

CUBAN COMMUNISM: FROM ORTHODOXY TO
HERESY TO ORTHODOXY

by

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ABSTRACT

The first chapter of this thesis explains why the Cuban C.P. failed to make the revolution of 1959, but instead managed to alienate itself from nearly every nationalist and leftist political party in Cuba during the years 1925 through 1958.

The second chapter traces the reversal of Cuban relations with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. from 1960 to 1962 and assesses the role of the Cuban C.P. in these changing relations.

The third chapter of the paper traces the formation of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI) and the changes undergone by the Cuban C.P. as a result of this process.

The fourth chapter discusses the formation of the United Party of the Socialist Revolution and shows that much of the history of the Cuban C.P. from 1962 onward can be understood in terms of a purge of communist old guard in favor of Fidelista forces.

The final chapter of this paper describes the progress that has been made in organizing the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) and the completion of the Fidelization of the Cuban C.P.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The PSP remained a party of the poor, highly disciplined, devoted, and often persecuted. And then someone else made the revolution in its place, and in so doing cast doubt on all ~~its theories, tactics, and its very raison d'être.~~ A party born for revolution and convinced that it had a monopoly in this field was suddenly forced to stand by almost idly while socialism triumphed all around. ¹

One of the key concepts used throughout this thesis is that the Cuban C.P. was dominated by the U.S.S.R. from its inception in 1925 until the beginning of the "Fidelization" of the party in 1961. It is this U.S.S.R. dominance of the party on the one hand and the profound nationalistic nature of Fidel Castro's revolution in 1959, on the other hand, that explain the struggle between Fidel and the "old guard" during the 1960's.

This chapter is an attempt to indicate the extent to which the Cuban C.P. was dominated by the U.S.S.R. from 1925 until 1959, a domination that explains not only why the Cuban C.P. failed to make the revolution in 1959 but why the party alienated itself from nearly every nationalist and leftist political party in Cuba during the years 1925 through 1959.

Since a "complete" history of the party throughout the years 1925 to 1959 would entail a volume in itself I have focused this

chapter on the legacy of the Comintern, and how this legacy led the party to adopt the precise revolutionary scheme for developing countries as expounded by the U.S.S.R.; a scheme that resulted in at least three major miscalculations on the part of the party and resulted in the Cuban C.P.'s alienation from other opposition political parties in Cuba.

The General Strike of 1933 and the part played in the strike by the Cuban C.P. was to result not only in alienation of the party from other Cuban political parties but in a concentrated attack on the party by the Cuban left; an attack which lent itself to the "unholy" entente of the Cuban C.P. and the Cuban right. The PSP - Batista alliance was in turn to lead to even further alienation of the party from the Cuban people and their political parties. The third most ³ notable miscalculation of the party was its decision in 1952 to not only adopt the Soviet model of "peaceful" transition but like all other non-revolutionary groupings to oppose Fidel Castro's insurrection. It was not until mid-1958 that the party finally realized that Fidel had a good chance to win his struggle, and alignment with Fidel at this late point further reinforced the Cuban people's notion of the party as basically opportunistic.

(i) The Legacy of the Comintern

The Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) was founded August 16, 1925,

as a section of the Third International. The Second Congress (1920) of the Comintern established the domination of the Soviet CP over the other CP's by adopting the twenty conditions prescribed by Lenin. These twenty conditions defined the character of the Comintern as a single, world revolutionary organization composed of national sections, each of which was dedicated to the overthrow of the established government of its own country. According to the Soviet newspaper Izvestia (July 16, 1920), the purpose of the Comintern was "The introduction of complete unity of tactics into the international headquarters for a proletarian uprising against world imperialism".²

The Soviet Union was, of course, to serve as "headquarters" for the proletarian uprising. Thus, from its very inception the PCC conceived itself to be a dependent ally of the U.S.S.R., and at the same time the U.S.S.R. to be the leader of the world revolution against imperialism.

During the "hard line" periods of Comintern activity, the Cuban CP and other Latin American CP's were instructed to polemicize against non-communist leftists and to refuse joint action with the latter in the political arena and labour movement. The result of this sectarianism was often political isolation if not total impotence for the Latin American CP's.

In the period 1935-1945 and during the present post-Stalin period, the Moscow oriented international Communist movement has adopted "soft line" tactics. This more pliable political line has

TABLE I

COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA - EXISTENCE AS A MAJOR
PARTY OR FRONT PARTY

Communist Party of Cuba (Partido Comunista de Cuba)	1925 - 1939
Communist Revolutionary Union (Unión Revolucionaria Comunista)	1939 - 1944
Popular Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Popular)	1944 - 1961
Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (Organizaciones Revolucionarias Integradas)	1961 - 1963
United Party of the Socialist Revolution (Partido Unido de la Revolución Socialista)	1963 - 1965
Communist Party of Cuba (Partido Comunista de Cuba)	1965 -

allowed Latin American CP's to partially integrate into their respective countries' political process. ³

From 1935 on, the "united front" tactic became more fully developed as Moscow became increasingly aware of the fascist and Nazi threat to the U.S.S.R. As a result, the Comintern recommended political collaboration with anti-Fascist groups.

The Twentieth Congress of the Soviet CP saw the beginning of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign. Khrushchev revised the "old" view that linked the world Socialist revolution to inevitable imperialist wars. In a nuclear age, war was clearly out of the question; instead the world revolution would continue under peaceful conditions.

...transform parliament from an instrument serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie into an instrument serving the working people, launch an extra-parliamentary struggle, smash the resistance of the reactionary forces and create the necessary conditions for the peaceful realization of the Socialist revolution. ⁴

Although this policy did not rule out violent revolutionary struggle, it did limit it to only those situations in which the local ruling classes had eliminated all peaceful alternatives of struggle. ⁵

In short, by 1959, the Cuban CP and other Latin American CP's were committed to making the revolution by "...directing their efforts toward creation of broad national fronts, recruiting new dues-paying

members, increasing circulation of party press, open political agitation, and electoral activity".⁶

The dominance of the Cuban CP by the U.S.S.R. goes far in explaining not only the CP's inability to gain the popular support of Cubans, but instead to alienate themselves from other opposition political parties in Cuba. By adopting the precise revolutionary scheme of the U.S.S.R. for developed countries of Europe, the Cuban CP made similar mistakes throughout the period 1925-1959; mistakes that cost them their place as leaders of the revolution.

(ii) The General Strike of 1933

By 1933 the PCC had succeeded in creating a dedicated leadership made up of young intellectuals such as Rubén Martínez Villena. In addition, the PCC had gained control of the Cuban National Confederation of Workers (CNOC).⁷

On August 2, 1933, a bus depot in the capital went on strike, and within two days the entire transport system of Havana was paralyzed. By August 6, the strike had spread throughout the entire island. On August 7, rumors were flying that the dictator Machado had resigned and the people of Havana took to the streets in celebration. Machado's police force opened fire on them and dozens were killed.

Within two days Machado had offered the Communist controlled Central Strike Committee all the claims demanded by the Committee. On August 10, César Vilar, in the name of the Cuban Labor Confederation, gave orders for a resumption of work at noon of August 11.

The workers disregarded the order, and by August 11, the general strike had precipitated a military uprising, thus forcing Machado to flee the island.

U.S. Ambassador Sumner Welles arranged with Machado's officers for the accession of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes to the office of President. Céspedes was apparently "...acceptable to the officers, the upper class and most of the politicians, but the masses, the students, the anarchists, the communists thought differently".⁸

On September 4, a sergeants' revolt led by Fulgencio Batista resulted in the taking of power by a five-man junta presided over by Ramón Grau San Martín. The Communists, pursuing their program of sectarianism not only refused to cooperate with Grau's government, but proceeded to set up the equivalent of "soviets" among the sugar workers. By the end of September, some thirty-six sugar mills representing 30% of the islands' sugar crop were in the hands of the workers.⁹

Grau reacted by sending in troops to seize the sugar mills. By January 14, the Grau government and the "left" as a whole had been weakened to the point where Batista could force the government to resign.

Batista thereafter became the strong man in Cuban politics for the next ten years, although he held no formal government position.

The Communists were, of course, attacked by the other opposition political parties for their actions during the strike and their failure to support the Grau government.

(iii) The Communists and Batista

In January 1934 the Comintern sent representatives to Cuba and effectively purged the PCC. Blas Roca replaced Villena on the Central Committee and all of Villena's supporters were removed from the Central Committee; in fact, most of the "intellectuals" ended up leaving the party altogether.¹⁰

The Seventh and final Congress of the Comintern, held in 1935, adopted the tactic of the "united front" and as such set the stage for yet another blunder by the Cuban CP. At the Congress, it was decided that fascism was the number one enemy of the world's people and a "united front" (that is, an alliance of all opponents of fascism in each country) was necessary to combat fascism.

In fact, the Cuban CP ended up apologizing for their past sectarianism:

The basic error of the party consisted in mechanically setting the class interests of the proletariat against the interests of the national liberation struggle, the aims of the bourgeois democratic, agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution in Cuba... This...position objectively facilitated the coming to power of the present reactionary government. ¹¹

Shortly after the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, Blas Roca, the new leader of the PCC, addressed the Sixteenth Plenary Assembly of the Central Committee of the Cuban Party. ¹²

Batista, that national traitor in the pay of the imperialists, the faithful executioner of the orders of Caffery, has drowned the March (general) strike in blood, has turned the university into a barracks, has smashed the workers trade unions and burned down their headquarters, has destroyed the Medical Federation of Cuba, has filled the prisons with more than 3,000 men and women, and adolescent defenders of liberty and democracy, has unleashed a barbarous terror campaign of street murder against all anti-imperialist parties, and would now like to profit from his temporary victory by liquidating the revolution altogether. ¹³

Blas Roca went on to call for a united front of all Cuban political parties against the fascist Batista; a call for unity that all parties ignored, since distrust of the Communists was still prevalent as a result of their actions in the strike of 1933, and their failure to support the Grau government.

By late 1937, Batista had realized that he would have to

liberalize his government somewhat if he were not to go down in Cuban history with a reputation as hated a tyrant as Machado. In an attempt to gain some degree of popular support, Batista allowed the Communists to organize a "front" party called Partido Unión Revolucionaria (PUR).

From the Communist point of view the new party was in keeping with the U.S.S.R. "soft" line approach of presenting a unified front. The leader of PUR was to be Juan Marinello and included such famous Cubans as Salvador García Agüero, Nicolás Guillén, Augusto Rodríguez Miranda, Dr. Antonio Macéas and Juan Aéreo.

The next three years saw the U.S.S.R. and her traditional enemies - the capitalist countries of Europe - moving closer together in their fight against fascism. By July of 1938 Blas Roca delivered an address to the Party Central Committee in Havana; an address in which his position of 1935 is reversed:

We must remember Batista's social origins. Although he has grown rich, like all the new officers, and although he can now be described as a man of property, reactionary and aristocratic circles continue to treat him as a mere sergeant, a man in whom they cannot place their trust. Moreover, his links with the revolutionary movement are still very strong; he is still friendly with his

messmates - sergeants, corporals and privates - all of whom remember his oath of loyalty to Cuba. I firmly believe that the force of the revolutionary tide which, in September 1933, drove this man to fight the then government, continues to exercise a pull on him and on all the other participants in these events. ¹⁴

Roca went on to say that an agreement could be reached between the PCC and Batista providing Batista's attitudes toward democracy, social conditions and Cuban independence improve somewhat.

In May of 1938, the Party was permitted to publish its daily newspaper, Hoy, which by 1939 had become the official organ of the newly founded Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC). Hoy soon after became one of the major Cuban daily newspapers. ¹⁵

By September 13, 1938, the PCC was given legal recognition by Batista; the first time since its founding that such recognition had been received. A year after legal recognition of the PCC (1939), Lázaro Peña (Communist) was elected General Secretary of the CTC by a huge majority and thus the Communists gained control of CTC. ¹⁶

With the PCC now legal, the need for PUR disappeared and at the Third Party Congress of January 1939, provisions were made for the liquidation of PUR, when in August of 1939 the PCC and PUR joined together to form the new party, Communist Revolutionary Union. ¹⁷

Within a few months (November 15) the Cuban CP had joined the Batista led Socialist Democratic Coalition in the Constituent Assembly elections of 1939. The Opposition Bloc, led by Dr. Grau San Martín and consisting of: the Auténticos, the ABC Party, the Democratic Republican Party and the Action Party won 45 of 81 seats and thus took control of the Assembly. The Communists managed to win six seats within the Batista coalition.

On July 1, 1940, Batista won the Presidential elections and within two years (July 24, 1942) had brought two Communists - Juan Marinello and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez - into his cabinet. Batista himself repeatedly stressed the loyalty of the Communists, as evidenced by the following letter published in Hoy on June 13, 1944.¹⁸

My dear Blas,

With reference to your letter transmitted to me by our mutual friend, Dr. Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, Minister without Portfolio, I am glad to be able to confirm that my government has received and continues to receive effective and loyal support from the Partido Socialista Popular, its leadership and its masses.

The period 1940 to 1944 saw the Party make gains for the members of CTC. It obtained guaranteed employment, an eight-hour day, and a wage increase.¹⁹ On the other hand, as Karol points out:

...the Cuban Communists carried on as if their country were nothing less than an integral part of the United States. They worried about U.S. internal stability, prosperity, and the strength of America's armed forces. ²⁰

To the Cuban masses and the other Cuban political parties, the Communists had joined forces with Cuba's worst fascist in order to fight against "world fascism". The Party's support of Moscow policy had caused them to ignore conditions in Cuba once again.

As a result, the Party was forced into isolation and rendered relatively impotent in the coming years of struggle.

The Presidential elections of 1944 saw the Party, now called "People's Socialist Party" (PSP) support Batista's governmental coalition against Dr. Grau. However, Grau won the election and assumed the office of President. It was another two years before Grau gained control of the Assembly. In 1947, Minister of Labor, Carlos Prío Socarrás smashed Communist power in the trade unions by lending support to the Auténticos' contention for trade union control, thus repaying the Communists for their support of Batista.

The PSP received another serious blow when the French Communist Party, through Jacques Duclos, attacked the U.S. Communists and its supporters, the PSP, in 1945. The U.S. Party, closely associated with the PSP, was accused of :

(1) liquidating the only independent party of the U.S. working class; (2) of propounding revisionist theories about the disappearance of the class struggle in each country and throughout the world; (3) of spreading dangerous and opportunistic illusions by presenting the purely diplomatic procedures of the Teheran Conference as a new communist platform. ²¹

The 1948 Presidential elections displaced Dr. Grau as President in favour of Auténtico candidate Prío Socarrás. The isolation of the PSP was reinforced when no other political party running for office would accept an alliance with the Communists. The PSP was now forced to live completely under the wing of the U.S.S.R., to place its few remaining hopes in the success of Moscow in the now fully developed "cold war".

Life in that atmosphere was exceedingly uncomfortable. The Cold War was now at its height, and the ruling Auténticos, anxious to find absolution for their leftist trends of former days, beat the anti-Communist drum all the more loudly, directing their attacks chiefly at the Communist trade unions, the last strongholds of the PSP. And they succeeded in smashing them with criminal violence. ²²

PSP control had been smashed, but a case can still be made for significant Communist influence on Cuban workers at the time.

An IBRD Report of 1950 states, "Some authorities estimate that perhaps 25% of Cuban workers were still secretly sympathetic to them (communists)".²³

The same report goes on to say:

It must be remembered that nearly all the popular education of working people on how an economic system works and what might be done to improve it came first from the Anarcho-syndicalists and most recently - and most effectively - from the communists.²⁴

Nevertheless the Constituent Assembly elections of 1950 saw the Communists suffer a further decline when they lost their three remaining seats and registered only 55,000 votes, a decrease of 88,000 votes than they had secured in the 1948 elections.²⁵ This decline apparently continued during the remainder of the 1950's.

(iv) PSP Failure to Support Fidel Castro

The Presidential elections of June 1952 never took place; instead, nine weeks before the appointed date, General Fulgencio Batista organized a new coup d'état that resulted in President Prío Socarrás quietly slipping away to Miami. Batista was once again undisputed leader of Cuba.

The PSP condemned Batista's putsch, but having lived in a political wilderness for some eight years, they could not make their voices heard. { Batista was accused of being an American puppet, a man who had broken diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R.; and once again the Communists called for a united front that would topple Batista

and end their own isolation. The call for unity fell on deaf ears, for by this time the remaining political parties were more anti-communist than anti-Batista.

One of the few other voices to speak against Batista's putsch was that of Fidel Castro.

It is not a revolution, but a brutal snatching of power! They are not patriots, but destroyers of freedom, usurpers, adventurers thirsty for gold and power. The coup was not against Prío but against the people. 26

Eleven days later, on March 24, Castro submitted a brief to the Court of Constitutional Guarantees formally protesting Batista's putsch; the Court rejected Castro's appeal.

By July 26, 1953, Castro had decided armed struggle was the only course of action left to him in Cuba. The morning of July 26 saw Castro and well over 100 men attempt to take control of Moncada army barracks in the city of Santiago de Cuba. From a military point of view the attack was a dismal failure - most of Castro's force was wiped out. By August 1, Castro and the survivors of Moncada were also captured. The news of Castro's attack and the ensuing slaughter of his men by Batista forces put Castro's name in the forefront of Cuban conversation at the time.

During a dramatic trial in which Castro switched his role as defendant to prosecutor of the Batista regime and delivered his famous "History Will Absolve Me" speech, he and the survivors of the attack were sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

It was at this point the Party held to the tight schema of the U.S.S.R. model of revolution and not only failed to support Castro but labelled the attack on Moncada as a "putschist attempt, a desperate form of adventurism, typical of petty bourgeois circles lacking in principle and implicated in gangsterism".²⁷

In fact, the Party went even further and theorized that armed struggle was not the way to win the revolution. Once again the Party had submitted itself to the Soviet scheme for peaceful revolution in the Third World and thereby ignored Cuban conditions.

The thesis that the PSP and Fidel were not working together runs counter to arguments posed by such people as Nathaniel Weyl and published in his book Red Star Over Cuba. Weyl takes the position that Fidel was an agent of the Soviet Union at the time of Moncada and the PSP supervised the entire operation. All available data deny such a thesis as Weyl's. See for instance, the manifesto "The Cuban Revolution" July 23, 1953, by Raúl Gómez García written on instructions from Fidel.²⁸ In this letter, García connects the revolutionary movement with the struggles of Céspedes, Agramonte, Maceo and Martí, Mella²⁹, Guiteras,

Trejo, and Chibás as part of a continuing revolution not yet ended.

The letter goes on to say:

The Revolution, declares that it recognizes and bases itself on the ideals of José Martí, the program of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano, the Montecristi Manifesto as well as the revolutionary programs of Joven Cuba, ABC Radical, and the Partido del Pueblo Cubano (Ortodoxo).

In addition, K.S. Karol documents that one of the leaders of the PSP admitted to him that there was no connection between Fidel and the Party in 1953. ³⁰

When, in April 1958, Fidel, then leading a guerrilla insurrection from the Sierra Maestra, launched his appeal for a general strike, the leadership of the PSP, though not opposing the strike, declared that the Movement had not the force behind it to succeed. This declaration was interpreted by many as pro-Batista, and in effect Batista allowed the statement to be widely circulated in Cuba. When the strike was not at once successful, the PSP ordered its members to abandon the strike. When Fidel issued an ultimatum that called for officials in the Batista government to resign, the PSP disregarded it and did not break with the Batista regime. ³¹

It also seems significant that in the "Unity Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra", July 20, 1958, an attempt to establish a united front

of all parties opposed to Batista failed to include the PSP. The manifesto was signed by Fidel Castro, by Prío and Varona for the Auténticos, by members of the Ortodoxo Party, by delegates of the students, and the Directorio Revolucionario, by Representatives of the trade union (Auténticos, followers of Cofiño, and the 26 July Movement), by the ex-banker Justo Carillo of the Montecristi organization, by Miró Cardona as a representative of the civil resistance groups and by a member of the Democratic Party.³²

However, by July, 1958 the Party had finally decided to send Carlos Rafael Rodríguez to the Sierra and offer support to Castro, support which Castro accepted but which was not publicized.

The contention that the PSP played only a minimal role in the revolution of 1959 is confirmed by Blas Roca:

The main form of opposition consisted in armed combat in the countryside whereas strikes, election boycotts, and other actions by the working class and the urban proletariat played only a secondary part...³³

In 1960 Blas Roca admitted that the PSP did not take part in the critical stages of armed struggle in any significant way:

We rightly foresaw, and greatly looked forward to, the prospect that in response to conditions created by the tyranny, the masses would organize and eventually engage in armed struggle or popular insurrection. But for a long time we failed to believe that these struggles, including a prolonged general strike, would culminate in armed insurrection quite spontaneously. Hence we did not prepare, did not organize or train armed detachments...That was our mistake... 34

By the middle of 1959, following Fidel's seizure of power, the PSP was fully aware that it remained on the fringes of the revolutionary "camp". In order to improve its marginal role the PSP would have to gain Fidel's endorsement and at the same time obtain tangible assurances of U.S.S.R. solidarity with Cuba in order to strengthen its bargaining position with Fidel.

The PSP immediately began to use their party organ Hoy to point out to the U.S.S.R. that the Cuban revolution should be distinguished from other revolutions in the underdeveloped world. They did this by pointing out that the revolution included the working class, (i.e. the PSP) and that its leadership was made up of the "most radical sector of the petty bourgeoisie". In short, that the U.S.S.R. should be ready to extend its full support to Cuba on the grounds that the revolution was potentially socialist. When Fidel had the strongly anti-Communist President Manuel Urrutia replaced by a former communist party member Osvaldo Dorticós, the PSP had an even stronger case from the Soviet viewpoint. 35

Thus, the PSP had managed to place itself in the position of middleman between Fidel and the U.S.S.R., a highly desirable position in that the radical revolution Fidel had in mind would never gain the acceptance and support of the U.S. and thus Fidel would be forced to seek the support of another major power to ensure what eventually became a matter of survival of his revolution. Whether this strategy would result in PSP capture of state power in Cuba was not yet clear.

(v) Footnotes - Chapter One

- 1 Karol, K.S. Guerrillas in Power. Hill & Wang, New York, 1970, page 58.
- 2 Neumann, Sigmund. Modern Political Parties. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1967, page 265.
- 3 Crain, D. The Course of the Cuban Heresy: The Rise and Decline of Castroism's Challenge to the Soviet Line in the Latin American Marxist Revolutionary Movement, 1963-1970. A Doctoral Thesis, Indiana University. 1972.
- 4 "Statement of the Meeting of the Representatives of the Communist and Workers Parties". World Marxist Review. VIII, December, 1960, page 21.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Crain, D. op. cit., page 13.
- 7 Suárez, Andrés. Cuba: Castroism and Communism 1950-1966. The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1969, page 2.
- 8 Goldenberg, Boris. The Cuban Revolution and Latin America. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, New York, 1966, page 105-106.
- 9 Walker, B. The Labor Policy of the Cuban Government Since 1925. University of California, 1952, page 47.
- 10 Suárez, Andrés, op. cit., page 3. See also: Alexander, Robert J. Communism in Latin America. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1957, page 274. In his book, Alexander reports that the Cuban CP policy of actively engaging in setting up new soviets was criticized by the Comintern in an article by Mijowsky in the Communist International, April 5, 1934:

"The Comintern later criticized this proclamation, [Cuban C.P. policy] noting that it 'does not correspond to the correct tactics actually conducted by the Party,'" on the grounds that it carried through "'the organization of soviets, as organs of preparation for the seizure of power, as organs of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses for the struggle for power' even where there still was an effective local government in existence." Thus it would appear that Villena and his supporters were purged from the Cuban CP on the grounds of misapplication of U.S.S.R. revolutionary tactics.

11 MacGaffey, W. and Barnett, C. Twentieth Century Cuba, Doubleday & Company Inc., Garden City, New York, 1965, page 154.

12 Despite the setbacks suffered since the strike of 1933, the Communists were still a significant force in Cuban politics. The Communists provided the leadership of the CNOC which according to a 1935 Foreign Policy Association report "...stands out as the most powerful and aggressive labor group, and as the only organization really national in scope." (See Commission on Cuban Affairs, Foreign Policy Association, Problems of the New Cuba, New York, 1935, pages 191-196). The report goes on to say that the CNOC was based on "Marxist doctrines". In April of 1935 the party claimed to have a membership of 6000, and 3500 members in the Young Communist League between sixteen and eighteen years of age. In addition, the party had some 300 members in its student wing at the National University plus an undisclosed membership in the Havana Institute, the Havana Normal School, and the two technical schools at Rancho Boyeros and in some provincial institutes and Normal Schools. (From page 196 of Foreign Policy Association Report, op. cit.).

- 13 Karol, K.S. op. cit., pages 81-82, emphasis added.
- 14 Ibid., page 83.
- 15 Page, C.A. Organized Labor in Cuba. University of California, 1952, page 103.
- 16 Karol, K.S. op.cit., page 102.
- 17 Poppino, R.E. International Communism in Latin America. The Free Press, New York, 1966, page 81.
- 18 Goldenberg, Boris. op. cit., page 117.
- 19 In this period of close collaboration with Batista the Communists were able to obtain the promulgation of the following decree laws by influencing the government:
- (1) Decree No. 798 (1938) - which provided for collective bargaining contracts and job tenure.
 - (2) Decree No. 3185 (1940) - established a 44 hour work week with pay for 48 hours.
 - (3) Decree No. 1123 (1943) - giving CTC corporate status.
- From C.A. Page, Organized Labor in Cuba, op. cit., page 107.
- 20 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 99.
- 21 Ibid., page 107.
- 22 Ibid., page 108.
- 23 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in Collaboration with the Government of Cuba. Economic and Technical Mission to Cuba. Report on Cuba: Findings and Recommendations of an Economic and Technical Mission Organized by IBRD in Collaboration with the Government of Cuba in 1950. Washington, 1951, page 365.

- 24 Ibid., page 366.
- 25 Loney, J.M. Imperialism, Nationalism, Revolution. M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1966, page 224.
- 26 Fidel Castro "Proclamation on Batista's Seizure of Power", from Bonachea, R.E. & Valdés, N.P., Revolutionary Struggle 1947-1958. The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1972, page 147.
- 27 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 139.
- 28 Bonachea, R.E. and Valdés, N.P. Revolutionary Struggle, 1947-1958. op. cit., page 155.
- 29 The only reference to anyone connected to the Communists in this letter is to Julio Antonio Mella, a young intellectual of the 1920's. While Mella was a Party member, he never occupied a position of power within the party and his militant actions went against party policy. The Party used his death as an opportunity to create its first martyr.
- 30 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 132.
- 31 Alba, V. "Cuba: A Peasant Revolution", World Today. V. 15:5, 1959, page 53.
- 32 Goldenberg, Boris, op. cit., page 161.
- 33 Blas, Roca. "The Cuban Revolution in Action". World Marxist Review. Prague, Vol. 11, No. 8. August, 1959, page 15.
- 34 Blas Roca. "Report to the Eighth National Assembly of the PSP", August, 1960. From Karol, K.S., op. cit., page 149.

35

For further information see: González, E. "Castro's Revolution, Cuba's Communist Appeals and the Soviet Response". World Politics. V. 21, October 1968, page 39.

CHAPTER TWO

1959 - 1961 THE RADICAL LEAPS FORWARD

By mid 1959 the PSP had realized that it was on the fringes of the revolutionary process and as a first step in its bid for power in Cuba had cast itself as the middleman between Fidel and the U.S.S.R. The PSP, however, had failed to correctly assess the radical nature of the developing Cuban revolution and as a result from January 1, 1959 until December 1, 1961¹ the head of the PSP, Blas Roca, continuously advocated proceeding with caution in domestic and foreign affairs.

Each of Castro's rapid radical leaps forward forced the Cuban Communists to revise or update their theoretical analysis of the regime and the revolutionary process, and to fall hastily in step behind the government.²

As Cuba's trade relations changed throughout 1960-1962 Fidel found himself not only completely cut off from the U.S.A.* , but well on the way to economic dependence on the U.S.S.R. On April 17, 1961, the U.S. -supported invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs left Fidel in a position of military dependence on the U.S.S.R. to ensure the survival of his government. As Fidel's dependence on the U.S.S.R. increased the PSP utilized its role as middleman between Fidel and the U.S.S.R.

* See Appendix III

to the fullest extent and was able to increase its influence in Cuba considerably.

However, Fidel attempted to counter the increasing party influence by recruiting old guard party members to his side. The most notable case being one Carlos Rafael Rodríguez; it was through Rodríguez that Fidel was able to begin the process of isolating Blas Roca, a process that was completed by 1965.

Thus even in these early years of the revolution Fidel realized the potential threat of the party and began actions to minimize the threat; while the party was able to increase its influence throughout 1960-62, Fidel was careful not to allow the party to secure any real power in the Cuban government.

(i) A Change in Partners

The "rapid radical leaps" were many in these early years of the revolution. Between 1959 and 1961 Cuban foreign trade was drastically changed.

The percentage of exports to Socialist countries was 24.2% in 1960, by 1962 the figure had increased to 82.2%. While the percentage of exports to non-socialist countries had been 75.8% in 1960, a dramatic decrease to 17.8% occurred in 1962. A similar reversal had

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CUBAN TRADE WITH SOCIALIST
AND NON-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES
1960 - 1962 *

EXPORTS

	1960	1961	1962
Socialist	24.2	73.3	82.2
Non-Socialist	75.8	26.7	17.8

IMPORTS

	1960	1961	1962
Socialist	18.7	70.0	82.8
Non-Socialist	81.3	30.0	17.2

* Data compiled from Cuba 1968 Supplement to the Statistical Abstract of Latin America, Latin American Centre, University of California, Los Angeles, California, 1968, pages 172 & 173.

taken place in Cuban imports between 1960 and 1962.³

It was not until the Land Reform Law of May 17, 1959,⁴ that the U.S. government began to express "serious concern" about the revolution.⁵ The Land Reform Law of May can hardly be viewed as "Socialist". The expropriated properties were to be paid for in interest-bearing bonds; in fact, the 4.5% interest rate was higher than that granted by similar Japanese legislation shortly after World War II. The twenty-year term of the bonds was less than that granted in Formosa.⁶

~~The Land Reform was not socialist:~~ it spoke of confiscating only the land of the big landowners, and promised compensation and the establishment of independent tribunals for the settlement of disputes. It held out the bait of property to smallholders and tenant farmers, completely in accordance with the feelings of those inhabitants of the Sierra Maestra who had fought in the rebel army...⁷

Further, Castro's implementation of the Land Reform Act was justifiable if one considers that Castro "inherited almost overpowering land and employment problems from his predecessor".⁸

This problem had plagued Cuba for nearly a century and its magnitude was expressed by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey in April of 1959, when he said:

A pent-up mass hunger for land, is understandable in a country where less than one-tenth of one

percent of the farmers own one-fifth of all agricultural land, and 8 percent own 70 percent of all the land.⁹

In another issue of the Congressional Record, Senator J.F.

Kennedy says:

U.S. companies owned about 40% of the Cuban sugar land, almost all the cattle ranches, 90% of the mines and mineral concessions, 80% of all the utilities and practically all the oil industry.¹⁰

According to the Washington Post, the U.S. government's initial reaction to Cuban Land Reform emphasized that payment for expropriated land should be "prompt, adequate and effective" and the views of U.S. investors should be heard. Criticism continued throughout 1960 and the U.S. implied that it might "seek solutions through other appropriate international procedures".¹¹

Between May and December of 1959, the U.S. news media conducted a campaign against the revolutionary tribunals. On May 11, Time said:

Executions, a prime instrument of terror, went on. Schoolteacher Olga Herrera Marcos, charged with squealing on the rebels, may become the first woman 'war criminal' to face a firing squad. Her death sentence has been appealed. Four former soldiers, sentenced to prison terms by the trial court, were sentenced to death upon 'appeal'¹² by the government. Death toll so far: 549.

In his television program entitled "Is Cuba Going Red?", CBS correspondent Stuart Norris accused Cuba of being a totalitarian dictatorship. ¹³

Herbert Matthews relates an incident in which he cabled a story to the New York Times attempting to explain the Cuban side of the revolutionary tribunals only to have it "rejected with great indignation by the publisher and editor". ¹⁴

On January 21, 1961, Castro reacted to the campaign with vehemence when he accused the United States of killing 400,000 Japanese at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He went on to add "Ours is a people's revolution which must be a beacon of hope for [Latin] America". ¹⁵

By February 13, 1960, an "Agreement on Trade and Payments between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and The Republic of Cuba" had been signed. ¹⁶

to do
In this agreement the U.S.S.R. was to purchase 425,000 tons of sugar from Cuba in 1960, in addition to the 575,000 tons already purchased for that year. Over the succeeding years the U.S.S.R. was to purchase one million tons of sugar per year from Cuba. Cuba agreed to purchase from the U.S.S.R. certain "equipment, machinery and mechanical tools, petroleum and petroleum products, wheat, paper, non-ferrous metals, chemical products, fertilizers and other goods". ¹⁷

By March, 1960, the U.S. reaction against Cuba had reached the point where Joseph Alsop saw fit to warn against U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba.

The people at home who have begun to talk loudly about Cuba will do well to remember how the Suez crisis started. It started, in effect, because the late John Foster Dulles began a game of tit-for-tat with Gamal Abdel Nasser...the temptation to begin a game of tit-for-tat with Fidel Castro is already strong and is likely to grow stronger...cut the quota, and Castro will seize the American investments that are still untouched in Cuba. Increase the pressure, and he will demand the evacuation of Guantánamo naval base. Break diplomatic relations and he will make Cuba into a Soviet base in our Hemisphere...Compared to Castro, Nasser is humble, sluggish. If Nasser reacted violently to the beginning of a game of tit-for-tat, Castro can be expected to react ten times more violently. He can, in fact, be expected to play out the game of tit-for-tat to the limit of his resources..."¹⁸

Nevertheless, by July 6, 1960, President Eisenhower cut the Cuban sugar quota from 3,119,655 tons to 700,000 tons. ¹⁹ Curiously enough, Eisenhower's action followed renewal of Soviet-Cuban diplomatic relations by less than one month.

On July 20, Eisenhower told the world that the U.S. would not "permit the establishment of a regime dominated by international communism in the Western Hemisphere". ²⁰ Thus, the Cuban revolution was labelled communist by the U.S. government. This attitude of the U.S. was strengthened at the OAS meeting in Costa Rica on August 29, 1960 when the

conference passed a declaration which condemned extra-continental interference in the affairs of the American Republics and declared that the "acceptance of a threat of extra-continental intervention by any American state jeopardizes American solidarity and security." The OAS members also rejected the "attempt of the Sino-Soviet powers to make use of the political, economic, or social situation of any American state, inasmuch as that attempt is capable of destroying hemispheric unity and jeopardizing the peace and security of the Western hemisphere". ²¹ Were the "sovereign" states of Latin America acknowledging that the U.S. had exclusive rights of intervention in their affairs?

By August 16, American property in Cuba, valued at some \$500 million, was expropriated. By September 17, the American banks in Cuba had been taken over as well - assets of some \$250 million. On October 24, all remaining American property was nationalized. ²²

On September 2, 1960, Fidel issued his response to the "Declaration of San José" in a speech entitled "The Declaration of Havana". The speech was delivered at a rally in which the audience was declared to be a "National General Assembly of the People of Cuba", in order to approve Fidel's declaration. Their assent was indicated by chanting "Cuba sí, Yanqui, no!" Fidel's Declaration affirmed the right of nations to create civilian militias, "so that they may themselves defend their rights and destinies...The right of the peasants to land; the right of workers to the fruit of their work; the right of children to education; the right of the ill to medical and hospital attention;

the right of youth to work; the right of students to free, experimental, and scientific education; the right of Negroes and Indians to full dignity of man; the right of women to civil, social and political equality; the right of intellectuals, artists, and scientists, to fight with their works, for a better world".²³

In addition Fidel implied the right of Cuba to export her revolution: "it is the duty of oppressed and exploited nations to fight for their liberation, and it is the duty of each nation to make common cause with all the oppressed, colonized, exploited peoples, regardless of their locations in the world".²⁴ Thus, the seeds for the "Cuban heresy" were planted, seeds that would grow into conflict between the U.S.S.R. and U.S.S.R. supported CP 's in Latin America and Cuba by 1967, over the question of violent revolution in Latin America.

In January, 1960, some 600,000 hectares of land were confiscated; by June of 1961 the figure had risen to 3,800,000 hectares and of this total, 2,725,000 had been distributed to the peasants.²⁵ As Michel Gutelman points out, approximately 4,438,870 hectares of land had come under state control by late 1961.²⁶ In addition, much of the industry expropriated by the government had fallen under INRA control.²⁷

As Cuban - U.S. relations deteriorated, Cuban-Sino/Soviet relations were on the rise. Two days after Eisenhower announced the cut

in the Cuban sugar quota, the U.S.S.R. agreed to buy all the sugar involved in the cut. In addition, Khrushchey announced that "figuratively speaking' the Soviet Union would flatten the United States with atomic missiles if Cuba were attacked".²⁸ The next day, at a mass rally Ché Guevara thanked the U.S.S.R. for their past help and declared "Cuba is a glorious island in the centre of the Caribbean, defended by the rockets of the greatest power in history".²⁹ By July 23, Cuba and The People's Republic of China had signed their first commercial treaty.

By January 3, 1961, Cuban - U.S. relations had reached their lowest ebb in history and the U.S. decided to cut off diplomatic relations with Cuba.

~~*~~(ii) The Bay of Pigs - Prelude to Fidel's Marxism-Leninism

At this point, it is useful to very briefly summarize the course of events that led up to the "Bay of Pigs" invasion in an attempt to show the complete polarization of Cuba and the U.S. by April 17, 1961. A polarization that left Fidel little choice but to declare his complete alliance with the Socialist bloc.

On September 29 and 30, 1960, the U.S. State Department publicly advised all Americans to stay out of Cuba and those in Cuba to return home. On October 6, 27 men, including two Americans, made an invasion attempt in Oriente Province. Of this group, one American and seven Cubans

* were executed on October 13. By October 19, the U.S. had imposed an economic embargo on all U.S. exported goods to Cuba, with the exception of medical and certain food supplies. On October 21, Kennedy, in an election speech, referred to the embargo as "too little, too late", and urged the U.S. to aid Cuban "freedom fighters" in overthrowing Castro. Three days later Kennedy denied making the statement. On November 1, Cuban Foreign Minister, Raúl Roa charged the U.S. with planning an invasion of Cuba and again on January 2, made the same charge before the U.N., this time claiming that the time for the action will be before the Kennedy inauguration. On October 31, and again on November 2, these charges were denied by the U.S. State Department, and the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., James Wadsworth. At the same time, President Eisenhower said that any steps necessary to the defense of Guanta^omo, will be taken. By November 18, the Cuban press and radio had denounced Eisenhower's order for the "protection" of Nicaragua and Guatemala, by U.S. naval units, as the first step in the U.S. planned invasion of Cuba, and on November 29, Fidel announced his hope for Kennedy to shift away from the offensive policy, which Eisenhower had been pursuing. On December 3, Eisenhower authorized the use of \$1 million, from the contingency aid fund, for the aid of Cuban refugees. An emergency mobilization was called in Cuba, from January 2 to 21, 1961, after which time, Fidel considered

* the immediate threat, eliminated with the coming to power of Kennedy. Eisenhower had, on the 3rd of January, severed all diplomatic relations with Cuba, and by the 25th, Kennedy had rejected Fidel's offer of the 21st, to restore relations. By February 28, the Cuban press and radio had started another campaign to warn of the impending invasion. Meanwhile, on the 12th of February, the U.S. Ambassador to Peru and Brazil, in 1958, W.D. Pawley, testified before the Senate Internal Security Committee, that he had been instructed to form an anti-Castro-anti-Batista government, in Cuba three weeks before Batista fled. On March 3, A.A. Berle Jr., rejected on behalf of Kennedy, Brazil's offer to mediate the dispute between Cuba and the U.S. This was followed on the 8th by an offer from Fidel to settle the dispute, which was officially ignored, whereupon, Cuba charged, in the U.N., the U.S. with acts of aggression, on the 19th Cuba demanded a hearing on the U.S. invasion threat. On April 3, the State Department released the "White Paper", which summed up its case against Cuba. On April 5th, Cuba had charged the U.S. with supporting an invasion army of counterrevolutionaries and mercenaries with bases in Guatemala and Florida. The invasion forces landed in Cuba, April 17 and by the 20th had been defeated by Fidel's forces. ³⁰

The Cuban defeat of the invasion forces was a tremendous personal victory for Fidel Castro, for the Cuban masses had mobilized behind Fidel and very handily defeated the invasion attempt. Once again Fidel had tweaked the nose of the American colossus and won.

Instead of shooting the 1700 prisoners (Fidel had learned such action would only result in bad press in the U.S.), Fidel indulged in philosophical discussions with them. Instead of closing the door to American relations, he stated the Cuban position as "first we are willing to hold whatever discussions may be necessary to find a solution for the tension existing between the two countries (Cuba - U.S.A.) and arrive at a formula of peaceful co-existence, diplomatic relations and even friendly relations, if the government of the U.S. so desires. Second, we are willing to fight and we will fight to the last drop of blood if we are attacked." ³¹

The U.S. had long since realized that a Cuban government led by Fidel Castro would never go back to the status of an American colony and thus their reply to Fidel's offer was predictable enough: "We have repeatedly said that the basic problem in Cuba is communism in this hemisphere...communism in this hemisphere, is not negotiable. This is a multi-lateral problem and not a bi-lateral problem." ³²

Thus, from Fidel's point of view the U.S. had left the door open for further military aggression against Cuba. With this in mind we can begin to understand how U.S.S.R. nuclear missiles ended up in Cuba, and why Fidel found it necessary to form even closer ties with the Socialist bloc by declaring himself a Marxist-Leninist on December 1st, 1961.

(iii) The Role of the PSP in the Radical Leaps Forward

The role of the PSP in this process had clearly been that of followers rather than leaders. As early as May 23, 1959, it was clear that the PSP were not in a position of power or leadership.

On May 23rd the PSP had suffered a crushing defeat at the congress of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (FNFA), the largest union in CTC. The Communist attempt to put forward a unity candidate was not only rejected, but anti-communist sentiment ran so high that a motion of censure against Hoy was passed and there was even serious talk of taking the newspaper away from the Communists and placing it directly under the control of CTC, a move that would have isolated the PSP from the masses as circulation of Hoy had more than trebled during 1959.

This had its effect on Party leader Blas Roca, when only two days later, he addressed the PSP Central Committee plenum in the following words:

We must not create or aggravate any conflicts...
but it is also impossible for us to retreat. 33

In effect, Blas Roca was admitting to his fellow Party members that he no longer knew what to do.

At the PSP Congress in August, 1960, there was no demand for expropriation of foreign property, takeover of American banks or even expropriation of Cuba's key industries. The PSP had adopted a rather cautious position by describing the revolution only in terms, much of which, had already been accomplished: "consolidation of national sovereignty, total abolition of latifundia, industrialization, confiscation of all illegally acquired property, reduction of unemployment, raising the standards of living of the masses, strengthening of the revolution, etc." ³⁴ In fact, Blas Roca advised extreme caution in any future nationalizations and took the position that:

Private enterprise, in general, that is not imperialistic or monopolistic or of a parasitic nature, is still necessary. ³⁵

Blas Roca went on to say that "in general, previous interventions in Cuban enterprises have been justified but some of them could possibly have been avoided". ³⁶ And yet, within weeks of Roca's speech nationalization on a grand scale had been implemented by Fidel. Clearly the PSP was not making the decisions, and a case can be made that they were not even being informed in advance of the critical decisions being made by Fidel.

For instance, Suárez points out that during the Congress of Latin American Youth (August 5, 1960) the Cuban delegation, which included some members of the PSP Youth (Young Socialists), denied

Trotskyite claims that Fidel and the Cuban people were in the process of "taking over the property of the imperialists". The Young Socialists instead took the position that only those properties which failed to maintain production would be taken over. Yet, on that very night Fidel announced the nationalization of some 36 sugar mills, two oil refineries, the electric and telephone companies, all of them U.S. properties. ³⁷

The years 1959-1962 saw Fidel rely increasingly on a group of loyal followers from the Sierra Maestra rather than on any political party, including the "United Front" created by Fidel's Unity Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra of July, 1958. In fact, as Fidel's radical leaps forward increased in number and frequency the "United Front" membership became increasingly disillusioned, as did the whole of the Cuban bourgeoisie. It is interesting to briefly note the course of this disillusionment among some of the formerly key supporters of Fidel.

One of the first to leave was José Miró Cardona. Miró served as Prime Minister under President Urrutia appointed by Fidel early in January, 1959, but gave up the position on February 16, 1959 to become the ambassador to Spain. Fidel fired Miró. Shortly after the Land Reform Law of May, 1959, five cabinet ministers left the cabinet. They were: Luis Orlando Rodríguez, Roberto Agramonte, Dr. Sorí Martín,

Julio Martínez Páez, and Elena Mendéres. By June 27, President Urrutia had publicly begun his campaign against "communist control" of the Cuban revolution. Two days later Chief of the Cuban Air Force Pedro Díaz Lanz held a press conference and denounced "communist control" of the Cuban revolution. By July 16, Urrutia's attacks had reached the point where Fidel felt obliged to pressure him into resigning, and at the same time condemn Lanz as a traitor. In October of 1959, Hubert Matos tendered his resignation in a widely circulated letter to Fidel in which he condemned Fidel for turning the revolution over to the Communists. Within days Fidel had arrested Matos and most of his staff; Matos was later sentenced to twenty years in prison. By March of 1960, David Salvador, Secretary General of CTC, had resigned and joined a counter-revolutionary guerrilla movement against Fidel. In October, 1960, Teresa Casuso resigned as Cuba's delegate to the United Nations because she too feared "Communist control" of the revolution.³⁸

In some ways the disillusionment had spread to the PSP as well. As already mentioned, Blas Roca displayed caution if not dismay at Fidel's radical leaps forward and the growing significance of the Fidelista phenomenon. Indeed Suárez³⁹ takes the position the pro-Fidelista converts within the PSP were a threat to Party unity as early as mid-1960. Carlos Rafael Rodríguez appears to have been the central figure in the PSP who represented the growing Fidelista sentiment of the party. At the Eighth Congress of the PSP Blas Roca

warned "against precipitation", against the "temptation to form unity committees", because he was beginning to realize that it was just this that Castro wanted - "unity at the base" and Castro alone at the top, directing everything".⁴⁰ By February 13, 1962, Fidel had recognized that Rodríguez was pro-Fidelista and appointed him as head of INRA. Blas Roca, on the other hand, was left in a position of powerlessness. The Fidelista sentiment in the PSP can be seen to "win out" in December of 1961 when Fidel declares himself a Marxist-Leninist and receives the unconditional support of the Party and recognition from Blas Roca that Fidel is the unchallenged head of the new party, ORI. Thus, by 1962, for the first time in its history, the Cuban CP can be seen to be operating more or less independently of Moscow dictates.⁴¹

Some authors have attempted to develop the thesis that Cuba's "state within a state", the INRA, was Communist dominated in these early years of the revolution.⁴² I think it critical to recognize that there is a difference between old guard communists and Fidelistas; and further, that it was the Fidelistas that were in control, not the old guard communists. Old guard communists, in the past, have displayed a rather amazing loyalty to Moscow, a loyalty that this paper has already shown involved the adoption of the Moscow "line" at the expense of making the revolution. Fidelistas owe their support to

Fidel and as such adopt his tactics and strategy - tactics and strategy that were clearly in opposition to Moscow throughout much of the 1960's. ⁴³

As the more bourgeois elements of "The United Front" began to drop by the wayside they were replaced with Fidelistas, not old guard communists. Indeed, in March of 1962, Escalante mistakenly assumed the revolution had come to the stage of development that Moscow theorists considered the vanguard party, (that is, the PSP in the guise of the ORI) would assume leadership; Fidel purged Escalante and his followers, thus making it perfectly clear that the Cuban revolution was profoundly nationalistic and as such would not be run by a group of people under the thumb of Moscow.

Fidel clearly recognized the nature of "Yankee imperialism" and that the Cuban revolution was above all else a nationalistic revolution. Together, these two factors make the radical leaps forward of the early 60's inevitable. The radical leaps forward in turn meant a change in trading partners inevitable and the Socialist bloc was the only choice open to Fidel, given the American economic embargo and American pressure on the "free" world to isolate Cuba.

It should, however, be remembered that the PSP played the not insignificant role of middleman between Fidel and the Socialist bloc. In April of 1960, Blas Roca went to the People's Republic of

China and secured offers of support for the Cuban Revolution from Mao. From China, Roca went to the U.S.S.R. and met with Khrushchev. By May 7, Cuban - U.S.S.R. diplomatic relations had been restored. In June of 1960, Núñez Jiménez, the second top figure in INRA and former PSP member, left for Moscow in order to invite the Soviet Premier to Havana.

In many ways the study of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI) is the study of the repatriation of the communist party in Cuba.

(iv) Footnotes - Chapter Two

- 1 January 1, 1959 - Triumph of Castro's Rebellion. December 1, 1961 - Castro declares that he is a "Marxist Leninist".
- 2 Crain, D.A. op. cit., page 45.
- 3 See Table II for further details.
- 4 The Land Reform Law of May, 1959, can be viewed as the first major piece of legislation of the Castro government. The new law indicated the extent to which government would intervene in the national economy in order to repatriate the Cuban economy; as well as the limitations the government would set on private ownership in the agrarian sector of the economy. The new law ensured a "vital minimum" of 66,273 acres to be awarded to the landless peasants and in addition limited individual ownership in all cases to 995 acres (30 caballerías). The larger estates were to be abolished (with the exception of the exceptionally productive estates - the maximum in these cases would be increased to 3,300 acres) with the land in excess of 995 acres to be placed under cooperative management or distributed among the landless peasants. Absentee ownership of land was forbidden, landowners were encouraged to work all their land, and sharecropping was prohibited. All sugar plantations were prohibited from operating as joint stock companies unless the shares were owned by Cubans not engaged in the sugar industry. Expropriated property was to be indemnified, based on assessed evaluation of the property, with twenty year governmental bonds paying 4.5% interest. In addition, the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) was established to implement the law.
Gutelman, Michel, "The Socialization of the Means of Production in Cuba" in Bonachea & Valdés (ed). Cuba in Revolution. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1972, pages 238-260.
- 5 Washington Post, February 26, 1960, page 5 cited by Neely, F.E. Controversy Over Cuba, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Washington, D.C., 1961, page 3.

- 6 Goldenberg, Boris. op. cit., pages 220-221.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Brumley, C. "Cuba's Colossus", Wall Street Journal, February 24, 1960, page 1.
- 9 Congressional Record, April 15, 1959, page 5310, cited by Neely, F.E., op. cit., page 1.
- 10 Congressional Record, October 6, 1960, page 5870. Ibid.
- 11 Washington Post, February 26, 1960, page 4, Ibid., page 3.
- 12 Time, May 11, 1959, page 46.
- 13 Thomas, H. Cuba, The Pursuit of Freedom. Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1971, page 1214.
- 14 Matthews, H. Fidel Castro, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1970, page 146.
- 15 Halperin, M. The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro. University of California Press, Berkely, California, 1972, page 21.
- 16 Trefousse, H.L. The Cold War/A Book of Documents. Capricorn Books, New York, 1965, page 242.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Alsop, J. "Either/or In Cuba", Washington Post, March 14, 1960, page 15.
- 19 Trefousse, H.L. op. cit., page 245.
- 20 Time, July 11, 1960, page 40.
- 21 "The Declaration of San José", Trefousse, H.L. op. cit., page 248.
- 22 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 82.
- 23 "Declaration of Havana", as cited in Morray, J.P. The Second Revolution. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1962, page 146.
- 24 Ibid, page 6.
- 25 Gutelman, Michel, op. cit., page 243.

- 26 Ibid., page 246.
- 27 Blutstein, H. et. al. Area Handbook for Cuba. U.S. Government Publication, March, 1970, page 290.
- 28 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 78.
- 29 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 575.
- 30 Zeitlin, M. & Scheer, R. Cuba: An American Tragedy. New York, Penguin Books, 1964, pages 150-170.
- 31 Phillips, R.H. "Talks Asked By Dorticós", New York Times, April 29, 1961, page 3.
- 32 Barker, R. "U.S. Rebuffs Cuba on Bid for Talks," New York Times, April 29, 1961, page 1.
- 33 Hoy. May 26, 1959. As cited by Suárez, A. op. cit., page 52.
- 34 Goldenberg, B. op. cit., page 193.
- 35 Blas Roca. The Cuban Revolution - Report to the Eighth National Congress of the People's Socialist Party of Cuba, New Century Publishers, New York, 1961, page 105 ff.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Suárez, Andrés. op. cit., 1966, page 97.
- 38 Casuso, Teresa. Cuba and Castro. Random House, New York, 1961.
- 39 Suárez, Andrés. op. cit., pages 99-101.
- 40 Ibid., page 102.
- 41 To some extent the party had placed Cuban concerns before the dictates of Moscow under the leadership of Rubén Martínez Villena in the late 20's and early 30's. However, by January 1934 Villena and his supporters had been purged from the party by Moscow and replaced by Blas Roca.

- 42 See for instance: Goldenberg, op. cit., pages 242-254; Draper, Theodore, Castro's Revolution, Myths and Realities. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, New York, 1962, pages 118-125.
- 43 See Crain, D.A., op. cit., for a detailed discussion of the Cuban heresy throughout the 1960's.

It may be useful to elaborate on the distinction between old guard communists and Fidelistas drawn in this thesis. The distinction between primary loyalty (that is, old guard communists are oriented toward Moscow while Fidelistas are oriented toward Fidel) has already been pointed out in the body of this thesis. What has not been discussed is the importance of this difference in loyalty. As Fidel drew closer to the Soviet sphere of influence and finally became a full member of the Socialist bloc, he faced the very real possibility of an abrupt end to his career as leader of Cuba. This becomes clear when one examines the Cuban experience in terms of the Soviet experience up to the 1960's. Prior to the 1960's only "accredited" parties (that is, parties that accepted the Soviet point of view on revolution, socio-economic structures desirable, etc..) would have an opportunity of becoming full members of the Socialist bloc, providing, of course, that the accredited party had captured power in its own country. By the early 1960's the differences between Mao and Khrushchev were becoming clear, this along with some twenty years of differences between Tito and Soviet leaders had caused the Soviet Union to proceed cautiously in the acceptance of new Socialist bloc members. In short by the time Fidel had made his revolution the Soviet experience had caused them to shy away from such an obviously independent and charismatic leader as Fidel, the Soviet choice for leadership of the Cuban revolution would be people more like themselves; in other words, the Cuban old guard communists. Thus the mere existence of the Cuban old guard communists in Cuba, who were highly organized, was a threat to Fidel's position as leader. On the other hand, as discussed in the body of this thesis, their existence also offered Fidel a way into the Socialist bloc, providing Fidel played his cards right. Play his cards right he did, in fact within a short time the Fidelization of the party began and Fidel was able to maintain a rather delicate juggling act by both using the old guard communists and at the same time phasing them out of key positions in the party.

CHAPTER THREE

THE INTEGRATED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS(ORI)

Of the three amalgamating revolutionary organizations, only the PSP had the experience, the disciplined membership, and the ideological background that were needed in setting up the ORI-PURS. There was also another, and very significant advantage from Fidel's point of view. The enhanced role of the PSP would inspire more confidence in the Kremlin concerning his own reliability, while the PSP in turn would be more willing and in a better position to persuade the Kremlin to recognize the legitimacy of Fidel's claim to full membership in the socialist club. 1

It is in the study of the ORI that the struggle between Fidel and the party old guard is most evident. There is evidence that as early as January, 1961 the PSP and Fidel had reached an agreement on the formation of the ORI; however, it was not until July 26, 1961 that ORI officially came into existence. Throughout 1961 and the early part of 1962 old guard party members concentrated their efforts on organizing the new party ORI; Aníbal Escalante soon became the key figure in the organizational drive and it was clear that he was operating under the assumption that power in Cuba would reside within the new party.

As early as November 10, 1961 Fidel had publically displayed dissatisfaction with the old guard organizational drive, but his warning was ignored by Escalante. By March 13, 1962 the old guard's attempt

to capture power for the new party had been so successful that Fidel began an attack on Escalante and his supporters that was to very quickly result in the purge of many of the old guard from the party and their replacement by Fidelistas.

The missile crisis of October, 1962 gave Fidel the lever he needed with the U.S.S.R. and thus the old guard role of middleman was no longer required and Fidel lost no time in relegating old guard party members to obscurity and negotiating directly with the U.S.S.R. over the issue of full Cuban membership into the Socialist Bloc. Fidel's tactics worked, as on May 23, 1963, the Cuban Communist Party, at that time called the United Party of The Socialist Revolution (PURS), was accepted as a true communist party by the U.S.S.R. and thus a member of the Socialist bloc.

(i) The Formation of ORI

While the official formation of ORI began as a result of a meeting held July 26, 1961, unofficially ORI had begun formation several months earlier. As early as January, 1961, the PSP had ceased to make any pronouncements whatsoever on Cuban events while at the same time maintaining contact with its fraternal parties abroad. Suárez points out a list of greetings to fraternal parties published

in Hoy between March 9 and July 4, 1961. They were as follows: March 9 - CP of Venezuela, March 18 - CP of Norway, March 18 - CP of Britain, June 3 - CP of Israel, June 25 - CP of Colombia, and July 4 - CP of Mongolia. Suárez feels that by January, 1961, the PSP and Fidel had already discussed the possibility of a new party and Fidel had secured the PSP's agreement to dissolve the PSP and join the new party at the appropriate time, but the PSP used these greetings to fraternal parties to make their presence felt and thus "pressure" Fidel into publicly announcing the formation of a new party. ²

The laws promulgated in February 1961, were an early indication that the Cuban state apparatus was leading toward socialism and thus the increased importance of PSP participation in the revolution came as no surprise to astute observers. Edward Boorstein points out that the purpose of the organic laws was "...to complete the task of rebuilding the state apparatus, to give it the structure required to operate a socialist, planned economy". ³

The laws resulted in a JUCEPLAN⁴ (Junta Central de Planificación - Central Board for Planning) with greatly increased powers in the Cuban state apparatus. Instead of assuming mere advising functions JUCEPLAN was now placed in charge of forming the plans under which the Cuban economy would run. Law 935, of February 29, 1961, reads:

The plans which the JUCEPLAN formulates will be submitted to the consideration of the Council of Ministers and once approved will have the force of law. ⁵

Goldenberg points out that almost all the secretaries of JUCEI (provincial organs of JUCEPLAN) were members of the old Communist Party. ⁶ Thus, as early as February, 1961, the role of the PSP in the revolution had increased significantly.

In early 1961, the PSP, the Directorio Revolucionario, the July 26 Movement, and the Young Pioneers began to casually be referred to as "organizaciones revolucionarias integradas" by the Cuban Press. ⁷ It is also interesting to note that on May 24, 1961, Revolucion published two pictures of a meeting in the town of Guantañamo with a caption identifying the pictures as the scene of "fusion" between the PSP, July 26 Movement and the Directorio Revolucionario.

In addition, Draper points out that on June 4, 1961, at a student meeting in Havana, Ché Guevara said "the only thing lacking is to create the party and to name Fidel as its Secretary General". ⁸ Thus, considerable work had gone into the creation of the new party preceding the meeting of July 26, 1961. Nevertheless, the official beginning of ORI can be traced to this meeting. When Fidel proposed the question: "will all who support the union of all revolutionaries in the united party of the Socialist Revolution raise their hands," ⁹ he received a reply that was overwhelmingly in the affirmative.

As a result of the above named meeting, the ORI was set up to organize and build the Partido Unido de la Revolución Socialista (PURS). ORI membership was drawn from three key Cuban revolutionary organizations; the PSP, the 26 July Movement, and the Directorio Revolucionario. In November of 1961, Fidel set the tone of the new party when he explained that the "true revolutionaries would be a select and small party of the masses, while the masses, though they could support the revolution, could not call themselves revolutionaries".¹⁰ When Fidel used his personal influence to aid Lázaro Peña (old guard PSP member) gain his position as secretary general of CTC, it became clear that the PSP had assumed a somewhat more important role in the revolution than previously; although exactly what the role was to be was not yet clearly defined or understood. The PSP, however, felt that its role in ORI was sufficiently important and secure that the Party officially dissolved itself on November 27, 1961.¹¹ By this time, it was becoming fairly clear that the driving force behind ORI was one Aníbal Escalante (old guard PSP member) who announced that the ORI had set up headquarters in 100 of 126 townships on the island and had some 800 ORI nuclei in Havana.

In May of 1961, Escalante had said: "...the revolution had completed the national liberation stage 'defined' in May, 1959, and in May, 1961, was entering the socialist stage as a decisive step on the road to communism".¹² Thus, Escalante set about building a

new party based on the traditional party model, with all the assumptions underlying such a model. The key assumption being that power resides within the party, an assumption that section two of this chapter shows to have been premature, to say the least, at this point in Cuban history.

As Escalante continued to build the new party, and in the process to take control of the ORI, "old guard" influence spread. Five of six of the provincial secretary-generals of ORI were former PSP members; namely: José L. G. Carvajal, Silvio Quintana, Leónides Calderío, Arnaldo Milián and Ladislao González Carvajal.¹³ By late 1961, the ORI controlled the School for Revolutionary Education and the military academy and the communist analysis of the Cuban historical process was beginning to alienate many veteran supporters of Fidel. In addition, ORI had implemented an effective screening out program for those army officers not well versed in the teachings of Marxism-Leninism (a group which often included Fidelistas).

On December 1, 1961, Fidel gave his "I am a Marxist-Leninist" speech and during the discourse proclaimed his Marxism-Leninism and in the last section of the speech announced his decision to make a single Marxist-Leninist party upon which his regime would be based. Fidel went on to explain that a continuation of his one man rule was no longer "correct" since the revolutionary process was now considerably

more advanced than in 1959 and that for his part he would "subordinate" himself to the new party. The PSP assumed it would of course play a major part in the new party. ¹⁴

On February 6, 1962, as if to confirm Fidel's decreased role in the revolution Carlos Rafael Rodríguez (old guard PSP and pro-Fidelista) assumed Fidel's position as President of INRA. ¹⁵

On March 9, 1962, the first "official list" of the directorate of the ORI was released. The list was a balanced compromise between old guard communists and Fidelistas. ¹⁶ It had now been over two months since Fidel's bid for full membership into the Socialist bloc and the U.S.S.R. had yet to reply. On March 13, 1962, Fidel began a series of manoeuvres designed to indicate to the U.S.S.R. that he was firmly in control of the Cuban revolution and there was no chance of this situation changing in the foreseeable future; therefore there was no point in continuing the wait-and-see game before granting Cuba full membership into the Socialist bloc.

(ii) The Purge of Escalante and the Repatriation of ORI

On November 10, 1961, speaking to ORI's Revolutionary Orientation Committee (COR), Fidel indicated that he was somewhat displeased with the

TABLE III

THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF ORI (1962)*

<u>PSP Members</u>	<u>26th July Movement Members</u>	<u>Others</u>
Blas Roca	Fidel Castro	Oswaldo Dorticós
C.R. Rodríguez	Raúl Castro	Faure Chomón
Aníbal Escalante	Ché Guevara	
Severo Aguirre	Emilio Aragones	
Flavio Bravo	Augusto Martínez Sanchez	
César Escalante	Ramiro Valdes	
Joaquín Ordoquí	Juan Almeida	
Lázaro Pena	Armando Hart	
Manuel Luzardo	Sergio Del Valle	
Ramon Calcines	Guillermo García	
Raúl Curbelo	Osmany Cienfuegos	
	Haydée Santamaria	

* This table is compiled from data provided by H. Thomas. Cuba The Pursuit of Freedom. op. cit., p. 1377, and B. Goldenberg, The Cuban Revolution and Latin America. op. cit., p. 263, and Revolución, March 9, 1962, page 1.

Members are ranked according to importance.

TABLE IV

THE SECRETARIAT OF ORI (1962)*

Fidel Castro

Raúl Castro

Ché Guevara

Oswaldo Dorticós

Emilio Aragonés

Blas Roca

* Data taken from Suárez, A. Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966, page 151.

Members are ranked according to importance.

ORI when he warned that "Arbitrary arrests must stop!"¹⁷ Escalante was present at the meeting (in fact, he chaired the meeting) but chose to ignore Fidel's warning and continued to build the party according to his conception of a vanguard party.

On March 13, in a speech given at the University of Havana, Fidel began his attack on Escalante and the leadership of ORI. Halfway through his speech Fidel paused and said:

And we, while he was reading, were following the testament in a book...We noticed that he skipped the fourth paragraph...Out of curiosity we began to read what he had skipped and we saw what said..."We trust that the purity of our aims will attract the favour of God, to allow us to establish the rule of justice in our country". Now that is very interesting, I thought: "Caramba! Did he intentionally omit these three lines?" When he finished reading, I asked him. And he said: "At the entrance they gave instructions. I described what I was going to read and they told me to skip those three lines".

Is this possible, comrades? Are we so cowardly, so bigoted in mind, that we have to omit three lines from the testament of José Antonio Echevarría simply because...he believed in God? What sort of faith is this in truth?...And the tragedy is that the comrade who received the order to omit those lines is a poet, and in his own little book of verses (which I have here) is one which is entitled 'Prayer to the Unknown God'.¹⁸

Halperin points out that at this point in his narration Fidel exploded with "...what a myopic, sectarian, stupid, and crooked conception...What are they trying to do this revolution? Transform it

into a yoke for oxen or a school for puppets?"¹⁹ Only two days later Revolución ran an editorial entitled "War Against Sectarianism"; Fidel's attack on Escalante and his leadership of ORI was now well under way.

On March 16, 1962, Ché Guevara, Minister of Industry, continued the attack on the revolutionary leadership (ORI leadership) when he complained in a speech to union officials that "The achievements of the revolution...are confined to the establishment of a few small consumer-goods factories and the completion of factories started under the dictatorship". He went on to criticize the quality of goods produced, low productivity, incompetence of technicians and managers, bureaucratic habits and "lack of revolutionary awareness, the inadequacy of our work, insufficient control, and lack of revolutionary vigilance".²⁰

On March 16, in a speech given at the graduation exercises of a one-year accelerated teachers course, Fidel became more specific in his attack when he mentioned ORI by name: "There are people who have the idea that to belong to the ORI gives them the right to be giving orders, to fire and appoint [governmental administrators], to create chaos in the management of the state".²¹ Fidel went on to accuse ORI secretaries up and down the country of imposing despotism on the country that rivaled that of Batista and his henchmen.

By March 22, 1962, the National Directorate of the ORI had named a secretariat that included Blas Roca but not Escalante; the other members of the secretariat were Fidelistas. On March 26, Escalante was fired from his position in ORI and shipped off to Prague on the first available plane. The next day, Fidel delivered a speech over national radio and television, the subject of which was "sectarianism". In this speech Fidel became even more specific in his attack when he told his listeners and viewers that Aníbal Escalante was a communist for many years and:

In our opinion he was a true Communist, an honest Communist...but Aníbal Escalante erred. Aníbal Escalante, a Communist, committed grave errors. The fact is that Communists also make mistakes! They are men, after all. Is this the only time that the Communists have made a mistake? No, Communists have made many mistakes. The history of the international Communist movement is studded with mistakes. Many apply Marxism wrongly. A man, after all, and only a man, and like every human being exposed to the temptation of error, Aníbal Escalante erred. 22

Fidel went on to elaborate on Escalante's "errors". Escalante had built a party that was an apparatus for the implementation of his own orders, the ORI had evolved to the point where it was interfering with the operation of various governmental ministries, ORI secretaries were anti-Fidelista, etc. In short, Fidel had shown that Escalante's assumption that the time was right for implementation of a traditional

Communist party was untimely to say the least. In a speech on March 28, 1962, Fidel repeated his charges of the previous day and clearly showed that it was he and not the old guard communists who was in control of the revolution in Cuba. The ORI was, of course, purged of Escalante appointments and more Fidelistas brought into the key positions.

As M. Halperin points out ²³ while most of Fidel's speech had attacked the ORI and Communist leadership of ORI, Fidel did attempt to end his speech on a note of unity when he called for the people of Cuba to respect and recognize the merits of the Communists and the Communists to assume an attitude of modesty. Thus, several important governmental positions were left in the hands of Communists (Communists loyal to Fidel). For example, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez continued as President of INRA, Manuel Luzardo continued at the Ministry of Internal Trade, Lionel Soto continued at the School of Revolutionary Instructions, and César Escalante (Aníbal's brother) succeeded Aníbal as director of the Committee of Revolutionary Orientation (COR) of ORI.

M. Halperin reports that on April 11, 1962, Pravda featured an editorial that praised Fidel's "perfectly correct criticism of sectarian errors" and went on to declare Fidel's speech of March 26 to be Marxist-Leninist, and referred to Fidel as the national hero of

the Cuban people. The full blame for the entire episode was put on Aníbal Escalante. ²⁴

After the purge of Escalante the task of electing "model workers" was begun. Halperin describes this process of election of model workers:

Candidates for membership in the new Cuban scheme were nominated from among the workers including the managerial staffs, by a majority vote at open mass meetings in each work centre or institution. To be eligible for nomination a person had to be an 'exemplary worker, an active member of a number of mass organizations including the militia, and familiar with Fidel's important pronouncements and those of Che... and had not to have voted in the election Batista mounted in 1958... Conspicuously missing among the required qualifications was a knowledge of any of the classics of Communist literature, including the works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. At the same time, candidates and all others were given to understand that membership in the party would provide no privileges. Finally, nominees were screened by party authorities before receiving their membership cards. ²⁵

In this way, Fidel hoped to gain the support of the Cuban people for the revitalized party and at the same time ensure that the old guard did not control the "type" of recruits admitted to the Party.

(iii) The Missile Crisis

In October of 1962, a major confrontation was to occur between

the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. that would result in increased leverage for Fidel in his bid for full membership in the Socialist bloc.

Fidel's purge of Escalante and his followers from ORI, coupled with the remaining Cuban old guard's submission to Fidel, left the U.S.S.R. with no choice but acceptance of Fidel as supreme leader of the Cuban revolution.

During the next few months, a number of trade and mutual defense agreements were concluded between Moscow and Cuba, one of which must have provided for Soviet missiles on Cuban soil. By August 29, U.S. reconnaissance planes discovered ground-to-air missile bases in Cuba. On September 8, the U.S.A. discovered long-range missile bases in Cuba. On October 22, President Kennedy denounced the Cuban missile bases and ordered a blockade of all shipments of offensive military weapons to Cuba.²⁶ For the next six days Kennedy and Khrushchev practiced brinkmanship on a grand scale. On October 26, 1962 sanity once again prevailed and Khrushchev gave in to Kennedy and agreed to (1) remove the missiles; (2) allow U.N. inspection of dismantled missile sites. Unfortunately, Khrushchev had failed to consult with Fidel during the six days of brinkmanship. A situation which led Fidel to conclude: "An armed conflict has been avoided, but peace has not been achieved."²⁸

Khrushchev's unilateral decision to remove the missiles from Cuban soil cast Fidel in the role of a pawn in the game of international power politics, a role he tried to discard in his letter of October 28th, to U. Thant. The letter declares "...President Kennedy's guarantees that there will be no aggression against Cuba are meaningless" unless he agrees, in addition to ending the "quarantine", to implement the following five stipulations.

- 1) Lift the economic blockade...;
 - 2) Stop all subversive activities...carried on from the territory of the United States and from a few other countries cooperating with it;
 - 3) Stop the attacks by pirate vessels based in the United States and Puerto Rico;
 - 4) Stop all violations of our air space and territorial waters by United States aircraft and warships;
 - 5) Withdraw from Guantánamo Naval Base and return the Cuban territory occupied by the United States.
- 29

In the end, Fidel refused to allow on-the-site inspection of dismantled missiles by U.N. observers, but allowed U.S. U-2 planes to photograph the sites.

The missile crisis was to have a lasting effect on Fidel's feelings towards the U.S.S.R. and old guard communists. On October 28, Hoy had praised Khrushchev by referring to his "sensible, realistic, and fairminded acts and proposals".³⁰ On October 30, 1961, Hoy acknowledged Fidel's five points and supported them. In addition, Latin

American CP's lined up on the side of Moscow and praised Khrushchev for "exercising statesmanship which had preserved world peace and guaranteed the future of socialism in Cuba." ³¹

As a result of the missile crisis, Cuban - U.S.S.R. relations were at their lowest ebb since 1959. By the end of 1962, Soviet pronouncements on the Latin American liberation movement renewed their emphasis on peaceful struggle. Fidel, meanwhile, had adopted Che's thesis of violent revolution and in a speech on January 15, 1962, launched an ideological attack on the Soviet line. Fidel accused Latin American Communist theorists of being "afraid of revolution" and in fact creating "resignation, conformism, and fear of revolution among the masses". ³²

Fidel went on to attack Cuban old guard communists when he accused them of "distorting the historic truths of his revolution" and attempting "to use the case of Cuba to confuse revolutionaries of other countries where the conditions for revolution exist and where they can do the same as in Cuba". ³³

The U.S.S.R. was particularly sensitive to Fidel's criticisms since Peking was openly attacking Khrushchev as a "revisionist" and Fidel's attacks served to aggravate the political tensions between pro-Moscow CP officials and their local Peking-Havana oriented critics

throughout Latin America.

The first attempt at reconciliation appeared in the form of the U.S.S.R. - Cuban Trade Agreement, February 6, 1963. The U.S.S.R. granted Cuba a credit to compensate for the trade imbalance for 1961-1962 and to include the projected imbalance for 1963. In addition, the U.S.S.R. permitted Cuba to divert one million tons of the U.S.S.R. quota of sugar to the world market and thus obtain needed dollars and higher prices for the sugar. The U.S.S.R. further agreed to increase the price of Cuban sugar for 1963.

Sixteen days after the trade agreement, February 22, 1963, Fidel delivered a speech entitled "On the Unity Party of the Socialist Revolution of Cuba (PURS)".³⁴ The speech marked the transition of ORI into PURS, with Fidel serving as Secretary-General of the new party.

A front page headline in Revolucion, April 16, 1963, signified the second major U.S.S.R. gesture toward reconciliation with Cuba. The headline announced Fidel's impending visit to the U.S.S.R. As M. Halperin writes:

Certainly, in the 800 years since the founding of the Duchy of Moscow, no Russian Czar, emperor or ruler of the Soviet Union had received a visiting head of state or any other foreign guest with anything remotely resembling the pomp and ceremony, and out-pouring of attention and honors, that Nikita Khrushchev bestowed on Fidel Castro.³⁵

Fidel's visit culminated in the Joint Cuban-Soviet Declaration of May 23, 1963, which provided Fidel with the Soviet acceptance of Cuba into the socialist bloc, which he had been striving for since early 1961. The document read:

The relations between PURS and CPUSSR are based on the unbreakable principles of proletarian internationalism and fraternal solidarity, of equality between the parties...³⁶

Thus, PURS was finally accepted as a true Communist Party, with Fidel as its head, by the CPUSSR.

(iv) Footnotes - Chapter Three

- 1 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 132.
- 2 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 128.
- 3 Boorstein, Edward. The Economic Transformation of Cuba. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969, page 140.
- 4 Juceplan first arose from the old organic law of March, 1960. The original Juceplan was for the most part engaged in academic studies and its recommendations were not binding on anyone. Unlike the new version of Juceplan the original Juceplan's terms of reference were far too vague.
- 5 Boorstein, Ed. op. cit., page 149.
- 6 Goldenberg, B. op. cit., page 245.
- 7 Thomas, H. op. cit., page 1372.
- 8 Draper, T. Castro's Revolution. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, New York, 1962, page 123.
- 9 Thomas, H. op. cit., page 1372.
- 10 Ibid., page 1373.
- 11 Morray, J.P. op. cit., page 165.
- 12 MacCaffey & Barnett. op. cit., page 322.)
- 13 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 148 (footnote 45).
- 14 Draper, T. op. cit., page 149.
- 15 It is reported by M. Halperin (op. cit.) pages 143-144 that while the U.S.S.R. merely sat back and hoped the new party would capture power from Fidel, the Chinese attempted "to persuade certain elements of the former PSP, among others, to seize power by a military coup." The Chinese apparently felt that Fidel was an "incorrigible petit bourgeois romantic whose rapid elimination was necessary to ensure Cuba's transformation into a genuine socialist state".

- 16 See Table III for the complete breakdown of the Directorate of ORI as of March 9, 1962.
- 17 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 133.
- 18 Thomas, H. op. cit., pages 1377-1378.
- 19 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 150.
- 20 Goldenberg, B. op. cit., page 257., emphasis added.
- 21 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 151.
- 22 Thomas, H. op. cit., page 1379.
- 23 Halperin, M. op. cit., pages 153-154.
- 24 Ibid., page 155.
- 25 Ibid., page 158.
- 26 Trefousse, H.L. op. cit., pages 276-282.
- 27 Ibid., pages 282-287.
- 28 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 175.
- 29 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 193.
- 30 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 171.
- 31 Crain, D.A. op. cit., page 45.

- 32 Ibid., pages 53-54
- 33 Ibid., page 54.
- 34 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 179.
- 35 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 210.
- 36 Ibid., page 220.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNITED PARTY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

"For fifty years two fundamental factors, one external and the other internal, have shaped the nature and political modus operandi of the Latin American Communist parties. The first and most important element is the relationship of these organizations to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and Soviet foreign policy. The second determining factor involves the nature of the Communist parties of Latin America...a factor directly influenced by the first and related to CP traditions and past experience, in the Latin American political process.

The preceding quotation is especially salient to an understanding of the development of the Cuban CP during the years 1962 through 1965. From the purge of Aníbal Escalante in 1962 onward, the history of the Cuban CP can be understood as a purge of "old guard" party members by nationalist forces (Fidelista forces). It is with the formation and history of PURS that this process is made especially clear. Although Fidel allowed Blas Roca and Raúl Castro to step up party organizational efforts in these years, the party itself played little or no role in Cuban political life. In short, Fidel allowed the old guard to expend their energies in activities that resulted in

little or no pay-off in terms of power for the Party. This chapter will show that when the party did begin to make headway in capturing "some" power Fidel went on the offensive and thus eliminated the possibility of the party becoming a significant force in the decision-making process in Cuban political life.

(i) The Role of the Old Guard in PURS

As early as 1963, Fidel had realized that the "old guard" constituted a serious threat to the ideals of the revolution he had made in 1959. I.L. Horowitz summarizes the nature of these threats:

The centralization of the Communist Party would elevate Havana to a supreme place in the bureaucratic hierarchy, thus depriving Castro of the rural mystique so vital to his outlook.

The party bureaucracy threatened the charismatic basis of Castro's leadership.

If orthodoxy were victorious, Castro would be saddled with not only material, but ideological dependence upon the Soviet Union.

Orthodox communists threatened Cuba with isolation from other Latin American revolutionaries. Like Stalin, these old-time communists were afraid that every other revolution would be "premature", "lacking in basic historical conditions for change".

Finally, Castro felt orthodoxy would be likely to smother the revolutionary "will", that human quality that had overcome so many hardships and had actually made the Cuban Revolution possible. ²

The first significant indication that the "old guard" would not be playing a role in PURS similar to the one they played in the formative stages of ORI was their complete lack of participation in Fidel's first trip to the U.S.S.R. in May-June of 1963.

...neither Blas Roca nor Carlos Rafael Rodríguez nor any member of the former PSP leadership formed part of the group chosen by Fidel to accompany him on his first trip to the Soviet Union. The Cuban party representatives participating in the "fraternal" talks with the CPSU were all Castroites, that is, besides Castro himself, Emilio Aragonés, Sergio del Valle, Guillermo García, Regino Boti, and Raúl Curbelo. 3

It was clear that Fidel no longer felt PSP input was necessary to persuade the Kremlin to recognize his claims for admittance to the Socialist bloc; Fidel was convinced (and rightly so) that the missile crisis had given him all the bargaining power he needed to gain Moscow's approval of a Socialist Cuba.

In addition, Fidel's selection of representatives accompanying him on his trip made it perfectly clear to Moscow that the "old guard" communists would not be playing a significant role in PURS. Moscow, of course, attempted to increase the role of the "old guard" in PURS, but to little avail. 4

It was only a matter of a few months later that Fidel thought it appropriate to teach all interested parties that it was he who held the reigns of power and the "old guard" had no chance of capturing them.

(ii) The Trial of Marcos Rodríguez

The trial of Marcos Rodríguez⁵ in March, 1964, showed not only the "old guard" communist's relative powerlessness, but its inability to defend one of its comrades in the face of a Fidelista onslaught. Suárez feels the reason for Fidel's attack was to "cool off the organizational ardor of the old Communists, regain the confidence of his followers, and once again remind everyone that he alone was in command".⁶

On March 16, Revolución announced that the trial of Marcos Rodríguez had begun the preceding Saturday. Included in the front page announcement were excerpts from Rodríguez's confession that stated he had been a member of the Socialist Youth (the youth organization of the PSP in the early and late fifties). It was thus clear from the beginning that the old guard communists were once again in for a rough time. As the trial progressed it became clear that as early as

1955, Marcos Rodríguez was informing the PSP of Student Directorate activities thus implicating the PSP through its association with Marcos Rodríguez. Further doubts were cast on the PSP when it came to light that in 1958, while in Mexico, Marcos Rodríguez met with Joaquín Ordoquí and his wife Edith García Buchaca (two eminent leaders of the old PSP) and confessed his betrayal of the students to Batista police. Marcos Rodríguez was apparently forgiven his treachery by the party as he applied for membership shortly thereafter and was admitted.

On March 18, Marcos Rodríguez was condemned to death, but by March 20, ex-members of the PSP had organized themselves and brought enough pressure to bear so that Fidel announced the sentence had been appealed and Marcos Rodríguez would be given a new trial.⁷

On March 23, Blas Roca attended a meeting of the PURS, accompanied by a secretary of the Soviet embassy, and announced that the new trial would result in PSP exoneration.⁸ The die was cast, the old guard would attempt to dissociate themselves from Marcos Rodríguez and thus remove any doubts as to their revolutionary integrity.

At the new trial Señora Buchaca denied having heard Rodríguez's confession and Marcos Rodríguez later claimed he had not made such a confession. Blas Roca stated in a series of articles in Hoy that slander of the PSP and thus of the old guard was an attempt by "divisionists", "schemers", and "sectarians" to break revolutionary solidarity. Carlos

Rafael Rodríguez (who till this point was considered more a Fidelista than an old guard communist) demonstrated his support of the old guard when he said, "I am an old Communist, and proud of it...proud of my whole life, and proud of the life of the PSP".⁹

As the trial came to a close it was clear that the old guard tactic of disassociation with Marcos Rodríguez had met with only limited success; for while Fidel exonerated the PSP of any guilt, Rodríguez was once again found guilty and this time - shot.

Technically the PSP had been exonerated, but only after further damage had been done to its already tarnished image in the Cuban public eye. It was a hollow victory for the PSP old guard indeed, for a member of the PSP had gone before the firing squad.

During the next year and a half, Fidel systematically removed those of the old guard who had banded together to defend the PSP and thwart his efforts to discredit the PSP during the Rodríguez trial. On February 15, 1965, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez was removed as President of INRA (a post Fidel once again assumed); on November 19, 1964, it was announced that Joaquín Ordoquí had been relieved of all his positions in the administration and in PURS (in fact, the resolution to remove Ordoquí was passed by the National Directorate of PURS)¹⁰ and that he and his wife had been placed under arrest.

The continuous purge of old guard communists was beginning to take its toll on Blas Roca as well; Suárez reports:

His head wobbled minutely but regularly, and even though he rested his hands on a table in front of him, these, too exhibited the tremor. ¹¹

(iii) PURS Organization Efforts

On Fidel's second trip to the U.S.S.R. in January of 1964, once again no old guard Communists were included; Fidel went even further and failed to include any members of the National Directorate of PURS (other than himself). Fidel was able to secure increased Soviet economic support for Cuba in turn for which he toned down his criticisms of Latin American CP's and expressed solidarity with the U.S.S.R. policy of peaceful coexistence and of their attempt at doing "away with the existing differences and of fortifying the unity and cohesion of the ranks of the international Communist movement". ¹² This was clearly an anti-Chinese position, thus, Fidel's previous stance of neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute was compromised.

From 1962, the old guard had concentrated their organizational abilities in cultural activities, organization of PURS, and setting up party cells in the Armed Forces.

In 1962, César Escalante had replaced his brother as the head of the Commission for Revolutionary Orientation (COR) and since that time had been working with Blas Roca to gain control of Cuban cultural activities. However, in December 1963, César Escalante suffered a serious setback in his bid for power.

In December, a series of capitalist films (including "La Dolce Vita") were being shown in Havana, after, according to M. Halperin a long run of rather dry socialist movies in 1962. Blas Roca questioned the "suitability" of these new movies in an article published in Hoy. Alfredo Guevara, Director of the Institute of Cinematography (and former subordinate of Blas Roca in the PSP) lost no time in publicly disagreeing with Blas Roca and further pointed out that Blas Roca's, and by implication, César Escalante's opinions in no way represented the cultural policies of the regime. Guevara went to make sarcastic reference to the old guard's socialist realism when he said it amounted to "the work of art must be replaced by propaganda sugar-coated with certain formulas, and the public will be reduced to a vast mass of babies who, by their nurses, will be fed perfectly prepared and sterilized 'ideological pap'".¹³

Roca immediately backed down and acknowledged the unofficial status of his opinions. Meanwhile over four hundred artists and

intellectuals had prepared a statement in support of Guevara. In addition, President Osvaldo Dorticós, joined the fray and stated that Roca's opinion was not that of the government. Thus, Roca and through him, César Escalante and the COR suffered a set-back, indeed their very *raison d'être* was called into question.

It was not until after Fidel's second trip to the Soviet Union (January, 1964) that PURS began serious efforts to extend the Party's organization and influence in the Cuban Armed Forces.

By the autumn of 1964, the organization of the party in the Eastern Army had been completed, and it had begun in the Central Army. All this conformed to the Soviet model, modified, with respect to recruiting, by Castro's innovations. The soldiers of every unit selected "model fighters". Then, through meetings, self-criticism, and analysis, the party cell was formed and elected its Bureau. All the cells depend on the political department of the armed forces, composed of the political chiefs of the three army corps and headed by a chief. Finally, the political department is subordinated to the military department of the National Directorate of the PURS. 14

This should not be interpreted to mean that the old guard Communists had control or even significant influence over the Cuban Armed Forces. For once a state of combat has been declared, all the party organs cease to function, and the military chain of command stands alone. Fidel, is of course, Commander and Chief of the Cuban Armed

Force s. In addition, Fidel has never shown an interest in PURS organization within the Armed Forces (the key figures in the organization of PURS within the Armed Forces were Blas Roca and Raúl Castro). Further, Suárez reports that in February 1967, Granma announced a new development in the Cuban military structure in the form of a special corps called "The Armored Army Corps, Reserve of the Commander in Chief".¹⁵ Presumably, Fidel maintains very tight control over this new corps.

It is also interesting to note that as of the end of 1964, neither the chief of the political department nor the two political chiefs of the army corps were old guard Communists.¹⁶

D.Burks points out what may be a typical example of the process of party formation in his statistics for Camaguey province.

By June, 1964, there were 698 cells in existence with 6,468 members, who represented 7.67 per cent of the total number of workers employed in the places of work which had been organized. A total of 416 candidate members had also been selected. The cells in most cases, however, were not functioning as effective organizations and thus failed to meet problems of production (for example, absenteeism and work norms) as they arose.¹⁷

As the PSP gave way to ORI, and ORI gave way to PURS, in October of 1965 PURS gave way to the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC).
Throughout 1964-65 the old guard had continued their efforts to organize

PURS and in October, 1965, were rewarded for their efforts by a further decrease in their numbers on the National Directorate of PCC, further assuring Fidel's complete control over the new party.

(iv) Footnotes - Chapter Four

- 1 Crain, David, op. cit., pages 5-6.
- 2 Horowitz, I.L. Cuban Communism. Aldine Publishing Company, New York, 1970, pages 7-8.
- 3 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 181.
- 4 Suárez (page 191) points out the following from an article in Kommunist, No. 18, December, 1963, op. cit.

"The key process in the development of the Cuban Revolution is the establishment of the vanguard which is leading and guarding the revolution...The expansion of PURS is currently the priority task."
- 5 Suárez, A. op. cit., pages 201-202.
- 6 In March of 1957 Rodríguez informed the police of the whereabouts of members of the Student Directorate who had staged an unsuccessful attack on the Presidential palace. The information led to the death of several student leaders when the police raided the hide-out.
- 7 Old guard communist and Fidelista Rafael Rodríguez said at the trial that on March 16, 1963, he began to make arrangements for the communists to be heard. At the same time, Blas Roca had the matter dealt with by National Directorate of PURS and sent a letter to Fidel asking for a fair hearing thus enabling the old guard to clear the PSP. (Cuba Socialista, May 1964).
- 8 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 207.
- 9 Ibid., page 208.
- 10 Ibid., page 221 n. 35.
- 11 Ibid., page 221.
- 12 Ibid., page 193.
- 13 Ibid., page 195.

- 14 Ibid., page 197.
- 15 Ibid., page 198, n. 36.
- 16 Burks, David. "Cuba Seven years After", Current History, 1966, page 40. Burks reports that, "Within FAR as of July, 1965, 1,304 cells had been set up, as well as some units above the cell level."
- 17 Ibid., page 39.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA (1965 - 1974)

(i) Party Organization

Since its inception in 1965, considerable progress has been made in organizing the PCC. In October of 1965 several significant changes occurred in party organizational structure. Under the guise of increasing the representativeness and doing away with sectarianism¹ Fidel had increased the 24-member National Directorate to a 100-member Central Committee.² In addition, a Politburo was added to the new party, and as is the case in other CP's, the Politburo is the apex of party power. Directly under the Politburo in the hierarchy is the six member Secretariat. In addition, five Commissions have been incorporated into the party structure. They are (1) Commission for the Armed Forces; (2) Economic Commission; (3) Constitutional Commission; (4) Education Commission; (5) External Relations Commission.

It is instructive at this point to assess the role of the "old guard" in the PCC power structure. Of the eight members on the Politburo, none were old guard communists. Old guard representation fared somewhat better in the Secretariat where Blas Roca and Carlos

Rafael Rodríguez served as members.

Thus, of the eleven men who composed the membership of the Politburo and the Secretariat, only two were old guard communists. That is, their representation had dropped from approximately 40% in ORI to about 18% in the PCC. According to Thomas³ twenty-one of the one-hundred member Central Committee were old guard Communists, that is, approximately 20% as compared to their representation of 40% on the ORI National Directorate.

It is interesting to note that while old guard Communist Carlos Rafael Rodríguez was placed on the important Economic Commission, President Osvaldo Dorticós is chairman of that Commission, and hence Rodríguez was not at the beginning in a key "power" position.⁴ Blas Roca, on the other hand, was given the position of chairman on the Constitutional Commission, but it would appear that this Commission is relatively weak and ineffective since after eight years of work, a new constitution has yet to be drawn up. In addition, Blas Roca lost the editorship of Hoy, which was merged with Revolución, into the new official party organ, Granma. Suárez reports an added humiliation imposed on Blas Roca by Fidel at the ceremony that handed editorship of Hoy over to Granma.

...He praised Roca for his "humility", implying that because of this he had "earned the right to live many years..." - obviously to distinguish him from Aníbal Escalante and Ordoquí, who because they were not "humble" went, one into exile and the other to jail.⁵

TABLE V

POLITICAL BUREAU OF PCC* (1965)

Major:	Fidel Castro Ruz
Major:	Raúl Castro Ruz
Comrade:	Osvaldo Dorticós Torrado
Major:	Juan Almeida Bosque
Major:	Ramiro Valdés Menéndez
Comrade:	Armando Hart Dávalos
Major:	Guillermo García Fría
Major:	Sergio del Valle Jiménez

TABLE VI

SECRETARIAT OF PCC* (1965)

Major:	Fidel Castro Ruz
Major:	Raul Castro Ruz
Comrade:	Osvaldo Dorticós Torrado
Comrade:	Blas Roca Calderío
Major:	Faure Chomón Mediavilla
Comrade:	Carlos Rafael Rodríguez

* Data taken from Cuba Socialista, November 1965.

Members ranked in order of importance.

It is useful to note that the military contingent in the Central Committee consisted of 58 majors, 9 captains and one lieutenant, practically all Fidelistas. Thus the representation of the military was 68%, an exceptionally high figure, undoubtedly far higher than any other ruling communist party.⁶

Clearly the new Party leadership is very heavily weighed in favour of Fidelistas and as such Fidel has increased his hold on the party to an even greater degree than he exercised in ORI and PURS.

In 1965, the PCC set up Party secretariats in each of Cuba's six provinces, which in turn supervised smaller party secretariats in cities and city wards. The process then began of organizing party cells in all centres of work and in military units.

G. Volsky⁷ reports that by 1970 Party membership had risen to approximately 100,000. This figure shows a growth of some 84,000 members in seven years.⁸ By March of 1973 Party membership had reached some 153,000. In 1973 party leaders decided to concentrate recruitment efforts on industrial workers and have met with considerable success since, in Havana province alone, some 30,000 workers had been trained for party membership by the end of 1973.

Volsky goes on to report that by early 1973 the PCC had some 14,360 primary organizations and 401 municipal, 60 county-wide and six provincial secretariats.

(ii) Fidel's Bid for Independence (1965 - 1967)

Although the months immediately following the missile crisis had been a time of strained relationships between Cuba and the U.S.S.R., by the beginning of 1965 the strain had decreased to a point where Cuban - U.S.S.R. relationships could be called good. However, during the course of 1965, Fidel began a series of manoeuvres designed to not only gain ideological independence from the U.S.S.R. but to make Havana the Mecca of the Latin American revolutionary movement. During the next two years the "Cuba heresy" was to cast Fidel at odds with many of the U.S.S.R. supported CP's in Latin America.

The beginning of Fidel's manoeuvres for leadership in Latin America during the years 1965-1967 can be seen in a speech entitled "Division in the face of the enemy was never a revolutionary or intelligent strategy".⁹ In this speech, delivered March 13, 1965, Fidel criticized both the U.S.S.R. and China for their failure to unite and fight the common enemy - American imperialism. Fidel also proudly stated that:

We are the people of the First and Second Declaration of Havana, which we didn't copy from any document but which were the pure expression of the spirit of our people, deeply revolutionary and highly internationalist.¹⁰

In January, 1966, the Tricontinental Conference of the Asian, African and Latin Peoples' Solidarity Organization was held in Havana. As a result of this conference, OLAS (Organización Latino - Americana de Solidaridad or Latin American Solidarity Organization) was formed in mid 1967, an organization which pledged to "unite, coordinate and impel the struggle against North American imperialism", in Latin America.¹¹ Headquarters for OLAS would be in Havana.

F.D. Kohler¹² reports that the "ultramilitant tack" of the Tricontinental Conference, attended by a U.S.S.R. delegation, so alarmed Latin American governments that they demanded explanations from Moscow. In the months to follow the First Tricontinental Conference, U.S.S.R. diplomatic disclaimers of the Conference caused Fidel to become even more explicit in his ideas on revolution in Latin America. In March-April of 1966, at the Twenty-third congress of the CPSU, Armando Hart, head of the Cuban delegation, demanded joint action against American aggression in Vietnam and went on to denounce popular front tactics in Latin American as "ideas, tactics and methods arising from the situations of twenty years ago which have become obsolete".¹³

August 4, 1967, marked the opening of OLAS conference, which was to be a milestone in the Cuban heresy. The tone of the conference had been set five months earlier when OSPAAAL (The Organization

for Solidarity Among the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America) had published, in Havana, a message from Ché Guevara, at the time leading a guerrilla movement in Bolivia.

Ché's message was a call to arms of all revolutionaries. After denouncing the great socialist countries for not making Vietnam an inviolable part of the Socialist bloc, Ché went on to call for armed revolution:

What role shall we, the exploited people of the world, play? The peoples of the three continents focus their attention on Vietnam and learn their lesson. Since imperialists blackmail humanity by threatening it with war, the wise reaction is not to fear war. The general tactics of the people should be to launch a constant and a firm attack in all fronts where the confrontation is taking place. 14

Ché restated his thesis of armed revolution when he said Latin America was ripe for revolution:

In Latin America the armed struggle is going on in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, and Bolivia, the first uprisings are cropping up in Brazil [sic]. There are also some resistance focuses which appear and then are extinguished. But almost all the countries of this continent are ripe for a type of struggle that, in order to achieve victory, cannot be content with anything less than establishing a government of socialist tendencies. 16

K.S. Karol reports that in August of 1967 a pamphlet entitled "Informe de la delegación cubana a la primera conferencia de la OLAS" was widely circulated in Havana. The "Informe" invited Latin American revolutionaries to emulate the Cuba example. That is, that since the old guard communists could no longer play a decisive role in Latin American revolution, the old guard was invited to merely join in revolutions led by others.

During the OLAS conference an explosive book entitled Revolution in the Revolution?, by Regis Debray appeared on the scene. Debray's book made explicit what was implicit in the "Informe". The fact that the book was given such wide circulation in Cuba was indication that it had Fidel's approval.¹⁶ Debray did not mince words in presenting his thesis on revolution.

In the first chapter of his book¹⁷ Debray castigated the old guard communist parties for their complete failure to make revolution in Latin America. A failure he attributed to the old guard's attempt to impress the European or Asian ideas of revolution upon a continent where different conditions prevail.

...the people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa...the principal stress must be laid on development of guerrilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties...That is why insurrectional activity is today the number one political activity. 18

In the end, the conference agreed that guerrilla struggle must be considered the fundamental path of revolution in Latin America, though not necessarily the only path. ¹⁹

(iii) Escalante Affair No. 2

Through 1966-1967 Fidel had made a strong bid for leadership in Latin America and in the process, shown the U.S.S.R. that Fidel and Cuba could not be easily "domesticated". In January of 1968, Fidel was to demonstrate once again that he, and not the old guard communists, was in control of the Cuban revolution.

Aníbal Escalante had returned from exile in 1964 and was given an honorary post as administrator of the state farm Dos Hermanos. Unlike Blas Roca, Escalante was not willing to submit to the exclusion of the old guard from power in Cuba. From 1964 to 1968 Escalante re-embarked on his attempt to elevate the position of the old guard in the new Communist Party.

During three and one-half years Escalante managed to recruit several of the old guard to his cause. Included in his supporters were two members of the Central Committee of the Party constituted in 1965. José Mator (first chief of CDR [Committees for the Defense of

the Revolution) and afterwards Cuban Ambassador in Budapest) and Ramón Calcines (Communist Youth leader in 1960 and an important figure in the Foreign Relations Commission of ORI from January 1961 to March 1962).

Hugh Thomas ²⁰ reports that among other things, Escalante's faction disapproved of armed struggle in Latin America, moral incentives replacing material incentives; the group also felt that Fidel Castro was "mad" (insane) and Ché Guevara a Trotskyist.

It also came to light that Escalante had organized supporters in several sections of the Communist Party, and with them, was gathering documents on the Cuban economy and passing them on to officials of the U.S.S.R.

Finally, on January 28, 1968, after a 36-hour meeting of the Central Committee, Escalante and his followers were charged with and prosecuted for the crime of "microfactional activity". ²¹

Carlos Rafael Rodríguez had learned his lesson well, since he put the full weight of his position as former old guard communist at the service of the prosecution. Blas Roca, perhaps the best qualified old guard communist to pronounce on all the charges, said nothing during the entire trial, but merely voted.

Thus, once again, Fidel had purged the party of old guard communists who posed a potential threat to his control of the party.

October 8, 1967, had marked the beginning of a political and theoretical setback for the Cuban heresy. It was on this day after destroying Ché's guerrilla band, that Bolivian Rangers murdered Ernesto Ché Guevara. Ché's death cast doubt on the guerrilla warfare thesis. It also, in the words of Fidel, robbed the Latin American revolutionary movement of "its ablest and most experienced chief." ²²

The more Fidel learned from the survivors of the Bolivian massacre, the more he felt inclined to place responsibility for Ché's death on the Communists in La Paz. ²³

When the U.S.S.R. newspaper Pravda published a series of articles critical of Ché and his thesis of guerrilla warfare in Latin America shortly after Ché's death, Fidel dropped all pretence of good relations between Cuba and the U.S.S.R.. In fact, the negotiations between the U.S.S.R. and Cuba on the triannual agreements (a renewal of 1965 agreements) quickly broke down.

At about this time²⁴ final plans for an International Cultural Congress were being drawn up and Fidel decided to continue with the Conference, happy to welcome leading leftist intellectuals to Havana as possible allies against Moscow. During the Conference, Fidel was to

continue his bid for leadership in Latin America and his attacks on the old guard were to become more virulent. The following are but a few of the insults Fidel leveled at old guard parties and U.S.S.R. revolutionary theory and practise during the Conference.

The leaders of the Communist Party are like football players trained for the 1924 championship, but nevertheless trying to carry off the World Cup in 1968.

To be quite honest, we must admit that often before now, when it came to crucial world issues, to imperialist aggression and crime, it was the intellectual workers who showed the greatest militancy, who reacted with the greatest determination, and not those political organizations whom one might, in all conscience, have expected to give the lead.

On many occasions the so-called organized vanguard was found hiding behind the rearguard in the battle against imperialism.

For if there had been actions, great or small, we should have known about them. Instead, we have the clear impression that their "defence of peace" served only to lull the masses to sleep.

..[they] asked why Ché went to his death, and... will never discover the answer, because they are incapable of dying with him, of being true revolutionaries like him. ²⁵

Most of the 500 delegates were on their feet giving Fidel tremendous applause, while the delegates from the Eastern bloc sat in stunned silence. The U.S.S.R. - Cuban conflict was out in the open

and "foreign visitors left Havana convinced that they had watched a milestone being laid in the history of the Communist movement...".²⁶

(iv) The Decline of the Cuban Heresy

Fidel Castro's decision, late in 1968, to become reconciled to the U.S.S.R., hit Havana like a bolt from the blue.²⁷

According to M. Kline, by March, 1968, Cuba was beginning to feel the effects of a U.S.S.R. economic squeeze.²⁸ In his speech of March 13, 1968, Fidel referred to the pressures when he said:

Let us fight as hard as possible, because we have known the bitterness of having to depend to a considerable extent on what we can get from abroad and have seen how this can be turned into a weapon, how, at the very least, there is a temptation to use it against our country. Let us fight for the greatest independence possible, whatever the price!²⁹

It had been made clear to Fidel the extent to which Cuba was dependent on her trading partners. There were at least three occasions in 1968 that indicated that Fidel had decided to let pragmatic economic considerations overrule his bid for ideological independence and thus lead to a decline of the Cuban heresy.

In May of 1968, a student uprising in Paris culminated in a strike by millions of workers in France. Much of the organizational work for the student uprising had been carried out by Alain Geismar, the secretary of SNESUP (The National Union of University Teachers). Geismar had not only attended the Havana Cultural Conference, but was openly pro-Cuban in his sympathies.

Fidel's reaction to the strike that had made headlines in every major newspaper in the world, was total silence. Fidel's silence was especially significant in that the French government accused Fidel of engineering the student uprising at the Havana Cultural Conference. The strike afforded Fidel an ideal opportunity to express solidarity with the students and workers and thus increase his importance as a leading revolutionary; instead, absolute silence.

On July 26, 1968, the centre of attention moved from Paris to Mexico City. The Mexican students had been dissatisfied with President Díaz Ordaz's government for some time and on July 26 they decided to publicly express this dissatisfaction by organizing a vast street demonstration in honor of a government they found far more appealing, the Cuban government. By the end of the day, the demonstrators had been dispersed, leaving at least ten students dead and many more injured. The next day, all Mexican universities and high schools went on a protest strike. Demonstrations continued throughout July and then one day in August, half-a-million people joined the students and marched through the capital. The demonstration turned

into a running battle with Mexico's Army. The climax finally came on October 2, 1968, when some 15,000 unarmed demonstrators were assembled in Mexico city's Tlatelolco square, President Díaz Ordaz sent in shock troops and tanks, killing 300 and wounding over 2,000 of the demonstrators.

Surprisingly, Jean-Paul Sartre's and Bertrand Russell's appeal for a world-wide boycott of the Olympic Games being held in Mexico at the time went unheeded by the entire world, including Fidel. Once again, Fidel remained absolutely silent on the massacre of pro-Cuban demonstrators.

On August 21, 1968, U.S.S.R. armed forces invaded Czechoslovakia and forced Czechoslovak leader Alexander Dubček to resign. All of Cuba expected Fidel to issue a fiery blast at the U.S.S.R. for their aggression in Czechoslovakia. Fidel did just the opposite - he supported the U.S.S.R. invasion of a brother Socialist country.

Fidel's silence on the Paris uprising had allowed Cuba to maintain valuable economic ties with France. His silence on the student massacres in Mexico had allowed Cuba to maintain valuable economic and diplomatic relations with Mexico, and his support of the U.S.S.R.'s actions in Czechoslovakia resulted in continued economic support for Cuba. However, he had maintained these at the cost of support for his

bid for leadership in the Third World, specifically in Latin America. The support and admiration Fidel had gained at the Cultural Conference early in 1968 had been lost, also, to some extent, Fidel's image in Cuba had been damaged.³⁰

(v) Ten Million Tons of Sugar

The experiences of 1968 had driven home to Fidel that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve ideological independence while at the same time remaining economically dependent on another nation. For nearly ten years he had struggled to keep the old guard communists from power, only to find himself forced into the position of accepting the dictates of Moscow. Forced to compromise his political beliefs in order to preserve the Cuban economy, by the end of 1968 Fidel had decided to concentrate all his efforts and the efforts of the Cuban people at producing a gigantic sugar harvest of 10 million tons in 1970.³¹

Fidel's 10 million ton zafra was a two pronged attack. (1) Fidel counted heavily on the huge harvest "to be used to advance, instead of hold back, the rest of the economy, to buy machinery and equipment required for broad agricultural and industrial development"³² and (2) Fidel hoped to unify the entire country behind him and lead Cuba to a victory that would restore the trust in his movement that had

been on the ebb in the late 1960's, or as Fidel said in a speech in October of 1969:

The ten-million ton zafra represents far more than tons of sugar, far more than an economic victory, it is a test, a moral commitment for this country. ³³

The ten million tons goal of the 1970 zafra was not achieved. Although the 8.5 million ton harvest was the largest in Cuban history, it had cost dearly. Halperin reports ³⁴ that the labor involved in the harvest was a colossal 500,000 man years of labor, or more than double the expenditure of work per unit of sugar produced than in the 1950's. The concentration of manpower in the sugar harvest had resulted in a serious decline in production in many other areas of the economy. ³⁵

It would appear, however, that the relative failure of the 1970 zafra has led to an even more serious problem for Fidel. As mentioned earlier, since 1959 Fidel has struggled to keep control of key decision-making apparatus in Fidelista hands and out of old guard hands. Fidel's one very real fear in his alliance with the U.S.S.R. was Moscow domination of Cuba, and of himself. Since 1970, it would appear that Fidel was fighting a losing battle in that the Cuban economy was slowly but surely being integrated with the Soviet economy.

(vi) The Soviet-Cuban Intergovernmental Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation (SCICESTC)

On January 29, 1970, C.R. Rodríguez held discussions with L.I. Brezhnev in Moscow on the "measures adopted by the Communist Party of Cuba...to fulfill the plans of economic construction." ³⁶

By the end of the year (December 9, 1970), C.R. Rodríguez was once again in Moscow. It was at this time that Rodríguez signed the agreement on the formation of a Soviet-Cuban inter-governmental commission for economic, scientific and technical cooperation. The new agreement set the stage for Cuba's closer integration within the Soviet bloc.

According to Leon Goure and Julian Weinkle the aim of the new agreement "appears to be to force Cuba into developing more effective planning, which will be geared to the ninth Soviet five-year plan, and to make better use of the island's resources and available equipment." ³⁷

Throughout 1971-1972 Soviet-Cuban economic integration continued to a degree that finally resulted in Cuba requesting and receiving full membership in COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) in July of 1972.

Commenting on Cuba's admission to Comecon, C.R. Rodríguez said that his country's participation in the organization would be different

than that of the European countries or of Mongolia:

The conditions are different. We have and we have set it on record, peculiarities of economic development and geography which make us have, within the CMEA, a special status with evident limitations and also with clear requirements... Nevertheless, our participation will be in some respects identical to that of the countries which form part of the CMEA...With full control by the Cuban nation over investments in our country. ³⁸

Rodríguez was perhaps expressing Fidel's continuing concern with Cuba being completely integrated with the U.S.S.R. economy and Fidel's efforts to achieve a "special" status for Cuba in Comecon, in order to prevent such a complete integration of Soviet-Cuban economies. However, in the eyes of much of the Third World Fidel had already lost the struggle for independence. For instance, in September of 1973, Fidel drew the ire of several Third World leaders when he addressed the Conference of Non-aligned Nations in Algiers. ³⁹ In the speech, Fidel defended the U.S.S.R. and made the argument that any attempt to pit the nonaligned countries against the socialist camp is counter-revolutionary and benefits only the imperialists.

By January of 1974, the benefits to Cuba of integration with the Soviet economic system came to light in an article in Granma by Nikolai Patolichev, Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade. The article, entitled

"Foreign Trade Links Strengthened," pointed out the increasing quantity of trade between Cuba and the U.S.S.R., as well as:

Two of the agreements cover the use and further granting of Soviet credits to the Republic of Cuba. Under the provisions of the first one, Cuba's payments on its debts arising from previous credits will be delayed until 1986, when they will cover a 25-year period at no interest. The second one deals with the granting of a new credit to the Republic of Cuba, also under very favorable conditions, to cover the difference in the value of the reciprocal supply of goods and services during the 1973-1975 period. 40

From January 28 to February 3, 1974, L.I. Brezhnev paid an official visit to Cuba during which the Cuban government was lavish in its praise and declarations of its lasting friendship with the U.S.S.R. The Soviet-Cuba Declaration produced as a result of Brezhnev's visit included the following:

Economic, commercial, scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries will be constantly developed and improved on a planned, long-term basis, in accordance, specifically, with the economic agreements signed in 1972. Special attention will be given to increasing the effectiveness of economic cooperation.

There will be wider cooperation between Soviet and Cuban planning bodies, between ministries and departments of the two countries, and direct contacts between Soviet and Cuban factory personnel. 41

(vii) Footnotes - Chapter Five

- 1 Lockwood, L. Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel. Random House, Inc., Toronto Canada, 1969, page 182. Lockwood reports the following from an interview with Fidel in May, 1966:

It is true that the directorate was limited at the beginning, that it was not completely representative. And when the criticism of sectarianism was made, that directorate was enlarged and made more representative.

- 2 See Table IV for list of membership on party committees. See Cuba Socialista, November, 1965, for complete list of PCC leadership.

- 3 Thomas, H. op. cit., page 1454.

- 4 While the statement that Osvaldo Dorticos dominated the Economic Commission of the PCC during the 1960's stands, it must be somewhat modified for the period 1970-1974. An examination of the U.S.S.R. press indicates that in the 1970's Carlos Rafael Rodríguez's role in negotiations with the U.S.S.R. greatly increased in importance.

In March of 1970, The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. xxii, No. 5, March 3, 1970, reported a meeting between Brezhnev and C.R. Rodríguez dealing with Soviet-Cuban cooperation in the economic sphere. The same source (Vol. iixx, No. 4, January 5, 1971) reports C.R. Rodríguez (and now called "Minister" of the Republic of Cuba) signing "an agreement on the formation of a Soviet-Cuban intergovernmental commission for economic, scientific and technical cooperation" on December 9, 1970, in Moscow.

Vol. xxii, No. 50, January 12, 1971, of The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, reports that on December 15, 1970, C.R. Rodríguez had further discussions with L.I. Brezhnev. The same source (Vol. xxiv, No. 51, January 17, 1973) reports that C.R. Rodríguez signed another agreement, concerning U.S.S.R. - Cuban trade relations, on December 23, 1972 in Moscow.

In addition, The Current Digest of The Soviet Press, Vol. xxiv, No. 10, April 5, 1972, reports a 1600 word article by C.R. Rodríguez published in Pravda on March 11, 1972. The article's subject matter was "The Soviet-Cuban Inter-governmental Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation".

It is also interesting to note that C.R. Rodríguez accompanied Fidel on his trip to the U.S.S.R. in June of 1972 and took part in the discussions.

Thus, it would appear that Fidel has forgiven C.R. Rodríguez of his "sin" of identifying with the old guard communists during the trial of Marcos Rodríguez and elevated him to a relatively high position in the Cuban power structure.

5 Suárez, A. op. cit., page 230.

6 Ibid., page 228. It should be noted that the figures cited for military representation are only approximate, since some of the military titles were, for practical purposes, honorary titles only.

7 Volsky, George. "Cuba, Fifteen Years Later", Current History. January, 1974, page 10. Volsky bases his information with regard to party growth on an article from Partiynaya Zhizn, April 10, 1973.

8 Suárez, A. op. cit., pages 179-180. Suárez reports that according to ORI National Directorate figures in March of 1963, party membership in Cuba totalled only 16,000.

9 For a complete text of the speech, see Kenner, M., and Petras, J. (ed.) Fidel Castro Speaks. Grove Press, Inc. New York, 1969, pages 107-114.

10 Ibid., page 111.

11 Soto, Lionel. "First Conference of the Peoples of Three Continents", The World Marxist Review, Vol. 9, No. 4, April, 1966, pages 3-13.

12 Fox, D. Kohler, "Cuba and the Soviet Problem in Latin America" Article can be found in Suchlicki, J. (ed) Cuba, Castro and Revolution. University of Miami Press, Coral Gables, Florida, 1972, pages 119-143.

- 13 Ibid., page 130.
- 14 Gerassi, J. (ed.) Venceremos! The Speeches and Writings of Ernesto Ché Guevara. Simon and Schuster, New York, New York, 1968, page 416.
- 15 Ibid., page 419.
- 16 On March 13, 1967, Fidel delivered a speech in which he made it clear that revolutions in Latin America would be made with or without a party, and that it is guerrilla warfare and not party dogma that determines true revolutionaries. See Kenner, M. & Petras, J. (ed.) Fidel Castro Speaks. Op. cit., pages 115-135.
- 17 Debray, Regis. Revolution in the Revolution? Grove Press, Inc., New York, New York, 1967.
- 18 Ibid., page 116.
- 19 Debray's (and through Debray - Fidel's) challenge to U.S.S.R. theories of revolution did not go unchallenged. The U.S.S.R. was particularly sensitive to Debray's thesis that the party was not necessary for a successful revolution. In March of 1967, Pravda featured an article on the importance of the party in making the revolution.
- The Communists justly maintain that with the intensification of the attacks of U.S. imperialism on the honor and sovereignty of Latin American peoples, any under-estimation of the role of the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class in the national liberation struggle, any weakening of the Communist parties and, even more, and splitting of their ranks, whatever motives may lie behind it, would bring irremediable damage to the vital interests of their countries and peoples.
- Reported by Jackson, D.B. Castro, The Kremlin and Communism in Latin America. The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1969, page 138.
- 20 Thomas H. op. cit., page 1468.

- 21 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 468. Karol reports that in all, thirty-six persons were charged; including Octavio Fernández, Elilio de Quesada, Luciano Arguelles, Orestes Valdés, Raúl Fajardo, Luis M. Rodríguez Gaens, Lázaro Suárez and Marcelino Menéndez, Aníbal Escalante. Apparently Calcines and Mator were less compromised than the others since they were merely expelled from the Central Committee and did not receive prison sentences as did all the others.
- 22 Granma Weekly Review. October 22, 1967. From a speech by Fidel.
- 23 In an addition of Ché's "Bolivian Diary", Fidel had written in the preface that Monje (leader of the pro-U.S.S.R. CP) and Oscar Zamora (leader of the pro-Chinese CP) sat back like cowards, instead of joining Ché as they had agreed to do. Guevara, Ché. Bolivian Diary. Lorrimer Publishing Ltd., London, 1968, pages 12-13.
- 24 The week long conference began January, 1968.
- 25 Karol, K.S. op. cit., pages 399, 401, 402.
- 26 Ibid., page 403. For further information on the conference, see Halperin, M. The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro, op. cit., chapter 30.
- 27 Karol, K.S. op. cit., page 490.
- 28 Kline, M.M. "Castro's Challenge to Latin American Communism", in Suchlicki, J. (ed.) op. cit., page 212.
- Kline points out that the U.S.S.R. was applying economic pressure in the protracted tri-annual trade negotiation of 1968 and in cutbacks in shipment of Soviet petroleum since January, 1968. Cutbacks in petroleum shipments posed an extremely critical problem in Cuba since virtually all petroleum in Cuba is imported from the U.S.S.R.
- 29 Kenner, M. & Petras, J. (ed.) op. cit., page 281.
- 30 See Karol, K.S. op. cit., pages 490-510., for a more detailed account of Fidel's response to the Paris uprising, Mexican massacre and U.S.S.R. invasion of Czechoslovakia.

- 31 Fidel had announced such a goal as early as the Spring of 1963, but his experiences in the ensuing five years led him to place much more importance on the ten million ton harvest than previously.
- 32 Boorstein, E. op. cit., page 204.
- 33 Granma Weekly Review, October 26, 1969.
- 34 Halperin, M. op. cit., page 241.
- 35 For further details on the problems of the 1970 Zafra see: Huberman, L. & Sweezy, P. Socialism in Cuba. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969, pages 173-180.
- 36 The Current Digest of The Soviet Press, March 3, 1970, vol. xxii, no. 5, page 19.
- 37 Govre, L. & Weinkle, J. "Soviet-Cuban Relations: The Growing Integration:", in Suchficki, J. (ed.) op. cit., page 177.
- 38 U.S.S.R. and The Third World. Vol. 2, No. 7, July-August, 1972, page 419.
- 39 Castro, Fidel. "Speech to the Conference of Non-aligned Nations in Algiers", Information Bulletin, World Marxist Review, V. 19, 1973.
- 40 Granma Weekly Review. January 10, 1974.
- 41 "Cuban-Soviet Declaration" Granma Weekly Review, Feb. 10, 1974, page 10.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION


This thesis has shown that the Cuban Communist Party was radically transformed by the revolution of 1959. In its fifty years of existence the Party has undergone numerous changes in name. Between 1934 and 1963 Blas Roca has held the key position of Secretary-General, a position he gained as a result of a purge conducted by the C.P. U.S.S.R., and lost as a result of Fidel's takeover of the party in 1963.

At its inception, the party was known as the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), the name it retained until 1938. In 1938, the party amalgamated with the Partido Unión Revolucionaria (PUR) becoming a legal entity and thus escaping police persecution and the alienation it had created by its actions in the August 1933 strike. By 1944, the party's name had been changed to the People's Socialist Party (PSP), a name meant to indicate a change in Party strategy. The party no longer viewed its immediate task as the creation of communism, but rather the establishment of socialism. Their new slogan was to be 'Economic Progress, Social Security, Victory, and a People's Peace'. For the PSP the U.S. imperialist era had ended and as such the party would work with the bourgeois to achieve socialism.

By July, 1960, the party had joined forces with the leading Cuban revolutionary organizations to form ORI. From the beginning, ORI was to serve as a transitional stage to the formation of the new vanguard party PURS; a transition brought about in 1963. The most recent change in the party's name occurred in 1965 when the party became known as the Communist Party of Cuba (CCP).

However, despite the changes in name, prior to 1959 the outstanding characteristic of the party was its domination by the U.S.S.R. This dominance of the Cuban CP by the U.S.S.R. and dependency upon the U.S.S.R. for revolutionary strategy was to ultimately lead the party to alienation from significant sectors of the Cuban population and eventually render the party impotent during the most significant revolution in Cuba's history.

During the period 1959 - 1961 the party assumed increased importance in the Cuban state apparatus and by mid-1961 had reached the height of its power and influence under the leadership, in the ORI, of Annibal Escalante. But the period was to be short-lived, for by the end of July 1961, Fidel had launched an attack on Escalante that led to Escalante's and his supporters' removal from key positions in the party, and complete takeover by Fidel.



In short, from this point on the communist old guard in the party were replaced with 'fidelistas' or 'old guard' who accepted Fidel's supremacy over the party and as such would pose no threat to Fidel's personal power in that they followed Fidel's directives and not those of the U.S.S.R.

From 1961 through 1970 the Cuban CP appeared to have adopted the traditional structures and operational features of socialist bloc parties; this was not the case. The essential difference between the Cuban CP and the more traditional socialist bloc CP's was the Cuban party's lack of power. Instead of making or even implementing decisions; the Cuban CP served as a legitimizing 'rubber stamp' for Fidel's decisions.

The failure of Fidel's 10 million ton zafra in 1970 forced an integration of the Soviet-Cuban economies and Fidel has now adopted the Soviet version of Marxism-Leninism lock, stock and barrel.

The ultimate irony is that after winning a ten year struggle for survival between the old guard communists and himself, Fidel is now well on the way to becoming an old guard communist and as a result the orthodoxy of the Cuban CP during the pre-1959 era has returned, after a brief absence in the 1960's.

APPENDIX I

BACKGROUND ON THE MAJOR CUBAN POLITICAL PARTIES

1. Auténtico Party (The Partido Revolucionario Cubano).

Grau San Martín took the lead in founding the Auténtico Party shortly after his forced resignation as President of Cuba at the hands of Batista on January 14, 1934. From 1934 through 1944 the Auténticos constituted the major opposition party in Cuba. The program of the party during these early years was support of agrarian reform that would give land to the landless, particularly the sugar workers. The party emphasized the necessity for rapid economic development, and the need for increased economic independence. The Auténticos advocated extensive labor legislation and strongly supported the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively.

By 1944 the Auténticos had been elected to power and formed the government for the next eight years. During the party's term of office it failed to carry out the programs that had gained the support of the Cuban people in 1944. Instead the Auténtico administrations became famous for their corruption and by 1952 the party was well on the way to collapse.

2. Ortodoxo Party (Partido Popular Cubano)

The Ortodoxo Party was formed in 1947 by dissidents from the Auténtico ranks and led by Eduardo Chibás. Chibás vowed to revive the

program and doctrine of the Cuban Revolution against Machado in 1933, that is: nationalism, socialism, and anti-imperialism. The Ortodoxos would not be merely electorally oriented but would adopt organizational and leadership characteristics which would imprint on it the discipline and militancy necessary for a truly revolutionary party. There seems little doubt that the Ortodoxos would have won the election of 1952 had Batista not staged a military coup and had Chibas not killed himself in 1951.

It was from the Ortodoxo Party that Fidel and many of his followers in the Moncada uprising sprang in 1953. As Fidel's revolution against Batista increased in success throughout the late 1950's the ranks of the Ortodoxos were depleted as the younger members joined M-26.

3. M-26 (July 26 Movement)

Established as a rival movement to the Ortodoxos in 1955 and takes its name from the attack on Moncada, July 26, 1953, led by Fidel Castro. The new movement was devoted to the principle of violently overthrowing the Batista government and drew heavily on young members of the Ortodoxo Party for its membership. Fidel had been the undisputed leader of the movement since its founding in 1955 and had over the years used the membership of the M-26 to displace old guard communists from key positions in ORI, and PURS. The M-26 ended its existence as a separate entity in 1961 when it merged with other parties to form ORI.

4. Student Directorship (Directorio Estudiantil Universitario).

A student body started in the late 1920's that had, at one time or another nearly every major Cuban political leader in its ranks, The Directorio called for justice against fraud, honor against corruption; it declared war on poverty, spoke for the dignity of man, it was violently against Machado and Batista. In addition to its propaganda wing the party also ran a military branch. The Directorio established their undisputed revolutionary credentials between 1930 and 1959 by opposing Machado and Batista with bravery and sacrifice. The main action of the group was the attack on the presidential palace on March 13, 1957. After January of 1959 many of its members left the party to join M-26 and by 1961 the Directorio had ceased to exist as it merged with the other parties to form ORI.

5. A.B.C. Party

One of the largest of the anti-Machado parties in the early 1930's. The 1932 program of the party proposed development and protection of small rural property holdings, gradual elimination of the large estates, limitation to American acquisition of land, eventual nationalization of American companies in Cuba, establishment of producers' co-operatives, nationalization of public services. As early as 1932 the party was split into at least two wings, the Ghandian wing which preached nonviolence and the radical wing which advocated violent action to displace Machado. Even in the early days the party was accused of fascism but this criticism was submerged in

light of the greater threat to Cuba posed by Machado and later Batista. By 1939 The A.B.C. party had combined forces with the Auténticos and others to win the Constituent Assembly elections. During the late 1930's and 1940's the party was reduced to a group of intellectuals whose most pronounced characteristic was violence and conspiracy. By the 1950's the party played little or no role in Cuban politics.

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