Master

FEATURES

"THE SOVIETIZATION OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION: ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE," by Carmelo Mesa-Lago. World Affairs, summer of 1973 issue.

This article is a detailed, well-documented review of the way by which the Soviet Union has achieved control over Cuban internal affairs, and how it has also brought Castro into line, at least in his public pronouncements, with Soviet foreign policy.

The writer notes 1968, when Castro came out in support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, as the beginning of the end of any real independence of action by Cuba, and then carefully traces how, beginning in 1970, with the establishment of the Soviet-Cuban Commission of Economic, Scientific and Technical Collaboration, the Soviets have built their own style economic and administrative hierarchy to protect their huge investment in Cuba. The writer cites mid-1972 as Cuba's "point of no return" in its dependence on the USSR.

Although numerous statements by Cuban officials are quoted to illustrate Cuban repudiation of what the writer calls the "Sino-Guevarist" years, i.e. those during which Cuba was most active in trying to export its revolution, he also highlights those instances when Castro himself has never answered directly whether he has come to believe that guerrilla action is subordinate to other means of attaining power.

The last section of the article outlines conditions under which there could be a rapprochement between Cuba and the U.S., and analyzes Castro's current dilemma: when he bitterly criticizes the U.S., it indicates he is concerned about losing power; on the other hand, when he sets conditions for negotiations, it is probably the result of Soviet pressure on him, to resist it would erode his power even more. The announcement from Moscow, 17 December, that Brezhnev has decided to postpone his visit to Cuba by at least two weeks indicates that the Soviets may be having second thoughts about this very issue. By attending the January first celebrations marking the fifteenth anniversary of Castro's revolution, as they orginally planned, they could have run the risk of embarrassment by possible anti-American outbursts by the Cubans.

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Contents

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Carmelo Mesa-Lago

THE SOVIETIZATION OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION: ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Since Premier Fidel Castro endorsed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the USSR has played an increasing role in Cuban affairs.[1] Such influence was first manifested in the more orthodox and moderate foreign policy of the island which, for instance, aligned itself with the Russians in their ideological battle against more radical-leftist positions. Until recently Castro managed to preserve his relative independence in internal matters, but the serious dislocation of the Cuban economy, precipitated by the Premier's futile mobilization for the ten-million-ton sugar harvest, put an end to that situation. He dramatically announced in the summer of 1970 that the Revolution had entered into a new stage characterized by less idealism and more realism.

Soviet control over the island's domestic affairs has been achieved in various ways. Castro has delegated most economic powers to President Osvaldo Dorticós, a moderate whom the Soviets trust, and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, chief economist, planner, minister without portfolio, and old-line pro-Soviet communist. The Prime Minister seems to have turned his energies outside the country, traveling abroad more than three months in one single year (from the end of 1971 to the end of 1972). Through an intergovernmental Soviet-Cuban Commission, controlled from the Cuban side by Rodríguez, the USSR has institutionalized her supervison over the use of her economic and military aid to the island. A new wave of Soviet technicians has flooded into Cuba, and native personnel in charge of plants built with Soviet aid are being sent for training to the USSR. The Cuban economy has become even more integrated into the Soviet bloc through the former's entrance into Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). Castro's concern over the United States-USSR détente has been appeased by Soviet rhetorical statements and his own realization of this new era of *realpolitik*. Cuba has dramatically reduced the exportation of the revolution, accepted non-guerrilla-warfare roads to socialism, and assumed an increasingly compromising attitude vis-à-vis some conventional regimes in Latin America. In view of these developments and the United States rapprochement with China, it is somewhat surprising that a normalization in United States-Cuban relations has not occurred as yet. But it may happen in the near future if some conditions discussed in this article are met.

The Increasing Soviet Tutelage over Cuba

In December 1970 Carlos Rafael Rodríguez led a Cuban delegation to Moscow for meetings with a Soviet team of economists headed by Nikolai Baibakov, director of the Soviet Central Planning Board. As a result of such conversations, the Soviet-Cuban Commission of Economic, Scientific, and Technical Collaboration was established. In February 1971 the Soviet-Cuban long-term trade and payments agreement for 1965-70 was temporarily extended until 1975.[2] The signing of a permanent trade agreement was delayed until the Commission had carefully studied the situation. To complete the basic details for the Commission's organization, Baibakov visited Cuba in April and May, and Cuban Chancellor Raúl Roa went to Moscow in June 1971.[3]

The first meeting of the Commission was held in Havana early in September 1971. The Soviet delegation was led by the Vice President of the USSR Council of Ministers, Vladimir Novikov, and was composed of top officials from several ministries as well as the Soviet ambassador to Havana. The Cuban delegation was led by Rodríguez, who also presided over the meetings, and was composed of top Cuban officials and the Cuban ambassador to Moscow. Rodríguez opened the meetings with an appraisal of the Soviet role in the birth and support of the Cuban revolution. In the same vein, Novikov reported that Soviet-Cuban trade in 1970 had increased by 60 percent over 1966, reaching more than one billion rubles per year (about three million dollars daily); he also stressed the pivotal importance of Soviet oil, steel, and machinery for the island's economy and listed the factories and plants built or repaired with Soviet aid.[4]

The agenda for the meeting included the establishment of a more efficient system of training the Cuban personnel in charge of the Soviet-made plants; Cuban reports on the measures adopted to make up for delays caused by the 1970 sugar-harvest mobilization in the Soviet-aid construction of one electrical plant and two fertilizer plants; and the possibility of future Soviet cooperation in mechanizing the sugar harvest, expanding electrical capacity, and establishing a pharmaceutical industry in Cuba. Premier Castro attended the signing of the agreements but, unaccustomedly, did not say a word; in the official picture he was standing behind Rodríguez, who was signing the document. The latter thanked the Soviet delegates "for their efforts in organizing and making more effective use of the aid provided by the USSR." In the protocol, the Cubans agreed to speed the operation of loading and unloading Soviet vessels in Cuban ports, to accelerate the work at plants being built with Soviet aid, and to send to the USSR the technicians who would direct such plants. The USSR promised to send Cuba a new sugar-cane harvester designed jointly by engineers from both countries and to provide technical aid for Cuba's attempt to produce its own harvesters locally on a large scale, with tests, supervised by Soviet experts, to be conducted on both machines during the 1972 harvest. Nothing concrete was agreed to on new electrical and pharmaceutical plants.[5] Upon his return to Moscow, Novikov announced that the Commission had also reviewed the fulfillment of trade

agreements in 1969-71.

At the end of October 1971 Premier Kosygin visited Cuba. He had previously been in Havana in June 1967 on his return to Moscow from his Glassboro meeting with President Johnson. This was at a time when Soviet-Cuban relations were deteriorating; the important dignitary received a cool official reception and little attention from the Cuban press. In contrast, his second visit was heralded with great fanfare and relations were very cordial. In a meeting with Castro the Soviet Premier said: "We have lost no time in getting together with comrade Fidel . . . . It isn't only on this meeting but also in other matters we came to a quick understanding with him." Castro replied: "One way to express our gratitude to the USSR for their great aid is to extract the maximum out of the Soviet equipment, to use it efficiently, and to keep it in running condition."[7] There was a communique signed by both Premiers, in which Castro fully endorsed Soviet foreign policy while Kosygin condemned the United States' "illegal holding" of the Guantanamo base and invited his colleague to visit the USSR.[8]

While visiting Chile in December 1971 Castro was publicly asked whether there were any "contradictions" in the relations between Cuba and the socialist countries. He acknowledged that there had been contradictions "at times" and, recanting past statements, said that they had been partly due to Cuban idealism.[9] Almost at the same time, in a meeting held in Moscow between President Dorticós and Secretary Brezhnev, the former stated that Cuba was "creating the foundations of socialism" while the latter reported on the "progress made in the construction of communism in the USSR." Thus Cuba acknowledged being at the bottom of the Soviet-invented four-step ladder to full communism, two steps below her protectors. This was a repudiation of Cuba's heretical proclamations during the Sino-Guevarist years of 1966-70 that she was building communism and was ahead of the USSR in the development of consciousness, communist ownership, and egalitarian distribution.[10] Dorticós also expressed his gratitude "for the public recognition by the Soviet Union of the significance of the Cuban Revolution with respect to the liberation movements in Latin America." This subservient attitude would have been inconceivable during the 1960s when the Cubans attempted to lead the Third-World revolutionary movement, thus challenging the Soviets. Once the "conflicts" between the two countries had been overcome, Kosygin was willing to announce that conversations had begun on the signing of a trade agreement for 1972-75 that would replace the old 1965-70 agreement provisionally extended (see below).[11] In the meantime, the extended old agreement was hurting Cuba economically: in 1972 the international price of sugar was above the 6.11 cents per pound paid to Cuba by the USSR. In December 1971 the latter paid 7.14 cents per pound for 270,000 tons of sugar bought from Brazil, the archenemy of Cuba.[12]

The extent to which Cuba has departed from Sino-Guevarism and moved toward Soviet orthodoxy is evident in the treatment given by the Cuban press to Nixon's visit to China vis-à-vis his visits to Moscow and Warsaw in 1972. Reports of Nixon's visit to China were cleverly manipulated by the Cuban press to criticize the Chinese. In one issue of

the party newspaper *Granma*, the front page was divided into two halves: the top half contained news and photos of the United States bombing of Vietnam while the bottom half had photos of Nixon shaking hands with Mao and Chou En-lai. The newspaper also reproduced excerpts of the friendly toasts exchanged between Nixon and Chou, and its last page was full of photos with ironic comments.[13] In contrast, Nixon's visits to Moscow and Warsaw were reported factually (taken from TASS), although very briefly and not in prominent places, but without any type of evaluation or comment.[14]

The second meeting of the Soviet-Cuban Commission was held in Moscow in April 1972, with Rodríguez as head of the Cuban delegation and Novikov as president of the meeting. At that meeting the results of the tests made during the 1972 sugar crop of the various types of cane harvesters were probably evaluated. (Significantly, in June the USSR announced that a factory to build the model sponsored by the Soviets would be sent to Cuba.) The Commission agreed to supply Cuba with an electronic computer to help in economic planning, thus strengthening Rodríguez' position in favor of a more technical and powerful central planning apparatus. Other topics discussed were the mechanization and modernization of ports (the inefficiency of loading and unloading Soviet ships had been on the agenda of the first meeting), civil aviation, irrigation, hydroelectric energy, a pharmaceutical industry, education, and communications. Rodríguez decorated Novikov with the medal of the Cuban Academy of Science and met with Kosygin.[15]

Although the subject of military aid was not included in either of the two agreements of the Commission, events in 1972 showed that this was on the agenda. Early in January the Cuban Navy received several Soviet missile-carrying launches that doubled its missile and antiaircraft equipment.[16] In April the Air Force, in turn, received a flotilla of MIG-23's, the most technologically advanced Soviet aircraft, which modernized the Cuban stock of MIG's 15, 17, 19, and 21. For several months a team of hundreds of Soviet military experts led by Lt. General Dimitri Krutskikn had been training Cuban personnel in the use of this equipment.[17]

On May 2, 1972, Castro began a trip to Africa and Eastern Europe which lasted 63 days, longer than all of his previous trips abroad put together. Before taking off, the Premier said: "Only a few years ago none of us would even dream of being outside of our country for too long, considering the way the imperialists were acting, with all their threats. Fortunately things are different now."[18] Castro was no longer afraid of the possibility of a United States direct or sponsored invasion, but he was concerned about the Soviet commitment to a rapprochement with the United States, which was manifested by the fact that Nixon's decision to blockade North Vietnamese ports and escalate the bombing of the North did not impede his visit to Moscow. In Castro's mind Cuba and Vietnam are in a similar position; thus, he devoted a large portion of his speeches in Eastern Europe to attacking the United States and pledging solidarity with the Vietnamese. In his speech on arriving in Poland—Nixon had just left—Castro pointed out that his country was not part of any security pact or military alliance (another

ous reference to the Warsaw Pact, but depended only on its own power.

Brezhnev rhetorically responded to Castro's pressure by condemning the United States blockade and bombing of North Vietnam as well as the United States occupation of the Guantanamo base in Cuba and by assuring the Cuban Premier that the policy of peaceful coexistence would not weaken the ideological struggle, that the confrontation between capitalism and communism would become more acute, and that small socialist nations would be defended and treated equally by the Soviet superpower. Apparently satisfied, Castro said that for twelve years the United States had exerted pressure on Cuba to break her ties with the USSR but that, instead, the relations and confidence between the two countries had consolidated, reaching a level never attained before. Then he pledged that Cuba would never accept "opportunism, neutralism, revisionism, liberalism, or capitalist ideological penetration." One wonders whether this statement was a betrayal of his subconscious hope that the USSR would abstain from such vicious practices.

Castro's trip also made evident his new, more compromising attitude toward other countries. Four or five years earlier Castro had strongly criticized Houari Boumédienne for overthrowing Ben Bella. Now Castro began his trip with a stay in Algeria of nine days, equal to the time he later spent in the USSR. (Algeria was followed by six days in revolutionary Guinea and one day in traditional Sierra Leone.) Castro had also earlier sorted friend from foe by the country's prevailing antagonism toward the USSR; hence, Rumania had been very high in his esteem. Now the length of his stay in each of the Eastern European countries was positively correlated to their orthodoxy and good standing with Moscow: nine days in the USSR, eight in East Germany and Bulgaria, seven in Poland and Hungary, five in Czechoslovakia, and only four in Rumania.

Rodríguez joined Castro for the Eastern European stage of his trip, replacing Major Juan Almeida, a black, who was an asset in the African stage of the trip. (Some members of the Cuban delegation who were unacceptable to the USSR also returned to Havana.) Both the Cuban and the Eastern European news media ranked Rodríguez second in the Cuban delegation; he was decorated in several countries; and in the Moscow meetings he, Castro, Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny met alone. Rodríguez was shown in photos at important meetings; he apparently was taking care of the serious business. During the trip Castro did all that he could to build up his image. He submitted to unaccustomed formalities such as wearing a necktie to receive the Dimitrov Order in Bulgaria and the Lenin Order in Moscow, and a cap and gown in his investment as Doctor *honoris causa* at Charles University in Prague. He visited dozens of factories and farms even in remote areas, played football with Bulgarians and basketball with Poles, and often mixed with the population. Castro's visit to the USSR was originally scheduled for three weeks but lasted only nine days. When leaving the country, the Prime Minister said that he would return in 1973 or 1974 "for a more extended unofficial visit." Rodríguez stayed in Moscow for a few days after Castro left, preparing a significant announcement.

officially requested Cuba's entrance into the organization, and its eight members unanimously accepted.[19] Rodríguez promised to eliminate "once and for all" the instability of the Cuban supply of sugar to the socialist camp and requested entry into the Intergovernmental Commission of Socialist Countries for the Development of Electronic Computation. In turn, Kosygin stated that the needs of the Cuban economy should be coordinated with the 1976-80 plans of Comecon members.[20]

In the West there was the impression before Castro's trip that neither he nor the Soviet leaders were eager for Cuba's entrance into Comecon.[21] After the step was taken, it was speculated that Cuba's admission could be a Soviet concession to give guarantees to Castro that Moscow's improved ties with Washington would not be to the detriment of the Caribbean island.[22] But if this were the case and Castro had a vested interest in getting such a "concession," why did he not stay in Moscow five more days to make the request himself? Probably what he wanted was Cuba's admittance into the Warsaw Pact, but this was too much to ask of the Soviets because it might have jeopardized their delicate new détente with the United States. It is doubtful that Cuba's entrance into Comecon will bring any significant advantage to the island; and, conversely, it may result in less flexibility in Cuban economic plans, now to be coordinated with those of the seven Eastern European nations (and Mongolia!). Personally, this step will reduce Castro's power in economics even more and strengthen that of Rodríguez. The USSR seems to be the main winner with its increased control over the island's economy and, probably, a distribution of the Cuban economic burden among Comecon members.

Cuban dependence on the USSR seemed to have reached a point of no return in 1972. Some 60 percent of Cuban trade was with the Soviets, approximately the same proportion it used to be with the United States in the 1950s.[23] Cuba had also systematically failed to meet her sugar export commitments with the Soviets, thereby building in 1965-72 a cumulative deficit of about 20 million tons of sugar, the equivalent of three good sugar crops.[24] According to Soviet sources, the island's cumulative trade deficit with the USSR for 1960-70 amounted to 1.5 billion dollars; but Cuban statistics indicate that the figure was above two billion dollars.[25] Due to Cuba's bad sugar and tobacco crops of 1971-72, such trade deficit may have increased to three billion dollars by 1972.[26] The total debt of Cuba to the USSR in that year was probably close to the four billion dollar mark if the annual repayment of loans plus interest, shipping costs, and the cost of maintaining Soviet technical and military advisors are added. It has been reported that the National Bank of Cuba estimates that half of such debt could have been saved if Cuba had traded with market economies.[27] Cuba's merchant marine, despite its remarkable growth in the last decade, carried only seven to eight percent of the island trade, most of which was handled by Soviet vessels.[28] The USSR gave Cuba $1.5 billion in military aid until 1971; and although, apparently, she did not charge for it, she has gained substantial control in the supervision of such equipment. In the summer of 1971 there were some 3,000 Soviet technicians and military

subjects in Cuba.[29] Thousands of Cubans who are now (or will be) in key positions have been and are being trained in the USSR.

In the 1960s conflicts between the USSR and Cuba were generated by several causes. Cuba often felt treated in a neo-colonial manner by a big power. The first serious confrontation occurred in 1962 when the USSR agreed with the United States, without consulting Cuba, to withdraw the missiles that created the October crisis. Six years later Castro accused the "developed socialist countries" of using commercial practices similar to those employed by the capitalist countries and specifically denounced the USSR for restricting its oil supplies to Cuba, thus obstructing the latter's development. Other points of friction resulted from divergent doctrinal stands; thus, in 1966-68 (when Sino-Guevarism was in vogue) Castro imputed the Soviets with neglecting ideological consciousness and political awareness for the development of the material base and with introducing economic reforms that pushed them back to capitalism.[30]

In his speech of July 26, 1972, the Cuban Prime Minister showed how his dependence on the Soviets had forced him to retreat from his previous positions. He said that Cuban-Soviet relations were "based on principles and doctrine." Castro also reported that since his 1964 visit an impressive Soviet progress had occurred in technology, economics, and science, and in the cities, and stated that this development of the material base had been paralleled by the achievement of a "tremendous political awareness": "It is an unquestionable fact that imperialist ideology, propaganda, and corruption have not succeeded in gaining a toehold anywhere in the Soviet Union . . . . Marxism-Leninism lives on there, [it] is the daily bread of the Soviet people." Finally he stated that the Soviet leadership had "deep feelings of solidarity, affection, and respect" for the Cuban people and that they, in turn, were "proud to have the priceless, disinterested, and revolutionary" friendship of the USSR: "The economic relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union have been the most generous and the most revolutionary possible . . . . Relations of this kind used to be unknown in the history of relations among nations . . . . Though the world of tomorrow will change, our friendship with the Soviet people will remain a constant and our gratitude will be eternal."[31]

In November 1972 there was an important reorganization of the top Cuban government apparatus: an Executive Committee with power above the Council of Ministries (JUCEPLAN—Junta Central de Planificación) was established, composed of ten Deputy Prime Ministers with direct control over sectors of the economy, each one grouping several central ministries and agencies. Castro became the President of the New Executive Committee and retained the Premiership of the Council of Ministries and control over several ministries and agencies, principally the armed forces and internal security. But, obviously, there was some delegation of his previously omnipotent power. Rodríguez was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Policy with control over the Soviet-Cuban Commission and all foreign relations. President Dorticós was given control over JUCEPLAN (Junta Central de Planificación), the Ministries of Foreign Trade and Labor, the National Bank and other minor agencies.[32] Nevertheless, Rodríguez's control over the foreign

sector gives him enormous power in foreign trade (in addition, this ministry is headed by Marcelo Fernández, a follower of Rodríguez's economic thought) and expertise in planning a *de facto* control over JUCEPLAN.

The Soviet-Cuban Commission, Cuba's entrance into Comecon, the strengthening of the former's planning apparatus, and the increasing influence of Rodríguez and other technocrats trusted by the USSR assured the latter that the island would use Soviet aid more efficiently, follow a more orthodox and rational economic policy, and do her best to honor her export commitments in the future. And yet Cuba's accumulated debt was of such a colossal magnitude that it put in jeopardy the new economic strategy. Important concessions were necessary to allow such strategy to consolidate, bear fruit, and eradicate the negative image of Cuba's poor economic performance which had been so embarrassing for the Soviets all over the world and, particularly, in Latin America.

In December 1972 Castro and Rodríguez returned to Moscow, having been invited to participate in the festivities of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the USSR. At the plenary meeting of the anniversary, in a final political concession, Castro cited the Soviet "single multinational state" as a model for a "Latin American socialist community."[33] The next day he and Brezhnev signed five economic agreements through which the USSR made the following important commitments: (1) stipulation for 1973-1975 of higher prices for Cuba's two main export items—sugar (an increase from 6.11 to 11 cents per pound) and nickel; (2) technical aid in 1973-1975 (at a value of 300 million rubles) to mechanize the sugar harvest; to repair, modernize and/or expand nickel, electricity, oil-refining, textile, and metallurgic installations; and to help in planning and electronic computation (this credit will be paid in 1976-2000); (3) deferment for 13 years of the payment of the Cuban debt to the USSR (both principal and interest) accrued in 1960-1972 (payments will be made in 1986-2011); (4) granting of the necessary credit to compensate for the expected Cuban deficit in the balance of payments in 1973-1975 with the Soviets (probably about one billion rubles) under the same payment conditions as in number 3; and (5) a three-year (1973-1975) trade agreement (details were not given).[34]

The third meeting of the Soviet-Cuban Commission was held in Havana in February-March 1973 to implement the new economic agreements signed in Moscow. Rodríguez, the head of the meeting, opened it with praise to the USSR for the concessions made. No further information was made public.[35] The numerous concessions made by Cuba since 1970 had finally paid economically but the island dependency upon the USSR was greater than ever before.

Cuba's Realpolitik with Latin America

The Organization of American States (OAS) agreed in January 1962 to expel Cuba from the interamerican system, alleging that it was incompatible with Cuba's self-proclaimed socialism and Marxism-

Latin America and its relations with the Soviet Union. In July 1964 the OAS, responding to evidence presented by Venezuela of a Cuban-armed expedition, agreed to cut diplomatic, economic, and transportation links with Cuba. At the time only Mexico, Chile, and Uruguay opposed the sanctions, but eventually the last two countries accepted the OAS decision. Cuba resorted to increased aid to support revolution in Latin America as the only way to break her isolation in the hemisphere. In addition, in 1966-67, Che Guevara, Regis Debray, and Castro proclaimed the dogma that the rural guerrilla *foco a la* Cuba was the only road for revolution in Latin America.

In the late 1960s three events induced Cuba to stop sending armed expeditions abroad and to reduce dramatically her aid to Latin American guerrillas and revolutionary movements: the death of Che Guevara and the concomitant failure of his guerrillas in Bolivia (as well as previous failures in Argentina, Guatemala, Peru, and Venezuela); the deterioration of the Cuban economy which forced an inward concentration of all the nation's resources and efforts; and the rapprochement with the USSR, which allowed the latter to exert pressure on Cuba to normalize her relations with Latin America.[36] Early in 1970 the Venezuelan guerrilla leader Douglas Bravo accused Castro of abandoning continental revolution for consolidating socialism in his own country, as Stalin had done in the USSR in the 1930s. The Premier answered, defending his nation's "right and duty" to improve her economy, and warned that, in the future, guerrilla fighters would have to meet Cuban criteria to receive aid.[37] Since 1970 very little or nothing has been heard from the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), founded in Havana in 1967 to promote continental revolution. There are occasional reassurances in Castro's speeches that Cuba is still supporting the revolution in Latin America, but these seem rhetorical statements except perhaps for the training in Cuba of a selective group of Latin American revolutionaries.

In trying to break her hemispheric isolation and under pressure from the USSR, Cuba has become increasingly compromising with the socio-economic-political systems of other Latin American countries, first accepting the "progressive military," then "democratic socialism," and finally conventional military and representative democracies. In mid-1969 Castro had set three preconditions in order for Latin American countries to restore relations with Cuba: (a) rejection of the OAS sanctions; (b) condemnation of the "crimes" committed against Cuba by "Yankee imperialism"; and (c) revolution. He then said that Cuba would never return to the OAS and would wait as long as necessary (ten, twenty, thirty years) until all Latin American countries would revolt and establish the Organization of Revolutionary States of Latin America.[38] Less than one year later Castro replaced all these preconditions with a new one: that the country behave independently from the United States.[39]

Peru was the first country that offered Cuba an opportunity to practice the new *realpolitik* when, in 1968, General Juan Velasco Alvarado overthrew the democratic, but weak and inefficient, government of Belaunde Terry, proclaimed a revolution, and nationalized the United States oil business. Since then Cuban-Peruvian relations have

warmed cordially in 1969. Castro hailed the Peruvian leaders as "new phenomenon," that of "a group of progressive military playing a revolutionary role"; in 1970 generous Cuban aid was given to help the victims of the devastating Peruvian earthquake; in the fall of 1971 Velasco invited a Cuban delegation to attend a meeting of the UNCTAD's Group of 77 held in Lima; in late 1971 Castro made a stopover at the Lima airport (on his way back to Cuba from Chile) and met Valasco; and early in 1972 Peru presented a motion at the OAS requesting that its members be left free individually to reestablish relations with Cuba if they wanted. The motion was defeated but, in July, Peru reestablished relations with Cuba.

For a brief period, under the rule of leftist General Torres in 1970-71, there was a chance that Bolivia would repeat the Peruvian example; but the military coup of conservative General Banzer in late 1971 closed that possibility.

Since 1971 Cuba has been courting Panama's military regime led by General Omar Torrijos. Although he has not introduced any revolutionary or significant reformist changes in his country, Torrijos has challenged the United States over the Panama Canal. At the end of 1971 two vessels under Panamanian flag were captured by the Cuban navy, which alleged that Panama had launched incursions against Cuba before and that the captain of one of the vessels (a Cuban by birth and a United States citizen) was a CIA agent. The U.S. government offered its aid to Panama and requested from Cuba the return of the vessels and the captain. Castro immediately denounced this as a United States plot to divert Panamanian attention from the Canal and damage relations with Cuba. He invited Torrijos to send a plane to Havana to pick up all the crewmen who had not participated in acts of aggression. A Panamanian delegation soon arrived, heard the confession of those crewmen accused by Cuba, accepted the conditions, and hailed Castro for respecting Panama's sovereignty.[40] In 1972 Panama supported the Peruvian motion at the OAS and Panamanian air force planes made regular trips to Cuba carrying politicians and university professors and students. Later in the year Torrijos followed the Cuban precedent at Guantanamo Base by refusing to collect the United States' annual rent for the Canal Zone. The conflict over the Canal was brought by Panama in 1973 to the UN Security Council with strong support from Cuba, Peru, the USSR, and China, and against United States objections. During the Council meetings held in March in Panama City, General Torrijos condemned the embargo of Cuba, and Foreign Minister Juan Antonio Tack announced that Panama would recognize Cuba soon.[41]

In 1969 the Chilean Christian Democrat government of Eduardo Frei initiated trade exchanges with Cuba and, in June 1970, signed a two-year trade agreement for $11 million. Later in the year the Marxist candidate of the Popular Front (*Unidad Popular*, composed of Socialists, Communists, Radicals, and a leftist split of the Christian Democrats—MAPU), Castro's friend Salvador Allende was elected President. Ten days after taking office Allende reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba; and early in 1971 a new trade agreement (increasing the trade volume by only six million dollars) was signed by both countries.[42] Allende and Castro exchanged visits to their

respective countries; the Cuban Premier's trip took place at the end of 1971 and lasted almost one month, while the Chilean President's trip took place at the end of 1972 and lasted less than one week.

In 1971 Castro supported Uruguay's Popular Front (*Frente Amplio*) in that nation's elections. This Front, more a mixed coalition than that of Chile, was composed of splits from the two traditional parties ("Blanco" and "Colorado"), plus Communists, Socialists, and Christian Democrats, and was led by retired General Liber Seregni. The urban guerrillas, "Tupamaros," an illegal movement, could not participate in the elections and, although manifesting doubts that they could solve the problem, did not oppose the *Frente*. Castro was greatly disappointed when the Front lost the election to the conservative candidate of the incumbent party. Nevertheless, the entering of military men into the cabinet in 1973 opened the door for potential changes which are carefully watched by the Cubans.

A surprising rapprochement took place in 1971-72 between Cuba and the conventional government of Ecuador, led by the 78-year-old politician and quasi dictator Velasco Ibarra. He had not introduced a single revolutionary measure in his term (nor in his previous two brief periods as President) but seized some 50 United States fishing ships that had entered the unilaterally established 200-mile territorial waters of Ecuador. (The country is strategically important to Cuba because it is expected to become the second largest Latin American oil exporter by 1974.) In the Soviet-Cuban communique released on the occasion of Premier Kosygin's visit to Havana, both parties hailed Ecuador's "independent posture" (as well as that of Panama). On his way back from Chile, Castro made a stop at Quito's airport and met Velasco Ibarra and part of his cabinet. The warming relationship was interrupted in early 1972 by a military coup that overthrew Velasco Ibarra (for the third time in his career!). The new military regime has been cautious in its statements; and, although siding in 1972 with the Peruvians at the OAS meeting, did not follow them in reestablishing relations immediately with Cuba. In March 1973, during the ECLA meetings held in Quito, the chief of the Cuban delegation, Rodríguez, met with Ecuadorian President General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara and the Legislative Commission. When asked by journalists if the reestablishment of relations between the two countries was imminent, Rodríguez diplomatically said "we are not in a hurry."[43]

Mexico never accepted the OAS decision to isolate Cuba. Diplomatic relations and small trade continued uninterrupted although several conflicts created tension and coolness between the two countries. Early in 1972 the situation apparently changed when, for the first time since Cuba's revolutionary takeover, an exchange of foreign-trade missions took place. Cuba is interested in buying Mexican lubricants, manufactured products, and medicines (the latter suggests that the expected Soviet aid to develop a pharmaceutical industry in Cuba has not materialized) and in receiving technical experience in the industrialization of minerals and petroleum derivatives in exchange for tobacco, rum, and minerals. Mexico's Foreign Trade Bank offered to finance the operation and an agreement was signed in March 1973.[44]

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago entered the OAS in the late 1960s. Instead of alleging that they were not bound by the 1964 OAS decision, the two countries abstained from establishing diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba. The two nations have rather conventional regimes, democratically elected; and at one point Trinidad and Tobago accused Cuba of training some of its citizens in revolutionary warfare. The situation changed in 1971-72, however. An exchange of trade missions took place between Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago in late 1971, and a more liberal party gained power in Jamaica early in 1972. Both countries voted in favor of the Peruvian motion in the OAS in the spring of 1972, and Castro hailed them for doing so. In a conference of Commonwealth Caribbean leaders held in Port of Spain in October, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (as well as Bardados and Guyana which entered the OAS in the early 1970s) decided to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba and the decision was implemented in December 1972.[45]

The unexpected occurred in Argentina when President-General Alejandro Lanusse quickly convoked presidential elections; these were freely held in March 1973 and won by the Peronist candidate Dr. Héctor Cámpora who was inaugurated as President on May 25. Cuban President Dorticós was invited to the inauguration and three days later Argentina and Cuba reestablished diplomatic relations.[46]

In Central America surprising changes began to take place. At the end of 1972 Cuba sent two "medical brigades" to help the victims of the earthquake that destroyed Managua (interestingly the same gesture that opened the door to the Peruvians) and they were received by the Minister of Public Health.[47] Cuba stated that this was an act of solidarity to the suffering people of Nicaragua and did not necessarily mean support to Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, Jr., but even this gesture would have been difficult to conceive three years before. On the other hand, Costa Rican President José Figueres (another former archenemy of Castro) addressed in 1973 a meeting of Cuban exiles in Puerto Rico, advising them to be realistic (in view of the United States rapprochement with China) and to open themselves to the possibility of a rapprochement between Cuba and the United States.[48]

Finally relations with Venezuela, the nation that in 1963 requested of the OAS the imposition of sanctions against Cuba, have improved considerably since 1969 as a result of a change in attitude by the Christian Democrat government. The first step was taken by President Rafael Caldera's "pacification program" which included legalization of the Venezuelan communist party, amnesty to revolutionary activists who agreed to respect the democratic process, and relaxation of tensions with Cuba. In 1972 top Venezuelan officials from the Ministries of Education and Agriculture visited Cuba; there were professional, scholarship, and sport exchanges; the Cuban press agency *Prensa Latina* was allowed to establish a branch in Caracas; and one of the two Cuban guerrillas arrested in the 1963 landing was freed. Early in 1973 Caldera stated that the guerrillas in Venezuela had disappeared,

that Cuba's conflicts with other Latin American countries had been considerably reduced, that the normalization process between Venezuela and Cuba was evolving positively, that his government was endorsing Cuba's entrance into international agencies (e.g., the Group of 77), and that, although Venezuela would not formally present the Cuban case in the next OAS General Assembly, the theme would be discussed informally. The Assembly held in April was headed by Venezuelan Foreign Minister Aristides Calvani who played a crucial role in getting approval for the new doctrine of "ideological pluralism" to accept, within the OAS, nations with divergent socio-politico-economic systems, including Marxist ones.[49] At the same time that the OAS assembly was taking place the Christian Democrat presidential candidate Lorenzo Fernández (elections will be held in December 1973) was discussing in Moscow with the Soviet leaders the possibility of shipping oil from Venezuela to Cuba.[50] In his May Day 1973 speech, Castro for the first time openly courted Venezuela by welcoming its recent step to annul the commercial treaty with the United States and by announcing that Cuba would support the Venezuelan government "regardless of its economic system" in case of a serious conflict with international oil corporations.[51]

The previous pages show that Cuba has assumed an increasingly compromising attitude vis-à-vis Latin American countries with divergent revolutionary stands:[52] the Chilean Marxist government; a group of nations that have proclaimed themselves revolutionaries but are mostly reformist (e.g., Peru and Mexico, and probably Argentina in the future) or have not changed the status quo at all (as in Panama and Ecuador); and a group of conventional regimes that do not pretend to be revolutionary (e.g., Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela). A Hungarian journalist posed the problem to Castro while he was in Chile, asking him: "You have said a number of times in your speeches that there are many ways to achieve socialism; could you give us a general picture of the Latin American scene in this respect?" Castro answered employing "Cantinflas style" (the deliberately confusing and contradictory way that the famous Mexican comedian Mario Moreno uses to get away from difficult situations):

> I don't think I ever said that there were many ways, I might have said that there was more than one way, which remains to be proven and, to a certain extent, is being proved. Also, that new variants might come up . . . . Here's a new way: the Chilean process. A variant which may very well set the beginning of a process whose future we cannot predict, as in the case of Peru.

A Chilean journalist tried to get a more concrete definition from the Cuban Premier by asking: "In view of the experience of the last ten years of revolutionary struggle in Latin America do you think that the theory of the revolutionary nucleus [the guerrilla *foco*] is now subordinate to other forms of struggle or is that theoretical stand still valid?" Castro diplomatically chose to remain silent.[53]

Cuba's compromising attitude vis-à-vis Latin American countries that "behave independently from the U.S.A." has been paralleled with consistent verbal attacks against other military regimes (Argentina until May 1973, Bolivia after September 1971, Brazil, and Paraguay), representative democracies (Colombia, Costa Rica, Uruguay, and

Venezuela (until 1970) and twilight-zone systems (Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras). These are indiscriminantly despised as "imperialist puppets" or "Yankee lackeys." Training of selective revolutionaries from some of these countries apparently continues; and Cuba, at least rhetorically, also claims active support to revolutionary forces within them. These countries (together with the United States) have strongly opposed a revision of the 1962-1964 OAS agreements. In general, the less legitimate these countries' bases and the more they are maintained by repression, the stronger their opposition to Cuba. (Many of these countries, in fact, have exaggerated the Castroite threat to get more economic and military aid from the United States.) The most democratic regimes have been more flexible in this matter in spite of real physical attacks originated in Cuba.

For a decade Castro systematically rejected the possibility of Cuba's returning to the OAS, abhorring it as a "putrid, revolting den of corruption," a "disgusting, discredit cesspool" and a "ministry of colonies of the United States." At one point Castro said that Cuba would return to the OAS only if the "imperialists and their puppets were kicked out first"; more recently he spoke of the substitution of the OAS first by the "Organization of Revolutionary States of Latin America" and later by the "Union of Peoples of Latin America." (Notice that the second title, suggested in 1971, conveniently excluded the word "Revolutionary.")[54]

The position of OAS officials in the matter has been an embarrassing one: violently rejected by Castro, strongly criticized by a minority of Latin American countries, and having strong opposition to change from the most authoritarian-conservative countries in the area in an awkward marriage with the powerful United States. In November 1971, trying to avoid a repetition of the Chilean example (that individually reestablished relations with Cuba), the Secretary General of the OAS, Galo Plaza, began consultations in Mexico on the "normalization" of relations with Cuba. Besides the support of the openly favorable countries, he apparently received an endorsement from both Bolivia (then under leftist Torres) and the four open-minded democratic countries. But the strong opposition of conservative military regimes and that of the United States put an end to the move.[55]

In the spring of 1971 Nixon's overtures to China raised the possibility that Cuba would be next. The majority of OAS members became fearful of losing their scapegoat and bail for juicy United States aid, as Taiwan had done. The open-minded minority showed concern over an embarrassing Cuban-United States agreement on their backs. Galo Plaza hurried to ask the White House and the State Department to keep him, and the OAS members, informed of any changes in policy toward Cuba and resumed his efforts to find a satisfactory compromise within the OAS framework. The Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations quickly rejected any move to restore Cuba to OAS membership but welcomed the restoration of relations with Latin American countries on an individual basis. Toward the end of the year Peru presented a motion at the OAS, freeing its members to make individual decisions on the matter, but withdrew the motion later. (Castro rejected the rumor that the ship incident which occurred at the time—a possible cause for the Peruvian withdrawal—could have been deliberately created by Cuba to

sabotage the motion.) In May 1972 Peru reintroduced the motion which was defended at an extraordinary meeting of the OAS by Chancellor General Mercado Jorrin.[56] The final vote (thirteen against, seven in favor, and three abstentions) showed some surprises: Colombia and Costa Rica (reportedly favorable) voted no, and Argentina and Venezuela (the first reportedly against, the second in favor) abstained.[57] Castro's strong statement from Sofia, at the same time that the meeting was taking place, rejecting any "neutralization" of Cuba and endorsing the Latin American revolution (see below), could have affected the voting adversely.

The changes that occurred in Latin America in the second half of 1972 and the first half of 1973 significantly altered the OAS voting pattern in the Cuban case. In April 1973 the majority of the OAS members accepted the new doctrine of "ideological pluralism" and Galo Plaza stated that possibly the next General Assembly would lift the sanctions placed in 1964 against Cuba.[58] At the time, there were in the OAS eleven countries solidly in favor of lifting the sanctions, six strongly against, and seven dubious. This was a remarkable shift in one year, but only eight votes (one-third of the membership) are needed to maintain the sanctions. Therefore, if the United States opposition continues and there are no significant changes in Latin America, Galo Plaza's prediction may not come true. On May Day 1973 Castro said that the new doctrine of "ideological pluralism" made the 1962 OAS resolution (declaring the Cuban Marxist system incompatible with the "interamerican system") null and void. And yet he did not help to break the deadlock by stating that it was the OAS that was incompatible with Marxism-Leninism and by rejecting a return to the OAS unless the United States is excluded from the organization (he also added a new condition: that the OAS headquarters be moved to a Latin American country).[59] Thus in mid-1973 the battle was still between Havana and Washington. Is a rapprochement possible?

The Conditions for a United States-Cuban Rapprochement

In the late 1960s a United States-Cuban rapprochement was mainly the subject of intellectual discussion with a few practical overtures that did not produce the expected fruit.[60] In the 1970s, however, an era of *realpolitik* has begun, which has created better opportunities for negotiation: on the United States side, the understanding with China, agreements with the USSR, and the settlement of peace in Vietnam; on the Cuban side, the decline in the exportation of the revolution to Latin America and a more compromising attitude toward divergent systems in the area. Until now, however, there have been only minor changes in the positions of the chief leaders of the two countries, and the conditions for negotiation established by both seem irreconcilable.[61]

In October 1969—with an eye on the increasing number of military and authoritarian regimes in Latin America—President Nixon pragmatically stated that, in the future, the United States would deal with these countries realistically as they are. This has justified the United States' close economic and military cooperation with Brazil and its cautious policy vis-à-vis Peru and Chile. United States officials have not

mentioned again the incompatibility of the Cuban regime with the interamerican system as a deterrent for normalizing relations between the two countries. (The "interamerican system" was never clearly defined but loosely meant representative democracy plus market economy, a formula which is now absent in most of Latin America and has been substituted within the OAS by the new doctrine of "ideological pluralism.") The United States government, however, has not modified its stand vis-à-vis the other two preconditions established for the restoration of relations with Cuba: (1) cutting her military ties with the USSR, and (2) stopping her subversion in Latin America. Throughout 1970-73 the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Assistant Secretaries for Interamerican Affairs have reiterated (in reports to the United States Congress, the OAS, the Latin American countries, and the news media) that Cuba has not changed its position on these two points.[62] In 1971 the State Department acknowledged that "Cuba's active assistance to subversive elements was apparently at reduced levels" but pointed to her intransigent rejection of a return to the OAS as proof that the situation was not ripe for a revision.

This deadlock has been slightly altered by occasional events, most of which have aggravated the existing tension: the frequent hijacking of United States planes to Cuba; the capture in early 1970 of a Cuban fishing boat and its crew by a group of Cuban exiles (there were attacks on Cuban fishing boats in the fall of 1972 and in early 1973 also); the establishment late in 1970 of a Soviet servicing facility for submarines in the Cuban port of Cienfuegos; the detention and expulsion from the United States in 1971 of a Cuban delegation that attempted to participate in an international sugar conference held in New Orleans; and at the end of that year the seizure by the Cuban Navy of two vessels under the Panamanian flag. The latter probably was the gravest incident of all: the State Department qualified it as "an intolerable threat" to free trade and navigation in the Caribbean; Pentagon sources indicated that air and naval units were being placed on alert and that they would go in aid of any attacked ship under a foreign registry if the corresponding government requested it; and the Navy reported that warships stationed in Guantanamo (that is, in Cuban territory) would be sent to the Caribbean to engage in a potential confrontation with Cuban war vessels.[63]

Only in a few cases have there been positive exchanges between the two nations: in 1971, the entrance of a United States volleyball team into Cuba and of a Cuban baseball team into Puerto Rico; in 1972, the attendance of an official United States scientific delegation (from the Commerce Department) at an international oceanographic conference held in Havana;[64] and in 1973, the hijacking agreement. The latter had been considered on several occasions and was precipitated when in November 1972 the hijacking of an airplane almost caused disaster in both the United States and Cuba. (The hijackers threatened to crash the plane into the Oak Ridge Atomic Center and the landing in Havana presented serious problems because the airplane had been damaged by FBI agents' bullets.) Discussions began immediately through the Swiss Embassy in Havana and the agreement was simultaneously signed in that capital city and Washington on February 15, 1973. The document

grants to each nation the right to deport the hijacker of an aircraft or vessel or to try him in its own territory and according to its own laws. In the latter case hijacking for "strict political reasons" may be considered as a mitigating or extenuating circumstance providing that the hijacker (a) was in "real and imminent danger of death"; (b) did not have "a viable alternative for leaving the country"; (c) did not use financial extortion (any funds obtained through this means are to be returned without delay); and (d) did not cause physical injury to the members of the crew, passengers, and other persons. These conditions, at least in theory, considerably reduce the probability of political hijacking. Another important clause in the agreement stipulates penalties for those who conspire, prepare, or take part in an expedition to carry out acts of violence against the territory, aircraft, or vessels of the other party.[65] This was obviously intended to protect Cuba against attacks from exiles and may explain why the agreement has received no publicity in the United States.

In the few cases in which the United States and Cuba have had positive exchanges (including the hijacking agreement) top officials from one or the other country rapidly dismissed any hope that such exchange could imply a modification of their respective basic policies.

The United States expects Cuba to break the ice, as President Nixon indicated in his speech of April 1971, on the United States-China understanding: "If the Cuban policy toward us should change, then we would consider changing ours. That is, we would take a step forward . . . . Havana hasn't taken any steps, so relations with Cuba remain frozen." Premier Castro answered, saying that there would not be an overture from Cuba and that his country would neither be neutralized nor stop its support of all revolutionary movements in Latin America.[66]

In 1971-1972 Castro spoke several times on his own preconditions for a rapprochement with the United States. When visiting Chile, he remarked that to reach an understanding it would not be necessary for a revolutionary or socialist government to be in office in the United States but just a realistic government ("a President of wide vision and broad understanding") aware of the United States, Latin American, and world situations and aspirations, and, hence, assuming a policy of peace. According to Castro, Nixon, although a realistic man, does not represent those trends and has been aggressive and reactionary in the past: "Nixon will never visit Havana!" Cuba will wait until the proper man is installed in the White House. Two conditions would also have to be met by the ideal government for a normalization of relations with Cuba: (1) an end to the war in Vietnam, and (2) an end to the United States role of gendarme in Latin America, that is, her abstaining from any intervention as in the past.[67]

In a press conference in Sofia, Bulgaria, held in May 1972, Castro dismissed as false a Mexican newspaper report saying that he was planning to meet Nixon in Warsaw: "We are not at all interested in such a meeting [and] would refuse [it]." He then stated that Cuba would never yield to the two United States conditions: "We will not give in one iota in this respect." Since Cuba had been able to overcome the most difficult tests posed by the United States, Castro argued that "it

would be absolutely senseless for us to make any concessions to the USA [now]." Then he assumed the same attitude that the American President had taken a year before: "Nixon is the one who's got to do something." He would have to meet, "with no strings attached," the two conditions set by Castro in Chile: (1) an end to the Vietnam war, and (2) an end to United States intervention in Latin America; plus two additional ones: (3) lifting the economic embargo of Cuba, and (4) getting the naval base out of Guantanamo. Castro said that Cuba would wait two, four, ten years until such conditions were met and further stated that "Kissinger and all those advisers and 'big brains' will never come to Havana or hold any kind of meeting with us." [68]

In his speech of July 26, 1972, Castro reiterated that Cuba's doors would be closed to "Nixon's cheap politicking and dirty deals." At the same time, he expressed satisfaction at seeing "the advances and new formulations in the policies of the United States" made at the Democratic Convention and that "one of the presidential candidates [McGovern] was in favor of lifting the blockade against Cuba." However, he attacked violently another point of the Democratic platform which stated that Cuba could not become a Soviet military base. "In our territory we do as we damn please! And no [United States] party platform has any right to establish prerequisites of any kind with regard to Cuba." Finally he reiterated the four conditions, enumerated in Bulgaria, necessary to begin negotiating the restoration of relations with the United States. [69]

What are the actual possibilities of the United States meeting the Cuban conditions or vice versa? It is clear that the socialist system of Cuba is no longer at issue and that the United States has concentrated all its emphasis on external matters. As this article proves, Cuba's military and economic links with the USSR have increased in the last decade, especially in the 1970s; hence, the United States demand that Cuba close the door to her Soviet friends has induced the opposite result. Without having some guarantees from the United States first Cuba could not cut her links with the USSR because it would have left her vulnerable to the former. The Soviet-Cuban military relationship presented a serious threat to the internal security of the United States in October 1962, but during the Missile Crisis the leaders of the two superpowers reached an agreement; this apparently has been honored by the USSR, which gave explanations to the United States at the time of the installation of its submarine base in Cienfuegos. The second United States condition was directed mainly at protecting the security of the American allies in Latin America. In many cases, however, those allies exaggerated the real threat in order to increase United States aid; in others, they managed (with or without United States aid) to capture the expeditions or defeat the guerrillas coming from Cuba. Since 1968 the island has turned inward, dramatically reducing her efforts to export the revolution. With its increasingly compromising attitude toward divergent systems in Latin America—shown in this article—Cuba has proven that she can be a peaceful neighbor. (The Soviet interest in normalizing the Cuban situation in the Western Hemisphere has been an important factor in this change; thus, the Sovietization of the Revolution has paradoxically helped in closing the gap to meet one of

the two United States conditions for negotiation while widening the gap in the other.) And yet the Cuban leaders could not afford to acknowledge publicly that they were another paper tiger and thus have continued their mostly rhetorical support of the revolutionary movements in the area. If the United States would drop its two conditions (this action should preferably take place within the OAS, perhaps with the United States supporting a motion similar to that presented by Peru in 1972) and if a rapprochement were eventually to take place, the two United States security objectives would probably be achieved anyway: peaceful relations with the United States and Latin America could result in the increased independence of Cuba vis-à-vis the USSR and in an even more conventional foreign policy of the island vis-à-vis her neighbors.

The first condition set by the Cubans has been met already with the end of the war in Vietnam. (In his speeches of December 1972 and May 1973 Castro dropped this condition.) Concerning the second condition, the last United States intervention in Latin America occurred more than eight years ago in the Dominican Republic; in view of the United States experience there and in Vietnam, it is doubtful that such an action would be repeated. Certainly the United States could put the Cubans against the wall, promising to abstain from intervention provided that the Cubans do the same, and agreeing to keep the agreement secret. The third condition set by the Cubans (raised to first condition on May 1st by Castro who added that it should precede any discussion and be unconditional) could be accepted without any significant disadvantages for the United States and probably with some gain. The economic embargo caused serious problems to Cuba at the time of its inception, but most of them have been overcome by now. Still some difficulties remain: the increased cost of freight (Cuba's main markets moved from 90 to 6,000 miles away); the higher costs paid on United States spare parts bought by Cuba through intermediaries (according to the Cubans the overprice ranges from 20 to 30 percent); the difficulties with shipping (Cuba's merchant marine carries only 7-8 percent of the island's trade); the relatively poor assortment and low quality of goods in Eastern Europe (as compared with the United States); and the higher price that the Cubans pay for their imports from the Soviet bloc.[70] But Cuba is capable of selling all that she produces (actually the problem is that she does not produce enough) and of buying practically everything that she needs either from socialist or market-economy countries. The embargo, instead, has served the Cubans as an excuse for their poor economic performance and as a propaganda tool for despising the United States as a superpower strangling a small nation. Dropping an economically inoperable embargo would probably result in an improved political image of the United States abroad. The fourth condition is for the United States to get out of Guantanamo. This naval base, according to the opinion of military experts, does not have strategic significance today and is not really necessary to the United States. Its doubtful psychological value ("in spite of Castro we are still there") is offset by the risks of a grave incident that it constantly poses. (Castro seems to have placed low priority on this condition; he rested importance on it in December 1972 and, although he reconfirmed it as one of his conditions on May

1, 1973, he put a low priority on it. Hence this condition may be a subject of negotiation.)

An American yielding on most of the Cuban conditions could be interpreted as a calamitous defeat. Conversely, the United States position could be presented as that of a great nation which has taken the initiative in removing a point of friction in the world, thus enhancing its own image and eliminating that of an encircled but challenging neighbor. The example of China proves that taking a noble initiative pays well in terms of both domestic and world opinion. There would also be more tangible benefits for the United States as a result of this normalization, such as the elimination of incidents between the two countries that could precipitate a grave confrontation.

At this point Castro and Nixon are each waiting for the other to make an overture; the question is who can afford to wait longer. Both men are realistic and opportunistic statesmen who have accepted many compromises in the past to obtain and keep themselves in power. Dr. Kissinger is reported to have said, prior to the United States presidential elections in 1972, that if Nixon were reelected, the normalization of relations with Cuba would then be "on the agenda."[71] On the other side, although Castro has stated several times that neither Nixon nor Kissinger will visit Havana, he has left the door open to negotiation by establishing his conditions and repeating them on various occasions. Let us now review the internal and external forces that the two men face and that could influence their decisions.

By the end of the fall of 1972 Nixon seemed assured of another four years in the White House and his power was strengthened by his electoral victory. United States congressmen, such as Senators Fulbright, Hughes, and Kennedy, had unsuccessfully urged a revision of the United States policy toward Cuba. In April 1972 a "Congressional Conference on United States-Cuban Relations" took place in the Senate, sponsored by 30 senators (all Democrats except three), with a team of 15 specialists debating the main issues. The Conference was intended for information rather than action; thus, it did not make any specific recommendations although it was positive toward a normalization of relations with Cuba (measures suggested were: ending the embargo and travel restrictions; reestablishing commercial flights; and promoting the exchange of publications, scholars, newsmen, athletes, and artists).[72] After the hijacking agreement was signed, a group of Republican congressmen called for a dialogue with Cuba that could lead to an eventual normalization of relations between the two nations "in the interest of the United States."[73] Until the Watergate scandal seriously weakened Nixon's power, the United States Congress was incapable of influencing him in favor of a rapprochement with Cuba (this was obviously proved by the inability of the Congress to impose upon the President a compromise on the more vital problem of Vietnam). In mid-1973, with the outcome of the Watergate affair still uncertain, any further discussion on this matter appears as sheer speculation; nevertheless one thing is certain: even if Nixon is cleared of

more compromising role with the Congress than before. Externally, Nixon's position has been strengthened on the one hand but weakened on the other. In the last decade the increasing Sovietization of Cuba has not recreated any internal security problems for the United States and conversely has helped in moderating the island's foreign policy. Sad as it is, the United States is better off dealing with a Soviet-controlled Castro than with him loose, creating all sorts of trouble. It would not be surprising if Nixon took advantage of his trip to Moscow to reach some understanding with the Soviet leaders on the future of Cuba as he probably did on Vietnam. Finally, the hijacking agreement has helped in dramatically reducing two frequent sources of tensions: diversion of United States aircraft to Cuba and attacks of exiles against the Cuban territory and vessels. On the other hand, while Castro has become more peaceful and dependent on the USSR, his Latin American brothers have behaved in a more independent manner vis-à-vis the United States and have presented a challenge to the latter on numerous fronts. In mid-1972 only two Latin American countries had relations with Cuba, but one year later the number had risen to nine and two other countries were expected to follow the same path soon. Still, at least one-third of the OAS members were in favor of the status quo. Thus, by mid-1973 the likelihood was that Nixon would not have to face an immediate challenge on Cuba at the OAS similar to that of China at the UN but, at the speed that the situation was changing, it was difficult to conceive that the problem could be postponed until 1976. The pressures from the majority of the Latin American countries which are in favor of a rapprochement, the crisis in the OAS, the weakened presidential power, and a desire to emulate in his second term the foreign policy achievements of the first may move Nixon into taking the initiative soon.

Castro appears also to be in a weak internal position in view of the erosion of his charisma and the challenge to his power by internal forces led by Rodríguez and supported by the USSR. These forces give priority to the island's domestic problems and are in favor of the institutionalization of the Revolution and the normalization of its status in the Western Hemisphere. Economically, Cuba is doing poorly but has been able to survive the embargo, and the new economic agreements with the USSR will help. The reestablishment of trade with the United States would help to ease the burdens of the country but would not be enough stimulus to induce Castro to an agreement. Normalization of relations with the United States would be a way to achieve more independence for Cuba but perhaps at a high cost for the Premier's power. Both for the United States and the USSR, Rodríguez would be a more reasonable, predictable, and responsible statesman to deal with than Castro, and he knows this well. It is doubtful that the restoration of United States-Cuban relations would result in enlarged power for Castro if the United States and the USSR have already reached an understanding. There is another way to look at the problem; and this is that, in the past, Castro has exploited the real or imagined encirclement by the United States to his own advantage: as a scapegoat for the frequent mistakes of his administration and as a phantom to keep his forces united and to impose his personalistic-autocratic will. Castro's record shows that whenever there has been a choice between his

country's independence and his own power, he has sacrificed the first for his own sake. His bitter criticism of Nixon and his provocative statements are indications of his concern about losing power, while his setting of conditions for negotiation is probably a result of Soviet pressure on him. Thus it is safe to predict that he will take the initiative in the negotiations only if he perceives that resisting Soviet pressure for normalization would erode his power even more. In view of the current state of Soviet-Cuban and United States-Soviet relations it is unrealistic for the United States to ask Castro (even if full guarantees are given to him to preserve his power and the socialist system on the island) to cut his ties with the Soviets and become totally independent. Between the two extremes (full Sovietization and total independence) lies a broad field for negotiation and the United States initiative could be critical in the outcome.

The United States policy of isolation of Cuba and "wait-and-see," practiced in the last decade, has allowed an increasing Sovietization and totalitarianism of the Cuban Revolution with the consequent curtailment of political and individual freedoms and vanishing of the autochthonous characteristics of the Cuban process. The initial American manifested concern over the negative domestic features of the Cuban regime (be it rhetorical or real) has been totally displaced by the United States' own interests in external affairs. The normalization of American-Cuban relations could help to gain some independence for the island and more freedom and less economic hardships for its people. These results are by no means assured beforehand but would depend largely on the attitude and concerns of the United States. If it decides to take the initiative and does not neglect the interests of the Cuban people at the bargaining table, it may induce the slow transformation of the current autocratic and Soviet-dependent Cuban regime into a more democratic, humane, and independent socialist system. In an era of *realpolitik*, this may be considered a rather naive and romantic suggestion with which to close this article, but not for those who dream of a better world for tomorrow.

Notes

1. See K. S. Karol, *Guerrillas in Power: The Course of the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1970); Edward Gonzalez, "Relationship with the Soviet Union," in Carmelo Mesa-Lago, ed., *Revolutionary Change in Cuba* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), pp. 81-104; Charles Bettelheim, "La révolution cubaine sur la voie soviétique," *Le Monde*, May 12, 1971; and Leon Gouré and Julian Weinkle, "Cuba's New Dependency," *Problems of Communism*, 21 (March-April 1972), pp. 68-79.

2. Radio Moscow, transmissions of December 9, 1970, and February 22, 1971. The extension of the trade agreement was not reported by the Cuban press.

3. *Granma Weekly Review*, May 2 and 16, 1971, p. 12, and June 20 and 27, p. 1.

4. "Cuban-Soviet Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Collaboration Holds First Session," *Granma Weekly Review*, September 12, 1971, p. 7.

5. "Novikov and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez Sign Protocol of Collaboration between Cuba and the USSR" (and in smaller print: "Prime Minister Castro Attends Signing"), *Granma Weekly Review*, September 19, 1971, p. 3.

6. Radio Moscow, transmission of September 25, 1971.

7. "Palabras en el Reparto Alamar," Instituto Cubano de Radiodifusión, transmission of October 27, 1971. See also the daily edition of *Granma*, October 25-30, 1971.

8. "Joint Soviet-Cuban Communique," *Granma Weekly Review*, November 7, 1971, p. 1.

9. Press Interview, *Granma Weekly Review*, December 19, 1971, pp. 12-13.

10. At the concluding session of the Soviet-Cuban Commission's first meeting, Rodríguez

had stated that Cuba was "constructing the foundations of socialism." On the occasion of Kosygin's visit, the Soviet side said that Cuba was "constructing the foundations of socialism." The importance of the Dorticós-Brezhnev statements is that they were made at Moscow, using the correct Russian terminology and, then, were reproduced in the Cuban press. See *Granma Weekly Review*, January 2, 1972, p. 12.

11. *Granma Weekly Review*, January 9, 1972, p. 10.

12. See Marcel Niedergang, "La récent voyage de M. Fidel Castro a confirmé son alignement sur Moscou," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, August 1972; "Brazil, Sugar Challenge to Cuba," *Latin America*, 2 (January 1972), pp. 9-10; and "Inestabilidad del mercado azucarero," *Progreso*, August 1972, pp. 35-76.

13. "Cordial Nixon-Mao Interview; Chou-Nixon Friendly Meeting; Paper Tiger Gives Syrupy Speech in Peking," *Granma Weekly Review*, February 27, 1972, pp. 1, 7, 12. See also *ibid.*, March 5, 1972, pp. 1, 12.

14. "Sale Nixon . . . en viaje a la URSS," *Granma*, May 17, 1972, p. 5; "Llegó Nixon a Moscú," *ibid.*, May 23, p. 6; "Actividades de Nixon en Moscú," *ibid.*, May 24, p. 5; "Llegó Nixon a Varsovia," *ibid.*, June 1, p. 6; "Terminó Nixon su visita a Polonia," *ibid.*, June 2, p. 7. The weekly editions of *Granma* did not publish news on the visit.

15. "Firman Cuba y la URSS protocolo de la segunda sesión de la Comisión Intergubernamental de Colaboración Económica y Científico-Técnica," *Granma*, April 17, 1972, p. 6. See also A. Voronov, "Soviet-Cuban Cooperation Enters New Stage," *International Affairs* (Moscow), September 1972, p. 81.

16. Raúl Castro, "Speech at the Naval Parade on Revolutionary Navy Day," *Granma Weekly Review*, August 13, 1972, p. 5.

17. Radio Rebelde, transmission of April 18, 1972. See also *Granma Weekly Review*, April 23, 1972, p. 2.

18. F. Castro, "Speech at the May Day Parade and Workers' Rally," *Granma Weekly Review*, May 7, 1972, p. 5. Information on the trip comes from *ibid.*, May-July editions and the Cuban radio. See also "Fidel por 10 países," *Cuba Internacional*, 4 (September 1972), pp. 4-71.

19. Until Cuba's entrance Comecon was composed of the seven Eastern European countries visited by Castro, plus Mongolia. Observers were Cuba, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Yugoslavia. In 1962, Albania was excluded. China neither entered Comecon nor sent observers.

20. C. R. Rodríguez, "Speech at the 26th Session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance," *Granma Weekly Review*, July 23, 1972, p. 10.

21. See for instance Gouré and Weinkle's opinion, *op. cit.*, p. 77, published three months before Cuba entered Comecon.

22. Theodore Shabad, "Cuba Becomes Full Member of Soviet Economic Bloc," *New York Times*, July 12, 1972, p. 2.

23. Rodríguez has argued that statistical similarity could not hold in economic and political terms. See "Diálogo con Carlos Rafael Rodríguez," *Cuba Internacional*, 3 (November-December 1971), pp. 86-91.

24. See my chapter, "Economic Policies and Growth," in Mesa-Lago, *op. cit.*, pp. 301 *ff.*

25. Soviet sources are: *Vneshniaia torgovlia SSSR: statisticheskii sbornik 1918-1966* and *Vneshniaia torgovlia SSSR za 1968 god* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniia, 1967 and 1969), pp. 69 and 15; *Foreign Trade* (Moscow, No. 6, 1970, p. 55; and No. 5, 1971, p. 48. Cuban sources are Junta Central de Planificación, *BE Boletín Estadístico 1970* (La Habana: JUCEPLAN, 1971), pp. 188-191. See also Eric N. Baklanoff, "International Economic Relations," in Mesa-Lago, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-276.

26. In 1971 the value of Soviet imports increased by 17 percent to a record 800 million pesos, while Cuban exports to the USSR probably declined by 40 percent to 280 million pesos due to a decline in sugar production from 8.5 million tons in 1970 to 5.9 million tons in 1971. Probably the level of Soviet imports in 1972 remained equal while that of Cuban exports to the USSR declined due to an even worse sugar crop. The 1971-72 combined deficit was probably above one billion pesos.

27. By Gouré and Weinkle, *op. cit.*, p. 75, without giving a clear source.

28. F. Castro, "Speech at the Main Event in Commemoration of the Victory of Playa Girón," *Granma Weekly Review*, May 2, 1971, p. 6.

29. Martin Schram, "Cuba Today: The Party Seeks Economic Revival," *Newsday*, September 13, 1971; and Gouré-Weinkle, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

30. See Gonzalez, *op. cit* pp. 82-86.

31. F. Castro, "Speech on the 19th Anniversary of the Attack on the Moncada Garrison," *Granma Weekly Review*, August 6, 1972, pp. 3-6.

32. "Executive Committee of Council of Ministries Established," *Granma Weekly Review*, January 3, 1972, p. 2.

33. F. Castro, "Speech at the Solemn Session in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the USSR," *Granma Weekly Review*, December 31, 1972, p. 9. Castro also said (p. 16) that he felt [illegible] Moscow and that a man could have two homelands.

34. F. Castro, "Report to the People on the Economic Agreements Signed with the Soviet Union," *Granma Weekly Review*, January 14, 1973, pp. 2-3.

35. "3rd Session of the Cuban-Soviet Intergovernmental Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Collaboration Opened," *Granma Weekly Review*, March 4, 1973, p. 3.

36. See Ernesto F. Betancourt, "Exporting the Revolution to Latin America," and Irving Louis Horowitz, "The Political Sociology of Cuban Communism," in Mesa-Lago, [illegible]

37. F. Castro, "Speech in the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the Birth of V.I. Lenin," *Granma Weekly Review*, May 3, 1970, pp. 2-5.

38. F. Castro, "Speech at the Close of the Main Rally Marking the Beginning of the Ten-million-ton Sugar Harvest," *Granma Weekly Review*, July 20, 1969, p. 5.

39. F. Castro, "Discurso en conmemoración del Centenario del Natalicio de Lenin," *Granma*, April 23, 1970, pp. 2-4.

40. *Granma Weekly Review*, December 26, 1971, and January 2, 1972. In March 1973 Cuba freed one of the two remaining Cuban-born prisoners as a friendly gesture toward Panama.

41. *Granma Weekly Review*, March 25, 1973, pp. 8-11.

42. CORFO, *Chile Economic News*, February 27, 1971, p. 3.

43. *Granma Weekly Review*, April 1, 1973, p. 8.

44. *Comercio Exterior* (Mexico), March 1972; and *Latin America*, March 16, 1973, p. 83.

45. "Caribbean: Cuba Back in the Fold?" *Latin America*, October 20, 1972, p. 229; and *Granma Weekly Review*, December 24, 1972, p. 13.

46. *Granma Weekly Review*, May 20 and June 3, 1973, p. 1.

47. *Granma Weekly Review*, January 7, 1973, p. 8.

48. Cuban exiles reacted negatively to Figueres' suggestion with a few remarkable exceptions, e.g., Castro's former Minister of Finance Rufo López Fresquet.

49. Marvine Howe, "Venezuela Opens Cuban Contacts," *The New York Times*, April 22, 1973, p. 17.

50. *Time*, April 16, 1973, p. 38.

51. F. Castro, "Speech at the International Workers' Day Parade," *Granma Weekly Review*, May 13, 1973, p. 3.

52. Cuban relations have not only improved with Latin America but with other nonsocialist countries as well. Trade with Japan, France, Italy, Canada, Great Britain, Spain, and Sweden increased notably in 1970-73, reaching the half-billion mark. Cuba imported equipment (for transportation, agriculture, industry, and construction), received technical assistance and credits from these countries in exchange for sugar, nickel, tobacco, and rum. See *Svea Ornstedt SIDA* (Stockholm), July 15, 1971; "Cuba," *Barclays Economic Intelligence Department* (London), December 17, 1971; "Cuba: From Dogma to Pragmatism," *BOLSA Review* (London), April 1972; and "Cuba's Links with Nonsocialist World Expanding," *Business Latinamerica*, April 20, 1972. At the end of 1971 Castro stated that Cuba was in the process of overcoming the economic embargo and that the island had a growing foreign market and could sell all that she was capable of producing. *Granma Weekly Review*, November 21, 1971, p. 8, and November 28, 1971, p. 4.

53. "Press Conference with Newsmen from Different Countries," *Granma Weekly Review*, December 19, 1971, pp. 8-9. For a detailed account of Castro's 1971 trip to Chile and stops in Lima and Quito, see George W. Grayson, "The Significance of Castro's Trip to South America," *World Affairs*, Vol. 135 (Winter 1972), pp. 220-239.

54. F. Castro, "Speech at the Close of the Main Rally," *op. cit.*, p. 5; "Discurso en conmemoración del Centenario," pp. 2-4; and "Speech at the Main Event," *op. cit.*, p. 6

55. Benjamin Welles, "More Latin Lands Seem Willing to End Ban on Cuba." *New York Times*, August 14, 1971, p. 3.

56. *Ibid.*; and "Peru: End of Story," *Latin America*, June 2, 1972, pp. 169-170.

57. "Cuba: From Dogma to Pragmatism," p. 201; and "Cuba and the Recent Vote in the OAS," *Granma Weekly Review*, June 18, 1972, p. 12.

58. Galo Plaza's statement was made on April 26, 1973, at the Conference, "The OAS Today and Tomorrow," University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

59. F. Castro, "Speech at the International Workers' Day Parade," *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

60. For example, the 1968 conversations between Antonio Núñez Jiménez, president of the Cuban Academy of Sciences, and American intellectuals who tried to facilitate the interchange of scholars and publications; the 1968-69 agreements of the Hispanic Foundation, Library of Congress, and of the Latin American Studies Association in order to promote intellectual interchange; the seminars held in 1968-69 by the Center for Inter-American Relations (CIAR) of New York with the purpose of recommending to the United States government a new policy with respect to Cuba; and the 1969 Ford Foundation grants made available for field research in Cuba. See also the articles by John N. Plank, "We Should Start Talking with Castro," *New York Times Magazine*, March 30, 1969, pp. 29 ff.; Irving Louis Horowitz, "United States-Cuba Relations: Beyond the Quarantine," *Trans-action*, April 1969, pp. 43-47; Richard Fagen, "United States-Cuban Relations," Yale H. Ferguson, ed., *Contemporary Inter-American Relations: A Reader in Theory and Issues* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1972), pp. 192-203 (this is Fagen's report to the CIAR meetings of 1968-69); and Jorge I. Domínguez, "Taming the Cuban Shrew," *Foreign Policy*, no. 10 (Spring 1973), pp. 94-116.

61. For background on United States-Cuban relations see Cole Blasier, "The Elimination of US Influence," in Mesa-Lago, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-80; and Edward Gonzalez, "The United States and Castro: Breaking the Deadlock," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 50 (July 1972), pp. 722-737.

62. For instance, Robert A. Hurtwitch in February 1970 in the TV program "The Advocates," in July 1970 before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in September 1971 before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and in February 1973 before the Congress; a State Department report to the OAS in March 1970; Secretary Rogers to the Congress in March

1971; Charles Appleton Meyer to the press in July 1971; and President Nixon to the press in April 1971 and January 1972.

63. *Granma Weekly Review*, December 26, 1971, and January 2, 1972.

64. Tad Szulc, "U.S. Government Scientists Attended Parley in Cuba, *New York Times*, July 11, 1972.

65. *Granma Weekly Review*, February 25, 1973, p. 3.

66. Castro, "Speech in the Main Event," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

67. *Granma Weekly Review*, December 19, 1971, pp. 10-13; and George Natanson, "Nixon Doesn't Represent World Realities–Castro," *The Times of the Americas*, May 13, 1972, p. 2.

68. *Granma Weekly Review*, June 4, 1972, p. 6. Two weeks later the Cuban press mentioned conditions 3 and 4 ignoring the first two. In October Castro mentioned conditions 1 and 2 ignoring the last two. In December he ignored condition 1 (the end of the war in Vietnam was in sight) and seemed willing to yield on condition 4. In May 1973 he definitely dropped condition 1, reiterated 2 and 3 (although changing their order, therefore giving priority to a domestic matter over an interamerican issue), and said that condition 4 was still on but had a lower priority.

69. F. Castro, "Speech on the 19th Anniversary," *op cit.*, p. 6.

70. Some of these problems were explained briefly by Castro, "Speech at the Main Event," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

71. "Cuba: Lure of the Market," *Latin America*, October 20, 1972, p. 229.

72. "Congressional Conference on United States-Cuban Relations," Washington, D.C., New Senate Office Building, April 19-20, 1972.

73. *Latin America*, February 23, 1973, p. 64.