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From: "LEONARDO LIMONTA" <cubaofia@prodigy.net>
To: <Undisclosed-Recipient:@pimout4-ext.prodigy.net;>
Subject: Speech given by President of the Republic of Cuba on August 30, 2002
Date: Sun, 1 Sep 2002 13:41:22 -0400
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Speech given by Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba, =
at the ceremony to celebrate the completion of the repair, expansion and =
building of 779 primary and secondary schools in the capital. Guanabo, =
Habana del Este, August 30, 2002
=20
Dear construction workers;
Dear teachers and students:
Fellow residents of Havana and Cuba:
=20
Today, as in the glorious days of the Bay of Pigs when our brave =
soldiers took less than 72 hours to wipe out the mercenary troops who =
had invaded our country to destroy the Revolution, our construction =
workers, supported by the people living in the capital, have achieved a =
great victory.
           A program was planned and implemented over a 20-month =
period; it was to cover 779 primary and junior high schools in our =
capital city,
where a profound and unprecedented type of educational revolution that =
will serve as an example to the world was initiated. Of this figure, =
which includes all the schools at those educational levels, 734 were to =
be completely renovated and expanded, 12 were to be rebuilt, and 33 =
would be newly built. The number of classrooms needed for the program =
amounted to 3,287, including the rooms needed for computer labs.
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On April 27, 2001, the first 100 renovated schools were =

inaugurated; by October 26, 2001, 202 had been renovated; on April 10,

2002, renovation number 302 was inaugurated; and on June 29 renovation = number 402 was inaugurated. On that day, there were still 377 schools = needing to be renovated, rebuilt or built.

The program had to be completed by September 1, 2002. We had only 62 = days available in which to finish the program of the 779 on time and = with all the requisite quality. The 779 included 33 new schools, some of = which had not even been started.

Why such an urgent effort? It was not just a whim or a desire to break = records. It was simply that, as is traditional, classes would begin in = the first few days of September. An enormous effort to train thousands = of urgently needed teachers in intensive courses had been made and the = aims of their training had been fully met. All the classrooms already = had their televisions and all the schools had their computer labs. The = 1,200 urgently needed teachers who had been trained in intensive courses = to teach computer skills were ready. Actually, the fact of having 20 = months for the program of renovating and building thousands of = classrooms and other buildings seemed to be a perfectly adequate amount = of time to complete our task without any great pressure.

As it happens as often as not, some of the cadres = responsible for the job were overconfident. The actual fact is that, as = the school year was about to begin, it could be seen that the program = was behind schedule; calculations of the time and effort necessary were = overoptimistic. Moreover, although it was possible to work day and night = during the summer, because that was school vacation time, the excessive = heat and the rains could present not insignificant obstacles.

=20

We became aware of the need for a titanic effort as = renovation job number 402 was inaugurated =BEexcellent work on an = important and beautiful school in La Lisa=BE with work still to be done = on 377 schools and only nine weeks to do it. All the materials were = available. We had to complete the program on schedule, do it under the = strictest quality control, and without using work forces from projects = given priority because of their economic importance or the value of the = services they were called on to provide.

The extraordinary organizational capacity of our Party and = Young Communist League, of the people of the Havana and of its = grass-roots organizations was put to the test. We had the enthusiastic = support of ministries and many agencies and companies which, from the = outset, had shown great enthusiasm in supporting a plan which would = benefit all of the city=92s children.

The constituencies, People=92s Councils, and People=92s Power Assemblies = in each municipality devoted all the time and support needed to the = program. The contribution of teaching staff, school principals and = municipal education directors was particularly outstanding. The = children=92s involvement was very moving; they inspired joy, passion and = courage in everyone, doing the tasks within their capabilities any time = of day and sometimes in the early hours of the morning. Parents and = their children were also there at night or in the early hours of the = morning.

On more than one occasion the number of construction = workers, both professionals and volunteers, who worked in one day = totaled almost 40,000 people. Several provinces sent reinforcement = construction workers, people chosen for their good morale and abilities. = No one ever lost his or her confidence or certainty that we would = succeed.

At 9:00 p.m. today we begin this ceremony, only three hours = away from the deadline to complete the building program. Earlier today, =

at around midday and at 2:15 p.m., work on the last two schools was = completed. A sport=92s reporter would say that the Olympic race between = the time available and the building program for the 779 schools was won = by the latter in a photo finish.

Hundreds of thousands of people took part in one way or another in this = shared project. Many working days stretched to 16 and 20 hours. Those = involved in our endeavors in July and August were as well looked after = as our resources allowed. Counting breakfasts, lunches, dinners and = snacks, 30 million meals were supplied.=20

The total costs of the two-year school building program = reached 25,851,000 in U.S. dollars and 215, 827,000 Cuban pesos. The = value of the buildings, restored, expanded or newly built can be = calculated at no less than two billion dollars. Their social and human = value cannot be calculated. The 20 students per classroom at the primary = level puts our country way ahead of all other countries in the world at = this educational level.

And while this was going on in the capital, other titanic = efforts by construction workers and the people were continuing in the = battle to totally repair the damage and destruction caused by Hurricane = Michelle and to meet the deadline and do so with quality. The cost of = this was much higher but equally essential.

In our city, as happens in any large undertaking, there were = contradictions, deficiencies, arguments, strong criticisms, reprimands = and discussions. There is no doubt that this contributed to some = rectifications, reorganization, strategies and tactics developed along = the way, ingenious solutions to various unforeseen problems and = situations where our engineers, architects, building technicians and = chief project designers showed their talent.

Much will be written and thousands of anecdotes will be told = about this noble and selfless epic which will bestow such great benefits = on our homeland. The experience gained will be of great use in other = plans and projects. The Revolution=92s ambitious educational program = will continue to expand throughout the whole country.

As I bring my words to a close today, it only remains for me = to say that the battle was won with great dignity and courage. We can = feel proud of the feats we have accomplished.

However, a basic principle must be laid down. Today, everything is very = beautiful in the educational institutions, which look like new. As is = normal in any construction works, problems will doubtless arise in some = of those recently built, rebuilt or renovated. There will have to be a = labor force ready to find urgent solutions to those that arise at = whatever point. And the most important thing: the relevant mechanisms = must be organized in the Capital, at the municipal and people=92s = council level, in order to immediately carry out repairs in any school = that needs it. Appropriate, accurate, certain and completely rational = and economical calculations must be made, with care to put aside and = protect the materials needed, so that the 779 schools in the building = program just completed are always kept in the top-notch, heartening and = beautiful state they are in as we declare them open today.=20

A veritable culture of protecting and preserving the = schools, their resources and equipment must be encouraged in the = children, the teachers, parents, local residents and our people in = general. Nothing more noble, human, motivating and useful than a school = can be created.

We must ensure that what fills us all with joy today will = never become, through laziness or irresponsibility, a source of sorrow = and frustration.

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Let us safeguard what has been achieved. Let us be worthy of the feats =
we have shown we can accomplish!
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=20
Long live the revolution!
=20
Long live socialism!
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Patria o muerte!
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Venceremos!
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Information Office
Cuban Interests Section
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building of 779 primary and secondary schools in the capital. =
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1">                    =20
</SPAN>And while this was going on in the capital, other titanic efforts =
by=20
construction workers and the people were continuing in the battle to =
totally=20
repair the damage and destruction caused by Hurricane Michelle and to =
meet the=20
deadline and do so with quality. The cost of this was much higher but =
equally=20
essential.<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
<P class=3DMsoNormal style=3D"MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: =
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size=3D3><SPAN=20
style=3D"mso-tab-count: =
1">                    =20
</SPAN>In our city, as happens in any large undertaking, there were=20
contradictions, deficiencies, arguments, strong criticisms, reprimands =
and=20
discussions. There is no doubt that this contributed to some =
rectifications, =20
reorganization, strategies and tactics developed along the way, =
ingenious=20
solutions to various unforeseen problems and situations where our =
engineers,=20
architects, building technicians and chief project designers showed =
their=20
talent.<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
<P class=3DMsoNormal style=3D"MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: =
justify"><SPAN=20
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involved=20

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size=3D3><SPAN=20
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1">                    =20
</span>Much will be written and thousands of anecdotes will be told =
about this=20
noble and selfless epic which will bestow such great benefits on our =
homeland.=20
The experience gained will be of great use in other plans and projects. =
The=20
Revolution=92s ambitious educational program will continue to expand =
throughout=20
the whole country.<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
<P class=3DMsoNormal style=3D"MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: =
justify"><SPAN=20</pre>
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size=3D3><SPAN=20
style=3D"mso-tab-count: =
1">                    =20
</SPAN>As I bring my words to a close today, it only remains for me to =
say that=20
the battle was won with great dignity and courage. We can feel proud of =
the=20
feats we have accomplished. <o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
<P class=3DMsoNormal=20</pre>
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style=3D"FONT-FAMILY: Arial; mso-ansi-language: EN-US; =
mso-bidi-font-family: 'Times New Roman'"><FONT=20
size=3D3>However, a basic principle must be laid down. Today, everything =
is very=20
beautiful in the educational institutions, which look like new. As is =
normal in=20
any construction works, problems will doubtless arise in some of those =
recently=20
built, rebuilt or renovated. There will have to be a labor force ready =
to find=20
urgent solutions to those that arise at whatever point. And the most =
important=20
thing: the relevant mechanisms must be organized in the Capital, at the=20
municipal and people=92s council level, in order to immediately carry =
out repairs=20
in any school that needs it. Appropriate, accurate, certain and =
completely=20
rational and economical calculations must be made, with care to put =
aside and=20
protect the materials needed, so that the 779 schools in the building =
program=20
just completed are always kept in the top-notch, heartening and =
beautiful state=20
they are in as we declare them open today. <o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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style=3D"mso-tab-count: =
1">                  =20
</SPAN>A veritable culture of protecting and preserving the schools, =
their=20
resources and equipment must be encouraged in the children, the =
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mso-bidi-font-family: 'Times New Roman'"><FONT=20

teachers,=20

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parents, local residents and our people in general. Nothing more noble, =
human, =20
motivating and useful than a school can be =
created.<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3><SPAN=20
style=3D"mso-tab-count: =
1">                    =20
</SPAN>We must ensure that what fills us all with joy today will never =
become, =20
through laziness or irresponsibility, a source of sorrow and=20
frustration.<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
<P class=3DMsoNormal=20</pre>
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style=3D"FONT-FAMILY: Arial; mso-ansi-language: EN-US; =
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size=3D3>Let us safequard what has been achieved. Let us be worthy of =
the feats we=20
have shown we can accomplish!<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3> <o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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style=3D"FONT-FAMILY: Arial; mso-ansi-language: EN-US; =
mso-bidi-font-family: 'Times New Roman'"><FONT=20
size=3D3>Long live the revolution!<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3>Long live socialism!<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3>  <o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3>Patria o muerte!<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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size=3D3>Venceremos!<o:p></o:p></FONT></SPAN></P>
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Interests Section<BR></FONT></DIV></BODY></HTML>
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