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Aspects of Cuban-Soviet Relations

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yes
When the Cuban delegation to the 50th anniversary celebration showed up in Moscow headed by the Minister of Public Health, Western reporters had a field day speculating on its meaning. The fact that a top echelon revolutionary leader did not come was said to represent a cooling off in Cuban-Soviet relations.

no
On anniversary night things looked very different here in Havana. The official Soviet reception in the huge patio of a self-exiled millionaires mansion in a zone formerly known as "Country Club" was attended by President Dorticos, Prime Minister Fidel Castro, Armed Forces Minister Raul Castro and other top ranking governmental and Party leaders. This singular array of personages, ^{The very moment when} coming at a time when the world press was still speculating on the meaning of the Moscow business shows the difficulties involved in evaluating Cuban policy from a one-shot angle.

yes
Cuban foreign policy is characterized by its independence sui generis, its outspokenness and its complexity. Soviet-Cuban relations highlight all these characteristics.

yes
The U.S. government is naturally delighted when they detect breaches in Cuban-Soviet unity. That differences exist nobody denies. But U.S. policy makers would be making a mistake to bank on a rupture of relations as part of their master strategy.

No Cuban revolutionary discounts the degree and utility of Soviet aid. When Cuba nationalized the oil refineries in 1960 and was faced with a total embargo on petroleum shipments from the big cartels, the Soviet Union stepped in to fill the gap. In these seven years oil tankers from the far away Black Sea have kept the refineries in operation. Cuba has never had to ration gas.

yes
During the 1962-3 food shortages Soviet canned meat as well as hake and herring brought in by Soviet fishing boats helped the Cuban people over the hump.

In the wake of Hurricane Flora the Soviets contributed a pre-fab housing factory. A communications parts factory is also a gift from the Soviets.

yes
Soviet technical ^{advisors} ~~advosers~~ have contributed in many fields: industrial development, geological exploration, technical training. Soviet pumps, compressors, motors, machine tools and

other industrial materials have played an important role in filling the vacuum left by the withdrawel of American sources of supply.

A huge fishing port complex with dry dock and canning facilities built with Soviet technical help and machinery is already in partial operation in Havana. Soviet officers man some of Cuba's merchant ships while Cuban's are training their own men. The weapons of the Cuban army and navy, from rifles to rockets, are given to Cuba by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union utilized her advanced engineering skills to design and build the best cane sugar cutting and harvesting combines in the world.

These are all facts that the C.I.A. cannot ignore when analyzing why the U.S. failed to blockade Cuba into submission.

yes
Not to be overlooked is the trade agreement stipulating annual Soviet purchases of at least 5 million tons of Cuban sugar at 6 cents a pound until 1970. (The world market price is now around 2 cents).

no
Recognition was given to the Soviet Union during the 50th anniversary celebration here in Havana. A week

Union was topped off by a mass meeting, a member of the Central Committee of the Party and a founder of the C.P. in 1925, spoke in glowing terms of Soviet achievements.

However, in spite of this wide area of solidarity, there are a whole number of issue in the realm of theory and practice about which the two nations do not see face to face.

There has been a sharp decline in the use of basic Soviet textbooks on Marxism-Leninism and Political Economy in the Universities. Although it is recognized that these texts played a vital role in initiating Cubans to the theories of scientific socialism, they are now criticized on several accounts: 1) they underestimate the problems of the Third World, 2) they lay undue stress on the peaceful road to socialism, 3) they portray as all-inclusive historical and economic laws conclusions drawn from specific Soviet conditions of development.

One of the concrete points of divergency has to do with the problem of material and moral incentives in the construction of the new society. This in turn relates to the question of the transition from socialism to communism. The Cubans tend

yes
sum
up
change
style

that the Soviet texts stress only the need for material incentive and at the same time dichotomize too mechanically the development of socialism and communism. According to the Cuban point of view, simultaneous with the building of socialism one must consciously introduce communist ideology and practices. The Cubans do use material incentives in many areas of economic life but they ~~constantly stress~~ moral incentives. ^{They} ~~and~~ ^{to} do all they can educate students, workers and farmers in this respect and to ~~put~~ ^{practice} this concept into practice ^{in the factory, on the farm} ~~in the factory, on the farm~~ and in the administrative units. The Cuban government has also begun to ~~introduce~~ ^{introduce} with ~~payment for~~ certain services and facilities as a means of slowly introducing communist practices: ^{public} telephones are now free; entrance fees to sports events have been abolished; use of facilities ⁱⁿ including lockers in recreation ~~sites~~ ^{centers and beaches} are now gratuitous. By 1970 all rents for housing will have been abolished and in the coming decade the Cuban government will provide free clothing and meals for all students. Next year ^{students will receive} 250,000 ~~with~~ full scholarships (education, food, board and recreation) to primary, secondary and university level education.

yes
The Cubans insist that since the transition from socialism to communism has ^{not yet} ~~never~~ been achieved ~~yet~~ in any country, the tactics and strategy of this transition should not be raised to the level of a historical law. For that reason they reject the textbook assertions ^{that} would generalize the historical experience of specific countries into a blueprint for all of them.

Another area of difference has arisen around the problems of Latin America. Cuba considers that the objective conditions in Latin America - hunger and poverty - call for revolutionary methods to develop the necessary subjective conditions that will bring about a social upheaval. The slogan of armed revolution for most of the Latin American countries is not thought of as a pattern for rapid victory but as a method of awakening the consciousness of the masses and of showing them the way and the possibility of victory against their oppressors. Cuba has little faith in the possibility that the national bourgeoisie of Latin American nations will have either the courage or the will to confront U.S. imperialism and their oligarchical allies. Cuba sees military dictatorships as one form of guaranteeing imperialist domination in Latin

She also considers that the so-called representative democracies are a means of achieving the same ends by more astute and demagogic forms. Cuba supports the view that in many Latin American countries the only hope is a guerrilla war against the army and State apparatus carried on by peasants, workers and their allies among intellectuals and the petit-bourgeoisie.

It is from this criteria that differences with the Soviet union arise. One surmises on the basis of Soviet policy that they consider that the national bourgeoisie of many Latin American countries can be wooed away from American imperialism by means of trade agreements, cultural exchanges and even long term loans by the Soviet bloc nations. This policy has clashed directly with Havana's assessment of the Latin American situation and for that reason the Cuban government has been openly critical of the aspect of Soviet and eastern european policy. Cuba considers that loans and trade relations only bolster these countries economically and allows them to assume an image that strengthens their hand in the struggle against revolutionary elements.

Cuba's attitude toward certain Communist parties in Latin America are also areas of possible disagreement. Although Cuba maintains fraternal relations with most Latin American parties she has been highly critical of some. The most dramatic case is her opposition to the Communist Party of Venezuela. During many years the V.C.P. was a major force in the guerrilla struggle against the elected governments of Betancourt and later Leoni. Some time ago the Party central committee decided to call a halt to their participation in the armed struggle. Several leading members of the Party led by guerrilla leader Douglas Bravo ^{disseminated} ~~deferred~~ from the decision, attacked it, expressed their determination to remain in the mountains and were expelled. Today the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) and the Revolutionary Independence Movement (MIR) carry on the armed struggle. The V.C.P. has indicated its intention to become fully legal and to take part in the coming presidential elections. Cuba supports the position of the F.A.L.N. and the M.I.R. and does not recognize the authority of the ^{some areas of divergence} ~~W.C.P.~~ ^V.