

THE JOURNEY OF PRIME MINISTER FIDEL CASTRO.../ ONE
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PRENSA LATINA FEATURE.

THERE WAS A TIME, LESS THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, WHEN AFRICA AND EUROPE MEANT EXILE TO CUBANS WHO STRUGGLED FOR THEIR COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE AGAINST SPAIN.

THERE WAS A TIME, LESS THAN TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN ALL AFRICA SUFFERED UNDER DIRECT COLONIAL RULE.

THERE WAS A TIME, LESS THAN FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN ALL SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WERE ANATHEMA TO THE CUBA GOVERNMENT.

THERE WAS A TIME, LESS THAN A DOZEN YEARS AGO, WHEN CUBA, UNDER A NEW REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT, BEGAN A NEW ERA OF FRATERNAL RELATIONS WITH THIRD WORLD NATIONS THAT HAD BEEN OR WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR NATIONAL LIBERATION AND WITH THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES OF EUROPE AND ASIA.

SEEN AS A TIME SEQUENCE, EACH OF THESE SPOT CHECKS ON HISTORY HELPS US TO SEE, IN PERSPECTIVE, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRIME MINISTER FIDEL CASTRO'S JOURNEY THROUGH LANDS OF AFRICA AND EUROPE. HIS TRIP IS THE FULLEST EXPRESSION OF A CHANGED WORLD-A CHANGED AFRICA, A CHANGED EUROPE AND A CHANGED LATIN AMERICA.

IF ONE SOUGHT A SINGLE WORD TO SUM UP THE MEANING OF FIDEL CASTRO'S TOUR ONE WOULD BE HARDPUT TO FIND A BETTER WORD THAN: "SOLIDARITY".

THE JOURNEY OF PRIMER MINISTER FIDEL CASTRO.../ TWO
DURING THE TRIP THIS SOLIDARITY OF PROGRESSIVE HUMANITY
WAS EXPRESSED IN A THOUSAND OCCASIONS ON THE MOST DRAMATIC QUESTION
FACING THE WORLD TODAY: VIET NAM. ONE JOURNALIST, WHO TRAVE-
LLED WITH FIDEL CASTRO'S PARTY, COMMENTED THAT THE CUBAN
PRIME MINISTER MADE HIS TOUR WAVING TWO FLAGS: THAT OF CUBA
AND THAT OF VIET NAM. HE WAS REFERRING TO THE FACT THAT ON
EACH AND EVERY DAY OF THE MONTHS LONG TRIP, FIDEL CASTRO SPO-
KE ABOUT THE STRUGGLE OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND OF THE GE-
NOCIDAL POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

EVERY OFFICIAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE, SIGNED ON THE LAST DAY
OF HIS TRIP IN EACH COUNTRY, THUS FOR VIET NAM, CARRIED THE
MESSAGE OF FIGHTING VIET NAM. THE COMMUNIQUES SIGNED BY THE
CUBAN LEADER AND THE LEADERS OF GUINEA AND ALGERIA IN AFRICA,
AND BULGARIA, RUMANIA AND HUNGARY, IN EUROPE, HAVE INSISTED
ON THE "UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNITED STATES FROM
VIET NAM."

THE JOINT COMMUNIQUES ALSO EXPRESSED SOLIDARITY FOR OTHER
PEOPLES STRUGGLES ON OTHER CONTINENTS. THE FIGHT OF THE PEOP-
PLE OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES IN GUINEA-BISSAU, CAPE VERDE,
ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE WAS MENTIONED IN ALL OF THEM. SO WAS
THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA AGAINST
APARTHEID AND FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE.

THE JOURNEY OF PRIME MINISTER FIDEL CASTRO.../ THREE
EACH JOINT COMMUNIQUE ALSO INCLUDED WORDS OF SOLIDARITY
FOR THE POPULAR FRONT GOVERNMENT OF CHILE WHICH IS FIGHTING
UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES TO BRING ABOUT A PROFOUND SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN THAT COUNTRY.

THE COUNTRIES WHICH FIDEL CASTRO VISITED WERE IN THEMSEL-
VES INDICATIONS OF WHERE THE SENTIMENTS OF THE CUBAN REVOLU-
TION LIE. GUINEA AND ALGERIA IN AFRICA, LIKE CUBA,
COUNTRIES THAT HAVE WON THEIR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE SINCE WORLD
WAR TWO, HAVE BOTH ESTABLISHED SOLID TIES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH
THE CARIBBEAN ISLE. BOTH, LIKE CUBA, HAVE CHALLENGED THE
TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THE METROPOLI AND
WITHIN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES. BOTH HAVE PROCLAIMED A SOCIALIST
ROAD OF CONSTRUCTION.

THE TOUR WHICH FIDEL CASTRO IS MAKING OF THE COUNTRIES
OF THE SOCIALIST BLOC IN EUROPE WAS ONE MORE INDICATION OF
CUBA'S CLOSE TIES WITH THOSE COUNTRIES. HE LOST NO OPPORTUNI-
TY TO EXPRESS HIS GRATITUDE TO THESE PEOPLES FOR THEIR
TECHNICAL AND MATERIAL AID TO THE CUBAN REVOLUTION AND FOR
THEIR MORAL, POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT OVER THE PAST
DOZEN YEARS.

THE JOURNEY OF PRIMER MINISTER.../ FOUR AND FINAL

THE TOUR OF FIDEL CASTRO REPRESENTED A HIGH POINT IN STATE TO STATE, GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT AND PARTY TO PARTY RELATIONS. JUST AS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, AND INSEPARABLE FROM THE OTHERS, WAS THE "PEOPLE TO PEOPLE" ASPECT OF THE VISITS. CASTRO, AS WAS EXPECTED FROM THE PROTOCOL OF FORMAL AND RESERVED RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC. WHENEVER THE POSSIBILITIY PRESENTED ITSELF, HE WAS AMONG THE PEOPLE, TALKING TO THEM THROUGH HIS EVER-PRESENT INTERPRETERS.

THE CUBAN PRIME MINISTER DID MANY THINGS THAT ENDARDED HIM TO THE PEOPLE. IN GUINEA HE DRESSED IN THE TRADITIONAL GARB OF THE COUNTRY AND IN POLAND HE PUT ON THE TRADITIONAL UNIFORM OF THE SILESIAN MINERS. HE LEANED ON TRACTORS AND CARRIED ON A CONVERSATION WITH A WORKERS.

HE INVITED BYSTANDERS WHO HAD COME TO GREET HIM TO SIT DOWN, HAVE REFRESHMENTS AND CHAT. AT MONUMENTS TO UNKNOWN SOLDIERS, IN CEMETERIES, AT THE INFAMOUS MUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP, FIDEL CASTRO EXPRESSED THE DEEP FEELING OF HUMAN SOLIDARITY HE FELT WITH THE VICTIMS AND HEROES OF THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM.

WHEREVER FIDEL CASTRO HAS GONE DURING HIS TRIP, HE WAS ACCLAIMED BY TENS AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. FEW POLITICAL FIGURES IN THE WORLD TODAY COULD EXPECT SUCH GREETINGS IN FOREIGN LANDS.

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