

Cubans Disillusioned with Castro

By BILL STUCKEY

Fidel Castro's admission that he is a "Marxist-Leninist" has had unexpected repercussions inside Cuba itself.

This is the picture described here by one refugee, the former owner of an insecticide factory, who fled Cuba last week:

A vast number of Cubans who were prepared to support Fidel to the bitter end have turned against him since the "Marxist-Leninist" declaration, the refugee said. Many who supported Fidel the Personality are now disillusioned with Fidel the Communist.

This class of Cuban was particularly "slow to wake up to the fact that Fidel is a Red," he said. The ones who woke up earlier have long since fled the country, have been imprisoned or executed.

The refugee, who withheld his name for fear of retaliation against relatives still in Cuba, said he overheard these expressions of discontent in conversation after conversation in Havana during the past month.

"FIDEL WOULD STILL BE FIGHTING in the mountains if the people had known this earlier," he said.

"Now, every Cuban I know who is still there is praying for a U.S. invasion — anything to set them free," he said.

The people have also learned a lesson from the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion last year, he said. At that time Castro successfully avoided the possibility of internal rebellion by arresting thousands of suspected anti-Communists and anti-Fidelistas (the refugee, who himself was imprisoned said most Cuban laymen now estimated the number of arrested persons at 300,000).

But if there is another invasion, the people will quickly "run from their houses and hide from the police," he said.

"Cubans before Castro did not really understand what freedom was," said the refugee. "Now they know. Freedom is the opportunity to send your children to any school you want, to teach them anything you want, to go to any church at any time, to be able to change jobs or go where you want to go, to speak your mind. Today, the government even tells the people what their hobbies will be."

THE FIRST SPANISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER here in over a quarter of a century is scheduled to make its appearance today. A weekly, it will be known as "El Tiempo de Nueva Orleans" (the New Orleans Times).

"El Tiempo" was founded by Angel Cueva, a local freight forwarder who, before he came to the U.S. 10 years ago, was a member of the Congress of Ecuador, a holder of several high governmental and political party offices, a lawyer — and last but not least, a political writer for two Ecuadorean newspapers.

Through the newspaper, Cueva hopes to draw more local Latins into city political and civic affairs, generally kept tab on Latin Americans here (estimated at anywhere from 20,000 to 30,000 persons), improve understanding between the U.S. and Latin America, and boost the port of New Orleans.

ORLEANS LEVEE BOARD PRESIDENT Gerald J. Gallinhouse launched a trial balloon into the Latin stratosphere recently when he suggested that the headquarters of the Organization of American States be moved from Washington to New Orleans.

To that, OAS ambassador Chep Morrison, also with balloon in hand, ventured a counter suggestion to the States-Item.

Moving the entire OAS apparatus here might prove too costly and generally difficult. Most of the OAS Latin ambassadors would prefer to remain in Washington where they could be close to the U.S. ambassadors from their countries, he said.

Morrison said, however, he might propose relocating some agencies which are concerned with Pan-American affairs.

Such agencies might include the Pan-American highway commission, the Economic Council of the Americas now in Chile, the Pan-American judicial commission now in Mexico, the OAS agricultural research institute in Costa Rica and bureaus concerned with Pan-American cultural affairs, he said.

Incidentally, said Morrison, Miami is trying to do exactly this.

ANOTHER LOUISIANA POLITICIAN, Gov. Jimmie H. Davis, showed signs of going Latin recently when he said he would create a state international relations commission. Although the commission would presumably seek to increase trade between Louisiana and all parts of the world, the heavy emphasis would be on Latin America, judging from his speech.

The governor's press secretary said this thought was behind the proposal:

Most businessmen who now export to the Latins are in the state's three major port cities. The commission would try to get manufacturers and businessmen from the high-and-dry hinterlands to participate also.

Activities of the commission would probably include sponsoring seminars throughout the state, pointing out how the Latin trade could bring higher profits to specific local industries, trade missions and a promotional and advertising program aimed at Latin America.