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## TWO DECADES OF SOCIALISM IN CUBA

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- THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA: HEGEMONY AND DEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT, 1880-1934. By JULES ROBERT BENJAMIN. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977. Pp. 226. \$14.95.)
- CUBA IN THE WORLD. Edited by COLE BLASIER and CARMELO MESA-LAGO. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979. Pp. 343. \$5.95.)
- CUBA: ORDER AND REVOLUTION. By JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978. Pp. 683. \$25.00.)
- THE USSR AND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION: SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL AND STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES, 1959-1977. By JACQUES LEVESQUE. (New York: Praeger, 1978. Pp. 215.)
- CUBA IN THE 1970S: PRAGMATISM AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION, 2d ed. By CARMELO MESA-LAGO. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978. Pp. 187. \$3.95.)
- THE ECONOMY OF SOCIALIST CUBA: A TWO DECADE APPRAISAL. By CARMELO MESA-LAGO. (New York: New York University Press, forthcoming.)
- CHILDREN OF CHE: CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION IN CUBA. By KAREN WALD. (Palo Alto, Calif.: Ramparts Press, 1978. Pp. 399. \$4.95.)
- REVOLUTIONARY CUBA IN THE WORLD ARENA. Edited by MARVIN WEINSTEIN. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1979. Pp. 166. \$13.50.)

As the Cuban Revolution enters its third decade, scholars in the field of Cuban studies are beginning to assess the sweeping changes in Cuba's domestic and foreign policies brought by the decade just past.<sup>1</sup> Ten years of political institutionalization, economic reorganization, and foreign involvement have rendered obsolete much of the earlier scholarship on Cuba. The politics of charismatic authority have become the politics of institution-building; the economics of moral suasion have become the economics of decentralized planning; and the regional foreign policy of guerrilla insurgency has become a global one of revolutionary war.

Not surprisingly, the process of interpreting changes of such magnitude has sparked a number of controversies in the field. Has

Castro's charismatic authority truly been institutionalized, or are Cuba's new political structures merely a facade behind which Fidel continues to wield unrestrained and unrestricted authority? Does Cuba's retreat from the revolutionary fervor of moral incentives reflect a loss of idealism or merely a more realistic path to the enduring goal of New Socialist Man? And what of Cuba's foreign policy? Have the Cubans, so fiercely independent in the 1960s, sold their autonomy for Soviet economic aid and become Soviet puppets; or have they finally succeeded in prompting the Soviet Union to adopt a more revolutionary and internationalist foreign policy?

As the books and essays reviewed herein demonstrate, there is rarely full agreement on these issues. Yet the changes in Cuba and the resulting controversy among scholars in the United States has deepened our understanding of Cuban politics in several ways. The liveliness of debate has sharpened the arguments of all participants, and has also prompted more rigorous and comparative treatment. The study of Cuba has traditionally been more idiographic than analytic, in part because Cuba falls between the two area specialties of Latin American studies and comparative communism; the conceptual categories of neither field have been fully satisfactory for analyzing Cuban reality. Many of the new studies employ more comparative concepts and advance models of Cuban politics that are, at least implicitly, cross-national in scope; even the more historical studies of prerevolutionary Cuba proceed from a much clearer analytical perspective.

#### *Antecedents of the Revolution*

Whenever scholars look back at Cuban history, seeking the causal threads that lead to the upheaval of the 1950s, they are drawn inevitably to Cuba's dependence on sugar and its relationship to the United States. For two centuries before the Cuban Revolution, these two factors dominated the development of Cuba's polity, economy, and society; even Spain's colonial authority was overshadowed by the growth of economic ties, illegal at first, between colonial Cuba and the emerging nation only ninety miles to the north. In *The United States and Cuba*, Jules R. Benjamin finds the antecedent of the 1959 Revolution in the abortive revolution of 1933, which "sprang from tensions in Cuban society derived in great measure from the structure of its relationship with the United States" (p. xi). The structure of that relationship was dependency. The strength of Benjamin's analysis lies in his recognition that the economic and political dimensions of the U.S.-Cuban relationship cannot be fully understood in isolation from one another. The subjection of Cuba was by no means the natural result of mere market forces: U.S.

governors and diplomats deftly wielded their political influence to extract economic concessions that made Cuba safe, and prosperous, for U.S. capitalism. Despite the clutter of some extraneous detail, Benjamin's book traces meticulously how the political and economic sinews of Cuban dependency developed and intertwined—sector by sector, firm by firm, politician by politician.<sup>2</sup>

Another of the book's strengths is its detailed examination of the domestic political battles in the U.S. that shaped the character of Cuban dependence. By demonstrating that the dependency approach is by no means incompatible with a sensitivity to bureaucratic politics, Benjamin has also shown that this approach need not be framed exclusively as a "rational actor" model of U.S. foreign policymaking and thereby counterposed to bureaucratic-political models.<sup>3</sup> Yet Benjamin's historical narrative reveals that none of the political debates or bureaucratic conflicts in the United States ever called into question Cuba's dependent status; all the domestic battles were waged within the confines of a wider, more enduring pattern of domination and submission.<sup>4</sup>

Critics from the left have sometimes charged that dependency theorists are so preoccupied with international relations that they ignore the political dynamism of a dependent country's lower classes.<sup>5</sup> Benjamin's account of the 1933 revolution lends weight to this charge. Though this account comprises much of the book's narrative, Benjamin becomes so enthralled with the Machiavellian machinations of Sumner Welles that, like Welles, he fails to pay much heed to deeper social and political forces or to the lower classes they set in motion. Welles was trying to fine-tune the Cuban political system—to replace a pliant president who had become a liability with a pliant president who could restore order. He played a brilliant game of political chess with Machado (and simultaneously with Cordell Hull), but he was oblivious to the social earthquake gathering force beneath his feet. Even with the advantage of hindsight, Benjamin seems equally oblivious. His account of the revolution of 1933 is little more than diplomatic historiography.<sup>6</sup>

Jorge I. Domínguez's *Cuba: Order and Revolution* is already regarded as a standard reference because of its comprehensive treatment of Cuba since 1959. Its analyses of Cuba's earlier political systems have tended to be overlooked, however, and Domínguez's explanation of the revolution of 1933 offers an interesting theoretical contrast to that of Benjamin. The conceptual core of *Cuba: Order and Revolution* is political power, "its uses and the institutions created to serve it" (p. 2). Beyond this it draws on a wide variety of political theorists: Weber on charismatic authority; Huntington on modernization and institutionalization; Davies and Gurr on political violence and revolution; Apter on mobilization regimes; etc. Marx is notably absent, as are all the various depen-

dency theorists—an odd lacunae since Domínguez's analysis of pre-1959 U.S.-Cuban relations is certainly not hostile to the basic tenets of the dependency approach. Domínguez's theoretical eclecticism would be more praiseworthy if the conceptual fragments were assembled into a coherent mosaic, but he does not really endeavor to integrate them and produces instead separate, and not always consistent, analyses of Cuba's three postindependence political systems. In fairness, there are certain conceptual themes woven throughout the book: legitimation, regime capability, and social mobilization are the most important of these, and their interrelationship is adapted primarily from the theories of Samuel Huntington.<sup>7</sup>

Domínguez attributes the weakness of Cuba's first political system (1903-33) to a "pluralization" of politics engendered by U.S. imperialism. U.S. intervention and influence undermined the central government by creating and sustaining alternative centers of political power in both the public and private sectors. The result was a poorly institutionalized and barely legitimate political system, incapable of surviving the economic crisis of the 1920s and 1930s. A rapid expansion of social mobilization during those years, in tandem with a collapsing economy, produced a "classic context for revolt" (p. 48).

Though Benjamin and Domínguez approach the 1933 revolution from very different theoretical perspectives, both conclude that the effect of U.S. domination was pivotal; both ascribe the political collapse to the system's inability to alleviate economic crisis; and both trace that impotence to Cuba's relationship with the United States. The central difference between the two analyses lies in their estimation of the interaction between politics and economics. For Domínguez, the relationship is fairly simple: economic subordination produced pluralized political power and left the government incapacitated. Benjamin, however, in keeping with his perspective of political economy, offers a more complex explanation: the structural deformities of dependency, imposed and enforced by the economic and political muscle of the colossus of the North, not only limited the Cuban government's policy options, they also intensified the economic crisis by allowing U.S. interests to shift the burden of depression to Cuba.

Unfortunately, the period from 1934 to 1959 falls beyond the scope of Benjamin's book; it would be most interesting to see how he might apply the dependency approach to the political (and social) complexities of the Batista years. Domínguez's analysis of this period, like his analysis of Cuba's first political system, focuses on political power. With the inauguration of the Good Neighbor Policy, "imperialism" gave way to "hegemonism" as the U.S. sought to avoid explicit intervention in favor

of more diplomatic means for maintaining dominance. This transition expanded the capacity of Cuban governments because hegemonism was centralizing rather than pluralizing, though Domínguez offers no theoretical explanation of why this should have been the case. In any event, the fatal flaw of Cuba's second political system (1933-58) was not incapacity, but a separation of the "politics of incumbancy" (i.e., electoral and party politics) from the "politics of interest" (i.e., pressure group politics). The former focused on controlling the government for personal gain, while the latter centered on capturing relevant pieces of the regulatory bureaucracy to assure their compliance with private enterprise.

Why and how this two-track political system emerged from the ruins of the 1933 revolution is unclear, but its effect was to produce organized interests who dealt directly and successfully with the government bureaucracy without any need to forge national political coalitions, either with one another or with the existing political parties. It was, in effect, an almost organic corporatism, though Domínguez does not call it that.<sup>8</sup> When this political system collapsed, Cuba's organized groups had no experience at subordinating narrow self-interest to cooperation in defense of wider class interests. Faced with a revolutionary government intent on ruling in the interests of the unorganized poor, the organized groups proved impotent, passing onto the dust heap of history with surprisingly little resistance.

#### *Politics in Revolutionary Cuba*

Domínguez's treatment of the revolutionary polity is more sophisticated and detailed than his analysis of the prerevolutionary period, yet its encyclopedic character is at times a liability. The abundance of factual detail too often obscures the author's line of analysis, leaving even the careful reader adrift in the sea of data Domínguez has assembled. The main link between the pre- and post-1959 analyses is the assertion that the revolutionary system continued the process of centralizing political power—with a vengeance. Domínguez clearly implies that this was somehow a logical extension of the earlier process, but he never specifies what the underlying centralizing dynamic might be. After 1959, centralization is attributed to Cuba's need to defend itself against the U.S. and, more dubiously, to the Soviet Union's purported preference for dealing with centralized bureaucracies. The expansion of central control resulting from the socialization of the means of production receives scant mention, but this is because Domínguez views Cuba's transition to socialism as essentially derivative—the result of the need to enlist Soviet support in the struggle with the United States. This analysis does not do

justice to Cuba's domestic sociopolitical dynamics, which Domínguez himself later describes very perceptively. James O'Connor has argued persuasively that the Cuban revolution became a socialist revolution primarily as the result of those internal dynamics,<sup>9</sup> though Cuba's rapid realignment towards the U.S.S.R. must obviously be understood as a function of the U.S.-Cuban conflict.

In his examination of contemporary Cuban politics, Domínguez focuses on legitimation, institutionalization, policymaking, and attitudinal change. In the course of his discussion, he presents detailed portraits of every Cuban political institution (the party, the government, the military, and the mass organizations), and a variety of key policy areas (economics, science, culture, and agrarian policy). The basic view of Cuban politics that emerges from this comprehensive exploration is not, however, particularly new or unique. It corresponds in its essentials with the views set forth by Edward Gonzalez and Carmelo Mesa-Lago, and also conforms quite closely to the bureaucratic model of Soviet politics, which enjoys currency in the field of Soviet and East European studies.

The discussion of legitimation is one area in which Domínguez's analysis is far more sophisticated than the conventional wisdom regarding Castro's charismatic authority. While recognizing the inestimable importance of Fidel, Domínguez notes that regime performance, nationalism, and mass participation have also contributed to regime legitimacy. Moreover, he is careful to distinguish between charismatic authority as the basis of legitimation and Castro's role in the policy process: "... One man cannot do everything" (p. 206), Domínguez cautions, later adding, "No one person decides public policy in Cuba, and no one person ever has" (p. 381). Despite these caveats, Domínguez does not depart from the prevailing view on the "limits of charisma"—that Castro's preeminent role kept Cuba's political institutions weak and subordinate throughout the 1960s, "obstructing institutionalization" (p. 206).<sup>10</sup> Institutionalization, defined in terms close to Huntington's, involves the complexity, coherence, adaptability, and autonomy of organizations.<sup>11</sup>

Since 1970, the Cubans have been involved in a multifaceted process of political reorganization that they themselves called the institutionalization of the revolution. Domínguez is especially cautious in evaluating its results. He notes that Castro has delegated more power, that the leading role of the party has been established, that legitimacy has shifted significantly towards a more legal-rational and less charismatic base. In fact, he grants that all institutions have become more stable, coherent, complex, and capable—but not autonomous; and this makes him unwilling to conclude that what the Cubans call institutional-

ization is really that. The lack of autonomy has "limited the process of institutionalization" (p. 260), and while the other changes have formalized political structures, "the formalization of the revolutionary state should not be confused with its institutionalization" (p. 240).

There is a serious problem with this formulation. If the autonomy of political structures is to be defined as their independence (in a "separation of powers" sense) from one another, and if autonomy is to be the sine qua non of institutionalization, then by definition no properly functioning Marxist-Leninist political system can ever qualify as institutionalized. In a system based upon democratic centralism, no political structure is supposed to be autonomous of party leadership. Such a system will only fulfill the autonomy criterion *when it is breaking down*—i.e., when the party is so weak or divided that it cannot rule effectively. Under such conditions, is the system *more* institutionalized or *less*? For Huntington, we should note, institutional autonomy is not, as in Domínguez, the autonomy of one political organization from another; rather, it is the autonomy of political institutions from social forces. Indeed, Huntington portrays Marxist-Leninist systems as among the *most* institutionalized.<sup>12</sup>

Domínguez is especially critical about the lack of autonomous political participation in Cuba. He characterizes Cuba as a mobilization system in which mass participation is centrally controlled and directed; hence it is ineffective as a means of influencing policy. The distinction between autonomous and nonautonomous participation has long been used to contrast western and socialist political systems, but in recent years its theoretical adequacy has come under increasing attack in the field of comparative Communist studies.<sup>13</sup> It is unfortunate that Domínguez does not at least take note of this debate, even if he did not feel compelled to address the issues raised by it.

Discussing the newly created Organs of People's Power (OPP), Domínguez concludes that the elections for local delegates are "rigged" because their procedures "made manipulation by the Communist party easy" (p. 287). Candidates are nominated at neighborhood meetings of eligible voters, seats are contended by multiple candidates, and voting is by direct secret ballot. The flaw in this, according to Domínguez, is the absence of "autonomous electoral competition"—i.e., candidates cannot campaign, and thus cannot run on the basis of issues. Cuban elections are not rigged in the sense that outcomes are predetermined or manipulated, but neither are they a mechanism for introducing new issues to the policy agenda or offering an alternative political elite. Their function is to select respected citizens to act as links between senior decision-makers and the general populace. While one may debate the

pros and cons of an electoral system designed in this way, it cannot be called "rigged" simply because it does not conform to North American conceptions of what functions an election ought to perform.

Domínguez concludes his discussion of political participation with an explanation of how such extensive but nonautonomous participation can be sustained with so little loss of regime support. "Cubans are socially mobilized enough to be politically mobilized by a competent government," he argues, but "they are not socially mobilized enough to have the psychological resources to participate politically on their own" (p. 304). How is it that after two decades of educational improvement (education being Domínguez's principal indicator of social mobilization) the same populace that was sufficiently self-mobilizing to overthrow both the Machado and Batista dictatorships has suddenly become a nation of sheep? Either Domínguez is wrong about the nonautonomous quality of Cuban participation, or he is wrong about the link between social mobilization and participation.

With the masses involved in nonautonomous participation, policymaking is the prerogative of Cuba's political elite, and Domínguez adopts an essentially bureaucratic model to explain it. The sources of elite power include closeness to Fidel, one's own organizational post, and, on occasion, closeness to the U.S.S.R. "A grasp of factional politics," Domínguez observes, "is indispensable for understanding power relationships within the Cuban elite" (p. 420). Unlike Edward Gonzalez, for whom Cuba's elite cleavages are relatively stable, Domínguez argues for a more fluid model in which the center of political power shifts both horizontally and vertically within the political system depending upon what issues are at stake. His studies of economic, civil-military, agrarian,<sup>14</sup> cultural, and scientific policy demonstrate clearly that different issues involve different actors and may cut different ways.

In the final analysis, Domínguez paints a picture of Cuban politics in which a small group of elite members dominate the system, deciding all important policy issues and directing nonautonomous political institutions. Policy differences among them are fought out bureaucratically, and Fidel Castro by himself remains virtually a minimum winning coalition. Interest-group lobbying, while not unknown, is meager and limited in effectiveness. The masses, though they generally regard the system as legitimate and participate extensively in politics, do so at elite direction and under elite control, with little effect on policy.

Edward Gonzalez, in his contribution to the Blasier and Mesa-Lago volume (and in other writings), presents a model of Cuban politics very similar in its essentials to Domínguez's.<sup>15</sup> Political power is highly concentrated in a small elite who are relatively insulated from and in command of mass politics. Gonzalez was one of the first analysts to

explore the negative consequences of charismatic authority for political institutionalization in Cuba.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps because he places greater emphasis on Castro's charismatic role in the 1960s than does Domínguez, he views the personalistic element of Cuban politics as more persistent in the 1970s. In tone at least, Gonzalez's writings portray the institutionalization of the revolution as having been less effective at altering the institutional matrix, in part because he views Cuban politics as almost trans-institutional. Indeed, at some points he seems to argue that the institutional changes of the 1970s were little more than an instrument of political combat between existing factions.<sup>17</sup>

For Gonzalez, the basic dynamics of Cuban politics are found within that narrow stratum of leaders who head Cuba's state, party, and army. The factional divisions within this "political oligarchy" have not changed much in the past decade, though Gonzalez acknowledges that institutionalization has imbued them with a more bureaucratic tinge. Factions that were once explained as having an essentially clientelist base (Fidelistas, Raulistas, and old Communists) are now described as stemming from elite differences over "ideological and issue orientations, power considerations, and bureaucratic and organizational interests" (Blasier and Mesa-Lago, p. 5). Thus the clientelist labels have given way to less personalistic ones (the Fidelistas have become the revolutionary tendency; the Raulistas, the military tendency; and the old Communists, the technocratic tendency), but the personnel remain basically the same.<sup>18</sup>

Carmelo Mesa-Lago was one of the first scholars to note that the changes initiated in Cuba during the early 1970s were significant. This edition of *Cuba in the 1970s* provides a great deal of new information on Cuba's evolving political structure and new economic system, but the basic analysis and conclusions of the first edition are unchanged. Mesa-Lago is less hesitant than either Domínguez or Gonzalez to call the institutionalization process a success: "... there is no doubt that the process of institutionalization has had positive effects: the various organs of the state now have their legal functions delineated, the top posts have been assigned specific duties and boundaries, the military and civilian sectors now appear fairly separated, there have been elections for the first time since the Revolution, and there are channels opened to the people that enable them to have some input into the administration" (p. 79).

Nevertheless, he adds, "the center of decision-making in Cuba continues to be highly concentrated (although somewhat broadened) in the same clique" (p. 79). The 1970s began with promises of democratization as well as institutionalization, but Mesa-Lago sees these promises as largely unfulfilled. Though he does not challenge the fairness of local

Peoples Power elections, he notes that the power of local OPP assemblies is severely restricted. Though the mass organizations, especially the trade unions, have been revived from their nadir in the 1960s, the revival has come largely in the form of increased central control rather than increased mass initiative. Thus, instead of a decentralized democratic system, institutionalization has produced "central controls, dogmatism, administrative-bureaucratic features, and limited mass participation resembling the Soviet system" (p. 115). This, obviously, is not far removed from the model advanced by Domínguez and Gonzalez.

The bureaucratic-centralist model does have its critics.<sup>19</sup> Though their conceptual approaches to the study of Cuban politics vary considerably, on the whole they tend to be less equivocal about the successes of the institutionalization process, especially with regard to the broadening of mass participation. Analysts such as Casal, Azicri, Bengelsdorf, and this author maintain that the creation of the Organs of People's Power is not merely an attempt to improve legitimacy by establishing a participatory facade. Rather, it is an authentic attempt to extend effective participation and to improve the political linkages between leaders and populace.

If mass participation in Cuba is authentic, then the mass-elite dichotomy that lies at the heart of the bureaucratic-centralist model obscures more than it clarifies. By writing off the masses as nonautonomous and focusing on intralite conflicts, the bureaucratic model overlooks not only the importance of mass politics but, more significantly, the nature of the relationship between masses and elites. The result is that a single, albeit important, aspect of Cuban politics (elite conflict) is elevated to the status of being the *only* aspect worth analyzing in depth. From this we get, at best, a one-dimensional representation of Cuba's political dynamics—no matter how detailed that representation might be.

#### *Economics in Revolutionary Cuba*

Controversies tend to be less intense when it comes to evaluating economic performance, largely because the data are less amenable to divergent interpretation. Yet controversies do exist, centering on how successful the regime has been in the area of social welfare policy, and on the degree and character of Cuban "dependence" on the Soviet Union. Carmelo Mesa-Lago's *The Economy of Socialist Cuba: A Two-Decade Appraisal* contains the most complete collection of Cuban economic data ever assembled. As always, Mesa-Lago is particularly sensitive to their limits, yet at the same time he is able to draw from them a richly detailed profile of Cuban economic performance.<sup>20</sup>

The title of this book is well chosen, for it is very much an appraisal of economic performance rather than a history of Cuban economic policy.<sup>21</sup> The first chapter provides only a quick summary of how policy has evolved through five stages during two decades of revolutionary government: the liquidation of capitalism (1959–60); the Stalinist model (1961–63); an interregnum of debate over alternative policies (1964–66); the Mao-Guevarist model (1966–70);<sup>22</sup> and the Soviet economic reform model (1971–present). This survey passes with such dizzying speed that it does not quite provide the framework necessary to integrate the chapters that follow. Also missing is any attempt to place Cuban economic trends into the wider context of Cuban political developments. While he documents in detail the effects of various economic policies, he doesn't delve into the political conflicts that led to the transitions from one phase of policy to another. A corollary to this is that Mesa-Lago's explanations are wholly economic in content, though the economy being explained is directed by political rather than market forces. By contrast, one of the great strengths of *Cuba in the 1970s* is precisely its integrated analysis of politics and economics in the revolution's second decade.

The main body of *The Economy of Socialist Cuba* is organized around performance in five areas: economic growth; diversification; international dependency; employment; and equity.<sup>23</sup> The prerevolutionary economy faced serious problems in all these areas, and the revolutionary government came to power intent upon stimulating growth, diversifying production, reducing dependency, eradicating unemployment, and reducing inequality. The difficulty, Mesa-Lago argues, is that these goals cannot be pursued simultaneously. During the 1960s, growth was sacrificed to consumption (1959–60), diversification (1961–63), and egalitarianism (1966–70); only in the 1970s had it been given top priority. Diversification proved to be more difficult and costly than the regime anticipated, and after a brief interlude in the early 1960s, the economy has returned to its reliance on the comparative advantage of sugar. Mesa-Lago foresees some future success for diversification into nickel production and tourism, but Cuba's short-term prospects for escaping dependency on sugar are not very bright.

In his discussion of Cuba's international economic relations, Mesa-Lago refers to the dependency literature, but does not really adopt its conceptual or theoretical framework in his own analysis. In essence, he equates dependency with vulnerability to a foreign country. With the issue cast in these terms, he concludes that Cuba has traded its prerevolutionary dependence on the U.S. for dependence on the U.S.S.R. The complex of relations that constitute dependency in the extant literature is, of course, more complicated than this and whether Cuba's vulnera-

bility to the U.S.S.R. constitutes an unequivocal case of dependency as that term has come to be understood is much less clear than Mesa-Lago's analysis admits.<sup>24</sup>

Employment and equity are the two areas in which the revolutionary government has had the greatest success. While unemployment has been virtually eliminated, underemployment (i.e., employment at low levels of productivity) is still a serious problem. The emphasis in the 1970s on raising productivity put some upward pressure on the unemployment rate as plant administrators attempted to streamline their labor force, but unemployment in Cuba is still by far the lowest in Latin America. Equity of distribution was the revolution's first priority throughout the 1960s; and especially during the Mao-Guevarist phase of economic policy. Inequality in the standard of living was dramatically reduced by a shift in the distribution of income from upper to lower classes, the free provision of social services (e.g., health and education), and a rationing system that tended to equalize real buying power across what income differentials still remained. As the romanticism of the Mao-Guevarist phase gave way to the pragmatism of the 1970s, wage leveling has been replaced by the reintroduction of limited wage differentials based on skill and productivity. Moral incentives have not been wholly abandoned, but are now leavened with a generous portion of material incentives as well. The effect, of course, is greater inequality than existed in 1968, but nowhere near the inequality of the prerevolutionary period.

Though *Cuba: Order and Revolution* focuses primarily on politics, Domínguez does explore social and economic policies as they relate to regime performance and legitimacy. On the whole, his conclusions accord with those of Mesa-Lago. The revolutionary government has been fairly successful at redistribution, but much less so at promoting economic growth. Domínguez, however, tends to disparage the Revolution's social gains by the weight and tone of his commentary, which focuses more on shortcomings than achievements.<sup>25</sup> Mesa-Lago is no less critical of shortcomings, but his chronicle of the successes and failures of social policy is more balanced.

Both Domínguez and Mesa-Lago assess Cuban social policy in the aggregate; between them they offer as complete a survey of the existing data as is possible. Karen Wald's *Children of Che: Childcare and Education in Cuba* proceeds from a different premise, without attempting to survey or analyze the whole of Cuban childcare or educational policy.<sup>26</sup> Through a series of anecdotes, she "lets the Cuban people tell their own story" (p. 20-21). On some subjects, such as the development of childcare, the book is thorough, but it always proceeds from the viewpoint of the people who are recipients of the services. This is the book's strength;

it reminds us that behind all the aggregate data, there are real, flesh-and-blood people struggling with the legacy of underdevelopment.

Most scholars in the field of Cuban studies agree that the aggregate quality of Cuban health and educational services declined in the 1960s because so many professionals left the island. While this may be true, cold statistics cannot do justice to the impact that even minimal services have had on the lives of the poor who had *no* such services before 1959. Wald captures that impact in a brief exchange with a thirteen-year-old boy, Juan:

Karen: Did your mama go to school when she was a little girl?

Juan: No, because there weren't any schools; there wasn't any way to get them.

Karen: Did she say anything to you when they built the school here?

Juan: Yes, she said she was really glad because now I'd have a chance to learn to read and write and become educated. She said I should study real hard, because an educated person can't be fooled and taken advantage of the way people are when they don't have any education.

Karen: Did she say anything about the hospital?

Juan: At first, she cried. She said she was happy that we wouldn't have to go through what they did when she was little. She said a lot of people would still be alive if that hospital had been built then. One time when we passed the hospital, she told me that this is what the Revolution was fought for, and if anyone ever tried to take it away from us, we'd all have to pick up guns and fight to keep it. (P. 76)

### *Cuba in the World*

By the end of the decade, Cuban foreign policy had supplanted the institutionalization process as the most widely discussed issue in the field of Cuban studies. Though there has been no book-length study of Cuba's foreign policy since Bender's study of U.S.-Cuban relations,<sup>27</sup> the new activism of Cuban policy has prompted two anthologies to fill the gap. Neither, unfortunately, does a very satisfactory job. Blasier and Mesa-Lago's *Cuba in the World* is a collection of essays originally prepared in 1975; inevitably, many of them are seriously dated. An even larger problem is that virtually all the contributions are narrow in focus, and the volume suffers greatly from the lack of a unifying essay to provide an overview of how Cuban policy has evolved and thus to place the narrower subjects in some perspective. Blasier contributes an excellent essay on the costs and benefits accruing to the U.S.S.R. from its relationship with Cuba, concluding that the Soviets would probably not oppose a U.S.-Cuban rapprochement; but the volume contains no essay on the general state of either Cuban-Soviet or Cuban-U.S. relations. Linsley discusses Cuban policy toward Puerto Rico, and Jones offers a

rather superficial review of Cuban relations with the Caribbean, but there is no essay surveying Cuba's evolving reintegration with Latin America or the South American region as a whole. Shapira's article on Cuba's Middle East policy proceeds from the assumption that Cubans are merely Soviet puppets, and Levi's piece on the nonaligned movement is extremely disappointing; there is no essay on the general state of Cuba's relations with the Third World. Nelson Valdes, however, presents a detailed examination of the Angolan intervention, clearly relating it to the wider context of Cuban internationalism and earlier policies toward Africa.

There are several other excellent pieces in this volume: Gonzalez provides the fullest explication thus far of his view that Cuban policy, especially foreign policy, is the result of factional struggles within Cuba's political elite; Domínguez contributes a thorough study of Cuban military policy abroad; Blasier, in a second piece, makes excellent use of Soviet and CMEA data to examine Cuba's position in the CMEA; and Ritter assesses the transferability of Cuba's developmental model to other underdeveloped nations. Two of the best pieces are by Mesa-Lago himself. The first is a thorough survey of Cuba's current economic situation, both domestic and international; the second is a systematic analysis of the costs and benefits Cuba would incur in any rapprochement with the U.S. Mesa-Lago concludes that the economic benefits to Cuba would be modest, since its continued dependence upon the export of sugar and the uncertainty of the international sugar market limits Cuba's ability to expand its hard currency trade. As long as sugar remains the principal source of Cuba's foreign exchange earnings, it will be neither possible nor profitable to reduce its concentration of trade with the socialist bloc.

Weinstein's *Revolutionary Cuba in the World Arena* is plagued by many of the same problems as the Blasier and Mesa-Lago volume. Most of its articles are equally narrow in focus and it, too, lacks an essay to provide the sort of overview of Cuban foreign policy that could knit the disparate pieces into a coherent whole. Hagelberg's highly competent technical study of Cuban sugar policy suffers most from this lack of context because it contains no discussion of Cuba's wider economic situation or policy. Hewett's piece is a useful description of the inner workings of the CMEA, but is not as detailed as Blasier's in the Blasier and Mesa-Lago volume. Oddly, Hewett argues that Cuba joined the CMEA as a result of Soviet pressure, despite demonstrating that membership is highly advantageous to Cuba economically, and that Cuba has been exempted from most of the economic costs of membership.

Lowenthal's imaginative piece is the only essay that deals directly with Cuba's African policy. It weighs the costs and benefits of the An-

golan intervention as they might have been outlined to Cuban decision-makers in a briefing paper from their foreign policy advisors. Not only is the format delightfully creative, but the content is insightful and incisive as well, demonstrating that Cuba had very good reasons of its own for the intervention. Casal's excellent demographic and political profile of the Cuban community in the U.S. is one of the better pieces in the volume; unfortunately it must have been written before the opening of the dialogue between the community and the Cuban government, since it makes no mention of this historic event in which Casal herself has been an important participant.

In an effort to place Cuban foreign relations in a broader perspective, Freida Silvert lauds Cuba as a "prototype" of the "new politics"—politics in which the capitalist-communist dichotomy is no longer relevant. The "modalities" of the new politics are liberation vs. authoritarianism; egalitarianism vs. oppression; and, in foreign affairs, poor vs. rich. Much of the argument is obscure, and Silvert ascribes to the Cubans a humanistic and almost antitechnological world view that is clearly at variance with current policy. Yet this article, bold in scope, raises a number of intriguing issues. The one lesson Silvert extracts from Cuba's experience is that technical economic issues of development are not nearly as important as politics. Once the political choice to give priority to development has been made, "the eco-technical solutions to developmental problems are simple" (p. 19). This is, of course, an exaggeration, as Cuba's current economic difficulties attest. Giving priority to development and equality does not make the resolution of "eco-technical" problems simple; it does, however, make their resolution *possible*.

Both the Blasier and Mesa-Lago and the Weinstein volumes are uneven and would have benefited greatly from a more ruthless exercise of the editors' prerogative. By excluding weak articles, they would then have had room for pieces examining Cuba's foreign relations from a broader, more integrated perspective; neither provides the reader with any sense of how greatly Cuban foreign policy has changed during the revolution's second decade. One of the more dramatic changes has been the evolution of Cuba's relations with the Soviet Union, relations which have gone from the high tension and animosity of the late 1960s to an unprecedented plateau of mutual accord and cooperation. Where Cuba once denounced the timidity of Soviet foreign policy and its lack of revolutionary zeal, Cuba now lauds the U.S.S.R. as the "natural ally" of the Third World. This congruence of foreign policies has led not only to diplomatic partnership, but also to military cooperation in Africa and the Middle East. Though the new cordiality of Cuban-Soviet relations is most valuable in foreign affairs, it extends to Cuban domestic policy as well. After the debacle of the 1970 sugar harvest, the Soviet Union

increased substantially its economic assistance to the island, while Cuba embarked upon a program of political and economic reorganization which brought it much more into line with contemporary Soviet practice. Many of Cuba's new political structures have been explicitly modelled on their Soviet counterparts and, in *The Economy of Socialist Cuba*, Mesa-Lago aptly describes Cuban economic policy in the 1970s as the "Soviet economic reform model."

How did these changes come about? Was Cuba forced to abandon its errant ways by Soviet economic pressure? Or did the Cuban leadership shift policies of its own volition due to the policy failures of the revolution's first decade? There is no question, of course, that the Cuban economy relies heavily on Soviet assistance and would be in dire trouble without it. But how much influence does Soviet aid buy? The answer from recent scholarship on Cuba is by no means unequivocal and, interestingly, the same analysts sometimes have different interpretations when examining domestic and foreign policies. Domínguez, Gonzalez, and Mesa-Lago all argue that the bureaucratic-centralist model to which Cuba's domestic polity has conformed since 1970 resulted largely from Soviet pressure.<sup>30</sup> It was, in effect, the price Cuba had to pay for Soviet economic assistance in the dark years of 1970-71. For example, Domínguez writes, "As the disastrous year of 1970 came to an end, the Soviet Union once again rescued Cuba, but this time on condition that a major reorganization of the Cuban government, under Soviet guidance, be undertaken" (p. 159). This is only an inference, of course, since there is precious little direct evidence on how Cuba and the Soviet Union interact. Other scholars, this author included, have argued that Cuba's domestic difficulties during the late 1960s were so acute that the policy changes of the 1970s are explicable apart from any Soviet pressure.<sup>31</sup>

However, there is a virtual consensus in the field that Cuban foreign policy is made in Havana, not in Moscow.<sup>32</sup> Even those scholars who argue that Cuba's domestic policy changes came at Soviet initiative reject the idea that Cuba acts as a Soviet puppet in Africa. Gonzalez reflects the dominant view when he writes, in the Blasier and Mesa-Lago volume, "The Cubans were pursuing their own Third World interests [in Angola] which coincided with and were supportive of Soviet interests in Southern Africa" (p. 23). This poses an interesting theoretical dilemma for those who attribute domestic changes to Soviet pressure. If the U.S.S.R. decided, in the early 1970s, to coerce the Cuban leadership into adopting a new domestic course, why would it allow Cuba to maintain autonomy in the field of foreign policy? Would not the Soviets be *more* interested in Cuba's foreign adventures than its domestic political arrangements? The Soviets' own interests are, after all, much more directly involved in Cuba's activist stance in Africa. It is, at the

very least, an anomaly for Cuba to have preserved its international independence while surrendering a good portion of its domestic autonomy. Yet none of the scholars who advanced the Sovietization thesis concerning domestic policy have addressed this.

The most likely explanation for this apparent contradiction is that the Sovietization thesis is mistaken—that the changes in both Cuba's domestic and foreign policy resulted from the internal dynamics of the Cuban revolutionary process. But the fact that such an anomaly could be so widespread yet so little commented upon reflects one of the principal weaknesses in the field of Cuban studies—the compartmentalization of domestic and foreign policy analysis. This results not from a division of labor among analysts, for the same people have written widely in both spheres; rather, it is a theoretical compartmentalization in which domestic and foreign policies have too often been studied in isolation from one another.

An extremely interesting aspect of the Cuban-Soviet relationship which has been largely ignored is the impact the Cubans have had upon the Soviets. The conventional wisdom of international relations holds that large states set the terms of global events that small states must more or less passively accept. This notion has always been anathema to the leaders of the Cuban Revolution, so it should come as no surprise that Cuba has become one of the first small states to mount a truly global foreign policy. The Cuban-Soviet relationship has, perhaps inevitably, had an impact on both partners.

In *The U.S.S.R. and the Cuban Revolution: Soviet Ideological and Strategic Perspectives, 1959-1977*, Jacques Levesque provides a comprehensive and invaluable survey of how the Cuban Revolution altered Soviet perceptions of the world and hence Soviet foreign policy. Relying almost exclusively on Soviet sources, Levesque demonstrates conclusively that the Cuban Revolution catalyzed and shaped such key departures in Soviet policy as the opening to "national democrats" and "revolutionary democrats" in the Third World. He also shatters some well-established myths. Latin American Communist parties were by no means as subservient to the U.S.S.R. as the conventional wisdom would have it; indeed, the Soviets labored mightily to mediate a reconciliation between the Cuban and Latin American parties, receiving resistance from both quarters. While Levesque covers the history of Cuban-Soviet relations in some detail, Soviet policy is really the book's principle subject. Because Levesque refers only to secondary sources for the Cuban perspective, his explanations of Cuban behavior are on occasion superficial; his explanations of Soviet actions and reactions never are. Though scholars will learn little about Cuba from this excellent study, they will learn a great deal about the Soviet Union.

## Conclusion

Domínguez's *Cuba: Order and Revolution* and Mesa-Lago's *The Economy of Socialist Cuba* are definitive works on the politics and economics of the first two decades of revolutionary government in Cuba. Though controversy will no doubt continue, as it should, over the interpretations made in these volumes, they are so comprehensive that they will inevitably serve as the point of departure for debate. Two glaring gaps remain: there is still no study of Cuban foreign policy, and there is no detailed treatment of Cuban politics or economics (or political economy) from those scholars who reject the bureaucratic-centralist model propounded by both Domínguez and Mesa-Lago. Given the currency of Cuba's global involvements, the absence of a book on foreign policy is unlikely to last very long. The absence of a full-length study offering an alternative to the bureaucratic-centralist model is more serious since this lack retards the debate over the bureaucratic model by casting its opponents in the unenviable role of constant critics. The best criticism of the bureaucratic-centralist model would be a new interpretation of Cuban politics that provides us with a better understanding of contemporary Cuba.

## NOTES

1. See, for example, the "Forum on Institutionalization," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 9, no. 2 (July 1979): 63-90.
2. Heretofore, the standard work on the subject has been Robert Freeman Smith, *The United States and Cuba: Business and Diplomacy, 1917-1960* (New Haven, Conn.: College and University Press, 1960). Though Benjamin offers more detail on some subjects, Smith is still the best overall study of the period.
3. For example, Abraham F. Lowenthal, "'Liberal', 'Radical', and 'Bureaucratic' Perspectives on U.S. Latin American Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Retrospect," in Julio Cotler and Richard R. Fagen (eds.), *Latin America and the United States: The Changing Political Realities* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), pp. 212-35.
4. Guillermo O'Donnell makes this point forcefully in his commentary on bureaucratic politics models in the Cotler and Fagen volume, "Commentary on May," pp. 164-75.
5. See, for example, the exchanges in the special issue of *Latin American Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1974) on dependency theory.
6. Luis E. Aguilar, *Cuba 1933: Prologue to Revolution* (New York: Norton, 1972) provides a good contrast. Though Aguilar's explanation of the revolution of 1933 is not as compelling as Benjamin's, Aguilar succeeds in providing the reader with a strong sense of domestic political cleavages and dynamics during that period.
7. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).
8. James O'Connor, *The Origins of Socialism in Cuba* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970) does regard the prerevolutionary system, especially under Batista, as corporatist.
9. O'Connor, *The Origins*, chapters 1-3.
10. For the major explication of this view, see Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba under Castro: The Limits of Charisma* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton-Mifflin, 1974).
11. Huntington, *Political Order*, pp. 12-22.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 334-43.
13. For example, D. Richard Little, "Mass Political Participation in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.: A Conceptual Analysis," *Comparative Political Studies* 8, no. 4 (Jan. 1976): 437-60; and Jerry F. Hough, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).
14. The chapter on agrarian politics is unsurpassed. Not only is this an important and often overlooked aspect of Cuban politics, Domínguez's treatment of it is the best in the book.
15. Edward Gonzalez, "Institutionalization, Political Elites, and Foreign Policies," in Blasier and Mesa-Lago (eds.), *Cuba in the World*; "The Party Congress and Poder Popular," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 6, no. 2 (July 1976): 1-14; "Complexities of Cuban Foreign Policy," *Problems of Communism* 26 (Nov.-Dec. 1977): 1-15; "Castro and Cuba's New Orthodoxy," *Problems of Communism* 25 (Jan.-Feb. 1976): 1-19; "Comment," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 9, no. 2 (July 1979): 80-81.
16. Gonzalez, *Cuba Under Castro*.
17. Gonzalez, "Castro and Cuba's New Orthodoxy," pp. 12-16.
18. On the various factional divisions within the elite, see William M. LeoGrande, "Continuity and Change in the Cuban Political Elite," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 8, no. 2 (July 1978): 1-33.
19. Max Azicri, "The Institutionalization of the Cuban Revolution: A Review of the Literature," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 9, no. 2 (July 1979): 78-83; Lourdes Casal, "On Popular Power: The Organization of the Cuban State during the Period of Transition," *Latin American Perspectives* 2, no. 4 (1979): 78-88; Casal, "Cuban Communist Party: The Best among the Good," *Cuba Review* 6 (Sept. 1979): 23-30; Carollee Bengelsdorpf, "A Large School of Government," *Cuba Review* 6 (Sept. 1976): 3-18; Marifeli Pérez-Stable, "Whither the Cuban Working Class?," *Latin American Perspectives* 2, no. 4 (1975): 60-77; William M. LeoGrande "Mass Political Participation in Socialist Cuba," in John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson (eds.), *Political Participation in Latin America* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978).
20. On the limits of Cuban economic data, see Mesa-Lago's "Availability and Reliability of Statistics in Socialist Cuba," *LARR* 4, nos. 1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1969): 53-91, 47-81; and his brief update, "Cuban Statistics Revisited," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 9, no. 2 (July 1979): 59-62.
21. For a more policy oriented analysis, see Archibald R. M. Ritter, *The Economic Development of Revolutionary Cuba: Strategy and Performance* (New York: Praeger, 1974).
22. Mesa-Lago originally dubbed this period the "Sino-Guevarist" model. Presumably the substitution reflects recent changes in the Chinese development model, specifically T'eng Hsiao-ping's retreat from Maoism, rather than any new assessment of Cuba's practice during the late 1960s.
23. Mesa-Lago first addressed these issues in "Economic Policies and Growth," in Mesa-Lago (ed.), *Revolutionary Change in Cuba* (Pittsburgh, Penn.: Pittsburgh University Press, 1971).
24. For a somewhat different interpretation of essentially the same data, see William M. LeoGrande, "Cuban Dependency: A Comparison of Prerevolutionary and Post-revolutionary International Economic Relations," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 9, no. 2 (July 1979): 1-28.
25. For example, after more than two pages detailing the shortcomings of contemporary Cuban education, Domínguez writes, "These criticisms . . . should not detract from the impressive educational achievements of the revolutionary government compared to the prerevolutionary period." But there is no comparable discussion of what those achievements have been (pp. 170-72).
26. For more systematic assessments of childcare and educational policy, respectively, see Marvin Leiner, *Children Are the Revolution: Day Care in Cuba* (New York: Penguin, 1974); and Jonathan Kozol, *Children of the Revolution* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978).

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27. Lynn D. Bender, *The Politics of Hostility* (Hato Rey, Puerto Rico: Inter-American University Press, 1975).
28. For such an essay, see Jorge I. Domínguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 1 (1978): 83-108.
29. The January and July 1980 issues of *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos*, still in press at this writing, are devoted entirely to Cuba's African policy.
30. Domínguez, p. 159; Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970s*, p. 105, Gonzalez "Castro and Cuba's New Orthodoxy."
31. E.g., Nelson Valdes, "Revolution and Institutionalization in Cuba," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 6, no. 1 (Jan. 1976): 1-24; William M. LeoGrande "Party Development in Revolutionary Cuba," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 21, no. 4 (Nov. 1979): 457-80.
32. E.g., Domínguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy"; Gonzalez's article in Blasier and Mesa-Lago (eds.); Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970s*, pp. 142f.