

Reflections by Comrade Fidel

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

Part I

On Tuesday, September 21, at 9 a.m., I met with over 600 passengers of the Peace Boat, most of them Japanese, including a survivor of the mass murders carried out in Hiroshima; she was two years old when the event occurred.

Cuban national television broadcast the meeting, but since we had no simultaneous interpretation in the Convention Center's conference room, the voices of interpreters, who had the difficult task, overlapped with my words. So I have decided to write a reflection on this subject.

I took advantage of the opportunity to reduce the length of what I expressed and to put my ideas in better order while absolutely maintaining the same contents.

I have kept the full statements of the people who participated in the meeting. Despite my efforts, the Reflection was long, since the meeting lasted for two and a half hours, so I decided to divide it into three parts, which will be published on consecutive days.

The meeting opened with an address by Kenia Serrano, president of the Cuban Friendship Institute:

Good Morning.

On September 3, the director of the NGO Peace Boat, Mr. Yoshioka Tatsuya, sent our Commander in Chief a letter asking him to meet with the directives of the Peace Boat and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivor who was on board; the Commander in Chief accepted, and with pleasure he also invited a large group of the passengers to the meeting.

We are gathered here today, September 21, a day declared World Peace Day by the United Nations, and of course with the participation of our beloved Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, which is memorable for us. (Applause).

Presiding over our meeting are Mr. Nao Inoue, director of this voyage of the Peace Boat (Applause); Ms. Matsumi Matsumura, also part of the Peace Boat staff, who will help us interpret into Spanish what it is going to be said in this meeting (Applause); Ms. Junko Watanabe, member of the Hibakusha Movement and survivor of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and Professor Susana Garcia, from the University of Havana, who will also facilitate the dialog by interpreting into Japanese as you can see (Applause).

Comandante...

Cmdte.- What, is it my time to give a speech?

Kenia Serrano.- Your greetings, since we all are waiting for that.

Cmdte.- No, I came to give answers, that is the truth. I asked what I should do and was not told anything.

In fact I want, in the first place, to thank you for the honor that this meeting entails.

I was sort of absent as you may know. I read the newspapers; but I have missed many of your meetings although I head about them later in detail. I have already learned a lot about you: the number of times you have been in Cuba. You first came in 1990, then you came back in 1995, 1997 and 1998; you came twice in 2000, 2001 and 2002; then again in 2005, 2007 and 2009, and today; so I understand you have made 14 trips.

Well, when I received the invitation, I was happy to exchange views with you due to the significance of the moment we are now living, which is not just any moment. I also had a feeling of gratitude, because I know about your solidarity through the years; the difficulties, the struggle against blockades, the identity and nationality of the boat itself, the harbors that you were allowed or not allowed to visit, if they would provide you with fuel or not, and other stupid things similar to those made by our main adversary, whose methods will never lead to a world of understanding and peace on our planet.

Now as to your slogan, which, in my view has very special value —“Learn from past wars to build a future of peace”—, and will always have meaning, at this moment it is

more relevant than ever. I would dare say, without fear of making a mistake, that there was never such a dangerous moment in the history of humanity. So, this is not just a simple trip; it is a real, serious struggle, and this I am saying can be proven. I hope that during our meeting we will discuss ideas and strategies that could be implemented; realistic solutions and not only the simple expression of noble wishes.

This meeting has great significance for me, particularly for the experience you have gained in this issue.

Over the past few days, we marked one more anniversary of that brutal and unwonted event, in which nuclear weapons were launched for the first time on peaceful cities.

What happened in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 was very much remembered around the world. I had just graduated from high school, I remember that. It was summer and I was visiting Santiago de Cuba when we heard the news. Nobody had the slightest idea that such weapons existed, and then, three days later I think, they launched the second atomic bomb.

I can talk more about that later, about the feeling I experienced and the concept I held throughout my life about that event; but this is an example of those things that help raise awareness, because the picture of everything that happened there and the human tragedy inflicted, despite the passing of time, would again move the world public opinion. I do not think that there was anything more revealing of what war really is.

Well, I think I have used up much of your time for my first words, we would like to listen to you. I am willing to answer any questions you want to ask me. I have no secrets of any kind, any subject can be addressed.

I'd like to ask our translator how she has been doing. You, you (laughs and applause).

Intepreter.- Fine, I think, just fine, Comandante.

Cmdte.- Very good.

Kenia Serrano.- Thanks, Comandante.

Mr. Nao Inoue, please.

Nao Inoue.- Good Morning! (exclamations: "Good Morning!")

First of all, I'd like to express our deepest appreciation for the fact that you welcome us on this occasion.

My name is Nao Inoue, director of Edition 70 of the cruise boat. I want to say some words on behalf of all Peace Boat members.

It seems you know a lot about our organization. We founded this organization in 1983, more than 27 years ago. We have thus far taken 70 cruises around the world with more than 40,000 Japanese people.

As you know, we have made 14 trips to Cuba and this is a very important year for us, because we mark our 20th anniversary; that is why it has been so important for us to have met you in person, Comandante.

Over the past 20 years, we have made our best efforts to be a bridge between the Cuban and the Japanese people, and we have always rejected the unjust [US] blockade, which is unfair indeed.

We think that it is very important to maintain this bridge, not only between the Cuban and the Japanese people, the two of them, but to also reach out to the other Latin American and Asian countries. The reason we want to work hard in this direction is because we want to build a world of peace, sustainable and led by Cuba. We are now beginning to strengthen friendly relations with Venezuela, Ecuador and Nicaragua. Out of these countries, Cuba is where we have visited the most. We will also meet with Nicaragua's president, Daniel Ortega.

In order to strengthen friendly and fraternal links between the ALBA countries and Japan, we are now implementing a project known as the ALBA Youth Cruise, to which we invite the youths from the ALBA countries to come on board, exchange views, hold forums and lectures, and we would also like to ask you, Comandante, to support this

project.

As you said, we are the only nation that was hit by an atomic bomb. As such we believe we have the duty and the mission to spread messages in favor of a world free of nuclear weapons. And we would like to cooperate with you in order to eradicate nuclear weapons.

We also want to say that Japan is a country with a pacifist constitution that renounces war and weapons of mass destruction (SIC).

We also learned about Latin American countries and that they also have a pacifist constitution and prohibit the existence of foreign military bases. We are planning to propose to the United Nations that this organization promotes a pacifist constitution for all countries in the world.

We do not want war ever; we cannot allow the use of nuclear weapons ever. As the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagazaki often say, "We do not want this kind of brutal tragedy to be repeated." We want to build the world and the society in which people want to live; they do not want to live in poverty and that sort of thing. Therefore, we consider it necessary for all the countries to have this kind of Constitution.

We took the compromise to create a world without poverty, without hunger, with much happiness and a sustainable world.

Finally, Comandante, I am a great fan of yours (laughs and applause). It seems that we all are fans of you.

We know that you are very busy, but we want to invite you on board to sail to Nicaragua. What do you say? (Applause). What do you think about that? (Applause).

Cmdte.- Marvellous! (Applause).

Nao Inoue.- I will conclude my words with this invitation. Thank you very much (Applause).

Cmdte.- It won't be during the hurricane season, will it? (laughs).

I was told that you were to arrive yesterday, but there were some storms in the Atlantic. Finally, at what time did you arrive?

Nao Inoue.- We arrived at 5:00 in the morning.

Cmdte.- And how fast does the Peace Boat go? (laughs)

Nao Inoue.- More or less like a fast bicycle (laughs).

Cmdte.- Well, it depends, I think that world champion cycles can reach over 60 kilometers per hour (laughs).

I think that in our times the Peace Boat must run faster; it is more urgent now to travel around the world (Applause).

I should also apologize. Yesterday morning I heard the news. I thought about how I would meet with you, since I was told that I had been asked to meet with some of you. Then I thought, "If possible, I will try to greet all of them," I did not know, however, what time you would arrive and since I knew that you had a schedule planned for the whole day and I did not want to interfere with the plans of any other institution or program, we decided to have this meeting so early in the morning. We all have had to wake up early. I imagine that you might have been...I don't know where you might have been, if you were on board the ship looking at the entrance Havana or if you were sleeping. I beg you to excuse me for that, because I am guilty for you having had to expand your program (Applause). Then we organized, or more precisely, we improvised this meeting at this time so that you were able to attend your activities and to avoid me ruining my relations with the institutions that will welcome you.

I think they gave us one and a half hour. I answered that in the end you were expected to arrive today, but were now to arrive tomorrow, so, it is a flexible issue. I think the boat was expected to sail out today at 5:00 pm.

Kenia Serrano.- Boarding would start at 5:00 and the boat would sail out at 7:00.

Cmdte.- So, was it expected to sail out at 7:00?

Kenia Serrano.- That's correct.

Cmdte.- Right, you were to conclude your activities at 5:00.

Well, if a storm forced the delay of the boat, if you leave at 9:00 or at 10:00, then you would stay some more time in Havana, it is not a tragedy anyway. Fortunately, the visit did not take place under war. It has happened in peace time.

I extend my apologies for that.

Do you have any idea of how this will take place?

Kenia Serrano.- Comandante, this is a very moving event, every time the cruise ship comes —last year and now— it brings survivors of Hiroshima, and now we have Ms. Junko Watanabe with us. I propose we listen to her testimony.

Junko Watanabe.- First, Commander Fidel Castro, it is a great honor and also a great pleasure to meet you; I'd like to express my deep appreciation for having welcomed us with so much love.

I would also like to thank you for your great the interest and knowledge the Cuban people show about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Furthermore, just yesterday, the Movement for Peace in Cuba held a meeting with me about my experiences and a ceremony for International Peace Day; we also had a nice meeting at the Friendship Center.

I was born in Hiroshima and later I married a Japanese man and went to live in Brazil. I went to Brazil at the age of 25. I returned to Japan when I was 38 years old. And at that point in time, for the first time, I understood that I was a survivor of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I was born in downtown Hiroshima, but during the Second World War our family had been evacuated from Hiroshima, and since I only was two years old I can't remember; though when I my parents told me that I was a survivor, I was really shocked.

On August 6, 1945, at 8:15, my mom was at home with my younger brother. My elder brother and I were playing in the yard of a temple near my home. Then, my mother felt a strong wind, a terrible wind, and she saw burnt papers falling in front of our home. My mom was surprised and she came to get us at the temple. At that moment the black rain began. The rain was black and sticky.

Before the bomb was launched that August 6, the weather was nice in the morning, and they say that the atomic bomb exploded 580 meters above.

Cmdte.- How many meters?

Junko Watanabe.- Five hundred and eighty meters above the earth.

Cmdte.- It was a nuclear bomb.

Junko Watanabe.- A nuclear bomb.

Cmdte.- That was the energy of uranium, not of plutonium. The plutonium one was launched on another city.

Junko Watanabe.- Yes, on Nagasaki.

Then, since it explodes high above, it does more damage with its hot rays and hot wind, which burn people. After the bomb exploded, all the dust and papers flew upwards and then came the black rain with radiation.

After being exposed to the black rain my body had this condition.

Cmdte.- How's that, can you explain?

Junko Watanabe.- My body was damaged, I will explain its condition now.

I suffered from diarrhea every day. I could eat, but no nutrients remain in my body, they all were lost, everything that I ate. My parents thought their daughter would die.

In fact I was only two years old, and I cannot recall any disastrous scenes.

When I turned 60, I joined an association in Brazil. At present, 132 survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are living in Brazil.

Cmdte.- Where, in Brazil?

Junko Watanabe.- In Brazil.

Cmdte.- Were they kids when they went to Brazil?

Junko Watanabe.- Of different ages.

Cmdte.- Did their parents go with them?

Junko Watanabe.- Most of them got married and went there as adults, without their parents.

At present the average age of these survivors is 75, they are getting old. That is why the president of the Association in Brazil asked her to help the association because she is a young survivor.

Although I am a survivor, because I could not remember anything, I did not know anything about the atomic bomb before I joined the association.

Later I had the opportunity to read all the documents written by 200 survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who lived in Brazil. They wrote about what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

That was the first time I knew about the reality of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. They described the very brutal scene.

Sadness and resentment made me feel very unhappy and I felt that I was shaking.

I also found a documentary with images, filmed by a Japanese journalist. However, after the atomic bomb, US academicians stole this information and took it to their country. They were never going to show us this video I found in the office.

It has been somewhat difficult to watch it because it is an old tape. So, I asked a friend to turn it into a DVD.

We and 10 survivors, friends of ours, saw the film.

The scenes in the documentary are too brutal and I watch it with much sadness; the city of Hiroshima was disappearing.

We saw that in the documentary, we saw how the buildings were all burnt and the city was completely black. There were also the people, who seemed to walk unconsciously; skin hanging from their arms because it had deteriorated; their eyes falling out of their sockets. People walked, but unconsciously.

When I saw that documentary, although I could not recall that event, I understood I was there at that moment and I also understood that such a thing was done by human beings; then I felt strong resentment and sadness.

Then I came up with this idea. We have to tell those testimonies to other generations, and two years ago, in 2008, I participated in the Hibakusha Project undertaken by the Peace Boat Organization. With 100 survivors on board, we travelled and gave our testimonies in every port; I also met other Hibakushas around the world.

In Viet Nam, we met the victims of Agent Orange, from the Viet Nam war, we learned about what they and their parents had gone through. The effect on their bodies is transmitted from generation to generation.

My older brother, who was playing at the temple, died two years ago at the age of 67.

After being submitted to the black rain, as I was, he had weak bones and became very weak. He died at age 67 from liver cancer.

Now that I see the survivors dying, I am very concerned about my health.

I would also like to tell you about the story of Origami, the crane figures made from paper. They represent a symbol of peace for us and now for the world. They

accompany the story of a young girl, named Sadako Sasaki, who died from leukemia at the age of 12.

This year, when I attended the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Conference held in New York in May, I had the opportunity to meet Sadako Sasaki's brother.

Let me tell you a little about the story of Sadako Sasaki. Like me, she was hit by the black rain. She grew up healthy until she turned 10. Then, she became ill and was hospitalized; she was never able to leave hospital.

She believed that if she could make 1,000 paper cranes, she would get better and, according to the story told by her brother, she kept making cranes until...Well, at that time there was no paper. She received her medications wrapped in paper, so she would use that paper, folding it by using needles. Up until her last moment, she would always say: "I want to live more, I want to live more."

We are now in the same situation of Sadako Sasaki. We were hit by the black rain at the early age of two. She is dead and I still survive. Therefore, I feel this great responsibility of explaining what the atomic bomb is and who the survivors are. Survivors have to live with many physical problems and mental preoccupations until they die, and we had to tell this to other generations.

We learned that there are different kinds of Hibakushas around the world, in several places. For instance, the indigenous people who extracted uranium from the mines are very affected by the radiation; the people who live near nuclear plants too, and we have to learn these things to educate people.

When I participated in the Hibakusha Project two years ago, there was this Japanese man, the director of the documentary film, who discovered that I was on board. He later also interviewed my father, who is 98 years old. What my father told him I had not previously known. My father said the following. The director asked my dad; "Why didn't you tell Junko the truth?"

From the bomb up until now, the young girls who were affected by the atomic bomb,

although they are survivors, they have been discriminated against and have had difficulties trying to marry. Then, we recognized that I, being a survivor, have fortunately had no physical problems, although there are many doctors who say that the affect of the radiation also shows up in future generations.

To be continued tomorrow.

Fidel Castro Ruz
September 24, 2010
3:38 p.m.

Reflections by Fidel Castro

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

(PART TWO)

Cmdr .- How old was your father when he died?

Junko Watanabe .- He's still alive, he's 98.

I would like to promise you, to convey the feelings of my brother, who is now dead, and to convey to you the message that all the survivors have, and so that the new generation transmits our testimony to the next generation, I will continue giving testimony. Thank you (Applause).

Cmdr .- Please excuse me if I ask some questions, because we're interested in knowing everything that she is relating, and, of course, if no-one objects, we will be broadcasting this event via national television (Applause). We are keen that our public knows all this, but not just broadcasting it here, but transmitting it to other countries, sending out the news of this meeting. It is of utmost importance to know what happened there, regardless of what has been published, filmed, and all the new things that are appearing.

I'll explain, then, why I'm asking some further questions.

She said she was in a nearby house, that she was in the yard with her brother when the

explosion occurred producing a cloud of dust. She knows, from others who were aware at the time, how long it took to get that dust on people who were there.

Junko Watanabe .- About 30 minutes, but it did not rain everywhere, but just where the wind swept the rain.

Cmdr .- Rain. But there was rain and some ashes.

Junko Watanabe.- Really the rain of ashes did not exist, just that dust mixed with rain was what came to where they were; it wasn't separate, it was just one thing, alone, linked with all the filth and with all the things that came with it.

Cmdr .- And there was no roof where she was, she was in a yard?

Junko Watanabe .- We were 18 kilometers from where the bomb fell.

Cmdr .- Eighteen kilometers!

Interpreter .- Eighteen kilometers.

Cmdr .- That is what I was going to ask, because there is a bridge, I think, that they show as the point, the target where the bomb was dropped. It was 18 kilometers?

Your parents were indoors?

Junko Watanabe .- My mom was holding my younger brother outside the house, and my dad was in Hiroshima, he had been working and at night headed for the house, but, well, he was still inside a building. He even saw the plane circling above Hiroshima.

Cmdr .- Before the bombing. Right.

And your mother was also burned?

Junko Watanabe .- No. Really, where we were, 18 kilometers from the place, what we got was all this quantity of burnt paper, that wave, that wind that came to us; but burned as such, we were not.

Had we been a little closer, that is, near the epicenter, I do not think we would be telling this story today.

Cmdr .- Right.

What I want to tell you is that we recently had a visit from a very prestigious researcher, a professor emeritus at Rutgers University, New Jersey, and he is the author of the theory of nuclear winter. This, in my opinion, is of utmost importance because it relates to the current dangers facing humanity, and there are many things that are unknown.

This professor visited our country and at a meeting of scientists gave an excellent exposition of his theory, a theory with much prestige; it seems to me indisputable, and is related to the consequences of nuclear war. It does not relate, exactly to the destruction it causes, which would be huge, but analyzes the danger that a regional nuclear war, or even a global war, would mean for humanity.

It deals with the current facts, very different from that time when the first nuclear bomb was launched. He takes into account the situation at this moment, when there are 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world. I imagine that many of you know that data. The scientist says that a hundred nuclear explosions would be sufficient to produce what he calls a nuclear winter.

He bases his theory on a series of investigations made by American scientists and Soviet scientists, before the demise of the USSR, on the effects that would be produced by a number of nuclear weapons if a war broke out. They calculated that about 100 nuclear explosions would be enough to obliterate human life on the planet, so a war, for example, between India and Pakistan, with the number of weapons held by each of them would be enough to put an end to our species.

I think that although maybe you have enough information, we can provide you with a copy of the lecture by Alan Robock, -that is the name of the professor who recently gave it here, this month,- which contains data of great value, which would serve you for the disclosure of the consequences, not only about the damage they would cause; of course, the current weapons are far more powerful, more accurate, much faster. The

power of the existing weapons is equivalent to four hundred and forty thousand times the power of either of the two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan; they tested the two, one with uranium and the other with plutonium. Now all these technologies are mastered and the arms can be used with absolute precision.

The agreements that have been made between the great powers are practically worthless because they do not translate into real arms reduction.

It strikes me that if your organization would make contact with him, and he is a very generous man, he could give you a lecture on this issue.

I asked about the mist, since he explains and demonstrates that as a result of nuclear explosions, everything burns, wood; all that comes from oil, and many other things, as he explains, are burned and mixed with the soil to produce large concentrations of dust. I have studied it all: what would happen if there were two or if there were 10, if there were a 100, and there is a limit. That cloud of dust would spread across the world in a period of time, I think no more than three weeks, and the temperature would drop below freezing. That means, for example, a night months long, not allowing in any sunlight. Food production would disappear and the consequences are horrible; over six billion people would go without food, in addition to the cold.

I asked a question when he finished his hour long lecture, with maps, charts; they've studied all the effects of volcanic eruptions; studied how the dust extends each time one occurs, even a recent one in Iceland in Europe, which created serious problems. They also studied the great fires that have occurred naturally or as a result of war or accident.

I asked: "How many people in the world know the information you are providing?" He said: "Almost no one." I asked, "And in your own country, how many people know it?" And he replied, "Very few." I asked him how he could explain this phenomenon. And I added "Maybe this has to be studied, looking for specialists in psychology and in other fields to explain this phenomenon." And he said, "I have an answer: it is called denial." He reasoned that when horrible things could happen, people rejected the idea of

believing them possible.

To the explanation that he gives one could add another, which is connected to the media, the monopoly of the mass media. Things happen in the world, and despite modern means, radio and television, films are handled in a way that news is happening, but not explained, and indeed many of the most important that exist in the world are not known, or are reported as news and not analyzed. There are very important books about the monopoly of the news media; the truth is kidnapped and we don't know. Two phenomena.

I explained to him that we were not pessimistic about the possibility of creating an awareness. I tell you, you can create a consciousness or not. Of course, if the masses cannot read and write it cannot even be attempted; if the society has a level of knowledge as does Japanese society, then with their own means of dissemination, not only written, but with words with images, with music, with many events, you can create an awareness today.

I would say that this was the case in Cuba. If people could not read and write ... What can a person do, who can not read or write? If they reach sixth grade or not, if they graduate from high school or not, if hundreds of thousands made college, if they have good teachers, there are different phenomena. The Revolution has not been defended by force; it has been defended by knowledge by awareness. How could a small country like Cuba, withstand 50 years of blockade and harassment? They thought they could take the country, or they could deceive it, but they could not. It was, in my view, a demonstration that one can form a conscience, because if we give up the idea that consciousness can be created, then what would be your task? Because you are traveling the world and explaining, prompting people who knew about it, and telling facts that are heartbreaking, really. Let me explain still better what you are doing, because they're feeling it, and are carrying people who experienced it, and have the images, have many things.

I was in Hiroshima. I visited the museum. Everything was explained to me there: what withstood, what did not; and one of the terrible images of the human tragedy was the

illustration of children not yet born, pregnant mothers with a month, two months, three months to go, these images have been illustrated there, and are of great impact, and I think there is material to do so. I would say that today there is much more awareness, but it takes a lot more. And the fact is that today all of humanity is threatened by something as horrible as what you have related, and even more horrible still, because we've heard from people who were in the area of the first bomb, the pain of the people who died, people who were burned, who were injured or were irradiated and have lived more than 50 years. Actually those explosions occurred 65 years ago, and today there are thousands of them, even more powerful and accurate, threatening humanity.

The scientist supports the theory that the more nuclear weapons a country possesses, the less chance of peace and security it would have. He is in favor of eliminating all nuclear weapons. I would go a little further. I think if you liquidated nuclear weapons and not conventional weapons as well, it is almost same.

The destructive power of such conventional weapons is huge today. A bomb bearing tungsten fragments, carried in a heavy warhead, with no use of nuclear energy, can reach the speed of 25,000 kilometers per hour, 20 times the speed of sound; it later falls at no less than 20,000 kilometers per hour. A whole area below it is fully devastated. No command posts or government remains, nothing of the target site remains on its feet. This has been published and explained. The past world war claimed 50 million lives, who were the victims of conventional weapons, excluding the victims and human damage from the two nuclear bombs, which caused over 150 thousand deaths and a greater number of people suffering from burns, radiation and many other injuries. Destruction, hunger, disease affected a large part of the world in that war. If another world war occurred, it would be the last one, there could be no other.

Einstein himself said that he did not know what a war in the atomic era would be like; but the next one would be with bows and arrows.

I had brought a letter that Robock sent me, the scientist already referred to, in reply to a question I asked him when he was at the airport ready to return to his country. In his lecture, he had given some data about the Planet Mars; I called him on the phone and

asked him where I could get more information on that planet. He explained to me that Mars had its atmosphere, something that given its small thickness I ignored. He promised to send information.

And he sent it two or three days later.

Mars has a thinner atmosphere than that of the Earth—he said-- with only 7 % of air...It is equivalent to the density of the air on the Earth at a height of 21 kilometers.

The Martian atmosphere—he said—is made up mostly of carbon dioxide.

The information is related to what we are talking about: the effects of nuclear explosions. The impact on the climate. What has been said about the environment? What has been said about climate change? Is it that such a serious problem does not exist? Is it that it has not been studied? Is there is not a prestigious film made with the cooperation of the most eminent scientists on climate change, its effects on rainfall, the economy and human life?

This has been studied as a second problem regarding climate change. That is, we do not have to wait for a nuclear war to see life disappear from the planet. That is what I am telling you, for life to disappear from the planet.

The economy and life of nations are currently based on the consumption of non renewable raw materials, among others the most important one, oil, which is a raw material being consumed at a pace of nearly 100 million barrels a day.

Bear in mind that oil took hundreds of millions of years to form from living matter.

Some 400 million years were required to form oil, gas and coal. How fast is man consuming the oil that nature accumulated during 400 million years? In just 130 years, human beings have already used up more than half of that fuel, whose consumption also has a huge impact on the environment. The Carbon Dioxide that is so abundant in Mars' atmosphere precisely is the result of oil consumption. These are factors that humanity must be aware of, face and resolve. This is the price of its existence.

The human population cannot grow without limits, since the planet where we were born and where we live has its limits. Calculations, if I remember right, say that by the year 2050 the population will reach 9 billion inhabitants. Just 200 years ago that figure was one billion. The consequences this has regarding water, food, energy and raw materials are really extraordinary.

Japan has quite a limited land surface for its population; its population has nearly reached 130 million inhabitants at present, as I understand; it is said to be the nation with the highest life expectancy and with a high culture, and that its population growth will stabilize at little over 100 million people. Then, it is possible to reach population stability.

A neighbor country of yours, China, is currently implementing a rigorous population-related policy; if they had not adopted such a policy, at present China would have some 3 billion inhabitants. China and India alone have nearly half the inhabitants of the world.

These are facts. People must have the courage to face the realities, to know them, like you are doing with respect to the terrible consequences of nuclear explosions. Those who will be born should have the essential living conditions to enjoy a life as fully and naturally as possible. This is not what is happening now. Some 8 or 10 million people die every year as a consequence of hunger and lack of health care. Who talks about that? Some scientists and some politicians do. Such news is hardly mentioned; the big transnational companies are not interested in that subject.

I know that on this trip you asked us to send you a doctor with internationalist experience, but not someone who was thinking of being internationalist. There are thousands of those Cuban doctors in many countries. You would surely be amazed if you knew, for instance, what our small country can do to help other nations. I am not talking about impossible tasks.

Matsumi Matsumura.- Commandante, look, what I wanted to comment on our part, when you mentioned the internationalist...

Cmdte.- And is he here?

Matsumi Matsumura.- Yes.

Cmdte.- Where is he? Can he raise his hand?.

So I can see you better.

They told me you had been in Haiti, is that right?

Matsumi Matsumura.- Dr. Livan Torero, worked a lot to help the people in Haiti after the earthquake and we invited him on board the Peace Boat so that he can tell us about his experiences in Haiti. And we also have Salsa dancer Jose Ramon with us, since learning about your culture is very important for us; I think it is a traditional dance and we have learned a lot about Salsa.

Indeed, thanks very much for this invitation. Thank you very much, Comandante (Applause).

Cmdte.- I congratulate you and thank you. I mentioned it because I know what they are doing and I was going to mention the case of Haiti, as a proof of what consciousness can achieve.

In Bolivia there are nearly 2,000 Cuban doctors; they are in many places. In Ecuador, with a 15-million population, they are helping to study and treat all those people who, due to genetic or other problems, are physically impaired, who were born blind or deaf. When a child can't hear he can become dumb; if he does not learn the sounds, he cannot reproduce them. Many problems can be solved with a small instrument, just by providing them with an earphone they could speak and communicate.

But if they are born blind and deaf the situation is more complicated. What would the life of a blind or deaf-mute person be like, someone who has never heard a sound or seen anything?

I know the results of cochlear implants and how people learn to hear, speak, listen to

music and meet the world; their lives change.

I think that society must make parents aware, try to foretell risks that, in certain cases they should not have offspring. I consider that every human being that is born must come to the world with their potentialities. And if for any reason they are born with non-hereditary vital deficiencies, we must make all possible efforts to enrich the lives of those people. Those who can't be fed, those that can't be taught, those that cannot develop a normal life, a life worthy of living, should simply not be conceived.

I understand that not everyone can think exactly the same way, there are religious influences, I respect all that; though I am frankly expressing my opinion and why? For the human race, at present this really has to do with the famous problem of be or not to be, if survival is possible for this species, that has inflicted lot of damage on the rest of the living beings. Since the human species was born, it stormed everything; intelligence has thus far been a tragedy to nature, and now nuclear weapons could create a problem as serious as that famous asteroid that fell—they say—on the Tehuantepec isthmus, in Mexico, tens of millions of years ago, and caused a prolonged winter.

No other species achieved this, but they maintained a balance with nature through billions of years, about 4 billion years. Man is new. This thinking species emerged less than 200,000 years ago—now this thinking I would say is still to be proven, if the species does not prove it is able to survive. Excuse me for being somewhat strong about our foolishness. The only thing that has been proven up to now is that there is not the slightest proof that it was preceded by another one.

In the end, all these problems are combined, and I think they must be associated to win the battle, which must be the goal to reach by the human beings. Then, perhaps many marvelous things could be created.

How many scientifically well prepared people, how many eminent people are there in the world? Some 80 percent of engineers in the United States are dedicated to the military sector, creating means and science to destroy and kill, by virtue of a perfidious system that led them into that fate.

Our aspiration is that people reach high intellectual levels. By chance, on my way here I took a news bulletin and I read that Cuba occupies the first place in the world as to the percentage of students in higher education centers. Venezuela occupies the fifth position; the second, third and fourth places were occupied by the Republic of Korea, Finland and Greece; while the United States was behind us in the sixth position.

I cited the doctor, because those men and women—most of them are women—are working in Bolivia, Nicaragua, Venezuela, in many Third World countries. But, why? I am amazed: they come, for instance, on vacations for 15 days and they get anxious to return to their work, they miss their patients; you have to listen to what their patients say. It is a product of consciousness, which was not purchased anywhere; it is not done for money.

The task being undertaken by those comrades in Haiti is a product of consciousness. Therefore, I dare talk about consciousness, because I have seen that consciousness made the Revolution possible, made resistance possible, aside from any criticism they can make of us or the mistakes we can make, because no human work is perfect. We do not have the slightest fear of speaking of mistakes, because what can't really be admitted is what is done unconsciously against others.

There is no perfect human work, but we believe in it, and if we did not believe in it, we would not be doing what we are doing, or what you are doing in such a noble manner.

I am sorry to have used up too much of your time.

To be continued tomorrow

Fidel Castro Ruz

September 25, 2010

12.14 p.m.

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

PART III

Matsumi Matsumura.- Comandante, we were with a brigade that was working in Shihan and we had the opportunity to meet the relatives of the Five Anti-terrorist Heroes, and we learned a lot about the issue of the Five Heroes. We have also been learning about this subject on board.

As you just mentioned, September 12 marked the 12th anniversary of the Cuban Heroes and we, the members of the Peace Boat, also wish for their release, the sooner the better; for our part, we promise to support this campaign from far away, from Japan (Applause).

Comandante, then, what I was saying is that we have been learning already.

Furthermore, you referred to the subject of the education and health systems in Cuba. We are here now, but as you may know, we have many organizations that are waiting for us, and it would be very good if we had more time for a direct meeting between the Japanese and the Cuban people. What do you think?

Cmdte.- This is an important moment. At the United Nations, they are currently discussing—I know you are part of the United Nations as members of the Social Economic Council—the UN goals, they are holding a conference there, before the general debate takes place. Well, the United Nations is the only thing we supposedly have, because at times it seems nonexistent, since they discuss the development problems, the development goals, the education goals, the health goals, and these are increasing unmet; on the contrary, every time there is a crisis a step backwards occurs.

The purchasing power of the Americans themselves has reduced their buying capacity 43.6 percent. You can imagine an economy in which, all of a sudden, much of what is produced by the sectors of services, the industry, etc is no longer purchased, and the unemployment it causes.

Unfortunately, we have had to collect a lot of information about the United States and I can assure you that it is a disaster. It is a “great democracy,” that great that they have

12,000 lobbyists in the US Congress working for the transnational companies, who cost 3,500 million dollars annually. These are measures from past times that have incredibly degenerated. The Result: all the big companies control and manipulate the Congress of the United States, which enjoys the capacity of ratifying accords or approving budgets and legislation. If there is an accord on the reduction of nuclear weapons, aside from its poor scope, it has to be approved by Congress.

You do not even know what the role of a president in the United States is, many times he can do nothing, and this is the man who has a nuclear suitcase, while no one knows what the suitcase is for. We must not forget that when they launched the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they were the only two that existed, while a mediocre and ignorant president decided to launch them. I am sure that Roosevelt would not have launched those bombs, he was different, a capitalist of course, the head of the richest capitalist and imperialist state, but a man with a wide education and with certain political ethics, less identified personally with large fortunes. The one who came after him did not report that they had the bomb, not even to the Soviet Allies. And what was most cruel, there was no need to use the bomb, it has been historically proven, the majority of Japan's imperial forces, concentrated in Manchuria, were totally defeated; the Japanese militaristic government could no longer stand on its feet. In order to get the victory, already in the hands of the allied armies, they did not have to launch those bombs, and what's worse, they cannot argue that they tried to save lives; the soviet forces were advancing unstopably on Manchuria, while the end of the war was just a matter of days away.

If they were looking for a military pretext, why didn't they launch the two bombs on military facilities or bases? Why did they launch them on the civilian population? Why did they decide to kill over 100,000 people and unleash so much suffering? They did know what the bomb meant. And few days ago, there was this film showing th plane that carried the bomb, they named it after the pilot's mother. See how much pride! What an honor! How can they give a mother's name to the plane that launched the bomb and killed over 100,000 people in just few minutes?

It was a cruel action, an indescribable experiment at the expense of the suffering of

hundreds of thousands of helpless people who were not responsible at all for the war.

Junko said you had been to Viet Nam to see the effects of Agent Orange. How many children, how many millions Vietnamese died in that war? About 4 or 5 million. How many of them remain invalidated as a consequence of those chemical products they used? They used chemical weapons in another war; they gave them to Iraq during the war against Iran. The government of the United States has also used bacteriological weapons; they used them against Cuba; they also use white phosphorus and cluster bombs, napalm and other similar means through their allies.

The President still has the faculty to use the nuclear weapon or initiate a war. After the war breaks out...and this has special significance, because right at this moment there a situation of real danger of war, and of nuclear war. We all know about the situation existing in Iran today. We all know that there are threats pending on Iran due to the controversy about the processing of uranium. They have not been able to prove that the Iranians are making a nuclear weapon or that they are intending to make it. They have research centres, many countries have research centres, and there are about 40 nations who in practice could produce the nuclear weapon, including the enrichment of uranium. The Iranians have research centers; they have power plants that burn nuclear fuel. A power plant using that energy produces the raw material to make plutonium, the nuclear weapon used in Nagasaki. The Russians have signed agreements with Iran: they give the uranium, which is used by the Iranians to produce electricity and they take what is left after electricity is produced.

I warn you that there is a very dangerous situation. They have sent an American-Israeli squadron to the coasts of Iran, the ships are there, and they have had accords adopted at the Security Council based on erroneous calculations, they think they will crush the resistance. My opinion is that they can not crush the Iranian resistance and that they will not get any agreement by force.

The State of Israel has been working on programs, we can say that it has become the world's fifth nuclear power, and it is determined, it already did it against Iraq with its attack on the nuclear research center; it did it in Syria with its attack on the research

center, this happened in 2007; the case of Iraq occurred in the 1980s, and according to articles by well informed journalists and statements by its leaders, it is well known they are determined-- if the Americans do not attack Iran-- to carry out these actions on their own, to destroy the research centers, destroy the plants that are operating or about to operate to produce electricity.

I already wrote about this, particularly, about the dangers of a war in that zone. I have written 26 reflections, including the latest one in which I spoke about the gypsies, one of the groups that were submitted to extermination in Nazi concentration camps; the main victims were the Jews, the Gypsies and the Russians by virtue of Hitler's cynical doctrine about vital space.

I have my positions with respect to all this, I have never hesitated to condemn the Holocaust, because it was a cruel act; but this is a position and the other is related to interventionism and Israel's warmongering plans.

All these problems are ongoing. I encourage you to pay attention to all that. I do not know what material we can send them, perhaps the reflections that we have published on the subject.

Well, how many Japanese translators do we have?

Kenia Serrano .- In Cuba, a few, but they can help do it in Japanese.

Cmdr .- We will also send Robock's lecture and some other material.

So what we can do is humbly cooperate with you in any way we can. Surely you have the film Home, by French filmmaker Yann Arthus-Bertrand, on the environment. It is one of the best things that have been made.

If they attack Iran to destroy the reactors, the war becomes nuclear, quite simply, because the Iranians have developed defensive conventional weapons, developed unmanned aircraft, have hundreds of missile launchers; there would not be a surface vessel left intact, because they can defend themselves against one, or two, but not against many missiles that are launched simultaneously, as far as I know. Can you

imagine such a situation? If they underestimate the Iranians and launch an attack on those places, the losses by the attackers will be very high. The attackers know that an unending war would start, who controls such a situation? An order to attack is easy to give, that's how all wars start. But, in my view, it can also be the last, because, in my opinion, in this case it would inevitably be nuclear. Hopefully it will not happen, but it is one of the short-term dangers that I consider imminent.

We, as I have said, are already working modestly and appreciate all the news you can send us, and if they keep coming and we have time, I say time if we do not have to interrupt other things, we will reconvene. I promise.

Thank you (Applause).

Inoue Nao.- Thank you very much.

We have taken advantage and have learned a lot.

To know the reality of what is happening here in Havana, in fact the participants in the Peace Boat- well we only just got here- only know the cruise terminal. So, after we leave here to know the other activities, the work that the Cubans are doing and also to see directly the activities and policies that you have built.

In truth, many thanks.

Cmdr .- Aren't you going straight to Nicaragua?

Matsumi Matsumura .- We are passing by Jamaica, then the Panama Canal and then to Corinto, Nicaragua.

Here, Commander, I would like to introduce a very important guest who is here, the Minister of Culture of Nicaragua, Mr. Luis Mora, Minister of Culture (Applause).

Cmdr .- But he came with you or was he waiting for you here?

Luis Mora .- I was here in Cuba, to board the ship.

Cmdr .- But you're going to Jamaica?

Luis Mora .- To Nicaragua, to Corinto.

Cmdr .- And who is the other one?

Luis Mora .- We are very pleased to be here with you. Greetings from Daniel and Rosario, from the people of Nicaragua to the fraternal people of Cuba, who we love and who have helped us so much.

Cmdr .- Thank you.

Luis Mora .- For sure, for sure.

Matsumi Matsumura .- Thank you.

At his side, and also a consultant, from the Caribbean side, Mr. John Hopkison.

Interpreter .- The Caribbean side of Nicaragua.

John Hopkison .- A pleasure, from the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, Bluefields, where you were, Commander, walking the streets of Bluefields, many years ago.

Cmdr .- Yes, yes, I'm very happy (Applause).

Inoue Nao .- This is a bell and I hope in your bedroom a peaceful wind blows and make the bell give a peaceful sound too (He hands over the bell).

I would also like to give as a gift, our boat, the Peace Boat, which is now in the port of Havana, the Oceanic.

Kenia Serrano .- The ship in which they travel is called the SOS Oceanic, it has the Panamanian flag.

Cmdr.- Well, I'll look after it.

Inoue Nao.- In truth, many thanks again for having received us. We are committed to

further advancing our activities and, above all, working with ICAP, which is always supporting us by doing programs here and exchanges, led by Kenia and also the vice president Alicia Corredera, who always supports us.

Thank you, Commander (Applause).

(They give him the gifts.)

Cmdr .- I think I stole an extra hour, but I hope that with the others you can make it up. Because of me you are going to leave an hour late (Laughter and applause.)

At this point the meeting ended. The objectivity of what I expressed can be demonstrated.

You can see that when I spoke of Franklin D. Roosevelt, I said that I believe he would not have released those bombs, he was truly anti-fascist and within the economic and political system of the country, he did not reduce, but raised taxes on the millionaires, to the extent that he was hated by the right; which was represented by Harry Truman in the heart of the empire.

The world should know, and think about the fact that Harry S. Truman, in a radio address to the nation on August 9, 1945, said verbatim:

"The world will know that the first atomic bomb dropped on a military base in Hiroshima. This was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, as far as possible, the killing of civilians ... "

There was no military base in Hiroshima. The point selected was a small bridge in the middle of the city.

Disclosing that lie was a disgusting act of cynicism. Truman was aware and fully informed of the destructive power of the weapon.

On August 6, on the 65th anniversary of that monstrous crime, Canadian academic Michel Chossudovsky reported that Harry S. Truman himself wrote in his diary 11 days

before the release of the bomb:

"We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It could be the fire destruction that was foretold in the Euphrates valley, after Noah's Ark This weapon will be used against Japan ... [We] will use it for the purpose of military objectives and soldiers and sailors are the target and not women and children. Even if the Japs are savages, ruthless and fanatic, we as leaders of the world for the common welfare can not drop that terrible bomb on the old capital or the new ... The goal will be purely military ...it may be the most terrible thing ever discovered, but may in fact be the most useful. "

It was undoubtedly the greatest and most cynical murder in history.

Fidel Castro Ruz

September 26, 2010

11.45 a.m.