

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

CUBAN EXILE NATIONALISM

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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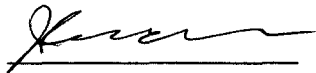
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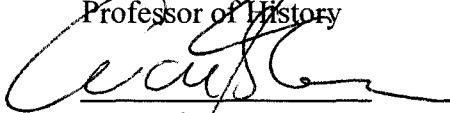
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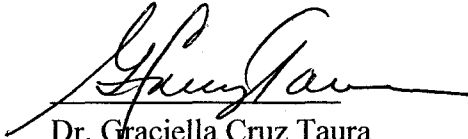
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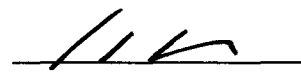
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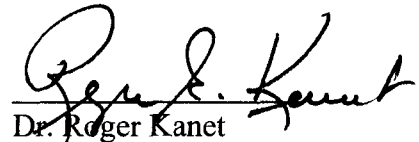
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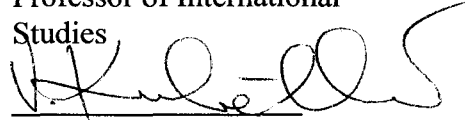
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How did the experience of exile, particularly in the Miami and New Jersey communities, affect the tenets of traditional Cuban nationalism? How does the resulting emergence of a “Cuban exile nationalism” affect the relationship between Cuba and the United States, Cuba and Latin America and among Cubans inside and outside the island? And lastly, what does the existence of this Cuban exile nationalism say with regards to the current debates within political science and international studies about the nature of nations and nationalism? How will the struggle among different nationalist strains affect Cuba’s post-Castro transition?

DEDICATION

“The key is to reclaim power and interest from materialism by showing how their content and meaning are constituted by ideas and culture. Having stripped power and interest explanations of their implicit ideational content we see that relatively little of international life is a function of material forces as such.”

Alexander Wendt
The Social Theory of International Politics

“Thus I am driven to the conclusion that no ‘scientific definition’ of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.”

Hugh Seton-Watson
Nation and States

For Librado Linares and his civic hope.

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Chapter One - Introduction and Methodology

This dissertation addresses the shared ideological consensus of a community whose political and economic power far transcends its numbers. It examines the internal mechanics and ideological worldview of Cuban exiles, specifically those in the United States, hoping to identify the key components of the shared views of nation, nationalism and national identity that shape the opinions of this community, particularly in the Miami and New Jersey areas.

In order to present the fundamental values and beliefs of Cuban exile nationalism it will be necessary to dissect the components of the community's core political beliefs and relate them to Cuban history as a whole, to examine the historical reasons that produced these values (mythification of the pre-1959 republic; both allegiance to and suspicion of, the United States; radical anti-Communism, etc.) as well as describe their effects on the generational and socio-economic changes in the leadership of the Cuban-American community between 1960 and now. These core beliefs have evolved in many different ways over time, their ultimate development affected by the different waves of refugees who have arrived in Florida over the different periods of the over four decades of Castro's rule.

This dissertation seeks to establish an outline for the history and evolution of ideas that led to the unique phenomenon of the Cuban-American identity in the United States. To do so, it will be necessary to lay out and penetrate the core principles of what I propose to call a nationalism without a nation-state, making visible in the process the ideological pillars of what seems to be, the invisible republic of *el exilio*.

On a personal note, living and growing up in Miami or New Jersey's Cuban community, the two largest and most important Cuban communities in the U.S. in the 1970s and 80s provides a fascinating challenge for anyone interested in the nature of nations, nationalism and national identity.

On the one hand, the Cuban immigrant communities provided a great example of economic integration and assimilation into the American body politic. In sociological and economic terms and later also politically, Cuban Americans came to be perceived as the most successful of the Hispanic groups living within U.S. borders.

On the other hand, in contrast to their high degree of economic assimilation, the Cuban communities have been entrenched in their cultural traditions and language, and the focus of their attention has tended to center, not on the issues and themes of interest to the rest of the Hispanic groups in the United States such as poverty, discrimination and inner city social ills, but rather on political affairs in or related to, Cuba.

Growing up in these Cuban communities in Miami and New Jersey signified a strange experience of living simultaneously within two nations: one the United States, with its dominant democratic laws, civil institutions, language and mass media in a specific, demarcated territory and the other the Cuban exiled nation, a phantom or invisible republic, where the social, cultural and religious institutions of pre-Castro Cuba still hold sway, and where a broad array of political organizations centered on "*la libertad de Cuba*," vied for an invisible sovereignty over an invisible republic devoid of its own national territory, but existing within an uncharted spiritual territory of memory, myth and aspirations that seem to flow continuously from the living rooms of exiled families to the offices of anti-Castro groups and the municipalities in exile through the

meeting halls of Masons and Odd fellows, the basements and pews of Catholic and Protestant churches, and the backyard rituals of Santería followers.

The exiled communities of Miami and New Jersey¹ seemed to be engaged in a mystical dialogue with the history of Cuba. The territory had been lost, exiled pundits from all sides of the political spectrum would concede, but the essence of what Cubans call true *cubanidad*² or Cuban ness lived on in exile, as it had done many other times throughout Cuban history. On the other side of the Straits of Florida however, the Castro regime also lay claim to embodying the essence of *cubanidad*, and has dismissed the exile opposition as a mere extension of US imperialist designs over Cuba.

Time, both the Cuban government and other observers argued, would settle the issue. The immigrant communities it was agreed would inexorably blend into the American milieu, as so many other immigrant groups had in the past. Power, the Cuban government believed, would determine identity.

But final judgment has proven elusive of both history and time. Castro has managed to hold on to power for over four decades. And the exiled nation has not disappeared. In April 2000 I watched as thousands of youths took to the streets of Miami to demonstrate against the Clinton administration's handover of child rafter Elián González to the Cuban government. I remembered how experts had predicted that my generation, the children of the first wave of Cuban exiles, would quickly assimilate into mainstream America, leaving behind the Cuban identity of their parents. Now I watched as the grandchildren of the first exiles joined recently arrived *balseros* carrying Cuban

¹ These are mentioned due to the fact that they were probably the most numerous, although other exiled communities both across the US and in other countries, such as Spain or Venezuela, also displayed an intense associational life.

² Term used by Cubans to describe, "being Cuban," or "Cubanness."

flags and demanding freedom for the island. This confirmed an earlier experience I had had working as a teacher in Belen Jesuit, one of the elite prep schools of Miami's Cuban community. The fourth generation of the Cuban American community, the grandchildren of the first waves of exiles, still remained focused to a great degree on Cuba and its future. English was their native language and they had no individual memories of Cuba, but they were still solidly loyal to the dream bequeathed to them by grandparents and parents.

Almost three generations of Cubans have passed since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and the grandchildren of the first exiles still call themselves Cuban, and as was seen during the Elián González affair, still react powerfully to the issues dealing with Cuban freedom. What does this say about the Cuban nationality itself?

What does the survival of two diametrically opposed visions of Cuba, one on the island, the other in exile in Miami and New Jersey or in other parts of the world mean about Cuban national identity? How have the traditional tenets of Cuban nationalism been affected by this process? How does the existence and survival of this Cuban exile nationalism affect relations between Cuba and the United States, as well as between the Cuban exiles and other immigrant communities?

Moreover, what does this contribute to the understanding of nations, nationalism and national identity as concepts in and of themselves? How does the theoretical debate on nationalism affect our understanding of the different existing strains of cubanidad in the early 21st century?

Defining my own national identity, reconciling the conflicting demands of the two national realities within which I have been living, and understanding the existential

predicament of these different tendencies, made me interested in nationalism and at the same time has influenced the way I have gone about studying it. My perspective therefore, is not from the outside-in, that is to say, as a detached observer of the nationalist phenomenon who is a citizen of a prosperous civic polity where the natural tensions of the national identity have been subsumed under layers of institutional arrangements conducive to personal freedom, but rather from the inside-out, as a human being affected by nationalist tensions exacerbated by ideological struggle and consequent existential tension.

My objective therefore, is to rationalize this ‘permanent communication’³ that the exiles of different generations and ideologies have preserved with their national identity, to attempt to study and understand it with the hope of contributing to a definition of cubanidad or Cuban ness freed at last from the shackles of fratricidal conflict and self-negation.

My theoretical perspective owes much to the constructivist school of international relations, pioneered by Arendt, Wendt, Onuf, Kubalkova and others. In its perception, rooted in natural law theory, of humans as eminently social beings who constantly and consciously construct their social realities at diverse levels and through the use of both rational and emotional means, I have found tools of analysis that have greatly helped me in understanding the subject matter at hand. It has helped me avoid the trap of interpreting nationalism as a static phenomenon in time.

³ This ‘permanent communication’ of exiles with what they would describe as the essence of their national identity can perhaps be likened to the conception of ‘simultaneity of time’ central to the development of nationalism, which Benedict Anderson explores at length in his now classic “Imagined Communities.” We will deal with this concept further on in this dissertation in the chapter on Cuban exile nationalism.

Nationalism or nationalisms are a dynamic process of constant building and rebuilding of collective identity by the diverse individuals and groups who comprise a nation, even when, as is the case here, the individuals and groups are outside the physical territory of said nation although still clearly within its spiritual domain.

This community, existing within the spiritual domain of the Cuban nation, is rooted in the identity of Cuban Americans in the Miami and New Jersey communities, in the United States, and comprised of exiles belonging to different generations. Within these parameters, it must be said that the Cuban American community is large, complex and varies in both socio-economic status and in its political affiliation towards Cuba and US politics. My goal is to identify, define and explain the fundamental ideological concepts that have shaped its 40 year old plus consensus.

Methodology -

In order to analyze the complex reality of Cuban nationalism the following methodology will be used:

- A review of the existing literature on nationalism in general and Cuban nationalism in particular.
- A selective review of the publications and writings of the Cuban exile communities in Miami and New Jersey from 1959 to the present with regard to their ideological perspectives on Cuba, focusing on the struggle against the Castro regime and the different variants of possible futures.
- A review of the literature produced by the Cuban government and those sharing its opinions on the Cuban exile community and its role in the relationship between the United States and Cuba.

- Personal interviews with individuals who have been primary actors in many of the events described or who have analyzed in depth the phenomenon of Cuban exile nationalism. The individuals were chosen on the merits of the personal knowledge they could provide on specific times and ideological evolutions within the Cuban communities in Miami and New Jersey. The most important aspect of their knowledge was the personal experience they had acquired as a result of immersion in the invisible republic of 'el exilio,' in other words, I sought an inside-in perspective on Cuban-exile reality, not the detached musings of neutral observers. Conversations centering on these periods with questions focused on their specific insights were used. Based on the criteria mentioned above, I tailored the interviews to the specific life experiences of these individuals, gleaning valuable insights into the ideology of Cuban exile nationalism from their personal histories.

These steps led me to formulate my research question by:

- Gaining a broader view of the general phenomena of nationalism, which allowed me to understand both common denominators between Cuban exile nationalism and other nationalist movements, as well as the singularities of Cuban exile nationalism, which shed a greater light on the social and political problems of Cuba as well as possibly contributing to the general theory of nationalism.

- Developing a vision of the evolution of the sense of nationalism in the Cuban exile communities in Miami and New Jersey since 1959 and the nuances, which have evolved during this process.
- Understanding of the social and political realities, which have shaped this exile nationalism as objectively as possible.
- Attempting to describe the dynamics involved in the evolution of this nationalism not as a static process outside of time, but rather as a continuing, living reality which has shaped and has been shaped by the role of individual human lives.

With these operational criteria I will proceed in the following manner in the preparation and presentation of my dissertation. The steps taken will include:

- (1) **Identification of what the terms nationalism and national identity signify, and discussion of the different interpretations of these terms that animate current scholarly debate.** To do so, I will review both the historical emergence of nationalism as understood in the context of today's world, the history of ideas which have shaped nationalist thought, and how modern scholars of different schools interpret these ideas and events. In order to do this I will present both a historical survey and a review of said ideas, with an analysis of the existing body of literature on the subject, reflected in the bibliography of this work.
- (2) As part of this same chapter, I will then analyze the development of traditional Cuban nationalism throughout the island's history and leading to the 1959 revolution. I will review both the key events and the development of ideas that led to the emergence of the traditional strains of Cuban nationalism and the

existing literature on the subject. I will focus on Castroism as an expression of Cuban nationalism and as an ideology that seeks to interpret Cuban nationalism.

- (3) **Having established this criteria**, I will first proceed to analyze whether there does or does not exist a ‘Cuban exile nationalism’ in the Miami and New Jersey Cuban communities and if so, how to define it. I will review selected texts and publications that deal with this concept. I will pay particular attention to the publications of the Cuban exile community, on the speeches and writings of its leaders, and on the personal recollections of key actors gathered in the course of personal one on one interviews. I will also refer to the publications, analyses and perceptions of the Cuban exile community expressed by the Cuban government’s recognized intellectuals.
- (4) I will seek to analyze how the ideology of Cuban exile nationalism has affected the community’s relationship with the United States as well as with other Latin American nations, and, ultimately, with Cuba itself.
- (5) The next step taken of my dissertation will delve into the present and the future. First, I describe the emergence of the civil society/dissident movement in Cuba, analyzing its ideological content as well as its brand of nationalism and how it has both complemented and clashed with the Castroite and exile nationalist strains. I then review the existing literature on the development of the civic movement, and include personal, one on one interviews with the founders and protagonists of the movement.
- (6) Lastly, I will use the Elián González case as an example of the clash of the different expressions of Cuban nationalism, analyzing the development and

conclusion of the crisis through the prism of understanding the mechanics of the diverse expressions of Cuban nationalism.

Having proceeded to take the above-mentioned steps, I will triangulate the gathered data in order to improve its reliability. This will consist of contrasting the content of the personal interviews, the literature review and historical research in order to gain a better understanding of the different perspectives, which composed the specific moments in the evolution of the ideology of Cuban exile nationalism.

As far as I am aware, a study of this scope has not been written. Thus I hope to contribute to the topic of Cuban exile nationalism. There are certain caveats concerning the scope of my research, which I must clarify from the outset. First, I do not have direct access to sources in Cuba due to the fact that I cannot travel to the island. Second, my own personal involvement in the political life of the exile community which may, consciously or subconsciously, affect the content of what those interviewed relay to me, as well as my own, inner opinions on many of these topics, which may ultimately affect what I am writing about.

In closing, I believe that this dissertation on “**Cuban exile nationalism**” makes an original contribution to the social sciences for the following reasons:

1. Because it provides an unprecedented, in-depth analysis of the self-perception of the political identity of the Cuban exile community that contributes to a better understanding of the inner workings of a society that too often falls prey to the most banal stereotypes.

2. Because in doing so, in dissecting and analyzing the components of an “exiled Cuban nationalism,” it contributes to a clearer understanding of the different ideational structures which are clashing within the context of the Cuban conflict, therefore potentially making a contribution to its eventual resolution.
3. Because it both contributes to a better understanding of Castroite and exile nationalism, and also analyzes the essential elements of an emerging Cuban civic nationalism.
4. Because it contributes to a better understanding of nationalism as a political phenomenon by clearly demonstrating that it can continue to exist, and even thrive, even though disconnected from the material conditions (i.e.: national territory) that Stalin and Weber, for example, conditioned it to.

In other words, I believe that this dissertation can serve as partial confirmation of Renan’s depiction of nationhood and nationalism as “spiritual principles.” Having said this, I must point out that the essence of my dissertation lies in an exploration of the different constitutive elements that make up the Cuban exiled nation, based on the two fundamental national needs defined by Renan: the preservation of memory and the affirmation of the will to remain together as a nation.

In this dissertation I explain how the realization of these two needs: the preservation of memory and the affirmation of the will to remain together, has created a new, exiled Cuban nationalism with its own rules and realities. Furthermore, I believe that a profound understanding of the rules and realities of all Cuban nationalisms is key to an eventual successful transition to democracy in the Island.

Lastly, I must insist that this is not a social history of the Cuban exile experience, but instead, a history of the ideas that have conformed the tenets of a Cuban exiled nation and its unique brand of nationalism. That is to say, whereas traditionally in Cuban history those who left the island because of political reasons saw themselves as exiled from the nation of Cuba, the unique circumstances surrounding the predominance of Castroism in Cuba as well as the extended duration of exile from the island have led to the development of a new phenomenon: the view that it is the nation itself that has exiled itself from the Cuban national territory, and that as such, the nation has a life of its own, a particular spiritual dynamic, in spite of being distant from the physical homeland. It is this new perception of exile and nationhood that I address in this dissertation.

Chapter Two – What is nationalism?

The definition of nationalism is the concern of a great body of modern literature. The matrix of the debate consists of four key issues: first how to define nation and nationalism, secondly, how they emerged, third how nationalism developed, and fourth and finally whether the Western or European nationalism is equivalent to non-western expressions of the same phenomenon.

There are five major schools that offer different answers to these questions. The first are those who propose that nations are eternal: that they have been around forever and are part of human nature itself. Secondly there are the perennialists, “who argue that nations have been around for a very long time, though they take different shapes at different points in history.” (G.E. Zuelow, *Nationalism Project website*) The third school are the modernists, composed of those who view nations as entirely modern constructs. Lastly, are the views of Marxists and post modernists, who tend to view nations as social illusions.

Additionally there are two more dividing lines of students of nationalism: those who emphasize nations and nationalism as an ethnic reality, and those who view nationalism as an expression of civic, i.e. state and law oriented, consciousness.

Based on this, I will delve into the modern origins of the nation-state, examine its effects on historical development and offer a working hypothesis of nationalism based on the social nature of man. I will use this hypothesis as the theoretical framework within which to understand the concept of a Cuban exile nationalism.

The Nation-State -

It is traditionally believed that the nation state as such was born as a result of the Treaty of Westphalia. This treaty marked the end of the exhausting Thirty Years' War (1618-48) in which the Habsburg Dynasty failed to preserve the concept of the *Respublica Christiana* as the fundamental pillar of the continent's political organization (Baylis and Smith, 2001,42). In effect, the Treaty subordinated the multiple autonomies and sovereignties of the medieval world to the overriding rule of a centralized and centralizing state, the model of which were the French and Bourbon monarchs. This signified a break not just with the Catholic Habsburg's aspirations at re-establishing a universal Roman empire, but also with the idea of a universal ethic conditioning the political behavior of sovereigns. "In the modern era secular politics and particularly the politics of the state and the art of statecraft, was liberated from the moral inhibitions and religious constraints of the medieval world."(Baylis and Smith, 2001, 42)

The fundamental political principles that emerged from the Treaty of Westphalia effectively established the monarchs as powers beholden only to themselves, who did not have to recognize the predominance of any higher authority or power. This principle, *Rex est imperator in regno suo* (the king is emperor in his own realm), meant that sovereigns were not subject to any higher political authority and that every king was independent and equal to every other king. Furthermore, through the principle of *cuius regio, ejus religio*, the ruler had the faculty to determine the religion of his realm. This meant that sovereigns had no right to intervene in a sovereign jurisdiction on religious grounds and it was from this principle that a third emerged: the balance of power. This one was intended

to prevent any hegemon from arising and dominating everybody else. (Baylis and Smith, 2001, 43)

Although imbued with many drawbacks and limitations, medieval society was organized around a series of autonomies, commitments, loyalties and obligations referenced by a strong Christian ethic which gave a sense of self-worth and dignity to the existing communities and classes, binding individuals into a strong social network where social mobility was scarce, social responsibility was high, but a place and a recognition was assured to all of its components.

Europeans in medieval times, which lasted for about a thousand years from the year 500 until about 1500, lived under a system of religious and political cohesion referred to as the *Respublica Christiana*. This universal structure gave at least 'minimal unity' to Europeans whatever their language or homeland happened to be. (Wight, 2001, 40)

The emergence of the national monarchies, and the centralized states that they ushered in, signified an alteration of these existing social networks, and a perception by many different classes, irrespective of their place in the social ladder, of an intrusion into the intimacy of their established social environment.

It is not surprising then, to find that resistance to state centralization came from both nobles and peasants. As Martin Wight points out: "The common man's inner circle of loyalty expanded, his outer circle of loyalty shrank, and the two met and coincided in a doubly definite circle between, where loyalty before had been vague. Thus the modern state came into existence; a narrower and at the same time stronger unit of loyalty than medieval Christendom." (Baylis and Smith, 2001, 40)

What the Treaty of Westphalia was actually doing was systemizing the state model invented by the Italian city-states during the Renaissance.

In inventing the Renaissance the Italians also invented the modern independent state, or *stato*, of which the most prominent examples were Venice, Florence, Milan, and the Papal states. They were usually based on a city and its environs – although they sometimes extended farther afield, as in the case of the Venetian republic, which occupied extensive territories along the northern and eastern Adriatic Sea. By instituting their own freestanding political systems the new Italian men of the *stato* were of course defying and breaking free from medieval political-religious authority. (Burckhardt, 1958, 26-44)

This signified the breakdown of the normative model for politics by divorcing ethics and praxis in the political realm. What prevailed in the politics of the Italian city states was the conviction that “the morality of the state and the ethics of statecraft is distinguished from universal religious ethics or common morality and is elevated above them,”⁴ a principle now referred to as ‘realism’ or ‘power politics.’

In order to achieve the objective of centralization the elites that were creating the first European nation states had to adopt new standards of political conduct: between themselves as sovereigns, between themselves and other nobles and between themselves and the people. This transformation of established codes of behavior would create a distance, a barrier between themselves and the people they ruled. The existence of competing codes of social conduct at different class levels would pave the way for the emergence of nationalism as a moral and therefore a social, force.

The primary result of Westphalia was the institution of an international system of sovereign states which mutually reinforced each other in the struggle to preserve their sovereignty from transnational dynasties such as the Habsburgs, from the influence of the

⁴ Vincet 1982:74, as cited in Baylis and Smith, p.41

Roman Catholic Church, and from domestic challenges as well. But the nature of the Westphalian system also entailed that states became mutually suspicious of each other and of their inherent attempts at subverting each other's sovereignty. Precisely because, perhaps, these emerging 'national monarchies' were not based on the rule of a specific people by a specific ruler, but instead on the domination of certain territories with disparate languages, customs, and even faiths.

The argument has been made that the administrative extension of territories through conquest, alliance, and marriage in the Europe of medieval times could not be singled out as the source of modern nations. "At most, such unified territories provided the shell and framework – a possibility, no more – for their subsequent emergence." (Smith, 1988, 130) As a consequence, rulers were internally jealous of their sovereignties precisely because this 'right to rule,' or 'natural authority,' was more of an imposition than the result of a historical process of social legitimation (Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 146).

The mutual recognition of sovereignty by the Westphalian states was the pillar of the new international system. Alexander Wendt explains it best in his *Social Theory of International Politics*:

When states recognize each other's sovereignty as a right then we can speak of sovereignty not only as a property of individual states, but as an institution shared by many states. The core of this institution is the shared expectation that states will not try to take away each other's life and liberty. In the Westphalian system this belief is formalized in international law, which means that far from being merely an epiphenomenon of material forces, international law is actually a key part of the deep structure of contemporary international politics. (Wendt, 1999, 280)

International law under the Westphalian system was meant to ensure that the sovereignty of the state stayed in the hands of the centralizing rulers. This process in fact, emerged from a previous process through which the national monarchs had wrested sovereignty from the existing feudal autonomies. Therefore Westphalia guaranteed the existence of the sovereign nation-states, but not that of the nation or nations.

For this state system, regulated war and violence were a condition, in fact a permanent one, as a means through which to preserve an international order based on mutually exclusive sovereignties. That is to say, military conflict served to always keep sovereignties in line, not allowing them to spill over each other. Wendt refers to this structure as “Lockean,” or one in which states struggle to preserve the institution of sovereignty as the moral underpinning of international relations as differentiated from “Hobbesian” where states seek, potentially, to exterminate the other. (Wendt, 1999, 280)

This states-system based on limited sovereignties continuously engaged in limited conflict did not confine itself to Europe. As the European powers expanded internationally, they also exported this model of political organization. “The spread of European political control beyond Europe which began in the late fifteenth century and only came to an end in the early twentieth century proved to be an expansion not only of European imperialism but also, later, of international society.” (Bull and Watson, as cited in Baylis and Smith, 2001, 45). The European nation-states directly or indirectly encouraged the emergence of nation-states in order to rule the world.

What the architects of the Westphalian system in its diverse incarnations did not envisage was that by abjuring from a universal ethic to which they could morally subordinate their sovereignty, they had also weakened the only mechanism capable of

limiting the scale of military conflict. This would prove to be the undoing of the Westphalian state system⁵ and it would also curse its political heirs in the 19th and 20th centuries. “In other words, the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia upheld and used the pre-existing territorial and political units for their own ends of maximizing their profits and prestige, and in doing so, became the victims of the system of states and the warfare it engendered, even when it led them to the abyss.” (Smith, 1988, 132)

Nations and Nationalism

It is not difficult to pinpoint the emergence of the nation-state. Defining nationalism and nationhood constitutes more of a challenge. We must venture an insight: Nationalism emerges as a primary reaction to the existence of the nation-states.

Man’s nature is intrinsically social. We cannot survive without group existence, and our individuality is most often an expression of the desire to excel or be recognized within the group. This social nature is not random or scattered; ties of affection, authority, mutual loyalty, common interests and relationships developed over generations under gird it.

Where these group relationships bond strongest there emerge *ethnie*.⁶ As Anthony Smith explained in his classic *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, what distinguishes ethnic communities from other groups are a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, an association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity (Smith, 1988, 22-31).

⁵ “There was no doubt something rather petty and sordid about this matrimonial diplomacy. A dynastic compact by which provinces and their inhabitants are transferred from one owner to another like estates with their livestock is revolting to the susceptibilities of our democratic age. But the eighteenth century system had its compensations. It took the shine out of our patriotism; but with the shine, it took the sting [...] War has now become ‘total war’, and it has become so because parochial states have become nationalist democracies.” (Toynbee, 1974, 286)

⁶ “[...] the French term ‘*ethnie*,’ which unites an emphasis upon cultural differences with the sense of an historical community.” (Smith, 1994, 22)

The existence of these factors strengthens the mechanisms of self-preservation, which exist within any human group. Ethnie do not by themselves, however, constitute a political community. The forcible aggrandizement of territories under the rule of dynastic European monarchies both politicized many existing ethnie and brought into being new collective identities based on the disbursement of law by a certain sovereign within a certain territory. Although these categories were present to a certain or lesser degree in all of the national states forged by the absolute kings of the late Middle Ages, the fact remains that after the Westphalian Treaty of 1648, communities, be they ethnic or territorial, which had become accustomed to the existence of certain rights and privileges specific to their social integration (corporatism) were supplanted by impersonal power and by a new political identity progressively imposed from above (Smith, 1988,139).

Mechanisms of social self-preservation are not in and of themselves agents of ideological architecture. They are innate to man's social nature, a result of evident natural law. These mechanisms conform to the structure of the polity within which the group resides, be it city-state, republic, principality, kingdom or nation. Although they may be dormant, they are never extinct. The bonds of the medieval communities, the lingering memories of group rights and duties remained within the historical memory of the kingdoms. In his memorable book *The Great Transformation*, Karl Polanyi studied at length the spontaneous reaction of the social self defense mechanism against the expansion of industrialization. Said description bears a striking resemblance to the activation of the same mechanisms within nationalist movements. "The countermove against economic liberalism and laissez-faire possessed all the unmistakable characteristics of a spontaneous reaction. At innumerable disconnected points it set in

without any traceable links between the interests directly affected or any ideological conformity between them” (Polanyi, 2001,156). Polanyi was pointing to the fact that there are organic links within the fabric of any society, which transcend class and regional differences and which have to do with the survival of society as a whole. These mechanisms may not always be articulated rationally, but they exist nonetheless and comprise an important part of what nationalism is.

The nature of the Westphalian system, with its constitutional need for permanent regulated warfare, forced the national monarchs to attempt to unify like never before with the populations under their rule. Inter-state warfare and rivalry forced class cultures to be progressively set aside in the interest of establishing ever-closer links with society at large. The historical challenge of state preservation presented the European monarchical elites with the need for national unification.

If the European experience were our only guide, we would have to rule the image quite wrong. For the most part, that experience does not show us modernizing elites articulating the demand and needs of the masses, and fighting off traditional holders of power in order to meet those needs and demands. Far from it, we discover a world in which small groups of power-hungry men fought off numerous rivals and great popular resistance in the pursuit of their own ends, and inadvertently promoted the formation of national states and widespread popular involvement in them. (Charles Tilly, *Nationalism and the International System*, in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994, 252)

They now had to reach out to the very social forces that they had suppressed in order to originally consolidate power. Whereas Louis XIV in France had both co-opted and suppressed the Third Estate, and Charles V had crushed the comuneros, Louis XVI had no other option but to gather together the different estates in order to consolidate his national and international policies.

In doing so, the national monarchs activated these social forces, which then set out to make the state their own. “The modern nation is, therefore, the historic consequence of a series of facts converging toward the same point.” (Renan, p. 145-46). Out of this process of elite initiative to unify with society and consequent social reaction the nation-state was born. “If the nation is to become a ‘political community’ on the Western territorial and civic model, it must, paradoxically, seek to create those myths of descent, those historical memories and that common culture which form the missing elements of their ethnic make up, along with a mutual solidarity” (Smith, 1988, 146).

The creation of the nation state is the result of a process of political mobilization from the state to the nation and from the nation to the state, and not necessarily always in that order.

The best example for this is the French Revolution. As noted by Halliday,

The second phase in the evolution of the idea of nationalism came with the French Revolution of 1789: the opponents of the monarch called themselves *la nation*, i.e. ‘the nation,’ meaning by this the community of all French people irrespective of previous title or status. Here the concept ‘nation’ expressed above all the idea of a shared, common, equal citizenship, the unity of the people. The slogan of the French Revolution, ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,’ embodied this idea: perhaps the most common cry of the revolution was ‘Vive la Nation’, ‘Long Live the Nation’. The concept of ‘nation’ was, therefore tied to the principle of equality of all those living within states, to an early concept of democracy.⁷

The suppression of the Third Estate by the French kings became the model of almost all the European national monarchies. The rebellion of the French people, once their political identity had been awakened by the convening of the Estates General, was

⁷ “Who is bold enough to maintain that the Third Estate does not contain within itself everything needful to constitute a complete nation? It is like a strong and robust man with one arm still in chains. If the privileged order were removed, the nation would not be something less but something more.” (Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, *What is the Third Estate?*, In Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 36. Also see Baylis and Smith, 2001, 444).

an expression of the bottled defiance of a political order which had violated primordial political bonds consisting of dignity, passion and affection.

As Ernest Renan so eloquently wrote in *What is a Nation?* (Italics added by author):

Furthermore, the eighteenth century had entirely changed the situation. After centuries of humiliation, *man had recovered his ancient spirit, his self-respect, and the idea of his rights. The words 'mother-country' and 'citizen' had regained their meaning.* Thus it was possible to carry out the boldest operation ever performed in history –an operation – that may be compared to what, in physiology, would be an attempt to bring back to its former life a body from which brain and heart had been removed. (Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 147)

In contrast, England provided another different and perhaps more successful example of nation-building without the deep underlying traumas undergone by continental Europe as a result of the French Revolution. First of all, English society as a whole resisted the modernizing tide that came from the Italian city-states and ushered in a model of absolute rule and centralized political leadership. Kings were beheaded and revolutions fought to preserve the rights of Parliament and hem in the power of the kings.

As Toynbee described it, the emergence of the new Italian polities with their superior political efficiency presented a challenge for all of the existing monarchies of Europe. Some tried to respond to these challenges through the establishment of absolutist states that somehow mirrored the type of tyrannies into which the Italian city states had eventually succumbed. On the other hand, others and specifically England, tried to generate the same type of efficiency in their national states through the transformation of the medieval assemblies into organs of national self-determination. “and England

accordingly became the pioneer, or creative minority, in the next chapter of Western history, as Italy had been in the preceding one.” (Toynbee, 1974, 293-94)

Liah Greenfeld argues that English nationalism was the specific result of the English elites successfully establishing the framework for a commonality of interests with the English people (as cited in Hanson and Spohn, 1995).

The nation therefore is not a static phenomenon. It is a political and ethnic identity in a perpetual process of affirming, reevaluating, upholding or discarding the fundamental elements that constitute it. The nature of these fundamental elements is to be found in a set of social values that makes collective life possible, and is therefore political.⁸ These values allow man a collective existence with which to confront the inevitable fact of his individual finality. Nationhood and nationality are a journey towards the spiritual improvement of collective life in whose realization prior, current and future generations may feel actualized. In doing so, it subordinates time to moral existence.

The nation is a moral community. It is territory, ethnics, history and hierarchy subordinated to egalitarian political values based, after the American and French revolutions, on universal principles necessary enough for individual existence that they become collectively internalized and socially intimate.⁹

Nationalism does not behave as a noun, but as a verb. It is a concept in perpetual motion, describing the movements that spring and gather force to reinforce a community

⁸ “Thus we see that a nation is a great solid unit, formed by the realization of sacrifices in the past, as well as of those one is prepared to make in the future. A nation implies a past; while, as regards the present, it is all contained in one tangible fact, viz., the agreement and clearly expressed desire to continue a life in common. The existence of a nation is (if you will forgive me the metaphor) a daily plebiscite, just as that of the individual is the continual affirmation of life.” (Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 153-54)

⁹ “That moral consciousness which we call a nation is created by a great assemblage of men with warm hearts and healthy minds. And as long as this moral consciousness can prove its strength by the sacrifices demanded from the individual for the benefit of the community, it is justifiable and has the right to exist.” (Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 154) Benedict Anderson further demonstrates in his “Imagined Communities” that American nation-building served as the inspiration or prototype for the modern European nation-states.

defined as nation or to help it confront a given historical challenge. Nationalism describes the loose ideology of movements toward nationhood, in defense of nationhood, or for nationhood that constitute the mobilization of social and political forces within national settings.

Michael Hechter has attempted to classify the different types of ways in which these social forces mobilize within the general category of nationalism. He describes four varieties: *state-building nationalism*, where central rulers attempt “to make a multicultural population culturally homogenous,” *peripheral nationalism*, which occurs when a distinct culture settled into a specific territory resists assimilation into a greater national whole, *irredentist nationalism*, which takes place when one state seeks to annex territories of a neighboring state which has been settled by its own nationals, and finally *unification nationalism*, which “involves the merger of a politically divided but culturally homogenous territory into one state.”¹⁰

Nationalism therefore, is not an ideology *per se*, but a concept which identifies the mobilization or the attempt at mobilization of a national community for the sake of its collective empowerment *vis a vis* time, history, geography, environment or life itself. It is pre-political in that it is moral: it seeks merely to conserve the ‘social essence’ of the national community, although that conservation may take many forms and may even distort that original essence in the process.

As such, ideologies, or systems of ideas about the organization of human society, latch on to nationalism as a powerful moral and social carrier for specific political

¹⁰ Hechter, Michael. Containing Nationalism. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. See pages 15-17.

programs. Early democratic ideas as expressed in liberalism collided with the emergence of nationalism and complemented it, providing it with a definite aspect to its character.

The result was the prototype for the nation state.

The first phase [of nationalism] is associated with the thinking of the Enlightenment and in particular with the principle of the self-determination of communities, i.e. the idea that a group of people have a certain set of shared interests and should be allowed to express their wishes on how these interests should best be promoted. Derived from the ancient Greek idea of the polis, or political community, this idea was most influentially expressed in the thinking of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau laid the basis for modern ideas of democracy and the legitimacy of majority rule. Later democratic thinker, notably John Stuart Mill, added to this with their stress on representative government as ebbing the most desirable form of political system: once the idea of representative government is accepted, as a means of realizing in a collective form the principle of individual self-determination, then it is a short step to the idea of the self-determination of nations. (Halliday, as cited in Baylis and Smith, 2001,444)

Liberals, Leninists,¹¹ Fascists¹² and National Socialists¹³ identified it as such and latched on to it as the means through which to capture the state and political power so as

¹¹ "If we do not raise and advocate the slogan of the right to secession we shall play into the hands, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of the feudal landlords and the despotism of the oppressing nation. Kautsky long ago advanced this argument against Rosa Luxemburg, and the argument is indisputable. When Rosa Luxemburg, in her anxiety not to 'assist' the nationalistic bourgeoisie of Poland, rejects the right to secession in the program of the Russian Marxists, she is in fact assisting the Great-Russian Black Hundreds. She is in fact assisting opportunistic resignation to the privileges (and worse than privileges) of the Great Russians, although this nationalism is the most formidable at the present time, it is the nationalism that is less bourgeois and more feudal, and it is the principal obstacle to democracy and to the proletarian struggle. The bourgeois nationalism of every oppressed nation has a general democratic content which is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we support unconditionally, while strictly distinguishing it from the tendency towards national exceptionalism, while fighting against the tendency of the Polish bourgeoisie to oppress the Jews, etc. etc." (Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *The Rights of Nations to Self-Determination*, in Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 208-09)

¹² "A nation, as expressed in the state, is a living, ethical entity only insofar as it is progressive. Inactivity is death. Therefore the state is not only authority which governs and confers legal form and spiritual value on individual wills, but it is also power which makes its will felt and respected beyond its frontiers, thus affording practical proof of the universal character of the decisions necessary to ensure its development. This implies organization and expansion, potential if not actual. Thus the state equates itself to the will of man, whose development cannot be checked by obstacles, and which, by achieving self-expression, demonstrates its own infinity." (Mussolini, *Fascism*, in Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 225)

¹³ In a very real sense, the ultimate international finality of Marxist-Leninism and Fascism/Nazism was the creation of world order in which the existence of nation states would be subordinated to other factors, be it

to then reformulate the international state system and the very configurations of the nation as a political community according to their respective ideological postulates.

All inevitably succumbed, like the absolute monarchs, to the very nationalist forces they had at first enticed, then tried to suppress. Why? Precisely because as a pre-political force, nationalism constitutes the collective affirmation of fundamental moral principles without which collective human life would be untenable. It is natural to man, and it lies within the constructed setting of nation states.

The types of nations and nationalisms

The type of nationalism has to do with the type of nation in which it develops and with the given time and historical challenge which it confronts. No two nations and therefore no two nationalisms are alike. “Thus nations modify themselves according to time, place, and their internal character; each bears in itself the standard of its perfection, totally independent of all comparison with that of others” (Johann Gottfried von Herder, in Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 54). Nationalism as a concept contains the principles of political and cultural action through which a community seeks to empower itself within the context of a universal natural law.

Anthony Smith has proposed a definition of the different types of nation. In *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, he writes that all nations have both modern ‘civic’ and ‘genealogical’ elements. No civic polity, or republic, or ‘nation to be’ as Smith describes it, can survive ‘without a homeland or a myth of common origins or descent,’ conversely no ethnic group which wishes to build a modern nation-state can do so without the body

class struggle, socialist ideology, the power of stronger nations, the predominance of a certain race, etc. In other words, nationalism as such would cease to exist because the nation-state as known historically would have ceased to exist within these proposed alternative world orders.

of equal rights and duties and of economic and territorial structural organization, which is based on the civic notion of citizenship. (Smith, 1988, 149)

Liah Greenfeld contributes to a similar vision by establishing a distinction between the different types of nationalism that have developed within the different types of nationhood. Greenfield broadly identifies two main types of nationalism: civic and ethnic. The civic is described as divided into an individualistic and collectivist variants. The former made manifest in the English and American Revolutions and the latter in the French. This mode of collectivist civic nationalism she describes as riddled with contradictions and therefore highly unstable:

The civic criteria of national membership acknowledge the freedom of the individual members, which the collectivistic definition of the nation denies. Collectivistic and civic nationalism is therefore an ambivalent, problematic type, necessarily plagued by internal contradictions. The turbulent political history of the French nation is eloquent testimony to these contradictions. (Hanson and Spohn, 1995)

The other type of nationalism counterpoised by Greenfeld to civic nationalism is ethnic nationalism, driven by a belief in genetic determinism. For this variant of nationalism, expressed in German and Russian history, individuality must be submerged within history and collectivism. Therefore, it has tended to be radically anti-Western in its diverse expressions (Hanson and Spohn, 1995).

Nationalism as the actualization of collective potential.

The means towards the actualization of collective potential is not always nationalist, as Smith points out, since not all human groups or ethnies constitute nations, and not all nationalities desire a state. However, those such as Gellner or Hobshawn intent on depicting nationalism as some sort of socially engineered illusion, fail to amply demonstrate why that illusion has not only survived, but also become a colossal force in

human affairs. It is clearly evident that nationhood is the measuring rod for collective identities in our world.

Although admittedly Gellner and Hobshawn single out material factors, which are key in the constant dialectic of nationalism and nationhood, they fail to articulate the undeniable power of the nationalist potential. Anderson describes well the nature of this shortfall when he writes: “[...] But it is doubtful whether either social change or transformed consciousness, in themselves, do much to explain the attachment that peoples feel for the inventions of their imaginations- or... why people are ready to die for these inventions” (Anderson, 1991, 141).

Anderson notes that even for people are not only willing to die for their nation, the nation inspires one of the deepest and strongest of human emotions, love. “In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love” (Anderson, 1991, 141).

Perhaps the answer lies in that nationalism provides man with a response against the inevitability of his demise.

His belief and his struggle to plant what is permanent, his conception in which he comprehends his own life as an eternal life, is the bond which unites first his own nation, and then through his nation, the whole human race, in a most intimate fashion with himself, and brings all their needs within his widened sympathy until the end of time. (Johann Gottlieb Fichte, “Address to the German nation,” as cited in Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 65)

It allows man to confront death collectively by appreciating a means of transcending it through the exercise of virtue among those humans whose being he feels

closest to his own. Nationalism for many is therefore literally about life and death. As Anthony Smith has written, “the return to the past is necessary because of our need for immortality through the memory of posterity which the seeming finality of death threatens. In our descendants’ memory lies our hope.... The nation becomes the constant renewal and re-telling of our tale by each generation of our descendants.” (Smith, p.208).

Therefore, nationalism has as an overriding goal of subordinating identity to a transcending moral consciousness within the confines of the modern state. Not being specifically ideological, history demonstrates that this moral consciousness may be manipulated and distorted by the ensuing politics it generates. The analysis of nationalism, therefore, cannot be divorced from the institutions and processes that help mobilize it.

Chapter Three - The Rise and fall of the Cuban Republic

At the sight of the city utterly perishing amidst the flames Scipio burst into tears, and stood long reflecting on the inevitable change which awaits cities, nations, and dynasties, one and all, as it does every one of us men. This, he thought, had befallen Illium, once a powerful city, and the once mighty empires of the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, and that of Macedonia, lately so splendid.

- Polybius, describing Scipio, the Roman general, as he ordered the destruction of Carthage

The subject of this chapter is the historical development of what can be referred to as traditional Cuban civic nationalism, as separate from Castroite nationalism and Cuban exile nationalism. In order to document it I recur to both a historical survey of the development of the events and ideas in question, and review the texts that have both studied and constituted this body of attitudes and beliefs which constitute the tenets of traditional Cuban nationalism.

I follow the development of Cuban nationalism from the liberal ideologies of the wars of independence in the 19th century, to the development of the “national revolutionary” ideological family by the middle of the 20th century. Particular emphasis is placed on studying how traditional Cuban nationalism affected the psychological and ideological make up of the Cuban republics that existed during this period, and how the institutional and ideological weaknesses of these republics provided the breeding ground for the emergence of Castroism.

CUBA: THE BLACK LEGEND OF THE REPUBLIC

By 1960 Cubans had taken their republic from the desolation and hardship of a country ravaged by a prolonged war of independence (1868-78, 1879-80, 1895-98) to the highest tiers of socioeconomic development in Latin America.

An enduring myth is that 1950's Cuba was socially and economically a backward country whose development, especially in the areas of health and education, was made possible by the socialist nature of the Castro government. Despite the widespread acceptance of this view, readily-available data show that Cuba was already a relatively well-advanced country in 1958, certainly by Latin American standards, and in some cases, by world standards". (Smith, Kirby and Llorens, 1998).

Even government-sanctioned Cuban academics such as Jesus Arboleya acknowledge, "In the decade of the 1950s, Cuba was a country of striking contrasts. If on the one hand, according to some indicators, it ranked as one of the most economically and culturally developed countries in the hemisphere, the social imbalances were so acute that the political situation was always under tension."(Arboleya, 2000, 23)

Powerful forces swirled beneath the hospitable tropical façade of the Cuba that existed in the first part of the twentieth century. Inherent tensions shaped an identity that came to combine great material prosperity with equally great psychological weaknesses.¹⁴ On the one hand, the country's economy was developing dynamically, achieving standards of living that were among Latin America's highest. On the other, its process of political institutionalization was fraught with violent civil strife. Cubans embraced 20th century modernity while still trapped in the ideological struggles of the 19th century.

Roughly speaking, these mind-sets consisted of two perspectives: the first can be traced to the Spanish conquest of the island and the captain-generals that successively ruled it. The Spaniards came to see Cuba as both the launch pad for the establishment of empire and as a fortress meant to protect it. It was from Cuba that Cortés set off to

¹⁴ "It is not easy to explain the remarkable debility of Cuban society in the middle of the twentieth century, to balance the considerable prosperity on the one hand against the psychological weaknesses on the other, the stifling labour laws and the stagnation, the reliance on sugar and the world market and the increased diversification.." (Thomas, 1998, 1188.)

conquer Mexico and three centuries later, from where Ferdinand VII dreamed of initiating the reconquest of the breakaway Latin American republics.¹⁵ It was in Cuba that the Spanish held on long after they had been expelled from their wealthier colonies in the continent.

It was in Cuba that the explosion that sank the USS Maine battleship in 1898 hailed the birth of the American empire and the death of the Spanish, where the Soviets established their only firm foothold in the western hemisphere, eventually bringing the world the closest it has ever been to nuclear confrontation. It was from Cuba that at one point in time Castro and Guevara tried to initiate an international guerrilla war that would sweep the hemisphere and ‘turn the Andes into the Sierra Maestra.’¹⁶

This strain of thought paradoxically combined militarism and insularity, a yearning for a greater destiny for the island with a profound suspicion of everything and anything foreign to her shores. Those who viewed Cuba as a citadel perceived her fate as inextricably linked to that of a greater imperial power and could only conceive of the Cuban state as an extension of a greater one.

This fortress mentality was directed not only outwardly, but also inwardly, sometimes viciously so. It perceived Cuba outwardly as either the spearhead or the citadel of imperial designs. Inwardly, it beheld those of Cubans, linked through wealth, lineage, ethnicity or ideology with that greater power, as the internal defenders of

¹⁵ [trans. by author] “The island of Cuba was the objective of innumerable attempts at independence promoted from continental America, and was also the command center of the counterinsurrections organized by Spain. Many expeditions left the island for continental America, mainly Mexico, with the sole purpose of recuperating the territory which had recently achieved independence and once again turning it into a Spanish colony. Fortunately, Spanish incompetence and Mexican force prevented a return to the old colonial order.” (Rodríguez, 1990. 74)

¹⁶ “Y esa ola de estremecido rencor, de justicia reclamada, de derecho pisoteado que se empieza a levantar por entre las tierras de Latinoamérica, esa ola ya no parará más”. Second Declaration of Havana, read by Fidel Castro on February 4, 1962. (*Manifestos de Cuba.*, 1975, 285.)

civilization against a motley mixture of races, a perpetually immature populace often referred to by Cuban intellectual Jorge Mañach, that threatened the higher destinies that Cuba was bound to serve.

Así, la psicología de la cubanidad de Figueras era obra de un registro único de vicios y virtudes. Los cubanos eran y serían siempre desinteresados, hospitalarios, dadivosos hasta la prodigalidad, poco aficionados al comercio y al ahorro, propensos al galanteo, machistas, carentes de iniciativa industrial para ser autosuficientes en la economía y de iniciativa política para ser independientes, mentirosos e indolentes. Entre estos males sociales, Figueras daba la mayor importancia a dos, que ya habían sido diagnosticados por De la Guardia, Garrigó y Márquez Sterling: la ‘acletofobia’, o el horror a la verdad en los asuntos públicos y la ‘atonía’ moral. (Rojas, 1999, 160)

[trans: For Figueras, the psychology of Cubans was a unique compendium of virtues and vices. Cubans were and would always be disinterested, full of hospitality, generous, not given to commerce or savings, boastful, *machistas*, lacking enough industrial initiative to be self sufficient in economic terms and sufficient political initiative to be independent, liars and apathetic. Among these social ills, Figueras gave the most importance to something which had already been diagnosed by De la Guardia, Garrigo and Marquez Sterling: the horror of speaking the truth about public affairs and lack of moral reasoning.]

The fortress was designed for inward and outward battle, encircling and protecting a higher destiny that a percentage of the Cuban population could not possibly understand. This fortress mentality was perhaps best labeled by Fidel Castro in his January 1961 speech before the Revolutionary Militias, when he said: “Nosotros tenemos que ser un pueblo espartano [...] un pueblo luchador” (We must be a Spartan people [...] a fighting people) (Thomas, 1998, 1347). In Fidel Castro the Spartan fortress-state perhaps found its best spokesman and architect.

The Spartan ideology had its logical corollary in this discourse of ‘negative cubanidad.’ That is to say, Cubans required a Spartan state because they were somehow unfit for a democratic order, and at the same time the Spartan state protected Cubans from a world they were somehow unfit for.

The other perspective envisioned Cuba as an open plaza, a polis, open to the world, to destiny, endowed with great possibilities and assured a bright future. It was born perhaps of the island's dynamic mixture of races and nations, of its central location favorable to trade, communication and commerce, of its proximity to the world's greatest republic, of its vigorous and often bloody quest for self-discovery and of the ideas of freedom and equality that seduced many of its elite and of its people. This perspective came to be based on a belief in and to affirm the permanently latent power of the Cuban citizen. Freedom for that individual would unleash all his creative potential. In political terms, those who saw the island in this manner could translate her uniqueness only into independence.

However, the political history of the republic was not forged by the preponderance of one perspective over the other, but rather by the way in which they clashed, mingled, sometimes coalesced and eventually and bloodily divorced. From that divorce emerged both the Spartan fortress state and the invisible exiled republic. At the roots of the dispute lie the origins of Cuban totalitarianism. Whereas a civic, liberal ideology constituted the conceptual essence of Cuba's first two republics, authoritarian, anti-political conceptions of politics never disappeared from the nation's undercurrents and would come to greatly affect the direction of its historical process.

Hence, Castroism will be analyzed beyond its Marxist dimensions as a nationalist-authoritarian ideology, a homegrown totalitarian endeavor cosmeticized by Communist theory. In this respect special attention will be paid to the relationship between emotion and passion as political components of authoritarian and totalitarian expressions of nationalism.

In his book *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson writes at length about the seeming paradox between the ‘philosophical poverty’ of nationalism and its considerable political power, (Anderson, 1991, 5) capable of inspiring ‘colossal sacrifices’ in the annals of world history. Among other reasons, he adjudicates this power to the fact that nationalism is a primary ideology,¹⁷ concerned with responding questions of life and death with which material, present-oriented ideologies such as Liberalism and Marxism do not deal.¹⁸

Therefore, it should not be surprising that as Anderson further asserts, “Such considerations underline the fact that since World War II every successful revolution has defined itself in national terms...and in so doing, has grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the pre-Revolutionary past” (Anderson, 1991, 2). Nationalism is generated by and addresses the profound moral fibers of a community. It may serve as a carrier for more complex political thought structures expressed in ideologies, but in essence its power lies in the fact that it comes from a profound perception of *we* or *us* which must be defined in a proper relationship to that of the ‘Other.’ Its connectedness derives from its identification with the pre-rational discourse of passion and emotion.

Damian J. Fernandez has explored at length the effect of the politics of passion in Cuban history. He writes that the discourse of passion and emotion:

[...] Are defined by intense affectivity and personal engagement combined with a normative agenda driven by a moral imperative. They generally arise from potentially divisive ‘foundational’ issues that establish the nature of the political community, who belongs to it, how it should be

¹⁷ “Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N (rather as one might Age-with-a-capital-A) and then to classify ‘it’ as an ideology.” (Anderson, 1991, 5)

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.10

governed, and what its core of values should be. The politics of passion embrace the individual's and the collectivity's sense of self-worth, honor and dignity. The politics of passion are usually motivated by codes of ethics and normative frameworks influenced, at least indirectly, by religion. (Fernandez, 2000, 19)

Hence, in the famous words of Theodore Draper describing Castroism,

Historically, then, Castroism is a leader in search of a movement, a movement in search of power, and power in search of an ideology. From its origin to today, it has had the same leader and the same 'road to power,' but it has changed its ideology. If Castroism were merely an extension of its leader, it would belong to the traditional caudillo-type movements of Latin America in which power is its own justification. But Castro is not a traditional caudillo; he is a new type of caudillo with a need to justify his power ideologically. (Draper, 1965, 48-49)

A cursory look at Cuban history from the mid-19th century to 1959, and more than that, an outline of its ideological and political development, is needed in order to understand the basis of Cuban exile nationalism.

It is necessary to concentrate on the development of a few central historical notions and their transformation within the political process of the island nation. Among them are several key factors that contributed to the inherent tensions of the Cuban national identity and were influential in the later development of Cuban totalitarianism.

For as Fernandez proposes:

One of the most dramatic features of Cuban political history has been the chasm between the ideal and the real. This chasm is not exclusive to the island, but why has it been so pronounced in its politics? The chasm has resulted from material constraints and from competing and coexisting political cultural frameworks among Cubans. Together three major cultural paradigms – the liberal, the corporatist and lo informal-construed politics on the one hand, as a moral crusade for absolute ends-the politics of passion-and, on the other, as a personal instrumental quest-the politics of affection (Fernandez, 2000, 26).

These concepts can be summarized in the two propositions that we will now elaborate:

1. The conflict between the modernizing and autocratic/corporatist tendencies within the Cuban body politic.

Those political currents linked to the Catholic Church, to monarchy, to a corporatist and feudal perception of politics, opposed to free markets and representative government, came to constitute a powerful, dominant element in the Spanish political identity. These forces were especially strong in Cuba.

The implementation of the Royal Order of Spain on May 28, 1825, granting total ruling power to the island's Captain General by King Ferdinand VII, established the dangerous historical precedent of absolute power in the hands of one individual, transcending and surpassing all institutions and limiting all political freedoms and nullifying all laws.

As the island's material prosperity increased the autocratic tendencies of the ruling elite did as well.

The wealth of Cuba between 1825 and the end of the nineteenth century grew to first class levels. The prolonged absolute powers of the captain-general also grew to a real dictatorship, different in kind from the incompetent autocracies of the eighteenth and previous centuries. Cuban wealth continued to grow, and the Cuban dictatorship to flourish, alongside relative stagnation in Spain, the mother country. Slavery and the slave trade, even though the latter was illegal, were the institutions, which held these things together (Thomas, 1998, 109).

The Spanish king empowered the Captain Generals out of fear that the flames of insurrection already blazing through the other Spanish colonies in the Americas would

sweep throughout Cuba.¹⁹ But the efforts of the Captain Generals could not change the fact that liberal ideas had begun to take root and disseminate throughout the island.

According to noted Cuban historian Herminio Portel Vilá,

[Trans. by author]: The two brief periods during which there were constitutional governments in Spain, which lasted until the Holy Alliance helped to crush liberalism in Spain and its remaining colonies (1823) had stimulated the appetite of Cubans for independence (Vilá, 1986,23).

During this period increased trade between Cuba and the United States also greatly augmented the exposure of Cubans to liberal and republican ideas (Thomas, 1998, 194-95).

It has been argued that in Cuba the revolutionary ideas of liberalism predated nationality, as if to discount the legitimacy of Cuban national identity. “El revolucionarismo había arraigado en la Isla mucho antes de que apareciera la conciencia de nacionalidad” (Sorel, 1998, 42). But it is significant to note that the emergence of the modern concept of nationalism is deeply intertwined with the diffusion of the political ideas of the Enlightenment. The prototypical nationalism of the United States and France was civic in context. In Cuba, as in the US and France liberal ideology shaped the idea of patriotism. In Europe, the confines of the citizen rebellions were circumscribed to the territorial dimensions of the national states born of Westphalia. It was thus that the civic nations were born.

¹⁹ “Esto tuvo un efecto espantoso sobre el desarrollo democrático de Cuba y digo espantoso porque los cubanos que nacieron durante ese siglo estuvieron sujeto a una tara terrible de que no se podía hablar, no se podía conversar, porque el Capitán-General era omnipotente y con este Capitán-General omnipotente, pues no había forma de hablar. El discurso político, el intercambio de ideas en Cuba, en este árbol de la libertad, sufrió un embate tremendo”. [trans. by author: This had a horrible effect on the democratic development of Cuba, and I say horrible because the Cubans who were born during this period were born with the terrible stigma that they could not speak, they could not converse, because the Captain-General was omnipotent, and there was no way to speak with that omnipotent Captain General. Political discourse, the exchange of ideas in Cuba, in that tree of freedom, suffered greatly.” Luzárraga, Alberto. “Panorama histórico de la democracia en Cuba”. *Revista Democracia* No.1, vol.II.(2000) : p.4-23.

European nationalisms were inspired by the revolt of the Thirteen Colonies, by the French Revolution and by the national independence movements of Latin America. Civic consciousness and national identity were respectively imbedded in each other's ideological framework (Anderson).

As Anderson writes in *Imagined Communities*:

It [the nation] is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the living paradigm of such religions, and the allomorphism between each faith's ontological claims and territorial stretch, nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state (Anderson, 1991, 6).

The attainment of political liberty is therefore a foundational element of Cuba's nationalism and national identity. A strictly materialist interpretation of the origins of nationhood would discard the understanding that nations, as living social bodies, are in a constant process of growth and change. Perhaps only a minority supported independence at this time, but the intensity of their effort and the persuasiveness of their arguments was increasingly well received by the emerging national population. Cubans felt trapped in a historical predicament, caught between the demands of a modernizing economy and the constraints of an obsolete political order. Freedom through independence came to provide an increasingly reasonable alternative for their aspirations.

The drive for independence both strengthened and was strengthened by emerging Cuban nationalism and national identity. The attainment of political liberty through separation from Spain began to strike a deep chord within the networks of passion and affection of the segments of the population in the island who had developed a community

life distinctly their own. “While the grandest Cuban planters were thus toying with annexation to the U.S., the leaders of the lower middle class, such as it was, were attempting radical, even multi-racial policies, to gather the support of the slave masses” (Thomas, 1998, 102).

In retrospect, it becomes clear that the Royal Order of Spain of 1825 was a reaction to early displays of incipient Cuban liberal nationalism but it also served to augment these nationalist sentiments. The exile of liberal thinkers such as the Catholic priest and political philosopher Félix Varela and poet José María Heredia and the ban on publications that could contain Enlightenment ideas,²⁰ resulted in that “residents of Cuba lost the protection of what law there was.”²¹

This harshness augmented the sense of ‘otherness,’ of foreign oppression, felt by significant sections of the Cuban population and strengthened, along with other factors, the resolve for freedom through independence. This resolve would lead to the prolonged armed struggle for independence that would establish the fundamental emotional narrative of Cuban nationhood. However, there was another segment of the population, which opposed Cuban nationhood. For the thousands of Cubans who fought on the side of Spain, harsh laws were justified on the basis that this was the only way to keep Cuba Spanish. They would develop a counter national ideology whose effects are still felt to this day. The genesis of both Castro’s Spartan nationalism and the discourse of negative cubanidad are here.

²⁰ “In April 1826 a decree forbade the import of books which opposed ‘the Catholic religion, monarchy or which in any other way advocated the rebellion of Vassals or nations.’ ” (Thomas, 1998, 102)

²¹ Ibidem

2. The inconclusive end of the Cuban wars of independence.

Cuba had three wars of independence: the Ten Years' War, which lasted from 1868 to 1878, the 'Little War' (1878-79) and the War of Independence, (1895-98). In these wars and their anti-climactic conclusion can be found the origins of the tensions and contradictions at the core of Cuban national identity that remain unresolved to this day.

The wars of independence in Cuba were long and brutal because for the Spaniards Cuba was the "ever-faithful" daughter and the "most Spanish" of its colonial possessions. It is for this reason, perhaps, that Spanish liberals were conservatives when it came to Cuba. Inevitably the same corporatist and feudal dislike for politics²² that constituted such a dominant element in the Spanish identity came to influence "the most Spanish" of its colonies.

Venezuelan philosopher and writer Arturo Uslar Pietri has described the Latin American wars of independence as ideological civil wars where the conservatives won in the Iberian Peninsula and the liberals resulted victorious in Latin America.

Era evidente la falta de convicción y entusiasmo entre los jefes españoles en América, para combatir decisivamente a los hombres que representaban ideas que ellos compartían. Lo que había habido en España hasta esa hora había sido un estado de guerra civil, larvada o abierta, entre constitucionales y 'serviles'. Lo que pasa en América representa otra faz del mismo enfrentamiento. Era difícil para hombres como Morillo o La Serna, mirar como enemigos mortales a los patriotas americanos (Uslar

²² "Modern aspirations came to naught because of their inherent idealism in conjunction with a host of economic, national, and international factors. Liberal values clashed with and were subverted by a corporatist cultural legacy. Based on the political philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas, among other Catholic thinkers, and with roots in Aristotle, corporatism was essentially monistic and patrimonial. The corporatist paradigm, remnant of Spanish colonialism, endorsed the notion of law, order, stability, and elite leadership through a centralized bureaucratic authority – the state – that would rule over, and in coordination with, sectoral groups hierarchically and organizationally integrated. Each group had rights and responsibilities dictated from above. The state, along with the private sector, would play a defining role in the economy and would supply a modicum of goods to all. The economic paternalism of the corporatist state – with its implied concept of familial responsibility – influenced and continues to influence Cubans' expectations of the state. From this perspective, the state is a source of moral and economic benefits" (Fernandez, 2000, 28).

Pietri, 1995, 52-3). [Trans. by author: The lack of conviction and enthusiasm was obvious among the Spanish officials in the Americas. They did not wish to fight against those men who represented the ideas they shared. What had taken place in Spain until that moment was a civil war, open or discrete, between constitutionalists and those loyal to the Crown. What happened in the Americas was another phase of that same confrontation. It was difficult for men like Morillo or La Serna to behold the American patriots as their mortal enemies.]

Taking place decades later, Cuba's wars of independence were no exception, for they pitted Cuban against Cuban in a struggle that cut across racial and class divisions.

An important element of the Cuban wars for independence were that whereas in the Latin American wars of independence slaves, mestizos and poor whites had sometimes struggled on the side of the Crown against the criollos, in Cuba the landed aristocratic classes in the eastern part of the island who began and led the insurrection against the Spanish Empire freed their slaves and incorporated them into the struggle for national liberation. "Enmities between Spanish peninsulares and Cuban creoles reached heights rarely achieved in the rest of Spanish America, almost obliterating color prejudice" (Thomas, 1998, 249). This, on the one hand, would serve the Spanish to portray the insurrection as a class or racial war and to conjure the specter of a "new Haiti," but on the other, it would establish the basis for an egalitarian national identity on which to found independence.²³ For those loyal to Spain the struggle for independence was also one over the 'whiteness' of the island.

²³ "En 1895 el freno de la esclavitud había desaparecido. El gabinete conservador de Cánovas había decretado la abolición en 1880 y seis años después quedó sin efecto el sistema de patronato, creado para facilitar la transición de los ex-esclavos a la vida libre. Por entonces, la antigua aristocracia terrateniente, arruinada por la guerra y la crisis del azúcar, había perdido el papel dirigente que ejerciera durante medio siglo. Todos estos factores contribuyeron a dar a la revolución de 1895 un talante más democrático y radical, lo que a su vez acarrearía consecuencias políticas y militares de largo alcance" [trans. by author: By 1895 the limitation of slavery had disappeared. The conservative cabinet of Canovas had decreed its abolition in 1880 and six years later it suspended the system of patronage, created to facilitate the transition to freedom for former slaves. Around that time the old landed aristocracy, ruined by war and the sugar crisis,

Oposing the independentistas were the Spanish forces and those Cubans who joined the voluntarios whose allegiance was to Spain. They not only countered the rebels with military force, but also with the development of a specific type of discourse, which was disdainful of the Cuban character and its ability for self-rule. For those who opposed independence, Cuban self-determination and mob rule were synonymous. The Cuban population at large was regarded as a motley mixture of races which did not have the education needed for self-rule.

At the end of the wars of independence there were no clear losers or winners. The Spanish government had lost control of the island. But it had not surrendered to the *mambises*, or Cuban rebels, but to the United States government. Cuba had its independence, but it was limited by the American imposition of the Platt Amendment, which severely restricted the country's internal and foreign policy.²⁴ The anti-climactic result of the Cuban wars of independence constituted the first knot in the complicated string of tensions at the heart of Cuban identity.

The Cuban criollos had sacrificed their wealth in the struggle for independence but by the end of the war they had neither regained this wealth nor fully gained political power. But perhaps worse for the national psyche than the Platt Amendment was the fact that those disdainful of Cuban sovereignty held on to crucial elements of power.

had lost the leadership role it had had for half a century. All these factors contributed to giving the 1895 revolution a more democratic and radical nature, which at the same time would have long term political and military consequences." (Sorel, 1998, 79).

²⁴ Proposed by US Senator Orville Platt, the Amendment, which was imposed as a condition for the end of the American occupation on the members of the Constitutional Convention and was incorporated in Cuba's 1901 Constitution, established that (1) The Cuban government would not enter into any treaty with a foreign government that could limit its independence, (2) The Cuban government would not indebt itself beyond its financial means, (3) That the United States preserved the right to intervene in Cuba in order to safeguard its independence, (4) That the actions undertaken by the US during the occupation would be deemed legitimate and ratified by Cuban law (5) That the Cuban government would undertake the public health plans agreed to with the US government, (6) That final sovereignty over the Isle of Pines would be agreed upon later on by the US and Cuba and (7) That the Cuban government would allow the US to establish naval bases on its territory (Suchlicki, 2002, 69-70).

Economic power lay in the hands of many *integrista* and *autonomista* families²⁵ whose holdings and possessions were protected by the American authorities, secured by the 1898 Treaty of Paris (Suchlicki, 2002, 69) between the United States and Spain which ended the war and from whose negotiations the Free Cuban forces had been excluded.

When it came to political power, although elected positions were held by the Cuban *independentistas*, the bureaucracy was dominated by the *autonomista* sectors, which had been entrusted with it by the Americans (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 188). As a result, the discourse of *negative cubanidad*, which found Cubans lacking in the character necessary for self-determination, and which projected as a consequence the insufficiency of any and all Cuban politics, was disseminated throughout the civil society of the young republic. An example of this school of thought was to be found in the words of the first American governor, Leonard Wood, who wrote: “The time has been very short to convert a people into a Republic who have always existed as a military colony, 60% of whom are illiterate and many sons and daughters of Africans...”(Thomas, p1998, 450-51).

Those who had been *integristas* and *autonomistas* in the past now often became annexionists, desiring that the Americans replace the Spanish as absolute rulers of Cuba. As Hugh Thomas relates, “The Spaniards ‘to a man’, reported Atkin’s Cienfuegos manager, now wanted only annexation and ‘unless this is obtained or the island is to remain under control of the U.S., they will give up their business and return to Spain” (Thomas, 1998, 409). With the economy and bureaucracy of the island controlled by those who did not favor independence, and with powerful allies in the United States reinforcing their opposition to complete Cuban sovereignty, the counter national forces

²⁵ The *integristas* were those who favored remaining under Spanish control. *Autonomistas* favored autonomous government under continued Spanish tutelage.

began to constitute what Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci described as a historic bloc, “to describe the mutually reinforcing and reciprocal relationships between the socio-economic relations (base) and political and cultural practices (superstructure) that together underpin a given order” (Baylis and Smith, 2001, 211). This counter national historic bloc permeated the Cuban psyche with a loathing for sovereign Cuban politics.

Contradictions in terms

Impoverished and decimated by years of wars, with most of the committed independentista leadership having died in battle, Cubans had a republic that was not fully a republic and an economy mostly in foreign hands. The independentista political class had a supposedly self-determined republic that was not fully independent and the autonomistas were faced with the responsibility of administering the independent state they never desired in the first place.

As a consequence, the existing unblemished source of Cuban national pride lay not in achievements of its first independent, democratic governments, whose legacy would always be a mixed one, but in the prolonged wars of independence and their litany of heroes, martyrs, battles, suffering and betrayals. It seemed as if the best of the Cuban leadership had perished in the brutally long struggle for liberation. “The weaknesses derive partly from the consequences of a long and destructive war of independence, in which most of the best men of the generation of 1895 died and in which the old Cuban society of the nineteenth century, already in decay, received a mortal blow” (Thomas, 1998, 1188).

Although the Cuban *independentista* forces had been careful to submit the military command to civilian rule and even under the worst conditions had preserved the

structure of duly constituted civilian government (Vilá, 1986, 39), what transcended to later generations of Cubans was mainly the warrior epic of *la gesta independentista*. From its chronicles of valor, stoicism and betrayal and the frustration with the many pitfalls of republican politics would emerge an emotional narrative of both heroism and despair that would overwhelm Cuban political discourse.

“In the public schools they spoke more to us about Maceo’s prowess in battle than about his democratic ideas,” Mons. Agustín Román, a prominent spiritual leader of the Miami exile community, would comment on the historical instruction for the young emanating from this emotional nationalist narrative.²⁶ For Roman, the genesis of the republican cult of political violence lay here. Cubans would vent their frustration over an incomplete independence and the stifling discourse of negative cubanidad of important population sectors through the exercise of the one political action over which they had full sovereignty: violence.

3. The domination of the bureaucracy and economy of the newly born island republic by the autonomistas and anexionistas. The essential tenets of autonomista thought. The educational system in the hands of the independentistas.

The leaders of Cuba’s struggle for independence from Spain were fundamentally liberals. They believed that within the framework of freedom, rule of law, representative government and an open economic system the island could prosper. They envisioned a future republican Cuba grounded in natural law and part of an integrated confederation of American republics. The independentistas, however, were opposed by three forces, based mainly in the western part of the island: the *integristas*, who sought to remain with Spain, the *autonomistas*, who sought to remain within the Spanish fold but with greater freedom

²⁶ Personal interview, 12/29/03

and autonomy, and those who despaired of the ability of both Spaniards or Cubans to rule Cuba and sought annexation by the United States, known as *anexionistas*. Autonomistas and anexionistas tended to coincide and complement each other in their thinking.

The best organized of these three parties, with greater intellectual capacity and financial resources, were the autonomistas (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, Vol. I 184-85). At the core of autonomista thought lay a profound distrust in the ability of Cubans to rule themselves. They regarded with suspicion the incorporation and rise to prominence in the independentista ranks of former slaves and poor whites, and believed them incapable of administering an independent country.

La revolución, que se proponía modificar por medios violentos la estructura de la sociedad cubana, tal cual se había desenvuelto durante el régimen colonial estimulaba el encumbramiento de las masas, cuya supremacía se consagraba con el establecimiento del sufragio universal. La democracia, ejercida in limitaciones por una población que carecía de tradiciones políticas y de capacidad para conocer sus verdaderas necesidades, tenía que dar lugar a perturbaciones sociales de tal naturaleza, que la mantendrían en estado de desasosiego y de intranquilidad – aparte de la actuación de la demagogia, halagando los bajos instintos de las masas-, las incitaría a adueñarse de la cosa pública, entorpeciendo de esta manera el proceso civilizador, el cual, para prosperar, tiene que estar dirigido por mentalidades superiores y de una probidad absoluta. (Menocal y Cueto, 1945, 17).

[Trans. by author: The revolution, which sought to modify through violent means the structure of Cuban society as it had developed under the colonial regime stimulated the empowerment of the masses, whose supremacy was consolidated by the establishment of universal suffrage. Democracy as exercised by a population which lacked political traditions as well as the capacity to know its true needs, had to lead to social disruptions of such nature that they would maintain a state of uncertainty and instability. This, added to the role of demagoguery, constantly fanning the low instincts of the masses, would incite them to take public matters for themselves, in that way blocking the civilizing process, which in order to prosper, had to be led by superior minds of proven moral integrity.]

The first American occupation of Cuba at the end of the last war of independence, from 1899 to 1902, did not by itself signify a reversal of the independentista hopes. In fact, it would leave a positive legacy in terms of infrastructure development. The principal leaders of the independence movement warmly welcomed American military intervention against Spain. Tensions and clashes would inevitably develop over the Platt Amendment, the Treaty of Reciprocity, and other matters, but perhaps the most pressing was the fact that the Americans kept in key positions those who had struggled against the birth of a free Cuban republic.

Nonetheless, the different Cuban factions jockeyed for greater influence with the Americans. Whereas autonomistas and anexionistas grew close to Governor Wood, who favored eventual annexation, independentista leaders, and mostly through the emigré community, had influence in Washington, where they sought to continue steering American policy further in the direction of consolidating the Cuban Republic. One key area where the independentistas gained control was the educational system.

Los principales problemas de la República en 1902 pueden sintetizarse con la mentalidad colonial, que no debe atribuirse a la Enmienda Platt, ya que es la consecuencia del régimen español y del hecho de que la economía continuó en manos de extranjeros o de cubanos afectos a España, lo político y administrativo a virtud de la misma herencia de la Colonia, pues sus procedimientos al respecto se basaban el fraude electoral, el desconocimiento de la voluntad de la mayoría, el peculado, el soborno, y el contrabando; el social, o sea la necesidad de humanizar la situación de los trabajadores y del campesinado y de incorporar plenamente al negro en la sociedad cubana de acuerdo con los postulados de la Revolución; el educacional, consistente en continuar la labor iniciada por Mr. Frye en la ocupación militar y en erradicar el analfabetismo, contribuyendo a mantener y consolidar los valores éticos que constituían el fundamento de la nacionalidad; el cultural, o sea continuar la tradición de los intelectuales cubanos que desde Varela a Martí, habían sabido orientar oportuna y adecuadamente a la sociedad, y, por último las relaciones con los Estados Unidos, tarea que no era fácil, pues el país estaba acostumbrado a depender de otro. (Masó, 1998, 569)

[Trans. by author: The main problems of the Republic in 1902 can be summarized as the consequence of the legacy of the colonial mentality. This should not be attributed to the Platt Amendment, since it is the direct consequence of the Spanish regime and of the fact that the economy continued in the hands of foreigners or Cubans loyal to Spain, as well as the political and administrative sectors. The Spanish legacy with regard to this was based on electoral fraud, the negation of the will of the majority, embezzlement, bribery, and contraband. In social terms, there was a need to humanize the situation of workers and farmers and to fully integrate blacks into Cuban society according to the principles of the [independence] Revolution, in educational terms there was a need to continue with the work begun by Mr. Frye during the military occupation and in the elimination of illiteracy, thereby consolidating the ethical values which were the basis of nationality; in cultural terms there was a need to continue with the tradition of Cuban intellectuals who, since Varela and Marti, had known how to wisely steer society in the right direction, and lastly, the relations with the United States, which was not an easy task, because the country was used to depending on another.]

Named as general superintendent of schools by Governor Brooke, who preceded Wood, Alexis Everett Frye, an American educator who had had great success with the public school systems in Chicago and California, understood that the purpose of the public schools was to foster and strengthen the civic character of Cubans so as to therefore reinforce the nascent republic. Frye sought to strengthen the national character of Cubans, and he “inspired the first Cuban public school educators with a missionary spirit that was slowly lost in the Republic” (Masó, 1998, 440).

Frye enthusiastically set about his task. When he became superintendent there were 300 public schools in Cuba. By the time he left office that number had increased to 3,313 (Thomas, 1998, 446). The end of the American military intervention in 1902 had enrolled 163,348 children in public schools as compared to 85,809 in 1899 (Vilá, 1986, 47). Thanks to his efforts, 1,256 Cuban public teachers attended summer courses at

Harvard (Masó, 1998, 441). It is estimated that the Cuban population in 1902 consisted of 1,572,797 inhabitants. (Duarte Oropesa, 1974, 127)

Most important, however, was the content of the educational program. Frye himself wrote a book on the geography of Cuba. A Teacher's Manual, which contained the first history of Cuba edited after the end of the Spanish dominion, written by Cuban patriot Manuel Sanguily, was published and distributed (Masó, 1998, 441). "Students were to 'compare the thirteen colonies that gave rise to the United States with Cuba during its colonial period' and 'to learn how the American people gradually resolved the problem of self-government, thereby forming some idea of the enormous task that currently confronts Cuba' "(Perez, 1999, 160).

The protests from the anexionista and autonomista sectors were not long in coming. A clash ensued between Frye and Governor Wood, who favored the annexation of Cuba and felt that Frye was "contributing to the growth of Cuban nationalism" (Perez, 1999, 440). Wood accused Frye "of spreading the most intense radicalism as to the future relations between Cuba and the United States" (Thomas, 1998, 447).

Frye was eventually removed, but he had helped to plant a deep seed of nationalism in Cuba's public educational system, one that would be felt throughout the breadth and length of the Republic. In essence, a chasm had developed between an educational system churning out Cubans imbued with the values of a new democratic citizenry, and an administrative and economic system dominated by the vestiges of Spanish colonialism. In this cleavage can also be found the roots of the violent dichotomy that facilitated Castroite totalitarianism. Cubans would increasingly come to see the state as illegitimate, not for racial or even regional or religious reasons, as in other Latin

American countries²⁷ but because two antipodal values systems were being disseminated by the same state.²⁸

The Insufficient State

For the autonomistas, anexionistas and integristas the wars of independence had been an immense failure. In self-fulfillment of their own prophecy, they viewed and dealt with Cuban politics and the Cuban state as inherently insufficient, corrupt, and underdeveloped. An organic rejection of popular politics inherited from Spanish integrismo mixed with racism and class prejudice lay at the core of their thought.

La animadversión al político, hecha so capa de una presunta falta de escrúpulos y de una amoralidad total y sin excepciones, tuvo su origen, al menos en una sociedad estructurada como la nuestra, por un lado en la simpatía que por los autoritarismos sienten los enemigos de la igualdad social, y por otro en la feroz negativa de los privilegiados a compartir los frutos del privilegio. En realidad subestimaban al político, y hasta lo odiaban, quienes temían al acceso y al ascenso del pueblo a oportunidades de empleo, de bienestar, de educación. (Baquero, Gastón, *Elogio del Político*, Centro de Estudios para una Opción Nacional. Miami. 1999)
 [Trans. by author: The rejection of political office, based on a supposed lack of scruples and on a total immorality with no exceptions, had its origin, at least in a society structured like our own, on the one hand in the sympathy for authoritarianism held by the enemies of social equality, and on the other, by the furious opposition of those the privileged classes to share the fruits of their privilege. In fact, they despised politicians, even hated them, because they feared the access of the people to job opportunities, to a better life, to education.]

They viewed the Cuban state as hopelessly insufficient and therefore dealt with it as such. By the end of the wars of independence Cubans had their state but autonomistas, anexionistas and independentistas thought little of it.

²⁷ “It appears that Latin Americans, as a whole, have not been able to create a state with which they feel comfortable, a state they believe to have legitimate power and institutions and government entities that truly work to serve society.” (Montaner, 2003, 6)

²⁸ These educational reforms would in the long run contribute to the undermining of the integrista influence fashioned in the manner of a Gramscian historic bloc. As Vilá notes, “As more and more persons acquired an education, the press underwent a complete change. There were new newspapers and magazines, and the old ones adopted the same format” (Vilá, 1986, 47).

Spanish conservatives grounded this view of the insufficiency of the Cuban state in the traditional rejection of politics. “Spaniards remained Spaniards even in the second generation, they busied themselves with commerce and private life and, though for years economically dominant, they were politically inactive” (Thomas, 1998, 1188). They viewed the affairs of the state as above politics, as a complicated matter accessible only to those with the cultural, economic, social and political conditions that enabled them to deal with those matters. The idea of a polis, a political community founded upon the notion of a common good, a public space and citizen participation, seemed both foreign and idealistic. The contradictions existing in the public discourse of politics and in the informal attitudes of elites led to schizophrenic tensions at the heart of the Cuban nationality. As Damian J. Fernandez would comment in his *Politics of Passion*: “The Cuban people have been caught in the tug-of-war of competing ontologies and epistemologies” (Fernandez, 2000, 41).

The inability of the anexionista, integrista and autonomista families to accept the existence of the Cuban state prevented them from articulating a conservative political current in Cuban affairs. Instead, they chose to concentrate on dominating the economy and bureaucracy of the island and leaving the petty business of politics to the independentista leaders who sought it. A good percentage of the large number of Spanish immigrants and capital also held this view. This would create a precedent where Cuba’s entrepreneurial classes would be divorced from politics, instigating a low level of civic responsibility. Their politics of anti-politics would severely affect the health of the Cuban body politic in the years to come.

Parallel to the new Cuban middle class that emerged and claimed greater economic power, to the state apparatus undergoing succeeding transformations, and to a changing national press, the cultural hegemony of the anexionistas and autonomistas decayed. What was left was the pervasive self-doubt and loathing of national politics that informally permeated Cuban political culture.

Written in 1957, Luis Aguilar León's brilliant essay *Pasado y Ambiente en el Proceso Cubano*, critiqued this insidious undermining of cubanidad. Aguilar pointed out that:

It should come as no surprise that in our country what comes naturally and spontaneously in others is deemed heroic. In Cuba one must have a very firm and persevering spirit in order to continue believing in Cuba. Because in all places, from the very first classrooms, in conversations in the streets, in the theaters, in the clubs, at home, in light banter or in political discussions, Cuban youth have their nationality torn from them. It is whispered to them that our independence heroes were actually this or that, he is taught to reject what he thought were the values to follow, and he is warned against the serious mistake of taking Cuba too seriously. He is shown a nation that isn't serious, full of petty tricks and dirty deals, where there are no firm values, nor social classes worthy of respect, where everything is run according to the lack of responsibility of the criollo and where, above all things, one must learn early on to take advantage of the weaknesses of others." (Aguilar León, 1972, 75-76).

4. The contempt for Cuban politics of the autonomistas and anexionistas and the contradictory demands on the newly emerging Cuban political class.

From the beginning of Cuban republican history then, there existed a striking paradox: both the desire to strengthen the state and the rejection of the political means with which to do so. Although the American occupation had made a great material contribution to the country, Wood's governorship in particular had injected a dangerous precedent into the perception Cubans had of the U.S.

Whereas the Cubans desired to approximate the United States culturally, and to establish similar political institutions, the real effects of American power in the island's politics often wound up on the side of those who effectively opposed the consolidation of a civic democratic nationality among Cubans.²⁹

This made the transference of power and authority from the Americans to the Cubans and among the Cubans themselves difficult, if not impossible. The second American intervention (1906-09) was motivated primarily by Estrada Palma's refusal to hand power over to Jose Miguel Gomez and his followers. Contested elections were protested through political violence. Cubans learned that American power would come down on the side of short-term material interests requiring stability, even if it damaged the consolidation of democracy. Getting the Americans involved in domestic political squabbles became a national habit (Masó, 1998,513).

Furthermore, for most of the Cuban political classes born of the struggle for independence, politics became the only means through which to attain economic power. As a result of the agreements reached in the Treaty of Paris, which ended the War of Independence, their properties, confiscated by the Spanish colonial rulers, were never returned. American and other foreign interests dominated the economy in the first years of the republic. Corruption and state intervention in the economy, long a tradition of Spanish colonial rule was continued and bolstered by the American occupation forces became intertwined with the notion of Cuban politics.

²⁹ One of the most telling of these episodes was the suppression of the nationalist press by Wood in the midst of the debate over the Platt Amendment. (See Vilá, 1986, 57).

The early republican intellectuals faced a striking dilemma: in order for Cubans to be truly free Cuba had to be truly independent.³⁰ In order for it to be truly independent the Cuban state had to be strengthened. This signified however, that authority had to be concentrated. However the proper means through which to concentrate this authority, the rules of the game or *reglas del juego*, were not clearly established among the elites, political or economic, precisely because there existed a politics of anti-politics among many of them. Many were profoundly convinced that foreign intervention was acceptable in Cuban affairs to preserve order and stability due to the lax political character of the Cuban people (Fernandez, 2000, 35). Others were willing to accept the shortcomings of independence, including corruption, in order to build democracy on a firm foundation of sovereignty.

Just as Hannah Arendt described the European Jewry as economically powerful but politically powerless, constituting an apparently powerful and influential force but in actuality marginalized from public affairs by self-segregation, (Arendt, 1979, 4) the Cuban elites also represented an enormous force with great latent power that seemed influential but actually wasn't. They would compromise and support whoever was the de facto power, confident that their place in the world economy was so secure that whether it be Spain first or the Americans later, an empire would intervene to prevent things from getting out of hand. A generation of national revolutionaries, arisen from the rapidly

³⁰ Independence leaders and thinkers were themselves divided into two currents. One, which had thinkers such as the prestigious Juan Gualberto Gomez as one of its spokespersons, emphasized the importance of independence above all. They rejected the Platt Amendment and supported the candidacy of Gen. Jose Miguel Gomez in the 1906 elections. Others, such as the venerable patriot and first president of the republic, Estrada Palma, saw stable government as the priority. In a personal letter dated October 10, 1906, he wrote: [trans. by author] "I have always felt since the time when I took an active part in the Ten Years' War, that the final aspiration of our noble and patriotic efforts was not independence, but rather the firm determination to achieve a stable government, capable of protecting lives and properties and guaranteeing the natural and civil rights of all those residing in the island..." (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 187).

growing republican middle class, would come to view them as a parasitic force, bolstering tyranny and doing nothing to better the republic by promoting the specter of suprapolitical solutions. They came to constitute the perfect foe, apparently strong but weak at the knees.

In his autobiography, Armando Hart, one of the leaders of the 26th of July Movement, described this perception of the weakness of the Cuban bourgeoisie held by the revolutionaries. “[...] don Cosme de la Torriente representaba propiamente a la ‘burguesía’ que no podía dirigir en Cuba ninguna revolución, porque no tenía fuerza real” (Hart Davalos, 1999, 70). The Cuban bourgeoisie, for Hart “could not lead a revolution because they had no real power.”

5.The yearning for the supra-political state and a caudillo to lead it. (Machado, Batista, Castro)

Both Cuba’s aristocracy and its rising middle class sought, overtly or implicitly, a **supra-political state**. They wanted a state whose efficiency and order would be above the “intrinsic corruption and incompetence of politics.”³¹ Therein lay another great dichotomy. Whereas the island’s political discourse still centered on the liberal aims of

³¹ “En otro ensayo del mismo libro, titulado Los intelectuales, Márquez Sterling responsabilizó a la política y los políticos cubanos del malestar que experimentaba la cultura. La clase política cubana era inculta, no leía, y de ese vicio, según Márquez Sterling, se desprendían 20 defectos muy bien cuantificados que podrían condensarse en dos propensiones morales: aptitud para la tiranía e ineptitud para el patriotismo. Los políticos inutilizaban a los intelectuales mientras el caciquismo, la empleomanía, el clientelismo, el despilfarro del tesoro y la tergiversación de la historia generaban una cultura escéptica y desilusionada. Vemos aquí una marca más de la recurrente negación de la política por la cultura en la historia cubana”. (Rojas, 1999, 159).

[Trans. By author: In another essay in the same book, titled ‘The Intellectuals,’ Marquez Sterling placed the responsibility for cultural malaise on Cuba’s politics and its political leaders. According to Marquez Sterling, the political class was not well versed, did not read, and from this vice came 20 other flaws which could be summarized in two moral categories: an predisposition towards tyranny and an inability to practice patriotism. Politicians neutralized intellectuals while patronage, petty chieftainships, the squandering of public resources and the manipulation of history generated a skeptical and disillusioned culture. We see here another expression of the recurring cultural negation of politics in Cuban history.]

the independentista thinkers such as Varela, Agramonte or Marti, the de facto political culture seemed to emphasize the attainment of the mythical supra-political state where the efficiency and order sought by autonomista oligarchs would be somehow reconciled (after 1933) with the egalitarian³² and libertarian longings of the common man.³³

The Generation of 1930

From the mid 20s on, economic troubles caused by the fall of sugar prices in the international markets mixed with an increasing call for government reform. The Mexican and Soviet Revolutions and the Argentine Cordoba university reform movement were powerful and recent historic influences on those vying for change in Cuba. The activities of nationalist students and faculty began to imbue the University of Havana with the political protagonism for which it would later on become notorious. The labor movement coalesced under the leadership of the anarcho syndicalists, and Marxism made its way from youthful intellectual circles to groups of workers throughout the country (Thomas, 1998, 569-71).

The apparently contradictory yearning between suprapolitical order and efficiency on the one hand and freedom and equality on the other seemed to find its synthesis in one man: Gerardo Machado y Morales (President from 1924-28; dictator 1928-33). A general in the wars of independence, with a professional career linked to the American companies in Cuba, his authoritarianism and efficiency in the handling of the state and the development of the country turned him into what seemed then the ideal man of Cuban

³² See Vilá, 1986, 285 and 542 for these strange ideological alliances.

³³ “Cubanos de a pie” is a Cuban phrase used to describe the average Cuban. Similar to what John Doe would be for Americans.

politics. The supra-political state had found its *caudillo*.³⁴ Machado was a caudillo that could provide the Cuban people with the access to the state they desired and at the same time discipline those ‘unruly masses’ in the name of an aristocracy that did not share their same sense of ‘cubanness.’

The mix of efficiency and order and freedom and egalitarianism that Machado embodied for a time can be found in both his apparent ideological sympathies and in the people he surrounded himself with. His leanings toward fascism were much commented. “Others saw a connection with Fascism and Mussolini in Machado’s declared aim to ‘discipline these Cubans,’ these ‘Italians of America,’ and this too was not unappealing.” (Thomas, 1998, 573).

His steadfast opposition to the Platt Amendment was also much admired, but he did not lose contact with the apolitical Spanish aristocracy in the island. “To implement his programme, Machado made up his cabinet of a contrasting group of men: the secretary to the presidency, and ultimately the most powerful man in the administration, was Viriato Gutierrez, son-in-law and eventually heir of Laureano Falla Gutierrez, the biggest Spanish sugar mill owner in Cuba. He represented Machado’s best link with the important Spanish colony and also with the sugar dealers.” (Thomas, 1998, 573.)

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From this emerged the policy of *cooperativismo*: where Cuba's two historical political parties, the liberals and conservatives, practically merged to consolidate a dictatorial system in support of Machado and his decision to illegally amend the Constitution in order to re-elect himself in 1928. Both a man of the people, an independentista, and an iron-willed ruler pleasing to the corporatist political notions of the autonomistas and their descendants, Machado seemed to offer a high road to national self-determination.³⁵

6. The fusion and confusion of liberal, republican, democratic, collectivist, nationalist and anti-imperialist ideas, ideals and values in the abstract concept of "Revolution."

In Machado's path there emerged, however, two powerful forces which would decisively influence the rest of Cuban history: one the organized left, led by the labor movement and the Communist Party, and the other the nationalist revolutionaries, who began to coalesce around intellectuals and the student movement in the University of Havana of the late 20's and 30's and sought to find in José Martí and other independentista thinkers the ideological foundations for a profound renovation of the Cuban Republic.

The Left

Several factors influenced the sharp growth of the left in Cuban politics all throughout the 20's and 30's. In the first place, the Cuban wars of independence, with the massive incorporation of slaves, former slaves, and rural poor had had a decisively

³⁵ Nationalist exile ideologues of the 80's and 90's such as Gilberto Gonzalez-Tena would come to later lament that the synthesis of thought and action between "the nationalist thought of Machado and [radical firebrand and minister of government under Grau] Guiteras" never took place.

egalitarian appeal. Two leading left-wing thinkers, the social democrat Diego Vicente Tejera and the Marxist Carlos Baliño, belonged to Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party. However, Martí publicly and consistently criticized socialism and Marxism and the Cuban Revolutionary Party was meant to serve as an umbrella organization for all the independentista factions.

Secondly, the massive migrations of Spaniards to Cuba³⁶ after the wars of independence ended had brought with it the ideological currents of both organized communism and anarcho-syndicalism so prevalent in Europe at the time. (Thomas, 1998, 291). Of particular importance was the influence of Mexican Communists, as well as the rise of the Peruvian APRA, led by Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, which sought to combine both Marxist and liberal tenets in an authentically Latin American ideology. Thirdly, the Machadista supra-political state accepted by the republican establishment did not seem to contain an element of social justice that could appeal to the increasingly dissatisfied and growingly rebellious masses of poor Cubans.

Led by the Communists, who gradually and sometimes violently displaced the anarcho syndicalists from the leadership of the labor movement, the left also sought a supra-political state, but one where the country's society and economy would be subjected to overriding collectivist principles (Garcia Montes and Alonso Avila, 1970, 65).

³⁶ Between 1902 and 1907 155,252 immigrants arrived in Cuba, an overwhelming percentage of which were Spanish. (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 142.)

The Nationalist Revolutionaries

Whereas the left sought its inspiration in Marx, the nationalist revolutionaries, imbued with reformist ideals, rediscovered Jose Marti.³⁷ In Marti's writings and life the young leaders and intellectuals of the 1930's, Mañach, Prio, the Rubio Padilla brothers, Guiteras, Chibas, Tony Varona, Rafael Trejo, etc. found that Marti's natural law-based liberal doctrine could serve as the foundation for a democratic republican state open to Cubans of all races and classes.

The nationalist revolutionaries sought to articulate a doctrine of fundamental unity and brotherhood among Cubans, one that Marti had so insisted on. The "cult of Marti," the fanatical devotion to his life and writings, the insistence on his ideology as the natural ideology of the Cuban nation, can all be traced to this yearning for ideological renovation of the Generation of 1930. Theirs was a mild anti-Americanism, which consisted of admiration for the American democratic system but rejection of its interventionist policies in Cuba.

The emerging Cuban middle class gathered around the leadership of the Directorio Estudiantil Universitario of 1927 and 1930. They struggled for what they called the "authentic revolution" of Jose Marti, as distinguished from both the "failed" first republic and the "foreign" revolution of the Communists. And the name of the political party that they would create would be known precisely as this: the Cuban Revolutionary Party, named after Marti's political organization. They were better known, however, as the Autenticos, or "authentic ones."

³⁷ The autonomista sector, so dominant in the early republic, had been harshly critical of Martí. Giberga, for one, had described Martí in the House of Representatives, as 'hombre funesto para Cuba', ['a terrible man for Cuba'] (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 186) leading to an effort not to preserve his memory.

The Left and the national revolutionaries coincided in that the independentista revolution had not concluded, in their opposition to U.S. involvement in the Platt Amendment, in that Cubans had been alienated in their own country, and that the Cuban state had to be both more democratic and more actively involved in the nation's development.

The Revolutionary Family

The majority Autenticos and the significant minorities of Communists and later the Batistianos, with all the different factions and offshoots that coalesced around them, constituted Cuba's "revolutionary family." After 1933, they controlled the country's politics based on a socioeconomic consensus that transcended their own political clashes. Their shining moment came in 1939-40 when they managed to put aside their differences in order to draft a constitution and produce a peaceful transition. The old autonomista distrust in the ability for self-rule seemed to have been finally buried.

It is interesting to note, however, that progressively and gradually, at least as reflected in the language of the constitutions, Cuban political discourse became increasingly state-centric, until the sovereignty of the people was replaced by the sovereignty of the state.

The rapid evolution of the notion of sovereignty and statehood in Cuba's political scene becomes evident when one compares the constitution of 1901 and 1940 and the intervening "Constitutional Laws." Whereas the first article of the 1901 Constitution read that "the people of Cuba constitute themselves into an independent and sovereign state and adopts a republican form of government," the Constitutional Law of 1934 stated that "the people of Cuba are an independent and sovereign state, whose form of government

is republican.” Lastly, the 1940 Constitution simply states that “Cuba is an independent and sovereign state, organized as a unitary and democratic republic, for the attainment of political freedom, social justice, human solidarity and individual and collective well being.” Finally the 1976 socialist constitution quite simply states that: “the republic of Cuba is a socialist state of workers and farmers...”

How did the evolution of the concept of sovereignty take place within the political definitions of Cuba’s revolutionary family? What did they have in common? One, the appeal to the abstract concept of “the Revolution” as both their moral and ideological source of legitimacy, two the agreement on the existence of an interventionist, socially active state based upon the corporatist cooperation of business and organized labor, and three a vaguely defined and constantly changing notion of “anti-imperialism” and “latino-americanismo.”

Perhaps the emblematic embodiment of both the emotional force and the political and ideological contradictions of the “revolutionary family” was Antonio Guiteras y Holmes. No other leader of his time period came to represent radical nationalism as he did. Fervently anti-Communist, the nationalist reforms he implemented while Minister of Government under the first Grau presidency (1933-34) were aimed at taking economic and bureaucratic power away from both Spanish and American interests and into Cuban hands. His organization, “Joven Cuba,” or “Young Cuba” impressed or attracted scores of young nationalists. His famous phrase “I subordinate my honor to the interests of the Revolution,” ushered in a wave of urban terrorism that would establish an enduring legacy of the sacralization of political violence in Cuban public life.

And yet, this “paladin of Cuban nationalism,” had been born in the United States, and English was his first language. The political program of “Joven Cuba” was a strange mix of both nationalist and anarcho-syndicalist ideas characteristic of the period, with the essence of national sovereignty deposited not in the central government but in the municipalities. Guiteras was killed while trying to leave the country so as to continue organizing an insurrection against the Batista-controlled governments of the late 30s. He would become a mythic figure for the coming generations of Cuban nationalists.

The national revolutionary family would nonetheless constitute a mixture of ideologies conditioned more by specific leaderships and emotional attitudes towards politics than by a rigorous approach to public policies. Cuban nationalism was originally civic and liberal in character, anti-Spanish and pro-American. American nation-building efforts in the first years of the Republic had increased the cultural affinity with Cubans. A profound political chasm developed and widened as a result of the American government’s imposition of the Platt Amendment, the autonomista presence in the bureaucracy and support for the Machado dictatorship.

Socialism provided the sentimental common ground where the heirs of independentismo nationalism and the legacy of Spanish authoritarianism began to mix. These were the beginnings of the intoxicating brew of the Cuban revolutionary identity.

Prosperity and tension

Between 1925 and 1959 the island did indeed prosper. The initiatives taken by the Machado government, as well as the socioeconomic programs of the Batista regimes³⁸

³⁸ Perhaps a good example of the diverse ideological panoply that would coalesce around authoritarian so called supra political figures can be found in the fact that the coalition supporting Batista’s first democratically elected government, in 1940, ranged from the Communist Party to the Traditional Spanish Falange (See Vilá, 1986, 542).

and Auténtico governments (1944-52) did result in greater economic growth and social mobility. The impoverished and war ravaged Cuba of 1902 progressed into the increasingly cosmopolitan island republic of the late 40's and early 50's. In their own lifetime many Cubans were able to appreciate the dramatic change from the impoverishment of their youth and adolescence to the increasing middle class comfort of their middle age years.³⁹

It is this Cuba of the 40's and 50's that remains locked in the nostalgia of the Cuban exile community. The Cuba that ranked fourth in literacy rates in Latin America in 1953, where "food supplies were abundant, and its people were among the best fed of the hemisphere"(Kirby and Llorens, 1998, 250). Cuba, as a matter of fact, ranked third out of 11 Latin American countries in per capita daily caloric consumption (Ibidem). The Cuba that in 1958, "...ranked just ahead of the Soviet Union as the largest sugar producer in the world" (Kirby and Llorens, 1998, 252).

The question, then, is what happened politically to this golden Cuba of nostalgic exile dreams?

Although the democratic governments of Batista (1940-44), Grau (1944-48) and Prío (1948-52) did make significant economic and institutional progress, several factors eroded the legitimacy of democracy in the eyes of many Cubans. Among these were political corruption as well as the left over violence from the revolutionary struggles against the Machado regime (1927-33) and Batista's first dictatorship (1933-40). There are, however, other more profound factors.

³⁹ Cuba's per capita income increased from \$176 in 1903 to \$239 in 1924, and after the years of the Great Depression and the fall in sugar prices, from \$260 in 1945 to \$500 in 1958. (Marquez Sterling, Carlos and Manuel, 1975, 308-310).

Perhaps the expectations of Cubans had come to exceed the possibilities of the Republic. For Cuba's upper classes and its rapidly expanding middle class, the standard against which they measured their expectations and possibilities was not that of other Latin American countries, but of the United States.⁴⁰ Since the pace of consolidation of political institutions did not match that of the rapid social and economic modernization, the blame for this gap fell on politicians and even politics itself.

No other leader expressed this rising frustration of the Cuban middle classes with their politics better than Eduardo Chibas and the Ortodoxo Party. With his charismatic assault on political corruption and his no hold barred attack on all politicians and institutions, Chibas inflamed Cubans with the conviction that all that was needed to finally achieve the full civic empowerment of their nationality was a great moral crusade. Chibas' dramatic suicide in a radio station, after finalizing one of his daily tirades, was caused by his inability to prove the allegations of corruption that he had vented against Autentico leader Aureliano Sanchez Arango. His funeral and burial were massively attended by thousands of Cubans. He had set the style for the forthcoming generations of nationalists: an emotional, moral crusade against all the petty politics, *politiquería*, which prevented cubanidad from realizing itself was the only means through which to cleanse the republic. However, his mud slinging diatribes had further eroded the legitimacy of the Republic and its institutions before the eyes of many of its citizens.

To this must be added an inherent weakness of the Autentico Party: they had managed to make a Revolution, take power back from Batista, begin the democratic institutionalization of the country, and make strong headway both economically and politically, but they failed to perceive how fragile the republican institutions still were.

⁴⁰ Thomas, 1998, 1102

They failed to gage how deeply Chibas' moral crusade had hurt the pillars of their credibility or the fact that Batista could carry out a military coup.⁴¹ Ultimately, perhaps, the Autenticos failed to understand that the very discourse, which characterized their party and most of Cuban politics, was eroding the construction of a Cuban civic polity, which was their main purpose.

Why so?

Culturally, the notion of the supra-political state had become dangerously integrated with the concept of "Revolution." Revolution always meant something more, something greater, more enduring and respectable than the exercise of politics, even through democratic means, seemed to offer. All governments were held up to this constantly changing and abstract standard, charged with passion and emotion that transcended the more objective parameters of administrative honesty and state efficiency.

But what kind of revolution? For all the popularity of the term (it appeared even in folk songs), the concept remained cloudy. True, revolutionary phrases permeated the manifestos, press reports and many intellectual and artistic works. Such expressions as 'change of the social structure' became commonplace in campaign speeches and press statements. They may have proved effective in identifying the speaker with popular causes and in stirring the emotions of the crowd, but their full meaning never really reached the hearts and minds of the people who applauded them so warmly. To the great majority, a change in the social structure meant simply a chance for a good education and a good job, and fair treatment by the government (Llerena, 1978, 41).

Worse yet, an inherent, implicit aspect of the socioeconomic consensus was that politics, democracy, the republic itself, were but an instrument of that greater social destiny awaiting Cuba. The instrument was not an end in itself, but simply that, an instrument. And, ultimately, instruments can be discarded, or replaced.

⁴¹ Personal interview with former Autentico leader Antonio Santiago, 2/15/2004

Rapid economic growth seemed to indicate Cuba's utopian possibilities, only politics seemed to get in the way. It is here, without dismissing the personal grievances and ambitions of Batista and the junior officers who engineered the 1952 coup, which can be found the ideological origins of el *10 de marzo*. The desire for greater state efficiency and intervention on the one hand and for greater democratization on the other, ran hand in hand. For thinkers and activists of that time perhaps it did not become clear that rather than being compatible they were actually mutually contradictory, pulling in separate directions (Sorel, 1998, 112). The overthrow of Carlos Prío and the disastrous majority ruling by the Tribunal de Garantías Constitucionales y Sociales validating the coup⁴² and legitimizing the use of force, strangled the republican institutions trapped in the middle.

Politicians and politics remained as the true foes of the supra-political social state.

The March 10 coup

There are non-ideological factors that were certainly influential in the success of the March 10 coup: Batista's personal ambitions and those of some of his closest collaborators are the most important among them. However, what concerns us in this study are the political conditions that made possible the March 10 coup, the new political realities that the coup itself created, and the resultant death blow they dealt to the viability of the democratic forces in Cuba.

Certainly the corruption of the Auténtico governments of both Grau and Prío undermined the legitimacy of the Auténticos and received far greater attention than the success both administrations had in many different fields. The vigorous presidential

⁴² "El décimo hito en la Historia de la Democracia en Cuba lo encontramos cuando el Tribunal de Garantías en 1953, apunta que la fuerza es fuente de derecho, lo que legitimizó la fuerza en el derecho y significó que la vía civilista desapareciera" (Luzárraga, 2000, 18).

[Trans. by author: The tenth moment in the history of democracy in Cuba can be found when the Constitutional Court issued a finding stating that force is a legitimate source of law. This meant that civic life would disappear.]

campaign of Eduardo Chibás, with its anti-corruption focus, also certainly eroded the legitimacy of democratic institutions. The sensationalist and often-crude tones of the Cuban press, which made ample use of the freedoms guaranteed by the democratic administrations, also greatly contributed to this erosion of institutional legitimacy. In a public statement, then President Carlos Prío Socarrás dealt head on with this problem:

El insulto soez se ha hecho norma en la vida pública. Por tales caminos, ¿adonde va Cuba? ¿A que pantanos morales y sociales nos lleva una pasión política cerril, indigna de país civilizado como el nuestro? ¿Quién, desde la sombra, está sembrando en Cuba la semilla del odio entre todos los cubanos? (Hernandez-Bauza, 1986, 222).

[Trans. by author: Crude insults have become the norm in our public life. Where will Cuba wind up if we follow such a path? To what social and moral abyss is this vulgar type of politics leading us? This type of politics is not becoming of a civilized country like ours. Who, from the shadows, is planting in Cuba this seed of hate among all Cubans?]

One must remember, however, that corruption has existed, does exist and will continue to exist in many democratic governments, even of the most prosperous and advanced nations. In Cuba's case, corruption became an element of almost metaphysical dimensions for reasons that we have elaborated in this paper up to now: it served to reinforce the stereotype about Cuban politics since 1902 that had been disseminated by the powerful and influential cultural pessimists (Fernández, 2000, 34).

It wasn't that this or that politician was corrupt or that this or that administration could include a handful of crooks: the problem lay with the institutions themselves, with the political means of structuring a democratic republican state, with the legacy of Spanish authoritarian and corporatist thought which kept undermining the attempts at building a republican political order. This became most evident in two cynical phrases that permeated Cuban society: *la gente decente no se mete en politica* (decent people

don't get involved in politics) and the equally notorious *todos los politicos son iguales* (all politicians are the same).

The counterpoint to the negative attitude towards politics was the mystical Marti-worship that had resulted from the nationalist exultations of the Generations of 1923 and 1933 and their nationalist revolutionary leaders, chiefly among them Antonio Guiteras. They had impressed upon Cuban culture and the popular imagination the unattainable goal of a political utopia of absolute civic pulchritude. Two powerful ideological currents that consistently undermined this goal beset Cuba's democrats, weakened by their own internal flaws: on the one hand, the elitist rejection of politics and, on the other, the impossible social yearnings and unrealistic political expectations of the more radical national revolutionaries. "Despite the fact that the tide of scandal had begun to ebb during the Prío administration, too much psychological damage had already been done. The old undefined word 'revolution' was once again current in activist and militant circles. Crises were their natural milieu, and they welcomed the opportunity" (Llerena, 1978, 41).

It was not that Chibás was wrong in denouncing corruption, or that the study and veneration of Martí hurt the Republic, or that strong institutions such as the free and independent press, the judiciary and Congress, and the civil associations had not emerged during this period, but rather that the psycho-political context of Cuban culture was perhaps not strong enough yet to deal with these exacerbations. Therefore, Batista's March 10th coup dealt a crushing blow to the fragile process of democratic consolidation in the country. It did so by strengthening the perception among Cubans that suprainstitutional and extra judicial means were a valid recourse for political actors within that political setting. This amounted to the validation of political violence as an

acceptable way to transfer authority. By doing so, it also strengthened various radical positions. If the ambiguous, authoritarian and even demagogic concept of revolution was to be validated by both the coup itself and the language utilized by Batista to justify the coup, then the right to take up arms and change the government of the republic was open to all. The phantom of revolution could now come down as swiftly as a guillotine over any attempt to construct a civic polity in the country.

The dichotomy between staging a coup, structuring a whole theory to validate the use of force in politics, and then calling for elections as Batista did for April 1953, dealt a crippling blow to the universal references of civilized political discourse within the Cuban context. The March 10 coup set up the psychological and even political structure for the advent of totalitarianism, although the construction of such a system was not the aim of the plotters or the officials of the Batista dictatorship.

Chapter Four - The Anti-Political Revolution

“The nation’s problems were perceived as stemming from politics, with their personalistic and passionate characteristics destructive of social harmony, democracy and progress.”

*- Damian J. Fernandez
Cuba and the Politics of Passion*

The March 10, 1952 coup hailed the definitive crisis of the Cuban Republic. The failure to reach a political solution to the crisis exemplified by the breakdown of the Diálogo Cívico in 1955 led by venerated independence war veteran Don Cosme de la Torriente resulted in civil war. “Had SAR and the opposition effectively mobilized public opinion over the course of 1955 and early 1956, a peaceful transition might indeed have been the outcome of the civic dialogue”(Perez Stable, 1998).

Cosme de la Torriente tried to bring about a peaceful end to the dictatorship by engineering a political dialogue in which all parties could participate. Torriente clearly understood that unless an institutional solution was found to the violation of constitutional order in the country then no one would be able to stop a further radicalization of the conflict. Ultimately, this would lead to the breakdown of the republic. Although most of the political opposition with the exception of Castro, welcomed and participated in the Civic Dialogue, it eventually broke down, with both sides reaching a point where neither would make any further concessions to the other.

By 1955, Batista had dug his way into a hole from which the Republic could not possibly emerge unscathed. As two camps became clearly defined, on the one hand the Batista dictatorship and, on the other, the different insurrectional factions, the republic entered into a hopeless tailspin. The centrist position, advocating an institutional solution

to the crisis could not coalesce, besieged as it was from the radicals in both the Batista government and the insurrectional forces.

Both Batista's refusal to hand over power and the emotional narrative of nationalist revolutionary thought added fuel to the fire of civil strife. To understand the advent of Cuban totalitarianism it is important to understand each of the two main groups engaged in the insurrectional struggle against Batista, the composition of their leaders and fighters, and the influence that nationalist revolutionary thought had on them.

The insurrectional response to the Batista regime emerged from two distinct sources. Haydée Santamaría, one of the most prominent of the 26th of July leaders wrote in 1955: "The university students on the one hand and the 26th of July Movement on the other embody the two great currents of a new revolutionary generation" (Hart Dávalos, 1999, 204).

The first current came from the institutions of the Republic itself. Bruised and battered as they had been by the scandals and problems of the 12-year period of democracy (1940-52), these institutions seemed to reinvigorate themselves in the new struggle for freedom. The epic of the wars of independence seemed to assure that a new insurrection, a new revolution, could serve as a cleansing gauntlet from which could emerge a new nation. Those that resorted to armed struggle to confront the Batista regime in pursuit of the full restitution of the Constitution of 1940 and the strengthening of the existing civic institutions tried, at least until 1955-56, to find either a negotiated or electoral solution to the crisis. Senator Menelao Mora, who later led the attack on the Presidential Palace, and many others tried to reach a political solution to the institutional

crisis created by the March 10 coup and de facto military rule (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, vol.III, 359).

The Auténtico party (although split into different factions), the University of Havana's Federación Estudiantil Universitaria and its revolutionary arm, the Directorio Revolucionario, and different groups of officers within the armed forces became the most visible institutions that sought insurrection from within the fold of the existing republican institutions.

The failure of the March 13, 1957 uprising and the death in combat of leaders such as Senator Menelao Mora and FEU president Jose Antonio Echeverria, and the murder of Senator Pelayo Cuervo, possibly the most respected leader of the civilian opposition to the dictatorship, deprived Cuba of vigorous leadership firmly committed to both restoration of the Constitution of 1940 and an ethical cleansing of the republican institutions. Moreover, it deprived the opposition of a visible and necessary civilian leadership component clearly striving to reestablish republican legitimacy from within the fold of republican institutions.

As Jorge Valls, one of the founders and leaders of the Directorio Revolucionario, wrote:

[trans. by author] In the midst of civil violence, the attempted civil-military coup and the capture of a visible center of power in combat, together with the execution of the tyrant, was the essence of the assault on the Presidential Palace on March 13, 1957. Led by Menelao Mora Morales with the collaboration of the Directorio and the Federation of University Students and the participation of revolutionaries from different backgrounds such as Carlos Gutierrez Menoyo, Ricardo Olmedo and many others, it represented the most outstanding effort to reclaim the principle of revolutionary leadership from Fidel Castro and the 26th of July

and everything hidden under the heroic or aesthetic emotion that was ideologically imprecise.⁴³

The other camp in the insurrection emerged from either the margins or completely outside of the existing republican institutions. The core group of what would later become the 26th of July Movement came from the University of Havana, from the labor unions, from sectors of unemployed youth or vocational schools. They also believed in restoration of the Constitution of 1940, ethical cleansing of republican institutions, a firm defense of the island's national sovereignty and an activist and interventionist state guaranteeing social justice.

Just like the Auténtico “men of action” or the brave militants of the Directorio Revolucionario, the 26th of July combatants saw themselves as the continuators of the struggle of the wars of independence, fighting to establish a worthy Cuban republic. However, something far more profound and extreme had happened in the leadership of this current. No one could properly refer to them as communists, for at this time both factions (the Auténticos and Directorio on the one hand, the 26th of July and the Ortodoxos on the other -- which were not always so easily distinct) were stridently anti-Communists (Arboleya, 2000, 48-49). The Communist Party was associated with both a foreign totalitarian ideology and a long tradition of compromise and cooperation with strongmen, from their secret deal with Machado near the end of his regime to their electoral coalition with Batista in the late 30's and 40's. But they had ceased to believe in the idoneity, in the viability, of republican institutions in order to fulfill the longings of Cuban nationhood.

⁴³ Valls, Jorge. *La Universidad ante el paso del siglo*. Centro de Estudios para una Opción Nacional. Miami. 2000.

Politics themselves, as understood in the traditional sense of Cuban republican history became the obstacle. Anchored in both the traditional rejection of politics by Cuba's influential cultural pessimists and by a confused definition of "Revolution" which mixed socialism with national revolutionarianism, these young men and women had become bitterly disappointed and frustrated with politics in and of themselves.

Castro paused and looked at us as if trying to fathom our thoughts. Then he turned once again to his favorite, almost obsessive theme: a denunciation of the *viejos políticos* (old politicians, in a highly scornful sense), considered by many to be solely responsible for Cuba's ills. Castro left no doubt that for him there was an insurmountable gap between true revolutionaries and politicians, and he reserved his most scathing diatribes and epithets for opposition politicians, in particular Prío and the *Auténticos*: scoundrels, shameless thieves, spineless lackeys of Yankee imperialism (Llerena, 1978, 61).

They had followed Chibás in his ethical crusade to cleanse the institutions. But with his death, whether accidental or purposeful, whether suicidal or passionately idealistic, they found reasons enough to justify their insurmountable frustration with the very notion of republicanism.

Chibás' ethical crusade could make sense only within republican parameters, only if politics were an end within themselves, a fundamental aspect of the very existence of Cuban independent nationhood. However, they came to believe that the death of Chibás showed them that an ethical crusade could only superficially address the true problems of the Cuban republic (Hart, 1999, 27). They believed that Chibás had died in frustration over his inability to successfully confront forces far more profound and greater than merely structural or personal corruption. These very forces that corrupted the Cuban nation were powerful precisely because Cuba's destiny was powerful. The interests opposed to Cuban nationalism were great because the Cuban nation was potentially great.

A book that widely circulated during this period and expressed many of these Cuban longings for greatness perhaps exemplified the idea of this great destiny. Published in late 1953, "Dialogues about Destiny," consisted of a series of conversations between Dr. Gustavo Pittaluga and some Cuban friends about the true nature of the possibilities of Cuba as a nation. Pittaluga was certain that "our destiny, if we know how to fulfill it, is the establishment of 'spiritual hegemony' over the peoples of the Caribbean" (Pittaluga, 1969, 11).

It won the Book of the Year Award in 1954 from the Cuban Book Association and was presented at the Havana Lyceum. The preface was written by noted Cuban intellectual nationalist Jorge Mañach, who stated:

More than once I have referred to the fact that we have placed our trust in an image of Cuba as an island made of cork, which cannot sink. Our facile optimism doesn't grasp that this means that we are also frivolous and full of fluff, floating aimlessly through history. Of course, there is much vitality in Cubans and a great abundance of plans and purpose. What we need is a common will, a profound consensus on a direction in which to head, a national purpose (Pittaluga, 1969, 8).

Thus, for these young radicals the aspect of Marti's thought that became fascinating was his insistence on the transcendent destiny of Cuba in the struggle to spiritually and politically unify Latin America. Marti's vision of the island as the "frontline fortress" of Latin America against American imperialism fascinated them. Rene Ramos Latour, one of the most courageous of the leaders of the urban resistance in the struggle against Batista, expressed this thinking in a debate with Ernesto "Che" Guevara. In a tense exchange on their respective ideologies, Ramos Latour responded to Guevara's admission that he believed that the solution to the world's problems could be found "behind the so-called Iron Curtain" (Franqui, as cited by Moran, 1980, 173):

Our main difference lies in that our main concern is to return government to the hands of the oppressed peoples of 'our America,' so that they may know how to remain true to their yearnings for freedom and progress by remaining united, in this way better protecting their rights as free nations and forcing the more powerful nations to respect them.

We want a strong America, master of its own destiny, an America which will face up to the United States, Russia, China or any other great power which tries to undermine its political and economic independence. However, those who have your ideological background think that the solution to our problems lies in liberating ourselves from the noxious dominion of the 'yankees' through the no-less noxious dominion of the 'Soviets' (Moran, 1980, 177-78).

As the civil war intensified, their immersion in their own emotional warrior epic, duplicating the independence struggle, dispelled from their minds the fact that Martí had anchored his vision of Cuba's manifest destiny in her ability to build solid republican institutions, in the character of a free and cultured nation of property owners.

It was Martí's messianism that moved them. They dubbed themselves "La Juventud del Centenario," the generation of Martí's one hundredth birthday (1953), born to fulfill the promise of a powerful, sovereign and disciplined Cuba. For them politics and politicians became the enemy (Llerena, 1978, 61) war and struggle were not instruments but rather a parable, a way of life and philosophy, that showed a far more worthy and sure path to the fulfillment of Cuban nationhood.

Tanto los expedicionarios del Granma como los dirigentes del 26 de julio que luchaban en la clandestinidad formaban parte de una generación joven nacida de una sociedad que sufría graves facturas y fuertes presiones culturales y económicas. Ignorada por los gobiernos 'auténticos' – de Ramón Grau San Martín y Carlos Prío Socarrás-, desconocida del de Batista, había vivido con altas expectativas que se habían desmoronado, y buscó refugio en la lectura de la literatura patriótica, de denuncia y combate. Se llamaban a sí mismos 'la generación del centenario de Martí'. Durante los últimos cuatro años, el más visible origen del desequilibrio estaba en la ilegitimidad del gobierno." (Moran, 1980, 21).

[Trans. by author: Both those who participated in the Granma expedition and the leaders of the 26th of July that were active in the underground were part of a young generation born of a society which had great fractures and strong cultural and economic pressures. This generation had been ignored by the 'Autentico' governments of Ramon Grau San Martin and Carlos Prío Socarras, it had been dismissed by Batista, and had lived with high expectations that had been torn to shreds. It sought refuge in patriotic literature, in protest and combat. They called themselves 'the generation of Jose Marti.' During the last four years the greatest source of instability lay with the illegitimacy of the government.]

Whereas the Autenticos and the Directorio sought to both strike "hard and at the head" of the dictatorship and to promote massive civil disobedience (Valls, Op. Cit.), the 26th of July relied on the guerrilla army, a trained and disciplined vanguard and a military chain of command. Echeverria sought to establish the spiritual headquarters of the uprising at the University of Havana. Castro needed the Sierra Maestra.⁴⁴ The insurreccional Autenticos and the Directorio believed that if the dictatorship could be decapitated, the body of the republic could be salvaged. Castro wanted to create a new society and needed the Sierra as a laboratory.⁴⁵

The Castroite rebels emerged, machinegun in hand, from the very depths of Cuba's political subconscious, a Jungian shadow difficult to dispel by any amount of light. They seemed to incarnate what every Cuban politician had paid lip service to since 1902, however they left very little room for anyone else but themselves in the tightly knit circle of their fanaticism. Many came to despise the republican forms and the emergent

⁴⁴Both Castro and the Communist Party were critical of the assault on the Presidential Palace in Havana. "Fidel Castro también se unió al coro y condenó el asalto, con argumentos similares a los del Partido Socialista Popular. Desde su refugio en la Sierra Maestra, en una entrevista con el camarógrafo de la CBS Wendell L. Hoffman y Bob Tabber, Fidel Castro dijo: '...También soy opuesto al terrorismo, añadió. Condeno esos procedimientos. Creo que no se resuelve nada con eso. Aquí en esta trinchera de la Sierra Maestra, es donde hay que venir a pelear". Garcia Montes, p.503-04.

⁴⁵ On the nature of the society being structured in the Sierra, see Moran, p.258. [trans. by author] "The first organization of the rebels over a territory had a definite military, if not police, nature...The Second Eastern Front was a mini-totalitarian state where discipline was based on the terrible drama of death by firing squad."

bourgeois society that spawned them as the demonic incarnation of the ‘weak’ and ‘unfulfilled’ Cuba they so despised (Llerena, 1978, 61).

Most illustrative of the true frame of mind of the 26th of July leadership cadre, more perhaps than the manifestos, or public pronouncements are perhaps, their correspondence. Armando Hart himself states this in his aptly titled book *Cuba: Raices del Presente*, (Cuba: Roots of the Present) when he writes about an article published in Bohemia magazine on December 25, 1955, where Haydée Santamaría (sister of Abel Santamaría, who died in the assault on the Moncada barracks and who became a prominent martyr of the 26th of July), publicly responded to José R. Andreu, a prominent politician whom Fidel Castro had entered into a public polemic with. Andreu came from the same small town in central Cuba as Haydee did. “This article,” Hart writes, “shows how we thought in the mid-50’s.” And it is in this public letter that very interesting and revealing phrases can be found.

Believe me, oh lord and master for many years of my hometown, the new revolutionary generation that is being forged during these years that we are living in is acutely aware of this species [corrupt politicians] which destroyed the glorious ‘Autenticismo’ and threatened to also do the same one day to the Orthodox Party...

Politicians of your type have turned the word Politics (underlined) into such a whorish thing that it acquires an offensive connotation for the young when it is used to describe a leader of the opposition...

In this country, Dr.Andreu, there is a complex subversion of all values...

Today [Fidel Castro] represents the best-organized *emotional* force that Cuba has had in her long years of struggle for a higher destiny...(Hart Davalos, 1999, 200).⁴⁶

At the heart of this emergent radical nationalist ideology lay the Compromise Syndrome, a reading of Cuban history where compromise had repeatedly dashed the

⁴⁶ To understand the content of the word emotional within the context of Cuban politics, see Fernandez, 2000,19.

island's hopes for independence. The key to a greater destiny for the country lay in an intransigent nationalist faith. A long string of deals and agreements stained Cuban history...the Pact of Zanjón (1878), where most of the remaining pro-independence forces had capitulated to the Spanish at the end of the Ten Years' War, the Treaty of Paris of 1898, where the Americans and Spanish had determined the island's future denying the Cubans a place at the negotiating table, ensuring the continued influence of the anti-independentista historic bloc, the Constitutional Assembly of 1901 which had accepted the Platt Amendment (after an admittedly difficult and tortuous process), the agreement between liberals and conservatives that had established the *cooperativismo*⁴⁷ ideology of Machado's dictatorship.

But their suspicion and resentment of compromise, which is the basis of politics, had gone beyond even this. The Constitution of 1940 itself came to be seen by these revolutionaries as another compromise, keeping Cuba from the true path toward socialism. "Aquella asamblea se caracterizó como el producto de un equilibrio logrado entre dos impotencias: la del viejo orden, que no tenía fuerzas para imponerse, y la de la Revolución, que tampoco las poseía para establecer sus intereses" (Hart, 1999, 25). [trans. by author: That assembly was best described as the result of a compromise born of limitations: that of the old order, which no longer had the strength to impose itself, and of the Revolution, which also lacked the strength to impose its interests."] Cosme de la Torriente's effort to achieve a peaceful resolution of the political crisis of 1950s Cuba had to be torpedoed, not because it could have positive or negative results, but because it

⁴⁷ Cooperativismo refers to the policy of unification of Cuba's traditional parties under the iron-fisted leadership of General Gerardo Machado.

was a compromise, a deal, a *political*⁴⁸ solution. The Compromise Syndrome would become a pillar of Cuban extreme nationalist thought.

Once again, Batista and Castro, in another example of the similar ideological roots of March 10 and July 26, converged on undermining the political terrain. Going beyond the specific personal decisions taken during their political careers and to the details of their actions as both insurrectionists and heads of state, it is important to dwell on the backgrounds of both men, for this provides a privileged glimpse of the profound social forces pulling apart Cuban civic ideology. The social context of their personal histories thrust them in the direction of Cuban anti-politics.

Batista's father was Belisario Batista, a mambí of mixed racial lineage who had fought under José Maceo in the war of 1895-98 and had returned home after independence to find that those whom he had struggled against still occupied key positions of power in the bureaucracy and the economy. The little property he had, he had lost as a result of his insurreccional activities. Those who had taken it had been protected first by the Spanish, and then by the Americans. "At local level, the U.S. military authorities accepted the status quo, not anywhere attempting much change in the old order of things in Cuban society" (Thomas, 1998, 422).

Having lost his father by age fourteen, Batista went through very rough early years until he found in the Cuban Army the way to rise in society (Thomas, 1998, 635-36).

He was a self-made man from the poor, racially mixed segment of the Cuban population that had thrown its lot entirely with the independence effort only to find that

⁴⁸ On the meaning of political within the Cuban cultural context, this sentence written by Llerena is most revealing: "Fiallo was the most politically minded of the group; in the Cuban context, this means that he favored legal, nonviolent action over open revolutionary struggle." Llerena, p.47

independence brought forth a national state to which they had little access, since the institutions of the bureaucracy were still in foreign hands. Like other Cubans, he became adept at *informal ways* of leaping over this chasm to attain positions of power in upper tiers of politics that were in independentista hands. Batista became the master and symbol of using informal leverage, of establishing alternative channels in order to attain political power while still trying to preserve the civic republican garb. He was followed ardently by both an elite sector and segments of an intelligentsia that sought a ‘supra-political caudillo’ to steer Cuba away from chaos, and segments of the marginalized and downtrodden who saw in him a way to leapfrog into social mobility.

Fidel Castro, on the other hand, was the son of a wealthy Spaniard, Angel Castro, who had arrived in Cuba as part of the Spanish Army to fight against the independentistas and who had made his standing and money by expanding his land ownership through different means. Hugh Thomas notes of him that:

He was a strong man, in physique and in character, willing to do anything, suited to do well out of the general social collapse that attended the end of Spanish rule and the coming of the Americans and the independent Republic. He worked on the United Fruit Company railway in 1904, and otherwise as a day laborer near Antilla, but despite this (or perhaps because of it) he always had a violent Hispanic antipathy towards the North Americans, who, he thought, rightly, had cheated the Spaniards out of victory over the Cuban rebels: an odd origin, but no doubt genuine, for his son’s similarly Hispanic dislike of the Monster of the North (Thomas, 1998, 803).

Raised in the elite Jesuit school Belen in Havana, Castro was further exposed to the anti-liberal ideas of Spanish Falangist leader Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, and to the pan-Hispanic ideology of the Hispanidad movement of Ramiro de Maetzu (Suchlicki,

p.107-08). This, and his membership in the violent revolutionary groups that gravitated around the University of Havana reinforced his anti-political, anti-liberal outlook.

The continuity between the hidden motives of the 10th of March and July 26th was not only ideological, but also most importantly historic and social. Batista and Castro arrived at the common terrain of anti-politics through the rejection of the insufficiency of the Cuban state. For the displaced Cuban proletariat that Batista came from, the state had never been able to serve as a guarantor of rules that would permit their social progress. For many Spanish living in Cuba and their offspring, the Cuban republic had ultimately been born out of a foreign intervention and was illegitimate. Both men embodied the anti-political, anti-liberal Jungian shadow of the Cuban national consciousness.

García Barcenas and the articulation of an emotional nationalist rejection of liberalism

A key factor influencing all the insurreccional factions in their formative stages was the homegrown nationalist revolutionary thought of Rafael Garcia Barcena. A poet, professor of philosophy at the University of Havana and one of the founders of the Directorio Estudiantil of the 1930s, Barcena organized the National Revolutionary Movement in 1952. It was one of the first groups to actively conspire against the Batista dictatorship.

A well-respected man, and according to accounts from all sides of the political spectrum, a true patriot, Barcena's influence on the young revolutionaries was profound. Many of the men and women who came to lead both the 26 of July and the Directorio belonged to the MNR until it was crushed by Batista's repression after an attempted

military coup. Like its 26 of July disciples, the MNR was fuzzy both in its political aspirations⁴⁹ and in its view of Cuban republican hood.

By this reasoning, Batista's sudden disruption of the constitutional order had been not a disaster but a most welcome opportunity, since it had opened the door to a new 'revolutionary cycle.' This was Garcia Arcana's real position, though he did not make a display of it, and it remained somewhat cloaked, if not embellished, by his gentle, non controversial personality." (Llerena, p.48) "In time I learned that Garcia Arcana's had been entertaining the idea of a putsch even before Batista erupted on the scene on 10 March 1952. (Llerena, 1978, 49).

However, in Garcia Arcana's poetic and mystical idealization of the revolutionary ideal⁵⁰, in his steadfast faith in a greater destiny for Cuba⁵¹, in his insistence on the military as the instrument through which to bring it about,⁵² he left a deep imprint on many of those who gathered around him.

The passionate ambiguity of National Revolution, with its disregard for politics and its implicit desire for a supra political yet militarily competent state, needed a new

⁴⁹ Duarte Oropesa describes the aims of the MNR as: 1)the culmination of the historical process of the National Revolution, 2)Place at the helm of the State an honest and competent leadership group, 3)Push the Nation towards the fulfillment of its historic destiny, 4)Reorganize Cuba judicially, politically, economically and socially, and 5)Eliminate the obstacles that oppose the establishment in our country of a humanistic social justice, of thorough democracy and ultimately, of a great nation. (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 279).

⁵⁰ Barcenas, a gifted poet, described the Revolution as a metaphor for the inherent, divine beauty of nature, as can be read in his poem "Responso Heroico": "La revolución, fue ella/nuestra novia rutilante,/que se ocultara un instante/para resurgir más bella./Breve eclipse de una estrella/que no se puede extinguir./Nacer después de morir/el cielo en su ley impone./Es como el sol que hoy se pone/para mañana salir " Valls, Op. Cit.).

⁵¹ [trans. by author] "[...]the MNR firmly believed that the Iberoamerican nations would constitute 'the most important block of nations of the coming century...' and that Cuba would be '...the guiding light of America, vanguard of the continental destiny, a great nation both morally and materially'" (Duarte Oropesa, 1989, 279).

⁵² Both Castro and Garcia Barcenas believed that armed force was the best instrument for revolutionary change in Cuba. Garcia Barcenas, however, believed the existing armed forces to be the best instrument for revolutionary change in Cuba and worked actively to overthrow Batista through a military coup. He was imprisoned and tortured for this. Once out of prison, he met with Castro. Castro also believed in change through military means, but he sought to create his own military.(Hart, p.52-53) The use of the military to further the revolution, after the overthrow of Batista, was central to Castro's thought while in the Sierra Maestra (Moran, 1980, 266).

type of caudillo. A young lawyer named Fidel Castro stepped into the role in a spectacular manner.

Castroism

The best among the young men and women who filled the ranks of the 26 of July Movement, of the Directorio, and of the other revolutionary organizations in the struggle against Batista were imbued with a moral conception of cubanidad. In formal political terms they struggled for the restoration of the Constitution of 1940. They sought to overthrow the military dictatorship and restore a democratic order. They sought to stamp out corruption and to implement social and economic reforms that would guarantee social justice. However, their main drive was moral rather than political, nationalistic rather than institutional. Their concern was more for content than for form.

More than a rebellion against Batista and his regime, they rebelled against decades and decades of an insidious undermining of cubanidad by the classes that emanated from the autonomista and anexionista sectors and the intellectuals who spoke and wrote for them. They sought to affirm their national identity by structuring its political order on firm moral foundations (Aguilar León, 1972, 75-76). They wanted a state that would affirm the self-love of the Cuban nation, and they despised the corruption of the Auténticos in spite of the admiration they felt for how Grau or Prío had attempted to reconcile national pride and civil liberties.

They sought to attain politically what their country, what their emerging or rising middle class families, were achieving economically. The Cuban middle class was torn by great contradictions at the heart of their psychosocial make up. By the 1950s their cultural affinity with the U.S. had never been greater, and yet U.S. support for the Batista

dictatorship had greatly augmented the political gap between the U.S. and emerging Cuban middle class nationalism.

The nation on which they sought to pattern themselves simultaneously blocked their access to the fulfillment of their political nationhood (Perez, 1999, 492-493). This desire for cultural emulation also had the internal contradiction of seeking to preserve the Hispanic legacy handed down from the emigrant grandparents or parents. Cuba was perhaps the most American and the most Spanish of Latin American countries. This was one of the components of the uniqueness of *cubanidad*.

Ultimately, they sought to sanctify Cuban politics through self-sacrifice so that the Cuban nation could at long last have the state it had struggled to attain.⁵³ They sought to embody the current of Cuban liberal thought initiated by Father Felix Varela and continued by José de la Luz y Caballero, Rafael María Mendive, Ignacio Agramonte and José Martí. An intellectual and political tradition firmly grounded in the humanist conception of natural law, which under girded Western thought for a millennia.

They rebelled against the dictatorship, not against the republic. They sought to cleanse politics, not to eliminate them. However, from their midst emerged a leadership cadre, brought together by Fidel Castro, which went beyond the moral content of revolt to a structural questioning of republican forms. The affirmation of national identity lay not in what to them was the tired formula of republican institutions, rule by civilians, and personal freedoms with a degree of social justice, but in the empowerment of a national state that could make its will felt inside and outside the country.

⁵³ In a personal interview with the author, the Directorio's 'intellectual leader' Jorge Valls, recalled how Joe Westbrook had remarked to him that it was necessary to give up their lives so that Cubans would take their politics seriously. "Jorge," Valls recalled Westbrook as saying, "aquí hay que morirse."

For the radicalized inner core of the Rebel Army and the 26th of July Movement this task required a clear sense of purpose: the radical defense of the island's sovereignty. A clear chain of command: a dictatorship led by those morally proven to understand the nation's greater destiny. And an internal order that bolstered this unified national destiny: only collectivism could assure this (Ibarra, 1972, 74). Tactically, however, these convictions were not to be made public until the revolutionaries were fully in power

The Cuban Revolution of 1959, or at least the version of it articulated by Castro, shrouded its doctrinal statist conception of the nation in an ardent nationalism that promised to fulfill the historical aims of the broadly and vaguely defined 'Cuban Revolution' (Ibidem). Through this nationalism it arrived at its socialism. In defense of the militarist state it had created, its statism would transcend even its own firebrand nationalism. Cuba would once again become the launch pad for a European empire. Cuba had become the New World fortress for the imperial network of a like-minded foreign power, the Soviet Union.

Along the way it dispensed with the objectives of the liberal thinkers the Revolution constantly claimed to embody. Varela, Agramonte, Marti and many others had struggled to structure a republic that would serve the interests and values of the Cuban citizenry. Cuba's long tradition of liberal struggles had aimed to build the State from the Nation. Castroism inverted that formula, seeking to build the Nation from the State. Cuban liberal patriots were important for their example, not their thinking. Castroism built a nation-state which Cubans had to serve in order to be Cuban.

Initially, the thrust for self-empowerment and national affirmation would inspire Cubans with their own reflection. Through national struggle they saw themselves as they

dreamed of themselves: virile, proud, creative, powerful, defiant, free. However, as time elapsed, as the state grew more and more rigorous in the so-called defense of this vision, the image became static.

Those looking into the supposed magical mirror of revolution, where an individual could come to see his collective self, realized that the image remained unchanging but the people, the persons, looking into the mirror changed. A new collective self-perception was denied them by the frozen image imposed by collectivist dictatorship. As the image remained the same, the nation began to disintegrate.

The bloody struggle against Batista served as the laboratory where this leadership cadre built the model for its new society. Dystopia awaited Cuba in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra and the Sierra Cristal. The politics of anti-politics led to Castroism. It initially combined many things in its fold: the enshrinement of violence, the violent anti-Americanism that came from a mix of both the Hispanic legacy and far left thought, the warrior narrative of the wars of independence, the desire to play them out again until a definitive conclusion was arrived at, the desire to create a supra-political state led by a supra-political leader, a caudillo, who could guarantee law and order while fulfilling the utopian nationalist and collectivist objectives. A caudillo who would brook no compromise and compromise none of the fundamental supra political goals of the mystical revolution: nationalism and collectivism.

Too much blood had been spilt for a state that could not command, that was not sufficient; Cubans yearned for a decisive state. Castro achieved the synthesis between the extreme nationalism of its rank and file and the socialist ideas of other leaders. Its knot of power lay in radical statist egalitarianism built around its caudillo.

The continuum of Cuban nationalism

Castroism established a new and dominant expression of Cuban nationalism. It wasn't the liberal democratic version of Martí, or that of the early Republican intellectuals, or of the Directorios of the 30s and 50s, or of the Auténticos and Chibás. This nationalism did not seek the consolidation of a polis, but rather the structuring of a fortress, a modern Sparta, where all were equal and some more equal than the rest, where the priority was the radical defense of sovereignty and the collectivism that went associated with it. This it called social justice and nationalism.

Castroism used Marxist-Leninism as the ideological means through which to bind together the yearning for the supra political state of the autonomistas with the collectivist and nationalist longings of the radicals. The anti-American revolution became a formidable pretext for the perpetuation of dictatorship. All of this provided the ideological justification for the fortress state.

The fundamental principles of this strain of Cuban nationalism were:

- (1) Authoritarianism – emanating from the chief, structured on courage, loyalty, complete devotion to the source of authority itself, based on values disassociated from politics. The objective being not authority as a means towards the preservation of the common good, the structuring of the polis, the upholding of the public space, but rather as an end within itself, as the centrifuge of both collectivism and national sovereignty synthesized in the leader.
- (2) The politics of conspiracy – Literally the politics of those who breathe together, who lie in the midst of the fortified circle defending the nation from

all external and internal enemies. In the politics of conspiracy, power is understood as emanating from conspiracy, from the hidden agendas of elites struggling for or against different modes of exploitation. The nation ultimately belonged to those at the center of the conspiracy. All others became part of the nation through their loyalty to the conspirators, to the leadership cadre that had begun the structuring of the new Cuban state in Cuba's eastern mountains and who rejected the republican model as a sterile mechanism imposed by the U.S. vision of modernity, but incapable of fulfilling Cuban nationhood.

The process through which this revolutionary cadre replaced one set of objectives for another was difficult and complicated. Only the brilliant political engineering of Fidel Castro, masterfully both arousing and manipulating the inherent tensions of Cuban national identity could have achieved it. The weaving of ideals and words, of historical reasons and moral values, of politics and anti-politics hurled brother against brother in Cuba's first true civil war. It was here that the invisible republic was born.

Chapter Five – The Resistance

I believe that American history reveals that there were actually two Americas. The American Civil War was a cultural war, almost a clash of civilizations. Two social spirits had been sewn together into a sort of improbable body. For better or for worse, the truly revolutionary spirit, the Yankee spirit, won and became the spirit of America.

Claude Polin

“Tocqueville’s America and America Today”⁵⁴

There is active resistance in Cuba, but it is limited, uncoordinated, unsupported, and desperate.

U.S. National Intelligence Estimate on Cuba

March 21, 1962⁵⁵

Two main ideological currents emerged from the beginning of Cuba’s history as a nation. As with all ideologies, they emerged from the need to resolve the challenges facing a given human group within a certain geographical setting. The different sets of solutions arrived at by subgroups within the primary human group form the basis for the ideologies that shape political conflict. Class, racial, gender and ethnic issues tend to interweave with these primary mindsets, evolving ideological perceptions in different directions within the twists and turns of history.

The dominant Cuban ideology from the time of the Spanish conquest to the end of the wars of independence conceived of the island primarily within its key strategic context. Determined by geopolitics, this essentially militarist perception conceived of Cuba as a fortress from which to either launch conquests or defend the empire. This conception of Cuba’s destiny beheld the island as perpetually linked to the designs of an imperial power. In this case, it was imperial Spain.

The civilian component of this essentially militarist conception of Cuba articulated a political discourse based precisely on this geopolitically determinist

⁵⁴ *Chronicles*, p.17, October 2004

⁵⁵ Bohning, 2005, 262.

conception of the island. Referred to as the discourse of 'negativa cubanidad' by philosopher Rafael Rojas⁵⁶, the civilian component of Cuban militarist ideology doubted the ability of the island's inhabitants for self-government. A whole arsenal of arguments was constructed to demonstrate why the island's internal realities, be they for class, ethnic or social reasons, made independence impossible. What remained for Cubans, this school argued, was to pragmatically forge a community for themselves within the imperative of their geopolitical dependence. The reformistas, autonomistas and anexionistas of the decades spent under Spanish domination were expressions of this ideological conception.

The second Cuban ideological school perceived the island from the inside out rather than from the outside in. In the fertility of Cuban soil, in the richness of its agriculture, in its key strategic location, in the mixture of races and mores and ways of its inhabitants, it found the existence of a new identity, longing to be part of the world on its own terms, with its own contribution to make.

This perception emerged primarily from the tradition of liberal and humanist thought grounded in the Western conception of natural law. It found inspiration in the United States. It sought America out as a natural ally. But America was not forthcoming in the way Cubans dreamed her to be. The American intervention at the end of the wars of independence, its prolonged occupation of Cuba, its repeated interventions in Cuban affairs often in support precisely of those sectors that were not democratic or liberal, undermined the Cuban liberal republican sector.

⁵⁶ Rojas describes the discourse of negative cubanidad as one that is doubtful of the teleological aspirations of the independentista/republican expressions of cubanidad. He describes it as a necessary, critical counterpart to Cuban nationalist conscience, which has been submerged by the Spartan nationalism of Castro. However, it is my contention that the origins and development of the discourse of negative cubanidad are interwoven and complementary with, the development of Spartan nationalism in Cuba.

The birth of the Cuban Republic in 1902 should have hailed the triumph of the second school over the first. Within a generation, by 1923, Cubans came to see the revolution for independence as incomplete. They were frustrated by American intervention, the failure of the Cuban political class to establish mechanisms for the exercise and transference of power and the persistent undermining of the national identity from within by the left-over expressions of the autonomista discourse. The word revolution acquired a heavily emotional meaning, deeply interwoven with the very conception of national identity. Rationality seemed to indicate, according to a whole panoply of arguments, the impossibility of Cuban nationhood. Emotion, interpreted in the best romantic fashion as faith in the inherent nobility of the nation, was the true compass. Politically, both liberal democratic and authoritarian strains from the left and right mixed dangerously within the definition of Cuban Revolution.

In this context, the March 10, 1952 coup frustrated the republic and republicans. The increasingly bloody struggle against Batista became a moral crusade, a desire to establish a new republic on firm moral grounds. Within a certain sector of the leadership cadre of the revolt, the rebellion became a revolution against politics itself, an assault on republican hood.

This sector had adopted and renovated the militarist perception of Cuba and believed that the only hope for national affirmation lay in its militarization and insertion into the global imperial conflict. Its totalitarianism was a logical consequence of this organic conception of nationhood. This faction saw the United States as the natural enemy of the very existence of Cuba. It saw the Soviet Union as a natural ally. It beheld

Cuba as both the spearhead and the Latin American fortress of the battle of Soviet Communism against American capitalism.

However, only with time can this distinction be so easily established. In its historical moment, the Cuban revolutionary family was so interwoven that distinctions became very difficult. Where did nationalism end and statism begin? Where did nationalism justify socialism or socialism nationalism? Was the subordination to the Soviets a temporary necessity or a betrayal of the most fundamental principles of the Revolution itself? Castro's tremendous ability to persuade and manipulate made it possible for many to vigorously and honestly defend precisely the opposite ideological principles that had motivated their struggle against Batista.

The key lay in the subordination of civilian rule to military command. It was here that the Cuban Revolution broke with its liberal roots and embraced the geopolitical militarist conception of the island, with the Revolutionary Armed Forces as the nation's true political party. After the death of the best of the Directorio and the Autentico leadership in the March 13 uprising, the death of the most independent of the 26th of July Movement's civilian leadership, and the failure of the April 9, 1958 national strike, the military control of the Revolution, led by the guerrilla army, became an irreversible reality.

Since the wars of independence, through the revolutionary struggles in the 1930s and even in the very struggle against Batista, military subordination to civilian rule had been a fundamental principle of Cuban revolutionaries. They understood that although they had to venture into the field of armed conflict in order to wrest power from militarist factions, it threatened to contaminate the liberals with the very ideological methods they

were fighting against. All through the wars of independence the armed revolutionaries had respected civilian rule, even when it was poor or inefficient. Cuban independence generals never participated in a coup against the rebel republic's civilian leadership. Machado and Batista shed their military uniforms when they became presidents. However, Castroism ably destroyed this paradigm.

The line between the civilian and military components became apparently blurred within the fold of the Rebel Army. A militarist society was being built at the mountains of the Sierra. Although the struggle against Batista never became a full-blown war (Montaner, 1976, 18), and the amount of casualties was low in proportion to the general population itself (Ibid, 25-26), the amount of casualties in proportion to the amount of revolutionaries themselves was quite high. The warrior subculture of sacrifice and heroism inherited from the prolonged wars of independence and the sense of patriotic moral imperative taught by Cuban public education had become the political culture of the revolutionaries. The armed struggle over political principles had become the maximum expression of honesty and commitment. Cuban independentista ideology perceived Cubans in the singular as the key to the stability of the republic. Revolutionaries believed that this ideal Cuban, in order to be morally capable of building a new republic, had to be forged through blood, fire and sacrifice.

[...]en los últimos meses de la lucha un sector importante de la población vivió una vida distinta, sufrió nuevas experiencias. Ignoro que efecto pudo tener en varios cientos de jóvenes nacidos y criados en las ciudades la vivencia en las montañas, el contacto con la impresionante naturaleza, el esfuerzo físico sostenido, la muerte de queridos compañeros en campos y ciudades, y sobre todo, la conciencia de estar participando en un empeño nacional en el cual tuvieron lugar muchos actos de heroísmo (Moran, 1980, 125).

[Trans. by author: ...in the last months of the struggle an important sector of the population lived a different kind of life, it suffered new experiences.

I do not know what kind of effect it could have had on hundreds of young men born and raised in the cities to live in the mountains, in an impressive contact with nature, in a sustained physical effort, having to deal with the death of beloved comrades in the countryside and the cities, and above all, the awareness of participating in a national effort in which many acts of heroism took place.]

Therefore, for the revolutionary faction led by Castro within the broader revolutionary movement, which sought to organize a militarist, collectivist society in order to consolidate the Cuban State, conflict was useful in order to prolong the mentality of war and struggle necessary for the dominance of the fortress-ideology. The rationale for Castroism was that the destiny of Cuban history was the construction of the Cuban state. This state was more important and greater than the Cuban nation itself. In order for this state to truly exist it had to be Marxist and militarist. The presence of the United States 90 miles away left no other choice. The pervasiveness of the world capitalist conspiracy left no other option but to crush the public space at home to leave no room for counter-revolutionary conspiracy. The revolutionaries had to conspire to defend the revolution. But now they would conspire before the people. This was their sense of public accountability. And this was as much public space as Cubans could get. It was, in essence, a continuation of the Autonomista School. The supra political state led by a caudillo had been achieved. The conspiracy was public and the public domain was subordinated to the conspiracy.

On the other hand, the liberal revolutionaries found no middle ground on which they could rationally discuss the Revolution's future. The flourishing of caudillismo, of militarism, of all those things they had struggled against and believed embodied in the Batista regime now emerged again from the innermost quandary of its leadership cadre.

However, the ambiguities of the notion of the Cuban Revolution itself, the predominance of the emotional narrative of nationalism over the rationality of civic republicanism, and the endless appeal to the paradigm of the war of independence had paved the way for the radicalization of the revolutionary effort. It seemed to both sides that only war could finally lead to the Cuba each envisioned.

From Insurrection to Civil War

It is difficult to state with precision when the Cuban insurrection against Batista ended and the Civil War over the destiny of the Revolution began. For the handful of Batista followers or sympathizers who went up into the hills or set up small sabotage networks in the cities as early as 1959, it was simply the continuation of the previous war. However, most of the anti-Castro combatants did not come from the Batista ranks. They came from the ranks of the Revolution itself or from sectors of Cuban society that had never before become actively involved in politics. The civil war was not only a conflict amongst Cubans, but also a struggle between the revolutionaries themselves, between former comrades in arms over the meaning of the sacrosanct concept of revolution.

A chain of events throughout 1959 coalesced the opposition to Castro within the revolutionary ranks. These include: the second trial of the Cuban pilots previously absolved of bombing the civilian population, the ascension into key positions in the revolutionary government of members of the Communist Party and the displacement of revolutionaries who were believed to have anti-Communist convictions, Castro's well-staged coup against provisional President Manuel Urrutia, the arrest and trial of Comandante Huber Matos, Castro's direct intervention and insistence on a unified candidacy between the 26th of July Movement and the Communists in the Congress of the

Confederation of Cuban Workers, his personal intervention in the elections for the presidency of the Federation of University Students in the University of Havana, the warming of ties with the Soviets and the visit of Anastas Mikoyan to Cuba, the growing hostility against the Catholic Church, as well as the Urban and Rural Reform Laws. All of these events polarized different sectors both within the revolutionary ranks and the population at large.

As the revolutionary government steadily silenced the free press and moved to first limit and then eliminate all political activities which it did not control, many perceived the need to organize a struggle against an emerging dictatorship. Opposition to Castroism emanated from diverse sources. In the first place, and representing a new force in Cuban politics, were the political activists of Catholic inspiration. The Catholic Church had been the majority religion in Cuba, but its power was more nominal than substantive.

The Church's association with Spain during the Wars of Independence had stigmatized it politically in a country where Masons and left-leaning political currents were dominant. However, starting in the 1940s, a new generation of Catholic leaders, imbued with a message of social justice, had become increasingly active (Fernández Santalices). Charismatic Catholic leaders such as José Antonio Echeverría had legitimized a political space for Catholic thought and doctrine in Cuban politics. This new breed of Catholic leader also sought the moral renovation of the republic. Their goal, however, was not to create a secular, nationalist moral doctrine upon which to lay the foundations for a renewed polis, but rather to renovate Christian morality and sentiment as a legitimate basis for a new political order.

Most of these young Catholic leaders, many former members of the Catholic Labor Youth (Juventud Obrera Católica), the Catholic Student Youth (Juventud Estudiantil Católica) or the Agrupación Católica Universitaria (Catholic University Association) supported and even participated in the Revolution. Men such as Manuel Artime, who came from the Jesuit-led Agrupación and rose in the ranks of the Rebel Army, and Catholic leaders such as Reinol González and Heriberto Fernández were active in the labor front of the 26th of July.

The Catholic movement in Cuba could have provided a source for leadership and moral renovation for the republic. However, it came to prominence precisely in the most difficult of times and perished in the brutality of civil strife that followed. Three main anti-Castro organizations chiefly embodied Catholic social democratic thought. The Christian Democratic Movement, composed mainly of Catholic thinkers, leaders and activists who had either not participated in the insurreccional process against Batista or if so, not in the ranks of the 26th of July Movement, the Movement for Revolutionary Recovery (Movimiento de Recuperación Revolucionaria) which became one of the largest anti-Castro movements and also one of the most prominently Catholic, consisting of many veterans of the Rebel Army and the 26th of July Movement, and the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil, an offshoot of the MRR composed of Catholic university and high school students (Montaner, 1976, 228). A fourth organization, one of the largest of the resistance movements, was the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (People's Revolutionary Movement). It had a strong Catholic presence in its membership and leadership but most of its membership came from the labor movement (Montaner, 1976, 227).

In political terms, the Catholic-inspired movements went from the centrist Christian Democrats to the slightly left of center MRR and Directorio to the farther left MRP.⁵⁷ Another important source of opposition to Castroism came from organized labor. Two important and extensive resistance movements, the afore mentioned MRP and the larger yet 30th of November Movement, emerged from its ranks. Cuba had one of the largest and best-organized labor movements in Latin America before 1959. “A million workers, or half the total labor force, belonged to a union in 1958” (Thomas, 1998, 1178).

Controlled by Eusebio Mujal, the Confederation of Cuban Workers had chosen to support Batista as long as he did not interfere with the gains and progress of the labor movement. However, younger and more radical labor leaders had organized the National Workers Front *Frente Obrero Nacional* (Thomas, 1998, 1010) to aid the insurrectional struggle against Batista. The failure of the April general strike in 1958 had weakened their standing in the 26th of July *vis a vis* the Rebel Army, but they still retained significant authority and leadership. Castro sought to displace them in favor of Communist leaders during the Congress held to reorganize the Confederation of Cuban Workers in 1959.

From Castro’s strong-arming of this Congress there emerged two important nuclei of organized resistance. One, led by CTC secretary general David Salvador, became the basis for the 30th of November Revolutionary Movement. Made up mostly of former members of the 26th of July and the Rebel Army, the 30th of November (named after the date of Frank País’ 1956 uprising in Santiago de Cuba against the Batista dictatorship) became one of the largest and most enduring of the resistance movements. The other, led

⁵⁷ From personal interview with Christian Democrat leader Laureano Batista, Miami circa 1990.

by Catholic leaders such as Reinol Gonzalez, became an important component of the MRP (Thomas, 1998, 1285-86).

The Rebel Army itself became an important source of opposition to Castroism. Many officers and combatants of the Rebel Army joined the MRR, MRP or 30th of November or found other ways to resist the incipient dictatorship. Directorio commanders such as Rolando Cubela and Ramón Guin were imprisoned for conspiring against Castro, and the II National Front of the Escambray, a Directorio splinter group that had waged a guerrilla war in central Cuba against Batista, almost entirely turned against Castro. Led by Spanish-born Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, the II Front would sponsor the creation of Alpha 66 (Encinosa, 1994, 139).

However, the main source of opposition to Castroism and the longest lasting came from the countryside. In the central mountains of the Escambray and the swamps and hills of Matanzas province a loose knit insurgent army formed the core of armed peasant resistance to the regime. “Las guerrillas campesinas todavía darían mucho que hacer a Castro hasta lograr éste su total eliminación. Poco se conoce hoy de esa lucha que, según fuentes oficiales, de hecho se extendió de 1960 a 1966, la más larga librada en Cuba después de la Guerra de los Diez Años” [trans by author: The peasant guerrillas would cause great trouble for Castro until he finally managed to eliminate them. Little is known today about that struggle that, according to official sources, lasted from 1960 to 1966. This was the longest military conflict in Cuban history since the Ten Years’ War for independence.] (Clark, 1992, 105).

The uprisings would extend from one end of the island to the other, doggedly offering resistance to the revolutionary government long after any real hope for an

insurgent victory had passed.⁵⁸ The Regime would label this long fight to control the peasant uprisings the “lucha contra bandidos” or “struggle against bandits.”⁵⁹ At their peak the rebels managed to attack towns and government garrisons and to even stop traffic on the central highway (Szulc, 1986, 575-76).

The regime managed to finally quell the rebellions only by mobilizing thousands of troops in specialized military operations against them, and forcibly relocating thousands of peasant families from one part of the island to another, forcing them into internal exile and depriving the rebels of their base of support (Encinosa, 1994, 59). It constituted Cuba’s civil war of the 20th century. Its human toll has yet to be fully documented.

As Cuban exile writer and intellectual Carlos Alberto Montaner has written, “the Bay of Pigs invasion constituted the exception, not the rule of the anti-Castro struggle”(Montaner, 1976, 230). The struggle did not come from the outside but, rather, emerged from the depths of Cuba and the revolution itself. It originated in the reaction to the policies of the revolutionary leadership, in the profound ideological break between participants in the struggle against Batista, in the rejection of Cuba’s small landowners and peasants to an atheistic government that sought to impose upon them an agrarian reform with which they did not agree (Ibid. p.232-36), and in the resistance of many workers to losing what they viewed as the historic gains of the Cuban labor movement.

⁵⁸ In his 1986 biography of Castro, Tad Szulc notes that the uprisings represented the main source of preoccupation for the Regime before and after the Bay of Pigs. As much as \$1 billion in damages were said to have been caused by the rebels, who according to Raul Castro could have numbered as many as 5,000. ‘Ten times’ the number of fighters Castro had under his command at the end of the insurrection in 1959. (Szulc, 1986. 575-76.)

⁵⁹ Raul Castro referred to the uprisings as a ‘second civil war.’ (Szulc, p.576) Raul Menendez Tomashevich, the Cuban general who led the counter-insurgency operations, has also referred to the uprisings as ‘a veritable civil war.’ (Radio Progreso broadcast on 10/18/2000).

The Cuban resistance pinned its hopes on its alliance with the United States. It viewed its struggle against totalitarianism in Cuba as part of the worldwide struggle against communism. They saw themselves as Caribbean *maquis*, resisting the advent of foreign Communist ideology into the western hemisphere. But in the long period during which the Civil War can be said to have lasted, roughly 1959 to 1970, American aid was inconsistent, misdirected, with unclear motives. For many exiles and members of the resistance, the Cuban democratic resistance never received the firm support that resistance movements in occupied areas had during World War II. The United States proved to be at most, an uncertain ally, and sometimes when it moved to limit or obstruct those resistance activities of which it did not approve, even a foe.

Never before in 20th Cuban history had such large-scale uprisings taken place against any government as they did during the first years of the revolutionary regime. Never before had such a large underground been organized or so much fighting taken place both in the mountains and the cities. For the members of this resistance all this was in preparation for something that would coalesce all the efforts into a single mighty push to unseat Castro.⁶⁰

The something never happened. Brigade 2506 was abandoned on Cuban shores and American aid to the internal resistance was terribly inconsistent and wavering. Washington seemed to favor exile leaders over the internal ones, who had a better idea of what was truly going on inside the country.⁶¹

⁶⁰ From personal interview with historian Enrique Encinosa in Miami, on 8/30/00.

⁶¹ In his authoritative book *Cuba: Mito y Realidad*, Juan Clark writes that Rogelio Gonzalez Corzo, the main coordinator of the resistance movement in Cuba, remarked to Dr. Jose I. Lasaga that [trans. by author] "The Americans don't want to aid the Escambray [guerrillas] because they fear that if the Escambray achieves military success a new Fidel could emerge that they could not control." (Clark, 1992, 615-16.) Tad Szulc also comments on the lack of CIA support for the Escambray rebels in his own biography of Castro.

However, for the thousands of men and women who participated in the resistance in one way or another, and for the many more who within the island or in exile supported them, “la guerra” “the war of national liberation,” “the crusade to free Cuba from Communism,” became both a moral doctrine of resistance to Communism and a creed of proud defiance of Washington’s whims. For those who were organizing resistance to the Castro regime constant U.S. interference in their efforts placed them in a difficult situation. The main source of aid for the movement was the American government, but at the same time, political conditioning of this aid affected the internal integrity and identity of the movement. This dichotomy would result in a profound crisis at the heart of the movement.

A March 1961 intelligence report by Dade County Police summarized the nationalist crisis that official US policy was causing in the exile ranks:

FIDEL CASTRO's anti-American propaganda has made deep inroads in the minds of Latin Americans. Propaganda tours have been arranged to correct this situation but it is evident that such propaganda has to be conducted by Latins who have easier access to the minds of their compatriots. At present the majority of Cubans eligible to help in this important campaign feel very disillusioned if not angry toward the United States because they believe they are being exploited in their plea to free their country from the tyranny of FIDEL CASTRO.⁶²

Local Miami authorities demonstrated at this time a better understanding of the exile mentality than their federal counterparts. The factors outlined in the intelligence

⁶² [Reference: Dade County OCB file #153-D] March 9, 1961 intelligence report by Thomas J. Kelly, Metropolitan Sheriff and LT. FRANK KAPPEL, Supervisor, Criminal Intelligence SUBJECT: CUBAN COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES, F.R.D. - - Cuba Information Archives

report became an important aspect of the ideology of Cuban exile nationalism: the state of perpetual war against the anti-Cuba embodied by Castro and Communism and the permanent suspicion of policies emanating from Washington.

The Cuban Civil War can be said to have spanned three phases. The first, during 1959-61 when the first resistance movements were organized and the guerrilla uprisings began to take place, led up to the Bay of Pigs debacle, where the Castro regime managed to eliminate the first tier of the internal resistance leadership, crush the first wave of guerrilla uprisings and triumph at the Bay of Pigs.

A second phase ran roughly between 1961 and 1966. Initially the resistance movements tried to reorganize. The rural guerrillas managed to regroup and actually go on the offensive (Encinosa, 1994, 158), major efforts developed within the armed forces to topple Castro and dozens of commando raids took place as the exiles sought to assist the reviving war effort. However, the reduction of American support for the exiles after the 1962 Kennedy-Kruschev Pact, the increasing isolation of Cuba, and the Cuban Regime's ability to systematically eliminate first the urban guerrillas and then the resistance in the mountains, spelled its end. The rapidly increasing military might and sophistication of the Regime and the diminishing American aid, served to make commando raids by the exiles increasingly difficult.

The last phase goes from 1968 to 1970, when guerrilla fighters such as Amancio Mosquera "Comandante Yarey," Vicente Méndez and José Rodríguez Pérez attempted to return to Cuba from exile to reignite the rural uprisings. They failed heroically, losing their lives in the process. The Torriente Plan, an effort by respected Cuban businessman José Elías de la Torriente to unite the different exile factions in single effort to initiate the

“war of national liberation,” also fizzled out at this time after a single commando action against the town of Sama in eastern Cuba.

However, the Cuban civil war never had a precise date on which it began or a precise date on which it ended. I have chosen 1970 simply because the historical data indicates this year as the last in which any major anti-Castro armed efforts took place with any chance of success.

For Castro and his regime the civil war had not ended, simply because they had depicted the internal struggle as an extension of the overriding struggle against U.S. imperialism. There was no other “Cuban side,” there was only Castro and the Revolution against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. No civil war had taken place, only an unending struggle to defend national sovereignty against imperialism.

Chapter Six – The Exile Republic: Nationalism without a Nation

“Exile in Miami feels less like exile. It has intimate compensations that the Cuban does not find elsewhere. The emigré who goes north will have to adapt. Those who have stayed in Miami have formed here a miniature Cuba, marvelous and new. The pain of the lost country is much reduced by the sensation that one lives in a city conquered peacefully. And for the same reason, almost as if it belonged to us. There are so many Cubans living in Miami and the manner of living has assumed a tone and flavor so criollo that at times we even reach the point of thinking that the North American is a foreigner. We suddenly hear English spoken on 8th street and we believe that it is an unfortunate tourist who has lost his way.”

Eladio Secades

Thus we see that a nation is a great solid unit, formed by the realization of sacrifices in the past, as well as of those one is prepared to make in the future. A nation implies a past; while, as regards the present, it is all contained in one tangible fact, viz., the agreement and clearly expressed desire to continue a life in common. The existence of a nation is (if you will forgive me the metaphor) a daily plebiscite, just as that of the individual is a continual affirmation of life.

Ernest Renan

Nostalgia and solidarity

According to Renan’s classic definition of nationhood, there are two basic pillars for its maintenance and preservation: nostalgia and solidarity. Nostalgia in the sense that collective memories of powerful shared life experiences serves as bonding mechanisms among individuals and between individuals and groups. The re-living of these memories through different means: from cultural expressions to social ceremonies and types of economic organization, serve to bind the community together as distinct and separate from other social groups. Those who do not share such memories and have not therefore experienced a re-living of them that ultimately leads to the elucidation of a transcendent meaning from them are not part of the ‘nation.’ Inclusion in shared memories is one of the rites of initiation of nationality. In most countries the state takes the lead in the

preservation of these memories through education, the founding and maintenance of libraries, the promulgation of official holidays, etc.

Similarly, solidarity stands as another key component of nationality. The ‘daily plebiscite’, to which he refers, the affirmation of the will to remain together, consists of the willing cooperation of individuals among themselves and between themselves and the established social order. This allows precisely for the continuity of the social existence of the group. Again, in most countries, it is the state that takes the lead in the formulation and implementation of the laws that embody the social purpose of the community.

However, when a community such as the Cuban Diaspora loses both its state and its national territory, nostalgia and solidarity become unique challenges, even more central to the preservation of nationhood and nationality. How the exiled communities of Miami and New Jersey organized themselves to face this dual challenge is further complicated by the fact that the Cuban exile community did not consist of a single exodus that took place in a single moment of time, but rather of a series of migrations that were successively accommodated in different ways by American law. Furthermore, Cuban exiles have not only settled in the United States, but also in many countries throughout the world and in some cases, the passage of time has also weakened nostalgia and solidarity.

Migration and Community

According to Professor Juan Clark’s landmark sociological study of Cuban refugee flows to the United States, these can be divided into two major periods: “The Early Departures,” which took place between 1959 to 1962, or from Castro’s rise to power to the October 1962 Missile Crisis, and from 1965, the year of the Camarioca boat

lift and the start of the U.S. bound Freedom Flights, to 1973. (Clark, 1975) Additional massive Cuban migrations took place in 1980, with the Mariel boatlift, and in 1995 with the rafter exodus. Of course, in between all of these years there has been a steady stream of Cuban migration to the United States and other countries.

Approximately 248, 070 Cubans entered the United States between 1959 and 1962, whereas 345, 481 entered between 1965 and 1973. (Cuban Immigration into Dade County, Florida, 1985) Approximately 120,000 Cuban refugees arrived through the Mariel boatlift, and a little over 26,000 arrived in 1996 as a result of the rafter exodus crisis. (2002 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics) Diverse statistical sources further indicate that Cuban exiles around the world are congregated mostly in the United States, and Puerto Rico, with Spain, Germany and Canada following closely behind. (See Demographic Yearbook Systems, United Nations Statistics Division, 2003 and Migration Information Source). Significant communities also exist in Venezuela and Mexico.

There are a series of laws that have codified the legal status of Cuban refugees in the United States. The first was the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, allowed Cuban refugees living in the United States to adjust their legal status to that of permanent residents. Up to that point in time there were 258,317 Cuban refugees living in the United States who had not been able to adjust their legal status. In 1986 the U.S. Congress passed a law for immigration reform that included a section that allowed Cuban refugees who had arrived in the United States through the Mariel boatlift to adjust their legal status and to seek permanent residence in the United States. The 1997 NACARA law made further stipulations that allowed Cuban refugees in the United States to seek permanent legal residence in this country. Contrary to popular perception, these laws are not unique to

Cuban exiles, since Congress has passed other laws in the past that have made legal residence in the United States and even citizenship, possible for immigrants from certain specific countries. (Del Castillo)

Each wave of exiles had their own perception of the political conditions that had caused their exodus. Whereas the 'Early Departures' consisted of supporters of the overthrown Batista Regime and later on disenchanted revolutionaries as well as a good portion of Cuba's middle class, later departures came mainly from the lower middle class including workers and farmers. These also had lived under Communism for a greater period of time.

Whereas the early waves of arrivals had hope that the United States would intervene in one way or another to liberate Cuba from Castroism, later migrations, particularly that between 1965 and 1973, had witnessed first hand the endurance of the system and had suffered more directly from it. More radical youth leaders emerged from this wave of refugees, intent on waging a 'Cuban only' struggle against Castro. Some, like Lino Gonzalez, Ramon Saul Sanchez and Virgilio Paz, were imprisoned for their activities in violation of U.S. laws. Others, like radio commentator Armando Perez Roura, whose staunchly right wing perspectives were to greatly influence all of Miami radio, also migrated from Cuba during this time.

How these different waves of refugees came to develop a unitary sense of memory and solidarity which kept them not only Cuban, but as members of a new Cuban exiled nationalism was the result of both this constant social effort to preserve a certain type of Cuban nationality opposed to Castro's, but also of the way in which different exiled thinkers defined their collective situation.

The shared collective history of the exile community consisted of a roller coaster-like emotional journey where peaks of hope, heroism and nostalgia were matched by long moments of apathy, egoism and despair. Through it all, each wave of exiles managed to hitch its load of memories onto the succeeding group, developing common strains of perceptions that further unified the community.

The matrix of this new wealth of memories that set apart the exiles as both a distinct group in the United States and within the Cuban nation, consisted of the following general chronology of events:

Between 1959 and 1961 Castro consolidated power and the regime quickly radicalized itself into first a left wing and later, a Communist dictatorship. Internal resistance grew, thousands began leaving the island and initial hopes for a quick return to a liberated Cuba were postponed, but not lost, when the Bay of Pigs invasion failed. Hopes began to rise again as the Kennedy Administration began to recruit thousands of exiles for what appeared to be another invasion of Cuba. However, these hopes were dashed when as part of the agreement to solve the October 1962 Missile Crisis President John F. Kennedy agreed not to invade Cuba. (see Appendix).

However, exiles became expectant again when in 1963 U.S.-backed guerrilla camps led by Manuel Artime opened in Central America. Labeled as 'Operation Mongoose,' the CIA supported a wide assortment of infiltrations and commando raids against the Castro regime. Ironically, independent exile efforts to carry out similar actions were the object of persecution by U.S. authorities. As the CIA progressively cut its support for these types of actions after the Kennedy assassination in November 1963, the

community watched with bitterness as its continued armed efforts to overthrow the Castro regime were persecuted by the U.S. government.

As the 1960s closed the exiles had one last rally of hope: prominent businessman Jose Elias de la Torriente managed to unite the traditional factions of Cuba's pre-1959 Republic into an alliance which was to carry out an ambitious, albeit secret, plan to liberate Cuba.⁶³ Hundreds of men received military training for this eventual invasion of Cuba. Exiles donated thousands of dollars to the effort. However, the secret plan never materialized. Torriente's movement fizzled. Extremist groups executed him in his home as he sat watching TV. (Encinosa, 250-252)

It was at this time that many in the community, including prominent leaders such as Carlos Prio and Jose Miro Cardona embraced a strategy which the radical Nationalist groups had named "Guerra por los Caminos del Mundo," or "War around the World." The purpose was to strike at Castro's political and economic interests outside the island. The 1970s proved to be a difficult and bitter time for the exiles. The War around the World projected a terrorist and extremist image of the community, while Castro gained international power and prestige. A segment of the community entered into a dialogue with the Cuban government, and thousands of exiles visited their homeland after years of separation. The possibility of a liberated Cuba seemed dimmer than ever.

This, however, changed with the advent of the 1980s. The Mariel boatlift, the election of Ronald Reagan and the emergence of the Cuban American National Foundation under Jorge Mas Canosa's leadership signaled the empowerment of the community and its decisive participation in U.S. politics. Although the emergence of

⁶³ "Exiles Repeat Battle Pledge." The Miami News. 24 Aug. 1970.

Cuban Americans as a powerful lobbying force in the United States did not lead to Castro's immediate downfall the CANF agenda was responsible for both tightening the economic noose around the regime and giving exiles an influence over US policy towards Cuba which they, and Cubans in general, had never had.

As the Soviet Union fell apart between 1989 and 1991 and other Eastern European countries were liberated, it seemed certain that Castro's final hour had finally arrived. However, it didn't. The regime was ideologically determined to last beyond the downfall of the Soviet Union. The exile leadership was under the mistaken impression that the magnitude of the economic crisis in and of itself would inevitably bring about the Regime's downfall. There was the underlying belief that the spontaneous popular uprising could not be stopped. But in a regime where public opinion is tightly controlled, Castro successfully prevented widespread popular discontent and social protest from articulating themselves into a coherent political movement for change. Another great mistake took place: for too many exile leaders the leadership of the anti-Castro struggle was outside Cuba, in Miami. They saw the dissidents in the island as complementary, and not central, to international efforts to bring down the Castro regime. As such, the dissidents, who could have become the catalyzing force for social unrest to transform itself into a political movement for change, were not sufficiently supported and were not ready when the people took to the streets, as on August 5, 1994.

Jorge Mas Canosa's death in 1997 further disillusioned many. The Elián crisis took place within this narrative, at a moment of frustration and anguish in the community. A Miami Herald story on 10/20/00 by Ana Acle titled "Hope for change in Cuba fading,"

stated that: “In the aftermath of the Elián Gonzalez case, more Cuban exiles than ever before believe there will never be major political change in Cuba....”

An Exile Metanarrative

The exiles had to set up complex mechanisms in order to continue to affirm their nationality. Participating in the ‘daily plebiscite’⁶⁴ of a country they were no longer in and whose state despised them required the development of a new type of resistance. By resisting assimilation and remaining Cuban they felt as if they were resisting Castro on a daily basis, as part of their normal routines. At the same time, by preserving a high degree of anti-Castro sentiment they persevered in their nationality, in their Cubanness. Anti-Castroism and Cubanness became inseparable elements for the exile nationalist ideology.

A critical self-perception held by the exiles of themselves and their role during all of this time was that they were the ‘front line’ of Western civilization as embodied by the United States, in the struggle against Castroism and Communism. Exile activists would often echo the phrase coined by journalist Humberto Lopez, Sr. “Cuba, Christ of America.” It was through Cuba’s suffering that the American continent would be spared from Communist domination and that a decisive contribution to the defeat of international Communism would be made.

Perhaps the most important contribution to this self-perception came from Juan Antonio Rubio Padilla’s article: “A la Opinión Pública,” (see Appendix) published in Miami a few days after the defeat at the Bay of Pigs. Rubio Padilla had been a founding member of the 1930 Directorio, a leader of the Autentico Party, a minister in Prio’s

⁶⁴ By ‘daily plebiscite’ Renan meant the constant affirmation, through diverse political and cultural actions, that a people constantly make to preserve their identity.

government, and a staunch foe of both Batista and Castro. A man of deep religious convictions, he was respected for his honesty and culture.

He had protested over the way the American government and the CIA had handled their relations with the exile leadership, and had separated himself from the political leadership of the Bay of Pigs invasion as a result. He wrote in 1961, a few weeks after the Bay of Pigs debacle that:

En mayo de 1960, después de largas discusiones con los elementos norteamericanos que intervenían en estas cosas, me negué a formar parte del F.R.D. El desacuerdo partió del criterio fundamental mantenido por mí a través de todo este proceso: La ayuda de los Estados Unidos a Cuba en su lucha contra el comunismo no es una obra de generosidad o de caridad que los cubanos tenemos que aceptar con las condiciones unilaterales que los Estados Unidos nos impongan. La necesidad de derrotar al comunismo en Cuba es tan vital para los Estados Unidos como para Cuba.

[Trans: In May 1960, after long negotiations with representatives of the United States who intervene in these things, I refused to join the Democratic Revolutionary Front. The disagreement stemmed from a fundamental conviction which I have held throughout this process: the aid of the United States to Cuba in its struggle against Communism is not a generous charitable act that Cubans have to accept along with unilateral conditions imposed by the United States. The need to overthrow Communism in Cuba is as vital to the United States as it is for Cuba.]

His public manifesto spelled out the notion of the exile forces as a sort of invisible Cuban republic which was to be considered as nothing less than an ally of the United States in the struggle to save Western civilization through the eradication of Communism in Cuba. He explained:

Pocas veces en la historia se dan circunstancias internacionales en las cuales de una manera tan clara se vea la necesidad de la colaboración de dos pueblos en un solo propósito. La Providencia ha dispuesto las cosas de tal manera que Cuba no puede deshacerse del comunismo sin la ayuda norteamericana, al propio tiempo que los Estados Unidos no pueden derrotar al comunismo en Cuba sin la colaboración de los cubanos que muestren al mundo su deseo, su voluntad y su decisión de pelear contra el comunismo y optar libremente por la democracia.

[Trans. Few times in history have there been international circumstances, which so clearly have dictated the need for collaboration of two peoples in one single purpose. Providence has disposed that Cuba cannot rid itself of Communism without aid from the

United States, whereas the United States cannot defeat Communism in Cuba without the collaboration of Cubans who demonstrate to the world their desire, will and decision to struggle against Communism and freely opt for democracy.]

In another part, he added:

Pero no sólo será la América la que se sacudirá la parálisis de miedo que le produce ahora la amezana roja, el mundo entero verá con alivio a Rusia retroceder en la guerra fría. Y ya nadie podrá borrar de la historia el hecho de que ha sido la sangre de los héroes traicionados de la Bahía de Cochinos la más prolífica del siglo XX, porque allí se originó la reacción gloriosa de Occidente Cristiano que, en una cadena de victorias, cuyo primer estabón fue la reconquista de Cuba, no se detuvo hasta incinerar las momias de Lenin y Stalin y consagrar de nuevo al culto divino la Catedral de San Basilio.

[Trans: It will not only be Latin America which shakes off the paralysis of fear that is now caused by the Red threat, but the entire world which will feel relief as Russia loses ground in the Cold War. And no one will be able to erase from the annals of history the fact that the blood shed by the heroes betrayed at the Bay of Pigs will be the most prolific of the 20th century, because it originated the reaction of the Christian West, which after a string of victories the first of which will be the reconquest of Cuba, did not stop until Lenin and Stalin's mummies were incinerated and the Cathedral of St, Basilius was once again consecrated for holy worship.]

The aims of the Cuban exiles had to be not just to defeat Castro, but to restore the Republic and the Constitution of 1940 under a conservative government that would reject socialism.

For Rubio Padilla the only true hope for Cuban liberation after the Bay of Pigs disaster lay in a U.S. invasion of the island. "Castro had turned the island into a Soviet aircraft carrier," he wrote, and this act violated the sovereignty of both the people of Cuba and the people of the United States. Only direct U.S. intervention could save Christian Western civilization in the island. Therefore, he believed that this invasion would not constitute another US intervention in Latin America if the United States treated the Cuban opposition as true allies, if it restored the legal Constitution of 1940 and if it helped the island rebuild itself. These actions, he believed, would be welcomed

by the Cuban people and would reconcile the United States with Latin America in a new relationship.

However, the Cuban exile leadership proved incapable of rising to the political and ideological challenge posed by Rubio Padilla. Here lay one of its great flaws and weaknesses. In political terms, the leadership elite of the Cuban exile community had developed a dependency relationship with the United States. The Castro Regime fully expected the opposition of Cuba's upper classes. It used this opposition to ably consolidate its own power. Cuba's elites were economically powerful but politically immature. Their blind faith in the United States often proved to be a liability in the political and ideological struggle against Castroite nationalism.

An example of this could be found in the Cuban units recruited for the US Army after the Bay of Pigs. Frank Calzon, a veteran of the struggle for democracy in Cuba and a pioneer of both the human rights struggle and Cuban American lobbying in Washington D.C., recalled that the Cuban units recruited by the US Army lacked "political consciousness." "They trusted no one else but the Americans, and gave little importance to the anti-Castro leadership."⁶⁵ This, of course, would also begin to change after the 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev Agreement.

The psychological dependence of the anti-Castro leadership on the United States became a factor that the Castro Regime could easily manipulate to its advantage. This psychological dependence allowed the regime to portray all opposition to it as something artificial, disconnected from the country's reality. What befuddled the Communist government was the stiff resistance it found among Cuba's lower middle class and

⁶⁵ Interview with Frank Calzon, Washington D.C., March 21, 2005

organized labor. A leading Castroite ideologue, Jorge Ibarra, affirms in “Ideologia Mambisa,” his seminal work on Castroite ideology, that:

Under the new conditions created as a result of the revolutionary triumph of 1959 a ‘nation for itself’ began to be definitely constituted. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialism used every possible means to prevent this in a desperate effort to break these bonds. In the course of the deadly struggle that ensued the bonds of solidarity of all the oppressed sectors of the nationality were strengthened. Certain sectors of the labor aristocracy and the petty bourgeoisie, permeated by the ideology of the alienated nation, suffered the same fate as the anti-national bourgeoisie. In spite of the influence these sectors had traditionally had over Cuban society, the mass of the people true to the profound ideas that inspired them, managed to complete the process of national formation under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard. (Ibarra, 1972, 74)

Whereas the Castro Regime could parade many Brigade 2506 veterans in front of the television cameras in order to interrogate them, it could not afford to do so with the Escambray rebels. They represented a grass roots opposition whose existence the Regime could not afford to propagate.

This grass roots movement constituted the social basis for an emerging popular conservative movement that Cuba had never had. To a degree then, Rubio Padilla articulated the emerging conservatism of Cuba’s middle and lower middle classes. Perhaps passionately nationalistic and friendly to social reform, they also felt they had a stake in the increasingly prosperous republic.

Rebel leader Agapito Rivera organized one of the most effective of the guerrilla armies that opposed the Castro regime and in many ways symbolized the nature of the agrarian rebellion against Castro.

Years later in Miami, after having been wounded and captured by Castro’s armed forces and spending years in prison for his activities, he remarked to historian Enrique Encinosa:

[Trans by author: I was poor, very poor. I had nothing, but I had the hope of someday having something. Then I saw that everything was being taken away from those who had property. This meant that they were closing the door on me that I could never have what I sought to have. Those who had property had it taken away and those who did not have it had their hopes taken away. So we had to fight against that, to take back our right to seek to have something.” (Encinosa, 42)

For Cuba’s dislocated lower middle class the revolutionarist rhetoric that Castro embodied and that still defined the opposition’s “democratic left,” no longer attracted them. They had felt its consequences: it had cost them the little property they had amassed and the status they had begun to gain in the Republic. Before 1959 Cuba’s middle and lower middle classes had been staunchly anti-Communist but had believed in political measures that would guarantee greater equity in their society. Now in exile, they remained socially minded, but anti-socialist as well as anti-Communist.

For financial support the exile democratic left, from Ray’s MRP in the 1960s to Matos’ CID in the 1980s would often have to rely on the Americans. This was something that Rubio Padilla would also criticize in his document.

In many ways, the rest of the Autentico leadership would follow Rubio Padilla in this ideological evolution. Fittingly perhaps, because the Autenticos had been the party of Cuba’s middle and lower middle classes. Rubio Padilla, Prio and Tony Varona, to name a few of the most prominent, remained very influential in the exile community until their deaths. “They had authority among exiles. Prio’s home was open to all factions, even the batistianos who had overthrown him. They had an understanding, an awareness of the republican identity that few could match,” Pedro Roig would comment many years later.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Interview with Pedro Roig, Miami 3/13/04

Living without Cuba

For the anti-Castro Cubans, whether on the island or in exile, the war of national liberation could not end. The paradigm of the wars of independence had to be revived. Far from their homeland, the exiles would now begin to reenact the passion play of the lost republic.

The experience of having had to leave their country and journey to a foreign land, the pervasive racial and class homogeneity that characterized the initial waves of exiles, the unifying factor of cultural resistance inspired by the political resolve to return to the lost homeland, all contributed to providing Cubans in exile with a sense of profound national unity which the republics of 1901 and 1940 had perhaps never had. This new nationalism retroactively constructed, as nationalisms tend to do, a lost golden age out of the republican experience of 1902-59. It saw itself as the extension of the civic republicanism of the island's first two republics. The roots of this new nationalism however, did not lie in the lost golden age, which never existed, but rather in the overwhelmingly unifying experience of current exile.

From the beginning, Cuban national identity had been a leap of faith. The island seemed geopolitically determined to be ruled by some great power. For Cubans a profound acceptance of their national identity ultimately became a matter of having faith in themselves as a people, as individuals capable of prosperity, freedom and order.

One school of thought could not take this leap. It capitulated to the seemingly inexorable reality of geography. The island could not be independent. It lacked whatever was needed to be truly a nation, a republic. This discourse of negative cubanidad permeated many island elites and shaped their relationship with the Cuban state and

foreign powers, mainly the United States. For the discourse of negative cubanidad, the Cuban people were sociologically incapable of ruling themselves. It shaped a negative self-perception of Cubans and their politics.⁶⁷

To counter the negation of the fulfillment of Cuban identity through nationhood, the proponents of Cuban independence made an emotional affirmation of national faith through sacrifice and struggle. Martí and his ideological heirs depicted Cubans as noble, worthy, heroic, capable of ruling themselves and of building a great republic. Although the empirical evidence could demonstrate the contrary, the powerful mix of emotion, faith and identity of Cuban nationalism challenged and imposed itself over and over again on the discourse of negative cubanidad.

Great contradictions developed at the heart of the Cuban national identity. Pride tinged with insecurity, a nationalism psychologically dependent upon the United States, and the centrality of violence and conspiracy as the only true means through which to achieve serious political ends, an obsession with a greater destiny matched by a permanent frustration with the present.

Over and over again during the first half of the twentieth century Cubans rallied to save their republic from themselves. Independence, freedom and social justice became interwoven ideals. In the process, a radical revolutionary generation developed which began to break with the liberal ideals upon which the Cuban identity had been founded. When the creation of a new Cuban came to be perceived as the necessary outcome of the creation of a new state, the process of republic building envisioned by Martí had been inverted.

⁶⁷ On the intellectual genesis of this strain of thought, see Rojas, 1999.157

Re-inventing nationalism: the exile experience

Nationalism is a moral and emotional force that emanates from the most elemental morality and the most fundamental emotion: that which responds to man's primary need for group solidarity. The scope of this group solidarity was expanded by the post-Westphalian development of the national states, the reaction of local communities to the intrusiveness of absolute monarchies, and by the development of mass media and access to education. The specific historical challenges faced by each nation further consolidated their unitary consciousness. This unitary consciousness is formed by both spiritual and material factors. It is a living, changing, breathing thing that must be looked upon more as a biological organism than as a lifeless mathematical model. Rather than review forms and institutions, we seek to identify the dynamic, vital nature of this organism capable of consolidating a nation.

A cross section of pre-1959 Cuban society now found itself in exile. The wealthy, a good portion of the middle class, many workers and peasants, found themselves without a homeland. They were both grateful that the US had opened its doors to them and unsure about the commitment of their great ally to the cause of Cuban liberation. They were labeled as 'worms' and 'rabble' by the triumphant Castro dictatorship. The unitary consciousness of nationhood was now augmented by the unitary consciousness of becoming a diaspora.

Exiled Cubans saw themselves back at where it had all started: Cubans without freedom, without a country, governed by a tyranny supported by a foreign totalitarian power, and unsure of what support, if any, they could receive from the United States.

“I remember the most common expressions of my older family members with regard to Cuba,” recalls feminist intellectual Ileana Fuentes of her family’s early years upon arriving at the exile communities in New Jersey, “Oh what we lost, ‘you don’t know what you have until you lose it,’ ‘the republic was too young,’ ‘Castro lied to us,’ ‘the Americans betrayed us.’”⁶⁸

If ever there was a time for the discourse of negative cubanidad, this was it. The fatalism of the discourse of negative cubanidad seemed proven: Cubans had so utterly failed at ruling themselves that they had won independence from Spain only to eventually wind up in the hands of the Soviet Union. The autonomistas and anexionistas seemed right after all.

The exile community had to develop an ideology with which to overcome pessimism and frustration and respond to a three-pronged challenge: one, to explain the loss of their country and consolidate the ideology with which to regain it, two, to survive and prosper in foreign lands and three, to preserve their identity and pride as the whole social and political fabric of the Cuba they had known broke apart and they were forced to start their lives over again in foreign cultures. All three objectives, intrinsically intertwined, were inseparable in the composition of the exile ideology.

Resisting assimilation while achieving success in America and overthrowing Castro, or at least persevering in their identity until such deed was accomplished, became the central priorities of the Cuban exile community. “The anti-Castro political leadership viewed *organized* assimilation into the US mainstream as an acceptance that the Revolution and exile were irreversible.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Interview with Ileana Fuentes, Miami, Florida December 31, 2003, Miami, Florida.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Mechanisms developed to involve the community in a constant dynamic of political action alongside an ideology that rejected the discourse of negative cubanidad while affirming the sanctity of the exiles' collective duty. This primary ideological mandate superseded the political, racial and class divisions of pre-Castro Cuba. The primary ideological mandate of the exile community was to preserve its distinct kind of Cubanness as an alternative identity to Castro's prevailing brand of nationalism.

The social expression of this primary ideology was:

- (1) The strengthening of the family as the central unit of exile social life,
- (2) The development of an alternative schooling system,
- (3) The development of alternative means of mass communication within the community, such as exile radio stations and the small newspapers, or periodiquitos.
- (4) The emergence of tightly integrated networks of business and trade within the community itself, based on the central notion that "Cuban buys Cuban."

The political expression of these social pillars lay in four key political components of the exile community and the anti-Castro struggle. These were: the social organization of the exile communities around the 'Municipalities in Exile,' and other fraternal institutions, popular mobilizations, armed struggle and underground activity, and development of an ideological consensus around the concept of 'unidad.'

In the next section we analyze the ideological components of this discourse as well as how they integrated in a functioning manner with the mechanisms of exile political action.

The Dynamics of the Ideology of Cuban Exile Nationalism: Discourse and Action

The following elements were central to the development of the ideological discourse of the Cuban diaspora:

- **The reappraisal of the republic and the myth of its achievements.**

“...aquella república que todos hemos aprendido a amar, tras haberla perdido”.

Adolfo Rivero Caro

The warring factions of Cuba’s republican history now suddenly found themselves alone and without their country. Autenticos, ortodoxos, batistianos, former members of the ABC, Christian Democrats, Catholic social democrats, nationalists, anarchists, those who had fought in the ranks of the 26th of July Movement or the Directorio and those who had fought against them in the army or the secret police, former industrialists and former labor leaders, sugar mill owners and peasants, all now shared one powerful common denominator: exile. That which had divided them in the republic remained, but its importance diminished as they felt themselves drifting farther and farther away from their country.

Cubans were perhaps never satisfied with the state of their republic, but they were far less satisfied with having lost it. The republic that seemed so insufficient at one time seemed greater and greater in the distance. The Castroite Black Legend of the republic as a semi-feudal protectorate completely subservient to the United States incensed all exiles collectively. Preservation of what the republic had achieved, as a testament to its legitimacy as the true heir to the wars of independence became a priority for the many

educators, intellectuals, and political and business leaders who now found themselves in exile.⁷⁰

However, the reappraisals of the republic's true achievements were soon transformed into a myth. The Republic began to be described in exile literature and radio as a golden age, when nothing had gone wrong until Castroism had brought out the apple of discord.

- **The conception of exile, or el exilio, not as an individual event, but as an invisible entity, an invisible republic embodying the principles of Cuban liberalism and the true institutions of the Cuban republic. El exilio as the embodiment of the true Cuba.**

Cubans quickly realized that their exile was not merely an event consisting of many thousands of Cubans leaving their country because they disagreed with the existing regime, but rather that the whole social structure, the whole civil society that had emerged in Cuba from the end of the wars of independence to the revolutionary triumph of January 1, 1959 had been uprooted. A new Cuban nationalism, based on the old fortress conception of Cuba, had decided to rebuild the country from the state down at the expense of all autonomous institutions. Cubans until 1959 had defined their identity in

⁷⁰ The prologue to a small children's textbook on patriotic symbols, dates and biographies published in Miami in 1968 and reprinted many times since, indicates this desire on the part of an organized civil society in exile. "En su interés porque los niños y jóvenes cubanos que crecen en el Exilio, lejos de la Patria temporalmente perdida, conserven algunos de sus recuerdos y conozcan de sus grandezas, el Colegio de Pedagogos y la Federación de Educadores Cubanos han preparado la presente edición de SIMBOLOS, FECHAS Y BIOGRAFIAS, con el mismo propósito con que anteriormente editamos nuestros ELEMENTOS DE HISTORIA DE CUBA, y ELEMENTOS DE GEOGRAFIA DE CUBA y como aporte a la conmemoración del CENTENARIO DE YARA, por acuerdo del Consejo Nacional de Veteranos de la Independencia de Cuba" (Espinosa, 1968, 3)

[Trans. by author: Interested in that Cuban children and youth that grow up in Exile, far away from the homeland that we have temporarily lost, maintain some of their memories and know of its greatness, the Association of Cuban Teachers and the Federation of Cuban Educators has prepared the present edition of SYMBOLS, DATES AND BIOGRAPHIES, with the same purpose with which we also edited ELEMENTS OF CUBAN HISTORY and ELEMENTS OF CUBAN GEOGRAPHY, and as a contribution to the YARA CENTENNIAL, as determined by the National Council of Veterans of Cuban Independence.]

these institutions. They ranged from the family to the municipality to the Church or the masonic lodges, including the professional associations or 'colegios,' the labor unions, the social clubs, the University of Havana and the free press, that Cubans until 1959 had defined their identity.

Hannah Arendt points out in her monumental *Origins of Totalitarianism* that:

Totalitarian movements are possible wherever there are masses that for one reason or another have acquired the appetite for political organization. Masses are not held together by a consciousness of common interest and they lack that specific class articulateness which is expressed in determined, limited and obtainable goals. The term masses applies only where we deal with people who either because of sheer numbers, or indifference, or a combination of both, cannot be integrated into any organization based on common interest, into political parties or municipal governments or professional organizations or trade unions. Potentially, they exist in every country and form the majority of those large numbers of neutral, politically indifferent people who never join a party and hardly ever go to the polls (Arendt, 1979, 311).

This quote by Arendt, which could refer to conditions in Cuba in the early 1960s but actually describes European totalitarianism of the 20s and 30s, sums up the paradox of the Cuban situation. The masses and their caudillo had uprooted civil society. However, civil society had transplanted itself to a foreign soil and survived, albeit also experiencing a profound transformation.

The republic had been lost. But its building blocks could be kept alive in exile. It was in them that the exiles believed that the seed of the republic could be preserved. These institutions, all together, embodied el exilio. But el exilio meant far more than exile to the exiled Cubans. It signified an invisible, rebel republic that held out hope for the eventual liberation of Cuba.

Cuban civil society had been stateless before. During the war against Spanish rule, when the Cuban government was but a shadow evading the enemy in the

countryside, and during the American occupation, when the establishment of an independent Cuban state seemed imminent but not fully achievable. Now the republic was invisible, in exile it was both stateless and nation less. What's more, in the language of the exile nationalist ideology the struggle against Castroism constituted the continuation of the wars of independence.

In the February 1965 issue of its "DRE Internacional" newsletter, the Student Revolutionary Directorate proclaimed that:

Cuba is today living through moments very similar to those lived by her founding fathers. Cuba is struggling for her independence...Cubans who are struggling today are inspired by the same ideals of February 24, 1895 (The start of Cuba's last war of independence) and of all the wars of independence of the Western Hemisphere.

In this mindset, civic and liberal nationalism once again was faced with the challenge of wresting power away from a dictatorship based on a corporatist and authoritarian notion of power.

The building blocks of the institutions, the individual exile Cubans themselves, had to fight against two stereotypes, which were mutually complementary: one, the discourse of negative cubanidad, that Cubans were lazy, inept, irrational, undisciplined and clannish and two, the Castroite Black Legend that stated that all those who had left were either thugs, or thieves or oligarchs, feeding off the country. The institutions, be they the family, the municipal associations, the lodges or the Church, reinforced the struggle for respectability of their individual members who in turn, with their efforts to improve their lot, imbued these institutions with influence and weight in a foreign land.

The institutions sought "unidad," which more than the unity of the exile factions signified the establishment of a government, an exiled state, that could fully represent the

exiles politically in the struggle to reestablish a Cuban nation-state based on the freedom of the individual. That goal, due to many different reasons, seemed as unattainable. Perhaps as unattainable as the ideal government had been in the republic. In its stead, the exiles and their institutions forged an ironclad consensus on how to confront Castro, Castroism and its version of the Cuban national identity.

- **The reenactment of the “passion play” of Cuban republican history by the exile community.**

The consensus established by the exile community based itself on the reenactment of the paradigm of the wars of independence. Once again aided by a foreign European power, the Soviet Union, the fortress state militarist mentality, now incarnate and perfected in Castroism, had overcome republican Cuba. Once again, as in the wars of independence, Cubans who believed in the basic values of a liberal society found themselves either persecuted, imprisoned or executed on the island or banished abroad. A war of liberation had to be waged. The United States of America, the foremost exponent of those values that these Cubans treasured, seemed a natural ally. Castroism had affected many of its interests and the Soviets were their antagonists in the Cold War.

However, just like in the wars of independence, the US turned out to be an uncertain ally. The Bay of Pigs (1961) and the Missile Crisis (1962), the selective application of the Neutrality Laws to independent exile groups, and many other events seemed to confirm the unreliability of the US. But the US also provided safe haven for Cuban exiles and confronted the Castro regime diplomatically at the international level. For exile leaders the relationship with Washington was difficult, as always. This proved

to be another factor that reinforced the notion that they were involved in a prolongation of the wars of independence.

For the exiled Cubans the Bay of Pigs was tantamount to the confiscation of the ships and weapons with which Martí was originally supposed to initiate the last war of independence in 1895, or the refusal in 1898 by the American troops in allowing Calixto García and the Cuban Army of Liberation to enter Santiago de Cuba. The Missile Crisis in 1962 and the Kennedy-Khrushchev Pact⁷¹ became synonymous with the Treaty of Paris where Spain and the US had decided Cuba's destiny without the presence of Free Cubans. The application of the Neutrality Act to exile paramilitary efforts aimed at reviving the struggle inside Cuba became equivalent to a new Platt Amendment, keeping the Cubans from carrying out their struggle.

The Cuban exile community became intensely loyal to America and its ideals, but tightly knit and intensely committed to its own agenda of Cuban national liberation. The exile institutions saw themselves as the components of an invisible, exiled state, defending the interests of a future republican Cuba against both Castroism and the fluctuations in US policy. Both nearness to the United States and independence from 'los americanos,' became virtues for the leadership of the exile republic.

- **Cuban national liberation as the preeminent, overriding goal of the Cuban exile community.**

Although there were multiple exile organizations, they needed a very precise focus in order to effectively channel the energy needed to maintain their existence in foreign soil. This focus was on Cuban national liberation and the preservation of the exile

⁷¹ An informal agreement reached between John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev at the height of the October Missile Crisis whereby the United States committed itself not to invade Cuba while the Soviets pledged to withdraw all the nuclear missiles from the island.

institutions and organizations as the only way to keep this hope alive. For many years the exile leadership did not accept forays into mainstream US politics. They were seen as deviations from the sacrosanct goal of liberating the island from Communism.

In 1961 Jose Miró Cardona testified before the U.S. Senate. Cardona had been a prominent member of Cuba's middle class. A respected jurist, he had opposed the Batista dictatorship and served as a cabinet member in Castro's first revolutionary government. When he became convinced of the 'secret totalitarian agenda' of the Revolution he left for exile. Eventually he was to lead the Cuban Revolutionary Council, which was to be the government in arms of the Bay of Pigs invasion. His personal evolution as a prestigious jurist and academic, opponent of the Batista dictatorship, prime minister of Castro's first revolutionary government and then radical foe of Castroism mirrored that of a good part of the exiled population. In his testimony he clearly explained what was to be the overriding priority of the mainstream anti-Castro leadership:

[Cuban] men, women, and children [in the U.S.] have just one purpose: to go back [to Cuba] and fight. They would rather fight and die than try to remake their lives in a friendly but foreign country. Every day they await the order to take up arms, to fight communism, and specially, to fight in Cuba. They want to keep their dignity intact. They do not fear adversity; they want to go back. Therein lies the fundamental reason for the Cuban exiles' determination to stay in Miami, one hour's flight from Cuba.⁷²

This would be the commandment at the heart of the consensus of the exile community towards organized integration into the US mainstream for more than 20 years. The political empowerment of the community in the US came as Cuban Americans

⁷² Arboleya, 2000, 212

involved in US politics managed to link their aspirations with the consistent exile priority on freeing the island from Communist rule.⁷³

This perhaps made difficult the relations between Cuban exiles and other communities. The exiles may have appeared to have tremendous tunnel vision, and they did. As feminist intellectual Ileana Fuentes stated to the author, “The focus of Cuban liberation was the expression of a mental need to keep ourselves emotionally strong and survive in a foreign soil.”⁷⁴

- **The insistence on war and confrontation as the only morally legitimate means through which to struggle for the preeminent goal of Cuban national liberation. The belief that the civil war inside the island had been lost not because of any deficiency of the Cuban resistance but due to the American betrayal at the Bay of Pigs and continued American meddling in anti-Castro efforts by exiles.**

The Cuban Civil War (1960-70) had been the largest armed effort in the 20th century history of Cuban warfare. For the Castroite revolutionaries, the war had never ended and for the republicans, the war had never truly begun. The exiles felt that they were the inheritors of the republic and of the ideological pillars of the republican consensus: independence, democratic rule, social justice and anti-communism. Now shaken by a Communist takeover that had come disguised in the traditional robes of Cuban nationalism, the exiles would accept anti-Communism only if it came validated with deeds.

⁷³ Encinosa, 1994, 316

⁷⁴ Interview with Fuentes, 12/31/03

The exile community became intolerant, not so much of other ideas or alternatives, but of strategies and tactics that did not fit the standard of complete rejection of Castroism. War as a metaphor for rejection of the new Cuba structured by Castro, war as a testament to the existence of a Cuban opposition that refused to accept Castro's permanence in power, war as the only legitimate means of true political change in the face of tyranny, and ultimately war as romantically envisioned in the paradigm of the Cuban wars of independence became the doctrine and the creed. As exile historian Enrique Encinosa wrote in "Cuba en Guerra," an account of the efforts to overthrow the Castro Regime: "Después de casi tres décadas y media de sufrimiento y sangre, el pueblo cubano continuaba luchando por su libertad. La guerra no había concluído." [Trans. by author: After almost three decades and a half of blood and suffering, the Cuban people continue to struggle for their freedom. The war has not ended.]⁷⁵

Some groups were welcomed. Others were rejected. The left-of-center Alpha 66 or Abdala youth movement or the Guángara anarchists were acceptable because they were militantly anti-Communist. Others, such as prominent banker Bernardo Benes were rejected because they was willing to negotiate with Castro.

But there was more. The proliferation of militarism both in Castroism and among the republicans developed a sub culture of conspiracy and paramilitary logic. The long years of the civil war, the thousands of Cubans who received paramilitary training and actively participated in conspiracy and conflict strengthened the already existing deification of armed revolution in Cuban political culture. What became consistent was the belief in violence as a legitimate means through which to achieve political objectives. Violence had been a legitimate tool for political purposes throughout the Republic.

⁷⁵ Encinosa, 1994, 363

But whereas Castroism needed militarism and conflict as a logical corollary of its ideological structure, that of the fortress state, militarism would prove stifling to the republican side. For years, and long after any hope of military victory had faded, the deification of armed struggle would prevent the exiles from assessing different options. Any alternative option would often be considered pro-Castroite.

Noted Cuban intellectual Luis Aguilar León would note during the early 1960s that:

The Revolution first, politics later,' shouts Fidel in Cuba while he eliminates basic freedoms. And, as if like an echo, the antifidelistas here respond 'War first, politics later,' while they ready the army of liberation. And, in the meantime, no one is concerned with presenting to the Cuban people a basic program, a unanimous promise that will guarantee to that people that we are not just struggling to overthrow Fidel Castro, but to reestablish freedom, [a program] which is not just anti-Communist but also pro-democracy⁷⁶

- **The preservation of the Cuban identity for the new generations of Cubans that had either left the island at a very young age or that were born in exile**

*"Before the demolition of the Silver Sands Hotel,
Our father spun dominos under the thatch-palm gazebos,
Drank then insulted the scenery.
Nada like our Varadero,
There the sand was powder; the water truly aquamarine.
I remember the poor magic of these voices ---
How beautifully they remembered beauty."
Richard Blanco
"The Silver Sands"*

The exiles did not leave the education of their young exclusively in the hands of the US public education system. A whole parallel system of Cuban private and parochial schools was established, where the values of "republican Cuba" were transmitted to a

⁷⁶ Aguilar Leon, 1972, 137

new generation of exiles. In the public school system many Cuban-born educators also did their best to instill those values in their students.⁷⁷

“The penchant for private education found renewed vitality in exile, as the old schools of Havana were reorganized in Miami, but no longer to advance familiarity with things North American but to preserve Cuban ways: among them, La Salle, Baldor, Lincoln, La Progresiva, Edison and Colegio La Luz.”⁷⁸ The alumni of these schools, and most noticeably perhaps those from the Jesuit-run Belen school (the same high school Castro graduated from in Cuba and which he nationalized shortly after taking power), would create friendship networks within the community that would both preserve the vitality of the existing institutions and empower new generations within them.

If Cuba could not be liberated for the time being, then exiles believed that the immediate objective was to pass on their legacy, traditions and values to a new generation. It was here that the most immediate of battles had to be waged. The most noticeable aspect of this battle was Spanish. Cuban families continued to speak to their children in the language they had brought over from Cuba. Many also taught their children how to read and write it. For many young Cuban Americans, English became their “official” language and Spanish the intimate language of their deepest expressions. The frequent mixture of both became a testament to the unique Cuban American identity of a new generation.

⁷⁷ EXILIO, 1967.199-237

⁷⁸ Perez, 1999, 502

- **The political and economic achievements of Cubans in exile as proof of their nobility, of the possibilities for growth of Cubans under rule of law and freedom, and as a negation of both the discourse of negative cubanidad and the Castroite attacks.**

Tensions developed in the community as the years passed and the Castro regime continued to survive. Those who continued dedicated to the struggle looked down morally on those who were dedicating themselves exclusively to building their new lives in the US. However, as the success of Cuban-Americans in different fields in the US began to show, the pride in achievement of the Cuban exiles became a powerful weapon in the war of liberation.

The prosperous had not forgotten the agenda of national liberation, or the unstated commitment to those who had continued the struggle at great personal sacrifice through the turbulent 70's. The image of triumphant exile Cubans became a testament not only to the falsity of the Castroite Black Legend about exiles (they were all scum, they'd beg to return, they would not progress in the US) but a rebuttal of the traditional discourse of negative cubanidad which had its roots in the autonomista and anexionista thought.

Why? Because exiles believed that they had doubly proven, first in the lost republic and then once again in exile, what Cubans could achieve within a framework of freedom, democracy and rule of law. Cubans were hard working, disciplined, law abiding. Secondly, although latter day autonomistas and anexionistas argued that this had taken place precisely within the framework of a foreign power, namely the United States, the exiles felt they had succeeded in the United States due to a great degree on the

unwritten laws of solidarity and collaboration of the social networks that made up the invisible republic to which they belonged.

- **The influence of Cuban exiles on US policy toward Cuba as the achievement of independence through republican, democratic, free market means. The paradigm of dependence inverted, self-empowerment of the community and the invisible republic it sought to embody.**

Two new types of Cuban nationalism emerged from January 1st, 1959. Both responded in their own way, from their own social, political and economic perspectives to two great challenges of Cuban nationhood: American intervention and the insidious internal effect of the discourse of negative cubanidad.

The first, Castroism, embraced a statist conception of the nation and it became so embroiled in its statism that it reneged on the principles of independence and national sovereignty that it once supposedly embodied. However, it did consolidate a state independent of US influence or intervention. It countered the discourse of negative cubanidad with a permanent affirmation of the collective might: be it with its triumphant armies in Africa or with its proclamation of collectivist achievements at home.

The permanent economic crisis of the Castroite model belied that a fundamental component of the Cuban identity had been neglected: the individual. The centralization of the economy, the overwhelming limitations on personal freedom, the lack of public space for the discussion of options and alternatives, eroded the basis of what had once been one of Latin America's most prosperous economies.

Even the massive Soviet subsidy to the Cuban economy could not stop its permanent rationing and shortages, the decay of the cities and essential services, the diminishing crop yield, and the unyielding, desperate exodus.

The exiles embodied the second variant of Cuban nationalism. One that conceived of the state as the result of the actions of individuals and the institutions they created. These individuals seemed to be able to accomplish abroad what they could not or would not under Castro.

These exiles would fail in the military struggle against Castro. But with their network of institutions and organizations they would consolidate a political base that would make them influential and even key decision-makers when it came to US policy towards Cuba. Preserving their identity, the exiles would come to insert themselves in such a way in the American body politic that they would come to be determinant within its policies towards Cuba.

The advent of the Cuban American National Foundation under the leadership of Jorge Mas Canosa would mean many things. It would signal the completion of the cycle of the republican passion play by the exile community: from defeat in the burning sands of Girón to the hallways of influence in Washington D.C., from powerless victims of executive decision-making to key political players within the process. Independence could be achieved, CANF would suggest, not in confrontation with US capitalism, but from within it.

“In many ways, Jorge Mas Canosa was the depository of the traditional Cuban republican leadership, which passed from Prío, to Tony de Varona⁷⁹, to him.”⁸⁰ Exile nationalism now meant not waiting for the Americans, but rather taking a proactive role within the US system to activate US policy on behalf of the exile cause. It also marked the passing of leadership in the exile community from the 1930’s generation which had created the second republic wounded by Batista and abolished by Castro to a generation of leaders who had participated very little, due to their age, in public affairs in Cuba, but who had instead risen to positions of leadership within the context and milieu of the exile communities.⁸¹

This generational change also signified an ideological change: from the Roosevelt New Deal-influenced social democratic consensus of the 1930s generation to the Reagan-influenced philosophies of open markets and smaller states with limited social intervention held by the leadership of the Cuban Liberal Union and the Cuban American National Foundation.⁸²

It marked a turning point in Cuban political history. Entrepreneurs and businessmen would no longer sit by and allow labor and political leaders, generals and revolutionaries to run the country. They would assume responsibility for the public space, for the republic itself. What’s more, Mas’ vision steered the exiles out of the labyrinth of conspiracy and armed struggle. Some decried Mas’ authoritarianism and the sectarian philosophy of the Cuban American National Foundation. They believed that the

⁷⁹ Founder of the 1930 Directorio and of the Autentico Party, he was also Prime Minister of Cuba under the Prío government and was a key leader of the Democratic Revolutionary Front and later the Cuban Revolutionary Council, which were to be the government-in-arms of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

⁸⁰ Interview with Gustavo Marín, Miami, February 12, 2004.

⁸¹ Interview with Pedro Roig, Miami 3/13/04

⁸² Ibid.

combination of money and power eroded the democratic nature of the republic Cubans aspired to. Nonetheless, Mas' leadership and decision-making took the exile community and its brand of nationalism to a new reality that could not be easily dismissed by neither Washington nor Havana.

Cuban exile nationalism

Castro had called on the Cuban people to be a Spartan people, a fighting people. He probably had no idea that his foes, *los gusanos*,⁸³ would also be affected by his words. The bourgeois, apathetic Cuba had died. The long civil war of resistance to Castroism had ended militarily by 1970. But its legacy continued.

Militant Catholicism had been exotic to Cuban politics before 1959. However, the defiant shouts of “¡Viva Cristo Rey!” called out by the members of the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (DRE) and other Catholic youth organizations as they faced the firing squad, the deaths of the Brigade 2506 combatants abandoned at the beach head by President Kennedy, the harrowing stories of how many of the *brigadistas* had starved to death on rafts escaping from the beach or asphyxiated as they were herded by the Castroite troops into meat trucks with no ventilation, burned a deep scar into exiled middle and upper class Cubans.

The tenacious endurance of the guerrillas in the Escambray mountains and other areas, the heroism of those who returned and attempted to reignite the uprisings and failed, losing their lives in the process, left a deep imprint in the many thousands of rural or semi-rural families that either stayed in Cuba or left the country.

⁸³ In the early 1960s, Castro labeled his foes and all exiles in general as ‘los gusanos,’ or the worms, meaning that they crawled on their bellies seeking the favor of their American masters.

Moreover, the men who'd died shouting ¡*Viva Cristo Rey!* or the ones who had perished in the peasant uprisings, regardless of class or regional distinctions, became the martyrs for a whole generation of Cubans either forced to leave their country or raised in exile. Likewise, the living martyrdom of the Plantados, those political prisoners who refused to undergo 'political reeducation' at the hands of the Castro government in order to have their prison terms reduced, became the constant conscience of an exile community that progressed materially in the 1970s and 80s. Their lives and example were transmitted first by the social institutions reorganized in the exile communities and then by the powerful radio stations that progressively became the voices of the exiled community.

From the bourgeois Cuba of the 1950s emerged a "fighting Cuba," similar, perhaps, to the "fighting Jew" that Jabotinsky⁸⁴ had envisioned. On the surface the ornaments seemed the same as those of the Hispanicized and Americanized middle-class culture of the 1950s. Deep below the surface profound changes had taken place. For the first time, since the wars of independence, thousands of Cubans had a family member who had been executed, imprisoned or otherwise negatively affected by a regime. This fact, and separation from their native land, immersion in a foreign culture, as well as the very real awareness that again and again they had been collectively victimized by decisions made seemingly distant centers of power, for example at the Bay of Pigs or during the Missile Crisis, bound the exiles together into tight nuclei.

For the first time in Cuban history liberal nationalism had intertwined itself with religious undertones and a profound distrust of centers of power, whether it be Moscow

⁸⁴ Vladimir Jabotinsky, Polish-born Zionist leader who believed that the establishment of the Jewish state could be achieved only through the creation of an armed force.

or Washington. This combination of elements made itself more glaring, more instantly visible, in the militant movements that came to the fore of the community in the 1970s. The highly-respected *Abdala* youth movement, the *Nacionalistas*, *Alpha 66*, the reorganized *Autenticos* and others, voiced to one degree or another, the idea that Cubans only had themselves which sufficed to wage a successful war of liberation for Cuba.

A new slogan appeared at this time in exile meetings and publications: ‘We must do it ourselves!’ ‘No more waiting for the Americans!’ recalled exile activist Julio Estorino of this period. This became evident in the language of exile manifestos and programs. The traditional *Autenticos* proclaimed, “with or without this or any similar aid, or even without any foreign cooperation at all, the *autenticos* will never desist from the effort to liberate Cuba.”⁸⁵ The *Abdala* youth movement stated that: “In absence of free elections, the Cuban people, well acquainted with the sacrifice, pain and destruction caused by war, will be obligated to responsibly seek this alternative whenever and wherever it is deemed just and necessary. The war born of the suffering slave will be worthy of the untiring struggle of the sons of Cuba, be it faced by the Castroite oppressor, by the Soviet Union, by the United States, by those among us who are timid, vain, servile or apostates...”⁸⁶

The forerunners of this view were probably the radical *Nacionalistas*, who had stated in 1970 that: “The Cuban people are obligated by what is right and ethical to take whatever measures are necessary, be they conventional or not, according to the necessities of the patriotic struggle. The Cuban people are alone, absolutely alone, in the

⁸⁵ Partido Revolucionario Cubano (*Autenticos*). *Doctrina y Programa. Beligerancia de Cuba*. Editorial AIP. Miami. circa 1968-70.

⁸⁶ Agrupación *Abdala*. *Ante la Coexistencia*. Instituto de Capacitación y Estudios Cubanos. *Abdala*. ICECA. Circa 1970-2.

struggle against an evil power that attempts to destroy it after having taken away its homeland.”⁸⁷

Recalling this period Ramón Saúl Sánchez, a former militant youth leader and now an active advocate of nonviolence, stated that: “We as a community felt bound by nostalgia and misunderstood by the world. We turned to each other and hoped to find our strength in that.”⁸⁸

The violence that some of these organizations unleashed did not have the support of the community. However their exhortations to action, their insistence on struggle no matter how impossible the odds may have seemed, their constant reminder that Cubans could only trust Cubans when it came to matters of liberating the homeland, did not go unheeded. A community of individuals that was trying to rebuild their lives and reestablish their living standards listened and continued working.

The main foes of the militant organizations of the 1970s were coexistence and assimilation. Castro’s hold on power was too secure and consolidated. However, accepting a Caribbean détente and coexisting with Castro’s Cuba, meant accepting Castro’s definition of cubanidad and his version of history, ultimately conceding that he had indeed triumphed, that Cuban history had led to him.

Assimilation, or integration into the American body politic was the flip side of the coin. If Cuban exiles ceased to be Cuban then they would be what Castro had accused them of being: latter-day annexationists,⁸⁹ Yankee lackeys, and pseudo-Cubans. The path seemed at best, difficult. To persevere in a hopeless struggle. To succeed without fully integrating. To retain hope in a return that everyday seemed more distant.

⁸⁷ *Manifiesto Nacionalista. Programa del Movimiento Nacionalista Cubano*. Exilio. 1970.

⁸⁸ Interview with Ramon Saúl Sánchez, Miami, Florida., Dec.27,2003.

⁸⁹ Term which refers to those Cubans who had sought Cuba’s annexation to the United States.

The most trying of time for the Cuban community turned out to be the 1970s. During the previous decade, the multiple efforts to unseat Castro had failed. Resentment at what was perceived as an American betrayal was strong. As Enrique Encinosa noted in *Cuba en Guerra*, his history of exile efforts to overthrow the regime:

By the late sixties, the exile community was exhausted. Many movements had disappeared slowly. It was a sad situation, in which the collective exhaustion of the combatants prevailed. There was no financial backing from the Americans with which to buy military equipment and speedboats. There was no money with which to sustain a minimal fighting force. Many exiles – Manolo Guillot, Plinio Prieto, Rogelio Gonzalez Corso and others – had died during infiltration missions into Cuba. Others, bitter at the changes in American policy, had abandoned the process. Others still, emotionally distraught after years of clandestine missions, could not continue. The few, the stubborn, kept active, organizing and dividing themselves in endless conspiracies against the Regime.⁹⁰

Reporter Mary Wilkinson wrote in an article in the Miami News entitled “Cuban Rebels Lose Zest for Cause,” that:

Hard times have hit the militant Cuban exile groups here. Where silent commandos once stockpiled recoilless cannon, automatic rifles and bags of explosive plastic, today phones ring unheard in empty offices. Some stand vacant of furniture with only a forgotten map of the island pinned to a scarred wall. There's little money and a lot of apathy among the activists who dreamed of liberating the island by hit-and-run raids. Of all the multi-splintered action groups that once kept Miami police hopping on arms raids, there remains only a handful clinging to plans for the future. These plans are still secret - but probably small. ‘It's the same old story, no money,’ said a disillusioned young member of one group. ‘Fewer and fewer people come to the meetings and you can't raise a dime anywhere. ‘Anyway, what good are the raids? Where have they gotten us?’

The 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, which granted Cubans in the U.S. a permanent legal status was further evidence that the exiles were here to stay. This was a bitter pill for many militants. Jose Basulto, a Brigade 2506 veteran who either led or participated in

⁹⁰ Encinosa, 1994, 227

many commando or infiltration missions into Cuba with the CIA and independently of it, explained:

The 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev Agreement mortgaged Cuba's freedom. The 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act was the first payment on that mortgage. Cubans were not allowed to fight for their freedom, so they were allowed to come and stay in the US. Since they wouldn't let us fight for Cuba's freedom, they gave us a sedative. A few could be free if we got to the US and stayed there.⁹¹

Left-wing ideologies and movement were on the rise around the world and U.S. losses in Vietnam had made many question the feasibility of an anti-Communist struggle against Fidel Castro. As the U.S. moved towards detente with the Soviet Union, voices began to be heard in the exile community that called for coexistence with the Castro regime. They argued the following:

The exile community was shaken to its very core. El Diálogo, as the talks became known, was not simply between Castro and leftist fringe groups, like the maceítos. Castro, of course, had insisted on their attendance as well as that of members of the group that published *Areíto*, a New York City-based magazine that was openly pro-Castro. Also involved in the talks were stalwarts of the exile community such as Benes himself and Orlando Padrón, owner of Padron Cigars. Their talks with Castro violated a principle held sacred by a large majority of Cubans in America: No communication with the dictator who had forced them to leave their homes.⁹²

Some young exiled Cubans who embraced Castroism at this time by participating in pro-Castro magazines such as *Areíto* or in the Antonio Maceo Brigade did so as a result of their cultural integration with the American left. Having an anti-Castro position within this milieu became untenable. On the other hand, the more militant second generation movements, such as *Abdala*, represented a rejection of assimilation by this second generation and an embrace of traditional Cuban civic nationalism.

⁹¹ Interview with Jose Basulto, Miami, February 14, 2004.

⁹² Anton and Hernandez, 2002, 195-96

It is the principal conclusion of this study that it was at this time that the specific dynamics of the exile nationalist ideology gave definite shape to the Cuban exile community. The pillars of this exile nationalist identity centered on a new self-perception of the exiles: they were not just a diaspora, but also a community of struggle. This was further reinforced, paradoxically, by the arrival, thanks to the Dialogue,⁹³ of thousands of former political prisoners who constituted an important sub-community among the exiles, and who contributed with their experiences drawn from the Cuban prisons, to an increased intransigence of the exile consensus.

Distanced from Cuba, cut off from its daily events, accosted by its former allies, experiencing divisions as to the issue of coexistence with Castro, the community now had to redefine itself not as simply an agglomeration of Cubans away from their homeland. It redefined itself as a nucleus of Cubans struggling to return to that home. What made one an exile was not geographical displacement, but rather partaking of a shared struggle to regain a lost homeland.

Vital to the community at this point in time was to both gain proximity to the centers of American power and at the same time to preserve sufficient distance so as to be independent and continue insisting on the total removal of Castro from power no matter what the fluctuations in US policy could attempt to dictate. Nostalgia and solidarity was key for a community striving to preserve its identity and to continue an apparently hopeless struggle. However, they had to become functional expression of the dynamic of political action in order to be effective. The mechanisms that accompanied the discourse

⁹³ The Dialogue refers to a series of meetings and negotiations that took place between members of the Cuban exile community and the Cuban government in the late 1970s which resulted in among other things, the release of thousands of political prisoners and the permission granted by the Cuban government so that exiles could visit Cuba again.

of Cuban exile were: the preservation of the social organization of the pre-Castro past, with the strongest being the 'Municipalities in Exile,' popular mobilizations, youth movements, armed struggle (even if only symbolic) and underground activity and the radio stations.

In the functioning of these mechanisms lay the dynamics for the existence of the exile community as such.

Social organizations

Social organization of the Cuban community was based on Cuba-centered themes, structured around pre-1959 associations, such as the *municipios*, which consisted of an organized network of neighborhood associations based on Cuba's traditional municipalities. They kept the community from becoming a disarrayed mass subject to assimilation by the U.S. mainstream. Most importantly, these social circles, which came together for mutual help, for festivities and for purely social activities provided an organized backbone for the community that made possible the diffusion and coordination of anti-Castro activities. The *Municipios* themselves became small laboratories for democracy and exile nationalism. The annual elections of both municipal leaders and representatives to the national organization of municipalities became a microcosm of what the exercise of democratic sovereignty could be like in a future democratic Cuba.

Like few other institutions, the internal life of the *Municipios* mirrored the tensions of Cuban exile nationalism: the tug of war between the exile and the US agenda, between assimilation and cultural resistance, between the political mores of republican Cuba and the ideological evolution sparked by the emergence of a new strain of nationalism in its exile communities.

“The Municipios embodied the mainstream of the Cuban exile community in the United States. It was neither hard-core assimilationist nor radically nationalist and revolutionary: its members sought to both survive and prosper in the United States and also liberate Cuba. The Municipios became the place where we attempted to both preserve our cultural and historic roots and contribute to the island’s democratization,” said Julio Estorino, who served as president of the Municipios and participated in the important reform of the organization that took place in the 1970s.⁹⁴

The local municipios emerged in the 1960s out of the “spiritual necessity” Cubans in exile had to be with people from their families and hometowns. They were places of social solidarity, which were effective for both nostalgia and survival in a foreign land. Their national organization however, was dominated to a great degree by the political class from 1930s Cuba that centralized decision-making and was disconnected from the internal life of the municipalities.⁹⁵

Led by Santiago Blanco, a veteran of the Autentico Party who had worked as a pharmaceutical representative in Cuba before arriving in the United States in the late 60s, the reform movement in the Municipios placed power in the national organization back in the hands of the local municipio organizations, decentralized and renovated the national leadership, established different activities and programs such as an annual fair to both improve fund raising for the organization and attract Cuban American youth, and in the process became the backbone of exile efforts at political unity such as the Cuban Patriotic Council.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Interview with Julio Estorino, Miami, 6/30/04.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Blanco was a true institution-builder. A tireless worker, he was a man of vision and conviction who shunned the limelight. “He could work for hours on end for the Municipios and Cuba, which in the process greatly affected his family life,” said Estorino of Blanco. Unlike other politicians and activists, Blanco never made political differences personal and would strive to reconcile with those who could oppose his views.

In many ways, the reform movement within the municipios in exile was a harbinger of the emergence of the civic movement within the island: locally based citizen initiatives weary of the radicalism that had so often prevailed in Cuban political culture in the 20th century who sought to preserve a national association which was truly democratic in its decision-making. Working class Cubans in exile felt perhaps more represented by these institutions where they exercised effective participation and responsibility than by the myriad of political organizations, which claimed to represent them.

If modern nationalism consists of the transference of the concept of sovereignty from the monarch to the people, and if the term “people” was to be understood as consisting of self-determined associations through which people exercised self-determination that transformed them into a modern nation, then the objective of the exile nation was to demonstrate that although cut off from the national territory, its exercise of associational democracy, among other factors, made it sovereign.

The exercise of spiritual sovereignty be it through associational democracy, through popular mobilizations, or through underground activity was a key element of Cuban exile nationalism. It signified that the conceptual and complex zone of self-determination, which validates modern nationhood, had not been appropriated by Castroism or dominated by the US. As long as Cubans, no matter where they lived,

established an area of social intimacy among themselves where they were self-determined, Cuban sovereignty still held sway, and a piece of Cuban nationhood remained unabated by Communism.

Popular mobilizations

Perhaps the most visible projection of the exercise of sovereignty by the exile community were the huge demonstrations organized throughout its history. The mass rallies seemed to express the principles of self-determination and of collective agglomeration by a sector of the Cuban population willing to reconstitute itself and persevere in the establishment of a civic Cuban national identity.

Popular demonstrations were of two types: those which resulted from the initiatives and organization of exile leaders seeking to show the world and the community itself that the freely determined portion of the Cuban people backed them and their specific platforms, and those which emanated upwards from the community, catching even the anti-Castro leadership by surprise and through which the community as such either affirmed or defended its basic principles.

Among the most noteworthy of the mass rallies organized by the exile leadership were the December 1962 rally where the recently released Brigade 2506 leadership handed President John F. Kennedy the Brigade's battle flag. In turn, the President vowed that the flag would one day be raised over a free Havana. Other important events were the 40,000-person rally where business leader José Elías de la Torriente announced his ill-fated secret plan to liberate Cuba, the 1978 March of Dignity, where thousands of exiles marched against coexistence with the Castro regime and the 1996 Orange Bowl rally

where thousands of exiles mourned the murdered pilots and passengers of the downed Brothers to the Rescue aircraft.⁹⁷

Far more significant in terms of the influence on exile ideology were the spontaneous mass protests that erupted at specific, precise times in the history of the Cuban nation in exile. They always seemed to take the established exile leadership by surprise, and they would always serve, among other things, to keep alive the identity of Cubans in the United States as exiles.

These events took place at key moments in time. In 1967 Miami Cubans carried out a generalized strike demanding the release of jailed militant leader Felipe Rivero. In 1980, as thousands of Cubans took to the streets of Miami in solidarity with the 10,000 Cubans who had sought asylum in the Peruvian Embassy. The following year civil disturbances took place across Miami in protest over the deportation of a stowaway refugee to Cuba. Perhaps the most recent were the wave of civil disobedience that swept the city as a result of the Clinton Administration's secret immigration pact with the Castro regime, and the popular protests in 2000 over the deportation of Elian Gonzalez.

What these events had in common was their spontaneity, the massive popular participation, and the great number of youth who became involved in them. The unifying principle tended to be solidarity with distressed fellow Cubans and, in almost all the circumstances, the issues revolved around immigration: who stayed in Cuba, or who became part of the invisible Cuban republic. There was also another unifying factor: the clash between US policy towards Cuba and the priorities of the exile agenda. In many

⁹⁷ On February 24, 1996, two aircraft belonging to the humanitarian organization Brother to the Rescue were shot down over international air space by the Cuban air force. The four young Cuban Americans aboard were killed. The shoot down took place as within Cuba the State Security forces rounded up dissidents who had been trying to organize a meeting of all the opposition organizations.

ways, each of the demonstrations marked the coming of age of a new generation of exile activists.

“There has always been a tension between our identity as exiles that are part of an oppressed nation and becoming one more ethnic group that spoke, thought, and acted like the American system wanted it to,” said Gustavo Marin, who led the powerful Abdala movement in the 1970s and 80s.⁹⁸

The spontaneous mass protests of 1967, 1980, 1981, 1994 and 2000 seemed to embody a dramatic and passionate telluric social reaction of the exile community against the progressive, creeping assimilation of everyday lives into the U.S. mainstream.

The question becomes whether this social reaction was a projection of the exiled communities as a whole, or of certain specific social, racial and economic groups within the community. Particularly in the New Jersey Cuban exile communities the popular mobilizations, or protests, were the one place where Cubans could gather as a whole, to themselves and in community, within a social environment in which other ethnic groups also developed their identities. There were no powerful radio stations to call for the rallies, so the process of mobilizing people took place through the organizations, the small newspapers, or periodiquitos, and informal word-of-mouth networks that stretched throughout the shops, factories and schools in which the community congregated.⁹⁹

The existence of radio and television stations which catered specifically to the Cuban population was of immense help to the mobilization efforts of the Cuban exile community in Miami.

⁹⁸ Interview with Gustavo Marin, Miami, February 12, 2004.

⁹⁹ Interview with Mario Fernandez, a business leader of the Cuban exile community in New Jersey, New Jersey 12/20/04.

Opinions vary, however, as to whether these mobilizations truly included a cross-section of the community and not just a specific part of it. “I don’t think that any exile organization tried to segregate black Cubans. For example, the Municipios always had black Cubans in prominent positions of leadership, including the presidency, as well as Brigade 2506,” said community leader Julio Estorino.¹⁰⁰ “The only statue erected for a Cuban exile freedom fighter in Miami is that of Tony Izquierdo, a black Cuban who was a founding member of Brigade 2506 and died while fighting the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. One of the few exile leaders who managed to unite the different organizations under a single umbrella was another black Cuban and Brigade 2506 founder, Tomas Cruz.”

The integration of black Cubans into the life of el exilio in many ways mirrored what had happened in republican Cuba. There were prominent black leaders in different organizations, such as the Municipios, Brigade 2506, the associations of former political prisoners and the labor unions, but the mass of black Cuban exiles as such seemed distant from the political life of the community, although probably not from its cultural life.”¹⁰¹

The protests

In 1967 federal immigration authorities detained radical anti-Castro nationalist leader Felipe Rivero and threatened to deport him. Rivero, the founder of the militant Cuban Nationalist Movement, was a scion of one of the island’s wealthiest families and a veteran of the Bay of Pigs invasion who had acquitted himself very well in a televised interrogation session while a prisoner in Cuba with Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez in 1961. Once released along with other Bay of Pigs veterans, Rivero led his

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview with Julio Estorino, 6/30/04.

¹⁰¹ Personal interview with exile leader Jose Basulto, 2/14/2004.

Cuban Nationalist Movement on a worldwide campaign of terrorism against Cuban government targets. The U.S. federal authorities arrested Rivero in order to stop his efforts, which they had denominated “Guerra por los Caminos del Mundo,” or “War Around the World.” Rivero went on a hunger strike to protest his imprisonment.

The exile community reacted with a general strike that shut down Cuban Miami. Thousands of school children were not sent to school that day, and throughout the city workers either walked off their jobs or didn’t show up for work. The strike, coming from a community that had gained a reputation for being hard working and law abiding, surprised the authorities as well as many non-Cuban residents of Miami. For the exiles it was a powerful statement that they would not be swayed from the primary task of liberating Cuba.¹⁰²

Rivero eventually negotiated a settlement with the FBI, but the strike itself proved to be symptomatic of other exile protests to come. The strike perhaps had a little known precedent: Cubans recruited for the US Army after the Bay of Pigs invasion for an apparent second invasion attempt of Cuba would protest in their barracks upon discovering that the plan had been discarded by the Kennedy administration. (Bohning, 2005, 197)

Thousands of Cubans were recruited for the US Army for what was understood to be a second invasion of Cuba. Mario Fernandez, who was a young recruit in the Cuban Units, recalled:

“When we got to Fort Jackson in October 1962 I remember a sergeant telling me that we ‘smelled like Hungarians,’ in reference to the Hungarians who had been trained by the US Army after the 1956 uprising against Soviet rule in their country but were

¹⁰² “Exile Offices Bombed as Exiles Walk Off Jobs,” *The Miami News*, May 23, 1967.

ultimately never sent back to fight. We were later transferred to Fort Knox. The missile crisis took place and it became obvious that the Kennedy Administration had discarded plans for a second invasion of Cuba. There was widespread discontent among the members of the Cuban Units, as we were called. This resulted in a strike that broke out. What provoked it was an incident between two brothers who were part of the unit and a Puerto Rican sergeant. We refused to come out of the barracks and others turned back the food at the cafeteria. The MPs showed up in riot gear. The Cuban officers negotiated with their American superiors and a physical confrontation was avoided. Later on we were told by the Americans that it was the first time in the history of the US Army that anything like that had taken place.”¹⁰³

“I remember the strike being mostly about the quality of the food and the tensions between the Cubans and some NCOs, but the breeding ground for the discontent was the Kennedy Administration’s decision not to invade Cuba after the Missile Crisis,” said noted author Carlos Alberto Montaner, another veteran of the Cuban Units.¹⁰⁴

In 1980, thousands of Cubans sought political asylum in the Peruvian Embassy in Havana. Immediately, an event similar to the Felipe Rivero strike took place in different exile communities across the United States. As thousands of Cubans filled the Peruvian Embassy in Havana attempting to flee from the Castro regime, thousands of exile literally took to the streets of Miami with demonstrations and caravans of honking cars. Young men dressed in camouflaged fatigues filled the streets of the city. Exiles marched in solidarity with those held within the Peruvian Embassy. The protestors wanted not just the resolution of the refugee crisis in Havana, but the liberation of Cuba as well.

¹⁰³ Interview with Mario Fernandez, New Jersey, 12/20/04.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Carlos Alberto Montaner, Miami, 12/22/04.

Days of patriotic enthusiasm filled Miami as exiles went on hunger strikes, marched and publicly demonstrated calling for the end to the Castro regime. Youth led and incorporated themselves into the protests, surprising an older, established leadership, which had almost given up on the new generation of exiles. The Anglo leadership of Miami came to the realization of how tenuous its hold on the Cuban population was.

The anti-Castro protests were transformed into the gigantic Mariel boatlift when Castro announced that Cubans could pick up their family members and a then Castro sympathizer, Napoleon Vilaboa, began to organize the first flotillas of boats headed to the island. The halcyon days of the Mariel exodus would follow, and Miami would never be the same.

Until 1980, the self-image of Cuban exiles had been a happy mix: they were not only U.S. allies in the global anticommunist struggle, but also a “model” minority. With Mariel, this positive image faded quickly; Cuban-Americans now found themselves classed with the most downtrodden and discriminated against minorities. Like other ethnic groups before them, the exiles responded to strong outside prejudice by undergoing a process of reactive formation: they worked to redefine the situation in terms more favorable to their own self-image and their role in the community. In this alternative perspective, the exile community itself represented the solution to Miami's problems and the builder of its future. Instead of subduing the Cubans, the hegemonic discourse of the *Herald* and its allies transformed the exile community into a self-conscious ethnic group, one that effectively organized and mobilized an impressive array of resources for local political competition. The exiles responded by laying claim to the city.¹⁰⁵

This transformation of the exiles into a ‘self-conscious ethnic group,’ had great consequences for the exile community. It ushered forth the emergence of the Cuban American National Foundation. It also helped bring together the disparate elements of the community’s leadership those who sought to integrate into mainstream America and the

¹⁰⁵www.asje.org/mg.html

traditional exile organizations that would have none of this and continued to insist on the liberation of Cuba as their priority.

The Cuban government observed the process with apprehension, noting that powerful entrepreneurial forces within the community were being organized for the first time.

The Miami counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie was barely organized politically in the early 1980s. Situated in the enclave's center of economic power, it had distanced itself from the traditional counterrevolutionary groups and had yet to find a space within the limited domestic political efforts carried out by a few Cuban American Democratic politicians. The creation of CANF filled the void and rapidly strengthened this group. Their connections with the conservative sectors were weaker than those of the conservative intellectuals and Cuban American Republican politicians. However, they were better suited to control the rest of the community and mobilize the necessary resources to carry out the plan of the US conservative movement. This won them the leadership of the Cuban American neo-conservative movement and eventually absolute supremacy over the foundation in the person of Jorge Mas Canosa (Arboleya, 2000, 228).

The depth and breadth of the passionate solidarity among Cubans was not to be misunderstood. A political and cultural crisis still raged at the center of their existence as a community. Although Cuban American were intent on demonstrating that they were law-abiding, hard working citizens, and they railed against films such as Brian De Palma's 1983 *Scarface*, which cast them as drug dealers and criminals, rebellion against backroom dealings between the US government and the Castro regime became the ever-present emotional duty.

In 1981 there were scores of arrests of Cuban protesters as civil disturbances swept the city of Miami when refugee stowaway Andrés Hernández was deported back to Cuba. The exiles would not accept this treatment of a Cuban who had arrived on US

shores seeking political asylum. Such was the sentiment that a generation later would propel thousands of younger Cubans, the grandchildren of the first wave of Cuban exiles, to take to the streets to protest the INS raid on the Miami home of Lazar Gonzalez that took Elián back to his father.

Similarly, in 1994, in the wake of the August 5th demonstrations against the Castro regime in Havana and the rafter exodus that ensued, thousands of mostly young Cubans who had arrived from the island at different periods took to the streets to carry out systematic civil disobedience to protest the Clinton Administration's secret immigration deal with the Cuban government. Scores of activists and demonstrators were arrested and the Clinton Administration guaranteed that the Cubans already being held in Guantánamo would be allowed to come to the United States.

Events such as the ones described above, but on a lower scale, took place often in the South Florida and New Jersey communities in the decades after 1959. The spontaneous popular demonstrations were part of a pattern: small groups of exiles who refused to integrate into the mainstream would continue carrying out small symbolic armed or public actions to keep the cause alive. The bulk of the exile community, struggling on to survive and get ahead economically would watch, perhaps sympathize, but not get involved. The action groups or movements would become eventually exhausted and their activities would diminish.

But then some incident, some event, would trigger a spontaneous public outpouring of support or solidarity by the otherwise non-participant exile community. A new generation of activists would become involved, efforts would be renewed with new vitality and the exile nation would resurrect out of the ashes of frustration and defeat. In

the mean time, between bursts of underground activity and popular protests, the social organizations of the community worked to preserve their identity and goals.

By having collective expressions of solidarity with fellow Cubans, either persecuted activists or refugees trying to reach freedom, the community seemed to be saying that they still belonged to the same nation as their countrymen in the island, and that this nation was divided by political, and only secondarily by economic reasons

The popular demonstrations had a more profound effect on the individual Cuban himself. By participating in demonstrations he felt part not just of a greater community of Cubans in Diaspora, but also manifested principles of Cuban nationhood. The demonstrations became a sort of communion by the participant with the transcendent nature of Cuba's struggle for freedom. "The names of martyrs were called out: the crowd would respond with shouts of 'Presente!' Their voices soared as they sang the Cuban national anthem. It was as if you were one with Cuba," recalled veteran exile journalist Roberto Rodriguez-Tejera of these events.¹⁰⁶

"The importance of the demonstrations was that we let the world know what was going on in Cuba. By participating, people felt more Cuban. For the duration of the demonstration they broke away from the absorption of the American mainstream and reaffirmed their identity," recalled Ramón Saúl Sánchez, whose participation and leadership of such marches would eventually result in the organization of the protest flotillas in front of Cuba's shores.¹⁰⁷

Although these popular outbursts kept the cause of a free Cuba alive, they also demonstrated how passionately it still resided in the social intimacy of the Cuban

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Roberto Rodriguez-Tejera, Miami, February 12, 2004

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Ramon Saul Sanchez, Miami, Dec. 27,2003.

community. Some have argued that the demonstrations came to be controlled from the distance by Castro himself, who knew that by activating mass immigration he could cause a crisis for any US administration not just outside its shores but also within its cities. Indeed, the demonstrations proved in the long run to be an admittedly reactive roadblock to attempts at the normalizing of relations between the governments of Cuba and the US. They projected the impression that the Cuban exile community, although law abiding, could be unpredictable, “that US culture had not totally colonized Cuban sentiments.”¹⁰⁸

This sovereignty of Cuban passion, which inspired the spontaneous demonstrations, also served as catapults for the immersion of youth in the anti-Castro efforts. “The demonstrations were organized as a way to mobilize an otherwise passive community and to stimulate participation in our efforts,” recalled Gustavo Marin, founder of the Abdala youth movement.¹⁰⁹ Exiles had lost Cuba and had little control over political affairs affecting it, but they would not surrender ownership over the expression of their sentiments for their own country.

The youth movements

Central to the mechanics of exile nationalism without a nation-state was the rise of youth movements. The notion of youth as the testament of public faith in the present and future of the Republic was fundamental to Martí’s notion of civic nationhood. As Castroism claimed to embody the inevitability of Cuba’s future, the existence of younger generations that would affirm their national identity signified not just that the exiles had succeeded in preserving their Cuban identity, but that the future was still up for grabs in

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Gustavo Marin, Miami, February 12, 2004

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

the contest between the different strains of Cuban nationalism. A tradition of youth movements developed within the exile community and became a source of renewal and empowerment for the community.

Founded inside Cuba in 1960, the Student Revolutionary Directorate, known by its Spanish acronym DRE, sought to embody the spiritual continuation of the student Revolutionary Directorates that had fought against Machado and Batista. Originally a part of the larger Movement for Revolutionary Recuperation, in the early 1960s the DRE came to have organized cells in almost all of Cuba's educational institutions.¹¹⁰ Its members injected the anti-Castro cause with a tremendous example of personal sacrifice and selfless devotion. Many of them were executed by firing squads or served dozens of years in Castro's prisons. They were also exponents of a militant strain of Catholicism exotic until then to Cuba's political culture.¹¹¹ Supported by the CIA in its beginnings, the Directorio became one of the most combative and popular of the anti-Castro organizations, particularly in exile. Its August 25, 1962 raid on the Rosita Hornedo hotel in Havana, done without CIA approval, also came to signify for later generations a declaration of independence by exiles from American tutelage.

Often known in the North American press as the Cuban Student Directorate, the DRE was, in the words of one CIA analyst, 'perhaps the most militant and deeply motivated' of all the Cuban exile organizations seeking to oust Castro after the Cuban revolution of 1959. According to a CIA study in October in 1962, the DRE had the largest following of any individual exile group.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Encinosa, 1994, 32

¹¹¹ Montaner, Informe Secreto sobre la Revolución Cubana

¹¹² *History of the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil*, Jefferson Morley, Washington Post Cuban Information Archives.

The DRE's example, its martyred members, its actions, and its militant Catholicism were of great influence on the exile ideology and on later generational movements. The DRE was of particular influence on the founding of another youth movement: Abdala. Many DRE members became role models and advisors to a younger generation wishing to engage in the efforts to oust Castro.¹¹³ Named after the title of an early play by Jose Marti, the Abdala youth movement sought to renovate Cuba's historic ideology of civic nationalism and social justice.

The founding of Abdala in the early 1970s coincided with both the exhaustion of the first wave of resistance organizations as well as the arrival of a new wave of refugees who had been radicalized by having lived more years under Communism than the early arrivals. (Encinosa, 1994, 242) Originating in the exile communities in New Jersey and New York, Abdala's members went through a period of immersion in Cuban history and culture, guided by the nationalist intellectuals of the pre-Castro republic, such as Calixto Masó and Humberto Piñera.¹¹⁴ These same intellectuals were part of the construction of a 'nationalist teleology,' that would influence both the development of republican and Castroite nationalism. (Rojas, Op.Cit) As Abdala's founder and leader Gustavo Marín commented many years later:

We believed that in the synthesis of Cuban history Castro had gone the wrong way and the exile leadership had also been mistaken. The exile leadership had shifted too far to the right. The close ties of exile leaders with dictators such as Somoza had hurt the ideology of our cause. We wanted to call the exile community back to the historic revolutionary principles of Cuba and then link ourselves with our generational counterparts in Cuba in order to bring about a true national revolution.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Interview with Gustavo Marín, Miami, February 12, 2004

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

Abdala organizes chapters in almost all the exile communities. This position was diametrically opposed to that of those young Cuban immigrants organized in groups like the Antonio Maceo Brigade and Areito magazine, who sought to reconcile and embrace Castro's brand of revolutionary Communist nationalism.

Its insistence on a social democratic ideology, its emphasis on kindling the struggle inside Cuba through short-wave radio transmissions, its fierce nationalism, its pioneering use of lobbying in the US Congress and contacts with international youth organizations, and, its early emphasis on human rights and support of peaceful dissent inside the island, made it a forerunner of the path the anti-Castro struggle would take in the late 80s and 90s.

While Abdala dissolved in the mid 80s due to intense rifts within the organization, new generational movements emerged in the exile communities in the late 80s and early 90s. Whereas the DRE and Abdala were eminently political, emerging as they did from the values and experience of the pre-Castro Cuba, the generational movements that emerged in the late 80s were eminently cultural, and had their more immediate roots in the social experience of living in revolutionary Cuba. One such example was the Casa de la Cultura Cubana, which was founded and led by young intellectuals who had arrived in Miami through the Mariel boatlift. Together with exiles of their same generation who had grown up in the United States, they sought to rescue those cultural values that could unite Cubans, in exile and in the island, beyond the political defeats and frustrations of the exile efforts and Castro's exclusive ideological definition of Cuban national culture. Culture, not politics, would provide the basis for a revival of Cuban nationalism in the community. Other youth groups that followed in the same vein were the Venezuela-based

Fraternity of Free Cuban Youth, the Miami-based Free Cuban Youth and the Free Cuba Foundation and the Federation of Cuban Students at Florida International University.

In a 1990 Congress of Free Cuban Youth from around the world, this new generation founded a more political organization: the Cuban Democratic Revolutionary Directorate, which sought to continue the tradition of the Directorates in Cuban emphasizing support for the civic movement in the island, international solidarity, and active nonviolence.

Each generational movement within the exile community defined and shaped its lasting character. Each youth movement also seemed to take up on where the previous one had left off, in some way contributing to the general direction of the journey of the exile Diaspora. Each took its turn in erecting itself as a beacon reminding exiles not to forget their mandate to return home and not simply become another ethnic community within the American mainstream.

A major difference developed over between the youth groups and the traditional exile leadership over how to deal with the United States

A generational division developed within the Front. My very personal opinion is that the three younger members believed less in the Americans than the three veterans; although this may appear to be superficially contradictory, it was profoundly true. The three veterans had experienced first-hand the powerful American influence on Cuba's public life. We, like the rest of Latin America, gave greater importance to the influence of the people on political life.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Former FRD leader Ricardo Sardiñas, in Rasco, 2000, 36

This observation would greatly describe the generational differences with regard to the U.S. in the community. Whereas the older leadership had always been on the receiving end of American power, the younger exiles had grown within the system and would become increasingly adept at working within it.

Armed struggle and underground activity

Whereas public demonstrations and the youth movements served as living statements of the vitality of Cuban civic nationalism, the armed struggle and underground activity, even on symbolic terms, were ultimately statements of self-determination, of an intimate duty that free Cubans had to fulfill with their national identity even in the throes of defeat. The armed struggle and the underground activity that made it possible bound the community in a concentric circle looking inwards, preserving its identity and purpose free from penetration and domination by both the Castro foe and the US authorities.

The perpetuation of armed struggle in spite of a changing U.S. policy or Castro's continuous victories meant that the exile cause was still alive. The fact that small groups of exiles could still carry out limited paramilitary operations implied that exile Cuban efforts were independent and self-directed, that a clandestine sovereignty existed which could not be penetrated or controlled by the intelligence services of either Castro or the Americans.

The relationship is always a fitful one between the militant groups and the U.S. government, as described by Enrique Baloyra, a onetime member of the exile Student Directorate. "There is," he said, "a certain psychology involved in all this business, a psychology shared by groups like Alpha 66, and, later on, Omega 7.

The basic assumption these people make is that you cannot trust the Yankees, so you have to operate in the shadows and totally disconnect yourselves from any

American agency. Their philosophy was: ‘We were not going to follow what you tell us to do. What is sensible for you is not necessarily sensible for us.’ ” (Bohning, 2005, 154.)

The symbolism of these actions was more important to the community’s ideology of Cuban nationalism than their military effectiveness. The failed 1964 bazooka attack by the Cuban Nationalist Movement on the United Nations while Che Guevara spoke within the building best represented the intent of these efforts. Their purpose was not just to harass the Cuban government, but also to clearly display the vitality of the exile cause and its independence from US policies, and moreover, to bind the Cuban exile community together in a permanent, sovereign conspiracy to unseat Castro no matter how much time passed or what happened in terms of international politics.

Reports from US federal authorities certainly confirmed this. An October 1993 report from the Federal Bureau of Investigation on the underground terrorist organization Omega 7 concluded that:

Review of the available information on Omega 7 suggests that the organization was able to successfully conduct anti-Castro terrorist attacks over an eight-year period because: it was a small, tightly knit group of dedicated anti-Castro fanatics, most of whom were unknown to law enforcement authorities; and, it received financial support and some cooperation, at a minimum, silent approval which could be construed as tacit approval, from some elements of the Cuban exile community in the United States.¹¹⁷

The world of the Cuban exile anti-Castro underground would prove to be as baffling and impenetrable for the US intelligence services as for their counterparts in the Cuban government. “Although the CuIS (Cuban Interests Section) were and continued to successfully penetrate most of the anti-Castro groups, they never penetrated Omega 7.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ U.S. Department of Justice Report on Omega 7, October 29, 1993. Cuban Information Archives website

¹¹⁸ Ibid

This contributed to the charisma and prestige of these organizations, such as the Cuban Nationalist Movement, which were seen by the community as “the most radical and the least penetrated” by Castro’s intelligence services.¹¹⁹ Federal authorities in the United States complained of the tacit, silent attitude of noncooperation by the community that shielded this sort of activity.

While Omega 7 was active, a significant portion of the Cuban exile community viewed the attacks against Cuban officials and Castro supporters in the United States as a continuation of the patriotic fight against communism. Omega 7 members considered themselves liberators of the Cuban people and vowed to continue their fight until Cuba was free of Castro and communism. Elements within the exile community provided Omega 7 with support by contributing money for operations or merely denying knowledge of Omega 7 activities. The support usually came about either out of sympathy or fear of reprisal. For instance, individuals who were believed to be in contact with Omega 7 members would often intentionally supply misleading or incorrect information when interviewed by the FBI. Even when confronted with documentation such as surveillance logs and photographs placing them in contact with Omega 7 suspects, the individuals being interviewed would disclaim association. This type of support provided Omega 7 with a secure base of operation, which was difficult for law enforcement personnel to penetrate.¹²⁰

The Cuban government came to recognize that the continued armed efforts against it by the exiles did not simply stem from the actions of isolated groups, but from the result of complex socio-economic dynamics at the heart of the exile identity. In the book The Cuban Counter-revolution, by Cuban academic and former diplomat Jesus Arboleya, a description of the supposed social base of the militant sectors of the exile communities is made.

A Cuban-American sociologist, who would not give her name to a U.S. publication in 1980 for fear of reprisals, told of the results of her research into these groups: ‘Most of them,’ she explained, ‘came from the lower

¹¹⁹ Interview with Ileana Fuentes, Miami, Dec. 30, 2003.

¹²⁰ U.S. Department of Justice Report on Omega 7, October 29, 1993. Cuban Information Archives website

middle class in the old Cuba. Through the Revolution, peasants and the working class victimized them. In the United States they feel victimized by the upper classes and a political culture which places a great premium on being white...Their world here is an alien and disconcerting place which confers on them little or no power and social status...These men and women are easy prey for the movements and intelligence agencies in a society slowly, but systematically, moving politically to the right and in the process of socioeconomic disintegration...They are today's and tomorrow's bomb-throwers, Watergate plumbers, mercenaries, and most important today's and tomorrow's reactionary electorate.¹²¹

Although the efforts at armed struggle carried out by different groups during the late 60s, 70s and 80s, particularly the terrorist campaigns, certainly did keep alive, at least for many in the community, the idea of an independent, sustained war against Castro, it also damaged the perception of Cuban exiles and their cause. The maiming of respected exile journalist Emilio Milian with a car bomb and the downing of a Cubana de Aviacion airplane after taking off from the island of Barbados were two terrorist actions in the 1970s, which disillusioned exiles with armed struggle.

“The killings and bombings discredited the anti-Castro cause in the eyes of the American public, as exiles were seen more as extremists. It wasn't until the 1980s that Cuban-American organizations turned to politics American-style. Then they would gain greater influence at the highest political circle in Washington.”¹²²

For Frank Carlson, who along with Elena Mederos became one of the first Cuban exile human rights activists, and who pioneered the Cuban American lobby in Washington D.C., anti-Castro violence after the Bay of Pigs was always highly suspect. “I believe armed organizations have always been deeply penetrated by either Castroite or U.S. intelligence services,” explained Carlson, “All the terrorist campaigns of the 1970s

¹²¹ Arboleya, 2000, 172

¹²² Anton and Hernandez, 2002, 198

did was generate positive propaganda for the Castro regime and satisfy some exiles with the illusion that ‘something was being done.’ That’s not enough. I believe armed activity is the monopoly of the Castro regime. When we venture into this arena we are easily controlled and defeated while providing the Regime with justifications for its repression. How successful have exile armed operations really been? Has anyone managed to assassinate Castro? Or any of his ministers? Or any of the heads of the repressive apparatus? Why? Why is it that for 46 years armed actions have only generated justifications for the Castro regime and a ‘feel-good satisfaction’ for some exiles? Because that struggle has often been manipulated and controlled by intelligence services, particularly Castro’s. Many, many good Cubans, too many in fact, have lost their lives in these heroic but failed efforts.”¹²³

Beyond its symbolism, the violence would demonstrate that the expression of Cuban civic nationalism needed a profound transformation of its methodology in order to be truly effective. “For me violence was always an instrument, not an ends to itself,” explained Basulto. “My morality was not defined by armed struggle. There came a point when I realized that we would never be able to unleash the amount of violence needed to overthrow Castro without becoming monsters ourselves. Through nonviolence we could achieve our ends without getting lost in the cycle of violence.” In his youth, Basulto led commando raids into the island. His decision to give up violence and employ other methods in the struggle against Castro came about because of his profound disillusionment with the mechanisms of armed struggle.¹²⁴ Active nonviolence emanating

¹²³ Interview with Frank Calzon, Washington D.C., 3/18/05

¹²⁴ Interview with Jose Basulto, Miami, 2/14/04

from the exile community would come to befuddle the Cuban and US authorities as much as the armed struggle had.

The insistence by exile leaders on the concept of ‘unidad.’

If the exile community viewed itself as a nation without a state, it held hope for the consolidation of a state without the homeland in the unity of its diverse political organizations. This functional unity of the diverse groups would prove to be elusive if not impossible. In 1961 with the Cuban Revolutionary Council, 1965 with RECE, in 1969 with the Torriente Plan, in 1980 with the Cuban Patriotic Council and in 1990 with Unidad Cubana, the exile community attempted to bring about a coalition of exile organizations that could become the political representation of the stateless and exiled civil society. Most often these efforts failed whenever one or two of the main groups integrating the coalition dropped out shortly after they were founded. The coalitions themselves then became organizations.

However, the insistence on unity in the discourse of Cuban exiles resulted in the attainment of something more enduring than the political coalitions: a powerful moral consensus at the heart of the community whose common denominator was complete rejection of Castroism and anything appearing to have anything to do with it. The combination of all these factors: social organizations, youth movements, popular demonstrations, armed struggle and the insistence on unidad certainly kept the political priorities of the community centered on the liberation of Cuba, they also created an often suffocating environment in Miami for those who had different ideas or innovative ways of looking at Cuba’s problems.

Others commented that the mechanism of Cuban exile nationalism fed negatively upon itself in a vicious cycle. It made the community's leadership and actions static and predictable, its lack of unified leadership often conditioned by an unchanging consensus that could be neither redefined nor actualized precisely because there was no unified political leadership with the legitimacy and power to do this. The historical challenge of preserving a Cuban national identity in exile and persevering in at the very least symbolic efforts to overthrow Castro seemed to be just the most the community could do. Proceeding to the next stage would prove more difficult.

Those arriving in Miami from Cuba in the early 1980s confronted a community distanced from the reality of Communist Cuba and incapable of adapting its liberation strategies to the island's changing social environment. In order to survive away from home, Cuban exile nationalism had become as collectivist as its civic roots would allow. For many, Miami proved to be intellectually and socially repressive. The mechanisms of nationalist dynamics in the community proved to be an alienating experience for many, especially those who had lived through the programmed menu of daily life under Castroism. Persecuted Cuban writer Reinaldo Arenas a staunch foe of the Castro regime, who arrived in Miami in 1980, wrote that:

I didn't want to remain for too long in that place, which was like a caricature of Cuba; of the worst part of Cuba; the back and forth, the petty intrigues, the envy. I couldn't stand even the environment of a place that had none of the island's beauty, it was like a ghost version of the Island; a sandy, infested peninsula trying to become the dream a million exiles had of having a tropical island bathed by the sea and breeze.¹²⁵

Many prominent exile Cuban intellectuals lived a life detached from the daily mechanisms of the exile community. For them exile was an individual experience. The

¹²⁵ Arenas, 1992, 313

invisible republic set up by the exile community made a mockery of what they had lost. They felt that the lack of attention to culture and intellectual life displayed by the community in the 60s and 70s forced of a banishment of sorts. Intellectuals, such as Lydia Cabrera, Enrique Labrador Ruiz, Carlos Montenegro and Gaston Baquero, some of Cuba's greatest writers, preferred to live in exile within an exile.¹²⁶ Other intellectuals however, did seek to forge a space within the exile community, and insisted on presenting their alternative views even in light of intolerance. Painter Siro del Castillo had been a teenage member of the DRE and had suffered political imprisonment. Upon arriving in exile in Miami in 1973, he found an exile community "disconnected from Cuban reality," where "there was intolerance against anything but the most extremist positions." For Castillo, this intolerance wasn't ideological, but rather "visceral and emotional." For him the 1970's were trying times, "because it was very easy to manipulate people towards violence."¹²⁷

However, this did not prevent him from actively engaging in the life of the exiled civil society. "Exile activity in culture, sports and politics was very vibrant and there were many spaces to both work within and create new alternatives." Together with other intellectuals he founded magazines, produced plays, organized community protests, and became one of the pioneers of the human rights movement in exile, even though he was occasionally branded a 'Castro agent,' by some radical publications.

"None of us are above intolerance," he would say in an interview many years later. "We have all been intolerant at one point in time or another. The extremist and intolerant regime which took power in Cuba has made people extremist and intolerant,

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Interview with Siro del Castillo, Miami, 1/4/05

even in the opposition. It is an aspect of our political culture that we are overcoming. Miami has made great strides in this direction.”

However, Castillo would also comment that this intolerance wasn't limited to the exiles, but also to those who desired that the community embraces an agenda of cultural integration into the US mainstream. “All of a sudden, in the 1970s it became a sin to be an anti-Castro fighter. The only respectable thing was to be a community leader who did not get involved in Cuban liberation efforts. The Anglo establishment would select the leadership of the Cuban community.” This would cause a counter reaction in the community where new organizations and individuals emerged, and where the business sector of the community became increasingly politicized and empowered.

It was no coincidence then, that the more original and innovative movements in the exile community such as Abdala would become increasingly powerful in areas like New Jersey and New York. “There we were more exposed to a cosmopolitan air,” said Marin, “and forced to interact with what was really going on in the world and not in the world of our own that we had created in Miami.”¹²⁸

Radio stations

The fundamental pillar of this ‘world of our own we had created in Miami,’ were the Spanish language radio stations. Starting in the mid-60s radio stations in Miami began catering to the Spanish language public. At first, some of these stations would devote blocks of time to Spanish-language programming. Eventually, however, their programming would become all-Spanish and focused on Cuban issues.

“The first was WMIE, which was first known as the Voice of Freedom, and then as Radio Continental. The station started off with some afternoon and night programs in

¹²⁸ Interview with Gustavo Marin, Miami, 2/12/04

Spanish until it became a powerful station with all-Spanish broadcasting that could be heard in Cuba.”¹²⁹ Other stations followed suit, and by the 1970s Miami had a booming Spanish language radio market.

In the 1960s Spanish-language radio programming consisted of news programs on Cuba. By the 1970s the all-Spanish language radio stations had transformed their programming into mostly entertainment, with its main theme being nostalgia for Cuba in the 1940s and 50s. The radio stations stayed away from political programs, specially after the 1976 Emilio Milian bombing, when one of Miami’s best known Cuban radio commentators lost his legs to a bomb that had been placed under his car and went off when he started it. The motive of the bombing was apparently Milian’s criticism of exile terrorism. “After the Milian bombing fear spread among the radio stations. Owners wanted to stay away from Cuban politics and gave little access to anti-Castro militants,” recalled veteran radio journalist Roberto Rodriguez-Tejera of this time period.¹³⁰

This changed again in the late 1970s when Miami businessman Ramon Lopez bought WOCN radio and imbued it with deeply politicized programming. Debate over the Dialogue between the Cuban community and the Castro regime was featured in its programs and anti-Castro militants had full access to the station to express their views.

“The anti-Castro revolutionary organizations basically took over WOCN radio during the height of the Dialogue-Peru Embassy-Mariel crisis,” said Rodriguez-Tejera of this time period. Armando Perez Roura, a well-known radio commentator in republican Cuba, established an opinionated news format where his commentaries against the Dialogue and in favor of a hard line position against the Castro regime became very

¹²⁹ EXILIO, 1967, 299

¹³⁰ Interview with Roberto Rodriguez-Tejera, Miami, 12/22/04

popular. “Armando established the tone for Miami radio: nostalgia for the Cuba of the 40s and 50s, mixed with opinionated news casts and commentaries espousing the hard line against the Castro Regime.¹³¹

At first the newly politicized radio stations were under the influence of the militants. However, by the mid-1980s it was the radio stations that were setting the exile agenda. Jorge Mas Canosa managed to establish a close relationship between the Cuban American National Foundation and the radio stations, although he and Perez Roura later had a falling out over efforts at uniting all of the anti-Castro organizations in the Unidad Cubana umbrella group.

However, the radio stations didn’t just offer news and political commentary: they became veritable community centers where charity events were coordinated and carried out, where the poor, the elderly and the sick went for help, and where regular radio marathons helped raise money to fight cancer, to aid disaster victims in Latin America, to help newly arrived refugees, and eventually to support diverse anti-Communist causes. They became one of the key places where the Cuban exile community expressed its solidarity with itself and reinforced its notion of constituting an invisible republic.

The ideology of Cuban exile nationalism at this point in time finds its most important venue in the radio stations. This ideology was greatly shaped with the events having to do with the Mariel exodus: the Cuban community, consisting of those who had left the island in the 60s and 70s, found itself facing a dramatic, almost overwhelming exodus of individuals who came via the Mariel boatlift. These individuals yearned for personal freedom, but were closer culturally to Revolutionary Cuba than to the pre-Castro brand of nationalism the exiles had historically espoused. “The radio stations and the

¹³¹ Ibid.

community's historic organizations found themselves defending the values and traditions of pre-Castro Cuba and rejecting everything and anything having to do with the Revolution," explained Rodriguez-Tejera, "And this was crucial not just for preserving the dream of Cuban liberation, but also for preserving the status quo in Miami where exiles from the 60s and 70s held sway. Within this ideological construct, not only was the Cuba of the 40s and 50s the Golden Age, but the exiles who had arrived in the 1960s and 70s and the former political prisoners who came later its guardians."¹³²

This rejection of all things having to do with the Revolution would also come to affect even the view the exiles had of those who, within Cuba, had struggled against the regime. The reemergence in Cuba of an organized public resistance to the regime would soon both puncture the Miami bubble and challenge the exile ideologues and activists with the reality of a changing Cuba. How would the exile community react to the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a dissident movement inside Cuba?

The 1990s

By the early 1990s the exiles had come a long way from the apocalyptic 70s. During the 1980s exile political influence in the United States and at certain international levels had increased together with the community's economic power and the voting patterns of those becoming U.S. citizens. The massive visits by exiles to Cuba in the late 70s as a result of the family reunification authorized by the Cuban government as a result of its dialogue with members of the exile community, and the later Mariel exodus, had both refreshed connections with Cuba and indicated that Castro was not as stable as he portrayed. As Castro's permanent economic crisis worsened, the exiles' felt empowered.

¹³²Ibid.

With internal opposition fledging. Exile leaders reaffirmed the idea that change lay in the hands of *el exilio*.

Three strategic manifestations became evident.¹³³ There were what could be labeled as the **constructionists**, led by Jorge Mas Canosa and the Cuban American National Foundation, who sought to build a whole network of institutions and influence that would create a structure capable of leading the Cuban state as soon as the Castro regime collapsed upon itself. It relied on diplomatic, political and economic means as the way through which to consolidate a power base capable of launching the reconstruction of Cuba.

The growth of the Cuban American lobby took place precisely at the time that the American political system was opening up more to special interest groups.

As the US government has become larger and more open, groups that petition it –lobbyists– have become Washington’s greatest growth industry. As with all the other changes relating to this topic, the expansion of lobbying began in the 1960s and has continued ever since. In the mid-1950s there were 5,000 registered lobbyists in Washington; they doubled by 1970, then doubled again by 1990 (Zacarias, p.173).

[...] “Congress, the most responsive branch of government, was among the first to change. Considered-with reason- too closed and hierarchical, beginning in 1970, it transformed the way it did business, moving power out of the hands of the leadership into the entire body of members. It opened itself up to greater scrutiny and made itself more accountable in various ways. It changed the laws governing campaign contributions. In sum, it democratized itself and the American political system.”¹³⁴

The great historical merit of Jorge Mas Canosa was, that from the point of view of the exile mind-set, he’d dealt a deathblow to the discourse of negative cubanidad. Being an exiled Cuban now became synonymous with power and influence, with being in the inside track and not marginalized.

¹³³ These were similar perhaps, to the divisions existing within the Zionist movement at one point in time.

¹³⁴ Zacarias, 2003, 170

Involvement in US politics was a double-edged sword for the exile community. On the one hand, the cause often became prey to electoral politics. On the other, elected officials from the community were bound by the exile consensus. As a result, Cuba policy could not move from what was accepted. What Castro's intelligence analysts could not understand was that although CANF became the most prestigious and respected of the exile organizations, it was still one among others. And no organization, no matter how powerful, could completely dominate the complex mechanism of popular mobilization, youth movements, armed struggle and underground activity, radio stations and calls for 'unidad,' which forged and maintained the exile consensus.

There were also the **peacemakers**, or negotiators, who led by the Madrid-based Carlos Alberto Montaner and the Cuban Democratic Platform (a coalition of three political parties founded in 1990), sought to engage Castroism in a negotiation process that would culminate with a peaceful transition in the island. They sought to rely on international support and on the strength of the 'invisible majority' of moderates in the exile community to achieve this.

And there were the old *beligerantes*, or belligerents, who aided by Miami's powerful radio stations, and in particular Armando Perez Roura's *Radio Mambí*, kept alive the hope of an armed struggle as the means through which to accomplish the overthrow of the Castro regime.

All three, in one way or another, both counted upon and underestimated the role of the internal opposition in the island. Their strategies were focused on solutions coming into Cuba from the outside and, at most, all saw the emerging dissident movement as complementary, rather than central, to the transition in the island.

On August 5, 1994, Havana erupted. Thousands of Cubans took to the streets in spontaneous demonstrations against the Castro regime. Incensed by the deaths of several dozen men, women and children as a result of the sinking of a tugboat in which they sought to flee to the United States by the Cuban Coast Guard, and outraged by the general state of socio-economic conditions in the island, the habaneros took temporary control of some of the streets away from the government for the first time in 35 years of Revolution.

However, the protests fizzled away within days into a rafter exodus. The predominant strategies of the exile groups went into crisis. The constructionists were not able to influence the United States government into a tougher stance against Castro that could have exacerbated the latter's internal crisis. The beligerantes saw the awaited insurrection but lacked the organization or the preparation needed to take advantage of it. As for the negotiators, they had relied on the latent specter of social discontent as a complement to their strategy. They suggested that it was more prudent for the Cuban government to negotiate than to face civil strife. Now the regime persevered without facing civil strife or negotiating.

Inside Cuba, the existing established internal opposition, viewing itself as a component of an international, nonviolent campaign to achieve change in Cuba was not ready psychologically or strategically, to lead popular demonstrations. August 5th signaled that new, dynamic strategies had to be undertaken by the Cuban pro-democracy forces to achieve change. The exiles could not assume that time was on their side. These groups increasingly linked up with a new dissident leadership inside the island, which actively sought civil disobedience and nonviolent civic action to bring about change. A

newly emerging generation of dissident leaders within the island began to organize a nationwide meeting of all the Cuban opposition, which they named Concilio Cubano, or Cuban Council.

On February 24, 1996 the Castro regime reacted. Internally, it crushed the proposed meeting of Concilio Cubano by arresting dozens of dissidents. Concilio Cubano was an attempt at creating a broad-ranging coalition of opposition organizations. In order to deviate attention from this and to stem the increasing exile efforts at direct nonviolent action, the Castro regime mercilessly shot down two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft over international waters, killing all four young Cuban Americans aboard them. One airplane, flown by Jose Basulto, managed to survive and return to Miami.

A new type of leadership and of organizations came to the forefront during this period. This “fourth wave” of pro-democracy organizations¹³⁵ was not overtly political but rather civil or humanitarian in their focus. Groups such as the Democracy Movement, Brothers to the Rescue, Mothers Against Repression, Agenda Cuba, Alliance of Young Cubans, Bridge of Young Cuban Professionals, and the Directorio believed in change through a combination of civil disobedience, international pressures and direct nonviolent action. Peaceful flotillas into Cuban waters, symbolic flights to aid dissidents, leaflet drops over Havana, procurement of international solidarity for the dissident movement and imaginative protests in Miami and New York were the tools of this “fourth wave” of exile efforts.

¹³⁵ The first wave being the resistance and guerrilla movements of the 1960s, the second wave being the militant organizations of the 1970s, and the third wave the large, internationally recognized and influential movements of the 80s and early 90s, such as the Cuban American National Foundation, Independent and Democratic Cuba and later on, the Cuban Democratic Platform.

Indignation and grief swept the exile community. They expected a far stronger American response than actually came. A vacillating President Clinton signed the Helms-Burton Act, which he had earlier opposed. Many exiles saw this as a minor punishment against a violent and illegal action by the Castro government. Later, Jose Basulto's insistence, based on evidence he'd accumulated, that the American government could have prevented the shoot downs but did not act further incensed the community and strengthened the ideological underpinnings of the exile ideology.

On February 24th, 1996, on the anniversary of the Grito de Baire, which initiated Cuba's war of independence in 1895, a new generation of Cubans, three out of four of them born or raised outside the country, had shed their blood for the cause of Cuban liberation. The exiles had succeeded in transmitting their devotion to the cause of Cuban freedom to a new generation. However, that victory now faced the same obstacles as always: Castro's Machiavellian and ruthless ways, the uncertain and restrained American responses, and the perceived lack of an international outcry over the Castro regime's trepidations.

The consistent growth and gains of the dissident movement in Cuba, its increasing ability to challenge the Castro regime from within and through nonviolent means, and the growing response of the Cuban population to their efforts began to be noticed and backed by more and more exile organizations. Sadly enough, the years of accumulated frustration, the deeply held conviction that Castro controlled Cuba completely, the lingering distrust of the dissident movement because it often originated with former Communists, and the conviction that only el exilio was strong enough to propitiate true

change in the island, led the enormously influential exile radio stations to partially ignore and not fully report on the gains of the movement.

Elián

Then came Elián.

On Thanksgiving Day 1999 a pair of fishermen off the Florida coast found a barely conscious five-year old boy clinging to an inner tube. His name was Elián González, and he was one of three survivors of a harrowing trip across the Florida Straits by a group of Cuban refugees fleeing the island. His mother had died at sea, tying him to the inner tube and imploring other survivors to make sure the boy made it to freedom (Antón and Hernández, 257). His father's family cared for him in Miami, proclaiming that the boy would remain with them and not be sent back to Cuba.

Within days this triggered a furious battle over custody across the Florida Straits, with Castro insisting that the boy be returned to his father, Juan Miguel González, a government sympathizer who had remained in the island, and his Miami family and the exile community calling for the boy to have his day in court in order to determine custody. Elián's telegenic smile, the mass rallies organized by Castro to demand his return, the tug of war between Cuban Miami and the Clinton Administration turned the story into constant front-page international news. It culminated with the pre-dawn raid on the González home by Immigration and Naturalization Service agents who took the child back to his father in Washington D.C.

A poll conducted by Florida International University showed that up to 78.5% of Cuban Americans believed that Elián González should have stayed in the United States. About half of the Cuban sample were people who came to the United States from Cuba

before 1975. 14% (227) arrived in the years 1959-1964. Results for this group have a margin of error of +/- 7%. Other groups by years arrived in the US are: 278 in 1965-1974 (+/- 6%), 167 in 1975-1984 (+/- 8%), and 239 arrived after 1984 (+/- 6%). 150 respondents were born in the U.S. (+/- 8%). These margins of error are precise enough to make many of the differences in opinion between these groups statistically significant.¹³⁶

Few other events had as deeply and profoundly unified the undercurrents of the Cuban exile community as the Elián affair. Why did this case provoke such an overwhelming response by the different sectors that make up the Cuban exile community? The Elián González case triggered the key components of Cuban exile nationalism: an ideology born out of both the traditional continuum of Cuban nationalism and the experiences of the anti-Castro efforts over the years.

What were these key components?

- **The individual vs. the state** – For opponents of the Castro regime the struggle to unseat him has been an intensely personal one. For most it began with resistance to the dictates of totalitarian rule against individual decisions and desires. There is a common thread linking the rebellious political prisoners, the Escambray guerrillas and the rafters: the personal, tenacious struggle against insurmountable, deadly odds in order to gain personal integrity and freedom. Elián and his mother, with their innocence and perilous journey, symbolized what so many other exiles had experienced: the painful personal sacrifice of achieving individual freedom. This, above all, is the key component of exile ideology. To achieve personal freedom is the necessary condition from which to rebuild a national identity.

¹³⁶ FIU Cuba poll 2000, Cuban Research Institute, Institute for Public Opinion Research School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Center for Labor Research and Studies, Florida International University

- **The family against totalitarianism** – The fundamental unit of social identity for Cubans before 1959 was the family. The social network of interconnected loyalties moved up from the individual to the nuclear and extended family to the municipio, on to the province and then the country. Castro built a nationalism from the top down, where the primary unit of social identification was a metaphysical notion: “the Revolution” incarnate in two authority principles that were completely interconnected: the Leader and the State. For Castro’s opponents, safeguarding the family against the dictates of the State became the primary focus and objective. Lázaro González and his kin, in defying both Castro and the United States government and even their own family members, whether or not they were under the tutelage of the Regime, represented the quintessential notion of family resistance to totalitarianism for most exiles.
- **Intra-group solidarity** – The struggle of one individual against the state, and the consequent battle of one family against totalitarianism, built up an instinctual solidarity between all these individuals and all these families. It was this solidarity with those “who made it over the Sea Wall” or were trying to make it, that forms one of the most powerful binding forces of the exile community. The results of the Bay of Pigs and the Escambray uprisings solidified Castro’s hold over every Cuban. If so, then the freedom of each and every Cuban meant that a little piece of Cuba could be liberated or protected from Castro. It was this deep seated conviction that has sent the Cuban American community out into the streets time and time again: in 1980, to protest on behalf of those seeking asylum in the Peruvian Embassy, in 1981 on behalf of Andrés Hernández who was deported to

Cuba, in 1994-95 in support of the rafters sent to Guantánamo and in 2000 for Elián.

- **Intransigence** – Exiles had learned that victory lay in persistence and that the key to persistence lay in intransigence: to not cede on fundamental issues, to insist on what was known to be right. Lazar Gonzalez’ refusal to hand the boy over to his nephew who did not act until instructed by the Cuban government, epitomized the exiles’ absolute reluctance to ‘hand over’ the cause of Cuban freedom.
- **The importance of all battles** – The essence of anti-Castroism has long been the reaction or rejection of all that is Castro. More than a rational response, it constitutes a profound, emotional reaction, at an individual level, to the excesses and abuses of a totalitarian state. To this must be added the fact that the anti-Castro leadership lacked a strategy or plan, able to establish priorities or calculate the importance of one battle over another. The strategy amounted to an urge to confront the State everywhere and at all times, no battle being too small or too big, no confrontation having priority over the other. The importance of all battles, no matter how big or how small, or how truly beneficial its outcome would be to the cause in the long run, has been one of the mainstays of the exile mentality throughout time. Elián was one such battle.
- **Public aims and objectives against secret dealings between Washington and Havana-** For exiles the whole Elián affair could be reduced to a battle over crystal clear principles: the boy’s right to “a day in court” where he could have a chance at growing up in freedom, against Castro’s insistence on his return to Cuba to grow up in a totalitarian state. This was representative of key components of

the exile ideology. Against the notion of a Cuban's inherent right to freedom, there stood secret machinations and conspiracies between Washington and Havana and other centers of power that had allowed Castro to stay in power while the rest of the world democratized. "I don't subscribe to conspiracy theories," said exile leader Ramón Saúl Sánchez, "but it is undeniable that powerful groups in the United States have, for many years, fostered an attitude of attempting to resolve Cuba's problems behind the backs of Cubans."¹³⁷ For exiles, Elián was about the inherent right to freedom against the secret machinations of power.

- **The symbolism of a new generation** – Ultimately, for both the Castro regime and exiles, the Elián González case was about the identity of a new generation of Cubans. For the exiles, it was about liberating one more Cuban child from the grasp of the Spartan fortress-state ideology where no parent has custody over his or her child and giving him a chance to live a "normal," "free" life according to the standard interpretation of those adjectives in the US and pre-1959 Cuba. For Castro it was about his Revolution, his conception of the Cuban State and Cuban history transcending into the next generation, it was about preserving the tight cocoon of collectivist socialist discipline that, in his view, had freed Cubans from US intervention and turned him and Cuba into world leaders. Additionally, he realized that the Elián affair was a convenient way to divide Cuban exiles from mainstream America, to isolate them in the hope of at last having U.S. economic sanctions on the regime lifted. For both sides the war had not ended when at the sands of Girón, or when the last Escambray rebel had been captured or killed in the 1960s, but it had gone on and on, until a new generation of Cubans either

¹³⁷ Interview with Ramón Saúl Sánchez, Miami, Dec. 27, 2003

accepted or defined the contradictory definitions of Cuban identity and nationhood they had inherited.

Impact

Cuban exile nationalism had been key in confronting and overcoming some of the most negative manifestations of Cuban political discourse. Certain deeds had seemingly disproved the contentions of the cubanidad negativa. With deeds it had sought to counter the trepidations of the response to *cubanidad negativa* that lay in Castro's Spartanism. It had defined the struggle against Castroism as a moral struggle, deeply imbedded in the country's historical and cultural development. Traditional exile nationalism produced a "fighting Cuban," while it did away with the apathetic economic elites and their penchant for anti-politics and a supra political state. However, it had itself been infected by Castroism's fixation with force and revolutionary conflict. Violence of word and deed consistently damaged the cause of a Free Cuba because it reinforced the Castroite paradigm of confrontation.

Only with the emergence of the human rights and dissident movement in the island with its steadfast commitment to nonviolence and its recognition of the valuable work of preserving the Cuban liberal republican identity that the exiles had achieved, could the door be opened for the development of a new, more democratic, less confrontational strain of Cuban nationalism. Did the Elián affair contribute to the development of this sort of thinking among Cubans in exile?

The Elián saga damaged the international and national image of the Cuban exile community. Perhaps it derailed the community from providing crucial support, at an important moment in time, to an internal dissident movement that by 1999 had for the

first time demonstrated the ability to disrupt the internal functioning of the Castro regime. But the battle for Elián González was driven by reasons so profound to the exile identity that the incomprehension of many outside the community did not matter.

Long before the Elián case many exiles had convinced themselves that the world simply would not understand. The logic born out of defeat in the Civil War and the militant rhetoric of the 70s was that exiles were alone in their struggle. The success of the CANF in the 80s had convinced many more that perhaps this was enough. But as in the past, the huge outcry and demonstrations of the exile community served for it to renew its convictions and confirm its identity and struggle.

With each confrontation, the new nationalist creed, centered on the individual Cuban and his family and suspicious of all centers of power and especially Washington, drew even closer together an already tightly knit community. From recently arrived balseros through militant leaders like Ramón Saúl Sánchez, to prominent leaders such as Jorge Mas Canosa's son, Jorge Mas Santos, or Silvia Iriondo, leader of the influential Mothers Against Repression movement, to the community's economic elite, Elián had bound the exile consensus ever more firmly together. And it drew them together not in conspiratorial circles or in inaccessible labyrinths of power, but in the public plaza, in the desperately needed "public space" that the area in front of Lazar Gonzalez' home had become.

This "public space" for the exiles, centered not on the memories of a lost battle or a lost war, but on the living reality and tremendous potential of a young Cuban child. For many, it epitomized the struggle for a new republic, for a cubanidad centered on a "public

space” and not the closed circle of Castroite Spartanism or the corrupt and corrupting cycle of negative cubanidad.

It also touched a new generation of Cuban Americans who found in Elián's struggle for personal freedom and the consequent solidarity of his fellow exiled Cubans a beacon calling them to the roots of their identity. A public space not about the Cuba that had been but could never be again, but about a new one, symbolized by Elián, that could perhaps emerge from the values of freedom and solidarity that the community had so tenaciously hung on to for over four decades.

As this new generation emerged in the wake of the Elián saga it sought out what to do. The old strategies seemed ineffectual. However, the continuing growth of the dissident movement inside the island, and the elaboration of a new Cuban political discourse based on human rights and nonviolence, coming from within the country itself, became more and more attractive. Cuban exile nationalism, born of the predominance in Cuban national territory of the Castroite strand of Communism, sought to preserve a core set of fundamental moral values that defined pre-Castro Cuba.

Chapter Seven – The Civic Movement in the island

No matter how ferocious the onslaught of a totalitarian state, history has demonstrated that civil society does manage to survive, although in greatly reduced numbers, sometimes in minimal cells. The independent spirit of the population, reflected in associations that express their genuine and legitimate beliefs and interests somehow manages to survive, no matter how great the odds. Such has been the case with Cuba.

Although Castro had by 1970 roundly defeated the internal opposition and completely dominated any armed uprising, there were small spaces within the fabric of society that could not be completely subordinated. In the political prisons, in the Catholic Church and other religious institutions, in the Masonic lodges, and even within the Communist Party, which still owed a good part of its structure to its pre-1959 existence as a lawful political party, there still remained latent nuclei of discontent could not be crushed or swallowed whole by the regime.

It was from these small islets of civil society adrift in a totalitarian sea that the civic movement for change would emerge, pushed on by the transformations taking place within Cuba itself as well as by new international realities. One such reality was the growth of the dissident movement in Eastern Europe during the 1980s as well as the increasing attention paid to human rights by the international community. Such attention was made manifest in the Helsinki Agreement¹³⁸ and in the Carter Administration's human rights policies.

¹³⁸ 1975 Helsinki Accords Thirty-five nations signed the Helsinki Accords (including the Soviet Union and its satellites) . The Accords recognized the borders of Europe as they had been at the end of the World War II, thus recognizing Soviet domination of the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). All nations, however, agreed to promote personal liberties in their own countries.

The Cuban Committee for Human Rights was the first of these embryonic institutions, its membership drawn from disgruntled former Communists and revolutionaries who had been punished for dissenting from the path undertaken by Castro and his inner circle. Ricardo Bofill and others who founded the Committee in the mid 1970s were at the same time inspired by the example of the dissident movement in Eastern Europe, which had begun to challenge the Soviet hold over their countries through peaceful means.

Bofill, who had belonged to the Socialist Youth when the insurrection [against Batista] triumphed, had been sentenced to 12 years in prison because of the micro-faction affair¹³⁹ He had a degree in History from the University of Havana and had taught briefly at the School of Journalism of the university. But he had been forced to work in a can factory due to his ideas. In 1980 he had once again been incarcerated because of his humanitarian activities. Freed two years later, the constant persecution had forced him to seek asylum in the French Embassy, where he later left after being promised that he would not be persecuted. However, in October 1983 he was once again incarcerated after meeting with two foreign journalists. (Hidalgo, 1994, 62)

Bofill united the political prisoners who had already begun to become active in human rights work.¹⁴⁰ The Cuban Committee for Human Rights made its appearance on the Cuban scene by smuggling out reports on the deplorable human rights conditions in the political prisons and with the population at large, through journalists and friendly embassies. The Committee's activities not just became a symbol of an internal opposition reawakening within the island, but it pierced through the nationalism of both Castro and his exile foes to reestablish a universal reference point for those opposed to the Regime:

¹³⁹ A group of pro-Soviet Cuban Communists whom Castro had incarcerated and accused of conspiring against his rule.

¹⁴⁰ Hidalgo, 1994, 62

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948.¹⁴¹

The Committee's chances for survival were very slim at its inception. Persecuted relentlessly by the Castro Regime, misunderstood by many in the exile community and little known internationally, Bofill, Elizardo Sanchez Santacruz and a small group of activists would repeatedly go in and out of prison as they attempted to persevere in the establishment of an independent institution in defense of human rights within the island.

A changing international situation favored the continued growth and spread of the human rights movement inside Cuba. As the Soviet Union began its contraction in the mid 80s, and as the international human rights campaign centered on Cuba, initiated and led by exiles such as Elena Mederos, Humberto Medrano, Frank Calzón and others as well as by former political prisoners such as Armando Valladares, began to have an effect, as the Castro Regime became increasingly worried about its international standing. It would begin to feel the political cost of repression at home like never before, especially as the Soviet subsidies began to dry up and the prospect of seeking greater foreign investment in the country became an urgent need.

In the mid 1980s, as the cases of human rights violations in Cuba began to be presented every year at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, the Castro regime suddenly found itself confronted by either condemnations or growing disapproval from institutions and personalities around the world on whose tacit, if not explicit approval it had previously counted. An actual delegation of the UN Human Rights Commission visited Cuba in 1988 providing the dissident community with an excellent opportunity with which to gain international credibility and legitimacy. Dozens

¹⁴¹ Hidalgo, 1994, 63-67

of dissidents presented their reports and testimonies presented before the Commission. Castro has never again allowed such a commission to visit the island.

The dissident movement grew proportionately as the collapse of the Soviet Union accelerated during the late 80s and the early 90s. Ricardo Bofill, the former professor of Marxism who had developed the Committee's early strategies during his numerous years as a political prisoner, took another important strategic initiative. He felt that it was time to confront the Castro Regime publicly by denouncing its consistent violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, thereby transcending the bipolar morality of the Cold War. Bofill also resisted attempts by activists who sought to concentrate all of the steadily growing dissident movement in the Cuban Committee for Human Rights.

Instead, he favored another strategy: Cubans should found and seek to associate with as many diverse civil society nuclei as they had the courage and intelligence to conceive. In this manner not only would a plural civil society begin to be reconstituted in Cuba, but the regime would also have to face multiple foci of social resistance and not just a single, consolidated unit that could be easily dismantled. Bofill left Cuba for exile, but he had planted the seed of a new type of dissidence inside the island. Most importantly, he had reconnected Cubans with a framework of universal reference that went beyond the clash of nationalisms between Havana and Miami. As the dissident movement began to grow inside the island, driven by the desire of its inhabitants for a better life, a new generation of Cubans began to discover the existence of a different Cuba through the transmissions of radio stations such as the U.S.-run Radio Marti and La

Voz del CID,¹⁴² as well as through their contacts with exile activists who sought to aid them in their efforts.

Many of the initial dissidents were former Marxists who did not seek a profound transformation of the Castroite system, but rather a democratization of socialism. The first exiles to establish a rapport with the dissidents were either those who had believed in the Dialogue and the lifting of the embargo as tools with which to bring about an opening in Cuba, but also those who identified themselves with the “Betrayed Revolution” (Revolucion Traicionada) current in exile politics.

These were men and women who had fought against the Batista Regime and actively participated in the insurreccional organizations, but who had disagreed with Castro’s totalitarian turn towards Communism. These individuals had struggled for social justice and democracy and had never felt comfortable in sharing their exiled condition with either supporters of the Batista Regime or the political leaders who had attempted to find a negotiated electoral solution to the political crisis sparked by Batista’s March 10, 1952 coup.

They felt close to the Cuban people in the island and their revolutionary experience, sharing as they did with the Castro Regime some common aspects of revolutionary mythology and teleology. Independent and Democratic Cuba (CID), led by Commander Huber Matos, who had spent 20 years in the island’s prisons for his early public critique of the Revolution’s turn towards Communism, was the largest of these organizations. Its short wave radio station, *La Voz del CID*, provided an important voice for the emerging dissident movement.

¹⁴² A short wave radio station that belonged to Independent and Democratic Cuba, an organization led by former revolutionary commander Huber Matos, who served 20 years in the Cuban prisons because of his early public admonitions about the Communist turn of the Revolution.

However, as the dissident movement grew, its contacts with the multiple institutions of the Cuban exile community also increased. The positive aspect of this contact was that it exposed the dissident movement in the island to a different type of cubanidad and Cubans in exile to the reality of the island. The negative aspect lay in the fact that as the dissident movement was initially the weaker half in the relationship with Cuban Miami.

Such was the case for the initial, Havana-based leadership group of the internal opposition. The Concertación Democrática and Coalición Democrática alliances were established, which in turn were linked to different exile factions. Only Oswaldo Paya's Christian Liberation Movement stayed out of the factionalism. The Cuban government took advantage of this to carry out a huge crackdown on the opposition between 1991-92, which resulted in dozens of arrests, trials and lengthy sentences. But the dissident movement, literally like the legendary phoenix, would rise over and over again from the ashes of persecution and repression. It would continue to grow. As repression became greater and greater in Havana, organizing work would continue in the provinces, where discontent was probably greater. However, in the provinces the activists did not have access to the sanctuary of an embassy or contact with foreign journalists.

Dissident organizers, like mathematics teacher Francisco Chaviano, were vital in expanding the movement to the provinces, but also persuaded members of Cuba's feared political police to begin collaborating with the dissidents. Chaviano, imprisoned since 1993 and still serving a 15-year sentence, laid the groundwork for the emergence of Concilio Cubano and a national presence for the civic movement.

Dynamic of Nonviolent Social Movements

Social scientist Gene Sharp has long studied the dynamics of nonviolent social movements. His work coincides with the experience of civic leaders in totalitarian countries, such as Vaclav Havel, in pointing out that these movements tend to go through two phases: the first, a symbolic stage where a tiny minority demonstrates to the population at large that the struggle is possible, and the second, a meaningful stage where the movements begins to actually erode the power of the regime from below and making change possible.

For theorists like Sharp, and for leaders such as Havel and Walesa, the social contract is not just a political metaphor, but also rather a precise description of social dynamics. Power is seen as generated bottom-up, from the conscious or subconscious consent granted by the governed to the ruler. If the consent is withdrawn nonviolently, through active civil disobedience, the regime will be toppled. This is, at least, the latent potential of the emerging dissident movement in Cuba.

Although the traditional exile leadership was conscious of this, it was highly skeptical, together with many of the prominent dissident leaders inside the island, of the ability of the dissidents to carry out this sort of movement, given the existing conditions of totalitarian repression. The exile leadership had seen the Castro regime put down the anti-Communist insurrection of the 60s and it was doubtful of the possibilities of a non-violent insurrection having a greater chance at success. Younger and more radical members of the dissident movement were making attempts at civil disobedience as far back as 1988. However, they were few and far between and quickly repressed by the Castro regime.

The August 5th, 1994 uprising in Havana, Concilio Cubano in 1996 and the Papal visit in 1998, together with the extensive national growth and reorganization that the civic movement in Cuba undertook after the 1996 crackdown, convinced many inside and outside the island that a bottom-up, grass roots movement was the way to go in order to achieve true democratic change in the island. This was specially evident to U.S. organizations like Brothers to the Rescue, the Democracy Movement, Center for a Free Cuba, the Cuban Democratic Directorate and the Cuba-based 30th of November Movement, which had actively advocated civic resistance within Cuba through different means.

By 1999 Castro faced the stirrings of an active nonviolent civic resistance movement at home. Under the leadership of a younger generation of leaders such as Dr. Oscar Elías Biscet and Maritza Lugo, the number of civic resistance actions dramatically increased as well as the international solidarity that went along with it. This became evident during the Summit of the IberoAmerican heads of state held in Havana that year. The visiting heads of state and foreign ministers met publicly with leaders of the democratic opposition, conferring upon them recognition and legitimacy. The dissidents also proved capable of staging successful street protests in spite of the harsh repression in the days prior to the conference.

In a series of speeches in November 1999 Castro warned the police, judges, military and ministry of the Interior personnel, not to underestimate the dissidents, because if the Revolution lost consensus and lost the streets, it would lose power. Many Cuba-watchers believed that Castro fabricated the Elián crisis in order to deviate attention from the growing challenge at home.

What did the emergence, for the first time in Cuban history, of a national civic nonviolent movement signify for the dialectic of Cuban nationalism?

Nationalist theory and nonviolent dynamics

Three classical definitions of nationhood dominate the modern debate on nationalism. Contending strains of nationalism in the Western world have in one way or another adopted one of these definitions to apply to their national existence. The process of selection of such a definition is historically complex and cannot be underestimated in its layering of historical, cultural and social phenomena.

Three classic statements [on nationhood] are those of Renan, Stalin, and Weber. They cover a wide spectrum. Ernest Renan rejects the statist concept of the nation in order to identify the nation as a form of morality. It is a solidarity sustained by a distinctive historical consciousness. The nation, he declares, is a daily plebiscite. Stalin's influential definitions, by contrast, contain a mix of objective and subjective elements. Differentiating nations from races and tribes on the one hand, and imperial states on the other, he argues that a nation comes into existence only when several elements have come together, especially economic life, language, and territory. Max Weber examines the nation as a 'prestige community,' endowed with a sense of cultural mission. Nations, he claims, are too various to be defined in terms of any one criterion, but he affiliates nations to ethnic communities as populations unified by a myth of common descent. What distinguishes the nation is commitment to a political project (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994, 15).

The prevailing definition of nationhood in Cuban history has been intrinsically linked to the liberal conception of sovereignty as defined in social contract theory. This predisposes it toward Renan's definition, given the elements of consent, limited government, and emphasis of the community over the state present in both social contract theory and Renan's definition. This is not coincidental since Renan himself was an influential French liberal theorist.

If the nation, like Renan wrote, is a daily plebiscite through which individuals consciously or subconsciously agree to share a common destiny through the fulfillment of the great collective task of national co-existence,¹⁴³ then the dynamics of nationalism must be intertwined with an expanded understanding of the social contract theory. The purpose of the nation is not simply to justify the existence of a state, as Stalin would argue, or the causal result of social processes, as proposed by Weber, but rather the sustained preservation of a specific type of human identity through the civic mechanisms of freedom and tolerance. Perhaps to a greater degree, these definitions could find their corollary in International Relations theory. Stalinism is realism, Weber is institutional liberalism and Renan constructivism.

This expanded understanding of social contract theory can be found in the theory of nonviolent political action, where the social contract is understood not just as a myth or a convention, but as a fitting metaphor for a political reality: the ultimate source of power lies in the community and the ruler cannot ultimately rule without its consent.

For nonviolent theorists propose that if the purpose of the social contract is to expand freedom by both establishing and limiting government, as Locke stated, and furthermore, if it is local government and associational democracy which check the centralizing tendencies of majoritarian rule, preserving freedom in the face of democratic excess, as Tocqueville wrote, then the existence of the social contract can be understood not as a convention, but as the existing mechanism through which man protects the intimate networks that shape and define his social personality. Freedom, as defined by the

¹⁴³ Renan's exact quote is: "A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which are really only one, go to make up this soul or spiritual principle. One of these things lies in the past, the other in the present. The one is possession in common of a rich heritage of memories; and the other is actual agreement, the desire to live together, and the will to continue to make the most of the joint inheritance." (Dahbour and Ishay, 1999, 153.)

classical tradition, is man's ability to impose his rationality over his passions, to favor choice over need by asserting his political and civil rights over both the atomization of an individualistic existence and the oppression of harsh collectivist rule.

What makes man social is precisely that he can influence the collective self of which he is part and is not merely conditioned by its existence. Rationality, binding men together in social existence, signifies that man's potential for moral action, for acting in a manner respectful of the other, which embodies his own humanity, is not foreign to him, but natural. This natural potential to construct his own moral order, signifies that although the moral forces which progressively define and improve the human condition can be oppressed or distorted for a time, they cannot be eliminated.

The ultimate aim of totalitarianism is the subjection of a natural moral order through the diminishment of morality as the instrumentality of power. It has clashed over and over again with man's aptitude to act according to his conscience even under the worst conditions.

Man's power over his moral choices, a sort of spiritual sovereignty which precedes all other sovereignties, is first exercised at the social level in his treatment of those he lives with and his choice of whom he will associate with. Again, although these ties may be distorted for a time by the exercise of centralizing totalitarian power, the inherent rationality of man reimposes its primary associational interest over the subversion of social freedom emanating from the state. As Vaclav Havel writes in *The Power of the Powerless*,

If 'dissidents' have any kind of authority at all and if they have not been exterminated long ago like exotic insects that have appeared where they have no business being, then this is not because the government holds this exclusive group and their exclusive ideas in awe, but because it is

perfectly aware of the potential political power of 'living within the truth' rooted in the hidden sphere, and well aware too of the kind of world 'dissent' grows out of and the world it addresses: the everyday human world, the world of daily tension between the aims of life and the aims of the system. (Havel, 1985, 59-60)

Nonviolent struggle seeks to empower man over the automatic processes that his social action generates and over which he can easily lose individual control. Regaining control over social processes for man in his political dimension signifies not just that a new order is established, but rather that a new people, a new nation are born of this struggle and that therefore the corresponding social and political structures will also change.

The renewal of these authentic social ties and the strengthening of these networks to the point that consent is consciously taken away from the illegitimate ruler, may therefore constitute not just the strategy of a particular type of political struggle, in this case nonviolent, but rather the manner in which a nation, as an immanent moral being, speaks through the daily plebiscite of consent Renan wrote about.

Nonviolent struggle is redefining Cuban civic nationality along Lockean lines, through the mechanisms of associational sovereignty described by Tocqueville, and away from the tradition of Rousseauian thought with its alienating and complete surrender of personal rights to the General Will.

"Rousseau's authoritarianism and the revolutionary Jacobinism which came from it infected Cuban political thought and made radicalism an accepted norm which gradually corroded the pillars of the republic," reflected exile Cuban historian Pedro Roig on the metamorphosis of the concept of sovereignty which took place in the pre-Castro

republic. “A lack of political ethics, corruption and a high level of violence became part of our political identity.”¹⁴⁴

Calling for the plebiscite: the Varela Project

In 1976 Castro found himself under increasing pressure from the Soviets to institutionalize his regime. This meant, among other things, the adoption of a Soviet-style constitution, which literally began by pledging Cuba’s eternal loyalty to the Soviet state. Drafted mostly by many of the old pro-Soviet Communist leaders that had survived Castro’s successive purges, and who had also participated in the drafting of Cuba’s social democratic constitution of 1940, the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Cuba included a provision that if 10,000 signatures were gathered, a petition for a national referendum would have to be considered by the National Assembly of Popular Power.

In 1976 no Communist ideologue would have thought that opponents of the Castro regime would be capable of gathering 10,000 signatures for anything. But by 1998 a civil society was beginning to reemerge in Cuba. Citizens were exercising their associational democracy in the diverse civil society nuclei expressing themselves, albeit under repression and persecution, across the island.

The nation seemed to be taking back its sovereignty by working upwards from its basic social building blocks. The effort and sacrifice of thousands of men and women who had suffered persecution, exile and imprisonment for their actions was galvanizing this incipient movement into an increasingly coherent national force. The Papal visit and the public appearances of the Holy Father provided a forum where thousands of Cubans were able to gather and pronounce themselves in favor of the freedom and peace they longed for. It set into motion a dynamic process of social action on the part of Cuba’s

¹⁴⁴ Personal interview with Pedro Roig, 3/13/04

burgeoning dissident movement that at the same time felt motivated both by the glimpse it'd had of its latent mass appeal and its growing exposure to the body of theory on nonviolent political action.

At this time the Varela Project was born. It was steered by Oswaldo Paya, a Catholic engineer who had endured harassment and repression in Cuba as a result of his religious beliefs and later his political convictions.¹⁴⁵ Led by a new generation of pro-democracy activists, the Varela Project was born. Seeking 10,000 signatures in favor of a constitutional referendum that would allow Cubans to vote on whether they wanted (a) electoral reform, (b) a general amnesty for all political prisoners (except for those imprisoned for actions aimed directly at taking lives), (c) the right of Cubans to freely associate, (d) the right of Cubans to open their own businesses, and (e) freedom of expression, the Varela Project was directed at the population, not at the Regime.

It sought to begin the mobilization of Cuba's citizens into a national force for change. Receiving extensive international solidarity from Europe and Latin America, the Project obtained added support when former President Jimmy Carter endorsed it during his televised remarks while in Cuba. The Varela Project was but the tip of the iceberg: it allowed a growing civil society movement consisting of human rights committees, independent libraries, independent journalists, embryonic labor unions and political parties to reach out to a population that desired change and social transformation.

The Project has so far successfully gathered more than 25,000 signatures, becoming the greatest civic mobilization for change in the history of the Castro Regime. Castro rejected the Project through different means: first, by illegally amending his own constitution to make "socialism in Cuba irrevocable." Secondly, on March 18, 2003 more

¹⁴⁵ For Paya's long personal history of opposition to the Castro Regime, see Hidalgo, 1994, 184

than 75 civil society activists were imprisoned and condemned to a combined total of over 1,000 years in prison for their participation in these and other civic initiatives, setting the Castro regime on a confrontation course with the European Union.

Nationalist Dynamics and the Varela Project

Surprisingly enough for many Cuba watchers, the Varela Project has encountered stiff opposition from influential sectors of the exile community. Beyond both the petty and the valid, the profound reasons for the opposition of many in the exile community to the Varela Project lay in the dynamics of Cuban exile nationalism.

Behind the criticism of many in the exile community of Arcos' call for a national dialogue, of Concilio Cubano and the Varela Project, laid the ideological suspicion that these dissident initiatives, by operating within the legal framework of the Regime, somehow legitimized it.

The ideology of the Cuban civic movement represents a challenge to both Castroite and Cuban exile nationalism. Both nationalisms have been based on similar myths: that of enduring resistance, of final victory, of embodying the eternal values of the 'General Will' of Cuban nationhood. The perpetuation of violence as a discourse, long after armed struggle had effectively ended, became a means to negate the other brand of nationalism staring back across the other side of the Florida Straits.

By proclaiming its nonviolence, the civic movement sought to part the veil with which one nationalism negated the existence of the other. For the civic movement in Cuba this sort of introspection, this change of the rules of political engagement among Cubans, was a necessary step in mobilizing Cuba's citizenry. Only by undressing itself from its nationalist myths could the nation contemplate itself in its entirety and find the

reserves of moral strength needed to carry out civic change. For the civic movement in Cuba violence was both the great myth and the obstacle to the unleashing of the nation's moral power. Unlike Castroite and Cuban exile nationalism, the civic movement did not have a world to preserve, it had to change its world in order to find a place for itself.

Within the island, Castro could not allow the emergence of any sustained cracks in the edifice of totalitarian rule he had erected. The very existence of the civic movement was inimical to the philosophical pillars of the Revolution's primary conception of power. On the other hand, the inner logic of the Cuban exile community is a bit more complicated. There is pessimism at the heart of the mechanism of Cuban exile nationalism: the ultimate reason for the existence of that pessimism is that the liberation efforts failed. Republican Cuba was lost to Castroism. The exile identity ("eternal Cuba") must be preserved in order for the possibility of return to exist.

In this mindset, exile becomes a purpose unto itself because the real Cuba exists only in Miami. As time passed, the reference point for the exiles ceased to be their political affiliations in Cuba and became more about their place in the political spectrum of the exile republic.

For the exile community this mechanism is something to be both praised and decried at the same time: it can be very effective in making the exile feel as an active participant of Cuba's national drama while he is in reality and with few exceptions, a detached observer.

This pessimism also exists at the heart of Castroite nationalism, but Castro's iron fist keeps it in check. The regime's economic and social failures are evident and can be dismissed only through great rhetorical efforts of the imagination. However, Castroism

presents itself as the last Hegelian stage in the historical development of Cuban nationhood. The best that Cubans as a nation can achieve. This synthesis of Cuba's revolutionary history dismisses its own shortcomings and errors, its own failure at bringing about a better life for its citizens, by blaming it on the unrelenting hostility of Miami, the rebel capital.

Castroism can never recognize this other Cuba as being fully Cuban. It must seek to disparage it as a place of "worms" or a "mafia," because to do the politically reasonable thing, to engage in true contact and negotiation with the other side in order to arrive at a settlement, would mean the acceptance of another strain of Cuban nationalism and this acceptance would undermine Castroism's claim to being the sole and unique synthesis of Cuban history.

Cuba's civic movement was in many ways challenging the basic Hegelian 19th century teleology on which traditional Cuban nationalism was based. Castroism and Cuban exile nationalism disputed with each other which one synthesized the essence of the aspirations of Cuban nationhood. Cuba's civic movement disputed this teleological conception of nationhood; this vision of the nation as the ultimate instrumentality of the state.

The civic movement seemed to be stating that the nation constituted a moral existence of its own, a human construction, and a human reality, to which the organization of the state had to be subordinated. In other words, the existence of Cuban nationhood was not at the service of the construction of a nationalist state, but the nation, composed of its citizens, was a moral and ethical entity, which had to be respected because of its intrinsic moral value.

Cuba's citizen's movement seemed to want to liberate Cubans from their history, from the determinism of Castroite nationalism which insisted on a single destiny, on a single set of options for the nation, in exclusion of all the rest. The Cuban nation was not something to be created through the imposition of political violence, but a community of citizens that already existed and was free to re-create itself in order to find a better way of life. Cuba's civic movement could not ignore Castro's totalitarian state or the Cubans who integrated its structures. It co-existed with them on a daily basis. Instead, it had to find a way to build a new Cuba with the inclusion of those who resisted it from the power of the state.

In order to do so, they had to demonstrate to Castroite Cubans that they too were the victims of the totalitarian state, that within the structure of a totalitarian state even those who believe themselves to be empowered are subjected to the design of its own tyrannical mechanisms. Hard-line exiles believed there was some sort of accommodation or collaboration with the existence of the dictatorship in this. Dissidents responded that the exiles were far away enough to insist on a make-believe Cuba where there were no Communists and no Castroites.

Ultimately, many exiles sought the triumph of their history, their effort, their "eternal Cuba," over Castro's teleological version. Dissidents were confronted with the very real task of reaching out to a great number of persons in the island who had spent a good part of their lives as part of Castroism and for whom, even when desirous of change, an 'either or' solution would be a negation of their very existence.

The definition of reconciliation was at the center of the ideological dispute. For Castro reconciliation meant that the 'emigración' would accept the Revolution and

reintegrate into it. For many exiles reconciliation meant that those who had been Castroites would abjure from their lives and embrace the truth of exile nationalism. Many dissidents believed that these two definitions of reconciliation signified but the predominance of one nationalism over the other. A true reconciliation would imply the creation of a new democratic, pluralistic nationalism, where all prior political manifestations could find their place, co-exist and therefore become part of a new political order where there was space for all Cubans. This constituted the most essential negation of Castroism.

The emergence of the civic movement was among the factors that caused the development of different factions and strategies within the fold of both the Castroite and exile nationalisms. By acting as a catalyst for the pluralization of both nationalisms, Cuba's civic movement was in effect, opening the way for the creation of a new more plural, freer nation.

Chapter Eight – Analysis and Conclusions

Both Cubans who support Castroite nationalism or proponents of the civic republican version have amply demonstrated the existence of a strong sense of intra group solidarity and unity of purpose which are the hallmarks of any modern strain of nationalism. What Cubans have yet to achieve is political success in expressing national self-determination in a way that is respectful of the human rights and personal integrity of all Cuban citizens.

The emerging citizens' movement for peaceful change within the island proposes a way and a path to both counter totalitarianism and overcome the contradictions of Cuban exile nationalism. The way is a firm commitment to nonviolence, which as Oswaldo Paya has written "Peaceful transformation is not just a method for us, but a goal."¹⁴⁶ The path is the construction of a new Cuba, a new civil society, within the fold of the existing totalitarian state. So far in the history of Cuba nation building has been superseded by revolution. Now civic nation building is the revolution.

How these civic efforts are to translate themselves into political configurations in a post-Castro future is a matter of speculation and dependant on many diverse factors. What is apparent, from studying both Castroism and Cuban exile nationalism, is that while Cubans have achieved their nationhood, statehood remains elusive.

If for nationalist ideologues statehood is the pinnacle of nationhood, dictatorship, revolution, civil war and exile have been traumatic events on the road to political self-determination for Cubans. Certainly, the indifference and apathy of the entrepreneurial classes, the misplaced sense of class and national identity that characterized the Cuban

¹⁴⁶ Payá letter to Vaclav Havel, Letras Libres magazine, no.67, October 31, 2003

character before Castro have been overcome by the immense leveling forces of both revolution and exile.

For the first time in their history, as the 21st century began, be it in Havana or Miami, in government circles, in exile, or with the emerging civil society and citizens' movement, Cubans were alone with themselves. Their nationalist dynamics had turned their intimate and passionate zone of self-determination into an area that few dared to tread.

The permanence of totalitarianism however, threatened to create different ideological tribes out of what with so much effort had been the struggle to create a single nation. With command of the mass media and educational system, with their repressive apparatus and their aging caudillo dominating the national territory, the Castroites sought to hold on to their fortress nation.

The exiles, bereft of the national territory, continued to exercise their considerable social and political power in order to keep alive a Platonic, idyllic Cuba that would one day be revived in the national territory.

The exercise of associational democracy, the marches, the radio stations and the training camps that prepared men for a war that did not come, served, in the metaphysics of nationalism, to make the Diaspora feel as one with the Free Cuba of struggle and exile that permanently existed somewhere as a timeless Platonic form. In this the exiles renewed their identity and community with other Cuban exiles throughout history that they had not known but whose efforts in other times and places contributed to building a unique sense of national identity that they now called their own.

Meantime, in the island, without the dominion of the state held by the Castroites or the influence on the US government of the exiles, the civic movement struggled to build enough social power so that this nation could at last achieve a political system that would reconcile Cubans and not tear them apart.

The future of national ideologies – possible political party configurations

The coexistence in time of different strains of Cuban nationalism will affect the country's future transition to democracy. Contrary to what many believe, political parties are not the result of pre-existing universal ideologies, but rather, they express the historical political traditions of the countries to which they belong.

Political parties are inherently national phenomena. In a future time when the rule of Cuba's current one party regime ends, it is both natural and logical to assume that different political parties corresponding to Cuba's historical political currents will re-emerge from the period of exile, persecution, repression and underground and dissident activity within the island. Political parties ultimately represent the different systematic responses that segments within national populations generate when faced by collective historical challenges. Cuban independence in 1902, Cuban identity, the 1959 Revolution, all of these are landmarks that will continue to shape the outlook and pronouncements of Cuba's political forces.

Whereas what first congregates political parties is this primary response to historical challenges, it is inevitable that in a globalizing world these responses are inevitably translated into universal principles. Political parties that emerge from the specific conditions of Cuba's historical political milieu will find their counterparts in international ideological thought. However, it is primary ideology, or how a society

articulates its responses in the face of historical conditions, what will provide these parties with legitimacy and power within their own societies.

Political parties are modern institutions and central to nations and nationalism. They have mobilized the people in defense of specific principles of government for the nation as a whole. The nation, as the central territorial and political entity of our times, will continue to be the protagonist of international politics. All attempts to suppress it, from the Habsburgs to the Soviets, have so far failed. Therefore, it is important to outline the profile of Cuba's future political parties in order to understand where its diverse nationalisms may be headed.

Which are the primary ideologies of Cuban nationalism? Which are the historic systems of response to national challenges that will emerge as political conglomerates in the island's post-Castro future?

What has traditionally established the reference point for the various strains of Cuban nationalism has been the reaction to the United States. Three prototypical response systems can be identified: first of all, the absolute rejection of all that which is associated with the United States. This vision of Cuba sees the island as a sort of fortress-state, designed to resist all that which entails a modern, Anglo-Saxon inspired vision of capitalist democracy. Cuba's colonial governments, the Cuban-born volunteer forces that fought against independence, and Fidel Castro's Spartan nationalism hold this in common. They are different variations upon a common theme. Therefore, this way of contemplating Cuba and Cubans will most probably survive Castro in one way or the other. However, the vitality of this political current in a post-Castro political scenario will

have to do with the form of transition that takes place in the island. For the purpose of this chapter this political current will be designated as neo-Castroite.

The second response system generated by Cuban society as a nationalist expression has been the effort to establish a genuine Cuban identity, which, while assimilating the positive influences of the United States and the West as a whole, will integrate these aspects with the traditional values of social solidarity inherent to Cuban national culture.

This political current has undergone phases of both confrontation and cooperation with the United States. Its vision of Cuba as a free republic holding dearly the individual rights of its citizens is common to Varela, Marti, the Autentico and Ortodoxo parties, the different student organizations or Directorios of Cuba's history. It can be appropriately termed as the *civic nationalist* current. This civic expression of Cuban nationalism is particularly present in today's civic movement in the island. One of its manifestations is the reappraisal of the achievements of the democratic republics in the island's history, and particularly the Constitution of 1940. This historical current has sought to base the political identity of the Cuban nation on the civic values of a democratic republic.

The third response constitutes a radical rejection of Castro's Spartan nationalism. Furthermore, it proposes that Castro's Spartan nationalism is not simply a strain of Cuban nationalism, but rather its logical result. This current questions the whole construction of Cuban nationalism, and asserts that Marti's thinking itself was plagued by anti-liberal and anti-American ideas from its very beginnings, rendering it an anachronism in today's world. For this current, which finds its historical counterparts in the annexionist and autonomista movements of yesteryear, the viability of Cuba as an independent nation

must be questioned, and it proposes that perhaps it would be best for Cubans to enter into some kind of relationship with the United States similar to the one held by Puerto Rico.

Many young Cuban intellectuals inside and outside the island who are breaking with Marxism tend to embrace this historical current. They were taught from an early age that Castroism was the logical result of the evolutionary development of Cuban nationalism, and they have come to believe this. The intellectual arguments of this current, coupled with the intense disillusionment with the island and its politics that many young people in Cuba feel, signify that it should not be underestimated in its potential as a political force. For the purpose of this essay this current will be termed the revisionist current.

What role will these political currents play in Cuba's post Castro future? Which political parties will be organized? This will depend greatly on three factors: one, the type of transition that takes place, two the type of electoral system which is established in the country, and third, the ethics of political action which predominates in the country's culture. We will briefly look at three types of transitions that could take place in the island and how they could benefit or damage the possibilities of the different strains of Cuban nationalism to successfully transform themselves into feasible political parties.

- **Transition/succession**

One type of succession or transition could be that of a transition/succession totally dominated by the current Castroite elite after Castro's death and leading to negotiations between this elite and the United States and in a second phase with both the internal and exiled democratic opposition. It is to be expected that in this type of transition changes

would be gradual and partial and transformations of the current system would not be global but sectorial, with the elites trying to salvage as much of the system as possible.

This would result in the actual class of military and political leaders becoming leaders and managers of the newly opened business sectors. This new business sector would provide the financial basis for a political party that, although attired with the vestments of democracy, would embody the essential elements of neo-Castroism and its particular vision of Cuban nationhood.

This new party would certainly espouse Castroite, Spartan, Third World revolutionary rhetoric, and it would continue to have an ability to mobilize the masses through patronage stemming from its privileged financial position, but in practice its leadership would partake of capitalism.. It would be a Cuban version of the Mexican PRI of the 70s and 80s and/or the current Chinese model. A dominating bureaucratic class would ally itself with business and military sectors from the old Communist Party to hold on to key positions of power and make itself indispensable for the running of the country.

This sort of political party could find decision makers in the United States, Europe and Latin America willing to back it in exchange for the stability and tranquility which it would guarantee. Its discourse would be sufficiently left of center to make it attractive to social democratic sectors of the developed world and its opening to capitalist investment would endear it to some more traditional, conservative political sectors.

- **Gradual transition from above**

A transition from above which would be the result of a well-crafted strategy of international pressures by the United States, Europe and the democratic governments of Latin America and in which the internal and external democratic opposition would fully

participate as allies, could result in the partial dismantling of the Castroite governing apparatus. This model of transition could be particularly effective in establishing a true democratic state in Cuba if it took place before Castro's death. If successful, it could result in Castro's disappearance from Cuba's political life while he was still alive.

This type of transition scenario would initially favor Cuba's embattled democrats, particularly the rejectionist political current which does not accept the traditional formulations of Cuban nationalism, since any early election would possibly result in a radical vote swing against anything smelling of Castroism. It is also most probable that the most rejectionist forces would initially constitute cadre based and not mass based political parties, due to the limitations imposed by lack of time, of resources, and by their own ideological preferences. A rejectionist political party would initially not feel at home with the type of mass mobilization, which has become characteristic of Castroism as a political force.

This however, would prevent the rejectionists from constituting a broadly based social force, which could truly empower its political organization. As has occurred with democrats in Eastern European countries, the rejectionists could be overwhelmed by the constant popular agitation and political attacks of a reconstituted neo-Castroite party with important pockets of left-over power within the country's bureaucracy. The democrats would find themselves in control of the government but not of the power of the state. In a second round of elections, due to the slow pace of reforms resulting from the political scenario described above, the neo-Castroite party could present a viable option for the Cuban electorate.

- **Grass roots transition**

A grass-roots transition, which would be generated upwards from below in Cuban society through a sustained nonviolent struggle, could result in the erosion of the pillars of neo-Castroite power from below. With the aid of international pressures from the United States and Europe, this could result in a true transition to democracy in the island. This could occur after Castro's death or impose itself during his lifetime. In this type of transition the civic nationalist current could attain both the government and the power of the state. This type of transition could result in a reformist wing of the neo-Castroites breaking from the main power structure and allying itself with the democratic opposition.

The civic nationalist current would most probably best express itself in a broad coalition of political parties that could include liberals, social democrats, Christian Democrats and democratic nationalists. The Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and democratic nationalists would probably make the liberal economic program their own while liberals would benefit from the capacity for mass mobilization and social organization of the other currents in order to create a political organization with mass support and an effective activist core. In this case, probably the most logical strategy to be pursued by neo-Castroites would be to organize themselves into a moderate socialist party that would work at slowly chipping away at the unity of the ruling coalition by trying to establish an alliance with its most leftist and nationalist democratic components.

The viability of these political structures will be affected not just by the types of transition which take place, but also by the type of electoral model which is instituted. A purely presidential model with two legislative chambers with direct representation would

probably reinforce the traditional authoritarian structures of Cuban politics and empower the neo-Castroites.

On the other hand, a purely parliamentary model, with one or two legislative houses, given Cuba's fragmentary political culture, could result in governments that would last very little and render the country ungovernable.

A semi parliamentary model with a directly elected president who could name a prime minister, with a single chamber legislature with candidates elected both directly from districts and from national lists, similar in some ways to the German model, could strengthen nascent Cuban democracy. These types of electoral systems tend to result in the formation of systems composed of three to four political parties, which would in turn correspond to the country's existing political currents. This state potentially has enough plurality to be representative and enough stability to be able to govern.

The last and perhaps the most important of factors affecting the future political organizations of Cuban nationalism lies in the system of political ethics that will develop in Cuba's future. Cuba is a country exhausted from politics. As a result of almost five decades of totalitarian rule and its historic political troubles, Cubans have developed a profound rejection of political parties, labor unions, and other associations.

The country also suffers from a long history of state paternalism. A poor sense of citizenry and human rights prevails, and Cubans have little trust in their own ability to bring about changes. There is generalized frustration and the feeling of not having lived life fully by a population that is rapidly aging.

Therefore, the first thing that any political party will need in Cuba is access to the means of mass communication. In fact, more than access by democrats to the means of

mass communication it will be necessary that the means of mass communication be at the service of democracy. This will, to a great degree, determine the strain of Cuban nationalism that is ultimately predominant in a post-Castro future.

Reinventing Cuban nationalism: The Revisionist Challenge

A successful reinvention of Cuban nationalism will necessitate that the country concentrate on the present and the future. The key to the success of democratic forces in many former Communist countries lay in the ability to reach out to the youth. The youth, in turn, have been able to serve as the link between the ideas of the political and intellectual leadership and the desires of the population at large. The brand of Cuban nationalism which attains dominance of the means of mass communication, which successfully attracts youth, will to a great degree forge the country's future.

The greatest challenge to a successful reinvention of Cuban nationalism in the eyes of Cuban youth will come from the revisionist current mentioned earlier. It has always constituted a centripetal force at the heart of the politics of identity of the Cuban nation. The frustrating experience of Castroite totalitarianism has strengthened it. However, there are key points in the doctrinal make up of the revisionist current that a revised and democratic Cuban nationalism can successfully counter.

The central tenets of the revisionist school, outlined below, are complemented by the fact that Cuba, unlike other national states, has always confronted the possibility of non-existence as a nation. That is to say, incorporation into a more powerful national entity, be it Spain, the United States, the Soviet Union or, to a lesser extent, Mexico, has always been a possibility which has been explored at one point or another, by elements within Cuba's political elite. Today, the creation of regional economic blocs patterned on

the success of the European Union, further entice revisionists with the possibility of a supra political North American entity into which the Cuban nation could be absorbed and a different kind of nation, “a different way of being Cuban,” come about as the result.

The main points of the revisionist school have been:

- (1) Cuban nationalism has been conditioned by delusions of grandeur: an exalted conception of the island and its destiny. Through this prism the Cuban state has come to see itself in a dimension greater than the role its territorial, cultural and economic realities actually permit it to play.
- (2) This exalted sense of Cuba’s role led to the development of a cult of political violence and intransigence (not settling for anything else than this great destiny), which eroded the nation’s civic institutions.
- (3) Castroism developed this hyperbolic nationalism, this cult of political violence, to its fullest extent. However, it is this strain of Cuban nationalism which has prevailed, therefore the end of Castroism will also mark the end of Cuban nationalism as we have know it. That end should be reached through peaceful means: through negotiations and political agreements, in order to usher in an age of political stability and peace.
- (4) Besides these factors, Cuba was never able to develop a national identity fully its own, always being torn between the Spanish and the American cultures.

Why must a new Cuban nationalism refute these points? Because forging a democratic culture must be done within the logic of Cuban history and culture in order for it to make sense to Cubans. The definition of Cuban culture has become intertwined with the island’s right to self-determination as the guarantee of the basic rights of the

country's citizenry. Discarding this right to self-determination, which has beckoned Cuba throughout its history, would be tantamount to further mutilating the sense of self-worth and civic unity necessary for any nation to succeed in the difficult task of building a democratic polity. Democratic values have not been foreign to Cuban nationalism. They were an inextricable part of its dominant currents in the 19th and half of the 20th century. These ideas are not foreign to the Cuban polity.

The "delusions of grandeur" ascribed to Cuban nationalism have been traced by the revisionists to two political expressions throughout the island's history: one, the fact that throughout its republican history it has frequently become involved in political affairs outside of its own borders and two, the idea that Cuba is central to world events and an important part of human affairs.

While it is true that throughout its republican history the island frequently offered sanctuary to leaders and activists fleeing from Latin American dictatorships, and that Cubans did become involved militarily with events taking place in Mexico, Central America and the Dominican Republic in defense of democratic governments, it is also true that this sort of solidarity was common among nascent republics across Europe and Latin America and including the United States.

Any state professing a liberal ideology anchored in the conception of universal rights would be hard pressed not to offer some type of assistance to those who struggle for these same rights in other parts of the world, and specially in those countries who share strong cultural and linguistic bonds with Cuba. Undoubtedly, Castro distorted this tradition by providing support and sanctuary for terrorist organizations that sought, in many cases, to subvert and overthrow established democracies.

However, in the case of Cuban republican involvement in say the rescue of Madero's family from Veracruz during the Mexican Revolution, or intervening militarily to defend established democracies in the 40s and 50s in Guatemala and Costa Rica, or in providing support for the Dominicans who struggled against the bloody dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, Cuban governments were not responding to an exalted sense of nationalism but rather to a profound sense of moral obligation rooted in the liberal ideology of the wars of independence. Just as Cuba had received volunteers and support from different Latin American countries, particularly in the Caribbean, the Cubans now felt obligated to defend liberty in these countries that now needed help.

Secondly, although Cuba is certainly a small island limited in territory and in economic potential and with a long history of political turmoil, it is also true that the island for one reason or another has played a key role in important regional and even international events during its existence.

Just to mention three: the sinking of the *Maine* and the subsequent Spanish American War marked the birth of the United States as an imperialist power and changed the contour of world politics. Cuba was a central catalyst. The island again played a key role in the greatest nuclear showdown of the Cold War: the October Missile Crisis, and of late, the whole Elián controversy was pivotal in influencing the Cuban American vote in the 2000 presidential elections in Florida, which resulted in the victory for George W. Bush and the defeat of Al Gore.

The erosion of a cult of political violence and intransigence was not motivated simply by the island's nationalism, but also by the contradiction inherent in the fact that on many occasions throughout the island's history the United States undertook policies

which undermined the establishment of liberal democracy in the island and thrust the country's political class into protracted struggles for liberation and democratization.

The fact that the United States represented both an inspiration for Cuban liberal democracy and a frequent obstacle to it was not lost on Cuban nationalists of all generations and times. Therefore, overcoming political violence and intransigence requires not simply an evolution of Cuban civil society and political forces, but also that the United States implements a long range strategy of allying itself with these forces in order to achieve a democratic Cuba amenable both to Cubans and to the United States.

Additionally, although Castroite nationalism has predominated for the last half century in Cuban history this does not make this nationalism the exclusive embodiment of the Cuban national identity, just as Leninist and Stalinist nationalism did not embody Russia, or Nazism and Fascism German and Italian national identity, or Franco the Spanish nationality or Vichy France the French.

Countries that have rebuilt themselves from totalitarian states into successful democratic republics have undergone a process of cleansing their political history from totalitarianism. Democratic elements of their particular histories have played a key role in this new social construction. Cuba has had a longer experience with democracy and liberalism than many of these countries. This fact and these memories will be vital to the country's political reconstruction. Reevaluating and reappraising the contributions of Cuba's democratic republican period will be far more useful to the construction of democracy in Cuba than telling the island's population that their identity is somehow non-existent and must be made new in order to fit the contours of a democratic liberal model. The flowering of Cuba's civic movement under the most terrible conditions of

repression and persecution, and the fact that experts point out that it has probably the largest per capita dissident movement in a Communist country after Poland, are testaments to the fact that the moral reserves for a democratic liberal order can be found in Cuba and its history.

Lastly, the contention that Cubans have never really had an identity of their own is belied by the very existence of the Cuban Diaspora in the last 50 years. If the Cuban identity was so weak, so feeble, so inexistent, how is it that Cuban national communities have persevered and triumphed in the preservation of their identity while immersed in foreign cultures? And not only this, but these same communities have managed to succeed and progress in exile, without discarding their national roots.

The argument can perhaps also be made that the experience of exile made the national bonds stronger, and this awakened sense of deep solidarity was projected backward in time by the exiles as they consolidated a history for their emerging nationalist ideology. It is possible that Cubans became much more Cuban after 1959, be it in the island or in exile

This brings to mind the issue of whether the exiled Cuba is really “Cuba” at all, and not a virtual reality created by an immigrant ethnic group displaced from its home. The distortion in the exile nationalist ideology whereby Cuban reality on the island is subsumed under the dynamics of politics in Cuban Miami will not transcend. Greater and frequent contact with a post-totalitarian Cuba will inevitably shift the focus of Cuban politics of all sorts back to the island. However, the ideas and attitudes of those in the exile community who have not lost track of trying to understand what the exile

experience means in light of the global history of the entire Cuban nation, will find its place in a reconstituted free republic of Cuba.

It could be then that at some future time historians will interpret that the core of both the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban exile experience lay the drive of the Cuban nation to assert itself as a feasible national state, be it through Castro's aggressive interpretation of sovereignty, or through the persistent spiritual independence of the exiles.

Within a renewed civic republican narrative of Cuban history the existence of the Cuban Diaspora and its spiritual success in preserving its identity and material success in achieving prosperity are clear historical refutations of the myth of negative cubanidad. If anything, this has been a lasting contribution of the exile experience to the development of the Cuban nation.

Ethics at the heart of a new Cuban nationalism

But beyond this, civic democratic forces need to learn the hard facts of Cuban history. A well crafted message, a well-organized communications strategy, the right kind of transition, are not enough to insure the permanence of a future Cuban democratic republic. What is needed is a leadership ethic which places patriotism above the interests and demands of diverse institutions, which values these institutions more than personal interests, and which treasures a culture of liberty, democratic plurality and leadership and disdains the political style of authoritarian caudillismo. It must be a leadership ethic of substance and commitment, not of protagonism and envy. Its goal must not be simply to take power, but instead to redefine the purpose of power within a free society.

The country needs to define a culture of public service. Cubans do not simply hope for politicians and leaders who trumpet a nationalist speech. They need parties and leaders who can face problems and find solutions, and not simply when they are elected, but from the very moment they begin to articulate as political forces. Parties must go from being electoral machines to transforming themselves into voluntary institutions who strive for public service and whose priorities lie in rebuilding society, constructing democracy and watching out for the needs of the neighborhoods and the municipalities. Those parties who cannot mobilize youth for public service will not be able to forge a new generation of leaders capable of redefining Cuban nationalism.

The relationship with civil society will be vital to the country's future political endeavors. Civil society has reawakened under Castroism and it is not likely that it will disappear or lose its importance, no matter how imperfect, under a democratic state. Cubans will organize themselves individually and freely to defend their rights and interests, fulfill their political desires, and serve their communities. It is likely that this future civil society will be quite apprehensive about political power, having suffered for so long from its excesses. Civil society will most probably strive to check the power of government. This will be a good thing.

Cuban political parties will have to abandon the Leninist tradition of subordinating civil society to its political aims and come to see social institutions as full partners in the task of nation building. They will have to build relationships based on solidarity in order to replace dependence-based relations. Political parties should, in the best of cases, provide an ethical order and a social discipline to political debate. Civil society should bring diversity and internal democracy to the table. All this and much

more is what is required to go from a supra political understanding of the role of power in nationhood to a definition of public authority as expressive of the nation's natural plurality. That should result, at last, in a more inclusive Cuba.

A future democratic Cuban republic, existing in a globalized world where the United States is the preeminent superpower will perhaps learn much from the experience of Cuban exile nationalism.

The international bipolar conditions that made Castroism possible will no longer exist. However, the accumulated experience of a sizable portion of the Cuban population within the United States will be vital, not just in transmitting the valuable political experience of living within a state based on democracy and rule of law to the Cuban population in the island, but foremost in learning how the US system works internally in order to more effectively pursue Cuban interests and priorities within that context. The strong ties of national solidarity and patriotism fostered by the struggle of the exile communities without the need of state intervention will perhaps then be recognized as an important legacy for future generations of Cubans.

Implications for US Foreign Policy

Since 1959, U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba has often been trapped between the two Cuban nationalisms facing each other across the Florida Straits. Although the US government proved adept at manipulating the exiles up to the 1962 Missile Crisis, the more the exiles integrated and assimilated into the US mainstream, the more their will to power, focused on the goal of Cuban liberation, proved capable of influencing US policy towards the island.

As Castro consolidated power after the Missile Crisis, U.S. passed from toleration of the Regime, to attempts at rapprochement, to a sort of Caribbean detente, which ran intermittently along with occasional heated confrontations.. At each instance, the exile influence has made itself felt, pushing the U.S. government away from full recognition and normalization of diplomatic ties with the Castro Regime.

Beyond the tactical political benefits, the pro-American, civic, liberal basis of the exile nationalist ideology necessitates an absence of full U.S. recognition for the Castro Regime in order to preserve the possibility of a fully recuperated republic. An intrinsic part of this full recuperation lies in the reestablishment of ideological fellowship with the United States.

At present then, one can speak of three different sets of U.S. foreign policies towards Cuba: one toward the Castro Regime, the other aimed at the internal civil society and emerging pro-democracy movement, and the third with the Cuban exiles. These three sets of relations have revolved around the different priorities of each administration: the use of the Cuban economy to drain the Soviets, the avoidance of mass exodus at all costs, and/or the growing empowerment of internal civil society.

There are also several factors, which condition these relations and these priorities: the embargo, Radio and TV Marti, and immigration. These factors and conditions constitute the status quo of U.S. Cuba policy.

In light of the nuances of Cuban nationalism, what should current, mid and long term U.S. policy toward Cuba be all about? It should be about the future. And this brings forth the question, what future?

U.S. policy has fundamentally shaped Cuban nationalism over the years. Incoherent confrontation consolidated the Castro Regime. Neglect transformed Cuban Miami into a militant, self-enclosed bastion of influence over Cuba policy. What becomes apparent is that in dealing with Cuban nationalism, history clearly demonstrates that short-term U.S. preference for stability in the island over democracy has resulted in long-term headaches. Tolerance and even support for Machado and Batista radicalized Cuban nationalism further and paved the way for Castro's Spartan totalitarianism.

To empower the liberal democratic base of Cuban nationalism must be the long-term U.S. objective. This would not only benefit the Cuban people, but it would also guarantee the United States security from one of its closest neighbors, and would contribute to the stabilization and democratization of Latin America.

In order to do so, it would be a good thing to revisit Juan Antonio Rubio Padilla's thinking. The United States must work with the sole democratic force that exists on the ground, within Cuba: the emerging civil society and pro-democracy movement. However, it must be ever careful in dealing with this movement to even inadvertently cast it in a light of subordination or obedience to U.S. interests. What makes the pro democracy movement in the island strong is that it is homegrown, resultant of Cuban historical reality, and philosophically committed to nonviolence in its methods. The United States must recognize this movement as uniquely capable of contributing to the disentanglement of the Gordian knot of Cuban democratic self-rule, part of this, however, lies in recognizing and treating the leaders of this movement as true representatives of the repressed democratic sovereignty of the Cuban nation.

Therefore, a U.S.-supported multilateral strategy of support for the civic movement would be most conducive to the procurement of these goals. Democracy for Cuba, achieved by a homegrown grass roots democratic movement, is in the best interest of the United States, Cuba and the entire Western Hemisphere. A new chapter in the development of Cuban nationalism, liberating it from the anxious contradictions of its liberal objectives and its continuous clashes with a not-always coherent U.S. foreign policy could be the result. Then, and only then, could Cuba have an opportunity for true peace.

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CHRONOLOGY OF CUBAN HISTORY

1492 – Christopher Columbus discovers the island of Cuba, initiating the period of Spanish domination.

1868 – Ten Years' War. After decades of uprisings by slaves, tobacco growers and Cubans seeking independence from Spain, Cuba's first major war of independence begins in the eastern most part of the island with an uprising led by land owner Carlos Manuel de Céspedes at his farm, La Demagogue. Céspedes frees his slaves and urges them to join the insurrection. The insurrection will last 10 years, focused mainly in the central and eastern parts of the island.

1878–1879 - After hostilities cease in the Ten Years' War as a result of negotiations between the Spanish and rebel leaders at Zanjón, rebel general Antonio Maceo attempts to continue with guerrilla warfare against the Spanish. He fails and shortly after leaves Cuba. Other rebel forces however, reignite the uprising against the Spanish for several months, in what Cubans refer to as 'The Little War,' or Guerra Chiquita.

1895–1898 - Under the leadership of poet and journalist Jose Martí the bulk of the pro independence forces inside and outside the island unite. A new uprising begins on February 24, 1895 in the eastern part of the island. Martí is killed in combat shortly after the war begins. Under the leadership of Dominican general Maxim Gómez and General Antonio Maceo the rebels manage to spread the uprising throughout the island, with Maceo managing to reach the western most part of Cuba and occupy several towns around Havana. After Maceo's death in combat the Spanish and rebel forces reach a deadlock. U.S. intervention, provoked by the sinking of the battleship Maine in Havana harbor, results in the defeat of the Spanish and American control of Cuba. Up to 300,000 Cubans died as a result of Spanish policies, such as the creation of concentration camps to imprison the rural population and take away the rebel's base of support.

1901 – After a period of American occupation marked by improvements in the country's educational and health infrastructure, Cuban delegates assemble for a Constitutional Convention. Although the U.S. government recognizes Cuba's right to independence, the Platt Amendment is imposed in order to limit Cuban sovereignty and formally place it under U.S. supervision.

1902 – Cuban independence is declared, with Tomás Estrada Palma as the first president.

1906 – A second American intervention takes place as a result of electoral disputes between the Cuban parties.

1927–33 - After a first republican period marked by civil strife and also fraudulent elections but also by economic prosperity and improvement of the infrastructure, President Gerardo Machado, a veteran of the Wars of Independence, consolidates power in a tight-fisted dictatorship. This sets off a general revolt led by university students organized in the University Directorate, and intellectuals who had formed the clandestine ABC movement, known for its strategy of urban terrorism against the Machado dictatorship. After the Armed Forces withdraw their support for Machado he abandons power and leaves the island. American attempts at installing a provisional government are dashed by an alliance between student leaders and army sergeants who overthrow both the provisional government and the established officer class of the Cuban Army. Dr. Ramon Grau San Martin, radical nationalist Antonio Guiteras and Army sergeant Fulgencio Batista emerge as the leaders of what Cubans refer to as the '1933 Revolution.' Batista eventually overthrows both Grau and Guiteras, with the latter later on dying in an attempt to ignite a revolt against Batista's rule.

1933–40 - Batista rules Cuba from the Columbia military base in Havana through a series of civilian presidents. Finally, one of these presidents, Federico Laredo Bru, manages to have Grau San Martin and Batista meet and reach a political agreement to end revolutionary activity in the country and begin a normalized electoral process.

1940 – The Constitution of 1940 is drafted and approved by the Cuban people.

1940–44 - Batista is elected president and rules Cuba during this period.

1944–48 - Ramon Grau San Martin is elected president.

1948–52 - Carlos Prío Socarras is elected president.

1952 – Three months before general elections are to be held Batista overthrows Prío and establishes a new dictatorship.

1953 – Led by Fidel Castro, about a 100 Cuban youths attack the Moncada barracks in eastern Cuba in a failed attempt to ignite an uprising against the government. Many are killed but Fidel Castro survives and is imprisoned.

1955 – A general amnesty is declared for all political prisoners, and Fidel Castro is released. Batista and the opposition engage in negotiations of which the general amnesty is part. However, both parties fail to reach an agreement, with a significant part of the opposition becoming radicalized in the process.

1956 – Castro land in eastern Cuba leading a small group of armed followers and reaches sanctuary in the Sierra Maestra.

1957 – A group of students and activists of the Autentico Party attack the Presidential Palace in Havana in a failed attempt to assassinate Batista. The result is that the

leaders of the opposition to the Batista dictatorship who could have been an alternative to Castro are killed.

1959 – After a series of military setbacks, with half the country falling into rebel hands, Batista leaves Cuba and Castro takes over.

1959–61 - Castro consolidates power, begins radical revolutionary measures, ignites a growing confrontation with the United States, and suppresses fundamental freedoms. An American-backed invasion force composed of Cuban exiles is defeated at the Bay of Pigs. Thousands of Cubans are executed or imprisoned for their opposition to the Regime. Thousands of others begin leaving the island and seeking refuge in different countries, but mostly the United States.

1959-65 - As Castro develops a Communist system in Cuba, thousands of small farmers, students and workers take up arms against the regime, mostly in the central highlands. Castro manages to put down the uprising in what the revolutionary government will later on concede was a ‘civil war.’ Cuban exiles, often with CIA support, carry out small commando raids against the island’s coastal installations. The Castro Regime also supports guerrilla groups in most Latin American countries.

1965-70 – Thousands of Cubans leave the island through the Camarioca boatlift. Thousands of Cubans will leave the island through the Freedom Flights to the United States, which are to follow the Camarioca boatlift.

1968-70 - Castro eliminates the last vestiges of private ownership in the island. His projected plan to have 10 million ton sugar harvest in 1970 fails. During this period, three campesino leaders, Amancio Mosquera, Vicente Mendez and Jose Rodriguez Perez successively attempt to return to Cuba with their followers to reignite the armed uprisings against the Regime, but fail, losing their lives in the process. All three become folk heroes for the Cuban exile community.

1970–80 - Faced by the dismal failure of the Cuban economy, Castro fully embraces the Soviet model. American setbacks in Southeast Asia embolden the Castro Regime, which decides to intervene militarily in Africa in spite of a continuing process of rapprochement with the United States. The Sandinista victory in Nicaragua gives Castro his first revolutionary success in Latin America. In 1979 Castro is elected president of the Non Aligned Movement. During this time radical Cuban exiles carry out a strategy of attacks against Cuban embassies, diplomats, ships and airplanes around the world, known as “Guerra por los Caminos del Mundo,” or “War Around the World.”

1978-80 - As a result of secret negotiations with the US government and public negotiations with members of the Cuban exile community, thousands of exiles return to Cuba to visit their families.

1980 – Thousands of Cubans seek refuge in the Peruvian Embassy, triggering the Mariel boatlift. Afterwards, Castro reduces the amount of exiles allowed to visit Cuba, as he briefly experiments with economic reforms consisting of decentralization, material incentives for workers and open markets where farmers can sell their produce.

1980-90 - The Soviet and Cuban-backed Sandinista government in Nicaragua confronts the US-backed Contra rebels, while in El Salvador and Guatemala US backed government's fight against Soviet and Cuban-backed Marxist guerrillas. In Angola, the US and South African-backed UNITA guerrillas fight against the Soviet and Cuban-backed MPLA government. The peace agreements in Central America and southwest Africa that take place between 1988 and 1990 put an end to these conflicts. The Cuban American National Foundation is created by a small group of Cuban exile businessmen in 1980.

Mid 1980s – The Cuban dissident movement begins to organize and grow. The US government begins broadcasts of its Radio Marti station, aimed at the Cuban people.

1989-91 - The Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc fall apart, thrusting Cuba into its worst economic crisis ever. A group of Cuban Army and intelligence officers, led by Gen. Arnaldo Ochoa, are arrested and charged with corruption. Four of them, including Ochoa, are executed.

1989-94 - The power of the Cuban American National Foundation increases dramatically in Washington D.C. as Congress passes the Torricelli Bill, tightening the US embargo on the island. The first Cuban Americans begin to be elected to the US Congress.

1993 – The Cuban economy is dollarized.

1994 – The Cuban Coast Guard sinks a tugboat full of men, women and children as it attempts to leave the island. Dozens are killed as the boat is rammed and its decks sprayed with water from high-powered hoses. Thousands of Cubans take to the streets of Havana in spontaneous protests calling for the end of the Regime. The protests are put down by the government, which begins a new raft exodus, while simultaneously carrying out some small economic reforms.

1995 – Exile militants who had embraced armed struggle against the regime renounce violence and lead a peaceful flotilla into Cuban waters. The Cuban Coast Guard rams the lead boat in the flotilla once it enters Cuban waters, causing an international incident.

1995-96 - The Cuban dissident movement becomes more assertive in its challenge to the Castro Regime. The disparate groups achieve unity within the umbrella of Concilio Cubano, or Cuban Council. Castro cracks down on their planned national meetings, while two US based civilian aircraft belonging to the Hermanos al Rescate

exile group are shot down by the Cuban government over international waters as they carried out a search and rescue mission for Cuban rafters. As a result of this, President Bill Clinton signs into law the Helms-Burton bill, which further tightens the economic embargo on the island.

1998 – Pope John Paul II visits Cuba. Thousands gather to see him across the country, often chanting “Freedom! Freedom!” Emboldened by the papal visit, Cuban dissident groups become increasingly active.

1999 – The annual meeting of the Iberoamerican heads of state takes place in Havana. In spite of arrests, dissidents successfully carry out protest demonstrations and many Iberoamerican foreign ministers and presidents meet with dissident leaders. Two American fishermen find Elián Gonzalez, child survivor of a shipwrecked group of Cubans who were attempting to arrive at the United States, off the Florida coast. The battle over the custody of Elián becomes a major controversy involving the Cuban and US governments and the Cuban exile community.

2000 – George W. Bush is elected President of the United States, with the Cuban vote in Florida playing a key role.

2001-02 - Led by Catholic opposition leader Oswaldo Paya, thousands of Cubans sign the Varela Project petition asking for legal and constitutional reform of the Cuban system. Paya is awarded the Sakharov Award by the European Parliament for his efforts.

2003 – In spite of ongoing economic aid negotiations with the European Union, the Castro Regime cracks down on the growing dissident movement. Seventy-five activists, most of them active in the Varela Project signature drive, are arrested and sentenced to prolonged prison terms. As a result, the European Union imposes sanctions on the Castro Regime.

APPENDIX

1.1.1

A LA OPINIÓN PÚBLICA

Juan Antonio Rubio Padilla.

27 de Abril de 1961

Durante más de un año he guardado hermético silencio en público. Nunca quise asumir la responsabilidad de revelar ningún aspecto de las discrepancias que me han mantenido voluntariamente alejado de la dirección de la lucha contra el comunismo en Cuba.

Pero ya no hay secreto alguno que guardar. La Bahía de Cochinos ha sido la culminación desastrosa de una política cuyas interioridades han saltado a ocupar la primera página de los periódicos. Y creo que ya ha llegado la hora de que cada uno asuma las responsabilidades que le correspondan de acuerdo con la conducta y decisiones de cada cual en los momentos en que la suerte de millares de cubanos y de Cuba se estaba decidiendo en el secreto de reuniones que muchos creían que iban a permanecer siempre en la obscuridad y ocultas a la luz pública.

La gravedad de la situación cubana y la urgencia desesperada de darle solución rápida, al propio tiempo que el peligro de que se adopten soluciones festinadas y falsas, me obliga a hacer pública mi posición, no sólo con el propósito de dar a conocer mis puntos de vista sino con la esperanza de que ellos puedan contribuir a rectificaciones fundamentales, a una orientación correcta de la conducta de los cubanos en esta coyuntura histórica y a evitar la repetición de los métodos que llevarían seguramente a los mismos resultados que ahora todos lamentan y condenan.

En mayo de 1960, después de largas discusiones con los elementos norteamericanos que intervenían en estas cosas, me negué a formar parte del F.R.D. El desacuerdo partió del criterio fundamental mantenido por mí a través de todo este proceso: La ayuda de los Estados Unidos a Cuba en su lucha contra el comunismo no es una obra de generosidad o de caridad que los cubanos tenemos que aceptar con las condiciones unilaterales que los Estados Unidos nos impongan. La necesidad de derrotar al comunismo en Cuba es tan vital para los Estados Unidos como para Cuba.

No hace mucho días que el Presidente Kennedy repetía todavía que el conflicto de Cuba era problema entre cubanos. Sobre esa base falsa era imposible entenderse bien y, de hecho, el entendimiento que se produjo no pudo terminar de peor manera. Es en el penúltimo discurso del Presidente Kennedy cuando, por fin, se ha confesado, por primera vez, que la seguridad de este país está en peligro por la dominación comunista en Cuba.

Pocas veces en la historia se dan circunstancias internacionales en las cuales de una manera tan clara se vea la necesidad de la colaboración de dos pueblos en un solo propósito. La Providencia ha dispuesto las cosas de tal manera que Cuba no puede

deshacerse del comunismo sin la ayuda norteamericana, al propio tiempo que los Estados Unidos no pueden derrotar al comunismo en Cuba sin la colaboración de los cubanos que muestren al mundo su deseo, su voluntad y su decisión de pelear contra el comunismo y optar libremente por la democracia.

Pero esta colaboración leal y sincera, tan urgente y necesaria, tiene que ser establecida en el plano de grandeza moral con que los Estados Unidos han colaborado con otros países de Europa y Asia, inclusive con naciones enemigas derrotadas en el campo de batalla, sin pretender condicionar la ayuda a imposiciones políticas o tratamientos humillantes para la dignidad nacional.

GOBIERNO SIN SECTARISMO

Si los Estados Unidos quieren ayudar a Cuba desinteresadamente no tienen más camino que aceptar como patrón ideológico el que los cubanos se dieron a sí mismos en la Constitución de 1940, y propiciar un gobierno provisional basado en la Constitución, respetuoso de ella y sin sectarismo político, que presida unas elecciones generales libres. Y después, que los cubanos vayan democráticamente a las reformas que quieran.

Pero si los Estados Unidos pretendieran influenciar los acontecimientos cubanos, sería todavía admisible que trataran de exportar a Cuba lo que practican aquí. No podríamos quejarnos, moralmente hablando, de que quisieran para nosotros lo mismo que quieren para ellos. Pero que una de las cosas que pretendan imponernos como condición para ayudarnos contra el comunismo sea que aceptemos para después un régimen socialista, que no quieren para ellos, resulta una agresión inaceptable.

Sobre estas bases falsas las discusiones fueron estériles y las discrepancias pudieran sintetizarse así:

1) No acepté nunca que Cuba pudiera salvarse del comunismo por la acción de los cubanos solamente, aunque éstos tuvieran toda clase de ayuda en armas, campos de entrenamiento, propaganda. Confundir a Cuba con la Guatemala de 1954 siempre me pareció absurdo, faltando un ejército regular que en un momento determinado se insubordinara como en Guatemala. Los comunistas aprovecharon muy bien la experiencia guatemalteca y lo primero que hicieron fué destruir nuestro ejército. La ayuda, por mucha que fuera, tenía que ser comprometida formalmente por funcionarios del gobierno de los Estados Unidos y no por frases ambiguas de personajes misteriosos con nombres falsos que no tuvieron nunca identificación legítima.

Nunca ningún cubano pudo lograr saber lo que harían los Estados Unidos una vez lanzada una invasión, si ésta carecía de elementos suficientes para vencer. Aceptar la responsabilidad de lanzar a los cubanos sin seguridad sobre la ayuda ulterior, era correr el riesgo que se corrió. Y esta seguridad no la hubieran podido dar nunca las personas del nivel con quienes se trataban estas cosas.

2) Me negué a tratar con personajes de categoría inferior, irresponsabilizados con el uso de nombres falsos, y aconsejé que así lo hicieran también, a algunos de los actuales dirigentes del F.R.D.

3) Me negué a aceptar la ideología del movimiento tal como se plasmó en los primeros momentos y que después se agravó con la entrada de elementos abiertamente filo-comunistas.

Una guerra que comienza por admitir que el adversario tiene la razón, es guerra perdida por falta de moral. Y si el socialismo es bueno y la revolución social era necesaria en Cuba, ¿por qué combatirla? Y si el régimen de la libertad, la propiedad privada, la libre empresa y la democracia es malo, ¿por qué defenderlo?

4) De esta política izquierdista, socializante y fidelista se derivó un desdén por los cubanos amigos sinceros de los Estados Unidos y admiradores de su régimen social y político. Querer para Cuba lo mismo que existe en los Estados Unidos se consideró reaccionario y conservador. Se pretendió presentarlos como aspirando a imponer a Cuba un salto atrás. Y si ser partidario de la democracia, del alto standard de vida popular y del florecimiento económico al estilo americano, donde no hay una sola empresa propiedad del Estado, es ser conservador, habrá que concluir que lo que Cuba necesita es un gobierno conservador.

Todas las discrepancias hubieran podido superarse de haberse establecido desde el principio el trato directo con funcionarios responsables que pudieran adquirir compromisos formales con los cubanos, garantizando toda la ayuda militar necesaria para ganar la guerra; la ayuda para reconstruir económicamente a Cuba y la estabilidad garantizada y ordenada de un gobierno provisional imparcial, no revolucionario, que llevara al país al ritmo constitucional y democrático.

UN MEMORANDUM DEL 7 DE OCTUBRE

Como prueba de que estos criterios no son postdesastre, paso a copiar algunos párrafos del Memorándum que a principios de octubre de 1960 le entregué a un funcionario de los que intervenían en estos asuntos de Cuba, con motivo de un intento más, el tercero, para que me sumara al F.R.D., a lo cual me negué, una vez más, y en esta ocasión, por escrito:

LA NO INTERVENCIÓN FAVORECE SOLO A RUSIA

Sin embargo, vista objetivamente, la no-intervención le es útil sólo a Rusia, que puede apoderarse de un país latinoamericano, a un grado tal, que sólo puede ser rescatado de sus garas, por la acción de los Estados Unidos, y como éstos no pueden intervenir, el país estará definitivamente perdido y la situación de Estados Unidos se habrá agravado con la no-intervención.

"El anti-intervencionismo consagrado en Montevideo en la II Conferencia en 1933 fue la culminación de un ciclo histórico que se cerró ese año. Para los latino-americanos la

"intervención americana" eran las intervenciones de Haití y Santo Domingo para cobrar empréstitos privados, la persecución de Sandino para instalar a los Somozas, etc., etc. Eran los años del florecimiento pleno del capitalismo liberal y del imperialismo financiero extorsionado a los latinoamericanos.

"Contra todo eso se fue gestando un sentimiento anti-intervencionista que Cuba capitaneó victoriosamente en la Conferencia de Montevideo.

"Pero los Estados Unidos que se prestaron a aceptar la imposición de Montevideo ya empezaba a ser los Estados Unidos de Roosevelt y se empezaba a operar una de las transformaciones más maravillosas del siglo XX y probablemente de la historia universal.

"Al ser obligados a hacer la guerra abierta, lo mejor sería ir derechamente a deshacer de una vez y para siempre, el viejo prejuicio anti-intervencionista, mostrando cuanto antes y de la manera más clara y contundente, la verdad en toda su grandeza de la intención real de los Estados Unidos al intervenir en Cuba: ayudar a Cuba liberarse del comunismo, ayudar a Cuba a reconstruirse económicamente, ayudar a Cuba a restablecer su vida democrática, civilizada y pacífica".

"Y como todo eso se va a convertir en hechos elocuentes y convincentes por sí mismos, la intervención en Cuba pasará en la mente de los latinoamericanos a desplazar la imagen de la intervención a lo Haití, Santo Domingo y Nicaragua. Y cuando la intervención deje de ser una cosa mala para ser una cosa buena, el fantasma habrá muerto.

"Es preciso que los cubanos que le reconozcan jerarquía moral a los Estados Unidos para ayudarnos a derrotar al comunismo, se la reconozcan también para ayudarnos a reconstruir la democracia, sin que tengan por qué avergonzarse de defender después en público, lo que ahora se acepta en privado.

"Es indispensable y esencial que los cubanos que se asocien ahora a los Estados Unidos para salvar a Cuba crean de verdad que los Estados Unidos no quieren conquistar a Cuba, ni someterla a su soberanía, ni destruir las raíces culturales e históricas que la consagran como una nacionalidad propia que merece ser independiente y soberana que ellos por instinto de conservación no podrán tolerarnos nunca, y es convertir nuestra isla en un gigantesco porta-aviones para entregarlo como base de operaciones a otra potencia que quiera destruir a los Estados Unidos. Que es solo porque ese es el uso que precisamente ha hecho Castro de nuestra soberanía, por lo que ellos se ven obligados a actuar en Cuba.

"Si del futuro común que se avecina para Cuba y Estados Unidos sale una Cuba libre, ordenada y próspera, los Estados Unidos habrán vencido definitivamente los prejuicios y las reservas de todo un continente y abierto el corazón, la voluntad y el cerebro de 190.000.000 de latinoamericanos para la colaboración y la amistad.

"Y no son sólo los millones que se suman a esta causa, sino los millones que se restan a la causa de Rusia y del comunismo, porque como han evolucionado las cosas a causa de

la revolución cubana, todo el Continente luce en actitud hostil contra los Estados Unidos y haciéndole el juego a Rusia.

FALTA DE UNA POLÍTICA AFIRMATIVA

"Contra la ideología socialista, anti-imperialista, anti-norteamericana y anti-democrática de la revolución cubana, no se adoptó una política afirmativa de las tesis contrarias que constituyen, precisamente, el gran mensaje de fe en el futuro que los EE.UU. tienen para el mundo entero y que ha dado resultados tan estupendos en Alemania, Italia y Japón, precisamente en las naciones derrotadas en la última guerra y que estuvieron bajo la protección transitoria de los EE. UU.

"Frente a la revolución cubana se adoptó la política errónea de concederle la razón histórica de ser, y se le admitió todo menos que fuera pro-rusa, y ha bastado que elementos revolucionarios, socialistas y anti-imperialistas (léase anti-EE. UU.) se llamaran anti-comunistas para admitirlos en la dirección y el destino futuro de Cuba.

Estos elementos revolucionarios han estado siempre en la mejor disposición de dejarse ayudar por los EE. UU. para derribar a Castro, pero siempre sin abjurar de sus propósitos revolucionarios, socialistas y anti-norteamericanos".

LA ÚNICA GARANTÍA

La raíz ideológica común es la única garantía cierta de vinculación efectiva y de confianza absoluta hasta donde es posible buscar garantía de la que pueda fiarse racionalmente.

"Pero si en el momento difícil los aliados fáciles no tienen la convicción profunda, sincera y hasta apasionada de que la gran causa que defienden los EE. UU. en Cuba no es una causa pequeña al servicio de intereses inconfesables, sino que es la causa de la libertad del hombre sobre la tierra, de su derecho a adorar a Dios en el altar que le plazca y a vivir la vida en una sociedad asentada en los valores morales del cristianismo, si no creen en todo eso muy sinceramente, fallarán,"

"Se explica claramente que en una concepción a lo Guatemala de la acción americana en Cuba, la técnica de su desarrollo en la práctica tenía que tener y ha tenido algunas características de las cuales se han derivado consecuencias muy negativas.

"Una de esas características ha sido no usar como contacto o estabón con los cubanos a ningún funcionario responsable o conocido del gobierno norteamericano, y de hecho sabemos cómo se ha eludido sistemáticamente tratar sobre un asunto tan gravísimo y de tanta responsabilidad, directamente".

«Los EE. UU. mantienen inflexiblemente una línea de conducta: Actuar como si no existieran cubanos lo suficientemente leales, discretos y honorables con quienes se pueda tratar responsablemente este asunto ya partiendo de esta base, se ha mantenido la técnica

de no fiarse integramente de ninguno, para lo cual la primera prueba de desconfianza se exhibe al pretender que los que quieran participar en el esfuerzo anti-comunista, tengan que tratar con el pequeño grupo de funcionarios con nombre cambiado o quedar fuera del esfuerzo común».

«Guatemala ha sido el precedente que más ha influenciado la manera de pensar y decidir ahora sobre Cuba y, si todavía se está seguro de que los acontecimientos van a suceder como se ha estado planeando durante un año, y que ni siquiera atacada la base de Guantánamo los EE.UU. intervendrían, entonces quizá no valga la pena revisar los planes, ni los contactos, ni la integración del futuro gobierno, ni nada, y que sigan las cosas como van».

"Pero si las cosas no van a ser como en Guatemala y la mano de los EE. UU. va a tener que aparecer públicamente y el gobierno provisional va a tener que ser un aliado leal y consecuente de los EE. UU., y lo que suceda con Cuba liberada va a ser estimado por todo el mundo, dentro y fuera de Cuba, como obra americana, entonces sí creemos que debe revisarse la forma de establecer las relaciones ahora con los cubanos responsables que van a dirigir la guerra y el gobierno en la paz.

"Y lo peor de todo sería que, por no decidirse a rectificar los errores pasados y admitir las realidades nuevas que llegan a paso de carga demostrando que va a haber intervención abierta, los EE. UU. se vieran obligados, por falta de tiempo para otra cosa, a afrontar la nueva situación con el equipo de hombres con que están contando ahora. Este grupo, además de los inconvenientes intrínsecos de su ideología socialista y anti-norteamericana, sería muy difícilmente atacable por los EE. UU. en caso de grave discrepancia, pues todos los considerarían como hechurá americana.

"Y si los EE. UU. a los sesenta años de haber peleado por la independencia de Cuba y de haber tenido tanto trato íntimo y amistoso con los cubanos, no tienen fe en que pueden contar con amigos leales y verdaderos en Cuba, algo muy grave estará sucediendo en la confianza en sí mismo de este país, porque si no se consideran capaces de haber creado amigos en Cuba, no los crearán en ninguna parte. Y si los han creado y existen, ¿dónde están que no cuentan con ellos?

"Desele a los amigos una forma honorable de trato y verán cómo en esta gran cruzada contra el comunismo en Cuba no sólo tendrán la gran victoria militar y política sobre los comunistas, sino que verán con enorme placer espiritual, cómo por encima de las barreras naturales de la geografía y de la lengua, la historia ha fundido dos razas, dos culturas y dos pueblos en una sola fe y en un solo propósito; y por Cuba habrá empezado la única conquista perdurable de toda América, que no podrá ser nunca conquista de las armas o del dinero, sino conquista del espíritu y del corazón. Octubre de 1960.

EL ERROR MAS GRAVE

El error más grave de toda la política americana en Cuba en los dos últimos años ha sido el pánico a la intervención, cuando Rusia lo estaba haciendo abiertamente.

Mientras la mayoría del pueblo de Cuba, engañada por Castro y por muchos políticos que traicionaron la democracia apoyando el comunismo, permaneció al lado de la revolución, los EE. UU. hicieron bien en no intervenir. Pero después que el pueblo se ha convencido por sí mismo de la realidad y se encuentra aprisionado e impotente para deshacerse del comunismo, quien lo derrote lo encontrará con los brazos abiertos, a sus libertadores y, hoy por hoy, el pueblo de Cuba no tiene otra esperanza de liberación que los EE. UU.

La historia ha querido que una desgracia sangrienta para los cubanos y humillante para los EE. UU. imponga la decisión de más envergadura en los últimos quince años de la historia de este pueblo: La liquidación de la estrategia apaciguadora que le ha permitido avances increíbles al comunismo mediante el chantaje soviético de la guerra fría. Porque la intervención americana no sólo derribará estrepitosamente al comunismo en Cuba, sino que será el "turning point" de toda la situación internacional.

Pero no sólo será la América la que se sacudirá la parálisis de miedo que le produce ahora la amezana roja, el mundo entero verá con alivio a Rusia retroceder en la guerra fría. Y ya nadie podrá borrar de la historia el hecho de que ha sido la sangre de los héroes traicionados de la Bahía de Cochinos la más prolífica del siglo XX, porque allí se originó la reacción gloriosa de Occidente Cristiano que, en una cadena de victorias, cuyo primer estabón fue la reconquista de Cuba, no se detuvo hasta incinerar las momias de Lenin y Stalin y consagrar de nuevo al culto divino la Catedral de San Basilio.

LA MEJOR SOLUCIÓN

La mejor solución para Cuba sería un gobierno provisional organizado desde ahora, integrado por cubanos no batistianos ni fidelistas, neutrales, con autoridad moral y capacidad reconocida, que restablezca la Constitución de 1940, derogue todas las leyes que se opongan a ella y remita todas las posibles reformas al gobierno y al congreso elegidos por el pueblo.

Los integrantes de este gobierno no solo deben ser ajenos a los partidos políticos o sectores llamados revolucionarios, sino que en el acto mismo de la toma de posesión deben jurar solemnemente que no aceptarán cargo público alguno, ni por elección ni por designación, durante los cuatro años que sigan a la expiración de sus mandatos provisionales. Esto debe incluir al Presidente, a los Ministros y a los Sub-Secretarios.

FIN

Miami, 27 de Abril de 1961
Juan Antonio Rubio Padilla

1.2.1

Summary Record of the Eighth Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council

Washington, October 27, 1962, 4 p.m.

The President said that the key to any letter to Khrushchev was the demand that work cease on the missile sites in Cuba. He predicted that if we make no mention of Turkey in our letter, Khrushchev will write back to us saying that if we include Turkey, then he would be prepared to settle the Cuban situation. The President said this would mean that we would lose twenty-four hours while they would continue to work on the bases and achieve an operational status for more of their missiles. He suggested that we would be willing to guarantee not to invade Cuba if the Soviet missiles were taken out.

(SOURCE: John F. Kennedy Library, Transcriptions of Records of NSC and EXCOMM Meetings, October, 1962)

1.2.2

Telegram of President Kennedy's Reply to Chairman Khrushchev's Letter of October 26, 1962

Washington, October 27, 1962, 8:05 p.m.

1015. Following message from President to Khrushchev should be delivered as soon as possible to highest available Soviet official. Text has been handed Soviet Embassy in Washington and has been released to press:

"Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have read your letter of October 26th with great care and welcomed the statement of your desire to seek a prompt solution to the problem. The first thing that needs to be done, however, is for work to cease on offensive missile bases in Cuba and for all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use to be rendered inoperable, under effective United Nations arrangements.

Assuming this is done promptly, I have given my representatives in New York instructions that will permit them to work out this weekend--in cooperation with the Acting Secretary General and your representative--an arrangement for a permanent solution to the Cuban problem along the lines suggested in your letter of October 26th. As I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals--which seem generally acceptable as I understand them--are as follows:

1) You would agree to remove these weapons systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba.

2) We, on our part, would agree--upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments--(a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and (b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba. I am confident that other nations of the Western Hemisphere would be prepared to do likewise.

If you will give your representative similar instructions, there is no reason why we should not be able to complete these arrangements and announce them to the world within a couple of days. The effect of such a settlement on easing world tensions would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding 'other armaments', as proposed in your second letter which you made public./2/ I would like to say again that the United States is very much interested in reducing tensions and halting the arms race; and if your letter signifies that you are prepared to discuss a detente affecting NATO and the Warsaw Pact, we are quite prepared to consider with our allies any useful proposals.

But the first ingredient, let me emphasize, is the cessation of work on missile sites in Cuba and measures to render such weapons inoperable, under effective international guarantees. The continuation of this threat, or a prolonging of this discussion concerning Cuba by linking these problems to the broader questions of European and world security, would surely lead to an intensification of the Cuban crisis and a grave risk to the peace of the world. For this reason I hope we can quickly agree along the lines in this letter and in your letter of October 26th.

/s/ John F. Kennedy"

Rusk

(SOURCE: John F. Kennedy Library: **Kennedy - Khrushchev Exchanges During the "13 Days"** These texts are from versions published in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963: Volume VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges* (Washington D.C. : U.S. Department of State, 1996). Source notes and footnotes added to the published version have been removed.

1.2.3

Nikita Khrushchev's Message to John Kennedy

October 28, 1962

[Moscow domestic service in Russian at 1404 GMT on 28 October broadcasts a Khrushchev message to Kennedy. He declares:]

I received your message of 27 October and I am grateful for your appreciation of the responsibility you bear for world peace and security.

The Soviet government has ordered the dismantling of bases and the dispatch of equipment to the U.S.S.R. A few days ago, Havana was shelled, allegedly by Cuban emigres. Yet someone must have armed them for this purpose. Even a British cargo ship was shelled. Cubans want to be masters of their country. The threat of invasion has upset the Cuban people.

I wish to again state that the Soviet government has offered Cuba only defensive weapons. I appreciate your assurance that the United States will not invade Cuba. Hence, we have ordered our officers to stop building bases, dismantle the equipment, and send it back home. This can be done under U.N. supervision.

We must not allow the situation to deteriorate, (but) eliminate hotbeds of tension, and we must see to it that no other conflicts occur which might lead to a world nuclear war.

We are ready to continue to exchange views on relations between NATO and the Warsaw Bloc, disarmament, and other issues of peace and war.

(SOURCE: John F. Kennedy Library **Letter From Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 28, 1962**)

OFFICIAL ENGLISH TEXT OF KHRUSHCHEV MESSAGE

MOSCOW TASS IN ENGLISH TO EUROPE NO.11, 28 OCT 62)

1.3.1

Miami Herald
September 1, 1964

Exiles Claim They Raided Radar Station

Cuban exile leader Manuel Artime said Monday night anti-Castro commandos destroyed a radar station manned by three Russian officers and 150 Cuban soldiers in Southeastern Cuba in a dawn attack Sunday.

The raiding party struck by sea from a secret base, said Artime, secretary of the Revolutionary Recovery Movement.

The 68-minute attack began at 6 a.m. against the installation at Cabo Crus on the south coast of Oriente Province, Artime said.

He said he had no reports of casualties either among the attackers or the defenders, but that the radar site was destroyed.

According to Artime, the radar station was responsible for intercepting many boats carrying refugees fleeing Cuba.

Artime said the attackers traveled in two boats and landed on a reef one mile away from the radar site. He did not specifically know how many men were in the raiding party.

Some of the attackers walked a mile to their objective while others carried out a diversionary attack, Artime said.

The exile leader spoke at the home of a Cuban friend in Panama.

Artime declined to give details of the operation including questions of whether the attackers remained in Cuba or made their way back to the unspecified place whence the raid was launched.