

April 9, 1963

**Resignation Letter of Jose Miro Cardona to the
Revolutionary Council of Cuba**

Citation:

"Resignation Letter of Jose Miro Cardona to the Revolutionary Council of Cuba", April 9, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archivo Histórico Diplomático Genaro Estrada, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico City. Obtained by Jorge Mendoza Castro, translated by Anita Harmer and Tanya Harmer.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115208>

Summary:

A resignation letter of Chairman Jose Miro Cardona to the Revolutionary Council of Cuba in which he outlines his role in the historical activities of the Council, as well as his concluding thoughts on the actions the Council should take.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Spanish

Contents:

Translation - English

Revolutionary Council of Cuba

I Resignation

It is my duty to address the Revolutionary Council of Cuba, which I chair, to resign from the post which I have held to this day, which I was appointed to on 22 March 1961 by unanimous agreement of the organizations and dignitaries which I am honored to address.

The only reason for my irrevocable decision is extremely serious. Its basis could cause temporary discouragement to our compatriots who are anxiously waiting for the minute of liberation. Despite this - with a full sense of the enormous responsibility which rests on my shoulders, with a deep knowledge of all the implied consequences of my resignation, putting an end to a tormenting conflict of motives - a duty of clear loyalty, has led me to bring about this necessary crisis, in the hope of resolving it.

II Historical Account

Before explaining the main reason for my irrevocable decision, I feel obliged to give, in a short synthesis, an account of the main events which occurred after 17th April 1961. I made it my duty to maintain absolute silence regarding the agreements with the United States and the Council's plans, thinking it would better serve the cause. That judgment stopped me, until now, from clearing up the situation and offering the guidance, which exile continuously demands. Today it cannot be negated in any way.

a) Two Bitter Years

The last two years, after the defeat on 17 April 1961, have been, in truth, hard and bitter for all Cubans; for the men and women of the sacrificed underground; for the brave mountain guerrillas, for the proud political prisoners; for the heroic combatants of the Bay of Pigs; for the civilian population of Cuba dominated by terror; for the long-suffering émigrés; for the revolutionary organizations that have seen their fighting units decimated; for the Council and for me[.] [E]ncouraged by faith, I have resisted the onslaught of fierce adversaries without weakness, without responding to straight criticism of those justifiably impatient and poisonous diatribes of gratuitous adversaries, in order to avoid useless controversies.

After the Playa Girón episode - which in due course we will clarify in depth and detail, with reference to people, circumstances, precise dates and relevant details - we have worked with fervor and in silence for a homeland for everyone. To summarize the road after the disaster, we put Cuba above our pain. For this reason, we were able to suppress anger, close the road to resentment, not listen to ungrateful voices of hurt pride and dented dignity. And with a spirit clean of all hostile sentiment, we started the great task of reconstructing the forces of the broken Revolution.

b) Two Important Dates: 20 April and 4 May 1961

On 20 April 1961, the Honorable President Kennedy-who with the exemplary honesty of a head of-government-had taken complete responsibility for the experienced failure, in clear pronouncements that also expressed "his decision not to abandon Cuba," and warned the Hemisphere that if Latin American countries did not fulfill their duty, the United States would fulfill it with those who joined it, informed by inter-American treaties and agreements. Fourteen days later, on the 4th May, on my return from a trip to Nicaragua, Guatemala, and the Virgin Islands, [that I undertook] at his behest, [to conduct] a painstaking search for survivors, in the company of the doctors [Antonio] Maceo and [Manuel Antonio de "Tony"] Varona, President Kennedy

planned the immediate future of Cuba with me in a meeting for this purpose. His offers of cooperation were categorical and his backing absolute and total. Thanks to his personal decision, permanent economic aid to the widows and orphans of the expeditionary forces, was made possible. He also made it possible to provide help for clandestine forces in Cuba, [and] he planned the first recruitment program of Cuban volunteers in different US military units for very brief training and then [proposed] grouping them into one military corps with their natural leaders at an opportune moment, which we would discuss together. In his name, I invited officials from the Cuban Armed Forces (professionals, "rebels," and of liberation [sic]) to receive specialized courses in different US schools aimed at fighting on Castro's island, as well as other things that it is not necessary to record at this moment. The road travelled between May and October of 1961 was unforgiving at times. We did not waver in expressing our disagreement with the President's collaborators about methods and tactics, with a spirit of cooperation, it must be said, always prevailing. On 31 October of that year all the differences were harmonized and agreements were finalized in an "Agreement," which history will recover one day.

Only one thought gave me strength in the daily toil: the assurance that we had found the right path leading straight to reconquering Independence. It did not matter that adversaries rejected me ["me negaron el pan y la sal"]. The alliance between free Cubans and this nation became crystalized on "the basis of mutual respect" in order to eradicate communism from the homeland of Martí and to reaffirm the pillars of Democracy, [that were] in the throes of perishing on the American Continent.

c) The Activities of the Council

The revolutionary organizations represented on the Council coordinated the actions that needed to be implemented with the clandestine forces of Cuba and the agreed plans were put into action. The presiding organization also had to fight on other fronts. In October we appeared before the Inter-American Press Society to mobilize continental public opinion in favor of Cuba. The backing of the journalists from the continent was unanimous: to denounce Castro's crimes at the Commission for Human Rights of the Organization of American States [OAS] (October 1961) and to put a stop to the increasing wave of shootings; to oppose, with ample reasons, the relocation of exiled Cubans, who are now, being forcibly dispersed throughout the Union, before the American Senate (6 December 1961); to offer conclusive facts regarding the nature of the established regime in Cuba, its penetration throughout the continent, its links with Soviet Russia and communist China, and the repeated breach of all human rights to the Inter-American Commission for Peace of the Organization of American States (26 December 1961), in charge of harmonizing and supporting Peru and Colombia's motions. The relationship of interviews with Continental diplomats and politicians seemed to go on forever.

d) The Honorable Dean Rusk

With the actions agreed by the Revolutionary organizations represented on the Council already under way (November and December 1961), we had a long...meeting with the Honorable Secretary of State to hear about the policy that would be advocated at the [OAS] Conference of Foreign Ministers due to take place in Punta del Este, Uruguay. In that opportunity, I was also the conveyor of a message from the University Student Directorate to the illustrious Secretary of State. After analyzing each nation's position, he put an end to the meeting in the appropriate manner with these words: "I assure you that the San Jose de Costa Rica declaration will not be repeated and I beg you to inform your people that the United States will not permit Communism to continue in Cuba. I will inform the President of your points of view this evening. He will be very pleased to know them. The three of us are in agreement, he, you and I."

e) Punta del Este (Uruguay)

We set off for Uruguay immediately. The fate of our country was discussed there. We contributed as far as we could and it was possible to unify the American [i.e. Western Hemisphere] way of thinking. The Hemisphere was in firm solidarity with the Cuba in combat and exile; the right of individual and collective legitimate defense of American nations in danger was consecrated, as well as other measures which were agreed. It was a brilliant and fruitful conference in terms of results. We returned rejoicing. A long, complicated and difficult chapter of diplomatic negotiations had been concluded in order to begin a new one: military action. Everything pointed to our being at the threshold of great achievements.

f) Richard N. Goodwin and Mac [i.e., Mc]George Bundy

On returning to Miami, after the Conference of Punta del Este closed [on 31 January 1962], we had to leave for Washington in order to make urgent efforts regarding the political prisoners, whose "status" had been unidentified by Fidel Castro, who was already planning the dubious tactic of holding trials. On that occasion Dr. Varona and I went. We had several meetings with important officials at the State Department, and principally with Mr. Richard N. Goodwin, one of the President's closest advisors. With this official, we raised various aspects of the Cuban problem, as well as the political prisoners; but in this case, he evaded the conversation. Instead of answering, he asked. His attitude, in my opinion, was in contrast to the personal assurances given to me by the Honorable President [Kennedy] in the meetings which took place on 4 May, 13 June and were confirmed in writing in a letter to me on 25 September [1961], which put an end to one of the crises I alluded to earlier and to which the "Agreement" of October, which I have referred to, formally put an end to. As Mr Goodwin was dealing with the questions about Cuba very reluctantly, I, there and then, asked for a meeting with President Kennedy.

We returned to Miami, reported to the Council and in the hope that the requested interview would be granted, we left for Washington again. Castro's announcement of the unfair and illegal trial prompted us to do this. Whilst engaging in anxious requests, which I will have to refer to immediately, I reiterated my request for Dr. Varona and myself to have an audience with the President. We were handed over to another person, Mr. Mac George [sic] Bundy. Our conversation was polite but cold. Imprecision, procrastination, vagaries. He did not commit to any opinion. The seriousness of this correct gentleman was only lifted slightly as a result of a certain expression by Dr. Varona, regarding the fate of the prisoners who were to be tried the next day, 29 March [1962]. Tremendous vigil by all those in exile! I remember having declared the following: "Prevented from fulfilling my duties as a lawyer for the men of the Brigade, I send them my most heartfelt regards. My son is amongst them. It is a privilege to suffer and die for the homeland. May God be with them."

Dr. Varona agreed with me that we should stay in Washington until the end of the trial and that I should try to have a meeting with President Kennedy. He returned to Miami. The efforts I referred to earlier continued. We approached the representative of the Nuncio S.S. in Washington, all the ambassadors, and by telegram, all the governments of the world. We were not asking for clemency. We quoted the stipulations on "prisoners of war" in the Geneva Convention, with the aim of stopping the iniquitous and illegal trial. Cuba was a signatory to the Convention. To our honor and satisfaction, the Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic, Jose Bonilla Atilles, acted as the lawyer at the Organization of American States for the Cuba or Martí [José Martí]. He worked tirelessly until he managed to get an agreement, with "the inevitable abstention of Mexico and Brazil," on a declaration in support of the proposal put forth by the Council. The United Nations, as always, was deaf to our appeals. The neutralists in the useless and prejudiced organization have a narrow outlook on human rights when they are violated by a Communist regime.

g) Robert F. Kennedy

During those days, a meeting occurred, which seemed decisive for Cuba's fate, with a person of indisputably good will and essentially executive [power]. I am referring to the Attorney General, the Honorable Robert F. Kennedy. Two journalists, true friends of Cuba, made that meeting possible, Hal Hendrix and Joe Mallin, both editors at the Miami News. I aired two subjects with Mr. Kennedy. The first, because of its urgency, was the freeing of the prisoners, an issue which until then Mr. Goodwin had disrupted or delayed. After listening to me with undivided attention and giving thought to the arguments, he promised to take charge of solving the matter. He committed himself to it with real devotion. The second regarded the problem of Cuba. I gave him a summary of the whole question and I expressed my worries about the differences I had observed between Mr. Goodwin's vagueness and the assurances of the Honorable President. He answered: "I don't know all the details, but I assure you that the President's policy has not changed." He gave me a date for a further meeting on Tuesday 10th April [1962] at 4 pm.

h) The Meeting of 10 April

After talking briefly with the Attorney General in his office on the appointed day, he invited me to accompany him to the President's house. I went, as on previous occasions, with Dr. Ernesto de Aragon. Richard N. Goodwin was there. The meeting with the President lasted one hour exactly. It was satisfactory and enlightening. During the meeting, I outlined Cuba's internal crisis, the hemispheric crisis, the crisis of a lack of trust of those exiled and the troubled position of the Council. It was not a protocol or cold meeting. We had a genuine dialogue in which he assured me emphatically, conclusively and with finality "that it was essentially a military problem of six divisions," and that the Council had to contribute the largest contingent of fighters possible; that unilateral action should not be adopted, because, in total agreement with my judgment, it would be a very serious error with continental repercussions. He listened to my opinions attentively and repeated his request that the Cubans should continue their training in the military units. When I informed him that the agreed plan was on its way to being a disaster, because of the bureaucratic delays, excessive demands of certain physical conditions, because of the limit on the agreed age and because officers had not been invited, he asked Mr. Goodwin for explanations [line missing-trans.] I answered, I have been asking, nearly daily for the fulfillment of what was agreed." With little opposition, the Honorable President dictated orders, then and there, for massive recruitment, without as many requirements and with a formal invitation to the Officers. The meeting, obviously, also covered aspects which it is not my place to reveal. He put an end to our conversation with words that I shall never forget: "Your destiny is to suffer. Do not waver. You have my support and I reiterate my pronouncements. Pass on to the Council my most cordial best wishes." I left the White House certain that the liberation of the homeland with a Cuban presence at the forefront of battle, was getting close.

i) Crisis in the Council

I went back to Miami. The atmosphere of the exiles was charged. We were attacked "for not declaring war." The crisis within the Council intensified. Absences were noticed at the session we held for me to inform them of my efforts. The councilors, fully aware of the need for discretion, did not want me to be too explicit. At Dr. Varona's request, it was agreed to approve the plans and I was given a vote of confidence to put them into effect and I was congratulated for the patriotic work I had undertaken. The internal crisis was averted but I lost the effective collaboration of nationally relevant figure at the time I most needed them. Pleas were not worthwhile.

j) General Lansdale

The sugar quota
Trip to Central America

From that moment on, under tremendous attack by the exiles in opposition, whilst the revolutionary organizations were carrying out truly brave acts, we prepared a register of possible combatants and without vetoes or exclusions, the lists of officers, within the age limits given. General [Edward] Lansdale came to Miami to discuss certain aspects of the military problem, which had no simple solution and implied inevitable delays.[1] Whilst these matters were being fleshed out, the Council defended Cuba's right to the sugar quota at the House of Representatives (25 May 1962), under the direction of Professor Arturo Manas, who I am grateful to. Afterwards, for international political reasons, I visited the nations of Central America and Panama (7 to 19 June 1962), whose unity of thought and action were due, in part, to the agreements of Punta del Este. The exiles who were there welcomed us affectionately. I met with all the presidents and ministers. President Kennedy's visit, which had just taken place, was outlined. We found the nations of the Isthmus, united, proud, in solidarity with Cuba, but powerless.

k) Recruitments. Meeting of Ministers

On our return, we had to wait a while longer, which was inevitable. But it was an intense time of meetings with Latin American diplomats. In the meantime [Soviet leader Nikita] Khrushchev was arming the island of Cuba. The clandestine organizations did a great job of providing intelligence. There were many public opinions, all contradictory, that were made about the missile bases and the presence of Russian troops. On 25 August [1962], at a press conference on the subject, we denounced the arsenal in the Antilles and the invasion of Russian troops. We asked for a naval and air blockade of the island, we alerted all the nations of the continent. At that moment a reckless action, due to its heroism, was undertaken by the Revolutionary Student Board and the Monte Cristi Association. A month later, after many conversations at the Pentagon, I was told about the massive recruitment program. I opposed some of its aspects. My objections were accepted, and on 25 September the Council made a proclamation urging Cubans of military age "without distinction of age, creed or political alliances, to put aside all the attitudes and motives which separated and divided them and to join, on mass, the ranks of the combatants." On 3 October (with all the factors adjusted in perfect synchronization), the Informal [OAS] Conference of Foreign Ministers took place [in Washington]. The proclamation made was a sign of great future events. The continent was closing ranks. I felt confident, despite criticism of the proclamation, which was described as flimsy and insignificant as was the announcement calling for recruitment. Nonetheless, the offices were filled with volunteers of all ages. Women also responded.

l) A More Important Meeting: Mr. Adan [Adam] Yarmolinsky

Invited by the "Chicago Council," I went to Chicago in the month of October, to give a talk in commemoration of the Grito de Yara [the start of Cuba's war of independence in 1868]. An appointment was made there for me to attend a meeting with important people in the city of Miami, on Sunday 14 [October] at 3 in the afternoon. The meeting took place. Mr. Adan [Adam] Yarmolinsky [a senior Pentagon aide to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara] was chairing it, with the assistance of Mr. Robert F. Hurtwich [Hurwitch], an exemplary official [Special Assistant for Cuban Affairs] from the State Department and high-ranking officials from the Pentagon. Dr. Varona, Captain Ernesto Despaigne, and I attended for the Council. The meeting which took place at the Carrillon Hotel that Sunday, lasted exactly four hours. We were asked, with unusual urgency, for a massive incorporation of all Cubans of military age, even those who were arriving every day from Cuba, "that they should join before registering at the Refuge." All matters related to the Officers (rebels, professionals and liberators) were discussed. The problem arising from the use of airmen and the

triple legal situation of the use of medics (refugees, resident and North American citizens) was examined. And the classification of "cadres" and of "civil advisers" according to whether they were professional or rebels. This delegation worked all Sunday night and early Monday morning. Those recruited to Fort Knox were undergoing intense training. The crisis was imminent. We were eight days from 22 October. I was reassured by the approach that it had been the right way ahead. I was tormented by one preoccupation: the situation of the political prisoners, but I worked harder than ever. We discussed the situation with the revolutionary organizations of the Council who alerted, with no indiscretions, their fighting cadres in Cuba. The Economic Corporations worked at a fast pace in the next twelve months to ensure Cuban supplies. They worked extremely discreetly, as the Miami pessimists continued to dole out their unrelenting criticism.

m) 22 October 1962

The 22nd of October arrived. I was informed in good time of the content of the Proclamation that the Honorable President was to make public at six [sic; seven] in the evening. The free world resonated with enthusiasm at President Kennedy's Proclamation. Nations of abstention, neutrality, and indifference aligned themselves with the United States. There were many who mobilized their forces. The Cubans at Fort Knox were on the alert, impatient for action. I made all the necessary arrangements. The Council declared itself to be in permanent session and its members in their designated places. We waited. The 23rd and 24th were days of unbearable tension. At four o'clock in the afternoon of that day of the 24th, aware of the course of events, I was told "that the circumstances varied, but not the aim and that the planned course of action was delayed for a short time." Khrushchev was negotiating. I warned that delaying tactics were being employed, which favored the Soviet and his Caribbean commissar. The agreed date arrived, the "quarantine," that is to say the blockade, was lifted. Public spirit fell. This produced a negative reception at Fort Knox. A wave of disaffection started in an impressive way. Mistrust was being reignited in force and defeatism spread. All arguments put forward to halt it were useless.

n) The Return of the Combatants; Orange Bowl

Another intensely dramatic event rekindled the lost confidence. I am referring to the return [in December 1962] of Bay of Pigs combatants, whose fighting spirit could not be broken by two years in prison. Those who did not return, those who succumbed in the battlefield, were present in their absence. The survivors returned with their slogan: that of returning, with decorum, to save Cuba. That moving event was followed by another of great political importance. I am referring to the President Kennedy's presence at the Orange Bowl proceedings [in Miami on 29 December 1962]. Before those men, punished by lead, he made statements of unequivocal alliance, as he picked up the flag of the Brigade. The leader of Democracy spoke and he spoke as leader. His words were vibrant, strong, decisive, and binding. He reiterated his commitment to Cuba before the world. In that way he confirmed what President Villeda Morales had said before, in the City of Miami after having had a meeting with the President in Washington: "Soon, very soon, Cuba will be liberated."

III

The Current Situation

After that, three more months have transpired with despairingly slow progress. During this time, [in answer to continuous requests] I have received the same assurances given to me beforehand. However, there have been events that obviously contradict them. Such as: 1) the continued change of positions with the corresponding surrender of points of view that the United States had excessively emphasized. I refer to: a) the direct inspection of terrain, put forward as a indomitable

question and compromised by the United States after the mediation of U Than [sic; U Thant] and Mikoyan's [sic; Mikoyan's] mysterious visit to Cuba; b) the withdrawal of Russian soldiers - not Agricultural technicians whose number exceeds 20,000, as the Cuban underground has informed - to which a specific date was fixed for evacuation, but which was not able to be realized, [even though] the United States [with its] science and patience, should know already that Khrushchev will change his strategy and battle tactics in a continuous way, a thousand times if necessary, in the pursuit of his objectives. For communism, "the word of honor is nothing more than this; a word." Honor, for them, is a naïve bourgeois prejudice. 2) the inaction that revolutionary organizations have been forced into. These two things persuaded me to put together summary memorandums (14 February and 28 March) for the Office of Coordination established in Miami after 22 October [just] past and that will be made known at a proper time.

Commando actions ['Las acciones comando']

Having issued the Memorandums I have referred to (I have not received an answer to the first of these) two commando actions were carried out by groups of Cubans (not North Americans) against Russian vessels (not American) out of the territorial waters of this country. As a consequence of these six things happened at breakneck pace, that I list as follows:

The illuminating Russian note of protest that warned the United States that it had violated agreements.

The note from the Department of State "condemning Cuban actions that had been carried out," which contradicts the Joint Resolution of Congress in September 1962. It is significant that the action carried out by the Revolutionary Student Directorate and the Monte Cristi group before 22 October [1962], did not receive the same condemnation.

Castro's attack on a North American vessel. Fidel Castro suspiciously suddenly observes - now! - formal diplomatic courtesies and offers excuses that are accepted. Before the broken agreement that Russia referred to in the note that we have made reference to [in point 1], Fidel Castro shot down [on 27 October 1962] an airplane that the unfortunate [US Major] Rudolph Anderson piloted, without any reprisals and it has tirelessly undertaken piratical actions, of real international delinquency, such as the continued robbery of airplanes, the attacks on North American fishing boats, the kidnapping of ten Cubans that live in a Key, far from the territorial waters of Cuba and the United States, the violation of law adding to his habitual insolence. Of course, he did not give explanations.

The categorical order that has been communicated to various compatriots confining them to [Florida's] Dade County.

The embargo on Cuban vessels, two of which belong to the Organizations of the Revolutionary Council, to immobilize them and, finally,

The strangest and most disconcerting of all the measures adopted: the warning to England for it to stop or pursue in each case, Cuban combatants that sail in territorial waters of its American possessions. In this way Fidel Castro [page cut off-trans.] Khrushchev's most sinister designs protected by the most efficient maritime police of the two most democratic powers in the world.

Critical analysis of the adopted measures

Wracked by uncertainty, I have thought about three reasons for the adopted measures. They are the following:

These measures are justified by the need to mask actions of an immediate warlike character with ones of apparent ostensible friendship. I discarded this, because in this case 240 Cuban patriots who had completed their period of training would have been held back in Fort Jackson. They told me in Washington that, despite my opposition, they would be graduates in a few days [i.e. not retained for immediate action];

The agreed measures are perhaps related to the fact that Cuban actions compromise a far-reaching strategy. I discarded this reason as well because, in accordance with what was agreed, I should have been previously informed, a condition that was adhered to by cable on 22 October 1962.

The agreed measures are probably due to not wanting to interrupt the prolonged process of evacuation of the Russian technicians (that comprise more than a division of soldiers of a Soviet army) or the freeing of North American prisoners. This did not satisfy me either, as the argument was contradictory. The reason is evident: On 22 October the Russian soldiers were to be found in Cuba, and North American and Cuban citizens in prison were freed a long time after this.

Faced with all the arguments the force of events leads to this conclusion: the Cuban struggle is in the process of being liquidated by the government [of the United States]. This conclusion appears confirmed, very forcefully confirmed, by the warning that every refugee has received with their monthly subsidy, forcing them to relocate. In its final part, it says: "Each Cuban refugee carries with them [i.e., him/her] a message of the real Cuban spirit, their love of freedom and longing to convert the sadness of leaving their homeland into the inspiration to prepare themselves for a brilliant future in the land of freedom." This provision that signals a brilliant future to Cubans in a Nation that is not their own, is not autonomous. I want to say that it is prepared by the Office of Coordination that, after 22 October, controls all, absolutely all, activities in relation with Cuba.

c) The trip to Washington

I left for Washington filled with intense anguish. My mood in these moments became known to a journalist friend of mine whom I respect and admire: Howard Handelman, editor of the magazine, "US News and World Report." "I am going, I said, to request that they revoke the orders issued against the brave expeditionaries and, principally, in search of clearing up grey areas in my thoughts." In the capital, free of the pressure that the ideas I had come up with had been agitating me over the course of 48 hours in Miami, after a serene analysis, I adopted, in principal, the decision that I am making known today. I made it conditional, however, on the result of my meetings. My frame of mind was permeable to the slightest argument in which they might offer me the minimum sense of security. The future Cuba was in dispute.

The Meetings in Washington

The answers that I hoped for to all the questions I raised, very calmly, but with real passion, did not alleviate the doubts that the United States had caused me to have. When I did not manage to get the necessary definitions, even though after 17 April 1961 they had promised to discuss with me before any change of policy they were considering, my doubts were confirmed. All the circumstances that I have made reference to, by themselves constitute a series of rational indications, vehement indications, that lead, in an inevitable way to the following conclusions:

[e]) Conclusions

First: The United States of America has been the victim of a masterful Russian game. With the scarecrow [espantajo] of installing missile bases, that necessarily had to be photographed and quickly accepting to withdraw them, at the first demand, Khrushchev proposed pacts that did not need to be agreed to and achieved his immediate objectives: a) to retain his barracks for attack and subversion in the Caribbean; b) strengthen the military capabilities of Fidel Castro to destroy the first attempt at insurrection; and c) consolidate the Communist Regime in [Latin] America, [through] the first step for peaceful coexistence, the immobilization of the United States and with the United States the rest of the Continent, [which is] as disappointed as the Cuban patriots and as bewildered as them with respect to the future.

Second: With the United States immobilized, Cuba became entrenched in the strange twists and turns of a willing psychological war between the two great powers of the world, [as a result of which] it has become necessary to also immobilize Cuban patriots, in an obscure agreement.

Third: Cuba, heroic and martyred, shattered and hungry, has been used as a bargaining chip, despite the Monroe Doctrine, the "Joint Resolution" of 1898, the Rio de Janeiro [Inter-American] Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, the agreements of the Organization of American States, the Punta del Este Resolutions, the sovereign will of this nation expressed in the Resolution of Congress in September 1962 and the repeated offers of cooperation I have received.

Fourth: The Office of Coordination for Cuban Affairs, recently created and with headquarters in Miami, implementing a rapid liquidation of the Cuban process that is reflected, among other things, in the following facts:

the speedy relocation, outright dispersal of Cubans

the effort to stop at all costs the establishment, although transitory, of revolutionary Cuban bases of operation outside the Union's territory and its territorial waters

the persecution of revolutionaries in the ways I have outlined already, committed now to inquisitive interrogations

IV

General Considerations

These are, in grim reality, the facts. The repeatedly expressed assurances, the constantly renewed promises, have been suddenly broken, without notice - and without signaling new paths. Until today, I was encouraged, not by optimism without any basis, but rather by a rational feeling of security that Cuba would be liberated soon as a result of joint action by Cuban and North American forces with the unlimited support, moral and material, of the majority of the nations in the Hemisphere. But a violent and unexpected shift in the policy of the United States government has taken place - as dangerous and sudden as another previous one of sad recollection, that does not have any other reasonable explanation than the deal that refers to Russia's protest against Cuban action. It is necessary to understand this fact well: the attack on the Russian vessel was not carried out by North American forces nor in territorial waters of that country. Such a deal should be condemned with total vehemence, not only by the Cubans but by all free men of the Continent. No power can change the fate of our Homeland, because our freedom cannot be an object of negotiation.

Faced with this unexpected situation that destroys the patient work of the two years

that I have been overseeing it in a minute, with the Council's total trust in me, I am left with no alternative but to resign the thorniest position that I have held. More so that my conduct can be judged fully throughout this long, interminable process that ends in distressing frustration, I should express the principles here in this instance that, in the midst of many compromises, I have rigidly upheld in the course of these two years.

a) The Alliance for Progress

First: I have maintained and I maintain that the "Latin American experts" do not sense the imminence of disaster for the whole Continent. They guarantee that the Alliance for Progress alone is the panacea for all the social ills of the common homeland. It is certainly a generous and necessary effort, whose success, in my opinion is conditional, on the eradication of the Cuban Communist Regime.

b) Isolation and the Economic Blockade

Second: I have maintained and I maintain that this is has a criminal purpose - [sentence missing-trans.] the economic asphyxiation that is exerted through a total embargo, prolonging "without end" ["sine die"] the martyrdom of a people that has reached intolerable limits of its resistance to provoke an internal rebellion, can not be justified if the moment when it will end is not predetermined. To promote or attempt an insurrectional movement determined by desperation without coordinating it with warlike actions projected from abroad, among a population dominated by terror, will lead: 1) to rewriting the bleak story of Budapest [i.e. the Soviet crushing of the Hungarian revolt in 1956-ed.]; 2) to creating the myth of the invincibility of Fidel Castro; and 3) to bringing about negotiations for a coexistence that America has just condemned.

c) Feared World War and Permanent Revolution

Third: I have maintained and maintain that Khrushchev will not trigger a world war, due to the presence of North American troops combined with the efforts of Cuban combatants. Geographically, Cuba is outside the Soviet sphere of influence. Khrushchev will not provoke armed conflict. He showed this last 22 October. To the contrary, protected by his policy of threats, his hold over local communists in different parts of the Hemisphere will grow, day by day, and he will continue to extend his frontiers in [Latin] America. Permanent revolution is his objective. Venezuela is already burning thanks to Castro's decision, Colombia is burning thanks to Castro's decision, the convulsion in Argentina is consistent, and Marxist ferment in all other nations is a frightening sign of great cataclysms.

d) Cuba Outside the Regional System

Fourth: I have been opposed and I oppose the idea that the problem of Cuba is separated from the regional system and situated within a global strategy that leads the Comintern of imperial Russia towards achieving its unceasing hegemonic purpose. Cuba is essentially a regional problem. To isolate it from the American [i.e. hemispheric-trans.] community so that eventually, on any day of an uncertain year, Cuba's fate is unilaterally decided, is totally unacceptable for the decency of those of us that are proposing an honorable alliance. This would mean the nation's sovereignty would be devastatingly shipwrecked. I will never accept the idea of receiving an occupied island as a favor with attached conditions.

The alliance with the United States

Fifth: I have said and reiterated that the Cuban-North American alliance is justified by reasons that have deep historical roots and brings together the vital, permanent, and reciprocal interests of both peoples perfectly: a) the Independence of Cuba and, b) the security of this nation, aspects that provide the tone and inform the political content of the Joint Resolution of 21 April 1898. "Cuba is and has the right to be free and independent," the legislative power of this nation [the United States] said on this historic occasion. By virtue of the "rough riders" under the leadership of "Teddy Roosevelt["] and the Mambises [the term used for Cubans who fought for independence-trans.] under the orders of Major General Calixto García they fought together in the hills of San Juan and put an end to Spanish power in America. This declaration is continuous. It is valid. Today our country has been converted into a Soviet province and the security of the United States is being threatened by a communist fortress in the Caribbean.

f) Our reiterated standpoints

Sixth: For the reasons outlined above and many others that could be added I have favored the alliance with the United States so that it is understood, with very good reason, that Cuba should be helped by the whole hemisphere. This obligation corresponds equally to all nations in the Continent because the survival of the essential values of man and of western civilization are being contested in these moments in Cuba: God, homeland, and family; as are as a consequence invaluable assets such as: democracy, independence, freedom, justice, and social well-being. The battle that Cuban patriotism is upholding is far more profound than the insurrection of a people against a typical [Latin] American dictatorship. It is a battle against a new phenomenon in America: the installation of a Communist Regime that demands everyone's assistance to destroy. This is what the unavoidable fulfillment of treaties demands.

f) Interventionism

Seventh: I am opposed to any type of intervention in the internal political affairs of another country when, as occurred in the past, the intervention is undertaken in favor of the intervening power. But in the Cuban crisis a completely reversed situation has arisen. With an extra-continental power having intervened evidently in our Homeland, the Rio de Janeiro Treaty [Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance] and other international instruments demand collective hemispheric action to put an end to this intervention. These instruments specifically state that this type of action does not constitute intervention.

Holocaust

Eighth: I have said and exhaustively repeated that we aim to raise, through joint effort, a monument to Victory, not an obelisk to martyrdom. As a result, in a constant way, with absolute clarity, I have suggested coexistence once again, the necessity of establishing an alliance on basis of mutual respect for a joint military action. This assumes "coordination of all forces" and "Cuban presence in the direction and execution of the plans that are agreed". To clarify my thinking: we are asking for coordination, we offer collaboration, but we will not allow Cuba to be excluded from the process. Our proposal was rejected in this opportunity. So we demanded, another time again, that we be given an analogous warlike capability to the one that Fidel Castro receives from the Soviet Union, so as to win a battle alone or succumb to a Holocaust together. The result was as sharp no. They closed all the doors. They have inexplicitly shut off our alliance from 1898.

V Final [Conclusion]

With the principles that have shaped my conduct in this process made clear I should say, so that it is known, not now by the Council, but rather by all compatriots, that after my last conversations in Washington, I can not believe in words that they outline, without defining, confused prospects for an imprecise and far-off liberation, denied by objective facts in the present. Dominated by the specter of uncertainty and the having lost trust in the realization of offered assurances, I cannot continue in the position of chair of the Council.

Cuba, however, cannot be delayed in its struggle. Today it needs, more than ever, all its forces to make the Homeland that its founders wanted a historic reality. The Revolutionary Council - that has offered exceptional work without publicity worthy of everyone's gratitude and that will be known in good time - should close ranks and confront adversity, as always, with resolve; examine the current reality with calm objectivity; study developing politics in relation to Cuba, Latin America, and the United States and continue the harsh road [ahead]. The sources of Cuban patriotism are inexhaustible, as inexhaustible as its moral reserves. God help everyone on this new journey!

I leave this post with the hope that another Cuban will be appointed who, with the same love for his homeland but with more capacity and more ability than I, can achieve better auspices in the struggle that we are committed to. I leave this post, I repeat, but I do not desert the ranks. I will continue fighting as I have done until today, without measuring the hours, until I destroy Fidel Castro and his dishonorable regime if, by the will of God, something does not happen beforehand to rescue us from all our anguish and suffering.

Miami, Tuesday 9 April 1963

José Miró Cardona

[2] Ed. note: Gen. Landsdale had been put in charge of the CIA's "Operation Mongoose" program of covert operations against Cuba in 1961.