

**REMARKS BY DR. FIDEL CASTRO RUZ, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT A RALLY HELD IN GENERAL ANTONIO MACEO SQUARE. SANTIAGO DE CUBA, JUNE 8, 2002.**

Compatriots from Santiago de Cuba, Guantanamo and all of Cuba:

I had said that we would all respond to Mr. W. Bush. Our children, our teenagers, our young students; our workers, farmers, professionals; our journalists, historians, artists, intellectuals, scientists; the fighters of yesterday and of today; the youths, the adults, the elders and especially the mothers, the sons and daughters, and the close relatives of all those who have suffered themselves and their loved ones during 43 years of brutal terrorism, aggressions and a murderous blockade maintained by successive U.S. Administrations against our people. They have all been tearing to pieces Mr. W. Bush's statements in Miami.

He went too far in his speech. He was rude. He insulted, he lied, and he threatened. He would only need to add now that the heroic people he pretends "to free", have all been forcibly mobilized to take part in the huge and enthusiastic demonstrations of Sancti Spiritus and Holguin before, and in this enormous rally held today here, in Santiago de Cuba.

Perhaps no other country has ever witnessed such an imposing, combative and sound political movement. Perhaps, never before a small nation had the strength of character and the courage to resist such a powerful adversary. This is an unprecedented confrontation that is taking place in a new historical stage between the force of just ideas and the murderous ideas of the brutal force.

When the arrogant use of force is imposed in violation of every right, ethic and reason, demagoguery and lies remain the only possible ideological support.

Hardly two thirds of a century has passed since Humanity went through the bitter experience of Nazism. Fear was Hitler's inseparable ally against his adversaries. First, he was tolerated as a buffer and a potential ally against communism. Then, he was made concessions. He recovered the Ruhr, a crucial zone for military build-up, and went on to annex Austria to the German Third Reich. Then, without a shot, he conquered a large part of Czechoslovakia. Later, his fearful military force enabled him to strike a non-aggression pact with the USSR on August 23, 1939, that is, 9 days before the outbreak of a war that would inflame the whole world. The lack of vision and the cowardice of the statesmen in the strongest European powers of the time opened the way to a great tragedy.

I don't think that a fascist regime can be established in the United States. Serious mistakes have been made and injustices committed in the framework of its political system --many of them still persist-- but the American people still have a number of institutions and traditions, as well as educational, cultural and ethical values that would hardly allow that to happen. The risk exists in the international arena.

The power and prerogatives of that country's President are so extensive, and the economic, technological and military power network in that nation is so pervasive that due to circumstances that fully escape the will of the American people, the world is coming under the rule of Nazi concepts and methods.

I do not intend to exaggerate or dramatize. But, the truth is that there's a growing tendency to question and override the very existence and the role of the United Nations.

Last September 20, 2001, when Mr. W. Bush proclaimed that those who did not support his war project against terrorism would themselves be considered terrorists and exposed to his attacks, he was overtly disregarding the UN prerogatives. At the same time, based on his military power he was assuming the role of world master and policeman. For those of us familiar with the Marxist literature, that day was the 18<sup>th</sup> Brumaire of Mr. Bush\*. Future historians should take note of the political leaders' reaction in most countries. It was panic and fear that came over most of them.

Such conceptions and methods contradict the idea of a democratic world order based on principles and norms that ensure safety and peace for all of the peoples.

Long before the terrorist attacks of September 11, Bush had promoted enormous budgets for the research and production of more deadly and sophisticated weapons, although the cold war was over, the old adversary no longer existed and the weakened State that replaced it lacked both the economic resources and the will to face up to the overwhelming force of the sole hyperpower.

Why was that colossal military build-up program conceived, and for what purpose?

In a recent speech made on the occasion of the bicentennial year of the West Point Military Academy, an institution well-known for its remarkable role in the military history of the United States, Mr. W. Bush threw a fiery harangue at the graduation ceremony of 958 cadets. However, his remarks were also addressed to the United States and the entire world.

Some of the ideas expressed there are a reflection of his thinking, and that of his closest advisors, long before the brutal attacks of September 11, which now serve as an excellent pretext to justify what was already then a rather dangerous, inadmissible, unsustainable and peculiar idea of the world. He said for example:

*"If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long."*

*"In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act."*

*"Our security will require transforming the military you will lead, a military that must be ready*

*to strike at a moment's notice in any dark corner of the world. And our security will require... to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives."*

*"We must uncover terror cells in 60 or more countries... Along with our friends and allies, we must oppose proliferation and confront regimes that sponsor terror, as each case requires."*

*"We will send diplomats where they are needed, and we will send you, our soldiers, where you're needed."*

*"We will not leave the safety of America and the peace of the planet at the mercy of a few mad terrorists and tyrants. We will lift this dark threat from our country and from the world."*

*"Some worry that it is somehow undiplomatic or impolite to speak the language of right and wrong. I disagree. We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name. By confronting evil and lawless regimes, we do not create a problem, we reveal a problem. And we will lead the world in opposing it."*

*"Generations of West Point officers planned and practiced for battles with Soviet Russia. I've just returned from a new Russia, now a country reaching toward democracy, and our partner in the war against terror."*

As you can see, he doesn't mention once in his speech the United Nations Organization. Nor is there a phrase about every people's right to safety and peace, or about the need for a world ruled by principles and norms. He only talks of alliances between powers, and of war and more war. He speaks of war on behalf of peace and liberty, words that coming from him sound as meaningless and empty as soap bubbles. His entire speech is no more than a sweetened exaltation of chauvinism, and of the superiority of his country's culture, glory and power.

The miserable insects that live in 60 or more countries of the world chosen by him and his closest assistants --and in the case of Cuba by his Miami friends-- are completely irrelevant. They are the "dark corners of the world" that may become the targets of their unannounced and "preemptive" attacks.

Not only is Cuba one of those countries, but it has also been included among those that sponsor terror. And, on top of it all, the cynical fabrication that Cuba produces bio-weapons; they simply overlook the fact that the entire world knows it is a colossal lie.

What is the difference between that philosophy and methods and those of the Nazis? Why is it that so many governments are trembling with fear and keeping silent?

It is not a simple coincidence that the fascist right forces are gaining ground in various European countries.

The American people will refuse to educate their children in such a philosophy.

In the face of such cowardice, many peoples of the world will look hopefully to the American people as the only one capable of putting a straightjacket on, or stopping, the bigots in their lust for power, abuse and conflict. Many peoples in the world showed their unanimous solidarity with the American people after the attacks of September 11; our noble and generous people did too, and certainly not out of hypocrisy or fear.

We would like for those West Point cadets to come to Cuba as tourists some day, when Americans are again free to travel, but not as invaders.

Who has actually reaped the benefits of the terrorist attacks of September 11? Those that President Eisenhower defined as the military-industrial complex; those whose authority had been called into question by the electoral fraud; the Miami terrorist mob; those who want to destroy the United Nations; those who advocate the predominance of hegemonic policies and who want to reshape the world as they wish.

I don't believe for a second that anyone --whatever his position-- who could have prevented the obnoxious crime of the Twin Towers deliberately allowed it to happen in a yearning for popularity and power or for any other purpose.

But, calling things by their name, as Mr. Bush said in West Point he likes to do, I'd say that I think the President of the United States has made serious mistakes in the way he has handled the situation after the tragedy. I shall mention only a few made both domestically and overseas:

He should have never implanted fear in the minds of the American people.

He should have kept calmed.

He should not have adopted hasty decisions without even considering other possibly more promising options, which would have been unanimously supported by all governments, by the most influential religions and by the fundamental political trends, from both the left and the right.

He should not have identified over half of the countries in the Third World as his enemies, much less as terrorists.

He should not have pursued a path that will have the effect of multiplying the number of bigots and suicidal persons in the world, thus seriously complicating the struggle against terrorism. The Palestinian's is a case in point: for every Palestinian that has been murdered, the number of walk-in suicide bombers has markedly increased, which has led to a predicament with no way out in sight.

He should not have concealed the intelligence reports he received, particularly that of August 6, which has given rise to all sorts of doubts and guesses. It is necessary to be valiant and transparent with the people. No one can believe that this is impossible for security reasons. Those of us who have lived and struggled for decades against thousands of terrorist plans and actions originated in the United States are perfectly familiar with the

nature of such intelligence reports, whose sources need to be highly protected by those who draft and forward them.

He should not have met with, or accepted the presence at that meeting in Miami of, well known characters that have organized, directed and carried out thousands of terrorist attacks against Cuba and other countries, including several hundreds inside the territory of the United States.

For many years and until September 11, the Cuban American National Foundation financed, organized and publicized countless terrorist actions and plans to murder Cuban leaders. Today, that same organization continues to fund the defense, protection and impunity of the worst terrorists while waiting for the Cuban Revolution to be destroyed by the United States. Everybody knows this, both in Miami and the White House. Mr. Bush's intimate relationship with these terrorists completely undermines his moral authority and disqualifies him as a world leader to fight against terrorism.

He should not have allowed the fabrication of that stupid lie about Cuba developing bio-weapons. As for the alleged theoretical capacity to produce them, needless to say that even when all governments could lie that doesn't mean they all do.

He should not have politically challenged the Cuban revolutionary leadership because he is in no position to respond to the political challenges that Cuba could throw at him. It is like sailing on a big paper boat --full of lies and demagoguery-- that cannot endure the wind or the waves.

He should not have made demands on matters that are the sole concern of our sovereignty, nor launch threats against Cuba because the Cuban people have never been nor will they ever be forced to give in. This is the people that did not hesitate for a moment when hundreds of nuclear weapons were aimed at this island on October 1962, threatening to wipe them off Earth. No one remembers a single Cuban patriot who lost heart.

Now, Mr. Bush could find himself in the dilemma of either rectifying or trying to wipe Cuba off the map, which is not all too easy.

Mr. Bush should be better informed about what the Cuban people is today and of how it feels; its degree of unity, its political culture and its unmovable strength.

Other things could be said in addition to these reflections on the unfortunate May 20 speech and on other issues, but I don't wish to expand any further.

As we had promised, our people with their talents, their truths and their patriotism have been giving the right response. But the task is not over yet, since our mass organizations will also respond. On Monday 10, their national leadership will meet in the country's capital. Also, the National Assembly, supreme body of the State power, will respond in due course and it will certainly do so with all courtesy.

Thank you, Mr. Bush, for you have honored us with your recognition that such an institution exists here and that in the year 2003 there will be elections for deputies.

There is just this one point to clarify: if, as you have indicated, all elections in Cuba have been rigged, how could the National Assembly have any authority to adopt the amendments to the Constitution that you have demanded? The solution might be that the Cuban Supreme Court validates our deputies. That would be most democratic!

Compatriots from Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo, unforgettable comrades-in-arms in the Moncada, on the mountains and in the cities, comrades from yesterday, today and tomorrow:

On behalf of those who have given their lives for Independence and the Revolution, to whom we will be loyal up until our last breath, I congratulate you on this gigantic demonstration.

Long live Socialism!

Homeland or death!

We will overcome!

- Reference to the book *The 18<sup>th</sup> Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte*, by Karl Marx. (Note of the Translator)

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