

## "The Universal Conscience"

### Speech to the Cultural Congress of Havana

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*The following text of Castro's closing speech to the Havana Cultural Congress of January, 1968, is the official Cuban translation as published in the January 21 Granma. The stenographer's notes—applause, laughter, ovation—are retained here. Unobtrusive reminders of the situation, they suggest the auditorium and imply the mood.*

As Castro points out early in his speech, the Congress's participants formed an unusual group: they had not come as "militants in any political organizations." In other words, they were not the official representatives of so many communist parties, and the Havana meeting was no mere Cuban replica of the CP congresses of the U.S.S.R. Rather, it constituted another episode of the new revolutionary's attempt to overcome the reluctant-dragon apparatus of the communist parties of Europe and Latin America: the spirit of revolution discarding its no longer serviceable forms. This is the unifying theme of a speech which touches on all the major problems that confront men of all three worlds in their distinctively modern collectivity.

DELEGATES TO THE Cultural Congress of Havana,  
Comrades:

I feel I must express the opinion of many participants in the Congress to the effect that this, the first international event of its kind, has been a complete success.

Some predicted that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to hold a congress of this kind—an international assemblage of numerous workers in the intellectual field, coming from no

less than seventy countries, speaking a great number of different languages, whose ideas may differ on many points and who, therefore, might have turned the Cultural Congress into a sort of arena for all kinds of polemics and misunderstandings. Some predicted that it would be very difficult for the workers in the intellectual field to reach practically unanimous conclusions.

Perhaps this is the result of several factors, among them the general tendency of intellectual workers to be excessively individualistic at times and the fact—analyzed in the Congress itself—that men of any society, independently of their positions, are greatly influenced by the ideas, habits, and way of life that permeate the world in which they are developing. And possibly this supposition is based on an underestimation of intellectual workers.

So we ought to give some thought to what factors have made this Congress possible, what factors have inspired the discussions in this Congress, what factors have contributed to giving it a profoundly revolutionary quality, a revolutionary quality that may truly be said to surpass the most optimistic expectations. The factor that made this Congress possible and guaranteed its results is the universal conscience that is developing today, the universal awareness of the grave threats hanging over all the peoples of the world, the universal awareness of the need for struggle, the universal awareness of the need for justice, which is spreading throughout the world.

The strange thing is that the men and women gathered here did not come as militants in any political organizations. Many times and in many places congresses of similar militant organizations, of similar parties, have been held; but this Congress has been characterized by its broad representation, by its participants having come from vastly different places, by their having carried out a variety of activities and, in spite of this, by the fact that a series of questions, a series of fundamental principles, was approached with unusual unanimity.

Intellectual workers from the most diverse sectors, intellectual workers having the most diverse philosophical ideas, the most diverse scientific and artistic concepts, the most diverse political opinions gathered here, and yet a common ground could be found. We believe that this constitutes a genuine cause for concern for the enemies of humanity.

What determines this universal conscience? Is it perhaps an idealistic sentiment nurtured by those who participated in this Congress? Is it perhaps simply the expression of noble, gener-



ous, humanitarian sentiments? Even though these sentiments clearly abounded in this Congress, the factor that created this universal conscience was, unquestionably, the danger, the threats of aggression, and the actual acts of aggression hanging over and victimizing many peoples of the world—practically the whole world. This universal conscience has grown on a par with the spirit of aggression, the acts of oppression and subjugation, and the threats that hang over humanity. What must be said is that the men and women meeting here undoubtedly constitute the vanguard, a nucleus that is able to get to the bottom of things, to grasp quickly the nature, the character, and the seriousness of the contemporary problems from which humanity is suffering or that are threatening humanity.

We have read all the resolutions on the different topics, and it is clear that the fundamental questions, the most serious dangers that face humanity today, were dealt with, and they were dealt with, we feel, very correctly.

There are some things before which no one with a modicum of conscience, no one with human sentiments or feelings of justice can remain unmoved.

That is why, for example, the aggression against Vietnam, this act unparalleled in modern times, this mass murder which Yankee imperialism is brutally perpetrating against that people, this action which is unjustifiable from any point of view, which relies on vastly destructive weapons and acts of barbarism, unquestionably reminds all those who have lived through Nazism in Europe or are familiar with it through reading . . . of the crimes of the Fascists. It reminds them, for example, of all those actions which later were qualified as war crimes and for which the Nazis were punished and in some cases executed—although not so many as should have been, only those principally responsible for those acts.

The imperialist Yankee policy today reminds us of the policy of Hitler. It reminds us of the Nazis' acts of barbarism, but with a difference: imperialism has succeeded in amassing technical and therefore also military resources; it has succeeded in amassing forces of death and destruction incomparably greater than anything the Nazi-Fascists ever dreamed of.

It is logical that humanity should be concerned when it sees such tremendous forces advancing along the same road.

Not only does the nature of the crimes committed contribute to developing conscience, but so does the admiration we feel for the heroic people who are facing those powerful forces so

bravely, so successfully, and so incredibly, who are combating them and, moreover, defeating them.

The indignation and hatred against one side and the admiration for the other, regarding events in Vietnam, have contributed to a considerable extent—perhaps more than any other single thing in today's world—to the creation of this awareness of justice and universal ethics which has been in such great evidence during this Congress.

But humanity, at the same time, sees more and more clearly that these deeds are not mere isolated incidents—far from it! They are the fruits of a concept, of a whole system which the imperialists are trying to impose on the whole world.

The unusual unanimity with which the actions of Yankee imperialism are today condemned is the logical result of a whole chain of similar events which have taken place throughout the world in recent times. Because those imperialists who brutally murder in Vietnam are the same imperialists who invaded and occupied the Dominican Republic. They are the same imperialists who participated in the repression of revolutionary movements all over the world. They are the same imperialists who triggered the events that culminated in the murder of Lumumba. They are the same imperialists who carry out acts of provocation and aggression against Korea, who intervene in Laos, who threaten Cambodia, who keep a notorious puppet in power in Formosa, and who, with their weapons and resources, prop up the oligarchic governments of Latin America, the tyrannies, the archaic systems that prevail on this continent. They are the same ones who not only support coups d'état in Latin America—which have become daily occurrences—and coups d'état in Africa—which have become so fashionable nowadays—but even support the reactionary military coups d'état in Greece, in Europe itself, and abet acts of aggression against the Arab peoples. (*Applause*)

Actually, there is no need to mention Cuba, as our case ceases to be an isolated one, to become just one more. Our experience has taught us only too well about the activities and behavior of imperialism. But today our people's stand, their indignation and hatred of imperialism, is motivated not precisely by imperialist aggression against us but by the comprehension of the role imperialism plays in the entire world.

There is not a single people, there is not a single contemporary problem where the activities of imperialism are not clearly seen and felt; there is not a single infamous cause in today's world that is not supported by imperialism, as there is



not a single just cause in the world that is not opposed by imperialism.

It is no longer just the case of imperialism aiming at and attacking what is called the Third World or the underdeveloped world—or developing world, as others call it. This term, “developing world,” is a misnomer, an incorrectly applied concept, because, if we go by the reality of that world, we could call it, rather than a “developing” world—from an economic and technical standpoint, and as a result of the conditions imposed by imperialism on that part of the world—a “world in retrogression.”

The voracious actions of imperialism are not limited to this part of the world; the actions of that imperialism are directed, ever more seriously, against the interests of the so-called developed countries as well. There are discrepancies of terminology in this concept of “developed” and “underdeveloped” countries, since it is said that at times a country which is highly developed industrially and economically is at the same time politically and socially underdeveloped, and that a country that is economically underdeveloped is politically and socially more developed.

We do not feel in the least offended if we are included among the underdeveloped countries. Because development of awareness, our social as well as our general cultural development, is steadily becoming a prerequisite to our economic and industrial development. In this country—as must occur in any other country where conditions are similar to ours—the development of a political as well as social awareness among the people becomes a prerequisite for winning the battle against economic underdevelopment.

Imperialism as a world phenomenon, as a world evil, as a wolf at large in the world, can exist only if it acts in this wolf-like manner all over the world, if it acts against the interest of the entire world. And that imperialism behaves identically toward the rest of the so-called developed world, the industrialized world.

Nowadays it is common, in political terminology, to speak of imperialism headed by the United States. The fact is that in today's world there is only one truly powerful imperialism; in today's world the mainstay of imperialism, imperialism in essence, is U.S. imperialism. The powerful imperialisms of yesteryear are today extraordinarily weak in comparison with Yankee imperialism. That is the reason why—and this is becoming understood more and more clearly by the whole world

—the effort, the struggle, is being concentrated against Yankee imperialism, the mainstay of every reactionary government, of every evil cause in the world.

That imperialism even threatens to devour—and is actually, to a certain extent, devouring—the other imperialist powers. It is needless to dwell on this point. It was discussed in the Congress; brilliant ideas were expressed and proposals made in this sense. A paper presented to the Congress examined, and substantiated with statistics, the phenomenon of Yankee imperialist penetration in Europe, the drain of capital—it is no longer a question of the exportation of capital but of the drain of capital—which Yankee imperialism is carrying out in the underdeveloped world. An insight was given into the mechanism of the brain drain which Yankee imperialism perpetrates all over the world. And facts showing the phenomenon today of a monopoly over science and technology, showing how the imperialists utilize the great advances in science and modern technology. All of this was brilliantly set forth at the Congress, as was the explanation of how, at present, when the Yankee imperialists make investments in Europe they only have to bring in ten per cent of the total amount invested, mobilizing the rest of the resources within Europe itself.

We know the degree of Yankee penetration in Europe. And we must say, seriously, that, perhaps to an extent unimagined by Europeans themselves, Yankee imperialism governs Europe. (*Applause*)

We know this; we have constant proof of it. Because, for example, the imperialists carry on incessant economic sabotage, economic blockade against us, doing everything possible to keep us from acquiring anything useful in any part of the world. The worst of this is that on many, many occasions the imperialists sabotage and frustrate our efforts in countries that consider themselves quite independent, quite sovereign, and quite developed.

The imperialists hold controlling interests in countless European enterprises; the imperialists control numerous patents used in Europe. And if we seek to purchase a machine that is manufactured under a patent held by a U.S. company, or if part of the machine has been manufactured under such a patent, we cannot buy the machine or the technological process involved. At times we may buy a part of a factory, but we cannot purchase the complete process because the patent is held by a U.S. company. In many other cases, in which neither patents nor the participation of U.S. capital in a factory is



involved, we are also unable to purchase what we want because U.S. citizens are important clients of that industry and will be offended if the industry sells something to us. And in this way they sabotage and frustrate our efforts in the economic field.

Thus they govern Europe, as owners of enterprises, as owners of patents, as important clients, and as allies of some European governments, using their influence to sabotage Cuba's economic activities.

And the lengths to which they go and their thoroughness in this activity seem incredible. Therefore, we, without being Europeans, know to what extent the economy of Europe is ruled by the United States. And the problem confronting Europe—including capitalist Europe—is to see if any way exists to control, to check that economic penetration; to see if a way exists to resist that penetration, and if such a way exists within the capitalist conception, within a capitalist legal structure. No matter how much they try to protect themselves with tariffs and import duties, the financial and technological power of the United States is so great that on many occasions it is able to sell cheaper and even "dump" certain products, overcoming every kind of trade barrier. And often the U.S. capitalists do not have to overcome any barrier whatever because they simply buy up the European enterprises.

We have even had the following type of experience: after we have purchased trucks from a European firm and received them, U.S. businessmen have bought the factory. From that point on, we have been unable to purchase a single spare part for those trucks.

Sometimes we have the impression that they are voraciously taking over everything, and sometimes we even have the impression that whenever a European plant supplies us with products which are important to our development the imperialists won't rest until they have bought that plant. Fortunately, they have not been able to do this in all industries; fortunately, contradictions arise; fortunately, in spite of everything and as a result of those contradictions, and as a result of that penetration and of the competition of Yankee imperialism with Europe, in spite of all difficulties, trade between Cuba and Europe is on the increase.

We have a ready index to the steadily increasing resistance of European industrialists and governments, to their increasing concern or increasing anguish over the economic penetration and domination of the European economy by the United States, in the fact that at present it is not so hard to purchase certain

things which a few years ago were very difficult for Cuba to acquire. Our country's credit—and please forgive me for this disquisition—and the number of commercial offers made to us are increasing.

These facts show us the contradictions; these facts show us the tremendous influence the Yankee imperialists have in Europe. And at the same time we see a growing concern in the capitalist circles of Europe over this phenomenon that is affecting that continent.

Therefore, there is an enemy that can indeed be called a universal enemy. If, in the history of mankind, there ever was a truly universal enemy, an enemy whose attitude and deeds alarmed the whole world, threatened the whole world, assaulted the whole world in one way or another, that real enemy, that truly universal enemy, is precisely Yankee imperialism. And, as mankind becomes aware of this problem, mankind begins, in one way or another, to act.

At times we have heard self-criticism by intellectuals, scientists, and artists to the effect that they are not in close contact with problems. I am not referring, in this case, to the intellectual workers of the Third World—if we may use this name—I am referring, in particular, to the intellectual workers of Europe. They criticize themselves for having a distant—at times they call it paternalistic—relationship with the problems of the world. What do we think of this? It seems to me that we would be deceiving ourselves, we would fall into idealism, if we were to expect this awareness we were speaking of to appear overnight, in a glorious awakening.

We are not going to spend time analyzing the degree to which intellectual workers all over the world are mobilizing in favor of just causes; rather, we shall stress that whatever the degree of that development, whatever the effectiveness of that solidarity, the fact is that such a movement is on the increase, the fact is that it is developing, the fact is that it is growing.

And, in all sincerity, we could say that we have often seen how certain causes which most affect today's world, how certain aggressions, certain crimes have aroused greater defense movements, greater response, greater protest, and greater militancy in groups of intellectual workers than in organizations of a political kind which might have been expected to react with the most militancy! (*Applause*) At times we have seen alleged vanguards far back in the rearguard in the struggle against imperialism! (*Applause*)



In truth, it is not our intention to offend or hurt anyone from this rostrum. Besides, we do not like to offend or attack anyone indirectly. I say this because we must refer to a truth that we know from firsthand experience. After all, this is the point of view of the victims of aggression, the point of view of the revolutionary combatants of a country struggling against imperialism, of a country which, if it does not occupy the front-line trench—for the front-line trench is, unquestionably, Vietnam—(*Applause*) is a country occupying a modest battle post and defending it firmly and resolutely. When we see someone who is supposed to be a member of the vanguard actually in the vanguard it seems the most natural thing in the world to us. But when we see those who were not thought of as being members of the vanguard actually in the vanguard of protest and struggle this arouses our admiration. Therefore, we do not stop to gauge the degree of their fight, but rather we see tangible proof of the fact that when the banners of just causes are not raised in certain countries there are honest men who will raise those banners! (*Applause*) We have seen many an example of such phenomena.

In the course of these years of revolution we have learned a lot, and one of the things we have learned is to distinguish between what is false and what is true, between a revolutionary slogan and a revolutionary attitude, between words and deeds, between dogmas and realities.

Could anyone feel that our experience during the October Crisis was not an unforgettable one for us? We do not want to speak about that episode, but our people unquestionably lived through moments of extreme danger. And no one should take it as bragging when we state here that our people acted with dignity, with integrity, and with bravery. (*Applause*)

But let us say at the same time that for years, almost since we were teenagers, we have been hearing about a great campaign for peace. And I do not say this to criticize the men who have fought for peace, the men who honestly, in one way or another, have taken up the banner of the struggle for peace and have raised it as high as they could.

What really caught our attention was the fact that, when peace was truly endangered, when the world was on the brink of a nuclear war, we did not see mass mobilizations in Europe—and we take it for granted that there would be war in Europe, too, if there were a nuclear war; we take it for granted that, in an encounter between the great nuclear powers, Europe, tied by military pacts to one of these powers, Yankee imperialism,

would suffer from the consequences of this war, would be involved in the war—yet we did not see great mass mobilizations. And truly, if there were any, we didn't hear of them; great or small, we didn't hear of them. And we had the strong feeling, the impression—and if this strong impression is incorrect we would be grateful if someone would set us straight—that that slogan was nothing but a slogan, something to be taken lightly, and that that slogan was not able to mobilize any masses, that that slogan was not even able to awaken the masses' instinct of self-preservation.

Where was the vanguard? Where were the revolutionary vanguards?

We have a recent example, very recent, which was very close to us: the death of our heroic Comrade Ernesto Guevara. (*Ovation*)

It will be difficult to find a man who is his equal; it will be difficult to find a revolutionary purer than he, more consistent than he, more complete than he, more exemplary than he. And when we are asked to give an example of what a revolutionary is or should be, could we find a better example than his?

Nevertheless, who were the ones who raised his banner on high? Who were the ones who created a stir in the world? And, above all, who were the ones who raised high his name in Europe, who raised high and extolled his example? Who were the ones who mobilized people, painted signs, and organized meetings in Europe? In which sector was the impact of Che Guevara's death most profound? Precisely among the intellectual workers! (*Applause*) It was not organizations, it was not parties! It was honest, sensitive men and women, who were able to assimilate, understand, and do justice, as compared with those who are unable to understand and who will never understand why he died, who will never be capable of dying as he did, of being the kind of revolutionary he was. (*Applause*)

We know the heartfelt sorrow of true revolutionaries throughout the world. Above all, we know how this event grieved the most exemplary revolutionaries of this epoch, the Vietnamese combatants. (*Applause*)

We have received many condolences, true condolences and formal condolences. We speak of condolences because there is no other word, even though the death of a combatant is not an occasion for mourning, if we believe, as we have always believed, as our people have believed, as revolutionaries in all epochs have always believed, that no true man, no true revolutionary dies in vain.



We have been given irrefutable proof of that by our own enemies, who, with no respect for his condition as a wounded combatant unable to continue fighting because even his weapon had been destroyed, cravenly assassinated him. And not only did they, as cowards, assassinate him, but, even more cowardly, they did away with his body.

In recent days the wire services have been publishing news items, have been speaking of an exchange of counterrevolutionary prisoners in Cuba for Régis Debray. Of course, we are sure—for we have seen Debray's attitude, we have seen his powerful defense, we have seen the serenity, courage, and integrity with which he unmasked his accusers—we are sure that Régis Debray would never accept such an exchange. But we are not running away from the "gorilla" Barrientos's challenge. If he wants counterrevolutionaries freed, if he wants petty counterrevolutionary leaders freed, we say, we propose: return the remains of Major Guevara and we will release one hundred imprisoned counterrevolutionaries! (*Ovation*) We will release, at once, not one counterrevolutionary, but one hundred, chosen by the CIA and by the Pentagon, if they have the courage to return the remains of Major Guevara! (*Applause*) For they are the ones who will show whether or not it is true that they fear Che even more dead than alive. (*Applause*)

This is a mighty example of what an example is! This is a mighty example of the fact that ideas cannot be destroyed! This is a mighty example of the fact that revolutionary causes, just causes, cannot be crushed, no matter what blows or losses they are dealt! Because we are human beings, we are men, for a reason; and a man's ideas are values that are above and beyond anything else, and, of course, above and beyond his own life.

We have gone through these experiences, and it is for that reason that—with no intentions of flattery, but with absolute sincerity—we want to express the sentiments aroused in us at seeing how the intellectual workers, in ever increasing numbers, have united and become mighty standard-bearers and defenders of just causes.

I mentioned Che's example; but we have also seen the strength that the movement for support of and solidarity with Vietnam is gaining throughout the world; we have seen how more and more intellectual workers in the United States are raising the banners of struggle against the savage aggression in Vietnam; we have seen the increasing support that the intellectual workers of the world are giving the black Movement in

the United States; we have seen how intellectual workers throughout the world have raised the banner of struggle against the imprisonment of Régis Debray; and we have seen in recent events, in definitive actions, how the movement of solidarity has increased among intellectual workers throughout the world. And we know how to give this phenomenon its due and deeply deserved estimation!

By this I don't mean that we should be satisfied. I don't mean that the maximum has been done; far from it. I don't mean that this movement has the strength it should have; I simply mean that we feel optimistic because this movement—a movement of conscience, of justice—is growing and developing. And there is no doubt that it will continue growing and developing, because as our common enemy becomes increasingly aggressive, as its crimes become increasingly repulsive, as it becomes increasingly rapacious, this movement, this strength will grow.

And, saying Yankee imperialism is powerful, that Yankee imperialism has amassed great financial and technical resources, great means of causing death and destruction, we do not consider, and never will, that this threat to humanity, that all the forces accumulated by imperialism, can be more powerful than humanity. Vietnam, a very small part of humanity, has shown us once again how to face, how to fight, and how to defeat this superpowerful imperialism! An imperialism that is trying to intimidate the world, that is trying to blackmail the world, and that has only succeeded in increasing political awareness in the world, in increasing the indignation and fighting spirit in the world, as its actions become more repulsive, as its actions become more criminal and abhorrent—an enemy that wants to solve everything by force, that wants to solve everything with its gold, that is just as ready to assassinate as to bribe, that is just as ready to oppress by force as by corruption, an enemy that penetrates all fields, penetrates all activities.

It is logical that intellectual workers must feel revolted when they see the best creations of man, the most marvelous products of human intelligence, the creations of scientists and technicians, the advances that man has developed for the welfare of mankind, being used today to kill, to destroy, to oppress, and to corrupt. The advances in physics, as well as in chemistry, in electronics, and in biology, are applied to making everything from bombs that explode into thousands of pieces to poisons, chemical means of destruction, weapons of germ warfare—in short, everything that men of science have created is used.



It is logical for the intellectual workers of the world to feel that in one way or another they are victims of this plunder, to feel they are under attack in one way or another, just as they feel they are under attack from the brain drain policy of stealing technicians, from this whole policy aimed at monopolizing science through the recruiting of scientists from all over the world, from so-called developed countries and from underdeveloped countries. This situation is no secret; it is very widely recognized, since the statistics have been published in the United States itself. Thus, the country with a more developed technology is following—as I pointed out on January 2—this policy of brain draining, this stealing of specialists.

In the face of this situation, what can be strange about men and women, intellectuals who hold the most varied philosophical views, who take very different political positions, who are apolitical, or who sustain differing beliefs, having met here?

We also want to point out that certain aspects of this Congress have been truly impressive. One of them is the general awareness of what constitutes imperialism, what it represents, the general awareness that the problems raised in the modern world cannot be solved by outdated social systems rendered obsolete by the development of science and technology as well as human conscience. And there was unanimous agreement among intellectuals of the Third World as well as those of the developed countries that it was impossible (through these obsolete social systems) to overcome the deep-seated problems of any modern country, be it developed or underdeveloped: for the developed countries to meet or overcome the serious contradictions that exist under capitalism in order to pass beyond a society that is practically rendered obsolete by history, or the underdeveloped countries to take their only possible road, because how can a country which is falling further behind the rest of the world achieve an accelerated rate of development going through the *via crucis* of capitalist development under the conditions of imperialist domination?

But these were elementary questions for those who took part in this Congress.

However, there were other matters, and one thing in particular which quite frankly impressed us very much, because it indicated just how vast the scope of the world revolutionary movement actually is. This was a paper presented by a group of Catholic priests who took part in the Congress. I am not going to mention their names, because I have not consulted them

about it, but I am going to read their paper to our people—I suppose you delegates have all read it.

We, Catholic priests, delegates to the Cultural Congress of Havana, are convinced of the following:

That imperialism today, and especially in the Third World, constitutes a dehumanizing factor which destroys the very basis of individual dignity, violates the freedom of cultural development, impedes true forms of human development, and propitiates a state of underdevelopment that grows more acute and oppressive by the day.

That in spite of the differences existing between Christianity and Marxism concerning interpretations of mankind and the world, it is Marxism which provides the most exact scientific analysis of the real nature of imperialism and provides the most effective impetus to revolutionary action by the masses.

That the Christian faith involves the concept of love expressed through effective help to each and every man.

That the priest Camilo Torres Restrepo, by dying for the revolutionary cause, provided us with the greatest example of a Christian intellectual dedicated to the people. [Applause]

We pledge ourselves to the anti-imperialist revolutionary cause, come what may, in order to achieve the liberation of every man and of all mankind.

Therefore, we condemn the economic and cultural blockade which imperialism has placed on the Republic of Cuba, first free territory of America. We condemn the United States' war against Vietnam as a most monstrous imperialist aggression against the freedom of a people living in the Third World.

We reject any form of colonialism and neocolonialism as the product of imperialism, an alienating and dehumanizing force.

This statement is an indication of how revolutionary ideas, in one form or another, are spreading, how they are broadening in scope, how these ideas are even penetrating religious sectors, and how more and more revolutionary combatants are emerging from these sectors.

A few days ago we read one of the numerous news dispatches received here from the Yankee news services, dealing precisely with this movement, expressing concern over the movement developing within the Catholic clergy in Latin America. And, of course, it stated that this was a movement linked to Cuba, to the Cuban Revolution, to Castro, and so on. It even made accusations against the Papal Nuncio. (*Laughter*) Accusations were



made against the Papal Nuncio in Cuba as well as the Canadian Papal Nuncio who had come to Cuba to invest the Cuban Papal Nuncio with the office of bishop.

There was a reception, and we attended that reception. And of course, for the imperialists, for the counterrevolutionary clique, for the reactionaries, and undoubtedly for the CIA, that was a conspiratorial council. (*Laughter*) Unquestionably, the reactionaries are more and more alarmed; they live in fear, seeing conspiracy everywhere, seeing specters everywhere, seeing subversion everywhere. And it's true, it is true! They are the specters that they have created, the rebellions that they have aroused, and the universal conspiracy by men worthy of mankind that they have incited.

Unquestionably, we are observing new events, new phenomena. It is certain that revolutionaries, we who consider ourselves revolutionaries, and, among those who consider themselves revolutionaries, we who consider ourselves Marxist-Leninists, all have the obligation of analyzing these new phenomena. Because nothing could be more anti-Marxist than dogma, (*Applause*) nothing could be more anti-Marxist than the petrification of ideas. And there are even ideas propounded in the name of Marxism which seem to be truly fossils. (*Applause*) Marxism has had thinkers of genius: Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Lenin, to mention the outstanding founders. But Marxism needs to develop, break away from a certain rigidity, interpret today's reality from an objective, scientific viewpoint, conduct itself as a revolutionary force and not as a pseudo-revolutionary church. (*Applause*)

These are the paradoxes of history. How, seeing sectors of the clergy becoming revolutionary forces, can we resign ourselves to seeing revolutionary forces becoming ecclesiastical forces? (*Applause*)

We trust that because of our affirmation of such ideas we shall not be subjected to excommunication (*Laughter*) nor to a Holy Inquisition either. But we must meditate on this, we must act with a more dialectical sense—that is, with a more revolutionary sense.

We must analyze contemporary phenomena, study them profoundly. Naturally such analysis, such concepts, must be more and more the work of groups rather than individuals. Just as in scientific fields the isolated researcher scarcely any longer exists, nor can he exist, so in politics, in economics, in sociology, isolated researchers—the appearance of men of genius under modern conditions—become more and more im-

probable. And in reality there is a certain underdevelopment in the field of political ideas, in the field of revolutionary ideas. And this is the basis of the enormous confusion that exists in today's world, the enormous crisis that exists in the field of ideas—that is, in the field of doctrines—at the very moment in which revolutionary sentiments and attitudes are spreading. No one can state that he is the possessor of all truth. Today no one can state, amidst the great complexity of the world, that he is completely right. We have our truths here, which arose from our experience, applicable to our conditions, and we have our deductions and our conclusions. But we have never attempted to be mentors; we have never pretended to have a monopoly on revolutionary truth. Nonetheless, we have seen how revolutionary truths have appeared, how revolutionary ideas emerge from analysis, from the efforts of many minds.

And what will the imperialists say, what will they think? Perhaps they will say that this is a Vietnam in the field of culture; they will say that guerrillas have begun to appear among intellectual workers—that is, the intellectual workers are adopting an increasingly militant position. And we have not the slightest doubt that the imperialists will be deeply concerned at this event and the resolutions adopted at this event, the revolutionary tone of this event.

And the thinking of the imperialists is increasingly evident, their intentions ever more unmistakable. Today, for example, two dispatches, quoting two great oligarchs of imperialism, arrived in Cuba: one concerning a general, the U.S. Chief of Staff, and the other reporting on statements made by Mr. Rusk. Are they any different from the usual declarations? They are no different. Are they any different from numerous statements mentioned in this Congress? No! But they do reveal the precision and clarity of the intellectual workers and their resolutions.

Let's see what they say—whichever of the two, the one you prefer. Mr. Rusk spoke and, among other things, referred to the October Crisis. The cable reads: "The October Crisis, in which the United States showed considerable moderation, has surely served as a warning to various powers, both large and small," stressed U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk at a press conference yesterday, adding that many countries had learned their lesson."

This is the vulgar language of vulgar blackmail! (*Applause*)

All right. But, even more important, it says: "Another continuing problem is that constituted by aggressions such as the one in Vietnam"—Vietnamese aggression!—"adding that once



the so-called wars of liberation are curbed"—once the so-called wars of liberation are curbed!—"the world will be able to enjoy a long era of peace." A pax romana! (*Laughter*)

The dispatch continues: "Speaking of the population explosion, Dean Rusk stressed the pressing need to find a solution to it before this danger reaches the point of causing the outbreak of a nuclear war.

"Science and technology will have to overcome these problems, which, in the '80s, will acquire a character at least as explosive as the question of nuclear weapons," he concluded."

And the general? What did the general have to say?

"General Harold K. Johnson, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, stated today that the experience of this country (the United States) in the Dominican Republic and Cuba shows that war in Vietnam is necessary to end the spread of communism.

"In an address given in this city General Johnson stated, 'The spread of communism ended when our country began directly assisting resistance to the establishment of the system.'

"He added, 'Even in our hemisphere, when we stand up to the communists swiftly and vigorously, as was the case in the Dominican Republic, they are halted.'

"But," continued Johnson, 'when the United States did not recognize a communist coup, as was the case in Cuba, the tumor put down roots and tried to spread.'

"General Johnson, who returned a week ago from his ninth inspection tour of Vietnam, denied that the communists had taken the initiative in the war, or that the war had become stalemated."

Two statements issued on the same day: one from a general with numerous defeats to his credit, the other from an eminent and dismal spokesman of imperialism. And what do all these declarations so brazenly issued by the spokesmen of imperialism—generals and civilians—mean? Do they perhaps hide the strategy of imperialism? Do they somehow disguise its intentions and ambitions?

They say that "Communism ceases to spread when we combat it vigorously." They cite the case of Cuba—"that tumor"—a tumor that is still not rooted out, is perhaps what they mean to say—how can its spread be stopped? "And that's why we intervened in Santo Domingo, at the cost of blood and fire . . . to assist the resistance." They assisted the gorillas! Resistance? They couldn't have held out for half an hour against the people! (*Applause*)

And what does the other one say? Just the same: that "When liberation struggles cease there will be peace." But they don't

stop there. It is not enough for liberation struggles to cease. No. The birth rate must be controlled; population growth must be controlled. For it's not enough for liberation struggles to cease; if humanity continues growing there will be explosions more powerful and dangerous than nuclear weapons. Imperialism wants science and technology to come to its aid! It wants education on birth control; it wants birth control to come to its aid!

The solutions put forth by imperialism are the quintessence of simplicity. Two thirds of humanity is hungry; in order to rid themselves of hunger and misery, these people must make revolutions. Ah! But there must not be revolutions! Revolutions will be put down with blood and fire! There will be peace only if there are no revolutions. But, moreover, even if there are no revolutions, what will happen to that two thirds of mankind that multiplies like rabbits? When they speak of the problems of population and birth, they are in no way moved by concepts related to the interests of the family or of society. No! Their premise is that humanity will die of hunger if it continues multiplying; and they advance this concept in these days, which are not the days of Malthus or of Methuselah! Just when science and technology are making incredible advances in all fields, they resort to technology to suppress revolutions and ask the help of science to prevent population growth. In short, the peoples are not to make revolutions, and women are not to give birth. This sums up the philosophy of imperialism.

But at the same time we see the insoluble contradictions of that imperialism, its insecurity, its fear of the future. Here is evidence that this oligarchy, established on guns and on piles of gold, lives in worry, lives in distrust, lives in fear of the future.

And that, in essence, is what the political thinking of imperialism today is reduced to, the political thinking of the oligarchy that governs the United States and that, despite its savage repression, its technological and military resources, feels insecure. For it knows that, without revolution, none of these countries will emerge from underdevelopment.

The imperialists admit, they understand—they know—that there is no formula for passing from feudalism to progress. They know that without revolution there is no development, and they feel powerless in view of the reality that there is growth and development in the world, that the population is growing and that—as a natural and inevitable phenomenon—revolutionary awareness is growing.

The imperialists know that the gap between the developed and the underdeveloped world is growing; the United Nations



constantly publishes the statistics. It is known, for example, that the gross national product in the United States will increase from approximately 400 thousand million dollars in 1960 to approximately 800 thousand million in 1975—a fifteen-year period; that in the European Common Market the gross product will increase in the same period from approximately 200 thousand million dollars to 400 thousand million dollars, this by 1975. All economists and all those who work in problems of commercial exchange know that industrial products are sold at increasingly higher prices to the underdeveloped world and that the latter's products bring lower and lower prices.

A Latin American oligarch recently said that his country could buy only one jeep now with the same amount of a product which ten years ago could pay for three jeeps.

And while the living standards go up in one part of the world, poverty grows in the rest of the world; the inequality grows, exploitation grows.

According to the same data, the imbalance in trade between the underdeveloped and the developed world amounted to 4 thousand million dollars in 1960 and will amount to approximately 20 thousand million dollars by 1970.

While the gross national product grows, while the per capita income grows in one part of the world, in the most populated part of the world the per capita income diminishes, the imbalance grows; prices for the products of those who have the best living conditions increase, while the prices paid those who live in the worst conditions drop; resources, moreover, are often squandered by feudal barons and by oligarchies; the extraction of monetary resources increases.

And that is simply an insoluble problem, a problem that has no solution; it is a simple fact. Therefore, it seems that those who use cybernetics and calculate, add, subtract, multiply, and divide have consulted their computers and learned that this situation has no solution, that it is a situation without solution.

So what is the imperialists' remedy? Repressive wars against revolutions, and there will be peace when there are no more revolutions; let populations cease to grow, because if the population does not stop increasing there will be uprisings and there will be nuclear wars.

In no previous period of history has man heard such barbarous, genocidal, brutal manifestations against mankind!

That is the fact, that is the undeniable truth, that is what contributes to the creation of a universal revolutionary awareness; that is what has brought you here; these unquestionable

facts are what has given a revolutionary tone to this Congress.

And it is true that in the field of culture there are many problems to be solved, there are many questions to be answered, and we by no means wish to disguise the fact that there are still many things for which solutions must be found; there are many new problems still unsolved. And those are problems that face us as revolutionaries, above all when, as revolutionaries, in special conditions, we find ourselves obliged to use an immense part of our efforts to merely survive, to defend ourselves, and to advance.

However, we are determined to find the adequate answers, the best solutions, to the countless problems that emerge in the process of development of a society. Problems to be solved and solutions to be found exist; we do not deny it. And we will find the solutions. And we sincerely believe that this Congress is a contribution to us and to the revolutionary movements.

But the way that the intellectual workers of the Congress took hold of fundamental problems, of the most essential questions, of the things that most concern man in today's world, and worked on these questions and, united around these questions, carried this Congress forward, has been instructive.

Numerous questions could be debated within the revolutionary camp on the problems of culture, because they are real problems.

Perhaps that was what the imperialists expected. But attention and efforts were centered on fundamental contradictions, on decisive contradictions, that are not contradictions within the heart of the revolutionary movement, not problems of culture within the heart of the revolutionary movement, but contradictions and problems of culture created by imperialism.

We do not, certainly, believe that this Congress has solved all problems or clarified all questions, but we do believe that it has been an extraordinary step forward; we do believe that it has been very, very positive; and we do believe that the topics that have been discussed here are essential and that the preoccupations concerning revolutionary society were important and essential—above all, those relating to the new man.

Fortunately, in this question of the future we have the magnificent exposition left to us by Che, in which he so clearly and brilliantly analyzed some of these problems with the sincerity, honesty, and frankness that invariably characterized him, and in which he expressed his idea of what the new man should be like, what the man of tomorrow, the man of the twenty-first century, should be like. We have seen how these concerns were taken up in this Congress. We have also seen how the example



of Che, his attitude, his conduct, his honesty, his integrity, presided over and inspired many of the resolutions of this Congress.

For us, this successful event, whose results are greater than the most optimistic predictions, will be unforgettable. It is true that our people live hours, days, and months intensely immersed in work, overcoming obstacles, battling for the development of our economy under difficult conditions, against an aggressive imperialism and with a socialism which is very limited in all fields; and in this battle, in this titanic struggle, in this effort that grows by the day, immersed in work, our people may have appeared to be indifferent to the Congress, but really that is not the case. In reality, our people have acquired an extraordinary sensitivity, an extraordinary perceptiveness, and you had an opportunity to observe in several mass rallies the rapidity, the agility, of our masses to understand any problem, the degree of political understanding of our people, their revolutionary spirit, the internationalist spirit which they have developed; their feeling of solidarity acquired in the struggle itself that has inspired and received the encouragement of everyone. In every event, be it the Tricontinental Conference, a conference of Latin American revolutionary organizations, or events such as this one, they have increasingly broadened their knowledge, their information, their revolutionary horizons.

For our part, we take pleasure in saying that your presence here has been a very great honor. We hope that our people have expressed in a thousand different ways their warmth, their recognition, and their sympathy. It is a high honor for us to have shared these days with men and women of value, of prestige, whose works and labor are known to a much greater extent than you perhaps imagine. We shall remember this high honor, always. This sentiment expresses the sentiment of the Revolutionary Government, the sentiment of our Party, the sentiment of our people. And so, in a spirit of friendship, of fraternity, and of affection, we declare this Congress closed. Many thanks to all of you. Be assured that this effort for advancement in all fields, in economy, in culture, in revolutionary struggle, in the construction of a better society, in the development of a better man, will not cease, and that our Revolution will not defraud the confidence and hope that you may place in it!

*Patria o Muerte!*  
*Venceremos!*  
(Ovation)

## "I Don't Mean Bananas"

MALCOLM X

*By the fall of 1968, the disarray of the Black Power movement had become critical. In part: sharp police repression. In part: the difficulty of achieving the concrete practice of a forward strategy, of avoiding the pitfalls of self-defensiveness. But these reasons may themselves largely be explained by still a third: nationalism and radicalism, caste politics and class politics, had somehow been forced apart by black militants and defined as competing points of departure, the former becoming ascendant in key black groups.*

*Malcolm's political method had presupposed rather the unity of nationalism and radicalism, a unity which therefore connected Mississippi with the Congo and Africa with Asia, and which understood a viable politics for black Americans to require both a demand for Africanhood and a conception of pro-Africanhood as an explicitly anti-imperialist stance. The decision of many black militants to leave the anti-war protest to whites—"their war, not ours"—drained that protest of its needed volatility and led at the same time to the further psychological and political confinement of the Black Power movement in the weakest of all definitions of blackness. "Black is beautiful." Very well, but only provisionally: only when it asserts itself against the full plenitude of whiteness's oppressive meanings. One understands the need to develop black consciousness. But there is just no such thing as a black consciousness which is not also a consciousness of the structural sources of global subjugation: caste is class and cannot otherwise be understood.*

*That is, black is beautiful only under the same conditions in which white is also beautiful. It is only men and women that can be beautiful, and it is only their fully understood stipulation of freedom that can make them so. Either negritude is*