tionary lacking this quality. Perhaps it is one of the great dramas of the leader that he must combine a passionate spirit with a cold intelligence and make painful decisions without flinching. Our vanguard revolutionaries must make an ideal of this love of the people, of the most sacred causes, and make it one and indivisible. They cannot descend, with small doses of daily affection, to the level where ordinary men put their love into practice.

The leaders of the revolution have children just beginning to talk, who are not learning to say “daddy.” They have wives who must be part of the general sacrifice of their lives in order to take the revolution to its destiny. The circle of their friends is limited strictly to the circle of comrades in the revolution. There is no life outside of it.

In these circumstances one must have a big dose of humanity, a big dose of a sense of justice and truth in order not to fall into dogmatic extremes, into cold scholasticism, into an isolation from the masses. We must strive every day so that this love of living humanity is transformed into actual deeds, into acts that serve as examples, as a moving force.

The revolutionary, the ideological motor force of the revolution within his party, is consumed by this uninterrupted activity that comes to an end only with death, unless the construction of socialism is accomplished on a world scale. If his revolutionary zeal is blunted when the most urgent tasks have been accomplished on a local scale and he forgets about proletarian internationalism, the revolution he leads will cease to be a driving force and sink into a comfortable drowsiness that imperialism, our irreconcilable enemy, will utilize to gain ground. Proletarian internationalism is a duty, but it is also a revolutionary necessity. This is the way we educate our people.

TRANSLATOR UNKNOWN

Note

know the little Guayabo River on the way to Los Pinares?—whose water is still pure and delicious, right near there I saw a caoba cut down, so large I thought it would take ten men to embrace it. Old man, I asked my father, why did they cut it down when this little arroyo does not get sufficient water in spring to float it? And my old man explained that they could quarter it and if it still did not move, they could slice it again. Do you know what I think such a tree would be worth now? I would say ten to twelve thousand pesos.

Those were the days when people were run off their own lands—though they had papers dating back to colonial days to show it was theirs—because corrupt officials would sell the land to La United. They began their measurements of huge tracts with just a millimeter off at the start, but when the line was extended to a distance that little millimeter widened out to become whole towns and farms. You may ask yourself what a pass we had come to that eventually we had to beg La United for a tiny bit of land to have a cemetery. It was these things that made me have a certain view of life.

I have always had ideas that have put me in the left wing, not Communist, you know, but left wing. I am what you could call a tame left-winger, for I have always known that what makes men is economic and political interests and passions of the heart, and that it is no use intervening in these factors. What do men seek but to dominate others and impose their wills? And I have known that it is futile to come between men and these aspirations. I have always wanted peace and reasonable fraternity between men, an end to those interests which create injustices. This was but a foolishness of mine, for it could not be.

Yet listen to how, being a tame leftist, I came to a laughable pass. I had been an alzado, a rebel, here in 1918, another foolishness, for there was no difference between the group in power and the group out of power; but some of us took to the monte in rebellion, not knowing that these were two bourgeois parties, whose differences were simply the different personal ambitions of the leaders. I did not know this then, I learned it later with the Revolution—the Revolution has taught Cubans many things. Cubans have never liked to work, for example, because we have always seen that to get ahead or to gain this or that you do not work; you do it through friends, never through sustained study or work but always by the proper cultivation of friendships and politicking.

It was not difficult to see this because men, by and large, speak what is on their souls. Sometimes they repeat what they have heard or what they think you want to hear, but in the main, men say what is on their hearts. And so it was, listening to men, that I thought all this will never end: it will always be these interests which will rule men. That is what I was like with my first experience of revolution and with the machadato in the twenties and again in 1933 and then with Grau and Batista. Why should I hope?

The Revolution triumphed here, and during the first months I said to myself, It is the same thing: so-and-so wanted to be mayor, and the judges were still the same ones who had been selling themselves, and all the same people were scurrying around to maintain their positions or change to another, for there were a lot of vacancies. And the time passed and before I noticed it, very intransigent things happened. The Revolution said to La United, You have to go, I say you have to go and you will go, man. And so it happened. La United went—incredible!

And Cubans who do not like to work go off in droves to cut cane for nothing, 50 percent real volunteers full of enthusiasm and 50 percent—well, they go, carried along by the others and catching some of their enthusiasm for the while. For it is wonderful how the government does this. It does not grab anyone and say, Here, you have to cut cane. Oh no, for no one is forced anymore. They go instead to a work center and say, It is our hope and need that three or four here will go cut cane. They say this to someone who is responsible, and they are the ones who by psychology and their own enthusiasm find three or four and even more to go.

So it was that three years ago I suddenly came to this laughable pass that all the things I had learned in a lifetime were superseded. There is a real revolution, and those woods will never again be cut down and shipped away to make money for someone else. Of course they are not there, you cannot replace that fine wood in a short time—it was the work of centuries—but they are planting everywhere and scientifically, and the pines and the fruit trees grow faster and bear sooner. See those houses behind you, old and crooked like me, they are going to be cut down and there will be a malecón [broad sidewalk or esplanade along seawall] to walk on and look at the view!

"I know what you are going to say," I said to Dr. Morales when we had left Felix Estol. "You are going to say that Mayari has a reason for coming into being, but none for existing under socialism, right?"

"Right," he said.