

[US Society of Editors \(Talk by Fidel Castro\)](#)

Autor:

- [Castro Ruz, Fidel](#)

Question: "Tell the people of our country, including we editors, what we should do to help Cuba and you to make the Revolution successful?"

Ans: We wish to express our sympathy for the American people which we have always loved and are fond of. All American citizens that have come here have been happy and have been welcomed. All Americans in the last week congratulated us, have seen how much freedom and happiness there is in Cuba. I have sincere sympathy for the people of the United States and I am grateful. And, I know that when we were misquoted, I know the people of the United States believed us, and that many millions of U. S. citizens wrote to newspapers that they agreed with us. That is why I am grateful to the people of the United States. Many times in the history the truth is now known, many times in history the lie is more powerful than the truth. In this case the trust is opening its own road by the help of the people. They say how can they help us. I can answer. They helped us last week, the people of the U. S., and there are many other ways, their friendship, their sympathy, and many other ways. We are not asking for money from the U.S. government or anybody. We are trying to solve our economic difficulties by only working here in Cuba. What we want is to sell our products and what we want is to produce here all those things we can produce, because we cannot be in competition with the industries outside of Cuba because it is perfect. Centuries of progress in other countries make it impossible for us to be in competition. This is why we have to produce all those things we can produce here in agriculture and industry. And what we want sometimes the U. S. interests are not agreed that we produce something like rice, grease and many other products that we can produce here. I think it is the right of the Cubans to produce all those things that we can produce and to sell all those things that we can produce here at a low cost, like sugar. I ask why the U.S. take the sugar so expensive. I ask why if we can sell all the sugar the U.S. can buy at the low price, I suppose the best thing for the people of the U.S. is that we can sell the sugar at the low price--all the sugar they need. I know that the American people like the sweet things. And so we can buy from the U.S. all the things we cannot produce here. The U.S. can buy those things they cannot produce there at a low price.

Question: You have been critical of the U.S. for not helping you to oust the former President of this country. How could we interfere in the affairs of your country in that way? Also, you wish the Organization of American States to oust Latin American Dictator-Presidents. How could the OAS tell any Latin American country whom they should elect or keep in office?

Ans: I did not criticize the U.S. because they did not help us. We criticized the U.S. because they helped Batista. That is not the same. We do not ask the U.S. to interfere in our matters. There are two ways of interfering. One, of helping the dictator and one of helping the people.

The people of Cuba don't need interference. If we did not have the interference of the U.S. in our political matters, you can be sure that we would not be a full democracy and progressive people. At the end of the Independence War the U.S. interfered. They said in the Congress that we have the right of being a free country. They began the war against Spain. After the war the U.S. stopped here, and after two years the Congress said another thing. They said they had the right to interfere in Cuba. Then what happened, the U.S. government didn't know the real picture in Cuba. Frenchmen, Englishmen,

they came here, and who were their friends? Those who knew how to speak English, those who lived in the city. Not the patriots. The patriots were countrymen like those men that you see here. And those that had been friends of the Spanish began to seek the friendship of the U.S., as they signed the Platt Amendment. As the U.S. could interfere here in Cuba, when there was no good government, Cubans could not do anything because they were afraid the U.S. would interfere again and they would lose freedom. So, the people of Cuba got accustomed to bad government and accustomed to other bad things, like waiting for the U.S. to solve the difficulties. Cuban lost their own confidence and for more than 30 years supported bad government because they were afraid of the United States. In 1933 when a dictator was thrown away there was established a Revolutionary Government; three months after Jefferson Caffery the Ambassador of the U.S. here in Cuba, and you can read this in the U.S. memory, it is not my invention. Do you know that you publish every 25 years those questions on white paper -- you know, you can read it. Jefferson Caffery helped Batista to take the power by force and we have Batista here for 11 years.

After the last war the democratic nations were speaking of democracy, human rights, all those things; they speak to the poor people of wonderful realms of freedom and liberty, that in the future the rights of the people will be guaranteed by the U.N. and democratic people -- and then the dictators were afraid--but not for a long time. When they saw it was a lie, they saw it was illusion of the people, dictators came back. And so after 8 years Batista came back again and there was no revolution in Cuba, some change, constitutional government, not to much honest government. They began to take a lot of money every year, and after a year civilian government was discredited. And then, Batista, whose soldiers and whose officers were already in the army, he came with his friends and went to Columbia and everybody saluted him and the 7 years that followed were terrible. Worse than Germany.

Cubans are sensible and noble people. They do not like war and blood and there were 7 years of terrible things, torture, crimes of all sorts.

You can ask the people, the children, from ten years, those of three years can tell you the history of Cuba.

There was a pact made with the Constitutional Government. But, this government changed, we had here a dictatorship, a man with a group of angsters, that is not the majority of the people, and interested people with Batista began to govern. And the U.S., because there was a pact, began to send tanks, airplanes, guns, arms, and military missions here to Cuba. I don't want to seek hate against the U.S. You ask me and the only thing I want to tell is the truth. I want to be courteous, but I want to tell the truth. And they sent a lot of arms. Batista made the soldiers believe that the U.S. was helping him. He used the arms, not for continental defense, but to kill Cubans, people of all kinds, and the soldiers believed the U.S. was helping Batista. It is true that one year before the U.S. stopped. That is true because many people wrote about this. It was something like a rectification. But war criminals, those that were the worse like Masferrer, Laurent, and many others are now in the U.S., living with a lot of money, conspiring, buying arms in the U.S. And we are not afraid at all. We would like them to come -- we would help them to come. If they want, we will give them the ship. They don't need to hide, it is not necessary. The truth is that when we finished the war we said to the people, don't kill anybody, or don't burn the houses. That is not civilized. We are going to send them to trial and punish them and that is what we did. During all the war we never killed any prisoners of war. The Red Cross knows that we always sent them again to the enemy

lines. Nevertheless, Batista always killed the prisoners, always tortured them. But we said when the war finished that we will make justice with war criminals. We told the people don't kill them, we will punish them. Then we began to punish the war criminals, not all of them, we could not kill them because there are thousands of war criminals. But we are punishing the worst war criminals. It is logical that the U.S., where the people

have never lived under tyranny, they do not know what it is to be afraid for 7 years, to be afraid that your husband or son, friend, will be killed. In the U.S. they did not know that those terrible war criminals during the night would take people from their houses, killing them after torture. As the U.S. doesn't know what is tyranny, and what they do know they have seen in the cinema, read in history and in novels, then they hear speak of those war criminals as they heard speak of the Roman people that killed

the Christians in the beginning. Many of you have seen the picture of the first Christians who were killed in Roma. Well, you see, but you don't feel real, you feel about that thing as a far thing and you don't become angry when you see the picture of one Christian that was killed in that time. And this is the same thing that happened here. Many of you don't know what happened here in Cuba, and when you know nothing about that, about the fear that happened a long time ago, that is why it is not easy to understand why we punish those war criminals. Like the U.S. punished those German criminals, those Japanese criminals. Because when the Americans went to Italy in the last war a group of U.S. soldiers were captured by the Germans and were killed. When the U.S., after the war, took the German generals and those who killed the Americans were sent to trial and were executed. You do not have the same rights that we have because you were in a war between nations, with Germany, there was no tradition about that. There was no law before and you punished your enemies that were not U.S. citizens. Well, we were here punishing Cuban citizens that were against Cubans, and against Cuban law, because we have more right to punish those war criminals that the U.S. has to punish war criminals in Germany and Italy. And that is why it is not easy for the U.S. to understand, but they have a way to understand. Do you want to know what tyranny is? Why don't you go to live in Santo Domingo for about six months.

Question: What is the percentage of the gross that will be for government. And how will that keep American racketeers out?

Ans: In the first place, we have not decided how much they are going to pay. If it will be the same quantity each week or a percentage, we don't know how much. On the question of the gangsters, well, gangsters are powerful, but we do not want gangsters here. Gangsters have been powerful in the past, well, we will fight against them.

Question: Elections - Do you have plans for Constitutional Convention?

Answer: No, because if we do that the people are going to think that we want to stay here a long time without free elections. We are in the first place democratic people; in the second place we would never like to be in any place the people would not agree; third place, we are sure of the victory in any election. Do you know what a survey is? The survey is an American invention, a good invention, and by that we can know how many people are with us. And it is not necessary to have a constitutional convention. The next thing will be general elections, I believe with the Constitution of 1940. Because in any place where the Government wants to be a long time without free elections because they have no people, they begin to make inventions, planning ways of being a lot of time there, and we are not in that case.

Question; Are the electoral laws going to be changed?

Ans: Of course, we will try to improve the system so that democracy will be here in politics. People used to buy votes, spend money, using power to win the election, we are not in that case. We want to improve our electoral system of election.

Question: You would like us to extradite these people that were your political enemies, but we have had a tradition of reverence for political refugees. How can you, as a lawyer, determine which are good political refugees and which are not.

Ans: It depends what happened in the first place that I have not a lot of faith in these things. In the first place, you can know who is a criminal, who is a robber, it is not difficult, because as you know it is a tradition for many governments to rob, kill and they go away. Sometimes the U.S. when they don't like somebody they say "No, you cannot come," and when they want they say "Yes, you can come." For example, the U.S. didn't accept Perez Jimenez and other dictators when they wanted to go to the U.S., the State Department said "No." Why do you accept Masferrer, who is one of the worst criminals any country has ever seen. Masferrer was not military, he had a personal group of several hundreds of criminals that he took from the prisons, those men killed children, they burned houses, they robbed the businessmen, everybody. Why the U.S. doesn't ask "well, you have the right of reaching him." Can we

Cubans think this is a friendship action for Cuba? Would you like that a terrible criminal come here, some spy, well if you want we would be very helpful, and send him to the U.S. and this would be a way of helping this friendship between Cuba and the U.S. What we will do if a criminal comes here? We will take him and put him in prison and send him to the U.S. to be punished. Would you like to help us to catch Masferrer?

I want you to know that hundreds, thousands of Cubans, would gladly go to kill Masferrer or Batista, but we do not permit that. We want to be respectful of the law of the other countries. You know what Trujillo would do, he would send his men to kill people anyplace, but we will never permit that. If it is done, it is not because I would allow and I would punish that person. I think the State Department is working in a legal procedure to expedite Masferrer, but I have not a lot of faith.

Question: What is your opinion of the U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba since you came?

Ans: I am not an American citizen, I have no right to speak about the political situation. But if you ask me about Cuba, I think now it is not a bad policy. This time I think the U.S. government sent a good Ambassador. Everybody says he is a good Ambassador and I feel the attitude is not against us politically. Really the official policies as I think now and observe is of friendship. Also, we are waiting to see what happens to the price of sugar.

Question: I think we would like to take back some impressions of the progress that you are making on organizing the new government, particularly -- are you finding any difficulties getting competent people in your administration?

Ans: The government is not an easy job, this work, administration, many things happen. For example, new people, intelligent people, capacitated, what does matter is that they will learn in the process. If someone seeks employment, everybody asks "who is he?" "Is it a Batista friend that comes after the victory?" Sometimes there are some people that are intelligent people but not revolutionary history and you have to be quiet and careful with public opinion, because public opinion is very sensible--to people that are coming to win some position that were in business or friendship with Batista. Now we only have a small part to pay the men. It is so difficult, and another difficulty is that there are many interest because government permitted many things. For example in the beach, you need beaches for the people, there are a million inhabitants. The best beaches are taken, many houses are there. You try to find a beach for the people, you have to fight many interests. Many houses in the beaches, and other things are in the same way. These were created by the bad government, but we are convincing the people that that is not right, that we have the duty of helping the people, because if we don't carry this job forward all the Cubans are going to loose.

Question: Does your government have any plans to restore sugar production to level of European war?

Ans: Well, it depends on several things. What we want is to produce at a low price because in those years, during the Batista government, Batista stopped our production for a good price and what happened was that everybody began to seek sugar cane and to produce sugar cane.
(can't understand what follows.....)

We will try to improve the sugar industry, to sell at the low price. Why doesn't the U.S. citizen protest against the high price of sugar? Some of you belong to the South of the U.S. If we can produce sugar better than you, and you can produce another thing better than us, you produce that thing and we produce sugar, and do business.

Question: Can you estimate when the Election will be held?

Ans: Yes, in about two years. People want this

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Question: Do you have a plan to Eisenhower to solve any difficulties

Ans. There are no difficulties. because really I do not see any. As you know there are some interests few people, that are a small percentage of of the U.S. That some revolutionary law can them and they can make propaganda against us in . But really, there are no serious difficulties and I there would be no difficulties in the future. I do say we are a small country and a small people working here too much to solve our difficulties. The U.S. is a big country and big people working to solve the difficulties. Then I am here in my place, working to solve the difficulties. Then I am here in my place, working in my small country and working for my small people, and we want to be in friendship with all the countries of America. If President Eisenhower has time--and if I have time too, I would gladly speak with him as I speak with you and as I speak the same with the most small citizen and the most big citizen of the U.S. I would gladly salute and shake hands.

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Cuba

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