

Cuba Seems the Gainer In Reds' Clash at Havana

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Cuba appears to have emerged as the only clear gainer from the Havana conference of African, Asian, and Latin American leftists that recently ended, U.S. analysts here believe.

About 450 delegates from some 70 countries attended the Jan. 3-15 meeting. Most were political leaders opposing the regimes in power in their countries. Communists dominated the meeting, but many of the delegates were non-communist leftists.

The conference, as expected, was to a considerable extent a tug-of-war between the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking factions of the International Communist movement. U.S. analysts are unable as yet to indicate which side came out ahead.

But experts have little doubt that Cuba, playing a crafty game, did benefit.

At the outset the Soviet Union is believed to have exerted great pressure on Premier Fidel Castro to give up once and for all his publicly neutral position in the Moscow-Peking struggle and commit himself to the Soviet side.

Castro in effect did this when he announced that Red China had reneged on an agreement to provide Cuba with a specified quantity of rice. Peking angrily replied it had made no such agreement. Castro is then seen as having indirectly attacked the Chinese by castigating "Trotskyites" for charging that the Cuban regime got rid of former Industries Minister Che Guevara because he was pro-Chinese.

Guevara has been inexplicably missing for several months.

Castro made a further concession to Moscow, on whom he is entirely dependent for his economic survival, when he attacked Marco Antonio Yon Sosa, who has for years led a communist guerrilla movement in Guatemala. Sosa

has refused to integrate his forces with a guerrilla group led by pro-Soviet elements.

Some U.S. officials say that if Castro appeared to cut the Chinese bridge behind him, he compensated for this loss of bargaining power in his relations with the Soviet Union by encouraging the conference delegates to support Chinese-style activist revolutionary tactics in the underdeveloped world.

Pariadoxically, he thus found himself in the same boat with the minority of pro-Peking delegates who, though ideologically removed from the less dogmatic Castro, were also pushing for hard-line tactics.

Even the chief Soviet delegate, S. R. Rashidov, supported such a line, possibly to prevent a conference split, despite Moscow's previous emphasis on nonviolent infiltration and subversion of governments.

Thus, a "liberation committee" to help finance violent revolutionary movements throughout the world was set up, with the Soviet Union as a member.

Castro, as a result, is seen by experts as having obtained worldwide communist support for his views on revolutionary tactics, support he can use to counter Soviet influence — even while divorcing himself from Red China in line with Soviet desires.

An appraisal of Chinese gains at the conference must await indications of the extent to which the hard line will actually prevail in the underdeveloped world.

But specialists here say the Soviets might come out ahead. They cite the establishment of a permanent Tri-Continental Organization as seen as a victory for Moscow, since inclusion of generally pro-Moscow Latin American groups in conferences of underdeveloped nations is likely to strengthen Soviet influence.