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street battles! Jose Antonio Mochaverria, lasted elected president of the FEU organized an armed attack on March 13, 1957 against the Presidential Palace in almost successful attempt to kill Batista. He and ~~many~~ ²⁷ other students and workers ~~who participated in the attack~~ were gunned down that day. The FEU was never an organization to operate within the narrow framework of student problems. It was since its conception an outspoken partisan of labor's rights and popular democracy. FEU was indeed a "cradle of Cuban revolutionaries".

With the victory of the Rebel Army FEU's revolutionary aspirations were finally realized. Many FEU members had fought for the downfall of the Batista Regime and ~~a large~~ ^{to become} group returned to the University as popular heroes and as leaders of the FEU. FEU entered a new stage: that of helping to build and consolidate the Revolution.

There is nothing unusual in the fact that some of the leadership and membership of the FEU considered themselves "anti-communist" before the victory of the Revolution. ^{Some of them remained so and left the country} The majority of them discovered however that in the struggle against foreign domination and for popular democracy that socialism was the only answer. This is the same process the Cuban's on all levels have experienced. Today the student body of the University of Havana actively supports the political line of the Revolutionary Government. This is attested to by the fact that 90% of the university students are members of the people's militia.

The report that the YCL and FEU leadership "have been engaged in a bitter contest for authority" is nonsense. In secret ballot elections the student body selected a FEU leadership that was 99% YCL in its composition. This was not fortuitous. The YCL'ers are themselves nominated and discussed by general assemblies of their fellow students. Thus they represent the most respected students. This accounts for the coincidence of choice when FEU elections are held.

The exigencies of revolutionary theory and practice have made clear the need for a mass organization on the campus with a broad base (like FEU) combined with a structural efficiency from top to bottom (like YCL). This in part accounts for the amalgamation of the two organizations.

The old FEU had a single campus-wide leadership which operated through a cultural, sports, defense and productive work committees. The YCL, although selective in nature (30% of the students are members) had a functional organization that allowed it to respond more quickly to the problems and tasks of the moment. The YCL-FEU combines the advantages of both organizations.

The new streamlined setup lessens the number of elected officials ~~imposed~~ to run student affairs on the campus. Functional parallelism has been abolished and the number of high level posts has been reduced. For instance, instead of 123 leadership posts in the eight Faculties of the University there are now 22. This leaves more leadership capacity on the grassroots level where most of the work is done.

Ninety-five percent of the University of Havana students are members of the Jose Antonio Echeverria Brigades. Each brigade has 25 or 30 students and membership in them is strictly voluntary. The members of a brigade operate as a unit in volunteer productive work and are also a mutual-aid study team. The leader of each brigade is chosen by its members and does not have to be a member of the YCL.

The YCL-FEU orients the grassroots brigades, organizes cultural, education, defense and voluntary labor activities, publishes a monthly magazine and is the general spokesman for the student body. It also acts as Permanent President of the Latin American Student Organization with its headquarters in Havana.

The manner in which the selectiveness of the YCL is combined with the mass democracy of the FEU is evidenced in the unique election procedures of the YCL-FEU. The

- 1.-The Base Committee² is composed of from 200 to 300 students of the same year and major. At a meeting of the Base Committee officers are chosen. They must be members of the YCL. If a non-YCL'er is nominated he or she is immediately considered for membership in that organization and if approved ^{may} integrate the leadership of the Base Committee. (One should keep in mind that all YCL'ers are nominated and disaussed by their fellow students).

The Base Committee then makes suggestions for the leadership of the YCL-FEU on the School level.

- 2.- A general assembly of all the Base Committees of a single School makes nominations for the candidates of the School Committee to be elected at a subsequent general election. Suggestions are also made for candidates for office on the Faculty level.
- 3.- All members of the YCL of a given Faculty plus two non-YCL representatives of every brigade in that Faculty meet to nominate candidates for Faculty level offices taking into account the suggestions received from below. Suggestions are also made for the campus-wide candidates.
- 4.- The outgoing Campus Committee (8 campus-wide officers plus the 8 student leaders of the different Faculties) evaluates the suggestions given them by the Faculty level meetings. They decide, without deleting any names, which of the candidates should run for Faculty level offices and which of them should run for campus-wide posts.
5. A massive General Assembly of the entire student body of the University is held in the Athletic Stadium to hear and discuss nominations for posts on the School, Faculty and Campus levels. The following day secret ballot elections are held for the leadership of the YCL-FEU.

Juan Vela, ex-President of the FEU told the Guardian that the student body discussed the organizational changes in depth, and has "accepted them with great enthusiasm". First Secretary Palomino of the YCL-FEU then challenged any American university group to show ~~him~~ more grass roots participation of the student body in campus-self government than the students of the University of Havana enjoy. Any takers?

ALL THE FACTS FIT TO PRINT
BEHIND THE YOUNG COMMUNIST - STUDENT FEDERATION
AMALGAMATION
By Lionel Martin

STUDENTS IN CUBA FACING NEW CURBS

Special to the New York Times

1967² Miami, Nov. 25 - The Castro government appears to be tightening its political control of the University of Havana's 24,000 students.

The Havana radio announced this week that the University Student Federation, the country's only student organization and for more than four decades the cradle of Cuban revolutionaries, is being phased out.

The Federation, once independent and strongly anti-totalitarian, will be absorbed by the Communist Youth League, the Cuban counterpart of the Soviet Komsomol, the announcement indicated.

For the last year, the two organizations, whose leaders are hand-picked by the Government, have reportedly been engaged in a bitter contest for authority over the Havana University students.

Having contributed greatly to the overthrow of Premier Fulgencio Batista, the Federation exercised considerable influence during the initial years of the Castro revolution.

The amalgamation of the Young Communist League and the Federation of University Students (FEU) has nothing to do with the "tightening of political controls" over the students. The YCL-FEU is the natural outcome of the FEU revolutionary tradition and the result of practical experience in the past years.

Julio Castro Palomino, the new First Secretary of the YCL-FEU told this reporter that the fusion of the student groups fulfilled the vision of Julio Antonio Mella who founded the FEU in 1923 and the Communist Party of Cuba in 1925.

During its more than four decades of existence the FEU fought in the front lines against imperialism and the dictatorial regimes that it sponsored. Under the banner of FEU the students confronted police violence in numerous