It is an obligation to express here the impression gathered from among the many participants in this Congress, that this, the first international event of this character has been a complete success.

Some prophets said that to hold a congress of this nature would prove a difficult task, and that perhaps it would not be possible to carry out an international assembly of this sort with the participation of such a large group of intellectual workers coming from no less than 70 countries, speaking many different languages, whose ideas on many points might differ, and that, therefore, the Cultural Congress might become a site for controversies of every nature, for misunderstandings, and it would be very difficult for intellectual workers to arrive at practically unanimous conclusions...

And the curious thing is that the men and women gathered here did not come as militants of any political organization. Congresses have taken place in many parts and in many epochs, with organizations of similar militants, of similar parties, but nevertheless, this Congress has been characterized by the fact of its amplitude in the representation, of such different origins, of the very different activities that each one of its participants is engaged in, and nevertheless, a series of matters, a series of fundamental principles were accumulated with strange unanimity.

Intellectual workers of the most diverse branches, intellectual workers with the most diverse philosophical concepts, with the most diverse scientific and artistic concepts, with the most diverse political opinions, and nevertheless, a general agreement could be observed. And we truly believe that this will constitute a reason for preoccupation on the part of the enemies of humanity.

And what is it that determines this universal consciousness? Is it perhaps an idealistic feeling of those who met here in this Congress? Is it perhaps the consequence of a merely altruistic feeling, of a noble and generous feeling? Though these feelings evidently abound in this Congress, it is indisputable that the factor that creates this universal consciousness is precisely the danger, the threats of aggressions and the real aggressions that many peoples of the world - that practically the whole world - are suffering. As the acts of aggression, of oppression, of subjection, of the dangers which hang over humanity have grown, to an equal degree has universal consciousness grown.

What has to be said is that the men and women assembled here, without any doubt, represent that vanguard, that nucleus which is capable of penetrating more deeply, which is capable of understanding, first, what is the nature and the essence and the seriousness of the contemporary problems which are threatening humanity and which humanity is suffering...

Indignation and hatred on the one hand, and admiration on the other hand with regard to the events taking place in Viet Nam, have contributed most notably, perhaps more than any other fact that this time, to create that awareness of

Extracts from a speech delivered by Major Fidel Castro

Ruz, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government at the closing of the Cultural Congress of Havana. 1968.

justice and universal morality which has been evident in this Congress...

There is not a single continent, not a single country in the world, there is not a single people, there is not one present-day problem in which the imperialist activity is not seen, is not felt, is not noticed, there is not a single menace in the world that imperialism does not support, as there is not a single just cause in this contemporary world that imperialism does not attack.

And it is not only that imperialism seeks its bayonet and attacks what has become customary to be called the Third World, or the under-developed world, or the world in development, as others call it. And calling it a world in development is a truly misused concept because if we were to depend on the reality of that world, - more than a world in development from the technical point of view, - more than a world in development, we may call it a world in retrogression as a consequence of the conditions that imperialism has imposed on that world...

But imperialism as a universal phenomenon, imperialism as a universal evil, imperialism as a universal wolf, cannot exist except under the condition of acting as wolf all over the world, and acting against the interests of the whole world. And this Imperialism likewise acts against the rest of the developed world and the rest of the industrialized world. Nowadays it is customary in political terminology to speak of "imperialism headed by the United States." The fact is that in the contemporary reality, there is only one really powerful imperialism: in the contemporary reality the support of imperialism, the essence of imperialism, is U.S. imperialism. That is why it is increasingly understood by the whole world that the effort, the struggle, is concentrated against U.S. imperialism, which is the support of all reactionary governments, the support of all the evil causes of the world...

So that there exists an enemy that may actually be called universal, and if at any time in the history of mankind, there was a really universal enemy, an enemy whose attitude and whose actions are worrying the whole world, menacing the whole world, attacking the whole world in one form or another, that real enemy, and really universal enemy is Yankee imperialism...

We have sometimes heard from intellectuals themselves, from scientists and artists themselves, the self-criticism that they are remotely related to these problems. In this case I do not refer to the intellectual workers of the Third World, to give it some name. I especially refer to the intellectual workers of Europe, the self-criticism that they are remotely related - they sometimes call it paternalist, etc. - to the problems of the world. How do we see this question? We think we would be daydreamers, we would be too idealist, if we were to wish that from one day to the next this aware-
ness about which we were talking would spring up in an apathetic awakening.

We do not stop to analyse the degree to which intellectuals mobilize all over the world in favor of just causes; rather, we stop to consider what whatever the degree of this development may be, whatever the effectiveness of this solidarity may be, the true fact is that the movement is increasing; the true fact is that such a movement is developing, the truth is that the movement grows.

And to be honest, we could say that we have seen many times how certain causes which most affect today's world, how certain aggressions, certain crimes, have received more support, more acceptance, more protest and more combativeness in groups of intellectual workers than in organizations of a political nature from which the greatest combativeness was to be expected. On occasion we have seen supposed vanguards in the depths of the rear ranks in the struggle against imperialism (APPLAUSE).

And indeed it is not our intention to come to this rostrum to offend or to hurt anybody. Besides, we do not like to offend or attack in an indirect manner. And I say this as an obliged reference to a truth which we have verified — after all, this is the outlook of those who have suffered aggressions the outlook of the revolutionary fighters of a country struggling against imperialism and of a country in which, if not the foremost trench — because the foremost trench is unquestionably Viet Nam (APPLAUSE) — occupies a modest combat post but defends it firmly and resolutely.

And when we see in the forefront a vanguard man or some one whom we assume to be one, it seems to us the most natural thing in the world; but when we see in the forefront of protest and fight those who were not thought to be of the vanguard, we admire them. And so we do not stop to measure the degree to which they fight, but to see and verify the fact that when, in some countries, there is no one to take up the banners of justice, there are worthy men to take up those banners! (APPLAUSE) And the examples of these phenomena are not few.

In the course of these years of revolution we have learned much, and among other things we have learned to discern between true and false, between a revolutionary attitude and a revolutionary slogan, between words and facts, between dogmas and realities...

Where were the vanguards? Where were the revolutionary vanguards?

But we have a very recent example, a very recent one, which touches us very closely, and that was the death of the heroic comrade Ernesto Guevara (OVATION).

It will be difficult to find a man like him; it will be difficult to find a revolutionary more pure than him, more consistent than him, more thorough than him, more exemplar than him. And whenever an example is to be given of what a revolutionary is and should be, could there ever be a better example than his?

Yet, who were the ones who raised his flag? Who were the ones who agitated throughout the world? But, above all, who were the ones who raised his name in Europe, the ones who lifted and exalted his example? Who were the ones who mobilized themselves, painted signs and organized demonstrations all over Europe? On what sector did the death of Che Guevara make the deepest impact? It was precisely among the intellectual workers! (APPLAUSE)

It was not in the organizations, not in the parties. They were honest and sensitive men and women, those who adopted an attitude of assimilating, understanding, admiring, of doing justice: they were opposed to those who ask why Che Guevara died, opposed to those who are incapable of understanding and who will never understand why he died, and who will never be able to die like him, nor be revolutionaries like him (APPLAUSE).

And we know how this deed caused grief in the hearts of true revolutionaries throughout the world. And above all, we know how this deed caused grief in the most exemplary fighters of three times, the Vietnamese fighters.

I mentioned Che's example, but we have seen the increasing strength of the movement of support to and solidarity with Viet Nam in the whole world; we have seen the ever increasing number of intellectual workers in United States who raise high the banner of the struggle against the savage aggression to Viet Nam; we have seen the intellectual workers of the world offer increasing support to the black movement in United States; we have seen how the intellectual workers of the world have raised high the banner of struggle everywhere against the imprisonment of Regis Debray; and we have seen in the events that have taken place in the recent past, in defining events, the growth of the solidarity movement among the intellectual workers of the whole world. And we really appreciate deeply this phenomenon!

This does not mean that we should be conformists, it does not mean that we should feel that we have done our best at all. It does not mean that this movement has the strength that it should have; it simply means that we feel optimistic because this movement, a movement of awareness, a movement of justice, grows and develops. And there is no doubt that it will continue growing and developing, because in the same measure in which a universal enemy becomes increasingly aggressive, in the same measure in which its crimes are increasingly repulsive, in the same measure in which its claws are increasingly menacing, this movement, this force will grow.

And when we say that Yankee imperialism is powerful, when we say that Yankee imperialism has accumulated great financial and technical resources, great means of destruction and death, we mean that we will never accept that this menace to humanity, that all the forces accumulated by imperialism could be more powerful than humanity.

And this is proven once more by Viet Nam, a tiny part of humanity. How they fight, how they defeat that almighty imperialism! An imperialism that tries to intimidate the world, that tries to blackmail the world, and which only succeeds in increasing the world's awareness, provoking its indignation, and increasing the world's fighting spirit to the same extent in which its actions are repulsive, to the same extent to which its actions are criminal and hateful; that enemy who wants to solve everything with its weapons, wants to solve everything with its gold, who murders and bribes, who oppresses through force as well as through corruption, and who penetrates into every field, who penetrates into every activity.

And it is logical that intellectual workers could not help but feeling revolted upon seeing how the most extraordinary products of human intelligence, how the creations of scientists and technicians, how all the means that man has developed for the benefit of man are employed nowadays to kill, to destroy, to oppress and corrupt. Just as they use the achievements of physics as well as of chemistry, electronics, biology, because they manufacture anything from bombs that explode into thousand of fragments, to poisons, chemical and biological means of destruction, and in fact, everything that scientists have created.

And it is logical that the intellectual workers of the world feel in one way or another, victims of this spoliation, feel in one way or another, that they are being attacked, just as they feel similarly attacked by the policy of brain buying, of the piracy of technicians, that policy aimed at monopolizing science, aimed at the recruiting of scientists from all over the world, either from a so-called developed country or
exists nor can he exist, sociology, isolated researchers, the emergence of geniuses of a team rather than that of individuals. Just as in modern times become more and more impossible. In science the isolated researcher practically no longer
work contemporary phenomena. Naturally, the analyses, of "excommunication" for asserting these things (LAUGH) forces when we see sectors of the clergy becoming revolutionary forces? (APPLAUSE)

These are the paradoxes of history. How could we resign ourselves to see sectors of Marxism become ecclesiastical forces when we see sectors of the clergy becoming revolutionary forces? (APPLAUSE)

And and there is certain underdevelopment, there is in fact certain under-development in the field of political ideas, in the field of revolutionary ideas. And from this is derived the enormous confusion that exists in the world today, the enormous crisis that exists in the field of ideas, that is, in the field of doctrines, in the precise moment when the attitudes and the revolutionary feelings of the world increase. No one can say that he possesses the whole truth; no one can declare today, in the midst of all the complexity of the world that he has the whole truth. We have our truths here, emerged from our experience, applicable to our conditions; and we have our deductions and conclusions: but we have never intended to be masters, we have never intended to be monopolizers of revolutionary truths.

Nevertheless, we have seen how revolutionary truths are found, how revolutionary truths gradually emerge as a result of the analysis, of the effort of many brains.

And there is no doubt that this is the impression that the Resolutions of the Congress leave. And this is, in our judgment, the most extraordinary thing: how such enormous conclusions have been reached, how the points of view have been unified, and how a handful of truths have been said, how a handful of unquestionably revolutionary and humane feelings have been expressed. And it must leave this impression on all those who read the resolutions of this Congress.

Two declarations, on the same day, by a general with many defeats and a "master mind" of imperialism.

And the statements so brazenly expressed by imperialist spokesmen, generals, and civilians, what do they mean? Perhaps they misrepresent imperialist strategy? Perhaps they disguise in some manner their intentions and purposes?

This one (Sam Harold K Johnson) speaks of "Communism ceases to proliferate when we fight it vigorously". That is the case of Cuba, "that tumor". - That tumor that has not been rooted out, be possibly meant to say -. How do we stop it? "And that is why we intervened by fire and sword in the Dominican Republic", "to help resistance". There they helped the guerrillas! Resistance? They would not have been able to withstand the Dominican people half an hour! (APPLAUSE)

And that is why they intervene in Viet Nam. They state very clearly that in Viet Nam they propose to crush the revolutionary movement, to deliver a determining lesson, in order to liquidate liberation movements. And the terminology of the international henchmen. And, of course, he retains that this "tumor" has not been removed.

And what does the other (Dean Rusk) say? He naturally says the same thing: that "when the struggles for liberation cease, there will be peace". But he does not stop there. It is not sufficient for the struggles for liberation to cease; there must be birth control, we must prevent the growth of population, because it does not matter if the struggles for liberation cease; if humanity continues developing, there will be increasingly powerful and more dangerous explosions than those produced by nuclear weapons. Science, Technology, come to help imperialism? Let there be education on the subject of births, let there be birth control!

The solutions of imperialism are very simple. Two thirds of humanity suffer from hunger. To put an end to this situation of starvation, to put an end to this misery, they must make revolutions. Ah! but no revolutions. Revolutions will be repressed by blood and fire! And there will be peace only if there are no revolutions. But, besides, even if there were no revolutions, what will happen to these two thirds of humanity which multiply like rabbits? When they talk about the problems of
population and birth rates, they are never based on a concept that has anything to do with the interests of the family or of society. No! They start from the principle that humanity will starve to death if it continues multiplying itself and in these times, indeed, which are neither the times of Malthus nor those of Methuselah. When science and technology achieve incredible successes in every field they resort to technology to repress revolutions, and the aid of science is requested to prevent demographic growth. In two words: the peoples must not make revolutions nor should women bear children. That sums up and synthesizes the philosophy of imperialism. But at the same time they reveal the insurmountable contradictions of imperialism, the insecurity, the fear for the future. Here it is clear that this oligarchy, sitting on cannons, sitting on piles of gold, lives restlessly, lives in distrust, lives in dread for the future.

And that is all there is to the political thought which is today the essence of imperialism, of the oligarchy that rules the United States and which in spite of all its fanatical repressions, of its technical and military resources, feels insecure. Because they know that without revolutions and without wars none of these countries will overcome underdevelopment.

They admit, they understand - they are aware - that there is no formula to pass from feudalism to progress. Imperialists know that there is no development without revolution, and they feel powerless in face of the reality that the world is growing, that the world is developing, that the population is increasing and, unavoidably - as a natural and unavoidable fact - that revolutionary awareness is inevitably increasing.

Imperialists know that the gap between the developed world and the underdeveloped world is widening; these data are incessantly published by the organs of the United Nations. It is known, for instance, that in 15 years the gross product will increase in the United States from approximately 400 billion in 1960 to 800 billion dollars in 1975; that in the European Common Market the gross product will increase during this period, approximately, from 200 to 400 billion dollars.

Many problems could be debated in the midst of the revolutionary camp about the problems of culture, because these problems are real.

Nevertheless, perhaps that was what the imperialist expected; the attention, the effort, was centred upon the fundamental contradictions, the decisive contradictions which are not those found within the revolutionary movement, which are not the cultural problems within the revolutionary movement, but the contradictions and the problems of culture with imperialism. We do not believe that this Congress has solved all the problems, that all issues have been cleared by it - far from it - but we do believe that it was a great step forward, we do believe it has been highly positive, and we believe that the issues discussed are essential and that the deliberation regarding the revolutionary society were important and essential, particularly the problems dealing with the new man.

And fortunately, in this question of the future, we have Che's wonderful pamphlet, in which, in a clear and brilliant manner, he analyzed some of these problems with the sincerity and honesty and frankness that always characterized him, and he expressed his ideas of how the new man should be, how this man of tomorrow, how this man of the XXI century should be.

And we have seen how these questions have been considered in this Congress. We have also seen how Che's example, his attitude, his bearing, his honesty, his wholesomeness, presided over and inspired many of the resolutions of this Congress.

For us, this successful event, whose results exceed the most optimistic predictions, will be forever unforgettable. It is true that our people live their hours, days, months, completely absorbed in their work, overcoming obstacles, struggling to achieve economic development under difficult conditions confronting an aggressive imperialism and together with a socialism still very limited in all fields; and in this battle, in this titanic struggle, in this effort that grows day by day, it might seem that the people, absorbed in work, have participated little in the Congress but this is not really the case.

Actually, our people have acquired an extraordinary sensiveness, an extraordinary perception which you had the opportunity to appreciate in the mass meetings, the quickness of perception, the alertness of our masses to grasp any problem; the degree of politicization of our people, their revolutionary spirit, the internationalism which they have developed, the feelings of solidarity which have been created through the struggle itself and which has found inspiration and received support from all over the world.

And in every event, whether it is in a Tricontinental Conference, a conference of Latin American revolutionary organizations, or in the events such as this, he has been increasing his knowledge, his information, his revolutionary horizons.

All economists and all those engaged in the problems of international trade know that industrial products are sold at an even higher price to the underdeveloped world, and that the products of this world are bought at an increasingly lower price.

A Latin America oligarch recently stated that the same amount of a product with which his country could buy three jeeps 10 years ago, now it only could buy one.

And while the standards of living increase in one part of the world, the standards of poverty increase in the rest of the world, the unbalance increases, exploitation increases.

While the gross product increases, while the per capita income increases in one part of the world, in the larger part of the world the per capita product decreases; the unbalance increases; the prices increase in favor of those who have the highest standards, prices decrease, against those who have the worst standards; besides resources are squandered by the feudal lords and the obligations on many occasions; the drainage of monetary resources increases.

And this is simply an insoluble problem, a problem without a solution, it is a true fact. That is why they, who use Cybernetics and calculate, add, subtract, multiply, and divide, seem to have consulted the computers and have been told that there is no solution, that the situation is intolerable.

Very well then: what is the imperialists' solution? Repressive wars against revolutions, and there shall be peace when there are no revolutions, when populations cease to grow, because if they do not cease to grow there shall be outbreaks and there shall be nuclear wars.

In no previous stage in man's history has such barbaric, genocidal, brutal pronouncements against humanity been heard.

This is the actual fact; it is the unconceivable fact; this is what contributes to form the universal revolutionary consciousness; this is the fact that has brought you together here, those unquestionable facts are the ones which have given a revolutionary tone to this Congress.

And it is true that in the field of culture there are many problems to solve, there are many issues to bring to light, and we do not at all conceal that there are many things which remain to be answered, that there are many new problems not yet resolved.
And we revolutionaries have those problems, especially when as revolutionaries, and under special conditions, we are forced to invest a huge part of our efforts in order to survive, to defend ourselves and to advance.

Nevertheless, there is the unquestionable intention of finding the adequate answer, the best solutions to the numerous problems that arise in the development of society. Solutions to be found, problems find the solutions. And we truly believe that this Congress is a contribution to us and to the revolutionary movements.

But, nevertheless, it has been an enlightening lesson to see how the intellectual workers of this Congress grasped the fundamental problems, grasped the essential matters, the things that worry men the most at present. They worked around these matters, they united themselves around these matters and around these matters carried out the Congress.

And for us, it is unnecessary to say that your presence among us has been a very high honor. We hope that our a great honor for us that you have shared these days with us - you, men and women of value, of prestige, whose masterpieces, whose works which are much better known then you yourselves can possibly imagine. And we shall work around these matters, they united themselves around these matters and around these matters carried out the Congress.

And for us, it is unnecessary to say that your presence among us has been a very high honor. We hope that our people have expressed to you in a thousand ways, their warmth, their gratitude and their sympathy.

With these feelings of friendship, of brotherhood and affection, we declare this Congress closed. Today; ...

African Literature Today
A Journal of Explanatory Criticism
Editor: Eldred D Jones
Issue No 1 contains articles on:

CHINUA ACHEBE
'The palm oil with which Achebe's words are eaten'.
by BERNTH LINDFORS

J P CLARK
'Two hands a man has': the poetry of J P Clark.
by JOHN POVEY

CHRISTOPHER OKIGBO
'Okigbo Understood': a study of two poems.
by O R DATHORNE

E N OBIECHINA writes on
'Critical Nationalism in Modern Creative Literature'

And there are reviews of books by Césaire, Ngugi, Amadi, Nwapa and Equiano

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The hit tune that year was "Memories Are Made Of This!". Even at the airport lounge the Muzak was playing it. Only when the news of the airline crash came through did they interrupt it. Ruth and Eddie Shaw were waiting for the plane that was to take them back to Johannesburg when a voice came through the loudspeaker announcing the crash of an airliner which was due to land at the Durban airport in an hour's time.

The news had a strange effect upon all the passengers. Suddenly, without saying very much to one another beyond an occasional murmur 'Where did it happen?' passengers began to avoid one another's eyes. The afternoon air which had remained for the greater part of the day portentously warm and still seemed now to hang heavily upon everybody, it seemed to carry in it the very stench of death. Whatever inconsequential gossip that animated the talk in the airport lounge was now touched by a sombre fatalism deriving from the day's news.

Women began to haul out their powder compacts and to retouch faces that were to all appearances faultless; they became irritable; their voices rose at the slightest provocation. But there were other more garrulous passengers who remembered other accidents. A small irrepresible man with a pinkish girlish face recalled two planes that had collided over New York City only a year before.

"I heard the news just as I was due to fly from London," he addressed the passengers generally. "It was ghastly, you know. At least, we were assured by the newspapers. Debris falling like soot over Manhattan. I refused to fly over there until they'd sorted out whatever had caused the accident."

The planes came and took off as though nothing had happened; the roar of jet engines filled the air and the cry of death was in everybody's ears like the voice of panic erupting from the depths of the subconscious mind.

After the first announcement of the disaster which had first sounded uncertain, there was an interval of about ten minutes before the radio reporters were heard from again. They now filled in the details of the disaster. The jet had skidded off the runway and telescoped into a hangar, bursting into lurid flames; by the time the fire engines got to the spot falling like soot over Manhattan. I refused to fly over there until they'd sorted out whatever had caused the accident."

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