

\$150,000 to \$200,000—but the step was symbolic. On June 3, a United States note accused Castro of conducting a "campaign of slander." Havana "categorically" rejected the note. On June 15, Cuba ordered two U. S. Embassy aides to leave the island because of contacts with counterrevolutionaries. On June 17, the United States retaliated by ejecting two Cuban diplomats. On June 22, Castro threatened to counter any action on sugar with total confiscation of American property. Four days later, the House of Agriculture Committee, under heavy pressure, approved a bill giving the President the power to fix the Cuban quota.

By cruel coincidence, this coincided with a crisis in Cuba concerning foreign-owned oil refineries. On May 23, United States and British oil companies in Cuba were ordered to refine Soviet crude oil, purchased to save the regime dollars and to forestall payment on some \$60 million owed the oil companies for past deliveries. Immediately after the House Agriculture Committee's action on the sugar bill, Castro seized the Texaco plant in Santiago for refusal to refine Soviet oil. He said defiantly, "We will take and take until not even the nails of their shoes are left...." By the end of June, Castro had seized the last two foreign-owned oil companies because of their refusal to refine Soviet oil.

In Congress, tumult prevailed. The legislators were impatient to recess for the political conventions and the President was reportedly furious at the prospect that there would be no final action on the sugar bill. Intense Administration pressure was applied as the two houses of Congress stayed in all-night session on the sugar bill. Emotions were frayed, and the political process was at its worst. Republicans and Democrats solemnly accused each other of being "soft" on Castro, and amid scenes of near pandemonium, the sugar bill was virtually written on the floor, in haste and in anger. When it was over, the bill that emerged gave the President discretionary power to reallocate the Cuban sugar quota—but the law also made mandatory the provisions of a windfall bonus to Dictator Rafael Trujillo's Dominican Republic. Castro propagandists could have asked for little more; subsequently, the Administration had to return to Congress to obtain authority to deprive the Trujillo regime of its slice of the Cuban bonanza.

On July 5, President Eisenhower signed the sugar bill and immediately withdrew virtually all of the Cuban sugar quota for the balance of 1960. Then came a curious anticlimax.

As the President's advisers of the State Department and the Treasury Department met with Secretary of State Herter to discuss the draft of a new hemisphere and plan to be presented at a forthcoming economic conference in Bogota. Press Secretary James Hargett said that the plan had no direct relation to the Cuban controversy and as yet had no name. Shortly thereafter, the Administration asked Congress, during its rump session in August, to authorize a \$500,000,000 contribution to a hemisphere-development fund.

The timing and circumstance of the birth of what was to become the Act of Bogotá were ineffable. After years of delay, the United States seemed to take initiative on a massive aid program for Latin America only after relations with Cuba had plumbed the nadir. It did not help that the announcement came almost directly from the golf links ("The President," the Associated Press reported, "was in a jovial mood on the first full day of his vacation. He got 18 holes of golf after his arrival . . . and was on the golf course again by 9:30 this morning.") Cynical Latin Americans immediately dubbed the \$500,000,000 aid program the "Fidel Castro Plan," and responded with the remark "Gracias, Fidel."

While all this was going on, in the distant jungle of Africa a new country was born—the Congo—and a man named Patrice Lumumba was making headlines. The U-2 debacle, the crumbled summit in Paris, the riots in Japan, Cuba, and the Congo—that summer was not one to remember.

### III

Indulging in the luxury of retrospective judgment, an observer can easily discern how a distracted and defensive country was led to strike back blindly at a taunting leader of a tiny nation. From today's vantage it is easier to see that the timing of Washington's moves was deplorable and the substance of its action questionable.

With a calmer country, the United States might have taken a different, more defensible, tack. Instead of suspending the quota, it could have set aside the premium payment of 2 cents over the world market price per pound of sugar, putting the money into an internationally administered fund. This fund could have been used to compensate expropriated land owners, with the understanding

that Cuba would regain the bonus when an honest attempt was made to meet legitimate American grievances. This would have meant that Cuba could have remained within the United States market. It would have averted the charge of economic warfare because Cuba would then be getting the same price for her sugar as other foreign producers not favored with the bonus arrangement.

Significantly, State Department officials were urging this approach, but the pressures were intense for a bludgeon method and President Eisenhower was too susceptible to the temptation to reach for a driver instead of a putter more suitable to avoiding the sand trap on a difficult tee. The result of Washington's tantrum reflex was to fix in the minds of many Latin Americans the stereotype of a brave young rebel who was being punished for trying to exercise sovereignty and carry out a needed social reform. Latin Americans ruefully noted that there would have been no talk about "betrayal" if Castro had sold out his revolution to the United Fruit Company or the First National Bank of Boston.

Concerning the timing, Ralph Winnet summarized the case in an article in the *New Republic*:

If we were secretly bent on glorifying Castro we could do it by adhering to a few simple rules: 1. Arrange the timing of all punitive measures so that they follow the confiscation of American property—especially oil property. 2. Proceed on the assumption that Latin Americans will naturally side with the United States. If this does not happen, evince hurt and surprise. 3. While United States owners are smarting from financial losses in Cuba, issue warnings against a Communist beachhead there....

This formula was applied effectively to Mexico. On July 7, in the midst of the sugar fight, the spokesman for Mexico's dominant party in Congress, Emilio Sánchez Piedras, expressed sympathy for Cuba. The next day, the State Department summoned Mexico's Ambassador in Washington to explain what was meant by the speech. President Eisenhower himself was said to have called from Newport to ask about the matter.

According to Gerry Rohichaud, the Chicago *Daily News'* correspondent in Mexico City, there was "deep and lingering resentment" over the summoning of the Ambassador.

"Their attitude," Rohichaud wrote, "is that the United States would be fit to be tied if foreign governments kept calling in United States ambassadors to explain the hostile remarks by United States Congressmen."

The incident, although trivial, suggests the pre-Castro attitude in Washington to Latin America. Not the least of the lessons administered by Castro to the United States is that a little tact and self-restraint, as well as pride, becomes the richest fellow on the block.

#### IV

Meanwhile, the Democrats and Republicans had nominated their presidential candidates—and in Miami, the Central Intelligence Agency was busy forming an army and recruiting a new government for Cuba. The details of the CIA operation will be set forth shortly; suffice it to say at this point that neither Vice President Nixon nor Senator Kennedy were wholly unaware of the CIA's efforts. Knowledge of this lends a revealing retrospective dimension to what both men said during the campaign.

In one respect, Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kennedy were evenly matched. Neither knew a great deal about Cuba or Latin America; both had to depend on the counsel of interested persons. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that the candidates were guided chiefly by the vicissitudes of the campaign, and less by inner conviction, in handling the Cuban nettle.

As regards Cuba, the campaign can be divided into two phases. The first phase, lasting until mid-October, was one of relative restraint and careful statement; in the second phase, the rivals reached for any available stick. Perhaps the best statement of their views in the initial phase came in a response to a questionnaire submitted by the Scripps-Howard chain. Question No. 4 was, "How would you meet the Cuban problem?" Mr. Nixon replied in part on September 23:

I believe the United States should continue to work within the framework of the Organization of American States regarding the Cuban problem, or any other which threatens the security of this hemisphere. We must recognize that there is no quick or easy solution to the threat raised by Castro in carrying out his extremist revolutionary policies and in his apparent desire to align Cuba with the Communist bloc... In a nutshell, however, our policy toward Cuba

1968 to Ch. D. W. 14th, not in my hand govern more. None.

should be governed by two basic guidelines. For one thing, we should undertake to meet the problem in concert with our sister republics of Latin America. For another, we must put the world on notice that under no circumstances will we tolerate Communist intervention in the Western hemisphere.

We must realize that the use of force toward Cuba or any other sister republic is bound to reawaken Latin American fears of this nation as an aggressive colonial power. This would inevitably damage our own prestige and work to the advantage of the Communists and other anti-American forces in the Americas....

There are grounds for hoping that if given the opportunity and the time, the people of Cuba will find their own way back to freedom and the democratic institutions which Castro has denied them. We must give them that opportunity.

To the same question, Mr. Kennedy replied:

I would have treated Cuba very differently during the last years of the Batista regime—when the serious errors of judgment and omission were made. Our relationship to Cuba is only one aspect of the much larger problem of our relationship to all the nations of Latin America....

If we can help create the conditions in Latin America under which freedom can flourish, then Castro and his government will soon be isolated from the rest of the Americas—and the desire of the Cuban people for freedom will ultimately bring Communist rule to an end....

Meanwhile, we must use the full powers of the Organization of American States to prevent Castro from interfering with other Latin American governments, and to return freedom to Cuba. We must make clear our intention not to let the Soviet Union turn Cuba into its base in the Caribbean, and our intention to enforce the Monroe doctrine.... And we must let the Cuban people know that we are sympathetic with their legitimate economic aspirations, that we are aware of their love for freedom, and that we will not be content until democracy is returned to Cuba. The forces fighting for freedom in exile and in the mountains of Cuba should be sustained and assisted, and

communism in other countries must be confined and not permitted to spread.

These considered words summed up the views both men espoused during September. But Democratic orators began to report that no issue drew as much emotional response as Cuba, and the Republicans began to press for some action that would signify that the United States was "doing" something about Castro.

At the same time, the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee released a report charging that Cuba "was handed to Castro and the Communists by a combination of Americans in the same way China was handed to the Communists." The report released on September 10 was based largely on the testimony of two disgruntled political appointees who had been ambassadors to Cuba, Earl E. T. Smith and Arthur Gardner. Despite its protests, the State Department was not allowed to rebut the testimony offered by the disgruntled amateur diplomats. To Democrats, still smarting from the charges by the Republicans that Mr. Truman had "lost" China, the temptation was too strong to rub in the parallel—if not in the crude words of the Senate Subcommittee then at least by innuendo.

Kennedy began hammering on the Cuban theme over and over again. In a major speech on October 6 in Cincinnati on Latin America, he blamed the Eisenhower Administration for allowing Cuba to become "communism's first Caribbean base." At the same moment he criticized the Administration for supporting the Batista dictatorship. Mr. Kennedy approvingly noted that ambassadors Gardner and Smith had warned "that communism was a moving force in the Castro leadership," but that the Administration had failed to heed their advice.

Mr. Nixon rose to the bait. In an October 18 address before the American Legion convention in Miami Beach, the Vice President said that "this Communist-Cuban regime" had become an "intolerable cancer" and that the time was now at hand "when patience is no longer a virtue." Added Mr. Nixon: "I say that our goal must be to quarantine the Castro regime. A number of steps can be taken to do this and are planned."

The next day, the Administration announced that it had imposed a sweeping embargo on United States trade with Cuba. The action was accurately interpreted as an election move to help out Nixon. Ambassador Bonsal was also recalled to Washington for consultation. The same day—

October 19—the Cuban delegation at the United Nations notified the General Assembly that Havana expected “a large-scale invasion” to be mounted in the next few days with the support of United States military forces. It was the first time that the Castro regime formally charged the United States military with taking part directly in hostile operations against Cuba.

In New York, Mr. Kennedy struck back, asserting that the embargo was “too little and too late” and that it followed an “incredible history of blunder, inaction, retreat and failure.” “For six years before Castro came to power,” the Senator said, “the Republicans did absolutely nothing to stop the rise of communism in Cuba. Our Ambassadors repeatedly warned the Republicans of mounting danger. But the warning was ignored....” The Democratic candidate went on to urge more stringent sanctions and that the United States attempt “to strengthen the non-Batista Democratic forces in exile and in Cuba itself....”

On October 22, in Allentown, Pennsylvania, Nixon accused Kennedy of advancing a “shockingly reckless” proposal that could set off World War III. He said that the “fantastic recommendation” for directly aiding the anti-Castro forces would, if not withdrawn, amount “to a direct invitation for the Soviet Union to intervene militarily on the side of Cuba.”

The record should note that at this point Mr. Nixon was already giving his approval in private to the CIA operation in Miami.

## V

The sharpest exposition of the second, frenetic phase of the Cuban debate came in the October 21 television encounter between the two rivals, the last of the four “Great Debates.” This was the exchange that centered on islands—Quemoy, Matsu and Cuba.

Mr. Kennedy led off with his version of Cuban events, firing each sentence like a loaded howitzer shell:

I look at Cuba, ninety miles off the coast of the United States. In 1957, I was in Havana. I talked to the American Ambassador there. He said he was the second most powerful man in Cuba and yet even though Ambassador Smith and Ambassador Gardner, both Republican Ambassadors, both warned of Castro, the Marxist influences around Castro, both of them

have testified in the last six weeks that in spite of their warnings to the American government, nothing was done.

Our security depends on Latin America. Can any American looking at the situation in Latin America, feel contented with what's happening today, when a candidate for the presidency of Brazil feels it necessary to call, not on Washington during the campaign, but on Castro in Havana, in order to pick up the support of Castro supporters in Brazil?

Mr. Nixon replied in tones of earnest indignation:

Our policies are very different. I think that Senator Kennedy's policies and recommendations for the handling of the Castro regime are probably the most dangerously irresponsible recommendations that he's made during the course of the campaign. In effect, what Senator Kennedy recommends is that the United States government should give help to the exiles and to those within Cuba who support the Castro regime, provided they are anti-Batista.

Now let's see what this means. We have five treaties with Latin America, including the one setting up the Organization of American States in Bogotà in 1948, in which we've agreed not to intervene in the internal affairs of any other American country, and they as well have agreed to do likewise.

The Charter of the United Nations, its preamble, Article I and Article II, provide that there shall be no intervention by one nation in the internal affairs of another. Now I don't know what Senator Kennedy suggests when he says that we should help those who oppose the Castro regime both in Cuba and without. But I do know that if we were to follow that recommendation that we would lose all of our friends in Latin America, we would probably be condemned in the United Nations, and we would not accomplish our objective. I know something else. It would be an open invitation for Mr. Khrushchev to come in, to come into Latin America and to engage us in what would be a civil war and possibly even worse than that.

This is the major recommendation that he's made. Now what can we do? We can do what we did with Guatemala. There was a Communist dictator that we

inherited from the previous Administration. We quarantined Mr. Arbenz. The result was that the Guatemalan people themselves eventually rose up and they threw him out.

We are quarantining Mr. Castro today. We are quarantining him diplomatically by bringing back our Ambassador, economically by cutting off trade—and Senator Kennedy's suggestion that the trade we cut off is not significant is just 100 per cent wrong. We are cutting off the significant items that the Cuban regime needs in order to survive.

By cutting off trade, by cutting off our diplomatic relations, as we have, we will quarantine this regime so that the people of Cuba themselves will take care of Mr. Castro. But for us to do what Mr. Kennedy has suggested would bring results which I knew he would not want and certainly which the American people would not want.

In his spirited polemic manner, Mr. Kennedy had the last word:

Mr. Nixon shows himself misinformed. He surely must be aware that most of the equipment and arms and resources for Castro came from the United States, flowed out of Florida and other parts of the United States to Castro in the mountains. There isn't any doubt about that, number one.

Number two, I believe that if any economic sanctions against Latin America are going to be successful, they have to be multilateral, they have to include the other countries of Latin America. The very minute effect of the action which has taken place this week on Cuba's economy, I believe Castro can replace those markets very easily through Latin America, through Europe, and through Eastern Europe. If the United States had a stronger prestige and influence in Latin America, it could persuade, as Franklin Roosevelt did in 1940, the countries of Latin America to join in an economic quarantine of Cuba. That's the only way you can bring economic pressure on the Castro regime and also on the countries of Western Europe, Canada, Japan and the others.

Number three, Castro is only the beginning of our difficulties throughout Latin America. The big struggle will be to prevent the influence of Castro spreading to other countries—Mexico, Panama, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia.

Mr. Nixon's argument that the quarantine is necessary to prevent the spread of Communism is a rather life if we're going to prevent a crisis and force from spreading throughout all Latin America. His influence is strong enough to prevent us from getting the other countries of Latin America to join with us in economic quarantine.

His influence is growing mostly because this Administration has ignored Latin America. You yourself said, Mr. Vice President, a month ago, that if we had provided the kind of economic aid five years ago that we are now providing, we might never have had Castro. Why didn't we?

The words deserve to be quoted in full because they surely marked the campaign's low in political humbug. The arguments of both men were shot through with the kind of sugared simplicities that politicians feel the American people like to hear.

In Mr. Nixon's case, his outrage over Kennedy's suggestion on aiding Cuban refugees came with ill-grace from a politician who was privately supporting the same course. His use of Guatemala as an example of how to handle Castro undercut the force of his moralistic position on nonintervention. Not all of Mr. Nixon's listeners were wholly ignorant of the CIA's reputed role in the Guatemala coup.

As for Senator Kennedy, his argument seemed a curious blend of Chester Bowles and Senator Thomas J. Dodd, mentor of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. On the one hand, he condemned the Eisenhower Administration for its support of Batista—but on the other hand, he quoted, when it suited his purposes, the testimony of two ambassadors to Cuba who were the most notorious symbols of the pro-Batista leanings of the United States. Of Latin America, Mr. Kennedy spoke in accents of Bowlesian uplift, but regarding Cuba his essential policy was one that ultraconservatives could applaud.

George Sokolsky, a Nestor of the hard right, commented on October 31 that, concerning Cuba, Kennedy "has been on the right side throughout. He has been speaking in the voice of American history much closer to the spirit of Theodore Roosevelt than Franklin D. Roosevelt. He is closer to the nationalist attitude of the Republican Party than to the internationalism of the Eisenhower Administration. Certainly this country must carry a big stick

or we shall become the laughing-stock of the Western world which watches little Cuba mock and twit the great United States that does not know what to do."

## VI

Cuba, in the meantime, was acquiring new friends. On July 9, three days after Cuba's sugar quota was lopped off, Mr. Khrushchev spoke at a meeting of schoolteachers in Moscow. "We shall do everything to support Cuba in her struggle," Premier Khrushchev volunteered, adding that the Soviet Union had the rocket power capable of hitting the United States if the "Pentagon dare start an intervention." A few days later, the Soviet Premier went on to say that the Monroe Doctrine was dead. "The only thing left to do with the Monroe Doctrine," he jibed, "is to bury it, just as you bury anything dead, so it will not poison the air."

All this came on the eve of a foreign ministers' meeting in San José, Costa Rica, at which the United States tried vainly to get its neighbors to condemn Cuba by name. "What does it matter to us if the Organization of American States condemns us?" Castro asked on August 7, announcing at the same time plans to seize \$913 million in United States property—virtually all remaining American investment in Cuba. His cockiness was enchanted by Soviet support (even though Mr. Khrushchev noted, on October 28, that his rocket threat was merely "symbolic").

On September 18, Castro returned to the United States to bait the eagle in its own nest. By this time, Castro had achieved one of his ambitions. He had become a world figure. He descended on the United Nations like a tribal chieftain arriving at a pow-wow of equals. There was swagger, style and limitless audacity in every move he made. If the competition of such rival chieftains as Nehru, Sukarno, Tito, Nkrumah and Nasser troubled him, he never showed it. Only Mr. Khrushchev, by banging his shoe and braying from his seat, managed to keep pace with Fidel.

The effect of all this on his American hosts was a process that Jean-Paul Sartre has termed "involution"—the process whereby civilized states fall victim of the same mores as their taunting, less civilized opponents. Castro came spoiling for trouble, like a cocky jet invading another juvenile gang's sacred preserve. The State Department reported that it could not find a hotel to house the Cuban delegation, and great pressure was applied on a midtown establishment to accept the unwanted guests.

When Castro had his exit started the hotel then had already made arrangements to move to Harlem. Presumably after an attempted betwixt him, Castro's marauders stalked out of the midtown hotel, leaving behind a litter of cigar butts, chicken feathers, uncooked steaks and towels profaned with shoeshine stains. Castro got the headlines he wanted when he picked his party into the Theresa Hotel in the heart of Harlem.

Speaking at the United Nations, Castro took a modest four and one half hours to present his case; some of his speech was spellbinding and eloquent, but his most memorable remark was that both Kennedy and Nixon "lack political brains"—an aside that earned him a reprimand from the chair. During his visit, he physically embraced Khrushchev, while his regime in Havana was completing the diplomatic embrace by recognizing Red China and North Korea. However, Premier Khrushchev remarked privately to Prime Minister Nehru that he felt Castro was a "romantic."

Castro's exit matched his entrance. His Cuban plane was seized at the airport by creditors, and the "Maximum Leader" had to fly home in a jet loaned by the Russians, leaving 31 Cubans stranded at the airport, luggage and all. It took a court order to release the official Cuban plane. Once back in Havana, Castro called Kennedy and Nixon "cowardly hypocrites" and joked that Mr. Khrushchev would get more votes than either if he stayed in America for six months. The Russian, he explained, was "a genial individual with great energy and a peppery disposition," while the American candidates were two "ignorant, beardless kids... puppets who are toys of the big interests."

The war of words had reached the point where a different kind of war seemed inevitable. By October 14, the entire sugar industry was nationalized and at the month's end there was little left to seize of any American property.

Again, the word "invasion" was heard. As November began, the Cubans were before the United Nations formally charging that a United States-backed invasion was imminent. The American delegate indignantly dismissed the charge as "monstrous distortions and downright falsehoods." Similar rejoinders met a series of other Cuban charges that a hostile buildup was supported by the CIA and the Pentagon.

On New Year's Day, 1961, the third anniversary of the

Cuban revolution, the Security Council was meeting to hear Cuban complaints about armed groups and mercenaries preparing to attack Cuba. A day later, Castro ordered all but eleven of 300 persons on the United States Embassy staff in Havana to leave their jobs or the island within 48 hours. On January 4, 1961, President Eisenhower broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Thus, as Kennedy was preparing to take over the presidency, Cuban-American relations had touched bottom. And the American people were about to hear strange rumors about what was going on in Miami, where busy CIA men were following Vice President Nixon's lead in treating Cuba as if it were another Guatemala.

## CHAPTER FIVE



### OUR MEN IN MIAMI

Generals fight the last war and economists solve the last depression, the maxim instructs us. It might now be added that intelligence agencies conspire against yesterday's revolutions. In the case of the CIA, the Guatemala coup provided the model for the plans to eject Mr. Castro.

Indeed, what may be called a Guatemala complex dominated the thoughts of both adversaries for opposite reasons: to the CIA it was the promise that a facile, earlier success could be repeated in Cuba with relative ease; to Castro it was the mounting threat that a Guatemala-style operation would be set in motion against him. While CIA officials privately assured the Eisenhower, and then the Kennedy, administrations that Cuba *would* become another Guatemala, Castro began warning publicly as early as March 1960 that his country *would not* be a Guatemala. The very aspect of this weird controversy over the proposed Guatemalization of Cuba was that the principal base for the CIA-Cuban rebel enterprise was precisely the territory of Guatemala.

From the outset, the CIA seems to have been beguiled by a false analogy. Because the agency succeeded in July 1954 in engineering the overthrow of Guatemala's President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, a Communist sympathizer, with the help of a ragged band of rebels gathered

across the border to Honduras and led by a former army officer and basketball instructor of comfortably rightist political persuasion, it jumped to the conclusion that the same techniques could be used against Castro in Cuba. Yet, to think of a Cuban operation in 1960 in terms of Guatemala in 1954 was as far-fetched as invading Hitler-held Europe with the contingent used to silence the guns of Navarone. If this is an exaggeration of the difference in military problems, it is difficult to exaggerate the enormous political differences that the "black operators" apparently overlooked.

Guatemala under Arbenz was still a chaotic, hit-or-miss experiment in Marxist or communist revolution in Latin America. Arbenz, whose leadership qualities did not even remotely approach Castro's, never established the degree of control over his country that the Cuban "Maximum Leader" had gained by 1960. An energetic American ambassador, the late John Puerfloy, was at battle station in Guatemala, busily coordinating the rebellion from within. Unlike Castro, whose army and militia were being rapidly equipped by the Soviet bloc, Arbenz commanded ill-equipped, disorganized and not particularly loyal forces. Whereas Castro had some problems in controlling an anarchic-minded militia, he nevertheless enjoyed the advantages of insulation, while Guatemala had a largely unguarded frontier with Honduras. Finally and no less important, the Guatemalan experiment had not evoked the kind of political and emotional response throughout Latin America that was awakened by the Castro revolution.

The last point needs to be underlined, because even though the Arbenz regime scarcely electrified Latin America, the ill-concealed United States involvement in the Guatemalan rebellion had the effect of reviving the resentment over past Yankee intervention in the hemisphere. Latin America quickly became the arena for anti-United States demonstrations that the communists, otherwise still ineffective, were able to exploit. There was profound indignation among some of Washington's best friends, men like the respected Chilean middle-of-the-road leader Eduardo Frei Montalvo of the Social Christian Party, who led a protest march on the American embassy in Santiago.

The sour aftertaste was intensified when Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, the new President and erstwhile CIA protégé, proffered Guatemala a blend of autocracy, corruption, scandals and general miasma. Some of the positive reforms of the Arbenz regime were quickly undone,

and even the State Department was dismayed by the ineptness of the man whom the United States helped put in power to replace a burgeoning procommunist dictator.

When Vice-President Nixon visited Buenos Aires in May 1958—few had then heard of Castro—he busily defended the United States from the charges made by Argentine students that Washington was behind the Guatemalan affair. But the impact of Guatemala apparently failed to register on Mr. Nixon. In 1960, after trying for six years to assuage Latin American feelings about Guatemala, the Eisenhower Administration made plans for a duplication of the same undertaking on so vast a scale that concealment of United States complicity would be impossible.

## II

A powerful case can be made for employing clandestine "dirty tricks" to eliminate the foci of communist infection in Latin America. Castro agents themselves carry suitcases of "dirty tricks" in seeking to export the revolution; the battle is not very "clean" on either side. But this is an argument that has not been settled at the Bay of Pigs and that will be elaborated in the conclusion.

But the corollary to accepting this argument must be the requirement that any such operations be conducted with a degree of sophistication. There must be an understanding of the nature of the adversary, his strengths and weaknesses, his ideological posture and his political style. Once the chinks have been detected, the proper wedges ought to be found to drive the leader and his followers apart. The tendency toward preconceptions must be averted and an over-all policy developed to meet the realities of the problem at hand. It goes without saying that a clandestine operation can be no better than the men who conceive and carry it out! In retrospect, one wishes that the British intelligence services had loaned political advisers to our men in Miami when they were trying to glue together an anti-Castro movement and were tripping over each other like hapless extras in an Alec Guinness film.

From the beginning, the CIA operatives took such a sanguine view of their ability to topple Castro that they were as much concerned with establishing the character of the successor regime. Thus, in a process in which one step led insensibly to another, the CIA wound up by virtue of its day-to-day decision—making powers as a kind of independent

and State Department operating not in embryo but in parity  
Miami Hotel Lodges.

Taken together, the net result of a hundred separate decisions was to commit the United States to a counterrevolution acceptable even to those most anxious to restore the pre-Castro status quo. In Washington, CIA higher-ups denied that this was the coloration of the agency's operation, but in Miami it seemed that the CIA plenipotentiaries equated American interest with supporting the more conservative exiles who avoided talk about social revolution, land reform and other unpleasant topics.

In conformity with their preconception that Cuba was another Guatemala, the CIA operatives cast about for a potential Castillo Armas. They began subsidizing political organizations that they felt could be manipulated by the CIA. And as an inevitable consequence, the ubiquitous agents looked unkindly on other leaders and movements that failed to agree. Step by step, this led to an active undercutting of rival groups—ultimately this led to the failure to give effective support to a growing guerrilla and underground movement in Cuba. It also reflected an attitude of hostility to left-of-center exile groups by second-rate field operatives. This in turn affected the top level of the agency and resulted in a lack of understanding at the top. It is not clear to what extent the CIA attitude was ideologically motivated or was simply a response based on the agents' view of what was "practical" or "realistic."

## III

The story begins in March 1960, when President Eisenhower first gave the CIA permission to organize the Cuban exiles into an armed force. Initially, there was no talk about a massive, one-shot invasion; instead the operation was reportedly sold in part as a contingency plan. The Cubans were available in Miami; they wanted to fight. Why not give them some training? Conditions in Cuba were uncertain, and anything could happen to Castro. Since no regular army forces existed in Cuba, it could be vitally helpful to have a well-trained, well-disciplined cadre ready to move in.

In over-all command of the undertaking was Allen W. Dulles, the tweedy, pipe-smoking director of the CIA. Mr. Dulles had served in two world wars and under six presidents. During most of the Eisenhower Administration, his brother was Secretary of State, and his agency had become increasingly involved in handling political operations



with only the slightest supervision. Mr. Dulles presided over the general outlines of the Cuban venture, but day-to-day responsibility was vested with Richard M. Bissell Jr., one of Dulles' three deputies. Bissell, a tall, dignified economist and one-time Marshall Plan official, was known for his scholarly discourse and for his success in developing the U-2 flights, an ingenious innovation that paid off handsomely until there was one flight too many. Both men had wide experience in intelligence work, but neither was ever deeply involved in Latin America—their backgrounds in intelligence and politics was mostly in Europe—and therefore neither had extended contact with the very special psychological conditions prevailing elsewhere in this hemisphere. And neither had ever commanded troops.

The actual handling of the Cuban problem in Washington was assigned to a retired army colonel in charge of the CIA's Latin American division, and then to his successor, also a former colonel, who had business experience in Latin America. It is not clear what the military command structure was in Washington and who actually bossed it.

The Miami manager for the project was a Central European (reportedly an Austrian) who had fought with French *Maquis* during World War II, who had contacts with the Office of Strategic Services and who then became an American citizen and an operative in the CIA, successor to the wartime OSS. He chose the cover name of Frank Bender, and this name was to become closely and publicly associated with the entire operation as it progressed from its strange inception to its tragic end.

This man Bender also had the disadvantage of knowing little about Cuba or Latin America, but those drawbacks, which included his inability to speak Spanish, were compensated by immense energy, monumental self-assurance and a commanding manner that succeeded in impressing a great many Cubans with whom he came in contact. He also had a curious habit of referring to himself in the third person singular when speaking to other people, with the result that his orders communicated directly to his Cuban associates included remarks like, "Bender wants this done or that done."

But perhaps the most important fact about Bender was his penchant for yes-men and his consequent favoritism toward those Cuban exiles who believed that there was nothing wrong in Cuba that a good counterrevolution wouldn't cure by turning the clock back. That Bender's orientation was at variance with those of two adminis-

trated under which he worked was a fundamental factor that the entire project had proceeded without a hitch that contributed to the disaster. His superior in Washington gave Bender unusual discretionary power and took his word for much that went on during the months of the invasion's gestation.

In Cuba, the CIA worked mostly out of Havana and Guantanamo Naval Base. In Havana, the principal operative was well attuned to the realities of the Cuban revolution and the shifting nuances of sentiment that were so important to know in judging the reaction of the island if and when an attack came. Unlike many CIA "country chiefs" in Latin America, this agent had considerable insight into hemisphere politics, based on experience. But it is not clear that his views carried any appreciable weight with his superiors and colleagues.

With rare exceptions, the dramatic personae, both in Cuba and in Bender's ensemble, lacked any apparent background for evaluating what was happening on the island. One eminent exile leader tells of a conversation with a CIA operative in which the Cuban mentioned Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the Peruvian reformer who is as well known in Latin America as Hubert Humphrey is in the United States. "Oh," said our man in Miami brightly, "you mean the Brazilian labor leader."

It is a paradox that when the Soviet Union, Communist China and the satellite countries send agents and technicians to Latin America, the visitors invariably come speaking excellent Spanish and possessing a sound knowledge of Latin American affairs. Coming from the other side of the world, they possess training that was in melancholy shortage among American agents assigned to derail a revolution on an island only ninety miles from Florida.

This lack of background—springing partly from a general neglect of Latin America—accounted for part of the trouble. An added ingredient was the predisposition of many agents to measure reliability by the loudness with which a Cuban denounced Castro and communism. Thus in the eyes of key CIA operatives, former Batista officers were simply anticommunists who were more ardent about opposing the rascal who humiliated their army. This evaluation was swallowed uncritically by higher-ups in Washington. But to many Cubans the distinction between "good" and "bad" Batista officers did not exist.

The final point is mechanical. The CIA men were not only shaping, in effect, foreign policy, but were exempt from any meaningful outside checks on their activities. In-

deed, they were in the enviable position of both organizing a clandestine operation and preparing the intelligence data through which the validity of the venture could be judged. A Secretary of State has to cope with Congress, the press and informed opinion; the CIA men worked in the dark, with the only check being the outraged protests of Cubans whose complaints were often dismissed as "exile talk."

#### IV

It was under these less than felicitous auspices that the intense planning for counter attack began. The political framework was provided by the signing of a "unity pact" among the main exile groups in Miami. This came about in the last days of May with the establishment of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (*Frente Revolucionario Democrático*), which carefully excluded any persons connected with the Batista dictatorship.

At this time the exile community in Miami was predominantly composed of the first waves of refugees, who left because they were tied up with Batista, and a second wave that departed the first drastic reform measures taken by the Castro regime. In the circumstances, the five-man directorate of the Front was composed of probably the best men available at the time, although none had a name to conjure with in Castro's Cuba. This directorate conformed to the conception of what both the State Department and the CIA felt such an exile group should look like.

The five were Manuel Antonio de Varona, an honest, earnest, but unexciting former premier who had served in the government of President Carlos Prío Socarrás (the man Batista overthrew in 1952) and who was leader of the venerable *Auténtico* Party; Captain Manuel Artime, the young chief of the exile section of the Movement of Revolutionary Recovery (MRR); Dr. Justo Carrillo Hernández, an able and highly esteemed leader of the anti-Batista "Montecristi" group, who had served as president of one of the government banks in the early days of the Castro revolution; Aureliano Sánchez Arango, a life-long revolutionary who had been foreign minister in one of Prío's cabinets; and José Ignacio Rasco, a courageous young man who had led the small Christian Democratic Party in Cuba.

Among the five, only Artime could claim an important connection with a significant underground group in Cuba—and even this distinction would not last long. Varona was the exiled leader of the small *Rescate* (Rescue) group

see the article by Senator Arango had a limited role, were among university students through his old Tropic Air Corp. Carrillo's friends were intellectuals rather than activists. Rasco's function was of little effective importance inside Cuba, although many of his people later distinguished themselves in underground work.

The "unity" of the front was a polite fiction; no sooner had the pact been signed than it was followed by the swirling dissension that typifies rootless exile politics. Glowering at the outer periphery were the well-connected and well-heeled Batistiano groups, such as the organization of former Senator Rolando Maserfer, whose private army of "Tigers" had helped the Batista forces terrorize Oriente Province.

From the outset, an unhealthy dependence on the CIA characterized the Front. The agency operatives provided it with a headquarters building on Miami's Biscayne Boulevard, and another office in Coral Gables, paying the salaries of many of its officials and investing money in its newspapers and propaganda activities. Thus the Cuban leaders lost their independence of voice and action. This was the saddest aspect of the entire production: that many honorable Cuban exiles allowed themselves to become an appendage of a government agency.

By late spring, the military plans began to take form. The original idea was to create a compact striking force of about 500 who could be used as infiltrators, guerrillas, and even as a landing brigade.

The decision was made not to train any forces in the United States because the risks of discovery would give away the Guatemala-style pretense that no American help was involved. Early in June, the choice fell—appropriately—on Guatemala. Fortunately, President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes had broken relations with Cuba a few weeks earlier—and aptly, one reason for the break was that Cubans were accused of plotting an invasion of Guatemala. Rounding out the family affair, the name of Colonel Arbenz, who had just gone to live in Havana, figured prominently in the Guatemalan charges.

Ydigoras was sounded out as to whether he would allow the use of Guatemalan territory as a training base for the rebel force. "Tony" Varona, the Front's best-known leader, conferred twice with President Ydigoras. Agreement was swiftly achieved and Dr. Varona relayed to the CIA the news that Ydigoras was receptive.

Under the agreements, the United States was to provide