response to the "insulting" treatment of the United States by Cuba's official propaganda. At the same time that Castro and his Foreign Minister, Raul Roa, were proposing negotiations, the Cuban radio and press were venting wild attacks on the United States. Children in the paramilitary Juvenile Patrols were taught marching songs about the Yankees being unable to cope with Castro and about Eisenhower being a stupid old man.

On February 14, visiting Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan signed a trade agreement with Castro under which Russia would buy a million tons of sugar a year for five years and grant Cuba $100,000,000 in credits. Cuba had sold sugar to the Soviet Union even under the Batista regime, but the pact with Mikoyan was seen by Washington as a first step in shifting Cuba's economic relationship to the Russian bloc.

Nine days later, the Castro regime sent an unexpected note to the United States suggesting negotiations on outstanding matters, but with the proviso that no executive or legislative action that could be considered as detrimental to Cuba would be taken by America during the talks. The implication, as understood in Washington, was that the United States could engage in no steps to protect its interests no matter what the Cubans did in the course of what could be endlessly protracted negotiations. Nothing came of the Cuban offer, but it was a skillful play for the gallery because it made the United States seem as if it were only willing to negotiate holding a club behind its back.

On March 6, the entire city of Havana was shaken by a deafening explosion on the French munitions ship *La Coubre*, whose hold contained military supplies bought by the Cubans in Belgium. About seventy persons were killed in the waterfront carnage. Castro immediately charged that the United States was behind the explosion, and his newspaper, *Revolución*, chimed in with the baffling comment that the alleged sabotage was an excuse for intervention. Although Castro subsequently backtracked from his initial accusation, his propaganda machine hammered relentlessly on the theme of American sabotage. A special horror booklet was produced by the Foreign Ministry to be circulated throughout the world, implying that the United States was indeed guilty of the dockside massacre.

It is impossible to tell what had set off the explosion, but the charge of American sabotage is highly improbable. Whatever the cause, experts blamed Cuban authorities for the grave error of tying up a munitions ship alongside a wharf for unloading. Normally, ships carrying explosives are anchored in the middle of the harbor and unloaded by lighters.

In any event, the blowing up of *La Coubre* exploded what was left of the chance for improving relations between Castro and the United States. The revolutionary regime began taking over United States property along with land and industry owned by Cuban interests. The original expectation had been that United States companies would lose their land under the provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law, and that in time the American-owned utilities would be taken over. But now the regime began to move indiscriminately to seize every type of property. On March 12, the first three United States-owned sugar mills were taken. Simultaneously, the huge nickel plant of the Moa Mining Company in Oriente Province, where Castro's rebels were allowed to hide during the war against Batista, was "intervened," the legal step preceding outright nationalization. The company's worth was $75,000,000, and the seizure accounted for the largest slice of United States investment out of the $1,000,000,000 or so seized until that time.

II

That Cuba intended to grab all United States property sooner or later was presently made clear by Major Ernesto "Ché" Guevara, the president of the National Bank, who always displayed blunt candor in discussing the regime's plans.

In a speech on the televised Popular University program on March 19, Major Guevara announced that "our economic war will be with the great power of the North." In what can be read as a declaration of ideological as well as economic war, Guevara asserted:

> . . . To conquer something, we have to take it away from somebody, and it is well to speak clearly and not hide behind concepts that could be misinterpreted. This something that we have to conquer is the sovereignty of the country; it has to be taken away from that somebody who is called the monopoly . . . although monopolies in general have no country, they have at least a common definition: all the monopolies that have been in Cuba, that have profited from the Cuban land, have very close ties with the United States. This is to say that our economic war will be with the great power of the North . . . our road toward

liberation will be found in the victory over the monopolies, and concretely over the North American monopolies.

At the same time that Castro and Foreign Minister Roa were still proposing negotiations over the sugar quota and compensation for land seized for the agrarian reform, Major Guevara was already forecasting the takeover of other American property. This throws a different light on the Cuban condition for negotiations, which called for a guarantee that the United States would take no adverse action during the talks.

In fact, Guevara could not have been more explicit in expounding what the Cuban government had in mind. Subsequently, however, Castro managed to create the impression that the wholesale seizure of property after July was merely a retribution for the elimination of the Cuban sugar quota. The Cuban revolutionaries were becoming adept at the art of provoking the adversary into angry reprisals and then shifting the blame to the adversary for having reacted.

In explaining the land reform as part of the revolutionary battle against the "colonialist monopolies"—instead of as a measure to provide justice for the Cuban peasant—Major Guevara had this to say:

> We had to hit the most irritating of all the monopolies, the monopoly of the land holdings, to destroy it, to make the land pass to the hands of the people, and then begin the real struggle because this, despite all, was simply the first entry into contact with the two enemies . . . The battle will be given now, it will be given in the future, because although the monopolies had here great stretches of land, it is not there the most important ones are; the most important ones are in the chemical industry, in engineering, in petroleum. . . .

During the same speech, which looms in retrospect as one of the milestone utterances of the revolution, Major Guevara also developed the argument that the United States sugar quota system—which brought Cuba about $150,000,000 annually in extra bonus payments over the world market price—was a form of "economic slavery."

He explained that this system forces Cubans to accept customs obligations with the United States under which the island has to spend in imports from the mainland $1.15 for every dollar earned through the bonus arrangement. Therefore, he said, the quota system made $1,000,000,000 pass from Cuban hands into the hands of the "North American monopolies." To begin selling sugar to the Soviet Union, he said, and to buy Soviet oil at prices 33 per cent below United States prices, was to begin to move toward emancipation.

Following the Guevara speech, the United States spent more than three months in formal inquiries to the Cuban government as to whether the Major had indeed been enunciating official policy when he indicated that the Castro regime wanted no part of the sugar quota. The Cubans, not surprisingly, never bothered to reply; Guevara was one of the chief spokesmen of the revolution and nobody was about to negate his words.

This situation led to perhaps the most absurd argument that developed between the two countries. The United States was claiming that the quota was a generous gift to Cuba but it was threatening to take it away—not to punish the island but to "assure" sugar supplies. The Cubans were claiming that the quota was "economic slavery" but they indignantly charged that Washington would be practicing unfair economic warfare if it should take the quota away.

To the extent that it mattered, the United States position was sounder, although the Cubans had legitimate grievances. At the time of Guevara's statement, it is worth stressing, Cubans were still receiving the bonus payments but were no longer spending most of their dollars on the mainland. Guevara had drastically curtailed imports to save hard currency and the United States was officially indignant over his refusal to continue the traditional purchases on the mainland. Thus the bonus system need not have involved "economic slavery" if the Cuban government kept the benefits on the island.

At the same time, there was weight to the Cuban argument that the sugar quota was set unilaterally by Congress, meaning that the island had no direct say on a decision vital to its economy. Yet tariffs were subject to reciprocal negotiations, which meant that the United States could use its leverage to maintain a low-tariff market in Cuba for American exports. And it was also true that the chief purpose of the sugar-quota system was not to "help" Cuba but to protect less efficient producers in the United States. In short, like many economic problems, the sugar was a simple matter of right or wrong only in polemics that were fired back and forth between Havana and Washington.

III

It was against this background of swiftly worsening relations that the State Department made the debatable decision to send back Ambassador Bonsal. This step was taken against the advice of the entire Embassy staff in Havana. Their opposition was based on the fear that Bonsal's return would be taken as a sign of weakness and would encourage Castro to engage in further humiliation of Americans. Their fears turned out to be justified.

Mr. Bonsal landed in Havana the day after Major Guevara made his "economic warfare" speech and a day before Schergales and Runquist were shot down in Matanzas. The timing of his return could scarcely have been worse. For the next six months, Mr. Bonsal underwent probably the most frustrating and humiliating experience imposed upon an American ambassador. His ordeal included his inability to obtain an appointment with Castro, futile protests to Foreign Minister Roa or his assistants over the arrest of American citizens, seizure of property or propaganda insults hurled at the United States. Embassy officials made increasingly frequent pilgrimages to the headquarters of the G-2 (secret police) in a sickly green villa on Havana's Fifth Avenue to inquire about Americans under arrest. There was seldom valid reason for the detentions and soon United States correspondents in Havana became the favorite target of the sport-shirt attired G-2 agents. A feeling of helplessness infected Americans in Havana as they realized that their government could no longer protect them.

A radical, dynamic revolution has no respect for weakness, or what it thinks to be weakness. The Cuban regime savored the humiliations that Mr. Bonsal and his staff suffered in silence. But here again we run into the pattern of inevitability that trapped American diplomatic efforts. If the United States had taken an aggressively hostile policy, the effect would surely have been to make Castro a martyr and to have strengthened the impression in Latin America that Washington was trying to crush a social revolution. Yet, in practicing the policy of "patience and forebearance," the United States may have advanced its larger Latin American goals, but at the price of encouraging Castro to attempt spectacular new effronteries.

As it was, Bonsal lost all contact with Cuban public opinion that was still strongly supporting Castro. His personal policy was to avoid exposure and conflict, and he was in no position to use his prestige to present Washington's side of the story. When a Havana TV and radio network agreed to let him appear on a program, the Ambassador decided not to do it. He discouraged his aides from sending vigorous statements of the American position to the remaining independent newspapers in Cuba.

One of the last people-to-people ties between the two countries was broken in April when the Rochester baseball team of the International League decided not to play in Havana any more. The local Sugar Kings lost their franchise. Safety of the Rochester players was invoked as the reason, and Castro promptly charged aggression in the sports realm. But a New York ballet group came to Havana at the same time, and dainty ballerinas apparently did not fear to dance where the tough baseball players were loath to tread. For a few more months, however, Cubans enjoyed live TV pickups of baseball games on the mainland and the boxing match in which their compatriot Benny Parets won a world title.

These were the few remaining threads in the fabric of the old relationship, but they could not obscure the size of the vent now dividing the two governments and the two systems. Yet optimists professed to see a chance for a modus vivendi, and Castro occasionally threw them crumbs of encouragement, in between attacks on the United States.

Thus, on March 30, he coupled warnings to Washington that Cuba was not a Guatemala where a revolutionary regime could be overthrown by the CIA, with an offer to send Cuban Ambassador Ernesto Dihigo back to the United States after a lapse of three months, "if they are ready to discuss things on a friendlier basis." But in the same night-long speech he insisted again that anticommunism was tantamount to counterrevolution, and announced that his regime was not bound by the 1947 inter-American treaty of Reciprocal Assistance signed at Rio de Janeiro.

At the Labor Day celebration on May 1, Castro told a crowd of 500,000 that the United States was preparing an aggression against Cuba through Guatemala and added that the United Fruit Company—his favorite target, along with the State Department and the CIA—was backing it.

On that day, his supporters for the first time burst out publicly in the chant of "Cuba Si, Yankee No," and the United States was thus officially designated the enemy of the revolution. But despite the chorus of hate, Castro again chose to throw out a crumb of encouragement. Four days after his May Day speech, his regime confidentially advised the State Department that José Miró Cardona, the first Premier in the revolutionary government and later Ambassador to Spain, would be sent as the new Ambassador to the United States.

The State Department immediately and hopefully indicated its approval; the American press pointed out that Dr. Miró Cardona was a respected moderate, and the new Ambassador-designate said that he would fly to Washington as soon as possible. It is still unclear why Castro bothered to go through these motions. Dr. Miró Cardona was never given permission to take up his post, and in July he finally broke with the regime to seek asylum in the Argentine Embassy. He later became president of the Cuban Revolutionary Council in whose name the invasion of the Bay of Pigs was launched.

In recalling his fleeting appointment as Ambassador, Dr. Miró Cardona later told of seeing Castro only once on his return from Spain and never being able to secure an appointment as he sat in Havana waiting to go to Washington. In a series of conferences with Ambassador Bonsal, he had established a basis for improved relations and he reported to President Dorticos that the prospects were favorable provided the violent anti-American propaganda in Havana could be halted. Dr. Miró Cardona recounted that Dorticos had given him such assurances. But, he said, a few hours later Castro was again before the TV cameras with another sulphuric attack on the United States.

Three days after asking for diplomatic *agrément* for Dr. Miró Cardona, the Cuban regime established official relations with the Soviet Union and prepared an exchange of ambassadors. The timing looked suspiciously as if Castro were trying to tease Washington.

By then, Soviet bloc technicians were already pouring into Cuba, although they were still staying discreetly out of sight. The Soviet tanker *Vishinsky* had brought the first shipment of Soviet petroleum for a small, government-owned refinery. Cuban officials and newspapers were talking less and less about the regime's equidistant position between East and West, and more and more of friendship for the Soviet Union. After the summit meeting in Paris broke up late in May, Castro's newspaper *Revolución* described Eisenhower as a warmonger and heaped praise on Soviet Premier Khrushchev's performance.

Castro was applying taunting pressure on all fronts; the frayed rope of Cuban-American relations was being pulled taut and was almost ready to snap.

IV

From the dawn of his revolution, Castro saw his movement as one that was not confined to Cuba but that should be made to spread across Latin America. He foresaw a hemisphere-wide uprising against the United States and its influence, and already, early in 1960, a new slogan emerged proclaiming Cuba as the "Free Territory of the Americas."

In fact, however, even this mission was too modest for Castro. He began talking of Cuba inspiring revolutions everywhere in the underdeveloped world, and he predicted that a revolution would ultimately come to the United States. To encourage this project, Cuban propaganda busied itself spreading leaflets in Spanish and English in the South of the United States and in New York's Harlem urging American Negroes to rise against oppression. As an added fillip, the Cubans made contact with American Indians, too; in July 1959 Castro received Mad Bear, an Iroquois nationalist, as a guest in Havana.

While the United States was not overly alarmed by these Castro activities on the mainland (although Washington subsequently grossly underestimated the size and quality of the Cuban intelligence network in Miami, New York and Washington), it did view with extreme concern the efforts to "export" the revolution to Latin America. Latin American masses were evidently receptive to the example of the sweeping reforms put into effect in Cuba, and the activities of Castro-sympathizers were creating deep political and security problems for the moderate governments in the hemisphere.

"We are a bad example for Latin America," Castro and Guevara kept repeating with visible glee, and Washington could not agree more. The Cubans had defied the United States not only in terms of their direct and immediate relationship, but also in terms of carrying the war against "Yankee imperialism" into the very heart of the hemisphere to undermine the United States position everywhere in Latin America.

Their activities in Latin America served the twin objectives of sabotaging the United States influence and of assuring the Cubans of political support in the already foreseeable event that Washington would attempt to organize diplomatic action against Cuba through the Organization of American States, or even try for a military solution. But fundamentally Castro's concentration on Latin America was designed to underscore the whole rationale of his policy toward the United States: he was engaged in a total war against the "great power of the North" and thrusts against its soft underbelly throughout the restive hemisphere was part of the grand design. The obverse of this policy was that any accommodation with the United States on any terms short of Washington's total acceptance of his position would weaken his revolutionary efforts in Latin America.

Early in the spring of 1960 Castro sent out a delegation of his "26th of July Movement" to tour Latin America. It was headed by Carlos Olivares Sánchez, a communist from Oriente Province who soon after became the Deputy Foreign Minister and the real political power in planning Cuban foreign policy. Foreign Minister Roa, who only a few years before had written a book highly critical of communism, stayed on as the international spokesman for the regime. Late in 1961, Roa made up for his earlier lapse by announcing in a speech that communism was the world's, and Cuba's, "wave of the future." Castro echoed Roa a month later.

The Olivares mission, which stressed only the social-reform aspects of the Cuban revolution and Cuba's friendship for Latin America, was fairly successful. But it failed to persuade any Latin American government to agree to attend a world "hunger conference" of underdeveloped countries that Castro was planning to hold in Havana in the fall of 1960. The conference was never held.

Late in May, President Dorticós, Roa and a group of Cuban military commanders set out on a Latin American tour that immediately became a campaign aimed at depicting the United States as a political, economic and military aggressor against Cuba. In speeches and news conferences, Dorticós hammered on the theme that Cuba was a daily victim of air attacks from the United States against "our cane fields, our industrial plants, and even our capital." Although the anti-Castro flights were continuing despite tightened security measures that had finally been imposed by United States authorities, the Dorticós charges were wildly but deliberately exaggerated. Cuba, on the other hand, was portrayed by its President as free of communism, dedicated to the freedom of the press and enjoying excellent relations with the Roman Catholic Church. At this point, however, the last independent newspaper in Havana had been forced to shut down and Cuban bishops were drafting a pastoral letter against Communist infiltration.

For Dorticós, the trip had the effect of lifting him from what was assumed to be a figurehead role to a position of prominence and, ultimately, of considerable personal power. For the United States, it was a grim reminder of the spreading Cuban influence in the hemisphere.

At about the same time, Cuba imported powerful shortwave transmitters from Switzerland and inaugurated regular propaganda programs beamed to Latin America. The central theme of the broadcasts was the evils of "Yankee imperialism."

On July 26, when Castro celebrated the seventh anniversary of his revolutionary movement, a Latin American Youth Congress was held in Havana. The participants were mostly leftist students from all over the hemisphere, and they were subjected to intense anti-American and revolutionary indoctrination. Simultaneously, arrangements were made to bring Latin American students to Cuba regularly on scholarships.

By now Havana was becoming the magnet for the revolutionary left in Latin America. Cheddi Jagan, British Guiana's leftwing Prime Minister, visited Castro and signed a trade agreement. Chile's communist poet, Pablo Neruda, and procommunist Senator Salvador Allende were constant guests in Havana. Guatemala's ex-president Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, a procommunist ousted by a CIA-aided rebel invasion in 1954, came to live in Cuba. Mexico's leftist ex-President Lázaro Cárdenas was another honored guest. Brazil's Janio Quadros, then a presidential candidate, spent a week in Cuba in April, bringing along Francisco Julião, the head of the pro-Castro Peasant Leagues in the Brazilian Northeast. (The day after Castro announced in December 1961 that he was a Marxist-Leninist, Julião rushed to say that he, too, was a communist.)

American Embassy officials were reporting all these comings and goings in worried telegrams to Washington. But it was again Major Guevara, that advocate of "speaking clearly," who spelled out in full detail what the Cuban revolutionary leadership expected to see happen in Latin America.

In April 1960 he published his manual on "The War of the Guerrillas"—the "General Principles of the Guerrilla Struggle"—setting out in superb detail the tactics and the strategy to be followed in organizing and carrying out a revolution based on peasant and worker support against the armies and the established government.

On the very first page of his essay, Guevara discussed what he called Cuba's contribution "to the mechanics of revolutionary movements in America," and observed that in "underdeveloped South America, the field of the armed struggle must be fundamentally in the countryside."

"It is necessary to demonstrate clearly to the people," he wrote, "the impossibility of maintaining the struggle for social revindications within the framework of a civic contest."

As Washington shuddered, copies of the Guevara handbook of revolution began turning up throughout Latin America, along with other bundles of Cuban propaganda distributed by the Cuban embassies. Castro was now openly fighting the United States from Mexico's Rio Grande to the Argentine Pampas.

V

However, if Castro was thus extending his field of aggressive revolutionary activities beyond Cuba's insular confines, problems were beginning to develop for him right at home. For the first time since his victory in January 1959, organized opposition against his regime was emerging in Cuba, and it no longer was limited to the former soldiers of the Batista government—the *Casquitos*, as they were called, after the Army helmets they had once worn—or other Batista officials whom the revolutionary police had not flushed out.

This nascent opposition included many of Castro's former supporters in the ranks of the rebel army, the "26th of July Movement," Roman Catholic organizations, and other groups. These were disillusioned and embittered moderates who had once risked their lives in the anti-Batista underground in the name of the great principles of freedom and justice that Castro had so convincingly proclaimed from his Sierra Maestra hideout. Now they were seeing Castro opening the gates of the revolution to communist infiltration and gradually turning the revolutionary regime into a monolithic dictatorship. For the first time since Batista's fall, the word began to be whispered in Cuba that a great revolution was being betrayed.

It was surely inevitable that this new breed of rebel would gravitate toward the United States; not because they were necessarily in sympathy with the way in which Washington had handled the Cuban revolution, but because they had no alternative. There was nowhere else to go. It was part of the polarization process; as Castro himself was repeating daily, you had to be with the revolution or against it. There was no middle ground. And because of the very nature of the political gravitational forces at work in Cuba, those who chose to break with the revolution were automatically propelled toward the United States. Thus, for reasons that can best be described as centrifugal, the United States was perforce becoming an active adversary of the Castro regime, perhaps unconsciously abandoning the confused passivity of the first year or so of the revolution.

Since these new anti-Fidelistas themselves refused to be passive about their opposition and at once rushed into conspiracies, whether they were still in Cuba or had already fled to Florida, it was equally inevitable that the United States should forthwith become associated with these efforts. Therefore, like an irreversible engine, the inexorable drive of Cuban-American relations forced Washington to become an active partner in the emerging plots against Castro even before Easter of 1960.

It is difficult to determine precisely whether at this juncture the United States was acting from a political reflex or whether the Eisenhower Administration had already taken the historic decision that Castro had to be smashed at whatever cost, through any means at hand and as soon as possible. If this decision had not yet been taken formally in the early spring of 1960, all the ingredients for the decision were available, and pushed by the events in Cuba, the Administration was moving toward the only solution that appeared in its view to remain.

It is a fascinating historical pursuit to meditate over the extent to which great nations arrive coolly and deliberately at their great decisions—and over the extent to which decisions, even of dubious wisdom, are imposed by circumstances and the pressure of events beyond their control. In the case of Cuba and the United States, the conscious American decision to destroy Castro—whatever the exact point in time it was finally reached—seems to have been a reflex set off by the appearance of the anti-Castro conspiracies and then rationalized into national policy through a too facile inductive process.

As future events were to show, the United States was fated to have its policies again influenced by the driving momentum behind the anti-Castro forces when it allowed itself to be pushed into the folly of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

In any event, there is evidence that early in 1960 the Central Intelligence Agency had surreptitiously established working arrangements with anti-Castro groups in Cuba as well as in Florida. And it was at that time that the CIA committed the grievous error of extending these arrangements to extreme rightist and Batistano groups, despite assurances given at the time by the Eisenhower Administration and subsequently by the Kennedy Administration that the United States would have no dealing with personages, high or low, who were closely identified with the *ancien régime*. This initial political blunder committed by the CIA in the spring of 1960 was to plague it for the next twelve months and to contribute heavily to the failure of the invasion. This decision also marked the inauguration by the CIA of what, in effect, became its independent foreign policy toward Cuba, in cavalier disregard of the thinking in the White House and the State Department.

Thus the CIA established contacts in Miami with pro-Batista organizations and with exile groups whose entire political philosophy was dedicated to the return to the pre-Castro status quo in Cuba. This would mean the scrapping of land reform, the end of other reforms, and the return of all seized property. These factions were placing themselves not only against Castro, but against history; whether or not the CIA operatives were aware that total regression is impossible, their contacts with the rightist factions ran counter to official United States policy, aimed at encouraging social reform in Latin America.

One such organization existing at the time, although it later vanished in the maelstrom of exile politics, was the White Rose, a Miami faction with limited contacts in Cuba. In the early spring of 1960, CIA agents on the island busied themselves with delivering weapons and radio transmitters to the White Rose plotters, presumably to build them up into a sabotage force or the nucleus of a guerrilla operation. It is hard to believe that the CIA seriously expected that a group composed of thoroughly discredited Batistanos could command enough support to overthrow Castro. CIA agents being made to take the risk of being caught while carrying weapons for the White Rose in the trunks of their cars, some with diplomatic licenses, is one of those exercises in foolishness that was to characterize much of the anti-Castro operation.

But the CIA also began to work with democratic anti-Castro organizations that were beginning to emerge in Cuba, and notably with the Movement of Revolutionary Recovery *(Movimiento de Revolucionaria Recuperación)* which was launched clandestinely by a group of former military and civilian supporters of Castro. This was seemingly a more rational step, but later the MRR lost its original identity and became another rightist organization manipulated by the CIA.

In the beginning, the MRR was a "clean" revolutionary organization. Among its founders were three former captains of Castro's rebel army: Jorge Sotús, Higinio "Nino" Diaz and Sergio Sanjenís. Sotús was a young guerrilla leader who was one of the first Castro captains forced out of combat by Raúl Castro because of his opposition to communism in the Sierra Maestra. Nino Díaz, who was to figure prominently in later events, had also fought in the Sierra Maestra, then turned on the Castro brothers because of his anticommunism. Sanjenís had been the chief of intelligence for Havana in the rebel army early in 1959. He resigned when he became aware that the intelligence section had been taken over by the communists.

Castro's intelligence service was alert. Sotús was arrested in Santiago early in 1960; he escaped in December 1960 in a spectacular break from a Havana prison. Sanjenís was arrested with six companions the day before Easter, 1960, after one of his coplotters turned out to be a Castro agent. They were captured hours after Sanjenís in cooperation with CIA agents spirited Nino Díaz into the Guantanamo Navy Base from Havana. Sanjenís was sentenced to twenty years in prison and is believed to be at the Isle of Pines penitentiary where Huber Matos, the former Camagüey army commander, is also held.

The MRR started out as a secret organization composed of former rebel army officers. It also had close connections with young professionals and Roman Catholic youths who were setting up an underground through a Church-based organization known as "Catholic Groupement" *(Agrupción Católica)*.

The one Castro opponent who joined the MRR through the Catholic groups was Manuel Artime Buesa. He had been a captain in the rebel army, fought briefly in the Sierra Maestra, and became chief of the Agrarian Reform zone in Oriente Province. He was a gifted orator and a fanatical anticommunist. After breaking with the regime, he fled to Mexico where he wrote a book denouncing Castro for his plan to communize Cuba. Later, he went to Miami to become one of the chiefs of the MRR organization there. It was Artime that the CIA later picked to command the invasion forces.

At Havana University, the anticommunist activities were directed by a third-year law student named Alberto Muller, who had close connections with the Catholic groups and, more loosely, with the MRR. Muller and his supporters engaged in a futile struggle with the Federation of University Students (FEU), where communists already held considerable sway. Early in April, his newspaper, *Trinchera,* was burned and his supporters beaten, and Muller was forced to abandon the University.

The last open gesture by the Muller group was an attempted demonstration at the door of the TV studios of the CMQ network in Havana in favor of Luis Conte Agüero, a popular commentator and biographer of Castro who had delivered a violent public speech a few days earlier accusing Castro of tolerating communist influence. In the ensuing fracas, Conte Agüero, an old friend whom Castro quickly denounced as a traitor, was prevented from entering the station by communist strongarm squads. He later fled Cuba.

All these new anti-Castro groups had contact with the American Embassy in Havana and with CIA operatives who had their headquarters there. Plans were drawn for the smuggling or parachuting of radio transmitters into Cuba for the MRR underground and for the supply of arms. The CIA and the United States Government had thus firmly entered the conspiracy to oust Castro.

The Premier, who had an efficient secret service and considerable political imagination, wasted no time in going on the offensive. On April 22, Castro made a speech asserting that criticism in Washington was part of a "well-prepared and premeditated plan" to create an internal front against the regime. The plan was premeditated but not particularly well-prepared, as events were to show.

Early in April, Castro had to contend with a guerrilla operation in Oriente led by Captain Manuel Beatón, a semiliterate former Sierra Maestra fighter against Batista. Beatón, whose force was mainly made up of his relatives, had no clear political ties. The CIA ignored him, and the MRR, suspicious that the whole movement might be a Castro decoy, refused to support the Beatón operation. Castro brought thousands of regular troops and some of his brand-new militia units to flush out Beatón's tiny force, well aware from his own experience of the dangers of letting a guerrilla operate with impunity. Beatón was finally captured and executed.

Castro had less success, however, with a guerrilla band led by Nino Díaz that was organized at about the same time in the mountains in the Guantánamo area. There are good reasons to believe that Díaz had gone into the hills from Guantánamo Navy base and that the CIA had given him some support. But Díaz could not muster enough men and his guerrillas never had any contact with the Castro forces. Soon thereafter Díaz turned up in Miami, where he linked up with MRR elements.

The MRR had entered the conspiracy in an official way in the first week of April with the publication of a manifesto urging Cubans to take up arms to defend the revolution and democracy. In the eyes of Cubans—and of the CIA—it had become the foremost instrument for bringing about the fall of Castro. But neither the MRR nor the right-wing groups could have hoped to carry out their plans without external help. To provide such help became the mission of the CIA as the Cuban-American relationship moved quietly into a new dimension.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHASM OPENS

The first year, "the Year of the Revolution," presented a political problem to the United States Government. But in 1960, "the Year of the Agrarian Reform," the problem was as much psychological. The Furies were loose in Washington and Havana; before the year ended, Castro had seized some $1 billion in American-owned property, and the United States had come to the verge of organizing an invasion of Cuba.

It is not enough to explain the schism in political terms. Peel away the verbiage of dispute and underneath lay a sense of outrage, raw and red, about an ungrateful child spitting in Father's face. For in the Caribbean area, the United States had in some measure acquired an imperial attitude without accepting imperial responsibility.

There is a curious contrast in American relations with Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines—the three territories whose destiny was determined by the Spanish-American War. In the Philippines and Puerto Rico, the United States accepted direct colonial responsibility. The necessary evil of colonial rule was compensated by certain palpable benefits—health, welfare and educational measures, the training of administrative cadres, the encouragement of free institutions. The paradoxical outcome is that the two areas that the United States administered as colonies are today self-governing and essentially friendly—whereas the country nominally freed by the war is a hive of anti-Americanism. Strikingly, all the major parties in Puerto Rico, a self-governing commonwealth, and the Philippines, independent since 1946, are essentially friendly to the United States.

Cuba suffered most of the evils of colonialism but won few of the benefits. The island was, in a sense, an indirect colony, a client state dominated by private United States economic interests. While the Republic possessed the trappings of sovereignty, it enjoyed little of the substance. Until 1934, the Platt Amendment gave the United States power to intercede directly in Cuban affairs; on two occasions the power was used. Even after the Platt Amendment was abrogated, a psychological Platt Amendment remained stamped on the minds of both Cubans and Americans.

The United States had a choice when the Spanish-American War concluded. It could have acquired Cuba as an outright possession, or it could have granted more genuine independence to the island. We did neither, but chose an unsatisfactory course in between—unsatisfactory because it generated the sense of legitimate outrage that Castro was able to exploit and because it left a legacy in the American mind that made it impossible to accept the extravagant form that Cuban nationalism took.

Much of the tension of 1960 can be explained in terms of the very special attitude of the two peoples toward each other. It is suggestive that there was no comparable expression of popular outrage in the United States when Juan Perón of Argentina prodded and nettled the Colossus of the North. Yet Perón's affronts were in some ways as menacing as Castro's. In the midst of a shooting war with the Axis, Perón made Argentina a haven for Nazis and encouraged fifth-column movements throughout the hemisphere. But Argentina is a big country, a distant country, and a country whose sovereign right to misbehave was not in dispute. Certainly there was concern about Perón's peculations, but the alarm was mainly among editorial writers, diplomats and the informed few.

There was no Platt Amendment psychology concerning Argentina. Cuba was different; it was a country that was "ours" to be "lost." At every point, the warp of the past was evident in 1960. In America, the topic of Cuba became a raw nerve that every politician wishing attention could scratch and inflame. In Cuba, the legacy of the past divided Cubans against themselves; because so many islanders acted as puppets and brokers for U.S. business colonialism, Castro was able to discredit even bona fide democrats as Yankee stooges. In Florida, the Platt Amendment psychology made itself felt in the curious and unhealthy relationship between exiles and the CIA. An older generation of Cuban leaders had been conditioned to look to Washington as the final arbiter on vital decisions; in exile, some of these same Cubans were prone to abdicate their judgment to the CIA, assuming that Washington knew best and that American support assured the success of any venture. In a sense, many exile leaders were seeking a colonial solution to a revolutionary problem. They accepted CIA proconsuls as political strategists and allowed themselves to be bullied by shadowy agents in Miami's hotel lobbies. As events were to show, this was not the attitude, nor were these the men, who could arouse much enthusiasm in Cuba, an island gripped by messianic nationalism.

II

Such was the background for the debate on sugar that occupied the first seven months of 1960. As we have described, the activities of the extremists in both camps provided ample leverage for driving Havana and Washington apart. It was a case of mote and beam. In Cuba, the continuing clandestine flights were the beam—and flirtation with the communist bloc was the mote. In Washington, it was the other way around. If Cuba were allowed to get away with its effronteries,—a frequently heard argument went,—a dangerous precedent would be set in the rest of Latin America. "The United States," exhorted George Sokolsky, who spoke for nationalist conservatives, "needs to take a stand against every speck of a country spitting in our face." Big powers respond to the same stimuli; the same words must have been echoed in the Kremlin when the Politburo took up the problem of rebellious Albania.

But what could be done? The most obvious club, lying right at hand, was the Cuban sugar quota. The more Americans studied the matter, the more intolerable it seemed that Cuba should cream off a premium price for its sugar. The assumption among many was that removal of Cuba's quota would cripple the island's economy and perhaps bring down Castro. There was an element of Marxism-in-reverse in this formulation—the concept that economic duress would affect political emotions in a direction more favorable to the United States. But all too often, economic sanctions can produce precisely the opposite result and solidify a rebel and his followers.

In any event, Washington was not thinking; it was reacting. In a remarkably prescient column, Joseph Alsop warned of the consequences of becoming involved in an emotional orgy of tit-for-tat. Alsop wrote from Havana on March 14:

> Compared to Castro, Nasser is humble, sluggish and lethargic. If Nasser reacted violently to the beginning of a game of tit-for-tat, Castro can be expected to react ten times more violently. He can in fact be expected to play out the game of tit-for-tat to the limit of his resources, without regard for the consequences to Cuba, or the consequences to himself, or any other practical consideration.

Cassandra was ignored, and inexorably Washington was drawn into games that only Castro could win. The games culminated in a violent exchange that involved not only sugar but also oil—of all products the most politically loaded and symbolic of imperialism.

As early as January 22, the late Styles Bridges, Senator from New Hampshire and influential chairman of the Republican Policy Committee, was calling for a review of the sugar quota in retaliation against Castro's seizures of American property. John Marshall Butler, Senator from Maryland, added a day later that the United States should reexamine its Cuba policy, "paying special attention to Teddy Roosevelt's maxim to speak softly and carry a big stick." If in the ensuing months Castro was able to caricature the American policy as Big Stickism, it ought to be noted that American utterances helped hand him this propaganda weapon.

By February, the Administration was sounding out Chairman Harold Cooley of the House Agricultural Committee on changing the sugar law to give the President standby authority to alter its provisions. Cooley, on March 8, announced that he had refused to sponsor the Administration's measure because it contained "weapons of reprisal" against the Cuban people. More than compassion for the Cubans entered into Mr. Cooley's decision; he did not want to see control of the legislation pass out of his committee, where he used his power for vote-trading purposes with legislators from sugar-producing states.

On March 15, President Eisenhower said, a bit disingenuously, that the request for standby power was in no way intended as an act of reprisal against Cuba but was instead a way of assuring that the United States would get the sugar it needed. But the stampede of events made it clear what the purposes of the request really were. Actually, the problem in sugar was not to assure supply but to limit it. A fecund crop, sugar is easily cultivated in either cane or beet form, and the purpose of the Sugar Act was to allocate production among many domestic and foreign growers.

In the succeeding weeks, the game of tit-for-tat intensified. The unrepentant Castro would kick and jeer; the lumbering giant tried to flick him away like a bothersome fly. On March 16, the Commerce Department revoked a license for the sale of helicopters to Cuba; the next day in Havana, Castro jibed back that he could buy helicopters from Russia anyway. On April 7, President Eisenhower released the text of a letter to Chilean students that first used the word "betrayal" in an official U.S. statement on the Cuban revolution. On April 20, the House of Representatives passed the foreign-aid bill with a rider tacked on barring any aid to Cuba unless the President should judge it in the national or hemispheric interest.

Then, in May, a swift series of calamities put the Administration on the defensive and made it all the more eager to take some action, somewhere, that could restore some American self-respect. On May 1, the fateful U-2 plane nosed into the skies over Russia and plummeted down, taking with it the hopes for the Paris summit and the plans for President Eisenhower's goodwill trip to Russia and Japan. At the same time, adding to the mad-hatter atmosphere of that memorable May, the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on May 3 held a hearing starring one-time Batista army officers, thus providing an official forum for the most unsavory of all Castro opponents, as if to prove that Fidel was right in asserting that the United States was helping the Batistanos. The most notorious of the officers appearing before the subcommittee were General Francisco Tabernilla, former chief of staff, and Colonel Manuel Antonio Ugalde Carrillo, one-time commander of the military prison on the Isles of Pines, who was removed from that post by Batista after the prisoners went on strike against inhumane treatment.

The game intensified. On May 26, the White House announced that all existing aid programs to Cuba had been canceled; the programs were small—amounting to about