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Cuba:

The Cuban government continues to move toward the left and Prime Minister Fidel Castro appears committed to policies of leftist extremism in domestic affairs and, in foreign affairs, to a self-styled policy of "neutralism" vis a vis the US and the USSR. Castro's bitter tirades against the United States, which he accuses of being out to destroy the Cuban revolution, closely parallel to the Communist line. Communists, permitted unrestricted freedom under Castro, are posing as the regime's staunchest defenders and are steadily gaining strength.

The trend is exemplified in the changes that have been made in cabinet and other high posts since Castro came to power last January. Virtually all of these have resulted in the replacement of moderate officials by pro-Communists or others who are the willing tools of extremists. The most notable of such changes occurred on November 26th when the pro-US head of the National Bank and two moderate cabinet ministers were replaced by leftists. The new head of the National Bank, which plays a strategic role in the nation's economy and its foreign trade, is the notably anti-American "Che" Guevara, 31-year old Argentine soldier of fortune who was made a "native-born" Cuban citizen by revolutionary decree for his military exploits during the war against Batista. The pro-Communist Guevara, whose economic and financial background is virtually nil, conceives of the Cuban revolution as a class struggle which will result in changing the structure of the

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economy and social system.

Agrarian reform, regarded by Castro as the key to his entire revolutionary program, is being implemented rapidly and drastically. Most of the lands thus far expropriated, from American as well as Cuban owners, have not been turned over to the peasants as Castro promised, but have been organized into cooperatives owned and operated by the state. The agrarian reform machinery and the leftists who run it wield wide powers.

Organized labor is a prime target of the Communists, who have a core of experienced and capable leaders in labor. The Communists suffered only a surface setback during the congress of the powerful Cuban Workers Confederation last month when known Communists failed to be elected to the confederation's directorate. The slate finally elected include men with long records of collaboration with the Communists, who achieved other of their objectives in several of the resolutions passed at the congress. The confederation, for instance, voted to withdraw from the anti-Communist Latin American labor body, the Regional Organization of Latin American Workers.

Though Castro's government is still less brutally authoritarian than was the Batista regime, Castro is nevertheless employing many of the same tactics he so violently attacked when he stood as the valliant fighter for democracy against the Batista tyranny. The press is subjected to an informal self-censorship imposed by fear of attack from Castro. Habeus corpus is suspended and "counterrevolutionaries", civilian as well as military, are

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subject to trial by special revolutionary tribunals. Castro regards the free political activity associated with elections as merely serving to divide and confuse the people and has declared that there will be no elections until "the revolution is consolidated."

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