

# A New Stage in the Advance of Cuban Socialism

Fidel Castro

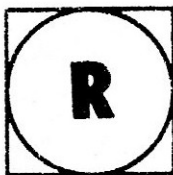
**MERIT**

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SPEECH GIVEN BY MAJOR FIDEL  
CASTRO RUZ, FIRST SECRETARY  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF  
CUBA AND PRIME MINISTER OF THE  
REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT,  
AT THE CEREMONY COMMEMORATING  
THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
DEFEAT OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM  
AT PLAYA GIRON. APRIL 19, 1968,  
YEAR OF THE HEROIC GUERRILLA.  
PLAYA GIRON.

(Translation of the transcript made by the  
Department of Stenographic Transcripts of  
the Revolutionary Government.)



RELATIVES of the valiant, heroic  
fighting men who died at Girón;  
Comrade officers and members of  
our Revolutionary Armed Forces;  
Comrade veterans of Girón who  
are present here tonight;  
Workers:

We are commemorating this  
seventh anniversary at the very  
spot where the last fighting of those heroic days  
took place. This is fitting when, precisely in memory  
of the glorious feat at Girón, the vast majority of  
our people are pitching in to an extraordinary  
nationwide work campaign.

In other years this date was commemorated with  
meetings at various places, but this year it seemed  
to be the most logical, most natural thing to com-  
memorate it here, at this spot — particularly when  
our people are involved full-scale in a revolutionary  
offensive.

For some years it was not the policy to promote  
our Armed Forces officers. It has been traditional,  
since the very beginnings of the Revolution — in  
organizing the initial struggles, as well as in the  
Sierra Maestra — for promotions to be made  
sparingly. That is, as our Army developed and  
cadres started distinguishing themselves, the first  
appointments of officers were made. We must  
say that this was a healthy custom. In general,  
we kept ranks down. There are many officers  
whose responsibilities — this continued happen-  
ing in the following years, and it still happens —  
are greater than those called for by their rank.  
So that we often have officers commanding divi-

sions, or commanding army corps, or commanding battalions, commanding important units, without having the military rank that corresponds to the command of those units.

We have made enormous efforts in these years to steadily train cadres in our Armed Forces. And not only that, but the immense majority of the revolutionary combatants who took active part in the war remained in the ranks of our Army. It was natural, since our country constantly needed to defend itself, for the Revolution to keep men of proved capacity, of firm revolutionary spirit, of deep awareness, in the ranks of our Armed Forces; for in these years, since the very day of triumph, January 1st, it has been necessary for us — as Captain Cuba said — to organize and train a powerful army.

For this reason the Revolution was deprived of numerous cadres for civilian tasks, for tasks of construction, for tasks of developing the country in all spheres. An enormous reserve of cadres remained in our Armed Forces.

Our Army, our General Staff and our Armed Forces Ministry have been making exceptional efforts to train cadres during these years, as I mentioned, so that today our country has, in the Armed Forces, a huge, mighty reserve of cadres fit for any task assigned them.

But this has been brought about through ceaseless efforts to improve academic levels, it has been brought about through hard work and study. The immense majority of our military cadres — without exception — have attended schools. Without exception...including the Armed Forces Minister, the comrades of the General Staff, all the officers of our Armed Forces. They have all taken, and are taking, various courses.

Otherwise it would not have been possible to attain the level of organization and mastery of technique that our Armed Forces possesses today; it would have been impossible to handle the enormous amount of military equipment we now possess.

Our Army, in the first years — above all, in the years of struggle in the mountains — had to be content with very simple weapons — rifles, some machine guns, some grenades and, towards the end, some bazookas and mortars seized from the enemy, mines — which turned out to be very effective against tanks — but, when all's said and done, very simple, easily handled equipment. Later, our Armed Forces steadily came into possession of equipment that was much more modern, much



more complex, that required a much higher level of training. Our Army and other branches of the Armed Forces were becoming more developed, with larger units being constituted.

At first there were only battalions; at the time of the mercenary invasion we were organized militarily basically by battalions, with the battalions organized by sectors. Later we organized divisions, army corps and armies, and provided each new level of organization with all the other necessary elements for the use, maintenance and supply of equipment and for the command of units.

This may seem simple to you now, but great energy had to be poured, as I said, into learning; there were years of study, of preparation, of training. It was necessary to create numerous military schools. We should mention that we began organizing these schools, basically, some months before the Girón invasion. Officers' training schools were organized, as were schools for instruction in artillery, tanks and various kinds of new weapons. These schools continued growing, and today they have a permanent enrollment of about ten thousand military students — not counting those who are studying abroad.

### ● PROMOTIONS WILL BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CADRES' STUDIES

And so we continued the old practice begun in the period of struggle in the mountains — selecting the comrades who were outstanding, who put forth the greatest efforts in study and the fulfillment of duty. The immense majority of those promoted, therefore, are comrades who have studied at schools — with the exception of comrades who have not had the chance to attend those schools but have been doing demanding jobs where they have demonstrated their tenacity and merit. We therefore make exceptions, in a few, very limited number of cases, for comrades of great prestige, great merit in the Revolution, veteran combatants, who are also promoted.

Naturally, there will be fewer and fewer of these cases in the future, so that with the new graduating classes, with the new generations of cadres — comrades who enter our Armed Forces as youngsters — promotions will always be made in accordance with the cadres' studies.

We should mention that, for example, 35 captains

have been promoted to the rank of first captain. All, absolutely all, were Rebel Army combatants. (APPLAUSE) and 33 of the 35 are members of our Party. (APPLAUSE)

Fifty-six first lieutenants have been promoted to the rank of captain, (APPLAUSE) and all 56 are veteran Rebel Army combatants, and all 56 are members of our Party. (APPLAUSE) And so on and so forth. Except that, naturally, most cadres with the ranks of first lieutenant, lieutenant and second lieutenant are younger comrades — many of them were 10, 11, 12, or 13 years old at the time of the war — and so the percentage of veteran Rebel Army combatants is not so high here.

But, in all, of the 1848 men promoted, 683 are veteran combatants of the Rebel Army. (APPLAUSE) And of the 1848, 1307 are members of our Party (APPLAUSE) and 155 are members of the Young Communist League. (APPLAUSE)

The total: 1462 of the 1848 promoted are militants. This can give us an idea of the makeup and quality of the comrades who were promoted.

It is by no means easy for our commanding officers to select those to be promoted, for it is certain that there is an immense number of men who are serving in a selfless, exemplary way in the Armed Forces.

We should mention that in our Armed Forces promotions are very far from implying privilege of any kind; we should mention that one of the activities that requires the greatest selflessness, dedication and spirit of sacrifice is that performed by our officers — so much so that special revolutionary vocation, a special spirit of struggle, is required to accept the obligations and tasks that fall to an officer in our Armed Forces.

And so experience has proved that the recruitment of cadres or of candidates for military schools is no easy matter. It is necessary to call for volunteers from our youth organizations, our scholarship schools, our centers of learning, appealing to our young people's sense of duty. This proves a constant truth: that when obligations are of the greatest and tasks of the hardest, not everyone is ready to take them on.

However, the need for Armed Forces cadres will never lead our Revolution to offer privileges of any kind, to offer soft spots, to offer material incentives.

That is, we will follow the best tradition, the tradition that has made our Armed Forces a profoundly revolutionary organization, upon which our homeland can depend for any task, for the prestige

it acquired in the war and acquired through the years is based precisely on the mettle of its men. We will, therefore, always follow the policy of recruiting cadres for our Armed Forces from among the best youths, from among the best militants. At the same time, numerous secondary schools have been established which will enroll graduating 6th-grade students who have already shown interest in and a vocation for becoming military cadres. And we must say that in this sector there are more than enough youngsters who aspire to studies connected with military sciences. That is, among the new generation — the generation now in primary school — there are many, many pupils who have the desire to study, the interest in studying, those subjects. At any rate, following the principle of selection based on quality, step by step, exerting great effort, we have been training thousands and thousands of cadres. And we have always followed a revolutionary method, we have always followed the policy of making that selection on the basis of merit, human qualities, intelligence and conscientiousness.

## ● AGRICULTURAL AVIATION IS GROWING ENORMOUSLY IN OUR COUNTRY

These efforts have not been spent merely in the task of organizing a well disciplined and trained military force. We have learned that these efforts did not mean, in the long run, a sacrifice for the all-round development of the Revolution and the country — far from it. Now we are beginning to reap the first fruits, showing what can be achieved by utilizing experience, the right methods, discipline and the employment of military cadres in activities of a civilian nature. Last year our Air Force was given the responsibility for agricultural aviation. Agricultural aviation is growing enormously in our country; there are more and more agricultural activities in which aviation is employed. When an airplane is used, productivity in many tasks may be increased as much as 100, 500 or 1000 times. Last year our Air Force took over that job; it organized the work, using military pilots, Air Force officers, earning their regular wages. It's common knowledge that if anyone received exorbitant wages in our country the pilots of crop-dusting planes did. They

earned a thousand, two thousand, or even three thousand pesos a month. They got paid according to the amount of land they dusted, planted, or fertilized. And if they flew a plane with ten times more capacity — such as the new planes that we were putting onto that job — they would have had to be paid unbelievable amounts of money, according to this method of remuneration. Of course, such wages would not exactly help to form revolutionary pilots.

Moreover, those incredible inequalities in wages constitute a heritage — and one of the worst — of capitalism. Because if the instrument used for this activity — the plane — costs 50 thousand or 100 thousand pesos, it is paid for by the other workers; the people's money goes to buy an airplane, which is an instrument of production that should be serving the people. If that plane is used by a worker who has had the opportunity to take specialized training, this does not mean that he has a right, with that machine, to earn ten, twenty or thirty times more than a worker who may be cutting cane but is contributing to the economy and, by cutting cane, helping to pay for those planes and for the studies of those selected to be pilots. And it is not fair for there to be a worker whose wages go up to ten, twenty or thirty times those of others when we get a machine that raises productivity enormously.

The Revolution inherited such practices in many spheres of activity. It seemed that it would be very difficult — impossible — to man those planes, to have an agricultural aviation not based on those enormous wages. Nevertheless, we turned to our Air Force, to our revolutionary pilots. And we must say that they responded to the call, once again showing that conscience is and should always be above any other interest — and if we do not feel this way, we are not revolutionaries — and today we have a mighty agricultural aviation, manned by officers of our Armed Forces, who get much higher output, a productivity several times greater, and, nevertheless, receive the same remuneration that they were receiving, their modest pay as Air Force officers. That is revolutionary conscientiousness, that is revolutionary spirit! (APPLAUSE)

We cannot give any of those machines, which are very expensive and of a very high output, to men who are not specially conscientious and revolutionary. In this connection, experience is proving us right.

## ● THEY TRIED TO STRANGLE US; THEY TRIED EVERY AVAILABLE METHOD TO IMPOSE ALL SORTS OF PRIVATIONS ON US

The same principle, the principle of extensively employing Armed Forces officers and operators to run the various kinds of equipment now being utilized in the development of our country, has had excellent results. This has led to still more advanced ideas. Our people are now in a position to develop and collect the fruits of this enormous source of discipline, know-how and revolutionary conscientiousness represented by our Armed Forces. Once again, the dialectics of history has been proved right. Once again, revolutionary accomplishments and other facts have shown how every action of our enemies has helped to create a virtue, a forcefulness among our people. And we must say that, without the imperialists' ruthless, criminal blockade against our country, our people would not have the revolutionary spirit they have today.

They tried to strangle us; they tried every available method to impose all sorts of privations on us. And this resulted in the imperative need to develop new ideas, new plans, new viewpoints, with the resultant enormous development in our people, as evidenced in this revolutionary offensive. The need to take measures against the threats, the need to organize and maintain a large army, enabled us, at the same time, to create this source of discipline, know-how and cadres now at the country's service in the battle against underdevelopment. And so, once again, enemy actions, meant to destroy us, led to our building up the resources and forces which now make it possible for us to take on any task, any goal, no matter how difficult it may seem.

There was a time when our Armed Forces consisted mainly of militiamen, of members of the workers' militia. But the amount of military equipment grew, the size of our Armed Forces grew, and the workers had a job to do in the factories. It became necessary to establish compulsory military service to meet the demands of the enormous growth of our Armed Forces — and, besides, there were men who had served in the Armed Forces for four, five, six, and even seven years and, understandably, wanted to go into other activities. Many of them had been separated from their families for years.



These men had to be replaced. This gave birth to compulsory military service. Military service has contributed greatly to the formation of our young men. When it was established, there were many young people who neither studied nor worked, many young people doing minor jobs, unwilling to attend school, to go into military service, or to do anything of the kind. This — like illiteracy — was an inheritance from the past. A young person in our country — where the majority of young people were engaged in positive, useful activities, in creative activities, or studying — had no right to be divorced from his obligations to society. Naturally, when military service was established, we did not call up those who were known for aversion to work or study. The first groups were carefully selected, mainly from among students and other young men, from among young revolutionaries. Gradually, other groups were called up, until by now the system includes practically every young man within the military service age bracket. Only one exception was made: those who were the sole support of their families. At the present time young people who are the sole support of their families are called — or may be called — up for military service, and the state — through social security — will support their families while they are serving in the Armed Forces. (APPLAUSE) There was also the case of tens of thousands of young people who were still illiterate. And in our military units — where armaments are ever more complex — illiterates constituted a real headache. Therefore, on many occasions, they were not called up. This created a sort of "no-man's-land" of young men who were, say, 10 to 15 years old at the time of the literacy campaigns and did not fall into the category of adult illiterates, but who weren't attending school, either. The years went by without their studying, and they stayed illiterate. What a disgrace for there to be an illiterate youth in this country in this day and age! What a disgrace, what a burden for society! Today it's clear to everyone that an illiterate person is of little use in our society and that as time goes by he will be more and more useless. But illiteracy won't stand in the way now; those who are illiterate will be called up and will spend part of their time in the Army learning how to read and write, studying.

## ● NATIONALIZATION OF THE PRIVATE BUSINESSES WHICH STILL EXISTED DID AWAY WITH MANY WAYS OF LIFE INIMICAL TO WORK

Many interesting things have been done and extraordinary possibilities opened up in our country as a result of the revolutionary offensive. The battle against loafers, for example, was quite difficult in the past few years because there, too, we had another immense "no-man's-land" where it was necessary to decide just what someone was: whether he was a loafer, a semiloafer, or a superloafer. (LAUGHTER) This was the field of those who, shying away from work, set themselves up in some hole-in-the-wall business or other. And, suddenly, there would be a young man operating a bar or running some small business, making almost as much money as an airplane pilot used to make in the past, making eight hundred or a thousand pesos a month! What category would this young man fall into? Would he be a loafer? A semiloafer? A superloafer? A loafer eats, wears shoes and clothes, consumes all kinds of goods. And just as bad as a loafer is an unproductive person who consumes as much as ten loafers without making a single contribution to society. This may come as a surprise to you, but there were full-scale gambling networks, such as the one we uncovered in Oriente, an organization of two hundred people running an illegal gambling system based on the national lottery. There were two hundred people involved! While tens of thousands of people were cutting cane to develop our economy and pitching in to the most difficult tasks every single day; while thousands of young men in the Che Guevara Trailblazers Brigade were working day and night — sometimes even risking their lives — exposed to all sorts of accidents, clearing large tracts of land; there were other people who ate, drank, dressed up, used electricity, transportation, medicines and so on and so forth and made a living out of gambling. How many children did they feed? How many families did they give shelter to? How many sick people did they treat? They were out for money, that kind of god that solves every problem; they were out for money, regardless of how they got it; they were out for money by illegal means, so that once they had the money they could buy

what they wanted without making a single contribution to society.

With the revolutionary offensive, these possibilities — including the possibility of becoming a loafer — have steadily disappeared. The nationalization of the private businesses which still existed (APPLAUSE) did away with many ways of life inimical to work. Someone who made a thousand pesos a month could afford the luxury of supporting six or seven idle nephews and nieces. With that kind of money he could give them everything they needed to live in comfort without going to school, working, or making the least contribution to society. Now we are teaching them to work.

We have spoken of "the people," but "the people" is still a vague, abstract concept.

Many things were discovered once investigations were made: for example, how many children attended school and how many did not; how many youngsters from 10 to 15, or 15 to 20, worked or studied and how many did neither. It is imperative for us to have such information, to know the structure of the population, the makeup of the population, what every citizen is engaged in.

Of course, many hangovers of the past still linger on — or lingered on — in our country. Let us take, for example, the women's work world: in the past, women were practically excluded from productive work; they were destined for the worst things; all sorts of prejudices existed; women had very few work opportunities. There were many cases of girls staying home because they had no job, no activity to which they could devote their energies.

On the other hand, a great number of easy jobs, suited for women, were taken by strong, healthy men who could very well do more arduous work. All these things continued to exist, but today great changes are taking place, great accomplishments.

## ● THERE WILL NOT BE A SINGLE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL!

Of course, today the percentage of children who do not attend primary school is relatively low. In many instances nonattendance is due to lack of adequate facilities or to lack of adequate socio-political work; but, in general, the percentage is

falling. And it is our duty to make every effort to reach the day when there will not be a single school-age child out of school!

It was easier to find young people of school age — of junior or senior high school age — who neither went to school nor worked. On occasion, they had been lured away from school by private businessmen; or they did not attend school because of negligence on the part of their relatives; or there were other reasons involved. In some cases they took jobs in state-owned work centers. The percentage of teen-age boys and girls who did not work or study was higher than that of the children.

Today, with the country's tremendous agricultural development, with the revolutionary offensive, with the masses on the alert, with the masses' increased participation in every activity, the struggle against hangovers of the past has become much easier.

In the past, a loafer could go unnoticed in a crowd of loafers or semiloafers. Today, a loafer sticks out like a sore thumb, no matter where he is. His neighbors immediately see him for what he is. He has no place to creep into. In an environment where everyone is busily working, it's soon clear that he's a loafer.

And so, as the masses join in work, the struggle against these antisocial elements becomes easier. Already in some provinces jobs have been given to such people, productive jobs somewhere. They didn't have to take them, of course. They were simply told: "You'll find your ration book at such-and-such a farm or in such-and-such a productive job." (APPLAUSE) It's going to be awfully hard for any of them to worm out!

We must say that, at the present moment, everybody is working: the loafers, those who made applications to leave the country... (APPLAUSE) Prior to the revolutionary offensive it was a "gusanos' holiday": the people were engaged in great tasks, and the gusanos were stabbing the people in the back, using every weapon and means available, living a life of ease, getting help from outside or inside, or engaged in "industrial" activities where they made lots of money. Their attitude was: "Situation normal. Now let's get busy and take the first places in the queue; start the rumors and lower morale!"

But the Revolution has launched an offensive in every sphere of work, and all it had to do — once it discovered it was being stabbed in the back — was to zero in a few guns on the enemy

and put them out of commission for good. (APPLAUSE) The *gusanos* are no longer on holiday, waiting three years, living at the expense of others, yearning for the day when they will enter the Yankee "paradise." Not anymore. The way to Miami now runs through the countryside, through the canefields, through work. (APPLAUSE)

The principle "He who does not work has no right to eat" is now being applied in full. (APPLAUSE) Of course, if someone is really sick, if he is incapacitated, even though he may be an enemy, the Revolution does not deny him the assistance he needs. But to support healthy people, people who can work, at this stage, after almost ten years of Revolution? No! That would not be right.

The country did not free itself of the latifundists, the Yankee monopolies, the sugar mill and factory owners, the owners of large businesses and banks, only to fall prey to exploitation by that sort of parasite. It's an evident truth that something can be consumed only because somebody produced it first. And if the one who consumes does not produce anything, then he is living off what others produce.

It is all so simple and clear, as we see the disappearance of the old concepts of parasitism and exploitation... Because, in the society of the past, being an exploiter or a parasite was considered something to be proud of, just as, in the past century, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to keep a man in chains and force him to work as a slave his whole life, and for a man, his wife and his children to be the property of another man and sold in the marketplace — things that seem absurd to us now — those institutions, those laws and that social system which let a man amass the fruits of the work — or part of the work — of thousands of men, where a few hundred men appropriated part of the crops grown by tens of thousands of peasants, and where a small segment of society lived off the work of others, without producing a single thing.

In our revolutionary process these hangovers of the past will meet more and more obstacles, and the possibilities of their lingering on under these conditions will be nil.

We are now struggling against such hangovers of the past, but in the future they will be non-existent. Though we still have illiterates, we should have no illiterates in the future; though we still have loafers, we should have no loafers in the future.



## ● **MILITARY SERVICE WILL BE EVERY CITIZEN'S MOST ELEMENTAL DUTY**

That is just what the development of the Revolution means: the elimination of the factors that led to such situations. It is our great aspiration to reach the day when our country will have enough schools and facilities so that no child will be denied the opportunity to attend school and when all children will have schools that are fully equipped — not only with educational facilities but with facilities for recreation, dining, etc. — similar to some of the schools the Revolution has already established.

We mentioned military service as a transitory stage. New methods and institutions have been created during the last few years, and today tens of thousands of young people enrolled in technological schools are in our Armed Forces.

What will our Armed Forces be like in the future? Primarily they will be organizations of cadres, of commanding officers.

Who will make up the infantry units, the artillery units and the many other branches of our Armed Forces?

They will no longer be youths called up for military service. Since all children will attend school, and since senior high school will be compulsory, military instruction will simply form a part of every young person's education, (AP-PLAUSE) and military service will be every citizen's most elemental duty. We intend to establish — as soon as possible — so many technological and senior high schools that our military units will be sufficiently furnished with such personnel, with young students, who will make up the bulk of the soldiers.

Needless to say, nothing makes a military commander happier than to have a technological school assigned to one of his units. Indisputably, any youth with one or two years of senior high or technological education finds it easier to learn military techniques, is much more capable of learning the handling of complex military equipment in a short time. Military units have a hard time training personnel composed of young people with only a second-, third-, or fourth-grade education; the task becomes much easier when working with young people of a higher educational level.

Therefore, in the future — a not-too-distant future — compulsory military service as it is now will

disappear; not because it will be suddenly decided on one day, but rather because it will be replaced, in practice, by this new system, which is far better.

Some may ask: "Who will man the tanks, the vehicles, the artillery tractors? Who will man the enormous number of armored and motorized units?" This, too, posed a problem: many of our comrades had been operating tanks for four, five, or six years. Many of them were from Oriente Province, from the mountain regions. When they wanted, understandably, to go into another occupation we were faced with the need to train new tank operators and gunners. And if a man had fired so and so many shots while learning to be a good gunner, now an equal number of rounds had to be shot off teaching a new man, and so on.

What have we discovered in this connection? What excellent possibilities have we discovered in the last few months as a result of the organization of the giant work brigade, of work brigades on many fronts of our economic development? We discovered that a tank operator is an excellent heavy-equipment operator, that he can operate a bulldozer, a power shovel or a grader; that a good personnel-carrier driver does an excellent job in construction work, driving dump trucks or other such vehicles.

What happened on occasion? It happened, for example, that when a tank operator left the Armed Forces to do some other kind of work he might wind up driving a rubber-tire tractor on some farm, or maybe he would get a job that had no relation whatever to what he had learned in the Armed Forces. And every year we had to train new men!

## ● ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE GIANT BRIGADE WILL BE SET UP, DRAWING FROM THE RESERVE

What does the Revolution propose to do? To set up work organizations such as the giant brigade or other brigades, drawing from the reserve, for the building of roads and reservoirs, for contour plowing — that is, for many spheres of agricultural work where machines are being used in large numbers. A tank operator will have the guarantee that, as soon as his stint of service is over, or when he wishes to change jobs after several years in the Army, he will be given a job and a machine in one of those brigades.

This system is already in operation. The giant brigade is largely made up of comrades from the Armed Forces armored units. In some of those brigades there are also a number of veteran operators, conscientious revolutionaries, who could easily operate tanks in the event of war.

What do we propose to do? We propose to organize work brigades, assigning them the equipment as it arrives in this country, manning them with comrades from the Armed Forces. Thus, we will have a powerful, well-disciplined reserve which, several months a year, will train in the corresponding units. That is, a certain percentage of the personnel of each motorized or armored unit will be training while the reserve will be doing productive work with these machines. This way we will have at least three operators for every tank.

Let us suppose there is a combat alarm. The order is given, and the best operators, the best gunners, take their places in the combat units. (APPLAUSE) The rest of the operators, with their equipment, will also join the military units, backing up these units with their nonmilitary equipment! In case of battle, the tank units may need the aid of bulldozers, power shovels or other kinds of equipment. And so, in wartime, all those men will join their respective units, some with armaments and others with machines, digging trenches or antitank traps, clearing the land or working in mine fields, wherever necessary. (APPLAUSE)

By then we will have the best tank operators in the world: men who know how to operate a tank and most of the time are operating heavy machinery quite similar to a tank; drivers who leave military trucks only to operate nonmilitary trucks; men who, day after day, are engaged in the tasks of production, acquiring experience in a special kind of war — that is, our country's dynamic war against underdevelopment; men whose everyday work will be to operate a machine similar to a tank or to drive a truck or a caterpillar tractor; men who will be constantly in training and, moreover, will receive regular military training part of every year.

By then we will have tank operators with ten or fifteen years' experience in handling tanks, and gunners who have practiced year after year. In the event of war, our Army will not find itself with young, inexperienced men manning tanks as a part of their compulsory military service; we will have much more experienced, much more mature operators, who have been actively partic-

icipating in the country's fundamental task, the task of development.

In order to give you a more concrete idea of what is being done, let us mention, for example, that, by the second half of 1968, 5000 modern machines — including trucks, bulldozers and power shovels — will be employed in the construction of roads and reservoirs, regular and contour plowing, drilling wells for water, and digging irrigation ditches and drainage canals. These machines include those put into operation last year. These 5000 machines will require close to 15 000 operators, and we estimate that, in keeping with our pace in agricultural development, by 1970 we will have close to 8000 machines, requiring 25 000 operators.

Why 25 000 operators? Because our country cannot afford the luxury of purchasing an expensive machine to have it in operation only five, eight, ten, or twelve hours. Men should — and must — rest, but we can't afford to let machines rest throughout these years of arduous work to develop the country. Machines will be serviced after every work shift. There is no reason for machines to lie idle in some storage shed; all they need is care, repair and lubrication. Any machine that is given proper upkeep can last a long, long time without having to lie idle ten or twelve hours a day.

## ● THE GREATER PART OF THE CAMPAIGN TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY WILL BE ENTRUSTED TO THE ARMY RESERVE

At present a great part of the machines I mentioned are working day and night. They are in operation for twenty hours, leaving four hours for upkeep. So that the great drive to develop the country which is now under way requires tens of thousands of operators.

Therefore the Army reserve, the motorized and armored units of the reserve, which have 8000 vehicles, will be deeply involved in the country's development. Twenty-five thousand men with eight thousand machines! They will be under the orders of their own cadres, their own officers; these brigades will require the participation of the same military command cadres, who, at a given moment, will pass with all their personnel, or a part,

over to the manning of tanks or artillery. And the rest of their personnel, as I have explained, will back up the military units with the same motorized equipment.

So that the greater part of the campaign to develop the country in the years to come will be entrusted to the Army reserve, consisting of 25 000 men with 8000 machines, more or less. This will be our Army: an organization of cadres who are highly skilled technically and share a profound revolutionary awareness.

The main shock troops, composed of soldier-workers, or worker-soldiers, constitute the dialectics of this process, along with the planes manned by pilots who are in service in either civil aviation or military aviation, and the regular units composed of technological or senior high school students. And behind them will be the rest of the people, the whole people, every man or woman capable of shouldering a weapon. (APPLAUSE)

Because this country must be determined never to lower its guard — never — and to arm itself increasingly, prepare itself increasingly. The day that we are so foolish as to feel secure we will have committed an enormous error. The stronger we are, the better prepared we are in all respects, the more we can count on a united, conscientious, hard-working people; the more arms we possess, the more secure we will be able to feel.

This will have to be an underlying principle for a long time, for we do not think imperialism will come to an end tomorrow, nor do we think the imperialists will turn into tame lambs. And an essential principle of the revolutionary philosophy of this country will be to make itself increasingly stronger, to be progressively better armed, better prepared.

When a country such as ours makes a revolution 90 miles away from the United States, when a powerful enemy such as Yankee imperialism declares that its aim is to crush it, when a country such as ours has already received so many lessons as to the criminal and aggressive nature of that imperialism, that country must become truly a nation wholly composed of workers, of soldiers, of students — both its men and its women.

At present our Institute of Military Technology has a contingent of almost 300 women comrades. They are the first 300 women in our country to take up military studies. (APPLAUSE) And both



men and women will receive military training. Young people will have it in the schools, the high schools. So that imperialism will see how the strength of this people is on the rise and how this people — which they thought they would be able to take by surprise one day, would be able to crush one day — is daily a better organized, more conscientious, stronger people.

It is necessary for everybody, and especially for our officers, to understand the line, the course, we are going to follow in the coming years relative to our Armed Forces.

### ● WE MUST ALL BE SOLDIERS, JUST AS WE MUST ALL BE WORKERS AND STUDENTS

And when we have achieved this we may be sure that we have achieved something which no other army in the world has been able to do. We will have achieved what no other country has been able to achieve. Since the real fact of being so near such a powerful and such a criminal neighbor has obliged us all to become soldiers, we must all be soldiers, just as we must all be workers and students.

These ideas will be our guidelines, our norms, in the military training of our people in the years to come.

At this time in our country, the length and breadth of the island, an extraordinary effort is under way. Truly, we cannot help feeling optimistic, cannot help being impressed by the way everybody is working at present.

Today, for example, as a gesture of commemoration for this anniversary, the workers building the cement factory at Nuevitas — whose completion is scheduled for October — sent the following telegram: "We want to inform you that we have exceeded the pledge we made you to have the first kiln in operation by April 26, and that today at 19 hours and 10 minutes, eight days early, the first bag of cement was turned out. (APPLAUSE) "As part of the construction workers' revolutionary offensive, we have accumulated 120 000 continuous hours of voluntary work in Girón Month." One hundred and twenty thousand hours! (APPLAUSE) "This is our homage to those who heroically fell

in combat while inflicting on imperialism its first great defeat in America.

"We, the construction workers, aware that we can move our Revolution forward only with the effort and heroism of every day, are ready to take on any job that may be assigned us.

"Always onward to victory! Patria o Muerte! Venceremos!" (Signed) Workers' Collective, 26th of July Cement Factory of Nuevitas. (APPLAUSE)  
And what factory have these workers been working on? A two-by-four shack for producing cement, do you suppose?

These workers have been building a factory which will contain three cement kilns. The first kiln will produce 625 tons of cement daily, and the three together, whose construction is going ahead very rapidly, will produce 1890 tons of cement a day. That is, its cement production will amount to not less than 600 000 tons a year. (APPLAUSE)  
Six hundred thousand tons is almost the equivalent of what Cuba produced before the Revolution. This is one of two factories to be finished this year, which will more than double our country's cement-producing capacity.

There also workers are building the Nuevitas electric power plant, another important industrial installation for our country. These two plants, for cement and electric power, are absolutely essential for our development.

Now, in order to understand these problems, the problems of any underdeveloped country and the insoluble problems of that immense part of humanity which lives in the world's underdeveloped areas — insoluble problems, that is, lacking revolutions — it is useful to examine the problems faced by these two industrial plants.

Take, for example, the fuel that this plant will consume — and this will help us to understand the problem of oil. Each kiln will consume 92.16 tons of fuel oil daily, and the three kilns, 276.48 tons of fuel oil daily. On a yearly basis, one kiln will take about 30 000 tons, and the three, 91 238 tons of fuel oil.

Of electricity, one kiln will use 37.2 million kilowatt-hours per year, and the three, 90 968 000 kwh. per year.

The other plant, the electric power station, will first have two units of 60 000 kilowatts. Daily productive capacity of one will be 1 440 000 kwh., with the two together producing 2 880 000 kwh. daily. Yearly they will produce about a thousand million kilowatt-hours.

## ● RELATION BETWEEN THE PROBLEM OF FUEL AND THAT OF ENERGY

This unit, or rather this plant, has been planned so as to eventually comprise six units of 60 000 kwh. each. How much fuel will this plant consume? One unit will use 388 000 kilograms daily; 2 units, 777 000 kg. daily; the two units together, more than 700 tons of fuel oil per day and about 200 000 tons per year. When all six units have come into being, they should consume 600 000 tons per year. How much water will the two units consume? About 720 tons per day. That is, they consume as much fuel oil daily as they do water. This lets us establish a relation between the problem of fuel oil and that of energy. Everybody knows that without electricity one can do practically nothing in the modern world. Electric power is needed for the functioning of innumerable factories, all sorts of machinery and tools, textile mills, shoe factories, all sorts of things, motors of every kind, refrigeration, not to speak of the electricity which is used in hospitals, schools, etc. and of that which is used every day directly by the people.

Electricity is a vital element for any modern economy. It is produced by hydroelectric plants in countries which have great rivers — which is not the case of our country, whose small rivers are used principally to fill reservoirs for irrigation. Other countries have used coal, but petroleum is the fundamental source, and today nuclear-powered generators of electricity are being constructed.

This gives an idea of the importance of petroleum. In addition to being the fundamental source of energy for generating electric power in our country at the present time, it is also indispensable in all kinds of transportation, in all kinds of activities, but fundamentally in agriculture.

When our country has twenty electric power plants such as this one — and, if a country is to be developed, it needs constantly more and more electric energy — it will need, or need to use up, 12 million tons of fuel oil every year in the production of electricity alone.

(A COMRADE FROM THE AUDIENCE SAYS SOMETHING TO FIDEL.)

Well, if I'm to read it afterwards, give it to me afterwards. I'll make sure that that paper gets to its destination, don't worry. If you interrupt me

now, I'll have to stop what I'm doing to read the paper.

Let's have a volunteer to pick up that paper on fuel savings... All right.

The growing electric power needs of our country will require, in a not-too-distant future, a number of power stations which will consume 12 million tons of fuel a year. One solution to this problem has already been found, which is the possible use of asphaltite in place of fuel oil for the power plants. A great deal of work is being done in this field, and it seems that there are large quantities of asphaltite in our country. Asphaltite is a form of petroleum which has lost its lighter gases on coming up to the surface; it becomes a rock-like substance of which one ton has the same thermal value as 0.8 tons of fuel oil. This is one of the possible solutions.

Of course, the search for petroleum becomes more and more fundamental, and we'll speak more about this later.

Now, then, there will be a day when mankind will regret over and over again the fabulous amounts of petroleum it is using up. Why? Because nowadays petroleum is not only useful as fuel. Petroleum's fundamental value is beginning to be its use in petrochemistry as a source of raw material for the manufacture of important products — the fundamental source of synthetic fibers, for example, is petroleum.

Needless to say, our consumption is not limited to petroleum. Our sugar mills consume millions of tons of bagasse as fuel; traditionally our sugar mills have burned some petroleum and great quantities of bagasse. But bagasse is also made into paper pulp and other things, which give it an economic value far superior to its value as fuel for running sugar mills. Therefore, from the 10-million-ton sugar crop on, and to the extent to which we can turn to other sources of fuel, bagasse will have to be used as a raw material for other, much more valuable and useful products.

And, as the world's population grows and the countries develop, what source of energy will be used in the future?

## ● NUCLEAR ENERGY IS THE ENERGY OF THE FUTURE

The energy of the future, the fundamental energy upon which mankind must, unavoidably, depend

in the future, is nuclear energy.

The energy contained in a ton of petroleum is infinitesimal compared to the energy that can be obtained from a ton of fissionable material.

With the discovery of the energy enclosed in the atom, man discovered a source of power capable of supplying all of the imaginable needs of mankind in the future. Atomic energy — which first burst upon the consciousness of mankind as an instrument of war and destruction — is at the same time mankind's only solution for the future!

It is for this reason that any country with the least amount of foresight and concern for the future must think in terms of the production of electricity and begin to think as of now in terms of the production of electricity by nuclear energy.

In the future our nation cannot keep on building more and more power plants run on petroleum. Upon the completion of our present program of power plant construction, we shall have to think in terms of plants run by atomic energy.

Today such plants exist. They are becoming increasingly efficient, and some of them can be purchased.

We cannot rely exclusively on oil-fueled electric power plants. Our country has no great rivers to harness, no great sources of coal. The oil we find must be used for other purposes. Therefore, in few countries is the need to employ another form of energy so important as in ours.

And that is why our Revolution is already selecting outstanding students to study nuclear physics and become engineers capable of operating this type of plant. This is one of the most vital questions in today's world.

In the near future a proposal entitled "The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" will be discussed in the United Nations. In our opinion this is a very controversial subject because of the significance it may have in relation to peaceful uses of nuclear energy by mankind in the coming years. I do not intend to go into this matter now, but our government intends to make its position very clear and definite when the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons comes up for discussion in the United Nations.

I simply wish our people to be informed, to have a background for understanding the importance of these questions and for raising their sights toward the future.

To illustrate this point we have taken the example of the enormous amount of petroleum consumed by an electric power plant, an oil-fueled electric



plant. And, since anyone can understand the importance of electricity, we believe that this example provides an excellent illustration. And the same example is useful for showing other aspects of the problem of underdevelopment, in explaining why the most difficult job of all for a very large part of the peoples of the world in future years will be that of advancing from underdevelopment and how, without a revolution, these problems cannot be solved.

These two plants provide excellent examples. When the cement plant has all three of its units in production, how many workers will be employed there? The number to be employed will be 420. The investment in machinery, equipment and other items will come to about 17 million pesos; construction costs, 9.8 million; installation and mounting of equipment, 3.4 million; plus 3.4 million for other expenditures. The total: 33 738 000 pesos.

So that the investment is some 80 000 pesos for each worker employed. For every man who will work in the plant, 80 000 pesos must be invested. Now the electric power plant, when it has the first two units operating, will employ 233 workers. The cost of the plant: 32 088 000 pesos. So that in that plant the investment will be 137 000 pesos for every worker employed.

This brings up one of the most difficult problems facing any underdeveloped country in today's world: the developed nations of Europe, the countries of Europe where industrial development began, all started with agricultural development. In England, France and Germany — in all those nations which followed the classic pattern — agricultural revolutions preceded the Industrial Revolution. And this took place in an epoch in which electricity was not yet used.

First there was a revolution in agriculture, increased agricultural production. In those days, 25 percent of the harvest was reserved for seed each year. Productivity per hectare and per man was gradually raised. Productivity per amount of seed planted was steadily raised, and thus the agricultural revolution, which preceded the Industrial Revolution, advanced.

In those countries the financial resources needed for industrial development came from agriculture. But when those countries began their industrial development, they began with small amounts of money; the equivalent of a few months' wages was enough to begin a single industrial plant, a

textile mill. And the first steel mills were started by using wood as a fuel. When the demand for steel increased — for agricultural needs at first, and then for the textile mills — coal was used, since all the firewood available in those countries would have been insufficient for steel production. But at that time an industry could be started with small investments, a few thousand pesos, and a handful of workers.

● **THE CLASSIC PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWED BY THOSE COUNTRIES CANNOT BE FOLLOWED BY ANY UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY**

Today this pattern would be inconceivable anywhere in the world. No one would think of beginning to produce steel with wood as a fuel. Moreover, any modern industry requires highly complex and very costly machinery. Of course, anyone could make the machinery used in earlier times. A blacksmith might produce a machine. There was no need for engineers; a man with practical experience would suffice. If up-to-date equipment is not used in the production of electricity today, fuel costs are excessive. A million tons of fuel could be needed instead of 600 000.

Because one part of the world was developed industrially while the rest of the world remained in a backward, exploited stage, the classic pattern of development followed by the already developed countries cannot be followed by any underdeveloped country. Observe that the underdeveloped world must make extremely high investments, even of over 100 000 pesos per worker, without taking into account the technicians and skilled workers required to operate such industries. And none of this can be accomplished with illiterate workers. On our analyzing these industrial plants, the need for cement can be readily seen, the need for steel. It has become very clear that in 1970, with the extraordinary agricultural base which is being created in our country at an unprecedented pace, a decade will begin in which our greatest efforts can be thrown into the development of industry. This does not mean that we have not been working on some basic industries, such as the production of cement and electricity and the production of fertilizers. That is, work is going on in certain basic indus-

tries. But the bulk of our resources and efforts have gone into machines for our accelerated agricultural development, for creating the base for our people's food supply and the resources needed for initiating a gigantic effort toward the industrial development of the nation in the decade of the 1970s.

And we must study, for example, the problem of steel and steel production as a fundamental question — which will require the investment of hundreds of millions of pesos in plant equipment — as well as the exploitation of our nickel resources, since our nation possesses the largest nickel deposits in the world. This metal commands a steadily higher price on the world market, but it requires very large investments.

If we had spent hundreds of millions of pesos on a steel industry instead of on machinery to clear farmland and build reservoirs and irrigation and drainage systems, perhaps we would now have neither steel nor food. First we must invest in that which allows the maximum employment of the population, in resources for meeting fundamental necessities and for creating basic resources for the subsequent development of the country.

So our people must concentrate their efforts very seriously on the advancement of industry beginning in 1970, when our agriculture will have made great strides forward and will be in full process of development. Our agriculture must be highly mechanized so that we may devote ourselves to building up a metallurgical industry and the industries of the future, such as chemurgy.

It will be a hard job, and many workers will be needed. But the mechanization of the sugarcane harvest will allow us — if we succeed in having all the cane-growing on level land and introduce 100 percent mechanization — to use just 20 000 men in our nation's sugarcane harvest. Twenty thousand using machinery. (APPLAUSE)

As of now, efforts are being made to assure the availability of one thousand sugarcane combines by 1970 and to have the entire harvest mechanized in the following three to four years for the production of 10 million tons of sugar annually. And this will require the creation of the sugarcane-harvest army. (APPLAUSE) It will require a highly disciplined organization, because the sugar mills, the trains and other means of transport will have to be supplied with cane with absolute punctuality, an exact amount of cane each day. The cane will reach the mills freshly cut, and

the mills will be grinding at full capacity during the entire harvest season.

I believe that our workers, our people, are perfectly able, because of their experience in the cane harvests, to understand what a 10-million-ton harvest produced by just 20 000 workers using machinery will signify for this country.

Of course, by that date — in fact, long before that date — cultivation will have been completely mechanized: mechanized planting and mechanized cultivation of the main crops, such as rice, citrus fruits and coffee. In short, mechanization everywhere. We are not worried about harvesting the coffee, because here picking coffee will be a kind of sport. It is not hard work. A 5th or 6th grader can do it, or any man or woman or younger person. It's a very easy job. Our first task is to solve the problem of harvesting the cane and doing the other hard labor which at present engages the greatest part of our labor force at extremely low productivity.

## ● AN ENTIRE PEOPLE WORKING WITH MORE AND MORE TECHNOLOGY AND MACHINERY

Our agriculture is advancing prodigiously today because we have machinery, and the brigade is using bulldozers, most of which have powerful 180-horsepower engines. Only think that the forests and brush were formerly cleared by hand with axes! Just think of the enormous productivity of these brigades, the enormous productivity of these men with machines! Machinery will increase the productivity of labor many times over in our nation.

Within only a few years the level of work productivity of our people will go up enormously. An entire people will be at work, an entire people working with more and more technology and machinery. We are moving toward the formation of a communist society, for which work productivity is highly important.

We shall be concerned with economic values for foreign trade; but for domestic consumption, for the satisfaction of internal needs, we shall be concerned with use-values. And if a man produces ten of something with one method and 100 with another, he will be creating one hundred times as much, or ten times as much. And if he produces 1000, then 1000 times more goods will be produced for society.

This is the general outline of our nation's future prospects, the reason for the great efforts we are now making. But we must free hundreds of thousands of men and women for new tasks.

When I spoke at the beginning about the new things that are occurring and I referred to the fact that men were working at jobs that women can do, I neglected to point out one of the most interesting and revolutionary things taking place at this moment. That is the decision of thousands and thousands of men who were working in the more than four hundred different jobs that will in the future be open exclusively to women. The idea of the Revolution was to classify all jobs and in the future to give those which can be done by women to women. But a movement arose among the 60 000 men who fall in these categories. And we have been truly impressed by the amount and strength of the response to this movement, which includes thousands of young men who have offered to turn over their jobs to women and take on other jobs in which they are more needed. (APPLAUSE) We truly believe that this is one of the most revolutionary occurrences in recent times and one of the most notable events of the revolutionary offensive.

The benefit that will accrue to society by the freeing of these thousands of workers for other tasks and the employment of thousands of women in jobs suitable to them is obvious. All of society will benefit by the transfer of these healthy, active men to other types of work where they are needed. I had forgotten to mention this fact.

So a new and very important stage will begin in 1970 as a result of the advance of agriculture in these years and the huge increase in productivity obtained by the mechanization of agriculture.

We referred earlier to petroleum. What is our situation in regard to petroleum? I have stated that in the future we shall have to think in terms of nuclear energy, but at present we must think in terms of petroleum. The exploitation of asphaltite has already begun, and now a period of finding every means to boost petroleum production in our country is under way. I believe no one is unaware of the importance of petroleum.

And since the possibility of petroleum's becoming a bottleneck in our economic development exists, there is no doubt whatsoever that we must concentrate on the solution to the problem. And the

problem is that our annual needs for petroleum are growing very rapidly. I mentioned only two plants. This year two new cement factories and two new power plants will go into production. No less than 600 000 tons of petroleum will be required for the four plants, since the power plants are included. That is, 600 000 additional tons of petroleum for the two units, not the full six units.

This year the measures taken for rationing fuel have benefited the country a great deal. If we had not rationed gasoline, the great efforts we are now making would have hit a snag. The thousands of machines we spoke of would in part be at a standstill: the giant brigade; the roadbuilding brigades; the brigades clearing the land, cultivating farmlands, digging ditches and doing all types of agricultural work. These five thousand machines we spoke of, this new equipment which has recently been set to work, or which will be in use by the second half of the year, would have been partially paralyzed.

## ● THE RATIONING OF GASOLINE CONSTITUTES A MONTHLY SAVING OF OVER 20 000 TONS OF FUEL

What has happened? The rationing of gasoline constitutes a monthly saving of over 20 000 tons of fuel. Fine. That solves the problem of gasoline, but bulldozers and tractors run on gas oil. So what has been done? Much of this gasoline production was converted to gas-oil production. Petroleum is broken down into various components. Gasoline is the lightest of these, gas oil is heavier and fuel oil is still heavier. But in an oil refinery, from a given quantity of petroleum, a smaller or greater quantity of gasoline can be refined. Thus if a little less gasoline is refined, slightly more gas oil can be produced. And that is what has been done.

With the petroleum we have saved through rationing, our refineries have switched over from gasoline to gas-oil production to the degree that is technically possible. Thanks to this measure, and despite the enormous demand for fuel and the amount of equipment operating at this time of year — although certainly under very tight conditions and with gas oil constantly being shipped

directly from the refineries to the places where it is required — all equipment has been kept in operation.

During these months of the year, as you very well know, the consumption of gas oil is at its peak: the sugar harvest is in full swing, the land is being prepared for cultivation, all activities are at their peak. By May or June the rains start — and the sooner they start the better! — the harvest is over, and the peak seasonal activity begins to diminish. The months of March and April are the months of peak consumption of gas. And all equipment has been kept running! And this has been made possible precisely by rationing gasoline since the beginning of the year.

It has been a great source of tranquility for all of us to know that this enormous quantity of machinery has not had to be stopped for a minute and has been incessantly at work on the production fronts most vital to the nation's economy.

Nevertheless, our needs are growing. And we cannot be certain that supplies from abroad will increase at the same rate. That is why we must make every effort to extract our own oil.

What exactly do we have at our disposal? We have very little drilling equipment. In recent years we have mainly devoted our efforts to geological investigation. If I recall correctly, we have sufficient equipment for 16 drilling projects, and some of this equipment is quite obsolete. However, drilling is going on in a number of places, and we can practically say that the main areas where oil exists are well known. Wherever a well is drilled, oil is found: there are few failures. (AP-PLAUSE)

In the Guanabo area we have the extraordinary case of almost all of the wells producing around 100 tons daily. There is one well that produces slightly less than 100 tons and another as much as 140 tons. The third well began producing a short time ago, and, after certain difficulties are solved, it is expected to produce 40 or 50 tons a day. The wells are referred to as Guanabo 1, Guanabo 2, Guanabo 3 and Guanabo 4. But number 2 well is the big producer. This is where the numbering should have begun. Wells number 1, 2 and 3 are big producers. The drilling equipment has been distributed to various parts of the country, and wells are being drilled as deep as 5000 meters. The oil at Guanabo is from 700 to 800 meters down. And extraordinary wells are coming in!

Three wells averaging 100 tons each a day produce practically enough oil to meet the needs of the Nuevitas cement plant. This will serve as a means of comparison. Two wells like the Guanabo 3 — if we use the old numbering — would provide enough fuel to run the Nuevitas cement plant.

And four such wells would run the two units of the power plant. And 12 such wells — although this is very optimistic — would provide enough fuel for all six units of the power plant for the Nuevitas industrial complex. That would come close to 2000 tons a day.

But wells rarely produce such quantities. In other places there are wells that produce 30 or 35 tons of oil a day. But in general the prospects are very good.

What was the first step taken by the Revolution as soon as we saw the need and the way to find more oil? We decided to obtain more drilling equipment. And we have made some progress. It is no easy task to obtain this drilling equipment, because the imperialists have made it their business to attempt to block us in all parts of the world whenever we have attempted to purchase spare parts for a refinery or a single part for any type of equipment for drilling for oil. The imperialists never let up their persecution, their harassment; they seek out any method to prevent our purchasing petroleum equipment. Often it is very difficult for us to keep our refineries running. Extremely difficult!

Quite logically, what the imperialists want least is for us to be able to obtain equipment for drilling for oil. But it seems we have now found some equipment.

Today international news agencies included the news that negotiations for cooperation between the Socialist Republic of Romania and Cuba have taken place on matters relating to mining. They spoke of an agreement. Romania is one of the socialist countries which produces equipment for drilling oil wells — that is, it has one of the most modern industries for the production of such equipment. It is not the only one, but it is one of the countries that produces the highest quality petroleum equipment. And we have signed an agreement which will supply Cuba with equipment for drilling oil wells.



Actually the Socialist Republic of Romania has granted us credit on terms that are very favorable for our country. Credit for 30 million pesos in drilling equipment! (APPLAUSE) This equipment will begin to arrive this year and continue to be delivered until 1970. If I remember correctly, the amount of equipment to be acquired will be three times what we now have. And this is just the beginning. We must look for even more equipment. We must have as much drilling equipment as is necessary. But it is already a considerable advance to be able to count on 30 million pesos in equipment at this time through a credit that has been granted on extremely favorable terms, especially considering all the spending a developing nation must undertake. The Socialist Republic of Romania has extended us this credit for eight years, with payment to begin a year after the date of delivery of each unit of equipment. Eight years to pay! Some 30 percent will be paid in sugar, and the payment also includes 10 000 tons of coffee during the period of payment, 22 000 tons of citrus fruits, 250 000 tons of molasses and 2000 tons of nickel. We are to pay this credit over eight years and with these products. I have read you the total amounts of nickel, coffee, citrus fruits and molasses with which we are going to pay this credit.

That is, with a small amount of the crop from the coffee we are planting everywhere, with a small amount of the fruit from the citrus trees we are planting, with a small quantity of molasses from the sugarcane we produce, and of the sugar produced from this cane, we are going to have 30 million pesos in equipment for the drilling of oil wells. (APPLAUSE)

It is quite right to state that we put a high value on this credit, which has been extended to our country at a time when we most need it so that we may acquire equipment vital to the development of our economy.

And, of course, we plan to make further efforts in this direction. But we have taken advantage of this occasion to state this publicly during this revolutionary offensive, to inform our people on these questions. We believe that our people are beginning to have a much better understanding of these problems, are becoming informed. And, of course, we are all beginning to understand the problems better, to see the problems more clearly.

Every day the road is becoming clearer, methods and possibilities are clearer.

● **THE FACT THAT OUR PEOPLE ARE BETTER INFORMED WILL BE A DECISIVE FACTOR IN CHANNELING REVOLUTIONARY EFFORTS**

And the fact that our people are better informed will be a decisive factor in channeling efforts, a decisive factor in the success of revolutionary efforts.

All of us knew too little. But it could scarcely have been otherwise. And today all of us, absolutely all of us, are learning many things daily; seeing things much more clearly; going to the roots of problems, the essence of problems; finding out our weak points, our strong points.

Of course, there is something incontrovertible: the first thing this people had to do — and set out to do — was to learn. A modern economy, a society that hopes to meet the needs of all its members, must make use of technology, the most advanced technology, or these needs will not be met and we will always live in poverty, misery and the selfishness that misery, poverty and shortage engender.

The present problems will not continue very long; the years of shortage and misery are being left behind. We did not inherit a developed, wealthy country. How many reservoirs, how many highways, how many cement factories, how many power plants, how many oil wells, how many drained fields did we have? How many technicians, how many tens of thousands of engineers were there? There were just a few, most of whom — with some honorable exceptions — took off in the wake of their bosses.

We had to do everything, and we still have much to do. In the countryside we still find people with second- and third-grade academic levels managing state farms, doing the best they can, and we can't ask them to do more.

However, tens of thousands of young people have spent years preparing themselves to carry out those tasks. And if today it is difficult to find a man with a sixth-grade education on a dairy farm, it will not be many years before we have an engineer in agronomy on each dairy farm. And then things will be much easier. (APPLAUSE)

However, we are steadily progressing, day by day, conscious of our great needs yet calm in the knowl-

edge that we are advancing toward a quick solution.

We did not have a single expert in artificial insemination, and now we have 3000; this year another 1000 will be graduated. We are already beginning to see the fruits of this labor. Veterinarians, veterinary technicians... In all fields, on all fronts, we can feel the urgent need for technicians, teachers and instructors.

Already tens of thousands of young people are attending junior and senior high and technological schools. But for every twenty or thirty students a teacher is needed, and you can't pull a teacher out of a hat. We must use TV for mass education, use the best TV network for educational purposes, because we have to multiply each teacher a thousand times. Otherwise, the multitude of students entering high school and technological school would swamp the teachers now available and those to be graduated in the near future. We must apply the mass media to education as the only means by which a country can do the work of centuries in a few years, can win the battle of centuries in a few years, so as to emerge from ignorance, from underdevelopment — from the lack of basic industries, of technology, of skills, of everything.

How often have we stopped to think about this? Politics! Politicians! Did any of them ever take up these problems? They had their demagogic slogans: roads, water, schools! But they didn't build roads, they didn't provide water, they didn't build schools; they did nothing at all. They couldn't be bothered with those problems. They didn't even build trails, not even cow paths.

The day the giant brigade was inaugurated we estimated how many millions of cubic meters of water were stored in reservoirs here. I believe we were speaking about the Charco Mono Reservoir. And that's a pond, not even a reservoir. A miniature reservoir. The El Mate Reservoir contains 20 times more water than the Charco Mono. The politicians had not even finished building the Charco Mono, San Juan and Hanabanilla.

And by 1973 this country will have 15 000 million cubic meters of water available — 15 000 million as a minimum, a conservative figure. But if throughout the country we do what is being done on the Isle of Pines... The Isle of Pines will have around 300 million cubic meters of water available. Of course not all parts of the country have the same proportion of mountains, plains and water

basins, but 15 000 million is the minimum; possibly we will have 15 000 or 20 000 million cubic meters of water to irrigate something over 4 million hectares of land.

The tragedy of the drought and the constant wait for the rains in order to plant and fertilize — the problem that comes up in a country where there are entire months without a single drop of rain, followed by torrential rains, a country where six months can go by without rain, as happened in Oriente, and then almost two meters of rain can fall in three days, as during Hurricane Flora — is one of the great problems of the tropics.

### ● WE MUST OVERCOME THE LACK OF WATER BY BUILDING RESERVOIRS AND BY TAPPING UNDERGROUND SOURCES

We spoke of the difficulties that underdeveloped countries face in the sphere of industrial development. And all these underdeveloped countries are in tropical areas. What a coincidence! In temperate zones of the world nature is kinder in many ways to agricultural development. There is snow; often seeds are sowed long before, and the water given off by the melting snow stimulates their growth; there are fewer blights, less underbrush, no hurricanes; they don't have great droughts followed by torrential rains.

Ah! But when we overcome these problems in the tropics we will be able to produce more on one hectare than can be produced on three in Europe, because we have sunshine the year round. But we have to overcome the lack of water by building reservoirs and tapping underground sources. We must control excess water with drainage systems, build flood control systems, control growth of underbrush with machinery, control blights with insecticides and guard against hurricanes with windbreaks — protective screens that offer protection to the crops.

And so, when a tropical country masters these natural plagues — and we will doubtless be the first to do so — it will be able to produce three times as much per hectare as any of the developed nations of the world. That is the battle we are waging now, and that is the battle we are winning.

The methods we are using — heavy-equipment brigades manned by disciplined comrades, directed by competent cadres, keeping well-tended equipment in operation 20 hours a day — will enable us to win that battle.

But we ask ourselves how the rest of the underdeveloped world will win that battle, how these problems are going to be solved in Latin America and in other parts of the world.

In Sagua we spoke of how the contradiction between private property and labor created social conflicts, how no one in any of those countries could stand up before the masses and explain that they had to work for the nation's development, that it was an era, a time, for creation, not consumption, for establishing the bases; because what had been inherited was poverty, a rapidly-growing population and a lack of economic development, and the workers of those countries would say, and quite correctly: "No. We are not willing to make sacrifices. For whom? For a handful of rich men who want to become even richer?"

When they impose restrictions in a capitalist society, the restrictions affect the masses, those with the lowest incomes, for whom a penny less is a penny less for food. When a capitalist takes in \$10 000 or \$20 000 a month and you take away \$1000 or \$2000, he still has \$18 000, and that doesn't deprive him of food. He might be deprived of a few bottles of perfume, or a couple more automobiles. Instead of buying 50 suits, he'll buy 47; and instead of buying 7 automobiles, he'll buy 6. But when a worker loses a peso, that takes away a peso's worth of food from him and his family.

And obviously this whole section of the world has the same need we had: the need to undertake a great crusade for development. How can they undertake it? The oligarchies and the bourgeoisie call on the workers to make sacrifices, but the workers are not willing to make them.

I mentioned Chile. I didn't mention any person, I mentioned the country. An "official" newspaper took offense and said, "Cuba, Castro, is interfering in the affairs of Chile." It even insinuated, venomously, that Cuba was behind the strikes there. What a way to reply to reasoning! What a way to respond to the irrefutable argument that the contradictions that arise in capitalist countries and the working-class resistance there are only logical! The masses don't want to make sacrifices so that a handful can become even richer.

## ● NOWADAYS NO UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY CAN SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CAPITALISM

That is why nowadays no underdeveloped country can solve the problem of development through capitalism. That is mathematical. If you take the figures, if you take into account what a modern factory costs, if you analyze how much the population grows annually, how much national income grows, you will see how those countries are bound to become poorer each year, how they are selling their products to the developed world at lower and lower prices and how the machinery that the developed world sells them is becoming more and more expensive. Figure it out — you don't have to buttress yourself with any other arguments; you don't even have to philosophize about history; nothing of the sort is necessary. Add, subtract, multiply and divide — and you'll see that that part of the world is at a dead end.

Within 32 years Latin America will have a population of 600 million, almost twice the population of the United States. What is the United States interested in? In keeping that immense and important part of the world divided into a thousand factions, governed by oligarchies that place the oil, copper, iron and other resources of those countries in the hands of Yankee monopolies. The first thing that those countries need is an agrarian revolution; and not only an agrarian revolution, but what follows! We carried out an agrarian reform in 1959. But that was only the beginning. The drafting of a law doesn't suddenly up 15 000 million cubic meters of water; the drafting of a law doesn't automatically clear the land; the drafting of a law doesn't suddenly make thousands of engineers or artificial inseminators available. There's the law, and then comes what's most important: thousands of pieces of machinery, discipline, technology and cadres; all that comes later.

For almost 10 years we have been creating the conditions for this advance. In the next four or five years, then, we will see how agriculture shoots ahead in this country. We have the satisfaction of guaranteeing that we will make an advance in agriculture that is unprecedented in the history of the world. (APPLAUSE) We have this as-

surance and this satisfaction. We will make the greatest advance in agricultural development ever known in history!

And then the exclamations will come, the hullabaloo about "miracles," and they will want to know how we did it. Fine. People will be astonished, and who knows what they'll make up; they'll say we did it with slave labor, etc., etc.

And then the shocks will come, too. For this country is becoming something to be reckoned with in almost all branches of tropical agriculture. Right now they are discussing the World Sugar Agreement in Geneva, and without Cuba there is no agreement. (APPLAUSE) And Cuba is there. Talks on the agreement have begun, and our delegation has announced that we will produce 10 million tons of sugar, so that no one will be shocked when that happens. We don't care if they believe it or not. Those who live in this country know how much land is ready for planting at this time — an unprecedented amount, for we have worked as never before. Maybe a few months ago there were some who doubted that 10 million tons could be produced, but there are few of these doubting Thomases now. And it is not a matter of eight point something, or nine, but at least 10 million tons. And not a ton less, not one less, with or without a drought! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) And, if there's no drought, there's no telling how many tons we'll have! Our plans take a drought into consideration; the drought has taught us a lot. We all have stiff necks from looking skyward for rain (LAUGHTER) and scanning the rain maps to see if there was any. These maps have different symbols to designate the amount of rainfall: triangles (little rain), squares (average rainfall) and circles (heavy rainfall); but now there aren't any circles or squares or anything. (LAUGHTER) Well, so what — unless it stops raining altogether, which would mean the end of the world. We are almost into the rainy season, and rainfall will run off into the sea less and less. It will be retained all over. And we shall have sufficient water from rainfall and from underground sources that we are going to tap.

● **IT IS ILLOGICAL TO IMAGINE  
THAT THOSE PEOPLE WILL BE  
RESIGNED TO STARVING TO DEATH**

We spoke of the difficulties to be overcome, and we asked ourselves how the underdeveloped people of Latin America can solve these problems —

with which we have firsthand experience. How are 600 million human beings — a great part of whom, from 35 to 40 percent, will be under 15 and therefore not participating in production — how are those people going to be fed three decades from now unless an enormous effort is undertaken right now? Logically, they are not going to starve to death, because they'll go down fighting first. It is illogical to imagine that those people will be resigned to starving to death. And, since children are going to keep on being born — because I don't think they will pay much attention to Johnson and Company when they speak of birth control and family planning... The whole thing is ridiculous. You know our countryside and our farmers; can you imagine what would happen if they came to them with such foolishness? (LAUGHTER) They'd tell the planners to go to hell. Really, this is something you cannot plan. Populations with illiteracy rates of 70 or 80 percent are not going to allow millions of their people to be sterilized, as was done in India. Nothing could be more inhuman!

The population is going to keep on growing. And revolution is the inevitable result, as in an elementary mathematical equation. This is one of the world's greatest problems — and one of the greatest problems to be faced by this continent in the coming decades and, in fact, even before, because the people are already suffering from unbearable poverty. There is no solution in sight. Those who are still alive live in overcrowded valleys.

At the time of the Revolution the peasants had already settled in the mountains. Twenty or thirty years before, nobody would have gone to the Sierra Maestra, and now they were practically on top of Turquino Peak. Give them a few more years and they would have wound up in Bartlett's Deep! (LAUGHTER) Those of you who have been in the mountains know how those peasants used to clear a slope, destroying all the timber, in order to grow a few crops, all of which caused the land to erode. It was the end of everything for those people.

The population kept growing, while the economy remained stagnant. The peasants were living on the tops of the mountains by the time we started our guerrilla warfare in that region. There was no solution to the problem. A little more time and the situation would have been unbearable. The population had doubled, while the number of sugar mills remained the same. Our economy was



practically the same as it had been 25 years before. As I said before, the people are living in overcrowded valleys. A giant effort is required to penetrate that continent and its jungles, to control its vast rivers. That giant task calls for a revolution. And not just a revolution, but a thoroughgoing revolution which will go on to develop higher levels of education, of organization, everything, as quickly as possible. There is not a single minute to lose. And all the wasted years lead ever more inevitably to a dead-end street. The only alternative is revolution!

It is impossible to emerge from underdevelopment under a capitalist system, with its feudal mode of land ownership and its contradiction between a bourgeois and oligarch minority and the people.

The first thing we had to do was get rid of the latifundia and then deal with the problem posed by the tiny farms. We had to develop new programs with the cooperation of the farmers, to find adequate solutions to all the farmers' problems that arose in connection with bringing the sugarcane fields closer to the mills, to plant what we needed where it was needed, to use heavy farm equipment and to increase productivity.

The problem of large-scale landowning still remains to be settled on this continent. Mexico is the only other country to have made consistent progress in this respect, the only other country to have had an antifeudal revolution and an agrarian reform, the only other country to have reached a level of development considerably higher than that of the other countries in Latin America.

## ● WHAT SOLUTION DO THE OLIGARCHS AND BOURGEOIS OFFER? NONE

What solution do they offer? None. What solution do the imperialists offer? Birth control; sterilization; the taking over of petroleum, iron, tin, copper and all other natural resources; inequitable trade — buying at ever lower prices and selling at ever higher ones.

What solution do the oligarchs and bourgeois offer? None. True, some thinking people are beginning to realize this, some are becoming aware of the stupidity of some of the actions taken against Cuba and to feel some remorse for having supported all the Yankee acts of vandalism, for having parroted

the Yankees, for even having supported them when their planes were here bombing us, their warships supporting the mercenaries. We have seen one of the most disgusting, the most shameful periods in the history of this hemisphere. And there are some who admit that what they did was sheer stupidity. Naturally, there are others, such as a tame lackey they have in Washington, a gentleman by the name of Rodomiro. Rodomiro — what is his name?... He's the Chilean Ambassador in the United States. A trained parrot (LAUGHTER) that the Yankees have been grooming to be President — a would-be candidate for the Presidency of Chile, a pro-Yankee Christian Democrat — in a maneuver to see how they can get the support of the Chilean Communist Party. It is almost impossible to talk of these things! If we speak, the uproar begins immediately: "Cuba interfering in the internal affairs of other countries." But some newsmen interviewed this gentleman, and he said: "No doubt about it; the measures taken against Cuba and the blockading of Cuba are very good."

It is obvious that those lackeys of imperialism feel very good; they have been accomplices to all the criminal actions against Cuba, all the crimes. Not only the economic blockade but also the blood of our people is on the conscience of those gentlemen! But does that make any difference? They are treated like decent persons, almost like progressives; bourgeois and reactionary oligarchs have even been pampered and showered with attention by governments that call themselves revolutionary. We're not going to dwell on this. We'll just let things run their course, to be recorded in history. But it is logical for Mr. Rodomiro Tomic — that's what I think his name is — Chilean Ambassador in Washington, presidential hopeful in Chile, possibly with the support of the Chilean Communist Party, to state that the blockade against Cuba is just. All he needs to say is that the blood spilled was also just, that the crimes committed were also just. And these things are happening these days.

Meanwhile, some are beginning to think things over. As I said, they see that Cuba has become an economic power, that the blockade has failed, that the country is being developed.

I mentioned the example of Geneva. I hadn't finished with that idea. Now, whether or not there is an agreement depends on Cuba, and, if Cuba's terms are not accepted, there will be no agreement! (APPLAUSE) The imperialists deprived us

of our sugar quota; they distributed it among many other producers; not a few benefited from the redistribution of our quota! Ah! Our people are still able to produce, to increase the yield per hectare, to mechanize cane production. If the prices are low, we know how to withstand those low prices. Others cannot withstand them. Now, they will not find that Cuba has a benevolent attitude. If they do not accept Cuba's terms, there will be no sugar agreement! (APPLAUSE) Let those who want to compete with us do so, if they can!

What we are saying about sugar we could also say about other tropical products. And another thing: before ten years have gone by, our ability to produce and export meat will surpass that of some of the meat-producing countries, such as Uruguay, (APPLAUSE) and rightly so, since we will have had to carry out this impetuous development and to go forward in the midst of the blockade, a blockade that we have had to face alone, a blockade that was imposed with the complicity of many of those governments (which, no doubt, are trembling at seeing the things we are doing in this country). And they will begin to see how stupid the blockade and aggressions are!

Some have said — as if they were trying to be merciful — that it would be good to see a type of tropical Titoism implemented here. What an absurd idea, what a ridiculous idea, to believe that the Revolution could conceivably regress to rightist positions, to Titoism and things like that! What we are going to have here is communism and more communism, real communism! (APPLAUSE)

The Yankees are dreaming of a kind of tropical Titoism, but what they are going to have the chance to see is true tropical communism. (APPLAUSE)

**● WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS,  
JUST AS IN THE MOUNTAINS  
WE WERE ABLE TO DEFEAT  
BATISTA'S ARMY OF 50 000 MEN**

We are advancing firmly toward this goal with actual accomplishments and revolutionary conscientiousness on our side. And, with just a little figuring, our workers, our people in general, our Party members and our officers will be able to envision what this country will be like with an output of 10 million tons of sugar, with increases

in the production of all kinds of foodstuffs — citrus fruits, coffee, milk and vegetables; how with just a small part of these crops we will be able to satisfy to the maximum the needs of this country. And they'll be able to understand how, on this route, with this spirit and with these methods, our country can advance in the not-too-distant future toward forms of communist distribution.

And we'll accomplish this, just as we are overcoming the blockade. We'll accomplish this, just as in the mountains we were able to defeat Batista's army of 50 000 men, when at the beginning we numbered only a half dozen. (APPLAUSE) And we'll accomplish this just as we learned to handle heavy artillery in a few days and crushed the mercenaries. We'll accomplish this, just as, only ninety miles from the United States, we have resisted the blockade and aggressions of imperialism. This people has actually accomplished tasks that are even more difficult, creating conditions for tomorrow, creating conditions for what is being done today.

It is ridiculous for them to dream of a tropical Titoism. And it is equally ridiculous for them to talk about Cuba's possible return to the OAS. The OAS, what for? (APPLAUSE) What an incredible underestimation of this people! To believe that those who got out of that den of lackeys, that organization — a historic disgrace to this hemisphere — through which the oligarchs and traitors handed over their peoples bound hand and foot to the greed of imperialism..! To believe that one can even speak of Cuba's ever returning to that disreputable indecency known as the OAS!

If some day we join a regional organization, it will be a regional organization of revolutionary countries of Latin America. (APPLAUSE) There is no other historic possibility and no other route.

Remarkable events have been occurring recently, and one of them is the way protest and rebellion are growing in the very heart of the United States. The superdeveloped country, the country that has the most advanced industry, the most wealth, is enmeshed in social conflicts and financial crisis; its warmongering and adventurist policy has led it into a dollar crisis, since it has been experiencing a constant loss in the gold that backs the dollar. And how has it been lost? In adventures, in crimes, like the gold that was spent on the mercenaries that invaded this country, like the gold that was spent on shedding the blood of our people. And the throwing away of all that gold practically pre-

precipitated the U.S. dollar crisis, despite its powerful and developed industry.

Internally, the society of exploitation and racism is in crisis. And these two factors of the criminal war against Vietnam and the unbearable racial discrimination, added together, have contributed to opening the eyes of broad sectors of the American people; they have contributed to developing political awareness within the very heart of the United States. And the black movement has acquired an impressive degree of fighting spirit. The war in Vietnam, similarly, has developed, among American students and young intellectuals, an awareness of the criminality and the anachronism that Yankee imperialism represents in today's world.

From the point of view of the black movement, one event that reveals imperialist stupidity, imperialist blindness and the impossibility of finding solutions within the system was the murder of Martin Luther King.

Martin Luther King defended pacifist positions. He was in favor of nonviolent struggle for civil rights, and he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. And the imperialists themselves used his preaching on nonviolence to counteract the influence of the most militant sectors of the black movement, those who favored fighting violence with violence. And, in an act of indescribable stupidity, the racists murdered the apostle of nonviolence in the black movement. Just one more act of a not uncommon sort. Such crimes are everyday affairs in a society whose social system has driven it berserk.

And, logically, that treacherous act, that repugnant crime, only confirms the inability of the capitalist system to solve the problems of American society.

## ● THE YANKEE COURTS WOULD BE SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE PRESSURE OF THE RACISTS

About this crime, a news dispatch datelined today mentioned something an American newspaper said: Martin Luther King's murderer may have escaped to Mexico or Cuba. Nothing could be more ridiculous! If that individual should get the absurd idea of landing in Cuba, we would immediately put him at the disposal of the black movement in the United States so that the revolutionaries might try him and give him the sentence he deserves.

(APPLAUSE) Naturally, we would not turn him over to the Yankee courts; the Yankee courts would be susceptible to the pressure of the racists. If that individual should land here, that would be the attitude of the Revolutionary Government, and we are sure that the leaders of the black movement would know how to mete out revolutionary justice. But Martin Luther King's murderers don't need to escape anywhere, because they have their protectors there in powerful and influential imperialist figures. Look for the murderer in the homes of his protectors! It is shameful, in the case of such a scandalous crime, that they still have not even been able to trap the criminal.

Our people identify strongly with the heroic struggle of the blacks in the United States because, certainly, within the United States the black movement has demonstrated such vigor and such strength that some spokesmen and newspapers have said that, at times, in Chicago and other cities, the blacks have resembled the Viet Cong. It must be said that the U.S. blacks are carrying on a heroic struggle for their rights under difficult conditions, and they enjoy the sympathy of all the revolutionary movements in the world — very especially, of course, Cuba's.

Another notable fact of recent times is the crisis of imperialist policy in Vietnam and the crisis of its prime mover, the imperialist President, Lyndon Johnson. His popularity has so greatly decreased, and opposition to imperialist policy within the United States has so greatly increased, that, on the eve of the elections, when a candidate within his own party had the edge on him, he decided not to aspire to the Presidency and to partially suspend the bombing of North Vietnam. It is obvious that this decision was the result of the devastating defeats suffered by the imperialists at the hands of the Vietnamese people.

Thus, the struggle in Vietnam has entered a new phase. The imperialists are maneuvering, trying to make their defeat as painless as possible, trying to limit the Vietnamese victory. And at this time, apparently, the possibility of beginning negotiations exists.

It is necessary for us to state our Party's position on these matters.

We look upon the Vietnamese people as the most extraordinary example of heroism; we look upon the Communist Party of North Vietnam and the National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam as the most extraordinary examples of capable, revolutionary organization. There is no doubt that the imperial-

ists are maneuvering; there is no doubt that the imperialists, defeated in Vietnam, are trying to escape their fate. We must express our full and absolute confidence in the Government and Party of North Vietnam and in the National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam. (APPLAUSE) No other people has ever given such a high example of heroism; no other people has ever displayed such skill in waging war; no other people has ever displayed such ability in determining policy. The Vietnamese must know very well what they have to do; without any doubt whatsoever, they know. Therefore, we wish to state our confidence in the Government and the Party of Vietnam. And the Vietnamese, who have not been defeated in the war, will not allow themselves to be defeated by the diplomatic maneuvers of imperialism, either. They are as capable of combating those maneuvers as they have been capable of fighting the war.

## ● THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM HAVE SERVED THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY

With incomparable heroism hundreds of thousands of the finest sons of Vietnam have shed their blood in sacrifice. The people of Vietnam have dealt imperialism one of its greatest defeats. The people of Vietnam have served the cause of humanity. It is fitting that the people of Vietnam, the Government of Vietnam, the Party of Vietnam and the Front for Liberation of Vietnam should have our confidence and our support. And we state here that we have absolute confidence in their policy, in their strategy and in their decisions, and that the people of Vietnam, just like the heroic people of Korea, their Party and their Government, will always have the confidence and support of the Cuban Party and people. (APPLAUSE)

Our times are characterized by extraordinary events that are educating humanity, that are teaching us many things. It is within this context that we are honoring this seventh anniversary, within the social context of a people in full revolutionary effervescence, in an all-out offensive, advancing full speed ahead.

Today has been deeply moving for us. All along the highway, every 500 meters for many kilometers, pictures of the heroes who fell are displayed. Today's program brings to mind the events of that day; those moments of tremendous tension, of hatred concentrated on the enemy; those moments

of dramatic battle, of unceasing advance from the very first day, from the moment they set foot on our sacred soil; the relentless attack of men who didn't give the enemy a moment's respite and who crushed them before they even had time to let it be known that they were being crushed. The enemy did not have time to react; our men just advanced and advanced and advanced; that battle lasted almost 70 hours, during which the rifles and artillery didn't stop firing for a single moment. We remember our extremely limited Air Force, manned by a handful of brave pilots who sank the enemy transport fleet in a matter of hours; the men who drove the tanks and manned the anti-aircraft guns and artillery, men who had just barely learned how to handle them; the advance of our columns on the different fronts: from Playa Larga to Girón, by way of Yaguaramas, by way of San Blas; and the final advance of a group of tank columns full speed ahead toward the coast, because launches had been detected from the air, and it was supposed that they were trying to reembark, thus making it necessary to speed up the attack and to send the tanks under orders not to stop until they reached the sea, an order which was carried out to the letter. Thus the cowardly attack against a people that they had underestimated and that they had believed would fall easy prey to their despicable actions was definitively crushed.

That was seven years ago. But the men who gave their lives will never be forgotten, and in the hearts of our people they will be enshrined forever. For that reason, when their names were read here and when the officer responded "All present!" nothing could have better expressed the spirit of those comrades, of those who gave their lives that day. The idea that they could never die, that they have not died, that they will never die! Those who fell here will never die, nor will those who fell together with the heroic Major Ernesto Guevara, (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) in immortal acts of heroism, nor those who have fallen fighting in union with revolutionary movements on other continents, according to the finest traditions of the country's and this Revolution's history, bringing to its climax the work of those who a hundred years ago fired the first shots to win the independence of this country!

### ● THIS GENERATION OF CUBANS IS PRIVILEGED

This evening the chorus recalled the history of the



100 years of struggle for our independence; the struggle was begun by Céspedes, Agramonte, Maceo and Máximo Gómez 100 years ago, and this generation has had the privilege of seeing it bear fruit. This generation of Cubans is privileged to unfurl its flag in complete freedom, complete sovereignty, with a degree of independence and dignity never before achieved, freedom in the fullest sense of the word, freedom won through 100 years of sacrifice, 100 years of bloodshed. This generation of Cubans is privileged to see the results of the efforts made in those years reflected in the young people who are growing up, in the young people who make up the most enthusiastic and combative sector of our people today!

It is only 7 years since Girón; almost 10 years since January 1, 1959; some 12 years since the Granma landing; some 15 years since the 26th of July; it would have been impossible for any people to have changed more in such a short time, it would have been impossible for any people to have become more different in so few years, it would have been impossible for any people to have created more than has been created in these years — above all, that spirit, that outlook, that awakening to our history, that awakening to our duty in this continent and in this world, that awareness of the importance the efforts of our people have today, of the chapter they are writing in history. And we realize that we have just begun. While things have happened rapidly in these years, while our people have advanced rapidly in these years, from now on we will go forward even more rapidly, more united, more aware and stronger.

How past generations would have liked to see our country today! How they would have liked to see a triumphant people marching forward, a revolutionary people like this, young people like this, an army like this! One hundred years after the firing of the first shot, we realize how useful, how incredibly useful, the sacrifice of those who fell was — from those who died at Girón to those who gave their lives in the first battles of the 10th of October 1868.

This generation can feel that it has done something, can feel that it has lived up to its duty and that it has a right to look to the future, that there is no reason to blush when looking at the past. For, we of this generation, unlike others that were hobbled for one reason or another — hobbled, basically, by imperialism, by Yankee intervention, which interrupted the revolutionary process, which imposed corruption and neocolonialism on us for

fifty years — unlike generations that could not see the results of the bloody, self-sacrificing struggles of this people, unlike those less fortunate generations, we can look upon the present, the past and the future with a spirit of tranquility, satisfaction and optimism, as could no previous generation.

It is fitting for us to to say here what the comrade who spoke in the name of the officers said:

Glory to all those who have fought for our country!  
(APPLAUSE)

Glory to those who have given their lives for our country! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "GLORY TO THEM!")

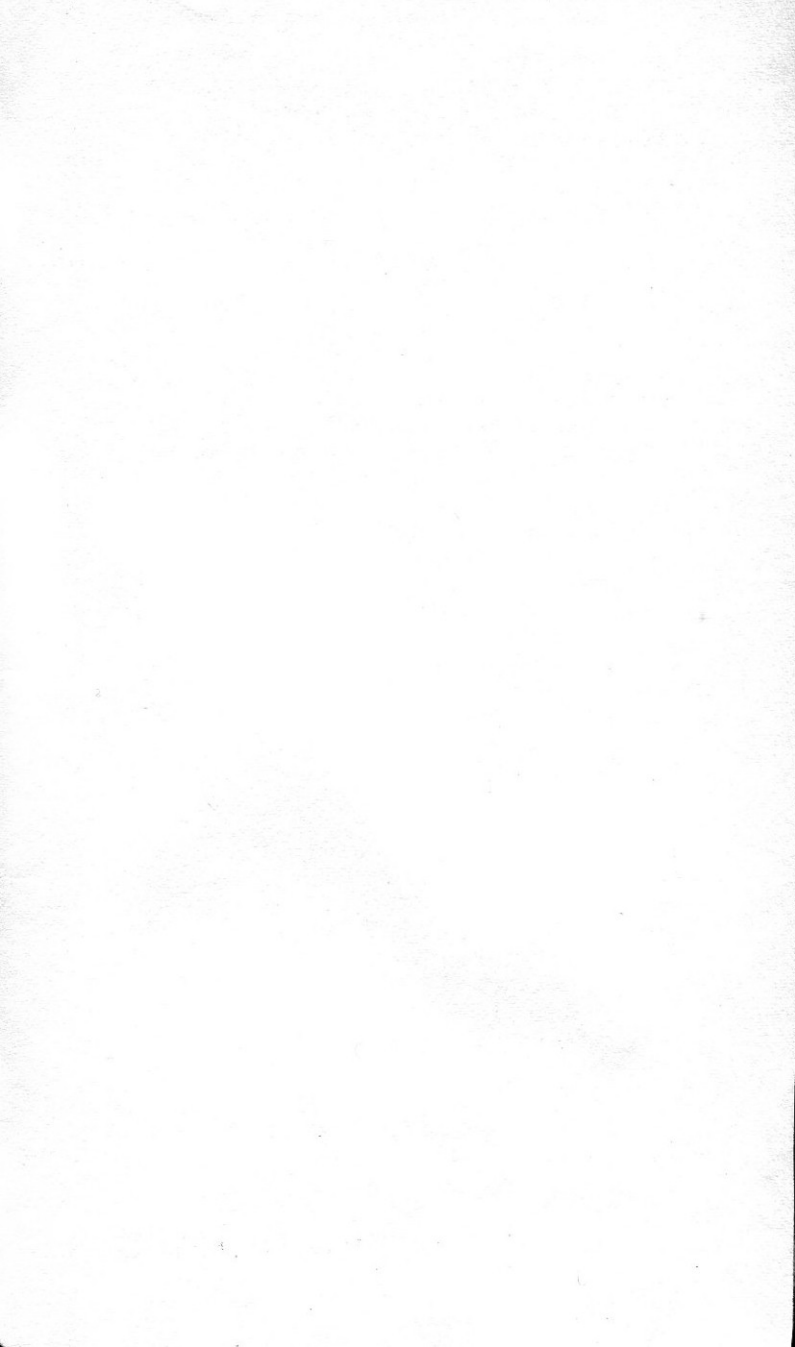
Glory to our heroic comrades who gave their lives on that day, in that historic battle, so that our people would not have to see this process interrupted once again and could achieve what has been achieved today and continue onward!

Everlasting glory to those who fell at Girón.

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)



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