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LETTER DATED 19 OCTOBER 1962 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

In accordance with the express instructions of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, I have the honour to bring to your attention the following facts and comments:

In recent weeks, there have been various attacks on Cuban territory which have been typical acts of international piracy.

On 12 May, a pirate boat attacked a Cuban Government patrol boat, killing three sailors and wounding eight. According to a UP cable, dated 25 August 1962, José Manuel Salvat, the leader of the counter-revolutionary student movement and the co-ordinator of the naval attack, introduced Leslie Nobregas, the captain of the pirate boat, and Isidro Borja, who sent the ship, at a meeting of journalists at Miami. This meeting had originally been banned by the police authorities but was held when the Revolutionary Student Directorate received assurances "that its members would not be molested".

During the night of 24 August, Dr. Fidel Castro, the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, announced: "At 11.30 p.m. yesterday, the sea front of the town of Havana was attacked by armed ships, which fired numerous bursts of 20-calibre gun-fire. This treacherous surprise attack shows the cowardice, the criminal and piratical spirit of its authors, the Government of the United States and the mercenary agents recruited by it, who operate with impunity from the coast of Florida, trampling under foot the most elementary principles of international law. We hold the United States Government responsible for this new and cowardly attack on our country."

At 2.50 a.m. on 10 September 1962, at Cayo Francés, sixteen miles from Caibarien, a pirate boat attacked the 350-foot pontoon boat "San Pascual", used

to store molasses, and the freighter "Newland", flying the British flag, which was close by and was coming to load a cargo of sugar for the United Kingdom.

The American Press agencies AP and UP reported from Miami, United States, that "some members of the anti-Castro organization known as Alpha 66 said that five members of the organization had carried out an attack on two freighters off the northern coast of Cuba". They added that the headquarters of the organization was in Puerto Rico and the operation was a naval attack on Cayo Francés, in the port of Caibarién. The communiqué, sent from Miami, says that "The British ship 'Newland', which was loading sugar for the communist countries at Cayo Francés was heavily machine-gunned by the Alpha boat".

At 2 a.m. on 13 October 1962 a pirate boat fired several bursts of 30-calibre machine-gun fire at a motor launch carrying a number of Cuban citizens, near Cayo Blanco, close to the town of Cardenas. Two militiamen were wounded in the attack and kidnapped by the attackers, who took them first to the British possession of Cayo Sal and then illegally into United States territory. This was a flagrant kidnapping and a violation of Cuban territorial waters, in which the United States was obviously implicated, since it gave refuge and protection to the actual attackers; it was also implicated in the kidnapping of the wounded Cubans, who were subjected by force to great pressure by the United States authorities in Florida, who tried to make it appear that they were both asking for asylum, whereas those who were responsible for the attack were encouraged and given every protection.

All these acts amount to hundreds of violations of Cuban air space and Cuban waters by aircraft attacking freighters making for our ports through our territorial waters which have been denounced by Cuba since 1 July of this year through the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces.

On 27 August, The New York Times reported that two United States airmen, William Johnson and Frank Swanner, had carried out exploratory flights over Havana before the attack on Friday, 24 August, in order to locate the target. This fits in with the fact that United States ships are spying on the Cuban coast - the ship "Oxford", for instance, which is permanently stationed within sight of Havana for the purpose of letting the armed motor boats know when they can approach with impunity, and boats are stationed just inside our territorial waters in order to protect the attackers when they withdraw.

These acts of international piracy are combined with brutal pressure brought to bear by the Government of the United States on some of its allies to halt their shipping to Cuba. It is no mere coincidence that these acts should be occurring at the very time that this pressure is being exerted, and that the more opposition and protest this policy of blackmail arouses, the more illegal raids are taking place. The pressure reaches such extremes as an undisguised threat in the form of official measures adopted by the Washington Government. For example, the newspaper Journal of Commerce, commenting on British opposition to halting commercial shipping with Cuba, said in its issue of 15 October 1962 that "if they persist, at their own risk, they may expect reprisals either immediately or later".

Upon their return to the United States, the perpetrators of those acts of piracy have said that "they are prepared to attack again" and that "they will carry out a more extensive operation". From New York, the organization which calls itself "Alpha 66" announced that it "was declaring war against all ships carrying goods to Cuba"; from United States soil, it admitted that the "Newland", a vessel flying the British flag, which was loading sugar for the communist countries, was subjected to intensive machine-gun fire. United States press agencies have released statements made in Puerto Rico, a United States colony, by persons belonging to Cuban counter-revolutionary groups, repeating that attacks would be made on vessels of non-Communist countries as well. It is a well-known fact that the Press, radio and television of the United States have not only published the statements of the perpetrators of these acts of international piracy but have also vindicated these villainous acts. Moreover, the confessed criminals have boasted that their acts were carried out from a base in United States territory from which they set out and to which they returned with complete impunity. Suffice it to recall that the leaders of the counter-revolutionary organization which calls itself Alpha 66 stated in Miami, according to the Associated Press, that they fired "sixty rounds from 20 mm guns, two centimetres at the base of the projectile, a calibre much used during the Second World War by automatic anti-aircraft guns, and most of them were tracer bullets which left a luminous trail".

The same agency reported the statement made in Miami by this counter-revolutionary organization that "it is ready to attack again". A cable from the Associated Press, sent from Caracas on 9 September 1962, reported that a representative of the so-called Student Revolutionary Directorate asserted that this counter-revolutionary organization "will attack any Soviet vessel it finds in Cuban territorial waters".

Thus it may be categorically stated that Cuban counter-revolutionary groups, acting with complete impunity and with the knowledge and protection of the United States authorities, are carrying out typical acts of international piracy. All its aggressions, pressures, threats and attacks against Cuba having come to naught, and its vain efforts to starve the Cuban people into submission having failed, the Government of the United States has not hesitated to resort to the most base methods and has not had the slightest scruple in violating basic principles underlying the very existence of the international juridical community. The Government of the United States has not hesitated to resort to international piracy, thus demonstrating not only the basically aggressive nature of its policy towards Cuba, but also the most profound contempt for international law, as shown by its blatant violation of the universally recognized principle of freedom of the seas and the peaceful conduct of trade.

On 25 August 1962, a cable from Miami reported that on instructions from the State Department the Coast Guard had impounded, at Marathon Key, the two vessels used in the shelling of the homes in the Miramar suburb. When they were informed that the vessels had been impounded by the Government, spokesmen for the counter-revolutionaries said: "We have no comment, but we hope they will be returned to us with all the artillery in working order". The attackers who carried out the piratical action of 10 September 1962 said that it was accomplished without radar or radio "and with rockets which did not work".

All these armaments were made in the United States.

The New York Times of 13 September 1962, pointed out that "if the United States wants to stop these dangerous adventures, it can almost certainly do so by telling the responsible leaders of the Cuban exiles that they must stop them. This should be done openly".

According to a cable from the Associated Press dated 25 August 1962, the United States State Department stated that "it had proof that the Cuban Student Revolutionary Directorate led the raid by sea against Havana last night from Miami. In relatively gentle terms, the Department warned the anti-Castro Cuban exiles that they could be prosecuted for violation of neutrality laws if they did it again. The law prohibits the launching of a military expedition against countries which are not at war with the United States. The Department of Justice is investigating whether there is any ground for taking action against the organizers of, and participants in, the attack."

Despite all the evidence, the United States authorities did not fail to use on these occasions the same cynical terms as preceded the military aggression at Playa Girón on 17 April 1961. In fact, on the morning of 15 April United States aircraft coming from United States territory and using United States arms bombed several Cuban towns as a preliminary to the invasion by mercenaries planned, organized and financed by the United States Government, as was publicly admitted some days afterwards by President John F. Kennedy himself. On that occasion Adlai Stevenson, the United States representative to the United Nations, stated that these had been aircraft of the Cuban Air Force which had rebelled against their own Government. Now, in connexion with the pirate attacks we are discussing, the same gross humbug is repeated. Thus a UP cable of 25 August 1962 reported in connexion with the attack on areas near Havana that "United States officials hinted privately that elements of the Cuban Navy might have been responsible and not the anti-Castro revolutionary group which claimed credit for the deed".

It was added that "investigations have shown that no ship belonging to the Cuban exiles capable of such a mission has left United States waters recently". In addition to that lie the agency in question basely added that "one possibility that was not rejected at the start by United States officials is that the Cuban army, which is alleged to be holding manoeuvres in the area of Havana, pointed its guns at the hotel in which communist technicians were lodging and at other buildings. According to these speculations the Cuban marines could have fired by mistake, could have been deserters or could have fired on Castro's orders so that he could accuse the United States of aggression".

A cable of the same date as the Associated Press Agency reported the statement of the official Robert J. Macloskey that, although he had no reports yet from other federal bodies responsible for preventing armed attacks from this country, "I presume that we should take action to prevent any attack from North American territory".

The very same day Mr. Reap, spokesman of the State Department in Washington, said that "there is still no news about the group of Cubans who call themselves Alpha 66, which announced in Miami that they had carried out the attack from a base somewhere in the Caribbean". He added that "apparently the Department of Justice was studying the incident". After the attack on the hotel in Miramar on 24 August 1962 the State Department stressed that "that type of attack did not really harm the communist organization in Cuba and that although it recognized the deep feelings by which the student group was animated and their hostility to the regime in their country, it could not approve of the use of United States territory as a basis for such actions". Hours later the State Department reported that it had "evidence that the anti-Castro Student Revolutionary Directorate was responsible for last night's attack on the sea front of Havana". The Department of Justice announced that it was "investigating whether the United States neutrality law has been violated as a result of this episode". The truth is that the pirate ships were manned by United States authorities.

The reaction of the United States Government to this conclusive evidence has all along been evasive and partial.

Whenever an act of piracy has occurred it has replied that the policy of the United States was to disapprove of the use of United States territory as a base for armed action against Castro. Arising out of the aggression of 11 September 1962, a cable of the U.P.I. Agency from Washington dated 12 September reported that the Department of State had restated its policy of opposing the use of United States territory by groups of Cuban exiles for launching attacks against Cuba.

"The New York Times" of 11 October 1962 exhorted the United States Government to prohibit the preparation of expeditions against countries with whom the United States was at peace. It added that violent reaction might be expected abroad if it appeared that exiles based on the United States were in fact trying

to sink ships carrying out peaceful trade with Cuba, and that the United States Government should prevent that unlawful and dangerous action by the Cuban exiles - with whose cause, however, the newspaper declared itself in complete sympathy. The "Daily News" stated that although the bombing of Havana was organized from the United States, no proceedings were planned against the adventurers who had violated the United States Neutrality Act".

Nothing could be more flagrant than the complicity of the United States Government in these international crimes committed by persons who assemble in American territory, perpetrate aggression with American ships and weapons, and return to American territory to announce publicly their acts of vandalism. By way of camouflage the pirates have been "warned" that they "may be tried" for breaches of American law "if repeated". This is a public announcement of impunity for the criminal, who is not punished but "warned", and then only if the offence is "repeated". This means that the law forbidding the crime requires as one of its ingredients that it shall be repeated - not to mention the fact that since these official announcements these crimes have been repeated and no action has been taken. On the contrary, speaking of these attacks which the United States Government itself encourages and abets, the White House press secretary Lincoln White stated on 12 October 1962 that the United States had informed Great Britain that it could not guarantee the safety of British shipping in the Caribbean against armed attacks by anti-Castro Cuban exiles. He said that such attacks are not approved by the United States Government and that the United States could not take any responsibility for acts committed by Cuban exiles sailing from ports not under its national jurisdiction. He added, that although the American coastguard and immigration services have plans for preventing incidents against Cuba, the United States has two thousand kilometres of coast to patrol; that there are in the Florida area many thousands of pleasure boats; and that there is no absolute safeguard against the occurrence of any incident. In commenting on the crimes of piracy recorded in this document, the United States Government not only abets, encourages and screens them, but in so doing tolerates a crime punishable by its own law; violates Cuban territorial waters and air space; offends against the law of the high seas and outrages the principle of the freedom of the seas; protects those who commit crimes in its territorial waters;

and flouts and tramples under foot all the rules of international law relating to persons taking refuge in its territory. The United States Government has revived both the obsolete Monroe Doctrine and piracy as an instrument of international policy.

In the speech he made on 8 October this year before the General Assembly Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós Torrado, the President of the Republic, asked whether the pressure for the blockage and unilateral action to enforce the blockade in time of peace was not an act of war, and he asked the United Nations to condemn these aggressive acts. He pointed out that this policy attacked the cardinal principles of freedom of trade, that ancient historic achievement of mankind, and, in answer to the false accusation by the United States that Cuba is a problem of the hemisphere, he declared that the true problem of the hemisphere is created by the United States Government through its lack of respect for the sovereignty of other States. The statement of the Council of Ministers of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba in reply to the joint statement of the Congress of the United States pointed out that the United States policy against Cuba constituted, "without concealment or scruple, the open proclamation of a policy of aggression and force which, in violation of the most elementary principles of international law and of the United Nations Charter, the imperialist Government of the United States is conducting against the Republic of Cuba".

The acts of international piracy which have been brought to the notice of the General Assembly form part of the tissue of violations and crimes which distinguish and inform the whole American policy towards Cuba.

Never has a Government made such a mockery of the principles on which the international legal community is based as has the present Government of the United States. Its foreign policy belongs to the age of the jungle.

On behalf of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, I request Your Excellency to arrange for this communication to be circulated to all delegations as an official document of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(Signed) Mario García Incháustegui  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Cuba