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Theory and practice of totalitarian dictatorship, a case study of Castro's Cuba

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THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TOTALITARIAN
DICTATORSHIP—A CASE STUDY OF
CASTRO'S CUBA

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B.A. University of Montana, 1964

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Within the discipline of political science the specialized study of totalitarian theory and practice is a relatively recent development.\(^1\) An operating example of a totalitarian movement and a totalitarian rule appeared in Italy under Benito Mussolini's Fascist government. The Nazi Party triumphed in Germany in 1933 and provided additional raw material for the study of totalitarianism. In Germany, the characteristics of this form of political control emerged and were recognized as being the components of a unique political phenomenon. These included the rule of a secret police, the utilization of terroristic controls, and the establishment of concentration camps. An understanding of the essence of totalitarianism was further expanded with the developments in the Soviet Union and the appearance of mass purges and slave labor camps.

With the expansion of totalitarian rule from Europe to Asia and Latin America, political scientists came to the full realization that this form of government is certainly not confined to one particular country or to one continent. It is in essence a general phenomenon capable of presenting a challenge to democratic

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governmental institutions throughout the world. A number of leading scholars and journalists have concluded that this phenomenon has spread to the island of Cuba where it has become a working system of government under the leadership of Fidel Castro.

In any study of totalitarian theory and practice, the initial step involves the formation of a working basic definition. Zbigniew K. Brzezinski provides us with such a definition.

Totalitarianism is a system in which technologically advanced instruments of political power are wielded without restraint by centralized leadership of an elite movement for the purpose of effecting a total social revolution including the conditioning of man, on the basis of certain arbitrary ideological assumptions proclaimed by the leadership, in an atmosphere of coerced unanimity of the entire population.

Working from a concentrated definition, it is possible to develop a descriptive analysis of what constitutes a totalitarian system. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski in their book Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy isolate six traits which characterize totalitarian rule. William E. Ebenstein and Ivo K. Feierabend present additional elaborations which supplement the analysis. Finally, Hannah Arendt provides an understanding of the psychological motivations and goals of a totalitarian system. The combined work of these authors is the creation of a theoretical model of the totalitarian state. The purpose of this thesis is to utilize this abstract model as a study guide for an analysis.

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2 Ibid., p. 275.

of Castro's Cuba from the years 1959-1964.

The base of this model is provided by the work of Friedrich and Brzezinski. These men have isolated what they refer to as a "syndrome" of six traits. The components of this syndrome are an official ideology, a single mass party led by one man, terrorist police control, a monopoly over communication media and over weapons, and a centrally directed economy.

The authors begin their study by elaborating upon the first element within the syndrome, an official ideology. According to Friedrich and Brzezinski, an ideology may be defined as "a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of how to reform a society based upon a more or less elaborate criticism of what is wrong with the existing or antecedent society." Since the totalitarian state is dedicated to total destruction and total reconstruction, the totalitarian ideology must accept the concept of violence as a legitimate component of its system of belief.

In the totalitarian setting, ideology is an all-encompassing doctrine which serves as the guide line and blueprint for every facet of the individual's existence. This all-encompassing nature is justified in the ideology's promise of the eventual creation of

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5Ibid., p. 74.

6Ibid.
an ideal, utopian society.\textsuperscript{7} 

The second characteristic of the totalitarian state as described by Friedrich and Brzezinski is the existence of a single mass party usually led by one man. The membership of this party is composed of an elite hard core which in itself comprises a small percentage of the total population.\textsuperscript{8} The party provides a following for the dictator. Party members dedicate their energy towards the successful fulfillment of party programs and through their devotion to duty set an example for the masses.\textsuperscript{9} 

The authors' reference to the individual who leads the single mass party is a concept deserving special elaboration. This individual, the totalitarian dictator, possesses and exercises a nearly absolute power which is unlimited by constitutional restraints. The dictator is assisted by political lieutenants and a bureaucracy, both of which are completely subject to his control. The nature of his leadership is also characterized by a peculiar relationship which exists between the leader and his people, a relationship involving a mythical identification between the two in which the leader and the led are considered to be one. The totalitarian dictator controls his lieutenants, the bureaucracy, and his people by the utilization of propaganda and terror.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., p. 9. 
\textsuperscript{8}Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{9}Ibid., p. 33. 
\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 26.
The third component of the descriptive base presented by Friedrich and Brzezinski is the existence within the totalitarian system of terroristic police control.\textsuperscript{11} Terror is the prime instrument within the system which is directed toward the achievement of the totalitarian goal of total change. Challenges to the revolutionary goal of rebuilding society cannot be tolerated. Opposition is prevented from developing by the utilization of total terror designed to engulf everyone in the society. The potential enemy as well as the open enemy must be weeded out and destroyed. Since unanimity provides the totalitarian system with its greatest element of strength, any deviation within the system must be completely eliminated.

Building toward an apex of terroristic control is a system based upon informers, purges, and public confessions, and it is capped with the existence of concentration camps.\textsuperscript{12} This structure of control receives its justification from the totalitarian ideology, an ideology considered by totalitarian leaders to possess the absolute truth. Deviations and challenges to the ideology are illogical and deserve ruthless elimination. Therefore, the authors are able to formulate the following conclusion: "The total scope of totalitarian terror and its pervasive and sustained character, operating in an atmosphere of ideological

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 10.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 165.
compulsion, make it a unique feature of modern totalitarianism.\textsuperscript{13} The fourth trait of the syndrome is the monopoly of control exercised by the leadership elite over all effective means of communication, including radio, television, motion pictures, books, newspapers, and the educational system.\textsuperscript{14} These various media are utilized as instruments to transmit propaganda directed towards the goal of maintaining the totalitarian system in its position of complete control. According to the authors, the propaganda is "action-related."\textsuperscript{15} Its goal is to motivate the masses to perform certain actions or to encourage the non-performance of certain other actions.

However, monopolistic control of radio, television, motion pictures, and the press produce among the general public a distrust of transmitted information.\textsuperscript{16} Therefore, in order to transmit revolutionary goals and ideology effectively, the totalitarian system must rely heavily upon its control of the educational system.\textsuperscript{17} Under totalitarian rule, educational communication between teacher and pupil becomes a transmission belt of indoctrination designed to foster within the youth of the society zeal for revolutionary goals and complete loyalty to the totalitarian

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 138.  
\item\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 10.  
\item\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 108.  
\item\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 112.  
\item\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 118.
\end{footnotes}
government. We may conclude that total monopoly of mass communications is therefore one of the most striking characteristics of totalitarian dictatorship.\textsuperscript{18}

The fifth element which contributes to the unique nature of totalitarian phenomenon involves a monopoly of force. Friedrich and Brzezinski categorize this fifth characteristic as a weapons monopoly whereby all effective means of armed combat are possessed by the ruling elite.\textsuperscript{19}

The authors conclude their contribution to the analysis of totalitarian systems with their presentation of the sixth characteristic trait of totalitarian rule—the central direction of the total economic operations of the country. This control is performed by a bureaucracy directed by the governing elite through centralized state planning operations, operations which involve control of industry, labor forces, and agriculture.

If the totalitarian system is functioning in an underdeveloped environment, rapid and immediate industrialization becomes the central objective of the regime.\textsuperscript{20} State plans are enacted by state-appointed directors who head each individual factory. Labor resources, including men and unions, are transformed into instruments and branches of the state machinery.\textsuperscript{21} Finally,

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 107.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 200.
\textsuperscript{21}Ibid., p. 212.
planning is carried to the sister function of industry in the economic system, that of agricultural production. Collective farms, subject to the regulation and direction of centralized state planning, are established. Thus, we see that the three components of economic production (industry, labor, and agriculture) become political instruments of the totalitarian regime and are subjected to complete control and direction.

These are the six basic characteristics which will be applied in this thesis to the study of Castro's Cuba. Upon this base, further information can be laid to refine the general picture of theoretic totalitarianism. The writings of William Ebenstein provide such information.

For example, Ebenstein clarifies the broad definition of totalitarianism presented by Brzezinski by stressing the concept that the basic purpose of totalitarian rule is the control of the individual by the state. According to Ebenstein, "There is no area of human activity—political, economic, social, religious, or educational—that is exempt from government control and domination." In addition, Ebenstein expands the understanding of the characteristics of totalitarian regimes by pointing out that the intricate components of totalitarian jargon are words used frequently to describe a democratic system of government—party,
democracy, public approval. Thus the totalitarian leader is able to pervert the democratic slogan of government by, of, and for the people by dropping the first two elements and building his regime upon the proposition that government exists "for the people." He maintains the government's right to rule completely while still preserving the appeal of democratic terminology.\textsuperscript{24}

The third contribution of Ebenstein to our basic understanding of the nature of totalitarianism is his explanation of law as it exists within such a system. Enveloped in a totalitarian environment, concrete rules of jurisprudence governing and protecting the individual are not able to survive. Law presupposes authority existing independently from the ruling elite. The totalitarian leader cannot admit such an existence within a system which fosters arbitrary arrests and standards of justice based upon such vague concepts as the "interests of the state".\textsuperscript{25} In a totalitarian state, the individual may be held legally responsible for his actions whether or not such actions disobeyed an existing statute. His offense may be labeled as a political crime and within the totalitarian framework such crimes are broadly defined. Ebenstein concludes that within the totalitarian system, law is designed to protect the government, not the citizen.\textsuperscript{26}

In the creation of an abstract model of the totalitarian

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{26}Ibid.
state, Ivo Feierabend further extends and elaborates the base provided by Friedrich and Brzezinski and the contributions of Ebenstein. Feierabend begins his analysis by stressing the incompatibility of a pluralistic society with a totalitarian regime. The totalitarian party infiltrates all other groups in the society armed with the goal of assuring that it will be the recipient of the complete and supreme loyalty of each individual in the society. The pluralistic society is replaced with a mass of isolated individuals whose need for social standards and a sense of belonging is satisfied by party membership and ties with the elite.27

The second contribution of Feierabend is his description and analysis of the expansionist and isolationist tendencies of totalitarian systems. These seemingly contradictory characteristics may be explained through an understanding of the totalitarian ideology. This is an ideology which professes to be based upon absolute truth. The existence of competing ideologies governing the political systems of foreign countries present to the totalitarian leader an illogical challenge. He is right and they are wrong. He is so convinced of the scientific truth which supports his cause that he can easily justify aggressive action towards these other false systems of belief. However, in order to protect the purity of his own beliefs, the totalitarian must be isolated from the foreign infiltration of false doctrine. According to

Feierabend, both imperialism and isolationism are "necessary protective devices without which the totalitarian political system would founder."\(^{28}\)

The final contributor to the basic model which this thesis will use as a study guide applicable to Castro's Cuba is Hannah Arendt. Arendt's unique contribution lies in the refinement of our basic understanding of the purposes of totalitarian terror. Arendt conceives of terror as the very essence of the totalitarian system of government, a system based upon the organization of isolated, "atomized" individuals.\(^{29}\) Spy systems, purges, the secret police, and the establishment of concentration camps are the instruments used in isolating the individual. According to Arendt, the concentration camps serve as the most outstanding illustrative example of the techniques of totalitarian terror. These camps were not designed as instruments for the punishment of definable, definite crimes. They are designed to isolate masses of human beings for the purpose of destroying the moral element in human nature and reducing men to an animal status. Man minus his moral character is conceived by Arendt as the ideal totalitarian citizen.\(^{30}\)

By combining the works of Friedrich and Brzezinski with the

\(^{28}\)Ibid., p. 734.


\(^{30}\)Ibid., p. 418.
elaborations of Ebenstein and Feierabend and the refinements of Arendt, the theoretical framework of what constitutes a totalitarian system is complete. This thesis will apply this framework to the political system of Castro's Cuba. Utilizing a descriptive analysis, the thesis will include a presentation of the background and history of the Cuban Revolution, an analysis of the beliefs of Fidel Castro, and a study of political, economic, and social conditions under the Castro regime.

The descriptions presented in this thesis are applicable to Cuba during the years 1959 to 1964. In all probability, these descriptions do represent a continuing trend. However, the proof of such a proposition lies beyond the scope of the thesis which is strictly limited to one time period.
On July 26, 1953 at 5:15 in the morning approximately two hundred young men participated in an attack on the Moncada barracks at Santiago in eastern Cuba. Their unsuccessful military operation was inspired and planned by a twenty-six year old lawyer named Fidel Castro. These men were motivated by a fiery interest in Cuban national politics. Most of them were active in radical political movements and several had belonged to the reformist Ortodoxo political party. The fruit of the attack was a fifteen year prison sentence on the Isle of Pines for the revolutionary leader and his followers.

The attack on the Moncada barracks represented the first direct stage in the military implementation of a revolutionary movement. But this stage was preceded by the formation of a revolutionary program, a program designed to appeal to the Cuban people as a means of securing their open support. The platforms

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of the program espoused by this group of young rebels were publicized in the trial proceedings brought against Castro for his role in leading this revolutionary attack against the regime of Fulgencio Batista. The base of the revolutionary program was its avowed opposition to Batista's dictatorship, a dictatorship characterized by tyrannical rule and governmental corruption.  

The Castro-led movement was articulated in terms of social justice for the underprivileged members of Cuban society through government-sponsored programs financed by expanded industrialization.  

In general, it may be assumed that the program proclaimed by Castro in 1953 appealed to Cubans who desired a return to constitutional government and to Cubans who wanted social change based upon economic improvements. The program was expressed in broad terms which created an implied appeal to Cubans whose political beliefs fell in between these extremes.  

On May 15, 1955, Fidel Castro received a pardon from the Batista government. Castro, with his brother, Raúl, fled to Mexico where he was joined by other Cuban revolutionaries. An Argentine doctor-turned professional revolutionary named Che Guevara enlisted in the revolutionary movement and a triumvirate

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6 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 232.
7 Malamuth, p. 20.
was formed composed of Fidel, Raúl, and Che.

During a two-year period, while men were receiving military training for an armed invasion, Fidel made contacts with Cubans of the middle and upper classes, enlisting their financial support. 8

Finally, the revolutionaries secured a yacht, the "Granma" and prepared to set sail for the Cuban mainland. The "Granma", built to accommodate eight people, was jammed with eighty-two men in addition to weapons and supplies. 9 The group landed on Cuban shores and was met by the military might of Batista's armed forces. Twelve survivors, including Fidel, Raúl, and Che, escaped to the Sierra Maestre Mountains from which they later launched a guerrilla war against the thirty thousand man army of Fulgencio Batista. 10

For two years and one month, the rebels, who by mid-1958 numbered around one thousand men, engaged in a program of guerrilla warfare based primarily upon defensive action. Offensive action was limited to attacks against small army patrols and weakly defended police posts. The rebels spent a great deal of their energy retreating from major military engagements since they fully realized the impossibility of their succeeding in such battles. 11 However, the heroic image projected by Castro and his mountain rebel followers was successful in providing psychological

8Ibid., p. 21.

9Ibid.

10Ibid.

11MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 240.
encouragement and inspiration to revolutionary activities throughout Cuba.\textsuperscript{12} Castro presented to the Cuban people a living example of a courageous, heroic struggle against dictatorship which strongly appealed to the Cuban people, especially the youth.\textsuperscript{13} The people began to perceive of Castro as the successor to José Martí, the martyred hero of the Cuban revolt against Spain in 1895.

Inspired by the Sierra Maestra movement, a large urban resistance program developed. Underground cells of the 26th of July Movement, the title adopted by the Castro-led rebels, conducted terrorist activity, distributed anti-government propaganda, and converted individuals into active participants against the Batista regime.\textsuperscript{14} Batista reacted by countering revolutionary terror with his own terror. The combination of guerrilla warfare and indiscriminate government reprisals succeeded in making life intolerable for the average Cuban citizen, who in the name of a return to normality, began to support, at least passively, a rebel victory.

Combined with active underground support, composed of young people and a citizenry which seemed more and more willing to support the Castro movement, was a third component of rebel support. This backing emanated from the opposition espoused by the several existing political parties. These parties were encouraged by

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 237.


\textsuperscript{14}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 241.
Castro's active rebellion and began openly to oppose Batista.\textsuperscript{15} Castro, the rich lawyer of the upper class, discovered that his movement was receiving support from a large national front. Professional organizations of businessmen were giving him verbal support. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church as well as Protestant clergymen were joining in the opposition to Batista.\textsuperscript{16}

However, two elements of Cuban society remained aloof from the revolutionary movement and failed to contribute any direct support. These were the peasants and the labor forces. Throughout the entire period of guerrilla warfare from 1957-1958 not a single peasant revolt occurred.\textsuperscript{17} This same lack of support was evident in the response given to Castro's appeal for a general strike called for April 9, 1958. According to Theodore Draper, the failure of the strike call illustrated that the revolution's support came from the middle and upper classes of Cuba and not from the lower classes.\textsuperscript{18}

On July 20, 1958 Castro initiated steps to formalize the active support he was receiving from organizations within the Cuban society. Seven revolutionary groups signed the Caracas Pact, the final draft of which was personally dictated by Castro. Partido Revolucionario Cubana, Partido del Pueblo Cubano, Organización Auténtica, Federación Estudiantil Universitaria, Directorio


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{18} Draper, \textit{Myths and Realities}, p. 2.
Revolucionario, and Directorio Obrero Revolucionario agreed to support the revolution and to accept the leadership of the 26th of July Movement.\textsuperscript{19} Communist representatives were not included in the pact.\textsuperscript{20}

The pact was based upon three basic proposed programs: support of an armed insurrection, the establishment of a temporary provisional government directed to the restoration of democratic principles, and the instituting of a permanent government dedicated to the protection of civil rights, freedom and progress.\textsuperscript{22}

On November 5, 1958, Fidel Castro and his troops marched from the Sierra Maestre initiating the first steps in a plan whereby his and Raúl Castro's troops would combine forces to converge upon Santiago de Cuba. Che Guevara led an assault against Santa Clara, the capital of Las Villas province. Santa Clara fell on December 31, 1958. The fall of this city convinced Batista that the battle was over. Two years and one month had elapsed since twelve men had made their way to the Sierra Maestre. To the leader of these twelve men, Fidel Castro, Batista abandoned Cuba as he and his advisors fled to the Dominican Republic. Underground groups supporting Castro seized control of Havana. This set off a chain reaction in which other major cities immediately surrendered. Fidel Castro and his bearded followers began

\textsuperscript{19}Malamuth, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{20}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 244.
\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
their victory march to Havana.23

Dr. Manuel Urrutia, the first provisional president of Cuba, arrived in Havana on January 5, 1959. He removed martial law, dissolved the existing Congress, and announced to the Cuban people that they would be governed by a provisional cabinet.24

The composition of the cabinet headed by Urrutia reflected the combination of the forces which had combined to oppose the Batista regime. However, the older Cuban leaders predominated, rather than the more youthful rebels.25 José Miro became Prime Minister, Roberto Agramonte, Minister of State, Dr. López Fresquet, Minister of Finance, Armando Hart, Minister of Education, Manuel Ray, Minister of Public Works, Humberto Sorí Marín, Minister of Agriculture, and Luis Orlando Rodríguez, Minister of Interior.26 Strikingly, Fidel Castro held no official position in the provisional government until February 13, 1959 when Cardona resigned the premiership to be replaced by Castro.27

One of the first acts of the Council of Ministers was the issuance of The Fundamental Law on February 8, 1959 which consisted of a modification of the 1940 Cuban Constitution. Those sections


25MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 247.


of the Constitution which discussed such basic concerns as Cuban culture, labor, property and suffrage rights were incorporated into The Fundamental Law without any essential changes. However, clauses of the 1940 Constitution dealing with the powers of government were rewritten and reconstructed so that the power of the government would be vested in the Council of Ministers.\textsuperscript{28}

The statements and actions of the new government as first articulated and performed by members of the provisional government appeared to be politically moderate. The new government proclaimed that Cuba would both accept and respect its international obligations. Internally, the government would pursue policies directed toward economic development and political freedom. Under the administration of the provisional government, civil liberties were restored. The press was accorded complete freedom in its access to information and in its publication rights. Within Cuban society, organizational groups were given autonomy in their operations. In response to this political climate, exiles began to return home.\textsuperscript{29}

Tension entered into the political climate when Castro moved to enact his program of revolutionary justice. While still in the Sierra Maestra, he had appealed to the Cuban people, begging them not to take justice into their hands in the event of a rebel victory. Castro vowed that Batista's lieutenants, accused of

\textsuperscript{28}MacCaffey and Barnett, p. 249.

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 248.
crimes involving torture and murder, would be punished. With the direct support of the mass of Cuban people, military courts were established during the first three months of Castro's rule. Three-man military tribunals ordered five hundred executions.

The American press presented these trials as being instruments of governmental-directed terror. However, there is very little evidence that these trials were not correctly administered as accused criminals faced written charges based upon convincing evidence. In two instances revolutionary justice was perverted. In one case, the accused was tried in an atmosphere described by Robert Alexander as being "akin to that of a lynch mob." Castro ordered a retrial for the accused, but the guilty verdict was again rendered. The second case involved the trial of a number of air force pilots accused of bombing open cities. The tribunal found the pilots innocent. Castro refused to accept this verdict, ordered a retrial, and personally dictated the sentences to be imposed upon the defendants.

These war tribunals were proclaimed by many American journalists as being the first step initiated by Fidel Castro in the transformation of the provisional government into a radical and personal system of rule. As the preceding paragraph illustrates, this proposition is subject to modification. However, by May, 1959, Castro did begin to transform the original provisional

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31 Ibid., p. 279.
During the first nine months of 1959, 1,500 decrees, laws and resolutions were enacted by the Castro government. The majority of these decrees were concerned with social legislation. Between July and November 1959, Castro initiated changes at the top levels of government which installed in nearly all governmental posts members of the radical left. The completion of the process can best be seen by tracing the careers of the original members of the Cuban provisional government. The first president of revolutionary Cuba, Manuel Urrutia, chose to seek refuge in a foreign embassy. José Miro Cardona, the first prime minister, is presently living among Cuban emigrants in Miami. Of the twelve original cabinet ministers, one, Humberto Sori Marin, has been shot, five others have gone into exile, and the original minister of public works, Manuel Ray, has been actively engaged in counterrevolutionary activity against the Castro regime.

Herbert Matthews presents an explanation of what happened in Cuba. The traditional ruling class of Cuba, a conservative, right-wing, upper-middle class, was replaced by a radical and left-wing regime. The new Cuban regime dedicated itself to programs which operated to the detriment of the upper levels of society. Its programs appealed to the poor, the peasant, the Negro,

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32 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 258.
33 O'Connor, p. 240.
34 Morray, p. 2.
and mulatto, but not to the professional, the businessman, or the white elite. 35

J. P. Morray concludes that a second revolution had occurred in Cuba whereby the original provisional government and the initial revolutionary programs were first modified and then became the recipients of basic changes. In the words of Morray:

...the development of the Revolution has carried Cuba beyond national independence, beyond patriotism; the Rebel Army now defends a Revolution that belongs to a different epoch from Maceo and Gómez; and the brooding idealism of José Martí no longer satisfies a Cuba he did not foresee. Lenin and Fidel Castro have superseded José Martí. 36

The following chapters of this thesis will trace and describe this process of radicalization by examining the development of Castro's personal ideological beliefs and by presenting a detailed analysis of political, economic, and social conditions within Castro's Cuba.

35 Herbert L. Matthews, Return to Cuba (Stanford, California: Institute of Hispanic American and Luso-Brazilian Studies at Stanford University, 1964), p. 3

36 Morray, p. 2.
CHAPTER THREE

FIDEL CASTRO--THE MAN AND HIS BELIEFS

From Galicia in Northern Spain a young immigrant came to Cuba and began his career as a laborer. At the culmination of sixty years of work, this man had succeeded in building an estate valued at $5,000,000. In 1927 a son was born to this man. The boy was named Fidel.

Fidel Castro was reared on a sugar plantation. His father and mother provided him with his first immediate contact of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. His parents controlled their Negro cane choppers through a system of strict discipline implemented by gun law. An understanding of such an environment enables us to comprehend more fully the description of young Castro related to Herbert Matthews by a neighbor of the Castro family who described Castro as a "wild, husky, unruly youngster."

Castro received his basic education in the Catholic schools of Cuba. He attended the famous Jesuit secondary school, Colegio

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1Malamuth, p. 16.
2Alexander, Prophets of the Revolution, p. 268.
3Malamuth, p. 16.
4Ibid.
de Dolores, in Santiago de Cuba. His fellow students remember him as a boy possessed with the desire to win, to dominate, and always to prove himself to be stronger than his contemporaries. The result of this driving energy and ambition were reflected in his outstanding success in the fields of athletics and academic subjects.

However, intertwined with this desire to excel was a fiery temperament which sometimes colored his academic career. For example, at the age of sixteen, Fidel lost an argument with a teacher. After storming from the school, Fidel returned with a pistol determined to shoot the teacher. The forewarned instructor had already fled.

At the completion of his secondary education, Castro entered the University of Havana where he prepared for a career as a lawyer. While at the university, Fidel developed his talents as an orator, giving long speeches to his fellow students. His political interests were diverted from national Cuban affairs to an active interest in student government. In 1945, he began a campaign for vice-president of the law school student body. Castro successfully courted the support of various student groups, including the campus communists. Once elected, Castro deserted his former communist supporters and began a militant campaign

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^6^Malamuth, p. 16.

^7^Ibid., p. 17.
This interest and participation in campus affairs was basically a superficial reflection of Castro's main interest—Cuban national politics. His outward expression of criticism directed toward the existing government resulted in the Havana police considering Fidel to be a dangerous character. However, this interest in politics was not for Castro an end in itself. Castro, even as a student, considered the value of the political system to lay in political instruments to be used for social development. The Castro sisters quote Castro in a conversation with his father:

I am in the university studying law and this same study of the law makes me defend what is right—even with naked hands. I defend the rights of the oppressed poor against those who abuse the power they wrench from the people with deceitful promises. That is my battle.

In October, 1950, Fidel Castro graduated from the University of Havana Law School with a Doctor of Laws Degree. He then joined a Havana law firm where he devoted his legal talents towards the defense of the poorer classes of Cuban society. He often represented these people without receiving any fee for his services.

Castro coupled his legal career with an active participation in politics. He joined and became prominent in the radical

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8Ibid.
9Ibid.
10Ibid.
11Ibid., p. 18.
Ortodoxo Party. By 1952 he was the head of the party's organization in Havana.\textsuperscript{12} Combining his legal function and party beliefs, Castro filed a brief in 1952 before the Court of Constitutional Guarantees in Havana. The brief presented an argument that Batista's assumption of power violated the 1940 Cuban Constitution. Castro demanded that Batista be charged with unconstitutional activity.\textsuperscript{13}

This legal attempt to crush the Batista dictatorship failed. Several young Cuban men decided to utilize more radical methods to undermine and eventually overthrow the Batista dictatorship. Fidel Castro accepted the leadership of this movement. The group crystalized their movement into direct action as they engineered and carried out a military attack against the Moncada barracks in Santiago in 1953.

Fidel Castro was brought to trial, charged with treason by the Batista regime. It is possible to trace the development of Castro's political philosophy by using his defense speech at his trial as a starting point. This political philosophy was clarified, modified, and expanded during a period dating from 1953, through the two years of guerrilla warfare, and finally, into the period from 1959, when Castro accepted the reigns of direct political leadership.

The 1953 trial occurred in the city of Santiago de Cuba.

\textsuperscript{12}Alexander, Prophets of the Revolution, p. 269.

\textsuperscript{13}Malamuth, p. 19.
The husky, bearded defendant presented his own defense in a speech which lasted for four hours. This speech received sparse coverage both inside Cuba and abroad. Yet within the context of the speech lay the skeleton of a plan for transforming the Cuban nation.14

Castro began the speech by defending his attack on the Moncada barracks. This defense was based on Article 40 of the 1940 Constitution. This article guarantees the right of the individual to rebel against tyranny. Castro claimed that his military actions were legal since they directed towards the uprooting of tyranny in Cuba.15

From this introductory proposition, Castro developed his speech into a discussion of his political philosophy. He expressed his belief in a democratic system of government based upon representative government and directed towards the protection of civil rights.16 Castro declared that the first law enacted by a Cuban revolutionary government under his direction would be a law restoring the 1940 Constitution.17 The speech also contained allusions to a government empowered by popular election.18

In "History Will Absolve Me," the title under which this

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15MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 231.
16Ibid., p. 232.
18Ibid.
defense speech was later published, Castro espoused his economic beliefs. He unleashed a vigorous attack against what he referred to as "vested interests" within Cuba and promised to rectify the existing system of economic injustice through revolution and centralized power. The Castro social program was proclaimed in the following words:

The problems concerning land, the problem of industrialization, the problem of housing, the problem of unemployment, the problem of education, and the problem of the health of the people; these are the six problems we would take immediate steps to resolve, together with the restoration of public liberties and political democracy.

In this section of the speech, Castro also implied that the economy must be subject to strict government control and regulation. He charged that the selfish profit motivation had been protected at the expense of the common welfare. The government should initiate programs by which grants of land would be distributed to peasants. Under government encouragement, agricultural cooperatives would be established as a method of sharing the cost and use of expensive equipment. Government involvement in the economy would also include the nationalization of electric and telephone companies.

The contents of the speech did not frighten middle class

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19 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 232.
20 Ibid., p. 233.
21 Ibid.
22 Draper, "Castro's Cuba: A Revolution Betrayed?", p. 11.
Cubans. Castro promised indemnification to the property owners affected by proposed revolutionary programs. Again and again in the speech, Castro referred to José Martí, the Cuban martyr who died in the name of freedom and independence. Castro quoted a wide range of political philosophers from Aquinas to Montesquieu. But not once did Castro quote Marx, Engels, Lenin, or Stalin.\(^{23}\) Middle class Cubans could feel relatively reassured from this speech.

The years which Castro spent in the Sierra Maestra waging a guerrilla war contributed the next step in the clarifying of his beliefs. In the Sierra Maestra, the city-bred Castro came into direct contact with the Cuban peasants. He found them to be poor, uneducated, many suffering from diseased bodies and living in primitive conditions. The humanitarian nature of Castro was genuinely touched by their plight. He became determined to initiate programs which would improve the living conditions of this Cuban class.\(^{24}\)

After two years of war, the rebels achieved victory. By February, 1959, Fidel Castro was personally directing the Cuban political system. At this time, the statements of goals and ideals issued by Castro contained a philosophy which appeared appealingly attractive to liberals throughout the world. In the words of Castro:

\(^{23}\)Malamuth, p. 19.

\(^{24}\)Draper, "Castro's Cuba: A Revolution Betrayed?", p. 9.
Standing between the two political and economic ideologies or positions being debated in the world, we are holding our own position. We have named it humanism, because its methods are humanistic, because we want to rid man of all fears, directives, or dogmatism. We are revolutionizing society without binding or terrorizing it. The tremendous problem faced by the world is that it has been placed in a position where it must choose between capitalism, which starves people, and communism, which resolves economic problems, but suppresses the liberties so greatly cherished by man. Both Cubans and Latin Americans cherish and foster a revolution that may meet their material needs without sacrificing their liberties. Should we accomplish this by democratic means, the Cuban Revolution will become a classic example in the history of the world.25

In the first weeks of the revolutionary victory, Castro consistently defined his program as "humanism." He refused to associate himself or his program with any other definite political tag.26 He denied that he favored socialization or nationalization of private property. As to his own political future within the new revolutionary government, Castro told reporters on February 28, 1959, that since elections would be held within two years, he expected to be the Prime Minister of Cuba for only a short time.27

Furthermore, in a speech delivered by Castro on May 8, 1959 in the Plaza Civica, Havana, Castro declared that his revolution was not associated with the communists.

Then why do we say that our Revolution is not Communist? Why, when we prove that our ideals are different from Communist doctrine, that the Revolution is not Communist or

26MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 258.
27Morray, p. 21.
capitalist, that it is a revolution of its own . . . that it has its own ideology—entirely its own—which has a Cuban basis and is entirely Cuban, entirely Latin American, why then, do they start to accuse our Revolution of being something it is not? . . . 28

This description may be considered as the first form of political philosophy espoused by Castro. A transformation of this original form appeared at the end of 1959, a transformation involving a shift to the left. Fidel Castro was accepting the support offered to his government by the Cuban communist party. For example, Castro appeared on television and denounced President Manuel Urrutia. According to Castro, Urrutia's strong pronouncements against communism were not compatible with a system of government based upon the support of several revolutionary groups, the communists included. 29 Urrutia fled into exile.

On May 1, 1960, Fidel Castro delivered a speech in which he presented his definition of the true democracy. He did not mention elections.

That democracy has asserted itself directly in the intimate union and identification of the government with the people, in this direct dealing, in this determination to do things and to strive for the good of the great majority, in the interest of the great majority of the country. 30

On May 1, 1961, Fidel proclaimed Cuba to be a "Socialist People's Republic." 31 On December 20, 1961, in a five-hour

30 Sigmund, p. 296.
31 Alexander, p. 286.
television monologue, Castro declared his conversion to Marxism-Leninism. Castro appeared to have crossed the line. He was doing more than protecting the communists. He was now espousing their philosophy and declaring this philosophy to be his own. The depth of the statement, "I am a Marxist-Leninist", was especially evident in an interview in the February issue of L'Unita, the Italian communist official paper. In Castro's words:

> It [The Popular Socialist Party] is the only Cuban party that has clearly proclaimed the necessity for a radical change of structure, of social relationships. It is also true that at first the Communists distrusted me and us rebels. It was a justified mistrust, an absolutely correct position, ideologically and politically. The Communists are right to be distrustful because we, the Sierra leaders of the guerrillas, were still full of petty bourgeois prejudices and defects, despite Marxist readings.

Castro's conversion to Marxism-Leninism was interpreted in several ways. To some, his "I am a Marxist-Leninist" speech marked the official crossing over from a revolutionary socialist position to a complete acceptance of communist philosophy. Others conceived of the speech as only an official confirmation of the philosophy which had motivated Castro before as well as after the revolution. Those who accepted this second interpretation claimed that Castro always was a Communist. Fidel Castro personally described the process involved in his conversion in an interview with Herbert Matthews of the New York Times. Matthews quotes

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With my ideas and my temperament, even in my school and university days, I could not be a capitalist, a democrat, a liberal. I always had it in me to be a radical, a revolutionary, a reformer, and through that instinctive preparation it was very easy for me to move into Marxism-Leninism. In the course of the interview, Castro consistently denied that he had officially belonged to the communist party either during his student days or during the early revolutionary period. He related to Matthews that during his third year at the University of Havana, he had read and been impressed by Marxist literature. But this was purely an intellectual inspiration which did not evolve into membership in the communist party or an official acceptance of Marxist philosophy.

Castro explained to Matthews that at the time of the attack on Moncada barracks, he was not a Marxist revolutionary. He desired a radical revolution within Cuba, but he felt that such a revolutionary program could be enacted under the 1940 Cuban Constitution and within a democratic system of government.

In summation of this interview, it is possible to conclude that Castro had a predisposition for Marxism. But he did not fully accept the Marxist line until well after the revolutionary process had started. Castro conceived of his conversion as being, in his own words:

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34 Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 11.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
... a gradual process, a dynamic process in which the pressure of events forced me to accept Marxism as the answer to what I was seeking.\(^{37}\)

In accepting and espousing a philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, Castro was in fact aligning himself with the official Communist Party of Cuba, the PSP. Why did he make this choice? Castro did this because his own 26th of July Movement lacked an official organization. Its greatest weakness lay in its heterogeneous nature of support. Within the ranks of the 26th of July could be found both Cuba's rich and poor. Between the interests of these two groups existed a steep chasm. The revolutionary leaders leaned toward the poorer elements of Cuban society. This alienated the upper classes who began to believe that the 26th of July Movement had been turned into an active instrument and weapon which would be used against them. Therefore, instead of providing Castro with a unified body to implement his program, the 26th of July presented him with a conflicting membership, unable to agree on a revolutionary program.

On the other hand, the Cuban communists could supply Castro with a rationale and organized support of his position as the líder máximo. The party offered a coherent program which was in essence similar to Castro's desired goals. Finally, the PSP possessed a structure of organization which could be utilized in the molding of the Cuban population into a unified corps of

\(^{37}\)Ibid.
revolutionary supporters.\textsuperscript{36} With the full acceptance of Marxism-Leninism, the Castro regime claimed possession of a "scientific" sanction for the expansion and unlimited use of the state power in the name of social change. The joining of the Fidel Castro movement with the communist party of Cuba produced a regime which possessed an ideology, a set of definable revolutionary goals, and a blueprint for enacting those goals.\textsuperscript{39}

After reaching this stage in the study of the development of Castro's political philosophy, it becomes necessary to investigate the relationship which existed between Castro and the Cuban communist party. From 1960 to 1962, the PSP exercised a great deal of independent power within Castro's political system. Its influence was felt in the formation of new revolutionary groups such as youth and women's groups and in the reorganization of existing Cuban associations such as the Cuban labor unions. However, in 1962 Castro decided that the party was going too far.

On March 26, 1962, Castro delivered a three-and-one half hour television speech in which he denounced the leader of the Cuban communist party, Aníbal Escalante and the control which Escalante was attempting to exercise in Cuba.\textsuperscript{40} According to Castro, party members were usurping control in factories and in

\textsuperscript{36}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 252.


\textsuperscript{40}Draper, "Castro's New Communists," p. 4.
other organizations. Castro related that it had become impossible for even a Cabinet minister to discharge an official duty without interference from the communist party. An angry Fidel Castro continued by reporting that several hundred rebel army officers had come to him personally complaining that they were no longer commanding troops because their political beliefs were not approved by the communist party.\footnote{Ibid.}

Castro blamed Escalante for the existing, unsatisfactory conditions. Therefore, the speech could be interpreted as only a personal attack against one man and not against the system he represented. Castro did not refer to policy questions in the speech. He paid homage to the past service of the communists to the regime and enlisted their continued support. However, he asked them to remember that those who accused him of creating a cult of personality around himself should be reminded that "we [the Castro-led rebels] waged a war, we led it, we won it."\footnote{Ibid., p. 5.}

The March 26th speech attacked one communist, but not communist philosophy. However, the speech reflected Castro's recognition that his revolution was slipping out of his control. This he would not tolerate. He had established himself as the líder. He and he alone would be the authorized interpreter of Marxism-Leninism in Cuba. Communism in Cuba would be communism
directed by Fidel Castro.\textsuperscript{43}

In order to correlate this description of Castro's beliefs with our theoretical model, it is necessary to determine if these beliefs correspond with Friedrich and Brzezinski's description of the totalitarian ideology which they define as "a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of how to reform a society based upon a more or less elaborate criticism of what is wrong with the existing or antecedent society."\textsuperscript{44}

The communist ideology gave to Castro a well rounded program upon which he could build his own proposals for the reform of Cuban society. But Castro's acceptance of the Marxist-Leninist label did not place him in a straight-jacket. The revolution still depended upon Fidel Castro, an unpredictable, uncontrollable, and anarchic individual. It may be concluded that he accepted a label and an organizational blueprint from the communist ideology. But the details of revolutionary programs would be Castro's own creations, reflecting his own judgment.

We have traced the development of the governing beliefs of Fidel Castro and have seen this development lead from a program described by Castro as "humanism" to an acceptance of Marxist-Leninism. In the succeeding chapter, an analysis and a description of the functioning of the Castro government, the government of the líder máximo, within the political system of Cuba will be undertaken.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 7.

\textsuperscript{44}Friedrich and Brzezinski, p. 74.
CHAPTER FOUR
CUBA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM UNDER CASTRO

The traditionally oriented student of political science would approach the Cuban political system armed with a theoretical study outline which would designate three areas of investigation: the executive, the judicial, and the legislative institutions of government. The student would find that the instruments of executive power are dominated by one man assisted by a group of young, loyal lieutenants. Institutionalized power has been superseded and replaced by a system of personalized government. When attention is turned to a study of the judicial branch of government, the student is confronted with a system of justice which derives its existence from the ruling elite. Lacking independence, the judicial system operates in an atmosphere of a controlled society. Finally, in place of a representative legislative branch, the student faces a void, created by the non-existence of a national representative body. Within this realm, his study must center upon mass rallies, the psychological connection between the leader and the people, and a study of the regime's ideological attitude concerning elections.

From mid-1959 to 1961, the Castro government operated through an executive committee or directorate of six men composed of Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Che Guevara, President Dorticós, Blas Roca,
Emilio Aragonés Navarro. It was within this group that the policy decisions of the government were formulated. A Cabinet of Ministers also comprised a part of the executive system. However, this group served an administrative function and was not involved in direct policy-making. The role of the Cabinet was further limited by the fact that each Cabinet member was responsible to Castro alone. Below the Cabinet of Ministers were all the organizations that administered the specialized agencies of the government. Included among these organizations were the army and police, the national political party, and the agencies devoted to economic control.1

Within this organizational framework, Fidel Castro remained the Jefe Máximo, the all-powerful leader. He dominated the government, the army, and the party organization. Castro was Prime Minister of the government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and Secretary-General of the country's single political party.2 He was assisted by a group of young men who were completely loyal to him and dedicated to the revolution.

Fidel Castro utilized the reins of executive power in a manner and with a style which colors and enlivens any political analysis of executive power. He worked in a disorganized manner. His rigorous daily schedule included impromptu visits anywhere on the island. He personally supervised government projects. He

1Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 8.
2MacCaffey and Barnett, p. 274.
explained government programs to the people by talking to individual humble citizens whom he met on his daily outings. A further example of these impromptu appearances were his unannounced visits to the University of Havana where he engaged in give-and-take "bull" sessions with the students. Castro formalized this contact with the people through his frequent televised speeches.

The examination of Castro exercising executive power must also include a special study devoted to the speech-making technique of this leader. Castro's frequent television speeches warrant special attention since they represent in themselves a governing technique. Castro possesses a unique speaking ability. He utilized a sense of rhythm and voice pitch to build his speeches according to a definite pattern and in so doing created an effect comparable to the recitation of a long poem. Graham Greene expounded upon the contents of these speeches. Greene described the speeches as possessing a sense of "a man thinking aloud." Castro, according to Greene, explained government programs, admitted government mistakes, and described the difficulties he and his lieutenants were facing. He did this in a style which

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reflected a deep respect for the intelligence of his listeners.\footnote{Ibid.}

The success of Castro's leadership technique was reflected in the genuine affection and admiration which was awarded him by the Cuban people, especially those of the lower classes. In both his actions and his speeches, Castro appeared to be completely dedicated to the welfare of the people and his people were the poor. He endeavored to give them a sense of human dignity. The poorer classes of Cuba found in Fidel Castro a new folk hero to replace Martí. The foundation of Castro's authority was the people's perception of his "heroism, wisdom, and sanctity."\footnote{Herbert Matthews, "The Cuban Revolution," Hispanic American Report, 13 (August, 1960), p. 6.}

The poor of Cuba worshiped the young leader. In many of their homes, his picture was hung next to that of Christ's.\footnote{Edward Friedman and Richard Kraus, "The Two Sides of Castro's Cuba," Dissent, 8 (1961), p. 58.}

A theoretical understanding of Castro's system of personalized government can be formulated by examining Frank Tannenbaum's explanation of why such a form of government was able to exist in Cuba. Tannenbaum finds the answer to this question within a study of the psychological forces which govern the individual Cuban's political attitudes, attitudes which revolve around the concept of the "caudillo."

To the Cuban, the caudillo possesses all powers of government. The leader is expected to do everything personally which is
required in the operation of a government. Such a government is personal and intimate. Therefore, the poorest of citizens will attempt to take his problems directly to the President, the great man who possesses the remedy for every ill. The leader and his people are one. They do not need elections, nor do they need a legislative branch of government to represent them. The caudillo is the personification of all government.\textsuperscript{10} In Cuba, Fidel Castro was the caudillo.

To complete the study of executive political power in Cuba, it is necessary to describe two members of Castro's executive staff, men who exercised a great influence over the Cuban caudillo. The first of these, Fidel's younger brother, Raúl, was noted for being extremely radical. While attending the University of Havana, he belonged to the Soviet Youth, the young people's branch of the Cuban communist party. As a reward for his active participation in the organization, Raúl was sent as a Cuban delegate to the Communist World Youth Conference held in Prague in 1953. He returned to Cuba the same year laden with Communist propaganda which he attempted to distribute in Cuba.\textsuperscript{11} Raúl assisted his brother at Moncada, followed him to Mexico, and fought with him in the Sierra Maestre. He occupied a key position in the Cuban governmental structure through his membership on the Directorate. However, he was not personally popular with the Cuban people.

\textsuperscript{10}Tannenbaum, pp. 181-186.

\textsuperscript{11}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 240.
and would never be able to take his brother's place.

The second individual who greatly influenced Fidel Castro was Che Guevara. Guevara, thirty-seven years old, was born in Argentina where he studied medicine at the University of Buenos Aires. He was involved in anti-Peronist activities in Argentina. He left Argentina to join the Castro forces in Mexico. According to Theodore Draper, Guevara possessed the best trained Marxist mind of those close to Fidel. He served Castro as an economic advisor from his position on the Directorate. However, his place within the governmental structure was given to him by Fidel. As a foreigner, Guevara was not popular with the people; therefore, he owed his power to his friendship with Fidel.

This was the picture which can be traced of the executive branch of government within Castro's Cuba. It does not represent a fulfillment of the promises made by Fidel Castro in 1953 or in 1959. These promises involved the establishment of an executive authority empowered by popular elections. Therefore, the study of executive powers in Cuba must include a description of the regime's modification and final nullification of these promises.

There have been three steps involved in the development of Castro's attitude towards elections. First, he promised them. This step occurred in the early formation and publication of a

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12 Ibid.

revolutionary program and government. Then Castro claimed that elections were not immediately feasible. Finally, he began to ridicule elections. The last two steps may be effectively illustrated by quoting from Castro's speeches.

Murray presents a quote from a speech which Fidel Castro made on April 9, 1960. This quote aptly illustrates a sharp turn from revolutionary promises that elections would be held within a few months after the provisional government had restored order.

> It is necessary to put an end to poverty, to consolidate the work of the Revolution, before holding elections.

In a later speech, Castro promised that,

> . . . elections would be held when the Agrarian Reform had been completed, when everyone had a job, when all could read and write, when all children had free schools, and all had access to hospitals.

Implicit in these quotes is the belief that the revolutionary program would be hampered by elections. Castro was directing a process which involved the complete rebuilding of Cuban society. Elections would only serve as an interference for his direct action. In a four-hour interview with a Brazilian newsman Castro stated:

> . . . elections are a myth. The parliamentary system in Cuba reflected the old system, which we are now destroying.

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14 Draper, "Castro's Cuba - A Revolution Betrayed?", p. 15.
15 Murray, p. 29.
16 Ibid.
Elections now would be a step backwards, with time and effort wasted in sterile discussions and theoretical considerations.17

A complete turn in Castro's attitude towards elections was illustrated in a speech given by Castro after the May 1, 1960 Labor holiday celebration in the Plaza Cívica in Havana. In this speech, Castro attacked the election process. He stated that "direct democracy, as practiced in Cuba was a thousand times purer than these false democracies that use all the means of corruption and fraud to betray the true will of the people."18

The acceptance by the Cuban people of this philosophy is depicted in an interview conducted by Richard Hudson. "'Elections,' moaned a woman. 'We had seventy years of elections and all the politicians did was deceive and rob us. We do not need elections. We have Fidel.'"19

When Castro referred to "direct democracy," to what was he referring? He was describing the mass meetings which he personally attended to explain governmental programs and to hear the roaring stamp of approval from the assembled crowds. The ballot box was replaced by voting "with machetes aloft."20 These mass meetings were also a phenomenon deserving of special discussion since they

20Friedman and Kraus, p. 58.
possessed characteristics distinctively Cuban. For these meetings were not comparable to the staged, mad frenzies of the Nazi or Fascist movements. Graham Greene attended such a meeting on July 26, 1963 where, in front of the monument to Martí in Havana, Castro delivered a three-hour speech. Greene found the assembled crowd to be composed of cheerful people with an air of being on a holiday enveloping them. Some stayed for the three hours. Others listened for awhile and then moved on. Then others took their places. This was Castro's direct democracy.21

The next area to be considered in the study of Cuba's political system is the judicial branch of government. Within Castro's Cuba, the legal system presented a unique picture.

The first purge of the Cuban Supreme Court by the revolutionary government was enacted by the provisional government's first president, Manuel Urrutia. This was a purge directed toward the elimination of Batista-appointed judges. At that time, the Supreme Court was composed of forty justices. Thirty-six were dismissed, to be replaced by judges appointed by President Urrutia. This newly-appointed Supreme Court then purged the lower ranks, removing approximately twenty per cent of the national bench.22

The second purge of the national bench was initiated by the Castro-directed government in late 1960 following the resignation of President Urrutia. On December 26, 1960, the Castro administration

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21 Greene, p. 17.

22 Murray, p. 16.
passed a decree officially dismissing seventeen Supreme Court justices. The number of judges on the Supreme Court was officially reduced to fifteen members. The Castro government justified this action by openly declaring that the old judiciary was composed of too many judges whose philosophy was not completely dedicated to the revolutionary cause. The government was not satisfied with the decisions in eight past cases, decisions which reflected an anti-revolutionary attitude. As a reaction to this decision, the president of the Supreme Court, Dr. Emilio Menindee fled into exile. Court vacancies were then filled by appointees who received Castro's personal approval. There was no judicial independence in Castro's Cuba.

The administration of justice within Castro's Cuba from 1960 to 1964 is a subject which presents a contradictory set of interpretations involving the legal treatment of political prisoners. Refugees from Cuba submitted written complaints to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States. Responding to these complaints, the Commission published two reports: one concerned with the legal situation of political prisoners in Cuba and the other dealing with general questions of human rights in Castro's Cuba. The Commission sent forty-eight notes to Castro containing one hundred and twelve complaints.

The Castro government replied to twelve.  

Complaints presented to the Commission declared that persons charged with political crimes were tried by special tribunals composed of men belonging to the militia or to the army. Therefore, these tribunals acted as an administrative arm of the government instead of functioning as an independent judiciary. Prisoners were forced to appear before these courts without being granted sufficient time to confer with a lawyer in order to prepare a defense. Furthermore, justice administered by these tribunals often involved an issuance of the death penalty sentence, a sentence based upon evidence presented in many cases by a single individual. Those accused of counterrevolutionary activity charged they had been deprived of the rights of bail, habeas corpus, and the right to appeal the decision of the tribunals.

The Commission was also presented with complaints that prisoners charged with political crimes received punishments, the forms of which serve as an affront to the concept of an individual possessing certain basic rights, regardless of his crime. An example of this unjust treatment which was sanctioned by the Cuban legal system was presented in the statement of a former magistrate.

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26 Ibid., p. 16.

27 Ibid., p. 18.

28 Ibid., p. 3.
of a Cuban court who had fled to Miami:

La Cabaña is a centuries old Spanish fortress. It abounds with dark, underground dungeons and uninhabitable cells, which are now used for political prisons .... There, in this filthy, underground hole the prisoners remain for days, without sun, light, or ventilation.\(^9\)

A former political prisoner described his imprisonment in one of Castro's prisons.

The only openings that room had were two holes the size of a man's eye, through which they watched me day and night. They did not let me sleep. There was a very strong light that made the room an oven. I was naked. The interrogations were endless.\(^30\)

The complaints also charged that convicted political prisoners were sent to concentration camps located in remote, rural areas of Cuba. Here the prisoners were inflicted with physical punishment and subject to forced participation in labor gangs.\(^31\)

To substantiate these charges, the complaints listed two locations of known concentration camps: one was supposedly located in the Las Villas in the district of Manicaragua; the other was located in Cayo Largo.\(^32\)

The Commission formulated a final conclusion which its members had deduced from the submitted written complaints:

From the contents of the documentation presented to the Commission, it appears that the procedure known as mental psychological torture has been employed in the political

\(^{29}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 21.}\)
\(^{30}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 30.}\)
\(^{31}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 20.}\)
\(^{32}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 23.}\)
prisons. This consists in destroying the moral fiber of the prisoner by means of a series of tactics including exhausting interrogations, complete isolation, false and alarming news, threats to the prisoner and his family, and acts of terror.\(^3\)

In evaluating the reports issued by the Commission, it becomes necessary to consider the source of the charges. The complaints came from middle and upper class Cubans who had fled to Miami. These people left their country because of dissatisfaction with a revolutionary program directed towards the implementation of programs of social improvements. These programs benefited the poorer classes of Cuban society at the expense of other classes. It must be remembered that emigres from Cuba are members of the upper-middle classes. It is these people who would benefit by a return of their position should the Castro regime fall in Cuba.

An evaluation of these reports should also include a recognition of the guerrilla record of Castro and his rebels. During the war waged in the Sierra Maestra, the rebels possessed an outstanding record for their treatment of prisoners. There is absolutely no evidence of maltreatment. Their conduct towards captured soldiers earned them a great deal of sympathy in Batista's own army ranks.\(^3\)

In addition, the Castro regime was subjected to charges of

\(^{33}\text{Ibid., p. 43.}\)

administering distorted justice in the revolutionary tribunals which tried Batista supporters. Yet subsequent writings by Zeitlin, Scheer, Draper, and Matthews revealed that these trials were with few exceptions conducted in a fit manner. The arrested person was charged with a specific crime in writing. He had an immediate right to contact a lawyer. The defendant was tried before a three-man board, one member of which was a lawyer. Each defendant possessed the right to appeal his verdict within twenty-four hours to a Supreme Court of Military Justice composed of five members.35

The court appearance of the prisoners captured in the April, 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion also presents a modification to the treatment described in the Commission's reports. A total of 1,179 prisoners were tried in the Castillo del Principe prison in Havana before a five-man military court. The defendants' condition as they appeared in court reflected the reception of good treatment. They appeared to be clean, healthy, and well fed after two months of detention in Cuba. The proceedings which followed in the court room were orderly. According to Cuban law, the invaders could be subject to the death penalty. Yet not one was sentenced to death.36

From the proceeding description, it is possible to conclude one concrete fact. The Cuban judicial system and legal codes from


1959 to 1964 were subject to the will of the ruling regime. An independent judiciary did not exist in Cuba. However, as to the administration of justice, including the punishment delivered to convicted prisoners, the conflicting reports and prejudiced sources limit the ability to present a clear, accurate picture.

The next area to be considered in the study of the political system is the role of political parties within the governmental framework. In the case of Cuba, this study is intricately connected with the role played by the Popular Socialist Party, the communist party of Cuba.

From all indications, Castro in 1959 was not an active member of the Cuban communist party. In fact, at the beginning of the revolutionary movement, the Cuban communists made public their opposition to both Castro and his movement. In turn, Castro did not include the communist party among signers of the Pact of Caracas. With the growing number of Castro supporters, the communist line of opposition to Castro shifted. A communist representative was sent to the Sierra Maestre in 1958 to form an alliance with Castro. The communist party then ordered its members to give full support to the revolution by joining the guerrilla forces and by participating in urban terrorist activity.37

At the completion of the victorious revolt, Castro, accepting the reins of government, began to initiate a revolutionary program

which in its content of social change alienated most of his middle and upper class supporters. His style of governing which evolved into personalized rule alienated members of the 26th of July Movement who had fought against one-man rule. Therefore, the 26th of July was not organized by Fidel into a working political party. Castro did not trust the other parties which had signed the Pact of Caracas since he felt that they represented too conservative a view. There was no native revolutionary party present to offer a program which could effectively challenge the communist party. The communist party reacted to the initiated revolutionary program by giving it its full support.

The Popular Socialist Party, headed by Blas Roca, Juan Marinello, and Aníbal Escalante, all old-time Stalinist-following communists, were able to offer Castro an organization and an ideology. By July, 1960, the PSP was the only functioning political party in Cuba. The power of the PSP was seen in its government-sanctioned control over newly created revolutionary associations of young people, women, and civic groups. But this was a power which was still subject to the control of the líder who effectively challenged Escalante in 1962. Fidel used the communists. They

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38 Alexander, Prophets of the Revolution, p. 383.
39 Schneider, p. 28.
41 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 260.
did not succeed in controlling him.

Since the Cuban communist party maintained very close connections with the Soviet Union, it becomes necessary to determine if Castro's economic and military dependence upon the USSR served to strengthen the Cuban communist party and to inhibit Castro's political power. Castro did not conceive of his economic dependence upon the Soviet bloc as being comparable to Cuba's previous economic domination by the United States. For example, the Russians brought Cuban sugar, but they did not own Cuban plantations or sugar mills.\(^2\)

Furthermore, the Cuban missile crisis exemplified the nature of the relationship which existed between Moscow and Havana. In an interview with Herbert Matthews, Fidel Castro declared several times that it was his idea to place missiles in Cuba, not the Russians.\(^3\) After the Bay of Pigs invasion, Castro believed that he needed missiles as a deterrent to any future attack on a larger scale than the invasion had been. Fidel claimed that he convinced the Russians of this need.

In order to repair the damage caused by their highhanded treatment of Fidel during the crisis, the Russians invited Castro to the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders accorded him a reception as no other foreign visitor had ever received in Russia.\(^4\)

\(^2\)Matthew, Return to Cuba, p. 12.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 15.

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 12.
Russians seemed to realize fully that they were dealing with a national leader who possessed an independent mind. According to Herbert Matthews, "When the Russians want to influence Fidel they cannot huff and puff like the wind; they must bathe him in sunshine." 45

In 1961, Castro announced the formation of a new political party, the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI). This party constituted an alliance between the communist party, the remaining elements of the 26th of July Movement, and the Directorio Revolucionario, a student group which actively opposed Batista. 46 ORI was established to fulfill the need of a well-organized political instrument to support the programs of the Castro regime. Each of the major Cuban government agencies and ministries had its counterpart in ORI. The leading officials in ORI were Carlos Rodríguez, Aníbal Escalante, and Fabio Grobart, all old-time communists. 47 It soon became obvious to Castro that PSP influence in ORI was too extensive. The Castro revolution was being confiscated by the PSP. Castro effectively challenged the PSP and secured the downfall of Escalante. Then Castro announced that ORI would be replaced by a new party organization.

The new party was named the Partido Unificado de la Revolucion Socialista de Cuba (PURSC). In 1964, branches of the party were

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46 Draper, "Castro's New Communists," p. 3.
47 Ibid., p. 18.
in existence on the local, municipal, and provincial levels of Cuba. On the national level, the party was directed by the Dirección Nacional, composed of twenty-five persons. It was Castro's announced goal that the PURSC would embrace all organizations which espoused loyalty to the revolution, including youth groups, the military, and trade unions. The PSP was incorporated into the new party. But within the structure of the PURSC, it was only one element and certainly not the controlling element.\textsuperscript{48}

By January, 1964, the new party had accepted 25,000 Cubans into its membership, a membership which was eventually expected to grow to 35,000. Individuals who desired party membership had to meet three qualifications: the candidate must be a first-rate worker, he must belong to a defense organization, and he must have participated in some of the government sponsored courses in self-improvement.\textsuperscript{49}

PURSC did not govern since it was not granted administrative powers. It was the desire of the Castro regime to have the party serve as an intermediary between the government and the people at every level. Party members were expected to direct their energies towards the fulfillment of government projects. It was members of PURSC who served as effective volunteers in Cuba's time of emergency as hurricane Flora hit Cuba's shores. But it was to be clearly understood that PURSC was an instrument of the government.

\textsuperscript{48}Matthews, \textit{Return to Cuba}, p. 7.

It did not control the government. In fact, there was no requirement that government officials and even members of the Cabinet belong. This was the structure and purpose of Castro's single-party organization.

The executive, judicial, and party system composed the Cuban political system as it operated within Cuba between 1959 to 1961. However, the ideological motivations of the Castro regime have led to an involvement in international politics. The Castro regime accepted and expounded a philosophy of expansionism based upon a belief in the purity and correctness of its own political system. Castro strongly desired the rebuilding of every country in Latin America according to the blueprint of the revolutionary Cuban government. On July 26, 1960 at a public speech, Castro said, "If they want to accuse us of wanting a revolution in all America . . . let them accuse us." The Castro government sponsored programs which brought hundred of Latin American students and leaders to Cuba where they received indoctrination and training aimed at developing them into guerrilla fighters who can effectively overthrow their home governments. Cuban embassies in Latin America openly engaged in subversive activity against existing governments. They distributed printed material throughout

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50 Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 7.
51 U. S., Department of State, Cuba (Inter-American Series, 1961), p. 25.
52 Ibid., p. 22.
Latin American countries, including Guevara's manual on guerrilla warfare. During 1959, the Castro government supported unsuccessful armed invasions to Panama, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. In 1963, an attempted plot led by Cubans to overthrow the government of Venezuela was uncovered and successfully prevented by that country's government. As a result of these actions, seven American states broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.

This completes the study of the model of the Cuban political system under the Castro regime. We may conclude that Cuba from 1959 to 1964 was governed by a personalized system of government which utilized a controlled judicial system and a single party to initiate and accomplish its programs, programs which were carried beyond the boundaries of Cuba to other countries of Latin America.

How do these conditions correspond to our theoretical model? Within the political system of Castro's Cuba were found two elements which correspond to the descriptions presented by Friedrich and Brzezinski. The leadership exercised by Fidel Castro was characterized by the existence of one dominating political figure who exercised absolute power. Furthermore, the PUESC, Cuba's single mass party, is illustrative of Friedrich's and Brzezinski's

53Ibid., p. 27.
55U. S., Department of State, Cuba, p. 29.
theoretical model of the totalitarian state.

The transformation by the Castro regime of Cuba's judicial system into a direct instrument of political power is illustrative of Ebenstein's description of law within a totalitarian system. Judges in Cuba were held responsible to the Premier who expected them to perform their functions in accordance with his revolutionary programs. In addition, the list of charges presented to the Inter-American Commission concerning the treatment of political prisoners within Cuba's legal system represents an example of operational terror as described by Hannah Arendt.

Finally, the Castro regime's interference with the operations of independent government of Latin America corresponds to the expansionist tendencies described by Ivo Feierabend.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE CUBAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM UNDER THE CASTRO REGIME

In analyzing the Cuban economic system this thesis will describe four components—industry, agriculture, the flow of capital within the system, and labor. An individualized analysis of each of these components will contribute to a broad understanding of the process of the production and distribution of goods within a society. Furthermore, since politics is the study of who gets what, where, and when, this analysis will involve the question of the relationship between the political and economic systems within the society being analyzed. The essential question which must be answered in the study of any economic system is that of control of planning. Where on the economic continuum between complete individualistic capitalism and complete government direction does Cuba lie? From this perspective, we will begin a study of the Cuban economic system under the Castro regime, concentrating first upon industrial production.

In 1959 the victorious rebels faced an economic challenge, the challenge of an economic system generally acknowledged to be structurally unsound. Cuba possessed an economy which was dominated by the production of one crop, sugar. This was a crop which was sold on a fluctuating market, which provided only seasonal employment for the Cuban agricultural worker, and which
was sold primarily to one country, the United States. This description represents the export side of the Cuban economic coin. The import side of the coin also presented a challenge. Cuban imports far exceeded exports. Cuba, whose greatest source of wealth is her rich soil, depended on imports for foodstuffs. As with her exports, the imports involved a dependence upon one country, the United States.¹

Castro and his economic advisors believed that a partial remedy for these economic ills lay in a program emphasizing industrialization. Since sixty per cent of Cuba's industrial production was controlled by American business interests, Castro believed his first task to be the liberation of this sector of economic production.² From June 1960 to February 1961, the Castro government expropriated all foreign companies. A program of nationalization was then extended to include all public services such as public utilities and even banking institutions. Government takeover finally culminated in the nationalization of principal Cuban companies whose size and resources made them of value to the government.³


Castro's Cuba was confronted with the unsolved problem of initiating accelerated industrial development. The regime believed that this problem could be solved by utilizing the approach of a centrally planned economy. To implement this planning a Ministry of Industry was created to administer industrial production. Furthermore, from among the array of Castro's advisors, one of his key men was chosen to head the ministry, Che Guevara.

The Ministry of Industry was composed of five vice-ministers, each of whom was responsible for one aspect of industrial production. These divisions were: basic industry, light industry, economy, industrial construction, and technical development. An organizational plan was formulated which provided for the operation of the ministry through six provincial offices.

The complexity involved in organizing a controlled system of industrial production was illustrated by the further breakdown of organization below the provincial offices. All of the state companies which were involved with the production of similar products were grouped together into empresas consolidadas (consolidated enterprises). These groupings facilitated the administration of these companies.

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5Ibid., p. 288.
6Ibid., p. 299.
7Ibid., p. 300.
8Ibid., p. 301.
Revolutionary goals and ideals became intricate components in the operations of the Cuban nationalized industries. Salaries within individual companies were equalized. The factory administrator made only as much as the skilled laborer. Communal incentives were stressed by condemning private self-interest motivations. Profits were nationalized. The state-owned companies deposited their profits from the sale of products into the General State Fund, the title of the government's account in the Cuban national bank.

The Ministry of Industry, the empresas consolidadas, and the controlled operations of individual factories by state appointed managers comprised the instruments of government regulation of industrial production. These instruments were topped by a Central Planning Board (JUCEPLAN) which coordinated, organized, and formulated general economic goals and programs.

JUCEPLAN was given the responsibility of preparing long range economic plans, modeled on those developed by the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. This central planning council was composed of the prime minister, the ministers of defense, finance, public works, economy, the president of the national bank, the chief administrator of the agrarian reform

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9Sears, p. 6.
10MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 271.
11Nolff, p. 304.
12Sears, p. 46.
program, and Guevara, Minister of Industry. This planning agency operated on a national level.

However, economic planning must reach the regional and local levels, too. A coordinating agency, Junta de Coordinacion (JUCEI) was established and given the responsibility of establishing units on the provincial level to serve as an intermediary between the national planning board and regional units of production.

The national and regional planning agencies were assigned the overwhelming task of formulating and implementing a complete economic program involving several complex components. A production plan had to be formulated, stipulating what products the consolidated enterprises would produce. Problems of supply had to be solved at the planning stage. The cost of products as well as the wages of workers had to be determined. Finally, planning involved the determination of production expenses including investment costs.

This elaborate system of organizational control operated and administrated Cuban industrial production. Ninety-five per cent of Cuban industrial output came from government-owned factories. The Castro government became involved with the production of electricity, textiles, shoes, hardware, basic metals, chemical

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13 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 276.
15 Wolff, p. 305.
products, and the refining of petroleum and sugar.\textsuperscript{17}

Castro and his economic planners faced their moment of truth in 1963. Centralized industrial production was not reaping profits. Concrete results sharply contradicted the formulated theoretical economic plans. Economic failures were clearly illustrated as Cuba faced its financial trade deficit. The communist world was exporting $1,600,000,000 worth of goods to Cuba, yet Cuban shipments to the bloc equaled about $400,000,000. Therefore, Soviet money was being used to finance a trade gap.\textsuperscript{18} The Cuban plans for expanded industrialization had not successfully matured. What had happened to turn expected profits into actual losses?

The answer to this question is composed of various elements. Within a period of only two years, Cuba's industrial system had been completely transformed from a capitalistic type of production to a system of highly centralized government planning. The revolutionary government faced the challenge of first preventing the paralysis of existing industrial production and then maintaining and eventually raising production levels. The regime prepared an organizational plan on paper. But the implementation of this plan often failed. Communications between ministries and production units was often bogged down.\textsuperscript{19} The formation of

\textsuperscript{17}Hispanic American Report, 15 (February, 1963), p. 1104.

\textsuperscript{18}Edwin M. Martin, "Cuba, Latin America, and Communism," The Department of State Bulletin, 49 (October 14, 1963), p. 575.

\textsuperscript{19}Seers, p. 50.
production plans was complicated by the lack of reliable statistics upon which to base such plans.\textsuperscript{20} These problems were capped by the fact that a large part of Cuba's administrative and technical personnel, members of the middle and upper classes who disagreed with revolutionary programs, had fled into exile.\textsuperscript{21} The vacancies left by their emigration were often filled with administrators whose qualifications were political and not technical.\textsuperscript{22}

Added to administrative difficulties were mechanical difficulties. The regime attempted to replace the worn parts of American-made machinery with Soviet-produced parts, an attempt which succeeded in wrecking the American equipment. The only alternative left to Cuba's economic planners was to replace American machinery with Soviet machinery. Thus extensive amounts of capital which was needed to expand industry had to be used to prevent complete paralysis of production.\textsuperscript{23}

Burdened with these problems, Castro visited the Soviet Union at the end of April, 1963. Castro was very impressed with Soviet economic plans. Upon returning to Cuba, he delivered a speech on June 4 in which he compared the Soviet and Cuban economic systems. "In Russia," he said, "everyone is dedicated

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 49.
\textsuperscript{21}Draper, Myths and Realities, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{22}Seers, p. 54.
to the economy with such seriousness that a Cuban visitor feels a little ashamed of his own people's attitude." He added:

The Cubans are somewhat idealistic revolutionaries who agitate a great deal and mobilize a great deal but build all that in the air without realizing that everything must have an absolutely fundamental basis in the economy.25

When Castro referred to "idealistic revolutionaries" whose idealism was not always economically sound, we may assume that the regime was at least indirectly admitting that its industrial stress was overdone. In Moscow, Castro agreed that Cuba would develop its economy through specialization, emphasizing agricultural production.26 The aim of the economic program became to reduce, but not to eliminate, the effort to industrialize and to concentrate upon agricultural production, especially sugar.27

This change of emphasis within Cuban economic planning leads to the next area of economic study, the second component of an economic system, agricultural production.

The study of Cuban agriculture within the Castro regime involves the concentration upon one government ministry, the Instituto Nacional de la Reforma Agraria (INRA). Using this agency as the focal point of investigation, the analysis of Cuban


25Ibid.

26Ibid.

27Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 6.
agricultural production may be expanded to include a study of land distribution, collective farming, and state-operated farms.

In 1959 the regime attempted to formulate an agricultural program. The government faced a system of agricultural production dominated by the production of a single crop, sugar. From 1929 to 1959, Cuban agriculture failed to adjust itself to a sugar market which periodically declined and very slowly recovered. Some diversification was attempted to balance these shifting scales in market conditions, but this diversification had not been extensive enough. Therefore, agriculture profits continued to depend upon the production of sugar.28

The cultivation of sugar creates internal problems within Cuban society. The sugar harvest requires seasonal labor. Therefore, a vast number of Cuba's agricultural labor force was left unemployed for many months during the year. Furthermore, the cultivation of sugar requires large tracts of land if a sugar plantation is to be run efficiently. The result of this requirement was the uneven distribution of land ownership, leaving a majority of peasants landless.29

The Castro regime faced these problems by establishing the Instituto Nacional de la Reforma Agraria (INRA). Agricultural planning was formulated and implemented in the towering headquarters


29Ibid., p. 99.
of IMM located in the capital city. The agency was headed by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, a leading Cuban communist for more than thirty years. He operated an agency which included departments concerned with land, production, trade affairs, agricultural machinery, and agricultural credit. From Havana, proposed programs of IMM were initiated through twenty-eight agricultural zones. Within each zone, an IMM delegate was installed under the title of Chief of Zone.

This description represented the proposed structure of agricultural control. It becomes very easy to utilize this description in forming an image of a very efficient, rigidly controlled operation. However, a visit to both IMM headquarters as well as to the various agricultural zones serves as a modification to this image.

Karl E. Meyer describes a correspondent's visit to the national headquarters of INRA. The correspondent was greeted by a sign over a functionary's desk stating, "Be Brief. We Are Fifty Years Behind." While the correspondent was conducting his interview, a messenger from Cuba's national bank arrived to pick up a check for $100,000. No one could find the check. A cluttered desk was ransacked and finally the check was found. Before the correspondent could continue, a school teacher entered the headquarters.

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30 Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 5.
31 Bianchi, p. 105.
carrying a paper bag filled with coins. The teacher explained that his pupils had contributed the coins for agrarian reform. All work in the office was halted. With due ceremony, the bag was placed on the director's desk and everyone in the office commenced counting.\(^3\)

The authority granted to the chiefs of zone colors any image we may have of an organized pyramid of control operating from the top downwards. Each chief was expected to accept responsibility, to see what had to be done and to do it on his own initiative.\(^3\)

Each chief was granted broad authority in all matters relating to economic and social development in his area. Funds were placed at his disposal by the national office of INRA and the chiefs were given considerable leeway in determining how these funds were to be spent.\(^3\)

Of course, INRA headquarters kept contact with these zone chiefs. It assigned provincial delegates whose authority extended over several zones. Coordination was maintained through periodic meetings in Havana attended by the directors of INRA's national headquarters, the provincial supervisors, and the zone delegates.\(^3\)

INRA, under Castro's direction, initiated, organized, and implemented the first program of agrarian reform in 1959.

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^3\)\(^3\)Zeitlin and Scheer, *Tragedy in Our Hemisphere*, p. 160.

\(^3\)Bianchi, p. 105.

\(^3\)\(^3\)Ibid.
According to this program, which was formalized in the First Law of Agrarian Reform, landholdings were limited to a maximum of 3,300 acres for cattle, sugar, and rice, and 900 acres for other uses. However, under no circumstances could a private individual own more than 1,342 acres. Privately owned land which exceeded the law's limitations would be expropriated. According to this law, owners of this land would receive compensation. They would be paid in twenty-year bonds at an annual interest rate of 4.5 per cent. The value of the land would be determined by the evaluation of the land according to the taxes paid on the land.

It proves to be very interesting to investigate the actual operations of INRA in the process of expropriating landholdings. According to Theodore Draper, a representative of INRA, accompanied by two armed soldiers, presented himself at a privately owned farm whose boundaries exceeded the limits set by the government. The delegate announced that the government was taking all but a certain portion of the land. Although the stipulations of the Agrarian Reform law did not include farm machinery or livestock, these too were often appropriated. The delegate then set a price for the confiscated land. If the owner accepted the price, he was paid immediately in cash. If he did not accept the price, his land was still appropriated and he was left without recourse.

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to appeal. The entire operation was carried on in a very un-
business-like manner. The government delegate made no inven-
tories. The landowner received no receipt. The government bonds
mentioned in the Agrarian Reform Act were not issued. 39

The government disposed of the expropriated land in two ways. The first manner involved the granting of this land to private individuals. Renters, share-croppers, and squatters were given first priority in receiving this government land, a grant of 26.8 hectares. However, the second manner of disposing of the land received governmental preference. This was the program of distributing land to agricultural cooperatives. 40 INRA was instructed by the regime to promote cooperative farms whenever possible. These cooperatives were placed under the control of INRA who appointed managers for each cooperative farm and supplied credit. 41 Coordination was established by giving the cooperative managers the responsibility of correlating their programs with the zone chiefs. 42

Each cooperative cost the Cuban government $100,000, which was utilized to provide capital, machinery, and fertilizers. It was expected that the cooperatives would pay this investment back to the INRA. Beyond this, surplus profits would be plowed

40 Bianchi, p. 102.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., p. 106.
back into the cooperative. The workers built their new houses and schools with their own hands with technical aid and raw materials provided by the state. All produce was to be turned over to INRA which then marketed it. Wages were determined by dividing the money made by the cooperatives equally among the workers.

The organizational pattern of control within each cooperative involved the manager and a general assembly of the workers. The manager was appointed by the state as INRA's official representative. The farmers of the cooperative met in a general assembly once each year to elect a directing board to represent them in the making of administrative decisions affecting the cooperative. This seven-man board accepted responsibility for production, supplies, education, machinery, housing, and personnel involved in cooperative living.

The government was vitally concerned with the choice of crops to be grown on the cooperatives. Sugar cooperatives were created. However, the government placed special emphasis upon the development of crop diversification. Cane fields were uprooted and the Cubans were encouraged to grow such crops as tobacco, coffee, and peanuts. The regime felt that with government encouragement agricultural production could be liberated from the chains of monoculture.

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From 1959 to 1961 the cooperatives functioned as an integral component of agricultural production in Cuba. However, in 1961 the cooperative form of farm organization began to be assailed by the regime. Why?

The organizational blueprint for organizing and managing the cooperatives was not successful. Adequate accounting systems had not been utilized by the cooperatives. Statistical records were not available to aid in the formation of agricultural plans. Furthermore, the regime charged the cooperatives with exploiting nonmembers hired at harvest time. According to INRA, cooperative managers had contributed to the general failure by not performing their jobs efficiently and effectively. The list of charges also included the accusation that the cooperatives had engaged in the black marketing of scarce produce.

In the final analysis, the regime decided that the cooperative system of organization was not capable of providing a strong base for economic growth. Therefore, a new plan was formulated stressing agricultural production organized according to the Soviet model of state farms. Two hundred and sixty state farms were created in 1961. The regime cloaked this change over in an ideological justification. The state farm system would better serve revolutionary justice since workers would receive equal pay for equal work. This method of payment far surpassed the

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\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 122.

cooperative method of dividing the profits among the workers.
The regime declared that the cooperative method was unfair since
profits depended upon land productivity, which varied. The
injustice would be corrected through worker employment on state
farms.\textsuperscript{48} Within a short period of time, these state farms were
employing over 100,000 workers. The farms were run by managers
appointed by INRA. By 1962 special departments concerned with
the administration of state farms were established in the regional
offices of INRA.\textsuperscript{49} The government had become the largest employer
of farm labor in Cuba.

With the establishment of state farms, however, agricultural
reappraisal was far from over. Three years after the agrarian
reform was officially started, total farm output had fallen below
the level of the years before the revolution. Again the regime
had to face the problem of answering the question, why? INRA
was still crippled in formulating production plans by the lack of
statistics. Since equipment maintenance programs had not been
utilized, farm machinery had deteriorated and the regime could not
secure new parts. Finally, the managers of the state farms were
often young and inexperienced and had made too many planning
mistakes. The end result of these combined conditions was the
creating of a low productivity level. In 1962 reappraisal began
again. INRA began to stress the need of keeping accounting

\textsuperscript{48} Bianchi, p. 123.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 124.
records, managers were replaced, and finally, INRA decided that the Cuban economy was not ready for the strains of crop diversification. Sugar would again receive the emphasis of agricultural planning.\(^5^0\)

The regime coupled its program of state farms with the formation of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP). This association represented a concession on the part of the agricultural planners to the private sector of the farm economy.\(^5^1\) The association was charged by INRA to encourage the small farmer to direct his production according to INRA programs.\(^5^2\) Nevertheless, the law recognized the existence of the private sector of agricultural production.

The free landholder in Cuba was restricted by certain government regulations. He was allowed by the regime to market one-fourth of his produce privately if he was able to transport and market the goods himself.\(^5^3\) However, these 200,000 small farmers had to sell the remaining three-fourths of their crop to the government at fixed prices. They received their supplies from INRA country stores. The government owned about one thousand of these stores, which were operated according to policies which

\(^{50}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 112.}\)
\(^{51}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 122.}\)
\(^{52}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 125.}\)
fostered underselling to drive all competitive stores from the market. 54

However, the small farmer received a personal guarantee of the protection of his existence from the líder. According to Castro, the small private farmer would not be pushed out by large-scale state agriculture. He promised that the proportion of state land to small farms would be stabilized at between sixty to seventy per cent state land to thirty to forty per cent small farms. 55

This promise was formalized in the Second Agrarian Reform Law. The provisions of this law stated that the ratio of state owned land to that owned by small farmers would be seventy per cent state to thirty per cent private. In addition, the law provided for the nationalization of land holding of over 33 1/3 acres. The owners of expropriated land which had been cultivated would receive an indemnity of fifteen pesos monthly per acre of land. The owners of unused land would receive no compensation. 56

This law was aimed at destroying medium landholdings. But in essence, its provisions did protect the small farmer whose original title to 33 1/3 acres had been given him by the government.

By the end of 1962, INRA was formulating agricultural programs

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54 Bianchi, p. 126.
56 Hispanic American Report, 16 (December, 1963), p. 961.
based upon a stress on sugar production. The government created a National Sugar Commission with boards at the provincial levels. Members of these boards represented the Ministry of Industries, INRA, ANAP, and the unions of agricultural and sugar workers. The Commission and the boards were to work together to promote coordination between all government bodies involved in sugar production.57

By early 1963 the government was espousing the following slogan:

The highest honor to the martyrs of the 26th of July is to arrive at July 26 with all our cane fields free of weeds.58

The Castro regime faced the revolutionary challenge of converting a capitalistic system of agricultural production into a socialist type. The methods of the transformation involved two Agrarian Reform Laws, the expropriation of lands, the establishment of cooperatives, their conversion into state farms, and finally, a mild form of encouragement to small farmers.

To complete the analysis of the industrial and agricultural sectors of the Cuban economy, it is necessary to describe the government's role in directing and controlling the flow of capital within and between these sectors. This is a two sided coin involving the flow of small as well as large amounts of money through the economy. The first side of the coin, the flow

57 Bianchi, p. 147.

58 Hispanic American Report, 16 (September, 1963), p. 675.
of small amounts of money, involves a description of the government's control over both wages and prices. Government programs of social improvement created a situation in which the average Cuban had more money to spend. Reduction of unemployment, lowering of rents and prices, and the establishment of a minimum wage brought about an increase in the demand for goods. The Cuban had money to spend; therefore, larger amounts of small capital should have begun circulating through the economy. However, a complication arose which greatly colored the situation. The failure of proposed industrial plans created a shortage of consumer goods. Through the success of government programs, the Cuban had money to spend. But because of the failure of other government economic programs, he had little to spend it on.\textsuperscript{59}

In investigating the second side of the coin, the flow of large amounts of capital, we become concerned with the area of investment capital. In this area, Cuba's revolutionary government was deeply involved. The principle source of financing capital investment within Cuba was the National Treasury, which utilized a nationalized banking system. Industrial and agricultural profits and foreign loans were deposited in the National Treasury and then distributed as needed in the economy. From this source came the funds which were used to maintain as well as to expand industrial and agricultural production.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{59}Nolff, p. 320.

\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., p. 311.
Industry and agriculture are two components of Cuba's economic system. The third component is labor, including men and their organization into unions and the relationship which existed between labor and the state between the years 1959 to 1961.

The situation of labor unions before Castro's takeover was one engulfed in corruption and involved with gangsterism. Unions were used as instruments by the government to control the workers. By tradition and habit, the Cuban workers were accustomed to government control. Therefore, the first acts of the Castro regime, acts of direct interference with labor organizations, caused little surprise to the Cuban workers. Programs of nationalization placed the Castro government in the position of being the leading employer of Cuban labor. This situation created the need to require all union leadership to profess loyalty to the regime. Moderate labor leaders were purged and replaced by government men. For example, Jesús Soto, an extreme leftist, was installed as head of the national labor confederation, Confederacion de Trabajadores de Cuba, (CTC).

An understanding of the relationship between labor and the state requires an examination of labor organization in Castro's Cuba from 1959 to 1961. Employees had to belong to industrial

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63 Ibid.
unions. There was a union in each plant and a national union for each industry. This pattern of organization was topped on the national level by the CTC, the central labor organization. There were twenty-five national labor unions in Cuba which were each represented on the Executive Committee of CTC.

Union elections were held in Cuba in October, 1961. Each factory elected a union section committee and delegates to a national union congress. Two million persons participated in the elections. Only in a few of these factories were there genuine elections in which several candidates were nominated and campaigned for union office. In most of these elections, one candidate was nominated for each office by the government's representatives. A general assembly of the workers confirmed the nomination. However, other candidates could have been nominated if the workers had so wished. No direct pressure was applied by the government to prevent such nomination. Cuban workers, conditioned by a long history of government control, did not choose to exercise such initiative even though the elections were carried out by secret ballot and each ballot had a space provided for write-in candidates.

According to Zeitlin, the workers had a "naive faith" in the

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64 Hispanic American Report, 14 (October, 1961), p. 691.
union organization sponsored by the Castro regime. The revolution had effectively eliminated corruption from the labor movement. The workers had no desire to create an independent organizational weapon of their unions.68

The successful management of labor by the Castro regime was also implemented by the creation of Grievance Commissions within each factory to handle complaints directly at the local level. These Grievance Commissions were composed of five-men boards, two men representing the factory administration, one representing the Ministry of Labor, and two representing the factory work force. These commissions decided such questions as individual grievances concerning wages, working hours, or working conditions. If the workers were not satisfied with a commission's decision, they could appeal the case to an Appeals Commission or directly to the Ministry of Industry.69 Cuban workers appeared to be very satisfied with the operation of these commissions.

Labor independence was limited by two methods. The first method involved programs of indoctrination sponsored by the government. These indoctrination programs were aimed at training the worker to promote production without the rewards of higher wages. The program was christened, "emulación socialista".70 The goal of the program was to increase production under a

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68Ibid.
69Ibid., p. 240.
70Ibid.
socialistic system stimulated by the example of outstandingly dedicated workers. The Cuban worker was trained to accept his participation in emulación as a moral obligation. He was taught to dedicate his efforts to transform his work into a direct service for his country. This attitude was nurtured and fostered in special government classes conducted in each factory. The workers were strongly encouraged to attend these classes. The worker who refused would be subject to indirect social pressures but not to direct force.

Government control was also exercised through the issuance of labor work books. These cards showed the grade of skill of the worker and his standard wage. The government had justified the issuance of these cards by stating that they served as a source of information on the distribution of labor and on the flow of labor from one section to another to provide a means of preventing labor shortages in key sectors. In actual operation, the cards facilitated the government's control of the labor force. No one could get a job, quit, or change employment without one of these work cards. In order to acquire a card, the worker had to fill out a very detailed and specific questionnaire. These questionnaires were filed to implement governmental control over the worker.72

71Ibid.

The Ministry of Labor issued these labor cards. The position which the Ministry of Labor occupied within the Cuban revolutionary system was a very strong one. Since March 11, 1960, the national labor confederation, CTC, no longer possessed the right to negotiate with factory administrators. The Ministry of Labor possessed this right. In addition, this government agency was given full authority to settle any labor controversy. Therefore, we may conclude that Cuba's controlled unions stood in second place behind the Ministry of Labor.

What have been the results of Castro's labor planning and control? Through revolutionary programs, which built workers' centers, nurseries for working mothers, and educational facilities, the Cuban worker benefited. Also, there were significant gains in employment. Workers were employed more regularly in revolutionary Cuba. Therefore, the majority of Cuban workers became fervent supporters of Castro and his government in spite of the government programs which made the worker subject to governmental controls both in securing and keeping a job.

In summation, we may conclude that the Castro government involved itself directly in labor relations by acting in three roles. The regime was directly involved in union affairs through its control of the CTC and individual unions. The government was directly involved in the area of employer-employee relations since

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74 Zeitlin, "Labor in Cuba," p. 239.
it became the chief employer in Cuba. Ninety-five per cent of Cuban industry had been nationalized and seventy per cent of her agricultural production had also been nationalized, a condition which required a large government payroll. Finally, the Cuban government, under Castro's direction, exercised complete control over the entire labor structure through the Ministry of Labor.

After describing the Cuban economic system, it now becomes necessary to correlate the description with our theoretic model. Friedrich and Brzezinski have stated that a totalitarian regime is characterized by the central control and direction of the entire economy. It may clearly be concluded that the Castro regime attempted to exercise such central control and direction. This control was extensive in the areas of labor and industry. Yet within the area of agricultural production, the regime limited its control by making concessions to the small farmer of Cuba.
CHAPTER SIX
PATTERNS OF LIFE UNDER CASTRO'S REGIME

In order to understand a society, it is necessary to study that society's political and economic systems. However, these systems are not the total of a society, and an examination of these areas alone does not contribute to a complete understanding of everyday living conditions within the social system. To grasp the complete picture, it becomes necessary to concentrate upon the social conditions of the society. Therefore, we will now begin to look at the conditions within Cuba which comprise the elements of the Cuban citizen's daily life. This study will examine the living conditions, the role of religion within the society, the nature of the society's communications system, education, and the role of associational groups. Placed against our working model of totalitarianism, the study of Cuban society must also include a search for terroristic methods of control and, if found, a description of this control and a discussion of reactions which such control stimulates within the society.

During the time period with which this study is concerned, the Cuban citizen's living conditions were closely related to the government's programs for expanded industrialization and agrarian reform. These expansive programs greatly disrupted the Cuban economic system. The premature shift of emphasis from sugar
production, the over-night creation of cooperatives, and the sharp shift to state farms contributed to the fall in agricultural production. Cubans were left facing shortages in both industrial and agricultural production. The Castro government was forced to resort to a system of rationing.

Government plans were formulated by which basic food commodities were rationed to the Cuban people. Each Cuban was allowed twelve ounces of meat a week, two ounces of butter a month, six eggs per month, half a pound of fish every fifteen days, one and a half pounds of beans a month, and six pounds of rice each month. Children under seven received one quart of milk per day, while for all others, the milk ration was one-fifth of a quart per day. Laundry soap, hand soap, detergents, toothpaste, and shoes were also rationed. However, fresh fruits, sugar, coffee, and many vegetables were available without any ration limitations.

American visitors to Cuba have reported the results of the rationing system. According to observers like Hugh B. Chester, Herbert Matthews, and Barbara Skelton, the Cuban people did not show any signs of malnutrition. No one in Cuba was starving. The Cuban diet was monotonous, but it was sufficient. In


3 Ibid.
revolutionary Cuba, children were especially well-fed.\(^4\) In spite of the rationing, Chester concludes that the average Cuban was eating more food than at any time before the Castro revolution.\(^5\)

Since Castro and his ministers also lived on the ration, the Cuban people, especially the peasants, felt that for the first time in Cuba, equal distribution of goods was contributing to a system of social justice.\(^6\)

Several revolutionary laws affected the average Cuban's living conditions. In early 1959, electric rates were reduced by one half. Telephone rates were also reduced. In addition, the revolutionary law of March 6, 1957, the Rent Law, reduced by fifty per cent the rent of all Cubans who earned less than one hundred pesos per month.\(^7\) Housing improvements were further extended by the building programs in the cooperatives and state farms. Finally, revolutionary programs to distribute free medical care to Cuban workers and peasants have contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of the poorer classes of Cuban society.\(^8\)

In analyzing the life of the average Cuban under the Castro regime, we have described living conditions, including food

\(^4\)Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 6.
\(^5\)Chester, p. 441.
\(^6\)Ibid.
\(^7\)Morray, p. 24.
\(^8\)Nolff, p. 318.
available, housing, and medical care. The description must now be extended to include an analysis of the role of religion within Castro's Cuba. Out of a population of seven million people, around six and one-half million Cubans were baptized Catholic, including Castro, himself. The study of practicing, functioning religion within Castro's Cuba is a study of a two-sided coin, one side reflecting coexistence with the regime, the other, religious restrictions imposed by the government.

A partially tolerant attitude toward religion was reflected in Herbert Matthews' quote of Castro's words: "I don't care whether a person is religious or not or what his religion is." Such an attitude was more forcefully espoused by Castro in his speech given on the anniversary of the attack on Batista's palace led by José Antonio Echeverría. The chairman of the ceremonial was quoting from one of Echeverría's speeches. This chairman deliberately eliminated the following sentence from Echeverría's original speech. "We are confident that the purity of our intentions will bring us the favor of God to achieve a reign of justice in our land." This omission infuriated Castro, who immediately delivered an entire speech based upon the deleted sentence.

Can we be so cowardly, so mentally crippled, that we have the moral poverty to suppress three lines? ... We know that a revolutionary can have a religious belief.

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10Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 13.
11Greene, "Return to Cuba," p. 18.
The Revolution does not force men, it does not intrude into their personal beliefs. It does not exclude anyone.\textsuperscript{12}

The Vatican did not break diplomatic relations with Havana. There was an Inter-Nuncio in Havana and a Cuban Ambassador at the Holy See.\textsuperscript{13} When the Nuncio was celebrating the coronation of Pope Paul VI, Castro paid him a courtesy visit which lasted for an hour and a half.\textsuperscript{14}

A further example of the coexistence of religion with the Castro regime was the fact that churches were open in revolutionary Cuba and they were crowded.\textsuperscript{15} In addition, church members read a regular column of Catholic news in one of Havana's newspapers. An occasional article by a Protestant pastor was also printed.\textsuperscript{16}

Conflicts between organized religion and the Castro regime appeared to be centered in the area of education. The regime had condemned the teaching of religion in schools. This condemnation culminated in the nationalization in 1961 of all private schools. Teachers and directors of private schools were allowed to continue at their jobs, but they became subject to state direction and not to their religious orders.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17}Hispanic American Report, 14 (July, 1961), p. 408.
Following an anti-government demonstration in front of a Catholic church in Havana, Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Boza Masvidad and one hundred and thirty-five priests were arrested and deported to Spain. Bishop Masvidad and forty-six of the priests were Cuban citizens.\(^\text{18}\) Castro made the further announcement that all priests who were foreign born and had been demonstrating an anti-government attitude while in Cuba would be forced to leave the country. However, he also stated that foreign-born priests who cooperated with the revolution would be allowed to stay.\(^\text{19}\)

Catholic leaders in turn responded to the government's action. Archbishop of Santiago, Enrique Pérez Serantes, in mid-1960 issued a pastoral letter which condemned the Castro government's shift toward the left.\(^\text{20}\) However, the Church did not decide to take any direct action against the government. The Catholic Church possessed the direct weapon of excommunication. According to Canon Law, the act of impeding or imprisoning Roman Catholic Bishops is an act which incurs excommunication. Since Castro and his officials have committed this act, they became subject to the excommunication.\(^\text{21}\) However, the Church did not make public any such action and appeared to be avoiding the entire issue.

It may be concluded that the Catholic Church in revolutionary

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Cuba was allowed to function in its capacity as director of religious functions. But its influence was allowed to include only religious matters. The regime would not tolerate its interference in the fields of either education or politics.

As religion is an intricate component of social life so are communications. The communication system, including press, radio, television, and movies, was colored and modified by the rule of the Castro regime. For example, in December, 1959, the eve of Castro's victory, there were sixteen daily newspapers in Havana. After the Castro victory, five of these newspapers, EL País, Excelsior, Mañana, Diario Nacional, and Republica were closed. The remaining papers fell under complete government control. Revolución was created as the semi-official newspaper of the 26th of July Movement. Hoy, the organ of the Cuban communist party, was allowed to publish by Castro without any interference.

Gradually, the total number of newspapers coming off the Cuban presses began to dwindle. Their editors, such as Jorge Zayas and José Ignancio Rivero, went into exile. This dwindling of newspapers and the exile of editors reflected the reaction to the government's enactment of a plan to "free the press." This government plan allowed newspaper workers to add clarifying statements at the end of articles which opposed Castro or his regime. An example of such notation was given in the *Hispanic American*

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According to the inserted comment, the particular article in question . . . "expressed the views of the newspaper management but the employees considered it untrue and not in accordance with the most elemental newspaper ethics." 24

Commenting on this postscript device, the Executive Board of the Provincial College of Journalists in Havana concluded that there was freedom of the press in revolutionary Cuba. According to a statement released by the board,

This freedom is no longer simply for the owner or seller of information, but for the journalist, for the manual worker and intellectual to make known his position regarding false, anti-patriotic and tendentious information by means of postscript or annotation, a procedure . . . that is one of the finest achievements of journalism and freedom of expression. 25

However, the board failed to report that these clarifying comments have been used only against articles which criticized or contradicted the governmental position. 26

The Castro government completed its program of publication control by finally allowing nothing but pro-government articles to be printed in the Cuban press. Castro refused to stand for any criticism. To facilitate this government control and regulation of the Cuban press, a government news agency was created, Prensa Latina, whose publication set the pattern for what was

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26 Ibid., p. 91.
acceptable printing matter in Cuba. All other Cuban newspapers were placed under the control of a central propaganda directorate.\textsuperscript{27} It may be clearly concluded that there was actually no freedom of the press in Castro's Cuba.

The movie industry, television, and radio were also subject to governmental regulation within revolutionary Cuba. Instituto Cubano del Arto Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC) was granted the authority to declare films counterrevolutionary. Such films were not allowed to be shown.\textsuperscript{28} Castro justified this action by stating that Cuba was in a revolutionary stage and since films wield such a powerful influence, they must be in accord with revolutionary principles.

Furthermore, radio broadcasting stations were also subject to government control. They praised Castro and his government and never indulged their facilities in the field of political criticism. With the seizure of CMQ Channel Six, the last independent station, all television channels became subject to government control.\textsuperscript{29} Radio and television stations were directed by the central directorate which also supervised press publications.\textsuperscript{30}

A controlled system of communications, including press, radio,


\textsuperscript{29}Hispanic American Report, 13 (March, 1960), p. 175.

\textsuperscript{30}Frankel, p. 88.
and television, provides a transmission belt for the government to use in transmitting policies to the people. The process of transmitting broad general goals is best performed through the society's educational system. Therefore, it becomes vital to investigate Cuba's educational goals, programs, and operating facilities.

In 1961, the Castro regime faced the problem of dealing with one million illiterates in a population of seven million.\(^{31}\) The Castro government, operating through Armando Hart's Ministry of Education, began to formulate plans to correct this situation. Two extreme approaches were utilized. At one extreme, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Che Guevara, and other leading government officials became teachers. On television, on radio, and at mass meetings these men became patient instructors, explaining history and economics to the Cuban people. Their work could be considered as a method of making general background knowledge available to the people. At the other extreme, illiteracy was attacked by sending an army of young volunteers to live with Cuba's peasants and to teach.\(^{32}\)

Castro christened 1961 as the "Year of Education." At his command all Cuban youngsters between the sixth grade and high school left their Havana homes to go to the interior of Cuba.

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\(^{32}\)MacSaffey and Barnett, p. 286.
where they spent eight months working with Cuba's illiterate adult peasants. In order to facilitate this program, Cuba's grammar and secondary schools were closed two months ahead of schedule and remained closed until December, 1961.

By February, 1962, Education Minister Hart reported that as a result of the work performed by thousands of Cuba's very young teachers, some 707,000 persons had been trained to read and write. Illiteracy had been reduced to 3.9 per cent. These peasants were far from being fully educated, but at least they had attained a first or second grade level of literacy. The government immediately set to work establishing follow-up schools to continue the training of these peasants. By November, 1962, 400,000 adults were enrolled in these follow-up schools.

Educational programs for adults were expanded beyond the literacy campaigns. Special educational programs were established in Cuban factories. By 1962, 100,000 adults were enrolled in these worker improvement schools and an additional 50,000 adults were enrolled in night schools located on the state farms.

For the youth of Cuba, the Castro government spared no effort on behalf of their education and welfare. Young people were

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37Ibid.
transported from Cuba's interior, given shoes and clothing, and were lodged in the confiscated mansions located in Havana or in specially built camps. At government expense, the students were well fed. Their educational curriculum was based upon concentrated courses in technical subjects. In 1964, there were about 100,000 scholarship students. Also the government issued 5,000 special scholarships for medical and engineering studies to graduates of basic secondary schools. Also, equal educational opportunities were extended to women, Negroes, and mulattoes. The University of Havana, which in pre-revolution days had a student body composed of only ten per cent girls, had a student body with forty per cent girls in 1964. It also had a far higher percentage of Negroes and mulattoes than before the revolution. In addition, extensive building programs increased the number of secondary and elementary schools in revolutionary Cuba.

The preceding description illustrates the active role of the Cuban government in the implementation of educational improvements. This description leads to the question of the degree to which political considerations are involved in Cuba's present educational system. An introductory answer to this question was provided in the official report by the Cuban government to the UNESCO

40. Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 10.
41. Ibid., p. 9.
Conference on Education and Economic and Social Development held in Santiago, Chile in 1962.

The aim of education in the New Cuba include these of instilling in our children and young people an unreserved love for their country and a sense of solidarity with the workers and peoples of all lands in their noble struggle for a free and happy life, and of teaching them to abhor imperialist wars of plunder and to strive steadfastly for peace.42

According to Richard Jolly, the intention to use the Cuban educational system for political purposes was openly declared by the Castro regime.43 Curriculum planning was orientated around a base of Marxist indoctrination.44 This was coupled with teaching a love for Fidel Castro in Cuba's classrooms. According to Education Minister Armando Hart, "Even in arithmetic class teachers have to preach loyalty to Fidel."45

The government exercised its control over the complete structure of Cuban education through a centralized board of advisors in Havana, which worked under Castro's supervision. The influence of the Havana board extended even to the level of daily lesson plans used in Cuban classrooms. The board issued model lesson plans which teachers and local administrators had to use. All textbooks had to receive the approval of the board. These lesson

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43Ibid., p. 346.

44Urrutia, p. 96.

45Frankel, p. 89.
plans and textbooks placed special emphasis upon government approved ideology and programs directed to foster nationalism.\textsuperscript{46}

Schools of Revolutionary Instruction which specialized in the teaching of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism were established throughout Cuba. The course offered by these schools was three months long. Classes took place during the evening to facilitate the attendance of working adults.\textsuperscript{47} Teachers, of course, were encouraged to attend such classes. In addition, teachers were provided with a government-issued handbook, \textit{Alfabeticemos}, the contents of which were strongly politically oriented.\textsuperscript{48}

Indoctrination proceeded from teacher to pupil. Richard Jolly illustrates the nature of this indoctrination by providing examples of questions used in Cuban textbooks. For example, in an arithmetic textbook, the following question was asked:

\begin{quote}
The Ku Klux Klan was founded in the US in 1866 to maintain by terror the supremacy of the white race. For how many years has this infamous society existed in our neighbor's land?\textsuperscript{49}
\end{quote}

A further example of this indoctrination was seen in an exercise given in \textit{Venceremos}, a primer for Cuban youngsters. The exercise involved having the students read and then write words

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{46}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 286.
\item \textsuperscript{47}Jolly, p. 207.
\item \textsuperscript{48}
\item \textsuperscript{49}Ibid., p. 363.
\end{itemize}
or sentences. One exercise was built around the phrase, "Young and old united, we swear with Fidel, to defend Cuba together. We shall never be defeated." 50

Government regulatory programs extended to the curriculum and faculty of the University of Havana. The Havana University had enjoyed a traditional autonomy, an autonomy which facilitated young Castro's rebellious activities against Batista while Castro was attending the University law school. Castro now declared that all teachers and students in the University who disagreed with government programs would be dismissed. 51

We may now formulate a conclusion from this description of education under the Castro regime. Educational facilities were expanded and improved under Castro's direction. But this expansion and improvement served as instruments of governmental control over the society.

To understand social conditions in Cuba our study must be expanded from an analysis of educational facilities to a description of the status of associational groups in Castro's Cuba. Associational groups went through two stages in revolutionary Cuba. The first stage involved the destruction of pre-revolutionary groups. Most of the associations whose membership was rooted in the upper and middle classes disappeared. Only the professional associations were left, but their organizations

50 Ibid., p. 358.
51 Frankel, p. 88.
were modified by governmental action. Within each professional association, a board of directors was appointed by the government. This board operated as a revolutionary tribunal which worked to disqualify from professional practice any person accused of counterrevolutionary activity.52 The tribunal of the Havana association of lawyers had expelled sixty members by July, 1960. The Havana medical tribunal suspended annual medical conventions and also expelled several members from practicing in Havana because of their political beliefs. Similar action occurred in the associations for journalists, radio announcers, public accountants, and engineers.53

In 1962, the Cuban Masonic Association was the recipient of violent government action. Cuban troops occupied the Masonic temple in Havana and arrested several Masonic leaders including the Grand Master.54 Cuban militiamen also occupied the headquarters of the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Labor Association, and the Catholic Laymen's Lodge.55

The second stage in the changing status of associational groups in Castro's Cuba was the formation of several government-sponsored organizations. For example, the Federation of Cuban Women, formed from existing women's organizations by the wives

52MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 279.
53Ibid., p. 280.
of Raúl Castro and Che Guevara, was created. An organization entitled the National Front of Professional Men and Technicians was formed. Finally, the organizational structure included two associational groups for young people: the Association of Young Rebels, for youth ranging in age from fourteen to twenty-five, and the Union of Rebel Pioneers, for children of seven to fourteen years of age.56

At the apex of government-sponsored organizational activity was placed the Cuban militia, the organization which gave to the men and women who did not fight in the Sierra Maestre a sense of direct participation in the revolutionary victory. According to Samuel Shapiro, who traveled through the provinces of Cuba in 1962, he was almost never out of sight of an armed man or woman. "Every office building, every hotel, bus station, residential block, and factory is guarded by olive drab militiamen who have rifles or machine guns and know how to use them."57 Shapiro met teenagers able to take anti-aircraft guns apart and put them together again. He also described meeting a sixty-five year old grandmother shouldering a rifle. These militiamen believed they were defending Cuba from her enemies and an enemy was anyone, national or foreigner, who opposed Fidel.

The government strongly encouraged the Cuban people to belong

56 MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 261.

to these revolutionary organizations. A citizen who refused to participate was reflecting by his actions a disloyal attitude. Disloyalty would be considered as counterrevolutionary and could qualify the individual as being an enemy of the regime. Consequently, membership in these organizations was very extensive.\(^{58}\)

In studying social conditions in Cuba, we have been slowly moving up a descriptive pyramid, which included the relationship of the government to food supplies and general living conditions, to religion, communications, education, and associations. Finally, we have reached the top of the pyramid with a description of police control over the Cuban population. In 1962, Castro established a Ministry of Interior, giving to this ministry the responsibility for maintaining public order. The creation of the ministry served as a method of centralizing all police units in Cuba in order to develop a strong and effective security system.\(^{59}\)

The security system within Cuba operated at both the lower and higher levels. At the lower levels, the neighborhood base, were found the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. These committees functioned in a watchdog capacity, reporting disloyal or suspicious action to higher authorities. After the Bay of Pigs invasion, the lists of suspects turned in by these defense committees appeared to be the basis for the arrest of

\(^{58}\)Frankel, p. 89.

\(^{59}\)"The Castro Regime in Cuba," Department of State, p. 19.
of several Cubans.\textsuperscript{60}

Moving up the security structure, we encounter the regular armed forces which totaled around 100,000 men. This force was fortified by the 250,000 militia members.\textsuperscript{61} Finally, we come to the top of the security system which was occupied by the G2, the national Cuban secret police and the investigating corps of the Cuban government. According to complaints presented to the Inter-American Commission, Cuban citizens were subject to arbitrary arrests by G2 officials. The arrested individual was then transported to the G2 headquarters in Havana where he was isolated and subject to interrogation involving psychological torture.\textsuperscript{62}

Legislation enacted by the Castro regime also contributed to a society subject to police control. Revolutionary Decree Number 988 designated five crimes which were punishable by death within forty-eight hours of capture. The crimes were: burning sugar cane, aiding counterrevolutionaries, helping traitors from abroad, acts of sabotage in Cuban cities, and carrying weapons without governmental permission.\textsuperscript{63}

Tad Szule charges that Cuba's program of rationing also

\textsuperscript{60}MacGaffey and Barnett, p. 282.


contributed to effective police control. Each Cuban city dweller received a ration book which was registered and made available to the police. This procedure made it impossible for outsiders to establish residence in the cities without the government's knowledge. Thus, underground movements were severely hindered from developing.  

This kind of control was further implemented by the Law of Urban Reform of October, 1960. This law prevented citizens from changing residence without government permission. The Cuban who wished to move had to secure government authorization from a Superior Counsil, the official who administered the Urban Reform Law. A Cuban caught carrying so much as a chair in a city street was subject to arrest for suspicion of violating the law.

The privacy of the Cuban's residence was challenged by Law Number 499, involving the control of the Aedes-Aegipti mosquito. Empowered by this law, the Cuban police was granted the authority to exercise unannounced access to any residence at any hour in search of the death-carrying mosquito. It has been charged that the law has been gravely abused as machine gun-bearing officers knocked down doors to search the homes of Cubans suspected of disloyalty.

One method which may be used in evaluating the effectiveness

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64 Szule, p. 25.
65 The Castro Regime in Cuba, US Department of State, p. 4.
66 Ibid., p. 4.
of this police system is to examine the existence or non-existence of effective opposition to the government. An examination of Castro's Cuba revealed the existence of two types of protest to government policies. The first type involved the utilization of a form of passive resistance. Instead of fleeing to the mountains to wage an active war of opposition against the government, several thousand Cubans chose simply to leave Cuba. Freedom Tower in Havana was the receiving house for the 150,000 refugees who left Cuba. The mental image of a weary traveler dressed in rags and carrying his few possessions in a bundle would not fit the Cuban emigré. Ninety-eight per cent of the refugees from Cuba arrived in Miami by jet. They were clean and well-fed. "They represent Cuba's middle class on the move." 67

Fidel Castro did not restrain these people by physical means. Each refugee was required by the Cuban government to leave the greater part of his possessions. He had to pay the Ministry of Finance twenty-five dollars before departing. Also, the Cuban who wished to leave his country had to secure a permit from the Havana civil service. Only one professional group experienced extreme difficulty in securing these permits. These were Cuban doctors. The regime placed unofficial barricades in the way of doctors wishing to leave, barricades which made it difficult for a doctor to secure a permit. However, the large number of Cubans who successfully secured permits and left Cuba proves that the

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government procedures involved in securing the right to leave were by no means insurmountable. If Cubans did not wish to remain in their country, Castro did not seem to want them.68

Some of these Cuban refugees chose to transform their passive opposition to Castro into an active form after leaving Cuba. Counterrevolutionary groups were formed in Miami, Mexico City, and Puerto Rico. The various opposition groups such as the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil sent agents back into Cuba to conduct anti-government programs, including urban terrorism, to undermine the Castro regime.69

The exile opposition groups were merged to form the Frente Democratico Revolucionario. It was this group which operated under CIA direction to undertake a direct invasion of the Cuban homeland. Their endeavor ended in seventy-two hours at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 when Castro squashed the attack.70

Since 1960, other Cubans dissatisfied with Castro's government have chosen to oppose him directly by operating within the country. Groups of counterrevolutionaries have fled to the Sierra Maestre and to the Sierra Escambray in Las Villas Province. These groups have operated much as Castro did during his days in

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68Ibid., p. 1205.


the Sierra Maestre, conducting guerrilla activities.\textsuperscript{71} Their activities were extended into urban areas where bombings have occurred. It was reported in October, 1960 that terrorists attempted to kill Castro by spraying his automobile with machine gun bullets. Reporters have speculated that these Cuban terrorists have made several attempts to assassinate the Premier, but they have never been reported in the Cuban press.\textsuperscript{72}

Who were these terrorists? The majority of the guerrillas, whose number was estimated at around three hundred men, were former Castro followers who became dissatisfied with the regime. They were led by former Castro officers such as Manuel Beatón and Nino Díaz.\textsuperscript{73}

The effectiveness of the guerrillas was strongly diluted by the results of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. The aftermath of the invasion was a slowdown in all counterrevolutionary activity in Cuba. The rebels' organization was weakened by government arrests and by a populace which conceived of opposition to the Cuban government as being motivated by foreigners. Cuban nationalism triumphed over counterrevolutionary activities.\textsuperscript{74}

These forms of opposition—refugees, exile groups, and guerrilla fighters—were effectively balanced by the groups within


\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Hispanic American Report}, 13 (June, 1960), p. 238.

the Cuban society which strongly supported the government. First, there were the young people who were directly benefiting from a government which seemed dedicated to their welfare. Since one-half of the population in Cuba was below the age of twenty-five, this was obviously a tremendous source of strength for the regime. Also there were the Negroes and mulattoes whose members compose one-fourth of the population. Under the Castro regime, they have achieved rights equal to those of their fellow Cubans. The public places of Havana have become filled with them as they exercise their new rights. Finally, there were the poor of Cuba. According to Max Frankel, they supported Castro's regime because "they may get a new house, or because they remember misery and prisons and tortures." They might not say so but they reveal that they also back Castro "because some derive satisfaction from seeing the rich on the run and the luxurious hotels overrun."

Each of these elements we have studied—living conditions, religion, associations, the communication system, and police control—combine to form a description of what living under Castro meant. It now becomes possible to apply this description to our theoretical model and to see in which areas the two patterns

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75Szule, p. 27.
760'Shaughnessy, p. 354.
78Ibid.
correspond. For example, Friedrich and Brzezinski categorize a totalitarian regime as exercising a monopoly over the entire communication system of the society. In Cuba, we have found that independent facilities of the press, radio, television, and movie films did not exist. These media were subject to government control and government direction. Communications control in a totalitarian regime extends to the area of education, according to Friedrich and Brzezinski. Our study of Cuba corresponds to this description. The Cuban educational system was directed by the government. Included among educational goals in Cuba were plans to indoctrinate the population in Marxism-Leninism, the official ideology of the regime. This factor also fits the theoretical description of Friedrich and Brzezinski.

Hannah Arendt's work may be combined with that of Friedrich and Brzezinski in the area of describing totalitarian terror. These authors present a description of spy systems, arbitrary laws, and secret police as components of a totalitarian system. In Castro's Cuba, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution performed the function of spy organizations. The G2 was Cuba's secret police. The various laws, such as the Urban Reform Law, the labor laws, the ration books contributed to the police control of Cuba's population.

Feierabend and Ebenstein describe the totalitarian system as one in which autonomous organizations are non-existent. The study of Cuba revealed the destruction of pre-revolutionary groups and associations and their replacement by government controlled
organizations. We found that government interference in Cuba extended into the field of religion. However, in the case of Cuba, we did find a modification to complete government control. The Catholic Church, prevented from interfering in either politics or education, was permitted by the government to retain a certain measure of autonomy in operating its churches.

Therefore, we have been able to apply our theoretical model to the case study of Cuba and we have found a correspondence in the areas of a communications monopoly, police control, and the status of associations. However, in the case study of Cuba, we also discovered two elements which mildly affect the theoretical model. The existence of an armed citizenry or national militia coupled with the existence of armed opposition within Cuba to the government introduces a refinement to Friedrich and Brzezinski's description of a near-complete weapons monopoly. Although the regime did control highly technologically advanced weapons such as tanks, jet fighters, and field artillery, smaller weapons were possessed by non-government personnel. However, it must also be remembered that a citizen or a guerrilla fighter armed with a rifle cannot effectively combat a tank.

We may finally conclude that in the area of social conditions within Cuba, we were able to find definite totalitarian characteristics. But these characteristics must be diluted by the fact that within Cuba there existed a majority of citizens who actively supported the government, not out of fear but as a reaction to revolutionary programs which benefited them.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

The case study of Castro's Cuba during the years 1959 to 1961 has included a description of the Cuban revolution, the man who led this revolt, the political situation in Cuba, the Cuban economic system, and finally, social conditions in Cuba. It now becomes necessary to answer the key question with which this thesis is concerned. Was Castro's Cuba from 1959 to 1961 a totalitarian regime? Before we try to answer this question, we might restate the definition of a totalitarian regime as presented by Brzezinski.

Totalitarianism is a system in which technologically advanced instruments of political power are wielded without restraint by centralized leadership of an elite movement for the purpose of effecting a total social revolution, including the conditioning of man, on the basis of certain arbitrary ideological assumptions proclaimed by the leadership, in an atmosphere of coerced unanimity of the entire population.1

It is possible to take each component of this definition, coupled with the refinements of the original theoretical model presented in this thesis, and to apply these descriptions to the situation which existed in Cuba. For example, we may begin by utilizing the first component of the definition, "technologically

advanced instruments of political power."

This technologically advanced aspect of totalitarianism affects the areas of weapons, communication facilities, and economic facilities. In evaluating the weapon force available to the Castro regime, we must determine if this force can be categorized as being technologically advanced. The Cuban regime was very well equipped with modern weapons, including jet fighters, tanks, field artillery, anti-aircraft artillery, mortars, patrol vessels, and torpedo boats. In addition, the regime directed a militia and an army equipped with modern small arms. It was these modern weapons which enabled the Castro regime to crush the Bay of Pigs invasion in only seventy-two hours.² It may be definitely concluded that the Castro regime possessed technologically advanced, modern instruments of power to implement its political strength.

Brzezinski combined his work with Friedrich to further refine and develop the concept of technologically advanced weapons as applied to the totalitarian state. According to these authors, the totalitarian regime possesses a near-complete monopoly of all means of effective armed combat within the society. The case study of Cuba revealed two conditions within Castro's Cuba which must be considered in evaluating the regime's control of the forces of armed combat. Within Cuba was found evidence of effective armed opposition to the government. Also within Cuba was found an armed citizenry, members of the Cuban militia. These

²Wheeler, p. 17.
two conditions would appear to modify Brzezinski and Friedrich's description. Yet when one evaluates the weapons available to the guerrilla opposition and to the militia, it is still possible to maintain that the Castro regime possessed a near-complete weapons monopoly. It was the regime which possessed control of highly technologically advanced weapons such as tanks and jet fighters, instruments of power which far outshone small arms such as pistols and rifles.

Returning to Brzezinski's definition and continuing with the concept of technologically advanced instruments of political power, we find that technology is clearly evident in the area of communications. Therefore, we are now able to extend this particular concept to Friedrich and Brzezinski's description of the totalitarian state as one in which the regime possesses a near-complete monopoly of all effective media of mass communications. Our case study revealed that Cuba's modern communication facilities became instruments of the government used to transmit government-approved policies.

Finally, Brzezinski's utilization of technology is applicable to the area of economic production. As Friedrich and Brzezinski point out, the totalitarian regime exercises a central control and direction of the entire economy through a bureaucratic organization. The Case study of Cuba revealed that Cuba's industries were nationalized, labor organizations functioned as instruments of the government, and the flow of capital within the Cuban economic system was government-controlled through a nationalized banking
system. A national planning organ was established to formulate a complete economic blueprint. Yet, as our case study illustrated, the central control and direction of agricultural production was somewhat limited. A visit to INRA or a visit to the farm of one of Cuba's independent farmers would modify the concept of complete, centrally directed control. The most extensive planning organization, INRA, appeared to be staffed with dedicated but very unorganized young men. The small farmer of Cuba was still functioning in a limited capacity.

From the concept of technology, Braesinski's general definition next includes the component of political power which is "wielded without restraint by centralized leadership of an elite movement." This concept was further refined by Friedrich and Braesinski in their combined description of totalitarian centralized leadership categorized by a single party typically led by one man. The study of Cuba revealed the existence of a centralized leadership led by Fidel Castro and composed of his very loyal, tested lieutenants. The nature of this leadership evolved around the concept of the unlimited power of the líder máximo who dominated every facet of political power. This was leadership colored by Castro's magnetic personality coupled with the Cuban concept of the caudillo. The Cuban communist party's challenge to this leadership was effectively met. Castro remained the líder, dominating the government, the armed forces, and Cuba's newly organized single party. His power remained unlimited, subject neither to elections nor to the restraints of an independent
According to the third component of Brzezinski's definition, this leadership is motivated by the purpose of effecting a total social revolution. This description accurately fits the Castro regime. Under the leadership of Castro and his lieutenants, the existing economic, political, social, and military structures of pre-revolutionary Cuba were completely destroyed. They were replaced by revolutionary innovations which completely transformed Cuba. The upper classes of Cuba were robbed of their position of leadership. A right-wing conservative leadership elite was replaced by the left-wing radical revolutionaries. The false democratic front which formerly characterized Cuban political rule was destroyed, to be replaced by a communist regime. Dependence upon the United States was supplanted by a turn to the socialist camp. Finally, the capitalistic economic system was transformed into a socialist system implemented by centralized planning.\(^3\)

Brzezinski concludes his definition by stating that a totalitarian regime is characterized by programs designed to condition the society's citizens according to ideological formats proclaimed by the regime "in an atmosphere of coerced unanimity." The case study of Cuba revealed active government programs to condition the Cuban citizen. These programs were implemented through the government's monopoly of control over the entire judiciary.

\(^3\)Matthews, Return to Cuba, p. 3.
communications system. The press, radio, television, and movies became instruments of the government. The Cuban people heard and saw through these media only what the government allowed them to hear and see. The monopoly was extended to the field of education. This control was capped by the non-existence of completely autonomous associations in Cuba. Government-organized associations in revolutionary Cuba possessed the complete monopoly of organizational membership.

Brzezinski's reference to ideology is also applicable to Cuba, whose leader professed to be a follower of the philosophy he labeled as Marxism-Leninism. However, this was Marxism-Leninism Cuban style. This was a label which was applied to the method, to the means, or enacting revolutionary programs. This label placed Cuba among the communist bloc of nations. Yet the formalization process of the label was not completely effected in Cuba. One simply did not find the disciplined structure in Cuba which one finds in the older communist states. Each one of the men who played a significant role in the Cuban revolution, including Fidel, Raúl, and Che, had different ideas of what Marxism-Leninism meant. The Castro regime faced drastic economic, social, and political problems. Marxism-Leninism gave them a label to apply to their drastic programs of social reform.4 But the revolution was not yet completely institutionalized. Programs were still being formulated. The leaders needed a wide area in which to flex

4Ibid., p. 10.
their mental muscles. They were not ready to be completely
dominated by a scientific, systematic set of ideological rules. They were still experimenting, and this experimentation was led
by Fidel Castro, a man incapable of conforming to any set dogmatic
rules.5

Can the atmosphere in Cuba be described as one of "coerced
unanimity"? Do we find operational terror in Cuba as described
by Friedrich, Brzezinski, and Arendt in their theoretic presenta­
tions? The study of Cuba revealed the existence of spy systems
as implemented through the Committees for the Defense of the
Revolution. This case study also exposed the existence of a
secret police, the G2. Also, according to charges presented to
the Inter-American Commission, concentration camps existed in
Castro's Cuba. Included in reports presented to the Commission
were charges that the Castro regime subjected prisoners to psycho­
logical torture designed to destroy the dignity of the prisoner.
The description of arbitrary arrests and trial proceedings of
political prisoners as presented to the Commission is illustrative
of Ebenstein's characterization of the status of law within a
totalitarian regime--law which is always designed to strengthen
the government, not to protect the citizen. It may, therefore,
be concluded that the Castro regime did operate in an atmosphere
of coerced unanimity which allowed neither criticism nor open
opposition of government programs.

5 Ibid.
As these preceding paragraphs illustrate, the Castro regime did fit the theoretic definition of Brzezinski. The regime also corresponded to the six traits presented by both Friedrich and Brzezinski: an official ideology, a single party led by one man, terroristic police control, a centrally directed economy, a monopoly of control over the society's communication media, and a near-complete weapons monopoly.

Furthermore, correspondence to the theoretic model is further seen when we examine the work presented by Ebenstein. The Cuban legal system was illustrative of Ebenstein's description. An independent judiciary did not exist in revolutionary Cuba. The regime openly declared that the instruments of justice were tools of the regime. Cuba's legal codes were applied to maintain and protect the operating regime, not to defend the citizen's right against assault by the state. In addition, Castro's profession of directing a truly democratic government was illustrative of Ebenstein's description of the perversion of democratic terminology by totalitarian leaders. Castro maintained that his direct contact with the Cuban people through mass meetings was the purest form of operating democracy.

Feierabend's description of a totalitarian society as one which cannot tolerate pluralism corresponds generally to the situation in Cuba. However, the Catholic Church's operation of its religious functions within Castro's Cuba modifies Feierabend's description. As the case study illustrated, the Catholic Church was granted a limited degree of autonomy. Finally, Feierabend's
additional contribution concerning the isolationist and expansionist tendencies of totalitarian regimes is applicable to the Cuban situation. Castro's control of communications served to isolate the Cuban citizen from outside influences. His direct interference in the affairs of other Latin American countries and his expressed desire for revolution in Latin America modeled after the Cuban experience were certainly illustrative examples of expansionist tendencies.

Arendt's description of the existence of terror within the totalitarian regime is applicable to Cuba where the existence of spy systems, a secret police, arbitrary arrests, concentration camps, and the utilization of psychological terror was charged. Yet it must be remembered that a majority of Cubans supported Castro, not because of fear but because of his concrete programs for social improvement.

It may be concluded, finally, that the situation in Cuba from 1959 to 1964 does fit the theoretic model of a totalitarian regime. The basic characteristics were present in Cuba. However, in fairness to Castro and his lieutenants, the phrase "Cuba was governed by a totalitarian regime" must be modified. The words totalitarian regime are softened when one considers the benefits which such a regime brought to Cuba. For the first time in Cuban history, the people were governed for an extended time by a government which was extremely honest and by men who did not attempt to enrich their own pockets at the public expense. For the first time in Cuban history the children of the poor were fed, clothed, and
educated. No one in Cuba was hungry. Educational opportunities were available to everyone. Government programs were initiated to implement long-range plans to strengthen the country's economy. The young leaders made many economic mistakes. But, according to Herbert Matthews, they learned from these mistakes and their economic hopes appeared capable of bearing fruit.

The Castro regime initiated and directed a complete revolution—social, economic, and political. The revolution had at its base programs designed to improve conditions in Cuba, everything from constructing a concrete home for a peasant who had lived in a hut to increasing the gross national product. It is obvious that Castro chose to implement this revolution with totalitarian methods, but one should not lose sight of his revolutionary goals when evaluating these methods.
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