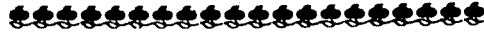


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"On my island, inspired by your example we shall shape our conscience and build Communism," says Fidel Castro in this poster harking back to (clockwise from upper left) Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, a leader of Cuba's 1868 war of independence; Antonio Maceo and Máximo Gómez, veterans of the 1868 and 1895 rebellions against Spain; José Martí, martyred leader of the 1895 revolt; and Camillo Cienfuegos and Ernesto Ché Guevara, early Castro lieutenants in the Sierra Maestra.



Cuba

Last June, the United States and Cuba began the process of restoring formal diplomatic relations. Already American diplomats have been stationed in Havana, and Cuban diplomats in Washington. Such tentative steps toward "normalization" follow almost two decades of Cold War hostility. Washington still sees some outstanding issues: compensation for \$1.8 billion in nationalized American property; Cuba's ambitious nuclear power program; its widespread military intervention in Africa; and the fact that Fidel Castro has kept more political prisoners in jail for a longer time than any other Latin strongman. Yet Castro's attempts to export his revolution to the rest of Latin America have failed. Cuba remains a one-party Communist state and a Soviet ally, but it has a history and character of its own. Here, historians Martin Sherwin and Peter Winn review past Cuban-American relations, while political scientist Richard R. Fagen examines Cuba's special dependence on the Soviet Union.



THE U.S. AND CUBA

by Martin J. Sherwin and Peter Winn

"There are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation," John Quincy Adams observed in 1823, drawing an analogy between the fate of an apple severed from a tree and the destiny of a beautiful island 90 miles off the coast of the newly acquired territory of Florida: "Forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain and incapable of self-support, [Cuba] can gravitate only toward the North American Union,

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which, by the same law of nature, cannot cast her off from its bosom."

One hundred and thirty-five years later, however, something "unnatural" happened to Cuba, and for almost 20 years Americans have been trying to figure out what went wrong. How did an island liberated in 1898 by our army and adopted by our navy—a country so freighted with our economic interests and political influence that it could be described as "no more independent than Long Island"—defy the laws of gravity? Were our perceptions of Cuba mistaken?

The search for useful answers must begin with a hard look at the cultural, geographic, and economic assumptions that have guided American diplomacy since our Founding Fathers conceived of the "American system," a sphere-of-influence concept that envisioned a U.S.-dominated Hemisphere.

Manifest Destiny

Culturally, the United States is Anglo-Protestant and northern European, a society of immigrants at odds with the ethos of the Latin world. Our citizens may turn south for trade or relaxation, but for models and for measures of success they look across the North Atlantic. The good opinion of Latin Americans does not weigh heavily on them: Imitation is encouraged, envy expected, and disapproval permitted, but activities that conflict with the interests of the United States are not suffered gladly.

This attitude, which Abraham Lowenthal has termed our "hegemonic presumption,"* has guided U.S.-Latin American policy since the 19th century, when Manifest Destiny spread the fever of expansionism across the North American continent. Distinctions between our conquest of half of Mexico in 1848 and our acquisition of Cuba from Spain 50 years later are real, but they

*Abraham Lowenthal, "The United States and Latin America: Ending the Hegemonic Presumption," *Foreign Affairs*, Oct. 1976.

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Largest and most westerly of the Caribbean Islands, Cuba is 745 miles long and has a total area of 44,218 square miles (roughly the size of Louisiana). It lies only 90 miles from Key West and 48 miles from Haiti, and is strategically placed to command the sea approaches to the Panama Canal. Discovered by Columbus in 1492, Cuba was colonized by Spain in 1511. The island is fertile and enjoys a moderate and stable climate, which is ideal for sugarcane cultivation. There are significant deposits of nickel, iron, copper, chrome, manganese, and tungsten, but no oil.

are far less important than the underlying assumption that binds them to the Platt Amendment of 1901 and the Bay of Pigs: that the United States has the power, the right, and indeed the responsibility to define the economic and political order throughout the Hemisphere.

A Tranquil Caribbean

Geography, too, has helped mold American perceptions of Cuba, from the earliest days of the Republic through the present, when space age technology calls into question the importance of proximity in great power strategy. Poised at the gateway to the Caribbean, guarding the isthmian route to the

Pacific, only 48 miles from Key West, Cuba has been viewed by Presidents from Jefferson to Nixon as an island whose destiny the United States must control. Even the 1823 Monroe Doctrine, as historian Ronald Steel noted in *Pax Americana* (1976), was essentially a Caribbean doctrine that affirmed the "vital interest" of the United States "in the tranquility of what it considered to be its inland sea."

American businessmen had reasons of their own for promoting a U.S. pre-eminence in Cuba. Even before the Spanish-American War, they had established a beachhead on the island. By 1897, exports to Cuba had reached \$27 million and investments almost twice that amount. After the island came under U.S. protection in 1898, the dollar followed the flag, a condition which Cuba's first U.S.-appointed governor-general, Leonard Wood, equated with political stability. When "people ask me what we mean by a stable government in Cuba," Wood wrote to Secretary of War Elihu Root in 1900, "I tell them that when money can be borrowed at a reasonable rate of interest and when capital is willing to invest in the Island, a condition of stability will have been reached."*

In the years that followed, United States economic interests achieved virtual control of the Cuban economy. American investments rose to \$1.2 billion in 1924, a year in which tiny Cuba was our fourth largest customer, buying 66 percent of its imports from the United States and sending us 83 percent of its exports (mostly sugar) in exchange. By 1928, Americans controlled three-quarters of Cuban sugar production, and "King Sugar," accounting for nearly 90 percent of Cuban exports, ruled the island's economy.

"Our Cuban Colony"

During the succeeding decades, American sugar holdings declined, reflecting the unstable fortunes of Cuba's bittersweet crop. Nevertheless, in 1956 Americans directly controlled 40 percent of Cuba's sugar production and consumed half of its sugar exports. The island still depended upon the United States for capital, technology, and tourism, as well as manufactures and markets. The development of Cuban industry had been impeded by treaty and restrictive U.S. legislation; Congress set the all-important Cuban sugar quota, and American investments accounted for 85 percent of all foreign investments on the

* Quoted in David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), p. 133.

island.* Economically, on the eve of Castro's Revolution, the island was still "our Cuban colony", and politically, the United States ambassador, by his own testimony, was "the second most important man in Cuba; sometimes even more important than the [Cuban] president."†

Despite the cultural biases, national security concerns, and economic interests that shaped U.S. policies toward Cuba, a minority of Americans sought to balance our interests against the legitimate aspirations of the Cuban people, although with limited success. In 1898, they persuaded Congress to accept the Teller Amendment, forbidding outright annexation of the island, only to see this measure neutralized in 1901 with the passage of the Platt Amendment, asserting the right of the United States to intervene in Cuba's internal affairs.

Background to Revolution

Three military interventions and an equal number of American proconsuls punctuated Cuba's history between 1901 and 1934, when President Franklin Roosevelt renounced the Platt Amendment.‡ Other forms of U.S. intervention, however, proved more benign. During the American occupation of 1899–1902, army doctors under Walter Reed virtually banished yellow fever from the island. Cuban finances were reorganized, trade boomed, and the Catholic Church was separated from the operations of the government.

But while American enterprise afforded Cuba a significant measure of prosperity, the island's new affluence was unevenly distributed and dependent upon the volatile world sugar market. In the end, the Depression and the Machado dictatorship (1924–33) brought economic crisis and political unrest—and Sumner Welles as President Roosevelt's emissary—to Cuba in 1933. Rejecting Machado's successor as too radical, Welles or-

*The Reciprocal Trade Agreement of 1934 barred import quotas or protective tariffs on a wide range of American manufactures and flooded the Cuban market with goods at prices with which local industries could not compete. Together with the Jones-Costigan Act of the same year, which established a generous quota for Cuban refined sugar, the trade treaty constituted what Earl Babst of the American Sugar Refining Company called "a step in the direction of a sound Colonial Policy."

†Earl Smith, in *Communist Threat to the United States Through the Caribbean*, Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act, Aug. 30, 1960, pt. 9, p. 700.

‡Between 1898 and 1920, the United States landed troops 20 times on the soil of foreign nations. Three of these interventions involved Cuba, although the Platt Amendment was invoked as justification only in 1906. In addition, the tutelary missions of Charles Magoon (1907–09), Enoch Crowder (1920–22), and Sumner Welles (1933) represented active American political interference in Cuba's internal affairs.

cheestrated negotiations in Cuba and decisions in Washington that led to the ouster of the reform-minded Ramon Grau San Martin in January 1934. Taking the hint, Cuban Army strongman Colonel Fulgencio Batista threw his support to Cuba's pro-American conservatives and reaped 25 years of power as a reward.

Batista brought tranquillity to Cuba, but through co-optation and coercion rather than reform. Strikes were broken, labor unions disciplined, and constitutional guarantees honored in the breach. Private property and foreign investment, however, were protected. Although a well-intentioned Foreign Policy Association study of 1935 focused sympathetically on the *Problems of the New Cuba*, in the eyes of most American policymakers and businessmen, the Cuban situation had been favorably resolved. By the 1950's, movies and tourism had replaced the old image of "our Cuban colony" with a new vision of "the enchanted island."

The Unseen Cuba

For most of its 6 million people, however, Batista's Cuba was a land of poverty, unemployment, sugar monoculture, and social injustice. Its politics were corrupt and repressive, and its relatively high levels of per capita income and social services were distributed unevenly. A 1951 World Bank report underscored these problems* and a few scholars and journalists denounced Batista's frustration of democracy and denial of human rights, but this was a Cuba that most Americans neither saw nor wished to see.

The New Deal had responded to the growth of anti-Americanism south of the border with the Good Neighbor Policy, but viewed from Havana, benevolent changes in U.S. policy between 1898 and 1958 were more show than substance. With its emphasis on political stability and economic order, the clear priority of American policy in Cuba remained the protection of American interests—a commitment that placed the United States in opposition to fundamental reform. For six decades, this policy appeared to be relatively successful, while acute economic, social,

*International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Report on Cuba*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1951. This study found ample unused human and material resources available in Cuba and urged that the country take advantage of the current prosperity to diversify her economy, which concentration on sugar had prevented at a social cost of 25 percent unemployment, even in "normal" times. The report also recognized the social and political obstacles to economic growth, stressing in particular a malaise among the Cuban people, reflecting a lack of faith in the integrity of government and business and labor leaders, and doubts concerning the impartiality and consistency of law enforcement.

CUBAN DOMESTIC EVENTS

- 1952** *March* Colonel Fulgencio Batista ousts President Carlos Prío Socarrás in a military coup.
- 1953** *July* Rebels led by Fidel Castro attack Moncado Barracks in Santiago de Cuba; about 100 students and soldiers killed.
- 1956** *November* Revolutionary uprising led by Castro begins in Oriente Province.
- 1959** *January* Batista resigns and flees to Dominican Republic. *February* Castro sworn in as premier of Cuba. *May* Agrarian Reform Bill effectively confiscates U.S. sugar holdings.
- 1960** *May* Pro-government unions seize major newspapers critical of Castro regime.
- 1961** *May* In a May Day speech, Castro proclaims Cuba a socialist state. *June* Cuba nationalizes education.
- 1963** *October* Most privately owned farms are nationalized.
- 1964** *August* Cuba cuts back on foreign buying because of deteriorating economy.
- 1966** *January* Government cuts rice ration by 50 percent.
- 1969** *May* Bread rationing goes into effect in Havana; Castro calls for record 10 million-ton sugar harvest in 1970.
- 1970** *July* Castro publicly acknowledges economic problems. *December* Castro announces failure to meet 10 million-ton sugar goal.
- 1972** *February* Government announces 35 percent reduction in domestic sugar ration; Cuban dependence on Soviet aid reaches \$750 million annually.
- 1973** *January* Government cuts daily beef ration by 20 percent.
- 1974** *June* Delegates to municipal assemblies are elected in first provincial elections in 15 years.
- 1975** *June* Cuba announces a trade surplus of \$500 million for 1974. *December* First Cuban Five-Year Plan calls for 6 percent annual growth rate; planners emphasize profitability and decentralized decision-making; Cuban Congress approves Constitution affirming Cuban socialism and calling for Cuban trade and diplomatic relations with all countries.
- 1976** *February* Popular referendum approves new Constitution.

and political problems festered. In the end, the failure to carry out reforms from above led to revolution from below—a revolution with a distinctly anti-American cast.

Revolution and Confrontation

The initial American image of Fidel Castro was shaped by veteran *New York Times* correspondent Herbert Matthews in a series of articles in early 1957. Matthews had traced Castro and his guerrillas to the rugged Sierra Maestra in eastern Cuba, and his articles described the Cuban leader as an idealistic reformer intent on restoring the democratic Cuban Constitution of 1940. While some of his followers were probably Communists—including his brother Raul and Ernesto “Ché” Guevara—Castro himself, said Matthews, was not. He concluded that the guerrilla leader’s policies were likely to be conditioned by the way the United States treated him.

During 1958, as reports of guerrilla success and government repression surfaced in the American press, Washington’s support for Batista began to cool. The State Department, however, still sought a “safe” alternative, pinning its hopes first upon a Batista general, Eulogio Cantillo, and then, after the rebel victory, on the restraining influence of more moderate members of Castro’s political coalition, but with the flight of Batista and his closest collaborators to the Dominican Republic on the last day of 1958, power effectively devolved on Fidel Castro.

Although the United States recognized the new Cuban government, the underlying tensions between Washington and Havana surfaced early in 1959 when the Revolution took a radical road. The trial and execution of some 500 Batista military and police officers accused of “war crimes” (involving the deaths of an estimated 20,000 Cubans during the preceding decade) were widely criticized in Congress and the American media. The new land reform and utilities regulation measures were formally protested as prejudicial to American interests.

Increasingly, allegations of communist influence appeared in the U.S. press, and Matthew’s romantic image of Fidel Castro yielded to something more menacing. “The Revolution may be like a watermelon,” suggested the *Wall Street Journal* on June 24, 1959. “The more they slice it, the redder it gets.” These were but the first in a series of salvos fired across the Caribbean whose cumulative effect was to reverse the force of geopolitical gravity and send John Quincy Adams’ Cuban apple spinning off into the Soviet orbit.

In the months that followed, the United States embargoed

trade with Cuba, recalled its ambassador, and secretly began training an exile invasion force, while Cuba nationalized American property, re-oriented its economy toward the Soviet Union, and moved toward declaring itself the Hemisphere's first socialist state. In the face of a revolution whose character and ideology had disappointed their expectations, the exodus of half a million Cubans began, many of whom found a home in Miami and support for their cause in Washington. By the close of 1960, the United States and Cuba were trading accusations and steering a collision course.

Although the United States response to the Cuban Revolution was influenced by the assumptions and politics of the Cold War, the intense emotion that it aroused in America revealed still deeper roots. The U.S. reaction also reflected a sense of failure and betrayal, as well as an awareness of the threat to our self-image and Caribbean hegemony that the success of Castro's Revolution represented. Americans may have differed about who was to blame, but they shared the rage of Prospero at the treachery of a Cuban Caliban.

At bottom, however, the anti-American course of the Cuban Revolution was the result neither of American error nor Cuban perfidy but of a fundamental conflict between our hegemonic presumption and Fidel Castro's commitment to the structural transformation of Cuba and its international relations. The United States would itself take up the banners of land reform, industrial development, and social justice during the years of President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. Castro's pursuit of these goals in Cuba in 1959, however, clashed with powerful American interests, as did his determination to lessen Cuba's dependence upon the United States. Either Castro would have to compromise his vision of a New Cuba, as his nation's leaders had always done in the past, or a showdown with Washington was all but inevitable.

Surrogate Invaders

While politicians and pundits debated whether Fidel Castro was a Communist and how Cuba's leap into the arms of the Russian bear could have been averted, successive U.S. administrations moved to deal with the new "red threat to the Hemisphere," as they had dealt with its Guatemalan predecessor in 1954—by sponsoring an invasion of exiles.

If the hegemonic presumption composed one part of the equation that added up to the 1961 invasion at the Bay of Pigs, the other was the projection onto Cubans of American values:

Castro was a Communist and a dictator; therefore the Cuban people would rebel against him, granted the opportunity. On the sands of *Playa Giron*, this presumption was revealed to be anachronistic and this projection ethnocentric. But the assumptions that shaped the invasion of Cuba were too deeply rooted for even the debacle of the Bay of Pigs to alter.

President Kennedy took responsibility for a misconceived strategy, but he continued to regard the new Cuba as a threat to the hemispheric system, a menace underscored by Castro's undisguised support for leftist guerrilla movements and the appearance of Russian vessels in Cuban ports. In Washington's eyes, the existence of a "red peril" only 90 miles from Miami justified a covert intervention that included economic sabotage, commando raids, and attempts to assassinate Castro. It required the recruitment and training of a clandestine force of Cuban exiles—a force that entered history at the Bay of Pigs and came home to roost at the Watergate.

Ironically, the potential Cuban threat to national—and hemispheric—security may have been largely a self-fulfilling American prophecy. The covert United States intervention in Cuba and open blockade of the island convinced Castro that another, more dangerous American invasion was in the offing and, by his own account, led the Cuban government to request the secret installation of Russian medium-range missiles on the island.

Sheathing the Dagger

Although the "missiles of October" (1962) had little effect upon the strategic balance of terror, their presence gave concrete shape to the deep-seated American fear of Cuba, "an island pointing like a dagger at the soft-underbelly of the nation." In the face of this concern, other considerations became secondary; the United States agreed not to invade Cuba in return for removal of the offending missiles.

Thereafter, American policy concentrated upon the containment of the Cuban Revolution, pressing for the island's ouster from hemispheric political and economic systems and training the Latin American military to prevent its repetition elsewhere. This priority of "no more Cubas" was to shape the Latin American policy of the United States for a decade—from Kennedy's Alliance for Progress to Kissinger's New Dialogue—and lead us to support first reform and then military dictatorships in half the continent, to send marines into the Dominican Republic (1965), and to intervene covertly in Chile (1970–73). As

President Lyndon Johnson remarked in justification of his massive Dominican intervention: "We don't propose to sit here in our rocking chair with our hands folded and let the Communists set up any government in the Western Hemisphere."

The New Cuba's Many Faces

The missile crisis, the most menacing event of the Cold War, froze a chilling image of Cuba for most Americans. Cuba was now a Russian satellite and America's enemy. It was a land of Spartan socialism, communist dictatorship, and regimented masses. Gone was the old image of Latin sensuality and spontaneity, of rum and rhumba.

Within this framework of general hostility, contradictory views of the "New Cuba" persisted. Some observers saw Castro as a Soviet satrap, replicating the structures and strictures of a neo-Stalinist state, responsive to the will and whim of the Kremlin.* Others regarded the Cuban leader as unpredictably autonomous, a revolutionary Latin tail wagging the conservative Russian bear, a financial drain on Soviet gold and a competitor for Third World leadership.†

Only a minority of Americans viewed the Cuban Revolution with more favorable eyes, stressing its concern for social and economic equity. To them, Fidel Castro was a popular and charismatic leader, not a totalitarian tyrant, and his rule reflected both independence and innovation.‡ Whatever the merits of these various views, it was not until the mid-1970's that the prevailing American image of Cuba began to change, and with that change came a thaw in U.S.-Cuban relations.

On the Cuban side, the high costs of the symbolic 1970 sugar harvest and the failure of revolutionary movements elsewhere in Latin America led to a new pragmatism in economic and foreign policy and to a new stress on citizen participation in building

* See, for example, K. S. Karol, *Guerrillas in Power*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1970, and Irving L. Horowitz, "The Political Sociology of Cuban Communism," in Carmelo Mesa-Lago, ed., *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972.

† See, Theodore Draper, *Castroism, Theory and Practice*, New York: Praeger, 1965; Andres Suarez, *Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-66*, Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 1967; D. Bruce Johnson, *Castro, the Kremlin and Communism in Latin America*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969.

‡ This group and its publications include Lee Lockwood, *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel*, New York: Macmillan, 1967; Jose Yglesias, *In the Fist of the Revolution*, New York: Pantheon, 1968; Richard Fagen, *The Transformation of Political Culture in Cuba*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969; and Marvin Leiner, *Children Are the Revolution*, New York: Viking, 1974.

socialism. On the American side, détente with Russia and China and peace in Vietnam made continued confrontation with Cuba an anomaly, while Castro's success in building diplomatic bridges to other Latin countries and eroding the U.S. economic blockade made a new Cuba policy advisable. Moreover, as the Communist monolith fractured into competing socialisms, pursuing distinct ideological paths and diverse national interests, the United States began to perceive opportunities to be seized where it had previously seen only enemies to be combatted.

Although Richard Nixon's personal hostility to Castro's Cuba (which he likened to one half of "a red sandwich," the other half being Chile several thousand miles away) prevented him from extending détente to the enemy off Key Biscayne, his successor, Gerald Ford, began the process of improving relations. Ironically, Nixon, with his trip to Peking, paved the way for President Jimmy Carter's inclusion of Cuba—along with China—among those areas of the world in which the United States should "aggressively challenge . . . the Soviet Union and others for influence." Détente may not have begun close to home, but the logic of détente eventually found its way back to the Caribbean.

Recently, American interest in Castro's Revolution has increased. Scholars and journalists, congressmen and businessmen have gone to Cuba and returned with more balanced impressions. Though it remains a country with economic problems, political restrictions, and Russian ties, it is also a land of rich resources, social reforms, and Latin culture. Moreover, in Fidel Castro Cuba has a popular and pragmatic leader who is ready for a rapprochement with the United States. Significantly, a Gallup poll taken last spring showed that a majority of Americans now favor negotiating our differences with Cuba and restoring diplomatic ties with Havana.*

As the Carter Administration takes steps to achieve both these goals, one phase in the long history of U.S.-Cuban relations draws to a close and a new one, with an opportunity to transcend the myths and mutual misperceptions of the past, begins. "The difficulty," Lord Keynes observed, "lies not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones."

* By a margin of more than 2 to 1 (59 percent to 25 percent), this poll showed that Americans are either "very strongly" or "fairly strongly" in favor of entering into negotiations (16 percent "didn't know"). Public opinion, which had been firmly opposed to normalization of relations with Cuba in early 1971 (Harris survey: 21 percent in favor, 61 percent opposed, 18 percent didn't know) began to shift after President Nixon's trip to China in 1972. See William Watts and Jorge I. Domínguez, *The United States and Cuba: Old Issues and New Directions*, Washington: Potomac Associates, 1977.



CUBA AND THE SOVIET UNION

by Richard R. Fagen

One day last spring, while walking along the breakwater in the once fashionable western section of Havana, I spotted a pair of massive high-rise buildings facing the ocean on an isolated promontory. "What are they?" I asked my Cuban companion. "Those are the living quarters of Soviet and East European technicians and their families," he said.

What did he think, I asked, of Soviet "influence" on Cubans and the Cuban Revolution? "It doesn't exist," he replied. "We simply owe them our lives."

Given my friend's poetic bent, he can be forgiven a bit of hyperbole. But there is an essential truth, both in what he said and in the symbolism of the massive, isolated buildings overlooking the sea. In one sense, the Cuban Revolution does owe its "life" to Soviet support, and certainly the Soviet presence in Cuba is both substantial and special. But equally noteworthy is how Cuban, how un-Soviet, how independent Fidel Castro's regime has remained throughout this long and tangled relationship.

Cuban history offers some insights into this paradox. When Fulgencio Batista fled Cuba in the early hours of the morning on January 1, 1959, eight days before Castro's forces marched into Havana, few persons in the world—possibly including Fidel Castro and most of his followers—could have predicted that such a close relationship with the Soviet Union lay ahead. On the contrary, to Castro's 26th of July Movement and its supporters, victory essentially meant the defeat of a brutal dictatorship and the chance to complete the long process of national liberation and development that had begun in 1868 with the first major revolt against Spanish rule in Cuba.

National liberation, however, did mean basically changing Cuba's 20th-century relationship with the United States, a relationship firmly rooted in U.S. entry into the struggle in the closing days of the Cuban Wars of Independence, reaffirmed through multiple political and military interventions, and symbolized

by the massive and humiliating (for nationalistic Cubans) U.S. economic presence on the island.

Although misperceived by most North Americans at the time, the fall of Batista and the public commitment of the new Cuban government to a program of profound economic and political changes necessarily implied direct conflict with U.S. economic, political, and strategic interests. Less fully understood—even by some early leaders of the Revolution—was that actually carrying out this program, especially those aspects that promised the eradication of poverty and the construction of a society in which all could realistically aspire to a decent life, implied the socialist transformation of Cuba's dependent capitalist system.

Caribbean Cold War

The first crude and imperfect expressions of these historical realities were not long in coming. During 1959, as the revolutionary government moved toward urban and agrarian reform, the nationalization of some foreign properties, and the freeing of Cuba from U.S. control, cries of "betrayal," "subversion," and "communism" were heard both in Cuba and abroad.

Although causality should not be assumed, it is not entirely coincidental that in March 1960, one month after Cuba signed a \$100 million loan and a sugar and trade agreement with the Soviet Union, President Eisenhower directed the CIA to begin organizing, training, and equipping the Cuban exiles who 13 months later came ashore at the Bay of Pigs.

In May 1960, Cuba and the Soviet Union formally established diplomatic relations, and Cuba informed the managers of U.S.-owned oil refineries that they would have to process Russian oil purchased under the recently signed Cuban-Soviet trade agreement. The refineries, acting under U.S. government directives, refused to receive the Soviet oil. A month later, they were seized by the Cuban government, and the Cold War was in full swing in the Caribbean. On July 9, three days after the United States reduced the Cuban sugar quota, Khrushchev

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promised to "defend Cuba with rockets" if the United States were to attack—a pledge that he subsequently said was only "symbolic."*

As 1961 dawned, the United States severed diplomatic relations with Cuba, claiming intolerable provocations. Little more than a hundred days later, on April 15, came the aerial bombardment that preceded the invasion of the Bay of Pigs. In his funeral oration for those killed in these first attacks, Castro declared that the Cuban Revolution was socialist. All remaining doubts as to the totality of the rupture between the United States and Cuba were swept away as the U.S.-trained and supported exile invasion force landed at *Playa Girón* and *Playa Larga*. Also swept away in the crushing and inevitable defeat of the 1,500 invaders by the Cuban militia and Castro's still poorly equipped rebel army were various North American illusions about the unpopularity and incompetence of Fidel Castro and other leaders—although such illusions linger in some circles even to this day.

In the context of the Cold War, there was logic if not good sense in the installation of intermediate-range Soviet missiles in Cuba in the summer and autumn of 1962. Whoever actually initiated the process leading to their installation (historians still argue over the exact mix of Soviet and Cuban motives and initiatives), it seems clear that the decision was linked to the Bay of Pigs and the threat from the North.

The 1962 missile crisis was spawned in the Cold War and made specific by U.S. antagonisms toward the Cuban Revolution. It was resolved over the heads of the Cubans through direct U.S.-Soviet negotiations and ultimately resulted in important changes in the bilateral relations between all three primary actors. A U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba was formalized—and honored in the letter, if not the spirit, of the agreement. Cuban beliefs in the Soviet commitment to socialism in the Hemisphere were shaken when Moscow backed down and the United States and the Soviet Union—both sobered by the confrontation—began a slow reappraisal of some aspects of Cold War strategy and tactics.

The Soviet-Cuban relationship was conceived at the height

* The sugar quota stemmed from an agreement under which the United States agreed to buy a fixed quantity of sugar each year at predetermined prices from Cuba (and other countries). The 1960 quota for Cuba was roughly 3.1 million tons at 5 cents a pound, or about 2 cents above the world market price. The reduction in the sugar quota meant that Cuba had to seek guaranteed markets elsewhere—in this case, the Soviet Union, although Russia was self-sufficient in sugar. Precise causes and effects are impossible to identify, but it is clear that from 1960 on, Cuba sought closer relationships with the Soviet Union both as a substitute for lost U.S. markets, goods, and technology and as a shield against U.S. hostility.

of the Cold War and gestated in an atmosphere of U.S.-Cuban hostility. It also, however, had a life of its own. Its most essential component has, from the outset, been economic. From 1960, when the first agreements were negotiated, to the present, the Soviet Union has been the primary foreign backer of Cuban development.* In the light of inherited underdevelopment and deformations of the economy going back to colonial times, of prior dependence on the United States, of embargo, sabotage, and the threat of invasion, and of Cuban inexperience and errors and the comparatively modest resource base of the island, it is difficult to predict what would have happened had the Soviet Union not been so supportive. It is in this sense, even more perhaps than in the military sense, that my friend's comment that "we simply owe them our lives" partakes of the truth.

The continuity of Soviet economic support is particularly impressive when the ups and downs of political relations between Havana and Moscow during the 1960s are taken into account. Haltingly after the missile crisis, but at a quicker pace after the January 1966 Tricontinental Congress in Havana, Cuba supported armed liberation movements around the world—particularly in Latin America—and thus came in conflict with Soviet policy.†

Soviet-Cuban Disagreements

By the beginning of 1967, the conflict was quite open, with Cuba supporting Latin American guerrilla groups, who in turn were under fire from Moscow-oriented communist parties in their own countries—parties that sought legitimacy and participation through electoral and other more conventional political tactics. The Cuban call to "take up arms against imperialism and its lackeys" was never more clearly voiced than by Ché Guevara and his small band of guerrillas in Bolivia. Operating without the backing of the relatively small but important Bolivian Communist Party, Guevara and his followers were finally hunted down and killed in October 1967 by a mixed team of U.S.-trained Bolivian rangers and CIA agents.

*The most frequently cited figure on Soviet aid to Cuba during the first decade of the relationship is "more than \$1 million a day" (approximately half a billion dollars a year). Precise figures are very hard to arrive at. Neither Cuba nor the Soviet Union has ever published comprehensive data. Levels of military grant aid are difficult to estimate, and Soviet purchases of Cuban goods, often under barter arrangements, sometimes involve price artificialities or subsidies.

†Throughout this period, the conditioning of the Cuban-Soviet relationship by the United States was always present, if only indirectly. In Cuban eyes, for example, Soviet failure to respond to U.S. intervention in Vietnam as forcefully as the Cubans thought Moscow should, reinforced and legitimized the policy positions that Cuba took in opposition to the U.S.S.R. elsewhere.

CUBA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

- 1958** *March* U.S. bans all arms shipments to Fulgencio Batista's Cuba.
- 1959** *April* A victorious Fidel Castro visits Washington; sees Vice President Nixon but not President Eisenhower.
- 1960** *February* Cuba and U.S.S.R. sign sugar agreement. *May* U.S. ends all economic aid to Cuba. *June* U.S. and Britain reject Cuban demand that their oil companies refine Soviet crude oil; U.S. cuts Cuban sugar quota by 95 percent; Havana authorizes expropriation of all U.S. property. *July* Khrushchev threatens retaliation with rockets if U.S. intervenes militarily in Cuba. *September* U.S.S.R. grants first military aid to Cuba.
- 1961** *January* U.S. severs diplomatic relations with Cuba. *April* Bay of Pigs invasion. *August* U.S. and all Latin American countries except Cuba sign Alliance for Progress.
- 1962** *January* U.S.S.R. and Cuba sign trade agreement. *October* U.S. aircraft report presence of Soviet ballistic missiles in Cuba; President Kennedy imposes selective naval blockade; U.S.S.R. begins to dismantle missiles.
- 1964** *July* Organization of American States condemns Cuban "aggression and intervention" in Venezuela and votes to end all diplomatic and economic links with Cuba.
- 1966** *September* Ghana breaks diplomatic ties with Cuba, accusing it of interference in Ghana's internal affairs.
- 1967** *March* Castro attacks Soviet contacts with "oligarchy" governments in Latin America. *October* Ernesto Ché Guevara slain in Bolivia.
- 1968** *July* Castro supports Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia.
- 1972** *July* Cuba admitted to membership in Comecon, the Soviet trade bloc.
- 1973** *February* Cuba and U.S. sign antihijacking agreement.
- 1975** *July* OAS ends embargo against Cuba with U.S. support. *October* Castro sends troops to aid Soviet-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.
- 1977** *March* Castro tours black Africa and visits Moscow; U.S. lifts ban on travel to Cuba. *September* U.S. and Cuba begin to normalize relations by reopening "diplomatic missions." *November* U.S. expresses concern over 27,000 Cuban troops and advisers in Africa.

To some extent, the death of Guevara marked the end of the most acerbic period of Soviet-Cuban disagreements on how to bring socialism into existence on a world scale. This was not fully apparent for more than a year—until Castro, with evident ambivalence, publicly supported the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in August of 1968. Describing the Warsaw Pact invasion as a “drastic and painful measure . . . a bitter necessity,” he aligned Cuba with the Soviets at a particularly dark and difficult moment in Moscow’s relationship with both European and non-European communist parties.

Since 1968, Cuban and Soviet political positions have drawn closer together. In 1972, after an agonizing reappraisal of Cuban economic policies in the wake of the failed sugar harvest of 1970, Soviet-Cuban economic agreements were revised on terms very favorable to the Cubans. All payments on credits previously granted to Cuba were deferred until 1986, at which time both principal and interest payments will be stretched out over 25 years. New credits to cover anticipated balance-of-payments deficits were received. The Soviet Union almost doubled the price it was then paying for Cuba’s sugar, increased the price it was paying for Cuban nickel, and signed a new agreement on technical and economic collaboration.*

By the early 1970s, the Cubans had also clearly taken the Soviet side in the Sino-Soviet split, and Cuban officials increasingly endorsed Soviet positions in international forums. In Algeria in 1973, when some Third World nations at the Fourth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Nations were vociferous in calling the U.S.S.R. (as well as the United States) imperialist, Castro responded:

How can the Soviet Union be labeled imperialist? Where are its monopoly corporations? Where is its participation in the multinational companies? What factories, what mines, what oil fields does it own in the underdeveloped world? What worker is exploited in any country of Asia, Africa, or Latin America by Soviet capital?

When a new Cuban Constitution was drafted in 1975, its preamble spoke of “Basing ourselves on proletarian internationalism,

* Estimates of total Cuban indebtedness to the Soviets at the time the new agreements were signed vary from \$3 billion to \$4 billion. For comparative purposes, it should be noted that in 1976 Mexico’s total public and private sector debt topped \$25 billion, with at least half of the total owed to U.S. banks. Because Mexico’s total population is more than six times that of Cuba, the per capita indebtedness statistics are not too dissimilar for the two countries. Cuba, however, has much more favorable repayment terms.

on the fraternal friendship, help and cooperation of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and on the solidarity of the workers and the peoples of Latin America and of the world." It would be hard to imagine a closer identification of two nations than such constitutional enshrinement.

What else has the Soviet Union received in return for its aid to Cuba? In the early 1960s, opportunities to beard the U.S. lion in its den must have seemed immensely attractive in Moscow, and the strategic value of access to Cuba was certainly a large plus, as viewed through Soviet eyes. Equally, if not more, attractive was the opportunity to be in on the ground floor of Latin America's most radical social revolution. But just as the Cubans in the first days of the Revolution could not possibly have foreseen the problems they would eventually encounter in their relationships with the U.S.S.R., Soviet leaders could not have imagined how trying their Cuban ally would become a few short years after the first trade agreements were signed. Soviet leaders must have breathed a collective sigh of relief after Castro supported the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia; certainly since the early 1970s Cuba has been the most positive of allies, al-

CUBAN FOREIGN TRADE (in millions of U.S. dollars)

	1957	1968	1970	1972	1974	1975*
Total exports	818	652	1,050	840	2,689	3,415
Communist countries	42	480	778	451	1,536	2,415
Non-Communist	776	172	272	389	1,153	1,000
Total imports	895	1,103	1,311	1,297	2,693	3,805
Communist countries	2	875	905	997	1,629	2,105
Non-Communist	893	228	406	300	1,064	1,700

* Preliminary.

Source: "United States-Cuba Trade Promotion." Hearing before the Subcommittee on International Trade and Commerce of the House Committee on International Relations, July 22, 1976, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1976, p. 37.

Cuban exports of sugar, nickel, tobacco, and fish rose steadily between 1970 and 1975, with sugar remaining the primary commodity. Trade with the communist world, especially the Soviet Union, has grown continuously since 1968. In 1974, however, there was a sharp increase in Cuba's trade with the noncommunist world, particularly Canada, Japan, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

though a somewhat costly one. Strategic factors are still important, at least marginally. But, perhaps most important of all from the Soviet perspective, is the fact that Cuba today is a basically successful and functioning example of socialism in the Western Hemisphere. The economy is much improved since the darkest days of the 1960s, the revolutionary government is stronger than ever, and even the archenemy to the North is now negotiating with it.

In the light of the economic bonds and close political ties between Cuba and the Soviet Union, what is to be made of my friend's claim that Soviet "influence" on Cubans and the Cuban Revolution doesn't exist? Viewed conventionally in an international relations context, the statement is false. To choose the most difficult, perhaps, and certainly the most controversial recent case, it is clear that the Soviet-Cuban relationship influenced the timing, manner, and scope of the Cuban presence in Angola since 1975. This is not to say that the Soviets "told" the Cubans what to do, or that the Cuban actions were some kind of crude repayment for past and present Soviet support. Rather, the way in which Cuba entered into the Angola equation would have been different without Soviet political and military support of the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and without U.S., Chinese, and West European support of other factions—not to mention the South African invasion. But almost certainly, given the Cuban leadership's policy commitments, values, and past actions, the Cubans would have been on the scene, with or without the Soviets.*

The Minimal Soviet Presence

From a domestic standpoint, the Soviet influence is much less clear (and in all fairness to my Cuban friend, we were not talking about international politics when he made his statement). More superficially—although not unimportantly—he was referring to the fact that Cuban daily life and culture have been only minimally touched by the Soviet presence. Baseball and boxing are still the favorite sports in Cuba; English is still the preferred second language; and Cuban music, art, literature,

* In assessing the Cuban role in Angola, it should be recalled that Fidel Castro had offered to send troops to North Vietnam during the early 1960s—an offer that was refused by the North Vietnamese and that the Soviets probably opposed when it was made. Furthermore, the Cuban commitment to the MPLA was long-standing, dating from the mid-'60s (actually predating the Soviet commitment), and the major costs of the Cuban presence in Angola, in both human and material terms, were borne by Cuba and its citizens, not by the Soviet Union. From personal contacts and other sources, it is my impression that, however costly, the Angola expedition, involving some 12,000 Cuban troops, was strongly supported by an overwhelming majority of Cubans.

CUBA'S ARMED FORCES

Total Population: 9,290,000
 Military Service: 3 years
 Total Armed Forces: 189,000
 Estimated GNP 1970: \$4.5 billion
 Estimated defense expenditure, 1971: 290 million pesos
 (\$290 million)
 Cuban Army: 160,000 personnel
 90,000 reserves, over 600 tanks
 Cuban Navy: 9,000 personnel
 1 escort patrol vessel, 18 submarine chasers, 5 *Osa*- and 18
Komar-class patrol boats with Styx surface to surface missiles,
 24 motor torpedo boats, 29 armed patrol boats, 15 Mi-5
 helicopters
 Cuban Air Force: 20,000 personnel
 210 combat aircraft, including 75 MiG-17s, 50 MiG-21s, 30
 MiG-21MFs, 40 MiG-19s, 30 Mi-1 and 24 Mi-4 helicopters
 Para-Military Forces: 10,000 State Security troops; 3,000 border
 guards; 100,000 People's Militia

Source: *The Military Balance*, 1977-78 edition, Institute for Strategic Studies.

Deployment in Africa: Cuba's military involvement in Africa has grown steadily since November, 1975, when Havana dispatched 3,000 troops to Angola. Two years later, Cuba had some 27,000 military personnel in 11 African countries (U.S. estimates).

and conversation, in general, show few if any traces of having been in contact with Eastern Europe. Soviet technicians and advisers are housed apart, and the Western visitor to Cuba is reminded of their presence only when he or she is addressed as "tovarisch" by kids in the street or when an Eastern European delegation puts in an appearance at one of the hotels or restaurants.* In fact, in contradistinction to the cultural and physical impact that the United States has had in most of Latin America and much of East Asia, the "tracelessness" of the Soviet relationship with Cuba is astounding.

There is also a deeper level at which my friend's comment has meaning. At that level, the key question involves the *autonomy* and *appropriateness* of Cuban development and the extent to which the special relationship with the Soviet Union has

*Estimates of the number of Soviet technicians and advisers in Cuba at any given time in the early 1970s range from 1,000 to about 3,000. The number of Cubans (mostly engineers and technicians) studying in the Soviet Union at any given moment during this same period probably did not exceed 1,500.

furthered, rather than distorted or restrained, needed economic and social change. The question is tricky, for no national development effort can be hermetically sealed against outside influences, and developmental goals can and do change.

The Cuban case, however, has been strikingly consistent. From 1953, when Castro made the famous speech in his own defense after the attack on the Moncada army barracks, to the present, the primary developmental goals and energies of the Revolution have consistently focused on improving the "quality of life" of the island's citizens. Although halting and uneven at times, overall achievements have been impressive and, as North Americans should understand by now, the incentive and commitment necessary for transformations of this magnitude do not come from without.

Thus, what ultimately gives substance to the claim that Soviet influence on the Cuban Revolution is of secondary importance is that Cuba's proudest achievements are rooted in the earliest moments of the revolutionary movement and have been fashioned from the sweat, creativity, and sacrifice of millions of Cubans. Of course, Soviet economic and technical support has been important in many ways, but the human resources, the key decisions, the style, the outcomes—and the errors—have been predominantly Cuban.

There is thus more than a kernel of truth in the claim that Cuban development has been—and continues to be—"uninfluenced" by the Soviets. It is something that visitors to the island sense, even those who are not particularly well disposed toward the Revolution. And it is this that continues to give hope to many who see in the Cuban experience much that is relevant to the future of the poorer countries—countries that in the main cannot expect and do not seek special relationships with the rich and powerful nations of the world, East or West.



BACKGROUND BOOKS

CUBA

The story starts with Columbus. But the explorer's October 27, 1492 landing on Cuba (after he had blundered about for a couple of weeks in the Bahamas), did not cause a sudden, disrupting change of the sort that has characterized much of Cuban history.

Convinced that he had found Marco Polo's fabled Asian island kingdom of Cipango (probably Japan), Columbus sent men inland seeking gold and "the Khan." They found neither, and he sailed on, leaving no settlement behind.

Britain's Hugh Thomas gives a backward glance to the first two and a half centuries of Spanish rule as he opens his prodigious, highly readable, 1,696-page **CUBA: The Pursuit of Freedom** (Harper, 1971).

Before Lord Albemarle sailed from England in 1762 to capture Havana, Thomas writes, the Spanish colony of Cuba had developed "with majestic slowness" into a prosperous possession. The countryside still had more acres left in virgin forests (cedar, mahogany, pines, royal palms) than were devoted to tobacco farms, sugar plantations, and cattle ranches. There were no good roads. Although the Catholic Church had reared a great cathedral in Santiago, the people of Havana still worshipped in parish churches among forts, the palaces of grandees, and unpaved back streets. Cuba serviced the great fleets that carried the wealth of mainland South America home to Spain. Havana, a commercial port with a permanent garrison of Spanish soldiers, had already acquired "that unique, easy-going, brilliant but semi-criminal character that has marked it ever since."

Albemarle's victory (he proclaimed himself captain-general and governor)

brought the first significant change in the island's social organization and economy. The Spanish regained control after a year, but during that year English merchants descended upon the island to open it up to world trade, and importation of African slaves on a major scale began. According to Thomas, the English brought in some 4,000 slaves in 11 months; Spanish planters followed their lead, importing so many more that within 30 years Cuba, unlike any Spanish possession on the mainland, had a black and mulatto majority in the population. Rapid expansion of the sugar industry, made possible by cheap labor, totally changed Cuban society.

It takes Thomas roughly 1,000 vivid pages to get through the two centuries following the British conquest. He covers economic, social, and cultural trends, the Spanish-American War, U.S. military occupation, the first Republic, subsequent dictatorships, and finally, Fidel Castro's 1959 takeover. The remaining 400-odd pages provide a close analysis of developments under Castro up to 1970. No finer single source on Cuba or on Castro exists in English.

Detailed studies of modern pre-Castro Cuba include **ARMY POLITICS IN CUBA, 1898-1958** (Univ. of Pittsburgh, 1976). The author, Louis A. Perez, argues that the turn-of-the-century U.S. intervention created a Cuban military apparatus designed to serve U.S. policy, not Cuban needs. This lackluster rogue army later served Batista, but it proved no match for Castro's insurgents, despite their weaknesses as guerrilla fighters.

The title of a brief historical work by Luis E. Aguilar, **CUBA, 1933: Prologue to Revolution** (Cornell, 1972, cloth; Norton, 1974, paper), indicates its author's

focus—the “ideals and frustrations” of the students, old revolutionaries, liberal professionals, and orthodox politicians who tried in 1933 to unseat dictator Gerardo Machado.

Another brief, well-written review of the pre-Castro years is **CUBA: The Making of a Revolution** by Ramon Eduardo Ruiz (Univ. of Mass., 1968, cloth; Norton, 1970, paper). Ruiz gives a clear sense of the growing nationalism of most Cubans in the 20th century and of a conflict-ridden Latin society's receptivity to socialism.

There is no consensus on Castro's Cuba among academic authors, and their scholarship is highly uneven in quality. The regime has its critics and its apologists (especially, one suspects, among those who want to be allowed to visit the island again). Bearing all this in mind, certain books can be recommended.

Among them is **REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN CUBA**, edited by Carmelo Mesa-Lago (Univ. of Pittsburgh, 1971, cloth & paper). It includes essays by leading Cuban exiles and U.S. specialists. The editor, himself the most objective of the émigré critics, concludes that Cuba's radical 1959–70 transformation was accomplished without excessive bloodshed or destruction of resources.

In a more recent book of his own, **CUBA IN THE 1970s: Pragmatism and Institutionalization** (Univ. of New Mexico, 1974, cloth & paper), Mesa-Lago assesses the island's current state. He sees Castro no longer enjoying “the capacity for maneuver that he had in the 1960s.”

FIDEL CASTRO'S PERSONAL REVOLUTION IN CUBA, 1950–1973, edited by James N. Goodsell (Knopf, 1975, cloth & paper) provides a bland but balanced short course taken from 39 sources—including Castro speeches, Ernesto Ché Guevara on “The Cuban Economy,” and U.S. State Department documents.

CUBA IN REVOLUTION, edited by

Rolando E. Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdés (Doubleday/Anchor, 1972, paper) centers on internal political, economic, agricultural, labor, and cultural changes. A notable inclusion is the translation of a poem, “Out of the Game” by Heberto Padilla, written before he was imprisoned by the regime. Its message: *The poet, get rid of him! . . . He does not play the game! Lacks enthusiasm! . . . Always finding something to object to! . . . Remove the party-pooper! the summer malcontent! He sings the “Guantanamo” through clenched teeth! . . . No one can make him smile! each time the spectacle begins.*

Most telling when it takes Castro to task for repressing just such literary expression is a miscellany of largely new-left criticism edited by Ronald Radosh, **THE NEW CUBA: Paradoxes and Potentials** (Morrow, 1976, cloth & paper). Contributors include Martin Duberman, Frances Fitzgerald (“A Reporter at Large: Slightly Exaggerated Enthusiasms”), and Maurice Halperin, writing on culture and revolution. Editor Radosh concludes that “the apparent end of Cuba's isolation now makes it essential that we discard outdated arguments of opposition to Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution. . . . It is here to stay.”

Two former enthusiasts, Rene Dumont and K. S. Karol, have written more critically about the Castro regime. Dumont, a French socialist agronomist with much experience in Africa, was invited to Cuba by Castro, who later condemned the book that resulted: **IS CUBA SOCIALIST?** (Viking, 1974). Dumont looks back at Cuban predictions of economic performance and measures them against the cold facts of accomplishment. (“Revolution is not easy, you know,” he quotes Castro as saying, apologetically, in 1969.)

Karol, a Polish-born Maoist living in Paris, is another European Marxist whom Castro welcomed and then turned upon. Whereas Dumont's criticism is on economic grounds, Karol's, in **GUERRIL-**

LAS IN POWER (Hill and Wang, 1970, cloth & paper), is political. Castro responded politically. The poet Heberto Padilla (above) was jailed because he allegedly passed information to Karol, and Castro made an effort to increase public participation in the one-party government, whose elitism Karol attacked.

An early U.S. critic, Theodore Draper, put more stress on the topsy-turvy Castro movement than on the man. Draper's **CASTROISM: Theory and Practice** (Praeger, 1965) is now out of print but remains valuable for its detail on the early Castro era.

A different kind of retrospective can be found in **CUBA, CASTRO, AND THE UNITED STATES** (Univ. of Pittsburgh, 1971) by the last American Ambassador to Cuba, Philip W. Bonsal, an angry victim of Washington's early hostility to the 1959 Revolution. He argues that the close identity of interest between two major oil companies and the U.S. Treasury produced an aggressive, unannounced policy of attempting to undermine Castro—and he shows how it failed.

Last year saw the publication of two volumes in a projected three-volume series of interviews with present-day Cubans: **FOUR MEN: Living the Revolution, An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba** and **FOUR WOMEN** (with the same subtitle) by Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon (Univ. of Ill., 1977). The final volume, **NEIGHBORS**, will be published later this year.

In 1969, Oscar Lewis was professor of anthropology at the University of Illinois and widely recognized for his books, including *The Children of Sanchez*. Fidel Castro (who told him that *Sanchez* was "worth more than 50,000 political pamphlets,") invited him to interview Cubans on their views of the Revolution and other

subjects. Lewis and his associates were given unprecedented freedom to travel and work. But the Cuban government halted the study. Officials said that their action was linked to Castro's displeasure over the Dumont and Karol books and their concern that the researchers might be turning up "negative" or "conflictive" data. Lewis died soon thereafter; his wife and associate Rigdon edited the tapes.

One of the subjects in *Four Men* says, "I'm completely in love with the Revolution. In love, in love, in love! I'd do anything for it. *Viva la Revolución!*" All the men, raised in dire poverty, agree that their lives have been changed for the better economically. ("It was the Revolution that pulled me out of the swamp.") To the women interviewed—a servant, a former counterrevolutionary/former nun, a psychologist whose family were early Castro supporters, and (at Castro's suggestion) a one-time prostitute—the Revolution has brought more personal freedom.

A less upbeat sense of Castro's Cuba emerges from a small (158-page) book **BLACK MAN IN RED CUBA** by John Clytus with Jane Rieker (Univ. of Miami, 1970). Clytus, a self-described "Negro-black-Afro-American-colored-revolutionary" went to Cuba in 1964, worked as a translator for *Granma*, the official Communist Party newspaper, and ended up three years later in jail after trying to "escape" across the border to the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay. Clytus's personal, somewhat overheated account of life under Castro is a corrective footnote to more glowing portraits of the new Cuban society: "Cuba taught me that a black under communism in a white-oriented society—any society where whites hold or have held power—would find himself persecute[d] . . . for even intimating that he had a love for black."

EDITOR'S NOTE. *Lewis H. Diuguid, an assistant foreign editor and former Latin American correspondent for the Washington Post, helped to select books for this list. Fellows and research associates at the Wilson Center also made suggestions.*