

# Che Guevara Speaks

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"We are not rehearsing final gestures; we want life, and we shall defend it."

## INTRODUCTION

by Alfredo Lopez

"Revolutionaries are not normal people": an understatement in relation to Ernesto Che Guevara. Physician, brilliant intellect, competent soldier, charismatic leader, developed- and eventually creative-Marxist economist, always a man able to capture the spirit of an experience in his own being, Che remains one of the four or five greatest revolutionaries in modern history.

Why? Certainly he was at no time the leader of the Cuban revolution. Theoretically and practically, that has been Fidel's role. But greatness is a historical fact, arising from the conditions in which a person must work. It is a quality of representing a period in the history of a people in its mentality, spirit, activities, and goals, while at the same time making a creative contribution to the shaping of that people and that period. Good people, brilliant people are many, but great people are rare, and Che is one of the greatest of this epoch.

He represents, by his life and example, so much that is true of the Cuban people, and all Third World peoples striving toward their liberation. His body often shaken by serious asthma attacks, Che's tremendous physical accomplishments were made out of almost super-human determination, that same determination which can thrust people forward in their battles for a new society while being geographically imprisoned in the belly of the decaying order. His intellectual development, his sense of culture and dignity, as well as his unswerving dedication to the socialism, are the new man. Everything about him seems to symbolize the Cuban revolutionary experience, and everything about that experience strikes a responsive note in more and more of the people of the Third World.

But Che is more than a symbol. He is a master of revolution, and his principle contribution is his life-long

espousal of the concept of the creation of "Two, three, many Vietnams." He died trying to make this most profound, most practically applied internationalism a reality. While Fidel Castro is a director of a struggle for socialism, a planner, a political and organizational genius with a domestic base, Che might be called the Foreign Minister of revolution, spending his time in one country just long enough to make sure things are secure and then going off to begin again elsewhere. While oppression existed anywhere, Che was not able to be at peace with himself. Like the true revolutionary of his famous quote, he was "guided by strong feelings of love."

There are many ways for a revolutionary to die, and one of the most ironic is to be made into a Hero figure as many people around the left have done to the image of Che. It is no coincidence that his most famous photograph is one with an austere and sad expression, long hair, and the star on his beret. (How often we see people with the star on their beret, but how many know the significance?) But that photograph shows only a small part of Che's reality. He could be extremely demanding, most of all demanding of himself. Serious, yes, but in an unpretentious way, the seriousness of a confident person. A seriousness frequently softened with jokes and ironies, smiling and relaxed.

After his death, people said "Che will never die," but for many he had already died by becoming a symbol instead of a human being. The fact is, he is dead. No longer will he joke, as in the interview segments of this record, or recall intimate personal memories as in the Camilo speech, or explain in that logical and brilliant way his political position on some important question. He will never again laugh, embrace, fight, write, speak or love. With his spirit living or not, that is the way it is -- he is dead and gone.

It is only difficult to comprehend this when we look at great men as something other than men. Goethe said that a great poem is one which manages to transcend its structural limitations while keeping within them, like a sonnet. Perhaps the same is true of great people. Something about them is transcendental, but in the end they are like us all. They live, and they die. We can only measure Che Guevara in terms of how he did both. This record, being limited by time and the available material, can only give a suggestion of that. But perhaps by hearing this material, in his own voice and words, we can better identify with him as a person, above all. Perhaps it will help us see that it is we who must take his place, and to understand that -- each in our own way -- this can be done.

## ABOUT THE MUSICIANS:

Pablo Milanes, Noel Nicola, and Silvio Rodriguez are young songwriter/singers representative of the new generation of cultural workers in Cuba. The work primarily in the Experimental Sound Collective at the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Arts and Industries (I.C.A.I.C.), and more of their work can be found on the album "Cuba Va!", Paredon P-1010 with examples of the entire Sound Collective. The song "Fusil Contra Fusil" is sung by young people all over Cuba, and is one of the most widely known of those written immediately after the death of Che Guevara.

The background music was provided by two New York-based Puerto Rican musicians. Miguel Poventud, from the small town of Guayama, has played guitar since age 10 and is now 30 years old. He has sung and played in many Latin American countries, and his knowledge of continental and Caribbean people's music is deep. Each theme you hear was chosen for its comment: during the Camilo talk, a folk song about food from Oriente Province; during the Puerto Rican part of the interview a dearly loved patriotic song of return to the island; during the Maceo speech, when Che mentions Gomez, a Dominican patriotic song to illustrate Gomez' roots and his internationalism.

On the recording day, Miguel was recovering from a serious accident which left his thumb held together with a steel pin. However, he was determined to carry out what we feel is a beautiful job.

José Gloro plays the accorgan, an accordion attached to an electronic device which gives it many voices. He comes from Arecibo, a town historically rich in music and art. He is 33 and has played with many groups. Ironically, he was with the US Marines in Guantanamo just one week before relations were broken between Cuba and the USA.

SIDE 1, BAND 1: (1:58)

QUE TENGO YO QUE HABLARTE,  
COMANDANTE?

letras y música: Pablo Milanés

Si el poeta eres tú,  
Como dijo el poeta,  
El que ha tumbado estrellas  
En mil noches de lluvias coloridas  
eres tú.  
Que tengo yo que hablarte,  
Comandante?  
Si el que asomó al futuro su perfil,  
Y lo estrenó con voces de fusil,  
Fuiste tú,  
Guerrero para siempre,  
Tiempo eterno,  
Qué puedo yo cantarte,  
Comandante?  
En vano busca mi guitarra tu dolor.  
En mi jardín ya, todo es bello.  
No hay temor.  
Qué puedo yo dejarte,  
Comandante?  
Que no sea cambiar mi guitarra  
Por tu suerte,  
O elevarle una canción al sol,  
O morir sin amor.  
Qué tengo yo que hablarte,  
Comandante?  
Si el poeta eres tú,  
Como dijo el poeta,  
El que ha tumbado estrellas  
En mil noches de lluvias coloridas  
Eres tú.  
Qué tengo yo que hablarte,  
Comandante?

WHAT CAN I SAY TO YOU,  
COMANDANTE?  
words and music by Pablo Milanés

If you are the poet,  
as the poet said,  
he who has tumbled down stars  
in a thousand nights of colored rains,  
is you.  
What can I say to you,  
Comandante?  
If he who thrust his profile into the  
future  
and initiated it with rifle voices  
were you,  
warrior for always,  
time eternal,  
how could I sing to you,  
Comandante?  
In vain my guitar seeks your pain.  
In my garden now all is beautiful.  
There is no fear.  
What can I leave you, comandante?  
It wouldn't be to exchange my guitar  
for your fate,  
Or to lift a song to the sun,  
or to die without love.  
What can I say to you,  
Comandante?  
If you are the poet,  
as the poet said,  
he who has tumbled down stars  
in a thousand nights of colored rains,  
is you.  
What can I say to you,  
Comandante?

SIDE 1, BAND 2: (1:15)

Che: Los revolucionarios no son gente normal. Eso se lo puedo asegurar. Pero en definitiva, lo importante es que la capacidad de construcción y de sacrificio se va a desarrollar. El revolucionario hace la revolución, pero la revolución hace el revolucionario. Y es una interrelación constante, cuando el revolucionario va alcanzando grados mas alto de conciencia. Porque empezo? ... se lo podemos dejar a los psicoanalistas si quieren, pero el hecho final es un resultado de la lucha y de la acción de las masas sobre el propio revolucionario.

Translator: Revolutionaries are not normal people. This you can be sure of. But in the long run what is important is that the capacity for construction and sacrifice be developed. It's a constant interrelationship. The revolutionary makes the revolution, but the revolution makes the revolutionary. There is a constant interrelationship, when the revolutionary achieves a higher level of conscience. Why did he start? We can leave that to the psychoanalysts, but the final fact is a result of the struggle, and of the actions of the masses on the revolutionary.

SIDE 1, BAND 3: (7:00)

IN COMMEMORATION OF  
CAMILO CIENFUEGOS

Camilo died when his small plane disappeared in the sea, a few months after the triumph of the revolution. Until then he had formed a triumvirate of military leadership with Che and Fidel, singling himself out as one of the most brave and brilliant sons of Cuba. He was also Che's close friend in the guerrilla.

On the 28th of October, 1964, the Ministry of Construction asked Che to give a talk in homage to Camilo. His remarks on the occasion are personal, low-key, and form at once a profound appreciation of the human and historical aspects of Camilo and a moving look into Che himself, the man, the quiet, soft-spoken physician, sifting through personal memories which had already become part of the history of an entire nation. It is a double portrait of the political and personal relations between two revolutionaries, and from it we can see how inseparable the two aspects are.

Compañeros:

Yo conocí a Osmani, a través de Camilo, un día de derrota, uno de los tantos días de derrota que tuvimos que afrontar. Nos habían sorprendido; en la huida yo perdi mi mochila, alcance a salvar la frazada nada mas, y nos reunimos un grupo disperso.

SIDE 1 (25:38)

BAND 1: QUE TENGO YO QUE HABLARTE, COMANDANTE? (1:58) sung by Pablo Milanés with guitar  
BAND 2: "Revolucionarios no son gente normal ..." (1:15) (Revolutionaries are not normal people)  
BAND 3: In commemoration of Camilo Cienfuegos (7:00)  
BAND 4: "Algunos momentos que son cosas de loco..." (1:50) (Some moments are completely mad)  
BAND 5: DICIEMBRE 3 Y 4 (2:00) sung by Noel Nicola with guitar  
BAND 6: "Puerto Rico es un caso distinto ..." (2:33) (Puerto Rico is a different case)  
BAND 7: United Nations speech, December 11, 1964 (11:00)

SIDE 2 (28:00)

BAND 1: Tribute to Antonio Maceo, December 7, 1962 (19:30) (during the missile crisis)  
BAND 2: Farewell letter to Fidel, April, 1965 (5:15) read by Fidel Castro to the Cuban people  
BAND 3: FUSIL CONTRA FUSIL 92:48) sung by Silvio Rodríguez with guitar

Fidel había salido con otro grupo. Quedamos unos 10 o 12. Y había mas o menos una ley no escrita de la guerrilla que aquel que perdía sus bienes personales, lo que todo guerrillero debía llevar sobre sus hombros, pues, debía arreglarselas. Entre las cosas que había perdido estaba algo muy preciado para un guerrillero: las dos o tres latas de conserva que cada uno tenía en ese momento.

Al llegar la noche, con toda naturalidad cada uno se aprestaba a comer la pequñísima ración que tenía, y Camilo -- viendo que yo no tenía nada que comer, ya que la frazada no era un buen alimento -- compartió conmigo la única lata de leche que tenía; y desde aquel momento yo creo que nació o se profundizó nuestra amistad.

Tomando sorbos de leche y disimuladamente cuidando cada uno de que el reparto fuera parejo, íbamos hablando de toda una serie de cosas. En general versaba la conversación sobre comida, porque las conversaciones de las gentes versan sobre los problemas más importantes que les aquejan, y para nosotros la comida era una obsesión en aquellos días. Así, me conto del arroz. . . no, de la harina, creo que la harina con cangrejo, que era una especialidad de la mamá de Camilo, y me invitó a comerla después del triunfo.

Y así conocí a Osmani, también, aquella noche de fraternidad guerrillera, mientras compartíamos la lata de leche.

Hasta ese momento no eramos



particularmente amigos: el carácter era muy diferente. Desde el primer momento salimos juntos. Desde el Granma, desde la derrota de Alegría de Pío estábamos juntos, sin embargo, éramos dos caracteres muy diferentes. Y fue meses después que llegamos a intimar extraordinariamente.

Chocábamos por cuestiones de disciplina, por problemas de concepción de una serie de actitudes dentro de la guerrilla. Camilo en aquella época estaba equivocado. Era un guerrillero muy indisciplinado, muy temperamental; pero se dio cuenta rápidamente y rectificó aquello. Aún cuando después hiciera una serie de hazanas que han dejado su nombre en la leyenda, me cabe el orgullo de haberlo descubierto como guerrillero. Y empezó a tejer esa urdimbre de su leyenda de hoy en la columna que me había asignado Fidel, mandando el Pelotón de Vanguardia.

Después fue comandante; escribió en el llano de Oriente una historia muy rica en actos de heroísmo, de audacia, de inteligencia combatiente; e hizo la invasión en los últimos meses de la guerra revolucionaria.

O que a nosotros -- los que recordamos a Camilo como una cosa, como un ser vivo -- siempre nos atrajo más fue lo que también a todo el pueblo de Cuba atrajo: su manera de ser, su carácter, su alegría, su franqueza, su disposición de todos los momentos a ofrecer su vida, a pasar los peligros más grandes con una naturalidad total, con una sencillez completa, sin el más mínimo alarde de valor, de sabiduría; siempre siendo un compañero de todos, a pesar de que ya al terminar la guerra era, indiscutiblemente, el más brillante de todos los guerrilleros.

A los pocos meses del triunfo, cuando todavía estábamos en la efervescencia de la destrucción del viejo orden y apenas comenzaba a discutirse sobre la necesidad de la organización, Camilo murió.

A mí no me cabe duda de que, así como rectificó aquellos primeros errores de los días nacientes de la guerrilla y se convirtió en el mejor de todos nosotros, así también se hubiera adaptado a las exigencias de esta nueva época, y hubiera sido una columna firme en la organización del Ejército, en la organización de cualquier organismo, cualquier parte del Estado que le fuera confiada.

Sin embargo, toda esta parte no ha podido ser ni presenciada, ni ejecutada, ni colaborar en su ejecución, por Camilo. Nos cabe solo pensar en lo que podría haber hecho, pensar en la ausencia que dejó en aquellos momentos en que todavía la conjunción de las fuerzas revolucionarias no se había realizado plenamente, y el papel que jugaba cuando, con su autoridad

indiscutida en toda una serie de discusiones, de malquerencias que existían entre los revolucionarios, surgía Camilo para imponer siempre el llamado a la cordura, el llamado a hacer prevalecer los principios y el espíritu revolucionario sobre cualquier querrela del momento.

Esa es la significación que tiene Camilo para nosotros.

#### (ENGLISH)

I knew Osmany through Camilo on one day of defeat, one of so many days of defeat we had to confront. We had been taken by surprise; in the flight, I lost my knapsack. I was able to save only the blanket, and a group of us were reunited. Fidel had gone off with another group. There were some 10 or 12 of us. There was more or less an unwritten law in the guerrilla\* that he who lost his personal belongings, which every guerrillero carried on his back, would have to fend for himself. Among the things I had lost there was something very precious to a guerrillero: the two or three cans of food that everyone had at that time.

When night fell, each one hastened, naturally, to eat the tiny ration he possessed. And Camilo, seeing I had nothing to eat, since the blanket was not a good source of nourishment, shared his only can of milk. And from that moment on, I believe, our friendship was born, or became really strong.

Drinking gulps of milk and each one secretly taking care that his portions not exceed the other's, we continued to talk about a whole series of things. In general, the conversation centered around food. Because people's conversations center around the most important problems which face them. And for us, in those days, food was an obsession. So, he told me about rice ... no, farina with ... I think it was farina with crabs that was a specialty of Camilo's mother, and he invited me to eat it after victory was won.

And this is how I met Osmany too, on that night of guerrilla fraternity, while we shared that can of milk.

Until that moment, we had not been particularly good friends. Our characters were very different. From the first moment, we were together. Since the Granma, since the defeat at Alegría de Pío, we had been together. Nevertheless, we were two very different characters. And it was months before we got to like each other extraordinarily.

We conflicted on matters of discipline, on matters on conception of a series of attitudes within the guerrilla. Camilo was wrong in those days. He was a very undisciplined, very temperamental guerrilla-fighter, but he learned

rapidly and corrected this. Even after he accomplished a series of feats that have made his name legendary, I am proud to have discovered him as a soldier. And in the column to which Fidel had assigned to me, leading the vanguard squadron, he began to weave that fabric of his legend of today.

Later, he became a major. On the plains of Oriente, he wrote a history that was rich in acts of heroism, audacity, combative intelligence; he carried out the invasion during the last months of the revolutionary war.

What most attracted those of us who remember Camilo as an essence, as a live human being, was what also attracted the entire people of Cuba: his manner, his character, his joy, his frankness, his readiness at all times to give his life, to risk the greatest danger with total naturalness, with complete simplicity, without the least boastfulness of bravery or wisdom, always a companion to everyone. Despite it being the end of the war, he was irrefutably the most brilliant of all guerrilla-fighters.

A few months before victory, when we were still elated with the destruction of the old order and had hardly begun to discuss the need for organization, Camilo died.

I have no doubt that just as he had corrected those first errors in the initial days of the guerrilla and became the best of us all, he would also have adapted to the demands of this new epoch, he would have constituted a pillar in the organization of the army in the organization of any body, any part of the state with which he was entrusted. Nevertheless, all this was not to be witnessed, nor carried out, nor even collaborated in its carrying-out, by Camilo. We should not think only about what he could have done, about the absence he left at the time in which the coalition of the revolutionary force had not yet been fully realized. The role he played with his undisputed authority in a whole series of discussions of wrong beliefs that existed among the revolutionaries -- Camilo would arise always to impose his call to serenity, his call to make principles and a revolutionary spirit prevail over any momentary quarrel ... This was the significance of Camilo for us.

\* Che uses the term "guerrilla" in its classical definition: an army of military column engaged in mobile, hit and run, operations.

NOTE: This transcription includes all you will hear on the record, but the speech is actually twice as long. The complete Spanish text may be found in "ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA OBRAS 1957-1967" published in Cuba by the Casa de las Americas.



SIDE 1, BAND 4: (1:50)

Che: En general lo que se puede decir es que hay algunos momentos en nuestra revolución que son cosas de loco. El ataque de Moncada, la salida del Granma, la continuación de la lucha con el grupo de hombres que quedan, la defensa contra la última investida de la dictadura, en la Sierra, la invasión de Las Villas, la toma de las principales ciudades, cada uno de esas cosas se analizan, y se llega a la conclusión de que había loco de por medio, y como todas ellas con ... llevaron a la toma de poder, tal vez se podía llegar a la conclusión de que para tomar el poder se necesita ser un poco loco. O por lo menos, no tener miedo a los que vaya a pasar, que es lo que nosotros no tuvimos, sinceramente.

Translator: In general, what we could say is that there are some moments in our revolution when there are things completely mad. The attack on the Moncada barracks, the expedition of the Granma, the struggle with the handful of men who remained, the defense against the last great attack by the dictatorship in the Sierra Maestra, the invasion of the Province of Las Villas, the seizure of the principle towns, if you analyze each one of those things, you reach the conclusion that there was something mad in the middle, and as all of them as a chain led to the seizure of power, you may reach the conclusion that in order to seize power you have to be a little crazy. Or at least not to be afraid of what might happen, which we weren't, honestly.

SIDE 1, BAND 5: (2:00)

DICIEMBRE 3 y 4

letras: Ernesto Guevara  
(texto del diario del Che en Bolivia)  
musica: Noel Nicola, 1968

DICIEMBRE 3. Sin novedad.  
No hay exploración por ser sábado.  
Los tres peones de la finca salen  
para Lagunillas para hacer mandados.

DICIEMBRE 4. Sin novedad.  
Todo el mundo quieto debido al  
domingo.  
Doy una charla sobre nuestra actitud  
hacia los bolivianos que vendrán y  
hacia la guerra.

DECEMBER 3 and 4  
words: Ernesto Che Guevara  
music: Noel Nicola, 1968  
(text of the Diary kept by Che in  
Bolivia)

DECEMBER 3 - Nothing new.  
No expeditions because it's Saturday.  
The three farmhands left for Lagunillas  
to do some errands.

DECEMBER 4 - Nothing new.  
Everyone is quiet on account of Sunday.  
I give a little talk about our attitude  
toward the Bolivians who are coming,  
and toward the war.

SIDE 1, BAND 6: (2:33)

Che: Puerto Rico es un caso distinto al de Venezuela. Desde el punto de vista de las posibilidades de lucha, de la misma lucha, naturalmente es un pueblo colonizado, pero la circunstancia del estar dentro del sistema Norteamericano, la cantidad de Puertorriqueanos que viven en Estados Unidos, la presión que hacen sobre toda la cultura pueblo Puertorriqueño, y sobre su, su idea de pueblo en si, hacen que la lucha sea sumamente difícil, y que si llegara hacer una lucha armada, tendría que tomar otras características: el tamaño de la isla, la población, impiden hacer una lucha definitiva. Cuando las condiciones están maduras, y el pueblo de Puerto Rico está en condiciones ya de alcanzar su libertad, si los Norteamericanos no ceden, el pueblo encontraría las formas de combate. Yo no soy ni un profeta, ni un profesor de liberación, depende del pueblo... los hombres nacen de la masa. La masa está allí, de allí tiene que salir.

Translator: Puerto Rico is a different case from that of Venezuela. From the point of view of the struggle itself, or the possibility of struggle, naturally it is a colonial people. But the circumstances of it being within the American system, the number of Puerto Ricans who live in the US, the pressure made on the whole culture of the Puerto Rican people, in short the pressure on its idea as a people (it's concept of itself as a nation), those circumstances make struggle very difficult. And if it may reach the proportions of an armed struggle, it would have to have other characteristics. The size of the island, the population, may prevent a similar struggle. When the conditions are ripe, and the people of Puerto Rico are in a position to attain its freedom, if the Americans do not yield, the people will find ways of struggle. I'm neither a prophet nor a professor of liberation, but it depends on the people. Do you think there is a man who could replace Albusu? Men come from the masses, and the mass is there. They have to come from there.





SPEECH AT THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
DECEMBER 11, 1964, 19th ASSEMBLY

Che arrived at the United Nations after having visited, over the past four years, many of the countries represented there, and several not yet recognized. Travelling in his capacity of Minister of Industries, he visited Mali, Guinea, Ghana, the Congo, Sudan, Syria, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Ceylon, India, Burma, Pakistan, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, China, the USSR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere. While his missions had to do with trade arrangements and getting an on-the-spot impression of the situation of various countries, he was greeted everywhere as the "Liberator of the Poor," with many honors bestowed on him in that capacity.

At the Assembly, he spoke with all the weight of his immense personal prestige, the result of his historic achievements. But his purpose was to give a clear and unequivocal statement of Cuba's identification with all small nations struggles for sovereignty, against imperialism. He mentions the interventions in such states as Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and the warnings from the USSR and China about the threat of US invasion. He mentions NATO and Turkey's pressure on Cyprus. He tells the Assembly that peaceful co-existence is a right of all nations, not just the big powers, but then underlines the fact that peaceful co-existence may not exist between exploiter and exploited. In this context he pays tribute to Albizu Campos of Puerto Rico, and describes some of the ironies of Puerto Ricans being employed as cannon-fodder against the people of Panama and Korea. He also touches on the maneuvers in Guiana to circumvent the Cheddi Jagan government, the brutal apartheid of South Africa, Moise Tshombe's flouting of the United Nations' authority in the Congo, and affirms Cuba's support of the struggles in Rhodesia, Southwest Africa, the Palestinian Arabs, and all people in conflict with imperialism.

Che asks the Assembly for a conference on nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear testing, but makes it clear that as long as the United States maintains aggressive bases in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Panama, Cuba could not adhere to any regional pact, particularly after the OAS resolutions in the Treaty of Brazil which might permit aggression. He maintains that such a conference would not be possible without the inclusion of the People's Republic of China, and repudiates the two-China

policy. He also states the necessity for the recognition of two German states.

The Geneva Conference of 1964 is mentioned, and Che points out that the USA has not implemented the explicit recommendations of that conference with regard to Cuba, particularly noting that by prohibiting the sale of medicines to Cuba the USA has dropped the humanitarian mask with which it sought to disguise the "aggressive nature of its blockade of Cuba." He argues that as long as the countries which are economically dependent remain in the capitalist markets they cannot have sound economic development, saying that they must break away to join the socialist bloc.

The training of mercenaries in Nicaragua, Panama Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Florida, and possibly Honduras with US backing is mentioned, and he points out that while it is openly discussed in the US press, the OAS ministers pretend not to be able to see this obvious preparation for aggression against Cuba. He states that this preparation, and the outright attack at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs) compelled Cuba to ask the Soviet Union for certain types of defense weaponry, that which provoked the missile crisis. Now, he says, the US uses the resolution of that "crisis" as an excuse for U2 spy planes to fly over Cuba and the infiltration of spies and saboteurs into the country. He asserts Cuba's right to keep on its territory whatever defense weapons it may choose in order to defend its sovereignty and its opportunity to build socialism. He adds that whatever collective obligations Cuba assumes, she will fulfill them to the letter, without forgoing any of its rights as a nation.

He brings a five-point program for peace from Fidel: "1) Cessation of the economic blockade and all the economic and trade pressure by the United States in all parts of the world against our country. 2) Cessation of all subversive activities, launching and landing of weapons, and explosives by air and sea, organization of mercenary invasions, infiltration of spies and saboteurs, all of which acts are carried out from the United States and some accomplice countries. 3) Cessation of piratical attacks carried out from existing bases in the United States and Puerto Rico. 4) Cessation of all the violations of our airspace and our territorial waters by aircraft and warships of the United States, 5) Withdrawal from the Guantanamo naval base and restitution of the Cuban territory occupied by the United States."

Che points out that (in 1964 at the time of the speech and until today) none of these demands have been met. Also, that the provocations at Guantanamo

up to the first of December, in 1964 alone numbered 1,323 or an average of four per day, with one Cuban soldier having been killed by shots through the barrier from the base. He says pointedly that only the firm self-discipline of the Cuban army has enabled them to keep from losing self-control in response. He quotes the Cairo Conference of Heads of State from non-aligned countries as having gone on record as seeing the military base at Guantanamo as counter to the will of the people and in defiance of the Belgrade Declaration, earlier, which called for settling the dispute over the base on an equal footing. The Cairo Conference also went on record as calling for the US to negotiate evacuation of the base.

Cuba's cultural and historical ties with Latin America are reasserted, and the fact of exploitation by a common master. The economic and political blockade instituted throughout Latin America by the USA through the OAS, resisted only by Mexico, is condemned, and Che makes it clear that the only terms on which Cuba wishes to resume relations with any of these nations is that of equality, recognition that freedom has been won with blood.

The idea of Cuban intervention in the affairs of Latin American states is firmly rejected and Che points out and documents that it is the USA who has intervened. Cuba's only alliance is with the peoples everywhere struggling to assert full sovereignty as proclaimed in the United Nations Charter. He speaks of the crimes of the US imperialists even against their own children, especially citing the case of blacks and other minorities. And he restates that the treasonous sell-outs in the government of Latin American countries who play the lackey role in the OAS will pay back their people the hard way.

Reaching a climax in the speech, he proclaims the independence and sovereignty of Cuba as the "Free Territory of America," and points out that Cuba's example is already being followed in Guatemala, Colombia, and Venezuela to some extent. Then he quotes the final section of the Second Declaration of Havana (see complete text in English and Spanish and the voice of Fidel Castro delivering the Declaration in full on Paredon P-1013) which dramatically describes the ties between 200 million Latin Americans who are "beset by the same miseries, harbor the same feelings, and have the same enemy," and their march toward liberation which has begun. His most famous quote concludes the speech: "This great humanity has said 'enough' and has begun to move forward!", and links this with the idea that this cry has been understood and supported by the peoples of the world, especially of the socialist camp.

NOTE: The speech in its entirety can be read in "Venceremos!, the Speeches and Writings of Che Guevara," edited by John Gerassi and published in paperback in 1969 by Clarion Books. Below are the portions which you will hear on the record only.

(SPANISH)

Señor Presidente; señores delegados:

La representación de Cuba ante esta Asamblea se complace en cumplir, en primer término, el agradable deber de saludar la incorporación de tres nuevas naciones al importante número de las que aquí discuten problemas del mundo. Saludamos, pues, en las personas de su Presidente y Primeros Ministros, a los pueblos de Zambia, Malawi y Malta y hacemos votos porque estos países se incorporen desde el primer momento al grupo de naciones no alineadas que luchan contra el imperialismo, el colonialismo y el neocolonialismo.

De todos los problemas candentes que deben tratarse en esta Asamblea uno de los que para nosotros tiene particular significación y cuya definición creemos debe hacerse en forma que no deje dudas a nadie, es el de la coexistencia pacífica entre estados de diferentes regímenes económico-sociales. Mucho se ha avanzado en el mundo en este campo; pero el imperialismo -- norteamericano sobre todo -- ha pretendido hacer creer que la coexistencia pacífica es de uso exclusivo de las grandes potencias de la tierra. Nosotros expresamos aquí lo mismo que nuestro Presidente expresara en El Cairo y lo que después quedara plasmado en la declaración de la Segunda Conferencia de Jefes de Estado o de Gobierno de Países no Alineados: que no puede haber coexistencia pacífica entre poderosos solamente, si se pretende asegurar la paz del mundo. . . .

También hay que esclarecer que no solamente en relaciones en las cuales están imputados estados soberanos, los conceptos sobre la coexistencia pacífica deben ser bien definidos. Como marxistas, hemos mantenido que la coexistencia pacífica entre naciones no engloba la coexistencia entre explotadores y explotados, entre opresores y oprimidos. Es, además, un principio proclamado en el seno de esta organización, el derecho a la plena independencia contra todas las formas de opresión colonial. Por eso, expresamos nuestra solidaridad hacia los pueblos, hoy coloniales, de la Guinea llamada portuguesa, de Angola o Mozambique, masacrados por el delito de demandar su libertad y estamos dispuestos a ayudarlos en la medida de nuestras fuerzas, de acuerdo con la declaración de El Cairo. . . .

La brutal política del apartheid se aplica ante los ojos de las naciones del

mundo. Los pueblos de Africa se ven obligados a soportar que en ese continente todavía se oficialice la superioridad de una raza sobre la otra, que se asesine impunemente en nombre de esa superioridad racial. ¿Las Naciones Unidas no haran nada para impedirlo?

Querría referirme específicamente al doloroso caso del Congo, único en la historia del mundo moderno, que muestra cómo se puede burlar con la más absoluta impunidad, con el cinismo más insolente, el derecho de los pueblos. Las ingentes riquezas que tiene el Congo y que las naciones imperialistas quieren mantener bajo su control son los motivos directos de todo esto. En la intervención que hubiera de hacer, a raíz de su primera visita a las Naciones Unidas, el compañero Fidel Castro (applause) advertía que todo el problema de la coexistencia entre las naciones se reducía al problema de la apropiación indebida de riquezas ajenas, y hacia la advocación siguiente: "cese la filosofía del despojo y cesará la filosofía de la guerra"; pero la filosofía del despojo no solo no ha cesado, sino que se mantiene mas fuerte que nunca y, por eso, los mismos que utilizaron el nombre de las Naciones Unidas para perpetrar el asesinato de Lumumba, hoy, en nombre de la defensa de la raza blanca, asesinan a millares de congoleños.

¿Cómo es posible que olvidemos la forma en que fue traicionada la esperanza que Patricio Lumumba puso en las Naciones Unidas? ¿Cómo es posible que olvidemos los rejugos y maniobras que sucedieron a la ocupación de ese país por las tropas de las Naciones Unidas, bajo cuyos auspicios actuaron impunemente los asesinos del gran patriota africano?

Nuestros ojos libres se abren hoy a nuevos horizontes y son capaces de ver lo que ayer nuestra condición de esclavos coloniales nos impedía observar; que la "civilización occidental" esconde bajo su vistosa fachada un cuadro de hienas y chacales.

Porque nada mas que ese nombre merecen los que han ido a cumplir tan "humanitarias" tareas al Congo. Animal carnicero que se ceba en los pueblos inermes; eso es lo que hace el imperialismo con el hombre, eso es lo que distingue al "blanco" imperial.

Todos los hombres libres del mundo deben aprestarse a vengar el crimen del Congo. . . .

Nosotros queremos construir el socialismo; nos hemos declarado partidarios de los que luchan por la paz, nos hemos declarado dentro del grupo de países no alineados, a pesar de ser marxistas-leninistas, porque los no alineados, como nosotros, luchan contra el imperialismo. Queremos paz, queremos construir una vida mejor para nuestro pueblo, y por eso, eludimos al máximo caer en las provocaciones maquinadas por los yanquis, pero conocemos la mentalidad de sus

gobernantes; quieren hacernos pagar muy caro el precio de esa paz. Nosotros contestamos que ese precio no puede llegar mas allá de las fronteras de la dignidad. . . .

Concretamente intervienen fuerzas de los Estados Unidos en la represión de los pueblos de Venezuela, Colombia y Guatemala que luchan con las armas por su libertad. En el primero de los países nombrados, no solo asesoran al ejército y a la policía, sino que también dirigen los genocidios, efectuados desde el aire contra la población campesina de amplias regiones insurgentes y, las compañías yanquis instaladas allí, hacen presiones de todo tipo para aumentar la ingerencia directa.

Los imperialistas se preparan a reprimir a los pueblos americanos y están formando la internacional del crimen. Los Estados Unidos intervienen en América invocando la defensa de las instituciones libres. Llegara el día en que esta Asamblea adquiera aún mas madurez y le demande al Gobierno norteamericano garantías para la vida de la población negra y latinoamericana que vive en este país, norteamericanos de origen o adopción, la mayoría de ellos. ¿Cómo puede constituirse en gendarme de la libertad quien asesina a sus propios hijos y los discrimina diariamente por el color de la piel, quien deja en libertad a los asesinos de los negros, los protege además, y castiga a la población negra por exigir el respeto a sus legítimos derechos de hombres libres? . . . .

Pero debe quedar claramente sentado que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos no es gendarme de la libertad, sino perpetuador de la explotación y la opresión contra los pueblos del mundo y contra buena parte de su propio pueblo.

Al lenguaje antibiológico con que algunos delegados han dibujado el caso de Cuba y la OEA nosotros contestamos con palabras contundentes y proclamamos que los pueblos de América cobrarán a los gobiernos entreguistas su traición.

Cuba, señores delegados, libre y soberana, sin cadenas que la atene a nadie, sin inversiones extranjeras en su territorio, sin procónsules que orienten su política, puede hablar con la frente alta en esta Asamblea y demostrar la justeza de la frase con que la bautizaran: "Territorio libre de América." (ovation)

(ENGLISH)

The Cuban delegation to this assembly has pleasure, first of all, in fulfilling the pleasant duty of welcoming three new nations to the large number of nations whose representatives are discussing the problems of the world. We therefore greet through their Presidents and Prime Ministers the people of Zambia, Malawi, and Malta, and express



the hope that from the outset these countries will be added to the group of non-aligned countries which struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism.

Of all the burning problems to be dealt with by this assembly, one which has special significance for us and whose solution we feel must be sought first, so as to leave no doubt in the minds of anyone, is that of peaceful coexistence among states with different economic and social systems. Much progress has been made in the world in this field. But imperialism, particularly United States imperialism, has tried to make the world believe that peaceful coexistence is the exclusive right of the great powers on earth. We repeat what our President said in Cairo, and which later took shape in the Declaration of the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries: that there cannot be peaceful coexistence only among the powerful if we are to ensure world peace.....

We must also say that it is not only in relations between sovereign states that the concept of peaceful coexistence must be clearly defined. As Marxists we have maintained that peaceful coexistence among nations does not encompass coexistence between the exploiters and the exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed.

Furthermore, a principle proclaimed by this Organization is that of the right to full independence of all forms of colonial oppression. That is why we express our solidarity with the colonial peoples of so-called Portuguese Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique, who have been massacred for the crime of demanding their freedom, and we are prepared to help them to the extent of our ability in accordance with the Cairo Declaration.

.....The brutal policy of apartheid is being carried out before the eyes of the whole world. The peoples of Africa are being compelled to tolerate in that continent the concept, still official, of the superiority of one race over another and in the name of that racial superiority the murder of people with impunity. Can the United Nations do nothing to prevent this? I should like specifically to refer to the painful case of the Congo, unique in the history of the modern world, which shows how, with absolute impunity, with the most insolent cynicism, the rights of peoples can be flouted. The prodigious wealth of the Congo, which the imperialist nations wish to maintain under their control, is the direct reason for this. In his speech on his first visit to the United Nations, our comrade Fidel Castro said that the whole problem of co-existence among peoples was reduced to the undue appropriation of another's wealth. He said, "When this philosophy of despoilment disappears, the philosophy of war will have disappeared."

The philosophy of despoilment not only has not ceased, but rather it is stronger than ever, and that is why those who used the name of the United Nations to commit the murder of Lumumba, today, in the name of the defense of the white race, are assassinating thousands of Congolese. How can one forget how the hope that Patrice Lumumba placed in the United Nations was betrayed? How can one forget the machinations and maneuvers which followed in the wake of the occupation of that country by United Nations troops under whose auspices the assassins of this great African patriot acted with impunity?.....

....But the scales have fallen from our eyes and they now open upon new horizons, and we can see what yesterday, in our conditions of colonial servitude, we could not observe -- that "Western civilization" disguises under its showy front a scene of hyenas and jackals. That is the only name that can be applied to those who have gone to fulfill "humanitarian" tasks in the Congo. Bloodthirsty butchers who feed on helpless people! That is what imperialism does to men; that is what marks the "white" imperialists.

The free men of the world must be prepared to avenge the crime committed in the Congo.....

We want to build socialism; we have declared ourselves partisans of those who strive for peace; we have declared ourselves as falling within the group of nonaligned countries, although we are Marxist-Leninists, because the non-aligned countries, like ourselves, fight imperialism. We want peace; we want to build a better life for our people, and that is why we avoid answering, so far as possible, the planned provocations of the Yankee. But we know the mentality of United States rulers; they want to make us pay a very high price for that peace. We reply that that price cannot go beyond the bounds of dignity.

....Specifically, United States forces took part in the repression of the peoples of Venezuela, Colombia, and Guatemala, who carry on an armed struggle for their freedom. In Venezuela not only do the Americans advise the army and the police, but they also direct acts of genocide from the air against the peasant population in vast rebel-held areas, and the United States companies established there exert pressures of every kind to increase direct interference.

The imperialists are preparing to repress the peoples of America and are setting up an "international" (network) of crime. The United States interfered in America while invoking the "defense of free institutions." The time will come when this assembly will acquire greater maturity and demand guarantees from the United States Government for the lives of the black and Latin American population who reside in that country, most of whom are native-born or naturalized United States citizens.

How can they presume to be the "guardians of liberty" when they kill their own children and discriminate daily against people because of the color of their skin; when they not only free the murderers of black people, but even protect them, while punishing the black population because they demand their legitimate rights as free men?... But it must be clearly established that the government of the United States is not the champion of freedom, but rather the perpetrator of exploitation and oppression of the peoples of the world, and of a large part of its own population.

To the equivocating language with which some delegates have painted the case of Cuba and the Organization of American States, we reply with blunt words, that the governments pay for their treason.

Cuba, a free and sovereign state, with no chains binding it to anyone, with no foreign investments on its territory, with no proconsuls orienting its policy, can speak proudly in this assembly, proving the justice of the phrase by which we will always be known, "Free territory of America."

SIDE 2, BAND 1: (19:30)

TRIBUTE TO ANTONIO MACEO,  
DECEMBER 7, 1962

At the moment when this speech was delivered, the confrontation between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. over defense missiles being maintained in Cuba was just settled. The world had been in a panic, the U.N. bristled with tension, people in the U.S.A. headed for the hills, children prayed in school for peace, and everywhere people went to bed not knowing if they would wake up next morning. This was the moment Ernesto Guevara chose to deliver to the Cuban people an eloquent lesson in how to examine a situation from the historical point of view.

This is one of his most brilliant speeches. Evoking the spirit of Antonio Maceo, one of Cuba's greatest revolutionary figures, Che helps us see the logic of oppression and the harassments of imperialism. In pointing to Maceo as the symbol of an entire people who did not shrink before the threats of the Spanish army, he demonstrates his unquenchable faith in the rationality and basic courage of human beings and seems to say it is our task to carry on that spirit.

As a Marxist, Che examined everything from a historical point of view, and consequently was able to approach all problems with the same faith in the development of which people are capable. This faith is a watermark of genuine revolutionaries. With great reluctance we were forced to cut five minutes from the speech on the record because of time considerations. However, the complete text is reproduced here. It is a model of how to orchestrate an idea, at which Che Guevara was a past master.



Compañeros:

Hoy se cumple un año más, del 66 aniversario de la caída del Titán de Bronce en la lucha por la liberación de Cuba. Como todos los años, el pueblo de Cuba acude a rendirle su homenaje.

A través de estos años de recordación se ha visto desfilar ante su monumento siempre al mismo pueblo, pero en esta tribuna, representantes de muy diversas tendencias sociales. Hoy, que estamos en la tarea de la construcción del socialismo en Cuba, que empezamos una nueva etapa de la historia de América, el recuerdo de Antonio Maceo adquiere luces propias. Empieza a estar más íntimamente ligado al pueblo, y toda la historia de su vida, de sus luchas maravillosas y de su muerte heroica, adquiere el sentido completo, el sentido del sacrificio para la liberación definitiva del pueblo. Maceo no estuvo solo en esa lucha. Fue uno de los tres grandes pilares en que se asentó todo el esfuerzo de liberación de nuestro pueblo. Con Máximo Gómez y Martí, constituyeron las fuerzas más importantes, las expresiones más altas de la Revolución de aquella época.

Cuando Maceo, con Panchito Gómez Toro -- el hijo de Gómez -- al lado, rendía su vida por la liberación de Cuba, ya Martí lo había hecho un año antes; ya la cabeza política más firme y más profunda de las fuerzas de liberación había dejado de pensar, y no se veían en el horizonte los dirigentes capaces de llevar la guerra revolucionaria en Cuba hasta los extremos de liberación total de todos los poderes coloniales; más aún quienes fueron sus herederos ni siquiera tuvieron la penetración suficiente para comprender el alcance de los planes yanquis y toda la maligna maniobra que estaba encerrada en el Maine y en lo que siguiera.

Es así como aquella guerra de liberación, que formalmente terminara en el 98 y que llegara también a una culminación formal en 1902, con la independencia, no había acabado ni mucho menos.

Lo que hoy tenemos es su continuación directa, pero más aún, podemos decir

que desgraciadamente hoy tampoco ha acabado la tarea de liberación de Cuba. Mientras el enemigo imperialista mantenga sus garras fuertes, mantenga su apetito, sus deseos de destruir nuestra Revolución, tenemos que seguir en pie de guerra, y sigue para nosotros, tan viva y tan presente como en los días de la gesta gloriosa del 68 o del 95, la historia y los ejemplos de Antonio Maceo y de todos los hombres de aquella época, que lucharon 30 largos años por dejar los cimientos de lo que hoy estamos construyendo.

Antonio Maceo tiene dos momentos, los más importantes de su vida, los que lo definen como hombre y como genio militar.

El primero de ellos es cuando contra todas las corrientes, contra todos los conformismos, contra todos los desesperados que querían alcanzar algún tipo de paz después de 10 años de lucha, cuando se desintegra el Ejército de Liberación y se firma la Paz del Zanjón, Antonio Maceo expresa la Protesta de Baraguá y solo trata de seguir la lucha en condiciones imposibles. Aquel pequeño ejército de la manigua estaba, sin embargo, estructurado como un remedo de cualquier país que poseyera todo el territorio, tenía Congreso, Presidente, Delegados, Ministros y separación total entre la fuerza combatiente y la fuerza civil.

En el año 78, las profundas crisis que dividían el campo patriota se habían perdido totalmente. Y la Protesta de Baraguá fue el último intento de un espíritu noble por continuar una lucha a la cual ya venía dedicado desde 10 años antes. Fue infructuosa en ese momento, pero se continuó en la idea. Y todos los grandes patriotas, algunos en Cuba, otros diseminados por el Caribe o por otros países de América, tercamente, mientras envejecían en el empeño, iban tentando una y otra vez volver a la Patria para darle su libertad.

En el año 95 lo lograron por fin. Tras las primeras escaramuzas se organizó un ejército, con características de tal, bajo la jefatura de Máximo Gómez. Y entonces se preparó la segunda de las hazañas definitivas de la vida de Maceo: la Invasión.

Organizándolas pacientemente, a sus tropas, nutriendolas con una fuerte caballería, amparados en el escaso poder de fuego de la infantería de aquella época, con movimientos continuos, con marchas y contramarchas, combatiendo sin cesar casi día a día, atacando fulminantemente la mayoría de las veces, resistiendo a pie firme los ataques otras, Antonio Maceo cruzó la Isla de una punta a la otra y llevó el fuego revolucionario a provincias que no lo habían conocido en la anterior etapa de la guerra de liberación.

Para hacer esto que hoy se puede referir en pocas palabras, se necesitaba un inmenso poder de organización, una

inmensa fe en la victoria, y en la capacidad de lucha de sus hombres, y un poder de mando extraordinario para ejercerlo día a día durante años de lucha en condiciones extremadamente difíciles, con bajas constantes, donde los heridos corrían el peligro de ser muertos inmediatamente si caían en poder de los españoles, donde los ejércitos españoles con capacidad de movilidad ya a fines del siglo XIX, capacidad y movilidad suficientes como para concentrar grupos de ejército grandes, trataban de cercarlo constantemente y lo acosaban una y otra vez. Cuando Maceo deja el Ejército de Occidente, cruza la Trocha y llega a esta zona donde perdiera la vida, se había cumplido su tarea fundamental, la Revolución estaba encendida en todo el territorio de Cuba.

Pero también es cierto que ya en ese momento tácticamente las tropas españolas estaban aprendiendo a luchar contra la nueva modalidad, contra el avance inesperado de las fuerzas patriotas y se estaba neutralizando su empeño.

La muerte de Maceo prácticamente selló la suerte de las tropas de Occidente como poder combatiente, y quedaron, en lo fundamental, las tropas de Las Villas, dirigidas personalmente por Gómez, y las tropas de Oriente dirigidas por Calixto García, sosteniendo el peso fundamental de la lucha.

Después vino el Maine, vinieron los norteamericanos, vino la Enmienda Platt, vino cincuenta años de penumbra en nuestra vida, de preparación para las nuevas batallas, de intentos repetidos por distintos patriotas que fracasaban y a veces morían en el empeño, como Guiterras, como Julio Antonio Mella, como tantos otros, que fueron jalando la historia de la lucha revolucionaria de nuestro país. Pero hemos llegado a un momento donde el machete de Maceo vuelve a estar presente y vuelve a adquirir su antigua dimensión. Hemos pasado por la prueba más dura que puede pasar pueblo alguno, hemos estado frente a la destrucción atómica, hemos mirado al enemigo preparar su inmenso caudal de cohetes, de armas de destrucción de todo tipo, y hemos visto como apuntaba todo ese arsenal hacia Cuba, hemos oído sus amenazas y hemos visto sus aviones surcando nuestros aires.

Y este pueblo, digno de Maceo, de la estirpe de Maceo, de Martí, de Máximo Gómez, no tembló, ni siquiera vaciló. Y el mundo moderno ha visto el espectáculo extraordinario de un pueblo entero que se preparaba a la peor de las catástrofes con una moral increíble.

Todas las historias de las grandes luchas heroicas de la humanidad podían resumirse -- sin exagerar, sin pensar que es un "chovinismo" excesivo -- en estos momentos de la historia de Cuba.

Nuestro pueblo todo fue un Maceo, nuestro pueblo todo estuvo disputándose



la primera línea de combate en una batalla que no presentaría quizás líneas definidas, en una batalla donde todo sería frente y donde seríamos atacados desde el aire, desde el mar, desde la tierra, cumpliendo nuestra función de vanguardia del mundo socialista en este momento, en este lugar preciso de la lucha.

Por eso, sus palabras, sus frases tan queridas resuenan tan hondo en el corazón de los cubanos, y es de obligada recordación esa frase que esta inscrita al costado del monumento: "Quien intente apoderarse de Cuba, recogerá el polvo de su suelo anegado en sangre, si no perece en la lucha." Ese fue el espíritu de Maceo y ese fue el espíritu de nuestro pueblo.

Hemos sido dignos de él en estos momentos difíciles que acaban de pasar, en esta confrontación donde hemos estado a milímetros de la catástrofe atómica.

Eso es lo que hoy podemos mostrar con orgullo ante su recuerdo y ante el mundo, y repetir cada una de las frases de Maceo, ejemplo de un revolucionario que lucha por la liberación de su país, y repetir las hoy con la misma fe, con la misma encendida fe en el porvenir de la humanidad, en el porvenir de todo lo noble de la humanidad, en el porvenir socialista de la humanidad, y repetir también -- cambiando quizás levemente sus frases -- que mientras quede en América, o tal vez mientras quede en el mundo un agravio que deshacer, una injusticia que reparar, la Revolución

cubana no puede detenerse, debe seguir adelante y debe sentir en sí todos los males de este mundo oprimido en que nos ha tocado vivir, debe hacer suyos los sufrimientos de pueblos que, como el nuestro hace pocos años, levantan la bandera de la libertad y se ven masacrados, destruidos por el poder colonial.

Y no solo aquí en América donde tantos lazos nos unen: en el África, en el Asia, dondequiera que un pueblo en armas levante cualquier arma -- que puede ser el símbolo del machete de Maceo o del machete de Máximo Gómez -- donde los dirigentes nacionales de sus pueblos levanten su voz -- que puede ser el símbolo de la voz de Martí --, allí nuestro pueblo debe ir con su cariño, con su comprensión inmensa. Un pueblo que sale de la prueba de la que ha salido el nuestro, no puede mantenerse indiferente ante ninguna injusticia en ningún lugar del mundo; dejaría de ser martiano, además, si permaneciera indiferente cuando en algún lugar del mundo los poderes represivos masacran al pueblo.

Por eso hoy levantamos el pensamiento de nuestros grandes héroes, de los luchadores de aquella guerra gloriosa, y lo hacemos nuestro y lo repetimos una y otra vez, porque no han sido nada más que fases de la misma lucha de la humanidad por deshacerse de la ex-

plotación. Porque todas las frases de Antonio Maceo, de Martí o de Gómez, son aplicables hoy en esta etapa de la lucha contra el imperialismo, porque toda su vida y toda su obra, y el final de su vida, no es nada más que un jalón que marca el mismo largo camino de liberación de los pueblos.

Y por ese camino ha marchado el pueblo de Cuba. Por el camino de la lucha, de la lucha cruenta, sin descanso, contra el poder colonial, están marchando muchos pueblos del mundo y, día a día, se levantan nuevos machetes en distintas partes de distintos continentes, para decirle al imperialismo que, cuando las razones no bastan, también está la fuerza del pueblo, y para enseñarle al imperialismo que cuando el pueblo se une no hay fuerza de las armas que pueda detenerlo. Lo parará en una batalla, lo liquidará en algún momento, aprovechará sus momentos de debilidades, aprovechará a veces su credulidad, como el caso del infortunado héroe del Congo, Patricio Lumumba; pero nunca podrá detener el avance de los pueblos.

Y frente a su soberbia bestial, frente a su afán de aniquilar a todo lo que es puro en el mundo, se alzan los hombres, se alzan los hombres dirigidos por gente que levanta las banderas de Martí, de Maceo y de Gómez.

Y en cualquier lugar del mundo, donde esas banderas tremolen, allí debemos dirigir nuestras miradas y nuestro saludo.

Y frente al imperialismo que nos amenaza hoy, con tanta furia como ayer, con tanto deseo de destruirnos como ayer, que prepara en silencio su nuevo artero ataque, sacamos el arsenal de todas nuestras fuerzas y de toda nuestra fe; mostramos las fases de todos nuestros grandes combatientes que representan la voluntad del pueblo y agregamos lo nuevo, lo último, lo que nuestro pueblo ha fabricado en esta última etapa de su experiencia histórica, para lanzarlo una y otra vez a la cara del imperialismo.

¡Patria o muerte! ¡Venceremos!

(Discurso en el acto de homenaje a Antonio Maceo el 7 de diciembre de 1962.)

(ENGLISH)

Comrades:

Today another year has passed, that of the 66th anniversary of the Bronze Titan in the struggle for the liberation of Cuba. Like every other year, the people of Cuba have gathered to pay him tribute. Throughout these years of commemoration, this same people has always passed before his monument, but here on the tribunal there have been representatives of diverse social backgrounds. Today, now that we are involved in the task of building Socialism in Cuba, now that we have begun a new epoch in the history of America, the commemoration of Antonio Maceo is seen in a proper light. He begins to be more intimately linked with the people,

and the entire history of his life, of his marvelous struggles and his heroic death, acquires its complete significance: the significance of sacrifice for the final liberation of the people.

Maceo was not alone in that struggle. He was one of the three great pillars which sustained the whole effort of liberation for our people. With Maximo Gómez and Jose Martí, these constituted the most important forces, the highest expressions of the Revolution in that era.

When Maceo, with Panchito Gómez Toro, the son of Gómez, at his side, gave his life for the liberation of Cuba, Martí had already done so the year before; the firmest and most profound political mind of the liberation forces had ceased to think, and there were no leaders on the horizon capable of taking the revolutionary war in Cuba to the extremity of total liberation from all colonial powers; moreover, those who became its heirs did not even have the insight to realize the extent of the Yankee plans and the whole malignant maneuver inherent in the Maine and the events that followed.

That is why that war of liberation, which formally ended in 1898 and which would also arrive at a formal culmination in 1902, with independence, could hardly be called finished.

What we have today is its direct continuation, but even more, we must say that unfortunately even today the task of Cuba's liberation is not completed. As long as the enemy maintains its strong clutches, its hunger, its desire to destroy our revolution, we have to continue on a war footing, and the history and examples of Antonio Maceo and all the men of that age who fought for 30 long years to lay the groundwork of what we are building today are just as alive, just as valid for us as they were in the days of the glorious uprisings of '68 or '95.

Antonio Maceo has two moments, the most important of his life, those which would characterize him as a man and as a military genius. The first of these is when, against all tendencies, against all conformity, against all those in despair who wanted to settle for some kind of peace after 10 years of fighting, after the Liberation Army was dissolved and the Peace of Zanjón was signed, Antonio Maceo expressed the Protest of Baragua and tried single-handedly to continue the struggle in impossible circumstances.

That little jungle army was, nevertheless, structured like a model of any country in control of an entire territory: it had a congress, a President, delegates, ministers and the combat forces were totally separate from the civilian forces.

In the year 1868, the deep crises which divided the patriotic camp were so sharp that unity of command and authority was totally lost. And the Protest of Baragua was the last attempt

of a noble spirit to continue a struggle to which it had been dedicated for the past 10 years. It was not fruitful at the time, but its ideal persisted. And all the great patriots, some in Cuba, others dispersed throughout the Carribean or in other countries of America, persistently, growing old in the process, tried from time to time to return to the fatherland to give it liberation.

In '95 they finally achieved it. After the first skirmishes, they organized an army, with the appropriate characteristics, under the command of Maximo Gomez. And so, the second feat that distinguished the life of Maceo was in preparation: the Invasion.

Patiently organizing his troops, nourishing them with a strong cavalry supported by the meager fire power of the infantry of those times, continually moving, with marches and counter-marches, unceasing combat almost every day, most of the time attacking feverishly, resisting the enemy attacks with firm footing, Antonio Maceo crossed the island from one end to the other, taking his revolutionary fire to provinces where the earlier stages of the liberation war were unknown.

In order to do what today can be described in a few words, an immense strength of organization was needed, an immense faith in victory and in the fighting capacity of his men, and an extraordinary power of command to exercise day after day, during years of struggle, in extremely difficult conditions with constant losses, where the wounded ran the risk of being killed instantly if they fell into Spanish hands, where the Spanish armies, with mobility by the end of the 19th Century, capacity and mobility enough to concentrate large army groups, tried constantly to surround them and pursued them time and again.

When Maceo left the Western Army, he crossed the Trocha and came to this zone, where he lost his life. He had completed his main task: the revolution was on fire throughout all of Cuban territory. But it is also certain that, tactically, at this time, the Spanish troops were learning to struggle against the new method, against the unexpected advances of patriotic forces, and they were neutralizing their efforts.

Maceo's death practically sealed the fate of the Western troops as a combative force, and this fundamentally left only the troops of Las Villas, under the personal command of Gómez, and the Oriente troops led by Calixto Garcia, to sustain the weight of the struggle.

Then came the Maine, the North Americans, the Platt Amendment, 50 years of darkness in our lives, of preparation for new battles, of repeated attempts by various patriots who failed, and sometimes died, in the attempt, Guiteras, Antonio Mella, so many others, who studied the history of the revolutionary struggle in our country. But we have arrived at a moment when

Maceo's machete is again present, and again it acquires its original stature. We have passed the hardest test any people can endure: we have confronted atomic destruction, we have observed the enemy preparing its immense stockpile of war-heads, weapons, and destruction of all types, and we have seen it aim this entire arsenal at Cuba. We have heard its threats and we have seen its planes surround our airspace. And this people, worthy of Maceo, cut from the same cloth as Maceo, Marti, Maximo Gomez, did not become afraid. It did not even tremble. And the modern world has seen the extraordinary sight of a whole people preparing for the worst catastrophe with incredible courage.

All the histories of the great heroic struggles of humanity could be summed up -- without exaggeration, without thinking that this is an excessive "chauvinism" -- during those moments of Cuban history.

Our entire people was a Maceo, our entire people was fighting to be in the first line of combat in a battle which perhaps did not present definite lines, in a battle in which all would be front lines and where we would be attacked from the air, from the sea, from the land, carrying out our function of the vanguard of the socialist world in that moment, in that precise area of the struggle.

This is why his words, his well-beloved phrases resound so deeply in Cuban hearts, and we are obliged to commemorate that phrase which is inscribed on the side of the monument: "Whoever tries to take possession of Cuba will reap the dust of its blood-washed soil, if he does not perish in the struggle." That was the spirit of Antonio Maceo, and that was the spirit of our people. We have proved ourselves worthy of him in these difficult times just passed, in this confrontation where we have been within perhaps millimeters of atomic catastrophe.

This is why today we are able to point with pride at his commemoration and before the world, and repeat each one of Maceo's phrases, example of a revolutionary who struggles for the liberation of his country, and repeat them today with the same faith, the same burning faith in the future of humanity, in the future of all that is noble in humanity, in the socialist future of humanity, and to repeat, perhaps slightly altering his phrases, that while there remains in America, or perhaps in this world, one injury to undo, one injustice to repair, the Cuban revolution cannot be detained, it must continue on and must feel in its heart all the evils of this oppressed world in which we must live, it must feel as its own the sufferings of peoples who, like our own just a few years ago, raise the banner of liberty and are massacred, destroyed by the colonial power.

And not only here in America, where so many bonds unite us, but in Africa, in Asia, wherever a people in arms raises any weapon -- which can be the symbol of Maceo's or Maximo Gomez' machete --, where the national leaders of their peoples raise their voices -- which can be the symbol of Marti's voice --, there must our people go with its affection, its immense understanding. A people which passes the test ours has passed cannot remain indifferent before any injustice in any part of the world; it would cease to be like Marti, moreover, if it remained indifferent when, in any part of the world, the repressive powers massacre people.

This is why today we put forward the thinking of our great heroes, those strugglers of that glorious war, make it ours and repeat it again and again; because they have been only phases of the same struggle humanity wages to rid itself of exploitation. Because all the phrases of Antonio Maceo, Marti, or Gomez, are applicable today in this stage of the struggle against imperialism, because his entire life, his entire accomplishment and the end of his life is no more than a milestone along the same long road of liberation of the peoples.

And the people of Cuba have marched along that road. On the road of struggle, of bloody, unceasing struggle against the colonial powers, many peoples of the world are marching day by day, new machetes are raised in different parts of different continents, telling imperialism that when reason does not suffice, the force of the people is ready, and teaching imperialism that when a people is united there is no force of weapons that can stop it. It might be checked in a battle, might be liquidated for a moment, its weak moments may be taken advantage of, its naivete at times might be used against it, as in the case of the unfortunate hero of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba, but the advance of the peoples can never be detained.

And before its bestial arrogance, before its eagerness to destroy all that is pure in this world, men rise up, men led by people who raise the banners of Marti, Maceo and Gomez, rise up. And toward any place in the world where these banners wave, we must direct our eyes and take off our hats.

And before the imperialism that threatens us today with as much fury as yesterday, with as much desire to destroy us as yesterday, that prepares its crafty new attacks in secret, we bring out the arsenal of all our strength and faith; we show the phrases of all our great combatants who represent the people's will, and we add the new, the most recent, that which our people has built in this latest stage of its historical experience, to hurl it time and time again in the face of imperialism. Patria o Muerte, Venceremos! (Country or death, we will win!) (Ovation)



## FAREWELL LETTER TO FIDEL AND THE CUBAN PEOPLE

Fidel reads this letter in the Plaza to the Cuban people, but it is Che's moment, feeling the pressure of the need to speak to the one man closest to him and to the world at the same time, to sum up his life. The brevity of it shows the hopelessness of trying

to put in words the things Che was used to teaching by example. This is a letter from the new man, a moving mixture of political principle, spiritual decisiveness, and human love ... a perfect personal/political statement from a man who knew it could be his last.

October 3, 1965  
Year of Agriculture  
Havana

Fidel:

At this moment I remember many things -- when I met you in Maria Antonia's house, when you suggested my coming, all the tensions involved in the preparations.

One day they asked who should be notified in case of death, and the real possibility of that fact affected us all. Later we knew that it was true, that in revolution one wins or dies (if it is a real one). Many comrades fell along the way to victory.

Today everything is less dramatic because we are more mature. But the fact is repeated. I feel that I have fulfilled the part of my duty that tied me to the Cuban revolution in its territory, and I say good-bye to you, the comrades, your people, who are already mine.

I formally renounce my positions in the national leadership of the Party, my post as minister, my rank of major, and my Cuban citizenship. Nothing legal binds me to Cuba. The only ties are of another nature; those which cannot be broken as appointments can.

Recalling my past life, I believe I have worked with sufficient honor and dedication to consolidate the revolutionary triumph. My only serious failing was not having trusted more in you from the first moments in the Sierra Maestra, and not having understood quickly enough your qualities as a leader and a revolutionary.

I have lived magnificent days and I felt at your side the pride of belonging to our people in the brilliant yet sad days of the Caribbean crisis.

Rarely has a statesman been more brilliant than you in those days. I am also proud of having followed you without hesitation, identified with your way of thinking and of seeing and of appraising dangers and principles.

Other nations of the world call for my modest efforts. I can do that which is denied you because of your responsibility as the head of Cuba, and the time has come for us to part.

I want it known that I do it with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow: I leave here the purest of my hopes as a builder, and the dearest of those I love. And I leave a people that received me as a son. That wounds me deeply. I carry to new battlefronts the faith that you taught me, the revolutionary spirit of my people, the feeling of fulfilling the most sacred of duties: to fight against imperialism wherever it may be. This heals the deepest wounds.

I state once more that I free Cuba from any responsibility, except that which stems from its example. If my final hour finds me under other skies, my last thought will be of this people and especially of you. I am thankful for your teaching, your example, and I will try to be faithful to the final consequences of my acts.

I have always been identified with the foreign policy of our revolution and I will continue to be. Wherever I am, I will feel the responsibility of being a Cuban revolutionary, and as such I shall behave. I am not sorry that I leave my children and my wife nothing material. I am happy it is that way. I ask nothing for them, as I know the state will provide enough for their expenses and education.

I would like to say much to you and to our people, but I feel it is not necessary. Words cannot express what I would want them to, and I don't think it's worthwhile to banter phrases.

Ever onward to victory! Patria o muerte!

I embrace you with all my revolutionary fervor.

Che

FUSIL CONTRA FUSIL  
by Silvio Rodríguez

El silencio del monte va,  
Preparando un adiós.  
La palabra que se dirá  
In memoriam será.  
La explosión.  
Se perdió  
El hombre de este siglo allí.  
Su nombre y su apellido son  
Fusil contra fusil.  
Se quebró,  
La cáscara del viento al sur  
Y sobre la primera cruz  
Despierta la verdad.  
Todo el mundo tercero va,  
A enterrar su dolor.  
Con granizo de plomo harán,  
Su agujero de honor,  
Su canción.  
Dejarán  
El cuerpo de la vida allí,  
Su nombre y su apellido son  
Fusil contra fusil.  
Cantarán  
Su luto de hombre y de animal,  
Y en vez de lágrimas echar  
Con plomo llorarán  
Alzarán  
Al hombre de la tumba al sol,  
Y el nombre se repartirán  
Fusil contra fusil.

## GUN AGAINST GUN

The silence of the forest  
Is preparing a goodbye.  
The word that will be said  
In memoriam is  
Explosion.  
He was lost,  
The man of this century, there.  
His first name and his last name are  
Gun against gun.  
It broke,  
The shell of the wind to the south,  
And on the first cross,  
Truth awakened.  
All the Third World  
Buries its sorrow,  
With a hail of lead,  
It will hollow out its place of honor,  
Its song.  
They will leave  
The body of life there.  
His first name and his last name are  
Gun against gun.  
They will sing  
Their mourning song of man  
and animal,  
And instead of tears  
They will cry lead.  
They will lift the man  
From the tomb toward the sun,  
And between them they will share  
his name,  
Gun against gun.

October 3, 1965  
"Año de la Agricultura"  
Habana

Fidel:

Me recuerdo en esta hora de muchas cosas, de cuando te conocí en casa de María Antonia, de cuando me propusiste venir, de toda la tensión de los preparativos.

Un día pasaron preguntando a quien se debía avisar en caso de muerte y la posibilidad real del hecho nos golpeó a todos. Después supimos que era cierto, que en una revolución se triunfa o se muere (si es verdadera). Muchos compañeros quedaron a lo largo del camino hacia la victoria.

Hoy todo tiene un tono menos dramático porque somos más maduros, pero el hecho se repite. Siento que he cumplido la parte de mi deber que me ataba a la Revolución cubana en su territorio y me despido de tí, de los compañeros, de tu pueblo que ya es mío.

Hago formal renuncia de mis cargos en la Dirección del Partido, de mi puesto de Ministro, de mi grado de Comandante, de mi condición de cubano. Nada legal me ata a Cuba, solo lazos de otra clase que no se pueden romper como los nombramientos.

Haciendo un recuento de mi vida pasada creo haber trabajado con suficiente honradez y dedicación para consolidar el triunfo revolucionario. Mi única falta de alguna gravedad es no haber confiado mas en tí desde los primeros momentos de la Sierra Maestra y no haber comprendido con suficiente celeridad tus cualidades de conductor y de revolucionario. He vivido días magníficos y sentí a tu lado el orgullo de pertenecer a nuestro pueblo en los días luminosos y tristes de la Crisis del Caribe.

Pocas veces brilló más alto un estadista que en esos días, me enorgullezco también de haberte seguido sin vacilaciones, identificado con tu manera de pensar y de ver y apreciar los principios.

Otras tierras del mundo reclaman el concurso de mis modestos esfuerzos. Yo puedo hacer lo que te está negado por tu responsabilidad al frente de Cuba y llego la hora de separarnos.

Sébase que lo hago con una mezcla de alegría y dolor; aquí dejo lo más puro de mis esperanzas de constructor y lo más querido entre mis seres queridos... y dejo un pueblo que me admitió como un hijo; eso lacera una parte de mi espíritu. En los nuevos campos de batalla llevaré la fe que me inculcaste, el espíritu revolucionario de mi pueblo, la sensación de cumplir con el más sagrado de los deberes: luchar contra el imperialismo dondequiera que esté; esto reconforta y cura concreces cualquier desgarradura.

Digo una vez más que libero a Cuba de cualquier responsabilidad, salvo la que emane de su ejemplo. Que si me llega la hora definitiva bajo otros cielos, mi último pensamiento será para este pueblo y especialmente para tí. Que te doy las gracias por tus enseñanzas y tu ejemplo al que trataré de ser fiel hasta las últimas consecuencias de mis actos. Que he estado identificado siempre con la política exterior de nuestra Revolución y lo sigo estando. Que en dondequiera que me pare sentiré la responsabilidad de ser revolucionario cubano, y como tal actuaré. Que no dejo a mis hijos y mi mujer nada material y no me apena: me alegra que así sea. Que no pido nada para ellos pues el Estado les dará lo suficiente para vivir y educarse.

Tendría muchas cosas que decirte a tí y a nuestro pueblo, pero siento que son innecesarias, las palabras no pueden expresar lo que yo quisiera, y no vale la pena emborronar cuartillas.

Hasta la victoria siempre. ¡Patria o muerte!  
Te abraza con todo fervor revolucionario,

CHE

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