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The Argument of Latin America

WORDS FOR NORTH AMERICANS



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THE ARGUMENT OF LATIN AMERICA: WORDS FOR THE NORTH AMERICANS

BY CARLOS FUENTES

Last spring, one of the big TV networks arranged a debate between Carlos Fuentes, the well-known young Mexican novelist, and Richard Goodwin, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American affairs. The U.S. Embassy in Mexico, however, refused a visa to Señor Fuentes and the debate never took place. An effort was then made to place Señor Fuentes' prepared text before the American public via one of the mass-circulation magazines. None was interested. After you have read the text below, you will understand why both the State Department and the mass media are so anxious to keep the views of a leading Latin American intellectual from the American public. As the son of a Mexican diplomat, Carlos Fuentes went to school in Washington, D.C., and is as much at home in the English as in the Spanish language.—The Editors

South of your border, my North American friends, lies a continent in revolutionary ferment—a continent that possesses immense wealth and nevertheless lives in a misery and a desolation you have never known and barely imagine. Two hundred million persons live in Latin America. One hundred and forty million of them work virtually as serfs. Seventy million are outside the monetary economy. One hundred million are illiterate. One hundred million suffer from endemic diseases. One hundred and forty million are poorly fed.

Today, these miserable masses have decided to put an end to this situation. Latin America, for centuries nothing more than an object of historical exploitation, has decided to change—into a subject of historical action.

You will ask yourselves: what has caused this Latin American backwardness? Why, if we won political independence more or less at the same time, are North Americans prosperous, free, democratic—and Latin Americans poor, subjugated, unable to govern themselves? You will sigh with relief: now, everything is going to change, thanks to American generosity. The Alliance for Progress will solve all the problems afflicting Latin America. Thanks to those \$20 billion, Latin Americans will forget the spectre of revolution so stained with blood and destruc-

tive of democracy and human rights, will manage to develop peacefully and, in a short time, will set up democratic societies, twins of the United States.

You are much given to good wishes, to what you call "wishful thinking." You have always believed that what is valid for you is valid for all men in all nations and at all times. You forget the existence of specific historical factors. You fail to realize that in reality there are two worlds, one of rich countries and one of poor countries. You fail to recognize that, of necessity, the poor countries require solutions different from yours. You have had four centuries of uninterrupted development within the capitalistic structure. We have had four centuries of underdevelopment within a feudal structure.

A Feudal Castle with a Capitalistic Facade

You must understand this key word: *structure*. You had your own origin in the capitalistic revolution, liberal and Protestant. You were born without an anachronistic link. You founded a society that, from its first moment, was identified with the historical reason of the times. You created an economy directed towards the creation of wealth in the social vacuum of Anglo-Saxon America. You did not have to fight against and assimilate the resistance of local cultures. You started from zero, a virgin society, totally equal to modern times, without any feudal ballast. On the contrary, we were founded as an appendix of the falling feudal order of the Middle Ages; we inherited its obsolete structures, absorbed its vices, and converted them into institutions on the outer rim of the revolution in the modern world. If you come from the Reformation, we come from the Counter-Reformation: slavery to work, to religious dogmatism, to *latifundio* (enormous expanses of land under the same landlord), denial of political, economic, or cultural rights for the masses, a customs house closed to modern ideas. Instead of creating our own wealth, we exported it to the Spanish and Portuguese metropolis. When we obtained political independence, we did not obtain economic independence; the structure did not change.

You must understand that the Latin American drama stems from the persistence of those feudal structures over four

centuries of misery and stagnation, while you were in the midst of the industrial revolution and were exercising a liberal democracy. You must understand that the only solution for Latin Americans will be to destroy all those structures at once.

But you ask yourselves: is a revolution necessary? Why not abolish those structures through evolution? The answer is simple: because the formulas of free-enterprise capitalism have already had their historical opportunity in Latin America and have proved unable to abolish feudalism.

During the nineteenth century, economic liberalism—laissez faire—was superimposed on the feudal structure in Latin America. Side by side with the landlord class of the colonial period, a new class of entrepreneurs sprang up to deal in the business of exploitation. Those capitalists turned us into single-product countries, exporters of raw materials to the occidental marketplace. The utopia of these entrepreneurs was the following: because of the international division of labor, it was appropriate for some regions to produce raw materials and for others to refine them; such an exchange would produce welfare for everyone. Now we know this is not true; now we know that, in the long run, the price of manufactured goods will always be higher than that of raw materials. Now we know that in a depression of the central economy, those who suffer most are the satellite economies, the producers of raw materials. Between 1929 and 1938, Latin American exports decreased by 70 percent. In that time, hunger *did* exist in Cuba: 50 percent of her labor force was unemployed, the national banks failed, the sugar lands were bought at bargain prices by Americans. The myth collapsed. If economies were complementary, as the classical theory states, our standard of living should be equal to yours.

In order to overcome the effects of economic liberalism, many Latin American countries entered another phase after 1930: protectionist capitalism, with the aim of encouraging the internal industrialization of Latin America and making it less dependent on the export of raw materials. But this naive and liberal capitalism was also superimposed on the feudal structure without destroying it. It abandoned to their fate the great masses of peasants and workers, and reserved progress for an urban minority. It ended by crystallizing a dual society in Latin

America: the modern capitalistic society of cities and the feudal society of the countryside. The minority society became richer at every turn, face-to-face with a majority society becoming more miserable at every turn. In the last few years, the abyss between the two has done nothing but grow. This is why capitalism has not succeeded in solving the problems of Latin America. It has been unable to destroy the legacy of feudalism. It has been unable to promote true collective development in Latin America.

This is what Latin America is: a collapsed feudal castle with a cardboard capitalistic facade.

This is the panorama of the historical failure of capitalism in Latin America:

Continuous monoproduktive dependence. In Brazil, coffee constitutes 74 percent of the exports; tin in Bolivia, 60 percent; copper in Chile, 63 percent; bananas in Costa Rica, 60 percent; coffee in Colombia, 82 percent; bananas in Honduras, 75 percent; coffee in Haiti, 63 percent; oil in Venezuela, 95 percent; coffee in Nicaragua, 51 percent; sugar in the Dominican Republic, 60 percent.

A continuous system of "latifundio." In Chile and Brazil, 2 percent of the population owns 50 percent of the workable land. In Venezuela, 3 percent of the population owns 90 percent of the land. In general, in Latin America, with the exception of Mexico and Cuba, 5 percent of the population owns half of the land. More than half of all Latin Americans are peasants who work under conditions close to slavery. However, only 24 percent of the land in Latin America can be cultivated. Of this percentage, enormous expanses are out of active production, either to maintain the earnings of the owners or through pure irrationality. Most Latin American countries must import a good part of their food; only Uruguay and Argentina are relatively self-sufficient. The productivity of agriculture is extremely low in relation to the manpower employed. And international prices of the agricultural products fluctuate and are constantly declining.

Continuous underdevelopment. The present systems are unable to increase production and use natural resources in the rhythm required by our increase in population. As a result, the

average annual increase in production per inhabitant in Latin America which in 1955 was 2.2 percent, declined in 1959 to 1 percent, and in 1960 to 0.0 percent. In other words, at present, in its double feudal-capitalistic system, Latin America *does not progress*.

Continuous political stagnation. The continued existence of the feudal structure forbids the masses access to education and assures the concentration of political power in the hands of a fistful of landlords and city capitalists. Latin American armies financed and equipped by the United States, support this system, as we have just seen in Argentina, Ecuador, and Guatemala.

Continuous general injustices. At present, 4 percent of the Latin American population receives 50 percent of the combined national incomes. The higher classes have hoarded more than 14 billion dollars in foreign banks. A great percentage of their local investments are unproductive ones: fixed-income securities, real estate, luxury goods.

Continuous dependence on foreign capital. At present, a good part of the Latin American economy is not serving its own development, but is nothing more than an extension of foreign economies, particularly that of the United States. Iron and oil in Venezuela, copper in Chile, Peruvian minerals, do not remain in those countries to promote economic development: they are a possession of the American economy and benefit only that economy. But since this is a topic very closely related to you, we will talk about it later.

The key question is this: How can the causes of underdevelopment in Latin America be chopped away? There is no room for doubt in the answer: stabilization of prices of raw materials in the short run, and economic diversification—industrialization—in the long run. But you want it to be done through peaceful evolution and the Alliance for Progress. And we think: through revolution. Let us examine both solutions.

The Alliance for Progress

The only structural reform foreseen in the Alliance for Progress is agrarian reform. Now, please consider that in Latin America the base of political power is the landlords. Do you sincerely believe that a leading class whose roots are in the

ownership of land is going to let go of its reason for being? Agrarian feudalism is the basis of the wealth and political dominion of the governing classes in Central America, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador; do you believe these classes are going to commit suicide voluntarily? A Peruvian oligarch recently told me: "If the gringos force us to divide the land, we will answer by expropriating their mining companies." No, my American friends: an agrarian reform in Latin America, as demonstrated by Mexico and Cuba, is only made through revolution, with weapons in hand. This is what the sharecroppers of Peru, the peasants of northeastern Brazil, the pariahs of Chile, Ecuador, and Colombia are beginning to do. They are not allowing themselves to be cheated by "false" agrarian reforms: the distribution of sterile lands, without credit, without machinery, without schools or hospitals. Those governing classes can deceive you, but they are not going to swindle the peasant masses or stifle their revolutionary impetus.

The Alliance is going to be used by governments that do not truly represent their people, by governments representing the old feudal order whose only interest is to keep its privileges. Look where your dollars are going to go: as in South Vietnam, as in South Korea, as in Iran and Spain—to the bank accounts of a handful of people, to the importation of luxurious automobiles, to the construction of apartment houses.

The Alliance does not even mention one of the basic factors of backwardness in Latin America: the economic deformation imposed by foreign domination of our economies. Ah, you jump at this point. You refuse to admit this. You have helped the development (what development?) of Latin America. You unselfishly give us dollars and technical aid.

We have already spoken about the domination of natural resources: iron ore, copper, tin, coal, lead, zinc, oil. These resources, in your hands, enter your economy: they are not employed in the internal development of our countries. The Alliance does not even speak of that. It does not foresee that the iron and oil of Venezuela may contribute to creation of heavy industry there, that the copper of Chile or the lead of Peru may be motors of national industrialization. At any rate, our in-

dustrialization must be light, for transformation, but nothing more.

You are also proprietors of Latin American foreign trade. Sixty percent of our foreign trade is with you, in accordance with the prices you set. American companies manage 75 percent of our commercial movement. You impose the conditions and the prices. Last year, the Alliance gave 150 million dollars to Colombia; but in that same year, Colombia lost 450 million dollars because of the decrease in coffee prices.

Ask the great cotton concerns how much they pay for a bale of Mexican cotton, at what price they resell it to the English monopoly in Hong Kong, and how much they charge the Communist government of China, which you detest, for it. The Anderson Clayton in this operation makes five times the amount that the Mexican grower does. And ask the Department of State why it forbids Mexico to sell its excess oranges to Czechoslovakia in exchange for machinery we need, machinery you either do not sell us or sell us for too high a price; ask the Department why the whole crop went rotten on the docks of Tampico while you traded happily with Communist countries and allowed Adenauer's Germany to be the principal Western market of that very same Czechoslovakia.

Investments? Yes, you have invested 10 billion dollars in Latin America. It is a curious thing: we have always received your investments, and we are still poor. You speak about *your* property in Latin America and call us thieves when we expropriate it. But why don't you ask your investors? Ask them how much they invest and how much they take back to the United States in profits. Do you want to know? Between 1950 and 1955, you invested 2 billion dollars, made three and a half billion, and took back to the States one and a half billion. In a single year, 1959, you made 775 million, only reinvested 200 million and sent 575 million back to the United States. In the last 7 years, Latin America lost, because of these shipments of money, \$2,679,000,000. You take out too much, leave too little, and even this little is distributed unfairly: where is the real benefit for our economies? Is it just that these profits do nothing, not a single thing, to alleviate the horrible misery, ignorance, and illness of the great majority of the Latin Americans

who, with their slavery, made them possible? You, as Americans, tell me if that is just.

And tell me also whether you have not recovered more than your investments, whether it is not right that this squandered wealth should be recovered and directed towards improving the lot of everyone, because it was created by the work of everyone though today it benefits only a dozen corporations.

Finally, in its year of life, the Alliance for Progress has been accompanied by acts of political aggression that prostitute it completely. These acts are the Cuban invasion in April, 1961, and the violation of the inter-American law in Punta del Este in January, 1962.

Playa Giron and Punta del Este

American responsibility in the invasion of the Bay of Pigs is not debatable: President Kennedy assumed it completely, with full knowledge that in this way he was violating not only inter-American treaties but the internal laws of the United States itself: the Neutrality Act and the U.S. Code. You pride yourselves on living in a State of Law. Why did you allow your government to violate it? Don't you count on representatives of the people to defend it? Is there not a process to call to account—impeach—the president who violates it? Why do you permit an apparently irrational act by your government, your CIA and a band of mercenaries recruited from the assassins and sadists of the Batista government? Or do you agree with your government in considering the law a dead letter when faced by political necessities? In this case you yourselves are justifying Goldwater, the John Birch Society, and all the fascist forces that, beginning with McCarthy, have been growing in the United States of America.

You killed women and children in Playa Giron. You bombed the first decent houses, the first schools, the first hospitals of Cubans who never before, during the long American protectorate over Cuba, had a roof, an alphabet, or their health. And you did it in the name of liberty, democracy, and free enterprise. What do you want us to think of these nice-sounding words when in their names a population is murdered and the first proofs of concrete welfare are destroyed? We think the same

as Simón Bolívar did 150 years ago: "The U.S.A. seems destined by Providence to plague us with all kinds of evils in the name of liberty."

In Punta del Este, the second aggressive act in the name of the Alliance took place. Maybe for you the standards of inter-American law are not important, but for us they are the result of a long struggle. It took us a whole century to win these standards. We won them with the invasion of Mexico and the annexation of half our territory, with the mutilation of Colombia, with the Platt Amendment, with the murder of Madero, with the occupation of Veracruz and the punitive Pershing expedition, with the interventions in Haiti, Nicaragua, and Santo Domingo, with the death of Sandino, with the campaign and the pressure against the Mexican Revolution, with the violation of Guatemala. It cost us a great deal of blood to set these standards: self-determination, non-intervention, respect for territorial integrity, equal rights for natives and foreigners, peaceful solutions of controversies, the right of each American state to organize as it thinks best. In Punta del Este, all these standards were violated by your government. A century of judicial construction collapsed. It does not matter, said Secretary Rusk: "It is not the role of foreign ministers to discuss judicial matters, but to make decisions in the field of politics." The OAS ceased to be a legal organization because it was converted, now without any disguise, into a political weapon of the United States of America.

And the Alliance for Progress looked like the soft loincloth of naked intervention in favor of the concrete political and economic interest of the United States in Latin America.

Revolution, Yes

For years, many Latin Americans put faith in a gradual change of American policies towards Latin America; they also put their faith in the ability of the inter-American organization to support the minimum principles of our sovereignty. It is necessary to thank President Kennedy who, in only a year, has destroyed those illusions. The New Frontier turned out to be identical to the Republican Old Guard. Today, Latin Americans know they must no longer trust in the possibility of a change in the American government or in the OAS: they

must trust only in themselves, in their capacity to destroy, by themselves, the old feudal structure and replace it with a radically new society, from which they can build for themselves.

Revolution? Yes, because as Mexico and Cuba have demonstrated, only revolution, not aspirins or good wishes, can destroy feudalism.

Revolution? Yes, because as Mexico and Cuba have demonstrated, only armed revolution can destroy forever the armies of caste, protectors of the old order. Or do you believe that the army which has just annulled the will of the people and deposed the constitutional president in Argentina is going to disappear voluntarily from the political scene? Do you think it just that this Argentine army, with more officers than the American army, is devouring 50 percent of the national budget? And do you think it just, as taxpayers, that your money should go to equip these caste armies? With your money, these armies prepare revolts, murder workers, torture students, and void elections.

Revolution? Yes, because as Mexico and Cuba have demonstrated, only revolution can produce the structural changes necessary to modernize our countries, get our stagnant resources moving, resources that were sold and squandered, realize agrarian reform, create an internal market, diversify production, promote popular education, and push industrialization.

Revolution! You cry to heaven, wring your hands, weep before violence and bloodletting. Yes. Unfortunately, it has never been possible to persuade the leading classes of a feudal country that their last hour has come. The Count of Arana, in the eighteenth century, could not persuade them, and President Kennedy, in the twentieth, cannot either. Porfirio Diaz and Fulgencio Batista were convinced only at gunpoint. This is the only way the Peruvian landlords, the Argentine militarists, and the Colombian landlords are going to be convinced. Blood? Yes, historical backwardness is paid for in blood. Injustice is paid for in blood. Remember Jefferson. From Spartacus to Fidel Castro, going through the Protestant, English, French, American, Mexican, and Russian Revolutions, revolutions have been accomplished by violence. Mickey Mouse does not make revolu-

tions. They are made by hungry men, valiant, angry, desperate men.

But you complain: what about democracy and liberty? Why, instead of bringing representative democracy, human rights, elections and a free press, do Latin American revolutions impose a leftist dictatorship in the place of a deposed rightist dictatorship? Why do they impose a single party, start a wave of political emigrants, suppress freedom of the press and elections? Why do they invite the protection of extra-continental powers?

Ah, this is what is worrying you. This is what you do not understand. You should start remembering. You have a very bad memory. You would do well to remember your own revolution in the eighteenth century. You also had your traitors, your deserters, and your execution walls. Like all revolutions, yours begot a counter-revolution. In those times, you had 3,500,000 inhabitants; 70,000 fled the United States to find shelter in Canada. You expropriated the belongings and lands of exiled people without paying them anything. You suppressed the pro-British press. You won the revolution with the help of a foreign power, France. Without Rochambeau's French troops and De Grasse's fleet, you could not have defeated the British. You suffered shameful press campaigns, were labeled "bandits and savages" by the royal European press. You used "exotic doctrines"—those of the French encyclopedists—to form a republican government, a heresy against the status quo imposed and defended by the Holy Alliance. You were the devils, the heretics, the non-conformists of the eighteenth century. You had to resist the counter-revolutionary invasion of 1812, your own Playa Giron, with Andrew Jackson's improvised militia. But you, during the colonial period, had already practiced representative democracy. You did not live under feudalism; you were already Protestants and capitalists; you were not struggling along as an exploited, illiterate hungry mass of people.

In our day, a true revolution in Latin America is equivalent to a war of independence. It means starting from the bottom and creating conditions that, at least, will permit the exercise of democracy. A democracy cannot exist, you know,

with empty stomachs, empty minds, and empty shacks. Democracy is not a cause; it is a result.

Sacrificing democracy through revolution? Not if there has never been democracy in Latin America. It has been democracy solely of paper and rhetoric. Sacrificing elections? Not if elections in Latin America have been only a ceremony and a fraud. Sacrificing human rights? Which ones? Those of men who do not eat, do not read, do not write, who live in humiliation and terror? Sacrificing freedom of the press? Not if there is no such thing in Latin America; there is an anti-national corrupt press at the service of the interests of feudalism and the most powerful foreign nation at hand.

No, the problem is different. The revolution would bring to power the popular majority that for centuries has had neither voice nor votes. In the eyes of this majority, the corrupt press, fraudulent elections, submission to foreigners, freedom of enterprise and the human rights of the minority that oppressed the majority are synonyms of those centuries of exploitation, of negation, of not being. This is not what the people are interested in. They are interested in *concrete* democracy: the starting point of their real aspirations. They are interested in destroying the old structure of exploitations; they are interested in creating their own new structures, national, popular, with collective benefits, in the knowledge that many mistakes will be committed and many failures endured, but with the hope that this time they will be working for themselves and for their future and not for a bunch of feudal landlords and foreign enterprises. Of course, this transformation demands great sacrifices and is not easy to bring about: four centuries of insanity weigh against it. But there is no other way. The only available alternative is to bear, forever, the old injustice.

Can't you understand this? Why do you seem so hysterical, so jealous, so angry when a revolution puts into action the liberated energies of the people, and why so indifferent, so calm, so thoughtful when these same people are exploited, tyrannized, and debased by a feudal oligarchy? Why did you not start press campaigns against Somoza, why did you not invade Venezuela while Perez Jimenez was in power, why did you support Trujillo for 30 years, why have you not declared your-

selves against Stroessner? What do you want us to think when you have supported and still support regimes of corruption and crime, but fling yourselves against regimes of honesty and work: against Cuba?

However, it no longer matters what you do or do not do. We already know the path. Open your eyes. Today it is Cuba. Tomorrow. . . . Keep your eyes open. The armies of privilege will be defeated. The old structures will collapse. Land, mines, businesses will be recovered. They will work for the benefit of everyone. There will be difficulties of conversion and organization. But in the long run the economy will be diversified, idle land will be cultivated, illiteracy will be eradicated, the liberated farmer's consumption of goods will increase, national resources will be used for national industrialization, culture will also belong to workers and farmers, and decent houses, hospitals, highways, and schools will be built.

Is this a dream? No, it is not. This is our challenge. Feudalism and superimposed capitalism have failed, in four centuries, to achieve any of this. You said that nationalization of oil was a daydream in Mexico; that within a year the foreign companies would be back because Mexicans were unable to manage such a complex industry. You were right: we *were* unable to do it, we had many difficult moments, just as difficult as those Cuba is now having. But with time, as is happening with Cuba, we created our technicians, our specialized workers, and we succeeded, we surpassed the old companies in efficiency and now we use our oil for our own benefit, rationally. We will not forget this experience: where the Latin American man becomes owner of his land, his industry, his work, he pulls himself out of the ineptitude of past centuries and shows what he can do. This is going to happen, don't you doubt it, in the next few years in Latin America. Nobody learns to swim without diving into the water.

Revolution, yes! ! Don't be deceived, Americans. Open your eyes. Ask the Peruvian farmer who chews coca and eats rats if he wants fake elections or revolutions. Ask the Chilean miner who crawls through the tunnels of Lota if he believes in free enterprise or in revolution. Ask the northeast Brazilian farmer if he wants capitalism or revolution. Ask the student

castrated by the Paraguayan dictator if he wants Stroessner's free press or revolution. Ask the Guatemalan farmer "freed" by Castillo Armas if he wants Alliance for Progress or revolution. Ask the Latin Americans who corrupts the press and the unions, who supports the armies and the oligarchies, who pays miserable salaries, who owns the mines and the oil wells. Ask them who gets the Alliance for Progress money, and ask what they use it for. Ask them if we believe in the free world of Franco, Salazar, Chiang-Kai-shek and Ngo Dinh Diem. Ask them and they will tell you why people spat on Nixon.

Ask the men living in "misery village" in Buenos Aires, in the "favela" of Rio, in the "cayampa population" of Santiago, if they are afraid of Communism. These beggars, these pariahs, will answer that they are afraid only of their present oppressors, of those who exploit them in the name of capitalism and representative democracy, and that they prefer anything that might mean a change.

Ask these men if they are against Cuba, if they believe the lies they read in the "free press" of our countries, if they do not know that the old American colony of the Caribbean is our hope because there the caste army, the *latifundio*, the administrative corruption, the official cheating are over and everybody works together, with weapons ready, Americans, with weapons ready to defend the Revolution; tell Ydigoras or Somoza to arm their people with the weapons you give them—and then to move forward together despite aggression and boycott.

Ask these men if they are afraid of help from the Soviet Union. Ask them if there is a single Soviet company in Cuba that exploits the Cuban economy for its own gain.

Do you see, Americans? The world has changed. Latin America is no longer your preserve. The world moves ahead. And you are standing on the rim. Are you going to help these inevitable revolutions or are you going to antagonize them with invasions, press campaigns, and economic aggressions? It does not matter. Revolutions are going to progress. The world has changed. You will not be able to put out all the fires in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

But try to understand. Try to understand that a revolu-

tion in Latin America can affect only a handful of Yankee enterprises, but never the concrete welfare you enjoy. Try to understand that our real development, which can be achieved only through revolution, far from hurting you will help you. Do not let yourselves be fooled by this handful of enterprises and investors. Try to understand that the sooner we start our basic development, which can come only through revolution, the more buyers you will have, and we will all be closer to a planned world economy, rational and interdependent.

What We Want

Understand this: Latin America is not going to be your back yard any more. We are going to enter the world. What kind of world?

Apparently, a world characterized by the political polarization of two power centers: the United States and the Soviet Union, facing one another from unchangeable positions—but both limited by the knowledge that a “hot war” will end not with victor and vanquished but with the total destruction of the human race.

But behind this obvious factor there is now another one: the upsurge of the underdeveloped countries and the possibility that they may dissolve this polarization, diversify and rationalize the international political positions, and confront the world with the primary job of peace—to cooperate in the economic and social development of those underdeveloped countries. The Soviet Union, as much as it can, is already doing so. And you? The first measure of cooperation is to know how to respect the revolutionary change that is taking place in those countries.

And there is a third factor, of truly universal perspective: over and above the visible conflicts of our world, there is emerging the development of modern science and the opportunity it offers to all men, without any distinction of political ideology, religious belief, sex, or race, to achieve a truly human life, free from illness, ignorance, and hunger and full of promise for personal and collective creation. Please, try to see beyond the intellectual provincialism of the cold war. Try to see where we want to arrive, we men of the underdeveloped world, hungry, revolutionary. We do not want the destruction of the American

people, which we love for the expressions of its great people, its great political names—Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt—and artistic names—Poe, Melville, Faulkner, Marian Anderson, O'Neill, Miller. We do not want atomic hatred, or a permanent cold war, but a world of peace in which we may grow without anachronistic deformations, without irrational exploitations. We want a world in which everyone coexists, not in mutual tolerance but in mutual respect and friendship.

We are different from you. Our problems are not your problems. We have to make decisions and walk on roads different from those you believe to be universally valid. Do not be provincial. Try to understand the diversity of the world. Try to understand we want progress that is real, not the unjust lie of today. We want *to be*. We want to live with you as loyal friends, not as sick, poorly fed, ignorant slaves. We want a rational organization of development in which science can, at least, distribute its fruits universally. We want to arrive at a peaceful synthesis of oppositions that are not, nor can ever be, eternal, any more than those of Greeks and Romans, Roman and barbarians, Guelphs and Ghibellines, Catholics and Protestants, monarchists and republicans, were. We want to be free of slavery, and we want to save you from a destiny worse than that of the slave: that of the lord, of the master.

Latin America knows its own path. Nobody, my American friends, is going to stop those 200 million people.

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