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SPECIAL CUBA ISSUE

JULIAN AGUILERA VICENTE

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Among Our Contributors

Irene Paull is known for her poetry, reviews and stories. We are indebted to her for gathering much of the material for this issue on a recent trip to Cuba. *Joseph North* is the widely read correspondent of *The Worker.* He is currently in Cuba. His book, *Cuba: Hope of a Hemisphere,* is reviewed in this issue. *Carl Marzani,* author and publisher, writes from first-hand experiences in Cuba. So does *Jesus Colon,* whose column appears each week in *The Worker. Harold Spencer* and *Angela Alexander* are Americans who work in the cultural field in Cuba. *Mark Flores* is another American who has worked in Cuba, specializing in economic studies. *Nicolas Guillen,* the Cuban poet, is an outstanding figure in the cultural life of his country. *Pablo Neruda* is the Chilean poet whose work appears frequently in our pages. *G. C. Infante* is a young Cuban writer. Among our reviewers, *S. Lesham* is a student of Latin American affairs. *Phillip Bonosky* is author of the recently published *The Magic Fern. Phillip Bart* is Organizational Secretary of the CPUSA. *Samuel D'Long* is a lecturer and writer. *Robert Forrey* is assistant to the Editorial Board of *Mainstream.*

Next Month

A critical article by Sidney Finkelstein, a satire by Robert Forrey, Part 2 of *Oakley C. Johnson's Story of A Woman,* poetry by young American writers. These are just a few of the features of the June *Mainstream.* With art, reviews, communications, special reports, this is an issue that will make absorbing reading, with something to interest everyone.

in the mainstream

EVEN in an epoch in which political events move with the speed of Yuri Gagarin in outerspace, the time that elapsed between the issuance of the State Department White Paper on Cuba and its dramatic refutation on the beaches of Bahia de Cochinos was unprecedented in its brevity.

The White Paper based its entire argument for military intervention in Cuba on the assertion that the Cuban people were groaning under the tyranny of Castro, who had betrayed the Revolution, and that the mere appearance of a few Cubans on the territory of Cuba itself would suffice to spark a universal uprising of the people, as it did when Castro came down from the hills.

Instead, the Cubans rose, in disciplined and organized fashion, as one man, and put down both the internal and external forces of the rebellion with decisive speed. This was their true answer to Washington and to the script-writer for the counter-revolution, the curious historian, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

The result of this sorry misadvanture is that American imperialist policy stands naked before the world. Even its faltering fig-leaf in the U.N., the tattered liberal, Adlai Stevenson, has been blown to the winds, and there is nothing to hide the sordid, shameful truth.

Mr. Kennedy, who seems to have been under the impression that he was running for the presidency not only of the U.S.A. last November, but of Cuba (and Laos and the Congo) as well, discarded the velvet glove in his speech before the newspaper editors in Washington, April 21, and brandished the mailed fist. Or perhaps, having spoken softly, he felt the time had come to wave the big stick. In any case, he laid down before the American newspaper editors in no uncertain

terms what is to be law for South America. The next time he will not play with proxy armies, not White Papers, but move in the Marines. He will be judge of what constitutes Un-American activity in Latin America —not the Mexicans, not the Brazilians, not the Argentinians; he and United Fruit, the Rockefellers, and the CIA will determine when the peoples of South America are crossing over the divide between "legitimate" functions of their governments and "communism."

It does not take a prophetic genius to see what further catastrophes for American policy lie along this road. The American ruling class sowed the wind in Guatamala, and reaped the whirlwind in Cuba. Castro drew lessons from the fate of Arbenz. "When the Government of Arbenz," he told the Cuban people in his television address, April 23, "tried to carry out the agrarian reform in Guatamala which affected the lands of the United Fruit Company, United States aggression naturally followed and caused the replacement of that Government."

FOR HE KNOWS—as the billions of subject peoples throughout the world know—that the issue in Cuba was not "communism," as it was not the issue in Italy when Mussolini raised it, nor in Germany when Hitler raised it, nor in Spain when Franco raised it. Millions have died under this slogan of anti-communism, the fatal hoax of our century. The people of Cuba knew that the only issue at stake in Cuba was the right of the people themselves to decide to use the wealth they created with their own labor to benefit their own people. In all the clamor over the Cuban issue, nowhere does one see mentioned the quite simple fact that South America is a vast pot of gold for American exploiters, contributing over 40% (millions of dollars annually) in forced tribute to Wall Street's super-profits.

The Cuban episode has been profoundly instructive to the American people who are learning their lessons the hard way, in the means and methods of manufacturing counter-revolutions. The role of the CIA, in this episode, as in the ill-fated U-2 incident, has emerged with alarming clarity. The American people were given another rare glimpse into the depths of the cynicism and moral corruption that motivates the cloak-and-dagger specialists of Project X, whose activities have been hitherto sacrosanct.

Could any group of self-proclaimed "liberators" as the junta around Jose Miro Cardona be more pathetic? The facts now prove that they were a group of mindless puppets dangled from a string tied to Allen Dulles' fumbling fingers. On the eve of the invasion of Cuba, the time for which was not set by them but by President Kennedy, they were

summoned to Philadelphia, and from there were unceremoniously hustled to a deserted house near Miami where they were held incommunicado. The CIA kept them prisoners from their own "revolution"! They were not even trusted to know the timing of the invasion they presumably were to lead and then "democratically" govern the country in the name of the majority of the Cuban people whom they were to liberate from their haunted house near Miami, where they were not allowed to use a phone nor to go to the bathroom without permission! Ringing communiques were issued in their name by the CIA—and their first knowledge of these communiques came from the radio which their captors let them listen to.

Finally, only when they could endure the situation no longer, and preferred to risk being shot by an American guard, did they manage to escape protective custody and phone up Washington to see what had happened to their revolution! There the intellectual brain trust around Kennedy, the Berles and Schlesingers, mollified them and assured them that President Kennedy's right hand was innocent of the doing of his left.

All this is material for low comedy, and so it would be considered if men and women and children did not die for the antics of such pranksters, and if precisely because on the thread of such fantastic machinations the peace of the world did not hang.

Mr. Kennedy has grimly declared that he is studying the lessons of the Cuban gamble. We know that the democratic forces of the entire world are also doing the same. We would suggest that in his study he seriously contemplate this over-riding fact: the people cannot, and will not, remain enslaved for any reason; and neither the CIA nor the Marines can force history back again. The Pandora's box of the people's hope is open: the people are on the march everywhere, and there is no stopping them. We can either face that fact and adjust to it, and gain honor thereby; or resist it and go down in deep dishonor before the peoples of the entire world.

We are especially proud of this issue. It is a testimony to the American people, and to our friends in South America, that another America exists, and will grow. We take our stand on the side of international peace and justice, non-interference in the internal affairs of any other country—a stand which every American worthy of the name takes with us. In fighting for Cuban freedom, we assure our own freedom.

REPORT FROM CUBA

JOSEPH NORTH

I: CUBA FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM

I spent four days in the Escambray a week or so ago and spent many hours of days and nights talking with the militiamen, the people in uniform. With my friend Ramon Navarra Luna, the heroic poet of Manzanillo, we went up from Santa Clara in a jeep that climbed steep heights and descended into crazily sheer valleys, like one of those tropical ants. The country here was made for ambush. Twists and turns and jungle-like underbrush; rocks and caves and sudden small table-lands.

The soldiers, volunteers all, were men, as old as 70 and as young as 17. They had an elan, a verve, and a soldier's skill which only the tempo of Revolution can bring. A people's army, men of every walk in private life—longshoremen, school-teachers, clerks, students. . . .

One night we stayed over at the mountain headquarters of the 111th Battalion, a haciendo among banana and coffee trees and big palms which formerly belonged to a high-placed Batistiano. Nobody wants to sleep at a moment like this in the crystal silence under a high sky where only some night-bird made noises deep in its throat. One bright star was in the sky, Jupiter, I believe. Maybe I didn't want to sleep but the militia did, dog-tired after a day's routine of trailing the counter-revolutionaries and their caches of arms that were, in the main, dropped from airplanes by parachute—airplanes that came from the USA.

I spent more of the night talking to sentries, sharp-eyed men who had had their attention peeled on the nearby rim of the mountain and on the sky for any possible plane that might be gliding down with the parachute set to drop bazookas, machine-guns, high-powered rifles, hand-grenades, millions of rounds of sharp-nosed bullets—the works.

Much of the time I talked with Heriberto Torres, a Negro from Santiago who manned the anti-aircraft gun whose nose slanted up from the the verandah, a sleek, handy-looking instrument he kept oiled and greased, nursing it like it was a baby. Because he had become an expert gunner and a first-rate soldier, the men called him—in honor and because he also had a distinct resemblance, "Lumumba." Torres told me what the Revolution meant to him, a stevedore when he could find work, which wasn't more than two, three days a week, figuring an average for the year. He spoke a good English and preferred to talk that "for practice,"

he smiled. I consented indeed, for my Spanish is considerably less oiled than that anti-aircraft gun. He was remarkably knowledgeable. I have found so many in Cuba who are. Self-educated men who can talk to you of Marti's poetry and Cuba's history, of politics and pottery, thoughtful and readily articulate. There is something about them that reminds me of the Russians I met in Gorky's literature and in the Soviet Union—it is not long-hair stuff to talk about the meaning of life as well as of the day's political shenanigans. They like to know, to conjecture, at least, what it is all about. They have the gift of colorful expression as Irish as Sean O'Casey. How little we know them! And they talk with that Latin quality where the gesture of the hands is as much part of speech as consonants and vowels.

Yes, "Lumumba" said, he had been in the "clandestina" the underground for six years of Batista. He had had enough of the hunger into which he was born, and yes, the discrimination for there was plenty of it here although its forms were different from that prevailing in the States—never as savage, never rife with lynching, subtler but just as galling to these proud folk. "After all," Lumumba said, "next to Marti, Maceo is our national hero, and he was a Negro." He was fed up with Batista who came back via the coup, the palace take-over of March 1952, with its subsequent degradation and quick return to kow-towing to the big foreign corporations precisely as before, in "Butcher" Machado's time. He had had enough of that, and the gangster-rule of the unions that Mujal—the puppet labor Nero (who sold the workers down the river, ceding vantage point after vantage point, on the pretext of salvaging the wage-gains) made after the Machado overthrow when there had been a progressive upsurge for a number of years. "Lumumba" had Batista's number and Mujal's number and he knew plenty about imperialism yanqui, having worked in the sugar fields and in the big factory-like centrales, and he knew that Jesus Menendez, the great Negro founder of the Sugar Workers' Union had been assassinated, as scores of other noble labor leaders had been, because they truly served their fellow-workers' interests.

So "Lumumba" was in the clandestina and he met secretly at nights in remote Santiago slums, ran mimeograph machines in cellars and closets, distributed leaflets discretely, read articles, wrote many, read books, of history, politics, poetry, and he became a very knowledgeable man indeed. In addition, he learned three trades so that if there wasn't work in one there might be in another. He could carpenter and he could make pottery, and if there was no work God gave him a pair of shoulders broad enough to tote freight down at the docks. "Most Negroes must do that,

know different trades," he explained. "And keep their eyes wide open, for if they didn't, it was just too bad."

Then came the landing of the boat that brought Fidel and his boys from Mexico, and there was the ambush and only twelve escaped to climb the mountain. And the peasants began to join them, and the band became a guerrilla troop, and then there were others who came up with guns, and the fighting grew. "Lumumba" was set in charge of helping raise funds, a peso here, a few there, from people he knew he could trust and later he helped get guns up there and medicine, and managed a kind of underground railway for the fellows and girls who went up to join Fidel. The party to which he adhered assigned him to stay at this work, on "the plain" as they say in contrast to working for the Revolution fighting in the mountains. It was no bargain, staying down on the plain, for the "chivato," the stool-pigeon, was everywhere, but you got to know the type after a while, for they had a manner "as clear as a straw hat." A too-ready and fawning smile, an over-eargerness to know, a knack of showing up accidentally. The firing squads and the torture—details worked overtime, as I have learned from talks with many here, even though "Lumumba" didn't go into that.

THEN came the big battle at Santa Clara when Fidel's men and the smaller details led by Raul, the Che (Guevara) and Camilo (the gentle-eyed, long bearded, relentless soldier), met up in Santa Clara. There they were joined by thousands of townspeople, women toting guns as well as men, most of them workers, members of the trade-unions, those who took their counsel from the underground trade union center—the F.O.N.U., the honest leaders of labor hounded out of office by Mujal's finger-men. The F.O.N.U., in accordance with Fidel, called a four-day general strike, "Lumumba" said, at the very end of the war, right after Santa Clara, and the country became one of "ciudades muertos"—dead cities. "Nothing moved, nothing," the gunner said. "It was wonderful to see the workers' power," he said enthusiastically, "by seeing the absence of motion."

The general strike enabled the Ejercito Rebelde, the rebel army, to take Havana without firing a shot. "We also prevented a plot to set up a buffer government," he said, "a ruse to prevent Fidel and his followers from taking the reins of government. It didn't work, as you know," the Negro soldier said.

Since then, well, he said, stroking the barrel of the anti-aircraft gun, things have moved so fast and so good for the people that they would rather die than surrender any of this. So now he was up here in the

mountains, had been for three months and he would sure like to get home again, but he won't till this is all cleaned up. It wasn't yet, but it would be. (A day later Fidel announced that eighty percent of it was cleaned up, but that in another range nearby they were still hiding out, holed up in the heights, succorred by the parachute drops, and by plenty of pesos dropped from the skies. "In fact," Lumumba" laughed, "we got one drop which had twenty thousand pesos in a bag. The government will make good use of it."

What kind of men did he think the enemy up here was? Some, he said, were hired to kill, murderers for pay. Maybe the most. Others were sons of the old latifundists; others still were city middle-class people whose minds belonged to the past and who dreamed of a return to the status-quo where they could get lush government graft. There were some who joined because the Roman Catholic clergy told them that Fidel was a Red and he had turned the country over to the Reds and the Russians, and they were going to stamp out religion and raise the kids to be atheists and send them to Russia. There were no few of that sort, some were peasants who believed that, but mostly they were city people.

He figured there were no more than 600 to 700 up here; he also figured they counted on a quick invasion on a big scale from Florida and Guatamala, and maybe out of Guantanamo, and that would be that. They would be top dog then, and man, the pickings were worth the effort. Some figured the "disaffected" would rise up to smite the godless, as one of the Catholic recruits had said. There were some priests up here, he said. (One was captured a week or so after I talked with him—a priest who said he had come up to shrive those who were dying and give confession to others—but the local peasants had a different story of his activities, which were considerably more than spiritual.)

A couple of landings had been made over in Oriente to try to set up a counter-revolutionary Second Front, but the motor-boats full of men were captured on landing in each case. (Later one of these motor-boats dashed into Santiago harbor and riddled a big gasoline tank with bullets and killed a couple of militiamen guarding the place.)

Well, "Lumumba" hoped he'd be going home soon, for there was a wife and two kids waiting and it was a long and lonely time away from them. He showed me a letter he had from his eight year old daughter Carmen which I read in the bright moonlight flooding the verandah. It began with the dateline that is the custom—the day and the month of this year of The Education. It concluded with Patria o' Muerte and Venceremos—we shall win. And it said, I miss you, daddy, and hope you come back soon and bring me a set of the beads the soldiers wear,

and a doll. "I am doing well in school and I got a prize for the best hand-writing in class," the child wrote.

WE talked about the men in his outfit, what kind of men were they? Well, all kinds—July 26th, March 13 Directoria, Partido Socialista Popular, men of no political groupings, Bautistas (Baptists), believers and non-believers, and yes, many Catholics. "It was odd," he said, "for priests to say there is religious repression here." There was none, the Catholics, like all, were free to go to church, to say confession, in fact were so free that priests could get away with counter-revolutionary sermons and nobody bothered them so long as they didn't "do" something about the Revolution. He came from a Catholic family himself, his mother devoutly worshipped God every Sunday at least, but she believed the Revolution was good for the country, as most Catholic "humildes" did, he said. One of the troubles is, he said, most of the priests in Cuba came from Spain and are believers in the Falange, which was a fascist outfit. If they kept that stuff out of their sermons the Government and the people wouldn't be so wary of them, but they won't just preach the Bible, but insist on being politicians and that was bad for the Church.

I asked "Lumumba" if he belonged to any political group and he said sure he does, to the Partido Socialista Popular. That is the name of the Communists here. How did he get along with the other men knowing that. "Fine" he said, rather surprised at the question. So long as he did his work of being a good soldier and decent fellow, fine, with everybody, including Catholics. Nobody is scared of him, or of his ideas; they come up sometime and talk with him about this or that, and about socialism. Some of them. Quite a few.

Communists, he said, are loyal supporters of Fidel and his government because they carried through a wonderful revolutionary fight and after victory have been doing the land reform and urban reform, cutting rents and giving ownership to those who lived in them, and helping the workers and are truly democratic. The PSP has been a legal party since the Revolution and it sees eye to eye with Fidel on the need to protect the Revolution by advancing it, which the PSP was for from the outset.

Certain friends of Cuba in the USA say it was a socialist revolution, I told him. No, he replied thoughtfully, Blas (Blas Roca, head of the PSP) said it was anti-imperialist, anti-latifundist, anti-tyranny, democratic and an advanced popular revolution. That's what it was, he said, and Blas was right. What was it becoming? Well, it would become socialist, like the rest of the world would become, he said. And Cuba would be right up there, among the first. He didn't want to argue with anybody

about that, he said, because such arguments only divide people up. The thing to consider is this—are people living better? Is unemployment being wiped out? Is education increasing? Is racism ending? If all that is happening, he for one, doesn't want to get into arguments about what to call it. What difference does that make if people feel good about what is happening? The enemies of the government want to stir things up with arguments like that, and he for one doesn't get into that kind of stuff.

Shakespeare said something about a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet, I said, and he laughed.

LONG about three in the morning when the moon was going down over that rim, behind a tall palm, some shots cracked the night's silence. "Lumumba" was up like a shot himself. In a trice men were rushing out of the hacienda, rifles in hand, and they plunged into the thick underbrush of banana and coffee trees surrounding the place. He couldn't leave his post with the anti-aircraft gun. About half an hour later a soldier in a beret with one of those bead necklaces bearing a cross, came back with a bundle of wet clothes. Whoever it was had shed his clothes in a nearby creek and why he had done so wasn't clear. They examined the clothes, but there were no blood marks, so the suspect, who had run when he was challenged, evidently wasn't wounded when he got rid of his shirt and pants, and what this all signified I didn't know nor did they.

Most of the men returned at dawn and they didn't talk much about it. Later the head of the outfit, a Havana school teacher, a slim, blackeyed man of thirty, told me they had captured the superintendent of the old latifundia here. He had been suspected of being in charge of caching arms somewhere near, he said. He had shed his clothes after crossing the creek because he had another suit on the other side, a disguise, and he was trying to make a getaway from this region. He had been a suspect before, but this was pretty much of a give-away. I left the next morning, before the affair was fully cleared up.

A mile off, on the highest peak around, I came across a schoolhouse with the Cuban flag above it. Some twenty-six kids were going to school here, in this primitive building—a straw-thatched roof, wooden pillars, no walls, and a view from the rude desks that overlooked a magnificent valley. I was in a jeep with three armed guards and I asked did they mind if I talked to the kids a bit. No, they didn't mind. The kids belonged to coffee-workers here, and they came to school on horseback, guarded by their parents. The oldest boy, about 14, said he was going

to be an agronomist. "Cuba needs agronomists" he said simply. The oldest girl, wearing a ribbon in her pigtail, said she wanted to be a teacher like the maestra here.

The maestra was twenty-two, wearing sort of slanted glasses, and had a blue ribbon in her hair. She had volunteered to come up here and teach. She was from Santa Clara, had finished high school, and had a three months course in teaching, at the same new and wonderfully beautiful school I had seen in the Sierra Maestras, where the 18 year old Negro martyr Conrado Benitez had studied. He had been a bootblack, wanted an education, got it, and went up into the Escambray, about fifty kilometers from here, to teach. One day, a month ago, the counter-revolutionists got him as he was going to his little schoolhouse—much like this one. And they threw a rope around his neck and hanged him from a tree till he was dead. "Because he was a worker, and black, and a teacher," Fidel had thundered.

That might give you an idea of the kind of people these counter-revolutionaries are. They were waiting, some of them praying, for the big Washington-sponsored, counter-revolutionary invasion.

The invasion came. They tried to overthrow the school house on a mountain-top, but the Cuban people threw them back.

II: THE POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY OF CUBA

IT IS hard to say which aspect of the Cuban Revolution is most misrepresented in the United States. Or to put it more crudely, lied about. I think it would be safe to bet that the Communist Party of Cuba is near the top of the list. (For one thing, its name is the Popular Socialist Party—el Partido Socialista Popular.)

By this time I have met no few of its leaders and its members. I assure you the people of Cuba have learned the Marxists have neither cloven hoofs nor diabolic horns. Aside from the fact that the Communists number themselves—and are numbered—as being among the most devoted and active followers of Fidel Castro, Cubans regard them about like every other Cuban in Havana, or Manzanillo or Santiago or any of the farmers on the cooperatives or the workingmen in the factories or the militiamen in the ranks or the soldiers in the regular army. Perhaps I do note a difference: a growing admiration that these patriots have a commendable zeal about their beliefs and work diligently for the common good. Cubans do not regard that as a demerit.

THE PSP was well-known throughout the land, before the Revolution. Don't forget it has been here since the martyr Julio Antonio Mella founded it in 1925. The party, though underground, played a big part in overthrowing Machado, was already making close ties with the people even while it was "illegal." And it was in that time the country saw the creation of the present trade-union movement headed by that remarkably able and selfless labor and political leader, Lazaro Peña. And in 1939, another great Negro leader of the Party and of labor, Jesus Menendez, founded the biggest union in the CTC—the Sugar Workers Union. These grew out of smaller trade union centers the Party previously organized. And in 1940 largely due to the persistence and sage creativity of the PSP, the country saw the writing of the Constitution of 1940 which many observers still regard as the most advanced Constitution of any western country. Its provisions included land reform, the eradication of the racist blight, advanced labor provisions, democratic guarantees, guarantees of rights for women and youth—a document astonishing in its spirit of progress. The tragedy is that the administrations of Grau and Prio ignored it and gradually ceded to the pressures of the latifundist reaction impelled by the hosts of imperialism which pushed, conspired, bribed and browbeat and made its way again to domination via Batista's coup d'etat of March 1952.

THE PSP was the first, among all the political groupings in the land, to condemn the coup d'etat, and in unreserved and uncompromising terms and acts. The PSP summoned its members and called people to take to the streets in the provinces of Oriente, Camaguey and Las Villas, March 10, to resist the usurper the first moments he snatched power.

Every possible means was used to tell the Cubans who backed the coup—i.e., the forces of imperialism, the most powerful capitalists of Cuba, its latifundists, the reactionary politicoes and the publicists who took their money.

Alone, the PSP went against the tide in many areas of public life, as Blas Roca delineated in his profound and comprehensive report to the Eighth Assembly of his Party last July. The fact is that many Cubans—in Labor, the countryside and the urban middle classes—had become confused in the demoralizing political atmosphere of the previous decade.

Graft, corruption, bribery, the unlimited sums of money that imperialism could spend, had their way. Fascist-type methods were used to usurp

the leadership of the trade-unions. Assassination of brave and able leaders became the rule of the day, and many a good man died at the hands of gunmen, leaders like Fernández Roig, Anancio Rodríguez, José Oviedo, Aracelio Iglesias, Cabrera, and the inimitable sugar-workers leader, founder of their union, Jesus Menéndez.

Hence no few Cubans, of various classes, felt it was not too bad a pass if Batista came back, remembering the earlier days, of the late Thirties, when he trimmed his sails to ride the rising tide of progressive activity in which the PSP played so big a part.

FROM the outset of Batista's return the Party argued, by leaflet, pamphlet, speech, newspaper article that the solution to Cuba's problems required the utter defeat of the new reactionary regime which had put itself at the disposal of imperialism, and hence, was anti-national, anti-labor, anti-progress. Inevitably, the PSP argued, the perpetrators of the coup would resort to the most extreme forms of repression, of violence. For they came to power divorced from the people, and against the people. The Party focussed attention on the fundamental fact that this coup did not merely substitute one set of leaders for the previous set, that would have been bad enough, but this coup was laying the basis for changing the *fundamental* social and political relations in the direction of complete subservience to U.S. imperialism.

The PSP pointed out that U.S. imperialism was the primary factor in the coup. Batista had sold himself to the monopolies of Wall Street body and soul and hence he would resort to a policy of rabid anti-Communism, anti-Sovietism in order to smash any semblance of democracy in the land.

It was difficult for many workers to see that at first, confused as they were by the unctuous phrases of Batista at the outset of his coup. He spread the belief that his resumption of power would create no particular disruption of the national scene, and would, in fact, put an end to the corrupting process of the previous Grau and Prio regimes. Naturally Batista had some initial success.

No few Cubans recalled that the PSP had worked in the same front with Batista from the end of 1938 to about the beginning of 1946, pursuing the tenets of a united front policy which brought undoubted progress to the country. As I mentioned before, Cuba then saw the legalization of the PSP, the creation of the CTC, of the Sugar Workers Union, almost half a million strong, of a democratic Constitution, in 1940, of a curb on reaction, of social legislation, and, in foreign policy, took part in the anti-fascist coalition against Hitler, established

relations with the Soviet Union. In brief, this coalition offered Cuba the possibilities of moderate progress. These facts, gratefully remembered by the workers and other groupings, were the basis for illusions about Batista upon his return to power in the coup of 1952.

After Fidel's heroic assult of the Monada Barracks—on July 26, 1953—the PSP, as well as all other democratic institutions lost even the semblance of legality the new Batista government allowed. The PSP, now driven underground, stoutly continued to function. It had acted upon the logic of its position and prepared the basis to continue work when the underground period would begin. This was indeed no easy task. Most of the Party leaders and most of its members were known to the police. They had functioned in the open since 1938—some fourteen years. Tried and trusted members had to be found who had homes where leaders could be hidden and could function, where meetings could be held. One can well imagine the meticulous and painstaking work necessary to create such machinery. But it was created.

It continued a relentless campaign of public education, and sought to promote every type of mass public action possible under the circumstances of illegality These included street meetings, trade-union pressure for immediate concessions to the workers' needs, resistance to the wage-cuts and longer hours, all of which would lead to a general strike that could topple Batista and institute a popular democratic government able to bring about national sovereignty, and the restoration of democratic rights.

SHORTLY after Fidel and the noble twelve survived the waterfront ambush, the PSP began to send volunteers up to the Sierras. They fought in the ranks, no few became outstanding figures in the Rebel Army. Three emerged from the war as *comandantes*—"generals" in the classic military language. Along with others, the PSP worked with might and main not only to send recruits, but also to establish a nexus between the men and women who worked in the "clandestinidad," raising funds, arms, medicines to nurture the armed revolutionists in the heights.

The fight against Mujalism in the trade-unions required the creation of an underground trade-union leadership—of PSP and non-communist labor leaders. This was achieved in the F.O.N.U. consisting of honest anti-imperialist working class leaders who kept close ties with the workers.

For all this had to be done against the terror of the Batista police who missed no trick the Gestapo had taught—torture became the order

of the day. The police, there were various denominations—military, civil, secret, plain-clothes, etc.,—sniffed and hounded and arrested, beat, tortured and killed. Fidel had given the figures as 20,000 killed. Tens of thousands more were arrested, beaten (generally with sawed off billiard cues) and jailed in the ancient prison-fortress on the Isle of Pines.

Despite this, the PSP carried on, brilliantly effective. By and large, the PSP was able to safeguard its cadres, men and women of remarkable experience and fortitude, and political sagacity. They were in continuous and close touch with the masses of Cuba. And they were at the nerve centers of the proletariat, sensitive to the movements and moods of the people, helping guide them, enlighten them, encourage them, step by step, to higher plateaus of resistance to the dictatorship. They were among those patriots able to be of inestimable value and critical worth to the valiant soldiers who were fighting under the skies in the mountains, ambushing the infinitely better armed soldiers of Batista who had all the weaponry that the might of the United States could supply: bazookas and machine guns and hand grenades and rifles and bullets and tanks and airplanes. The PSP played an invaluable role in helping build and maintain a liaison between the rebels in the field and the revolutionary movement in the cities and countryside. They were able to exercise a leading role in helping the rebels change their guerrilla tactics to those of positional warfare, to come down from the heights and deploy in the plains.

When the rebel columns met in Santa Clara and fought the decisive battle of the war there, finally breaking the back-bone of Batista resistance, the PSP was able, through its district, regional and neighborhood leaders, both in the province of Las Villas of which Santa Clara was the capital, and its members and followers in Havana, to give invaluable aid to the soldiers.

At this point Batista was ready to flee. His top-rank soldiers, plus the U.S. Embassy, plus the dignitaries of the hierarchy, sought to establish a caretaker government that could be a final bulwark against Fidel's full victory.

Fidel thereupon urged a general strike and the FOUN, with its strong complement of PSP union-leaders and their trade-union collaborators of various political shadings, summoned the members to general strike. Four days of "ciudades muertas"—dead cities resulted in which no wheel turned.

This prevented the Batistianos from their final deployment of forces in Havana and the city fell without a shot—the Batistianos in the

fortress of Columbia and elsewhere surrendered without a shot. The intricate scheme to set up the buffer government fell through—and the Revolution triumphed.

Upon victory the PSP again brought out its daily newspaper—"Noticias de Hoy," which had been carrying on as a weekly all the years of the dictatorship—under the name of Cartas Semanales, Weekly Letters. The first day of its re-appearance the newspaper carried a two-page manifesto which presented its position upon victory. I read it upon my arrival the first week in January 1959 and I then, and since, have marveled at its political acumen, foresight and direction.

I recall its adjuration to realize that 1959 was like no other year in history. Much had happened since 1954 when Guatemala was overthrown by the armed might of a subversive United Fruit and interventionist State Department. The relationship of forces in the world favored Cuba, turned the balance so much in its favor that if it adopted the policies of an inner domestic unity based upon anti-imperialist principle, it could count on the support of the majority of the world.

The socialist third of the world had strengthened immeasurably in the past half decade. The colonial lands were in torrential motion. Both tides joined in a confluence to aid a revolutionary land seeking sovereignty, democracy and social betterment. This time it could be done. The myth of geographical fatalism (too near the mighty U.S. to be able to go it alone) was ended. If the country was able to oust Pentagon-backed Batista, it could shoulder its way forward—despite all U.S. pressures—into the new era.

THE PSP led by its remarkable leader Blas Roca spelled out its views on the matter. The best way to "defend the revolution" was to "advance it." Agrarian reform was first on the agenda—see to it that the peasants get the land they dreamed of for centuries. Help them grow their products via scientific guidance in agronomy, loans, farm-equipment, etc. Simultaneously prepare the people for industrialization.

Change the one-crop system, which put the land in hock to U.S. markets, to a varied agriculture. Change the one-market system to a varied market all over the world. Restore diplomatic and trade relations with all, especially the socialist lands. Spread the benefits of democracy. See to it that the eradication of racism was complete so that all could live in harmony and equality and participate equally and whole-heartedly in advancing the Revolution. Guard unity, the rock-bottom necessity of the new Cuba, but do not hamstring revolutionary growth by refusing

the right to air differences with the revolutionary front which had its left, right and center. Let the differences be discussed amicably, as brothers and sisters within a family. And come to democratic agreements on the best course to pursue.

Already in that document, the PSP—pledging its uttermost support to Fidel—indicated its right to criticize by pointing out that the new cabinet did not fully represent the entire revolutionary front. It was weighted to the right of that front—did not contain working-class and peasant representation in the topmost councils. This—in time—would need to be corrected, the document declared. And thus it spelled out its position on the weighty life-and-death question of the time.

So it has proceeded in the two and a quarter years since 1959. Because anti-communism was recognized by Fidel for its true and ugly reality as counter-revolution, the counsel presented by the PSP could now be weighed on its merits, and not rejected out of hand simply because it came from the PSP.

The masses learned that the PSP sought no special privileges, no special or foremost place—simply the democratic right that its views be considered and judged as those of any other patriotic component in the body politic.

This has, fortunately, obtained. Today I encounter many young, and older Cubans, who do not shrink from discussing Marxism. What is it? What are its tenets? So you will find in the thriving bookstalls and corner-of-the-street-displays, many basic works of Marxism. The people do not fear to go to primary sources.

The relationship between the PSP, its leaders and members, with other organizations, and with the government, is closely-knit, democratic and comradely. Its leaders appear on the same platforms with other leaders and with Cabinet figures. The criterion is in the worth of a man's contribution to the revolutionary advance.

The PSP makes its contribution, in counsel, through its newspaper and its organizations. It conducts its propaganda fully in the open advocating unity of all the revolutionary segments, vigilance against counter-revolution, the organization of that vigilance through strengthened and even more unified trade union organization. So it is with the process of industrialization; with the eradication of illiteracy; with the construction of schools and hospitals; so it was with the final and total elimination ofvestiges of fascism. The PSP makes itself felt in all corners and areas of the political and economic life of the Republic. Its members shoulder responsibilities as Cuban patriots and communists.

TWO POEMS FOR FIDEL CASTRO

GOOD MORNING, FIDEL

NICOLAS GUILLEN

Passenger in transit, change planes to dream now!
Oui, monsieur . . . Sí, señor.
Born in Cuba, far away, beside a palm grove.
Yes, in transit. I'm on my way.
Sugar? Sí, señor.
Sugar right in the middle of the sea.
In the sea? A sea of sugar, then?
A sea.
Tobacco?
Sí, señor.
Smoke right in the middle of the sea.
And heat.
Can you dance the rumba?
No, señor.
I cannot.
Don't you speak English?
No, señor.
I never could.
Passenger in transit, change planes to dream now!
Then tears. Suffering.
Then life and its passing.
Then blood and its glory.
And here I am.
Today is already tomorrow.
Mr. Wood, Mr. Taft,
Good-by.
Mr. Magoon, good-by.
Mr. Lynch, good-by.
Mr. Crowder, good-by.
Mr. Nixon, good-by.
Mr. Herter, good-by.
Mr. Night and Mr. Shadow, good-by!
You can go, animal
Crowd, I never want to see you!

It's early, so I have work to do.
It's late now, so dawn appears.
The river flows amid stones. . . .
Good morning, Fidel.
Good morning, flag; good morning, shield.
Palm tree, buried arrow, good morning.
Good morning, medallic profile, violent bearded one
Of bronze, vindictive machete in the right hand.
Good morning, sturdy rock, fixed wave of Sierra Maestra.
Good morning, my hand, my spoon, my soup,
My shop, my home, and my dream.
Good morning, my rice, my corn, my shoes, and my clothes.
Good morning, my field and my book, my sun and my blood with no owner.
Good morning, my country in Sunday dress.
Good morning, Mr. and Mrs.
Good morning, farmer in the mountain being born to life.
Good morning, boy in the street, singing and resplendent at dawn.
Armed worker, good morning.
Good morning, rifle.
Good morning, tractor.
Sugar, good morning.
Poets, good morning.
Parades, good morning.
Slogans, good morning.
Good morning, tall girls like chaste sugar cane.
Songs, banners, good morning.
Good morning, oh land of my veins,
Corn clasped in my fists, bell
Of victory. . . .
The land smells of recent
Rain. A Negro head and a blond head
Go down the same road together,
Crowned by one fraternal laurel wreath.
The air is green. A mocking bird sings on Turquino.*
Good morning, Fidel.

Translated by *John W. Stanford*

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* Turquino: the highest mountain in the Sierra Maestra.

TO FIDEL CASTRO

PABLO NERUDA

Fidel, Fidel, the world is grateful
for words in action and deeds that sing,
that is why I bring you
a cup of wine from my distant land:
it is the blood of a subterranean people
rising from its shadows to your throat,
of miners who have lived for centuries
digging fuel out of the frozen earth.
They go beneath the sea in search of coal,
when they return, they come like ghosts:
they grew accostumed to the eternal night,
the light of their journey stolen
they nonetheless offer their cup
of such suffering and distance,
the joy of incarcerated man
haunted by darkness and by hope
who, though buried in the mine, suspects
when Spring has brought her fragrance:
he knows that man will struggle
until he achieves the broadest clarity.
They see Cuba clearly, these southern men,
these solitary men of the Pampas,
shepherds of the Patagonian cold,
fathers of tin and silver,
those who marry the brute hill
to obtain the copper of Chuquicamata,
men of forgotten busses
in towns pure with nostalgia,
women of the fields and shops,
children whose infancy was tears:
here is the cup, take it, Fidel.
It is full of so many hopes
that on drinking you will know your victory
is like the old wine of my land:
it isn't made by one but by the many,
it doesn't come out of one grape

but out of countless clusters,
it isn't just one drop but many rivers,
not just a captain but more than many battles.
And they will stand by you because you represent
the dignity of our long struggle:
if Cuba were to fall, we'd fall with her,
and we would have to come and lift her,
and if she blooms with all her orchards
she'll bloom with our very sap.
And if they dare touch the forehead
of the Cuba your hands have liberated
they will meet with the fists of the peoples,
we'll dig out the hidden weapon:
blood and pride will rush
to defend our well-beloved Cuba.

FIDEL CASTRO: A PARTISAN VIEW

CARL MARZANI

THE New York *Herald Tribune* began on its front page of March 19 a series of articles on Castro and Cuba by its foreign correspondent Joseph Newman who writes, according to the editors, "following four weeks on the island with the permission and without the interference of the Castro government." It so happens that the present writer was there at about the same time (in February) and that since he and Mr. Newman are old college classmates, we saw something of each other. The one thing we both agreed on was that it is of the utmost importance that the American people have a realistic view of Cuba and Castro. I spent considerable time with Castro and I feel so strongly that Mr. Newman's picture of him is decidedly one-sided that I proceeded to set down my own partisan view.

Mr. Newman is an able reporter, but he also quotes as authorities people now in exile whose expressions cannot but be self-serving. Furthermore, as Sandburg has said, words have long shadows, and properly chosen words can create obscurity as well as clarity. Thus Mr. Newman quotes "a Cuban who knows Castro intimately" to the effect that Castro is an "egotist." True, and so is John F. Kennedy. But, unadorned, the word is misleading. The obverse of the coin is self-confidence and this is an essential, if not key, component of political leadership and action. Jackson, Cromwell, Ataturk, the list is endless, had, had to have, such powerful personalities as to spill over in many directions, and some of their manifestations are offensive even to their friends—and to their enemies intolerable. To call Castro an egotist is to smear, not to illuminate.

Fidel means faithful in Spanish and to the overwhelming majority of

the Cuban people, as Mr. Newman would agree, Castro is faithful to their needs, faithful to the *campesinos* who are the core of his strength, faithful too in his reliance on the creative power of their liberated energies. Fidel Castro is a fish supported by the ocean of his people, giving him the buoyancy and the self-assurance which so troubles the *Herald Tribune.*

Fidel's confidence never wavered; he expected that even a defeat would be useful. A top Cuban Communist told me that he visited Castro in Mexico just after Castro had announced his intention to invade Cuba, and begged him to postpone it. "Batista's army is waiting for you to cut you down. Our Party can do little immediately. Give us a little time to organize, to prepare." Fidel answered, "We can't. The Mexican police are discovering and seizing our weapons. We have to go. Even if it turns out to be only a gesture, it will be a gesture the Cuban people will understand, will use sometime."

The invasion turned out a nightmare. In a small boat designed to carry a dozen people, 82 men were crammed with weapons, supplies and extra gallons of gas. The clutch of the engine, old and worn, would slip at high speeds. There was stormy weather, the men were seasick, the pump didn't work, they had to bail out water. Hopelessly late, they were still at sea when planned diversionary uprisings took place and were stamped out. They lost their way and finally the boat went aground in a swampy area far from any help from Cuban patriots. They had to leave behind the heavier equipment, supplies, food, medicines and slosh through swamps for four hours.

In the saga that followed, hunted and shot at, the group fragmented and the time came when Fidel was alone with two companions, hiding in the cane fields, living for five days on the juice of the sugar cane. Then his brother Raul with three companions joined them: they were now six and one of them, Rodriguez, has related what Fidel said and his own reaction.

"The days of the dictatorship are numbered," Fidel told the men with matter-of-fact confidence, and Rodriguez says he stared at Fidel in anger and amazement. "This man is crazy," Rodriguez says he thought to himself. "I was very mad with Fidel because after all we had just been through, with many of our men lost, Fidel stands there telling us with complete confidence that the days of the dictatorship are numbered." And so they were, so they were.

I asked Fidel once how and why he had such incredible, almost irrational, confidence. His eyes turned inward and he shrugged his shoulders. "I knew," he said simply, "I just knew the situation was ripe, the people were ready. As we were ready."

YET let no one think this is a man of instinct and intuition alone. He is a man of action with wide culture and knowledge. He has read, and reads, extensively and not the least of his reading has been in Marxism, though, as everyone knows but the U.S. State Department, he is no Communist. Mr. Newman, to his credit, never once implies that Castro is a Communist. I was present when a small group of some dozen people peppered him with questions, all kinds of questions. A trade union visitor from Costa Rica asked if he had read Marx. Fidel made an impatient grimace. "Of course, I read Marx," he said, "and Lenin too. Any educated man has." It never was a secret that Castro had read Marx, as have most bright Latin American students, but it so happens that a few days later in an interview with an Italian journalist Fidel repeated this fact and the journalist published it. Mr. Newman makes much of this statement, but, again to his credit, does not quite say that Castro is a Marxist. He says, in effect, that he is becoming one.

Of course to the average American the words "Communist" and "Marxist" are interchangeable, as the *Herald Tribune* well knows. Moreover, the word "Marxist" is itself a dirty word in the U.S., but this is only a commentary on our stifled society and our parochialism. Marxism is taught in the leading universities of the West, Cambridge, Oxford, La Sorbonne, Rome, Bologna and what have you, often by Marxists and sometimes even by Communists. The best comment on certain U.S. academic attitudes on Marxism was made by Professor C. Wright Mills, who is not a Marxist, when he answered a critic: "Those who say they hear Marxian echoes in my work are saying that I have trained myself well." So when Castro said that any educated man has read Marx he was saying a truth which is obvious everywhere but the U.S.

Someone in the group asked him what Marxist books he had read and Fidel hunched his shoulder in a half shrug and waved the stub of his cigar. "Oh, a lot of things. You know, the *Manifesto,* a little of *Capital,* didn't get too deep in that one though," he said with a grin, *"Eighteenth Brumaire,* the *Civil War in France, State and Revolution,* and so on, you know."

"And what did you learn?" I shot at him.

Fidel slowly turned his bearded face towards me with a quizzical, half-delighted glance. Everyone was quiet, eager for his reply, and his deliberateness created a certain tension of expectancy. He is exceptionally sensitive to people's moods and he was fully conscious of the atmosphere as his fugitive smile showed. "Compañero," he said finally, "I will tell you. I learned two things." He paused for emphasis. "I learned that there *is* a class struggle, and I learned . . ." he was no longer talking to us, no

longer conscious of an audience. His eyes were inward again, his voice musing, his head slowly nodding as his thoughts went back in time to the young man of long ago, ". . . I learned that you must *smash* the institutions of the ruling class." His hand, open palm, came crashing on the table before him. He was back with us again, and as the group spontaneously burst into applause, he gave us a wide, pleased grin. And chewed on his butt of a cigar.

Someone said: "Do you know the peasants call you, *el caballo* (the horse) because you work so hard?" Without false modesty, he nodded. "I know. Sometimes I wish I was an elephant." A young pretty woman school teacher from Venezuela asked him, "What about your celibacy, Fidel?" (He was divorced by his wife when he came out of the Batista jail.) The teacher had asked without thinking, but the association with *el caballo* was so plain that there was a burst of laughter and she blushed in utter confusion. Fidel threw her a wickedly, bold glance; he reacts to women as they react to him, but when he spoke, he spoke gently and eased her embarrassment, "Niña," he said paternally, "I'm much too busy."

THIS last is something of an understatement, because he is always on the go and needs every bit of his extraordinary vitality. Physically, he is a splendid man. Over six feet tall, built big and solid like a professional football player, he is every inch a fighting man. He was a fine athlete at school and his childhood was spent outdoors, horseback riding, climbing mountains, walking interminably. He walks the earth firmly, decisively, with muscular grace and something more. There is a certain delicacy of gesture and motion as if the mind had infused into the body its poetic strain. There is a touch of innocence about the man, a kind of Garden-of-Eden innocence which is reflected in the style of the Cuban Revolution itself. Just one example to show what I mean. One of Batista's most corrupt henchman, out of the money robbed from the people, had built himself a huge park-like estate with houses and gardens, and cabins and a lake. The Revolution had turned it into a national park for people's vacations and recreations. Going through it one day, my companion said to me, "Oh we must go and look at the tree houses." "Tree houses?" I asked and he smiled as he drove off on a side road.

Sure enough, here and there, scattered widely, I saw the most charming, the most amazing little houses built up in trees, just like a fairy tale. They were set inside wide branching trees, perhaps fifteen feet up, with strong steps leading up in two flights with a little landing between. The houses were a single room, perhaps twelve feet square, with little windows

and painted in gay pastel colors, yellows and greens and blues with white and red trim.

"They are for honeymooners," said my companion happily, "and it was all Fidel's idea."

And I thought of the wonder of a revolutionary leader, in the stream of history, with pressing, complicated problems clamoring for his mind, and somehow, somewhere, in his inner poetic strain, to find the thoughtful, charming idea and translate it into action. I was very moved.

Fidel's vitality is most clearly shown in his long, terribly exhausting speeches of four, five, six hours. He is a great orator as Mr. Newman agrees, saying "Castro is the most powerful public speaker on the world stage today. Some of us who have heard the leading political figures of the day . . . agree that none can compare with Castro in the power to arouse the emotions of a mass audience." True, but only half the whole truth, and because it is a half truth, Newman can trot out the same anonymous Cuban to say that "Talk is both a disease and a drug for Castro." This doesn't sound very lovely, but the whole truth is that Castro is a great teacher, he teaches in his speeches all the time, and in a population that inherited 37% illiteracy the spoken word has to be the primary means of communication. Hence the long speeches shown on TV. I've mingled with the crowd and of course emotion is stirred up, but most of the time people are listening and nodding and absorbing. I've never seen the mass hysteria which I saw in Germany of the thirties for example, and to make out Castro a demagogue is to completely mislead. Of course he loves to talk, what good teacher doesn't? I sat in the house of Harold J. Laski once and listened to an uninterrupted monologue of three hours, and mighty instructive it was too.

To come back to Castro's vitality. On the day the militia was demobilized after its alert as a preventive measure against the suspected invasion plans of the Central Intelligence Agency at the end of Eisenhower's regime, I heard Fidel Castro speak for six hours in the huge square before the palace. It was a grueling task, deep into the night, yet a couple of hours later he showed up at the hotel *Habana Libre* to have a talking fest with the small group I mentioned above. He stayed with them from one o'clock in the morning till six o'clock, answering all kinds of questions, his mind fully engaged, and at six o'clock when his audience, including me, were beat and worn out, he walked out as fresh as the dawn coming up over the harbor. It was some performance. Incidentally, it is a measure of the man that this small group was not composed of so-called important people. They were rank and file men and women from all over Latin America and if he had given them an hour it would have

been a handsome present. But he stayed with them, interested in every one of them, aware that they need his knowledge and his experience, that here were the people that would make the Cuban Revolution understood in their respective countries. Furthermore, the freedom of his answers, his directness, his sincerity, bound the group close to him in strong bonds. This is part of his great strength, that he freely reveals his innermost thoughts, and interestingly enough, Mr. Newman shows his naivete in revolutionary processes and revolutionary leadership by assessing this quality as one of Castro's liabilities, saying, "Talking is one of Castro's greatest weaknesses. In the process of talking on and on, both in public and private, Castro inevitably gives away some of his innermost thoughts . . ." and one gets the sense of the wise correspondent digging out secrets when all along Castro is shouting from the housetops.

Watching him, his mobile, expressive features revealing this thought processes, I became fully aware of another basic facet of this man's personality. He is a great teacher because he is a great learner. I was told this by people close to him. One of his intimates had told me how Fidel delights in polemics; he is a born fighter of ideas as well as arms, and whenever anyone advances a proposal or a suggestion he has a tendency to fight against it right away, to argue against, and more often than not, win. But then he'll say, perhaps next day, "You know you are right. It is a good idea." One of the major decisions, to develop a big militia, was one he fought against. Fidel wanted to develop the army and Guevara argued for a militia. Fidel came around and was generous in giving credit where credit was due. But as I watched him in the group discussion I became aware that this man not only learned from books and from others and from life; *he learned from himself.* There wasn't the smallest question, not the most trivial, that he didn't try to give an answer which was as true as he could make it, which in his own mind was not as concretized as possible, weighed against the reality of the world and his own inner reality. It sounds vague as I say it, half mystical, and again a detailed example may elucidate what I'm trying to say.

In the midst of a flurry of questions and answers, I had again thrown in a deliberately point-blank question: "Were you ever lost?" I asked. "In your mind I mean?"

He gave me a penetrating glance and nodded somberly. "Yes," he said simply. "The day we won!"

THERE was a chorus of ohs, and he smiled, a trifle grimly. He knew what he was doing; tearing the veils of illusion from the eyes of these hero-worshipers, ripping the cult of his prescience, letting the muddy

boots of human reality trample the spun gossamer of legend . . . and of course creating a new legend. He knew that too. I felt a great rush of affection and solidarity for this man I'd never seen before: "Good for you," I thought, "good for you!"

He was going on. "That day, suddenly all Cuba was in our hands, our little group. Everything became our responsibility, the unemployment, the children, teachers, factories, it was up to us and we had so few trained people."

"But you had programs . . ." someone interjected and Fidel waved it away. "We knew we had to have an agrarian reform, but even the how and the when we didn't know. But there was more to the problem than this." He was leaning forward, trying to make them see, reliving his own experience. "We had so many silly ideas, I had so many silly ideas, my head," he passed a hand over his brow; "there was so much crap in it. For example, sometime in the mountains, between fighting, I'd think of what would happen when we won, how we would have a new party and perhaps I would be elected and think up laws and introduce them and fight for the people's needs . . . and it was all silly. Once we won, we had the power to do things; we didn't need party politics which would be divisive. We'll have elections, but there is no hurry. The hurry is in getting things done in education and land and factories and unemployment. Power we have, it is the use of it, getting the right things done, the right order of importance . . ." He smiled. "You get my meaning. Yet I didn't know it in the Sierra. I could only think of politics in the old way, without realizing that it was not such a good way, that is was not the best way for us. I'm a middle class man, with middle class ideas, many ideas learned in school and never matched against life."

He paused thoughtfully in the deep silence.

"There's nothing harder in the world," said Fidel quietly, "than to rid your own head of outworn notions. I know," he said and tapped his head with a bent forefinger, "I know."

THIS maturing of Castro, which was to me so moving, is completely misrepresented by Mr. Newman. He quotes from a speech of Castro in which he said, with the frankness that is his trade mark: "The Communists had reason to distrust us since we leaders of the revolution, notwithstanding the fact that we had read Marxist works, were still full of petty bourgeois prejudices and all kinds of vacillations." Newman says this is public repentance, as if Castro has to be kind to Communists. The plain fact is that Castro is the leader of the population, and I think that if he

were to turn against the Communists, they would be thrown out of all their positions in a short time. No one in Cuba doubts this. Obviously I am not talking of the international questions, the sale of sugar, buying oil, etc. I am speaking only of the internal relations of power. No, Castro doesn't need to do repentance to please anyone. The truth is much simpler and much more exciting. He is a most strange political leader: a man of thirty-four who is learning all the time. As Sartre has well said: deeds produce ideas.

I thought of Professor Galbraith's phrase in *The Affluent Society,* "the greatest of vested interests are those of the mind," and I thought to myself which of the world's political leaders would have such self-understanding and speak so frankly about himself as Fidel Castro. And I also thought of the irretrievable stupidity of our State Department, which, in its arrogance, had forcibly pushed the Cuban Revolution to the left. For it was obvious, listening to Castro, that except for the agrarian reform he had had no preconceived notions of what to do. His approach was eminently pragmatic and if the agrarian reform had been accepted by United Fruit and the State Department, if some understanding help had been given, neither foreign business nor large Cuban enterprises would have been nationalized, Che Guevara would not be director of the National Bank and many of the middle-class forces now in exile would be functioning in La Habana. Above all, had the American oil companies not refused to refine Soviet oil, there would be many more American tankers coming over the horizon than Soviet tankers. Cuba's whole economy depends on oil, and the biggest propaganda for socialism in Cuba is not the Communist Party but the white Soviet tankers with their red hammer and sickle on the funnels steaming into harbor in a steady procession.

The thesis that the Cuban Revolution was pushed to the left by the U.S. actions is so manifestly true that I'm told it's even percolated within the State Department. I know for a fact that Mr. Newman agrees with it. The importance of this thesis lies in the fact that Cuba has still a long way to go to be Communist. The Communist Party is still comparatively small; per capita it comes to one party member per 160 inhabitants whereas in Italy for example the comparable figures are one in twenty. Furthermore none of the top leaders are Communists, as Mr. Newman agrees. Castro is only becoming a Marxist and the most stalwart Marxist, according to Newman is Guevara. I had a long talk with Guevara and he is a Marxist, but that word covers a wide spectrum these days. There's a Gomulka, a Togliatti, a Tito, a Khrushchev, a Mao Tse-tung. They are all Marxists, but I doubt for example that Chairman Mao would claim Guevara for his own. The fact is that

Guevara, like many Marxists, is a Marxist *sui generis* and it is well known in Cuba that he constantly needles the Communist Party.

THERE is much the U.S. could do. The Cuban Revolution cannot be reversed, nor the Cuban Communist Party eradicated. But it could be contained, and Soviet economic influence diminished. It would mean swallowing a bitter pill for the State Department, re-establish relations, accept the Revolution, re-knit the economic ties between Cuba and the U.S. on a basis of equality. It could be done, but I suppose it will not be done, and three years from now people will say: "If only in 1961 we had . . ." Meanwhile the *Herald Tribune* beats the drums of hysteria. Mr. Newman's articles sin by omission and partial reporting. So all the world knows the truth about Cuba except the American people.

Above all, the Cubans know what our government is doing. As I finish this I have a letter from La Habana dated March 19 by an American professor who is visiting there. He went to see the weapons captured from the anti-Castro groups in the Escambray Mountains. The professor was in the armed forces and knows weapons well. He writes: "I went last night to see the display of weapons captured in Escambray. Hundreds of United States machine guns, mortars, anti-aircraft cannon, automatic rifles, grenades, Garand rifles, with copious ammunition. How could this be procured without the co-operation of the United States government? In the absence of an answer there is but one conclusion." This conclusion was proved beyond doubt in the recent CIA invasion fiasco.

The Cuban people are very far from confusing the North American people with North American imperialism. The people know that the North American people are like us the victim of the trusts and monopolies, of the financiers and the big companies. It is the victim of the generals and rulers who raise taxes higher and higher to pay the expenses of an even more monstrous military armaments program, who follow a foreign policy of domination, of oppression, of war, of alliance with Franco, Adenauer, Chiang Kai-shek and the Latin American tyrannies—a policy that isolates the United States more and more from the people, and makes the name of Yankee more and more hateful as a synonym of imperialism and brutality.

from *The Cuban Revolution* by Blas Roca

TALES OF RESISTANCE

GUILLERMO CABRERA INFANTE

These vignettes tell of the terror under Batista. They are from ""Asi en la Paz come en la guerra" (In Peace As In War), Havana, Ediciones R, 1960.

VIGNETTE No. 1

JOSE WAS reading to himself and thinking that the style of the manifesto he had written could very well be Marti's. Well, a Marti at nineteen. He read and without being aware of it he was listening to his three companions sleeping. He was still reading when he began to feel sleepy and he thought that the heat and the four of them being closed up in that room made him sleepy. When he fell asleep with the paper in his hand he dreamt about the last few days and that he was walking through the street and nobody recognized him with his dyed hair. If he hadn't fallen asleep, he would have seen how the lock turned slowly and the door opened. He woke up because he was being pulled by the hair; they were pushing him against the wall and he heard shots very close. He felt a blow on his chest and thought it was a kick. When he rolled to the floor—his back still against the wall—he realized that it was not blows but bullets entering his flesh. Before losing consciousness and hearing the brutal clamor within his skull he saw a face bend toward him, smiling its twisted smile, and he saw the foot that kicked him in the mouth.

He wasn't dead, but he no longer felt anything: he wasn't dead yet. Some men were dragging him by the feet. They took him down from the second floor by a stairway and his head knocked against each step. On

one of the marble steps he left a piece of skin covered with hair that was blond at the tip and very black toward the root. When they got to the street the men dropped him on the sidewalk, then they hoisted him up and threw him into the truck. Before dying the last words of the manifesto he had written the week before passed through his mind.

"We shall be free or we shall fall with our chests a constellation of bullet wounds." It was this he had been reading.

VIGNETTE No. 5

ONE OF the rebel sailors made a flag of his shirt and waved it through a window, a sign of truce. They agreed to surrender if their lives would be spared and if they would be tried by courtmartial. But when they came out all of them were killed by three 50 calibre machine-guns, fired from the park.

Then the corpses of the hundred sailors and of the civilians were buried in a large common grave.

They brought two bulldozers and put them to digging a ditch. From afar it would have looked like the routine activity of highway construction. Those who were there knew well. The bulldozers made a hole fifty meters long by six wide and three deep. When they finished the dump truck dropped the bodies into the hole. Some fell outside. The soldiers would take them by the legs and throw them in. When they were all in the trench, the machine began to shovel earth until it covered the four hundred dead. The trucks, the bulldozers and a roller they had brought from a road in repair drove over the soil and flattened it. The operation had taken five hours, but when they finished, at daybreak, only a patch of fresh soil remained on the barren lot, like a large scar.

The revolt that had begun 48 hours before had ended.

VIGNETTE No. 6

THE OLD Negro woman slowly climbed the stairs of the grotesque building, a cardboard stone castle. On her way up she passed a policeman with a machine-gun at his chest, his hands hugging it tightly. When she told him what she came for his words were a chain of orders spread around her; then they let her enter and made her sit on a wooden

stool, to the side, near the door. She sat there for an hour. A lieutenant came and a corporal told a policeman that the old lady could go in to see her son. He took her to a barely lit cell at the rear. At first she had trouble distinguishing her son in the darkness. She saw that he had his head against the wall and one knee on a stool, the only piece of furniture in the cell. She called him. He didn't seem to hear her. She called him again and after a moment he moved his head, but not towards her: just a slight movement from side to side. When she called him for the third time the man came to the bars. The mother swallowed a cry: her son wasn't her son. He was swollen, one eye was closed, crushed, and his shirt was stained with blood. But neither of them said anything. She took three crumpled peso bills out of a handkerchief and gave them to her son. He looked at them with surprise, then took them, and heard her telling him to buy something to eat, since he surely hadn't eaten.

She could no longer contain herself and she asked him, in a low voice, what they had done to him.

He didn't say anything.

She asked him again.

Still he said nothing, and when he tried to talk to her, to explain to her he felt the pain and was silent. He only tightened the bills in his hand, then tore them into little pieces. Finally, he knew he could talk.

"Mama, they stuck a red-hot rod up me."

The mother didn't understand at first. When she tightened her fingers around the bar she opened her mouth because she knew she was going to scream; all she wanted was to wake up and know it was all a nightmare. But her son spoke again, with a voice absurdly clear, although it could hardly pass through his beaten lips. It was a nightmare, but it wasn't a dream.

"Mama, they stuck it in, burning, and they're going to do it again and I'm not going to be able to stand it, mama."

Again she felt like screaming, but she didn't scream, and when the policeman returned and told her she had to leave, that it was time, she let herself be led without saying a word. Her son extended his hand and touched her arm.

That was the last time she saw him. That night they interrogated him again and despite the blows and lack of sleep and the blinding light, he heard they were going to *heat* him again. Somehow he managed to pull himself loose and run toward a machine gun. But he wasn't able to fire. He didn't hear the quick creaking of the machine-gun nor did he feel the bullets penetrating his body, but his legs buckled and when he fell his fingers were pressed to his loins.

VIGNETTE No. 15

THERE IS a stain on the wall, near the floor. Is it blood? The darkness doesn't permit one to see well. On the ceiling there are cobwebs, dirt, perhaps soot. The walls are scrawled and between the water stains you can read the signs: "moTHer i LOve yOU deaRly PRUdeNcio." Who is Prudencio? Where is he now? There is another: Biva Cuva Lire! ! ! " Further over there is a perfectly spelled paragraph written on the wall. It seems to have been done with the tip of a hairpin. Perhaps the writer was a woman: "The Tyranny is ringing in its end. I know because the tortures are increasing. When the murderers are afraid, their only expression is torture." The last had to be guessed. It had almost been erased; but whoever erased it still wanted it to be legible.

"Mama, I am not afraid. I am going to die and I'm not afraid." (This is written in pencil, in an ugly but deliberate penmanship). THE TIME HAS ARRIVED FOR THE ASSASI. . . . Can't you guess the letter that's missing? Something—and there is a fearful suspicion as to what—prevented him from finishing. "Straik on 26." The author meant to say "Strike on the 26th." He did the best he could and nobody knows how much effort it took him to write this phrase that seems at first the words of a moron. "Viva Cuba libre!" One can't help thinking of a mature man who didn't want to join the cause of the young but who nevertheless endured for its sake imprisonment, tortures and possibly death.

"Someone tell my wife Fela who lives in Pasaje Romay 15, I don't remember the room, that her husband Antonio was tortured and that her husband Antonio Perez died like a man." There is an obscene drawing and above it a terrible word: "Batista". Another wanted to describe the tortures and has made a scrawl.

If there were more light you could read the rest of the messages. But these are enough. They are the real revolutionary literature.

"While here I learned of the doings of the Masferrer 'tigers'—a gang of cutthroats headed by a cool killer, Masferrer who became one of Batista's standbys. Masferrer had an army of some 200 *gangsters whom he deployed to assassinate those Batista wanted done in . . ."*

from *Cuba: Hope of A Hemisphere,* by Joseph North

WE WILL REMEMBER YOU, CUBA

IRENE PAULL

FIVE bombs exploded that day in Havana and a tobacco warehouse went up in smoke. But newsboys were cheerfully hawking the newspaper "Revolucion." Fruit peddlers were singing out, "Mandarinas! Naranjas!" The queen of the carnival smiled from the front pages of the papers. Truckloads of singing milicianos and busloads of volunteers were returning from the canebrakes decked in plumes of waving cane. An electrical supply truck rolled by Vedado painted with hand-made slogans: "Liberty With Bread and Bread Without Terror," "Fidel or Death," "This is Not Guatemala!"

The bombs are forgotten. The Soviet tanker "Druzhba" has just discharged a quarter of a million barrels of oil in the port of Havana; a Czech ship has unloaded 583 cartons of machetes, and the Russian sailors are cutting cane in Matanzas.

Volunteer teachers are headed for the Sierra Maestra. The pescadores are putting to sea their first fishing boats equipped with radio and refrigeration. A militia girl strides down El Prado her gun swinging at her hip. "Oh Susanna" blares brightly from the radio of Hotel Habana Libre while hammers and drills bang out houses and schools, hospitals and sport centers, and in the campos of the departed latifundistas where the grey plumes are on the cane, and in the tenderly tended fields of green tobacco, and where the new crops grow . . . rice and beans, tomatoes and corn, peanuts and soy beans, potatoes and malanga . . . white blossoms are already ripening on the cotton, and the poor are quietly inheriting the earth.

On February 12 school children of Havana placed a wreath on the statue of Abraham Lincoln in Fraternity Park. All Cuba mourned for Lumumba and a hand lettered sign appeared on a flaming bush of red hibiscus in front of the clinic next to our hotel, "The workers of this

clinic mourn and protest the murder of our brother Lumumba." This week an exhibit of Chinese contemporary art opens in Havana. On the Malecon by the sea a dove of peace will replace the rapacious eagle whose fierce talons grip the peak of the statue the United States erected to commemorate the "Maine." On every newstand, in every supermarket, in the Woolworth stores, and spread out along the sidewalk by Habana Libre you can buy Shakespeare, Homer, Cervantes, Whitman, Hemingway, Sartre, Tolstoy, or "El Capital" by Carlos Marx. And in the countryside, by the Jesus Menendez Cooperative, a *campesino* clambers up a cocoanut tree, cracks open the fruit, and giving us a half shell of the fragrant milk, drinks a toast to the people of the United States.

I could tell you how many state farms have been organized since 1959, how many classrooms have been created, how many *caballerias* have been planted to the new crops of cotton and rice, but statistics are words without music. Others will recite them. I want to sing you a few snatches of song from the heart of Cuba.

"Vista Alegre" in Santiago de Cuba is where the "ricos" live. They live in air conditioned mansions on the wide streets cooled with ceibas and the fronds of cocoanut palms and spreading mangos. Their well kept gardens blaze with clusters of burnt gold flamboyant and scarlet poinsetta, and over the walls the bougainvilla spills in breathtaking cascades of lustrous purple.

In the mud huts of Santiago by the grave of San Marti the "humildes" live. The poorest of the poor. Negroes. The long forgotten. They swarm in the hot dust of a Cuban Hooverville in shelters thrown together of pieces of tin, decaying boards, cardboard and cane. There are no sidewalks or streets and children play naked in the dirt among the tin cans and garbage. The floor of these shelters is the naked earth and cooking facilities are open fires. "Now it is dry, Señora, but oh when it rains! This is just one mudhole and it rains more inside the hut than out."

But half of the population of this slum has already departed. They have gone to live in the new housing project on the heights. Already more than half of the houses are completed. And so is the supermarket and the community center, the medical clinic and the school. Soon there will be a shoe factory to give the men work. And the "humildes" of the mudhole of Santiago de Cuba, not without laughter, have named their new neighborhood "Vista Alegre."

Where they are still waiting for their homes to be completed the women say:

"Ah, it will be good. Who among us have ever know hope like this? We had a hard life, Señora."

"We lived here half crazy with fear. When the rebels were winning in the hills the police would come and take out our men and shoot them. They would torture our boys. They knew that our hearts were in the mountains."

"We had no place to work. We had to beg. Eat garbage."

Enrique Carbajal came forward to speak for them. He is strong and gentle. He is not old but he has lost half his teeth and his sunny black eyes are shadowed with remembered pain.

"Nobody thought of us. Nobody. Nobody. We were the forgotten. The politicians used to come here in election campaigns and promise everything. They threw us a few pesos to vote for them and never came back again." He turned to the man who had asked him a question about elections. "Elections now? We do not want elections. There is nobody to run against Fidel. Elections now would only invite our enemies to come out of their holes. What are elections, senor? When you have what you want and your life is good, and your government is doing all it can for you and even beyond your wildest dreams, why do you need campaign speeches to make you promises? Our government is not making us promises. It is fulfilling them. 'Democracy,' senor?" He made a gesture embracing all the ragged people around him, "Tell me what more democracy you can have in a land where people like us are given arms?"

In the new "Vista Alegre" of Santiago it is hard to believe that these are the same people who had lived in the mudhole. Neatly dressed, they walk with brisk assurance down the new cement sidewalks. Children play baseball. Old people chat in the yard of the community center. A fruit peddler is rolling his cart down the clean paved streets singing, "Mandarinas! Naranjas!"

A family greets us warmly from their front porch. They invite us in. A rubber doormat bears the English word "Welcome." A picture of Fidel is on one wall and on another the Virgin Mary. A bunch of artificial flowers gleams stiffly in a vase on the table.

"What do I like best about my house?" The mother exclaims, "Why the floor of course! Before we had only the earth!"

But the wiry little grandmother can't decide what she likes best. She wants to show us everything at once. The sink. The stove. The electric lights. The toilet. The shower. The washtub outside with the built in washboard. Then she clasps her hands in a gesture of prayer. "Ai, contenta contenta contenta. Gracias Fidel. Gracias gracias. May you always be as happy as we are now, Señora. May your children be happy. May your country be happy. May we all live and be happy. Gracias to the senor in the heavens. Gracias Fidel. Gracias. Gracias."

ON a flat swamp bitterly wrested from the sea and to which the sea occasionally returns live the pescadores of Manzanillo. This reclaimed swamp is criss-crossed with stagnant ditches breeding mosquitoes in the green bilge water thick as mucous. Where the land is dry, naked children creep in the dust after the grunting pigs. The thatched huts are the sorriest bohios in Cuba where families live hardly sheltered from the elements. These are Cuba's "peasants of the sea."

Like all the fishermen Serafin Tomayo and Roberto Licca are lean, dried, eroded by wind and sun, men that the sea has bitten and salted. "We had to fill these swamps to live here. But sometimes the tide is high and we have to fill them again and we live in water. We used to go to sea with nothing in our stomachs and knowing we had left our families hungry. We could not go far in these little boats or the waves would capsize them. And you have to go far to get much fish. Now the government gives us good boats. It buys our fish and pays us well. When we are at sea we know the Cooperative will feed our families. The government has built schools and our little ones are already studying. It is building houses for us on the high land where the water cannot flood us. We will have a supermarket, a theatre. We already have a doctor. Ai. Ai. Phenomeno! Fantastico!"

And Elodio Barrios, a woman cries, "The house they are building for me cannot be real. It is a dream. Yet I will be living in it soon. Señora, do you understand? If I had to swim the sea to get to this house, then I would swim the sea! Fidel is a God for us forgotten ones. We are crazy with joy!"

On the high land we were taken to see the model house that will be the new home of Elodia Barrios. No house was ever fashioned with more loving hands. Made from Cuban materials they tell you proudly and furnished with Cuban furniture made by Cuban hands. Light, modern, simple, using pressed sugar cane waste to produce effects of unusual originality and beauty. This model house is decorated in a delicate green and furnished with a modern couch in red with clean straight lines, two easy chairs, one black, one gold, two cane rockers in green, a coffee table of pressed sugar cane. The children's room is furnished with bunk beds and a modern desk for studying. The dining room is bright with casement windows opening on a graceful table and chairs, a sideboard and cupboard to match, all of a distinctly modern and Cuban design. When the pescadores move in in March, a social worker will teach them how to use the facilities for decent living. For there is no electricity or gas or plumbing in the swamps of Manzanillo. And when their houses are all completed, they will begin to build a new refrigerated

warehouse like the pescadores of Guantanamo have built in the Cooperativa at Caimanera.

In the shadow of the American Naval Base white blooms are on the cotton of Guantanamo. We jog along a rough road into the Cooperativa Mata Abajo where 40 caballerias are planted to cotton, peanuts, tomatoes, soy beans, bananas and onions. All Cuba rejoices in its diversified crops. They even hand you little coupons on the buses that bear the legend, "A one crop country is a doomed one." At Mata Abajo they tell us, "We are uniting all the cooperatives around here into one big state farm and we will have much machinery. We could have done much more if we had not had to send our tractors into the mountains to make trenches . . . have you seen the Cooperativa de Pescadores at Caimanera?"

Julio Ortiz, a peasant of the sea, gave us unofficial welcome to the fishermen's cooperative of Guantanamo at Caimanera. He could not contain himself . . . there was so much to show us. He is tall and angular and lean, his freckled skin drawn tight on his fleshless frame. He is dark and dry bitten by salt like a net wetted and dried and wetted again, and there is only one tooth left in his head. He showed us the dock and the picturesque harbor of Guantanamo where pescadores were building boats with cabins equipped for the first time in their history with radios and refrigeration. "Ha ha ha," he laughed, "just today they called us by radio from Key Santa Cruz to tell us something is wrong with the motor of the boat and we sent out a mechanic!" This delighted him so that he laughed and slapped the young Indian student from Panama affectionately on the back. "What do you think of that, muchacho? And you know something else? We have schools for the children now even in the middle of the sea!"

Edelberto Quintano, the Cooperative's accountant who speaks English showed us the brand new warehouse with the refrigeration plant with a capacity of 140,000 lbs. "We have 185 members in this Cooperative. We have almost completed the warehouse and then we will build houses. We have built a school for the children. We have free medical care. We have our own stores, nine of them. Not all our members are fishing. Some are building boats. We have four 52 foot boats already out to sea. They can stay out 15 to 20 days without worrying about spoilage because they are refrigerated. We have eight 52 foot boats now in all and one 75 foot. We are also making 30 foot boats. Before the revolution the fishermen used to bring in 20 to 25 lbs. of fish on a haul. Sometimes nothing. If there was too much fish on the market they got nothing for their trouble or they accepted what they could get. And there was always danger of spoilage. Now these big boats bring in up to 500 lbs.

and no matter how much fish is brought, it is sold."

Julio Ortiz who was listening restlessly interrupted, punctuating his words with one long, lean finger. "Write this down," he cried, "Write down that the pescadores of Caimanera were dying of hunger. Write down that if we got sick they cured us in the cemetery. Write that we were men without dignity and without hope. Now write down that we have everything a man needs. We are even forming a PTA." He laughed, "Ha ha ha. Come. I will show you something . . ." He sprinted ahead of us, upstairs and down, into every corner of the new uncompleted building. "Blue prints?" he said in high good humor, "First we constructed it and then we said, 'Now send us the engineer to make the blue print.' " He moved so briskly we could hardly follow his spry old legs over the warehouse. But he would turn, grinning, and wait for us to catch up with him. Proudly as he showed us every corner of the plant, it was in the recreation room of the pescadores that the great meaning of the revolution overwhelmed him. "Look," he cried in Spanish, "Look what we have . . . we, the pescadores . . . biblioteca . . . radio . . . television . . . libros . . . musica . . . escuela. . . ." Then suddenly whirling around and grinning at us with the single tooth and his eyes twinkling, he stepped back, cocked his head on one side and asked in English, "Sotisfied?"

We were still laughing, Julio Ortiz more heartily than any of us, as he led us to meet the young administrator of the Cooperative, Justo Nunez Martinez, 31, who greeted us in his army uniform, his gun swinging at his side. "Welcome to a free country!" he cried and gripped our hands in a firm handshake. He used to work for the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo. "But when you ask me what I did before the revolution, the real answer is I fought for the revolution. You will find the rebel army even in the soup. We are of the same blood . . . workers . . . farmers . . . rebel army . . ."

"Ai, ai!" cried Julio Ortiz, and he threw a long arm around the young man's shoulder, slapping him lovingly. On the wall above them, over the time cards of the pescadores, was the slogan, "Treachery to the Poor is Treachery to Christ."

* * *

EVERYWHERE from Oriente to Pinar del Rio, from the Sierra Maestra to Matanzas, bursts of song from the heart of Cuba.

"We used to import turkeys for the holidays. Ha ha ha. Now we have enough to export. We used to import cattle. Now we export them to Venezuela."

"No, our chickens have open houses. Fidel does not want chickens

in jails. We do not believe in jails even for chickens. Do you know someday there will be no more jails here?"

"We are building a school for every martyr. Then our 20,000 will not really have died."

"That? No, that is not fruit. That is a field of cultivated roses. Cuba will have both . . . bread and roses . . ."

"We're construction workers, Señora. Before the revolution we built houses for others but we lived in the slums. We couldn't earn $100 in a whole year. Now I am constructing my own home, building it with my own savings. I don't want the government to pay for it. There are others who are poorer . . ."

"What is going on here is like a beam from a lighthouse that has no end."

"I wish you could see this two years from now. Then let them try to take it away from us. . . ."

"Carmelos de mello! Mandarinas! Naranjas!"

The crowing of a rooster on the bus from Manzanillo.

The brash clang of the Cathedral chimes of Santiago.

The feel of drying tobacco leaves, smooth as nylon.

The brothers Saiz were 13 and 15 when Batista's police assassinated them. They were rebels in the underground and the peasants of Pinar del Rio protected them. The police would question a peasant and if he did not reply, they would burn down his bohio, and if he made a move to defend his home, they shot him.

There is a statue in the town of San Juan de Martinez. The young faces of the brothers Saiz look out upon the dusty square. But the real monument to them is the Cooperativa Hermanos Saiz blooming in the midst of miles of green tobacco painstakingly protected with cheesecloth tents to preserve the precious leaves from chewing insects.

In the midst of the lushest countryside on the island with here and there a thatched bohio blending with the tropical landscape, and in the pastures of green pangola the graceful white garza birds following the cattle, we suddenly came upon a development as modern, as startlingly new as the suburbs of Los Angeles, but fashioned with more individuality and concern for beauty. For each house is different, each color scheme varied and the houses do not march up and down the streets shoulder to shoulder to save money for the big contractors.

Night falls and the bus rolls on through the darkening Sierras. People board it. A woman is traveling with a rooster in a basket. It crows as a bonfire lights up a brooding hill. The kerosene lamps are lighted in the dark bohios. People are standing. Chatting. Arguing. The bus somehow

has suddenly come alive. A man is singing over and over to a little tune of his own, "Viva la revolution, viva la revolution." And suddenly from the very rear of the bus a voice cries passionately, "They call this Communism! What do I care what they call it. For the first time I eat three meals a day. For the first time my children go to school. For the first time my wife has a doctor. For the first time I dare to speak my mind. Let them call it Communism. What do I care? I call it Libertad! Libertad!"

THIS is Fort Moncada. This is where the revolution was born on the 26th of July. Five thousand children go to school here. And this sunny day they are at recess. Girls are marching briskly to their own band. Boys are playing baseball where once Batista reviewed his troops. Under a spreading bush of pink weigelia a sign reads: "Careful. These gardens belong to the people."

Thirteen year old Enrico Rodriguez takes it upon himself to show us around. He is a manly boy and he speaks with the pride and authority of a man. "The revolution is the greatest fulfillment of Cuba." He takes us through the whole fort.

"Here is where the soldiers ate. Now it is our cafeteria. This was the soldiers' recreation room. Now it is a kindergarten. Here through this gate Fidel came in his car on the 26th of July. See these bullet holes? Here in the railing of this porch? That is where the soldiers fired at them. Here is where the police questioned the prisoners." The tall maestro writing on the blackboard does not turn around to look at us. He is writing in neat letters on the blackboard, "No voice is too weak to render tribute . . . Marti."

And Enrico passes quietly before the windowless cells. "And these were the torture chambers. They have scraped the blood from the floors. Soon they will knock out the walls and make windows and they will be medical rooms for the children."

We pause before the grey, eroded cells.

In Morro Castle in Santiago, whose ancient ramparts overlook the Caribbean is a battered statue of Martí above the dungeon where centuries of martyrs have scratched their lonely agonies on the walls. It bears the legend: "To sacrifice your life is to live."

Gary Gonzalez, the tall, lean passionate young member of Jovenes Rebeldes is standing at my side. His intense young face is thoughtful under his black beret and his hand is resting on his gun. Perhaps we are thinking the same thoughts as the frolicing children swarm over the fortress of Moncada and all around them the Sierra Maestra look down silently, lovingly, wrapped in sun and shadow.

I think of the young men who fought in those protecting mountains. And those who are buried under the coffee trees and the flowering plants and the languid fronds of the wild bananas. And I think that here, in this fort, in that very room where the maestro is writing on the blackboard, "No voice is too weak to render tribute" sat Haydee Santamaria on the 26th of July. And the torturer came and pulling on a long white glove said, "Speak or I will give you your brother's left eye." And she heard the screams of Abel Santamaria and did not speak. And he came out with blood to the wrist of his white glove and said, "Speak or I will give you his other eye." And she said, "If my brother did not speak when you took his left eye, he would not have me speak out of fear that you might take his right." And the torturer said, "Very well then, I will take your fiance's manhood." And she heard the screams of Boris Santa Caloma and the torturer came with blood to his elbow and said, "Your fiance is no longer a man."

And I thought of Abel Santamaria and Boris Santa Caloma and all of the men and women down all the bloody centuries who did not speak so children one day would frolic in the forts of tyrants.

I turned to Gary Gonzalez and said this aloud and Gary did not answer. Then he said tersely, "Yes, they gave their lives so we could live, and that's why we're ready to die to defend what they gave us."

THERE is a legend among the fishermen of Manzanillo that if you eat off the flesh of the lizeta fish, you will come back. We have eaten the lizeta and we will come back again some day to Manzanillo.

Adios, Cuba. Territorio libre de America. Or let it be "hasta luego" to Habana and Oriente and Pinar del Rio and the Sierra Maestra. We belong to the crowded subways of Manhattan, to Detroit and Peoria, to the Golden Gate and the hot streets of Chicago. In the lush caballerias of cane and tobacco we yearn for the rustle of Iowa wheat. Ours is the bleak majesty of the Rocky Mountains. "Remember us!" you said as you waved farewell to us in Aquacate, "you have the free soil of Cuba on your shoes!"

Venceremos, Gary Gonzales! Venceremos Julio Ortiz, Elodia Barrios, Loreto Mainelo, Enrico Rodriguez! Venceremos Lumumba and all the betrayed humildes of this earth. We will remember you when we return to wrestle with the talons of the Great Colossus. We will remember you, Cuba. You will sing in our blood.

MUSIC, DANCE, AND DRAMA: THE NATIONAL THEATER

HAROLD SPENCER

THE National Theatre of Cuba was born without money, without a theatre, even without official sanction, only four months after Batista was overthrown. It arrived prematurely because a group of young cultural workers were in a hurry to use the new freedom that the revolution gave them. Under Batista they had been trying to produce a culture that would be based on the traditions of their country, and this ambition conflicted with those who wanted nothing more than the night club culture imported from Broadway, or in more serious moments, the Western classical culture that was just as far removed from the roots of Cuban life.

It would be wrong, of course, to say that this un-Cuban attitude toward Culture in Cuba was a policy initiated during the last Batista era. For the past 60 years, since American business became the dominant force in Cuba, it was a policy of each of the governments in power to be at best unfriendly, or at worst, downright hostile to any current of thought that might stimulate the development of national pride. What was distinctive in 1959 was the emergence of a government based on exactly opposite views, and the existence of this group of revolutionary cultural workers who were itching to put their views into life.

One of the rebellious cultural workers, Senorita Isabela Monal, a doctor of pedagogy just two years out of college, was a member of the executive committee of the July 26 Movement (which led the revolution) in Havana. In her official position she plugged for a national theatre just as soon as the new government was established. Others on the

committee, while sympathetic to the project, nevertheless felt that the budget could not be strained for such an expense so early in the revolution. Miss Monal and the group of impatient artists decided to plunge ahead anyhow.

And so it happened that on May 1959 there was launched in Havana a National Cultural Festival. Fully appreciating the financial problems that faced their new government, the Festival sponsors didn't ask for any appropriation. With no money for a theatre, they settled for an auditorium offered to them in the building of the National Federation of Trade Unions (CTC).

Most of the theatre patrons who had learned to adjust their cultural lives to the pattern they had accepted under Batista, did not come to the Festival, and their absence doomed it to poor attendance. In these early days of the revolution a new audience had not yet been built for a formal cultural event, especially one not advertised and held in an out-of-the way CTC building.

The old theatre goers could have explained that they stayed away from the Festival because the program was a strange one that they were not accustomed to. For instance, there was choral singing by Cuban peasants, and folk-dancing by Cuban Negroes. They were non-professionals who could sing and dance in their neighborhoods for the pleasure of the simple people who lived there—but who had never been considered fit to perform in places like the George Raft nightclub.

The music of professional standing at this Festival would be just as strange to the old concert-goers. They were accustomed to an orchestra led by Erik Klieber, a first-rate musician who just never included a Cuban composer in his repertoire. And here there was chamber music by composers such as Juan Blanco, Serafin Pro, Angeliers Leon. Not only were they Cubans, but their work had never stood the test of public approval. In fact, some of them as recently as four months ago (when Batista was still in power) were regarded as subversive, and they had no standing in the world of art.

At this Festival they could expect to see drama by Cubans . . . such a playwright as Fermin Borges. But old Cuba knew only plays that were imported, usually from Spain or Mexico.

So the old theatre patrons decided this Festival did not deserve their support.

In this period of Cuban history, however, new people were making the decisions. In their judgment the poor attendance at the Festival was no measure of its value. They were impressed with this new turn in presenting culture that mirrored Cuban life and that directed its appeal

to "people," in the sense that Fidel Castro uses the word. "When we speak of people, we do not mean the well-to-do conservative segments of the nation always ready to reap some advantage from any regime of oppression . . . we mean the unredeemed masses . . . the group with ancestral longings for justice . . . the group that desires great and wise changes in all order of things. . . ."

Among those so impressed was the new Ministry of Education. And in another two months the government appropriated $197,000 to continue the struggle for a Cuban culture that was undertaken by the Festival sponsors. Isabel Monal became the director of the National Theatre of Cuba.

There was a theatre building in Havana's Plaza Civica that had been under construction for the past ten years. It was one of those projects that served as a source of graft for Batista's political family. When the new government made it the seat of the National Theatre and Miss Monal moved in with her staff, nothing inside the building was finished except some closets. When the doors to them were opened out tumbled bundles of bills on which the old grafters had collected payment—bills for music and drama and dance performances that were never performed; for costumes and stage sets and equipment never contracted for; for brick and cement never meant to be delivered.

The unfinished building was somehow placed into working order with seats provided from Batista's private theatre, and the first performance was given on February, 1960. Despite the unfinished condition of the building, there was no penny pinching when it came to expenses for turning out productions. The National Theatre has a fully staffed costume department, stage hands, carpenters, a lighting crew. There is a full orchestra of 70 members, a chorus of 50, a modern dance group of 30, a group of over 50 devoted to folklore, a drama group of around 30. The personnel, including directors, runs to some 300. Affairs are given without any regard for financial profit. Entire emphasis is on spreading culture to the people, especially to those who have perhaps never before been inside a theatre. Admission to all functions in Havana is 25 cents. When a National Theatre group travels to other parts of Cuba to give a performance, there is apt to be no charge at all, particularly in rural areas.

With all departments of the National Theatre headed by artists who have just been released from frustration, and with an enviable treasure of equipment at their disposal, what can we anticipate for the future?

If we base our estimate on the record of the ten months they have already been operating, we can certainly forecast that the quantity of

their production will be tremendous. During this time the Dance Department has choreographed and produced nine new major works and has given 27 performances; the Drama Department has put on five plays and performed 146 times; the folk division has performed 29 times; the chorus has learned half a dozen new works; the orchestra has learned the scores to all the dances and choral pieces and has in addition given 50 performances.

What about the quality of the work? In this country the right to answer this question is not reserved to the "expert" or professional critic. The leaders of the cultural movement publicly state what they are trying to accomplish, and they encourage everybody to measure the results against the promises. There are six daily papers in Havana, all limited to 16 pages, and in any day there is likely to be more art criticism in any one of them than appears in the New York Times. The cultural output here is as much a matter of public discussion as sugar production.

In the program issued for the First National Festival, the public is given a criterion by which to judge art production, in these words: "The culture of a people is one unity. We do not subscribe to the notion of a superior or inferior culture. So guided, we have programmed this First Festival of National Art of Liberty. We believe we have included what is best in Cuban art. From the folklore to other more artistic production is expressed all the passion, the life, the grief and the heroic struggle of our people.

"This Festival is a revolutionary effort to tap the liberated emotions which today are stirring Cuba. It is an effort to stimulate the heroic labors initiated by our artists to create a National art. And it is, finally, an expression of respect and faith of this movement for the valor and talent of our people."

Angeliers Leon, Director of the folklore division of the National Theatre, has for many years, with the collaboration of his wife, been making a study of the music and dances that have survived here, and that had remained exclusively in the possession of the Negroes of Cuba. Until the revolution, he didn't know whether his research would ever extend beyond his desk. The people who "counted"—those who were in a position to make available the means for exhibiting and publicizing his findings, were for the most part, antagonistic to what he was doing. In their eyes anything Cuban was of no importance. And as for Afro-Cuban culture, they considered it barbaric and immoral. For the whole duration of the Batista era, Mr. Leon says he was able to get permission no more than a dozen times to exhibit publicly, and always in the face of bitter opposition. Even the University of Havana, which might be ex-

pected to have at least an academic interest, was as intolerant as the rest.

Mr. Leon's interest in Afro-Cuban culture brought him frequent visits from BRAC (Bureau to Repress Communist Activities). Once he applied to the American Embassy here in Havana for a visa to Puerto Rico where he had been invited to lecture and he was confronted with an FBI record of his "subversive" activity. His American inquisitor was most interested in Mr. Leon's membership in Nuestro Tiempo, an organization devoted to exploring the roots of Cuban culture. It took the intervention of Senator Wayne Morse to get the visa, but on condition that enroute, at the stop-over in Florida, he must not go beyond the boundaries of the airport.

Now that Mr. Leon is free to carry on, with money from the government to pay himself and his performers, with theatres available, and with a press to publicize his work, he has brought to millions of Cubans an appreciation of Afro-Cuban music and dance, and of the people who perform it. But this absorption does not blind him to other aspects of expression that make up the "one unity" of culture.

Ramiro Guerra was one of the organizers of that early National Festival. But his choreography was not represented on the program because he had no group of dancers ready to perform his work. Under the Batista terror, the best he could do was to collect a few dancers on a temporary basis. Occasionally they would schedule a recital, but it had to be given in some out-of-the-way hall, in the hope of escaping the eyes of the police. There was an underground atmosphere about it. Audiences were afraid to come. The performance might be postponed for an indefinite future date. It was impossible to build a group under such conditions.

His sudden freedom from harassment undoubtedly accounts for the speed with which he now choreographs, expressing through his composition thoughts that were forbidden under Batista. One very popular work, El Milagro de Anaquille, expresses the resistance to a gum-chewing Hollywood film group that would make a mockery of their presentation of Cuban life. Another of his compositions that brings the house down is built on ritual brought over by the Yoruba tribe from Africa to Cuba hundreds of years ago. Anyone who has seen Cuban Negroes here dancing on their neighborhood streets would understand its popularity. There is the same off-beat movement of the head and shoulders and hips—the same practice of one dancer taking over with the rest of the group giving him support, much as an orchestra in a concerto gives support to the soloist. For this dance, Mr. Leon's unprofessional folklore group accompanies with original chanting and percussion. But with all the delight the audience feels through recognizing what is familiar, there is a heightened enjoyment that comes with a realization that somewhere something has been

added. Mr. Guerra's manipulation of this folk material can be compared to what Moiseyev does with his Russian folk material.

At most of the concerts given by the Music Department of the National Theatre, only a very minor part of the program is given over to works by Cuban composers, and sometimes none at all. Programs lean heavily on classical composers and those moderns who write in the classical tradition. Most of this music is familiar only to the old concert goers, most of whom wouldn't be caught dead at a National Theatre function. So the question might be asked: Is the Music Department less zealous than the Dance and Folklore Department in advancing Cuban culture?

The answer to this question was given quite simply by Dr. Monal: "We have to give our artists a chance to perform, and for the time being there are no musical scores in Cuba for that ensemble."

As in music, so in drama there is a shortage of Cuban material, and if actors are to be kept busy, it becomes necessary to use plays from other countries. In the meantime there is the same search for Cuban works, and whatever is written is certain to get a showing.

There is a play running now—The Philanthropist—by a cuban playwright, De Verfilio Pinera. It is about a millionaire who destroys the personality of people who come to him for help. He debases two of his victims so that they turn into dogs, and the borderline between symbolism and realism in this weird situation (which makes a fascinating problem in direction) could raise doubts about the survival of the human race. But a hero emerges, and leads them all into revolt. The play ends in a thrilling mad scene that has the millionaire himself crawling on his knees, a barking maniac trembling before the same ones he had been oppressing.

On Broadway the critics would surely call The Philanthropist overly melodramatic. But here, the people are exhuming bodies of the same kind of heroes they see in the drama (20,000 of them were murdered by Batista) and are at this very moment giving them funerals they were denied during the terror. For the mourners there can hardly be exaggeration in exposing the villainy of the tryants, nor in describing the glory of those who revolted against them. Here again is a fulfillment of the promise of the new cultural movement—to express "respect and faith of this movement for the valor and talent of our people."

Aside from a group of people here who have their roots so deep in the past that they would be hostile to anything that the new Cuba undertakes, there are others who welcomed the revolution and yet see no hope for a cultural movement that is so methodically geared to satisfy

the taste of the masses. For instance, painters here were recently asked to submit their work for a government exhibit. They cooperated gladly and expectantly. Then the government sponsors learned that most of the paintings being submitted were abstracts, and they abruptly cancelled the exhibit. Soon thereafter they announced that instead there would be an exhibit of revolutionary engravings.

The disappointed artists see a double threat in this policy: first, that if the artist must create only what the masses now want or need, there will be death for that experimentation that is needed to nourish growth of art, and second, that the government's hurry to create Cuban art will tend to exalt what fits that nationalist prescription even when it's mediocre or poor.

The director of the National Theatre does not share this fear. She said, when asked to comment, that the government will give priority to art that people can enjoy and that will stimulate them to participate in the creative process, but that there should be room for all kinds of artists, including those whose work does not now have popular appeal. It is a fact that a few months ago the government sponsored a travelling exhibit through South America of Cuban painting and that more than half of them were abstracts.

There are pessimists here (they would rather be called realists) who ask: How much longer can this poverty-stricken little island continue to use its pesos to subsidize dancing and music and drama, especially when the government expects to fulfill its promise to provide better food and homes for the millions who now live in bohios in the country and one-room shacks in the city, and whose diet is mainly beans and rice?

The leaders of the new Cuba answer that an economy that is planned and free from graft can provide both cultural and economic needs. And they show you that already thousands of new homes have been constructed and scores of new food products are being grown and put on the market, even while the cultural output is rising.

In evaluating Cuba's ambition to win stature in the cultural world, it would be easy to line up dozens or more items on the optimist's credit side of the ledger, and just as easy to balance each item with one on the pessimist's side. But in Cuba today the cultural output is advancing too rapidly to be measured by such conventional methods of bookkeeping. Take, for instance, the school-city in Oriente Province. There, 20,000 boys and girls who under the old government would have remained illiterate for the rest of their lives are being enrolled in this huge boarding school, equipped with a theatre and every other cultural advantage, where they will study everything from running a tractor to writing a

poem. Of course no one knows exactly what this will lead to, yet it is certain that something will be added to change Cuban culture as these students return to their farms with the new appreciation of values. But can bookkeepers measure that change now?

Cuba is not yet rich enough to set up school-cities in all the provinces. Do you think, then, that for the time being the government will be resigned to accepting an inferior cultural status for these other areas, just as we in the United States are expected to agree that Mississippi is too poor to overcome her cultural backwardness? Revolutionary Cuba is not bound by such static bookkeeping. And so the National Theatre sends cultural missionaries into the backward areas, to organize groups there for the study of the arts. They call it decentralization of culture, and it means that instead of confining the arts exclusively to Havana, as the American tourists had it in the past, the families of campesinos will have a chance to participate in the best cultural activity the country has to offer.

Any person who visits Cuba (when relations improve) must not be surprised by what he sees when he aproaches the National Theatre. There is scaffolding, piles of lumber, huge cement slabs waiting to be put into position, plants in tin cans under the care of the gardener, staircase still without railings, sewer pipes in open trenches, air-conditioning vents not yet covered, exposed wiring. There is no box office. A young girl is seated at a table under the open skies selling tickets. It has the same informality as one of those shows the children used to put on in the cellar for the relatives. Inside, as you sit down, you notice that the wall above the stage has open gaps where there should be windows, which makes for bad acoustics. But the show goes on.

A note on the program says that the performance is "pre-inaugural." This is like an announcement that what you are witnessing now is only a premature performance, and at the same time like a promise of what is in the making for you when the National Theatre is all finished and the real inaugural comes.

THE YEAR OF EDUCATION

ANGELA ALEXANDER

Nuez

PAST the windows of our bus flash colorful signs calling upon the Cubans to register illiterates in neighborhood centers, to teach them to read and write, to donate pencils and notebooks for them. This is Cuba, 1961. The Year of Education has replaced the Year of the Agrarian Reform and is bringing about a change, as basic as any other, in the life of the people.

Already (during 1960), three thousand volunteer teachers have been trained in encampments in the high Sierra Maestra of Oriente Province. There in the mountains, these volunteers were given courses in the fundamentals of education, reading and writing, arithmetic, languages, physical education, dietetics, social and natural sciences, agriculture, and revolutionary orientation. Besides this academic training, the young teachers were taught the principal features, geographical and agri-

cultural, of the zone in which they would teach, the conservation of land and water, the superstitions of the peasant and how to neutralize them, the care of children and the sick. Military training and experience in building homes, schools, and recreation centers rounded out this novel program for the instruction of teachers-to-be, who were then sent to live and work with the peasant families.

These three thousand are, however, but the forefront of an army of 500,000 volunteer "alphabetizers," of whom 100,000 will live and teach in rural and mountain regions. Two million illiterates remain in Cuba; by the end of the year, there is not to be one. The campaign has taken Cuba by storm. Everywhere there are signs and posters illustrating the "alphabetization" program. The newspapers daily carry reports of the number of illiterates and volunteer teachers in various areas. A map in Hoy (newspaper of the Cuban Communists) on February 14 showed in Santa Clara, scene of that last decisive battle of the Revolution, 7,595 illiterates and 3,350 alphabetizers. The 21st of February found the Municipality of Havana with 17,050 illiterates and 22,000 alphabetizers!

THE CAMPAIGN of alphabetization is now in its first stage—that of eradicating illiteracy in the cities. In May the second and major stage will begin. Imagine an army of 100,000 youngsters, most of them between 13 and 17 years of age, living in the homes of the poorest and humblest people of the country, eating with them, working side by side with them in the fields, living exactly as members of the family except for two hours of the day when they become teachers!

One bleak day towards the end of January, the body of Conrado Benitez, an eighteen year old Negro boy, in the words of Fidel Castro, "a humble boy of the people," was found hanging from a tree in the Escambray Mountains. He was a volunteer teacher, therefore, to the counter-revolutionaries who murdered him, he was a communist. The three "communist" texts he carried under his arm—a grammar book, a physiology book, and an arithemetic book—have become famous in Cuba today, fit subjects for poetry and art. And on Saturday, January 28, birthday of Jose Marti, Cuba's national hero, in a speech inaugurating the opening of a School City in a former army bastion, Fidel Castro announced the formation of the Conrado Benitez Brigade of 100,000 young people to teach in the home of every untutored peasant of the countryside and mountains. Fit homage to the Martyr Teacher of the Year of Education!

In May all the public secondary schools will close, and the students

will become teachers. However, they will need their parents' permission in order to register, and no pressure will be exerted if the parents refuse. However, laughed our informant, the schools will be closed for seven months, and what parent wants his children underfoot for all that time? Anyone refusing to send his child would be foolish and unthinking, he added, for the youngster would learn more in his half-year in the mountains than he might otherwise learn in his whole life. For his classroom will be, in Fidel's words, a place "where instead of a mattress we have a hammock to sleep in, where instead of electric lights we have candles; where there are no movies, no parks, no candy shops, no ice cream."

Applications are being sent to every school in the island, and the students will all register at the same time. But already the offices of the Municipal Council of Education in Havana are being besieged by youngsters who keep demanding to know when they can register. Studies indicate that there will actually be more than 100,000 students participating (out of a school population, public and private, of 160,000 of the appropriate age). In fact, pilot brigades of several hundred young people have already been formed by the Young Rebels, the organization of young workers and students.

The students have been told that they must prepare themselves in order to teach in the mountains, and they seem to be breaking their necks to be the best in their classes. They are not being encouraged to teach under the general program now, but to wait until May. Special classes are being given in the public schools in the methods of teaching, and in addition, they will receive fifteen days training just before being sent out. Private school students for the most part will have to wait until then to receive any formal training. Classes on how to use the manual for alphabetizers are given on television, and although they are for the population in general, they are given outside of school hours and are very specifically directed at the students.

The youngsters are to be sent to all parts of the island. Right now a census is underway to determine just which families and cooperatives need teachers. In the home of every illiterate, whether in a countryside shack, on a cooperative, or in the mountains, will be a student teacher. The farmers of Cuba are a warm and affectionate people. Two days under the campesino's (peasant's) roof, and the student will be a member of the family, his teaching effectiveness greatly enhanced. Once a week, students will meet with a technical adviser to report on their progress and receive instructions. They will not return to school until December, and they will then study throughout the year without a vacation. In

other words, they are giving up their vacation in order to teach the peasants.

In August the third stage of the program will take place when the progress of the entire program is checked. Any remaining spots of illiteracy will then be cleaned-up.

IN THE CITIES and towns, where the main effort is being centered at present, thousands of volunteers are either teaching or about to start teaching. Centers for the collection of notebooks and pencils have been set up all over Havana. Every day absolute strangers come into the offices of the Municipal Council of Education with donations of these vital materials Almost all of them are sent to the country, for the illiterate in the city are working for the most part and can afford to buy them, and if they cannot, their teachers or neighborhood councils will supply them.

The volunteer teacher, who is a worker, a housewife, a student, even a fifth or sixth grader, a member of practically any stratum of life, does not teach more than three illiterates, two hours a day, five days a week. He is under the direction of a professional teacher, termed a technical adviser, who directs a number of volunteers. Often he will teach illiterates as well, and is allowed to teach up to ten. As a matter of fact, thousands of volunteers have a sufficiently high educational level that, with an intensive training course of six months, they may achieve professional teaching status.

There are about 38,000 professional teachers in Cuba today, from the first grade through the university. The exact number of teachers participating in the program will not be known for several months; probably only about one-third of them are taking part now. However, a big campaign is being conducted to win over the teachers as a whole. They are being worked with both in small groups and in general assemblies which are being held for teachers all over the island. The problem is that a great many teachers come from a highly negative background. They were city people completely lacking an awareness of the countryside and its problems. Many of them took salaries without working. There are even cases of teachers going to the United States and collecting their salaries for years while paying someone else a minimal amount to teach in their places. Despite this, and despite the fact that professionals as a whole have not yet really benefited from the Revolution and have therefore been less enthusiastic than the workers and peasants, it is felt that within a few months, at least 80% of the teachers will be taking part. But one thing to be emphasized and re-

emphasized is that "alphabetization" is not a professional program but a POPULAR CAMPAIGN. With or without the professionals, the illiterates will be taught!

At the end of this term, a radical change will take place in the normal schools of Cuba. They will be closed and then re-opened in the country. Traditionally the peasant has been the neglected man of Cuba, looked down on by worker and professional alike. The state of his neglect can be estimated by the fact that 80% of the present day illiterates live in rural areas. In this basically agricultural nation, it is important that a teacher know that there IS a country, that he have a little of the farmer in him, that he be willing to teach in the country. For these reasons, all teachers will be trained in the country from now on. Before, said our informant, they were taught how to be teachers—now they will be taught how to be Cubans!

THE PROGRAM of the Year of Education is not to end with the eradication of illiteracy. The educational level of the people is to be raised yet higher and higher. The aim in the next two years following the Year of Alphabetization will be to bring everyone in Cuba to the level of a sixth grade education. Then technological schooling will be available to those wanting it.

The schools emptied in May by the students who go in the Conrado Benitez Brigades will be filled by adults who have just learned to read and write and are continuing their education. A consolidation of Cuban industry is taking place now, and there has been a recent argeement to build "factory schools" for those who have already learned to read and write. By December, when the students return, the factory schools will be ready. In addition, the cooperatives are building schools for the advanced education of the campesino, who will already have been taught the fundamentals in his own home.

Technology is the pressing need now. The workers are being taught to be the administrators of the existing industries and of the new ones. Many of these will be manned, and even run, by people who are now illiterate. Technological schools are being established at a great rate; it is planned to have at least one Technological Institute in each province. Before the Revolution there were 2,000 students in technological schools. Now there are 6,260.

I visited the National School of the Hotel and Tourist Industry, which could probably be taken as a prototype for the factory schools. It is basically for the gastronomical workers and those associated in any way with hotels, cafeterias, and restaurants. Part of the course is

academic and consists of Spanish, foreign languages such as English and French, mathematics, general culture, applied psychology, geography, history, and revolutionary orientation. All the workers take this academic course in common; then they separate into workshops in the trade in which they are engaged. Professional teachers teach the academic portion, and workers with much experience teach the practical part. Everything is completely free, of course, and there are more than 200 students, many of them administrators-to-be, attending in the morning, evening, or night (the school remains open until 11 P.M.).

In addition to those courses and courses given for tourist guides (guides, incidentally, not only for foreigners, but for Cubans who are being encouraged to visit all parts of the island for themselves), thirty illiterates from the neighborhood are also being taught. There are signs all over the area urging the registration of anyone who cannot read and write. There are also at least two other schools for illiterates in the immediate neighborhood, one in a hotel and one in an apartment house.

The education campaign has caught the people of the island in its sweep. Here is how one family, typical of many, is making its contribution. There are four sisters and one brother. Three of them participated in the census of illiterates which was taken in Havana. One girl and the boy went from door to door on one square block in their own neighborhood and encountered no illiterates. However, their sister went into Old Havana, into an area of furnished rooms and impoverished families. There, on just two sides of one square block, she found fifteen people who were completely illiterate and many others who knew how to read and write just a little.

The three have also registered as volunteer teachers. This, for one of them, involves working all day, studying education at night, and teaching two hours a day in between. This is her last year of school; her next step will be to teach in the mountains for six months as part of her thesis.

ANOTHER sister is teaching mathematics to some of the four hundred men and women who are being trained to administer the new industries under INRA (the National Institute of the Agrarian Reform). She recently came back from Oriente where she taught as a volunteer for one year, living in the house of a campesino thirty miles from the nearest town. Still another sister, although she would like to teach, cannot because she works for the government and this often involves staying at work until late in the night. The brother, the youngest, is in the Young Rebels and is waiting to be called to teach in the mountains.

Several Sundays ago I had gone with some friends and three of the girls and their father to the National Printing House, where we folded printed pages destined for *Venceremos.** Several hundred people in the highest of spirits were there, loudly thumping the tables whenever work lagged. They were all either employees of the National Printing House or their family or friends, who were donating their Sundays to the important job of completing the manuals. That was the second Sunday of such work. For the first Sunday, notices had been placed in the newspapers, and so many people appeared that many had to be sent away without doing any work at all!

Alongside the people officially teaching under the direction of the neighborhood councils, it seems that many people have taken to teaching their friends and neighbors on their own. One young man, for instance, is using *Venceremos* in teaching four pupils, including two completely illiterate eighteen-year-olds from the country and one highly enthusiastic seventy-year-old. He is looking forward to supplying them with simple books on politics, and literature too, as soon as they have advanced enough. He attended a meeting of his local council to get instructions, but has been acting independently ever since. However, the vast majority of the volunteer teachers are teaching under the supervision of the technical advisers.

The call to teach has reached even into the ranks of the children. A friend told me about a small boy in her neighborhood who has determined to teach his eighty year old grandmother to read. The grandmother claims that she is too old to learn—but she has been convinced by the combined persistence of the boy and my friend, who keep telling her that Fidel promised before the world that there would not be an illiterate life in Cuba by the end of 1961, and that she must help Fidel keep his word.

THE YEAR of Education actually received its start when Fidel Castro announced in New York that illiteracy would be eradicated in one year. Do you know, I was asked, that UNESCO said that this was an impossibility, that Cuba would need at least ten years, that, after all, there were not even 40,000 teachers in Cuba?

No, not even 40,000. Just 500,000!

All over Havana this year hangs the picture of Jose Marti, who is, rather than Fidel, the hero of the Year of Education. Statesman, educator, poet, political and military theorist of the War of Independence, Marti's

* *Venceremos* (We Will Win), a paperback manual for students.

writings form the basis of much of what is happening in Cuba today. On the flyleaves of the books poured forth by the hundreds of thousands from the National Printing House, in newspaper advertisements, on posters at parades is proclaimed "Be educated in order to be Free"—J. Marti.

In addition to the alphabetization program, the general program of education is proceeding apace. In 1958, there were only 16,000 classrooms in all of Cuba, mainly in the urban areas. Now there are 40,000 rural classrooms alone. But who knows, shrugged my informant, it is hard to give exact figures because tomorrow there may be 5,000 classrooms more.

A number of "school cities" already dot the island, and more will be built in the near future. In the Sierra Maestra is the Camilo Cienfuegos School where 500 mountain children live and learn. In Santa Clara, on the site of a former army encampment, the school city of Abel Santamaria was just opened with a school population in the thousands.

On the outskirts of Havana, another enormous army camp has been converted into the City of Liberty with 5,000 students at present. There are 30 to 35 students in each classroom, and later the size is to be reduced to 20 to 25 or even less. No one goes hungry at the City of Liberty—8,000 free meals are served daily to the students and personnel. The encampment is not yet completed, as old buildings formerly belonging to army personnel are being converted into the colorful, cheerful buildings characterizing the finished portion. When the conversion has been completed, there will be a substantial increase in the number of students. Here also are the offices of the Ministry of Education and the National Council of Alphabetization, which latter, incidentally, is housed in the former home of Batista.

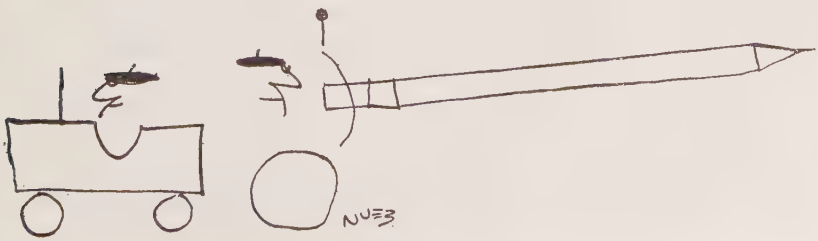
Most of the students at the City of Liberty are in the primary grades, with some facilities for secondary school students. These will be expanded, and there will probably even be technical schooling given there, with some students coming from abroad. There has been a growing student exchange program. Recently one hundred boys, mainly the sons of workers and peasants, went to the Soviet Union to study technology. In the near future, a group of boys not over 16 years of age are to be sent to Czechoslovakia and Poland, in addition to students already there. These boys will have several months of language training in Cuba first. Once abroad, they will perfect their knowledge of the language and learn technical processes which are in need in Cuba.

In five years, Cuba expects to have trained enough technicians to carry out her own industrialization program and to help other people of the world in addition. The countries of Latin America will not face two grave problems that have confronted Cuba—the distance and language barriers.

Spanish-speaking Cuba will be able to train technicians from Spanish-speaking Latin America and aid greatly in the development of true national industries.

THE GOVERNMENT confidently expects to find much hidden treasure among the illiterates of today—consider that 70% of them are under thirty years of age! But plans go far beyond developing in them an educational level merely reaching that necessary for industrialization. Recently I saw an advertisement in a newspaper calling for three thousand teachers of art, dancing, music, and dramatics to go to the cooperatives. The Department of Education sponsors dances, concerts, and plays for the "exorbitant" price of twenty-five cents. Every effort is being made to bring culture to the people—with such practical steps as opening the museum not during the day when people are working, but in the evening when they are free. Art exhibits take off from Havana and tour the country, making stops not only in the major cities and towns, but on the cooperatives also. We will be, said an official of the Urban Reform to me hopefully, one of the most educated and cultured people in the world.

Three hundred peasant girls from the Escambray Mountains living in the luxurious Havana Libre (formerly the Hilton) while they study—maids in one of the richest sections of Havana being taught to read at the local militia post, once the property owners' association—400 militiamen in one training camp alone trying to master *Venceremos*—a notice in the newspapers that prisoners learning to read and write in this year will have three months deducted from their sentence—two million pencils donated from the socialist countries—a department store window with three brooms dressed as carnival dancers sweeping away illiteracy—children reciting Marti to themselves as they stroll home from school—a building with the letters of the alphabet decorating the wall—a girl on the bus with her teaching manual under her arm—this is Cuba, 1961, the Year of Alphabetization.



A TALE FOR THE YEAR OF EDUCATION

J. R. GONZALEZ REGUERAL

SURE, I know this is "The Year of Education." Sure, I know why, too —this is the year when we'll put an end to illiteracy. But just the same, deep within me, 1961 is nothing but "The Year of Bufalo Bil." Write it like that, please, as we would in Spanish, with no double *"Efs"* and no double *"Els."* For you see, this Bufalo Bil I'm telling you about has nothing to do with that half real, half storybook character who is said to have hunted buffaloes for their tongues alone, because back in New York the big hotels were paying $25.00 apiece for buffalo tongues. He's not the guy that did his best to wipe away from the prairies those poor dumb beasts that somehow seem at times less beastly than the builders of that railway through the West. Bufalo Bil—the one who was my friend — was just a boy, 17 years old.

My Bufalo Bil was cheerful, keen and blond. He had an old shotgun tied together with bits of wire, and he was with Lieutenant Bermudez' group when I reached *La Piedra* climbing uphill towards *La Mesa* on my way to "the Che's place."

It was March in 1958. Already Raul Castro had crossed the Central Highway to open the Revolution's second front—"Frank Pais." Fidel was somewhere between *La Plata* and *Las Mercedes.* Che Guevara was manouevering around about *Minas del Frio,* harassing Sanchez Mosquera's men with his newly invented "mines." And I was climbing the Sierra Maestra on an assignment. I'm a reporter.

It was up to Lieutenant Bermudez and his little troup of fusileers to take me safely from *La Piedra* to the radio station. A "scout of the plains" had handed me over to them, and now they were slipping me through the loopholes in Batista's lines to the Che's headquarters in *La Mesa.* This was all night work; by dawn I was very near the heart of what then

was "Territorio Libre de Cuba"—liberated territory, rebel domain.

A ten-hour march still stretched ahead of us before we reached the fortifications at *Alto del Cornado,* where Captain Bello Acosta was in command. Indian-file in the middle of the haggard rebel column, I kept dragging myself on and on, holding somehow together through sheer will and the unspeakable fear of going to pieces before those gallant boys. I was sweating by the bucketful; I was panting; my lungs seemed about to rip with the effort of keeping pace with their long, quick easy stride. The trail was a nightmare.

Then they taught me my first lesson. We were approaching a few huts perched on a clearing in a sudden strip of almost-level ground. Clean-cut against the backdrop of the mountain jungle, the nearest one could be seen clearly, two pale longish blots of color looking down on us from the doorway. I say that it was then that Bufalo Bil taught me my first lesson. He was the one that spoke:

"Women ahead, boys, —button your shirts."

And the uncouth peasant sweating under the weight of arms and knapsacks did exactly the opposite of what the soldiers of any other army on campaign would have done: they soberly closed their shirts up to the very last button. Suddenly they seemed to crawl into themselves, bent below their long hair and longer, unkempt beards, eyes sternly to the ground.

The women reached out jars of cool water to us as we passed. "God go with you," they said. And I also trudged on without taking their water in spite of the fire that seemed to burn in the morning air. A shiver ran through me, I was that proud.

That was the first lesson I learned from the *barbudos.* A lesson in manners. Or should I say, a lesson in ethics?

Almost three years have gone by since then. And I begin to see how very different "We" were from those men—"We," the journalists back in Havana. "We" who were so sure we were the cream of the earth, and still were so mistaken in our ideas as to what a revolution was like. Three years—and I begin to see that those unshaven, long-haired, illiterate, earnest youngsters were busy at work on a real, honest-to-goodness Revolution. And that they definitely were not going to let anyone twist or thwart it or run away with it. And that "We" still have to climb many spiritual mountains if we are to make ourselves fit to march on ahead with them.

And I should know, because in that assignment of March 1958 to the Sierra Maestra one of those illiterate peasant soldiers was my guide. I never knew his name. But he was blond, trim and nimble. He had a long

moustache and a hat, and he grew a goatee on his chin. I called him "Bufalo Bil." His pals laughed and the nickname stayed put. We got along. But when I wanted to take his picture, he said no.

It appeared he took a dim view of "publicity." which of course surprised me. I didn't really know them yet, these men of 17 years who were tilling for us the soil where the seeds of the Revolution were to grow. And during a three minutes rest between marches, we talked.

"What'll you be, once the revolution is over?"

"Who, me? Now that's a silly question. I'll be what I am now, of course. A peasant."

Surely he hadn't quite got my meaning. (I was thinking along the same lines as "We" thought on those days.) Why it was only natural that every one of those rebels, once they won the war, should put forth his own "Personal ambitions." I spoke plainly:

"An army post? Police, maybe? Or a good paying job in the Ministry of Public Works, or Agriculture? Whatever it is, you'll have every right to it."

At that Bufalo Bil fixed on me the kind of stare I would have given a Martian stepping out of his flying saucer. A puny suspicion that after all things might not be the way "We" thought they were began to stir somewhere in the back of my brain. But I insisted:

"So what'll it be for you, when the war's won?"

"Me? Well, if you must know . . . I want to see if Fidel keeps a promise he made me once when I talked with him in *La Plata.*"

"What did Fidel promise you?"

"He promised that when we win the war everyone is going to learn to read and write. Because you see, I don't know how to read or write."

Bufalo Bil had just taught me a second lesson.

I remembered Bufalo Bil the first of January, 1959. It did me good to think that now at long last he would be putting away his rickety old shotgun held together with wire and picking up a primer. And silently I shouted a *"Gracias, Fidel"* very special and very, very much my own.

But during the first fortnight of January 1959 I learned that Bufalo Bil had died in one of the battles of the April offensive. And a damp cold dreariness swept over me, and I knew that without ever realizing it I had loved him deeply, this lost friend whose real name I never knew.

A year passed by and another was well on its way. And then one day it was announced, — Fidel announced it—, that 1961 was going to be "The Year of Education." And that this year we were going to fight the great fight against illiteracy.

And right then I decided that, so far as I was concerned, this would be "The Year of Bufalo Bil."

Bufalo Bil, who died in the month of April, under a rainstorm.

Bufalo Bil, who had to sign with a cross his admittance to Heaven.

THE NIGUAS OF THE NON-CONFORMIST

THIS is another story. And yet in a way it is the same. Bufalo Bil died. I go on living. The Year of Education begins today. And "We" have gotten around to doing something along that line to make Bufalo Bil happy. That promise Fidel made him is going to come true—it's got to—before we celebrate another First of January.

And it was the guy of whom I would least have expected it that began to pay our debt to Bufalo Bil. A non-conformist.

Now this does sound silly, doesn't it? But it's not. It's not silly at all. Bufalo Bil surely died an illiterate, and I'm terribly sorry. But this other friend of mine, this non-conformist I'm telling you about, will just as surely die (and may it be many many years from now) a full-fledged revolutionary, which wouldn't be so strange except for the fact that this gentleman used to be a full-fledged non-conformist. He wrote Literature with a capital and he was always looking for new sensuous experiences of a bizarre description. Mankind interested him very little, if at all, and he was perfectly capable of falling in love with the leather seat of a motorcycle. Now I'm not stringing words together to make a startling statement. I actually mean it. Carlitos—we'll call him Carlitos—once confessed to me, back in 1954, that he had managed to achieve voluptuous sensations by merely gazing on the leather seat of a motorcycle parked in front of his home in Vedado.

Can anyone imagine Carlitos going to the Sierra Maestra as a volunteer teacher? It's simply unbelievable. And yet that very night, even while Fidel's voice was still coming over the television, Carlitos answered his call and signed as Vounteer Teacher.

I laughed and laughed when they told me. Carlitos couldn't have "ripened" that much. Carlitos was a devotee of El Encanto's shirts and Mieres' ties. A non-conformist doesn't go to the *Sierra* just like that, unless of course he's out on the prowl for a new kind of sensation.

But Carlitos did go to the *Sierra,* and graduated in the Auditorium.

Nevertheless, I chose to stick to my doubts regarding Carlitos' vocation.

And the months went by.

Then the other night Fidel was speaking at the Workers' Palace. I

was there, taking the pictures for a newspaper story. Coming and going in the midst of sugar-cane cooperative members, sugar mill managers, teachers, rebel army veterans, young people and old timers, suddenly I heard someone calling, but in a nice way:

"Dago!"

Now whenever I hear "Dago" cried out in a nice way I turn around. It may be meant for me. So I turned around, but it wasn't meant for me. I didn't know anybody there, much less the blond bearded fellow who was hugging me tight, the way only a long unseen friend can.

"But don't you know me?"

I couldn't for the life of me guess who the gentleman might be.

"Well, now . . . honestly, I don't."

And I almost felt sorry for the stranger.

"So! You're joking, Dago."

I smiled—but not enough to imply an agreement to that statement. The whole thing was becoming embarassing.

"No. I'm not making fun of you. I'm just trying to be honest with you. I do beg your pardon, but the truth is I can't remember having ever met you before. Send me where you will, but I still don't remember you."

"I'm Carlitos."

Suddenly I recognized the features hiding behind that beard. The eyes were the same. But it was a man that stood before me. Broad shoulders, the strong build of a peasant. He hadn't grown taller, but there was a bigness in the way he moved—a manliness in his gestures. It was Carlitos, all right. But at the same time, to put into as few words as possible the fundamental change that had come over him, it was unbelievable that this new Carlitos had ever been capable of harboring a love for a motorcycle seat.

We talked about the months gone by without seeing each other. We exchanged ideas. We discussed plans. We made friends all over again, each happy at finding the other at the very forefront of the revolutionary struggle of today and tomorrow. It was nothing if not a miracle, but such of us as in times past had comprised the Pleiades of the "We" were beginning to be revolutionary—in Cuba as well as in the rest of the world. Could it be true?

I embraced him again, and asked about his health.

"Fine thanks. In fact, better than ever. Liver doesn't bother me any more. I sleep like a log. Only thing bothering me are the *niguas*."

*"Niguas?"**

* A tropical insect which burrows into the feet.

"Yeah—feet full of them. They get me up there, in *Minas,* and . . ."

"But man alive, it's not possible! Didn't they tell you to take along some shoes? Didn't you have even one pair of half-decent boots?"

"Yeah, I had boots. But I decided to try going barefoot for a while. Almost all the time, really, at the end."

That hero's image of Carlitos I had been so busy building in my mind began to fall apart. He wasn't what for a moment I had thought he was. He didn't have it in him, after all. He had gone up the Sierra to make himself a martyr. And *niguas* were providing him with the voluptuous feeling that once he had derived from the sight of a motorcycle seat.

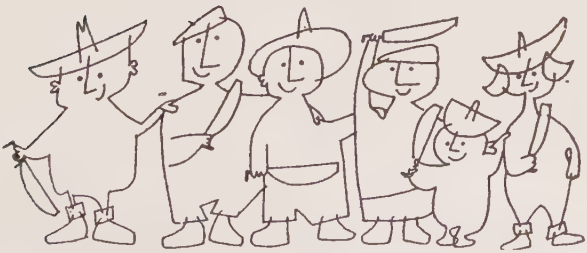
"But Carlitos, how could you?"

And then, sweet truthfulness peering from his calm blue eyes, he told me:

"When we got there, the children of the Sierra didn't have shoes. It was hard to get them to come to school when they saw us wearing our fine heavy boots. To get them to attend classes I had to go barefoot for almost a couple of months. Well, the children came to school, and I got *niguas* in my feet."

Carlitos had just taught me the final lesson in revolutionary lore. That is why I say that Bufalo Bil, who never knew Carlitos, must be learning to read and write in Heaven, with an immense blackboard made from a piece of night. And I am sure that a very short while ago he learned to write his first word:

"N-I-G-U-A."



LOOK HERE, JESUS MENENDEZ

RAFAEL RUBIERA

Look here, Jesus,*
your sugar cane at last,
how it has bloomed
during the battle.

Happy spirals
of free sugar.

Look at this knife,
sharper and more proud than ever,
how it cuts the cane
of Cuba.

And look, Jesus, at the light of dawn,
how it comes up.

It's the harvest of the people,
final owner of its sugar.

Look, Jesus,
at that old man full of wrinkles,
he who felt over his back
tongue of overseer and whip,

* Common surname in Latin America: pronounce: Hai-sus. Jesus Menendez was a sugar union leader and Popular Socialist Party (Communist) member who was assassinated during Machado's rule.

how young he feels
on his way to work
through his own tree lane
beneath the rays of moon and sunlight
both shining at once.

Look, Jesus,
at that train . . . listen to the music
of all those giant wagons
rolling on the rails.

It's the people's harvest.
Without protest.
Without arrogant bosses
and without blond rule.

Look, Jesus, at the towers of the mill,
tall by their very depth,
how they send through the air,
bound the world over,
the greetings
of the toiling man of Cuba.

Look, Jesus . . . and sleep.
Your brothers in war
are watching the claws
of filthy eagles:
they will never rend
this powerful joy.

Translated by *Alvaro Cardona-Hine*

JOSE MARTI TODAY

JESUS COLON

THE FAMILY that recently moved from one of the worst slums of Santiago de Cuba, was obviously happy with their OWN new house given to them by the Cuban Revolutionary government. The house was brightly painted. The family showed us around the spacious rooms. They pointed to the shiny chrome gadgets in the shower bath. They were delighted with all the furniture that came with the house—all made in Cuba too.

As we went out the kitchen door and around the well-kept lawn to the front of the house, I noticed a little placard nailed to a stick sunk in the grass. The placard read: "NO PISAR EN EL CEPED." (Do not walk on the grass.) And right underneath it said:

"ES LEY QUE DONDE FUE MAS CRUEL LA TIRANIA
SEA LUEGO MAS AMADA Y EFICAZ LA LIBERTAD."
Jose Martí

(It is a law that where tryanny was most cruel
let liberty be most loved and effective.)

As the bus kept eating up the miles of Cuban highways, we passed some workers brigades mending the roads. On their yellow painted wooden enclosure surrounding and protecting them from traffic, we could read the large words:

DANGER, MEN AT WORK.

Under the danger sign there were two lines from one of Martí's famous poems:

"Con los pobres de la tierra

Quiero yo mi suerte echar."
Martí
(With the poor of the earth
I would like to cast my lot.)

In another enclosure, under the big words:

DANGER, MEN AT WORK.

they had written:

"Esta revolución es de los humildes, por los humildes y para los humildes." Fidel

(This revolution is of the poor, by the poor and for the poor.)

The bus stopped in one of the many towns along the road. We went into one of the small cafes looking for something cool to drink. It was not unusual to overhear a conversation, with some one slightly raising his voice for all to listen. He would start with: "As Martí says . . ." And as the quote came out of the speaker's mouth, giving authority to what he had to say, we could not but be deeply impressed with the man referring to the inspirer, organizer and leader of the 1895 revolution, as if José Martí who was tragically killed at Dos Rios on May 19, 1895, had never died.

I heard repeated many times: As Martí SAYS . . . As Martí SAYS . . . As if Martí were walking alongside of Fidel today. As if Martí were looking at the republic about which he wrote and thought and died for, and which, at long last, is coming into being.

AS WE saw many manifestations of Martí everywhere in Cuba we came to realize how deeply José Martí is rooted in the minds and hearts of the Cuban people today. How much he meant to them. How much they regard Castro and the present revolution as the continuation, under new times and circumstances, of Martí and the inconclusive revolution of 1895.

Many Cubans who fought at the end of the 19th century believed the defeat of Spanish imperialism would end the struggle against all imperialism.

Martí was not of this belief.

As early as the Monetary Conference held in Washington in March, 1891, in which he participated, Martí sensed the increasing power of the trusts in the emerging American imperialism and their avaricious designs against Cuba and the rest of Latin America. Martí thought that the first step of the nascent imperialism in the United States would be to grab Cuba and the rest of the island nations of the Caribbean, then use them as a bridgehead by which to get hold of the rest of the Americas.

Thus, in writing to his friend Manuel Mercado, one day before he was killed, he wrote:

". . . my duty—since I understand it and have the courage to fulfill it—is to make Cuba independent, thus preventing the United States from expanding into the Antilles and the rest of the lands of our America."

As we read the history of Cuba from 1901 to January, 1959, and see how Washington and Wall Street dominated the economic, political and cultural life of the Cuban nation; and as the mercenaries, trained and equipped in Florida and Louisiana camps, are sent to invade Cuba, we can see how true and farseeing were Martí's words on the subject of present-day American imperialism.

We continued travelling throughout Cuba, passing by many large and small schools. City schools with many rooms. Along the roads and beside the highways, many rural schools. All of them without exception, with a statue or bust of Martí to greet you at the entrance. And with a proper inscription from Martí's many poems and prose writings like the following:

"Al venir a la tierra todo hombre tiene el derecho a que se le eduque; en pago él debe de contribuir a la educación de los demás."

Martí

(Each man has the right to be educated when he comes to this earth; in payment for which, he ought to contribute to the education of the rest.)

This quotation by Martí reminded us that 1961 is the "year of education" in Cuba—the year in which the Cuban revolutionary government has pledged to eradicate illiteracy throughout the nation.

The Revolutionary Government is bringing to the masses literature and culture which, under previous governments of the few, by the few and for the few were reserved only for the privileged and the aristocracy.

Following Martí's saying, everybody is helping—from the grammar school boys and girls to the militia and the professionals—to teach every Cuban citizen to read and write by the end of 1961.

BEFORE the Castro revolution in Cuba, the vital revolutionary meaning of José Martí was buried under pompous oratorical verbiage to cover up his real anti-imperialist and revolutionary meaning. Though there were isolated efforts to study and interpret Martí, there was not a government whose leaders recognized their debt to him—that tried in every one of its acts to implement Martí's principles by law and action.

In 1895 José Martí had to appeal to "los pobres de la tierra", the peasants, the workers, epecially the cigarmakers, as his main base for his revolution. Carlos Baliño, the highest figure of Cuban Marxist socialism at that time, closely cooperated with Martí and together with him signed

the principles and program of the Cuban Revolutionary Party when that political and organizational instrument for Cuban independence was launched at Key West, Florida, in 1892.

As Martí worked hand in hand with the socialist Carlos Baliño and all others working for the benefit of Cuba and its independence, regardless of their ideological leanings, so also Fidel Castro and his revolutionary government are working with the Popular Socialist Party, which is the Communist Party of Cuba whose members have proven to the whole Cuban nation, their dedication and all-out support for the present revolution and its great leader, Dr. Fidel Castro.

Carlos Baliño, the Marxist, Martí's friend and co-worker in the struggles of the 1890's, was also, with Julio Antonio Mella and others, the founder of the Communist Party of Cuba in 1925.

JOSE MARTI: Here is a man who has influenced the thinking of a continent, who is recognized by the leaders of the Castro revolutionary movement as their teacher and guide; a man who was instrumental in introducing Emerson and Whitman to the intellectuals and readers of Latin America and Spain; a man who lived in the United States for fourteen years—1881-1895—writing for the best papers and magazines of the time and agitating and organizing for the independence of Cuba; one of the great thinkers, poets and prose writers of the Spanish language; Martí, whose basic moral, political and social principles, brought up to date, form the basis of the historic Declaration of Havana; a man called the Apostle in all hispanic cultural circles and still . . . there is not a decent study or biography in English or even a short biographical sketch under his own name in the Encyclopedia Britannica!

The high political circles in Washington have always secretly despised the Latin American countries. The bourgeois intellectual circles here have also secretly—many times openly and ignorantly—despised the great men and the cultures of the Latin American nations. A mantilla, a guitar, the rumba and a pair of maracas is, for them, the compendium of Latin American culture. There are many prominent exceptions, but the exceptions, no matter how prominent, do not cross out the rule. Economic and political colonialism is always followed by an assumption by the oppressing power, of cultural and intellectual colonialism.

January 28, 1953, the centenary of Martí's birth, was observed with very small token celebrations that passed unnoticed in the Anglo-Saxon world. In contrast, however, The World Council For Peace honored Martí together with many other world figures who were also born in 1853. The climax of of these centenary celebrations was the cultural homage to

Martí at the Central House of Art Workers at Moscow. Many outstanding figures of science and the arts, including the Cuban Dr. Juan Marinello, participated (as did Blas Roca), with Ilya Ehrenburg presiding over the brilliant cultural evening.

Fidel Castro, the heir of José Martí is certainly throwing all colonial concepts and attitudes in history's ash can.

Castro, with present day Cuba, will not only be Martí's heir but will add new heights to Martí's fondest dreams for Cuba. Because today "los pobres de la tierra", with whom Martí would have liked to cast his lot, are the masters on one half of the earth. And they are backing Castro and Cuba to the hilt.

Nuez

ECONOMICS OF LIBERATION

MARK FLORES

DURING the first two years of the government of Fidel Castro consumption of the basic necessities of life by the Cuban people has increased markedly. These increases have been greatest among those classes that needed them most. Industrialization, though hardly yet begun, is now being planned on the basis of large credits from the socialist countries. Cuba now has gone a long way toward establishing a healthy and stable agrarian economy. It is about to enter the stage of developing an agrarian-industrial economy.

To understand these developments it is necessary to recall some facts about the Cuban economy before the triumph of the Rebel Army under Fidel Castro in January 1959. The dominating feature of the economy for decades had been its dependence on the export of sugar. The best Cuban lands had fallen into the hands of large American companies and a few wealthy Cubans. These owners used the land in the way that promised to yield the maximum profits to themselves over a period of years, without care for the Cuban peasants who also depended for their livelihood either on the land or on selling their labor to the big owners.

Cuban sugar was sweet in many ways to capitalists. The Cuban soil and climatic conditions produced a rich crop at small expense of labor. Once planted, sugar can be harvested year after year from the same cane. Like mowed grass it grows back after cutting; fields will yield harvests for twenty years with one sowing. But even more important from the point of view of the rich investor, crops do not have to be harvested every year. The cane can be left standing in years when the demand is low or the market poor from the seller's point of view. The cane will be even

richer in yield the following year, and the labor cost of harvesting it no greater. Thus the big owners, with sufficient capital to enable them to wait several years for a killing in a favorable market, fixed the size of the harvest in any given year to suit their own interest. World War II brought on a rapid increase of production. This was aimed at taking advantage of the extraordinary demand for sugar in the United States, which suspended the limitations on imports from Cuba. Also, war conditions had generated a high world market price. After the war this swollen supply exceeded demand, so the years prior to the Revolution were generally years of restricted harvests. These saved labor costs for the owners and intensified the misery of the Cuban laborer, who counted on what he earned during the two to four months of work at *zafra* time to carry him through the *tiempo muerto,* the dead time, that was the remainder of the year. Hundreds of thousands of these agricultural workers owned no land of their own. The development of the capitalist mode of sugar production gave Cuba two striking characteristics: wide and undulant seas of cane, unbroken even by a palm tree; and an agricultural proletariat with a very low and very insecure income. It is this class, together with the small peasants whose livelihood also depended on sugar harvests, that first gave Fidel Castro the help he needed; and these classes have received the major share of the first fruits of the Revolution.

WHILE the military struggle with the Batista army was still going on, the Rebel Army began agrarian reform by seizing land and livestock of the wealthy and distributing them outright to this proletariat and small peasantry on an individualist basis. Inability to increase production by working this land in small and isolated plots and the tendency of the new meat-starved owners to kill and eat their livestock, including dairy cattle, to satisfy their immediate hunger without thought for the future, taught the leaders of the Revolution the dangers in dividing up the land. Hence the Cuban Agrarian Reform Law, promulgated in May 1959, in general did not divide the land into small private holdings, but laid the basis for creating cooperatives and people's farms ("granjas del pueblo") from the great estates (the latifundia) nationalized by the Law. It is a mark of the respect and confidence of the agricultural proletariat for the Revolutionary leaders that no movements of spontaneous land seizure, such as occurred in Spain in the days of the Republic of 1931-36, erupted to challenge the authority of the new government and disorganize the plans for reform along cooperative lines.

The principal economic purpose of the Agrarian Reform Law was

to increase the productivity of the land and the people who live on it. This complimented the social purposes of creating steadier employment for agricultural laborers and bringing them together to live in new small towns with schools, social centers, medical care, more convenient political orientation and more effective military organization as a people's militia against the threat of counter-revolution.

Six hundred cooperatives were created out of land and laborers of the great sugar plantations. Credits, machinery, seed, technical help, fumigants against plant diseases, livestock such as cows, pigs and chickens, were made available by a government that was assuming command of the nationalized resources of the country. The members of these cooperatives were urged and helped to help themselves by diversifying their production, by making use of idle land and idle time, by producing more than sugar on the land assigned. Credits were earmarked to induce each group to meet its own food needs and to improve its own level of consumption by planting beans, bananas, oranges, lemons, "viandas" (potato-like foods that are a staple in the Cuban diet), rice, peanuts, tomatoes, lettuce, onions, carrots, and other garden vegetables. Also, they received loans to purchase their small herds of cattle for milk and beef needs; enough pigs for pork, bacon and lard; and their own supply of chickens. INRA (the National Institute of Agrarian Reform) appointed the administrator of each cooperative, maintained a close surveillance of progress, allocated machinery, gave technical help and guidance and bought all excess produce at prices that were fair to the cooperative. Throughout the countryside people's general stores have been established, where the other necessities of life are sold by INRA at moderate prices.

So far the small amount of land needed to commence this auxiliary cultivation of products for local consumption has been taken from lands not formerly in use, so that the amount of acreage in sugar has not yet been diminished. Following the harvest now going on, the first "people's harvest," in which every last stalk of cane is to be cut, some of the sugar lands will undoubtedly be plowed up and converted to other uses. At the same time the cultivation of the remaining sugar acreage is to be improved with more use of fertilizer and better soil care, so that each cooperative is expected to continue to produce at least the same amount of sugar as in the past from less land, more work, more science and more materials. This will release acreage for further diversification far beyond the domestic needs of the cooperatives, allowing them to go into serious production of various commodities for the national market and export without reducing sugar production. This is the Re-

volution's answer, already partially implemented, to the curse of monoculture in the countryside.

THE cooperative system tends to create a privileged group, the co-op members. They are limited to the number of people that the land can support on a year-around basis. They hire extra seasonal labor as necessary. At the end of the year they distribute 20% of the profit among themselves. The remaining 80% goes into investment in housing for cooperative members. Cooperatives have tended to compete for profit; some are rich, some poor. To correct these inequities the cooperative form of organization is gradually being replaced by "people's farms." On these everyone works for a salary paid by INRA, which in effect owns the farm and fits its production into the national plan.

All over the Island a campaign has been carried out to put more land into production. This involves clearing the maribu with tractors and graders; draining swamps, as in Cienaga de Zapata; building dams and irrigation canals for putting idle land into rice production.

Small private land owners are still an important sector in the economy. Approximately 50% of sugar cane land and 30% of cattle land remain in private hands. These farmers have been beneficiaries of kinds of aid that not only improve their income but operate to increase their production. Formerly, the majority of them were not able to work their land to its full potential, because banks would not take the risk of giving them the credit needed for soil preparation, seed and fertilizer; and because they had no access to modern machinery. This peasant class scratched out a meager existence with primitive techniques, some as owners of small plots, others as tenants and share croppers. Agrarian Reform converted all of this class into owners outright with no further obligation to pay rent. These small private cultivators have now been grouped into associations which administer INRA credits for getting the crop planted and cultivated with maximum production. They have the use of modern machinery, many of them for the first time in their lives, and fumigating materials for protecting their crops from disease and insects. Some 80,000 persons have received this type of help. All these measures have combined to bring about increases in agricultural production.

To buy this larger product there has also been an increase in wages received. In 1958, the last year of the Batista era, approximately 723 million pesos were paid in wages and salaries. In 1959 this increased to 1,055 million pesos, a gain of 43%; and in the first eight months of 1960 the gain continued at a rate of 28% over 1959. A further increase

in purchasing power of the city workers resulted from the rent law, which cut rents in half, and from the laws lowering electricity and telephone rates. A new 4% tax on all wages to provide funds for industrialization takes away only a small part of these gains. These two factors, an increase of production and an increase in purchasing power, have come together to increase consumption. The masses of the Cuban people are eating more and eating better than ever before. The number of cigars sold in Cuba, an index of prosperity, increased in 1960 by 39% over 1959. Beer consumption also increased by 7% despite heavy new taxes.

BESIDES being able to buy more of the necessities and amenities of life the humble Cuban also now for the first time in his life finds schools, teachers, medical care, medicines, hospitals, tuberculosis care, sports centers and bathing beaches made available, either gratis or at nominal cost, by a government that immediately set out to bring these facilities within the reach of every Cuban family. Thousands from among those whose need was greatest are also recipients of new houses, awarded on terms that are adjusted to the income of the occupant.

The Revolution inherited a condition of chronic unemployment and underemployment in both city and countryside. In January 1959, 371,000 workers were totally unemployed; by January 1960 this had been reduced to 237,000. It was reduced still further in 1960, perhaps by another 100,000. In many parts of the country there is now a shortage of hands needed for cutting sugar cane during the harvest months of January to April. So many agricultural laborers now have permanent work for the first time that they are not available for the seasonal jobs. This shortage is being met by volunteer brigades from the cities, who go every weekend in buses and trucks to the cane fields by the thousands, men, women and children, to cut, stack and load the cane.

APART from these extremely favorable developments for the Cuban people in the fields of employment and agricultural production, there remain the problems of Cuba's foreign trade and industrialization. Cuba has an underdeveloped economy with no heavy industry and not much light industry of its own. It is dependent on foreign sources of supply for hundreds of manufactured products as well as many indispensable food and raw materials items such as wheat, fats and ingredients for making sugar. Prior to the Revolution Cuba depended on the United States as both buyer and seller. Ninety percent of Cuban exports, mainly sugar, went to the United States. Seventy to eighty percent of Cuba's imports came from the United States. Therefore when the United States govern-

ment abruptly forbade all purchases of Cuban sugar and then forbade American companies to sell their manufactured products to Cuba, these were blows that could virtually paralyze the Cuban economy, as of course they were intended to do. Yet Cuba has survived, not without a certain amount of inconveniences, but certainly without suffering any visible distress. The Soviet Union made an emergency purchase of Cuban sugar already produced for the 1960 United States quota. The socialist countries have also agreed to buy four million tons of Cuban sugar in 1961 if the United States continues its boycott, paying at the rate of 4 cents per pound for it, 80% in products from the socialist countries and 20% in dollars. It is impossible to judge exactly the meaning of the 4-cent figure, since its real value will depend on amounts charged for socialist country products in return. It is nominally higher than the current world market price and lower than the price paid in the protected American market. The Soviet Union has promised in a formal commercial agreement "to take all possible measures to assure the supply of merchandise of vital importance to the Cuban economy that cannot be procured in other countries," and specifically to export to Cuba "petroleum, metal articles, sheet tin, wheat, fertilizers, chemical products, machinery . . . and other merchandise necessary to assure the uninterrupted functioning of Cuban industry, the successful development of its economy and the supply of necessary merchandise for the Cuban people." (Many of these items are already arriving in sizeable quantities. Cuba has been receiving its entire supply of petroleum from the socialist countries for nearly a year. There is no rationing. Cuba has an excess of gasoline, refined in Cuba, available for export.) The U.S.S.R. will buy in return sugar, nickel oxide, canned fruit juices and hides.

Cuban machinery, for example, in the sugar mills and electric plants, is mainly of United States manufacture. The spare part problem could, therefore, be a serious one. Attempts are being made to meet this by purchases in markets not yet closed to the Cubans, such as Canada, where American supplies are available; by local manufacture of parts; and by replacement of American machinery with models manufactured in the socialist countries. The latter recourse will increase in importance. It is clear that Cuba has accepted the opportunity offered by the socialist countries to find in them the markets and supplies now denied by the United States. This forthright response on both sides to the emergency created by United States policy is one of the striking features of this portentous three-cornered struggle. Other Latin American countries will be watching to see if it is possible to survive, and on what terms, outside the United States economic system.

Cuba continues to earn dollars by selling sugar in the world market These sales increased in 1960, easing somewhat the United States blow to Cuba's foreign exchange position. Sales of other commodities, especially fruit, in the United States have continued to produce some dollars. Also, nationalization of United States companies in Cuba produces an annual saving in foreign exchange of at least 100 million dollars, formerly returned to United States investors as profits and service charges on their operations in Cuba. Still, dollars are not available in sufficient amounts to continue the old system of importing anything and everything, the non-essential as well as the essential, that the Cuban with pesos would purchase. A system of exchange control now functions that puts the Cuban economy on an austerity basis. Luxury items are no longer imported, which means that a group of importers and retailers no longer have their former copious sources of income and the wealthy can no longer find everything their money used to buy. The National Bank, headed until recently by Che Guevara, administers these exchange controls, requiring that every expenditure of foreign exchange be justified as essential to the health and development of the economy. The Bank makes hard decisions daily in allocating the limited supply of dollars among competing priorities.

The industrialization of Cuba, one of the announced goals of the Revolution, has not yet progressed far enough to have made any notable effect on the economy. Nationalization has placed about 80% of existing industry under government control. This includes the Island's second-rate electric and telephone industries, four oil refineries with a total daily capacity of 84,400 barrels, sugar mills, textile factories, nickel, cobalt, chrome, iron and manganese mines, railroads, a small merchant marine, rice mills, coffee roasting plants, milk condensing plants and a rudimentary chemical industry. Some new canneries, small textile factories and shoe factories have been established to expand employment opportunities in the provincial and countryside areas. More light industry, such as cotton gins, spinning mills and factories for beginning the production of farm tools, nuts and bolts, electric pumps, plate glass, sewing machines and refrigerators are scheduled to be completed in 1961.

Until recently industrialization was proceeding mainly as an auxiliary to the purposes of agrarian reform and was planned in the Industrialization Section of INRA. One feature of the reorganization of the government announced on February 24, 1961, was the creation of a new Ministry of Industry under Che Guevara, one of the three most important leaders of the Revolution. Fidel Castro has also announced that 1962 will be the "Year of the Economic Plan," following years of Liberation (1959), of

the Agrarian Reform (1960) and of Education (1961). In his first interview as Minister of Industry Guevara said:

> The Cuban Revolution has entered fully into the process of industrialization. During the next five years we will invest approximately 1 billion pesos in industry. Of this amount 600 million will cover imports of factories, machinery and equipment. The other 400 million refers to production in our own factories of producer goods.
>
> The greatest part of the 600 million pesos worth of imports we will receive under credits from the socialist countries, although we will also acquire industries in other countries. . . . Beginning this year we will start to install light and heavy industry simultaneously.
>
> We will create heavy industry with credits and purchases in the socialist countries with smaller scale acquisitions in other countries. Light industry will be the product of our own "factory factories," imported from the socialist countries, principally from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. We will receive from People's China large quantities of raw materials and essential consumer goods.
>
> Heavy industry production will be varied, principally mining, iron production, petroleum (large explorations are under way) and blast furnaces. The blast furnaces will operate with power from petroleum driven generators acquired in the Soviet Union. By the end of a five year period in 1965, our heavy industry will be well advanced.

One billion pesos of new investment in industry over a five-year period will introduce great changes in the Cuban economy. In magnitude it will exceed the total amount of United States investment in Cuba that accumulated during the sixty-year period of Cuba's dependence on the United States. And these new investments, unlike the old, will be carefully planned to foster economic development. Cuba's leaders, forged in the difficult conditions of guerrilla warfare, are now preparing for the new struggle, no less revolutionary and no less crucial to the destiny of Cuba and many other interested spectators, of overcoming a heritage of underdevelopment.

"Perhaps the first very evident truth that should be established clearly is that the political instability of the governments, the political instability of Latin America at this time, is not the cause for underdevelopment, but, rather, the consequence of underdevelopment."

FIDEL CASTRO
Speech before OAS
Buenos Aires, May, 1959

books in review

Indispensable

LISTEN, YANKEE, The Revolution in Cuba, by C. Wright Mills. Cloth: McGraw Hill $3.95; paper: Ballantine Books, 50c.

CUBA: Anatomy of a Revolution, by Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy. Monthly Review Press, cloth $3.50, paper $1.75.

THE day after the text of the State Department pamphlet on Cuba was published in the *New York Times* an advertisement appeared in that paper. It read: "Over 400,000 readers of Professor Mills's book, *Listen Yankee: The Revolution in Cuba,* have learned of the economic exploitation by the United States of Cuba and other countries to the south of us. This fundamental determinant of U.S.-Cuban relations and of the course of the Cuban Revolution is entirely ignored in the State Department's pamphlet on Cuba as reprinted in the *New York Times,* April 4th."

C. Wright Mills' *Listen, Yankee* is in fact a powerful refutation of the State Department document, as is in a different way Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy's *Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution,* recently reissued in a new expanded edition. Though the State Department pamphlet is the work of professional historian, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., completely missing from it is precisely history—the history of United States-Cuban relations and of the economic exploitation by U.S. big business that is in truth the "fundamental determinant" of those relations. The State Department diatribe is *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark.

Neither the Huberman-Sweezy work nor *Listen, Yankee* is a history of U.S.-Cuban relations, but that history is an inextricable part, the mainspring of their discussion of the most profound social revolution that the western hemisphere has ever experienced. Both books are in a sense sociological snapshots, taken on brief visits to Cuba, of a complex, rapidly changing phenomenon. Both, as Huberman and Sweezy put it in their preface, "combine the methods of journalism and scholarship," share a similar socialist philosophy, and to some extent their material overlaps.

What is chiefly valuable in the Huberman-Sweezy book (apart from the excerpts from Fidel Castro's magnificent *History Will Absolve Me*) is the "anatomy," the analysis of social forces, structural reforms, the revolutionary regime, the new agencies that are helping remold a once subject nation. This analysis at times gives the snapshot the quality of a portrait in depth. What is chiefly valuable in *Listen, Yankee* is

that it presents in popular form the case for the Cuban revolution as some of the revolutionaries see it. This it does in the form of letters from a composite Cuban revolutionary (who appears to be a middle-class intellectual veteran of the Sierra Maestra guerrilla struggle) to a composite "average" North American.

Drawing upon published material as well as their own observations, Huberman and Sweezy give a vivid account of the remarkable, far-ranging achievements of the revolution in land reform, housing, education, crop diversification and other areas. They offer a cogent explanation of the government's fiscal policy that refutes our journalistic prophets of financial doom. Particularly illuminating in the added material is the discussion of the problems created by Washington's economic war on Cuba and of the new relationships with the socialist countries whose aid has proved decisive in preventing that collapse which the Eisenhower Administration hoped for. "Moreover," the authors point out, "with regard to credits for new capital investment the Cubans have been granted more by the socialist countries than the present state of their economic organization and planning permits them to make use of. Since Cuba enjoys an expanding market for her products in such areas as Western Europe, Canada and Japan, and since the socialist countries evidently mean to go on supporting the Cuban economy, there is no reason to anticipate the emergence of financial (or balance of payments) difficulties. This, needless to say, is an enviable position for a country embarking on an ambitious development program to be in." In other words, here is a genuine *alianza para progreso* (alliance for progress), from which the Cuban economy and the Cuban people profit vastly, but from which no foreign corporations profiteer.

THE Huberman-Sweezy book steps boldly into theoretical terrain that is bound to be controversial. Under the circumstances this is a virtue and even those judgments with which one disagrees prick and prod the mind to counter-thought. The Cuban revolution is basically part of the anti-imperialist movement of what C. Wright Mills calls "the hungry nation bloc" toward national freedom in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These national revolutions involve social transformations in varying degree, and in Cuba's case the social aspect is radical and profound. At the same time the Cuban is, like all genuine revolutions, *sui generis;* it has unique features that cannot be neatly pigeonholed or explained by the texts and their implications are not exclusively Cuban or Latin American.

Huberman and Sweezy are so impressed with what is unique in the Cuban revolution that they tend to blur its underlying character as part of a worldwide social process. This leads them to describe it as a "peasant revolution." If by this they mean "agrarian revolution" (a more exact term), there would be no quarrel with them since the chief task that the revolution undertook after the overthrow of the Batista tyranny was a complete transformation of the system of land ownership. But the authors mean something more: they view the peasantry as the leading class of the revolution. They base this on the predominantly peasant character of the rebel army which played the decisive role in destroying the old regime. They make it

clear that this was an exceptional peasantry since nearly three out of four of those engaged in agriculture were wage workers, many of whom had close ties with the industrial workers of the sugar mills. Certainly this "peasantry" has played an extraordinary revolutionary role. Yet the term "peasant revolution" raises more questions than it answers, especially when the authors extend it to affirm "the peasant character of the regime," citing a speech of Fidel Castro to support this thesis. There is, however, nothing either in the quoted passage or in the full text of the speech that describes the regime as "peasant."

It seems to me that Huberman and Sweezy tend to treat the rebel army too much as independent social force and to minimize the role of the urban working class and middle-class elements in the anti-Batista struggle. They are more nearly right when they speak of the revolution as "a genuinely *national* uprising against the monstrous Batista tyranny." (Emphasis mine—B. A. L.) This uprising was carried through by a coalition of classes. The nature of the coalition and the relative weight of its class components have changed as the revolution has advanced and fulfilled itself as an agrarian, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly revolution of a highly advanced type. The regime created by this revolution, though its leaders are largely urban former professional men and students, rests on that *de facto* coalition of urban workers, agricultural workers, small peasants and sections of the middle and petty bourgeoisie, with the alliance of city and country workers as the keystone.

Overemphasis of the peasant element in the revolution is the obverse of Huberman and Sweezy's failure to evaluate properly the role of the urban working class. The myth current in this country —perhaps it is also current in certain Cuban circles since Professor Mills' composite revolutionary echoes it—is that the workers were completely passive and played little if any role in the anti-Batista struggle. The fiasco of the general strike called by the 26th of July Movement in April 1958 has fed this myth. But a deeper examination of the facts reveals a different picture. The Cuban working class was highly organized. That was in one sense its misfortune. No other section of the population was so thoroughly controlled and spied upon. Most of the upper trade union leaders were as reactionary and as much part of the government machine as those that normally run the labor syndicates of the fascist countries, and considerably more venal.

The remarkable thing is that despite this leadership and the Batista terror, major strikes did take place. One of them, a general strike of sugar workers in December 1955, paralyzed several towns, attracted widespread support and won its demand for payment of a wage differential due the workers. If the sugar workers' strike in some places took on political overtones, the general strike of August 1957—wretchedly misreported in our commercial press and unmentioned in either of the books under review—was explicitly political and anti-regime. It burst forth spontaneously (though this is relative) in Santiago de Cuba in protest against two political murders committed by the Batista police. From Santiago it spread throughout Oriente province and overflowed into the greater part of Cuba until it was suppressed after a few days by government persecution and the strike-breaking

of the trade union high command. At its height the general strike was said to have embraced a majority of the workers in the large cities (with the possible exception of Havana) as well as many middle-class people and business men.

The later general strike in April 1958 failed not for lack of support, but because of extraordinary repressive measures (workers were threatened with shooting if they left their jobs), plus serious errors by leaders of the 26th of July Movement, which are touched on in the Huberman-Sweezy book. Finally, it was a general strike in January 1959 called by Fidel Castro after the dictator had fled that thwarted a coup by Batista generals (under U.S. sponsorship) and guaranteed the revolution's triumph.

SINCE that triumph the workers have played an increasingly important role; so important that it has caused Huberman and Sweezy in the new material added to their book to abandon their "peasant revolution" and "peasant regime" thesis, though they insist it was valid for an earlier period.

Written with haste and passion, *Listen, Yankee* illuminates in words that at times flame and crackle the problems of the old Cuba—its poverty, illiteracy, stagnant one-crop economy and control by U.S. big business—and the meaning of its great cleansing revolution: land reform, schools, new crops, new homes, higher living standards, freedom from tyranny and alien domination—a harvest of achievement and hope. The chapter on culture in the new Cuba is of particular interest since it contains material not previously available in English. *Listen, Yankee* is brilliant pamphleteering by a distinguished social scientist.

THERE are two controversial issues on which the views of the two books are similar. One is the relation of the Cuban Communists to the revolution. On this point the authors of neither work appear to have done adequate research. They accept the current participation of the Communists in the revolution and refute the standard anti-Communist cliches, but they do so by minimizing and at times distorting the Communist role. It is strange to find Professor Mills writing in a second note to the reader that the non-Communist revolutionary "made the revolution against . . . Communist Party opposition"—though perhaps not so strange in view of the fact that the source of his misinformation is the professional anti-Communist, Theodore Draper, now also a professional opponent of the Cuban revolution. Nor is the Huberman-Sweezy book accurate in stating that the Communists did not support Fidel Castro till six months before victory. The effort to depict the Cuban Communists as belated converts to the revolution hardly explains why all of the pre-revolutionary political parties they alone have survived and become, as Huberman and Sweezy indicate, close collaborators of the revolutionary government.

The Popular Socialist (Communist) Party of Cuba worked for 35 years to "make" the revolution that finally triumphed on January 1, 1961, and of course also made its share of mistakes. As all students of Latin America know, this has for more than 20 years been one of the strongest, most effective Communist parties in the western hemisphere with a substantial base in the trade unions. That base to a significant degree survived both the purges of Batista's precursors and the dictator's

terror. On the day that Batista seized power the Communists launched a struggle to oust him. They sought fruitlessly to unite all anti-Batista parties and groups and projected a program of fundamental social reforms similar to that proclaimed at his trial by Fidel Castro, but also emphasizing measures to free the country from the U.S. overlords. The Communist underground apparatus proved remarkably effective and the party played a leading role in the 1955 sugar workers' strike and the 1957 general strike. Communists participated in the unsuccessful general strike of April 1958 though they criticized its poor timing and preparation, and were of course active in the final struggle that nailed down the revolution's victory.

SOME of the Communist criticisms of Fidel Castro's methods in fighting Batista were certainly wide of the mark; others were on target. Where the Communists blundered badly was in failing to prepare military action against the dictator and focusing almost exclusively on peaceful methods. However, they supported the Sierra Maestra guerrilla operation from the outset, as their illegal publications testify, though maintaining a critical attitude toward the heterogeneous 26th of July Movement whose right wing later produced many defectors. The Communists too were not without influence among those Oriente province peasants who fled the guerrillas, served them as couriers and performed other indispensable tasks. It is well to recall that the twelve survivors of the Castro expedition that landed on the Cuban coast in December 1956 could not have continued to survive and build the armed force that eventually destroyed the dictatorship had not revolutionary activity by non-military means (in which the Communists were prominent) already become fairly widespread.

The second controversial question posed by both books is the nature of Cuba's social system. Huberman and Sweezy are unequivocal: "The new Cuba is a socialist Cuba." Professor Mills agrees. But if this was a "peasant" revolution and a "peasant" regime at the time *Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution* was originally written, did we therefore have a "peasant" socialism? That would be a historical curiosity which the founders of scientific socialism could not have foreseen even in their nightmares. The authors have only themselves to blame if they have been hoist by their own doctrinal petard.

Writing in May 1960, Huberman and Sweezy based their view that Cuba was socialist on the growing public sector of the economy (which has since become preponderant) and on central state planning (though this, according to their later material, is still far from a reality). This view cannot be lightly dismissed, especially in the light of the radical transformations that have eliminated not only foreign capital but important segments of Cuban private capital. It should, however, be remembered that most underdeveloped countries (India, Ghana, Egypt, Mexico are examples), whether or not they specify a vague socialism as their goal, have found it necesssary, because of the dearth of private financial resources, to mobilize public capital in state-owned enterprises (or in other forms of non-private ownership as in Israel's Histadrut enterprises), and therefore to institute a certain measure of planning. What distinguishes the Cuban activity in this sphere is its vast scope and revolutionary dynamism: decisive sectors of private

capital have been expropriated and converted into state property as part of a sweeping national and social revolution in which the workers, peasants (predominantly farm workers) and radical intellectuals are playing the principal role. However, crucial in the Marxist concept of socialism and confirmed by the experience of the only countries that have established it is a factor completely missing from the Huberman-Sweezy criteria: *working-class power.*

ONE need not approach this question in a doctrinaire straitjacket. Certainly Cuba is moving *toward* socialism. Certainly the capitalist class is no longer in power and the workers within the multi-class coalition wield a steadily larger influence in all spheres of life. In my opinion the social system might be described approximately as follows: private capitalism, revolutionary state capitalism and incipient socialism coexist, with the last two dominant and growing. It may be pertinent to recall V. I. Lenin's view of the role of state capitalism where the state is what he called "revolutionary-democratic," as distinguished from capitalist or landlord-capitalist, but not yet socialist. In his pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It,* written in September 1917, he urged drastic state capitalist measures, pointing out that "in a truly revolutionary-democratic state, state monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably means progress toward socialism. . . . For socialism is nothing but the next step forward from state capitalist monopoly." (*Collected Works,* Vol. 21, p. 211.) Several months later, after the establishment of the Soviet regime, Lenin, citing this passage, added the following: "Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we are discussing *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* the socialist state, but the 'revolutionary-democratic' state." (*Selected Works,* Vol. 9, p. 171.)

The circumstances in Cuba today are vastly different from those in 1917 Russia, and fortunately no Kerensky is in power. Yet in its own way Cuba has used state capitalist measures to break away from capitalism and create a new revolutionary democracy. This is a historic transition stage that helps illuminate the problem of the advance to socialism for many countries.

Regardless of shortcomings, *Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution* and *Listen, Yankee* are indispensable for understanding what is happening in the stormy island 90 miles from the Florida coast. By lifting the dollar-press curtain over the new Cuba (and the old) they perform a notable service to our own people. To affirm the right of the Cubans to their way of life and to demand an end to made-in-Washington aggression and subversion is to affirm the true national interest of our country.

B. A. LESHAM

Marxist-Leninist

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION, Blas Roca. New Century Publishers. Paper: $1.25; Cloth, $2.50.

THE course of the Cuban Revolution has had an impact on world events, particularly in our own hemisphere. Its reverberations are felt in our country. The Cuban people now face an invading force which is subsidized by American imperialism. In this struggle against tremendous odds the people are demonstra-

ting their support for their revolutionary gains, won under the leadership of the Castro government.

Under these circumstances, the report of Blas Roca, General Secretary of the Popular Socialist Party of Cuba (P.S.P.) "The Cuban Revolution" is most timely for the American reader. Delivered to the Eighth National Congress of his party in Havana last August, it contributes to the understanding of the profound social changes in this island republic. He bases himself on a Marxist-Leninist view in interpreting and formulating a policy for his party and country. His reasoning will be of help to the understanding of the revolution by the reader here.

The prestige of the Castro regime is so great that the Kennedy administration had to use one of its leading liberals to "indict" the revolution. This pseudo-liberal, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., was assigned the task of presenting the arguments for military intervention. In his statement, prepared for the State Department, he paid lip service to the achievements of the Cuban people. Hampered with numerous obstacles, an economic boycott initiated by Washington, this liberal still must confess that the Cubans made many gains. He has to list land reform, housing, new schools, elimination of illiteracy and other reforms. In this lengthy document he could not bring himself to admit that all discrimination against the Negro people was abolished. But Schlesinger concludes with the promise that "no future Cuban Government can expect to turn its back on such objectives" as have already been achieved. Nevertheless in the cause of anti-communism and to restore the ill-gotten wealth to the sugar and utilities trusts, the revolution must be destroyed.

BLAS ROCA'S report was made months before Schlesinger's statement. Yet it gives an answer to the lies contained in it. The liberal historian charges that the Cuban Communists had a working arrangement with Batista. This is aimed at disarming liberals and trying to gain their support for intervention. This is an old trick. We thought that this historian would not stoop to Winchell's level. Evidently we were mistaken.

The Cuban Communist leader buries this canard. The Communists supported Batista only during the period when progressive and democratic gains were achieved. It was a time when a democratic constitution was promulgated and Cuba was part of the anti-Nazi camp. Batista went out of power. With the coup d'etat of March 10, 1952 when he returned, the Communists were the first to lead the fight against him. This was a difficult task in 1952. The people remembered the positive achievements of the previous Batista rule. There were illusions to be overcome. Other parties hesitated, while the Communists forthrightly opened the fight against Batista.

From 1938 to 1946 the Communists were in a united front and cooperated with Batista. Let Blas Roca state the facts:

". . . the Party had a united front with Batista from the end of 1938 till practically the beginning of 1946. In the course of this the Party had achieved legality (September, 1938) after 13 years of underground life and severe repression; the Cuban Confederation of Labor (C.T.C.) had been founded (1939); the Constituent Assembly (1939-1940) had been summoned and had met, and with the close participation of our Party, in a prominent place, had approved and promulgated the democratic and progressive 1940 Constitution. . . . A policy of civil liberties and moderate progress had been maintained . . ."

Schlesinger, the historian, should at least state the facts and concede that the Communists played an important part in the formulation and the adoption of the 1940 democratic constitution. The present advances in Cuban democracy cannot proceed without the economic gains made under the Castro government. The elimination of land reforms and a reversal of the whole reform program can only destroy democracy and halt its continued advance. The people of Cuba remember well the lesson of Guatemala and need not look to the pious promises of Schlesinger as applied by the CIA's mercenaries.

THE Cuban Revolution is a departure from previous coups in Latin America. Many of them carried the stamp "Made in Wall Street." This is a new social upheaval aimed at sweeping away a semi-colonial economic system which was abetted by Cuban traitors and profit seekers. It is directed toward breaking the grip of foreign monopoly and creating new opportunities for the people. Its opponents try to halt and destroy the revolution under the banner of anti-communism.

But in Cuba we witness a great national, democratic, popular revolution. It is led by the national patriot, Fidel Castro. It has the support of Communists because it aims at eliminating the grip of foreign monopoly—of placing the land in the hands of the peasant, assuring benefits to the workers and middle classes. The convention report describes the character of the revolution thus:

". . . The Cuban Revolution is not a Communist revolution; it is anti-imperialist and anti-latifundist.

"It is a revolution which, by virtue of the historical tasks that it is meeting and solving, can reasonably be called a national-liberating and agrarian revolution. It is a revolution that, by virtue of the class forces that support it and drive it forward and by the radical methods that it uses, may be considered as an advanced people's revolution. It is a revolution, as Fidel Castro said, referring to its social content and its perspectives, of the lowly, by the lowly an for the lowly."

The reader will find a fitting description of the group which calls itself the "Cuban Revolutionary Council." This group, a creation of the State Department, have other interests less noble than those proclaimed in their official announcements. They may be heroes to the American press, but their record at home is somewhat tarnished. Here is the way Blas Roca describes them. He bases himself on the experiences of the Cuban people.

". . . First to pass over to the camp of imperialism were Diaz Lenz and a handful of minor traitors. After that came the other traitors, large and medium. Conte Aguero, Tony Varona, Justo Carrillo and Aureliano, Medrono and Carbo. Now the most hypocritical are taking their place. Miguel A. Quevedos, Miro Cardona and Raul Chibas. . . ."

These names make newspaper headlines today. But their treachery was already known and exposed last fall.

The reader of this book will find an important contribution to an understanding of events as they unfold today. It contains the clear approach of an outstanding Cuban Marxist.

Throughout the report Blas Roca stresses the urgent need of unity. In our country there has been much debate, including considerable discussion in left circles. Differences of opinion and approaches are expressed by various

groups. But this report can serve to stimulate the unity of the left in our country.

In doing this we can help not only the great cause of Cuban freedom, but strengthen peace and progress at home.

P. BART

Sartre's Cuba

SARTRE ON CUBA, by Jean-Paul Sartre, Ballantine Books, New York. Paper. 50 cents.

IN THE rapidly accumulating library on Cuba, this book of Sartre's has a special place. It has all the virtues—and one must say—the vices of the man himself: and yet its virtues always manage, somehow, to escape the annihilating clutch of its vices.

For instance, being a personality, a philosopher, in short a *wit,* in his own right, too often this book on Cuba gives the impression of being an episode in Sartre's life and thought, rather than an important objective development in modern history. Sartre's visit to Cuba sometimes seems to have been an existentialist experience, in which Cuba appears to be a phenomenon in a non-historical dream. This impression comes from the intensely subjective description of ideas, events, places and things which are steeped in the color of Sartre's vision. One yearns occasionally for just a fact stated as a fact, an idea brought to us without logical gymnastics. In fact, what is annoying in this book—though not to the point of actively injuring the book—is Sartre's helpless vice of juggling with ideas. Sometimes the juggling is brilliant: one wonders how he manages to keep them all flashing in the air at the same time. Sometimes it is quite annoying because the mind keeps bobbing up and down, or turning back and forth, trying to follow the motions, and ending up with a headache.

But this is not to deny the effect of immediacy, and energy, and dazzling color in which certain images, identified with Cuban reality, appear. Nor is it to deny either that there is much profit to be gotten even in seeing Cuba strained through the mind of Sartre, for that mind itself is a phenomenon of our times of some significance. Sartre is best in his vision of Castro himself, or of the bearded talented youth, who sometimes seem to be more precocious than conscious; as though a bunch of half-grown boys, having succeeded in a wholly unlikely, completely hare-brained adventure, which was really not intended to go beyond its own giddy aims, suddenly found a nation with six million children in their hands and they had to do something about it.

This even somewhat charming picture of uncommitted amateurs whose purity of purpose lies in their innocence of theory and of ideology is, however, part of the myth which has grown up, and is voiced by Sartre, that the Cuban revolution is absolutely unique in that it violates, or ignores perhaps one should say, the laws of social development discovered by Marx and developed by Lenin after Marx.

Castro had no socialist aims when he fled to the Escambray mountains, a survivor of foodhardy adventure, which, by all logic, should have ended with Batista bullets in his head on the beach at Manzanillo. His ideas developed from necessity. He depended upon the peasants to establish the bases for his revolution, and not the workers: therefore the "Marxist dogmatists" are here refuted on their own home grounds. The revolution

developed—or was improvised—as he went along—one deed giving rise to another, with the reasons for it and the meaning of it following long after.

Here is the picture of revolutionary innocence because there is no prior thought—which is something sinister because it is calculated—and it is pure because it is spontaneous, rising from the unquestioned depths of the moment. The argument is made that spontaneity is as powerful as organized action propelled by thought; and that the Communists of Cuba were superseded, with all their consciousness, organization, and theory, by a group of middle-class youth who pulled their ideas out of their beards as they went along.

Therefore, the conclusion arrives that Cuba is a harbinger of a new—purer—form of revolutionary action, without the necessity of proletarian leadership and Marxist-Leninist ideology. This "new" idea has already been given quite some circulation, both in Sartre as well as in C. Wright Mills and in Huberman and Sweezey's book on Cuba.

BUT what are the facts? Even if one were to concede everything that has been advanced to prove the unique and different character of the revolution that Castro led, the truth remains that, no matter how subjectively unconscious or ignorant the motivators of the Revolution might have been, still they did not act arbitrarily; they did not invent out of whole cloth; and the direction of the revolution went in a *certain* way and not in any way. In other words, objective laws of social development controlled the content of the revolution, whether the form took this shape or that one; and no matter in what state of ideological blindness the revolutionaries fought, it was not their blindness that determined the laws of the revolution's development but the laws of its development is what cleared their eyes and dissipated that blindness. They saw what they were doing "instinctively"; they thought they did not know what they were doing, but then they found out they were following a very distinct pattern even without knowing it. For the laws of life made them into revolutionaries from a band of half-adventurers, half-dreamers who, in the beginning, just hated a few things, and did not intend, perhaps, to overthrow the entire economic and social system.

It is not true, either, that the revolution depended on the peasants alone; or rather, if the revolution had limited itself to the demands of the peasants, it would soon have begun to deteriorate. Only the working class can raise it to a higher level than is possible for the peasants alone. And that is what has happened in Cuba, and that has happened also because the Cuban Communist Party consciously lights up the road the revolution must travel. There is no half-way station. To stop at any one point would mean to fail utterly, if for no other reason than that would bring into being, by that very fact, the class for whom such a half-way mark was profitable—that is, a class ready to fight against the logic of the revolution with the aid of the U.S.A.

Sartre proves in this book on Cuba that his vision penetrates along a crack of history, but does not penetrate to the profound forces that ultimately decide: even the year after his visit, which includes the attempted counter-revolution, has already made more and more urgent the necessity of a full definition of why the Pearl of the Antilles is so much the hope of the South American world.

WHAT basically misleads these prospectors for a new, un-Communist socialism, is the overriding fact that the emergence of the socialist world in one-third of the globe has shifted the balance of power decisively in the anti-colonial, socialist, people's direction, providing the soil for the sprouting of all kinds and varieties of plants that nevertheless sprout from the same root. Some of these plants are more apparent than real; some take hybrid forms, or some merely imitate what is real. Ultimately, they exist because the Soviet Union first of all exists. But to see in any one of these "variations" a qualitatively new plant that took life from the air is to blind one's self to modern day reality.

Nevertheless, Sartre's book is a real contribution to the continuing struggle for Cuban freedom; and no one who takes the book in his hand will put it down poorer than before. His is not the whole picture. But it is part of the picture—and a brilliant part of it at that.

PHILLIP BONOSKY

Arresting

90 MILES FROM HOME, by Warren Miller. Little Brown and Co., $3.95.

AS Warren Miller's title suggests, he is trying in this book to show the American people the realities of a revolution that is less than a hundred miles from our shores. American correspondents, including those "authorities" of the *New York Times,* have not seen fit to print the whole story of Cuba's revolution but only one side of it, and that distorted to the needs of an American ruling class. Mr. Miller gives us a full picture—an extremely interesting picture in an arresting format.

The picture of revolutionary Cuba he presents is really a composite. It is made up of a running account of the author's own experiences in Cuba, interspersed with letters, public pronouncements, newspaper clippings, poetry and the songs of Carlos Puebla. The result is no *pot pourri* but an integrated and balanced account of the different tendencies and classes in conflict, of the different values, the old and the new, which still stand side by side in Cuba as do books by Marx and Fulton Sheen on Havana's bookshelves. But the dominant impression that the book makes is that the great majority of Cuban people are lined up behind the revolution and Fidel Castro, and that the new is winning out over the old.

A waiter accused the American press of being kept by money interests. He defended Cuba's newspapers as reflecting the interests of the people. He says to Miller, "I have the uncomfortable feeling I have talked myself out of a tip." But he explains, "Still, it has to be said: our talking has got us somewhere. We are now a sovereign nation and we do not have to live on tips anymore." A jeep-driver who drove Miller around said about a newly organized dental clinic. "'Imagine,' he said, 'the next generation of Cubans will be walking around with perfect sets of teeth, and mouths without cavities. I tell you, you cannot doubt it, we are going to have such a beautiful country that the very thought of it should bring tears to your eyes.'" The peasants too, at first distrustful, now strongly support the revolution. In the old days politicians made promises, it seemed, only to break them, and when the Fidelistas came and spoke of reforms the peasants listened but many did not

believe for sure. Miller tells how those peasants whose homes had been destroyed by Batista's hoodlums were the first to be taken care of. Members of the militia came to rebuild the peasants' living quarters and the peasants continued with their farming. They did not even look. So many times they had been promised before. But when the house was rebuilt and the peasant and his family moved in, there were tears of gratitude.

Despite the calumnies of Radio Swan and the slanders of counter-revolutionaries, the people remain firm. Radio Swan's propaganda is so ridiculous—saying that the dead are piled in the streets, that children will be taken away from parents and that the Russians are doping people into communism with specially prepared beans that weaken the mind—all this is so absurd that the people scoff and make fun of the broadcasts. As one of the counter-revolutionary intellectuals told Miller in Miami, American ad men "are very good at Ipana ads," but their "propaganda efforts are amateurish and ineffective."

Despite the hard-sell, the mass of Cubans will not buy American-made anti-Communism. The campaign is backfiring. Take the sign Miller saw on a building:

NO! DO NOT MAKE ME DOUBT!
DO NOT TRY TO CONVINCE ME
THAT THE CUBAN REVOLUTION
IS COMMUNIST!
BECAUSE IF YOU CONVINCE ME
I WILL BECOME A COMMUNIST.

It is very likely that the loyalty of the people, of their fierce determination to fight and die for their new government, was what led Miller to feel—which is probably the single most important message that the book gets across—that "every minute of the day and night the revolution was planting itself deeper and deeper into the Cuban earth, and, if not stopped, that one day it would be as solid as this Cathedral, a thick-walled establishment that time would alter but never quite destroy."

THE middle class supplies the principal defectors and opponents of the revolution. We find in *90 Miles from Home*—the cafe owner who feels life will never be as good without the tourists, the well-to-do landowners who complain that they cannot even keep food on their table, let alone keep up their large house, on the $600 dollars a month the government allows them as compensation for their confiscated property. As a class they grew increasingly estranged from the revolution, if they had any sympathy for it to begin with. The Spanish word for chicken's wishbone "has come to be used as a term to describe the middle class; it indicates also that the middle class lived on illusions, by wishing for things. The middle class, and the upper class for that matter, are now called *siquitrillado,* the word for one who has had his wishbone broken." As Mr. Miller records the character of the different middle and upper class Cubans who oppose the revolution, whether they are in Miami plotting an invasion or in Cuba passing ecclesiastical letters around, they appear not as freedom fighters but as blind individuals, compounded of cynicism, corruption and wishful thinking.

90 Miles From Home closes as it began, with an exchange between Mr. Miller, an obviously principled American intellectual and one Mr. Aspic, an American balloon manufacturer, whose

visit in Cuba coincided with Miller's. Whether or not we are to take Aspic as a real person, or whether he is more a type than an individual, the parting words exchanged between the two, the intellectual and businessman, are highly significant. Miller, speaking to Aspic on the phone in Miami, says that something must be done and immediately to halt the deterioration in U.S. and Cuban relations. Miller says: "We must take the initiative, Aspic; that is my opinion. How is it we can see so clearly a Suez and an Algeria, and not this? Aspic, can we not find the dramatic message they are waiting for in that part of the world?" Aspic says he cannot hear; the connection is bad. Of course Aspic can hear Miller's voice but he does not get his message. His only business is business. What he does not want to see and what Miller in his book is trying to point out to Aspic and others like him who do not want to hear, is that time is running out on United States monopoly-dominated foreign policy.

90 miles off the coast of Florida the tide of history is flowing against imperialism. In all Latin America the tide is also turning. It cannot be stopped. The United States must not play the role of the executioner of social revolutions in Latin America. If we do we will, as a nation, lose any right to the title of defender of freedom and democracy. Our government, which enjoys no popularity among Latin American masses today, will become as odious in our hemisphere as the French government is in Algeria, the Portuguese in Angola, the Dutch in Indonesia or the English in Cyprus. If Mr. Miller doesn't say this in so many words in his book it is because he chose to let the Cubans speak for themselves, and they after all are the ones who should be heard.

ROBERT FORREY

Warm and Human

CUBA: HOPE OF A HEMISPHERE, by Joseph North. International Publishers. 95 cents.

FIDEL Castro speaking to the Cuban people at a loyalty rally October 26, 1959 said, "Our revolution has been a success because of the kind of people you are. Otherwise, we could not carry out this kind of revolution." What kind of people are the Cubans? This is the main question answered in the beautifully descriptive passages of Joseph North's latest book, *Cuba: Hope of a Hemisphere.*

The heroes of this fine book are, "los Liberadores, young bearded guardsmen, in olive green, their rifles slung across their backs . . .", the Negroes, the peasants, the wonderful young women—the Cuban people.

This is an appeal to Americans to think. Mr. North ends his book thus: "Respect for my native land, its hallowed traditions, yes and consequently, respect for myself, demand that I speak out for the justice of other nation's causes. I know it is our cause, too; if they go down to defeat, we the American people, suffer irrevocably too."

Those of us who have read the text of the State Department's document denouncing the Castro government, in which every traitor of the Cuban revolution is hailed and praised, will find this passage in North's book most revealing. "There was no question that certain elements in the Government and in the cabinet itself hesitated and feared the social advances necessary to guarantee

the Revolution. The new President, Manuel Uruttia, was one of these. There were others. Certain individuals who had gone along with the Revolution in its early stages, and remained with it to the ouster of Batista, began to balk at the progressive reforms. Behind the scenes an attack was being fomented by these, and spurred on, secretly, within the country, by agents of American imperialism. The Hitler weapon of anti-Communism began to be felt."

THE TERRIBLE and inhuman torture of the Cuban people by the Batista regime, against which our government never was able to muster any anger, or for that matter even whispered protest, comes to life in the incidents described in these pages. The figure of 20,000 killed does not bring out the picture of horror as do these descriptions in the the words of the victims of the terror. "There they beat him with billiard cues until he lost consciousness; next he knew he was lying in the courtyard outside his home. Half conscious, he saw an automobile's wheels headed toward him as he was lying prone, chest upward, aching in every bone of his body. Before he could twist away, the automobile was upon him, the wheels passed over his chest."

One young woman tells this story, "When they let me see him he was unrecognizable. His eyes were swollen closed and black; his face was a mass of blood; he lay moaning and he did not recognize me. I got an ambulance and a doctor and brought him home. I nursed him for weeks while he lay in delirium, and failed to recognize me. When he finally regained his mind, he was a broken man, a different man. He never smiled; he showed no emotion, he talked in a flat, dull voice, this young brother of mine who was always laughing. He is still under treatment, five months later, and I don't know whether he will ever be normal again."

I have but one criticism of Mr. North's book. It is too short. We have had a number of books and articles on Cuba. All analyze it politically. Not enough speak of the people in the warm human tones of this small book. For that reason I would have wanted much more of this good human document—the pain and suffering, the hope and the fighting spirit of the wonderful Cuban people who have a revolution to win. Those of us Americans who have had the privilege and luck to have visited Cuba after the revolution, know what a warm and happy people Cubans are. They show their love and friendship for the American people, but not for the imperialists, those who sucked the life out of their economy and land.

We need many books and pamphlets on Cuba. We need political analysis and we need warm human documents. Mr. North's book is warm and human, beautifully written and deserves the widest readership. Your shopmate, your school fellow, your office co-worker will understand and like this book.

North reveals the determination of the Cuban people to win their revolution. Their spirit is summed up in these words of Fidel Castro in his remarkable speech before the court of Oct. 16, 1953. "We were born in a free country which was our heritage from our forefathers. The island would sink into the sea before we would consent to be slaves of *anybody.*"

SAMUEL D'LONG

VICTIM OF WA