



## FIDEL CASTRO SPEAKS BEFORE HAVANA RALLY

Havana, COBC, in Spanish, to Cuba, Jan. 21, 1959, 2203 GMT--E

(Text)

Mr. President, gentlemen of the diplomatic corps, reporters of the entire continent, fellow citizens:

I am going to ask the people to do something for me, and that is that they help me. There are a million persons here and the loudspeakers cannot be heard. Absolute silence is necessary. It is very difficult to speak when (words indistinct) perfectly well, and today I should like to tell the people what I feel; I would like to tell the reporters what the people of Cuba feel, I want to tell the diplomatic representatives of the entire world the way our people think. To hear us, it is not enough to have been here; to have attended is not enough alone. It is necessary to be silent. It is necessary to show the people's discipline by being quiet. Let us see if a million people can be silent. (He waits to let the crowd calm down--Ed.)

Fellow citizens, it is possible that our fighters trembled more today before this crowd than they ever did before enemy bullets. For us, who have extraordinary faith in our people, this assembly has exceeded all estimates. It is said that with those who have just arrived the crowd extends from the Malecon to the Park of Fraternity. We can say one thing here today, and that is that there is no place in Havana to bring together all the people who support the revolution. (Applause) Before a small park was enough and there was room left. This time all the parks together around the presidential palace are insufficient. I am going to tell you an anecdote so that you can understand the full moral value of this meeting for us.

One of our comrades attached to the Havana municipality told me that this morning the employees gathered and asked him where they were meeting to go to the assembly, and our friend replied: No, those who want to can go and those who do not can go home. This is not the kind of meeting organized before. (Applause) How different it is when the people feel free! How different it is when the people rule. People have come from Matanzas and Pinar del Rio on foot. Thousands of our fellow citizens have come on foot because there were not enough vehicles.

We spoke of a half million, of getting together half a million Cubans, but the people said no, not half a million, but one million; and it turned out to be one and a half million. I went through some of the city's streets before arriving, and Havana was deserted. Not a soul was to be seen for blocks on end in the districts of Havana. All Havana had come, the whole city, all the

surroundings, and thousands and tens of thousands of Cubans from the provinces nearest to Havana. I am sure that if it had been physically possible 6 million Cubans would have gathered here today.

I realize that the best speech for this afternoon is your presence. I realize that nothing can speak so eloquently to the diplomatic crops and the 380 newsmen who have come from all the hemisphere as your presence. Many Cubans here present cannot even here [hear] me. I asked the men who organized the affair and they told me all the loudspeakers in Havana were set up here; and yet many tell me they cannot hear me. It hurts me to think that you are making the sacrifice of standing since hours ago and not even being able to hear what we are saying, but at least you can have the satisfaction of knowing that your presence has not been in vain and that this gathering today, this gathering here today, is the finest battle the people of Cuba have fought in this revolution. It is a victory by force of arms; not a shot has been fired. It is a much finer victory It is a victory of right; it is a victory of justice; it is a victory for morality. Those who thought we were just ordinary guerrillas, those who thought we knew nothing but the use of firearms, those who thought that after our military victories they would crush us in the field of information, and crush us in the field of public opinion, have found that the Cuban revolution also knows how to fight and win (battles) in that field.

Those who thought that monopoly over international cables, those who thought that spreading lies and slander right and left, would let them weaken our revolution and discredit our people, so that they could then leap upon it when it was weak, were mistaken, for the revolution today is more solid and stronger. Instead of weakening it they have strengthened it. The revolution is not intimidated by attacks. The revolution is not weakened by attacks. On the contrary, it waxes and gains strength, for this is the revolution of a valiant, fighting people.

With another people, another people lacking the virtues of the Cuban people, it would not even be worthwhile having started this struggle, but when one has a people like this to count on, one not only begins but achieves and goes on to total victory.

To the people of Cuba everything is clear. The Cuban revolution was an exemplary revolution. There was no coup here.

If we had been a group of army officers who, without the help of the people, had ousted the President and installed another in his place and had at once bowed to all the vested interests; if this had not been a revolution, we would not have enemies; they would not have attacked us; they would not slandered us.

While this palace housed a dictatorship that sold out the nation's interests; while this palace housed a dictatorship that made the most onerous concessions to foreigners; while this palace housed a dictatorship that betrayed the people, nobody attacked it; these press campaigns were not waged against it abroad; Congressmen did not speak out to censure it. While it housed a miserable traitor, a criminal who murdered 20,000 of our fellow citizens,

these campaigns were not waged against Cuba, or against him. While it housed a their who stole 300 million pesos; while the republic was governed by a band of thieves who stole more than a billion pesos, these campaigns were not waged against them abroad. While dozens of Cubans were being killed here every night; while young men were being found murdered with a bullet in the temple; while barracks yards were heaped with corpses; when our women were violated; when children were murdered; when police entered embassies to murder 10 refugees in a few minutes, these campaigns were not waged against Cuba, nor did the Congressmen over there, with rare exceptions, speak out to condemn the dictatorship.

But there is no need to go further. There you have Trujillo with his dictatorship 27 years old; there you have the 10,000 Haitians murdered by the Dominican dictator; there you have the tens of thousands of men murdered inside and outside of Santo Domingo by the henchmen of the criminal dictator. And there you have Somoza. Somoza is of the dynasty that for more than (25?) years has been oppressing his country, with his full jails, his press censorship, his thousands of crimes. And no campaigns are organized against them.

A campaign against the Cuban people, yes! because they want to be free. A campaign against the Cuban people, yes--a campaign against the Cuban people, yes, because they want to be free not just politically, but economically as well. A campaign against the people of Cuba, because they have become a dangerous example for all America. A campaign against the people of Cuba because they know we are going to call for cancellation of the onerous concessions that have been made to foreign monopolies, because they know electric rates are going to be lowered here, because they know that all the onerous concessions made by the dictatorship are going to be reviewed and canceled.

There, fellow citizens, you have the chief cause of this campaign. The explanation of this must be sought, the explanation of this campaign must be sought--if you let me talk I am going to explain; I would like to explain this thoroughly, so the people and the foreign press can understand it. We have not obtained the crowd's full cooperation in maintaining absolute silence. (Sentence indistinct)

The explanation for this campaign must be sought somewhere. Why has this campaign been launched against Cuba? The vilest, most criminal, and most unjust that has been launched against any people. Why, when barely four or five days had passed since the victory, did international cable services and certain U.S. Congressmen loose a barrage of defamation against the Cuban people? The purpose is clear. Our revolution was able to present itself to the world as a model of revolutions. The rebel army's generosity toward the enemy was without precedent in the history of revolutions and wars. Thousand of prisoners fell in our hands. Hundreds of wounded were cared for by our doctors. (Words indistinct) Not one prisoner was struck. (Much crowd noise--Ed.)

Fellow citizens, next time I am going to ask 2,000 Cubans to come instead of a million. That

is a lot, and there is not room. The crowd is being pressed together.

(Possibly one or two sentences indistinct, as if volume had been turned down loudspeaker--Ed.) I am going to sum up ideas. We invited the people of Cuba. We had nothing to say to them, because the people of Cuba know the truth very well. We do not have to convince the people of Cuba of anything, because the people of Cuba are more than convinced. It is necessary to convince the world public, and we are going to convince it through the newsmen who have come here.

Tomorrow we are going to meet with the newsmen who have come from all over the hemisphere. At the meeting I will submit to interrogation, as one can who has done his duty. I am going to submit to interrogation by America, as can be done by a man with a clear conscience. I do not have to give an account to any U.S. Congressman. I do not have to give an account to any foreign government. I will give an account to the peoples. In the first place I give an account to my people, to the Cubans. In the second place, to all the peoples of America. I give an account to the people of Mexico, to the people of the United States, of Costa Rica, of Venezuela, and of the whole world.

For that reason I called in the newsmen, to come and see the truth with their own eyes. Where there is justice there is no crime, and where there is crime there is no freedom of the press. Where there is crime, people hide their actions.

Here things have been done in the open. We came here so they could see that there is justice. And so we invited all newsmen of the world, for here in Cuba there is a freedom of the press (word or two indistinct) that is not found anywhere else in the world. In Cuba there is a respect for human rights not found anywhere else in the world.

The Cuban people are not a savage people, or a criminal people. This is the noblest and most feeling people in the world. If an injustice were committed here, all the people would be against it. Our intellectuals are not unfeeling; our newsmen are not unfeeling; our workers are not unfeeling; our peasants are not unfeeling; our priests are not unfeeling, and when everybody (few words indistinct) the punishment, it is because the punishment is a just one, it is because the punishment is deserved.

The allied powers punished the war criminals after the second world war, and they have less right to do so than we have, because they meted out punishment under the ex post facto legislation, while we are punishing the war criminals under legislation passed before the crime, in public trials, in courts made up of honest men. To avoid mistakes we are trying only the most notorious criminals, those who (have 5, 10, 15, or 20 murders against them?), those known to all the people. But is it not possible to expatriate, and I am going to meet with newsmen from the whole hemisphere. We have also invited the President of Cuba to attend the interview, and we are going to invite the cabinet. And we are going to explain fully to the newsmen everything they want us to explain. We must not expatriate; there is just one thing

more.

Reporters of the entire continent, diplomatic representatives accredited to Cuba, imagine an immense jury, imagine a jury consisting of a million men and women belonging to all social classes, of all religious beliefs, of all political ideas. I am going to ask this jury something. I am going to ask the people something: Those who agree with the justice that is being carried out, those who agree that the henchmen should be shot, raise your hands. (Applause of about 2 minutes)

Gentlemen of the diplomatic corps, reporters of the entire continent: The jury of a million Cubans representing all views and social classes has voted. To those who are democrats, or those who call themselves democrats I say: This is democracy, this is respecting the will of the people. Those who are democrats, or those who call themselves democrats, must respect the will of the people.

Before concluding I should like to say something I consider important: It is that the people of Cuba are worried about our security.

Thousands upon thousands of our fellow citizens have asked us to take care of ourselves. They fear that we will be attacked by enemies of the revolution. The people fear that the death of one of their leaders would be failure for the revolution. What I am about to tell the people of Cuba today is that this is not true. What I am going to tell the people of Cuba is that the revolution cannot depend upon one man. The fate of a nation cannot depend upon one man, that the fate of (justice?) cannot depend upon one man. Moreover, the leaders cannot be placed in a glass case.

I am firmly determined to continue doing things as I have been doing. I am firmly determined to challenge calmly all dangers, come what may. I am doing this for one reason. It is because I am very aware that nothing and no one can stop the revolution. And I also have something to say to my enemies: Behind me are others more radical than I. In the same way, by attacking our revolutionary justice, they have done nothing but reinforce the revolution. By killing me they will only strengthen the revolution.

In order to take the proper precautionary measures so as to be protected against all eventualities, I am going to propose to the board of the July 26 Movement that it appoint comrade Raul Castro second in command of the July 26 Movement. (Vigorous applause) I am doing it not because he is my brother, (words indistinct) but because I truly consider him sufficiently capable to substitute for me should I have to die. Moreover, he is a comrade with very firm revolutionary convictions and he has shown his ability in this struggle. He was one of the leaders of the attack on the Moncada garrison; he spent two years in prison; he has carried out so many (word indistinct) for the country; he has shown his ability as an organizer and a leader. I wish that this did not concern a brother. I wish that he had been another in order to remove the slightest suspicion that I am favoring a relative. I must say right here that

no one is being favored because for us the country means suffering and duty, not pleasure or vanity, or pleasures of a personal nature. For us this work is the work of a slave (who knows his people are lost?)

For us leadership means sacrifice. For us leadership is not aspiring to power. Everyone knows that I gave up power a long time ago. Everyone knows with what disinterestedness I fought, and that I am the opinion that no man is indispensable, and that any honorable Cuban can be a good President of the Republic. (Applause) Everyone knows that not only did I refuse to be President of the Republic, but I gave my full support to the President. Everyone knows my respect for the civil institutions of the republic. Everyone knows that I have neither interfered nor will interfere in matters pertaining to the presidency.

Everyone knows that I have been able to maintain unlimited (word indistinct) and if I have replied to thousands of questions it is because they were asked and because I was authorized (several words indistinct) if the President will not allow me to hold a single press conference, and the President will not allow me to make another statement while I am commander in chief of all the forces of the republic I will obey this order unconditionally.

What I have done is to defend the revolution from slander. What I have done is to defend the good name of my country when others were seeking to represent us as a country of criminals and savages. What I have done is to defend the prestige of this revolution which has cost so much and freely shed blood. I say this because to be a leader is really not a pleasure trip or a bed of roses, but a sacrifice, the extent of which perhaps very few can understand. This is all the more so when one feels the responsibility of so great a faith as the faith our people have placed in us.

By stating here the necessity that the people be alert and be prepared for any attack on its leaders or on one of its leaders, by presenting here this necessity, I do so with the honest conviction of a man who is not only concerned with the present but also the future of the country, of a man who is thinking about the country, not only while he is alive, but after his death. By stating here that I consider Comrade Raul Castro could replace me if necessary, I am not making the decision alone. Rather I want to consult with the people to see whether they agree.

My enemies know how that they can attack because everything has been taken care of. Moreover, should they attack Raul, behind him another would rise and behind that one another, and so forth. In the struggle the people of Cuba will not be lacking in leaders, because everything will have been taken care of. We who were able to win the war in the face of all odds will also be able to win the revolution against all the enemies who plan (to attack it?). Thus, the people of Cuba (words indistinct) each day we will be stronger in our defense of the interests of the country and the interests of the people. Finally, the people have attained their goal; the complete freedom and sovereignty which it never had. It is a nation which rules itself and does not take orders from anyone.

We have a just question to ask here. We will take advantage of this opportunity to ask the U.S. Government to return the war criminals who have taken refuge there. (Applause) The people of Cuba demand of the people of the United States not give asylum to the Masferras, the Venturas, and the other criminals. The people of the United States must demand of the U.S. Government the return of the war criminals because they are war criminals.

After the world war the people of the United States would not have agreed for Goering, Himmler, and Hitler to take refuge here. Well, our Himmler is Ventura. Our Goerings are the Tabernillas, the Pinar Garcias, the Tavianos, the (Laurens?). Our Hitler is Batista.

If the United States wants to be just, if the United States wants to respect the feelings of the people of Cuba, it must consent to extradite the war criminals because they are not political criminals. Those who violated women cannot be considered political criminals because the violation of woman has nothing to do with politics. Those who tore out eyes cannot be considered political criminals, because pulling out human eyes has nothing to do with politics, those who assassinated children and old women, those who tortured thousands and thousands of our fellow citizens without pity cannot be considered political criminals because torture has nothing to do with politics. They cannot be sheltered as political criminals because they are common law criminals. The millions of pesos which they stole to place in American banks must be returned to us. Filling one's pockets with the people's money in order to take it abroad has nothing to do with politics, because the theft of the republic's money to spend it on luxuries has nothing to do with politics, and they are thieves here and anywhere in the world. Therefore, the people of Cuba have the right to demand the return of the assassins, torturers, and also the return of the money taken from all the peoples. We are not going to waste our time asking Trujillo to return the thieves to (word indistinct) and we are not going to ask for the return of the air force planes which the refugees took with them. We are not asking Trujillo to return them because the people of the Dominican Republic will return them and because we do not want any kind of relations with Trujillo.

Of course, Trujillo is not a dictator; just talk with those Congressmen who are attacking us and you will see that Trujillo is a saint. It was disgusting; there were some papers, some Mexican papers, for example, with a cartoon showing Cuba dressed in white in a bath of blood, in a puddle, and us there with beards and rifles like common executioners, of course.

Why? Ah! Because the international cable agencies are there, the same agencies that (few words indistinct). They could not kill me and now they are trying to kill the revolution's prestige, and of course very subtly. Anybody with a minimum of understanding need only read the international dispatches to see how this campaign was organized. The sad part is that they have confused some American peoples. (Few words indistinct)

The Mexican people, a country that had a great territory wrested from it, a country that has been so humiliated and mistreated; to this country came the agencies that represent monopolistic, exploiting interests, to deceive the Mexicans and make them believe that we are

something worse Trujillo, worse than Somoza, worse than (few words indistinct) the world has seen. Our name has been presented as that of a murderer among the peoples of America.

Here, or in any country in America, I can stand with my head high, with the satisfaction of having a clear conscience and my hands free of blood. I can stand before any nation to tell it the truth. I am only sorry that the peoples of America should let themselves be deceived so abominably. I am only sorry to think what the fate of America would be if this revolution is crushed, because this revolution, which is not a coup, which is not the uprising of a group of military caudillos, but a revolution of the people, authentically of the people, should represent a hope for the peoples of America. And why? Ah! Because we have hit America's sore spot. The history of America for more than a century is plain; America is the victim of ambitious men, military caudillos, military castes. How much America and the peoples of our hemisphere need a revolution like the one that has taken place in Cuba. How much America needs an example like this in all its nations. How much it needs for the millionaires who have become rich by stealing the people's money to lose everything they have stolen. How much America needs for the war criminals in the countries of our hemisphere all to be shot.

Had these things been, maybe our continent would not be what it is today: Groups of nations divided, set apart despite their identical feelings, needs, interests, race, and culture; it would not be the group of divided, weak nations, victims of the customary tyranny and military castes. How much America needed Cuba's example. We Cubans can feel proud of a revolution that came with no ambition for dominion, with no goal of exploitation or domination over other countries; it came as an example, as aspiration for justice, broad justice, (word indistinct), within the most extraordinary system of respect for human freedoms the world has ever known.

The Cuban revolution can be summed up as an aspiration for social justice, within the fullest freedom and absolute respect for the people's rights. Our revolution must be defended as a patrimony of Cuba, if not of America. The honest men of America, the honest newsmen of the continent, the peoples who are our friends--we must ask them to defend our revolution, not allow it to be slandered in an attempt to destroy it to the detriment of not just Cuba, but America. There are some who want to keep the Cuban revolution from raising its head, so that no country in America can raise its head.

We had seven years of tyranny. Seven years, and nobody came to give us freedom; we had to win it with our sacrifices. Governments did not help us--we were helped by the peoples. The peoples of all America sympathized with us; the peoples of all America were our friends. And now they are trying to take away the only friends we had; they are trying to take away the peoples, trying to alienate peoples from us by telling them that we are carrying out mass executions, without trials, of Batista supporters. The dispatches do not say that they are the tyrant's henchmen; the dispatches do not say that they are murderers; the dispatches do not say that each of the men executed has 10, 12, or even 100 killings against his name. No, the dispatches say that they are mass executions, without trial, of "Batista supporters."

And since the peoples of America have seen the horrors of dictatorship, since the peoples of America are accustomed to hearing about mass executions of political opponents without a trial, an effort is made to make them believe this is such a (case?). The dispatches do not talk about the conduct of the rebel army; they have not stressed that this has been the only revolution where not a single man was mobbed to death; they do not stress that no other people in the world have conducted themselves in such a civilized way as the Cubans have done; that not a single henchman of the dictator has been tortured; that not a single enemy has been beaten; that this is the only revolution in the world where the people, instead of taking vengeance into their own hands, placed the criminals at the disposal of the revolutionary courts.

Ah! They do not say these things. The men we are sentencing now are the ones that the people usually kill the first three days after a revolution. We are executing the ones the people would have mobbed to death had we not asked them to have faith in justice. We have been more than generous. Informers have not been shot. The thing to do with informers is not shoot them, but send them to work, sentence them to forced labor, since they wanted to make their living by betrayal and informing, let them work for the people, let them work. But the hired killers must be shot, for even the Bible ways "he who lives by the sword shall die by the sword." They must be shot, because those who today ask that they not be shot will in three years be asking us to turn them loose. It is clear; there cannot be peace without justice; there cannot be democracy without justice. In the name of peace real crimes have been committed. And I can ask the Congressmen who attacked me, I can ask them: What did the United States do--I can ask the Congressmen who have attacked us: What was done at Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Ah! In the name of peace, two cities and (500,000?) human beings were bombed. We have not executed any child. We have not executed any woman. We have not executed any old man.

Yet at Hiroshima and Nagasaki 300,000 human beings died (words indistinct) And in the name of what? Well, they said it was to obtain peace. They also said it was to prevent the death of many North Americans in battle. all right; I tell those Congressmen that, aside from the fact that they have nothing to do with Cuban affairs, we are executing the tyrant's henchmen to obtain peace, and we are executing the (butcher?) so that they cannot murder our children again tomorrow.

Besides, the number of henchmen we are going to execute will not be more than 400. That is about one for every 1,000 men, women, and children murdered at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If it is a question of telling the truth, why did they not come here to talk? When we told them to come and see what the people want, why did they not come? Two Representatives who have defended the Cuban cause came. Representative Porter and Representative Powell came to testify to our being right. But the ones who attacked us, whom we invited to come and talk, face to face, to learn what the people (words indistinct).

Since they call themselves democrats let them see what democracy is. Since they talk about

the will of the people, let them see what the will of the people is. We did not invite (words indistinct) but so they could see the truth.

There is one thing I want to explain so the people will be clear on that point. The U.S. Government has not directly attacked us. The entire U.S. press has not attacked us. Part of the press, including Herbert Matthews, has defended us. And it is clear: At present the U.S. Government (has not assumed a hostile attitude?) toward us, but we know what the mechanics are in the United States. A certain campaign is begun; the interests that fear the revolution organize a campaign against the revolution; they shape public opinion, and then ask the U.S. Government to take action. Not yet, not yet, because they have not waged the campaign yet (words indistinct).

If it is necessary, we extend a permanent invitation to the newsmen; here we have nothing to hide. And since we have so much faith in the people, so much faith in their political maturity, we know that nobody will be able to bamboozle the people or swerve them (words indistinct). A beginning was made with the slander campaign, but we countered it in time.

Of course I want to make it clear that the people of Cuba are not animated by any feeling of hostility toward the people of the United States. On the contrary; we are also talking to public opinion in the United States, so that it may support us against those interests, which are the enemies of both Cuba and the United States.

We have not carried out an aggression against anybody. The Cuban revolution has not attacked any nation. On the contrary it is the Cuban people, for the mere fact of having freed themselves from tyranny at the cost of many sacrifices, who have been made the target of the most criminal, base, and cowardly campaign.

But, fellow citizens, I assure you that this battle is won; it has been won with the help of everybody, with the help of men of all different ideas, (religions?), and (few words indistinct). This is a battle that belongs to everybody. The people have united admirably in defense of their justice, sovereignty, and prestige.

Our gratitude and admiration are well deserved by a people that have been able to unite as one man in this struggle. Nobody can defeat such a people. We must prevent any split; we must remain united to defend the interests of the fatherland. (Few words indistinct) not just against the criminals, but also social justice.

A nation like this, which despite its hundreds of thousands of unemployed has given an incomparable example of order; a capital like this, where despite hundreds of thousands of unemployed there are no policemen, where there is not a single (word indistinct), certainly deserves (few words indistinct). A people that will not steal even though hungry deserve anything.

One example we can point to with pride is that despite the hunger and unemployment that exist, police are not needed in Havana, and the Boy Scouts are practically insuring order. In what country is there such extraordinary order and absolute peace that children are put in charge of keeping order in the capital after a revolution? That is what we want the newsmen of the American hemisphere to tell their own people.

Fellow citizens, my (warmest?) congratulations, my gratitude (passage indistinct). Today, after this extraordinary demonstration; today, after the satisfaction we feel at seeing this support from the people; today, as we feel such pride at being Cuban and belonging to this people, one of the world's finest peoples; today, on behalf of (all?) and in the name of the revolutionary government and the fighters of the rebel army, I want to say to my people. Thank you very much.

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