

# FIDEL CASTRO ON CUBA AND ANGOLA

*(This extract is from a speech by Dr Fidel Castro, at the end of the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party, which was published in Granma, January 11, 1976—Ed. LM)*

**W**HAT is the source of friction now? These Yankees owned Latin America but Latin America doesn't want any owners. Little by little it is rising up, and little by little it is becoming independent. They tried to isolate us from Latin America—and they did so for some time—but our ties are developing. They tried to isolate us from the rest of the world, but we have established links with the world, with the socialist nations and with the underdeveloped nations of Asia and Africa.

Now Angola is the source of friction. The imperialists seek to prevent us from aiding our Angolan brothers. But we must tell the Yankees to bear in mind that we are a Latin-American nation and a Latin-African nation as well (*prolonged applause*).

African blood flows freely through our veins (*applause*). Many of our ancestors came as slaves from Africa to this land. As slaves they struggled quite a great deal. They fought as members of the Liberating Army of Cuba. We're brothers and sisters of the people of Africa and we are ready to fight on their behalf! (*applause*).

Racial discrimination existed in our country. Is there anyone who doesn't know this, who doesn't remember it? Many public parks had separate walks for blacks and for whites. Is there anyone who doesn't recall that African descendants were barred from many places, from recreation centres and schools? Is there anyone who has forgotten that racial discrimination was prevalent in all aspects of work and study? And, today, who are the representatives, the symbols of the most hateful and inhuman form of racial discrimination? The South African fascists and racists. And Yankee imperialism, without scruples of any kind, has launched South African mercenary troops in an attempt to crush Angola's independence, and is now outraged by our help to Angola, our support for Africa and our defence of Africa. In keeping with the duties rooted in our principles, our ideology, our convictions and our very own blood, we shall defend Angola and Africa! (*applause and shouts of 'Cuba, Angola, united they will win!'*). And when we say defend, we mean it in the strict sense of the word.

And when we say struggle, we mean it, also in the strict sense of the word (*applause*).

Let the South African racists and the Yankee imperialists be warned. We are part of the world revolutionary movement, and in Africa's struggle against racists and imperialists, we'll stand, without any hesitation, side by side with the peoples of Africa (*applause*).

Only cynics would dare to condemn our support for Angola while marching upon that heroic people shoulder to shoulder with South African fascists: South Africa, a region where three million whites oppress 14 million blacks, wants to impose its policy on Rhodesia, as it is doing, and on the rest of black Africa. But Black Africa will not stand for it, will not tolerate it. Imperialists and reactionaries underestimate the peoples; mercenaries are in the habit of doing as they please, of marching in with their tanks and cannon to overwhelm defenceless people. They've already tried it here in Giron, and that's just what they are trying to do in Angola. But Angolans are not defenceless! (*applause*).

And Ford is complaining. Ford is hurling threats. Not really threats. He is just saying that the hypothetical and abstract possibilities of improving relations will be cancelled. Ford should instead apologise to the revolutionary government of Cuba for the scores of assassination attempts prepared by the CIA for many years against various leaders of the revolution (*applause*). The government of Cuba has the right to expect explanations from the imperialist government of the United States and to receive apologies for the horrendous and macabre assassination attempts plotted against leaders of the Cuban revolution, attesting to their degree of civilisation, or rather their degree of barbarity, and showing their true colours as criminals. They have put technology and science at the service of murder. And for years on end, in an unscrupulous, foul and indecent manner, that government has dedicated itself to planning the assassination of revolutionary Cuban leaders.

What we want from Ford is not the cancellation of his hypothetical hopes or possibilities for an improvement of relations with Cuba, but apologies for the shameful, hateful and disgraceful crimes which the government of the United States prepared against leaders of the Cuban revolution (*applause*).

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