

## [SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ AT THE UNIVERSITY STAIRCASE, NOVEMBER 27, 1960 \[1\]](#)

### **Fecha:**

27/11/1960

Students (APPLAUSE);

Young Rebels (APPLAUSE);

Youth Brigades (APPLAUSE);

Militiawomen (APPLAUSE);

Militiamen (APPLAUSE);

People of Cuba (APPLAUSE):

There is, on this November 27, something worthy of attention. It is that this rally, this year has been greater than last year's. Moreover, this means a lot. It means that as time passes what used to happen does not happen anymore; which is that commemorations like this were losing the warmth of the people.

The presence of a greater number of Cubans in this gathering tonight means that patriotic and revolutionary commemorations have more and more support of the people. Why? Simply because the people's revolutionary conscience is growing and getting stronger. And it is not just that many more Cubans going to the university this year. One must also bear in mind that this fact signifies, in another sense, a defeat for the counterrevolution.

For the Cuban Revolution this event has great significance, after almost two years of revolution, after the radical and profound measures the Revolution has brought to our country.

If this rally had taken place in the countryside, and the peasants had massively attended it, it would be natural; if this act were to take place among workers, and they congregated en masse, it would be only natural. The working class and the peasants, who for the most part are also agricultural workers, are with the Revolution; and that is quite natural.

The reaction did not try to fight its battle within the working class; the counterrevolution did not try to gain ground among the peasants. However, the counterrevolution pinned its hopes of taking positions in the University of Havana and among the student sectors. Why? Because the student are a heterogeneous mass; the composition of the student body is varied, and, in general, the children of the poorest families did not have the opportunity to pursue university studies. The opportunity to study in our country had been in inverse ratio to economic resources, or rather —to avoid causing an arithmetic confusion here—, in direct proportion to resources, and in inverse ratio to poverty. In other words, the poorer the families, the fewer opportunities for their children to study.

Who, for example, had to shine shoes on the streets of our capital? Where do those children who sell newspapers at night and at dawn come from? What chance did they have of studying at the university?

And what opportunity did children of peasant families have if there were not even primary school teachers in the countryside?

Those whose families had resources could go to the city, and could study in the institutes and the universities. Some, the most privileged, could also go to study abroad; they went either to the United States or to Europe. In general, the poorest families in the country, with few exceptions, could not send their children to study.

There could be poor people in the university, of course; and in the university and in the institutes; there are many children of poor families. However, in the university, there are also children of middle-income families, and there are children of rich families.

It may have happened that a young man who was poor could not study. What could never happen in our country was that a young man who was rich could not study; if a rich young man did not study was because he did not want to. And in general, wealthy families wanted their children to study, and were very interested in perpetuating their interests through them. That is strictly the truth.

Among the affected, university students were those whose family interests had been hindered by the revolutionary laws. For this reason, counterrevolution is trying to gain ground all over the world, not among the peasants. What is counterrevolution going to say to a peasant freed by the Revolution from paying rent? What will counterrevolution tell a peasant whose life changes radically, whom the Revolution has freed from misery, exploitation, and humiliation, to whom the Revolution has brought so many benefits? What will counterrevolution tell the workers now?

Counterrevolution owns, first, the schools, specially, the higher education institutions, and, in general, all schools. In addition, it goes to those centers of learning to recruit its agents from among the children of rich families, among the children of families affected by the revolutionary laws; and counterrevolution does not exactly go to the public school opened by the Revolutionary Government in the farthest mountains. Counterrevolutionaries have never even visited the mountains! (APPLAUSE.)

Counterrevolution does not go to the barracks and fortresses that have been turned into schools, where the children of workers and poor families go to study (APPLAUSE). Counterrevolution knows they have nothing to look for there. Imperialism knows they have nothing to look for there. And when they go looking for something, they are not exactly going to try to find it among the students; they are going to look for it, if anything, among the professors of those schools (APPLAUSE).

To be clear, yes, let me be clear, because there are still some Batista's followers among the secondary school teachers (SHOUTS AND APPLAUSE), because there are still reactionary and counterrevolutionary pro-imperialists among the secondary school teachers (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF: "ii Out! Get them out!"). Counterrevolution goes to them; counterrevolution goes to them, to turn them into instruments for its purposes against the people. Counterrevolution gets their instructions, above all, you know where: to the schools of the privileged (APPLAUSE). There, in the schools of the privileged, there counterrevolution has its best breeding ground. And in the schools of the super-privileged (SHOUTS), there is hardly any youth whose privileged interests has not been affected. Whether their families are large landowners, or as a large importer merchant, or as a big owner of a sugar mill, or a big representative of a financial institution, or a big realtor, or a professional at the service of those interests the Revolution has vanished from our homeland. It is very unlikely, it is very difficult that there might be a young man from the privileged class whose privileged interests have not been affected one way or another, by the laws of the Revolution of the humble, by the humble and for the humble (APPLAUSE).

And since we speak here in the name of that Revolution, we have the duty to speak very clearly to our people, especially to the humble of our people (APPLAUSE) and to speak also to the privileged of the past and the semi-privileged of today, because they still hold some privileges. We speak with clarity above all, so they know that we, the leaders of the Revolution, and the people who support this

Revolution with their enthusiasm and their invincible faith (APPLAUSE); we know what we are doing, and we know the heart of the matter, the background. Let those semi-privileged who remain out there know that we understand the reason, and we understand why the best breeding ground for counterrevolution is in those schools.

And when we spoke here about counterrevolutionary teachers, we were not criticizing our colleague, the Minister of Education. No (APPLAUSE). It is not an easy task to face that inheritance of the past. In any case, this is a natural consequence of the revolutionary process, and above all, the process of a generous revolution like this is; but a Revolution which has not weakened because of its generosity, but rather has this tremendous moral influence over its people, and the tremendous moral strength to act because of its generosity (APPLAUSE).

Counterrevolution is openly preached in many of those schools, hatred against our homeland is openly preached, hatred against other classes is openly preached, hatred against the humble peasant, against the worker, against the humble youth, against the humble people is also preached. That is to say; hatred is preached against the measures and actions taken, not to benefit privileged minorities, not to maintain the privileges of that minority, but rather to bring justice to those who lacked it, to bring well-being to those who lacked it, to bring progress and improvement to those who lacked it; and they did so openly, blatantly. And why openly and blatantly? Ah, because there is no one as sly on this earth as a counterrevolutionary! (APPLAUSE.) There is no one more cynical in this world than a counterrevolutionary! (APPLAUSE.)

And what do the scribes and the Pharisees know? You know who the Pharisees are and you know who the scribes are, and you know who the antichrists are here in this country (APPLAUSE). That is to say, those who do not cast their lot with the poor of this world, those who do not want to enter heaven through the eye of a needle (APPLAUSE). That is to say, those who want the camel to go through the eye of the needle (APPLAUSE).

Those, who never went to the underprivileged neighborhoods, who never went to the poor and abandoned villages; those, who dedicated themselves to encouraging the great social privileged and were their teachers; Those, Pharisees and scribes, those who make up the rotten rabble of counterrevolution, they know, what they are up to.

They know what the Revolution wants, they know what the Revolution aims at; they know the Revolution is generous. They know the Revolution does not want to play their game; They know that the Revolution does not want to add fuel to the fire of the international campaigns against our motherland. They know what they are up to; they know that they are not going to confuse anyone here. However, they are at the service of international interests; they don't care about the game here, they care about the game out there; They are interested in creating conflicts here, so they can spread propaganda abroad.

Those who here use the temples, or the schools of the super-privileged to wage a criminal campaign against the Revolution that has done so much good for the redeemed: the poor and the humble of this country (APPLAUSE). Those who want to rise up against the revolutionary homeland, because the revolutionary homeland destroyed selfish interests, destroyed immoral interests, immoral in the eyes of men and in the eyes of God (APPLAUSE); those who rise up against the homeland because the homeland destroyed those immoral and selfish interests; They, know that here they cannot fool anybody. Not even fanaticism can they instill among the sons of those who's properties were expropriated who they want to turn into agents of the counterrevolution; because those who died crucified in Rome, those who were torn to pieces in the circus without renouncing their faith, were not the children of the Roman patricians. They were the children of the Roman plebeian! (APPLAUSE.)

Those who burned on the crosses, those who were devoured by wild beasts, were slaves or semi-slaves: the poor of Rome. And among those men the faith was solid; those men were not used to the pleasures of the ruling class who lived from feast to feast. It is difficult they can make a hero, or fanatic, or a

person faithful to any belief out of the children of the privileged, because those who are faithful to any religious or political idea are not the overfed, they are not the satisfied, they are not the ones who in life ignore what suffering and what pain is (APPLAUSE). It is very unlikely they can make loyal servants of any idea among those who drive luxury cars; among those, whose table has always been served in abundance; Among those who think it is judgment day if they lack for anything (APPLAUSE). And yes: the time has come in our homeland for Judgment Day of the privilege and criminal exploitation of our people! (APPLAUSE.)

Heroes they will not find among the sons of the privileged. Conviction, the kind that lead men to be willing to die for those convictions, they will never find among the sons of the privileged, and they will never be able to instill in them the willingness to die, which is the opposite to those who are willing to die for their beliefs (APPLAUSE). But they are recruited to spread propaganda abroad; they recruit them to provoke. They know what they are up to; they know the Revolution is generous. They know the Revolution does not want to add fuel to the fire of the international campaigns against the homeland, and they take advantage of that fact to inculcate — even among children, whose minds are not yet formed--; reactionary opinions, opinions of a class that has lost their privileges, selfish opinions, opinions against the country, opinions against the Revolution, opinions against the people.

They know what the Revolution stance is, and they provoke. Perhaps they go further; perhaps they imagine that the Revolution fears them; Perhaps they believe that the Revolution's arm will tremble when the day comes it has to decree the end of so much crime and shame! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF: "Fidel, be sure, hit the Yanks hard!")

They took to the task of spreading the most vile slanders; And despite the fact that the Revolution has given proof upon proof of its attitude towards those centers, because that was the Revolution's policy since the beginning, that we even asked a group of teachers from one of those schools to renounce a legitimate attitude, in order to solve the problem. We spoke to them and asked them to abandon their attitude, to renounce those legitimate rights, in the interests of a revolutionary policy intended to prove with facts its generous attitude towards those sectors, as long as they did not take an attitude of outright belligerence against the Revolution.

And to that same university of the super-privileged, where a large group of young Cubans has been expelled because of their patriotic sentiment (APPLAUSE). With that University which is one- hundred percent Yankee and yankeephile (CHANTS: "Out!"); We had the gesture of talking to the university students and asked them to be generous with those who, while thousands of young people immolated themselves, and while dozens upon dozens of students were murdered in the streets, they did not even displayed the most basic civility and show solidarity with their colleagues from the University of Havana. On the other hand during the times when crime and terror were rampant, they profited with the homeland's blood, enrolling more and more students, thus benefiting from the civic spirit of a university that closed its doors and preferred to take to the streets to fight against tyranny! ! (APPLAUSE.)

And yet, the Revolutionary Government eased the sanction that students who had lost two, and three, and up to four years of school were rightly requesting, while the "gentlemen" graciously received their University degrees.

In other words, if there is something nobody can do is accusing the Revolution of been aggressive or hostile to those privileged centers. But the Revolution was against privilege, the Revolution was against the economic interests of the privileged classes; And since it was not a problem of religion, it was not an issue of religious beliefs, and it was a matter of material interests, in deed a money problem, yes an economic problem. Everything else, faith, religion and other issues, have served as a pretext to wheeze from the wound; the wound not of religion, nor of faith, but the wound of petty and selfish private interests (APPLAUSE), economic interests. Because the Revolution came to discover what a close link there was, for example, between landowners, the military and the clergy (CHANTS Of : "Out!").

When the sugar mills were nationalized, it was revealed that some clerics had perks of up to several

hundred pesos. In other words, they didn't just send the check to the henchman; They didn't just send the check to the sergeant, the lieutenant, the captain, the commander; They didn't just send the check to the famous lawyer, whose law firm was in charge of defending the sacrosanct interests of those gentlemen; They also sent the church official the "little check", and the "big check" too (SHOUTS OF: "Out!"), generating a disgusting marriage between the landowner who exploited the workers and the peasants, the henchman who beat and killed, the lawyer who charged high sums of money to defend those privileges and the priest who preached submission to the worker and the peasant (APPLAUSE AND CHANTS OF: "FIDEL, BE SURE, HIT THE PRIEST HARD!").

That is why some of these henchmen with cassocks (BOOKS), very far, very far from the true preaching of Christ, took on to delivering counterrevolutionary sermons in the churches (SHOUTS OF: "Out!"), and writing parochial pamphlets the Catholics themselves, the believers, received while they were still singing the National Anthem (APPLAUSE).

Ah! That the good believers did not know; that was not known to the humble believer. I did not know that the Pharisee received the big check from the exploiter of the poor of our homeland! I did not know it. And the Revolution did not have any hostile attitude towards religion; the Revolution did not interfere with anyone in any church; the Revolution simply nationalized sugar mills, and there, there it did the same thing it did at all the departments of the State: sinecures no! No perks! (APPLAUSE.)

The Revolution did not interfere with the interests of faith or religion; the Revolution did affect material interests. The laws of the Revolution were never against any church. What revolutionary law has ever hindered the rights of any church, or of any cult? What revolutionary law has violated any religious right? Ah! But the revolutionary laws did go against the latifundia, the revolutionary laws did go against the foreign monopoly, the revolutionary laws did go against the exploiter of the poor tenant; they were against high rents and they were even against the institution of rent; the revolutionary laws were against foreign interests, they were against monopolies, they were against everything that injured the country's interest. No revolutionary law was enacted against any church, and if the Revolution laws were issued against material goods, it is extremely clear that the attitude of some members of the clergy towards the Revolution has never been the result of any religious reason, On the other hand, they do cry out because of the injury to the economic interests of the classes with which they were allied (APPLAUSE).

And those truths were already said here, on this very platform, by a worthy Catholic priest (APPLAUSE); Those same truths were here proclaimed by someone who comes with his habit to speak on a revolutionary platform (APPLAUSE), to serve his homeland without denying God, to serve his people without denying Christ.

And here everybody can follow a political and revolutionary faith, and a religious faith as well, because the republic exercises full respect for the freedom of worship; respect for believers and nonbelievers alike. But one thing is certain, our homeland has room for all of us who love it! (APPLAUSE.) The Revolution has room for all of us who love the people!

Those who do not fit into the Revolution are those who hate the poor! Our homeland can't give room to those who hate the people! Those who do not love our homeland, neither can they serve God nor can they serve their homeland. They serve the interests of the selfish rich; they serve the interests of the privileged! (APPLAUSE.)

Those are the ones who cannot speak on this podium where the truth shines forth, and where all hypocrisy and all lies were put an end to from the first instant.

And these arguments explain why counterrevolution tried to take positions among students, in universities and in private schools; In private schools, that is up to them! We won't meddle. We said we were going to build schools for the children of humble families, better than the best private schools, and we are keeping our promise! (APPLAUSE.) And it is difficult for some schools to compete with the Ciudad

Libertad school center (APPLAUSE).

And it is only logical that as these schools for the people progress, some privileged schools will languish. For two reasons: because there are better schools now; and for another reason:

because the privileged have been, simply, stricken from their perks and their resources (APPLAUSE).

Things are clear. That money that previously went into the hands of the landowner, that money from the big importing business, the great financiers and the great landowners, which previously served to support schools for the privileged, that money is now used to build schools for the people. The Revolutionary Government takes those resources and turns them into school cities; and much more so since the barracks and fortresses which already existed have been turned into schools (APPLAUSE).

And the result is obvious: some of those privileged schools are ruined. However, they do not give up just to languishing economically, which is a consequence of the revolutionary measures issued by the government, not against them, but in favor of the people, and, naturally, they do not resign themselves.

What are they trying to do? Before closing the schools, they double and triple their provocations, so that, incidentally, since the schools will close due to the lack of privileges anyway, then let's try to make people believe internationally that the Revolutionary Government has closed those schools. The Revolutionary Government does not close them, but they then increase the dose of provocation, as they are doing in that university in Yankeeland.

And for the Revolutionary Government, in terms of whatever might be Yankee... the Revolutionary Government with regards to everything that smells of Yankee imperialism, will keep a steady hand when taking any measure. And the Revolutionary Government does not want to give counterrevolution an excuse to carry out international campaigns, but that does not mean, gentlemen of Yankeeland, that you have the right to impunity. And that, furthermore, can create any illusions, because in this struggle the poor will be with the Revolution (APPLAUSE), and the poor will fight, the poor will fight; and the privileged will be left alone. And the privileged are not made out of the same fiber as those who in ancient Roma knew how to die; the privileged go to the embassy and then they head for Miami. That is what many have done.

And at Country (Club), that neighborhood that is worth stopping by just to see how some lived, and from there go to Las Yaguas neighborhood, to see how others lived, and then imagine someone telling us that was fair, that it was noble, that that was very good and that the Revolution is very bad, because it wants those of Las Yaguas to have hygienic houses, and have cement floors, and have sanitary facilities, and have schools, and have parks and have bread to give their children (APPLAUSE). Let them later say that the Revolution is bad. It is so bad that it left them with 30 caballerias (circa 402 hectares), at least, to the landowners! It would take any neighbor in the slums to have 30 caballerias of land. It is so bad that it left six hundred pesos of rent to the owners of the big buildings! It would take any family in the Las Yaguas neighborhood to have 600 pesos of monthly income.

It is so bad that it has not taken the house from anyone of them! But they are "so good", "so good", that many of them heard that the Americans were coming, they believed in the story of the marines, and they left us the 400 hectares (CROWD SHOUTS), they left us the 600 pesos. And since they were still "better", "better" still than we imagined, they left us the houses at the Country Club (APPLAUSE). Nobody threw them out, but how could they live on 600 pesos? This was a criminal Revolution that starved them to death. How was it possible they were going to live with 30 caballerias? This was a criminal revolution that did not even leave them where to plant a banana tree.

How was it possible? And besides, if the Americans were coming, if the Americans were going to give them back their large estates, their businesses, they were going to raise rents again, they were going to turn the schools into fortresses again, they were going to take away the land from the peasants, and what was before was coming back and they would have no problems.

Why would they live here, in this hellish country, which built homes for poor families? Because the poor were not going to keep living in the huts and in those miserable neighborhoods, and they could continue living in those residences that envy nothing to the residences of the already mentioned patrician families of Rome.

It is possible that in very few places in the world there are residences like these; It is possible that in the United States itself, the epicenter of imperialism, there are not many houses as luxurious as these. And we recommend, as a method of revolutionary instruction, to go there, through Country Club, to go around a couple of times, and then go by the poor houses of Marianao, which are next to it, a dividing line: where the last residence ends, the first miserable house appears. And that was the world they wanted. and that is the world they yearn for, a world where 400 or 500 lived in those palaces, and millions and millions of families lived, as those who even for those miserable two-room apartments had to pay 70 or 80 pesos in some cases (SHOUTS).

What for, what did they pay the 80 pesos for? Why did the peasant work like a slave? Why did the worker work like a slave? For what? So that Martí's homeland, which he had said was "for everyone and for the good of all" ... And that was what Martí said, and he said it very clearly. He said that the homeland belonged "to everyone and for the good of all" (APPLAUSE).

And never did Martí or anyone else said the homeland belonged to just a few, and to the ill of almost the entire country. And the Revolution has come to fulfill that Martí's apothegm that states that the homeland belonged to everyone and was for the good of all. Furthermore, the Revolution has so generously fulfilled that promise like history has not recorded before; It has done it without using the guillotine, because it is known that in France the nobles were not expropriated, but rather had their necks cut off with a guillotine (SHOUTS). And in Haiti, when the slaves revolted, just to mention these examples, and many more could be cited, the owners of the coffee plantations had their heads cut off as well.

And when the peoples have risen up they have not followed very lenient procedures. Here the expropriated not only received a good treatment, but also, when they wanted to leave, they took the path of the embassy, they queued up at the embassy and nobody messed with them, nobody has come to tell them: no, you stay here anyway, living in your house in the Country Club ... (SOMEONE SHOUTS: "Now it's Cubanacán!") For them it is still the Country Club; for us it is Cubanacán (APPLAUSE). That has not been our attitude. Do you want to go? Then good bye. Do not disturb them. Is Uncle Sam going to pay for their expenses? Very well. It is better for Uncle Sam to pay for them instead of Liborio, who was the one paying for them until now (APPLAUSE).

And they immediately have established a committee to assist the poor emigrants, some emigrants who had 30 caballerias of land left, and had big bank accounts left. Well, they set up a committee. Do not bother them. These 30 caballerias can be used to employ more peasants and further develop the agrarian reform (APPLAUSE). Those 600 pesos they resign serve to employ five more workers to build new homes (APPLAUSE).

And those Country Club houses, what are we going to do with them? (SHOUTS OF: "Schools!") Not schools, because poor boys don't live around there.

We have an idea. There is a capital invested in real state, in furniture ... what should we do? (SHOUTS.) No, those houses will be used for our guests, for the leaders of workers, students, peasants, for illustrious visitors, since the Revolution always has many illustrious visitors (APPLAUSE). We are going to prepare 100 houses with Cadillacs and everything (SHOUTS), for the visitors invited by the already established Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (APPLAUSE). And we are going to keep the gardens in pristine conditions , and we are going to undertake a series of plans.

For example, we are going to choose 100 youth from the Youth Brigades for Revolutionary Work

(APPLAUSE) who want to study languages and become tourist guides. We are going to take them to a secondary school, where they will prepare to later study a diplomatic degree, but while they are students of that basic and pre-university secondary school, they will be tourist guides, drivers of those Cadillacs (APPLAUSE). They will take visitors to see the cooperatives, the people's farms, the school cities and the work of the Revolution. Afterwards, those same students, those tourist guides; will go to the university and later, in the future, they may even become ambassadors of the republic (APPLAUSE).

And it won't cost us anything to provide those services, because those same education centers can provide such services, and we are going to keep the gardens, and we are going to improve ourselves. And we are also going to use other schools, we are going to train a part of the students to attend to visitors. When visitors are there, they attend to them; when the visitors leave, they go back to school (APPLAUSE). And that way those Cadillacs won't use too much gas; they will last a long time, and they will be there for the exclusive use of foreign visitors while in Cuba.

That is what we are going to do with the houses at Cubanacán, which were abandoned voluntarily by "distinguished families" to seek accommodation with the "hospitable lands of Uncle Sam", Well then, thanks for the houses!

That is simply what happened here: A gentleman left and left us a school called "Havana Military Academy"? Well, we are already building additional facilities and there will be the first polytechnological school for the Rebel Army, where 1 000 Youth Brigades of Revolutionary Work will study. (APPLAUSE).

Not a single building will be left idle here, because the Revolution has already organized, and has the manpower to undertake all the tasks it sets out to, and all the goals it has set itself to fulfill. Now we have 600 scholarship holders for the university and a capacity for 2,000 and three more buildings are being prepared to handle 2,500 more. Every young person from a poor family wanting to study in the university needs only to ask for a scholarship. He does not need any sponsors. (APPLAUSE); He does not need a letter of recommendation. He simply goes to the office and says: "I want to study this of that degree, and I don't have financial resources" (APPLAUSE).

What do we do with those students? Do we give them a handout? No! Is it a state charity? No! Those students are going to pay for their studies afterwards (APPLAUSE); resources are simply advanced to them. How will they be there? Well, in the best possible conditions: historical places, adequate food, books, clothes, all expenses, and a 10 pesos a month alimony during the first year (APPLAUSE). And as they progress, more resources will be allocated to them. They have everything to devote themselves to study; they will also have the library, dining rooms, the social club. Those at Ciudad Libertad have sports facilities; Those near the university stadium have their sports fields here; and they will live a true student life, while the university city is built.

Those students will have every opportunity to become great technicians; and then they will repay the cost of their scholarship with a small portion of their earnings in 10 years; so that when they finish they can help thousands of new students enroll in the university and receive their scholarships (APPLAUSE).

What is the Revolution doing? Giving them the opportunity. And the Revolution will do this in the University of Havana, and at the University of Las Villas ... (AN EXPLOSION IS HEARD NEAR BY.)

.. Ignore it, Don't pay attention to it; They place those bombs against the poor, bombs they set against the humble people. None of these bombs are set by a peasant who has been freed from rent, or who lives in a cooperative or works on a village farm, and has been given teachers, and has been given a home to live, and has received the benefits of the Revolution. None of these bombs are set by a peasant from the mountains, where there are 1,000 volunteer teachers today teaching their children. None of those bombs are placed by a humble worker; none of those bombs are placed by a family whose rent has been lowered from 70 to 35 pesos, and have now been given the right to own the house they live in (APPLAUSE). None of these bombs are made by a family whose loved one has been admitted to a hospital, without a letter of recommendation, without any influential person involved, and where they



have been healed and in many cases their lives have been saved; None of those bombs are set by a family, whose children are studying in those fortresses which used to house those who murdered those very children in our homeland. None of those bombs are placed by a humble man from the people; none of those bombs are placed by a patriot. None of those bombs are placed by a true citizen who cares for others, who cares for his country.

Who sets those bombs? The henchmen place them, the mobsters place them, the agents of imperialism place them, those who sell themselves to a foreign power place them, those who kneel before the foreigner pace them, those who want to see to see their motherland drenched with blood! (SHOUTS OF: "Out! Firing Squad!" And "Cuba yes, Yankees no!")

Years ago, revolutionaries used dynamite to combat exploitation, to fight against crime, to fight against tyranny. Formerly, revolutionaries used dynamite to fight the henchman, the corrupt politicians, to fight against the embezzler, to fight against the those who extracted the homeland wealth, to fight against the imperialist exploiter, to fight against privilege. Ah! And it was at the price of being murdered, it was at the price of being tortured in an attempt to get a confession. The revolutionary who fought for his ideal knew he had an informant on every corner, he had a police car full of henchmen on every corner, he knew he had a torture chamber on almost every block! He knew that at the police stations the instruments of terror awaited; the hooks to gouge out his eyes, the red-hot irons to burn his feet, the sticks to grind his bones! that hell and terror awaited him in the police stations! (APPLAUSE.) The revolutionary knew that the devious bullet in the neck awaited him, the bullet in the back, the pool of blood where at dawn his corpse would lie. And the revolutionary bravely faced all this to fight for an ideal; nobody paid him, he didn't charge anybody for those services!

The counterrevolutionary, the agent of imperialism, the criminal who charges the embassy for his services, who charges the privileged for his services, he knows that neither torture nor crime await him; He knows he has as a guarantee of his life because of the Revolution generosity which has been granted even to the worst terrorists. He knows that no terrorist yet - and I think I'm not wrong about it - I think no terrorist has yet gone to the firing squad. That is how the coward counterrevolutionary terrorist acts (SHOUTS OF: "Firing squad!"). They know that nobody lays a finger on them; they know that no one gets a finger on them at a station; and they know the Revolution has been generous; they know the revolutionary tribunal have been benign. But we know that in the soul of a mercenary, in the soul of someone who has sold his services to a foreign power, in the soul of a criminal who charges for his services, in the soul of an enemy of his people, in the soul of an enemy of humble men of his people, in the soul of a servant of privilege, there is no courage to face the revolutionary tribunals and the punishment they deserve for their crimes. And that's is why there is no reason to become impatient. That is a proof of their impotence.

Where are the mercenaries who were training in Guatemala? Where are the planes? Where are the landing barges? (SHOUTS) Where are the legions of mercenaries? How come they have not disembarked? (SHOUTS OF: "Let them come!") And they are satisfied now just with making noise, they are content now with firing petards. They know the thousands of men - or they guess - we have supporting weapons, cannons, antiaircraft, and heavy weapons! (APPLAUSE.) They have an idea of how many battalions have been organized and armed, they have had a glimpse of the people's extraordinary mobilization. And they know what those weapons mean in the hands of the workers, in the hands of the peasants and in the hands of the students, these university students, who got rid of their uniform to wear the blue shirt of the workers' militia! (APPLAUSE), and understood the great honor of uniting, of closing ranks, shoulder to shoulder, with the workers of the country.

The enemies of the motherland and Revolution know what those cannons, and those mortars, and those weapons are in the hands of the people. And since they know that, if it took a lot of blood and sacrifice to disarm and defeat a military caste, an insignificant minority, when the people were fighting for their right while the Batista military were fighting for their privileges and the privileges of the class they defended; they know it took a lot of blood to disarm the tyranny. Now they also know that it will take a lot to disarm the working class and the peasants of this country, to take away those cannons, to take

away those weapons ... Cannons, yes, not just automatic rifles, but cannons of a considerable caliber and in a considerable number too! (APPLAUSE.) The mercenaries who can do it are yet to be born! (APPLAUSE.) The imperialists who can do it are yet to be born! (APPLAUSE.)

And that's why they rattle on their impotence, making noises that only serve to inflame the people's courage. Idiots! (LAUGHS.) Because when we fought, even under the most difficult circumstances, we were encouraged by an idea: the idea that we were right, that we were defending a just cause, that the people would rise up for that cause, and that we would destroy the enemy. What hope can they have of destroying the people, by defending despicable ends? What hope can they have of victory? Can't they see what a people armed means? Are they so stupid to harbor the remotest of hopes? Because they couldn't even face a part of the people; and they, plus their imperialist masters, could not confront our people, much less could they confront a part of the world that supports us (APPLAUSE).

Where are they, where are their hopes? Is it they are going to mobilize against the Revolution the man who had no job, any of the 200,000 workers who have started working in the countryside since the triumph of the Revolution? Are they going to mobilize against the Revolution the 35% of new industrial workers who have found employment after the triumph of the Revolution? Could they in any way counter the work of the Revolution? And not the work done in the past few months, which, despite being a lot, is still inferior to the work still to come (APPLAUSE).

How could they do it, if the fruits are already there? If there are already 600 scholarship recipients at the university? (APPLAUSE). If the first 600 youth brigades are already here (APPLAUSE). If the first 2 000 already claimed the Turquino Peak? (APPLAUSE). If those with fifth grade or higher are already here to enroll in different schools? One hundred and fifty in an aviation school still to come (APPLAUSE). Those who show more interest and are fittest physically will first go to handle machines for civilians, working as civilians, in agriculture and then they will have the chance of learning military aviation and after that, they will be the ones piloting our big transport planes (APPLAUSE).

And so, all the future pilots would have started at the "Camilo Cienfuegos" Youth Brigades of Revolutionary Work (APPLAUSE); they would have spent four months at the Sierra Maestra mountains, would have climbed the Turquino Peak five times and they would keep making progress. None of these youth would still a plane in the future (SHOUTS of: No!, Never!). These youth are the purest result of the Revolution. (APPLAUSE). The greatest pride of the Revolution! (APPLAUSE), the seed of the new motherland, the ones who will build a new generation better prepared to continue the work of the Revolution. Because the Revolution must guarantee its path towards greater goals, a future beyond today's enthusiasm; and ensure that the result of a people liberated is a generation which is fully the result of the Revolution.

A while before, we were talking about the inheritance of the past, and the inheritance that tomorrow's Cuba will receive will be the result of what we are doing today (APPLAUSE); it will be the tens of thousands of technicians with scholarships (APPLAUSE); it will be the tens of thousands of young people selected on the basis of their merits, their natural talents, where the weak of character and spirit were left behind, and the best got here where they will have the opportunity to continue to succeed, to continue progressing. In the schools, some of them will go to the School of Maritime Arts and Crafts, and within a year (APPLAUSE), within a year, they will be managing the first fishing fleets (APPLAUSE), doing deep-sea fishing, whose boats are being built. already in Cuban shipyards (APPLAUSE). Others, to naval schools, where they will learn for six months the essentials to become crew members of warships (APPLAUSE). They will serve as volunteers for two and a half years (APPLAUSE); Those two and a half years will also be, in part, training and, in part, they will protect of our coasts (APPLAUSE), they will defend our sovereignty, and then they will have a guaranteed job in our National Merchant Marine (APPLAUSE), and they will travel the world in ships from Cuba.

In other words, they have that opportunity; some, in aviation schools; others, in naval schools; others, in fishing schools; others, in technological schools (APPLAUSE), where they will also be part of combat units while they are studying (APPLAUSE).

When they finish their studies in technology, they will be able to either go to work in factories, or receive scholarships at the university to pursue higher education (APPLAUSE). And these young people are from the humblest families; many of them sold newspapers, others shined shoes; others did other jobs. Those youth, those are a pure extract from the Revolution! (APPLAUSE.) Among them, yes, no counterrevolutionary will be seeking proselytes. How different they are from the youngsters of the Yankee University of Villanueva!

And what alternative can be left in a struggle where the humble are here, the young people who have passed the hardest tests and, in addition to their formidable spirit, they are guardians of the Revolution, defenders of their motherland, and will sail warships ( APPLAUSE), and will they pilot combat planes (APPLAUSE), and will handle heavy weapons (APPLAUSE), and yet will be still preparing for a civilian life, while studying? That is to say, they will be students, preparing for peaceful work, for creative work.

And there are already 2,000 who left; each with his teacher, each brigade with its teacher. Those who already had a higher level went to a given schools; those who did not will perform other tasks while studying with the primary school teachers. Meanwhile, they go grade by grade acquiring knowledge which will give them the same opportunities as those who now go to technology schools. And meanwhile, they will reforest our mountains with timber-yielding trees, huge areas will be filled with millions of trees. They will carry out works (APPLAUSE) for the people; they will build school cities and will carry on. Two thousand have already passed the tests; 3,000 more are currently in the Sierra Maestra camps and 10,000 will be on January 28 next year (APPLAUSE).

Tens of thousands of youth like these, of the most humble and the best of our country, are already organizing themselves, and they will become technicians, they will become diplomats, they will be professionals, they will be specialized factory workers, they will be sailors, they will crew airplane, they will be captains of ships, they will be captains of planes! (APPLAUSE.)

And this is the Revolution, always looking for the best of the country, and with the best of the country preparing the best future for all Cubans. And so we go marching on with what we have. What we have is not perfect, we have received the inheritance of the past, an inheritance, in many ways negative, from the past. But nevertheless, the present generation reacts, the professionals react, and those same professionals, a large part of them who are products of the past, nevertheless react, and react with the Revolution. They react to take the place of those who leave the country. And they come here, to this same stairway, where one day they came to acquire that knowledge the people paid for, to swear from here, to that same people, fidelity to the Revolution and to the motherland. And these professionals react more and more strongly, and the cowards and the poor in spirit who have left their country at this hour are shown as what they are more miserable and meaner.

And we already see that reaction among doctors, architects, engineers and professionals all. And the students themselves who today, or in a few days, will graduate as doctors, they sent a document to the Revolutionary Government that group must be proud of, and, furthermore, a step forward in a gesture that surpasses that of the graduates from the previous school year in terms of revolutionary and patriotic quality. Because those from the previous year, many of whom are in the field today, led by two or three petty leaders of questionable conduct, They made economic demands and with total oblivion of the country's tremendous need for doctors, they were unable to make a gesture towards the Revolution and the people, the Revolution that aims to improve the standards of living of technicians. But we consider that it was not correct that a recently graduated student would receive 240 pesos for the six months he was going to spend in the country side. We estimated that a test was necessary so that those students who stayed in the country side would then receive a much better salary, but they should not start with 240 pesos. We also believed that those were also months of test, because if other youth were going to be in the Sierra Maestra for four months, and climb Pico Turquino five times, and will volunteer to work for three years, then it was fair for a university graduate to be willing to demonstrate his vocation as a doctor, his love for his country.

And it wasn't about money, because a few pesos more didn't mean anything to the government, nor a few pesos less. For the national economy, a few more pesos did not mean anything, nor a few pesos less. It was simply a moral question, and what interested us was not the amount to be payed for those months, but rather the moral quality of these recently graduated doctors. And those from the previous year were not - and I say it here with total sincerity and honesty as we always do - they did not live up to the Revolution's expectations, because when we said, well, we are addressing the issue in moral terms, and we said: It is your decision; two or three petty leaders, openly counterrevolutionaries, instigated them and led them to purely profit -based position.

However, the year's course, those youth who will graduate this year have had a completely different conduct. And right here we have the document they have sent, which reads:

"The undersigned, sixth-year medical students, who will finish their degree in a few months, concerned about a series of events which have occurred in recent days, and aware of the crucial and revolutionary moment our country is going through, wish to make it clear conclusively our position regarding the Cuban Revolution, and our attitude towards the sacred duty of fulfilling our social role.

"As we consider it inappropriate to make economic demands at a time when, on the one hand, the Cuban people are willing to make the greatest sacrifices, and that is why the satraps of Yankee imperialism cowardly attack us, we responsibly make the following statements:

"First: We support with our lives, if necessary, the revolutionary measures and norms taken by the government.

"Second: We are at the unconditional disposal of the Cuban authorities, for whatever they may be needed, once we our degree has been awarded.

"Third: We will accept with integrity and a spirit of sacrifice, the salary the government deems appropriate.

"Fourth: We only want to be useful to our country and use the knowledge acquired in the university paid by the people, for the benefit of that people.

Fifth: We reject as counterrevolutionary any other attitude that tends to undermine the revolutionary spirit which inflames our country today.

"Sixth: We ask all the comrades in our course to adopt this revolutionary stance and demonstrate to the people their great spirit of sacrifice and their love for the homeland that Martí dreamed of.

"Sixth year of the medical school of the University of Havana" (APPLAUSE).

What do we intend with the technicians? We simply intend to pay them as they deserve. In other words, pay them well, because a technician needs to commit a part of his life to studying without receiving any income. This technician deserves the reassurance of a good pay, as compensation for the effort made and the services rendered to the country. We did not care about the problem in terms of pesos more or pesos less, but the moral terms instead. We were interested in the revolutionary technicians, we want revolutionary technicians, and the people is willing to pay the revolutionary technicians as they deserve (APPLAUSE).

And we believe we can do it, because the country's economy will grow at an extraordinary rate. And we need these technicians, we are building hundreds of towns, and we want each town we build to have at least one doctor. That is why we have such a great need for doctors.

Formerly doctors had no jobs, many of them. They had to work for several years for a pittance, they received a measly salary in state hospitals, or they received a pittance in consultations from other

doctors. The Revolution has given a job for all technicians to work. There is not a single college graduate technician who can say they don't have a job. There is not a single doctor, a single agronomist, or civil engineer, or mechanic, who does not have a job guaranteed. Hence how inexcusable behavior it is for the technicians who left, because they did not leave when professionals were exploited, when the vast majority of the professionals had no opportunity; they did not leave when the country lived in the midst of terror and crime. And yet they left now, abandoning their country. And the doctor who leaves, the doctor who, working in a national institution, in a people's hospital leaves, is simply a criminal. Even more criminal than any other professional, because the doctor came here to study to save lives, the doctor came here to study to guarantee the lives of the people (APPLAUSE). And one can only consider but a criminal the doctor who, at the risk of one compatriot, or many of his compatriots losing their lives, leaves the national territory.

But criminal too, criminals are also the engineers, or architects, or professionals who treacherously leave their country. The National Medical College, in an assembly of doctors, yesterday reached agreements in this regard, and proposed giving a last chance to those who want to return, giving them a chance until December 31. Well, but as of December 31, we estimate that no opportunity should be given to any of those professionals who left their country in trying hours, because that attitude of leaving the homeland when danger was imminent is very easy, to return later when the country marches on, as it is doing already and as it will march more and more, along paths of extraordinary well-being and progress. They must lose, at least, their citizenship, and the right to practice their profession here (APPLAUSE).

The student residences are already filling up with new students, and those residences will also help current students who do not have resources. And the Revolutionary Government is willing to spend whatever is necessary to provide opportunities to study, and to fill the universities with new students, and to prepare the technicians for tomorrow. Today we not only have a revolutionary student, but also a whole revolutionary university, where at last great transformations are taking place in the syllabus, that is to say that at last the university reform has taken place (APPLAUSE). That is why the effort is worth making, that is why the people will gladly make the effort.

Last year we talked about the university city. Well, the building of the university city will begin in a few days. And the students are going to help, and the construction workers are going to help, and the youth brigades, and the Young Rebels are going to help (APPLAUSE). And next year, by September next year, we will have capacity for 8,000 students, only scholarship students at the University of Havana.

We can thus envision the future with optimism in all areas, because everything is becoming more clear, everything is becoming more certain: more organization, more experience, better prospects in all aspects stronger the Revolution, better circumstances.

Soon a new year will begin. Suffice it to say that in the new year in the countryside, only through agrarian reform we will employ 200,000 more Cubans (APPLAUSE). And they are more or less exact figures, that is, without exaggerations. We are in a position to employ 200,000 more people in the fields, only in the fields, in agriculture! The prospects are good in all respects.

Next year will also be the year of education; the great battle against illiteracy is a great battle. We intend to eliminate every last residue of illiteracy in a year, and we are sure we will win that battle, because we are already working on it. More than 1000,000 peoples will work on this campaign. However, if we consider it is not enough, the same mobilization we have undertaken and are currently carrying out to defend the country we will undertake to combat illiteracy, and we will mobilize tens upon tens of thousands of students, workers, young rebels, and people from the people at large with knowledge enough to teach, and we will go to find the last illiterate person, and we will teach them to read and write (APPLAUSE).

And the international scenario must improve. The Revolution has triumphed, the Revolution is a reality, and the Revolution will carry on invincibly. What can imperialism do before the world scenario they are

confronted with? They did not attack us with mercenaries, and each day that has passed, the mercenaries here have a tougher bone to gnaw on (APPLAUSE).

For this reason, the military strength of the Revolution has grown so much that we can wait for the mercenaries, no matter how much support they may have, we can wait for them laughing about it: they would last a very little.

And as for the rest, what has imperialism achieved with its "patrolling" in the Caribbean? More discredit, and, furthermore, proof that they are scared, proof that they are hitting the road. There is a revolution in Guatemala, and they rush to send battleships and aircraft carriers. What does that mean? Fear. And what does it mean? That the Revolution doesn't need to be exported, revolutions are going to take place on their own throughout the American continent.

What have they done with their boats? Ridicule. What have they done with their drills? Ridicule. What have they done with their economic aggressions? Ridicule. And a pound of sugar is very expensive in the United States. Let's see what happens next year, and let's see how they cope with sugar. We are going to establish our sugar policy. By the end of December, or early January, we are going to bring everyone together: the sugar mill workers, the cooperative members, the tenants, everybody, and we are going to establish a sugar policy according to the prospects.

Are there countries that want to speculate on economic aggression against Cuba? We'll see who can compete with Cuba in terms of sugar production. Cuba is simply going to be in a privileged position in the market, despite the aggression. And we are going to follow a policy, and let's see what happens, and let's see what the new administration which will replace the Eisenhower administration does (SHOUTS OF: "Get out!"). Let's see what line he follows, because Mr. Kennedy did a lot of demagoguery during the electoral campaign, encouraging the aggression against Cuba. But they should not mistaken apples and oranges, let's see what Mr. Kennedy does, let's see. We are going to see if maybe with the literacy campaign that we are carrying out, Mr. Kennedy becomes politically literate and politically re-educated. Perhaps this literacy campaign can help open up Mr. Kennedy his mind. And then, let's see what they do, let's see if they want to continue with the policy of aggression against our country, a stupid policy, a clumsy policy and a failed policy, or they decide to leave us alone instead, which is better business for them anyway. At least they have the chance now.

Aggressions are getting expensive for them; many factories have gone bankrupt in the US, and the very clumsy leaders of that country have sacrificed their own workers, sacrificed their own industries.

And with the embargo, they haven't hurt us that much. After the embargo, we have all continued more or less well; things have continued to be more or less the same; And since, on the other hand, agricultural production has been growing at an extraordinary rate, we already storing frozen chicken for Christmas (APPLAUSE); the grain is already being harvested. There are 50,000 turkeys, and something more still: the production of pigs is developing in such an extraordinary way, we have been developing special lines for many months, and its production is growing at such a great rate that we will even have pork roast for Christmas. (APPLAUSE), for the fans who could not resign themselves to a Christmas without that pate.

The embargo has failed. We have been solving our problems and they have sacrificed this market. Clumsy politics; it would be enough if they did the same all around the world, and imperialism would have been liquidated forever. If they did with the whole world what they have done with Cuba, it would last six months. You see how stupid they are in regards to Cuba.

In other words, the prospects are good in all respects. We are going to plan our sugar policy, and we are going to see what imperialism does: if they persists in their aggressions, that is up to them. It is best if they begin to reconsider and understand that the Cuban Revolution is already an indestructible reality, and they leave us alone.

We want peace. Why do we want peace? Because we have great projects; we have big plans; and we see how everything is progressing, and we already seem to foresee the future of Cuba, the extraordinary future of our country, which will be an example for all the peoples of America, and which recognized and admired by the other peoples of the world. . We need peace to carry out that great work; We want to invest all our people's energy in this work; we don't want blood; We wouldn't want a single young man, a single soldier, a single militiaman, a single worker, a single Cuban fall; we would like to see you all work. If we have armed ourselves, it is to defend that right to work; If we have invested extraordinary energy in preparing our defense, it is to guarantee that right.

And we will continue to prepare, we will continue to improve our military defense, because at the end of the day that is the safest thing to do. The most certain guarantee against imperialism is to be well armed. But that, we are doing already. We will soon be well armed and well prepared to defend ourselves against any attack (APPLAUSE). And then? Well then, to work, to carry out the great plans of the Revolution. This military preparation gives us the right to continue working; it has been a precondition for continuing to work. And perhaps we will make imperialism reconsider that an attack on Cuba is an attack doomed to fail; that an attack on Cuba would be the suicide of imperialism. And indeed, it would be preferable for us not for imperialism to commit suicide at our expense, but rather for imperialism, at its own expense, to continue slowly dying until its total and inevitable historical demise.

That is how we think; that is what we wanted to talk about here today. We may have missed a few things, but it doesn't matter; the essential is been said. We have been frank, we have been sincere; we have told the truth crudely, when we have considered that we should speak up.

But we have also expressed our faith, our optimism. Today we can, even with more certainty, with more confidence, speak like this on this staircase, because in truth this staircase has been more and more revolutionary every day (APPLAUSE); and this staircase, every day has been identifying more and more with the people. And in reality, no better tribute can be paid to the martyrs of 1871 and to the students who gave their young lives for what we are doing today, for these triumphs of the country that we have before us today.

And it is truly a source of satisfaction for all, for all the people, for the students and for all of us, to think about this 89th anniversary and think that those students, innocent victims of monopoly, exploitation, selfishness, innocent victims of the privileges of yesterday; those innocents, who fell because of the hatred aroused by the ideal of justice in the heart of the hateful oppressors of yesterday, in the hateful foreign interests that exploited our country will receive our homage today. . Today we pay homage to those innocent victims, sacrificed by the privilege of yesterday, along with all the martyrs who fell at the expense of the privileges, since they have contributed to the disappearance of privileges, those of the colony and those of the semi-colony, those of the Spanish colony, and those of the Yankee colony. Victims they were of the Spanish colony; a victim was Mella, a victim was Trejo, a victim was José Antonio Echevarria and all the comrades of his generation (APPLAUSE), victims, victims of the Yankee colony, of the Yankee rifles, of Yankee oppression and exploitation.

But, in the end, everyone's effort has served so there is colony no more, so that there is no more privilege, and so that true freedom and true justice, at last, will shine one day in our homeland.

And by paying this tribute to the fallen, let us also express our gratitude to those who fought in the war and continued to fight in times of peace; Let us also express our gratitude to the university leaders; our recognition to the maximum leader of the students, to comrade Rolando Cubelas (APPLAUSE), who knew how to play a role in war and knew how to fulfill his duty in times of peace. Close to graduating as a doctor, close to completing his university studies, he well deserves our public and sincere appreciation (EXTENDED APPLAUSE), and our satisfaction to know that he takes with him the permission of the honored: the right to walk with his head high and with the recognition of his people!

Our optimistic expression and our appreciation to the entire university; our faith, and our assurance that the University of Havana will also be in the front row in this creative and glorious hour of the

# **SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ AT THE UNIVERSITY STAIR**

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