

AIR MAIL

Subject: (Critical editorial appear-
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CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose the original and translation of an article appearing in the August 28 issue of PRENSA LIBRE entitled "Cuba has Given the United States One Billion Dollars as its War Contribution from Pearl Harbor to Date".

This is about as absurd an article as has appeared in the Habana press for some time. The burden of the writer's thesis is that Cuba lost \$1,000,000 in its sales to us of sugar and other raw materials; that this was a contribution to the war; and that we pay them back with warnings, scoldings, threats, etc. Cubans are urged to assert themselves.

While no important weight should be given to this outburst, it is nevertheless characteristic of a certain type of Cuban mind. Fortunately the segment of the Cuban people who reason this way is small, but they are more numerous than one might think. Cubans as a whole enjoy mental gymnastics but do not take them too seriously even though in large doses.

Also there is to be considered the source of the article. PRENSA LIBRE is an opposition journal which is fighting for its existence. Batista formerly pumped extraordinary sums of money into the paper and it is now so strapped it is grabbing at straws. It will print most anything that will embarrass the Government or increase circulation. So hard up has the paper been of late that it has tried some shakedown schemes on numerous Habana business houses. Hardware merchants and department stores were told on the sly either to pay up or certain real or imaginary skeletons would be put on display. Having been unsuccessful in gaining subsidy in this manner, perhaps the sheet thinks it can get some income by stimulating reader interest among those who like to hear the sort of xenophobic balderdash this article represents.

Respectfully yours,
For the Ambassador:

DOR - ARS Unit

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Enclosures:

(See next page)

James H. Wright
Counselor of Embassy

Aug 29 1945

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1. Clipping from PRENSA LIBRE,
August 28, 1945
2. Translation thereof

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To Department in original and hectograph

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 158
of August 28, 1945 from the Embassy at Habana

From the Habana newspaper PRENSA LIBRE
dated August 28, 1945

MIL MILLONES

DE PESOS HA DADO CUBA A LOS ESTADOS
UNIDOS COMO CONTRIBUCION DE
GUERRA DE PEARL HARBOR A LA FECHA

Nuestra Contribución de Guerra

La República de Cuba ha contribuido
fuerzo de guerra, desde Pearl Harbor, con
MIL MILLONES DE PESOS.

Cifra astronómica que hará sonreír a
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rigurosamente cierta, porque la respal-
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careros y exportadores de productos
cubanos.

La zafra de 1942, que ascendió a
4.323,123 toneladas largas, deducido el
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Continúa en la página OCHO

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MILLONES

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MIL MILLONES

DE PESOS HA DADO CUBA A LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS COMO CONTRIBUCION DE GUERRA DE PEARL HARBOR A LA FECHA

a 3.10, que era el precio justo en el mercado mundial, lo que equivalía a \$280.823,901.12, renunciábamos generosamente a una utilidad de \$40.764,759.84.

La zafra de 1944, fué de 4.973,962 toneladas. Restado el consumo, vendimos a Norteamérica 4.823,962 toneladas a 2.65, pero como el precio legal debió ser 3.50, existe una diferencia que no cobramos de \$91.848,236.48.

La zafra de 1945, de la cual vendimos a Estados Unidos 3.304,982 toneladas a 3.10, pudiendo venderse a 6 centavos la libra, con todas las dificultades y pérdidas del ciclón y la sequía, representó un aporte de colaboración de guerra de \$214,001,695.68.

Y la próxima zafra, que calculamos conservadoramente en 4.000,000 de toneladas, y por la cual nos ofrecen un precio de 3.45, pudiendo venderse a 8 centavos la libra, arrojará una diferencia a favor de la nación vecina de \$407.680,000.00.

Nuestra colaboración al triunfo de las armas aliadas, solamente en el sector azucarero, es, pues, de SETECIENTOS CINCUENTA Y CUATRO MILLONES, NOVECIENTOS OCHENTA Y CUATRO MIL, SEISCIENTOS NOVENTA Y DOS PESOS, y si a esa suma se agrega la diferencia que existe en los precios a que hemos cedido nuestros metales, mieles, carnes, tabacos y frutos, excede de MIL MILLONES DE PESOS lo que hemos puesto en las manos de Norteamérica para ganar la guerra.

Estos mil millones de pesos con que nuestra patria ha contribuido para el triunfo de la Democracia que nos prometió un mundo mejor y seguridades de una existencia más digna y decorosa en el futuro, en un país modesto de 120,000 kilómetros de superficie y menos de 5,000,000 de habitantes, supone un sacrificio extraordinario, y el más ejemplar renunciamento a todo propósito mercantilista.

En lugar de acogerse a las ventajas del arriendo-préstamo, Cuba puede vanagloriarse de ocupar el primer plano entre los países que ayudaron con todo cuanto tenían y podían para vencer al enemigo común.

No aportamos acorazados ni cuerpos de ejércitos ni cañones ni flotas aéreas, pero dimos MIL MILLONES DE PESOS con los cuales contribuimos a organizar la maquinaria que destruyó el nazi-fascismo, amén de la sangre cubana que también se prodigó en la contienda.

Mientras el trabajador americano en las industrias de guerra ganó diez y doce pesos diarios, el cubano se conformó con el jornal mínimo de dos pesos al día y en muchas ocasiones menos, que por las mismas exigencias de la guerra suponía afrontar los rigores de la escasez y el hambre.

¿Cuál es el premio que se nos ofrece en la paz? ¡Admoniciones, regaños y amenazas de desaparición de nuestras industrias básicas, azúcar, tabaco y ganadería!

No. Esto no fué lo que nos prometió la Carta del Atlántico y la Política de Buena Vecindad, concepciones geniales del insigne humanista y paladín de la Democracia, Franklin D. Roosevelt, cuyas frases vibran aún como una hermosa antorcha de reivindicación e igualdad para todos los hombres amantes de la libertad y la justicia.

En el plano de vencedores, porque no se nos puede colocar sin cometer una gran iniquidad en el de vencidos y esclavos, reclamamos la herencia espiritual que nos corresponde en las promesas del gran estadista infortunadamente desaparecido y pedimos que la Democracia Americana, que rige el mundo nuevo, llegue también a nuestro país y no se convierta en un producto exclusivo para ser usado sólo dentro de las fronteras de Norteamérica.

Si los Estados Unidos no pueden o no quieren darnos seguridades para el porvenir, debemos reaccionar en actitud de legítima defensa y vender nuestros productos al precio del mercado, comenzando por el azúcar que hoy vale a ocho centavos y no a 3.45.

Esta es "la verdad prohibida" que con tanto acierto calificó Álvarez del Real; el lenguaje cubanísimo que debemos usar para hacernos dignos del respeto y de la consideración.

Translation

CUBA HAS GIVEN THE UNITED STATES ONE BILLION
DOLLARS AS ITS WAR CONTRIBUTION FROM
PEARL HARBOR TO DATE

(From PRENSA LIBRE, of August 28, 1945)

The Republic of Cuba has contributed to the war effort, since Pearl Harbor, more than one billion dollars.

An astronomical figure which will cause the unbelievers and the sepoys to smile, but which is absolutely true because it is backed up by numbers and facts which we are placing before the mathematicians, sugar experts and exporters of Cuban products.

The 1942 crop which had a volume of 4,323,123 long tons, after deducting our consumption which we have conservatively estimated at 279,000 tons, was sold for 2.65 cents per pound, which is equal to \$240,059,141.28 and, since it could have been sold for 3.10 which was the just price on the world market, which would have equalled \$280,823,901.12, we generously waived a profit of \$40,764,759.84.

The 1944 crop had a volume of 4,973,962 tons. Less consumption we sold the United States 4,823,962 tons at 2.65 cents per pound, but inasmuch as the legal price should have been 3.50, there is a difference of \$91,848,236.48 which we did not charge.

The 1945 crop, of which we sold 3,304,982 tons to the United States at 3.10 cents per pound, could have been sold at 6.00 cents per pound; with all the difficulties and losses caused by the hurricane and the drought; this represents a war contribution of \$214,691,695.68.

And the coming crop, which we conservatively estimate to have a volume of approximately 4,000,000 tons and for which we are offered 3.45 cents per pound while it could be sold at 8 cents, shows a difference in favor of our neighbor of \$407,680,000.00.

Our collaboration in the victory of the Allied arms, in the sugar sector alone, amounts to \$754,984,692.00 and if to that amount we add the difference in the prices for which we have given our metals, molasses, beef, tobacco and fruits, the amount that we have placed in the hands of the United States to win the war exceeds one billion dollars.

This

This billion dollars which our country has contributed to the triumph of democracy which promised us a better world and assurances of a more worthy and decent living in the future, in a modest country with an area of 120,000 kilometers and less than 5,000,000 population, means an extraordinary sacrifice and most exemplary renunciation of any intent to profit.

Instead of taking advantage of lend lease, Cuba can proudly boast of holding the first place among the countries that helped with everything they had and with everything they could in order to defeat the common enemy.

We did not contribute battleships nor army corps, nor guns nor air armadas, but we gave one billion dollars which we contributed to the organization of the machinery that destroyed nazi-fascism, without mentioning the Cuban blood that was also shed in the struggle.

While the American workers in the war industries made ten and twelve dollars per day, the Cubans were satisfied with the minimum wage of two pesos per day and less on many occasions, which, because of the very exigencies of the war, meant that they had to face scarcity and hunger.

What is the reward that we are offered now that peace is here? Warnings, scoldings and threats of the disappearance of our basic industries, sugar, tobacco and cattle?

No. This is not what the Atlantic Charter and the Good Neighbor Policy, genial conceptions of the great humanitarian and leader of democracy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose words still vibrate as the grand torch of justice and equality for all men who love freedom and justice, promised us.

On the plane of the victorious, because we cannot be placed on a plane with the conquered and enslaved, we demand the spiritual inheritance we are entitled to in the promises of the great statesman who so unfortunately died, and we demand that American democracy which rules the new world, also reach our country and not become an exclusive product to be used only within the frontiers of the United States.

If the United States cannot or does not wish to give us guarantees for the future, we should react in an attitude of self defense and sell our products at the market price, beginning with sugar which today is worth eight cents and not 3.45.

This is the "prohibited truth" which was so properly qualified by Alvarez del Real; the very Cuban language that we should use to make ourselves worthy of the respect and consideration we are entitled to.