

Oct. 11, 1972

Mr. ALARCÓN (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. President, I am very happy to express the gratification of the Cuban delegation on your election to preside over the work of the General Assembly. We are gratified at your nomination not only because of the masterly way in which you are conducting our deliberations but also because you represent the People's Republic of Poland, linked as it is to Cuba by close ties of friendship and fraternal co-operation.

The general debate is now drawing to an end. Each year that we hold it, it tends to show us the grave problems confronting our peoples. There can be no doubt that from the general debate we gather the overwhelming fact that the world is still confronted by the same choices and problems as confronted it at previous sessions. We see that the most acute problems of the moment are still awaiting solution. We see that the peoples still continue their indefatigable efforts to create a world based on independence, on full respect for national rights, on the eradication of social interest and on the encouragement of progress for all. However, the yearly statement of those problems and their constant highlighting has served little purpose. The repeated efforts made here to ensure respect for the Purposes and Principles of the Charter have led to but meagre results. Those Purposes and Principles enshrined in the Charter at San Francisco, and yet the efforts by a major portion of the membership of the Organization to establish a new international order based on those principles that underlay the creation of the United Nations have come up against the attitude of the imperialist and colonialist Powers, which try by all means at their disposal to perpetuate their exploitation of other peoples, to despoil them of their wealth and impose their will upon them.

In Indo-China, in the Middle East, in Africa and in Latin America we are watching a single process taking place, one that is characterized by open battle, without truce, between the emerging peoples and the reactionary forces which are obstinately trying to halt the inexorable march of history.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

T
of its
since
solutio
Be
of war
myself
electic
expres
Poland
I
me as l
policy
way in
was ma
in tril
Ye
with y
sessio
fruitf

The aggression against Viet-Nam is still the principal international problem. The crimes committed by the United States Government go beyond the limits of human imagination, and make nonsense of nazi barbarism. Against the people of Viet-Nam the Yankees have exhausted all the resources of a technology placed at the service of infamy and of their plans for universal enslavement and domination.

PROGRA

the' Ge
the De
People
item a
possib

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

The bombing of dikes and irrigation systems, the indiscriminate destruction of Viet-Nameese towns and villages, the mining and blockading of ports of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the massive use of toxic chemical substances -- all these call for the most resolute and indignant condemnation by all peoples. The Government of Mr. Nixon is guilty of the most monstrous crimes. Civilized conscience and history have both condemned them as genocide, biocide and ecocide and call upon the international community to take energetic action to put an end to Yankee brutality, to cut the claws of the Pentagon, and to assure the Viet-Nameese people of their sacred right to independence and their own decision as to their future.

There is no other solution to the problem of Viet-Nam than acceptance of the seven-point programme submitted by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam. That programme enjoys the support of international public opinion, as was made clear at the recent meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in Georgetown, Guyana, last August. The Conference demanded the immediate withdrawal, total and unconditional, of all North American troops, military personnel and war equipment from Viet-Nam and the cessation of intervention in that country, and called upon the North American Government to take part seriously in the talks going on in Paris and give a favourable response to the proposals of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. By admitting as a full-fledged member the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam, the Conference of the Non-aligned countries evidenced its commitment of solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Viet-Nameese people and once more affirmed that that struggle calls forth the admiration and support of all peoples of the so-called third world. In that way the countries meeting in Guyana made it clear, moreover, that the incomparable tenacity of the Viet-Nameese people and their memorable victory over Yankee brutality constitute the greatest contribution to the cause of the emancipation of all countries of the so-called third world.

Thus all peoples of the world greet with joy the successful achievements of the Viet-Namese fighters and, as if it were a triumph of their own they hail the defeat of the Yankee policy in South Viet-Nam and in all Indo-China. North American imperialism has been thoroughly defeated in its foul war of aggression. In its insane arrogance, however, Washington goes on seeking to enlarge the sacrifices to be made by that indomitable people. Aware that there is no alternative for them but that of total withdrawal from Viet-Nam, the Yankees are leveling everything, destroying everything, eradicating from the land of Viet-Nam even the last trace of life; they are leaving no stone of infamy unturned in their diabolical aim of annihilating that people that has beaten them to their knees and wrecked their plans for domination. Some day all mankind will be a unanimous Nuremberg, sitting in judgement against those who have thus blemished the human spirit.

For the same reason, there is cause for indignation here when we hear the lying allegations of the head of the North American delegation. It is the last straw to have the United States try to attribute responsibility for the continuation of the war to the Viet-Namese side. The United States never had any reason whatsoever for interfering in the affairs of Viet-Nam; it never had and never will have any right to interfere in the life of that people or of any other people. The world can no longer be so easily deceived. It knows perfectly well that if an end is to be put to that conflict, the United States must completely withdraw from Viet-Nam, must give up its dreams of imposing on the Viet-Namese people the Thieu administration, the creation of Yankee intervention. What is difficult to understand is why Mr. Rogers comes to this rostrum to repeat arguments that absolutely no one believes.

To restore peace to Indo-China, there must also be an end to the North American aggression in Cambodia and Laos. The solution of the conflict in both those countries will be possible only through acceptance of the political programme of the National United Front of Kampuchea and the programme of the Patriotic Front of Laos. The non-aligned countries also took a position of solidarity with the Cambodian and Laotian peoples in their struggle against imperialist aggression. The recognition of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia as the sole and legitimate representative of that country within the non-aligned movement constitutes yet another proof of the growing

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

co-ordination among the anti-imperialist forces of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and an additional indication of the bankruptcy of North American policy. With the restoration of its seat to the legal Government of Cambodia, the non-aligned countries performed an act of historic justice, confirmed their adherence to the anti-imperialist principles which gave rise to that movement, and at the same time recognized a fact that cannot be disregarded: the Lon Nol clique, barely holding out in the Cambodian capital, kept going solely by foreign invaders, represents nobody and is the deceptive shadow of a fleeting nightmare. The General Assembly must draw the necessary conclusions from all this, drive out the usurpers and restore the seat to the legitimate representatives of Cambodia.

The Korean peninsula continues to be a hotbed of tension in the Far East. It is indeed deplorable that once again North American intrigue has succeeded and that it has not been possible to include in our agenda the item regarding the creation of favourable conditions for the peaceful and independent reunification of Korea. Cuba reaffirms its position of principle in this matter: the Assembly should insist upon the immediate withdrawal of all North American troops from South Korea, the dissolution of the so-called United Nations Commission for the Reunification and Rehabilitation of Korea, and the cessation of all interference in the internal affairs of that country.

A grave situation generating tensions and threats still exists in the Middle East. The Cuban position on this matter is very well known. Only the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from territories which they have occupied since June 1967, together with full respect for the legitimate rights of the Republic people, can possibly restore peace in that area.

No one can turn a blind eye to the constant provocation and hostile acts of every nature that are constantly being perpetrated against the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. This conduct is encouraged and promoted by imperialist interests, particularly North American imperialism, as well as the feudal elements of the zone, which are afraid that the example of the Yemeni revolution might encourage the Arab masses to fight in order to establish truly revolutionary and popular régimes in their country.

The European continent, the breeding-ground of conflicts and of antagonisms throughout history, today offers a potential for peaceful coexistence. That promising prospect is the result of the policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. It is the proof of tenacious action for peace and international security and the establishment of relations of co-operation among the States of the region. Cuba supports the initiative of the socialist countries, led by the Soviet Union, in proposing the holding of a European security conference.

The normalization of relations in Europe and the overcoming of tensions inherited from the last war all call for full recognition of the German Democratic Republic, a sovereign State that is called upon to play an outstanding role in the world of today. For the sake of the welfare of all and the cause of international peace, an end must be put to the discrimination against socialist Germany. Its entry into the United Nations, as well as its membership of all other international organizations, is an urgent and necessary measure which brooks no delay.

On the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly there are a number of items which touch upon the strengthening of international peace and security. Cuba reaffirms its support for the holding of a world disarmament conference open to participation by all States. I believe that we owe the Soviet Union a debt of gratitude for having taken the initiative in submitting this item and also with regard to the question dealing with the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the use of force in international relations.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

Among the basic problems that should also be included in the agenda is that of the elimination of military bases set up by imperialism all over the world, constituting so many spearheads of its policy of expansion, subversion, domination and aggression. As Latin American examples, suffice it to note those set up in Panama, Puerto Rico and the naval base of Guantanamo in Cuba.

Cuba shares the interest of all nations in peace, and it is for this reason that we support any measure which this Organization may adopt leading to general and complete disarmament, the destruction of all nuclear weapons and means of delivery, the liquidation of all existing arsenals and the cessation of the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons. But in so doing we must draw attention to the fact that these efforts will meet with large obstacles as long as the policies of imperialist aggression and exploitation survive in the world. The peaceful endeavours of the United Nations will only be crowned with success when conditions are such that security, independence and the territorial integrity of all States, great or small, are guaranteed; and this can be possible only through the overthrow of the aggressive plans and purposes of imperialism.

The retrograde interests of colonialism still stand in the way of the achievement of the Declaration contained in resolution 1514 (XV). In Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde, in Angola and Mozambique, the Portuguese colonialists, armed and supported by NATO, and with the utilization of international mercenaries, pirates and bandits, ruthlessly put down or fight against the liberation movements. Yet, the latter respond daily with more overwhelming blows against their oppressors. The people and the Government of the Republic of Guinea are constantly on the alert, ready to turn back and put down imperialist aggression. The masses in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa are putting up resolute resistance against fascist colonialists. Threats and plots by the imperialists continue against the Republic of Guinea, the People's Republic of the Congo, Tanzania and Zambia. The people of Puerto Rico, also encouraged by the recent decisions of international support for their just cause, are widening their struggle against North American colonial domination.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

By the expressed will of the vast majority of its Members, the United Nations has defined and stressed unequivocal support for the right of all colonial peoples to independence. Year after year, from this rostrum, a constant condemnation of colonialism is repeated and resolutions are adopted reiterating the need to put an end, once and for all, to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

And yet, the decolonizing work of our Organization faces resistance and obstacles which are well known to all. In the last few years the alliance of the reactionary forces of colonialism and racism and imperialism has been tightened in order to stop the process of the emancipation of the subject peoples, to reduce the United Nations to impotence and to perpetuate the slavery imposed for centuries over a considerable part of mankind. The fight against colonialism has thus achieved a critical stage.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

The General Assembly now must engage in a reassessment and consider concrete measures to ensure fulfilment of its decisions in all those Territories that have yet to achieve their independence. It is now up to the General Assembly to adopt the decisions necessary to break the back of colonialist-imperialist resistance and guarantee to all peoples the exercise of their indisputable right to national independence.

Action by all socialist and non-aligned States must be concerted in order to overcome the fatal influence still exerted by North American imperialism and its reactionary group. Only thus can the United Nations start along the road of effective and decisive assistance to the peoples which are fighting for their emancipation.

The Georgetown Conference defined the joint programme of the non-aligned nations for the complete and final eradication of colonialism, and very clearly set forth the reason why this shameful vestige of the past still survives in much of the African continent. That reason is none other than the political and diplomatic support, the financial and military supplies which colonialism and racism receive from the main centres of capitalist power in the world, and particularly from North American imperialism. It is the weapons of NATO which shoot at African fighters. It is the Western monopolies, primarily Yankee ones, which exploit the natural resources of the colonies and fatten their bank deposits with the blood and sweat of the enslaved masses. It is the pressures and manoeuvres of the Western Powers which hamstring action by the United Nations in favour of the oppressed peoples.

For the nations with an anti-colonialist mission -- and they constitute the great majority of this Assembly -- the choice could not be simpler: either they yield to imperialist pressure and slow down the process of liberation, or they batter more vigorously so as to isolate and overthrow the imperialists and put an end to colonialism everywhere.

There is other choice but to redouble militant solidarity with all national liberation movements and give them all the political and material assistance they require in order to see their struggle culminate in victory. For us, enemies of colonialism, the liberation movements are the rightful owners of the colonial territories, it is they who have the sole right to assume international legal representation of their peoples, it is they who comply with the terms of the Charter and United Nations declarations, and it is therefore they who deserve the full support of this Organization.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

My delegation is gratified at the recent decisions of the Special Committee on decolonization concerning the Portuguese colonies and Puerto Rico for they reflect the determination of that important organ fully to implement the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly and thus ensure the emancipation of all those Territories which have not yet achieved their independence. We also rejoice at the important decision of the Georgetown Conference to give seats as observers at future meetings of the non-aligned nations to national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity, the Arab League, and the Socialist Party of Puerto Rico. We are entirely in agreement with the decision taken by the Fourth Committee last 27 September to invite as observers representatives of liberation movements. Cuba considers that representatives of all the subjugated Territories should participate in the work of this Assembly, both in the Committees and in the plenary Assembly, when items dealing with colonialism, including item 23, are being discussed. Who can challenge the authority of the spokesmen of the combatant peoples to take part in decisions touching on their own future?

The Special Committee resolution recognizing the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence and instructing its Working Group to undertake a study of the specific steps required to implement the Declaration in resolution 1514 (XV) regarding that Territory constitutes an overwhelming and crucial victory for the universal cause of the struggle against colonialism. For twenty years North American imperialism barred the doors of this Organization to the case of Puerto Rico. To ensure maintenance of this situation, the United States Government resorted to all kinds of pressures, manoeuvres and ruses. For twenty years it imposed on this Organization a silence of complicity which allowed it brutally to repress the liberating desires of the Puerto Rican people. For twenty years the United States stood in the way of the fulfilment by the United Nations of its duty regarding Puerto Rico, spurned each and every one of the anti-colonialist decisions adopted here, deceived world public opinion, and acted out a grotesque farce entitled "Associated Free State" which the racist régime of South Africa is now borrowing to introduce in the Territories which it usurped and now oppresses and plunders. To do this,

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

the United States violated the sovereignty of some Member States, terrified the fearful, crushed the resistance of the weak and broke the will of the timorous. Today it continues in that pathetic effort. It still tries to snatch from the hands of the Puerto Rican people the victory it has achieved.

But Cuba is confident that this Assembly will support the report of the Special Committee and thereby authorize that Committee next year to adopt and implement decisions regarding Puerto Rico. There are few peoples in the world which have earned such a clear-cut right to international solidarity as that of Puerto Rico. In an unequal contest with an incomparably more powerful enemy, kept off the road which leads to American independence, victim of all the furies of empire, the Puerto Rican people have never yielded to their colonizers' frenzied attack.

Puerto Rico gave to this continent political prisoners who have been in gaol for so long: Oscar Collazo, Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, Irving Flores, Bernardo Díaz Díaz, Juan Antonio Cruz Colón, Rafael Molina Centeno and Manuel Mendez Candia. They have been prisoners for over two decades, and stand as living witnesses to the indomitable courage of that people. Maintaining intact the spirit of their struggle, those nine patriots remain incommunicado, subject to all sorts of harassment, and victims of a hateful prison system.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

Among them there are some of great age, others whose health is precarious. We cannot delay the mobilization of all anti-colonialist forces to demand urgently from the North American Government the immediate liberation of those fighters, who sacrificed themselves for the ideals of independence long before this Organization took them up and proclaimed them. We must not allow the hatred of the colonialists to be vented again on nine heroes who, with unparalleled courage fought to defend their country's right to independence. Their imprisonment is a disgrace to and a blemish on the anti-colonialist principles solemnly proclaimed by this Assembly.

Puerto Rico, a Latin American nation which is an inseparable part of our common country, will one day be independent. It is the last of the Latin American nations to be held under the colonial yoke, subjected to more intense exploitation by the monopolies than any other, turned into a military fortress of imperialism, subjected to the most execrable techniques of oppression, threatened with total absorption: surely its cause deserves the widest and most generous support. At the same time as it claims that the support, the Puerto Rican people continues its struggle, continues its unswerving pilgrimage towards independence. It has covered a long road since the day when Bayoán, the Indian of the first endeavours discovered that the white man was not immortal. They will continue along that road until they are able to prove that Yankee imperialism is not invincible either.

Assistance for the independence of Puerto Rico was part and parcel of the liberating strategy of Simón Bolívar and one of the constant themes of the teaching of José Martí. For any self-respecting Latin American it is a duty that cannot be shirked. Cuba for one will continue to do its duty, without hesitation, both within and outside this Organization.

Cuba and Puerto Rico were united by history in a single destiny. A century of lonely fighting together under twin flags sealed the single commitment that would link them for ever. In 1893 José Martí defined this union as follows:

"In the days that are to come those of Ponce and San Juan will fall in Yara and the Guásimas, and those of Cuba will fall for Puerto Rico."

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

Antagonism between peoples and their oppressors in Asia, Africa and Latin America has reached an acute moment. From that struggle will emerge the world of the future, which we see dawning in the socialist countries today, free as they are from exploitation and exploiters. To achieve liberation and to secure their rights the peoples must confront reactionary violence -- sometimes brutal, sometimes refined, but always cruel. Thus to say the least it is unheard of that an item on terrorism be suggested for inclusion on the agenda, as though that phenomenon did not have very clearly defined roots, as though its causes were not known to all, as though the violence in the world today were a geometrical abstraction with neither explanation nor content. Cuba has made known its views regarding this unacceptable manoeuvre and in due course will continue to fight against that effort and resort to every stratagem possible whenever revolutionary movements try to raise their heads in this Organization.

International attention is focused increasingly on Latin America. We are living through decisive moments; we are shaken from the very roots by the liberating impetus that runs through our veins and the geography of the continent with increasing speed. But we also confront threats and dangers which must keep us constantly alert. The heroic and tenacious effort made by our people to consolidate our independence and enable us to enjoy our self-determination in different ways surely call for and deserve the solidarity of all the peoples of the world.

We greet and support fraternally the Chilean people and the Government of Popular Unity which, under the direction of President Salvador Allende, is resolutely confronting the acts of intervention, pressure, intrigue, sabotage, reprisal and threat from North American imperialism, whose last act was the arbitrary embargo on a shipment of copper decreed by a French court on the insistence of the Yankee monopoly, Braden Kennecott, which has for years taken advantage of the sweat and sacrifice of the Chilean workers. That criminal economic aggression is a shameful violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the most elementary tenets of international law. We must protest most energetically against this shameful attack by Yankee imperialism, which is trying by most unscrupulous means to undermine and curtail self-determination and the economic development of Chile and other under-developed countries.

Cuba welcomes and supports, with fraternal identification, the Peruvian people and the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Force and its President, General Juan Velazco Alvarado, who continue with determination along the road towards full restoration of national sovereignty, the regaining of the wealth of the country and the economic and social transformations intended to create conditions and bases for a new life that will benefit the great majority in that country which for centuries had been dispossessed and exploited. My delegation is proud to proclaim that the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and Peru and the increasing strengthening of the ties of friendship and co-operation between our two peoples and Governments represent a milestone in the process of Latin American liberation, independence, unity and progress.

We are equally at one with and welcome the unceasing struggle of the people and the Government of Panama who claim their sovereign rights over the canal zone and to defend their territorial integrity.

The events taking place in those three countries are an unequivocal symptom of the fact that Latin America is no longer prepared to permit subordination or oppression by foreigners.

I do not believe it vain to stress again that the position of Cuba regarding North American imperialism and its puppets in Latin America and the Organization of American States will remain firm and unchanging. We say again that we have nothing to negotiate or discuss with the Government of the United States. We require -- and we do not discuss this -- the withdrawal of the United States from the naval base in Guantánamo. We require an end to the blockade and to subversive action.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

But as the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government -- Commander Fidel Castro -- has stated again and again, apart from these unshakable requirements, Cuba can never have discussions with the Yankee Government until the latter gives up its role of so-called policeman of the peoples of Latin America, and until it puts an end to its criminal aggression against the people of Viet-Nam.

Once again we reaffirm that we are ready to renew or establish diplomatic relations only with those countries of Latin America that are truly independent and sovereign and that fight to reconquer their national rights, such as Chile and Peru, which, despite the shameful efforts of the North American Government, have assumed that initiative in order to exercise their independence and sovereignty. Once and for all, we state that we will never return to the OAS, a discredited instrument of the North American domination over Latin America. In one word, Cuba will never undertake negotiations of any nature at the cost of its principles. The international community must condemn the imperialist manoeuvres and efforts to interfere in the decisions adopted by Latin American peoples, in full exercise of their sovereignty, in order to satisfy their legitimate national aspirations.

The activities of the North American copper companies, whose interests were nationalized by the Chilean Government, and which organize economic reprisals against that country, are inadmissible acts of aggression against a developing country that call for the most vigorous repudiation from the Assembly.

On this point may I read paragraphs 28 and 29 of the Georgetown Declaration. That Declaration was approved by 58 Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries on 11 August of this year:

"28. The Conference examined the situation in Latin America and gave full support to the Government of Popular Unity of Chile, endeavouring as it is to consolidate its national independence and create a new society, and to the nationalist measures implemented by the Government of Peru and to its efforts to defend its national sovereignty and promote social progress, and to the struggle of the people and Government of Panama to consolidate their territorial integrity. The

participants welcomed the increased struggle of the Latin American countries to rescue their natural resources, to affirm their sovereignty and to defend the interests of their peoples. They felt that the achievement of the complete and true independence of Latin America constitutes a basic component in the general process of the emancipation of the developing countries and the consolidation of international peace and security."

"29. The Conference gives full support to all those Governments which, in the exercise of their sovereign rights over the natural resources of their countries, have nationalized the interests of powerful foreign monopolies, in order to place those resources at the service of their peoples and the development of their countries. The Conference also condemned pressure, threats and reprisals against those countries, and pledged its support and encouragement to mutual co-operation among the developing countries in order to strengthen national efforts to consolidate political and economic independence."

Cuba proclaims its full solidarity with all revolutionary movements that in Latin America break the shackles imposed on the peoples by North American imperialism and parasitical oligarchies. Fighting in their own stronghold the main enemy of the peoples, they are making a decisive contribution to the general process of emancipation of the third world and the cause of international peace and security. The struggle of the Latin American people therefore calls for mass solidarity from all progressive and revolutionary forces. It is surely a duty to support those peoples that raise weapons to obtain freedom, and those that face the repressive brutality of fascist tyrannies in Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay. To contain the waves of revolutionary movements, imperialism organizes counter-revolutionary repression and wipes out the borders and frontiers of States. In that fratricidal undertaking it particularly conscripts Brazilian torturers, overcome by wild delirium, who want to play the role of a minor partner in the North American imperialistic undertaking of subjecting our peoples.

But neither directly nor through the services of hired henchmen can Yankee imperialism repress the revolutionary torrent, nor can it turn aside our peoples from the road they are on. The bell has rung for Latin America. Our peoples, formerly mere chattels in history, now are beginning to write it. In the past we suffered history; now we are creating it with our own hands.

Latin America is the stage of the intense stubbornness of imperialism, but also the stubbornness of the peoples that have been for so long subjected. It was in our continent that the first practices of neo-colonialism were tried. The peoples of Indian America, dark-skinned and half-breed -- José Martí called it "Our America", to distinguish it from the "wily North" -- which they had conquered with the sword and with the machete, at the cost of incredible efforts, have realized that their political sovereignty was an empty shell, and their countries were still the prey of greedy monopolies that took over their factories, devoured their lands, conquered their mines, and put their national dignity in chains. Peoples imbued with fruitful cultures, results of long and rich traditions of unity and struggle, inhabitants of a continent teeming with natural resources, were, under feudal control, living in misery and backwardness, divided by imperialism.

The imperialist torturer obtained and held their lands; the Yankee marines trampled their beaches and outraged their sovereignty; the proconsuls of the North dissolved governments, dictated policies, and administered countries as though they had become colonies and factories. It was the period of the ripe fruit, when our people were docile; but it was also the time when our peoples gave up their best children in their sacrificial struggle to obtain their full emancipation. In the Caribbean the Yankee imperialists started their career of challenge and piracy. On our beaches they tested their weapons and they began to build their empire. They snatched Cuba and Puerto Rico; they controlled the Antilles, and they fell with more force than ever on the lands of the South. José Martí, who understood more than anyone the times in which he lived, foresaw the future and he called on the peoples of Latin America to fight for their second and true independence.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

It too was to be born on the shores of the Caribbean. With the liberation of Cuba in 1959 the new and inexorable process of the destruction of an empire took place in Cuba where 50 years earlier the first foundations had been laid. The Cuban fighters who, on the beach of the Bay of Pigs, made the Yankees suffer the first American defeat, were opening a new era for our continent; behind their rifles stood an anonymous mass of workers and peasants, of Indians and half-breeds, who had been enslaved for centuries, always humiliated, still unknown. Its masses would now march with the decision of one who suddenly finds his own strength, with the inspiration of peoples that had never bent their knees until final victory was achieved.

To Cuba fell the historic privilege of starting the historic march and pointing out the road. Destiny placed this task on the shoulders of a small people inhabiting a very tiny island, lacking natural resources, separated by geography from the rest of its brothers in blood. But it was no coincidence that our small island had been the homeland of Martí. The Cuban people knew how to repel aggression, to turn away provocations, overcome a total trade and economic blockade and the isolation from a world that was and always would be its own world. My country drew strength from the inexhaustible sources of revolutionary ideas. We were always aware of the fact that we have a historic mission to perform: we must be the bulwark of the revolutionary, internationalist principles of Latin American solidarity.

People and Government are as one in the immense tasks undertaken today; with increasing rhythm the Cuban revolution moves towards the full achievement of its economic, social and cultural objectives. From 1971 industrial production has shown growth rates. Despite being afflicted by natural disasters, agricultural production has also increased gradually. Success in the field of infrastructure has been significant and particularly regarding building of all kinds. Educational policy, both as far as concepts are concerned, based on the unification of work and study, and the material bases, imply a revolution that is already

(Mr. Alacrón, Cuba)

yielding its first fruits. Forty four basic secondary schools have been started in rural areas since 20 September 1971. The rate at which schools are built is also increasing. More than 100 school-construction brigades are working to build basic secondary schools, polytechnical schools, schools for teachers, technological institutes and schools for vocational training. It is estimated that by 1980 we will be able to bring into the area of work and study more than a million young people as well as tens of thousands of teachers and educational cadres. As far as public health is concerned Cuba leads the rest of Latin America, as was recognized at the recent Conference of Ministers of Public Health in Santiago, Chile. The development of the sugarcane industry is also being carried out with true impetus in Cuba. The domestic financial situation has also undergone a healthy transformation. Through its principled policy, the expansion of its international relations with all continents and its fraternal ties with the countries of what is called the third world, as well as the socialist countries and, above all, with the Soviet Union, Cuba has laid down and strengthened an international position of which it can justifiably be proud. Our immediate and long-range prospect, in a word, could not be more clear nor more promising.

We also note with joy today that Latin America is firmly heading toward full liberation. Throughout the continent rebellion is growing, resistance is spreading, peoples are rising to recover their wealth, to consolidate their independence, to wipe out North American interference -- in a word, to carry out the revolution.

But it will not be an easy struggle. North American imperialism will not give up with grace a world that it has always held at will. To keep that world it will use all its manoeuvres, it will unleash its power and give free rein to its ferocity. But side by side with that process, there is being created in the very heart of imperialist power, a new and growing progressive movement that is anti-imperialist and socialist. In his statement of 28 September, the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government Commandante Fidel Castro, stated:

(Mr. Alacrón, Cuba)

"We too will be as one with our revolutionary brothers in the United States, as we were with Angela Davis, as we are now, speaking out for the liberation of Billy Dean Smith, and as we will be with all North American revolutionaries."

Latin America will triumph. No one and nothing can stop our peoples. Because our march is encouraged by and imbued with the memory of entire generations sacrificed to prepare the dawn that is now breaking, they are called into battle by the immortal example of Ernesto Che Guevara, the undisputed commander who from the very heart of America is lighting the way, who is a shining beacon guiding our steps to final victory.

Mr. OULD MOUKHASS (Mauritania) (interpretation from French):

Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to associate myself with the preceding speakers in extending the sincere and warm congratulations of the Mauritanian delegation on the occasion of your election to the Presidency of the twenty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The confidence unanimously shown in you by all Member States of the United Nations constitutes a deserved tribute to your talents and to your statesmanlike qualities, and also striking proof of the esteem that the international community holds for your country, its people, and its distinguished leaders.

In the accomplishment of your delicate but important mission, my delegation wishes to assure you of its entire and loyal co-operation.

My delegation also wishes to pay a sincere tribute to His Excellency, Adam Malik, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, for the skill, impartiality and patience, but also for the subtlety, devotion and tact he displayed in presiding over the long and difficult debates of the twenty-sixth session.

I should also like to express to our Secretary-General our satisfaction at his efforts to help bring peace to the world and in particular his eagerness to help the countries of the third world in their struggle to resolve their many problems.

(Mr. Panayotacos, Greece)

But we do not see any valid justification for the representative of Sweden using the podium of this Assembly to appoint himself censor of the régime of Greece in flagrant violation of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. Besides, his so-called democratic recipes do not appear in the lists attached to our bilateral trade agreements, since these are goods exclusively intended for domestic consumption. They are not therefore exportable to Greece, even as samples of no value. In brief, the Greek people can do without the Swedish opinion in this regard, an opinion which is too self-interested to be interesting.

Furthermore, in the course of its long history, from Thermopylae down to our own days, it has never hesitated to place itself unconditionally in the vanguard of the defence of freedom, including the freedom of most of our present critics.

Mr. President, I apologize for taxing the patience of the Assembly on a matter which falls outside its jurisdiction. I should like however, to assure you that I have no intention of returning to it.

Mrs. de VINCENTI (United States of America) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the delegation of the United States, to which I have the honour to belong, and as a Puerto Rican American citizen, I must energetically repudiate the statements made by the Cuban representative that Puerto Rico has not yet achieved self-determination. I vehemently object to his continued interference in the internal affairs of the United States and Puerto Rico.

It is a great irony that the representative of Cuba should have made the statements he made today in this hall. Perhaps the representative of Cuba, whose people have not seen a ballot box in their country for more than a decade, simply does not understand the meaning of the free electoral process and of other democratic institutions which mean so much to Puerto Ricans. It is shocking that it is the representative of a Government which does not allow the exercise of any freedom to the people it is governing who challenges and questions the right of Puerto Rico, where freedom is clearly and openly guaranteed for all citizens.

If the representative of Cuba had wanted in any way to express disagreement with his Government he surely would have had to seek asylum in the United States or some other country, since he certainly could not have returned to his home.

In Puerto Rico we know the meaning of self-determination, which we have enjoyed and continue to enjoy; and we know from our own experience the true meaning of freedom. For us, freedom is not just a word; it is a means to an end -- and our end is freedom, well-being, freedom with justice and freedom to ensure daily improvement in the life of the people of Puerto Rico. We are doing that daily in Puerto Rico.

Again and again the Puerto Rican people have spoken through their free elections; again and again they have demanded that Cuba cease its interference in our internal affairs. Must the people of Puerto Rico continue to be subjected to the slander we have heard today? This slander is intolerable and degrading to the people of Puerto Rico and to their free and democratic institutions. Must this Organization continue to listen to such warped judgements, malicious statements, regarding the people's ability to see and decide the issues for themselves?

As a Puerto Rican and as an American citizen, I must categorically reject the deliberately unwarranted and misleading allegations and the calumny and slander of the representative of Cuba.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

Today the General Assembly was able to witness another example of the diplomatic style of the United States Government. In previous years we have seen movie stars parade here, we have seen cosmonauts, we have seen clowns of different social levels taking parts as representatives of the United States. Today the delegation of the United States was good enough to confirm to this Assembly the colonial nature of its relations with Puerto Rico, bringing to the rostrum Mrs. Rivera de Vincenti, an American citizen, and very proud of it as she said, and thus repeated the usual practice of other colonial Powers of previous years. If the representation of the United States considers that this sort of manoeuvre is going to confuse anybody in the Assembly, then really they lack the most elementary respect for the representatives of countries in the Assembly.

For many years we have seen persons who were born in Angola and Mozambique present at these sessions and they too, with great pride, asserted their love for Portuguese citizenship and their cherishing of the Portuguese situation. And this year --- suffice it to glance around the Assembly where the delegation of Portugal is seated --- we see that tradition has been kept.

Thus far the United States Government has not taken the same colonialist and traditional path, but we must thank it for having selected this session to confirm that even in that aspect of the United States Government's relations with Puerto Rico, it is taking the same stand as that of the Portuguese towards Angola and Mozambique.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

My delegation would have thought that having taken that long trip from San Juan to New York, Doña Julita -- who was nominated by President Nixon to the North American delegation to the present session -- might have given us a more detailed explanation, with arguments and views that might have enriched the debate on the colonial situation of Puerto Rico, or told us something about the situation of that Territory. We are interested in meeting her and seeing her in the course of this debate, simply to ask her some questions so that representatives could make up their own minds regarding the degree of self-determination and freedom enjoyed by the people of Puerto Rico according to the Government of the United States, and its representative here this afternoon.

Mrs. Rivera de Vicente occupies within the colonial structure of Puerto Rico -- if I am not mistaken -- the post of Secretary of Labor. Let us see, Mr. President, if she is any more the secretary of labor of Puerto Rico than you or any other representative present here, or any of the public that is watching our discussion from the gallery.

She has no authority whatever, under the existing legislation of the United States, on any problem referring to relations between trade unions and employers, which are determined by Federal authorities of the United States. She lacks any authority to deal with minimum salaries in Puerto Rico. She has nothing whatever to do with unemployment problems affecting 30 per cent of the Puerto Rican labour force -- or, so that we may not be accused of altering the facts, I shall go by what the colonial authorities themselves say: approximately 15 per cent. She lacks authority to deal with problems of discrimination, which affect Puerto Rican emigrants living in this country, who constitute a third of the entire population of Puerto Rico. Apparently she has nothing whatsoever to do with strikes which occur in that Territory. Her presence here, her trip to New York has merely confirmed this once more.

I have before me a telegram from the North American news agency, UPI, dated 29 September -- a date when Doña Julita, now here in New York, was having cocktails with other representatives in her capacity as a North American citizen -- which states the following with regard to a strike that had started at the San Juan Star, the only Puerto Rican newspaper published in English:

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

"The present strike is the twelfth one taking place now in the area of San Juan".

I must say that later further strikes took place and I think that there are about twenty now. I return to the telegram:

"There were only two days this year, 15 and 16 January, when there were no strikes in Puerto Rico".

I must point out that in the midst of that situation, in a Territory where every day this year but two there have been labour strikes and conflicts the distinguished Secretary of Labor is able to absent herself for three months to come to New York and participate in the work of this Assembly. The reason is extremely simple: she has nothing to do with these problems since they are being handled as usual from Washington by the North American authorities. Just as they sent the Secretary of Labor on this trip, they could have sent the rest of the Puerto Rican Government, starting with the Governor himself, and everything would have remained exactly the same back home.

However, my delegation was surprised this afternoon because we would have thought that she would come to this rostrum, as I said before, to give us some views or some basic elements to enrich the debate on the Puerto Rican case. But, frankly, this declaration that was circulated to representatives at the Assembly and almost the entire text of which was read by her -- a text which represented an appreciable effort of translation into Spanish of the declaration made at the beginning of last month by Ambassador Bush, although in defence of our language and that of the Puerto Rican people, a language which we have retained for so many decades, we might have preferred a wording that was somewhat different from a mere literal translation from the original -- was already known to us from the lips of Ambassador Bush himself.

That is why we cannot interpret the operation which took place this afternoon, of sending a Puerto Rican lady here in order to reread to the General Assembly something that has been read before, as anything other than an effort to denigrate the Puerto Rican people, an effort to affect the image of the Puerto Rican people in the eyes of the world, and to make it appear as though that is the people of Puerto Rico.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

In conclusion I should like to say the following. In the statement which I read this afternoon I spoke of an agreement of the Special Committee on decolonization. That was the body which was entrusted by this Assembly with implementing the anti-colonial Declaration in resolution 1514 (XV) and which defined the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence. As everybody knows, that decision of the Committee was the result of a request submitted previously by Cuba. When Cuba asked the United Nations to examine the case of Puerto Rico it did not rule it out that Doña Julita, or any other spokesman for the present status of the island, or any other Puerto Ricans who were proud of a nationality that was imposed upon them by the United States contrary to the unanimous vote in the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico -- and since this historic fact does not appear in the English texts circulated by the North American delegation perhaps the proud representative is not aware of this detail; but that fact, nevertheless, is registered in the annals of history -- could come to the United Nations and make known their views as petitioners when the Puerto Rican case came up for consideration in the appropriate bodies of the United Nations.

Were they to do so, then, in this hall or any other, we might be very happy to see Doña Julita but we would then hear her speaking on her own behalf and not by disposition of Mr. Nixon, not from the United States speech, not obeying the orders of Ambassador Bush, not reading faulty translations of documents originally drafted in English which were previously read by Ambassador Bush, but speaking instead as a Puerto Rican even if she did want to speak of the pride with which she abides by and condones the colonialism imposed on her country.

That is the position of the Cuban delegation, and now it need only state that we reject this colonialist manoeuvre played out once more on the stage of this Assembly, where the administering Power of a Territory which it has oppressed for 74 years -- a Territory which has never sent a representative of the people to speak here on their behalf -- is trying to make the world believe that an oppressed people, a colonized people, a people whose rights have been denied them throughout history, is satisfied with colonialism.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

Neither that manoeuvre nor any other attempt to convince the Assembly that colonialism is pleasant for the Puerto Rican or any other people will ever succeed with the majority of the representatives. Cuba holds a far higher opinion of this Assembly. Cuba has far more respect for this Assembly. Therefore we must reject this deplorable spectacle.

Mr. KLUSAK (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The Czechoslovak delegation is compelled to exercise its right of reply in connexion with the statement made this morning by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. We regret that the representative of Sweden -- a country with which, as with the other Scandinavian countries, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is prepared to develop relations based on the principle of peaceful coexistence -- thought it necessary to make certain references concerning Czechoslovakia which we can only consider to be an attempt to interfere in the domestic affairs of a State Member of this Organization, contrary to the principles of the Charter. However, we were not surprised by this because it is not the first time that the representative of Sweden has acted in the way we witnessed this morning, but it is regrettable that this time the rostrum of the United Nations was made use of for that purpose. That makes it even more necessary for us to reject categorically all such insinuations as being completely unwarranted and as distorting the reality of the present-day life of the people of our country, as any visitor to socialist Czechoslovakia has an opportunity to see for himself -- anyone who comes to our country without prejudice to see the situation.

If we want to speak in the United Nations about the general tendency towards a détente in Europe it would be better not to arouse artificial conflict where it does not exist but rather to adopt a constructive policy based on a consistent recognition of the fact that there are in the world countries with different social and economic systems. As for the Czechoslovak delegation, it is our intention to proceed in this manner -- as we approach other important matters in the work of the United Nations.

Mrs. de VINCENTE (United States of America) (interpretation from Spanish): I am sorry that I have to take the time of representatives who have been here for many hours, but I cannot leave this hall without referring to what I consider an insult on the part of the representative of Cuba not only to the people of Puerto Rico and to the people of the United States but to myself, whom he does not know. As I understand it, the statements made by the representative of Cuba were completely out of order. He was discussing personalities, and he also tried to turn this into a political discussion and a political forum. Practically all the speakers who have preceded me have pointed out that one of the tactics of the representative of Cuba is to drag in all sorts of alien and outlandish subjects.

I do not have to explain to you why I did not give you all the information he asked for in order to enrich the debate. I did not do so because I do not believe that this is the right place for it; I did not do so because the case of Puerto Rico is not on the agenda at the moment; I did not do so because I am not going to give him the satisfaction of continuing to speak of something that is not his business and that does not come within his competence. He should be more concerned with problems within Cuba and should leave Puerto Rico alone. We do not need his intervention; we do not want it.

I think it is he who has been lacking in respect for this Assembly, because he spoke of some of the persons here as clowns or artists, as though it were a crime to be a clown or an artist. I think that the representative of Cuba should show a little more respect for human beings, a little more respect for persons who do not share his views or think as he does.

I am not going to explain to you at this moment that all he said was a tissue of lies. I have all the necessary authority to deal with labour-management relations. I have personally participated in the settling of most of the strikes that have taken place in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico and the Minimum Wages Board of Puerto Rico have full authority to fix minimum wages for those industries whose sphere of action is in Puerto Rico only. As regards the unemployment rate of 30 per cent which was mentioned, perhaps the representative of Cuba is misinterpreting this and is thinking of Cuba and not of Puerto Rico, which has never had that rate of unemployment.

(Mrs. de Vincente, United States)

He says that I lack any authority to regulate immigration in the United States. Of course I have no such authority. We are citizens of the United States. We do not need visas. We do not need permits. We do not have to pay anybody to give us a permit to enter or leave Puerto Rico or the United States of America. Therefore there is no need whatsoever to regulate immigration.

For the benefit of the representative of Cuba, I must say that there have been many strikes in Puerto Rico and that I, as Secretary of Labor, am proud of the fact that this has been the case because this means that there is democracy in Puerto Rico. It means that Puerto Rico is a free country. It also means that the workers in Puerto Rico can express themselves, which they cannot do in Cuba. I am sure that there has not been a strike in Cuba in the past 10 or 12 years, simply because the workers are not allowed to express themselves. Consequently I am extremely proud that last year we had 107 strikes because that means that all the workers in Puerto Rico can claim the rights which are not possessed in other countries of the world. And, also for the information of the representative of Cuba, I must say that we had only two days when there were no strikes and that those two days were in January, and I was nominated to the Assembly on 19 September.

When a person possesses authority and knowledge, when a person knows how to manage administration, that person does not have to be there for 24 hours a day or seven days a week. The proof of a good administrator is in being able to leave the office and yet have everything continuing as it should, because that shows that there is organization and that we have the will and the authority to do what we have to do.

I shall not exchange any more arguments with the representative of Cuba. I shall merely quote the words of the representative of Brazil, who said that because a person is the last to speak it does not mean that he speaks the truth or that he is to be believed.

(Mrs. de Vincenti, United States)

I believe that before the representative of Cuba continues to speak of the case of Puerto Rico he should really learn the situation in Puerto Rico and not let his mind become poisoned by what he has heard from only one side, which is a tissue of lies. All he does is lose his own prestige when he deliberately comes to the rostrum to insult a lady whom, as I said, he does not even know.

Mr. ALARCÓN (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I am sincerely sorry that the representative of the Government of the United States has now left the hall, since I was going to start by recognizing publicly that her second statement, obviously a more spontaneous outburst, obviously not hamstrung by the text of the translation of Ambassador Bush's earlier speech, was a much more weighty and interesting statement. I should like to make something very clear -- because, in a very demagogic way, she stressed the fact that she is a lady and also stressed respect for human beings.

I said -- and I repeat -- that one of the consequences of the United Nations action on Puerto Rico would be that Doña Julita, or any other Puerto Rican, any of those who are so proud of American citizenship, would be able to come to the United Nations, as she herself has done. For many years we had no Puerto Ricans here as you know. But they will be able to come here and not sit behind the nameplate of the United States, or in the seats of the United States, and not because they were nominated by President Nixon: they will not read texts that were badly translated into Spanish in the United States mission, or obey orders from Ambassador Bush. They will be able to come in a much more respectable fashion, in a fashion that would be far more recognized because of their personal attributes and prerogatives. This is the way I and Cuba would like to hear Doña Julita from this rostrum, but not in the lamentable way she was forced to express herself because of pressure by President Nixon, and the State Department, and Ambassador Bush.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

Furthermore, among a number of original things, she said I was trying to turn this forum into a political forum. Well, I think this allegation does not really call for an answer. Those representatives of sovereign States who, 25 years ago, created the United Nations knew full well that the hope was that the Assembly would become the most important political forum of the Organization.

She talked about respect for human beings, respect for the representative of the United States of America. And although in her statement she limited herself to justifying Yankee policy in Puerto Rico, my delegation cannot today pass over in silence the fact that a representative of the imperialist Government of the United States comes to the rostrum here --- however much of a lady she may be --- to speak of respect for human beings. She is the representative of a Government that has respected neither persons nor houses nor plants nor animals; that has not respected any form of life, of civilization, of culture; that has carried death and destruction to entire populations. Even today, the General Assembly heard, through a representative who spoke this morning, of some of the hateful manifestations of that policy of destruction and of complete contempt for the lives of persons and things. My delegation would have imagined that the United States delegation when mounting the rostrum would try to reply to the constant denunciations that have come from the immense majority of the Assembly regarding the brutal aggression against the people of Viet-Nam. We have a cable here that dramatically and vividly describes the events that took place today in Hanoi, in the capital of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, where there was the 59th large-scale bombing against the population of the capital of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. This time the bombing took place in the very heart of the city, causing damage and seriously wounding diplomatic representatives, including the representative of the French Government in that country and an Albanian diplomat. They speak of respect for human beings in a demagogic fashion, appealing to the most noble feelings of all human beings congregated in the hall. But with regard to respect for human beings, a Government has no right whatever to speak here or anywhere else of such things whilst it continues to commit the most odious crimes against the Viet-Namese people.

(Mr. Alarcón, Cuba)

It is truly sad; it is most lamentable; it is an insult to the people of Puerto Rico and to all the combatants in the world that it should have been a Puerto Rican voice that was raised in the service of that criminal imperialism, in the service of that genocidal imperialism, that imperialism that has sown death and destruction all over Indo-China --- that voice that was raised from this rostrum to speak naively on behalf of the United States of respect for human persons.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The general debate which has opened the twenty-seventh session of our Assembly has now come to a close. A record number of speakers --- 125 in all, including two Prime Ministers, two Deputy Prime Ministers, and 99 Foreign Ministers --- representing States situated in all parts of the world, have expressed their views on the great international issues. From this rostrum there has been heard the voice of States, small, large, or medium-sized, on which the Charter of our Organization confers on a footing of equality, the right as well as the responsibility to seek and define the paths of mankind towards peace, security and a better future.

The speakers have brought out the events which in the course of the past year have contributed to the détente and thereby strengthened the prospects for fruitful international co-operation in the important areas for the development of the human community. Yet the debate has not failed to bring out the darker aspects of the world situation, or to demonstrate that on certain essential problems there are differences of view, differences even of interpretation, of the concept of common interest, the concept which should guide our efforts.