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The Hostages Held By Premier Castro

Latin American delegations at the United Nations appealed to Premier Fidel Castro for clemency for the 458 rebels captured by the Cuban army in the attempted invasion.

"Ask for clemency the United States and the Central Intelligence Agency that organized the attack," the Cuban premier said in the course of his four-and-a-half-hour speech on Sunday. "It is absurd now to seek clemency if they do not stop the aggression against us."

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The speech Premier Castro has just made differs little from many that he made before a pitifully small force of Cuban patriots attempted a landing on a Cuban beach in order to join rebel forces in the Escambray Mountains. The United States expressed its sympathy with the invasion forces and gave them some aid in equipment and training, but there was no military intervention by this nation on behalf of forces that were seeking to finish a democratic revolution which the Castro government betrayed.

The invasion forces were directed by the Cuban Revolutionary Council in the United States. By a fitting coincidence the first president of Cuba under the Castro government Dr. Manuel Urrutia Lleo, was seeking asylum in Venezuela almost in the same hour in which Premier Castro was speaking in Havana and making his false accusation of aggression against the United States.

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Dr. Urrutia had once been the head of the revolutionary group of Cuban patriots in the United States backing a supposed democratic revolution against President Fulgencio Batista, the dictator overthrown by Fidel Castro.

When he was the head of rebel forces in the Sierra Maestra Mountains fighting Batista in 1958, Fidel Castro appealed to the world in a secret radio address to prevent Batista's execution of captured rebels. They were, he said in effect, Cuban patriots, fighting for democracy. The tables of the Cuban wilderness have turned.

Fidel Castro has already given Cuba a blood bath. He is now brainwashing the rebel prisoners he has captured and threatening to kill his captives. If he shoots these brave young Cubans he will

have to answer to all of Latin America as well as to all the free world.

Premier Castro holds the hostages of democratic aspirations in Latin America. His words and his threats should make clearer one of the next steps in the Latin American policy of the United States: a more vigorous and persevering effort to rally the nations of Latin America to the support of democratic government in Cuba by the overthrowing of Castro.