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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

SPEECH DELIVRED BY THE CUBAN MINISTER OF STATE,  
SR. CARLOS HEVIA, AT THE CLOSING MEETING,  
HELD ON TUESDAY 14, JUNE 1949.-

Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Government of Cuba, I wish to emphasize the pleasure with which we followed the works that have led to the conclusion of this Second Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America. The results of this Conference, coordinated with those of the former Session held in the beautiful Chilean capital, give the measure of real concern of the Latin American countries for the development of their resources, the well-being of their peoples, and the economic advancement to which they aspire.

For us Cubans, it has been a twofold honor. We have had the opportunity to work with the delegates and representatives of our sister-nations and of the international organizations of which we are members, toward the solution of our urgent common problems, which distinguish our economies from the more balanced ones of modern nations, and which we have not always been able to attain. Furthermore, this Second Session has afforded the Latin Americans an opportunity to express their wishes and their necessities, duly incorporated in thoughtful resolutions and proposals.

You have performed a very serious task, both as statesmen and as technicians, serving the peoples you represent and the ideal of economic independence.

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The Economic Commission for Latin American had already earned at its First Session, that right to exist, in order to serve better the high interests which have been entrusted to it, and protect them; here in Havana, this right has been definitely confirmed.

We are not dealing with a mere experiment but with the rightful hope of the Latin American peoples that their problems may be considered within the framework of world economy and with all the attention which is due to 150 million human beings, whose number is rapidly increasing and whose economic contribution augments hand in hand with the population; their production, however, must increase even more and it should also be better distributed.

You have worked well and conscientiously gentlemen. When returning to you may carry with you the assurance that your work during the Second Session of ECLA, at Havana, constitutes a new chapter in the Declaration of Economic Independence of Latin America, which some day will be acknowledged having of decisive significance in modern times; this chapter is being written by our agriculture, our industries, our trade and our finances, progressively leading to the attainment of "the greatest good for the greatest number", as proclaimed by Jeremy Bentham in the days of Bolivar and San Martin.

Please take with you the assurance of the understanding and gratitude with which the people and the Government of Cuba have observed your noble efforts displayed in the Second Session of the Economic Commission for Latin American.