

CUBA

Cuba's avowed entry into an "era of socialist construction," as proclaimed by Fidel Castro during the May Day celebrations in Havana, paves the way for additional internal moves which would bring the Cuban Government closer to the political structure of a Communist state. The announcement goes well beyond the international Communist description of Cuba as a "national democratic state." The proclamation of a "socialist" regime in Cuba may be an attempt by Castro to enhance his claim to further support and protection from the USSR.

Cuban May Day celebrations received wide coverage in the Soviet press. Although TASS in its initial report made no mention of Castro's claim of having established a socialist regime, Pravda subsequently published a summary of his speech including his reference to the need for a new "socialist" constitution, reflecting the socialist system he plans to build.

Castro's proclamation, which presents the bloc with an unprecedented situation, creates ideological as well as practical problems for the USSR. In order to provide an ideological framework for governments that support the Soviet bloc but are not a part of it, the meeting of Communist leaders in Moscow last November invented the designation "national democracy."

In subsequent statements it was made clear that while this fitted a number of countries it applied especially to Cuba. East German party leader Ulbricht stated that "undoubtedly the revolution of the Cuban people has created a national democratic state which has already fulfilled the task of national liberation and democratic revolution and which now is waging a struggle for further social progress." He implied that Cuba had reached the stage when it would be possible to carry out a "direct transformation from original conditions to a socialist revo-

lution avoiding the long road of capitalist development."

Thus, while placing an ideological stamp of approval on Cuban internal policies, and while proclaiming the "duty" of the socialists to support "national democratic" revolutions, the Communist statements suggests that the USSR would prefer to avoid the difficult problem of accepting Cuba as a member of the bloc.

In a series of lectures in early March restricted to Czech party members, Castro was referred to as a special case not identical to the leaders of nationalistic revolutions such as Nasir and Qasim, according to an untested source. He was described as the "first and only revolutionary of the new type" in Latin America and as an "honest pro-Communist," but not a leader to be fully trusted because he is not a Communist and lacks Communist training.

Moscow has not emphasized its pledges of general support for Cuba; and TASS, in reporting the 26 April press conference of the chief Soviet delegate to the UN, omitted Zorin's assurance that the USSR was prepared to come to the aid of Cuba if it is attacked. Moscow does persist, however, in picturing the Kennedy administration as preparing "new warlike adventures" in Cuba.

Pravda "Observer" articles attacked President Kennedy personally on 28 and 30 April. The first interpreted the US failure to reply to Khrushchev's 22 April letter to the President as a sign that new aggression is being planned, and concluded that the "new master of the White House" apparently agreed with the previous administration's alleged policy of "balancing on the brink of war"—which can only bring the United States "new resounding failure."

The second article charged that the "hypocrisy" of the President's protestations about

establishing "new frontiers" of US foreign policy, strengthening peace, and creating an atmosphere of trust had become most evident against the background of the rebel invasion. "What talk can there be of trust," asked "Observer," when the United States "threatens the cause of peace" by placing the world on the "brink of conflict." The article claimed that the President is "recklessly playing with fire" in Cuba and warned that "he who kindles a fire fans a blaze."

Further opportunities for extended propaganda treatment of Cuba will come when Castro receives his Lenin Peace Prize. Castro said he would like to go to Moscow to receive the award.

Castro's 1 May espousal of "socialism" also underlines the powerful role the Popular Socialist (Communist) party (PSP) has come to play in Cuba. Although Castro ordered that all political parties be dissolved when he assumed power in January 1959, the PSP subsequently emerged as the sole political organization of importance in Cuba. PSP members--estimated last January to be 18,000 strong--occupy most positions of importance in all branches of the government and in the labor, education, and public information fields. Party leaders, according to numerous reports, maintain that the relationship between Castro and the PSP is "exceedingly close."

In his 1 May speech, Castro said that the nationalization of private schools would be decreed shortly. This action seems aimed primarily at Cuba's 250 parochial schools, which are presently responsible for the education of about 65 percent of the nation's 200,000 privately taught school children. These parochial schools have been regarded by the government as hotbeds of "counterrevolutionary" activity for some time.

[REDACTED]
that the campaign against private schools has already begun.

The Cuban premier also observed on 1 May that Cuba's 1940 constitution "has been left behind by this revolution" and that a new "socialist constitution" was needed. Minister of Industry Che Guevara told in a 30 April televised speech of "an economic plan for the country, a socialist plan." Guevara's presentation was devoted largely to explaining the details of Cuba's five-year industrialization plan, and he also described future bloc material and technical assistance projects in support of the plan.

Cuba continues to demonstrate increasing dependence on economic exchange with the Soviet Union and other bloc countries.

[REDACTED]
the Cuban Embassy in Moscow to sign contracts for the delivery of a propane tanker and two IL-14 transport aircraft to Cuba, and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] of the departure of the Soviet tanker Frunze for Odessa with a cargo of Cuban nickel from the Nicaro plant, owned by the US Government but nationalized by Castro last year. Also, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Castro plans to purchase Chinese Communist technical equipment for the Nicaro plant.

[REDACTED] reports that the Swiss ambassador there has expressed horror at the inhuman prison conditions and recommended remedial action on the part of the Western powers.

Cuba's rejection of Costa Rica's plea for clemency for those captured in the landing has occasioned a considerable stiffening in the Costa Rican Government's attitude toward Castro. President Echandi told the Costa Rican congress on 1 May that the principle of strict nonintervention in another country's affairs is "outdated."