

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Peking and Moscow Si, Havana No

By Jack Anderson

President Nixon has rejected suggestions that he follow up his trips to Peking and Moscow with an overture to Havana.

He has no intention of seeking better relations with Fidel Castro as long as Cuba exports revolution to other Latin-American countries and Russia is permitted to use Cuban territory for military purposes.

There have been conflicting signals from Havana whether Castro is really interested in improving relations with the United States. Secret messages have been received in Washington suggesting he is eager to restore normal relations. These have been followed, almost invariably, by public attacks upon the United States.

Last fall, for example, Castro got word that the United States might soften its attitude toward Cuba. He hastily, if cautiously, flashed back the signal that he not only was receptive but that he might even be willing to use "traditional democratic procedures" to spread "socialist power" in Latin America.

Castro's message was repeated in the right places at the United Nations by his diplomatic-intelligence representative, Teofilo Acosta Rodriguez. The word quickly reached the Central Intelligence Agency, which sent a secret report, dated Dec. 8, to the White House.

Secret Message

"In the latter part of November, 1971," reported the CIA, "Teofilo Acosta Rodriguez . . . said that Fidel Castro, Cuban prime minister, had received a report before his departure for Chile that U.S. officials were considering a reversal of the U.S. hard-line policy toward Cuba.

"As a result, Havana had requested Cubans at the United Nations to check the report. Meanwhile, Castro had decided to mellow his tone on the United States during his Chilean trip.

"Acosta commented that there is some support in Cuba for the view that Cuba could benefit from improved cultural ties with the U.S., or some realistic adjustment of differences . . .

"Later in the conversation, Acosta said that Cuban leaders are doing some re-thinking on basic revolutionary tactics. There is some theoretical opposition to the 'Che Guevara' theory, which favors supporting native insurrectionists and anarchists in poor countries.

"Instead, support is growing for the Chilean formula, which maintains that traditional democratic procedures are the best means of socialist power in weak, backward countries."

As it happened, Castro got his signals crossed. He was wrong about the possibility that the United States might soften its line toward Havana. The blunt truth is that President Nixon isn't the least interested in an accommodation with Castro.

Those who watch Havana for the U.S. are convinced that Castro would jump at a genuine chance to normalize Cuban-American relations. He would like nothing better, they say, than to sit down as an equal with Mr. Nixon.

Castro's slashing attacks upon the U.S., they believe, are strictly defensive. He tries to appear intractable toward the United States, they say, because he is convinced the United States is intractable to-

ward him. He is particularly harsh upon Mr. Nixon, whose name is spelled in the party newspaper with a swastika in place of the "x."

These experts also believe Mr. Nixon has been influenced by his Cuban friends, such as Bebe Rebozo, to maintain a hard line toward Castro. The anti-Castro Cubans, who now live and vote in this country, are almost solidly behind Nixon.

Nixon's Cuban Policy

A White House aide assured us, however, that Mr. Nixon doesn't listen to Rebozo on Cuban policy. The aide said the President based his hard line on three factors:

1. U.S. policy toward Cuba isn't unilateral, but multilateral. The Organization of American States voted in 1962 to break diplomatic and commercial ties with Cuba. Until this is reversed, the U.S. will be bound by the OAS vote.

2. Russia uses Cuba as a base to refuel its submarines and for other military purposes. The argument has been made that this violates the Monroe Doctrine. Moscow also gives Cuba an estimated \$250 million a year in military aid, not to mention twice that amount in economic aid.

3. Cuba continues to provide arms, money and guerrilla

training to revolutionary movements throughout Latin America. There is evidence that Russia supports Cuba in spreading subversion.

In another secret report to the White House, for example, the CIA quoted a confidential source as revealing "that the Soviets asked Fidel Castro to try to regain control of Latin American revolutionary movements and to develop closer relations with Latin American communist parties and their leaders . . ."

The source quoted a Cuban intelligence officer, Enrique Benavides, as saying "that Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin had promised to provide financial aid to Castro's efforts to regain control over these movements. . . ."

"Benavides said that through Cuba the Soviets will support armed revolution or political struggle, whichever was deemed appropriate, in given countries throughout Latin America. According to Benavides, the Soviets have told Cuba they will 'pay for everything' in helping all revolutionary groups, even Catholic radical groups.

"Benavides strongly emphasized that Cuba has not changed its line but still favors armed revolution everywhere in Latin America."

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