

Cuba On Our Mind

by Tad Szulc

*Like the gnat in the ear of the ox, Cuba plagues America with a mighty pesteration.
Except, of course, in Miami*

In November, 1961, seven months after the fiasco of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, President John F. Kennedy invited me to the Oval Office at the White House for a private conversation about future United States policies toward Premier Fidel Castro. I had covered the April invasion from Miami as a correspondent for *The New York Times* and I had been highly critical in print of the whole enterprise. Now, the President said, he would welcome some constructive ideas. We chatted for a while about Cuba, then Kennedy leaned forward in his rocking chair and hurled a question at me:

"What would you think if I ordered Castro to be assassinated?"

I believe this is a virtually verbatim quotation of his words (one doesn't make notes at a private meeting with the President) and I remember being completely taken aback. I also recall blurting out a long sentence to the effect that I was against political assassination as a matter of principle and that, anyway, I doubted this would solve the Cuban problem for the U.S.

Kennedy leaned back in his chair, smiled, and said that he had been testing me because he was under great pressure from advisers in the Intelligence community (whom he did not name) to have Castro killed, but that he himself violently opposed it on the grounds that for moral reasons the United States should never be party to political assassinations. "I'm glad you feel the same way," he said.

This is the first time I am publicly recounting this conversation (the only other person present in the Oval Office was Richard N. Goodwin, then a Presidential assistant) because it stands out in my mind as an extraordinary example of the obsessive frustration and involvements with Cuba and Cubans that for well over a decade have permeated the United States government on the most senior levels. Nothing quite comparable has ever occurred between Americans and any other nation, near or far. The powerful United States and the little island ninety miles from home in the blue Caribbean have never been able to let go of each other. They have been set together as if in a Greek tragedy in which doom always seems impending.

To be sure, Kennedy vetoed the Castro assassination idea in 1961 after having taken full responsibility in April for the Bay of Pigs invasion. I cannot say to what extent he knew, that November, about a scheme elaborated by Military Intelligence officers soon after the Bay of Pigs (and of which I was vaguely aware at the time) to kill Castro and his brother Raúl, the Deputy Premier and Defense Minister, using Cuban

marksmen who were to be infiltrated into Cuba from the United States Naval base at Guantanamo on the island's southeastern coast. Perhaps this is what he had in mind when he talked to me.

Hearing Kennedy's rejection of assassination plots proposed to him by the Washington Intelligence community, I naturally assumed that no such thing would ever happen. In fact the Eisenhower Administration turned down in 1960 the recommendation of a C.I.A. operative to kill Castro.

But as I was to learn much later, the Central Intelligence Agency, presumably acting with President Lyndon Johnson's authority (unless it was another do-it-yourself undertaking), set in motion in late 1964 and 1965 a new secret plan to combine Castro's assassination with a second invasion of the island by Cuban exiles from bases located this time in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Some infiltrators were to be trained in the Dominican Republic. (Guatemala had been the site of training in 1960 and 1961.)

The new invasion was to be on a smaller scale than the Bay of Pigs. The scenario was to bring ashore some 750 armed Cubans at the crucial moment when Castro would be dead and inevitable chaos had developed. It was an incredibly wild scheme because the resolution of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, which brought the U.S. and the Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear confrontation, was based in part on Washington's commitment to let Castro be.

The existence of the assassination plot, hatched by the C.I.A. in Paris and Madrid, was disclosed by the Cuban government in March, 1966, after the designated gunman—a bearded Cuban physician and former Cuban Revolutionary Army major named Rolando Cubela—was arrested in Havana following investigations by Castro's counterintelligence agents, who had become suspicious of him.

Actually, the whole assassination-invasion plan had to be canceled when a rebellion unexpectedly erupted in the Dominican Republic in April, 1965, and President Johnson, fearful of "another Cuba," sent U.S. troops to invade that country. The Cuban scheme could not be pursued, and Cubela and his associates were left high and dry in Havana to be finally captured in February, 1966, along with a small arsenal of weapons, including an FAL automatic rifle equipped with telescopic sights and a silencer provided by the C.I.A. for Castro's planned assassination. Cubela was sentenced to death, but Castro commuted the sentence to a lengthy prison term.

Cuban revelations in 1966 about the Cubela plot had

little international impact at the time. But, to the best of my knowledge, the plans for the simultaneous second invasion—known by the code name of “Second Naval Guerrilla”—have never been publicly revealed. I doubt that even Castro had learned much about them inasmuch as Cubela’s knowledge was apparently confined only to his end of the broader plan.

The Central American camps were disbanded late in May, 1965, when the Dominican crisis convinced Washington that this was not a propitious time for a new Cuban adventure. Besides, we were already deeply involved in Vietnam. The blueprints for the “Second Naval Guerrilla” were probably quietly filed away in the archives of the C.I.A.’s clandestine-operations division. My information, based on recent interviews with men who participated in this project, is that during a period of about six months in 1964 and 1965, the C.I.A. disbursed \$750,000 monthly for the operation and that some \$2,000,000 in these funds remains unaccounted for. Subsequently, there were mysterious shoot-outs and deaths among Miami Cubans involved in the still-born invasion.

Also in 1964, idle Cuban pilots, veterans of the Bay of Pigs, were sent to the Congo by the C.I.A. as mercenaries to fly B-26 bombers on combat missions for the U.S.-backed Congolese government then fighting a leftist rebellion. The Cubans, under contract to CARAMAR (a C.I.A. dummy corporation whose initials stood for Caribbean Marine Aero Corporation), complained at the time that they were ordered to strafe and bomb villages and civilians. Nowadays, some of these pilots are in serious trouble with the law in Florida. One of them is serving an eleven-year prison sentence in Miami for traffic in cocaine and others are said to have acquired nasty criminal records. Another one has been recently charged with a killing in Miami.

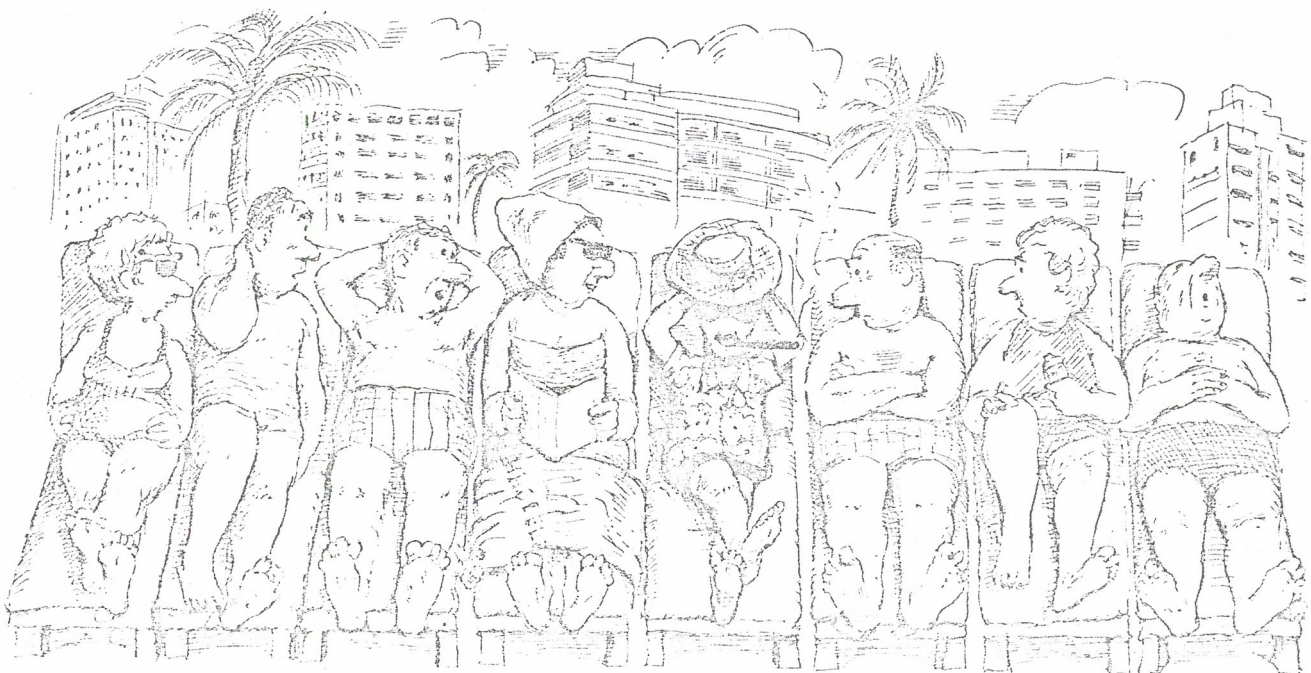
And, of course, the whole tortured story has continued. We find that the same cast of characters, ranging from gung-ho Florida C.I.A. operatives to gullible or corruptible Miami Cubans and Cuban-Americans, reappeared on the scene in 1971 and 1972 as key personages in the Watergate affair. They were picked from the pool of naïvely patriotic, restless and un-

stable Cubans who are the heritage left by the C.I.A. in Miami.

In almost every case there was the irrepressible presence of the C.I.A. veteran E. Howard Hunt Jr., the political coordinator of the Bay of Pigs under the *nom de guerre* of “Eduardo” and the man who first recommended Castro’s murder in 1960 and then helped to plan the 1965 assassination; James W. McCord Jr., associated with the 1961 invasion, the second landing operation, and the use of Cuban pilots in the Congo; and Bernard L. Barker (code name: “Macho”), who was Hunt’s aide in 1961, and his teams of Cuban exiles first recruited for combat on Cuba’s beaches and later for dirty work in the Watergate scandals. Eugenio Martinez, one of the Watergate raiders, was still on a C.I.A. retainer when the break-in occurred. Barker and his Miami commandos claimed Hunt had assured them that subversion against the Nixon Administration’s opponents and the President’s reelection would hasten the “liberation” of Cuba from Castro’s rule.

Cuba shed Spain’s rule in 1898, but independence came only after U.S. forces landed on the island, Teddy Roosevelt charged San Juan Hill and Americans, in effect, took over the country. For all practical purposes the island was governed by a series of American proconsuls inasmuch as the so-called 1903 Platt Amendment to the Cuban constitution gave the U.S. the right to intervene in Cuba’s internal affairs. United States corporations, such as the United Fruit Company, were free to acquire thousands of hectares of land for sugar plantations. The Cuban elite educated its children at U.S. colleges and universities, producing generations of Cubans whose allegiances were mixed, to say the least, and whose principal interest was not to rock the boat so that money could keep coming in.

Havana flourished as the playground for wealthy Americans and tourists in general. It had spectacular nightclubs, splendid casinos, famous bordellos and every form of street prostitution and vice a visitor’s heart could desire. Cuba was not a country to be taken seriously and the U.S. acted accordingly. When one thought of Cuba, what came to mind was the rumba



and Xavier Cugat. The power centers there were the American Embassy, the offices of American sugar and mining companies, the American Club on Havana's Prado avenue, the American-owned sugar-plantation principalities stretching from Oriente Province to Las Villas. In the West, Americans owned the tobacco fields from whence came the leaf for the famous Cuban cigars.

To the all-powerful Americans, these were the "good old days" in Cuba, and it was crystal clear, certainly to me, that Castro harbored no illusions that the U.S. would accept his revolution. During 1959, I had two nightlong discussions with him and he kept insisting that the "Yankees," his favorite word for Americans, would try to suffocate his revolution. He had visited Washington in April and met, of all people, with Nixon. But the trip only increased his suspicions. He resented, he told me, the pressure on him in Washington to enter negotiations for economic aid. "The Yankees just want to make me into another grateful recipient of aid," he said and laughed explosively. "But we don't need their aid."

If the C.I.A. or others in the American government conspired militarily, covertly and diplomatically for well over a decade to destroy the Cuban revolution and its ideology, Castro, too, held strong views about politics and ideologies in the U.S. During my second stay in Cuba, in mid-1961, we spent several hours at a table in the bar of Havana's Riviera Hotel discussing American youth. Whatever else may be said of Castro, he must be credited, I think, with remarkable political insights and instinct not only about his own people but about Americans as well. The long decades of intimacy, bizarre as it was, between Cuba and the U.S. inevitably helped Castro, a highly intuitive man, to develop his insights about us.

Two things are bound to happen in the United States, Castro was telling me as he toyed with his brandy glass and chomped on a long, unlit cigar. The first one would be major uprisings by blacks. The second event would be a violent radicalization of the American youth. All this, Castro said, was historically predictable. And he made no secret of his desire to be as helpful as possible in these causes without, he added ironically, "violating the sovereignty" of the U.S. He was, of course, proved right in the space of only a few years as black riots and rebellions did, in fact, occur and as the new American generation did become radicalized to an even greater degree than he had predicted. And Castro also did some helping.

In the area of black unrest and search for consciousness, the Cuban influence was at best marginal—if even that. Radio Havana broadcast a daily *Radio Free Dixie* program in English for about a year around 1964 denouncing "Mr. Whitey" and suchlike. Castro played host for a while to Robert Williams and Eldridge Cleaver during the Sixties, but he made sure that they never got out of hand. Cleaver, as a matter of fact, felt imprisoned in Havana: he was always under surveillance and the Cubans kept him politically on a very short leash. As far as I can tell, *Radio Free Dixie* had virtually no impact on black militants at home who had no need for inspiration from abroad.

On the other hand, Castro and the Cuban revolution were significant elements in the American youth radicalization between the mid-Sixties and the early Seventies. Castro and Che Guevara became cult heroes on American campuses—the white youth *did* need inspirational leadership—and the whole Cuban experience played an important role in this process of politicization. "Liberation Fronts" for every conceivable cause

mushroomed all over the country in an imitation of Cuban revolutionary tactics, young men grew beards and sported fatigues and black berets to be "like Fidel," and every self-respecting young revolutionary knew all about Sierra Maestra, how the guerrillas defeated Batista, imposed a land reform and expelled the predatory American business interests. Castro was helpful in all this restlessness to the extent of inviting—but very selectively—young Americans to visit his island. Over the years, several thousands came as part of "Venceremos Brigades" (from the Castro slogan, *Venceremos*, We Shall Win) to cut sugarcane, harvest vegetables and be exposed to a reasonable amount of anti-imperialist propaganda.

Quite incredibly, the U.S. government took these voyages with extraordinary concern, almost equal to Castro's own concern with the infiltration of C.I.A. agents into Cuba. Because the high point of American students' trips to Cuba coincided with a wave of violence and bombings in this country, the immediate conclusion was that the young men and women had been receiving guerrilla training from the Cubans. In the eyes of quite a few top law-enforcement officers, little Cuba suddenly appeared as a subversive threat to the stability of the United States. Although a number of apprehended bomb-throwers had been among those who visited Cuba (as well as some of those still being sought by the F.B.I.), no hard evidence was ever developed to link their activities at home with any guerrilla training in Cuba. For one thing, I suppose, Castro had more sense than to provide the U.S. with an excuse to retaliate.

I do believe, however, that our domestic bombers were *inspired* by the Cuban revolutionary experience, which is something else altogether. Testimony in the Watergate hearings brought out admissions from Nixon Administration witnesses that the violence between 1969 and 1971 had convinced law-enforcement agencies that foreign powers, including Cuba, were behind it and that a conspiracy was afoot to subvert the United States.

The next steps were the "plumbers" and then Watergate. There was testimony that fears had developed that Castro was secretly financing the McGovern campaign—absurd as the idea would have been from both Castro's and McGovern's viewpoints—and word was spread that the South Dakotan would make peace with Fidel if he were elected to replace Nixon. In this incredible vicious circle involving Cuban and American destinies, Cuban adventurers in Miami were recruited for subversive operations at home against what some people in power here wanted to see as a threat, partly coming from Cuba, to the survival of American institutions.

Last July, I went to Miami to reacquaint myself with the city and the people I knew so well, in 1961 and afterward, in the midst of the feverish atmosphere of anti-Castro conspiracies, secret raids and guerrilla planning. This time, I discovered, the exiles had come to terms with themselves and their lot, having set up households and businesses and sent their children to American schools. They no longer really expect to return to Cuba (except, possibly, to die at home) despite a residual slight hope that Castro may yet go away, after all. Young Cubans act and think American, have made the psychological transition to the American environment.

There still are tiny terrorist groups pledged to forms of anti-Castro warfare and periodically they bomb Cuban exhibits and study centers in the U.S. and

Canada. In March, 1973, for instance, a bomb exploded in the New York offices of the Center for Cuban Studies, a library specializing in materials on revolutionary Cuba. Late in July, another bomb went off in a Times Square building where Expo Cuba, an exhibition marking the twentieth anniversary of Castro's first uprising, was being put together.

In general, however, the Miami Cubans tend to their own lives and, in fact, I found the community quite disturbed by Watergate because it seemed to give all Cubans a bad name.

In checking bank records, I discovered that the Miami Watergate Defendants Relief Fund had managed to collect only about \$5,000 by the end of March for the four imprisoned Miami-based raiders (there were no collections for McCord, the fifth raider, because his home is in suburban Washington and he is free on bail) notwithstanding the affluence of the community. "We don't want any part of it," a Cuban businessman who once fought against Castro told me in disgust. The tiny Miami fund, then, was in wild contrast with the \$350,000 the White House secretly delivered to the convicted conspirators (including Hunt, McCord and G. Gordon Liddy), their families and attorneys. In fact, there are reasons to suspect that most of the \$5,000 actually came from Washington and that the fund itself was a cover-up dummy operation.

In the Summer of 1973, Cuban Miami was as tranquil and placid as any Latin community ever is anywhere. Cubans, as other Latins, believe in the importance of human sound around them. Cuban Miami's thematic sound, therefore, is the steady high-decibel hum of Spanish conversations in the streets, homes, stores, restaurants and bars, supplemented by the background effect of Spanish-language radio and television broadcasts coming from sets turned up to maximum volume. Huge billboards all over town show a Cuban family (typically large) and the lettering proclaims that "We all listen to Cubanísima," which is the name of one of the community broadcasting stations. And, indeed, they do.

When Cubans first began establishing themselves in Miami after the Castro take-over, people talked, a bit

patronizingly, about the "Little Havana" the refugees set up in the city's inexpensive Southwest area. It was a little quaint and a little amusing, what with Spanish-language signs sprouting everywhere and the Cubans starting little restaurants to serve *arroz con frijoles*, roasted piglets, enormous Cuban sandwiches and other gastronomic specialties from the island.

Today, however, nobody in Miami is patronizing about the Cubans. They are an important force in the area and they are the leaders of the steadily growing Latin community in Florida. The Cubans alone, some 350,000 of them, now represent one quarter of the total population of Dade County. Then, too, there are approximately 50,000 legal residents from Puerto Rico and from a number of Latin-American countries (Colombians are the biggest group) and an estimated 75,000 "illegals," that is, Latins without official authorization to live in the U.S. With about 20,000 Latin-American visitors at all times in Miami, it is assumed that the total Spanish-speaking population of Dade is around one half million.

"Little Havana" of the early Sixties has grown into a Cuban city covering six hundred solid blocks of Cubans living around fifteen streets and forty avenues in the Southwest. But, in recent years, they have spilled out of the Southwest into most other Miami areas, from Coral Gables to Miami Beach, and as far north as Hialeah where industry offers Cubans attractive jobs.

Nearly fifteen years after Castro's advent to power in Cuba, the exiled Cubans have built an extraordinarily affluent community. The measure of this success is that now only 35,000 Miami Cubans, about ten percent of the refugees there, still require U.S. assistance. Of this number on welfare, 22,000 are aged persons and the balance are under general assistance programs. This is probably a better performance than any other group in the country can claim. Consequently, the Cuban Refugee Program, administered by H.E.W., has begun to phase out, aiming at complete termination in less than four years.

What the Cuban refugees have created in Florida is a hardworking, middle-class society. There are Cuban physicians and bankers, (Continued on page 170)



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CUBA ON OUR MIND

(Continued from page 92) builders and land developers, cigar makers, bar and restaurant owners, publishers and owners of every conceivable business, from gas stations to real-estate offices. Thousands upon thousands of Cubans are in the service sector as car salesmen, waiters, car parkers, food handlers, store clerks and office workers. Because Cubans are aggressive, generally well-educated and willing to work at anything (in the beginning thousands of them gladly accepted substandard wages), they have to an important extent displaced Florida blacks from better jobs. Curiously, however, I could find no marked tension between the Cuban and black communities.

An important fact to bear in mind is that the Cubans moved into something of a vacuum when they began invading Miami late in 1959. Prior to their appearance on the scene, Miami tended to be essentially a rather indolent pasture town for retired elderly people from the North, and a winter resort. Aside from blacks, much of the city's population was, in a term still used, white "crackers" from neighboring Georgia who did quite well for themselves, virtually free of competitive pressures. The pressure came from the Cubans, hungry for work, resilient, imaginative and, in a great many cases, equipped with considerable skills and experience in a variety of fields. What they did, then, was to energize the whole city. Their presence has created close to 100,000 new jobs in the area.

Lip service is paid, of course, to the anti-Castro cause and there is, inevitably, plenty of nostalgia. The song *Cuando Salí de Cuba* ("When I Left Cuba"), which was written by an exiled Cuban, is a wistful, melodious remembrance of the island in the sun, and it is played over and over by Cuban disc jockeys and in thousands of Cuban homes. It is nostalgia that makes the Miami Cubans such a close-knit community and helps them to maintain their identity, socially and culturally. The men go on wearing Cuban *guayaberos*, the white embroidered long-sleeve shirts, traditionally the uniform of the Cuban middle-class male (Havana never required ties and jackets), which are now manufactured in Florida or imported from Yucatán, in Mexico. The family structure is unchanged: the woman still serves the man. Family ties and old friendships are kept alive. Everybody seems to belong to a Cuban social club. People help each other with jobs and loans.

But it is entirely wrong to believe, as some outsiders do, that Miami Cubans really expect, plan or hope to return to Cuba if and when Castro falls. From innumerable conversations I had in Miami, I am convinced that the vast majority of Cubans would stay just where they are—no matter what happens in Havana. They never had it so good.

There is a multiplicity of reasons for this wholly pragmatic attitude. The first and overwhelming reason is that there simply is no room for them in Cuba—and certainly not to enjoy the living

standards they now have in the U.S. Between 1930 and 1973, Cuba's population jumped from six to eight million, without counting, of course, the half million or so Cubans who fled the country over the years. The related second reason is that very few people in Miami are prepared after so many years to give up the comfortable lives they have built in exile for the uncertainties and inadequacies of existence "back home" even if Fidel is gone.

And this, naturally, makes sense. Fifteen or more years of exile is a very long time in one's life, and not many Cubans are prepared to start life for a third time. A very large number of them are middle-aged, or older, and they lack the stamina to launch upon new careers. The young ones, who were children when their parents ran away from Cuba, are too American-oriented. About 45,000 Cubans in Florida have become American citizens. This includes children who are naturalized along with their parents. By 1980, one half of all Miami Cubans will be Americans. And there are tens of thousands of children born in the U.S. certain to regard themselves as Americans and belonging to the American culture. Those not likely to become citizens are elderly Cubans who have not mastered the English language sufficiently to meet naturalization requirements.

A normalization in relations between Cuba and the United States is unlikely to send Miami Cubans returning home in droves. If nothing else, they would fear possible repression (many were involved at different times in anti-Castro activities). And very few of the prosperous exiles would choose to live under Castro's tropical brand of socialism.

In any event, the likelihood that relations will be normalized in the foreseeable future is quite remote. Neither Washington nor Havana desires it. The U.S. view, inherited from past administrations and certain to persist at least during the Nixon incumbency, is that Castro must first sever his military ties with the Soviet Union and commit himself not to encourage radicalism in Latin America. He has made it abundantly clear that he does not propose to do either. As far as Miami Cubans are concerned, however, the question is no longer *whether* but *when* relations will be resumed even though they realize the present obstacles to normalization. They are practical people.

"If Castro falls or if relations are established, lots of the folks may go back to see their families or spend a vacation," a well-informed businessman told me. "But I doubt whether more than a tiny percentage would pack up and go to live again in Cuba."

Another Cuban, a man who came penniless in 1961 and now owns a thriving industrial plant on Miami's outskirts, told me that "I may open a branch of my business in Havana if things change, but don't expect me to give up what I have here. This is where I belong."

The Americanization of Miami Cubans was explosively demonstrated in January when the Dolphins beat the Washington Redskins in the Super Bowl.

Thousands of them poured out in the streets to celebrate the victory of the home team—to the Cubans the Dolphins *are* the home team—with shouts, honking of car horns and firecrackers. It was as if the Havana Sugar Kings had won the baseball World Series in the old days. The Americans in Miami were much more restrained over the Dolphins' preeminence.

During my last visit to Miami, I was invited to a surprise party celebrating the twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of a very popular Cuban couple in the Southwest. It was a classic Cuban party: the food was Cuban, the chatter was loud and insouciant, there were abrazos around the room, and, according to Cuban custom, even tiny children were on hand. I got into conversation with a spry octogenarian who first came to the U.S. in 1908, worked from Atlanta to Salt Lake City and Baltimore, then retired to Cuba just before the revolution. Now he was back, in splendid form, full of reminiscences and proud talk about his two physician sons practicing at Miami hospitals. One of them, with whom, rather improbably, I discussed kidney transplants, is a highly regarded urologist. The atmosphere was relaxed and happy and I didn't hear a single person discussing Castro's imminent fall, something that was part of almost every Miami conversation in the Sixties. Now, people spoke of Manuel Rebozo (so named because of Manuel Rebozo, the first Cuban-born U.S. citizen to be appointed a Commissioner of the City of Miami, and other Cubans who did well.

I wish I could report that this Miami success story is about to end the tragic embrace, decades old, between the U.S. and Cuba. Certain facts, however, continue to keep alive the bizarre relations between Americans and Cubans. On the top level, there is the intimate friendship between Nixon and Bebe Rebozo who are next-door neighbors in the heavily guarded Florida White House complex on Key Biscayne. Before his election, Nixon participated with Rebozo in several joint real-estate ventures which netted considerable profit to the President. There are new indications that Nixon, who was one of the first depositors in Rebozo's Key Biscayne Bank, may have had more recent and complex financial dealings with Bebe with an enormous potential of embarrassment for the President. Last August, the Internal Revenue Service subpoenaed Rebozo's personal and bank records to determine whether any campaign contributions had been "laundered" by him. Investigators in Washington then discovered that Rebozo had kept \$100,000 in secret campaign contributions from Howard Hughes, the billionaire, for the last three years, inexplicably returning the money in 1973. A third member of the Key Biscayne inner sanctum is Robert H. Abplanalp, the Yonkers multimillionaire (the inventor of the aerosol valve) whose private island in the Bahamas is Nixon's favorite vacation spot. He is a director of Rebozo's bank and the two men secretly joined forces after 1969 to finance

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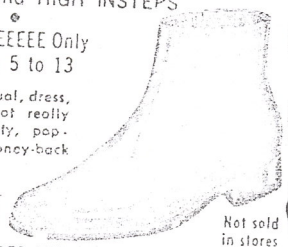
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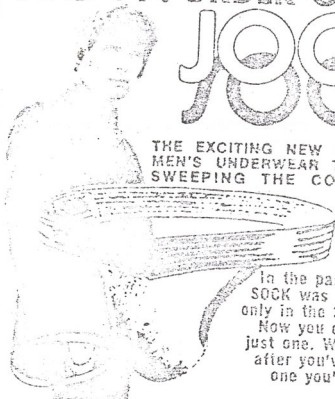
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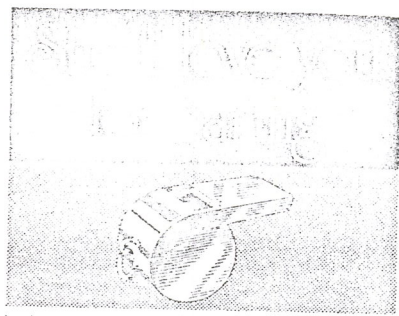
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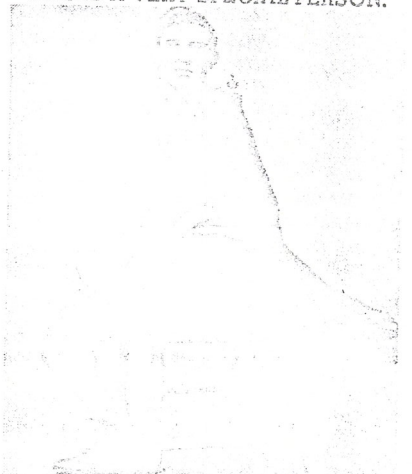
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John Merrick, the grossly deformed "Elephant Man", was deserted by his heartless manager. Befriended by a kindly doctor, Merrick became quite famous and was frequently visited by Royalty.

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Coming Up in March Esquire

If you are in your twenties or thirties, married, single, or simply living with somebody, you may regard kids as:

- a pain in the neck
- a threat to your freedom
- an economic burden you can live without
- a commitment to permanence you're not ready to make.

On the other hand, though, you may regard having children as your only shot at immortality, and besides, for as long as you can remember people have been telling you to marry and reproduce. So the question is:

Are kids worth having?

Next month, *Esquire* devotes most of its issue to the issue of kids.

- **GARRY WILLS** talks to parents and potential parents, seeking to find out if intelligent Americans are beginning to hate kids.
- *Esquire* once and for all adds up all the expenses and tells you what it really costs to raise a kid in the style to which you are accustomed. Hint: it runs into six figures.
- **JAMES SIMON KUNEN** profiles the man who developed a cure for acne, just so his own kids could grow up blemish-free.
- **RICHARD JOSEPH** offers advice on how to travel without kids and **JOSEPH BISHOP**, a distinguished professor of law, tells how you might disown your kids entirely.
- **DOTSON RADER** reflects on Andy Warhol as a father figure.
- And there are pictures of the Super Kids of America, great reasons why maybe you *should* have children, as well as great new fiction.

Do Americans suddenly hate kids?

Some answers coming up in *Esquire*.

Plus: *Esquire's* twenty-four-page Spring-Summer Fashion Spectacular!

the purchase of Nixon's San Clemente estate in California.

Rebozo, who was born in Tampa, remains generally aloof from the Miami Cuban community, but **Edgardo Buttari** is a prominent Miamian through whom Rebozo has done business with Cubans. Buttari, a recently naturalized U.S. citizen, was named by Nixon to serve on an advisory council on opportunities for Spanish-speaking Americans and holds a well-paying job in H.E.W.'s Cuban Refugee Center in Miami. Rebozo was one of the witnesses signing Buttari's naturalization papers. Buttari's close friend and occasional business partner is, in turn, **Manuel Artime**, who commanded the ill-fated Brigade in the 1961 invasion and was involved with Hunt in the abortive 1965 operation.

Artime, now a wealthy meat importer and real-estate investor, has been Howard Hunt's close friend since 1961. Hunt is godfather to one of Artime's children. After the Watergate burglary, it was Artime who personally handled the discreet disbursement of cash funds to the Miami families of the imprisoned Watergate raiders.

It was a former Cuban cabinet minister who introduced Robert Vesco, the financier indicted for fraud in connection with Nixon campaign contributions, to the President of Costa Rica. The same man persuaded Vesco to lend \$10,000,000 to two Cuban brothers, owners of a contracting firm, who planned to erect Miami's tallest office building.

I attended a Nixon fund-raising affair in June, 1972, just days before Watergate, at the island home of a Cuban millionaire lawyer. It was one of the most spectacular parties I had seen in years. There were bands, dancing, drinks flowing like water, and the host made the standard speech about the desirability to reelect Nixon so that Cuba could be "free" again. At the door, under the watchful eye of a deputy sheriff, \$100 bills were stashed away from the guests' contributions.

A Cuban millionaire with past C.I.A. ties (who spent some time recently in a Guatemalan prison because of his complicated banking operations in that country) is currently suing for the recovery of his majority stock in the Republic National Bank of Miami, which once belonged to him, in a \$7,000,000 action. About to become an American citizen, he was planning to start a daily Spanish-language newspaper in Miami, which would compete with the well-established *Diario las Americas* owned by two Nicaraguan brothers, and he told me of his plans over lunch not long ago at Miami's American Club. I looked around, and it looked familiar. The club is the exile version of Havana's old American Club and it is the business center for old Cuban politicians with little else to do. Americans do not patronize it, but the ambience is a bit reminiscent of the Havana establishment on Prado. Patrons still play pool, dice for drinks, everybody knows everybody else, and there is a great deal of table-hopping and loud conversation across the room. Only here does one still talk about going back to Cuba. ■