

TRÁNSLATION OF LETTER ADDRESSED BY GENERAL JOSE MIGUEL GOMEZ
TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LIBERAL PARTY DATED MARCH
10th. 1921.

Gentlemen of the Executive Committee:-

The offences committed against the Liberal Party since the month of May ult., not only by our political adversary, as solely that, although it would be deplorable to see the electoral campaign- degenerate, converting in a cruel battle what should be a tranquil civil function, but, the attack eventually proceeding from the other contender, the polling contest would be held on the same plane, bringing face to face the forces, the ability, the spirit and the energies of each group, without giving any illegitimate advantage or help, but when those offenses are carried out by official elements encouraged by the Government, which instead of remaining neutral in the contest, forms a sectarian part and an inflamed enemy, intervening and directing all in favor of the League without concealing it in any way, and allied to said League places at its disposal the immenses resources and the most illicit triskeries of Executive Power, forced me to adopt the firm resolution to repeatedly beg you, as you will no doubt remember, to disregard me on the electoral ticket, it being my proposal with said resignation, as I then notified you, to rest from the displeasures of this ungrateful public life, and specially, because, having another candidate for the Presidency, the rage and hatred which was ostensibly shown against my nomination would cease, and once the cause that determined the rancorous and spiteful participation of certain elements

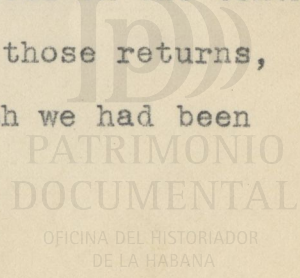
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in the electoral campaign disappeared, the mournful consequences of which I foresaw, we could succeed in preparing the polls and concur to them peacefully and orderly as is customary in civilised countries with people worthy of democracy as our history of sacrifices for liberty so deserves.-----

First your insistent request, and afterwards the proclamation issued by the President of the Republic on the 29th of August ult., and the Note published on the following day by the Charge d'Affairs of the Legation of the United States of America, obliged me to refrain from carrying out my purpose, and believing in the sincerity of General Menocal, and assured of the good faith of the expressive and conclusive warning of the Representative of the Government of Washington, I overcame my last doubts which were forcing me to retire to private life, and I thereupon resolved, considering it already a right and a duty owing to your generous insistencies to accept the nomination with which the Party honored me, seconding from that moment with vigorous actuations its incessant labor of enthisiastic propaganda, in which, as you will well remmember, we gathered from one to the other end of the Republic, the most delirious ovations from the compact masses, as if all the people of Cuba, anxious to free themselves from the bad Government they have suffered for the past eight years, crowding at every step of our march, acclaming us frantically in an ostentatious overwhelming of its irresistible Liberal mayority which affirmed to us the promise that the vistory of the Liberal Party would be an accomplished fact on

the first of November in the six provinces, without any possibility of it being avoided, (such was our excessive numerical superiority) by the crafty iniquities of the Government agents scattered over the National Territory, executed in some places and schemed in others. Nevertheless, our legitimate and founded hopes were shattered. I have no need in telling you so, as all of you are well aware of it. As the first day of November approached, the Government persecutions increased against our followers, but this did not detain us, because knowing as we did the enormous total number of votes in our favor, we decided to repulse the withdrawal that many recommended, and in spite of the Supervisors and the convicts recently pardoned, we went to the polls without having in mind, as no sane person could imagine it, that the coalition of the Leaguists and the Government could reach the limit of crimes and atrocities executed by them, which necessarily gave to the Party favored by the contaminated part of the Army, the advantage which the Provincial returns show. This, which in summary I have just set forth, as a synthesis of the electoral process, is absolutely true and is in everybody's conscience.

In view of our special international status, according to the interpretation given to the Platt amendment when the revolution of February (1917) took place, and armed with the meekness and patience of the legendary Saint, the Party resolved on the tenth of November, to rectify, in as far as possible, those returns, and to accuss the abominable proceedings of which we had been



the victims, utilizing the legal resources; and the Liberal Attorneys commenced the arduous task of contesting the cases of nullity, establishing the necessary appeals, gathering together all the proper proofs, which was a titanic work of unsurmountable difficulties on account of the innumerable violations committed and because of the hostility of the coercive situation created in the whole of the Island, which nobody can deny. We thus desired to show that we are a Party of order, and obedient to the counsels given to us; and allow me, as I have cited the Lawyers of the Liberal Party, to thank them now and express my most grateful acknowledgement. But the result of the appeals had to be as it has turned out, that the Courts have been unable to remedy all the evil caused, which was so great that it necessarily should scape the proofs of the contest as also the conviction of the Judges, in many, many of the abuses and infractions committed, leaving therefore unrestored the injustices and despoliation of the first of November. All said and done, in the Province of Santa Clara alone one hundred and two colleges have been annulled, which with those of Matanzas, Camaguey and Pinar del Río make in all nearly 200, without taking into consideration those yet SUBJUDICE in the Oriental Province, and those annullments are based, in the most conscientious analysis of the evidence brought forward in the proceedings, on coertions, intimidations, violences and the brutal misbehavior of the public forces, which far from upholding the rights of all citizens, placed themselves in a perverse and evident partiality in favor of the

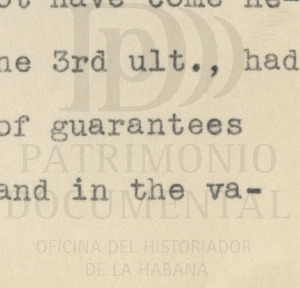
League, and brought about the terror which obstructed the voting of our colleagues. This is not a whimsical statement of our; this is the matter already decided, the judicial affirmation, the truth officially declared in those judgements, which are the greatest stigma and the most explicit condemnation of the Government.

On reading the decisions of the Supreme Court, amidst the sadness which overwhelms me, because it is shameful that such a scene should be depicted by those whose duty it is to be the keepers of order and the guardians and upholders of the Constitution and of the Republic, I feel satisfied that the Courts proclaim that I have not been defeated, which to any impartial observer, even without taking into account the desenting votes of those Judges who did not agree with the verdicts of the Court, and coolly judging the occurrences in the light of the data scrupulously thrashed out, it is easy to arrive at a conclusion that the Liberal Party won the elections in the whole of the Provinces in the year 1920, and was deprived of its victory in the same manner as it was robbed of the triumph gained in the year 1916. It is thus easy to deduce from said decisions of the Court, that all the occurrences cannot be understood and punished. The exceedingly small difference which our opponents have over us in the Pinar del Río and Camaguey Provinces, and the 3,500 votes of Matanzas, notwithstanding the accumulated atrocities of the police and soldiers, and considering also the unaccountable duality of judicial opinion in the decisions of the cases of Agramon-

te, Guaimaro and Sagua regarding the Municipal and National offices, which, perhaps, General Crowder, the learned author of the Law, cannot possibly explain, and which undoubtedly would have shortened even more the distance, giving us a larger margin for our probabilities of victory in the special elections is sufficient evidence.

The date of this election having been set, I was preparing to compete, notwithstanding the advantage resulting for the League in the definite decisions of the Supreme Court being unjust, it also being the result of the system of intimidation set up on the first of November, which, although in given cases all the proofs severely exacted by the Court were not forthcoming, it has been notoriously proven and everybody is convinced it was so. And my best support and greatest confidence rested in the noble and intelligent offices of General Crowder with the Parties and specially so in regard to General Menocal. I logically believed that his actuations would have been energetic and efficient, as far as would be permitted by the delicate and embarrassing circumstances under which he had to develop his high influence, and would have been shown in the so many times promised guaranties for suffrage. The voyage of the Minnesota unaccountable to me, except in so far as it came to make good the second part of the Note of August 30th ult., though, with all due respect to the Sovereignty of the people of Cuba, which the Special Envoy of President Wilson would so correctly observe and for which we shall be ever grateful, but never sacrificing a misunderstood condescension with a Government of bad faith, the rights of the people and the aims and efficiency of its function,

because it could never be forgotten that its mission was one of reparation and justice to re-establish truth and the dignity of suffrage, giving an opportunity to the majority of the people of Cuba to freely elect its officers. The revolution of 1917 had been condemned and the moment had arrived to equally condemn and suppress the violences and frauds of usurpation which deprived the will of the people of Cuba from choosing its rulers, as was duly warned in said document, in which our faith had been set on so many promises. I was under the impression that what had taken place with such a general and intense character was so astonishing and unheard of, that it was not a matter of a judicial case, but one of an extremely extraordinary situation beyond the foresight of the legislator and the authority of the Courts; but having submitted to these Courts the matter involved, as that was the reply to our statement of November the 7th ult., I expected that to go to the new polls, more so, under the conditions of inferiority in which the decisions of the Courts would place us, which could not be absolutely fair and avoid all the outrages and grivances owing to the defficiency of proofs and the perplexity of the traditional judicial criterium, I expected, I repeat, that we should be surroundid by positive guaranties, in view of the fact that as we were absolutely deprived of them on the first of November, they would be assured us in this new trial. I considered that General Crowder could not have come here for any other reason, as the Note of August the 3rd ult., had been scoffed, and those promises and assurances of guarantees had been repeated by him in public declarations and in the va-



rious interviews which he had so kindly granted us, in which he always clearly and precisely stated that no elections would take place without complete guarantees extending from at least ten days in advance of the elections. Can it be said that those guarantees exist; that the coercions of the last days of October are not repeated, and that the same obstacles and dangers for casting his vote are not placed in the way of the Liberal elector as were set in motion on the first of November? Cuban blood has already newly been shed in Cruces and Colon, and this should make us all shudder and recede: our electors are forsooth in fear, and our agents arrested, and the convicts are been transferred to the localities where elections are to be held, with arms and money belonging to the Republic. It matters not that formal acquiescence should have been given to the propositions of the Committee of Cordiality, which has already been dissolve by you because it was childish to expect anything solemn, sincere and real of far reaching practical efficacy; it matters not that the Supervisors sould have ceased in their offices if they are substituted by others much worse as hapens in Sagua, or they leave the police force organized as in Colon illegally upheld by the Executive Secretary, notwithstanding our complains, all of which have culminated in the death and wounded of yesterday; either does it matter that judicial inspectors be appointed if the same system of coercion continues involving us, and the same obstinate determination of the first of November also continues in force, obstructing and injuring the Liberal voters. Everything

offered is an indignant fallacy, and all that has been^{done}/is deri-
sive and useless in spite of the good intentions, the upright
advice, the lofty proposals and the constant efforts of our
generous friend General Crowder.

Under those conditions, I definitely make good the attitude
which I announced to said General in my letter of the 3rd inst.,
with these words:

"After the experience of 1916 and that of November last, and
in view of the inefficacy of the Notes of August the 30th ult.,
and the reign of violences in which we live, I would not cons-
cientiously dare as a Presiencial Candidate, to assume the moral
responsibility before my people, to advise my fellowcountrymen
to go to an election under those circumstances as it would be
equal to taking them to an abnormal situation of violence where
they would perhaps lose their lives and the peace of their ho-
mes". I have placed them before the Executive Committee with
the reasons set forth in this letter, in order that, considering
them with their good judgement, they may adopt the ulterior de-
cisions which they may think most convenient. It is sad, indeed,
that in a Country which apparently is free and master of its
own destiny, I cannot persevere in my high desire, not even
being upheld by the majority of my fellow-citizens. It is pain-
ful that the majority of the people shuld be subdued by an au-
dacious minority favored by a tyrannical Government, because
the result of it all would be: the polls a farce, suffrage a
sham pro-formula, reserving victory for the favorite of the Pa-

lace (government). But that is our true reality, and our so-called boasted democracy only a display-sign, with the imposition, annulled by nobody, of these methods of oppression and usurpation, without a recourse of revolt or possible punishment, owing to the veto of the United States and our love of Nationality. In our statement of November the 7th we did not ask for intervention as has been slanderously attributed to us; what we asked for was the effective electoral supervision, obliged by the singular conditions of our relations with the United States and its daily increasing interference in our public life since the proclamation issued by Mr. Gonzalez, and also for the celebration of general elections comprising also the Province of Havana. That was in accordance with our point of view, and I respectfully say, the duty of the American Administration. We accepted the other way, which would give advantage to our adversary. What I cannot accept, after having gone through the calvary which we have exhausted, because this would be inconcievable and would cast on my conscience the blood that is being and will be shed, is to go to the polls in which are being reproduced the threats and outrages which took place during the days preceeding November the first, and in which there will be repeated the same offences and injuries which took place when the electoral body last went to the polls and it was set back and riddled in the persons of the Liberal proselytes.

I have done all that has been in my power not to reach this well meditated decision, which perhaps may complicate our conflicts. I have endeavor as far as possible to avoid the eclip-

sing of the rights of democracy or to interrupt the course of the Republic; and I am tranquil and my spirit in absolute calm that I have no responsibility whatever in these failures and evils of my Country. When many of the present hirelings of the Republican Power genuflected before the Colonial Governors, I was founding it with my blood; afterwards I placed liberty and law above all. To-day, leaving you in complete liberty of action, I render to you a further proof that I wish its greatness and well-being. We should all love it above all things, offering to its conservation and prestige our personal egoisms. Blame for its misfortunes those who if in other epochs were patriots now are blind in their passions and compromise its existence; and let us leave the sad and bloody booty of the subterfuge of a dishonest suffrage to those who, following the vanities and profits of Power do not reflect or consider in risking the life of the Republic, sacrificing the normal evolution of its institutions, and in dispute with all cordial and conciliatory sentiments, are the only responsible for these irritating discords, and that the neighbor who watches and admonishes us should penetrate and daily increase more and more, his intervention in our matters.

Yours respectfully.

(SIGNED) JOSE MIGUEL GOMEZ.



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