

## [Address by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz at Céspedes Park in Santiago de Cuba, on the 1st of January of 1959 \[1\]](#)

### **Date:**

01/01/1959

Compatriots of Cuba, all:

We have finally reached Santiago. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) The road has been long and tough, but we have arrived. (APPLAUSE)

It was being said that today at 2 o'clock in the afternoon we were being expected in the capital of the Republic and I was the first person to be amazed (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) because I was one of the first people to have been surprised by that traitorous and confabulated coup this morning in the capital of the Republic.

Furthermore, I was going to be in the capital of the Republic, I mean in the new capital of the Republic (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE), because Santiago de Cuba will be the capital, according to the wishes of the provisional president, according to the wishes of the Rebel Army and according to the wishes of the people of Santiago de Cuba who so highly deserve it. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) Santiago de Cuba will be the provisional capital of the Republic! (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

Perhaps the measure is a surprise for some; it is a new measure, but for that reason the Revolution must be precisely characterized for doing things that have never been done before. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) When we make Santiago de Cuba the provisional capital of the Republic, we know why we are doing it. It isn't a matter of flattering a certain town in demagogic fashion; it's simply a matter of the fact that Santiago has been the most steadfast bastion of the Revolution. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

The Revolution begins here and now. The Revolution won't be an easy task. The Revolution will be a tough undertaking and full of dangers, especially during this initial period. What better place to establish the government of the Republic than in this fortress of the Revolution, (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) so that it may be known that this is going to be a government which is firmly backed by the people in the Heroic City and in the foothills of the Sierra Maestra, because Santiago is in the Sierra Maestra. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) In Santiago de Cuba and in the Sierra Maestra, the Revolution will have its two greatest strengths. (APPLAUSE)

But there are others as well... (INTERRUPTION)...Naturally we have never... (INTERRUPTION) ...refused any collaboration... (INTERRUPTION)... "Are you promising me that you won't?" And he says: "I promise I won't." I say: "Do you swear you won't?" And he told me: I swear I won't" (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

I believe that the first thing a soldier should have is honor; the first thing a soldier must do is keep his word, and that man has not only demonstrated a lack of honor and a lack of keeping his word, he also lacks brains, because a movement could have been done right from the start, with the complete support of the people and with triumph assured right from the start, but what it did instead was to somersault

into a vacuum. He thought it would be much too easy to fool the people and to fool the Revolution.

He knew something. He knew that when it was said that Batista had grabbed the plane, the people would throng into the streets, crazy with happiness, and they thought that the people were not mature enough to see the difference between Batista's flight and the Revolution. Because if Batista leaves and Cantillos' friends take possession of the tanks, it might very well happen that Dr. Urrutia would also have to leave within three months; because whatever betrays us now, will betray us later on, and the great truth is that Mr. Cantillo betrayed us before the Revolution. He demonstrated it very well and I am going to show it.

An agreement was struck with General Cantillo that the uprising would take place on the 31st at 3 in the afternoon. It was made clear that the armed forces would give their unconditional backing to the Revolutionary movement, the President who appointed the revolutionary leaders and the positions that were assigned to the military by the revolutionary leaders; what was offered, meant unconditional backing. The plan was agreed to in all its details: on the 31st, at 3 pm, the Santiago de Cuba Garrison would revolt. Immediately, several rebel columns would penetrate the city and the people would immediately fraternize with the soldiers and the rebels and a revolutionary proclamation would be launched in the country to invite all honorable soldiers to join the movement.

It was agreed that the tanks in the city would be placed at our disposition and I personally offered to move towards the capital with an armored column preceded by the tanks. The tanks would be handed over to me at 3 pm, not because it was believed that we would have to fight, but to be forewarned in case the movement would fail in Havana and we would have to position our vanguard as close as possible to the capital. Besides, it was also to foresee that no excessive events would be taking place in Havana.

It was logical that with all the hatred aroused there with the public force, because of the indescribable horrors committed by Ventura and Pilar Garcia, Batista's fall was going to produce disorganization among the citizenry and that, moreover, those police were going to feel like they had no moral force to contain the people; and effectively that's just how it took place. A series of excessive occurrences took place in the capital such as looting, shooting and fires. All the responsibility for that falls on the shoulders of Gen. Cantillo since he had betrayed his word and because he hadn't followed the plan that had been agreed. He thought that he could solve the problem by appointing police captains and chiefs, many of whom had already left by the time he appointed them, proof of the fact that their consciences were not so clear.

Of course how different it all was in Santiago de Cuba. What great order and civic mindedness! What great discipline the people demonstrated! Not one single case of looting, not one single case of personal vengeance, not one single man dragged through the streets, not one single fire was set. Santiago de Cuba's behavior has been admirable and exemplary, in spite of two things. In spite of the fact that this has been a city that had suffered the most and had seen the most terror, thereby having more right to feeling outraged, (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) and also in spite of our declarations this morning saying that we were not agreeing to the coup.

Santiago de Cuba's behavior was very exemplary and I think that this is a reason for which the people of Santiago de Cuba, the revolutionaries and the military in the Plaza de Santiago de Cuba can feel very proud. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) And it cannot be said that the Revolution is anarchical and disorganized; that happened in Havana, due to a treacherous act, but it didn't happen in Santiago de Cuba and we can set it up as a model whenever they try to accuse the Revolution of being anarchy and disorder. (APPLAUSE)

It's a good idea for the people to know about the communications between Gen. Cantillo and myself, if the people are not too tired, (SHOUTING AND CRIES OF "No!") I can read the letter.

After the agreements made, when we had already suspended our operations on Santiago de Cuba,

because on the 28th our troops were by then very close to the city and we had carried out all the preparations for the attack on the Plaza in accordance with the interview we had had, we had to undergo a series of changes, to abandon the operations on Santiago de Cuba and to direct our troops towards other locations where we presumed that the movement had not been assured right from the very start. When all our movements had been made and the columns were prepared to march on the capital, I got this note from General Cantillo, a few hours before; it stated verbatim:

"Circumstances have changed considerably in a sense that is favorable for a national solution"... in the sense that he wanted for Cuba. It was odd because after analyzing the factors we had on hand, the circumstances couldn't have been more favorable. Triumph was assured and so it was odd that he would say: Circumstances have produced very favorable changes." They were the circumstances agreed to by Batista and Tabernilla, circumstances ensuring the coup.

"I recommend that you do nothing right now and wait for events during the next few weeks, prior to the 6th." Of course, it was the indefinitely prolonged truce, while they were getting all the conditions ready in Havana.

My immediate answer was: "The contents of the note are completely different from the agreements made; it is ambiguous and we cannot understand it and it has made me lose my confidence in the seriousness of the agreements. Hostilities cease as of 3 pm tomorrow, that being the day and the time agreed by the Movement."

And then a very strange thing occurred. Besides that very brief note, I also sent a message to the chief at Plaza de Santiago de Cuba via the same messenger, saying that if hostilities were ceasing because the agreement terms were not being fulfilled and we were being forced to attack Plaza de Santiago de Cuba, then there would be no other solution other than for the Plaza to surrender, that we would demand that the Plaza surrenders if hostilities ceased and the attack was initiated by us. But as it happened, the messenger did not correctly interpret my words and he told Col. Rego Rubido that I had said that I was demanding the surrender of the Plaza as a condition for any agreement. He didn't say what I had declared to him about the attack being initiated, but not that I had presented Gen. Cantillo with the condition that the Plaza should surrender.

As a result of the message, the Colonel in Chief of the Plaza de Santiago de Cuba sent me a very conceptual and honorable letter which I will also read. Naturally he was offended by that proposal that had been presented to him erroneously and he said: "The solution found is not a coup d'état or military junta and, nevertheless, we think that is the best thing for Dr. Fidel Castro in accordance with his ideas and it would put the fate of the nation into his hands in 48 hours. It is not a local solution but a national one and any advance indiscretion could compromise it or destroy it and create chaos. We would like you to trust our dealings and you will have the solution before the 6th."

"As for Santiago, because of the note and the messenger's words, we have to change the plan and not enter; those words have caused ill will amongst the staff...and we shall never hand over the weapons without a fight. Weapons are not surrendered to an ally and they are not handed over without honor"... lovely phrasing from the chief of the Plaza de Santiago de Cuba.

"If you do not trust us or if you attack Santiago, the agreements will be considered as broken and the dealings for the offered solution will be paralyzed; we shall formally relinquish all commitments. Due to the time needed to act in one way or another, we hope the answer arrives in time so that it can be sent to Havana in the afternoon."

I responded to that note written by Colonel José Rego Rubido as follows:

"Free Territory of Cuba, 31 December 1958

"Sir:

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"An unfortunate error has occurred in the transmission of my words to you, perhaps due to the haste with which I answered your note and the hurried nature of the conversation I had with the messenger. I did not tell him that the condition we proposed in the agreements made was the surrender of Plaza de Santiago de Cuba to our forces; that would have been a discourtesy to our visitor and an unworthy and offensive proposal for the soldiers who have approached us in such a fraternal manner.

"The matter is quite something else. An agreement had been reached and a plan was adopted between the leader of the military movement and ourselves; it was to start being effective on the 31st at 3 pm. Even the details were agreed after carefully analyzing the problems that had to be dealt with; we would start with the removal of the Santiago de Cuba Garrison, I persuaded the general...of the advantages of starting in Oriente and not at Columbia, in order to largely spare the people from any coup at the barracks in the capital of the Republic and how difficult it was going to be in that case to associate the citizenry with the Movement. He fully went along with my points of view, he was only concerned about order in the capital and we agreed to measures that would avert danger. The measure was precisely the advance of our column on Santiago de Cuba. It was a matter of a united action between the military, the people and us, a type of revolutionary movement that from the very beginning would have the trust of the entire nation.

"Immediately, and in accordance with what we had put together, we suspended the operations that were being undertaken and we took on the task of carrying out new movements of forces towards other points such as Holguín where the presence of well-known henchmen was making resistance to the revolutionary military movement an almost sure thing.

"When all our preparations were ready, I received the note yesterday, where I was informed that the agreed action would not be carried out. It seemed there were different plans but I was not informed what they were or why. Indeed the matter was now not our business, we simply had to wait. Everything changed unilaterally and our forces were placed at risk; according to what had been assured, they would have been sent to undertake difficult operations; we were subjected to threats, to all kinds of imponderable elements... (INTERRUPTION) ...any risk of the general...in his frequent trips to Havana would militarily become a disaster for us. You can recognize that right now everything is very confusing and that Batista is a skillful and crafty individual who knows how to manoeuvre. Any risk... (INTERRUPTION) ...How could they ask us to forego all the advantages obtained in the last few weeks of operations, to have us wait patiently for events to happen?

"I clearly stated that it couldn't be an action with just the military, for that reason we really didn't have to await the horrors of two years of warfare. To have our hands tied at a decisive moment is not something we can be asked to do, we who have not rested in our fight against oppression for the last seven years.

"Even though you intend to hand over power to the revolutionaries, it is not power per se that interests us; what interests us is that the Revolution fulfills its destiny. I am even concerned that the military, because of an unjustified excess of scruples, would facilitate the flight of the important guilty parties who would go abroad with their great fortunes to make all kinds of trouble for our homeland from over there.

"I can personally add that power holds no interest for me, nor do I intend to occupy it; I shall only be vigilant that the sacrifices of so many compatriots are not wasted, whatever my subsequent fate may be. I hope that these honorable reasons which I explain to you, with all respect for your dignity as a soldier, are understood. You may rest assured that you are dealing with neither an ambitious nor an insolent man..."

Stop the tanks for me over there, please. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

ANNOUNCER- Please keep those tanks quiet. Please; it is an order of the Commander in Chief that you

silence the tanks and stop them right there so that the people can go on listening to the words of the supreme leader of the Cuban Revolution, Dr. Fidel Castro. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

DR. FIDEL CASTRO- When we finish our declarations and the proclamation of the provisional president, the tanks will render honors to the Civil Power of the Republic, parading in front of our balconies. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

He continued to read the letter of the 31st, written by the Colonel in Chief of the Plaza de Santiago de Cuba.

"I can personally add that power holds no interest for me, nor do I intend to occupy it. I shall only be vigilant that the sacrifices of so many compatriots are not wasted, whatever my subsequent fate may be. I hope that these honorable reasons which I explain to you, with all respect for your dignity as a soldier, are understood. You may rest assured that you are dealing with neither an ambitious nor an insolent man...

"I have always acted with loyalty and frankness in everything I do; one can never call something that has been achieved with deceitfulness and deception a triumph; the language of honor, which you understand, is the only language I know how to speak.

"The word "surrender" was never mentioned at the meeting with the general; what I said yesterday and what I reiterate today is that as of 3:00 pm of the 31st, the date and time we agreed upon, we could not prolong the truce in regards to Santiago de Cuba because it would be extraordinarily detrimental to our union... (INTERRUPTION)...Never a conspiracy...Last night the rumor reached us here that the general...had been arrested in Havana, that several youths had turned up murdered in the Santiago de Cuba Cemetery. I had the feeling that we had miserably wasted our time, even though fortunately today it appears to be proven that the general...can be found at his post; what need do we have to run such risks?

"What I told the messenger in terms of surrender, which was not transmitted literally and seemed to motivate the words of his note today, was as follows: 'if hostilities were broken because of noncompliance with the agreed terms, we would see ourselves forced to attack Plaza de Santiago de Cuba, something that is inevitable given the manner in which we have directed our efforts in the last few months, in which case, once the operation was initiated, we would demand the surrender of the forces defending it'. This does not mean that we think they will surrender without a fight because I know, even without a reason to fight, Cuban soldiers defend their positions with stubbornness and it has cost us many lives. I only wanted to say that after the blood of our men has been spilt to conquer an objective, any other solution could not be acceptable, since even though it is a steep price for us to pay, given the current conditions of the forces defending the regime which were unable to provide backing for that city, the city would inexorably fall into our hands. That has been the basic objective of all of our operations during the past few months and a plan of this magnitude cannot be suspended for some weeks without serious consequences, in the case that the military movement is thwarted, losing, moreover, the opportune moment, which is this one, when the dictatorship is suffering huge setbacks in the Oriente and La Villas provinces.

"We are placed in the dilemma of giving up the advantages of our victory or attacking, a sure triumph in exchange for a probable triumph. Do you think that with yesterday's note, so ambiguous and laconic a note, containing a unilateral decision, I could incur in the responsibility of keeping the plans suspended? As a military man, you can surely recognize that we are being asked the impossible. You have not for one moment stopped digging trenches; those trenches can be used against us by Pedraza, Pilar García, or Cañizares, if the general...is relieved of his command and along with him his trusted men. We cannot be asked to stand idly by; see how... (INTERRUPTION)...even though they bravely defend their weapons, we are left with no other option than to attack, because we also have very sacred obligations to fulfill.

"More than allies, I wish that we and your honorable soldiers could be comrades in one single cause, the

cause of Cuba. Above all else I wish that you and your comrades don't get the erroneous idea that my attitude and my feelings, that (INTERRUPTION)... they are mistaken for...(INTERRUPTION)... I respect the tacit ceasefire in the zone of Santiago de Cuba, to avoid any doubts, I ratify that even though at any minute before combat starts we can take up operations again; as of today, it should be taken under consideration that the attack is going to happen at any time and for no reason whatsoever shall we suspend our plans again, since our ... (INTERRUPTION) ...may sow the seeds of confusion among the people and harm the morale of our combatants.

"Sincerely,

"Fidel Castro Ruz" (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

Col. Rego answered me with an honorable letter which is also worthy of honor and it reads as follows:

"Sir:

"I received your kind letter dated today and please believe me when I say that I deeply thank you for the clarification on the previous note, even though I should tell you that I always thought that it was a matter of poor interpretation since over time I have observed your style of behavior and I am convinced that you are a man of principle.

"I didn't know about the details of the original plan since I was only informed about the part that affected me, nor do I know anything about some of the small details of the current plan. I would guess that in part you are right when you analyze the original plan; but I think that we still need a few days to see its consummation and we would never be able to avoid that many of the guilty individuals, the big, medium and small guilty individuals, would escape.

"I am one of those who think that it is absolutely necessary to provide an example in Cuba for those who, taking advantage of their positions of power, commit all kinds of punishable acts. But unfortunately history is infested with similar cases and very rarely the guilty parties have been placed at the disposition of the competent authorities, because very rarely do revolutions do what has to be done... (INTERRUPTION)...

I perfectly comprehend your concerns in this case, although I, bearing less of the historical responsibility, rather accept it.

"As for the unilateral actions of which you speak, I repeat to you that...in both cases I was only informed of the part affecting me, considering that what happened was that the general...rendered the idea of what you wanted according to his norms and principles, thereby acting accordingly.

"I have no reason to suppose that anybody is trying to abet the flight of the guilty person and, personally, I am opposed to such a thing," said Col.Rego Rubido (APPLAUSE) — "but in case this should happen, the historic responsibility for such occurrences would fall on the shoulders of those making it possible and never on the others.

"I sincerely believe that everything should take place in harmony with your ideas and that, in general, it is...inspired by the best wishes for Cuba's welfare and that of the Revolution you are starting.

"I learned about a young dead student found in the cemetery and just today I made sure that exhaustive investigations would be carried out in order to determine who was the killer and under what circumstances it occurred, just as in days past I placed the suspected persons responsible for the event at the disposition of the corresponding judicial authorities.

"Finally I must inform you that I sent a dispatch to the general about a plane to send him your letter full of ideas, and don't get impatient; maybe before the date set as the maximum limit, you will be in

Havana.

"When the general left, I asked him to leave me the helicopter with the pilot if it should occur to you to take a trip on Sunday afternoon over Santiago. (APPLAUSE)

"Well, Doctor, please receive assurances of my highest consideration and my fervent wish for a happy New Year.

"Signed: Colonel Rego Rubido" (APPLAUSE)

Talks were at this stage when the chief of Plaza Santiago de Cuba, Colonel Rego, and I were surprised by the coup at Columbia which was completely out of the range of the agreements. And the first thing that was done, the most criminal thing that was done, was to let Batista get away, along with Tabernilla and the major guilty parties. (APPLAUSE) They were allowed to escape with their millions of pesos; they were allowed to escape with the 300 or 400 million pesos that they had stolen. It's going to cost us a lot, because now from Santo Domingo and other countries they are going to be creating propaganda against the Revolution, cooking up everything they can to hurt our cause; and we are going to have them there, threatening our people, putting us into a constant state of alertness because they are going to be paying for and cooking up conspiracies against us. (SHOUTING)

As soon as we heard about the coup, what did we do? As soon as we learned about it on Radio Progreso. And even at that time, guessing what they were cooking up, I was making some declarations when I found out that Batista had fled to Santo Domingo. And I thought: could this be a mistake? And I sent someone to find out about it when I hear that, effectively, Mr. Batista and his posse have escaped, and the loveliest thing about it was that Gen. Cantillo was saying that the movement had happened thanks to Batista's patriotic proposals. Batista's patriotic proposals! That he resigned in order to avoid a bloodbath. What do you think about that? (SHOUTING)

And there is still more. For you to have some idea about the kind of coup that was prepared; it's enough to say that they had appointed Pedraza as a member of the Junta and he left. (SHOUTING) I don't think we need to add anything else to see what intentions the perpetrators of the coup had. And they didn't appoint President Urrutia, the man proclaimed as the president by the Movement and by all the revolutionary organizations. (APPLAUSE) They called up a man who is nothing but the oldest man among all the Supreme Court judges, and they are all quite old, especially a man who has been Presiding Judge, until today, of the Supreme Court, where there was no justice whatsoever.

What was the result of all that going to be? A half-baked revolution, a shady deal, the caricature of a revolution. That Mr. Perico de los Palotes, it's the same whatever you call him, whatever you call this Mr. Piedra who, by now, if he hasn't resigned should be preparing himself for us to make him resign when we get to Havana. (APPLAUSE) I don't think he's going to last 24 hours. He'll break a record. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

Appointing this man, really nice: Cantillo, a national hero, the champion of Cuban liberties, the lord and master of Cuba, and that Mr. Piedra over there. Quite simply we would have overthrown one dictator and installed another one. By all accounts, the Columbia Movement was a counter-revolutionary movement; by all accounts it was far from the peoples' proposal; by all accounts it was suspicious and immediately Mr. Piedra said he was going to convoke the rebels and a peace commission. And we would calmly dispose of our weapons, leaving everything and we would go there to show respect to Mr. Piedra and Mr. Cantillo.

It was clear that both Cantillo and Piedra were living on another planet. They were somewhere on the moon because I think that the Cuban people have learned a lot and we, the rebels have learned something.

That was the state of affairs this morning; it isn't the same situation as it was during the night because

a lot has changed. (APPLAUSE) Faced with this event, faced with this treachery, we ordered all rebel commanders to continue with their military operations and to continue marching to their objectives; consequently we immediately ordered all the columns destined for the Santiago de Cuba operation to advance to the city.

I want you all to know that our forces had very seriously decided to take Santiago de Cuba by storm. That would have been very unfortunate because it would have cost a lot of blood and tonight would not have been such a night of joy as it is, nor would there have been peace like we have now, nor would there have been such a spirit of fraternity as we have now. (APPLAUSE)

I must confess that if no bloody battle was waged in Santiago de Cuba this is due to a great degree to the patriotic attitude of Army Colonel José Rego Rubido (APPLAUSE); to the commanders of the frigates "Máximo Gómez" and "Maceo", to the chief of the Santiago de Cuba Naval District (APPLAUSE) and to the officer who was in charge of police headquarters (APPLAUSE). All of them, and that's exactly what we are acknowledging and grateful for here, contributed in avoiding a bloody battle and they turned the counterrevolutionary movement that morning into a revolutionary movement this afternoon.

We were left with no other alternative than to attack because we couldn't allow the Columbia coup to consolidate and so we had to attack without delay. And when the troops were already moving out towards their objectives, Col. Rego went out in the helicopter to find me; the frigate commanders got in touch with us and unconditionally followed the orders of the Revolution. (APPLAUSE)

By that time, counting on the support of the two frigates which have great fire power, with the support of the naval district and with the support of the police, I called for a meeting of all army officers at Plaza Santiago de Cuba, over 100 of them. When I invited them to meet with me, I told those soldiers that I didn't have the slightest concern about talking with them because I knew I was right; because I knew they would understand my arguments and that an agreement would come out of this meeting. In fact, by nightfall, early that night, we met at El Escandel, almost all the army officers in Santiago de Cuba, many of them young men who look like they are eager to fight for the good of their country.

I assembled those soldiers and I told them about our revolutionary feeling; I talked to them about the aim for our country; I talked to them about what we wanted for the country, what our conduct with the military had always been, about all the harm the tyranny had done to the army and about how it wasn't fair they should think of themselves as being the same as all soldiers, that the criminals were only an insignificant minority and that there were many honorable soldiers in the army, and that I know how they hate crime, abuses and injustice.

It wasn't easy for the soldiers to develop a determinate type of action; it was logical since the higher ranks in the army were in Tabernilla's hands, in the hands of Pilar García, in the hands of Batista's family and his unconditional followers, and that the army was overrun with a great sense of terror. Once couldn't expect any isolated officer to shoulder the responsibility.

There were two types of soldiers, and we know about them very well: soldiers like Sosa Blanco, Cañizares, Sánchez Mosquera, Chaviano (SHOUTING), who are characterized by crime and the point blank murders of unfortunate peasants. But there were soldiers who were very honorable in their campaign; there were soldiers who never killed anyone or burned down any houses, such as Major Quevedo who was our prisoner after putting up heroic resistance at the battle of El Jigüe, and who today is still a major in the army (APPLAUSE). There was Major Sierra, and many other soldiers who never burned down any houses. Those soldiers were never promoted. It was the criminals who were promoted because Batista always made sure he rewarded crime. For example we have the case of Col. Rego Rubido who doesn't owe any of his stripes to the dictatorship; he was already a colonel when the events of the 10th of March occurred. (APPLAUSE)

It is quite true that I asked for the support of the army officers at Santiago de Cuba and that the army officers of Santiago de Cuba gave their unconditional support to the Cuban Revolution. (APPLAUSE)



Bringing together the officers of the navy, the police and the army, we were able to bring down the coup rigged up in Columbia and to support the legal government of the republic, because it had the majority of our people, which is Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleó. Thanks to such an attitude we were able to avoid a lot of bloodshed; thanks to that attitude we have given birth to the truth, on this afternoon today, to a true revolutionary military movement.

I understand that among the people there are many justified passions; I understand our people's yearning for justice and we must have justice. (APPLAUSE) But I would like to ask our people here...we are at a time when we must consolidate power, first and foremost. And nobody would be against that! Because the army and the armed forces are among those who most want to see that the guilt of a few is not paid by the entire corps, and that it shouldn't be shameful to wear a uniform; that the guilty should be punished so that the innocent do not have to bear the load of disrepute. (APPLAUSE)

Trust us! That's what we are asking of the people because we know how to do our duty. (APPLAUSE)

In those circumstances, this afternoon a true revolutionary movement of the people took place, a revolutionary movement of the military and of the rebels, in the city of Santiago de Cuba. The enthusiasm of the military is indescribable! And here are all the army officers! There are the tanks at the beck and call of the Revolution! There is all the artillery at the beck and call of the Revolution! There are the frigates at the beck and call of the Revolution! (APPLAUSE)

I am not going to say that the Revolution has people; that cannot be said because everyone knows it. I was saying that people, who had shotguns before, now have artillery, tanks and frigates and there are many trained technicians in the army who are going to help us handle them. (APPLAUSE) Now it is really the people who are armed! I can assure you that when we only numbered 12 men, all on our own, we didn't lose hope; now that we have 12 tanks over there, how are we going to lose hope?

I would like to clear up that today, tonight, during the dawn hours, because it is almost morning, that illustrious magistrate Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleó shall take possession of the Presidency of the Republic. (APPLAUSE) Does Dr. Urrutia have the support of the people or not? (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTING) Because I mean that the President of the Republic, the legal president, that is what counts for the people and that man is Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleó.

Who wants Mr. Piedra to be the president? (BOOING) If nobody wants Mr. Piedra as president, why are we going to be saddled with Mr. Piedra? (BOOING)

If that is the command of the people of Santiago de Cuba, which is the sentiment of all the people of Cuba, as soon as this function ends I will be marching with the veteran troops from the Sierra Maestra, the tanks and the artillery, towards the capital, so that the will of the people is fulfilled. (APPLAUSE)

Here we stand, very simply, at the command of the people. What is legal at this moment is the mandate of the people; the president is elected by the people and not by a coterie at Columbia at 4 o'clock in the morning (APPLAUSE). None of the positions, none of the ranks that have been awarded by the Military Junta during the small hours of this morning have any validity whatsoever; all the appointments for army positions are null and void; I refer to all those appointments made this morning. Whoever accepts a position designated by the Junta will be a traitor this morning, they will be assuming a counterrevolutionary stand, call it what you will, and consequently they will be outlaws.

I am completely sure that all the military positions in the Republic will have accepted the provisions of the President of the Republic. (APPLAUSE)

The President will immediately proceed to appoint the chiefs of the army, navy and police. For his excellent service afforded at this time to the Revolution and for having placed thousands of his men at the disposition of the Revolution, we recommend Col. Rego Rubido as the Chief of the Army; he is a man...(APPLAUSE) Likewise, as Chief of the Navy we will appoint one of the two commanders of the

frigate that was the first one to join the Revolution (APPLAUSE) and I have recommended to the President of the Republic that he designate Major Efigenio Ameijeiras as the head of the National Police Force; he has lost two brothers, he was one of the members of the Granma expeditionary force and he is one of the most capable men in the revolutionary army. (APPLAUSE) Ameijeiras is conducting operations in Guantánamo but he will soon be with us here. (APPLAUSE)

I only ask for time for us and for the Civil Power of the Republic in order to carry out things as the people ask, but little by little. (SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE SAYS SOMETHING) I am just asking one thing of the people, and that is to be calm (FROM THE AUDIENCE SOMEONE SAYS: "Oriente federal, Oriente capital!") No, no! The republic must be united above all else. What you have to ask for is justice for Oriente. (APPLAUSE) In short, time is an important factor. The Revolution cannot...rest assured that the revolution will do it; rest assured that for the very first time the Republic will be entirely free, and the people will have...(APPLAUSE)

Power has not been the result of politics; it has been the result of the sacrifice of hundreds and thousands of our comrades. There is no other commitment with the people and with the Cuban nation. A man has come to power who has no commitments with anybody, only with the people, exclusively. (APPLAUSE)

Che Guevara received orders to advance on the non-provisional capital of the Republic and Major Camilo Cienfuegos, Chief of the Antonio Maceo Column 2 has received orders to march on greater Havana and to assume the command of the military headquarters of Columbia. Simply, the orders of the President of the Republic and the mandate of the Revolution will be followed. (APPLAUSE)

Don't blame us for the excesses that were committed in Havana; we were not in Havana. Blame Gen. Cantillos for the disturbances occurring in Havana and the individuals who put together the dawn coup; they thought they were going to dominate the situation over there. (APPLAUSE) In Santiago de Cuba, where a true revolution occurred, there has been complete law and order; in Santiago de Cuba the people have united, the military and the revolutionaries are together, and that is indestructible. The head of the government, the head of the army and the head of the navy will be in Santiago de Cuba; their orders must be fulfilled by all the command posts in the Republic. We would hope that all honorable soldiers bide by these provisions because soldiers, above all else, are at the service of the law and of authority, not constituted authority, because often this is a poorly constituted authority, but authority which has been legally constituted.

No honorable soldier has anything to fear from the Revolution. Here in this struggle there are no vanquished persons, because only the people have been the victors. (APPLAUSE) Some have fallen on one side and some on the other side, but we have all come together to give the nation its victory. We have given the fraternal embrace, the good soldiers and the revolutionaries. (APPLAUSE) Now there will be no more blood spilt; I hope that no nucleus will put up any resistance because besides being useless resistance, it would be resistance that would be crushed in a few moments, it would be resistance against the law and against the Republic, and against all the sentiment of the Cuban nation. (APPLAUSE)

It has been necessary to organize today's Movement so that no other war will take place in the next six months. What happened during the machadato? Well, one of Machado's generals staged a coup and removed Machado and a president was installed that lasted for 15 days; the sergeants arrived and said that those officers were responsible for the Machado dictatorship and that they didn't respect them, revolutionary effervescence grew and they kicked out the officers. Now that couldn't happen in this way; now these officers are backed by the people, and they have the backing of the troops and they have the prestige which is given them after they have joined the true revolutionary movement. (APPLAUSE)

These soldiers will be respected and well-regarded by the people and we won't have to use force and we won't have to go on the streets armed with guns, inspiring fear in everyone; because true law and order is that which is based on freedom, on respect for justice, and not on force. From now on the

people shall be completely free and the people will know how to behave correctly, just as they have demonstrated today. (APPLAUSE)

The peace our country needs has been achieved; Santiago de Cuba has moved on to freedom, without having to spill any blood. That's why there is so much joy and that's why the soldiers who disregarded and disapproved of the coup at Columbia so that they could unconditionally join the Revolution deserve our recognition, our gratitude and our respect. (APPLAUSE)

The armed institutions of the Republic will be model institutions in the future, due to their capacity, their education and the way they identify with the cause of the people because from now on, rifles will only be at the service of the people. There will be no more coups d'état, no more wars because we have looked after that so that the same thing that happened with Machado happens here and now. Those gentlemen who would like to have the occurrence at dawn resemble the Machado case... that time they installed Carlos Manuel and now they have installed another Carlos Manuel. (BOOS)

What we won't have this time is a Batista, because we don't need another 4th of September that destroyed the discipline of the armed forces, because what happened with Batista was that he installed indiscipline here in the army, because his policy consisted of praising the parties in order to diminish the authority of the officers. Officers will have authority; there will be discipline in the army, there will be a military criminal code where the crimes against human rights and against honor will be duly punished and there will be an obligatory sense of morals for every soldier. (APPLAUSE) There will be no privileges for anyone; soldiers with capacity and merit will be promoted, not the relatives or friends, something that went on until today when the ladder of ascension had not been respected.

All of those mandatory obligations will cease for soldiers and for all workers; for workers union dues will cease (APPLAUSE) and for soldiers it's the "peso for the First Lady" that will disappear; two pesos here and two pesos there, and so the entire salary disappears.

Naturally the people have everything to expect from us, and they shall receive it. But I have talked to the military so that they also know they will receive everything from the Revolution, all the improvements they never had because when the state budget is not being pilfered the military will be much better off than they are today. Soldiers won't have to serve as police; soldiers will be at their training sessions, in their barracks and they won't have to act as a police force. (APPLAUSE)

(SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE SAYS SOMETHING) Nothing about microwaves, although I'd like to clarify that at this moment the rebels have microwaves, because we need them, but the microwaves now do not come with the henchmen, none of that, no murderers, no more screeching brakes in front of your homes and no more midnight knocks at the door. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

I am sure that just as soon as the President of the Republic takes office he will decree the reestablishing of guarantees, and the absolute freedom of the press and all individual rights in the country (APPLAUSE), all labor union rights and all the rights and demands of our peasants and our people. We shall not forget our peasants in the Sierra Maestra and in Santiago de Cuba. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) We won't go to live in Havana and forget about all of you; where I want to live is in the Sierra Maestra. At least, in the part that belongs to me, because of my very deep feelings of gratitude; I shall not forget those peasants and as soon as I have some free time I will go to see where we will put up the first school-city that can hold 20,000 children. (APPLAUSE) and we will set it up with the help of the people; the rebels are going to work there and we are going to ask every citizen for a bag of cement and one steel rod and I know we will get the help of our citizens.

We shall never forget any sector of our country (SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE SAYS: Viva Crescencio Pérez!) Long live Crescencio Pérez who lost a child in the days after the war!

The country's economy will be immediately reestablished. This year we will be the ones to look after the sugar cane so that it doesn't burn, so that this year the sugar tax won't serve to buy murdering

weapons and bombs, and the planes to bomb our people. (APPLAUSE)

We will look after communications and now, from Jiguaní to Palma Soriano, telephone lines have been reestablished and the rail lines have been reestablished. There will be a sugar cane harvest throughout the country and there will be good salaries because I know that that is the goal of the President of the Republic. And there will be good prices because, precisely, the fears of there not being a sugar harvest raised the prices in the world market; and the peasants can get their coffee out and the ranchers can sell their fat cows in Havana because fortunately the triumph has arrived in good time so that there won't be any sort of disaster.

It is not my place to speak of these things. You all know we are men who keep our word and that we fulfill our promises and we like to promise less than we can deliver, not more, but less than what we are going to deliver and to do more of what we offer to the people of Cuba. (APPLAUSE)

We don't think that all the problems are going to get solved easily; we know that the road is strewn with obstacles, but we are men of faith and that we always face great difficulties. (APPLAUSE); the people maybe sure of one thing and that is that we may make mistakes over and over, but the only thing they can never say about us is that we steal, that we betray, that we are involved in dirty business. And I know the people will forgive the mistakes but won't forgive the scoundrels. And those individuals we have had up to now have been scoundrels.

Upon taking office as president, as of that moment, when he takes the presidential oath before the people, Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleó will be the supreme authority in our country. (APPLAUSE) Nobody thinks that I would like to take on powers here that go above the authority of the President of the Republic; I would be the first man to abide by the orders of the Civil Power of the Republic and the first man to provide an example (APPLAUSE); we shall simply follow his orders and, within the powers he grants us, we shall try to do as much as we can for our people, without any personal ambitions, because fortunately we are immune to ambition and vanity! What greater glory can there be than the love of our people! What greater prize is there than those millions of arms waving, full of hope, faith and love for us! (APPLAUSE)

Never will we allow ourselves to be dragged down by vanity and ambition because as our Apostle once said: "All the glory of the world fits into a single kernel of corn", and there is no satisfaction or prize greater than fulfilling one's duty, as we have been doing until today and as we shall always do. And I do not speak of this on my behalf; I speak on behalf of the thousands and thousands of combatants who have made victory for the people possible. (APPLAUSE) I speak of the profound feeling of respect and devotion for our dead who shall not be forgotten. The fallen shall have in us their most faithful comrades. This time it won't be possible to say as at other times that the memory of the dead has been betrayed, because the dead will continue to command. Physically Frank País and Josué País are no longer with us, nor are the others; but morally they are here with us, they are here spiritually, and only the satisfaction of knowing that the sacrifice has not been in vain compensates for the immense emptiness they left along the way. (APPLAUSE) Their graves will go on having fresh flowers! Their sons will not be forgotten because the relatives of the fallen will be helped! (APPLAUSE) We, the rebels, will not get paid a salary for the years we fought and we are proud that we aren't getting a salary for the services we have provided for the Revolution. But it is possible that we will continue fulfilling our obligations without being paid any salaries because if there is no money, it doesn't matter, what we have is the will, and we will do whatever is necessary. (APPLAUSE)

But I also want to repeat here what I said in "History Will Absolve Me": we will be making sure that the means of support, the assistance, the education of the children of the soldiers fallen fighting against us will not be lacking, because they are not to blame for the horrors of the war. (APPLAUSE) We will be generous with everyone because, I repeat, there are no vanquished here, only victors. Only the war criminals will be punished because that is the inevitable duty we have with justice, and the people can be sure that we are going to perform that duty. (APPLAUSE) And when justice is meted out, there will be no vengeance. We must have justice today so that in future days there will be no attacks on anyone.

Since there will be justice, there will be no vengeance. There will be no hatred. We have eliminated hatred from the Republic, like a damned shadow left to us by ambition and ....

It is sad that the most guilty parties have escaped; there were thousands of men ready to look for them, but we have to respect the laws of other countries. It would have been easy for us, because we have more than enough volunteers ready to risk their lives to go looking for those criminals; but we don't want to seem to be a people which violate the laws of others. We shall respect them while they respect ours, but it is certain that in Santo Domingo they are getting ready to conspire against us...(INTERRUPTION)

I had thought, at one time, that Trujillo would have harmed us by selling arms to Batista, and the damage he occasioned was not because he sold the arms but because he sold such bad arms so that when they fell into our hands they were good for nothing. (LAUGHTER) Nevertheless he sold bombs and with these bombs many peasants were killed. We don't even have any wish to return the carbines because they are no good, but we should return something better...

Yes; it's logical in the first instance that the politically persecuted of Santo Domingo will have here their better home and their better asylum and the politically persecuted of every dictatorship will have here their best home and the best understanding because we ourselves have been politically persecuted.

If Santo Domingo becomes an arsenal for counterrevolution, if Santo Domingo becomes a base for conspiracies against the Cuban Revolution, if those gentlemen dedicate themselves to engage in conspiracies from there, they'd be better off leaving Santo Domingo soon because they won't be safe there either. (APPLAUSE) And it won't be us, because we have no business getting mixed up in Santo Domingo's problems; it's just that the Dominicans have learned from Cuba's example and things are going to get very serious over there. The Dominicans have learned that it is possible to fight against tyranny and defeat it, and this example is what the dictators fear most; a heartening example for the Americas has just taken place in our country. (APPLAUSE)

The Americas must look after the course and the future of this Revolution; the Americas are looking at us, the Americas accompany us with their best wishes for triumph, the Americas will support us in our difficult moments, and just as we have rejoiced when some dictator falls in Latin America, the Americas too will be glad for the Cubans.

I must conclude, even though the load of feelings and ideas that with the disorder, hubbub and emotions of today bring to mind is great. I was saying, and I still haven't finished that idea, that there will be justice and that it was unfortunate that the guiltiest parties have escaped, the fault of people we know because the people realize who is to blame for their escape. And that they left behind, I won't say the most unfortunate but yes, the most dim-witted persons, those who didn't have the money, the men in the rank and file who obeyed the orders of the guiltiest parties; they let the guiltiest parties escape so that the people could satisfy their anger and indignation with those who held less responsibility. It is right for them to be punished this time, so that they learn (APPLAUSE).

The same thing always happens; the people warn them that the big fish are getting away and they stay. But the same thing always happens; the big fish leave and the little ones stay behind; well, they should also be punished. (APPLAUSE) The big ones leave, and they too will be punished; it's tough, very tough having to live far away from your homeland for the rest of your life, at the least they will be condemned to ostracism for their entire lives, all those criminals and thieves who have suddenly fled.

If only we could spy on Mr. Batista right now! That punk, that arrogant man who made speeches only to call upon cowards, scoundrels, bandits and the like! Here nobody has called anybody a bandit; here hatred does not reign; we do not breathe in the hatred, arrogance or disdain which filled the dictatorship's speeches. They say that man had a bullet in his pistol when he entered Columbia and he left early in the dawn in a plane with one bullet in his pistol. It was demonstrated how dictators are neither so feared nor so suicidal, and that when all is lost, they flee like cowards. What is really

unfortunate is that he escaped when he could have been taken prisoner, and if we had imprisoned Batista we would have taken away the 200 million pesos he stole. We would reclaim the money, no matter where he had stashed it, because those kinds of men are not political criminals. They are common criminals! And we shall see who shows up in the embassies, and we shall see if Mr. Cantillo has given them their safe-conducts. We will differentiate between political criminals and common criminals; asylum for political criminals and nothing for common criminals. They will have to show up at court and show that they are political criminals and if it is proven that they are common criminals they will be handed over to the authorities.

And Mujal, in spite of the fact that he is big and fat...we don't know where he is right now. (SHOUTING)  
See how they run away! (SOMEONE SAYS SOMETHING FROM THE AUDIENCE)

I don't understand how you all still remember these wretches! The people have finally gotten rid of all those bastards.

Now anyone who wants to can speak, for good or for bad, but anyone can speak. It's not like it used to be here when only those people talked and they spoke badly; there will be freedom...because of that...freedom so that they can criticize and attack us; it will always be a pleasure to speak when they fight us with the freedom we have helped everyone to attain. (APPLAUSE) We will never offend them; we will always defend ourselves and we will follow only one rule, the rule of respect for the law and respect for how other people think.

This names that have been mentioned here, those people who are in who knows which embassy, on which beach, on which ship, wherever they have ended up...(UNINTELLIGIBLE)...we have gotten rid of them, and if they have some little home, some little estate or some little cows somewhere, we will simply have to confiscate them.

But I have to point out that the tyranny's officials, the representatives, the senators, those who haven't especially been stealing, but those who have been paid their salaries, they will have to return every last cent they have been paid in these last four years because they have been paid illegally and they will have to reimburse the Republic for the money those senators and representatives earned. And if they don't return it, we will confiscate the assets they have. (SHOUTING) That, besides what they stole, because those men who stole have nothing left that is a product of the theft, because that is the first law of the Revolution. It isn't fair to send a man to prison for stealing a chicken or a turkey and then those men who stole millions of pesos are set for life somewhere over there. (APPLAUSE)

And they should be careful! The thieves of today and yesterday should be careful; they should be careful because revolutionary laws can come down over all the guilty persons of all times, because the Revolution arrives at its triumph without any commitments to anyone at all. There only commitment is with the people because the people are the only ones to whom they owe their victory. (APPLAUSE)

I shall finish now, (SHOUTING OF: "No!") I shall finish for today. Don't forget that I have to immediately march out, this is my obligation, and you have been on your feet for many hours. (SHOUTING)

I see so many red and black flags pinned to the dresses of our female comrades and so it is really tough to leave this podium where we have experienced, all of us here today, the greatest emotions of our lives. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

We cannot help but remember Santiago de Cuba with overwhelming love. The times we have met here, a meeting over there in the Alameda, a meeting over here in an avenue, Trocha, where one day I said that if they took away our rights by force, we would make a change...and take up guns. (APPLAUSE) And they blamed Luis Orlando for those statements, I kept my mouth closed, in the newspaper they wrote that it was Luis Orlando who had said that. I was the one who had said that but I wasn't sure if the statements were well made because in those days there weren't... (LAUGHTER) and it turned out we had to exchange everything, the students, their books and pencils, for guns; the peasants would

exchange their work implements for guns and we would all have to exchange everything for guns. For the time being the gun matter has ceased. Guns will be kept where they can be accessed by men who have the duty to defend our sovereignty and our rights.

But when our people are threatened, it won't be just the 30,000 or 40,000 members of the Armed Forces who will fight; instead it will be 300,000 or 400,000 or 500,000 Cubans who will be fighting, men and women here who are able to fight. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE) We will have the necessary weapons to arm everyone who wants to fight when the time comes to defend our sovereignty. (APPLAUSE) Because it has been demonstrated that it isn't just the men who fight, but the women also fight in Cuba, (APPLAUSE) and the best proof of this is the Mariana Grajales Battalion which distinguished itself so highly in a number of battles. (APPLAUSE) And the women soldiers are as excellent as our best male soldiers.

I wanted to show how women could be such good soldiers. At first I had to get over my problems with the idea because there were many prejudices and there were men who would wonder how a gun could be given to some woman when there was a man with a rifle around. But why not?

I wanted to show how women could be such good soldiers, and that there were many prejudices...about women, and that the female sector of our country also needs to be remedied, because women are victims of discrimination in jobs and in many other aspects of life.

We organized female units, and they demonstrated that women can fight. And when men and women fight in a country, that country becomes invincible.

We shall keep the militias or the female reserve troops organized and we shall keep all the women volunteers trained. (APPLAUSE) And all these young women I see here today wearing the red and black dresses, the colors of the July 26th Movement, I hope they too will learn how to handle weapons. (SHOUTING AND APPLAUSE)

And this Revolution, my compatriots, that has been accomplished with so much sacrifice, our Revolution, the Revolution of the people, is now a beautiful and indestructible reality! What a reason for well-founded pride, what a reason for sincere joy and for the hopes of all our people! I know it's not just here in Santiago de Cuba; it goes from Point Maisi to the Cape of San Antonio.

I fervently hope to see the people all along the route to the capital because I know that it is the same hope, the same faith of all the people who have risen up, that have patiently withstood all the sacrifice, who haven't complained about the hunger; that when we gave permission, three days for setting up communications again, so that they wouldn't be hungry, everyone protested (APPLAUSE) because what they wanted was to achieve victory, whatever the cost. And our people really deserve a better future, they really deserve to have the happiness that they haven't achieved in their 50 years of Republic; they really deserve to become one of the top-ranking countries in the world, because of their intelligence, their courage and their spirit (APPALAUSE).

Nobody can think that I speak like a demagogue. Nobody can think that I want to bamboozle the people. I have demonstrated my faith in the people enough because when I arrived with 82 men on the beaches of Cuba and people were saying that we were crazy and they were asking us why we thought we were going to win the war, I told them "Because we have the people." (APPLAUSE) And when we suffered our first defeat, and only a handful of men remained and we kept on fighting, we knew that this would become reality, because we believed in the people. When they broke us up five times in 45 days and we got together again and took up the battle again, it was because we had faith in the people. And today we have the most tangible demonstration that the faith had a firm basis (APPLAUSE).

I have the satisfaction of having profoundly believed in the people of Cuba and that I have instilled that faith in my comrades; that faith which, more than faith, is the complete security in our men. And that same faith we have in all of you is the faith we want you to have in us, always (APPLAUSE).

The Republic wasn't free in 1995 and the hopes and dreams of the Mambises were thwarted at the last moment. The Revolution didn't take place in 1933 and it was thwarted by its enemies. This time the Revolution has all the people; it has all the revolutionaries, it has the honorable militants. Its strength is so great and so irrepressible that this time triumph is assured!

We can jubilantly say that in the four centuries since our nation was founded, for the first time we will be completely free and the work of the Mambises will be fulfilled (APPALUSE).

Just a few short days ago, on the 24th of February, I couldn't resist the temptation to visit my mother. I hadn't seen her for several years. When I was returning along the road crossing the Mangos of Baraguá, during the dark hours of night, a feeling of deep devotion made us stop there. Those of us travelling by car stopped there at that spot where they have erected a monument commemorating the Protest of Baraguá and the start of the invasion. At that time, in the presence of those sites, thinking about the exploits of our wars of independence, the idea that those men had fought for 30 years and never saw their dreams made reality because the Republic had been thwarted, and the foreboding that very soon the Revolution they dreamed of, the homeland they dreamed of, would become real. It made us feel the most exciting sensations that could ever be imagined.

I saw those men with their sacrifices come to life again, those same sacrifices we have also come to know at first hand; I was thinking of their hopes and dreams, the same as our hopes and dreams, and I thought about how this generation of Cubans has to pay and how they have now paid the most fervent tribute of acknowledgement and loyalty to the heroes of our independence.

The men who have fallen in our three wars of independence today join forces with the men who have fallen in this war. And we can say to all those who have fallen in our struggles for freedom that at last the time has come for their dreams to be fulfilled. The time has come for all of you, finally, our people, our good and noble people which are total enthusiasm and faith, our people which freely love and freely trust, that fears men with affection above and beyond what they offer, they will have everything they need (APPLAUSE). I only have to say to them here, modestly, sincerely, with profound emotion, that they will always have us, their revolutionary combatants as their loyal servants; they will only have to serve them in return (APPLAUSE).

Today, upon assuming the presidency of the Republic, Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleó, the judge who said that the Revolution was just... (INTERRUPTION) ... liberated territory now takes up the entire country; I shall simply take on the functions he assigns me, all the authority of the Republic is in his hands. (APPLAUSE) Our arms bow down respectfully to the Civilian Power in the civilian Republic of Cuba. (APPLAUSE) I don't have to tell you that we are hoping he will fulfill his duty, because we are simply sure that he knows how to fulfill it. The provisional president of the Republic of Cuba...and the authority, and I give him the podium so that he may address the people.

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