

June 16, 1967

Dear Mrs. Kennedy:

I beg you forgiveness for enclosing so much literature but the events following my speech at Quemu-Quemu at the Inauguration of the Monument to the memory of your late husband, somewhat justify the bulk of this delivery.

The monument itself is without a doubt the most impressive in my country and one of most impressive in the Hemisphere. It has the height of a twelve story building and the strength of a constructive atomic explosion. My words modestly tried to match the sincerity, the aggressiveness and the clarity of the Uruguayan artist Lincoln Fresno, who designed the monument.

For those who believed that this would be just one more ceremony for a dead man, monument and speech descended as surprise and not an altogether pleasant one. What we tried to do was to demonstrate that President Kennedy was not dead but very much alive, and this was the quality which perturbed a few reactionary spirits that also were present during the ceremony.

Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy  
1040 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Although the exact version appears distorted in the end of the clipping of the Buenos Aires Herald it will give you a rough idea of what happened. The authorities did not leave during or after the speech on account of it, and the only slight commotion was provoked by one of the agents of stupidity to whom I allude in my words. (Stupidity is a major version of darkness -perhaps the worst).

Those forces went as far as to bring pressure on the local authorities, that contradicting the will of the people represented by those who erected the monument, gave way to this pressure and declared me "persona non grata" in Quemu - Quemu. Simultaneously the people of Quemu - Quemu through the voice of those who lifted the monument, expressed their full approval of my words.

q The hidden accusation against my speech was that it belonged to the marxist brand. I think words speak for themselves and will not try to justify what I consider a blind accusation. The blindness of this accusation is corroborated, among other things, by the declaration of the marxist intellectual who signed in Cuba at the beginning of this year a document where they denounce my activity as one of the most perilous antagonisms that as yet communism has met in Latin America, together with the Alliance for Progress, one of the strokes of genius of your late husband.

Pressures were strong under this accusation of marxism and in those circumstances and feeling with my back against the wall, doing

my best to survive against these attacks of ignorance and misunderstanding, I took a step hoping for your approval once you realized the circumstances under which I took it.

In a press conference in which the marxist accusations had to be answered, I read among other things the letter you had sent me in support of the monument and which really said nothing that could in any way compromise you but which at the same time did quite a lot for me in terms of clearing the atmosphere of the type of accusations launched against me. I had never thought of giving publicity to a letter that was personal I assure you, but I felt compelled to do so hoping that when properly informed you would approve of my action.

The Kennedy spirit is not easy to share because things worth while, I guess, are never easy. I can only hope that in my sincere attitude of wishing to share in that spirit I may meet with your approval.

Rafael Squirru  
Director  
Department of Cultural Affairs

CA/D/RS/mr.