

# The Homeland of José Martí Has Been Betrayed

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It is inspiring that the Czech nation can proudly present its credentials of two victories, the first against Nazi-Fascist despotism and the second against communist oppression, and that it can now show the whole world how it has subsequently been able to return to the path of freedom and democracy.

The native country of Václav Havel has the conclusive answer for those that predict chaos in Cuba after the defeat of the Castro-communist tyranny. Some of these pessimists obviously have little knowledge of Latin American history. Others must simply want to create an atmosphere of insecurity and uncertainty in view of the inevitable collapse of the barbaric and terrorist regime that has been oppressing the Cuban nation for almost half a century. In the course of their history, the Latin American nations have showed uncompromising rebelliousness against all types of oppression. If, as a result of a combination of negative factors, they had to suffer under despotism, it was always against their commitment to freedom. The Cuban nation is a bright example of the love for and commitment to freedom.

The Cuban inspiration of the fight for independence in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was not a warrior or politician but a writer, poet and humanist. José Martí left an abiding mark on the collective soul of his nation, which is the basis for understanding the nation's spirit of self-sacrifice, tolerance and the capacity for martyrdom in fighting a regime of terror, crime and barbarism for almost half a century. I deeply believe that after the dictatorship, Cubans on the island as well as in exile will be able to establish a system of life in freedom that combines the pressing needs to combat poverty with a continuing commitment to the values of justice, equality and solidarity. Our experience from the past and present shows us painfully that without these two key factors, democracy becomes fragile and is left at the mercy of demagogues and opportunists.

If these arguments are not sufficient for believing in the democratic future of Cuba, I can add the enlightening examples of the nations of Spain, Chile and Uruguay that, after the end of oppressive dictatorships, have gone through a natural transition to democracy. Of course these are democracies with many problems, but efforts have been made to solve them under the close supervision of free institutions. In respect to the Costa Rica nation's love for peace, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1948 José Figueres Ferrer abolished the army and we, the makers of the constitution, were privileged to include in the new political constitution Article 12 that abolished the army as a permanent institution. Furthermore, our nation declared peace to the whole world unilaterally when on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1983, the active permanent unarmed neutrality of Costa Rica in war conflicts between or inside states was declared.

The neutrality of Costa Rica involves state neutrality in war conflicts and in the intellectual and political fight against despotism. Yet concerning freedom, the nation of Costa Rica has never been and will never be neutral. We have shown and will always show belligerent solidarity with those who fight for freedom. If the conflict results in a war, since we do not have an army, we will be able to participate only as mediators or in humanitarian activities. Thus it can be explained that our solidarity with the Cuban nation in this difficult stage of its history started on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1961. At the time I, as a Parliament member, said in my speech that the native country of José Martí had been betrayed and that a totalitarian regime with the aspirations of communist imperialism to govern the entire world had been installed. The Committee of Workers for the Freedom of Trade Unions and Social-Democrat Prisoners from Central and Eastern Europe with its seat in New York under the auspices of FLCIO, the US trade union organization, disseminated the speech in different languages with the title: “There Is Not Revolution without Freedom”.

It was very sad and disappointing that at that time Fidel Castro had already been considered an idol all over the world. I was afraid that my call to defend democracy and my attempted solidarity with the Cuban nation would be smashed by a still very efficient international communist propaganda machine that would accuse me of being a henchman of Yankee imperialism, a servant of the imperialist exploiters and so on. But over the course of time, increasingly false beliefs and lies could not hide the tragedy of oppression, pain and crime in which the so called Castro revolution operated. Gradually the curtains concealing and dissimulating the psychopathic character of the omnipresent and omnipotent dictator of the island have been opened. Without being able to imagine the terror and repression, brave dissidents appeared in the country to whom I would like to show great respect and solidarity to on behalf of the Costa Rican people. We highly appreciate their courage and self-sacrifice as they challenge the monster from the inside. We understand and respect their special role in leading the suffering Cuban nation towards freedom.

Since April 1961 until September, 2004, more and more political, intellectual, academic and trade union elites have expressed solidarity with the Cuban nation. Many events of these four decades have brought us closer, although sometimes with irritating slowness, to the dawn of freedom in Cuba. The meetings of the ICDC, including the September Summit in Prague, represent a big step forward along the path towards the freedom of José Martí's homeland. For many years the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, subjected by force to communist imperialism, acted as allies to the Castro tyranny. Today they offer their support to democracy in Cuba. If Europe is able to combine efforts and actions regardless of country borders it will help more effectively to overthrow the impudent regime with its high toll of pain and blood. Furthermore, if we achieve this goal it will transmit positive energy to the American continent. It is frustrating that after long years of fighting to support the Cuban nation we still find an unacceptable level of moral and political ambivalence on the part of some chief politicians and intellectuals. They asked for and received help when fighting the so-called right-wing military dictatorships in their own countries. But when the moment came to provide help to a suffering nation under a so-called left-wing military dictatorship, that in terms of brutality overcomes the despotism experienced by other Latin American nations, some became hypocritical whilst others even acted as tyranny accomplices and demonstrated their weakness with regard to offences committed by the Cuban regime.

Oppression and terror, and recently also poverty, have led to the massive migration of women, men, young people and even children. This is a similar phenomenon to the endemic despotisms suffered by the majority of Latin American countries yet differing in size and characteristics with hundreds of thousands people ending in sui-generis exile, of almost biblical proportions.

We can find Cubans all over the world, none of whom have forgotten Cuba, and many of whom have retained their dreams in their new countries to return to liberate Cuba. The main concentration is in Miami where you can feel vibrations of Cuban soul everywhere: Martí, Maceo, Cuban music, a longing and a precious sense of humour. It is not by accident that the propaganda of the tyrant focuses its most ferocious attacks against the exile in Miami, referred to as the Miami Mafia. God bless the Cuban diaspora, as despite facing infinite family and personal misfortunes, despite the systematic aggression of the regime and its supporters and despite suffering betrayals and desertions, they have retained a glimmer of hope in the freedom of Cuba for almost five decades. I, as an old fighter for justice and peace, would like to express my acknowledgment of the Cuban exile, the Miami exile and the exile spread all over the world. This first Summit of the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba provides new spirit and strengthens the hope of those who on the island as well as abroad fight with indomitable spirit for the return of freedom and democracy. I think that the creation and initiatives of the

International Committee for Democracy in Cuba means the total identification of democratic forces of Europe and other places with the noble and holy final battle for restoring democracy in the native country of José Martí.