

Castro and Cuba – Part 1
Emergence of Authoritarian
Regime in Cuba

The situation before 1933

- Before 1902, Cuba was a Spanish colony.
- Two wars of independence:
 - First war of Independence (1868-78) against Spain, unsuccessful
 - Second war of Independence (1895-98) led by **Jose Marti**- rebels close to winning
- 1898- U.S. declares war on Spain (Spanish-Amer. War); Spain defeated; gave up Cuba Dec. 1898
- 1901- Cubans replaced one colonial power for another
 - **Platt Amendment**- USA claims right to intervene in Cuba's affairs
- USA did not grant Cuba formal independence until 1902
- 1902-21 – USA intervened militarily 4 times to ensure that Cuban government followed policies that were good for US investments
- Cuba's politicians - corrupt; elections often rigged ; prompted radical student movements (1923, and 1927-33) based on Marti's radical **anti-imperialism**

José Martí



www.BELPOZ.com - It's on Fouye...

The Platt Amendment



**Cuba becomes an American PROTECTORATE –
kind of like a little brother**

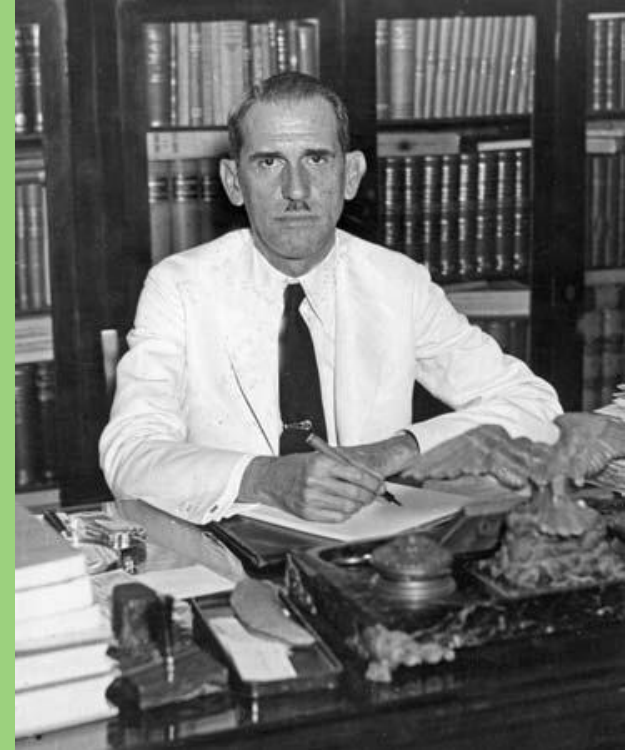
US military would rule Cuba for a while

US could intervene if deemed necessary

US received naval base

• **The Revolution of 1933-34**

- **From 1927** - Cuba was ruled by a dictator Gerardo Machado, but protests and a general strike in 1933 forced him to flee to the US
- USA helped put together provisional government headed by **Carlos Manuel de Cespedes**- however, protests and strikes continued ; 4th September army staged a coup- proclaiming a new provisional government led by **Ramon Grau San Martin**, a university professor
- Grau's government promised national sovereignty, a new constitution, democracy, and reforms- abolished Platt Amendment ; U.S. began to suggest military intervention



• **Batista counter-revolution, 1934**

- Again a military revolution, led by **Fulgencio Batista**
- U.S. did not recognize Grau's government due to announced reforms so split developed between moderates (Batista) and more radical left (**Antonio Guiteras**).
- Batista met w/ U.S. ambassador who persuaded Batista to use the power of the military in order to protect U.S. interest in Cuba



• **Puppet Presidents 1934-40**

- Batista and the military were the real power behind seven civilian puppet presidents, who could only enact measures approved by Batista and the USA
- Batista crushed left opposition
- After 1935 strikes, President Mendieta and Batista imposed martial law- strike leaders arrested, unions banned
- Opposition leader Guiteras shot dead by soldiers as he tried to flee to Mexico; many demonstrators executed by firing squad
- Grau formed a new middle class movement- Autenticos; the communists renamed to Partido Socialista Popular (PSP)



Mendieta and Batista



• **New Constitution, new coup 1940-52**

- Nov. 1939- Batista organized elections for a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution- Authenticos won 41 out of 76 seats
- New constitution passed in Aug. 1940, **Batista elected president in Oct. 1940**
- Due to economic issues, Authenticos candidate won the election of 1944, but Batista still ruled behind the scenes w/ help of the USA
- Grau's government 1944-48 engaged in corrupt practices and abandoned reforms- disappointing party members who expected social reforms
- According to **Julia Sweig**, Cuban government of 1948-52 became one of the most corrupt and undemocratic in Cuba's history prior to 1952 elections, Batista led another coup on **March 10 1952**, cancelled the elections and ruled until 1959

Batista family



What were the most significant stages in Castro's struggle against Batista's dictatorship in 1953-59?

- Batista's coup in 1952 met little resistance, as he promised election for 1954
- **Fidel Castro**, very determined to oppose the coup
- **Moncada Attack**
 - Fidel, younger brother Raul, and 165 youths attacked Moncada army barracks to obtain weapons-but it failed/half of them killed, wounded, or arrested. Castro and a few others gave themselves up and were put on trial with 100 others; Fidel took on their defense.
 - Only 26 were found guilty; most treated with leniency
 - Fidel got 15 years; Raul 13.
 - During trial Castro's "**History will absolve me**" speech and became well known
 - After 1954 election-Batista returned to repression and some opposition formed and opened way for armed opposition
 - **Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (DRE) and Organizacion Authentica (OA)**
 - However-it was Castro, who in the end organized the movement that ended Batista dictatorship

Castro (far right) and others who were arrested





• The 26th July Movement:

- May 15 1955- Raul, Fidel and many others released from prison. Batista tried to improve his image
- Immediately they started planning July 26th-however in July Castro and his supporters decided to go to Mexico to plan Batista's overthrow

• Preparing the Revolution, Mexico 1955-56

- Castro and group stayed in Mexico for almost a year, raising money plant manifestos

Ernesto "Che" Guevara- became a loyal collaborator and later became an important international symbol for rebellion

Feb. 1956-Castro began to train his army-but Mexican government discovered their plans-Castro, Che and others arrested-one released-continued plans w/greater secrecy
-> they left Mexico on Nov. 25 1956 for Cuba





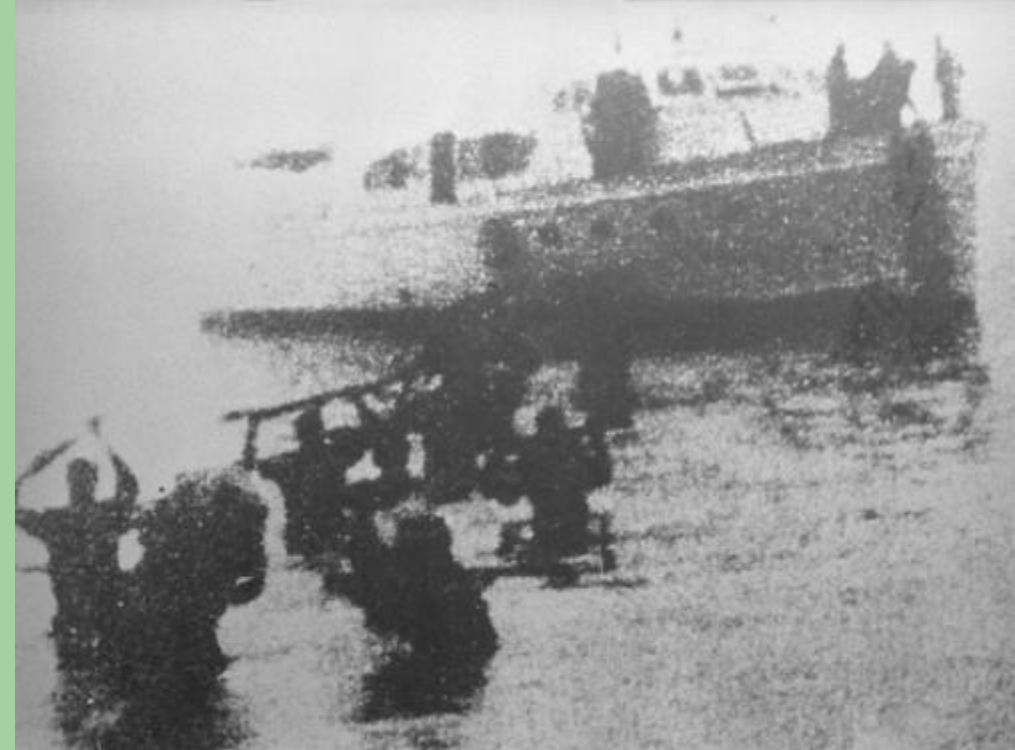
- **From Mexico to Sierra Maestra**

- Plan to move forward w/armed rebellion on Nov. 30th, however Castro's forces arrived late, and those in Cuba were already crushed by Batista
- **Dec. 2nd 1956**-Castro and 81 revolutionaries landed in Cuba and were attacked by Batista forces upon arrival-after 2 days of fighting-only 16 of Castro's group remained free and alive and much of their weapons were lost





- The surviving **Fidelistas** retreated to Sierra Maestra mountains, where Castro organized guerrilla warfare
- Batista depopulated the area and encouraged bombers and paramilitary death squads (Los Tigres)
- Guerrilla attacks by July 26 movement mostly successful-> attracted recruit from the local population-Castro organized bigger offensives
- Many people thought Castro had been killed (regime reported so)
- **Herbert Matthews**- NYT foreign correspondent met Castro; he reported on Castro's success, which encouraged Batista opponents
- 1957-58-Castro's military grew significantly; they showed respect and sympathy for the poor peasants, who gave them valuable support



Herbert Matthews and Castro



• **The Urban Resistance**

- Castro also organized a “civic resistance movement” on a national scale to gather wider support; established first in Havana -> person in control was **Frank Pais**
- In July 1957 – Pais was working to organize civic revolutionary front to force Batista from power-he was gunned down by Batista police
- In early 1958, the communist PSP gave its support to Castro-after which Castro started discussing plans for a revolutionary general strike in the cities; **Faustino Perez-** new leader of civic resistance
- Perez and Castro led the strike and signed a manifesto “**Total War Against Tyranny**” – declaring it the final struggle against Batista
- Date of strike-**April 9 1958**-police were ready and the uprising was easily put down
- This failure led Castro to concentrate on guerilla warfare, however, the working class remained an important part of the movement

Perez and Castro



• The Final Stage

- **Feb. 28 1958**-Castro's July 26 Mov. Announced a war on property and production in order to isolate Batista by hitting the economic elite
- By mid 1958, 4 other guerilla fronts opened up-gaining more recruits for the July 26th Mov.
- July 1958-Batista launched “**liquidation campaign**” to crush Castro's forces (involving 12,000 troops). Castro had about 5,000.
- July 1958-Opposition leaders met in Venezuela to organize a united front against Batista-”**Pact of Caracas**”-recognized Castro as principle leader of the anti-Batista movement

• **Castro's Counter Offensive**

- By 1958 (August) the government offensive had collapsed-important turning point-Castro's forces launch a counter offensive
- By the end of 1958, Castro's guerilla army was 50,000-which provoked several military plots against Batista
- New Years Eve, 1958, Batista resigned and fled; his army unit ceased to offer ad resistance to Castro
- **January 1st 1959** (after an unsuccessful US-backed coup), command of army passed to **Colonel Ramon Barguin**-ordered a cease fire
- Castro made a speech making it clear that the USA would not be allowed to dominate Cuba
- **Jan. 8th 1959**-Castro arrived to Havana to cheering crowds







How significant was the role of ideology in Castro's rise to power in 1959?

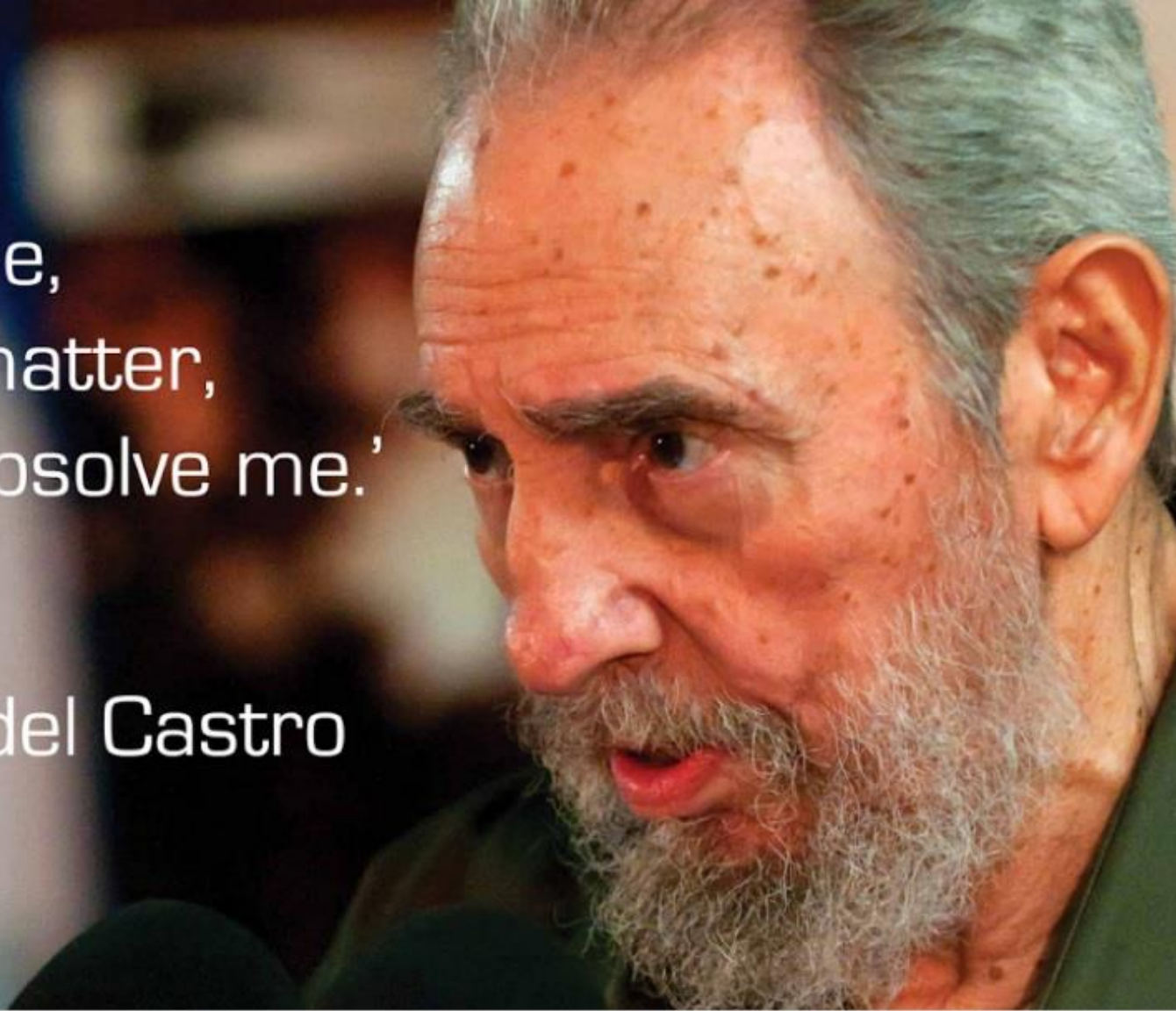
- Although Castro adopted aspects of communist ideology, after 1960 **Richard Gott** states that nationalism was more important in his ideology than socialism
- Main factor in Castro's rise to power-guerilla war against Batista, the stated aims (published in manifestos) were also important for gaining public support

Manifestos

- Castro saw manifestos as essential-"Propaganda....soul of every struggle"
- **Herbert Matthews**- Castro inspired by patriotism, similar to Marti and Antonio Guiteras
- Guiteras advocated program of radical reforms with vague socialist undertones
- Castro's first manifesto "**Manifesto of the Revolutionaries of Moncada to the Nation**" – shows these nationalist traditions - dated July 23, 1953-talks about independence from foreign control, social justice based on econ. and industrial modernization, and restoration of 1940 Constitution
- Castro's second manifesto "**History will absolve me**" speech of Oct 16, 1953, developed these ideas further-promises of agrarian reform, rent reduction, industrial devel., expansion of education and health care, and taking control of public utilities, which were mostly in hand of US companies
- Two formal "**Manifesto of July 26th movement**" – issued while in Mexico, showed no signs of communism or Marxism- lacked nay systematic idea or ideology

'Condemn me,
it does not matter,
history will absolve me.'

Fidel Castro



- During 1957-58 in the Sierra- constant stream of Manifestos-offered broad outlines of policies and reforms
- A manifesto issued on March 12 1958- preparation for 9 April general strike- repeated priority stated ideas -> none of the manifestos contained any radical socialist policies
- It wasn't until 1958 that serious contacts between Castro and Cuban communists began

• **Nationalism and Cubiana**

- Main inspiration for Castro's ideology was the more radical version of Cuban nationalism-ideas of **cubiana**-Castro believed that July 26th Movement needed to achieve Cuban independence and modernization
- Castro's ideas prior to 1959 appear less radical and more nationalistic than Che Guevara's or Raul's, and even they (according to **Sebastian Balfour**) were unorthodox communists.

Why was Castro successful in his bid to overthrow Batista?

- **Military and Political Factors**

- Quality of Castro's commanders, including **Che Guevara, Raul Castro and Camilo Cienfuegos**
- Geography-they started organizing areas with few Rural Guard outposts
- Batista eventually had to move guards outside of cities allowing opposition to mobilize in urban areas too
- Batista's brutality and repression increased opposition to him and brought additional support for Castro

- **Economic Development**

- Between 1952-1954, price of sugar declined – triggering first of many recessions of Cuban economy
- Effects of 1934 trade treaty with the U.S. – contributed to the inability of Cuban industry to develop – growing unemployment (by 1957 17% unemployed)



• Role of the USA

- In 1957- US wanted to prevent Castro from coming to power and to protect its own interests – told Batista to give away to caretaker gov.
- **Dec 9, 1957** a financier sent by US state Dept. tried but failed to persuade Batista to retire – Us reduced its support for Batista; placed an arms embargo on both sides

• Popular Support

- Increasing popularity of July 26th Movement – rebels followed policies of treating peasants with respect, paying for food and helping with harvests – gained them considerable support and it helped them remain hidden from Batista forces
- Later support spread to urban areas and middle class
- Much of support due to Castro's skillful use of **radio** and the press – he stage publicity stunts (Herbert Matthews)
- Regular broadcasts and **Radio Rebelde**- increasingly popular and helped to build support
- By 1959- his use of modern mass media had won the rebels considerable support

Castro

Consolidation and Maintenance of Power

How did Castro Consolidate his power in the period 1959-75?

- In Jan. 1959 new government installed
 - **President:** moderate judge **Manuel Urrutia**: presided over a cabinet; Prime minister **Jose Miro Cardona**
 - Real power lay with Castro- appointed commander in chief
 - TV broadcast trials of Batista political supporters- police and tortures / many found guilty and executed
- **Dual Power- January-November 1959**
 - **Jan. 1959-** Castro formed **OPRC (Office of Revolutionary Plans and Coordination)**- unofficial committee with his advisors. Including Raul and Che -created a situation of dual power between ORPC and cabinet-ORPC pushed revolution that Castro wanted
 - Feb-Castro became the PM, in April he announced **suspension of elections**; in May **INRA (National institute of Agrarian Reform)** was set up, absorbing the ORPC
 - Castro- president of INRA , Nunez Jimenez (Marxist economist), director – goal: agrarian reform an industrial development , but it became the government

Guevara, Urrutia, Castro



- **July-** Urrutia forced to resign; Castro ended dual power-replaced by **Oswaldo Dorticos** (remained in post until 1976)
 - By the end of November 1959- most moderates or liberals either resigned or have been pushed out

Revolutionary Consolidation

- From 1960- **centralized rule by Fidel and a few of his friends-** cabinet held all executive and legislative powers; Castro also appointed new judges
- From 1968 on- Cuba increasingly dependent on USSR
- **PCC- Communist Party of Cuba established in 1965-never a mass party**
- new state structure and institutions developed along Soviet Lines
- **1972-** Cabinet enlarged, and committee of eight took over Castro's functions-shift from individual to collective responsibility in order to create more formally democratic system-Castro-no more unlimited authority

Dorticos

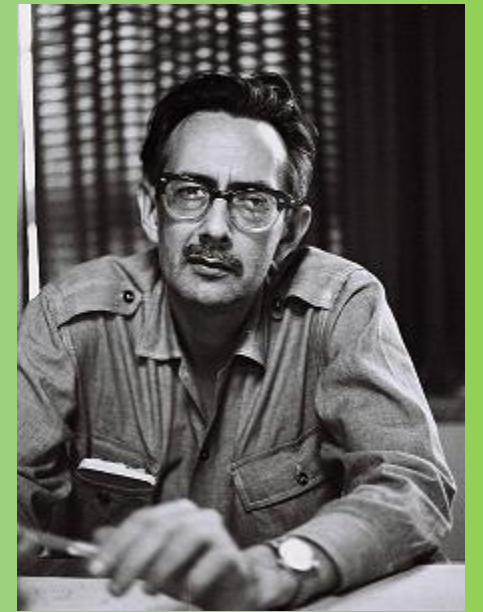


Opposition:

- many opponents of the regime in the early years- many disliked the growing influence of the communists
- some opponents resorted to counter-revolutionary guerilla warfare (often supported by the USA)
- Thousands died in this civil war between 1960-66, by 1966 most opponents have been defeated
- **1961 Bay of Pigs-** led to immediate arrest of all suspected counter-revolutionaries-(about 3500 in Havana alone)

The Communist Party- consolidation

- Castro needed the political experience of PSP-experienced with party politics and organization of mass movements and had prior governmental experience (unlike July 26 Movement)
- July 1961-PSP, July 26 Movement **and Directorio Revolucionario (DR)** joined into the **Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI)**
 - **Anibal Escalante**- ORI's secretary-powerful; he preferred PSP members – Castro removed him due to “sectarianism” - restructuring took place;
 - In 1963 ORI became **PURS (United Party of the Soc. Rev)**-and in **October 3rd 1965**, PURS became **The Communist Party of Cuba (PCC)**- by '65 revolutionary power consolidated
- this did not mean that Castro was in full control of the new party-there were factions within the party, but after 1968 party posed no serious challenge to Castro



Mass Organizations

- several organizations through which opposition could be expressed
 - **Federation of University students (FEU)**- Castro intervened in elections of president – Rolando Cubela – brought FEU closer to Marxist-Leninist ideology
 - Trade Unions:
 - Nov. 1959 – Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) elected new leadership, even though July 26th Mov. Candidate seemed certain to win, Castro pushed for unity with communists
 - 1970 opposition emerged from workers and trade unions
 - Absenteeism and poor productivity
 - Castro spoke on July 26th 1970 and argued for more democratic Methods



**To what extent did the
reforms of 1959-75 mean that
Castro had become a
Communist?**

The Impact of US Actions

- After Batista, Urrutia drew up a moderate cabinet, acceptable even to the USA, however, US attitude changed after **1959 Agrarian Reform Act** –
 - USA issued **Note of protest**- began to plan Castro's overthrow - as a result, Castro established trade links with other countries in order to reduce Cuba's dependence on the USA
 - **June 1959**- Guevara looked for new markets for Cuban sugar-USSR became a buyer and provided credits for plants and equipment; other Eastern block countries followed.
- 1960-plan to overthrow Castro presented to pres. Eisenhower and sabotage attacks stepped up
- July, US reduced the import quota for the Cuban sugar, leaving Cuba with a load of unsold sugar (USSR and China purchased it)
- As a result, Castro nationalized all oil refineries and all US owned properties, including the sugar mills.
- **Sept. 1960- First Declaration of Havana**- Castro condemned US imperialism in a speech- after which all US-owned businesses were nationalized

First Declaration of Havana



The Impacts of US Actions:

- In **November** USA imposed an **embargo** on all exports to Cuba apart from food and medical supplies-USSR agreed to buy import gap
- Castro first mentioned “socialist nature” of the revolution in a speech made on the 16th of April 1961 following air raids on April 15 (which preceded Bay of Pigs incident)
- **The Bay of Pigs Incident, April 1961**
 - two events contributed to radicalization of Castro’s revolution-pushed Castro closer to Cuban communists
 - **Bay of Pigs:** March 1960, Eisenhower approved plans for US backed exiles to invade Cuba , This **Operation Zapata** was put onto operation by president Kennedy,
 - April 15th-CIA pilots helped exiles bomb Cuban air bases, April 17th 15,000 exiles trained and armed by CIA attacked from Nicaragua –landed on two beaches ; however the expected anti- Castro uprising never took place
 - exiles defeated within 2 days despite heavy air strikes; over 100 killed and 1179 captured- (5 executed, 9 sent to prison)- the rest returned to USA in exchange for baby food and medical equipment



The Impacts of US Actions:

- **The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962**

- Nov. 1961 – Kennedy authorized another invasion; Castro asked USSR for weapons- Soviets brought in tanks, aircraft soldiers
- **Khrushchev** thought that placing nuclear missiles in Cuba would balance the threat from US missiles placed in Turkey
- Sept. 1962, Soviet technician began to assemble nuclear missile sites in Cuba- US was aware (spy planes took pictures); for the next 13 days, the world seemed close to a nuclear war
- Kennedy imposed naval blockade on Cuba; soviet ships turned back
- Khrushchev, without consulting Castro, sent letters to Kennedy on October 26th and 27th promising to remove missiles , and the US promised not to invade Cuba and remove US missiles from Turkey - Kennedy agreed



Castro's Revolution and Communism:

- during the period December 1961 to March 1962, Castro proclaimed his Marxism-Leninism several times- however, the Cuban revolution had not been lead by the Communist Party and was not a result of class struggle
- Castro's resolution had more to do with **economic growth** and social reform and USA military threats and economic embargo
 - For Castro- **Socialism was a strategy for a nationalist project of modernization** , based on state control of the economy, prioritizing production over consumption and hostility to US imperialism
 - Socialism also provided the moral and ethical codes expected of Cuban citizens – world free of poverty, exploitation and injustice

The Soviet Connection:

- Castro came closer USSR due to US hostility and the fact that soviet command economy model of modernization suited him
- Castro felt that USSR used Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis after which good relations were briefly disrupted
- April 1963- Castro and a few others went to Moscow upon Khrushchev invitation-they had several important trade discussions
- 1964-Castro paid second visit to Moscow- but relations cooled in 1967 when Castro attacked communist government (including Russia) who traded with countries that applied embargo against Cuba- after which USSR delayed signing trade agreements and cut back on oil supply
- Cuba's economy began to experience difficulty – and a large debt to Moscow, Castro was less able to defy Moscow



What were the most significant measures taken to maintain Castro's power after 1975?

- by the end of 1975, Cuba was well-established and an organized communist system
- 1976-New constitution, introduced a system of **Poder Popular**

Rectification Campaign 1986-87

- changes to government and party structure in the early 1970s meant that Castro no longer had unlimited authority, but remained head of the communist 1976-Castro became the president
- **Third Congress of PCC-** Castro launched a new campaign- “**Rectification of errors and negative trends**”- ties to economic issues and a drive against corruption
- in 1986-87, Castro widened rectification campaign making a series of speeches in which he admitted ‘errors’-he also singles out “bureaucrats” and “technocrats“ and those who enriched themselves
 - this is the response to growing worker dissatisfaction about shortages and income differentials- Castro became their spokesperson

Castro in 1986



The Ochoa Affair 1989

- June 1989-most serious internal opposition crisis since 1959
- 4 senior military and intelligence figures, including **Arnaldo Ochoa** were arrested on corruption charges and drug smuggling- tried by military tribunals- 4 executed on July 13th (others received prison time)- speculation that they planned a coup; crisis caused serious divisions in Cuba



- **Aldana and the 1992 purge**
- **Carlos Aldana** and the others admired Gorbachev's style of governing and called for more political pluralism
- collapse of regimes in E. Europe and Soviet Union made Castro decide to move against this opposition and other reformists
- He created **Rapid Response Brigades** of volunteers, who often harassed oppositionist groups and organizations calling for human rights
- Sept. 1992- Aldana was sacked from the party
- **1993- Poder Popular-** constitutional reforms, that prevented collapse of Castro's regime, despite economic difficulties post – 1991

US Actions, 1992-96

- idea of a revolutionary Cuba under siege is part of the mythology
- **1992- The Torricelli Act and Helm-Burton Act of 1996** tightened US sanctions against Cuba and sought active assistance in creating a US style democracy in Cuba

Re-moralization and Varela Project

- 2003- Castro decided on a partial return to anti-market centralization- this is also involved re-moralization of economic life- further moves against potential opponents, dissidents and human rights activists
- ministers of economics and planning-replaced
- after 2000, President Bush included Cuba in the “axis of evil”- this lead to renewed fears of US invasion
- Castro became concerned about members of **Varela project** who were campaigning for democratic reform and more private enterprise (petition)
Castro’s government organized a counter petition to amend the constitution to make socialist nature of the Cuban constitution “irrevocable”
 - included 8 million signatures (99% electorate)
 - they also harassed members of the Varela Project; in 2003 75 member were arrested



• Mass Organization:

- Castro tried to consolidate his regime by increasing the participation citizens in mass organizations
- used since 1976

Unions:

- main mass organization-**Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC)**- unites all 19 unions and organizes national congresses for workers to discuss issues
- proceeded by months of meeting of workers' assemblies
- According to **Historian Saney**- workers' assemblies have important input- they can reject managers' proposals , decide about production and work closely with the PCC

PCC

- attempts to integrate citizens-putting society's needs above individual
- Historian **Hobart Spalding** sees the influence of the PCC as suffocating; **Peter Roman** says PCC does not meddle in the operation and peoples power, though it does screen candidates
- about 15 millions Cubans (15% of population) belong to PCC



How far did the foreign policy
help Castro maintain power?

- Castro's commitment to end US control in Cuba-important- provided a lot of support from Cuban people
- Castro believed the world was divided between developed and underdeveloped countries- Cuba having a special role to help other undeveloped countries overcome imperialism
- his attitude shared by many Cubans and **foreign policies after 1959 created feelings of pride among the Cubans**

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Cuban's early foreign policies were designed to promote revolutions similar to that of Cuba in the Latin American region
- Cuba gave financial and logistical aid and military training to several revolutionary groups
- **Bolivia, 1966-67**
 - 1966, Che Guevara, went to Bolivia with other fighters to help **ELN Guerillas** to overthrow military dictatorship there, which was established 1964 following US-backed coup
 - Bolivian insurgency lasted only a few month (March-October, 1967)
 - Oct. 8th –Che was wounded and captured by CIA commands, he was murdered by a Bolivian ranger with approval of the CIA
 - Guevara became a symbol of revolution and resistance after his death
 - all of this enhanced popularity of Castro's regime



Cuban-American CIA agent Félix Rodríguez, in Bolivian army uniform, Oct. 9, 1967.

Chile, 1970-73

- Castro's government continued to give aid to various revolutionary groups, however, he reduced the support due to growing economic problems in Cuba
- Castro supported **Allende's Popular Unity** coalition government
 - He gave Allende AK47, but no military help beyond providing training and personnel for body guard
 - US inspired coup against Allende happened in Sept. 1973- Castro did not send troops to help Chilean resistance

Grenada and Nicaragua

- March 1973- left-wing New Jewel Movement led a successful revolution in Grenada- Cuba sent help to build infrastructure and military instructors to train new police force
- Oct. 1983- US sent forces to overthrow NJM government, 25 Cubans were among those killed in fighting
- This action condemned by the int. community
- 1979- Sandinistas overthrew US-backed dictator in Nicaragua and Cuba gave the new government considerable aid for its literacy, educational, and medical programs- they sent 2,500 doctors, nurses, teachers and engineers
- US sponsored Contras began to attack and murder education and medical workers, Cuba provided military training
- Sandinistas stayed in power until 1990

Sandinistas in Nicaragua



Venezuela and Bolivarian Revolution

- support for Hugo Chavez in 1998
- Chavez was popular and won four consecutive presidential elections before dying in 2013
- He was strongly opposed to US and their policies
- Him and Castro made bilateral agreements – medical help in return for oil
- Chavez helped struggling Cuban economy after 2003 and resulted in Foreign policy with popular outcomes for many Cubans
- Castro backed Chavez's Bolivarian revolution in 2006

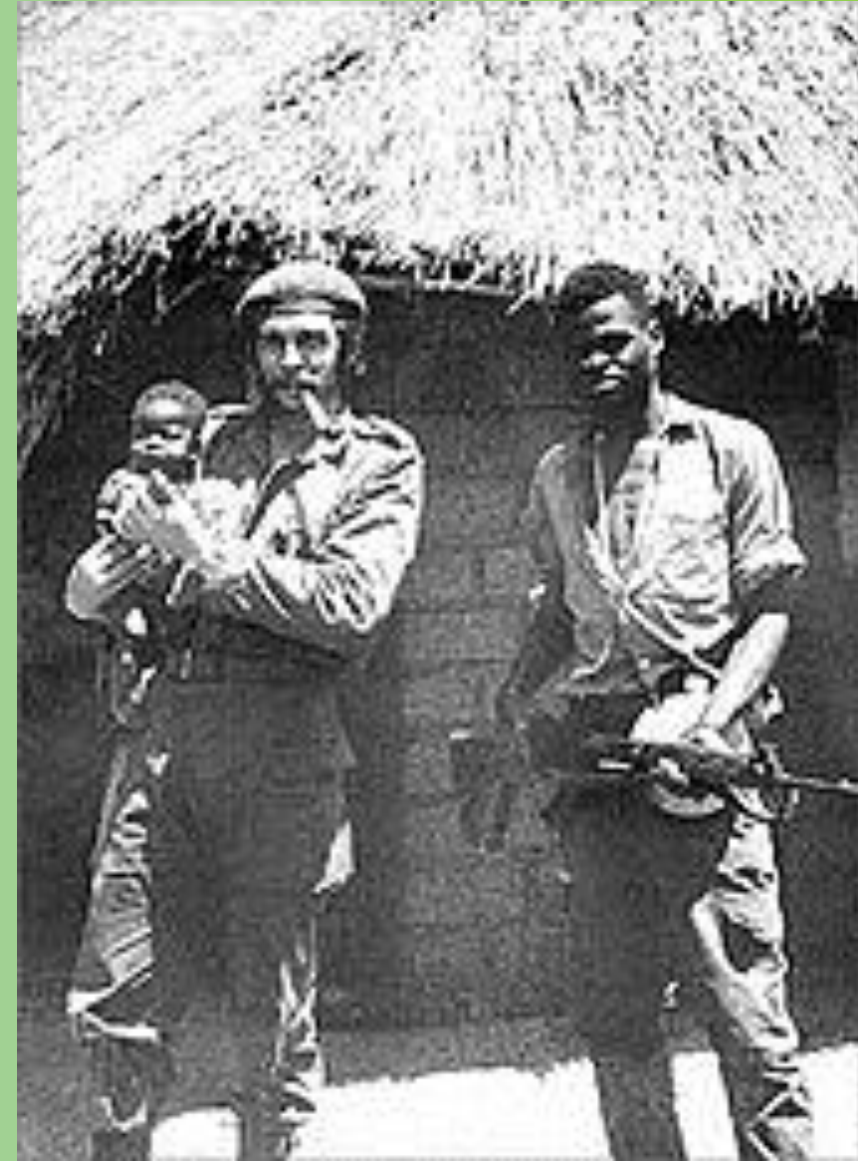


Africa

- Castro pursued an active foreign policy in Africa
- Cuba helped Algeria in their independence against France in 1963
- Castro focused on helping development in sub-Saharan countries, Mandela publically acknowledged important part Cuba played in bringing down the apartheid

The Congo

- mid 1960s- guerilla groups (Portuguese colonies) in Africa were fighting independence wars
- US sent help of 1000 mercenaries to help Portugal; Che took 120 volunteers to help the rebels
- However, the odds against rebels were too high and Che returned to Cuba



Angola and Southern Africa

- 1966- rebels in Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau,-Castro sent doctors and military instructors who helped and stayed until Guinea-Bissau won its independence in 1974
- Cuba's biggest commitment was to Angola
 - 1975- 3 rival independence group fought in a civil war after Portugal's dictatorship collapsed
 - Castro supported Russian backed MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberations of Angola)- US and South Africa supported the other two groups
 - Castro sent in troops, 25,000 soldiers, forced S. African forces to retreat for the first time, which encouraged those fighting against apartheid
 - Cuban troops remained in Angola into the late 1970s as South African forces continued to attack
 - US President Carter asked Castro to pull out forces and offered to normalize relations- but Castro refused because he did not want to be bribed or bullied



- **Humanitarian Aid**

- Cuba's foreign policy also included significant humanitarian aid- they sent teachers, medical professionals, construction workers to Nicaragua, Algeria, and Guinea-Bissau, but their biggest aid program was to Angola
- most volunteered because they shared Castro's commitment to internationalism and duty to help others
- Cuba provided 40,000 full scholarships for foreign students to study in Cuba
- there has been no other instance where an underdeveloped country has carried out such massive and generous aid programs

What other methods did Castro use to maintain his power?

Committees for the defense of the Revolution (CDR)

- created militia of members to build support, intimidate internal opposition, and defend Cuba from external enemies
- **CDR**- were set up in every city district, large factory
- involved people in identifying enemies of the revolution and repressing counter-revolutionary opinions and activities
- 7 million – membership

Emigration and Exile

- many went into exile in USA, 40,000 bet. 1959-61 (Batista supporters)
- 1961-62- 150,000 left- opposed Castro's move toward communism
- other major emigrations, Comarioca Exodus (1965), Mariel Boatlift (1980), and malecon Exodus (1994)



• Castroism (or Fidelismo)

- idea that Cuban revolution is based on Fidel Castro- has not resulted in an obvious cult of personality
- Castro had great charisma, and spoke well to crowds
- many had faith in him and as long as he was in charge they didn't seem to mind what he did
- he remained ethical- has not used his position to amass wealth
- Feb. 18th, 2008- after two years of illness- he announced his decision to stand down; his brother, Raul, took over
- he managed to turn Cuba into one of the most educated and healthiest societies in the world- despite all effort of the USA to stop him



Castro and Cuba Castro's Policies and Impact

What were the most significant features of
Castro's economic policies?

- For the most part, Castro's economic policies which were focused on the redistribution of income, helped to maintain the legitimacy of his rule (benefited poor people)

The Early Years, 1959-68

- New government moved quickly to benefit the poorest in Cuba

• Agriculture

- Minimum wage introduced in 1959 for sugar-cane cutters
- May 1959- Castro announced “**Agrarian Reform Act**”
 - All latifundia (large estates) broken up into smaller units- owner could keep 1,000 acres, rest liable to expropriation
 - About 40% of Cuban farmland was expropriated and divided up into individual plots of 67 acres for landless plantation workers and peasants
 - Larger farms ran as state farms (later; cooperatives)
- Considered as moderate land reform (but land owning class opposed)
 - Many US companies owned large estates



- 1960- USA decided not to purchase sugar from Cuba – Castro's response: nationalization of sugar mills and other US properties, and USSR purchased the sugar
- Government reduced unemployment, which was high prior to 1959 – which resulted in labor shortage by 1960

- **Industry**

- 1959 – real wages of non-agricultural workers rose sharply and rents for cheaper urban dwellings were reduced by 50%
- Prices of utilities reduced
- 300,000 tons of Soviet crude oil delivered to Cuba; Castro nationalized foreign oil refineries in June 1960
- Oct. 1960 – 382 Cuban firms were socialized (public ownership)
- more centralized approach to economy, **command economy**, was seen as the quickest way to ensure econ growth
- Main aim of early economic policy was rapid industrialization
- 1960- 80% of industry under state control and produced 90% of Cuba's exports



- 1961- Che Guevara became minister of industries; wanted to diversify the industry – but huge debate about how best to bring diversification began
- Central state ministries established and **Central Planning Board (Juceplan)** in charge of drawing up 4-year plans. According to historian Bethel, these plans were unrealistic and unrealizable
- 1963- problems evident; Castro went to USSR and econ. Changes announced – Guevara's plans for diversification abandoned – Soviet assistance given to concentrate Cuba on sugar production
- by 1968- signs of emerging economic crisis



- The Soviet Camp

- Agriculture

- 1960-90 production of sugar grew by 40%, but when unpaid overtime (“voluntary labor”) became mandatory and material incentives were removed – dissatisfaction led to falling yields
- **Battle for Sugar**- (Nov. 1969-July 1970)- goal set to increase sugar harvest to 10 million tons (unrealistic target)
 - Failed to meet the target but yielded 8.5 million tons – highest in Cuba’s history; overall improved production
- After 1970- Cuba helped by soaring price of sugar (80% of all Cuba’s exports)

- Industry

- By 1968 Cuba increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union; by **1970**- massive debt to the Soviet bloc – Castro turned closer to Soviet Union; had soviet economic advisors
- Important – supply of soviet oil



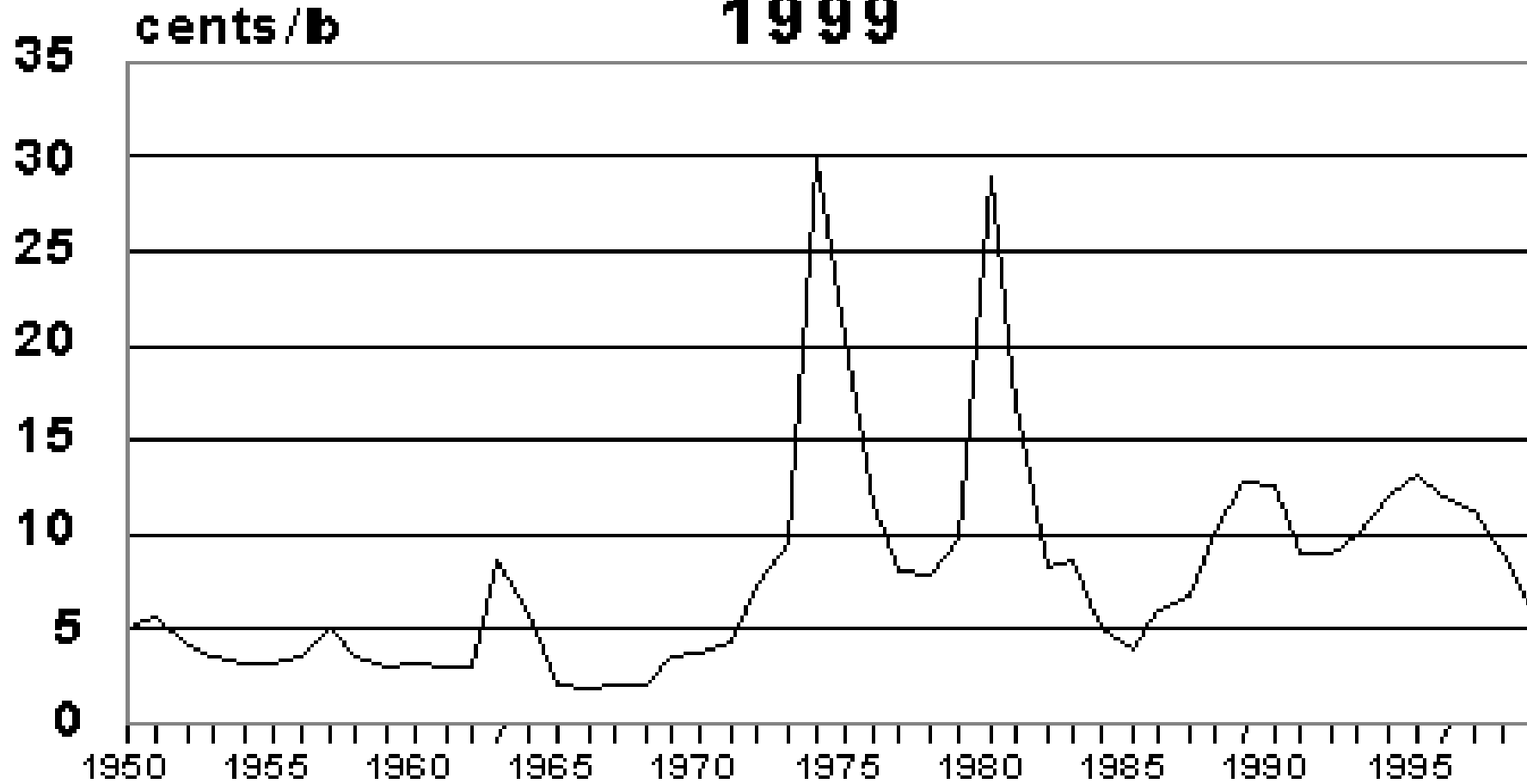
- 1972- Cuba joined **Comecon**- Econ. Union of communist states; Castro also signed a 15 year economic agreement w/ Russia – included deferring debt payments, increasing price of sugar, ect.
- **1972-82**- Cuban economy reorganized along Soviet lines – new planning system – 1975- first **Five Year Plan** designed to industrialize Cuba
- 1986- Castro felt that Cuba still lacked “comprehensive national planning for economic development” – launched his program of “**rectification**” – various anti-market measures – return to a more centralized economy
- Gorbachev (1985) determined to cut down on Soviet support;
 - 1989- visited Cuba, introduced changes (phasing out price subsidies, balance of trade, Cuba needs to pay for Soviet goods in US dollars)
- 1989-91 – Cuban imports of petroleum dropped by 60%, all E. European states cancelled assistance and reduced trade with Cuba

The Special Period and Beyond (1990-Present)

• Agriculture

- Post collapse of Soviet Union – Cuba experiences econ. problems – Cuba dependent on the world market (1990 – sugar \$602 per ton; 1992 \$200 per ton)
 - No external financing from Soviet Union led to “**Special Period in Tie of Peace**”
- March 1990- farmers used drought animals; food rationed
 - Industries had to be closed; workers sent to countryside to grow food
 - Before 63% of food imported from Soviet Union; now new sources of food supplies needed
- **1993**- establishment of agriculture cooperatives UBPC- reorganized production and sale of food; sector reduced
- Land remained in hands of state; UBPC had to produce quotas under fixed prices; private farmers’ markets allowed again
- Special Period ended in 1996; but dependence on sugar was gone
- 2002- gov. announced 71 of 156 sugar mills would be closed

Development of Raw Sugar Prices 1950 - 1999

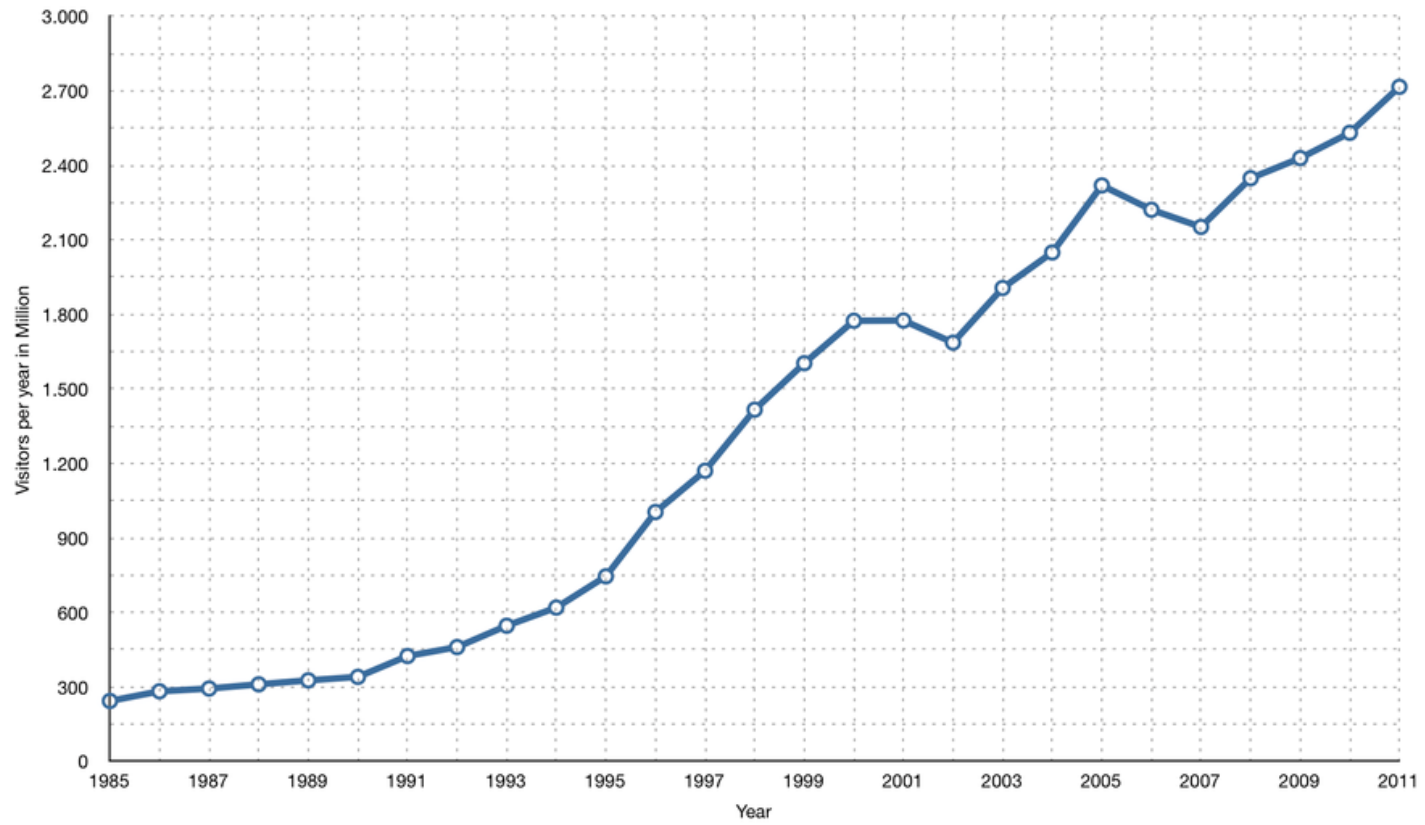


F.O. Licht

• Industry

- After 1975- targets rarely met; real econ growth modest
- 80% of machinery imported from Soviet Union and cheap soviet oil
- 1990- oil supplies were dramatically reduced – replacement supplies had to be bought on the world market (at higher prices)
- 1989-93 – Cuban GDP fell by 35%; exports fell by 79%
- 1990- gas, water electricity supplies cut off for short periods
- Because **Poder Popular**- not much of a conflict between gov and unions
- **Decree-Law 140, Aug 1993** – significant; US dollar became legal tender in Cuba
- **Decree Law, Sep 1993** – reintroduced self-employment in some occupations – by 1995, 5% of work force registered as self-employed
- Castro maintained his opposition to capitalism
- Tourism strongly promoted to help the economy – becomes #1 earner of foreign currency
- US- turned up the pressure – **Torricelli Act of 1992 and Helms-Burton Act of 1996** – to tighten trade sanctions, but European Union (main investor in Cuba) objected – US forced to exempt EU countries
- **2003**- new anti-market, re-centralization was introduced; US dollar no more a legal tender

Visitors in Cuba 1985-2011



How successful were Castro's Economic Policies?

	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRY
Early Years, 1959-68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trouble with agricultural diversification • 1963 sugar harvest down by 30% • 1964, USSR signed series of agreements, better prices of sugar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1962 – economy collapsed, rationing of consumer goods (fair distribution) • 1963 balance of payments crisis • Workers paid the same regardless of effect and quality (ineffective) • US Embargo – lack of raw materials
The Soviet Camp, 1968-90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problematic even after 1960 • Cattle raising, forestry, fishing declined • By 1970, economy in crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1970s, 80s, new management system – more autonomy to managers; again higher wages paid for better workers – increased productivity • First half of 1970 – economy prospered • Annual growth rate 4/1; significant improvement • 1980s - high debt, 1986 – economic recession
The Special Period and beyond, 1990-present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic disaster, mismanagement and constant shortages of goods • Restoration of “free farmers market” yielded good results • Agriculture production remained weak • Urban areas; organic plots – very successfully – supply 90% of Cuba’s fruits and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Import capacity dropped by 70% in 1989-92, due to loss of sugar earnings • Shortage of oil, parts, animal feed, etc. • After 1993, economy started to improve – GDP 3.5 % growth per year • Chavez helped Cuba with oil supplies

What were main social policies in Castro's Cuba?

- 1959 – most services placed in urban areas, rural areas left behind

Living Standards	Healthcare	Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Castro's policies to redistribute wealth were very successful – ended rural unemployment, prices of basic goods kept low, and rationing ensured fair distribution• Improvement in living standards for the rural poor was outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One of the most successful social policy areas for Castro's government• Healthcare services established as a right of every Cuban and free health care expanded (especially in rural areas)• Economic advances resulted in advances in health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before 1959 only 15% of rural inhabitants had running water and only 9% had electricity• Some inefficiencies by construction industry since government gave more priority to building of hospitals and schools• However many housing units were built

What has been the impact of Castro's policies towards women, ethnic and other minorities, and religion?

Women:

- Proportion of women in the labor force doubled by 1980
- Easier divorce, subsidized family planning
- Women were guaranteed equal pay – however highest paying jobs were in mining, fishery and construction and those were restricted to men only - despite policy women salaries still ca. 15% lower
- Impressive increase of women throughout the education system – highest school enrollment of young women – more than 60% of university students are women, and 47% of university instructors are women
- In medicine, women actually outnumber men (70% of students)



Women:

- 1960 – Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) – played a role in changing sexist opinions and behaviors
 - **Vilma Espin** – president for many years
 - Egalitarian family code, 1975 – obliged husbands to do half of all family chores; however surveys suggest the persistence of Latin American gender stereotyping in home still persists
 - Women participation in politics has been less equal, by mid 1980s only 13% of women in central committees, in the top governing agencies
 - By 2003 – women formed over 30% of active membership of PCC, 52% of union leadership, 31% of all managers
 - Cuba ranks 5th in the Americas in terms of overall equality of women



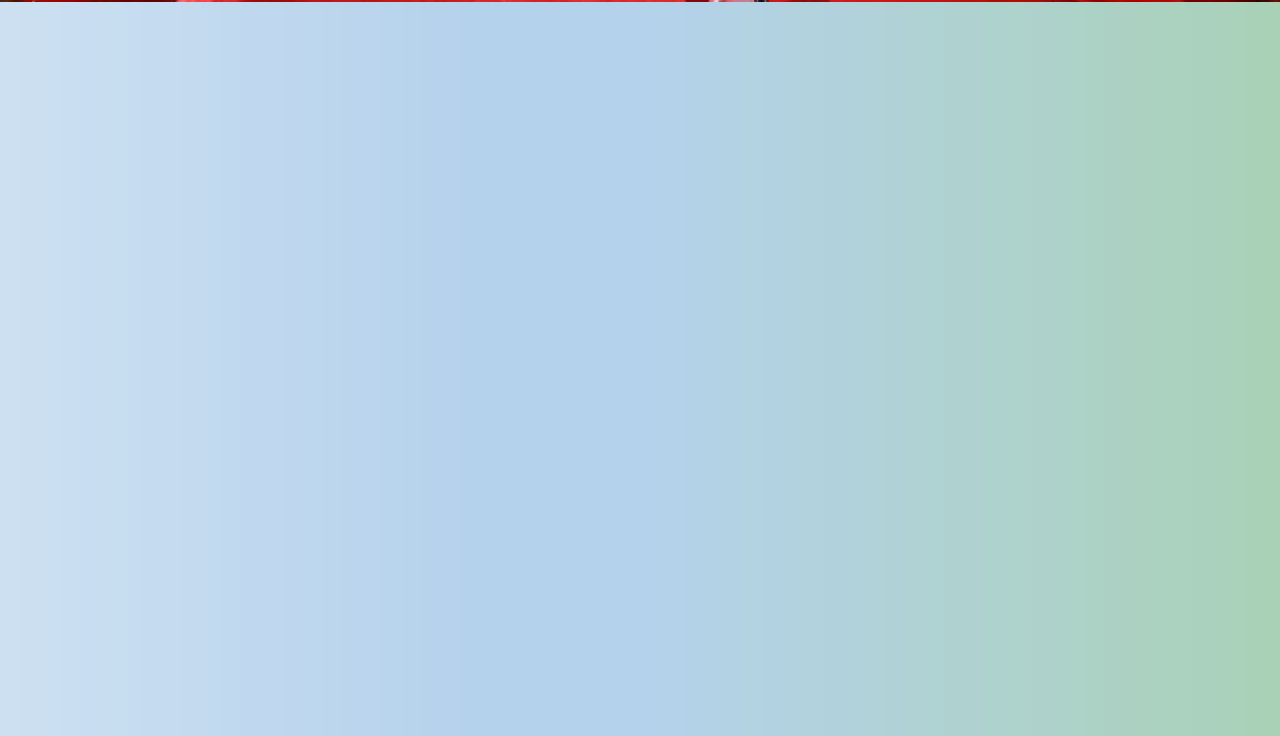
Black People

- Radical improvement of treatment of black people after 1959
- “**Proclamation against Discrimination**” speech – campaign against racial discrimination, states that differences in skin color are not important
 - Repealed pre-1959 discriminatory laws
 - Castro did not support black separatism – closing associations
- As a result of policy change, living standards for black and mulatto population improved considerably after 1959
- Black people are still significantly underrepresented in government but in 1986, Castro did announce it to be priority to increase share of top political jobs.



Same Sex Relations in Cuba

- Today, not illegal, but homophobia persists
- Situation has altered over the decades since 1959 revolution
- At first, same sex relations see as “bourgeois decadence” resulting from capitalism; similar attitudes throughout 1960s and 70s as Cuba moved closer to USSR
 - 1965- Revolutionary Armed Forces forcibly recruited gay men into UMAP work battalions(Military Unites to Help Production), but after criticism, in 1967 Castro ordered them disbanded
 - 1971 – Government described same sex relationships as incompatible with the revolution - gay individuals expelled from the party, and lost jobs
 - 1975 Supreme Court overturned this – government pursued more liberal approach
- **CNES – Centro Nacional de Educacion Sexual** – developed approaches to educating society; and accomplished some changes in attitudes and laws
- 1979 – homosexuality not a crime any more
- 2008 – free hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery (2010)
- There is no recognition of same-sex marriage, and protests and organizations banned



Religion:

- Catholic Church not as strong in Cuba they were in other Latin American countries
- By 1990s, out of 11 million population, only 150,000 regularly attended church
 - Numbers of Catholics and Protestants, and followers of other religions combined was less than 5 million
 - At first Church accepted the revolution but then secularization of education and reduction of Church's role in government changed their attitudes
 - Churches did condemn US embargo on Cuba
 - 1992 amendments to Constitution declared the state to be secular rather than atheist, and PCC allowed religious believers to join
 - 1998 Pope John Paul II visited Cuba

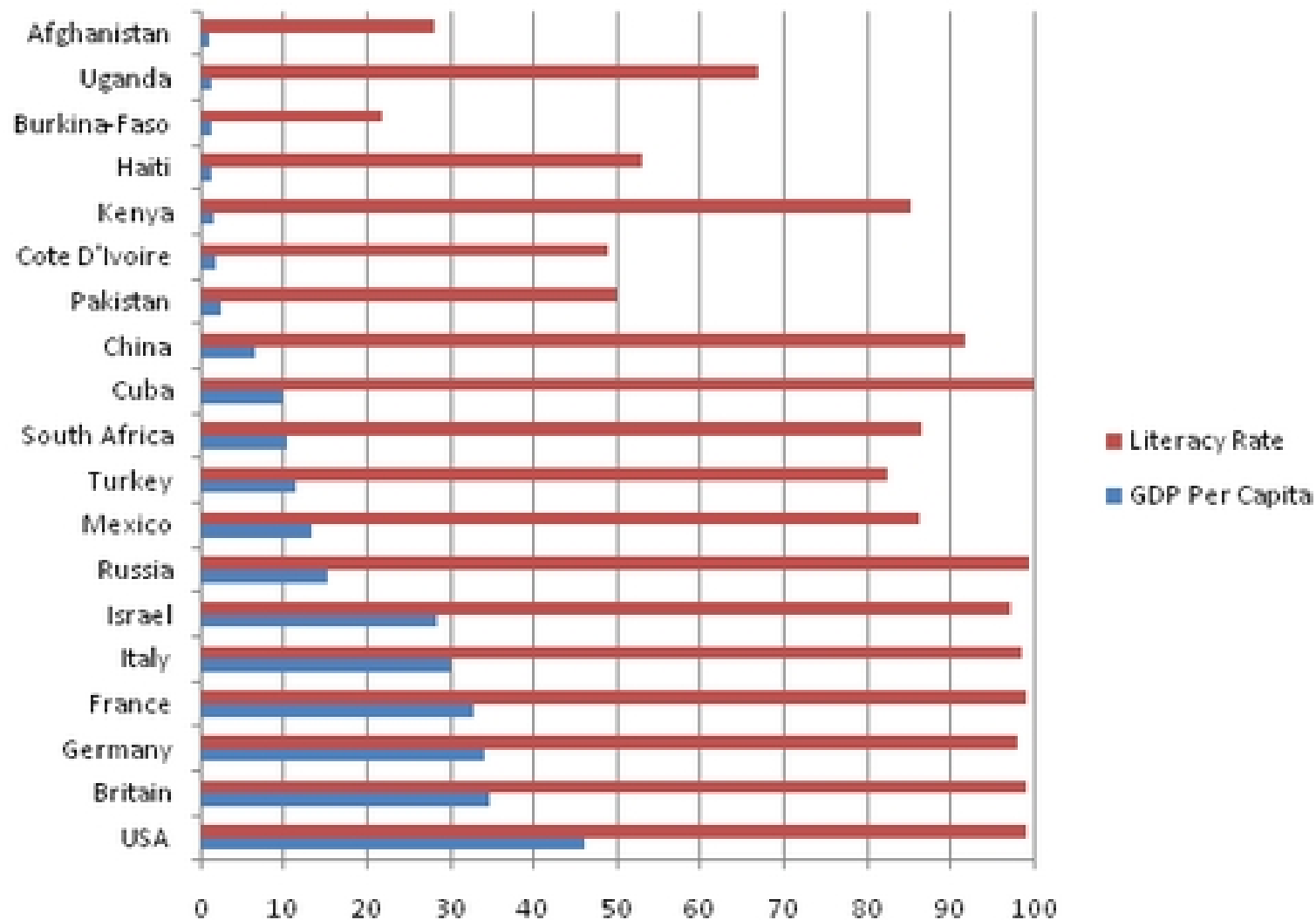


What impact have the policies of the Cuban Revolution had on education, young people, and the arts?

• Education:

- Education **most impressive** of Castro's achievements
- Drive to eliminate illiteracy began in 1961 – “Year of Education” -, government took over all private schools and achieved universal attendance at primary schools
- **Volunteer student teachers** (mostly teens) 100,000 of them recruited into brigades, taught millions to read and write
- More than 3,000 schools built in the first year
- Established extensive adult education system; free of cost
- As a result, average levels of education jumped from bare literacy in 1964 to eight grade level in 1979.
- **Jose Ramon Fernandez** – played a crucial role in improvement of education system
- Higher education improvements more limited; bias towards technical ed
- Overall Castro successfully carried out a real educational revolution after 1959

GDP per Capita Compared to Overall Literacy Rate



The Media and the arts

- 1960 – all mass media came under government control – only way to criticize was through letters-to-the-editor pages
- Arts was censored too, but not as much as the media
 - Material opposed to revolution, or written by known opponents was not published

How far is Castro's state authoritarian?

- Since 1959 Cuban state described as “communist dictatorship”, “authoritarian democracy” or “guided democracy”
- Castro feared that market economy and a multi-party political system would allow USA to continue their influence

Cuba and Democracy:

- prior to 1959 revolution – many Cubans tired of corruption and dependence that allowed USA domination
- Castro believed elections are less important than the things that the government does for the people
- Through Castro's Cuba was a one-party communist state until 1992, it was also populist – with limits
- Since 1992, other parties were legalized, but Communist party remains the official state party

• **Constitutions and Elections:**

- 1959- Castro suspended elections; 1959-76 no elected legislative body in Cuba
- 1976 – new constitution, set up three-tier system of **Poder Popular** (People's Power) – municipal, provincial and national assemblies to allow for democracy decision-making (only municipal elations were direct)
- Citizens and mass organizations NOT the Communist Party made up most candidates
- Element of **manadat imperative** (representatives must listen to voters, and respond to their complaints) very important (according to Isaac Saney)
- According to Balfour, despite 1976 reforms, leadership did not shift to people
- 1992 – Constitution – allowed direct votes for members of national and provincial assembly

Poder Popular after 1992

- 1992 reforms resulted in more effective political participation and reduced the power of PCC
- It is Cuban citizens who nominate and elect representatives
- Turnout in elections is usually high (90%), but there is no formal campaigning, only biographies of candidates are displayed in public places before elections.



CUBA'S ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE DECADES

DESPITE A FIERCE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE THE ISLAND NATION HAS ACCOMPLISHED MUCH

GENDER EQUALITY

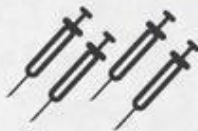


FIRST COUNTRY TO SIGN AND THE SECOND TO RATIFY DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN CONVENTION



WOMEN HOLD NEARLY HALF OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SEATS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

HEALTH INNOVATIONS



CREATED THE MENINGITIS-B VACCINE IN 1985, AND LATER FOR HEPATITIS-B AND DENGUE



FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO ELIMINATE MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV AND SYPHILIS

LIVING STANDARDS



IN 2014, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS AT 2.7 PERCENT



IN 2015, CUBA REPORTED A LOWER CHILD MORTALITY RATE THAN THE US

EDUCATION



99 PERCENT LITERACY RATE WITHIN THE COUNTRY



FREE EDUCATION FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY

GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS



SINCE 1969, A TOTAL OF 325,710 CUBAN HEALTH WORKERS PARTICIPATED IN MISSIONS IN 158 COUNTRIES



CUBA'S LATIN AMERICAN LITERACY CAMPAIGN HAS HELPED MORE THAN 10 MILLION STUDENTS LEARN TO READ AND WRITE

