



EDITOR'S PREFACE

Globalization is an objective reality underlining the fact that we are all passengers on the same vessel – this planet where we all live. But passengers on this vessel are traveling in very different conditions.

A trifling minority is traveling in luxurious cabins furnished with the internet, cell phones and access to global communication networks. They enjoy a nutritional, abundant and balanced diet as well as clean water supplies. They have access to sophisticated medical care and culture.



The overwhelming and suffering majority is traveling in conditions that resemble the terrible slave trade from Africa to America in our colonial past. That is, 85 percent of the passengers on this ship are crowded together in its dirty hold, suffering hunger, disease and helplessness.

Obviously, this vessel is carrying too much injustice to remain afloat, pursuing such an irrational and senseless route...

It is our duty to take our rightful place at the helm and ensure that all passengers can travel in conditions of solidarity, equity and justice.

Fidel Castro's opening speech to the South Summit,
April 12, 2000

Many books have been written on the subject of globalization. Many conferences have debated its meaning and direction. Voices from the Third World have been allowed little space in this debate. Among the strongest of these voices – and it must be said, among the most radical – has been Cuba's Fidel Castro.



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In this book Fidel Castro adds his voice to the growing international chorus against neoliberalism and the globalization of privilege and exploitation. He denounces a system which colonized, enslaved and plundered the peoples of the globe for centuries and which continues to do so today in the name of “free market economics.”

The Cuban leader bluntly describes the world today as “one giant casino” and asks: “Why not seek other formulas and admit that human-kind is able to organize its life and its destiny in a more rational and humane manner?” Fidel Castro asks what kind of globalization is needed:

It cannot but be supportive, socialist, communist or whatever you want to call it. Does nature, and the human species with it, have much time left to survive in the absence of such change? Very little time. Who will be the builders of that new world? The men and women who inhabit our planet. What will be their basic weapons? Ideas will be, and consciousness. Who will sow them, cultivate them and make them invincible? You will. Is it a utopia, just one more dream among so many others? No, because it is objectively inevitable and there is no alternative to it. It has been dreamed of before, only perhaps too early. As the most visionary of the sons of this island, José Martí, said: “Today’s dreams will be tomorrow’s realities.”

If there is a singular theme that emerges from this volume it is the role of ideas. Fidel Castro thrives in the intellectual and moral challenge that now faces not only the oppressed of the world in seeking solutions that will benefit the immense majority, but also the forces for social change. This book reflects his never-ceasing drive to “sow and cultivate” these ideas of hope and struggle, providing them with a content that creates their invincibility. He lives and breathes this belief in the dreams of today and the realities of tomorrow.



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The items contained in this selection are from May 1998 to April 2000. They include speeches and written messages by Fidel Castro. Among the speeches are those given in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Brazil and South Africa. During these last two years, Fidel Castro has been outspoken on the need to find an alternative to globalized plunder, poverty and despair.

The items have been excerpted for this volume, which has sought to feature the contributions of Fidel Castro on not only the subject of globalization but also on some of the central issues of world politics at the beginning of a new century.

This selection contains a distinct voice from the Third World that deserves to be heard. It is a radical alternative to the neoliberal “models” of social development promoted by the World Bank and the IMF.

*David Deutschmann
Melbourne, Australia
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