

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO
RUZ ON THE CONMEMORATION OF THE 9TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE TRIUMPH OF THE REVOLUTION, AT THE REVOLUTION
SQUARE ON JANUARY 2, 1968 [1]**

Date:

02/01/1968

Dear guests,

Workers,

Soldiers,

Students,

We introduced some changes in our traditional parade for the commemoration of the ninth anniversary this year.

What was the rationale? In organizing parades for this date every year we used to invest a lot of energy and time, a lot of equipment – which consequently wore out – and a lot of fuel; all this in addition to the considerable destruction caused by the heavy war machinery to the roads along which they are brought in.

This does not mean that our military parades have been suspended definitely; they have simply been rationalized. So they will be held only on our most important celebrations, as will be the case, for example, of the 10th anniversary of the Revolution next January 2, 1969 (APPLAUSE).

However, we were all very much satisfied and happy to watch the parade today; we saw paraders representing the pillars of the Revolution; our workers were represented by the men who will cut the sugar cane in the next harvest (APPLAUSE).

And they deserved some of the loudest applause, as a just recognition of our people to those who have been true and anonymous heroes in these years of hard Revolutionary struggle. They are men who have worked for months and helped to complete our sugar cane harvests in our current times when there is no longer a huge army of unemployed to do the job, as was the case in the past, while we strive to achieve the full mechanization of the sugarcane cutting process relatively soon.

They have accomplished a critical task along with our army soldiers who participated in the harvest, and the students of our technological institutes (APPLAUSE). They are the force that has secured the harvests these years, along with the regular cutters across the country, and they are the fundamental labor force to guarantee the 10 million sugar harvest in 1970 (APPLAUSE), besides the growing number of sugar cane harvesting machinery.

Also in the parade were the cadets from our military schools, of the various wings of our Armed Forces. There was a group of *Camilitos*, who belong to the schools where boys enroll very young to become

cadres of our Revolutionary Armed Forces (APPLAUSE). The parade also included students from the national schools representing the secondary and pre-university students; students from the workers' technological institutes and the industrial technological institutes. Additionally, there were boarding-school students, medical school students, and university students. And there was also a group of women who work in the Havana Agricultural Belt (APPLAUSE).

Therefore, the key sectors, the main fronts of the Revolutionary effort, have been represented in the parade. And after nine years of Revolution, it was a source of profound optimism for all of us to see tens of thousands of young people who are our dearest treasure after all these year...the most formidable investment of our people in the field of education, culture and technical development (APPLAUSE).

Marching in the parade were our new generations which no one can doubt will be considerably better prepared to face all the tasks lying ahead of our people and all tasks of our future society.

Among our guests here today are the members of the combatant brigade "Che Guevara" (APPLAUSE). They are a formidable example of what can be achieved with discipline, organization and Revolutionary spirit. We should remark that the level of productivity that they have achieved...such level of productivity in this type of farming activity has never been reached before, nowhere else; in just two months they bulldozed over 4000 caballerías¹ of land in the province of Oriente (APPLAUSE). With this in mind we decided that they deserved to be present on this platform in this 9th anniversary celebration.

Among our guests are the delegations attending the commemoration of this anniversary, as well as over 400 participants in the Cultural Congress of Havana (APPLAUSE), distinguished writers, artists and scientists from almost all parts of the world who are taking part in this important cultural event.

We are thus marking yet another anniversary and the beginning of a tenth year of work. And we must say that this anniversary comes at one of the most formidable moments of the Revolution, when the spirit of struggle and work of our people has clearly reached its highest point. It is also the start of a year that will certainly be a year of intense work. This is so because in 1968 we should engage in our strongest constructive effort and this will still be one of the hard years of the Revolution, which demands from us much work and great efforts, but which will certainly also be one of the years that will make us feel more optimistic about the future.

Our country has lived through nine years of arduous efforts. These efforts have been mounting. And some of these efforts have already borne fruit while others - those that are more fundamental - will too in a not very distant future.

This year should mark an even greater leap in the organization of the work of all the people, in the use of the resources available, as well as a major progress in the field of production.

As we're talking about this year and the efforts that we must make, and to what end, I want to point out precisely where we must make a major effort, because it will be one of the difficulties that we will face in 1968. And I will explain why. It relates to the question of fuel.

You must have noticed increasing problems with fuel in recent weeks, and the long lines at the gas stations. I will explain the reasons for such problems.

First, I would like to give you information about the increase in fuel consumption in the last years, and what has caused it. In 1958, we consumed 3,012,000 tons of fuel which break down as follows: 1,786 million tons of fuel oil; 399,000 tons of diesel oil; 130,000 tons of kerosene; and 697,000 tons of gasoline.

The yearly consumption increase in these eight years has been the following: in 1967 we consumed 2,736 million tons of fuel oil (a 53% increase); as for diesel oil, we consumed 937,000 tons, which is a 135% increase compared to 1958; in kerosene, the figure was 285,000 tons for a 119% increase from

1958; and gasoline, 909,000 tons, which is only a 30% increase compared to 1958. As you can see, for example, in the case of diesel oil – which is the fuel used in tractors and large transportation vehicles – what was spent in 1958 was slightly more than half of the gasoline consumed: the consumption of gasoline was almost twice that of diesel oil, since it was mainly used in cars. However, in 1967 the diesel oil consumption in the country exceeds that of gasoline.

How did such consumption increase come about? In the years of 1961, 1962 and 1963 there was a decline in sugar production, due to the circumstances that followed the suppression of our sugar quota by the US government, which also brought about some skepticism throughout the country in relation with sugar. Therefore, as a result of this situation, coupled with the low level of organization at that time and a lack of administrative efficiency that was due to the great structural changes made in our agricultural sphere, the sugar cane harvest in 1963 was of about 3.8 million tonnes of sugar. So in 1961, 1962 and 1963 there was practically no increase in fuel consumption; only a global 1% in the three years. But in 1964, just after the catastrophic hurricane "Flora", and in light of the new concepts, the experience gained and a better organization, a strong increase in production activities began nationwide. Consequently, 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1967 saw a sustained rate of increase of about 5.5% per year. Five point five percent per year was the average increase in fuel costs in the years 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1967!

Now, where did we invest these fundamental increases in fuel expenses, in what industries, what activities? First, the electricity industry, which consumes nearly one million tons of fuel oil, that is to say, 34% of the total fuel oil consumed in 1967, which stood at the figure of 2,736 million tons.

How has the electricity generation grown? The production of electricity has grown by 68% compared to the 1958 production, and we have estimated that in 1969, when the Nuevitas and "O'Bourke" power plants start operations, we will be able to double the level of electricity generation that was achieved at the beginning of the Revolution.

Let's look at the growth of electricity generation – which is the fundamental basis of development of any country – in the past years. This is measured in millions of kilowatts per hour; in 1958 the figure was 1,794, 9 million kW/hour; in 1959, 1,993 million kW /hour; 1960, 2,145 million; 1961, 2,237 million; 1962, 2,258 million; 1963, 2,344 million; 1964, 2,494 million; 1965, 2,592 million; 1966, 2,813 million; and in 1967 the figure was already 3,019 million kilowatts.

That accounts for the increased consumption of fuel oil from 1958 to date, and especially for the increase in recent years.

Secondly, the sugar industry, which consumes more than 600,000 tons of fuel oil, that is 20% of the national total for this type of fuel. It is used for the production of refined sugar, raw sugar, transportation, electricity generation and the production of alcohol.

Thirdly, the cement industry, which currently consumes about 180,000 metric tons, that is 6% of the national total for fuel oil.

The production of cement in 1967 was 15% higher than in 1958. Additionally, the annual average production in the past five years, 803,000 metric tons, is 40% higher than the average production during the five-year period of 1954 to 1958 which was 572,000 metric tons.

With the new plants that will start operating in the second half of 1968 we will double by 1969 and nearly triple by 1970 the production level of 1958.

The national average rate of consumption of fuel oil per ton of cement produced, including power generation, at the cement plant in Mariel, is 220 kilograms of fuel oil per metric ton of cement. The projected consumption for the new plants is the following: the one in Siguaney, 174 kg of fuel oil per metric ton of cement. This means that it will consume 116,580 tons of fuel oil annually. And the Nuevitas plant, which will also start up in the second half of this year and will produce one ton per every 160 kg of fuel, will consume 96,000 tons of fuel oil annually.

The nickel industry, which consumes about 330,000 metric tons, that is 11% of the total. In 1967 we managed to double the production of 1958, which was the second highest in the capitalist period.

How did the nickel production grow? It grew from 18,000 tons in 1958, dropped to 17,880 in 1959, 14,520 in 1960, to 18,120 in 1961, to 24,900 in 1962, 21,630 in 1963, 24,060 in 1964, 29,134 in 1965, 27,854 in 1966 and 34,900 tons in 1967, with much of the same facilities that existed at the time of the triumph of the Revolution; this was to a great extent a result of the extraordinary efforts of the nickel industry workers to restart the Moa plant, which already produced 34,900 tons last year.

Also the metal industry, which produced 6000 tons of steel in 1959, this past year, 1967, produced 120,000 metric tons.

Agriculture, which in 1967 ... I mean, I will refer to the consumption of diesel oil now. So far I have explained about the fuel oil consumption.

Now, about the consumption of diesel oil:

The agricultural sector consumed 275,000 tons, that is 29% of the total consumption for the agricultural and transportation activities.

According to estimates in the areas cultivated with permanent and temporary crops there has been an increase from 177,545 *caballerías* in 1958 to 277,000 *caballerías* in 1967. This means that the cultivated area increased by approximately 100,000 *caballerías*.

The mass of livestock, for example, has grown considerably. In 1952 there were 4,042 million heads of cattle. No data exist for 1958. But in 1961 there were 5,776,000, and between 1961 and 1967 the number increased from 5,776 million to 7,146,800 heads of cattle according to the census that was just completed a few months ago. This means that from 1958 to 1967 the number of livestock in the country has increased by approximately 2 million heads of cattle.

And not only that; as many of you know, our livestock is being transformed. Most of the livestock herds in Cuba are under artificial insemination programs and are radically being transformed into milk- and meat-producing cattle. Half a million new cows will be put to produce in the next 36 months. And so in the next three years we will begin to reap the fruits of this arduous effort, this policy of not sacrificing the females of the herds; slaughtering has been limited to males or the females unfit for breeding, and this explains the significant increase in our livestock, which will constitute one of our major economic items in the future.

The second largest consumer of diesel oil is the Ministry of Transport, which consumed 220,000 tons.

The total cargo traffic has increased too. And in this case the way to measure it... If for electricity we measure by kilowatts per hour, for transportation there is a measurement called tons per kilometer. For example, if 10 tons are transported along a 100 kilometer distance, we will have 1000 kilometers of tons per kilometer. There has been an increase from 4.87 billion tons per kilometer in 1963 to 16,797 million tons per kilometer transported in 1967, which is a 2.5 increase.

Moreover, public transportation this year reached a total of 1.25 billion passengers in all modalities; this means that in 1.250 billion trips at least one person was carried – this is measured by passengers carried per year – which exceeds by 525 million those carried in 1962, that is an increase of 72%.

Another major consumer of diesel oil is our Merchant Marine. The merchant vessels that Cuba owned before the Revolution were 14 units of small boats with a capacity of 48,000 metric tons. The Cuban Merchant Fleet currently has 42 vessels with a 258,000 metric tons capacity; that is an increase of 438%.

The Ministry of Construction also consumes diesel oil and spent 67,000 metric tons accounting for 7% of the total national consumption, in 1963 executed a volume of 421 million pesos in construction and assembly works in the whole country; in 1967 it expanded to an estimated volume of 700 million pesos, an increase of 65%, while the plan for 1968 is 850 million.

The National Fisheries Institute consumes 5% of the total national diesel oil, that is 49 000 tons. The fishing activity has almost tripled compared to 1958, from 21 000 tons in 1958 to 60,000 in the year that just ended, 1967.

Other consumers of diesel oil are: the Ministry of Industries, 67,000 tons; the Sugar Industry, 29,000; Water Resources, 21,000; and the Food Industry, 19,000.

The increase in the consumption of gasoline has been relatively low; gasoline is used mainly in transport activities, production activities and private cars.

Kerosene, which is used as cooking fuel, increased from 130,000 in 1958 to 286,000 in 1967.

What has been the level of equipment imports in the years from 1960 to 1967? We have imported 35,014 tractors, 5436 dump trucks, 23,936 flatbeds, 1603 trailers, 2931 panels, 3557 buses from the socialist countries, 928 British Leyland buses, 7314 rural cars including jeeps, 1 614 bulldozers, 567 graders, 873 excavators and cranes, 1355 concrete mixers. Our fleet of tractors for agriculture increased from 9200 in 1960 to 35,000 in 1967. We must also take into consideration the circumstances under which these machines are employed; the number of operation hours has almost doubled in recent months with the agricultural plans for next year. The agricultural field will grow from 48,000 caballerías of farm land under different crops, either permanent or temporary, to more than 80,000 caballerías in 1968.

Many of the activities like carrying and lifting sugar cane – in which more than 40 million tons were carried and lifted by hand – are now mechanized. That is, these machines have served to significantly promote the country's development, they have served to humanize the working conditions across the country, and are aimed precisely at ensuring a higher rate of agricultural development.

As you can see, the equipment brought into the country is not for luxury, leisure or entertainment purposes; they are equipment that the people will use to work, to increase production. And the fuel expenditures that have been made are precisely in favor of production activities fundamentally.

Our country, which had a few thousand tractors and approximately 300,000 cars, now has about 40,000 tractors, and the number of cars has been declining gradually. Public bus transportation has been expanded, though.

Apart from all the work in the economic field, we have given an enormous boost to education – which demands significant transport costs and other services that use fuel – and have considerably increased medical services. However, despite this significant rise in production activities in the 1964-1967 period, fuel consumption increased at a rate of 5.5% per year.

Supplies have been on the rise too. We didn't face any difficulty neither in 1964 nor in 1965. The difficulties began in 1966. Imports in the second quarter were insufficient to cover fuel costs that year and by the end of the year it was necessary to request some quantities in advances from the purchases of the following year to meet consumption needs. So in 1966 we received 23,571 metric tons of fuel oil and 37,222 of diesel oil in advance of 1967.

Additionally, the situation worsened in 1967 because it was necessary to request advances on purchases for a total of 70,000 tons of fuel oil; 25,000 of diesel oil, and 20,000 tons of gasoline. We received actually 44,922 tons of fuel oil; 13,515 of diesel oil; and 21,292 of gasoline, which totals 80,000

tons.

Given these circumstances our stocks began to dwindle, so any delay in the arrival of a ship due to a storm – as has been the case in the last weeks – or due to minor repairs in the industry could bring an important sector of the economy to a halt.

In 1967, the demand grew by 8% and supplies increased by only 2%. Hence, despite the advances on purchases in late 1967, not only were the stocks being exhausted – and we must operate with a minimum fuel reserve – but it was even necessary to request some amounts from the Armed Forces reserves. This means that not only were the stocks exhausted, but that by the end of 1967 we were forced to use reserves that are of great importance, that are practically untouchable, and that are the reserves of our Armed Forces, running the risk of finding ourselves with virtually no fuel reserves for our military units in case of an attack.

To all the costs of economic growth and the development of the country – and an underdeveloped country has to work hard in these activities that demand spending on fuel to give a solid boost to its economy – we should add the fact that our country is incessantly threatened by the yankee imperialism and must therefore keep a huge number of forces on the arms which use equipment that are mostly motor equipment and which need fuel during combat operations; fuel is also spent in training and in combat readiness exercises; this is despite the enormous savings that our comrades in the Armed Forces have made, as they have their share in the national consumption of fuel.

At the same time, the domestic oil production has grown slightly. Oil extraction in Cuba totaled 27,600 tons in 1959; in 1960, 25,400; in 1961, 28,100; in 1962, 43,300; in 1963, 30,800; in 1964, 37,300; in 1965, 57,400; in 1966, 69,100; and in 1967 the national production was more than 100,000 tons and stood at 113,600 tons (APPLAUSE). The plan for next year is 140,000 tons, while we hope to produce 250,000 tons in 1970.

So far I have explained in detail about consumption and supplies. I should say that the Soviet Union has made a considerable effort to supply us with fuel (APPLAUSE). That effort has resulted, for example, in the arrival of 162 vessels carrying fuel in 1967; this means a vessel arriving approximately every 54 hours. However, it seems that that country's possibilities to meet our growing fuel demand are limited. And our development effort is in full swing; we are at the most decisive point of our economic progress, as these figures show. There is a year of great work ahead of us, with the giant brigade already organized and which by the month of April will have 600 tracked excavators and 500 new 10-ton trucks that will arrive in the country between now and the month of August for the construction of waterworks; with more than 700 construction machinery and different other types of machinery for the construction of waterworks and roads; and also the completion of the giant brigade.

So we have been working in clearing land, building roads and in waterworks, apart from the huge farming plan for next year, which will ensure that enough cane is planted and that we will have more than enough cane to produce the 10 million tons of sugar. This means that we need to plant 25,000 *caballerías* of land next year, apart from the substantial increase in root crops and rice fields that will practically triple the cultivated area in 1967. This enormous effort, the startup of two large cement factories and of two large thermal power plants over the next 18 months, and the global growing rate of development in the country logically require an increment in fuel expenditures.

Our domestic production is limited; our means to pay for such purchases from other supply sources in the next three years are very limited, they are practically non-existent, because it has been precisely during these years of work that we have been creating new resources for the country's economy.

However, our economy cannot come to a halt. To say it more properly, our economic development cannot and should not decline, much less stop. This large number of machines that we have accumulated over the years must be used to their fullest potential.

Nothing would please the imperialists more, no dream has been more cherished by the imperialists, the

reactionaries and counterrevolutionaries, than seeing our economy in trouble due to fuel shortages; the CIA agents have made every effort to create obstacles and sabotage our fuel production facilities. Imperialists know that fuel is fundamental and strategic to the development of our economy; they also know it is key and strategic for our national defense. They are aware that in case of an aggression there would be no way to bring fuel into the country for our tanks and our war vehicles, for our weapons in general.

I draw your attention to this fact because it relates to the urgent need for the country to become aware of the importance of fuel. And if supplies are limited, if our domestic production is limited, if we do not have the means to buy from other sources, what should we do? What should we do with the fuel that we have? (SHOUTS OF: "SAVE IT") What is your response? (SHOUTS OF "SAVE IT!") Save it! And you have responded perfectly fine (APPLAUSE). The watchword of the Revolution, the watchword of the Revolution in all workplaces, in all industries, in all transportation centers, wherever fuel is used, is to save fuel.

Therefore, we need to have a tight control over fuel usage. A strong control primarily in the state-run activities, as the state-run productive sector has the largest share in fuel consumption in the country - with the nationalized industries, the nationalized transportation means, with its tens of thousands of tractors, with its new cement plants and, in general, with the rise in nickel production, with the growth of its merchant fleet and fishing fleet - while a relatively small amount of fuel is spent on private cars.

Consequently, there must be a strict control over the state sector; we must optimize the use of all our cars; we must ensure that no truck travels empty from one place to another (APPLAUSE). Our transportation, planning and Party organizations have been reviewing the flow of cars on the roads. They did a comprehensive study in the province of Oriente; they are doing the same in the other provinces, analyzing the purpose for each trip that is made and why you see vehicles going full to one place and returning empty. So they are trying to determine how much fuel can be saved in this regard.

The same applies to agriculture, to all types of construction works; it will be essential that we stop any practice which constitutes even the smallest waste of fuel, any unnecessary use of the agricultural machinery. We must have a strong control over the use of the agricultural machinery, and avail ourselves of the enhanced organization that we have achieved over the years to establish a true discipline in that sense.

In our sugar mills it is necessary to reach the highest possible level of fuel savings on the part of the operators, the workers, the technicians, the managerial staff, who should ensure that bagasse is employed timely, so that not a single gallon of fuel is spent unnecessarily. It is essential to apply at all levels and in all respects a strict policy of savings and control if we do not want that fuel shortages become a hindrance to the country's economic development at the time of its greatest momentum. Similarly - however unpleasant the measure is - we must implement a strong control over the gasoline spent on private cars (APPLAUSE).

There are many people in this country; not everyone who owns a car here is a bourgeois. Cars used to be imported here by the tens of thousands; in the past used cars were smuggled in, and they filled this country with low-priced cars which later demanded the importation of spare parts, tires and fuel. So many ordinary people bought a car of any type; we have seen that many drive their cars to attend the mass meetings; there are cars meant for transportation purposes.

Anyway, we will need to make this sacrifice, and the understanding and cooperation of all will be necessary to implement also during these years - we do not know for how long - a control on the use of gasoline for cars. We will immediately take all appropriate measures to establish that control, which has come to be strategic, that has come to be fundamental for our Revolution.

There is another issue: we cannot continue to take from the reserves of our Armed Forces, we cannot take another ton of diesel oil from our tanks or gasoline from our trucks and war vehicles (APPLAUSE), because those fuel resources are essential to the defense and life of this country. But at the same time

we cannot continue with this kind of tension, with empty tanks waiting, day after day, week after week, for a vessel to arrive when we know that the delay of a ship causes problems. We cannot live requesting advances constantly because it is not good for our economy. Additionally, we cannot maintain this policy of repeated requests for advances because it is detrimental to the dignity and decorum of this country (APPLAUSE).

That is why our Politburo, based on the reasons that I have just stated clearly, decided to implement a strict control over the use of fuel, confident that in every respect it is the most beneficial measure for the country.

Our country is marching forward, without a doubt of any kind. Some are beginning to understand, but perhaps many of the detractors of this Revolution do not imagine the magnitude and even the speed at which our country will begin to see the tangible fruits of the efforts that have been made along these years.

A country with a malformed economy; a country colonized by the fierce and unrelenting imperialists; an exploited country; a country with more than one million illiterate; a country without basic industries; a country without technology and without technicians; a country that the imperialists tried to deprive of doctors even, and also of engineers. And quietly and calmly our people said: those who want to go are free to go, those who want to leave this country are free to leave! (APPLAUSE) A country that embarked on the path of literacy; a country that started by teaching more than one million adults to read and write; a country that began by opening schools along its length and breadth so that there would not be a single child without a school here; training teachers, establishing schools for workers, workers' improvement courses, high schools for workers, technological institutes for workers; training new technicians by the tens of thousands with a stronger sense of duty and of social obligation, people of a superior human and technical nature.

Additionally, we are confronting the plunder of technicians by the imperialists, a looting that is practiced against us not only out of a habit for plundering, which is inherent to imperialists as they plunder technicians across the continent. They drain thousands of technicians every year from every country in Latin America paying them high salaries: thousands of doctors, engineers, who are bought off with money. And if they have ten, fifteen, twenty times more doctors than any country in Latin America per a thousand inhabitants, they don't feel satisfied: the buy off doctors across the continent in order to have more, while developing nations have less; and they buy off engineers, and even try to buy off artists, writers, poets, and whoever is of value. That's the "Alliance for Progress"!

They wanted to plunder us of our technicians not only out of a habit for plundering but also in order to put obstacles in the path of the Revolution. But the Revolution moved on and confronted the challenge in the best manner: not by setting up a prison for technicians, not by forcing any technical specialist to stay here even when we most needed them, but by keeping the doors open and expecting new men in greater numbers to take their place! (APPLAUSE)

And in the next three years we will graduate more engineers than were graduated any time before since the beginning of the century until the triumph of the Revolution (APPLAUSE). Now we have a greater number of doctors, better distributed. In fact, our schools hardly had enough room to receive all who applied for medical school, and we have enrolled about 1700 medical students.

The country coped with all these problems with the appropriate methods, starting with the literacy campaign and including the major specialties. And we have prepared ourselves, our conditions are different now, we are in a better situation. A people that had no organizational habits has gained habits of organization, and everyone became a student, and everyone became a soldier of the homeland, and everyone took on a sense of organization and discipline!

Those who have seen this parade today, especially our distinguished guests, might wonder if we are a militaristic country. We are not! We are an organized country, we are a disciplined country; we are a

people that, by force of the circumstances, has turned into soldiers, and as such we are willing to be good soldiers (APPLAUSE). And we are increasingly bringing discipline and organizational methods into all activities. Our people is evolving towards a new concept of education, a new concept of military service, because along with the development of institutions and the educational movement we have developed in terms of ideas too.

Today we have a global view, and our country will establish compulsory education not only through to sixth grade, but also to secondary school level; and not only to junior high school but we will establish compulsory education for all the youths within a certain age group, that is, the ages when they should be in school. Education will be mandatory up to the pre-university level (APPLAUSE).

We will establish the obligations that all members of society should have in relation to education, because a country like ours can not afford to have any illiterate person in 10 or 15 years time. Any illiterate person would be a nuisance, a hindrance, a mortgage, a burden to society.

We cannot afford to have any illiterate person, not even to have citizens without a high and broad level of schooling. And neither can we afford to have a single young person without a technical and professional training 20 years from now.

We are sufficiently encouraged by the experience of the past years to follow this ambitious vision, so the slogans on our nation's educational flags should say that every citizen must not only be educated and have a broad preparation and culture, but also be technically trained for production.

In a sense that is what is happening when the parades include the tens of thousands of students from technical institutes, who are also workers who cut cane, and are also soldiers who defend the homeland.

So all our future educational system and our organization will lead to the creation of institutions for children in kindergartens, of elementary semi-boarding schools where the children will eat breakfast, lunch and dinner and afterwards go to their houses to sleep. The creation of secondary schools in non-urban areas, under a semi-boarding system, as well as the establishment of technological institutes, and pre-university and all types of centers which will also follow the semi-boarding modality.

Along with compulsory education at the pre-university level, men and women alike will participate in the military service to the homeland! (APPLAUSE). The military and combat readiness training will be a subject that every citizen in this country should always take (APPLAUSE), since the right of the Revolution to exist, the right of the Revolution to live on, the country's right to build its future demand a strong people, a people prepared at all levels and a militarily trained people.

Therefore, the military service in its current form will disappear gradually, since in the coming years there will be nobody at age 15 in the first or second grade if we apply this concept consistently. And when someone is in second grade at age 16, it is because he or she did not attend school; it is because his or her parents were careless, because the parents' organizations and the educational organizations were careless.

We will no longer have - as is the case today - many young people studying the third and fourth grades while in the military service. So one ponders what these young people were doing when they were 10, 11 or 12 years old; either they were exploited in some way, perhaps in some cases by their own family who did not care about their education, or they were victims of their parents' indolence, or were the victims of the lack of efficiency of the educational institutions during the early years of the Revolution.

Every child has to attend school and every youth has to go to high school, and every youth has to attend a pre-university school.

And we have said that both men and women will undergo military training because we would be discriminating against women if we didn't provide them with military training. And I'm sure that no

woman in this country would accept being excluded from military training in her technological institute (APPLAUSE), especially in our Revolution where women play such a decisive role and are increasingly more prominent.

That is the prospect for the coming years, that's the perspective that we must work for from now on. In the economic field, fundamentally, our agriculture will have developed considerably by 1970, and the main emphasis of the country will not only be in the basic industries such as cement, electricity and others, but the 1970-1980 decade will be a decade of high growth in industrial facilities, both for processing the products of a developed agriculture and for meeting the needs of a modern society that is progressing.

This means that looking at nine years from now, once we have overcome the fundamental difficulties and are better prepared than ever to cope with the difficulties that may arise, we see a bright outlook and are entitled to feel much more confident in what we do.

And this country, which embarked on this revolutionary road nine years ago and has traveled deeper and deeper into that path, will never depart from the revolutionary path and will never stop to advance in the realm of ideas and the revolutionary institutions.

As long as imperialism exists our policy will be to confront it head to head and without hesitation (APPLAUSE). That imperialism which begins to feel concerned about the economic development of this country, which begins to feel defeated by this country's achievements; an imperialism that is dedicated to doing the most ridiculous things; an imperialism whose consuls hasten to try even to sabotage all our purchases, be them a quarter of a peso worth or one million pesos worth; an imperialism that organizes campaigns to prevent that we buy seeds, as the consul in Veracruz did when we tried to purchase some seeds from Mexico following all legal norms.

It was painful for us, very painful to see these campaigns succeed and see how in the name of who knows what hypothetical dangers of competition...for a country that sells its pineapples in the United States – to whom we do not plan to sell pineapples until imperialism disappears (APPLAUSE); in a country that also received a substantial part of our sugar quota when imperialism cancelled it on us, regretfully the idea that we were potential competitors prevailed. What a way for us, underdeveloped countries, to unite! What a way to help each other!

Sugar is our main crop and whoever wants any of our best cultivars of sugarcane can come to Cuba and get it (APPLAUSE). We are developing in animal husbandry and we have no doubt that in the course of a few years we will be one of the world's best in this field.

Whoever wants any breed, whoever wants some bull semen from any of our best sire bulls can come to Cuba and get it; whoever wants seeds of any kind can come to Cuba and get them, because we do not fear any sort of competition.

And if we, the working people, can't find coordination and cooperation among the countries of the developing world, we will have no alternative but to push forward with production and reach the levels that we know we are able to reach. And we know we are capable of many things, and we know that no country can compete in any way with us in the field of sugar (APPLAUSE). Additionally, we will also become major producers of meat for the world markets, both in terms of quantity and quality, and we will become major producers of tropical crops; we will stand among the top citrus fruit-producing countries in the world, and the same will apply for coffee, and banana and pineapple (APPLAUSE).

Here we have the *smooth cayenne* pineapple cultivar and we have counted all the plants and have a marked each plant with a flag; we are collecting every shoot, so we will produce more pineapple than can be produced anywhere else in the world (APPLAUSE).

Some attitudes are certainly difficult to explain.

We know that other countries have the smooth cayenne cultivar, including Guinea. The Republic of Guinea has that variety of pineapple, and we have excellent relations with that government, so we will not lack the seeds of any variety that we may be interested in getting (APPLAUSE).

The imperialists are making all sorts of pressure, sabotaging our development effort in every way, and the more they sabotage us, the more we endeavor; the harder they try to hold us back, the stronger our determination to move forward.

We have learned that lesson through historical dialectics, because in our march along a path full of difficulties and struggle our people has grown into a great people; while coping with great obstacles, great difficulties, the conscience of this country, the dignity of this country and the strength of this country have expanded. Just as the heroic struggle of other peoples against the imperialist enemy makes them evolve and become stronger, because that is a law of human society, that is a law of history.

Hence the people that enjoys the highest of universal recognition, the people most admired in the world today is the people of Viet Nam for their unprecedented, heroic struggle (APPLAUSE); a people that has become a giant; a people that is defeating the imperialists; a people that is pushing imperialism into an inevitable defeat; a people against whose integrity and heroism the yankee army and its ultramodern weapons of destruction and death have crashed.

And that people has managed to live up to its glorious mission, and that people has set a great, memorable and useful example for all the peoples of the world and especially our people. So we stand, without hesitation, unconditionally and under every circumstance, in solidarity with the people of Viet Nam, for whatever and wherever they should need us! (APPLAUSE).

Our country will pursue its internationalist policy without hesitation and in solidarity with the revolutionary movement worldwide (APPLAUSE); our country will deepen its revolutionary ideas and carry its banners as far as it is capable of taking them. Our country will also maintain its own hallmark which is the result of its experiences and its history; and in terms of ideology, we will maintain our own approach, with absolute independence, following on our own path set by our people based on our experiences and in accordance with our tasks.

These are the prospects for the future, these are the prospects for the generations that marched today on behalf of our people, and in that spirit we must look forward to the coming years.

Each passing year is a year in which our people works more earnestly, with more organization and more experience, with more technical development and especially with more revolutionary development.

What remains now is to give a name to this year 1968. And we want that you tell us (SHOUTS OF "HEROIC GUERRILLA"). I hear you are proposing that this year should be the Year of the Heroic Guerrilla (APPLAUSE). So this year will be called the Year of the Heroic Guerrilla (APPLAUSE) as the fairest name for this year on account of its nature and its spirit, and as a tribute of profound reverence, remembrance and love for the heroic Commander Ernesto Guevara (APPLAUSE), and for the heroic fighters who fell with him (APPLAUSE). The imperialists are reporting names of Cubans who fell with Commander Ernesto Guevara. Well, yes! We will not tell names, but we say that if other Cubans fell fighting alongside Commander Ernesto Guevara, that is very consistent with the history of this country, with its internationalist and revolutionary spirit (APPLAUSE).

And there's nothing extraordinary, nothing is more honorable for this country that some of its sons are ready to die in the fight, shedding the last drop of their blood for the liberation of the peoples, which is the liberation of humanity (APPLAUSE).

And they may believe that those Cubans will fall into oblivion but that will never happen. Just as

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Commander Ernesto Guevara they will live forever deep in our hearts, and someday not only our people but an entire continent will pay them the tribute they deserve (APPLAUSE).

May this year be worthy of that name, worthy of the example of Che in every respect, in austerity, at work and on the line of duty!

Homeland or Death!
We shall overcome!
(OVATION)

1. Translator's Note: One caballería = 13.4 hectares.

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