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On Stokely Carmichael's Visit
to Cuba

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Two full pages of the August 17 edition of Granma, official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, were devoted to a verbatim account of a panel discussion in which well-known Cuban figures and visiting Wilfred Burchett, Guardian Special Correspondent, analyzed the history and prospects of the black people's struggle in the United States.

In the month prior to the meeting the Cuban people became acquainted, as never before, with the struggle of Black America. This new consciousness was in large part brought about by the recent visit of Stokely Carmichael to Cuba. His declarations in Havana and Fidel Castro's praise and support of the young leader, have made Carmichael a symbol to the Cuban people of the American black people's determination to fight for their liberty.

Only one week before, at the closing session of the First Conference of the Latin American Organization of Solidarity (OLAS) Prime Minister Fidel Castro had declared: "The revolutionary government everywhere ought to give Stokely the maximum support, as a protection against reprisals by the imperialists, so that they know that any attempt against his life will have profound repercussions in the world."

Orlando Strobel, president of the Cuban Young Communist League

movements with whom I have talked, to have historic significance for its ^{inter}nationalist and revolutionary implications (see complete text). One of them hoped that the importance of the statement would not be underestimated by American radicals and that it would be seriously studied. Carrasquillo's emphasis on armed revolutionary struggle dovetails with the conclusions, in reference to Latin America, of the General Declaration of the First Latin American Conference of solidarity which proclaims guerrilla warfare as the principal form of struggle of the oppressed nations of Latin America.

Cuba generally understood that, as Fidel Castro has stated, from the Negro population "will arise the revolutionary vanguard in the United States." However, some express concern over the lack of Negro-white unity in the American radical movement inasmuch as they realized a decisive role in their country's liberation struggle. Jaime Crochot stressed this point at Havana's big solidarity rally:

"Our people know that long before the triumph of our Independence

we (1958 - 1964) had already begun our liberation struggle

because we had the same enemy and the same goals as all the peoples of the Americas

and we know that even today, when we are free, we are not

free. We are still oppressed by the same enemy, the same color of the skin. What

counts is a man's moral values, man's revolutionary mettle, whether he be white, black or any other color. The important thing is whether a man is revolutionary, loves his country and the oppressed, or whether he is a lackey, a coward, a traitor or an imperialist."

Viet Nam that same day brought a storm of applause. Seated on the tribune were the Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, Ngo Mau, and the first secretary of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front Mission, Van Ba. Interestingly enough, the entire week of events was organized by the Cuban Solidarity Committee with Viet Nam whose president is Melba Hernandez.

The head of Cuba's Young Communists issued a call "in the name of our people ... to all revolutionaries in the world, to all honest men, to declare their solidarity with the Negro people of the United States and to raise their voices to guarantee respect for the life of the men who fight only to make their people free."

Following Crombet's speech, the Cuban documentary picture "Now" with the voice of Lena Horne was projected on a huge outdoor screen. Also shown was a film of Carmichael speaking to a crowd in Mississippi. Barbara Dane, in Cuba for the International Protest Song Festival, sang several numbers. A group of Cuban balladeers sang improvised verses about the struggle of America's black people.

One day before the mass meeting, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Watts uprising, a ~~written~~ statement written by Stokely Carmichael was released here by the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OASAL). The statement is considered by representatives of pop