

[Speech delivered by Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz at the Palm Garden Room in New York on October 30, 1955 \[1\]](#)

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There are few times when the human word would appear to be as limited and deficient as it does today, to express the series of feelings, emotions, and ideas born in the heat of the great display of patriotism we have witnessed this morning, moments of emotions similar to those experienced on other occasions when we have had the chance to meet with large crowds.

There are moments in my life that I will never be able to forget, like that early morning on July 26th at 4:00 am when for the last time I addressed many of the people who died in that action; when I addressed those who fell fighting, when I talked for the last time to those of us who were going to fight, when I exhorted my comrades in the last pep talk, the most beautiful pep talk, the pep talk that is the summary of all the speeches delivered until that moment, the pep talk which precedes battle. I remember that as I remember another moment in front of three judges who said they represented justice, when I denounced the crimes that Comrade Marcos read out.

The audience was in fact the enemy. The soldiers of the army were there; our audience was made up of more than 100 soldiers and officers who were attending the trial out of curiosity or God knows why. And I was speaking to those soldiers, our alleged enemies, to those soldiers more than to the judges; I was telling those soldiers what kind of men were commanding them, I was telling them what kind of stain they had put on the uniform, I was telling them how ignominious and cowardly the attitude of those who wrote that nameless, shameful page in the history of Cuba had been.

I spoke to those soldiers certain that when they were confronted with reason, the reason that is our shield, they would also honour it in reverence because I know that it only takes being Cuban, even though they may be mistaken, it's enough to be Cuban to have faith in the possibility that they may understand reason and be ashamed of their crimes, in the possibility they will be sorry and in the possibility that they will also come together under the flags of justice.

But there was no occasion like the one today, no moment has seemed to me to be like it; not when I was giving my comrades a pep talk before the battle and not when I was condemning the murderers of my comrades.

Today, these Cubans who have gathered together in response to the call of the Homeland, these Cubans who, even a thousand leagues away, don't forget it for a minute; these Cubans who have come from Connecticut, from Newark, from Union City, who have come from more than a hundred kilometres away; this event today, because of what it means for Cuba, because of what it means for its prestige, because of what the people filling up this rooms say about Cuba, because of what this event says about the merits of our people, I swear that this is the most moving event I have witnessed in my life.
(APPLAUSE)

And when the sceptics, those who have no faith in their Homeland, ask me how we are going to overthrow a regime like Batista's, how we are going to restore freedom to our people, when those who have no faith ask that question, the answer is right here for them!

Today's event, organized in five days, without any publicity or ads in the newspapers, only a very small news item, with no money to pay for an ad, with the rain flooding the streets of New York, Union City, Newark early this morning, against nature, with no resources, this event has been organized in five days which, according to the well-informed, is the largest event that Cubans have held in New York since 1895. (Applause) And, Cuban men and women, here is the answer for the sceptics.

Those who know the background of this event, those who have worked incessantly for its success, are aware that on Tuesday, five days ago, we were looking for a place where we could gather together; we went to some different places. An event took place here; hundreds of people came, five hundred, two hundred, two hundred and fifty people came here. However, we were not satisfied in that search with the idea that the event which was going to bring Cubans together this Sunday should be held in any of those places.

As we searched, we found the Palm Garden and we saw that the place was roomy. Anyone would have been discouraged by the fear of failure, the fear of being ridiculous, the fear of having empty chairs. But we who have such great faith in our people, we who think as Martí did that the man who has no faith in his compatriots is an incomplete man, one who was born at seven months. We didn't hesitate one moment in saying: Yes! This is the place which will be filled with Cubans in five days; it will be filled with Cubans even though we cannot afford any advertising; this place will be filled with Cubans even if it rains, even if there is an earthquake or a cataclysm in the city of New York. (APPLAUSE)

And that is the answer for those who ask how we are going to overthrow Batista. That is the answer for those who do not believe. We are as certain that the regime will fall as we were certain, even though nobody believed it, that the Palm Garden was going to be filled tonight. (APPLAUSE)

We consider tonight's event as a victory for Cuba, a victory for Cubans. And the fame of the virtue and the patriotism of our people will grow throughout New York and the prestige of Cuba will grow. Those who have tried to boycott this event, the bunch of poor wretches, the mercenaries, who were surely counting on having some empty chairs tonight even though chairs would never be actually empty because they would be filled by the spirit of those who died, of those who lost their lives in action; (APPLAUSE) those who thought that spreading rumors about the Migration Services visiting the place, as if Cubans were breaking the law and if they weren't obeying the law as they are, as if a powerful State was going to serve as the instrument to their petty plans, they thought they would scare Cubans off. And we have heard about a man who said he was a consul, not for Cuba though, (APPLAUSE) who has devoted himself to thwarting this event. And I don't want to tell you, out of discretion, about some of the steps this man took in terms of the event; I don't want to be indiscreet, but I tell you he was all set to sabotage the event. And I understand that he even prepared an event on his own, I don't know what kind, some gluttonous event, I think it was a lunch, a dinner, or something like that, and that he was deeply concerned about the event and he had even sent his agents to spread word of the event.

But there is something else. We arrived at Union City yesterday to meet with a group of Cubans from Placetas, Cienfuegos, and other places in Cuba who were waiting for us. It was really interesting that a minute and half after our arrival, a captain, four patrol cars, a handful of detectives and all the police forces they could muster in that town showed up there.

The fact is that we are abiding by the law; the fact is that we respect the laws of the country we are in and likewise, we want them to respect our laws. (APPLAUSE) And we understood that all that mobilization could only be a consequence and a product of those people with evil intentions who were trying to sabotage that meeting; that some consul from who knows where had filed a complaint against us; that they were trying to hunt us down. So once more in this lifetime I have to suffer persecution, although it would have been involuntary on the part of those doing it and they would have had no other obligation but to investigate any complaint made. That situation however was quite odd.

It is really sad that those who are throwing Cubans out of their own land, thrown Cubans into this country to earn here with their hard work and the sweat of their brows the bread being denied them

there, it is very sad that, not content with that, they devote themselves to hunting down Cubans over here; they devote themselves to threatening them with sending this country's authorities after them. Because, ladies and gentlemen, if there would be one single Cuban here, only one Cuban who has been thrown into this country by necessity without undertaking all the required formalities, there can only be one explanation for this and that would be the excess of poverty and hunger that exists in Cuba. (APPLAUSE)

In addition they hound him, they use him and they attempt to make his life bitter. I have really found the attitude of that Mr. Consul a little silly.

(THE AUDIENCE ASKS: "What country is he from?")

FIDEL CASTRO. - From the country of the smugglers, comrade. (APPLAUSE) Because, it would be like burying your head in the sand; it would be like believing that this Cuban resurrection miracle could be held back with intrigues, when by now there are no intrigues or bayonets that can hold it back! (APPLAUSE)

This country's immigration authorities should not be hounding the Cubans who come here to work honestly; they should not be hounding the Cubans who have shown and given proof of their faith in democracy, of their love of freedom and of the decorum of the peoples, of the peoples' right to govern themselves, for which millions of men shed their blood in the last War. (APPLAUSE)

The immigration authorities should pursue those who disguise their criminal intentions under the diplomatic cloak. Because that Consul, let's say it out loud, is shameful for Cuba. (APPLAUSE) That Consul is a silken master smuggler; let everyone know it. (APPLAUSE) That Consul couldn't stop the advance of the people with his petty, treacherous hand. And as Martí said, I would say to that Mr. Consul whom I rather despise with a bit of pity but with no hatred whatsoever, that we pay friendship with friendship, steel with steel. (APPLAUSE) If we are paid respect, we will respect in turn; if we are attacked, we will attack in turn. (APPLAUSE)

And finally, very soon, perhaps sooner than he may imagine, although not as soon as some impatient people would wish, we'll be sending a Consul to the United States who will not be a disgrace but a source of pride; (APPLAUSE) a Consul who assists Cubans instead of hounding them; a Consul who can attend patriotic rallies and meet with the Cuban people (APPLAUSE) instead of a Consul who is a disgrace for our suppressed, humiliated nation, a Consul who, one glorious day for Cuba, won't have to hide in shame like Porras in his lair. (APPLAUSE)

Enough already; I haven't wanted to take it out on that poor fellow, I just wanted to symbolize all the shamelessness he embodies; that is what the Cuban Consul represents here, the shamelessness that rules Cuba. (APPLAUSE)

Having said these healthy words of clarification, I want to be more precise. Applause encourages us, lifts up our spirits and we see it as a tribute to the Homeland, to the fallen and as the expression of our people's faith. However, there is something more important for us than the applause: we care about the work that is yet to be done. We don't come here seeking applause. We came to do the work that our National Hero José Martí taught us back in 1895; among many others we came here to do the work that only a giant could do; we came to speak to the Cuban emigrants in New York and the United States.

Because exactly the same thing is happening in Cuba and one would have to be blind not to see it; it's happening exactly the same way as it did in 1868 and 1895. The reasons why you are here, and I know that if you could be in Cuba you would be in Cuba or you wouldn't be applauding Cuba; (APPLAUSE) if we asked every one of you why you are in this country, the answer would be exactly the same as the one given by those emigrants who in 1868 and 1895 gathered together to listen to the liberators' words. As it happened then, Cubans have to emigrate from their land because they are unable to earn an honest livelihood there. Before earning their livelihood in a shameful manner, Cubans prefer to leave

their country and go somewhere else in the world to earn their livelihood honestly. (APPLAUSE)

Many who have not been forced to emigrate live there, I know because I know the value of men; everybody here, everyone who has tirelessly worked to organize this event, all of you, any one of you, don't need some local political boss or corrupt politician to give them two or three hundred pesos to be part of their political machinery. I know that with their working capacity, determination and energy they could solve the problem, just like a bunch of mercenaries solve it now in Cuba.

Is there a shortage of wealth in Cuba? Is there a shortage of fertile land and extraordinary riches in Cuba to shelter not only you but six million Cubans, to shelter twenty million Cubans? No. Belgium, the Netherlands or any other country in Europe has a third of Cuba's land and it is covered by snow for many months; they have three times as many inhabitants as Cuba has, inch by inch they steal land from the sea, they build dikes and they live there and even compete with our wealth. Their condensed milk and their butter and a series of their products compete with Cuban products, even though the Cubans have land to spare, huge extensions of uncultivated land, extraordinary possibilities of being one of the most prosperous nations in the world. Oh yes! Cuba does not lack wealth, and the best proof is in the millions that are stolen every year. If there was a shortage of wealth in Cuba how could we explain there have been rulers who have left the country taking 50 and 60 million of pesos with them? How do we explain that Batista has distributed assets worth twenty million pesos? How do we explain the trips his relatives take every month, as rumor has it, to deposit certain amounts of money taken from the Republic into American banks? If Cuba lacked wealth how come so many millions of Cuban money has been invested in the United States? How is it possible that so many apartment buildings have been bought in New York? How is it possible that so much business can be done by these crafty people? These people are sniffing out that the people would get tired of them, that the people are already getting tired of them (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) and when that happens they won't have the time to get their suitcases out. They can smell it in the air! They must be hearing a subterranean rumbling which is now like running lava on the surface. Because how can they conceal what is happening here in New York? How can they conceal the people's mood? How can they refuse to see it? Even if they hide their heads three meters underground like an ostrich, how can they refuse to understand what is happening with the people of Cuba? How can they refuse to see that the end is nigh?

The end of the dictatorship? Yes! The end of the dictatorship; but not only the end of the dictatorship. The end of today's thieves? Yes, but not only the end of today's thieves. The end of the dictatorship, of today's thieves and yesterday's thieves! (APPLAUSE) The end of oppression and also the end of political maneuvering; the end of the betrayal of those who seized power on March 10th and the end of those who have been betraying it since 1902.

Because they are to blame for this entire sad spectacle we are witnessing, of this spectacle of hundreds and thousands of Cubans being forced to leave their Homeland.

If any argument was needed, about an occurrence that would be decisive enough to demonstrate what is happening in Cuba, you, your presence here today, the presence of these people here, is the most irrefutable of arguments. Because some have been here for two years, some for six months, some for three years, some for ten, some for fifteen or even twenty; but you have all come for the same reason, you all left Cuba because you could not make a living there. You all left Cuba and did it with the feeling of having twenty daggers of loneliness lodged in your hearts and feeling great homesickness. You all have left Cuba and you all wish to return.

I've heard it from the lips of many Cubans, I've heard those soul-wrenching words, I've heard Cubans who have told me with their arms raised to the sky: I'm not a lazy person! I'm a working man! I could have earned a living there! But it is so sad to go knocking door to door, house to house, looking for a job so that you don't have to steal, just to be able to feed your children. And if it's not you then it's your wife, mother, or brother, or your children, and nobody gives you work, nobody gives you work!

What I was also saying in this speech, what I said to the judges happened, what Comrade Marquez could not read because he only read a part, what I told the Court in Santiago de Cuba: "When someone accused of stealing appears before you, you send them to jail without thinking twice. You don't ask how many days he has been unemployed, how long it's been since his family had something to eat. No! You send him to jail. But nobody who has stolen millions and millions from the Government has ever spent one night behind bars. (APPLAUSE) You dine with them at some posh place on New Year's Eve and they have all your respect. When some miserly wealthy man burns down his business to collect the insurance, even though a number of unfortunate workers are burned to death in the process, they don't go to jail because they have plenty of money to bribe the judges and lawyers."

And that's the truth that nobody wants to talk about, the truth we've been telling the people, the need to cure the Republic, a timely cure before the tumor becomes malignant and the Republic dies; (APPALUSE) a cure even if it means amputation, even if it means cutting really deep, a radical cure. So that no Cuban comes to me, ladies and gentlemen, as one did yesterday, a man who is surely sitting among you, and tells me that he has been here for several months and has not seen his wife since he left, nor has he met his youngest child who was born in Cuba.

So that this hard life, because your lives are hard, I know this very well, I know how each of your lives is, I know how lonely you are amidst this mass of steel and concrete, how lonely you feel among the many millions of people, how lonely you feel in those houses, your homes, in those lonely apartments, where you cannot even dream of having a child there because they would not have the sun, they would not have the sun of their land, they would not have "waiting brides", the palm trees, to whose height Martí wanted to put justice; (APPLAUSE) they would lack the pure skies of the Homeland and they would lack the air to grow.

Because you, the men and women working here from seven in the morning to seven at night, you cannot have children because there would be nobody to look after them; either you would have to stop working and not have enough to eat or you would have to not have any children.

I have witnessed this tragedy and I often wonder: is it possible that some of these Cubans have to live here for ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty years? Is it be possible to resist this hellish life, is it possible to resign yourselves to it? And I also think that there are brothers and sisters and parents who are even worse off than them. Is resignation possible? Is happiness possible? Because José Martí rightly stated that there is no happiness without Homeland and without honor. Did he say "without Homeland"? Because, fellow Cubans, they have taken from us more than freedom. They have taken not only our freedom, they have taken away our Homeland; they have taken away from us the land where we were born.

And in this struggle we are trying to recover the Homeland that has been taken away from us, that Homeland which belongs to us as well, as much as it belongs to them; but it's more ours than theirs because we do not exploit it, because we love it. We love it so that we can live there, not submit it to oppression, not degrade it. And the Homeland, as Martí said, belongs to nobody; if it belonged to anyone it would be to those who love it selflessly and those who would be willing to make all manner of sacrifice on its behalf.

And we Cubans hurt not just because our Homeland has been taken from us; because they have ripped it from us, because we cannot live there, because they have separated us from our families, from our love and our feelings, they have disgracefully ripped it from us, they have taken it by force, they have ripped it from us by the only painful manner and furthermore they have humiliated us.

When human beings have something ripped from them, it is sad and unbearable. They have ripped it from us by force and they don't want to give it back. As you know every day there are more and more Cubans arriving, and the queues at the American Consulate are endless and more and more people keep arriving. Entire towns like La Esperanza where there was a tobacco factory, two shoe factories and where everything shut down after March 10th and the entire town emigrated; like Placetás, Fomento, Cienfuegos and, in brief, (APPLAUSE) all over Cuba where everything is in ruins. Cuba where the traitors

who seized power that morning said they were going to establish a government of peace, of respect for human life and for work. And they did! Batista has given jobs every year to ten thousand Cubans, in New York! (APPLAUSE) Batista is solving unemployment by working with the [US] Consulate to issue more visas every year; Batista is solving Cuba's problem by leaving Cuba without inhabitants. (LAUGHTER) Even with the most basic common sense one can understand that Cuba is steadily on its way to bankruptcy; even people with a minimum of understanding of economics know that the peso not earned in the factory, the peso not earned by a worker in his workshop, is the peso that no longer circulates in the stores, the shops and the pharmacies. It is one peso less being spent by the man who manufactures shoes or clothing. It is one peso less for the entire economy of the nation.

And I would like them to explain to me how are they going to solve the problem of Cuba by leaving hundreds and thousands of men unemployed, men who no longer produce and earn pesos, who increase the numbers of people who have to leave the country. Because even though there are many interests created to support such anachronistic theories, I cannot believe that the Railway Company, for example, needs to fire 500 or 600 workers, that this could be a healthy solution for the country. It might be a healthy solution for that Company for a few months or even for a few years, but those 600 workers are 600 fewer people buying in the country, it means 600 fewer people benefitting all the industries of the country, 600 fewer people going shopping, to sports events, to movie theaters or anywhere. It means 600 fewer people whose absence would be noticed in a year's time in other stores, in other factories, in other work sectors. And the consequences would be that in a year or a year and half they would have to fire 500, 1000 or 1,500 and from there it's a straight fall. That's why the Cuban economy today is falling.

Batista is not only a traitor; Batista is not only a dictator, a wretch who oppresses his people, who harangues his soldiers to kill Cubans with weapons paid for by Cubans; no! Batista is also an incompetent, one of the clumsiest rulers Cuba has ever had. In a word, ladies and gentleman, he is completely clueless.

Because as Martí said it's not the same thing "to govern a Republic as it is to command an encampment." Martí said this to Gómez: "General, a Republic is not founded in the same way as an encampment is founded." Gómez had been fighting for ten, thirty years and Martí told him that a Republic could not be governed in the same way as a military camp. And after fifty years, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Republic, during the centenary of Cuba's National Hero, one individual, a bold sergeant, would like to govern the Republic as if it were a military camp. And this individual has done nothing in ten years, thirty years, ten months, ten days, a day, one minute or one single second for the independence of Cuba. This is a Mr. General who earned his stripes the same way as those other generals to whom we have said, not from here because it would have no merit, but over there in Cuba, right to their faces, over there from the jail, we have told them they are not even worthy of leading the mules carrying the clothing of General Antonio Maceo's army.

Maceo, one of Cuba's most glorious military personalities, earned his General's insignia after over 500 battles, after risking his life every day, after fighting for eight years. And these men, these good-for-nothings with a few stars on their shoulders who were captains devoted to illegal gambling and exploiting everybody (it is well known what these people do: they take money from this sugar mill or from that farmer to defend the interests of the owners and to crush those who oppose them; that's their job), those men became generals overnight, in fifty minutes, without shooting once. They became generals, overnight generals who have never taken a risk, generals who are now millionaires.

Oh, yes! Those crimes have explanations. Because as Martí said, there is hatred that is born drooling from the bellies of man. Only low-born hatred, born from those who see their enjoyment of those millions being threatened, can take it out so cruelly on young people who have never stolen anything from anyone, honest young people, the young people who without bragging about it quietly and discreetly turned the Moncada Barracks into a torch in the early morning one day, without anyone knowing. (APPLAUSE)

They could not show any mercy because this was a dangerous example. They had to teach those youths a terrible lesson. They had to teach a lesson that would make sure no other young Cubans would ever even think of taking up arms to fight oppression and tyranny again.

They thought they would crush the rebellious spirit of the people because they had not encountered any resistance since March 10. Since March 10 they were gloating about having seized the Republic without firing even one shot and they were gloating about how that traditional rebellious spirit of the people had died. They could not tolerate that outburst. They had to pull it out by the roots and as dim-witted as they were they thought they could cut it out by killing and torturing those involved, by gouging out their eyes and by burying men alive. They were so dim-witted they couldn't understand that within a few years there would be 100,000 youths willing to die, that the people would rise up, a people like this one. I see in these people the embodiment of the words I spoke after spending 16 days in solitary in a prison cell; I spoke there from impotence, physical impotence but moral omnipotence. (APPLAUSE) I told them, despite the slander with which they tried to flood and bury us because they thought the truth would never come to light, they never thought the people there would have enough courage and determination and faith to make truth prevail. They imagined that the massacre could be covered up for a long time. I told them they would see the victorious specters of ideas rise up from the bodies of my dead comrades. They are not dead! Those specters terrify the tyranny, those specters give that miserable consul sleepless nights, those specters keep those generals awake during the night because they know of the crushing defeat that's coming; these specters don't give the tyranny a moment of peace.

Because this cannot be ignored; Cuba will know about all this because it will be written in the media, this picture will be published in the media. But if censorship and terror prevent this picture from being made public, this picture together with our people will circulate throughout Cuba via the 2,000 Cubans who are part of the underground apparatus of the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement propaganda distribution. (APPLAUSE)

Cubans: that money being collected there is a specter lingering like a ghost. Those pesos collected there are terrifying; those pesos make the tyrants tremble because those pesos you saw being collected into a Mambí hat were not for me; nobody thought that of course. Those pesos were put there for Cuba; those pesos were put there to tell the regime and to tell Cuba that these are the pesos earned by the sweat of our brows, earned by our daily labor and with which we are going to conquer the freedom of Cuba. (applause)

Ladies and gentlemen; now they won't be able to say as they once did that a liberation movement is being carried out with money stolen from the people. Now they cannot dub it as immoral, just as they could not dub it immoral before. Since it began, from the very first day, this Movement began well; it started with clean money. We don't want sullied money because the first law of the Revolutionary Government will be in place to confiscate everything from the thieves; we do not want to ask for favors from any thief.

And with those stolen goods we are going to do the first great works of the Republic and we will set up the first factories and the first industries we need so that there are no more Cuban emigrants abroad. (applause)

And we do not want commitment, nor will we have it; and nobody will come here to buy favors from the Revolution because the Revolution doesn't sell favors. (applause) And instead of having to thank a handful of people for freedom, we will want to thank the entire nation. (applause)

Now they cannot say we are going to overthrow the regime. Yes, because we are going to overthrow it and I do not hide it. We exercise the right that all peoples have had to be free; we exercise the right of Washington and of all the American liberators who drew up that Declaration of Rights in Philadelphia in

which it says that the most evident truth is that all men are born free and equal and their Creator granted all of them certain rights; and to safeguard rights, governments were established. And when governments did not fulfill the purposes for which they had been created, the people had the right to remove them and to institute another.

All the peoples of America have been liberated in the name of that right to freedom, of that right to fight against oppression; and these American peoples were liberated from the oppression of a foreign monarch. For that reason I trust that here in this country there will be many people who sympathize with freedom for Cuba, who sympathize with those who exercise the right that they exercised to be free.

We are going to get rid of that gentleman; we are going to remove him without violating any law anywhere. Here we will be preaching, raising funds and knowing what we have to do; here we will be preaching the idea and respecting the laws of countries which give us their hospitality. Here we are preparing today the most terrible psychological weapon that can be wielded against the regime that oppresses and debases Cuba because when the regime in Cuba sees this pile of bills, when the regime witnesses that spectacle, then it will be convinced that its end is nigh.

And the people over there who wait for the guide, the people over there even though they may earn a peso per day if they have a job, and not ten pesos every day, those people will also willingly give their peso because the 26th of July Movement will send the Manifesto to the people seeking their help; we want this Manifesto to be preceded by the photo of the contribution that our New York emigrants have made today. That's why they have been placed here, on the table, so that the contribution can be seen, to make it look great and to serve as encouragement for all Cubans.

Because the regime hopes that we cannot do anything; we have organization, they know that and we are decided, they know that too. They also know we are not millionaires because they know that we have not stolen a cent from the Republic, because they know that we will not ask a thief for one single cent. Now hear this as well; they will know that we will have the necessary help; they will know of the people's willingness to help this cause.

Oh, yes! And if the example of those who have come to contribute there has been admirable, the example of many Cubans contributing over there is also admirable; Cubans who earn twelve pesos a month, cooking, working, anywhere, and still they contribute a peso; Cuban workers who at the first meeting with our militant comrades contributed one hundred pesos of their savings; Cubans who have mimeographed this brochure at their own expense; Cubans who copy the manifestos and sell them.

Because, ladies and gentlemen, in Cuba a true miracle of resurrection is taking place; it understands that this is a struggle of sincere and honest men, whose souls are not tainted by corruption. (APPLAUSE) Because the people are intuitive, the people are not so easily deceived, the people allow themselves to be deceived whenever they want, the people will guess who their loyal servants are and the people know how much love we have put into this cause.

And sometimes I give an example to explain this: the man who falls in love with a beautiful and virtuous woman and loves her with all his soul would not be able to prostitute her, would not be able to rent her, would not be able to sell or exploit her. He wouldn't even allow others to look at her or offend her. Likewise we are incapable of exploiting, renting, or selling our blessed idea of the Homeland! (APPLAUSE)

We are in love with our Homeland. We have fought for it tirelessly, fought for it without rest and we go from one town to another for it; we will continue this pilgrimage for our Homeland, Cubans, until the day when the time has come to call on the regime to render accountability.

Because this time it will not be like July 26th; this time it will not be a handful of ignored youths; this time it will be the people; this time we have come to do what we unfortunately could not do before. Then our hopes were placed on other men, at that time we were looking at another series of Cubans who were well known in their homeland, from whom the Nation expected the miracle of liberation from the dictatorship. I would have expected these Cubans who in normal times would have stood at a podium and beat their chests and asked us to vote for them because they were willing to give the last drop of their blood for Cuba. They are ready to do it all; they are ready to be Spartans in the defense of the ideals of the people. And when a situation like March 10 occurs, when it's time to give the last drop of blood and even the last penny, those politicians who spend ten thousand and twenty thousand and a hundred thousand pesos to leave, mortgaging their homes and doing everything to leave, these people do not appear at any meeting, nor do they contribute one single cent to the country; and so a group of youths has to go to die with empty hands because they lacked the resources. (applause)

That is why I was telling you (and Comrade Márquez read it) that this is why the underworld of Cuban politicking has been governing the Republic; they are the thug politicians, they do not deserve any other name because I am one of those who thinks that the law-defying thugs who come face-to-face with authority are braver than those who steal there with impunity, without risk of any kind, those are the ones who have been governing the Republic. And here we are promoting a change on every front: first of all a moral revolution. It will also be a creative revolution, the revolution that knows what it will do, that has its program contained in this pamphlet and in the manifestos, a program that will take Cuba with facts and not with words to the place that corresponds to the country in America, because of the extraordinary richness of its soil, because of the virtues of its people. They are people such as you here, capable of meeting in five days, in the rain, coming together by themselves and with that enthusiasm which we have heard here listening for ten minutes to a standing comrade. These people deserve more than the dishonor in which they are living.

And if others should harbor any doubts about these people, should others offend them, should they intimidate them and lash them to a yoke, we can see their suffering, we can see their fight, we can see how they strive for freedom and we say: Blessed be the Cuban people. Only skeptics who will never do anything in the world, those who will never write a page in history, can have doubts about these people. If you had doubts you would not be meeting over there, if you had doubts we would have stalled at the first step when there were three of us at the beginning; and then we were a hundred, and then we were a thousand.

And there in the solitary prison cell on the Isla de Pinos where they set themselves against us in a cowardly manner, I never lost faith. I was there a year ago. There we were alone; there we were seemingly impotent and forgotten; a year ago we were very far from what we have here today. We were offered provisional liberty, and we reject conditional liberty. We said that freedom belonged to us because it was our right. We would remain there for one thousand years before accepting dishonorable liberty. And the people brought us out onto the street! A year ago we were there and now we are here today.

We are with the people. The 22 months did not discourage us; the 22 months did not make us lose heart or faith for one single minute. Here we are, at the base of the flag; here we are at the base of the idea; here we are at the base of the trench which we set up with ideas because, as the Cuban woman spoke to us: "Trenches made of ideas are worth more than trenches made of stone."

Here we are setting up trenches of ideas but we are also setting up stone trenches. (APPLAUSE)

Cubans: at this meeting Cuba will know about that generous and admirable contribution; Cuba will know about those pesos that are pesos from '95. And from here, from New York, I say it with the faith that always accompanies us, we are sure that Cuban emigrants, like the emigrants of '95, will help take the country back to freedom. Here we must have an apostle in every Cuban, in every Cuban who stood up here, in every Cuban who took an oath here, in every Cuban who will leave here with the idea of the Homeland utmost in his mind; we must have an apostle in every Cuban. Such apostles would not be satisfied with the applause that has been heard here; they are apostles who will go out and win over those who are not here, who will go to conquer those who went partying last night and so today they are not here, to those undecided or tired Cubans, or to those lazy Cubans forgotten by the Homeland. They will go out and wake them up with voices of love and voices of conviction.

Just the Cubans who are in New York, because we know what we need, only we Cubans in New York could overthrow that regime if we wanted to, that regime whose crimes horrified the crowd, and just New York (and it would not be New York alone because it would be Miami, Tampa, Key West and 127 places in Cuba), just New York can defeat Batista. With how much sacrifice? With what one spends on going to the movies for six months. Just New York can pay for the freedom of Cuba, New York alone, if two thousand Cubans can get together, two thousand Cubans who give two pesos every week, give two hours of work a week, the money to go to the movies, the money to buy a whiskey.

I tell you with all responsibility that six months of well-paid help given by the Cubans of New York would be enough to win over Cuba's freedom.

And what cruel revenge, the revenge of those who threw them out of their Homeland, the revenge against those who brought all of you here to this land, that is the cruelest revenge! The people overthrowing a tyrant with the money it takes to go to the movies for six months.

Engrave these words in your souls, for they are true. I have enormous faith that you will understand them, that you will measure the value of the virtues you have for constancy, for faith and for the seriousness and discipline with which you help. A modest and poor Cuban comes to ask you this, a Cuban who isn't having fun, who nobody will see having a drink or going to a night club, or spending even one penny on anything that isn't essential to his survival; as if we had to spend that because wherever we go we find generous Cubans who give us their homes and who feed us; we do not need anything for ourselves, we will never need it. The first manifesto came about, to our honor, as the product of a pawned overcoat; that first manifesto is with us thanks to the money we got for a pawned overcoat. In Cuba we now have 40,000 young people belonging to the Revolutionary Movement, youth committed to paying a monthly fee and money is raised as we go from town to town. Because we need those funds so that the same thing doesn't happen as it did the last time, so that the hands which will buy our freedom with clean blood and clean money will never again have to do it unarmed. (APPLAUSE) We do not ask Cuban emigrants for their blood, although I know they want to give it; we ask for a few drops of sweat every week. We will buy freedom with the sweat of their brows, and we will buy it with clean money, so that there are no commitments, so that the triumph is not stained by the interests of

those who have wanted to help it unselfishly, so that we can fulfill our obligations with these people, so that we feel more obligated. For that, Cubans, we ask for your help.

We say here today, just as Marti did, reaffirming our faith that we will find magnanimous help in all these honorable hearts, that we will knock on door after door and to ask for alms for the country, town to town; and it shall be given to us because we will ask with honor.

As the Apostle said, help the martyr, the martyr who asks for help, who awaits help, who relies on help, who wants to redeem himself with help. (APPLAUSE) Not just today, but every day, not with the patriotism of a single day but with the pure patriotism of an entire lifetime, not just in a moment of fleeting enthusiasm.

We leave all of you here today with a mission: as we leave here, we ask one thing of these Cubans who have been so excited today, those Cubans who stood to applaud Comrade Márquez. We ask you to keep something for us, that you keep the enthusiasm of today, that you will keep in every one of your hearts...

(Incomplete recording)

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