

Let's assault history, whenever necessary

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When we talk about that small engine that would propel the big engine of the Revolution, that assault on history carried out by a group of young Cuban revolutionaries on July 26th, 1953, cannot and should never be seen as a simple slogan, as a distant event, as something from the history books.

It is an event that shook the foundations of a country, and I would say more, of a continent, of a temporal and geographical space to reaffirm a path from which it came, a tradition of struggle.

It was, in addition to a historical imperative, urgency, a teaching: there is no other way to achieve independence and the definitive freedom of a people —when all possible paths to peace have already been exhausted— than that of taking up arms, launch to fight bare-chested, with the conviction that nothing is more important than duty to the country where we were born.

Nor are Revolutions and events like these —which define them—

spontaneous. They are the result of years, of generations, of the accumulation of injustices, deceptions, of ignominy and accumulated pain, of contained hopes, of an ideology and a collective and supreme feeling that goes far beyond individual aspirations.

You either win or die, as we Cubans know well, which is why we have also had to assault history so many times. We do it over and over again in our daily lives, in the face of every challenge, obstacle, threat. Perhaps that common strength, that rooted ideology, Martian like that of that Centennial Generation, is the strength and encouragement to continue, even in the worst circumstances.

Let us never be afraid to return our gaze with pride and passion to that July 26th, to see in the red and black that marked the subsequent battle the bloodshed and the mourning of a people that lost its children in the vigor of their youth. Let's see it as the rescue of the necessary collective memory of a nation that was capable of giving its best to not let its history, its heroes and martyrs die, to rescue the stained dignity, the rebellion of an unredeemed island that preferred to sink into the sea before becoming a slave again.

It was then —and it is today— about what it means to be Cuban, about that inalienable duty in which our lives depend, and for which history will have to be assaulted whenever necessary.

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
