

18 December, 2007

A Message from Fidel Castro to Cuba's Prime TV Programme The Round Table

Havana, December 17, 2007.

Dear Randy:

I listened to the entire Round Table programme on Thursday the 13th, without missing one single second of it. The news about the Bali Conference, commented on by Rogelio Polanco, the Director of the newspaper "Juventud Rebelde", confirms the importance of the international agreements and the necessity of taking them very seriously.

On that small island of Indonesia, there was a meeting of many Heads of Government of countries of the so-called Third World; they are fighting for their development and they demand fair treatment, financial resources and transferrals of technology from the representatives of industrialized nations which are also being represented there.

The UN Secretary General, faced with the tenacious obstruction by the United States in the midst of the 190 representatives meeting there, and after twelve days of negotiations, stated on Friday the 14th, Cuban time, when it was already Saturday in Bali, that the human species could disappear as a result of climate change. And then he went off to East Timor.

That declaration transformed the conference into a shouting match. On the twelfth day of pointless persuasive efforts, the American representative Paula Dobriansky, after sighing deeply, said: "We join the consensus." It is obvious that the United States made moves to get around its isolated position, even though it didn't change the empire's dismal intentions one iota.

The grand show began: Canada and Japan attached themselves immediately to the American coat-tails, facing the rest of the countries that were demanding serious compromises on the emissions of gases that are causing the climatic change. Everything had been foreseen ahead of time between the NATO allies and the powerful empire which, in one fell swoop of deceit, agreed to negotiate during 2008 in Hawaii, U.S. territory, for a new convention project that would be presented and approved at the Copenhagen Conference in Denmark in 2009; this would take the place of the Kyoto Protocol which is due to expire in 2012.

The theatrical solution was reserved for Europe in the role of saviour of the world. Brown spoke, as did Merkel and other leaders of the European countries, requesting international gratitude. What an excellent present for Christmas and the New Year! None of the eulogists mentioned the tens of millions of poor people who go on dying of diseases and hunger each year given the complex realities of the present, just as if we were living in the best of all worlds.

The Group of 77, which includes 132 countries that are struggling to develop themselves had achieved consensus to demand from the industrialized countries a reduction of the gases that cause climatic change, for the year 2020, from 20 to 40% lower than the level attained in 1990, and from 60 to 70% in the year 2050, something which is technically possible. Furthermore, they were demanding the assigning of sufficient funds for the transferral of technology to the Third World.

We cannot forget that those gases give way to heat waves, desertification, the melting of the glaciers and the increase of the levels of the seas which could cover entire countries or a large part of them. The industrialized nations share with the United States the idea of converting foods into fuels for luxury cars and the other wasteful practices of the

consumer societies.

All of this that I am stating was demonstrated when on that very Saturday, December 15th, at 10:06 Washington time, it was announced that the President of the United States had asked the Senate, which had then approved it, for 696 billion dollars for the military budget for the 2008 fiscal year; in this amount, 189 billion was ear-marked for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A feeling of sound pride came over me as I remembered the dignified and calm way in which I responded to the hurtful proposals directed to me in 1998 by the then Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. I harbour no illusions.

My most profound conviction is that the answers to the current problems of Cuban society which possesses an average educational level close to Grade 12, almost a million university graduates and the real possibility for its citizens to become educated with no discrimination whatsoever, require more varieties of answers for each concrete problem than those contained on a chess board. We cannot ignore one single detail, and we are not dealing with an easy path, if the intelligence of a human being in a revolutionary society truly needs to prevail over instinct.

My fundamental duty is not to cling to positions, much less to stand in the way of younger persons, but it is to bring experience and ideas whose modest value comes from the exceptional era that I had the privilege of living in.

Like Niemeyer, I believe that one has to be consistent right up to the end.

(Signed) Fidel Castro Ruz

(Handwritten)

Please include this letter in the Round Table programme that is announced today to be about Bali.

F. C.

5:16 p.m.

Bidepentes

Te ruego incluir esta carta
en la Mesa Redonda anun-
ciada para hoy sobre Bali.

B. C.

5 y 16 p.m.