

---

**OTHER NATIONS**


---

*Storm Warnings  
for Mr. Castro*

"The Freedom Flotilla: A Legitimacy Crisis of Cuban Socialism?" by Gaston A. Fernandez, in *Journal of InterAmerican Studies and World Affairs* (May 1982), Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

On March 20, 1980, a handful of Cubans sought asylum at the Peruvian embassy in Havana. Before the dust had settled, 125,266 Cubans had immigrated to the United States. Much has been made of their impact on this country. What does it mean for Cuba?

Fernandez, a political scientist at St. Olaf College, interviewed a sampling of "Freedom Flotilla" refugees in May 1980. He found them to be unlike the refugees of the 1960s and '70s, who were generally older, well-established skilled workers and professionals. The differences convince Fernandez that Castro's regime is losing support.

The refugees of the Freedom Flotilla are young—the average age is 25. And, while many are professionals (14 percent) and skilled factory workers (25.9 percent), unskilled manual and transport workers are disproportionately represented (they make up only 8.4 percent of Cuba's total population, but 35 percent of the refugees).

Less than a third of the refugees have been in prison. But 40 percent



Ray Fisher/TIME Magazine.

Cuban "freedom flotilla" refugees sight Key West, Florida, in May 1980.

**OTHER NATIONS**

of these committed "economic crimes"—e.g., tax evasion or black marketeering. A black market, notes Fernandez, requires "the collusion of many in society," and suggests widespread support for such activities.

With 40 percent of Cuba's population under the age of 15, disaffection among today's young people promises trouble. The younger refugees know Castro not as a revolutionary hero but as the head of an unresponsive government. They have been hit particularly hard by poor economic conditions. Unable to find jobs or housing, they must put off marriage and starting families. Others feeling the pinch include unskilled workers, thanks in part to Havana's planned shrinkage of the construction industry. Only rural Cubans—beneficiaries of land reforms and tax breaks—seem to remain loyal to their leader.

It is premature to declare "a crisis of socialism in Cuba," says Fernandez. But the Freedom Flotilla carried storm warnings for Castro.

### *Portugal since 1974*

"The Armed Forces Movement and the Portuguese Revolution: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back" by John L. Hammond, in *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* (Spring 1982), New Life Center, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Ill. 60115.

On April 25, 1974, a group of junior military officers ousted Portugal's 40-year-old Fascist regime. Their aims were to stop 13 years of war in Portugal's African colonies—Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique—and to establish democratic government. But the officers found themselves at the head of a socialist revolution they had not sought, writes Hammond, a CUNY sociologist.

The wars had cost Portugal dearly—in 1968, 42 percent of the national budget; by 1974, 4,800 lives. Massive popular rallies supporting the coup began almost immediately. Suddenly free to demonstrate, urban workers went one step further, launching strikes and "miniature coups" against business executives.

Hoping to consolidate its rule, the new regime obligingly lurched leftward. The army began overseeing radical farmworkers' forcible seizure of the *latifundios* (plantations). The government nationalized banks and major industries, including oil, steel, railroads, and tobacco.

But there was resistance. Multinational firms shut down their Portuguese offices. Domestic anger grew over dislocations accompanying the end of the wars: the return of 700,000 settlers and 150,000 soldiers and the loss of colonial resources. Elections in the spring of 1975 showed the radicals, though highly vocal, to be a minority. In November, right-wing officers moved against leftist troops in Lisbon and arrested their leaders.

Today in Portugal, banks and major industries are still state owned (though run as profit-seeking ventures); workers retain their unions and the right to strike (though they no longer have much say in the man-