



**The evolution  
of the Cuban  
military:  
1492-1986**

**Rafael Fermoselle**

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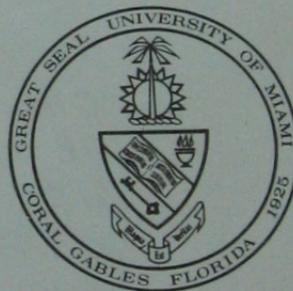
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L I B R A R Y



COLECCION CUBA Y SUS JUECES

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE CUBAN  
MILITARY: 1492-1986



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## PREFACE

This book is an attempt to present a broad historical account of the evolution of the Cuban military in order to correct some rudimentary concepts and gross oversimplifications on the subject. Although much of what has happened in the past five hundred years is accidental or the work of fate, there is some degree of order in the chaotic history of the island.

In writing this book, I owe much to the many historical accounts written about Cuba, and I have acknowledged them in footnotes throughout the book. I have also used many newspaper accounts of current events in Cuba in the past 90 years. These sources have been supplemented with scores of conversations and interviews with many of the chief participants in the events described in the book. I have used libraries in Miami, Florida, Washington, D.C., Texas and Mexico. The bulk of the research was conducted at the University of Miami Library, at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and at the U.S.I.S. Library in Mexico City.

My debt to individuals is very great. I am particularly grateful to the staff of the U.S.I.S. Benjamin Franklin Library in Mexico City, who assisted me in finding many of my sources. This was done at a difficult time when the library was operating in temporary quarters due to earthquake damage to the permanent facilities in September of 1985. I thank them for their help. I am also grateful to Dr. Leonel de la Cuesta (Florida International University), Dr. Maria Cristina Herrera, Executive Director of the Institute for Cuban Studies and members of the Institute for their assistance in finding subjects for interviews. I thank all the friends who helped me in planning and editing the manuscript and for their commentaries through all the revisions of the innumerable drafts. I am grateful to the Cuban National Foundation for their efforts to compile and publish important documents on Cuba which would otherwise be very difficult to obtain. I owe a great deal to my wife Pam, who helped me to edit the manuscript and made valuable suggestions and comments.

I have tried to depict accurately and fairly all the events covered in the book. I have expressed my own views in some footnotes in order to separate them from the main text. I have tried to present a fair balance before presenting my own conclusions. I make no apologies for my views. Tolerance for different points of view is consistent with the democratic ideals which govern the United States.

This publication has not been financed by any individual or government institution. All the costs of research and publication have been at my own expense. Errors of fact and of judgment are my own.

I dedicate this book to Dr. Harold Eugene Davis, who taught me to keep a loving flame for learning alive while he directed my graduate work many years ago at American University. Dr. Davis taught from 1924 through 1976, making it 52 years of writing, teaching and lecturing, mostly on Latin American themes. Even after his retirement at age 70, he has continued to conduct research and to publish on Latin American Foreign Policy and Diplomatic History. Thousands of young people have benefited from his dedication to education.

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to present an assessment of current Cuban military power, including the capabilities of the Cuban Government for projecting this power abroad. It includes a description of the organizational structure of the Armed Forces, principal officers, hardware, strengths and weaknesses. However, the capabilities of the Cuban Armed Forces cannot be judged only on the basis of current availability of hardware, training and leadership. In order to judge how well the Cuban military establishment can operate, the historical antecedents and the national character of the rank and file have to be taken into consideration.

When research for this book began, the author proposed to cover only recent developments in the Cuban military and current capabilities. He sought to explain the present and make projections for the future. But as the work advanced, it became evident that the present could not be explained without an understanding of the past. The research had to be expanded to complete the picture he sought to draw.

The study is largely historical in nature and provides an introduction to the Cuban military to the reader who does not know much about Cuba. It will help to familiarize the reader with the total environment in Cuba over many generations.<sup>1</sup> The point of departure is the arrival of the Spanish explorers to Cuba in 1510. A major premise of this book is that behavior in any given society tends to be stable and only changes over very long periods of time. Even after major disturbances and periods of shock, there is a tendency toward resuming some degree of traditional stability in the general environment. Behavior will settle down into traditional patterns. In the case of Cuba, the military has been the predominant force in society for close to 500 years.

For the reader who is well-informed about Cuba and its history and is more interested in current affairs, the first few chapters may seem somewhat superficial. For the reader who is only interested in a general knowledge about the Cuban military, the last chapters may offer too much detail. Perhaps there is an excessive coverage of subgroups in Cuban history. But their existence has played a major role in determining the course of events and their behavior may shed some light about how similar groups may behave in the future. The author considered splitting this book into two volumes,

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<sup>1</sup> Total environment is defined for the purpose of this book as the sum total of conditions which affect the life and development of Cubans as individuals and Cuban society as a whole.

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one covering the period from 1511 to 1959; with the second covering events since 1959. However, one of the goals of this book was to prepare an index that would include the most relevant names in Cuban military history. This index can be used for cross reference and as a guide to trace the career of key figures in the Cuban military. For this reason, the only possible compromise was to write one volume and emphasize the necessity for understanding the total situation since it is very difficult to study one event or one individual in isolation.

The chronicle of crimes and misfortunes, as well as heroic deeds associated with the Cuban military presented in this publication, has not been gathered with the view that history is moving inexorably in any given direction. Nor has it been prepared, as many other histories of Cuba, as episodes in a struggle between good and evil. And it has definitely not been written with the idea of justifying violence or militarism. It is a chronicle of events worthwhile remembering for people with an interest in the present and the future.

#### Strategic Location and Birth of Militarism

Current Cuban military power, as well as Cuban military history cannot be examined separately. In the past 500 years, since the discovery of the island by Columbus in 1492, Cuba has proven to be an extremely important geographic center for military operations in the Western Hemisphere. Soon after their arrival in Cuba, the first Spanish explorers realized that the wealth that they had hoped to find in silver and gold did not exist. The interest in the island as a source of wealth vanished very quickly. As explorers found considerable wealth in Mexico and South America many of the original Spanish residents of Cuba went on to the mainland. However, the Spanish also were able to determine very early that Cuba was an extremely strategic location to support their military and commercial operations. Cuba became a military strong point in the Spanish colonial system and was governed by military men for the most part from the beginning to the end of the Spanish colonial period. Militarism has been a strong component of the Cuban character for close to 500 years.

From Cuba, the Spanish launched the conquest of Mexico, Central America and South America. From Cuba, Spanish explorers launched expeditions that explored a large portion of the

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<sup>2</sup> Most books published in Cuba or about Cuba do not have an index. This makes it particularly difficult to trace key figures in the Cuban military throughout their careers.

United States. From Havana, the Spanish administered Florida and Louisiana. Cuban troops under the Spanish flag fought the British at Pensacola, Mobile, St. Augustine and at several sites in Mississippi during the American War of Independence. Also from Havana the British launched the failed expedition to capture New Orleans during the War of 1812. More recently, the United States used bases in Cuba to protect military shipping against German U-boats in WWI and WWII. Now intelligence collection facilities in Cuba are being used by the Soviets for monitoring U.S. maritime, military, and space communications, as well as telephone conversations in the United States.

### The Cuban Character

To understand the Cuban military one has to understand the Cuban character.<sup>3</sup> Cuba was a country of immigrants not unlike the United States. All the native population was wiped out in the first 300 years of colonial rule. Even as recently as 1959, over 20 percent of the residents of Cuba were foreign born.<sup>4</sup> Cubans are a product of Spain and the other nationalities that were blended together to form the Cuban of today. There is, of course, a strong African influence. Part of the African influence entered Cuba by way of workers from Haiti and Jamaica, who were imported to work in the sugar cane harvest. The rest is a legacy of slavery. This institution existed in Cuba longer than in any other country in the Western Hemisphere with the exception of Brazil.<sup>5</sup> In addition, other immigrations such as the Chinese indentured servants of the 19th century and the Eastern European Jewish immigration of the 1920's and 30's have also left their mark. There is also a strong influence from the United States, and it is impossible to separate Cuban history from that of its largest neighbor. In the past 25 years, a strong Soviet and Eastern European influence has also become part of the Cuban

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<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this book, "character" is defined as the sum total of the distinguishing traits, features and qualities of an individual or a society.

<sup>4</sup> It is difficult to find a Cuban who is about 40 years old today, who did not have at least one parent or grandparent who was not foreign born.

<sup>5</sup> The Moret Law of 1870 provided a formula for the gradual emancipation of the slaves. Another law in February of 1880 approved the total abolition of slavery but leaving them under the paternalistic protection of their old masters. Complete freedom was not granted to all the slaves until 1886.

experience. Naturally, all of these influences coalesce to form the Cuban national character.

Scholars and analysts in the United States that have devoted a considerable amount of time researching different aspects of Cuba, including the Cuban military, sometimes misinterpret their findings. This occurs because they often fail to take into account Cuban culture, or interpret their findings on the bases of U.S. mentality. Despite many similarities, Cubans do not think like people in the United States. For example, in the United States the issue of death is often left out of every day conversation. Cubans, on the other hand, talk about death as something inevitable and as very much a part of life. While Americans may say that someone "passed away," Cubans are very direct and will say that someone "died." Cubans also talk about their own death often and in a natural way, without it having any major significance, such as having a terminal illness.

At the same time, while in the United States historical accounts tend to include information about personal matters and private affairs of historical figures, Cubans tend to do the opposite. Cubans hide, or avoid mentioning incidents of the private life of prominent Cuban figures, because they find it to be in bad taste, or because they do not want to hurt the feelings of relatives who may still be alive. But without taking into account personal behavior of historical figures it is often difficult to understand the motor or the historical forces behind certain important events.

The hardest part of writing this book has been deciding what belongs and what does not belong in print. The author's interest in not just providing superficial information about key figures had to be balanced with the desire not to hurt the feelings of innocent relatives who want to cherish the memory of a deceased father, for example. But it is not always possible to do both. For American readers to be able to understand certain events in Cuba they need to know what most Cubans know through vox populi.

Cubans for the most part are not very tolerant of political views, habits, beliefs and practices that vary from their own. The average Cuban is not willing to recognize the right of individuals to have their own private judgment of right and wrong. José Martí (1853-1895), the Cuban patriot, poet and writer, viewed his writing as a way of rendering some service to society and assisting in the creation of a

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<sup>6</sup> There are many definitions of "culture." For the purpose of this book "culture" is defined as the formal and informal rules of behavior, language, values, standards, expectations, peculiarities and other factors that give Cubans identity and uniqueness.

Cuban consciousness. He worked hard to improve society by writing against many evils. One of these evils was intolerance.

Despite the legacy of Martí and the fact that Cuban Communists and anti-Communists claim him as one of their own, both groups do the opposite of what he preached. Fidel Castro preaches "within the revolution, everything... outside the revolution, nothing." The Cuban Government does not tolerate any form of dissent and any deviation from the norm is severely punished. The exile community in Miami behaves in a similar fashion. People are either a part of the problem or a part of the solution. There is no room for compromise.

Most Cubans are individuals with strong passions; at times they are prone to violence in looking for solutions to their problems and often lack discipline.<sup>B</sup> They are rebellious and stubborn. They argue about the most insignificant matters and internal bickering is part of most Cuban organizations.

Gangsterism and gangster-like behavior with a strong tendency toward criminal violence have also been fairly frequent among

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<sup>7</sup> Most Cuban children since the War of Independence have memorized perhaps the most famous of Martí's poems, dedicated to preaching tolerance:

#### La Rosa Blanca

Cultivo la rosa blanca  
en junio como en enero,  
para el amigo sincero  
que me da su mano franca.

Y para el cruel que me arranca  
el corazón con que vivo,  
cardo ni ortiga cultivo,  
cultivo la rosa blanca.

(Translated by the author)

#### The White Rose

I cultivate the white rose  
in June and January,  
for the sincere friend  
who stretches his open hand.

And for the cruel individual  
who rips out my living heart  
I do not cultivate thistle  
or thorns... I also  
cultivate the white rose.

<sup>B</sup> In February of 1986, during the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, Fidel Castro bitterly complained about the lack of discipline, lack of planning and shoddy workmanship of Cuban managers and workers, including delegates to the Congress. Castro had given the delegates a 30-minute coffee break, and when they did not return to their chairs within the prescribed time he scolded them for their lack of discipline. This was not the first time that Castro had made similar public complaints in one of his marathon speeches.

members of the Cuban underworld and the Cuban military. In the 1940's, many of the young idealists of the 1930's, who had been militant members of the Communist Party and other revolutionary movements became common criminals. Many, after participating in the Spanish Civil War as volunteers against the Fascists, or as volunteer fighters in the French underground against German occupation troops, upon returning to Cuba, could not live without the gun. Names such as Fernández, Salabarría, Tró, Agostini and Masferrer filled the pages of Cuban newspapers with their criminal acts. Today we find that a body of evidence exists which seems to point to Cuban military complicity in drug smuggling to the United States, although the Cuban Government has denied any involvement and many drug smugglers have been arrested when they have crossed into Cuban territory.

A more recent example of violent behavior was that of a group of Cuban criminals who arrived in Miami in 1980 and who are now in jail. Although these criminals are not representative of Cuban society their behavior is more violent than that of the rest of the U.S. prison population. Among the close to 125,000 Cubans of the Mariel exodus, about 1,800 of them have become feared criminals in the United States. The group that joined the drug underworld in particular has developed a reputation for violent behavior and the tendency to fight it out with agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> A comprehensive collection of articles and other documents related to the alleged connection of Cuban officials and the narcotics trade was published in 1983 by the Cuban National Foundation. One of the documents cites the indictment on November 15, 1982, by the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, of René Rodríguez-Cruz, a senior official of the DGI (Directorio General de Investigaciones), Vice-Admiral Aldo Santamaría-Cuadrado, Chief of Staff of the Cuban Navy until 1985, and Fernando Ravelo-Renedo, former Cuban Ambassador to Colombia, on charges of facilitating the importation of drugs into the United States. For more information see: Cuban American National Foundation, Castro and the Narcotics Connection (Washington, D.C.: CANF, 1000 Thomas Jefferson St., N.W. 20007), 88 pages.

<sup>10</sup> About 1,850 Cubans who arrived in the Mariel exodus in 1980 were in jail as of March of 1986, at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. According to reports from prison officials, there have been nine homicides, seven suicides, 400 serious but unsuccessful suicide attempts and more than 2,000 serious incidents of self-mutilation since 1981 among Cubans at the Atlanta prison. Although Cubans in Atlanta make up only about 5 percent of the total number of prisoners in the Federal prison system nationwide, they account for over half of the reported inmate-to-inmate assaults and at least one-third of all assaults by prisoners on guards. Source:

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But "violence" in the Cuban context is not always what one would interpret from a superficial observation of historical events. For example, several cases of important Cuban historical figures dueling with their enemies to defend their "honor" are mentioned in the pages of this book. But dueling in Cuba was reduced to absurdity a long time ago. Dueling became a highly cherished sport of Cuban politicians who often fought duels that were rarely fatal. They were "neither brutal not painful, and far less dangerous than baseball or tennis." Pistols were seldom used, with the preferred weapon being dueling-swords. At the drop of blood from a prick the duel was over. The shedding of blood healed the wound of honor which caused the duel.

As individuals, most Cubans are hard workers, show a great deal of ingenuity in solving problems, and place a very high value in education. The successes achieved by Cuban exiles in the United States after the 1959 revolution have become legendary. In a matter of a few years, Cuban families in the United States have prospered and attained wealth and professional recognition in many fields. They are frequently mentioned as possibly one of the highest achievers among immigrant groups who have entered the United States within a short period of time.

This same ingenuity and stubbornness has also been shown by the Cuban Communists to carry out practically impossible military operations. For example, in November of 1975, a battalion of special forces composed of 650 men was transported from Cuba to Angola in 13 days using old Bristol Britannia BB 218 turboprops. Within two months thousands of additional combat troops and equipment had been sent in an assortment of old ships and planes to support the MPLA. They fought against a South African invasion and guerrilla forces of UNITA and the FNLA. The tremendous odds against completing successfully this operation over 5,000 miles away from

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William E. Schmidt, "Number of Cubans Detained is Rising; Crowding and cost of holding men to be deported cited," New York Times (March 10, 1986), p. 1, col. 1. The experience with these prisoners is mentioned here only to show that these Cubans, most of whom were released from Cuban jails and placed on board ship for the United States by the Cuban Government, have a greater tendency toward violence than the rest of the jail inmates in the United States, many of whom come from a wider variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds than the Cubans.

11 "The Cuban Duel as a Sport," Literary Digest (April 22, 1916), pp. 1178-79.

the island only...  
ditional Cuban stubbornness. They dare to win.<sup>12</sup>

The average Cuban is a strong family man who also has a strong sense of loyalty to his friends. Although these are admirable traits, there is also an ugly side to them. Nepotism was strong in Cuba before the 1959 revolution and is still strong today. The pork barrel is almost a Cuban institution. Presidents Grau, Prío and Batista placed their relatives and close friends in important government jobs and looked the other way while they enriched themselves at the expense of the country. After the 1959 revolution, the same nepotism has continued, with the Castro family holding the most prominent jobs in the administration, and other generals and their families enjoying special privileges.

During the struggle for independence, Cuban troops fought with ragged uniforms, went barefoot, lived on snakes in the swamps, and endured many hardships. But the patriotism generated after independence, as the fighters became office seekers. The 1959 revolution, although paying lip service to patriotism, internationalist duties to spread the revolution to other countries, etc., has not avoided the surfacing of the perpetual office seekers and the creation of a "new class" that places civic responsibility behind personal gain.

Many Cubans volunteered to fight in Angola, for example, but upon their return in the early years after the start of Cuban involvement in 1975-76, expected and demanded special concessions and material rewards. With limited resources available to the Cuban Government these could not be granted. As the Cuban involvement in Angola has expanded to over 20 years, thousands of Cubans have been rotated through that war and the number of casualties has been mounting. The rewards for participation in so-called "internationalist duties" have been diminished, although refusing to participate can bring about many different forms of punishment. Cuban military involvement in Africa has also resulted in the creation of a new group of military heroes such as Division Generals Arnaldo Ochoa Sánchez and Abelardo Colomé Ibarra, both of whom have been given the title of "Hero of the Republic of Cuba," and given the Order of Máximo Gómez. They have both been praised for their spirit of sacrifice, unselfishness, desire to excel, heroism, etc., etc. These generals are part of the "new class."

<sup>12</sup> The Cuban Government wins dares such as this in part due to the lack of resolve of its enemies. When they face an equally daring enemy they cannot get away with deeds such as this. An example was their defeat in Grenada in 1983. However, please note that Cuba did not have regular troops in Grenada.

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"Personalismo" and "caudillismo" have been present for centuries in Cuba. It shows both in politics as well as in everyday life. Cubans are fiercely individualistic and proud. They like strong leaders or "caudillos" who demand absolute loyalty. This self-centered style of leadership, is part of the cultural heritage from Spain. Cuban leaders have been both civilian leaders, as well as military commanders. With very few exceptions, all the heads of state have had a military background going back to colonial times.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, Cubans have traditionally sacrificed their own individual interests for the common good. They have learned to adjust to long-term struggles to achieve personal or group goals. Although they may become rather impatient waiting for a traffic light to change, they can struggle for generations to achieve independence, overthrow a dictatorship or influence others to change their political and economic system of government. Most Americans cannot conceive how after so many years many Cuban exiles continue to struggle against the Communist government in Cuba and refuse to behave like other immigrant waves into the United States. Castro's followers also show similar traits. They are determined to assist in the defeat of Capitalism and the United States regardless of how long or what it takes.

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<sup>13</sup> Jack C. Plano, Milton Greenberg, Roy Olton and Robert E. Riggs, provided the following definitions of caudillismo and personalismo in their Political Science Dictionary (Hinsdale, Ill.: The Dryden Press, 1973):

Personalism: The Latin American political phenomenon of personalizing political power. Traditionally, many Latin American political parties could be described as bands of loyal followers clustered around, and serving as a vehicle for the expression of, some dominant and colorful personality.

Caudillismo: The principle of personal or "boss-type" political rule in Latin American politics. The caudillo depends on the personal loyalty of followers. Founded in the feudal systems of Spain and Portugal, caudillismo serves as a substitute for the formal institutions of government from the local to the national level.

## The Cuban Soldier

The Cuban military is formed by men and women who have all the characteristics outlined above. As the Cuban revolution of 1959 has matured over a quarter of a century and a professional modern military has been formed, the tendency toward fanatical actions has diminished. A professional military corps does not act on the basis of emotions but on the basis of a sound analysis of the situation at hand.

Although Cuban military and civilian leaders, as well as their Spanish ancestors, have been known to save the last bullet to commit suicide rather than face capture, Cubans as a group are not suicidal. A Cuban, as an individual may take his life rather than accepting defeat or dishonor but as a group they will not normally engage in suicidal actions on purpose. Prominent Cuban political figures have taken their lives when faced with terminal illness or depression due to old age or political or economic setbacks. Cuban criminals in jail in the United States, many of whom are mentally incompetent, have also taken their lives or attempted suicide when faced with the possibility of spending the rest of their lives in jail living like caged animals.

Cuban military and political leaders have led their men in battle and have been killed in heroic acts. An example is Lieutenant General Antonio Maceo who was wounded in combat twenty six times before losing his life fighting in the struggle for independence. Civilian leaders, such as José Martí, have died in combat fighting for their ideals. Cuban light cavalry charges with machete in hand during the War of Independence are also legendary and border on suicidal, but this was not the intent of the individual soldier. One could almost envision a Cuban cavalryman asking his fellow soldier before a battle, - Pepe, what would you like me to tell your family? They had no intention of dying and expected to survive.

On the other hand, leaders such as General Calixto García attempted suicide, and the former President of the Republic at Arms, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, killed himself rather than falling into enemy hands.<sup>14</sup> There are also more recent examples of suicides in the past 35 to 40 years. In 1951, Eduardo Chivás, a prominent opposition figure killed himself in the middle of a radio broadcast when he found himself unable to prove corruption charges against a member of the

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<sup>14</sup> García miraculously survived after placing his pistol under his chin and firing before being captured by the Spanish. The bullet exited by his forehead and quick intervention by Spanish military surgeons saved his life.

cabinet. Former President Carlos Prío Socarrás (1948-1952), a political foe of Chivás, committed suicide in Miami in 1976. Former President Osvaldo Dorticós (1959-1975)<sup>15</sup> and Hayde Santamaria, a prominent close ally of Fidel Castro during the revolution have also taken their lives in the past ten years.

Cubans fight as long as it is reasonably possible to win. The concept of Patria o Muerte (Fatherland or Death)<sup>16</sup> has severe limitations as was shown during the Grenada incident in 1983. The deliberate taking of one's life in mass suicidal action is not a Cuban characteristic. Losing a battle is not considered more important than winning a protracted war; patience and reason have prevailed in the past. For example, as far back as 1762, when the British sent a large expeditionary force to capture Havana, the residents of the city fought heroically for two months before surrendering. But this experience could not be compared with other instances in world history where other people have fought to the last man.<sup>17</sup>

Cuban military history, however, does record at least one famous practically suicidal action, which took place on October 8, 1871. Brigadier General Julio Sanguily, an invalid as a result of war wounds, had been taken prisoner by a Cuban guerrilla unit of about 120 men, fighting on the side of Spain. Upon learning that General Sanguily had been taken

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<sup>15</sup> Osvaldo Dorticós was serving as Minister of Justice at the time that he took his own life. A possible explanation for his action may be that during "Operación Toga," Cuban intelligence arrested several judges and other employees of the judicial system for taking bribes and engaging in other acts of corruption without his knowledge. He may also have been suffering from terminal cancer.

<sup>16</sup> This is a frequent slogan used by Cuban Revolutionary Government officials and was coined by Fidel Castro in the first year after the revolution in 1959.

<sup>17</sup> Spartan forces in the battle of Thermopylae, for example, fought against Persian invaders to the last man in 480 B.C. Two similar examples took place in Spain. In 219 B.C. the people of Sagunto staged a heroic defense of their city against the forces of Carthaginian General Hannibal Barca during the Second Punic War. In 133 B.C. the people of Numantia also staged a heroic defense of their city against the forces of Scipio Aemilianus, and preferred to die in the ashes of the city rather than surrender to the Roman soldiers. Although Cubans have never gone to these extremes, during the Ten Years War 1868-1878, Cuban patriots burned the town of Bayamo to prevent its capture by Spanish troops.

prisoner, Major General Ignacio Agramonte formed a cavalry unit composed of 35 of his best men and addressed them: Brigadier Sanguily is being transported as a prisoner in that enemy column. It is necessary to rescue him dead or alive, even if we all perish in the attempt. Although outnumbered, the smaller Cuban Army unit was able to rescue General Sanguily in a quick and bloody machete charge. General Sanguily later became himself a famous Major General in the Cuban Army. Henry Reeve, an American officer who later became himself a brigadier in the Cuban Army, participated in this famous action.<sup>18</sup>

### Cubans in Foreign Military Organizations

Cubans as individuals have distinguished themselves in combat in and out of Cuba. As far back as the seventeenth century there were famous Cuban corsairs like Thome Rodriguez and Felipe Giralдино. Cuban born flag-rank officers in the Spanish Army include Field Marshall Juan Montalvo y O'Farrill, born in Cuba in 1778 and General Julio Mangada Rosenorn, born in 1877. At least one black Cuban, Jose Domingo Hércules, commanded a large contingent of French soldiers in Napoleon's elite forces and received the French Cross of Honor.

Manuel de Quesada y Loynaz rose to the rank of General in the Mexican Army during the presidency of Benito Juárez and distinguished himself in the war against Maximilian and his French legionairs.<sup>19</sup> Bartolomé Masó participated in an uprising in El Salvador before joining the Cuban struggle for independence. Several Cubans also distinguished themselves in the American Civil War and became heroes of the Union Army.

<sup>18</sup> General Reeve was paralyzed from the waist down as a result of war wounds. However, he had a special chair made so that he could continue fighting as a cavalry officer strapped to his horse. He was killed in action later in the war. General Sanguily, who had suffered the same fate, also fought strapped to his horse.

<sup>19</sup> Benito Juárez was elected President of Mexico by Liberal members of Congress at Querétaro in 1857 upon the resignation of President Ignacio Comonfort following a military uprising led by Conservative General Félix Zuluaga. He served as President through a civil war which ended in 1860 and a war from 1862 to 1867 to defeat a foreign invasion led by France which placed Archduke Maximilian of Austria in power in Mexico. After the defeat of Maximilian, Juárez was reelected in 1867 and 1871, but he died in 1872 before completing his last term.

including the Fernández-Cavada brothers, both lieutenant colonels in the Union Army.

In more recent history, a Cuban commanded the Ethiopian cavalry of Haile Sellassie I in 1935 against the invading Italian Army. Many Cubans fought in the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939, as well as in the U.S. Army in WWII. A Cuban-American member of the U.S. Marine Corps, killed 81 Japanese in hand to hand combat in the Pacific campaign. Another Cuban, son of Celestino Fernández, a Communist leader in Camagüey who went into exile in the Soviet Union in the 1930's, became an officer in the Red Army and fought in WWII. During the Korean War, many Cuban-Americans fought in the U.S. Armed Forces and several were killed in combat. For example, Miguel Pérez Crespo died in combat in 1952 and Jesús Arbitre Peréa, a physician in the U.S. Army was wounded in combat while serving in the Medical Corps the same year.

During the Viet Nam War several thousand Cuban-Americans served in the U.S. Armed Forces ranging in rank from enlisted men to lieutenant colonels. They served in all branches of the service. Several of them distinguished themselves as pilots. Cuban-American officers, mostly lieutenant colonels and colonels are currently serving as U.S. Military Attachés or as members of Military Assistance Groups in several Latin American countries. Erneido Oliva, a veteran commander of the 2506 Bay of Pigs Brigade, was promoted to Brigadier General on February 23, 1985, and is currently the Brigade Commander of the 260th Military Police Brigade of the National Guard based in the District of Columbia. At the present time there is even a Cuban-American serving as commander of one American nuclear submarine.<sup>20</sup>

### Facts and Myths About the Cuban Military

The Cuban Armed Forces despite the size of the country have produced many legendary heroes, mostly in the 30-year period from 1868 to 1898, during the struggle for independence. But behind the Cuban pantheon of military heroes, the fact is that very few major engagements ever took place in Cuba before 1959. The Cuban military has really come of age in the past 25 years.

The largest military operation in Cuba during the colonial period was without a doubt the British attack and capture of Havana in 1762. Over 14,000 British troops took part in the

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<sup>20</sup> U.S. Navy Commander Henry F. Herrera, a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, was appointed skipper of the nuclear power submarine USS Lafayette in 1985. The submarine carries a crew of 150 men and is armed with 16 nuclear missiles.

operation. About 290 British soldiers were killed in combat, 650 were wounded, and about 152 more died of disease and wounds. Another 130 were declared missing and presumed dead. The Spanish and Cuban defenders suffered about 380 men killed and 1,493 wounded in combat. The battle for Havana lasted from June 6 to August 14, 1762.

During the Ten Years War (1868-1878) and the War of Independence (1895-1898), both Cuban and Spanish forces suffered thousands of casualties. However, there were very few large battles involving thousands of men and resulting in hundreds of casualties. For example, during the most important military operation of the War of Independence, known as the "invasión," between October 22, 1895 and January 22, 1896, Cuban forces suffered 67 dead and 364 wounded in twenty major battles, including Mal Tiempo, Coliseo, Calimete and Las Taironas. Cuban forces used mostly guerrilla warfare. The Spanish often broke the engagements and failed to use their superior forces to pursue the Cubans and force them to fight decisive battles.

The largest battles ever fought in Cuba actually took place after the United States entered the war with Spain in 1898. Spanish General Joaquín Vara del Rey with about 600 men, including Spanish, Cuban and Puerto Rican troops established a defensive line against much larger American and Cuban Army troops in the hills of El Caney. From a strong point at El Vizo Fort they fought practically to the last man. The defenders suffered over 400 casualties including Vara del Rey, who took his own life rather than surrendering. The American and Cuban troops sustained over 450 casualties. Another defensive line was formed by Spanish General Linares at San Juan Hill, where they fought against larger forces. They sustained 310 casualties before retreating. The American forces sustained 1,012 and the Cuban Army over 150. The real heroes, one could argue, were Spanish.

Between 1902, when Cuban became independent, and January 1, 1959, when the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista was overthrown, only two large battles took place involving large numbers of combatants and resulting in large numbers of casualties. They took place in November of 1934 and in September of 1957.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The black insurrection of 1912 resulted in several thousand blacks being killed. However, no real large battles took place. Most of the rebels killed had been hunted down and assassinated by the Army after their capture. Most of the other so-called battles were in fact skirmishes. They involved very few combatants and most of the casualties were often the result of assassinations after the fact.

The first took place during an attempted coup d'etat on November 8, 1933. Members of the ABC revolutionary organization and several popular officers in the armed forces led an insurrection against Fulgencio Batista and a revolutionary government led by President Ramón Grau San Martín. Naval units, airplanes and artillery were used in running gun battles throughout Havana, with the main action taking place at the military airfield at Camp Columbia, Police Headquarters, the San Ambrosio and Dragones Army barracks and the Atarés castle. Troops loyal to the government under the command of Captain Gregorio Querejeta were able to defeat the insurrection. Over 150 men were killed and many more were wounded. Querejeta later became a general and Chief of Staff of the Army.

The second large battle took place after the rebellion of Navy personnel and civilian revolutionaries in Cienfuegos on September 5, 1957 in an attempt to overthrow Fulgencio Batista. About 18 members of the armed forces loyal to the government and about 70 civilian and Navy personnel involved in the insurrection were killed. Many more were wounded on both sides.

During the seven years that Fulgencio Batista governed Cuba as a dictator between March 10, 1952 and December 31, 1958, approximately 1,000 government troops and about 1,500 revolutionaries were killed, for a grand total of no more than 2,500. In addition to the Cienfuegos uprising on September 1957, the largest battles took place on July 26, 1953 when Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba, and during the battle of Santa Clara in December of 1958, when about 60 government troops and 40 members of the Rebel Army were killed.<sup>22</sup> It is a myth that large military encounters took place in Cuba during the struggle against Batista. This author can only account for 52 encounters in seven years and most of them were rather small. Contrary to the assertion that as many as 20,000 people died during the revolutionary war, the actual figure is less than one fourth that number. The majority were executed, assassinated, or died as a result of terrorist acts, not as a result of combat.

The largest battles involving Cuban troops have all taken place after 1959, both inside and outside of Cuba. The largest battle ever involving Cuban military personnel took place during the Bay of Pigs invasion between April 15th and 20th, 1961. Government pilots flew approximately 70 missions

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<sup>22</sup> The government lost 22 soldiers and 64 attackers were killed. Most of attackers killed were in fact assassinated after they retreated and were hunted down by government forces. A total of 148 men and two women participated in the attack.

against the invasion force and shot down eight planes. They used two T-33's, two Sea Furies, and one B-26. The rest of the planes of the Revolutionary Air Force had been destroyed at several airfields two days before the landing by bombing runs conducted with B-26's of the invading force. The B-26 and one Sea Fury were shot down. The invasion brigade flew about as many missions with 17 B-26's, C-46's, and C-54's. Thousands of troops, and hundreds of tanks and artillery pieces were sent into combat against the approximately 1,500 members of the 2506 Brigade. Official figures place the number of men killed in the invasion force at 107 and the number of government troops killed at 161. Hundreds more were wounded. The actual number of government troops killed may in fact be much higher. In addition to the Cuban troops fighting on both sides, several American pilots were killed while flying for the invasion force. The Cuban Government also used foreigners, including Chilean and Nicaraguan pilots. Other foreigners fought as members of the ground forces. Many foreign military trainers were present in Cuba at the time teaching Cuban troops how to use thousands of new weapons including tanks and artillery.

Cuban troops have fought in many battles in Africa and the Middle East since 1961. Cuban troops were sent to Algeria to fight in the war between that country and Morocco. Cuban troops have fought with guerrillas in several African countries against Belgian, Portuguese, and South African troops. They have fought in internal conflicts either in support of guerrillas fighting to overthrow African governments or in support of African government against guerrillas or troops from neighboring countries. Some of the largest battles involving Cuban personnel have taken place in Angola and Ethiopia. Thousands of Cuban soldiers have fought and continue to fight in Angola since 1975. Cuban troops fought in Syria during the 1973 war with Israel. They have also fought as guerrillas in several Latin American countries including the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru and Guatemala.

At the present time over 35,000 Cuban military personnel are serving as combat soldiers or military advisers in about 19 different countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central America. The size of the Cuban military, counting ready reserves and militia is placed at over 1.618 million.<sup>23</sup> The Cuban Armed Forces have also assisted in the organization and training of a well-equipped military force of over 150,000 men in Nicaragua since 1980. Over 3,000 Cuban military experts as well as over 4,000 civilian advisers, are currently serving in Nicaragua.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, Handbook on the Cuban Armed Forces, (Washington, D.C.: 1986), p. 1-12. (Unclassified).

The old pantheon of military heroes is in the process of being expanded and even replaced by new names. Although Cuban military units are still named after the heroes of the wars for independence in the 19th century and martyrs and heroes of the struggle against Batista, new names are being added. Many leaders have been lost in combat in so-called "internationalist duties." Their memories have to be honored in order to maintain the interest of the troops in participating in these difficult conflicts, particularly when material rewards are very scarce. Most of the old comandantes of the guerrilla war against Batista and the military commanders of the early years of the revolution have been replaced by generals who were young teenagers and low rank officers in the Rebel Army during the revolution. These men have come of age in the foreign wars that have been fought and continue to be fought in many corners of the world.

Even legendary figures such as "Che" Guevara's may now be seen in a different light. Guevara and his Cuban followers were dedicated revolutionaries. Cuban Communists as well as Communists throughout the world revere his dedication but his expertise as a fighter is questioned. His theories about guerrilla warfare and his military leadership have been discredited. During the revolution he did not really perform any extraordinary deeds. In the war against the counterrevolutionary guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains he was badly defeated by the anti-communist guerrillas led by Porfirio Ramirez. Although "Che" Guevara may have had some successes in Africa, he was defeated in his efforts to start a guerrilla war in Bolivia.

The Cuban military now has experienced officers and military leaders that rival those of the military establishments of the leading world powers including the Soviet Union.<sup>24</sup> They have been under constant training and retraining for over twenty five years. They are dedicated to their ideals, and have years of experience in war, both conventional and unconventional. They are accustomed to accomplishing almost impossible tasks. For example, transporting thousands of men to fight a war in Angola without virtually any support in old ships and planes. They have challenged the odds over and over again and managed to obtain many victories. Defeat and/or failure to accomplish a mission brings about very strong and certain punishment. The officers who failed to fight to the death in Grenada have been severely punished.

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<sup>24</sup> Cuban troops have had more combat experience in the past 25 years than Soviet troops. With the exception of Afghanistan, where a massive Soviet military operation began in 1979, Cuban troops have been more active in the past 25 years.

It is particularly difficult to obtain information about this new leadership of the Cuban military. Who are these people by the name of Acevedo, Casas, Colomé, Ochoa, Schueg, Telles, Fernández, Cabrera, García, Baranda, Chui, etc.? This is one of the most important aspects of this study because one could reasonably expect that the future leadership of Cuba once Fidel Castro leaves the scene, will come from the military. Military leaders ex-officio have traditionally had an important social and political rank in Cuba. Latin America and in Soviet-block countries. From their ranks have come the leaders of these countries. There is no reason to believe that this will not take place in Cuba again. Military leaders with conspicuous positive merits within the current system, stand an excellent chance of being the future leaders of the country.

### Research Methodology

The information presented here has been gathered from published sources. All the materials used are public and available to any researcher willing to invest the time to read them. These include Cuban history books, military publications such as Boletín del Ejército, Verde Olivo and from U.S. Government publications such as The Soviet-Cuban Connection in Central America and the Caribbean, and the reports of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Newspaper and magazine articles, as well as books on Soviet military hardware, were consulted in the preparation of this assessment of Cuban military power. In addition, the author interviewed several Cuban-American researchers and recent emigres, many of them veterans of the Cuban military, to gather information and verify facts that have been obtained from other sources.

It is no longer possible to write about the Cuban military without consulting numerous publications on African, Middle Eastern, Asian, European and Latin American affairs. The Cuban military and intelligence organizations have become very active in practically all corners of the world since 1959. From Algeria to Syria, from Angola to Ethiopia, and from the Dominican Republic to Bolivia, Cuban soldiers have fought and continue to fight conventional and guerrilla wars. Hundreds of books and periodicals in many languages have been consulted to prepare this study, which only covers the highlights of these involvement. It would take several books to do justice to the subject.

As has already been mentioned, since 1959, new officers have come up through the ranks of the Cuban military and many of the leaders who fought during the revolution against Batista have died or retired. Others are now holding civilian positions in the government. An innovation à la Castro has

been that military officers have been moved back and forth between civilian and military positions. Thus it is not always possible to determine the actual status of an individual.

A list of all present Cuban generals and admirals is included in Appendix VII. An effort has been made to provide information about their background, including cross-references to specific events in which they took part. Many of these new faces are unknown outside of Cuba and even inside Cuba not all of them are well-known due to the secret nature of their activities. However, due to limited information, some of these men may have moved up in rank or changed their responsibilities or have retired since they were identified.

An interesting exercise was conducted during the course of the research for this publication. Several young and old Cubans (ranging in age between 26 and 70 years of age) who left Cuba within the past six years were read the names in the list of generals in the appendix. The same exercise was conducted with several leading scholars on Cuban affairs in the United States. Very few were able to identify the names and knew very little if anything about them. These generals live very private lives and are unknown except to their immediate relatives and staffs.

The Cuban Government prohibits the taking of pictures of individuals in the armed forces, military bases and equipment. This makes it practically impossible to gather this type of information when using only resources available to the average individual who can only obtain information in the public domain. But an attempt has been made to document the findings presented here with pictures from many different sources in the public domain, including many publications of the Cuban and United States governments.

# AFRICA

COUNTRY	YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE
Liberia	1847
South Africa	1910
Egypt	1922
Ethiopia	1941
Libya	1951
Tunisia	1956
Morocco	1956
Sudan	1956
Ghana	1957
Guinea	1958
Mauritania	1960
Mali	1960
Senegal	1960
Ivory Coast	1960
Volta	1960
Togo	1960
Cameroun	1960
Dahomey / Benin	1960
Sabon	1960
Congo (Brazaville)	1960
Congo (Leopoldville)	1960
Central African Rep.	1960
Somali Republic	1960
Malagasy Republic	1960
Chad	1960
Niger	1960
Sierra Leone	1961
Tanzania	1961
Algeria	1962
Rwanda	1962
Burundi	1962
Uganda	1962
Kenya	1963
Malawi	1964
Zambia	1964
Gambia	1965
Angola	1975
Mozambique	1975
Guinea / Bissau	1975
Cape Verde	1975
Sao Tomé and Principe	1975



## CUBAN OVERSEAS MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

The Cuban Armed Forces have been very active in the African continent since at least 1963. At the present time there are between 45,000 and 60,000 Cuban military and civilian personnel stationed throughout Africa, with the largest concentrations in Angola and Ethiopia. Readers may need to refer to this map often as they read the following chapter in order to better understand the complicated African politics that have followed the end of colonial rule over the past 30 years.

Cuban military involvement in foreign countries has taken many different forms in the past 27 years. The Revolutionary Government has given military training, logistical support, weapons and combat troops to revolutionary groups and friendly governments throughout the world. Thousands of Cuban soldiers have participated in guerrilla operations, civil and conventional wars. The experience gained over so many years of conventional and unconventional warfare has made the Cuban military establishment one of the most effective in the world. This chapter outlines the highlights of this growing outward projection of military power to other countries.

There are at least five distinct phases of Cuban military involvement overseas. The first phase, in the period from 1959 to 1965, can best be described as a learning process. At least 20 revolutionary groups in Latin America were given direct assistance by veterans of the revolution against Batista. Most of these efforts to export the revolution failed, for many different reasons. At the same time, the Cuban Revolutionary Government was in the process of establishing contacts with African anti-colonialist movements and newly independent countries. The Cuban leaders went as far as to send combat troops to Algeria in 1963 to help that country fight a war with Morocco. Contacts developed throughout Africa in the early sixties were to result in a major commitment in the 1970's and 1980's. But the learning process in Africa was long and, as in Latin America, not without mistakes.

The second phase, between 1966 and 1969, was very difficult and resulted in several major failures. It started with a great deal of hope and fanfare at the Tri-Continental Congress held in Havana in 1966, with a promise of world-wide revolution and ended on a sour note with several major setbacks. An untold number of Cubans, most of them veterans of the revolution against Batista, died in unsuccessful attempts to assist revolutionaries around the world to take power. Perhaps the worst failure was that of Ernesto "Che" Guevara in Bolivia in 1967. Cuba was strongly criticized for interfering in the internal affairs of native revolutionary movements and Communist parties, as well as for attempting to impose the Cuban revolutionary model on others. The divisions that resulted in many of these revolutionary groups was partially responsible for major setbacks like the one suffered in Bolivia. Relations with the Soviet Union were also strained as a result of the Cuban policies. The many failures in this period, particularly in Latin America, forced a rethinking of the strategy and goals of Cuban military involvement abroad.

In the third phase, from 1970 to 1975, the tactics of exporting the revolution changed. In the 1960's, the tactics had been to organize rural-based insurgency movements with Cubans or their allies often attempting to promote revolution on their own without forming alliances of coalitions with other revolutionary groups. In the 1970's the new tactics called for urban-based insurgency movements and an effort was made to form coalitions of revolutionary organizations. The Cuban Government made a major effort to establish diplomatic ties with developing countries and change its image in the world community. In Latin America an effort was made to re-open diplomatic ties which had been broken in the early 1960's. In Africa, Cuba strengthened ties with revolutionary movements and the governments of the new independent nations. Cuban military personnel were sent to train military forces for several of these young nations. They were also sent to act as body guards for revolutionary leaders who had been able to take power, but still faced many political enemies. Cuban civilians were sent in large numbers to provide medical, educational and technical services to civilians. In addition, thousands of foreign students were given scholarships to study in Cuba.

In the Middle East, the Cuban leadership was able to establish close ties with Arab revolutionary leaders. The defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war with Israel provided Cuba an avenue to develop strong friendships with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and other organizations which claimed that Israel was an extension of American imperialism in that part of the world. Arab guerrillas were given training in Cuba and Cuban troops were sent to the region to support training programs and to reenforce Arab armies. When the 1973 Arab-Israeli war broke out, Cuban combat troops were present in Syria, operating tanks and armored vehicles and providing logistical support.

During the fourth phase from 1975 to 1980, Cuban military involvement abroad underwent a major and important change. Thousands of Cuban soldiers were sent to Africa to fight as conventional units in Angola and Ethiopia. These major military efforts were carried out by younger soldiers who had not participated in the revolution against Batista. They were the product of the revolution after years of political and technical training. A new military order was born as a result of these experiences.

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Some of the higher ranking troop commanders were indeed veterans of the revolution against Batista, however, the majority of the young men sent to Angola were very young children in the late 1950's.

In the fifth phase, during the 1980's, Cuban military units have been caught up in a protracted war in Angola with no end in sight. Thousands of soldiers have been rotated through a difficult and bloody war. Thousands have been killed and estimates of casualties run as high as 10,000 since 1975. At the same time a new cadre of experienced military leaders has been formed. These men are experienced and respected both inside and outside of Cuba. The Grenada incident in 1983, however, brought about a major defeat. Cuban troops faced the American military for the first time and were defeated. An important aspect of Grenada was not the defeat but the failure to follow orders and fight to the end. Only token resistance was made by about three dozen men while the rest ran for safety and/or surrendered. This has not deterred the Cuban leaders from continuing to expand their military commitments to the spread of Communism. Now, in fact, most of the Cuban soldiers had not been born in 1959 when Fidel Castro captured power in Cuba. A new generation of soldiers is in the process of taking over the Cuban military establishment. Within 10 years all the old timers will be gone and the soldiers who are now participating in foreign experiences will be running the country.

Each one of the five phases outlined above has been subdivided by regions of the world. An attempt has been made to provide the reader basic information on the political history of each country where Cuban troops have been active. For most people, African history in the past thirty years is very confusing and difficult to understand. But without some minimal knowledge of African affairs it is impossible to gain an understanding of Cuban policies and military activities.

## AFRICA

Cuban involvement in African affairs started soon after the overthrow of Fulgencio Batista. African revolutionaries, most of whom were active in anti-colonial wars, were sympathetic to the Cuban revolution and its leaders. It was a case of mutual admiration. Ernesto "Che" Guevara visited several African countries in 1959, seeking to establish ties with revolutionary organizations. As a result of his trip, several new relationships were established and African leaders began to visit Cuba. For example, President Sekou Touré of Guinea was welcomed to Cuba in 1960. They spoke of the natural alliance of all people seeking to obtain their freedom. Similar activity was also taking place in Asia. Leaders such as Sukarno of Indonesia were invited to visit Cuba. But behind the open political contacts were the beginnings of Cuban military activity far from the island's borders.

### Algeria

At the time of the overthrow of Batista, the Algerians were in the middle of a bloody war to obtain independence from France. Algerian revolutionaries were given assistance by the Cuban Government starting fairly soon after the revolution took power. Cuban radio and television, as well as newspapers controlled by the government, ran many news stories on the progress of the war and presented "soap operas" about the struggle of the Algerians against French colonialism. The extent of Cuban assistance to the Algerians is clouded. However, the French Government prohibited Cuban civilian planes from flying over French air space as a form of protest for the assistance that was being given to the Algerians. <sup>22</sup>

In 1954, Algerians began a rebellion to obtain independence from France. The principal revolutionary organization was the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN). In 1958, after a series of meetings in Morocco, Tangier, Tunis, and Libya, representatives of several Algerian revolutionary groups formed a Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA). By the end of 1959, it is estimated that at least 170,000 lives had been lost in the conflict. In 1960, the GPRA had been recognized by the Soviet Union and several other countries, despite the fact that the GPRA had not yet defeated the French. Seeking an end to the war, French President de Gaulle offered the Algerians three choices: independence, federation with France or internal autonomy. The offer was neither accepted nor rejected as the war continued. After several years of bloody fighting, Algeria was granted independence in 1961. It is estimated that as many as 1.5

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After independence in 1962, diplomatic relations were quickly established and a Cuban military mission sent to Algeria as part of the Cuban Embassy. When war broke out between Algeria and Morocco late in 1963 over a border dispute in the area of Colomb-Béchar, a brigade of Cuban troops was sent to assist the Algerians. This was the first instance of a Cuban combat brigade being sent out to participate in a foreign war.<sup>23</sup>

When the war broke out in October of 1963, the Cuban merchant ship "Aracelio Iglesias" was en route to Algeria with several T-34 tanks and military technicians. On October 28, a battalion of tank troops may have arrived on another vessel. In addition, other Cuban soldiers were flown in by Cubana de Aviación Bristol Britannia aircraft. It is estimated that about 400 soldiers and 40 tanks plus artillery were transferred to Algeria. Although the Cubans were deployed to the front lines, the war came to an end before Cuban combat troops could enter into action. It seems that the Cubans were withdrawn within three months.<sup>24</sup>

Million Algerians may have died during the revolution and that as many as 2 million people were arrested or forced to live in concentration camps. Conservative elements in France did not go along with the move to grant independence and formed the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), to thwart the government's moves. They operated as an underground terrorist organization in both France and Algeria, but could not achieve their goals. Ahmed Ben Bella became the first Algerian Head of State in 1962 and ruled the country until 1965, when he was overthrown by a coup d'état led by Col. Houari Boumedienne. A Constitutional Assembly in August of 1963, proclaimed a new constitution which stated as one of the country's goals the building of socialism. The following year, in 1964, the Algerian Communist Party and the FLN joined forces to form one party. In 1968 the new party changed names to Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria.

<sup>23</sup> In 1973, King Hassan sent an infantry brigade to support the Syrian Army on the Golan Heights front during the war with Israel. At this time, a Cuban armor brigade was also providing assistance to the Syrians and thus the old enemies ended up fighting on the same side. We know that the Moroccans distinguished themselves in combat around Mount Hermon, but little is known about how the Cubans performed.

<sup>24</sup> William J. Durch, The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East from Algeria to Angola, (Alexandria, Va.: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Logistics Agency, Center for Naval Analyses, 1976), pp. 14-16.

The conflict did not last very long and the Moroccan Armed Forces humiliated the Algerians. After this incident, relations between Cuba and Algeria have been very close. Algeria has provided a base for Cuban military operations in the rest of Africa. When President Ben Bella was overthrown in 1965, relations between the two countries were somewhat strained, but before long, the Cuban leadership was able to establish a good working relationship with the new strongman, Colonel Houari Boumedienne.

## Ghana<sup>25</sup>

After WWII, the British colonial officials in Ghana allowed natives of the colony to take part in the administration of local government. In 1949, Kwame N'Krumah organized the Convention Popular Party (CPP) to demand additional reforms. Three years later, N'Krumah became the Prime Minister of the colony, and promised to fight against imperialism under a banner which mixed Socialism, Marxism and Christianity. He was successful in obtaining independence from the British in 1957.

After independence, N'Krumah became one of the principal leaders of the movement to free African countries from colonial rule. Internally, he carried out a revolutionary program to move the country toward Socialism. Relations with the Cuban revolutionary leadership were established soon after the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959. By 1961, a Cuban military mission had arrived in Ghana and a training camp for African guerrillas was organized under Cuban control. Ernesto "Che" Guevara visited the training Camp at least once in 1964, as part of a tour that took him to several African countries, including Algeria, Guinea and the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville). The camp seems to have been located near the border with Upper Volta in the northern part of the country.<sup>26</sup> The Cuban guerrilla training camp operated for several years until N'Krumah was overthrown in 1966 by a group of pro-British officers.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ghana is a small African country of about 238,537 Km<sup>2</sup> located between Ivory Coast, Upper Volta and Togo. The population of the country in 1983 was estimated at 12.7 million people. There are six major ethnic groups, of which the largest are the Ashantis with about 44 percent of the population. The official language is English and the capital is Accra.

<sup>26</sup> William J. Durch, The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East from Algeria to Angola, op. cit., p.14.

<sup>27</sup> In 1969, a new constitution was proclaimed and elections were held to transfer power to a civilian government.

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## Congo

The Congo is a vast area in West Central Africa, that was occupied by French, Belgian and Portuguese colonies for over a century. In the late 1950's movements for independence were started in the whole region and by 1958, the old colonies were giving way to several new independent nations. The development of the new independent nations is hard to follow since they shared the geographic name of the region and changed the names of the new countries several times.<sup>28</sup>

### Republic of Congo (People's Republic of the Congo)

Formerly known as French Equatorial Africa, this vast country became one of the overseas territories of the French Union after WWII. In November of 1958, the French granted autonomy and in August of 1960, full independence. Thus was born the new country of the Republic of Congo. The capital, which has also contributed to the name of the country is Brazzaville, located on the banks of the Congo River.<sup>29</sup> In 1970, it became the first African country to become Communist, and the name was changed once again to People's Republic of the Congo. The ruling political party is the Parti Congolais du Travail (PCT). The principal political forces are tribal groups in the north, the center and the south of the country, as well as Communist organizations and pro-western groups. It is difficult to tell whether regional tribal affiliations

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N'Krumah's CPP was not allowed to participate in the elections or to return to the country. He died in Bucharest, Hungary in 1972. Another military coup d'etat brought Colonel Ignatius Acheampong to power later in 1972 and N'Krumah's memory was revived as the liberator of the country from colonial rule. Relations with Cuba were reestablished in 1974.

<sup>28</sup> The geographic area known as the Congo, includes a vast area presently occupied by Zaire, People's Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea (formerly known as Rio Muni), Central African Republic, southern Cameroon, northern Angola, parts of southern Sudan, and parts of Malawi, Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), Mozambique and Zambia. The people of the region speak various Bantu languages which are closely related to one another.

<sup>29</sup> The country is often referred to as Congo-Brazzaville.

or political ideology have played a more important role in the politics of the country.

Cuban involvement in the Congo started under President Alphonse Massemba-Debat in the mid-1960's, when Cuba was asked to assist in the training of a militia or Civil Defense Corps. Formal diplomatic relations were established on May 10, 1964. Cuban troops provided a loyal presidential guard to Massemba-Debat to protect him against local political rivals. Cuban troops played an important role in June of 1966 when Captain Marien Ngouabi led an uprising demanding that President Massemba-Debat give up power and that all Cuban troops be sent back to their country. The uprising was defeated with about 200 Cuban troops playing a major role on the government's side. However, after this incident Cuban troops were moved to less visible areas outside of the capital and their numbers were reduced temporarily. One of their principal tasks in the Congo was to provide training to their golan guerrillas of the MPLA starting in 1966. This could best be done away from urban areas.

At least 200 Congolese were given scholarships to go to school in Cuba in the mid-1960's. This was part of a long-range plan of the Cuban Government to make friends in Africa and increase its influence in regional affairs. Over the years many Congolese have been educated in Cuba and have returned to their country.

The support of the Cuban Government was not sufficient to keep Massemba-Debat in power forever. In August of 1968, he was overthrown by Captain Ngouabi and his followers. The Army troops involved in the coup d'etat attacked and destroyed a People's Militia that had been trained by Cuban troops. It is possible that this militia unit was a cover name used to hide the presence of a substantial number of Cuban troops, who formed the bulk of this military unit.

Ngouabi and the Cuban Government managed to establish a friendly relationship after the coup that was to last until his assassination in March of 1977. Ngouabi played a major role in moving the country to declare itself the first Communist country in Africa and received substantial coaching from Cuba to set up a state security organization and a revolutionary court of justice to prosecute enemies of the state. In 1975 and 1976, Ngouabi provided considerable assistance to Cuba during the Angolan operation. Congolese airports and other facilities were used by Cuba as a staging area for an air-bridge to transport combat brigades to support the MPLA in Angola. However, despite Ngouabi valuable assistance to the Cuban Government, his Cuban friends could not prevent his assassination. Massemba-Debat was implicated in the death of Ngouabi and was arrested, convicted and executed.

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Ngouabi was replaced by J. Yhombi-Opongo, who was only able to retain power until 1979. He was replaced by Denis Sassou Nguesso, who had served as deputy head of state under Yhombi-Opongo. Sassou had close association with the Soviet Union, but also made an effort to improve the economy by establishing a closer relationship with France and other Western countries.

The Congolese Armed Forces are fairly small, consisting of between 8,000 and 9,000 men and a militia or paramilitary unit of about 1,500 men. About 400 Cuban soldiers were stationed in the Congo as of 1985. Military units are grouped under the Armée Populaire Nationale. The Congolese military has provided all the leaders of the country since independence. The principal military bases are located in the capital of Brazzaville and at Pointe-Noire.

### Republic of the Congo (Zaire)

This territory was the old Belgian Congo, and borders on the southeast with the People's Republic of the Congo. On June 30, 1960, the old Belgian colony became the Republic of Congo with its capital at Kinshasa (formerly Leopoldville). Patrice Lumumba, a well-known leftist African leader became the country's first Premier under a coalition government headed by President Joseph Kasavubu. The following year, in 1961, Lumumba was removed from office and murdered. The murder by mercenaries from Belgium, possibly working for Moises Tshombe, was followed by civil war and United Nations' involvement to end the fighting. Tshombe took over as president replacing Kasavubu after the death of Lumumba.

Followers of Lumumba formed a revolutionary government in the province of Katanga under the name People's Republic of Stanleyville in September of 1964. This was followed by a bloody civil war in which rebels captured and killed hundreds of white hostages and natives alike. The political arm of the rebels was the National Council of the Revolution, headed by Gaston Soumaliot and Laurent Cavila. They established contacts with the Cuban Government and requested military assistance. Cuban troops led by Ernesto "Che" Guevara went to the Congo to train guerrillas fighting against President Moise Tshombe in Katanga. Possibly as many as 200 Cuban combat troops participated in this operation. Guevara remained with the guerrillas from about April to December of 1965. The Cubans entered the country from Tanzania in the spring of 1965. They had their headquarters at Kigona.

Belgian paratroopers were dropped from American planes to rescue hundreds of people who had been caught in the civil war. In the middle of the civil war, General Joseph D. Mobutu deposed Tshombe and began a campaign to regain control

of the country.<sup>30</sup> It has been alleged that Cuban exiles, who were veterans of the Bay of Pigs invasion, went to the Congo under the sponsorship of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to assist the government troops fighting against the Communist guerrillas.<sup>31</sup> Cuban pilots working for the CIA were allegedly piloting B-26 aircraft in regular bombing missions against the guerrilla strongholds.<sup>32</sup> Eventually the revolutionaries arrived at a compromise with the government after Tshombe was deposed and the Cuban troops were asked to leave.

Guevara and some of the Cuban soldiers left Africa and went back to Cuba. Another group of Cuban troops went into the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) to set up new training facilities. In these facilities they trained guerrilla units of Amilcar Cabral (PAIGC) and guerrillas of the Angolan MPLA. They concentrated in the training of guerrillas fighting against Portuguese colonial troops in Africa. At the time, Portugal was fighting to retain control of Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Angola.

The Republic of the Congo went on to become Zaire under the leadership of General Mobutu, who changed his European name to Mobutu Sese Seko and forced all his countrymen to do likewise. Mobutu also changed the names of the principal cities in the country. The capital of Leopoldville became Kinshasa. Stanleyville became Kisangani, and Elisabethville became Lubumbashi.

About 12 years later, in 1977 and again in 1978, Cuban trained Zairians were to invade the Shaba province (formerly Katanga) from Angola in an attempt to overthrow Mobutu. Zaire received help from French, Egyptian and Moroccan troops and defeated the invaders. The Cuban Government denied any involvement in these invasions. (See Phase III for more details).

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<sup>30</sup> Tshombe was on board a plane that was hijacked to Algeria in 1967, where he was arrested and kept in jail until his death in 1969.

<sup>31</sup> Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence, pp. 138-139.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. pp. 131 and 148. The Cuban pilots working for the CIA were allegedly hired by a company called Caramar (Caribbean Marine Aero Corporation), which was a CIA "proprietary."

Contacts between the Cuban Government and revolutionary organizations in these Portuguese colonies were started in the early to mid 1960's. Initial contacts between Cuban officials and Agostinho Neto, leader of the Angolan MPLA, took place during the Cuban adventure in the Congo (Zaire) during 1965. Within a year, Cuban troops were training MPLA guerrillas in Congo-Brazzaville and Neto had travelled to Cuba to meet with Fidel Castro. Guerrilla organizations fighting against the Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau also obtained Cuban assistance starting in the mid-1960's up to the time that the country obtained independence in September of 1974. Amilcar Cabral, leader of the Marxist PAIGC, fighting for the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde maintained frequent contact with the Cuban Government during the revolutionary struggle against the Portuguese. At least one Cuban military officer, Major Pedro Rodriguez Peralta, was captured and imprisoned by the Portuguese for several years in Guinea-Bissau. Formal diplomatic relations between Cuba and Guinea-Bissau were established on October 1, 1973.

#### People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea (Conakry)

Cuban Government officials established contacts with the People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea and its President, Ahmed Sékou Touré soon after the overthrow of Batista. Diplomatic relations were established in 1960. This former French colony obtained its independence in 1958. Sékou Touré requested and received Soviet-bloc assistance so that he could move forward with the organization of a one-party Socialist state. Cuban troops were provided to work as body guards for Sékou Touré and to train local military units in the 1960's.

#### Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)

The Soviet Union had been providing assistance to guerrilla organizations in Rhodesia since at least 1961. Soviet aid was given to the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), headed by Joshua Nkomo. The People's Republic of China was providing assistance to the competing Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), headed by Mugabe. The role of the Cuban Government in the guerrilla warfare in this African country is clouded by considerable secrecy. However, it is known that members of ZAPU and ZANU maintained contacts throughout the revolutionary struggle to set up a black government with Cuba.

## Tanzania, Zanzibar, Equatorial Guinea and Rio Muni

The Republic of Tanganyika and the Republic of Zanzibar, an island off the east coast of Africa, joined to form one country in April of 1964. They adopted the name of United Republic of Tanzania, with the capital at Dar es-Salam. Both countries had received their independence from Great Britain in 1961. Tanzania drifted slowly to the left until in 1967 the banks and major industries were nationalized. Cuban Government contacts with the leaders of Tanzania were established in the early 1960's and Cuban military operations in Africa have often either started and ended in Tanzania. Diplomatic relations between Cuba and Tanzania had been established in June of 1964.<sup>33</sup> There is some evidence that points to the existence of Cuban guerrilla training camps in Tanzania in the 1960's where FRELIMO members were trained.<sup>34</sup>

Equatorial Guinea is located in the island of Bioko, off the west coast of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea. The island is about 10,832 square miles compared with Cuba, which has 42,827 miles. Rio Muni, located on the African mainland and the island of Bioko form the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. About 90 percent of the national territory is on the mainland, but the economy of the island province is stronger. The island was discovered by Fernando Po and became a Portuguese colony until it was ceded to Spain in 1778. A plebiscite was held in 1964 and the population of the Spanish territories then known as Fernando Po and Rio Muni elected for autonomy. Independence came on October 12, 1968.

Contacts between the Cuban Government and Communist leaders of Equatorial Guinea started in the 1960's, with the advantage of Spanish as a common language. The strategic location of the island can provide the Cuban military a refueling stop for airplanes carrying troops and supplies to and from Africa. Very little is known about early contacts between Cuba and Equatorial Guinea, but it is fairly certain that they had taken place since at least the mid-1960's.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> For example, Ernesto "Che" Guevara left Africa after participating in the guerrilla war in Zaire through the Dar es-Salam airport in Tanzania. He left on a commercial airline flight in December of 1965 or in January of 1966.

<sup>34</sup> FRELIMO: Mozambique Liberation Front.

<sup>35</sup> Masie Nguema Biyondo ruled the country from independence in 1968, becoming "president for life" in 1972. He was a ruthless dictator who drove the country into bankruptcy and forced the emigration of thousands of Europeans. Masie Nguema Biyondo was overthrown in August of 1979. A Supreme Military Council headed by Teoro Obiang Nguema Mbasasogo now

## PHASE II (1966-1970)

### Tri-Continental Congress

The Tri-Continental Congress, held in January of 1966 in Havana, concluded that wars of national liberation were justified and that all revolutionary groups with similar ideas and goals should unite to support each other. The Cuban leadership supported the formation of guerrilla organizations throughout Latin America to take power by armed struggle. Fidel Castro offered to cooperate with wars of national liberation all over the world. As a result of the Congress, a new organization, the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS), was formed in January of 1967, to promote the ideals of continental revolution, as expressed by participants in the Tri-continental Congress.

The congress became a battle ground of ideologies. The principal groups were: the Soviets and the traditional Communists parties allied with them; the delegates of the People's Republic of China and Maoist-Communist revolutionaries from all over the world; Trotskyite-Communists; members of the so-called "new left" from the United States and other countries; and Fidel Castro and his followers. The Cuban Government made every possible attempt to control the attendance at the congress to push for the approval of its own theory of revolution.

For example, despite the strong relationships which existed between Cuba and Mexico, a country that refused to break diplomatic relations with Cuba in the early 1960's, only Mexican revolutionaries who favored the Cuban line were invited to participate in the Tri-Continental Congress. Among the groups represented was the Mexican Movimiento de Liberación Nacional. The Mexican Communist Party and the Popular Socialist Party, led by Lombardo Toledano were not invited to participate because they supported the Mexican Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), which has governed in Mexico since the 1920's. The Cubans were exploring the possibility of exporting the revolution to overthrow a friendly government. Mexican leftists were not the only ones who had prob-

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lems the country. Diplomatic relations between Cuba and Equatorial Guinea were established on December 27, 1972.

lems attending the Tri-Continental Congress. For example, a Bolivian delegation of several Communist organizations arrived in Havana but were not allowed to participate in the congress.<sup>36</sup>

The 10 months that followed the Tri-Continental Congress were possibly the most militant in support of guerrilla movements in Latin America. Fidel Castro made repeated critical statements of Latin American Communist leaders and particularly Communist intellectuals who could not gather the strength to take power by force. He denounced these leaders as "right-wingers" who did not belong in the struggle against imperialism. Castro was also critical of Communist countries, including the Soviet Union, for maintaining diplomatic ties with oligarchic regimes in Latin America. Several Cuban Communists who had ties to the pre-Revolution Cuban Communist Party and others who had close ideological affiliation with the Soviet Union had been jailed or demoted from government jobs for not supporting the efforts to export the revolution. Castro's attacks against anyone who did not share his views continued long after the end of the congress.

At a rally in April of 1967, on the 6th anniversary of the defeat of the Bay of Pigs invasion, Fidel Castro called for immediate revolution throughout Latin America. A few days later at a May Day rally, Castro and other Cuban Government leaders hinted that Ernesto "Che" Guevara was already leading a guerrilla force in Latin America to carry the revolution to the entire continent. When Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin visited Cuba in June of 1967, the Cuban and Soviet leaders seemed to have clashed over the Cuban policy of supporting armed struggle against imperialism and Cuban financing, training and equipping of guerrilla fighters from other countries.

#### Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS)

The Tri-Continental Congress was followed a year later by a meeting of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity. In July-August of 1967, OLAS held a congress in Cuba in which pledges of support for guerrilla organizations in Latin America were made again. Delegates from revolutionary organizations attending the OLAS meeting called for the start of armed struggle even within the United States. Cuban leaders called for U.S. anti-imperialists to unite and cooperate in the struggle to spread the revolution. Stokeley Carmichael,

<sup>36</sup> Lydia Gueller and Lora and Ruiz González, representing the PRIN, PCM-L and POR were not allowed to participate in the congress. Source: Regis Debray, La Guerrilla del Che, (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1975), p. 36.

the struggle for the revolution. Stokeley Carmichael, a black student leader in the United States, was one of the invited guests. Carmichael called for the creation of many Vietnams in Latin America and the start of a black liberation movement within the United States. Several activists of the American "new left" and the anti-war movement attended the meeting and supported the calls for revolution in the United States.<sup>37</sup> Among the American radicals were members of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), who later formed the "Weathermen," an underground revolutionary organization responsible for several bombings in the United States in the early 1970's, including possibly a bomb that went off in the U.S. Capitol.

The OLAS meeting ended with additional Cuban pledges of assistance for armed guerrilla struggles and with a declaration that armed revolt was the fundamental political line for revolutionaries in Latin America. Previous Cuban financial and training support was expanded to include the active participation of Cuban military officers directly in guerrilla operations in Latin America. In Venezuela and Bolivia, Cubans were arrested or killed in combat with government forces. Despite frequent set-backs, Cuban support continued to flow out of the island.

### Conflicts with the Soviet Union

Conflicts with the Soviet Union over the policy of the Cuban Government of exporting the revolution by providing direct assistance to revolutionaries in other countries surfaced in 1967. The Tri-Continental Congress and the OLAS meeting had served as forums to attack Communist parties for their failure to lead armed revolutionary struggles. They were dismissed by more militant revolutionaries associated with Cuba as ineffective organizations whose members lacked the courage to take up arms. Fidel Castro strongly criticized the Communist leaders and called them "pseudo-revolutionaries." These parties were supported by the Soviet Union and their leaders had close ties to the Soviet Communist Party. With this kind of rhetoric a clash with the Soviet leaders was inevitable.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The Cuban Government continued to invite American black radicals to Cuba during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Among the leaders invited were Eldridge Cleaver of the Black Panther Party and Angela Davis of the Communist Party U.S.A.. Both had served time in jail for criminal activities in the United States. Cleaver eventually turned against the "New Left" and the Cuban Government and has become an anti-Communist activist in the United States.

<sup>38</sup> For more information on the Cuban-Soviet differences, between 1966 and 1968, see: William Ratliff, Castroism and Com-

Before long, a series of attacks on the Cuban leadership began to appear all over Latin America. The Venezuelan Communist Party answered Castro, demanding that he restrain his language when referring to Communists who were struggling against American imperialism and demanded that he censure the terrorist tactics that were being used by his followers. The Venezuelan party asserted its right to form its own policy and rejected Castro's interference in its internal affairs. Castro and his followers were called an "anarcho-adventurist" bunch which had lacked the courage to raise the red flag when they were fighting in the mountains against Batista. However, he demanded that other revolutionaries identify themselves as Communists and take chances that he himself was not willing to take. Castro was also accused of being two-faced for maintaining diplomatic and commercial relations with the Franco regime in Spain and with the same British Government that ran the colonial racist government in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia).<sup>39</sup>

Within four months, in August of 1967, the Colombian Communist Party issued a similar protest against the Cuban Government. In Bolivia, where Cuban guerrillas led by Ernesto "Che" Guevara were operating, the split between the Communist Party and the Cuban leadership contributed to the defeat of the revolutionaries. On October 27, 1967, days after the capture and execution of Guevara in Bolivia, an article written by Luis Corvalán, leader of the Chilean Communist Party was published in Pravda, dismissing the Cuban revolutionary thesis as adventuristic. The following month, when the Soviet Union celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, the Cuban leadership was not invited to participate.

Despite all the literature on the strong differences of opinion between the Cuban and Soviet leadership during this period, the author has also uncovered some evidence that the Soviets did provide support to Cuba so that it could carry out an aggressive program to export the revolution. For example, while the Cuban leadership was openly arguing with Communist Parties throughout Latin America and the Soviets were providing a forum to criticize Cuban tactics, Soviet officers were building training centers in Cuba. Colonel Wadim Kotscherigine, a KGB officer seems to have been in charge of building several training camps on the island for revolutionaries from other countries. Revolutionaries from most Latin American countries, as well as Africa and the Mid-

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munism in Latin America (Washington, D.C.: Hoover Institution, 1976), chapters 1 and 2.

<sup>39</sup> "Respuesta del Partido Comunista a Fidel Castro," El Nacional, (Caracas, Venezuela, March 17, 1967), p. D 7.

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...le East have been trained at these facilities. Cuban offi-  
...cers, with Soviet assistance, were also sent to North Africa  
...and the Middle East starting in late 1967 to train member of  
...the PLO and other Arab organizations. Cuba continued to re-  
...ceive Soviet weapons and Cuban officers continued to be  
...trained in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries  
...throughout this period. Thus the whole question of Cuban-  
...Soviet differences has to be taken with a grain of salt.

By 1968, Cuba had over 300 heavy and medium-weight tanks, 200  
armored personnel carriers, 100 assault guns, 600 surface-to-  
surface missiles, a large Air Force with Mig-15's, Mig-17's  
and supersonic Mig-21's, in addition to a large number of  
training aircraft. The Navy had also been expanded with 18  
Komar and five Osa patrol boats with Styx missiles. All of  
these weapons had been supplied by the Soviet Union and its  
Eastern European allies.

### Conflicts with the People's Republic of China

The conflict with the Soviet Union and Communist parties  
which supported the Soviet line was not unique. The Chinese  
Government had a substantial diplomatic delegation in Cuba.  
They directed a strong propaganda campaign with the goal of  
reaching all levels of the Cuban bureaucracy. Members of the  
military were particular targets of the Chinese Communists,  
who made it a point to reach every military installation in  
Cuba with their literature. In February of 1966, Fidel  
Castro attacked the Chinese Embassy for interfering in the  
internal affairs of Cuba. In March of 1967, the final break  
came, after Castro made a major speech critical of the  
activities of the Chinese in Cuba. He seemed to take sides  
with the Soviets in the well-known dispute between the two  
Communist giants, despite his own problems with the Soviet  
leaders. The Chinese and their "Maoist" organizations  
throughout the world counterattacked with a strong campaign  
against Castro. For example, in the United States, the  
Progressive Labor Party, a Maoist organization of the "new  
left" with hundreds of followers among young college students  
in the the northeast and California, published strong attacks  
against Cuba. They found plenty of reasons to claim that the  
Cuban leadership was a farce and its ideology misguided from  
true forms of Socialism that would eventually lead to  
Communism.

### Cuban-Led Guerrillas in Bolivia

Starting around March of 1966, several Cuban military offi-  
cers, veterans of the revolution against Batista, began to  
arrive in Bolivia. They included Captain Harry Villegas

Lieutenant Carlos Coello and Captain José María Martínez Tamayo, who had made the preliminary arrangements several months before to start a guerrilla unit. They were all closely allied with "Che" Guevara and had fought under his command in Cuba. Before long, at least 15 Cuban officers had arrived to form the vanguard of what was to be a large revolutionary army operating in the heart of South America.

According to recounts of the history of this period, Guevara's goal was to use Bolivia only as a platform to move to Peru, where he hoped to join established guerrilla forces in that country. However, the demise of the Peruvian guerrillas in 1965 and 1966, forced a change in plans and Bolivia became the prime target for revolution. Guevara arrived in November of 1966 via Madrid, Sao Paulo and Montevideo, using false papers. Several Peruvian and Bolivian Communist revolutionaries joined Guevara and his Cuban followers. By February of 1967, 15 Cubans and 48 Bolivians formed the backbone of the small guerrilla army.

The Cubans soon found out that the environment in Bolivia was not like what they had found in the Sierra Maestra Mountains in Cuba during the revolution against Batista. The peasants were natives who spoke Guarani, and not Spanish. Natives in other parts of Bolivia spoke Quechua and Aymara. Communication was difficult and the local population was not friendly. In Cuba they had not faced the dangerous animals that were present in the South American jungles (snakes, for example). Although the vegetation was lush, they did not find oranges, mangoes, and other tropical fruits like in Cuba. They could not find animals to hunt for food and there were no friendly

<sup>40</sup> According to the account of Régis Debray in his book La Guerrilla del Che, the following Cubans were part of the guerrilla army in Bolivia:

1. Maj. Vilo Acuña Núñez (Joaquín) killed 31 Aug. 1967
2. Maj. Sánchez Díaz (Marcos)
3. Maj. Gustavo Machín (Alejandro)
4. Capt. José María Martínez Tamayo (Papi, Ricardo)
5. Capt. Daniel Alarcón (Benigno) escaped to Chile
6. Capt. Alberto Fernández (Pacho) killed 8 Oct. 1967
7. Capt. Manuel Hernández
8. Capt. Orlando Pantoja (Antonio)
9. Capt. Eliseo Reyes Rodríguez (Rolando) killed 25 April '67
10. Capt. Suárez Gayol (El Rubio - had been Vice-Minister of Industry in Cuba) killed 10 April 1967
11. Capt. Harry Villegas (Pombo) escaped to Chile
12. Lt. Octavio de la Concepción (El Moro - Cuban military MD)  
Killed in combat 4 August 1967
13. Lt. Carlos Coello (Tuma)
14. Lt. Israel Reyes (Braulio) killed 31 August 1967
15. Lt. René Martínez (sic) Tamayo (Arturo)

local farmers to donate or sell food to the guerrillas. In addition, the Bolivian Army rangers, recruited among the native population proved to be good fighters, particularly against foreigners. By contrast, Bolivian members of the guerrilla unit were city dwellers who did not even know how to swim. Several died fording frequently swollen rivers in the jungle. It was easy to see that a disaster was in the making.

The Secretary General of the Bolivian Communist Party, Mario Monje demanded political and military control of the revolution. Guevara refused to give up control and demanded complete authority. The Central Committee of the Communist Party backed Monje. The Communist Youth League expelled members who joined the guerrillas. Guevara was left with the support of a small splinter group of the Communist Party and limited to non-existent assistance from abroad.

Before long, in early March of 1967, members of the guerrilla force clashed with Bolivian Army units of the IV Division based at Camiri. The guerrilla camp at Nanchahuasú was discovered and from about March 23, 1967 on, the guerrillas were on the run. They won some skirmishes but began to lose keymen experienced in guerrilla warfare and new men did not fill their numbers. Several Bolivians deserted and others were killed in combat, including Moises Guevara, one of the principal Bolivian leaders. He was killed on August 31st. In September of 1977, evidence began to be made public in Bolivia to the effect that Ernesto Guevara and several Cuban military officers and other foreigners had been leading a guerrilla force in that country since 1966. Within a month the Bolivian military reported that "Che" Guevara had been killed in the jungles in the southeast of Bolivia by Army rangers.

On October 8th, the guerrilla force fell into an ambush at Quebrada del Churo, and seven guerrillas were killed or captured. Guevara was captured suffering from a wound to a leg and was later executed by Bolivian Army officers. Only six members of the guerrilla force managed to escape, arriving in

During April of 1967, as the problems of the Bolivian guerrillas began to mount, another guerrilla organization in neighboring Brazil was also in trouble. A guerrilla unit that had been operating in Minas Gerais and Espiritu Santo in the Caparaó Mountains, was discovered by the Brazilian military and routed.

Among the Cubans who were said to have accompanied "Che" Guevara was Major José Nivaldo Causse Pérez. He is now a Brigadier General in the Cuban Army. The author has not found hard evidence that he participated in the Bolivian adventure. Moises and Ernesto Guevara were not related.

Chile in December of 1967. Only three of the fifteen Cubans survived the experience.<sup>43</sup>

The story of how Guevara was tracked down by the CIA and the participation of Cuban exiles in his capture and execution is a classic in intelligence operations. According to published reports, Special Operations staffers of the CIA suspected that Cubans were involved with the guerrillas operating in Bolivia, but could not get a receptive ear from their principals in the agency. However, when the guerrilla camp at Nancahuazú was overrun by Bolivian troops, captured documents provided sufficient evidence to prove that Guevara and a group of Cubans were in Bolivia. Guevara's fingerprints and a picture served to establish his presence. A few days later Regis Debray was captured by Bolivian troops. His life was allegedly saved by the CIA with promises that if he cooperated he would be protected from the Bolivians who wanted to kill him. In an attempt to save his life Debray talked.<sup>44</sup>

CIA Director Richard Helms and Clandestine Services head Thomas Karamessines put in motion a major operation to capture Guevara. American troops were sent to Bolivia to train Bolivian rangers in anti-guerrilla operations. Cuban exiles, including veterans of Bay of Pigs, who were familiar with Cuban military tactics were also sent to Bolivia. Before long, the guerrillas were on the run, suffering defeat after defeat. Another break in the case came when "Tania" an East German member of the guerrilla band was killed in late August of 1967. Tania had helped with the preparations to start the guerrilla operations as an agent of the Cuban Government. She may have been, in addition to a Cuban intelligence officer, a counterintelligence officer working for the Soviet Union and given the task of keeping an eye on what the Cubans were up to. Finally, Guevara was captured on October 8th. The CIA attempted to save his life in exchange for his cooperation in disclosing details of Cuban operations around the world. However, the Bolivian Government did not want Guevara alive for fear that he would create political problems for them and execution orders were given, overruling the CIA.<sup>45</sup> It seems that Guevara was not willing to cooperate anyway.

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<sup>43</sup> The members of the guerrilla force who managed to reach the Chilean border were received by Salvador Allende, who was then a member of the Chilean Senate. He provided them help to leave Chile unharmed.

<sup>44</sup> Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence, pp. 138-145.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Among the alleged CIA men involved in the capture of Guevara were Hugo Murray (station chief), John S. Hilton, Colonel Ed Fox, Larry Sternfield and Nick Lendiris. Among

Guevara's failure in Bolivia cannot be separated from the failure of the theory of the "foco" which had become a fad among some Marxist revolutionaries in the mid sixties. They believed that it was possible to start a revolution with only a handful of dedicated revolutionaries who would form the vanguard of a large movement which would follow after the masses became radicalized. They expected that the process of radicalization would come about from the experience of innocent civilians suffering the expected repression carried out by the government against the revolutionaries.

The defeat of Guevara and the other Cuban guerrilla leaders was a major setback for the plans to export the revolution. Castro eulogized Guevara and praised his dedication to the struggle against imperialism. But he pointed out that he had differed with Guevara over guerrilla tactics and called Guevara impetuous. Castro also pointed out that Guevara had a scorn for danger and believed that individuals were not important; that as men died new leaders would come up from the ranks and take their place in the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle.

With the defeat of Guevara the militancy of the Cuban leadership was restrained. It is estimated that over 2,500 Latin Americans had been trained to lead guerrilla forces. But the Latin American Armed Forces were also receiving training from the United States military on anti-insurgency operations. The experiences gained in the Vietnam war were being used to train special forces for counterinsurgency operations in Latin America. In the 1950's the Cuban military under Batista was weak, ill-trained and had corrupt and inept leadership. The situation that Cuban-sponsored guerrilla forces faced in the late sixties was much different. The Cuban military had to go back to the drawing board and rethink the concepts which had been used to export the revolution.

#### Cuba and the American New Left in the 1960's

The Cuban efforts to export the revolution did not spare the United States. The anti-war movement in the United States and the American "new left" were very much influenced by the Cuban revolution and Fidel Castro. Leaders of the new left, including the leadership of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and members of the Black Panther Party, were invited to Cuba to see first-hand the progress of the revolution. Members of these groups were converted to the Cuban political line and trained by Cuban military and intelligence

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the Cuban exiles who assisted in tracking down Guevara was Julio Gabriel Garcia.

officers to carry out terrorism in the United States. Cuba not only became a source of training but also a place to hide from American authorities and a source of funds. In addition to American leftists, even common criminals found refuge in Cuba. One of the favorite avenues to reach the island was by hijacking airplanes in domestic flights in the United States, risking the lives of many innocent people.

Although the Cuban Government did not have the funds to promote revolution in the United States, friendly groups in the American new left were provided tons of Cuban propaganda which they could sell in collage campuses to raise needed cash. However, despite the Cuban efforts to promote revolution in the United States, they failed in their goals. Before long, the "conservative" nature of the Cuban regime, opposed to drugs, homosexuality and inherent internal racism in Cuba turned off the American young people who had flocked to Cuba seeking a political guru. The Cuban Government promoted social disorganization, including sexual freedoms, homosexuality, drugs, etc. in the United States. However, Castro would not tolerate these activities in Cuba. The young "new left" members often became disillusioned and returned home.

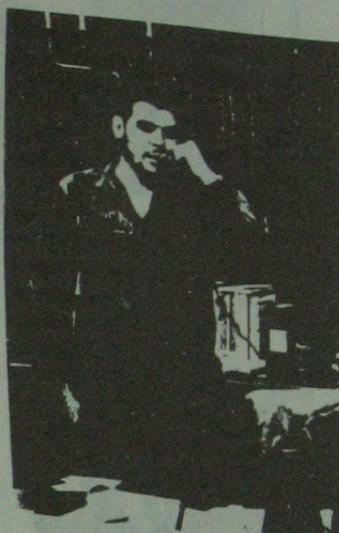
### The Viet Nam War

The Cuban Government provided the North Vietnamese Government moral and material support throughout the war from the arrival of American troops in 1965 to the fall of Saigon in 1975. Cuban medical doctors and other technical personnel were sent to Vietnam to lend a hand in the war effort. Details of the extent of Cuban involvement have never been researched and published.

One interesting aspect of Cuban participation in the war is that American prisoners of war reported upon their release that they had seen and heard people whom they believed to be Cubans in their prisons. Some even reported having been interrogated by men whom they believed to have been Cuban military personnel.

In a radio address on September 19, 1977, President Ronald Reagan quoted from the experiences of one American prisoner of war in North Vietnam. Colonel George E. Day, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, wrote that Cuban Embassy officials in Hanoi inflicted some of the worst tortures on American prisoners. According to Colonel Day, the Cubans sold the North Vietnamese the idea that they were experts in brainwashing and could re-educate American POW's so that they would go back home preaching the Communist line. When they failed in their mission, they turned to plain brutality. Colonel Day related the story of an American POW who was raped, bullied and tortured for a whole day until his mind

gave ... subjected to electric shock treatments with an old machine that left him with massive burns on his body and finished him off mentally. The POW was last seen by his fellow POW's in October of 1970.<sup>46</sup>



### ERNESTO "CHE" GUEVARA

These pictures show "Che" Guevara as a guerrilla fighter in Cuba after the overthrow of Batista in 1959, as a bureaucrat in Havana in the early 1960's and as a guerrilla fighter in Bolivia a few days before he was captured and executed.

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<sup>46</sup> Radio address by President Ronald Reagan, September 19, 1977. Reagan on Cuba, (Washington, D.C.: Cuban National Foundation), pp. 13-14.



FIDEL CASTRO ADDRESSING THE 4TH SUMMIT MEETING OF THE UNALIGNED COUNTRIES IN 1973



FIDEL CASTRO WITH PRESIDENTS BOUMEDIENNE OF ALGERIA AND SEKOU TOURE OF GUINEA IN MAY OF 1972 DURING A TOUR OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES.



THE FIVE "FRONT LINE" AFRICAN LEADERS

Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Agostinho Neto of Angola, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Seretse Khama of Botswana and Samora Moises Machel of Mozambique. The Cuban Government provided military support and technical assistance to all five of these leaders. (Neto died of cancer in September 1979, and was replaced by Jose Eduardo Dos Santos; Khama died of cancer in July of 1980, and was replaced by Quett Masire; Machel was killed in October of 1986 in a plane crash.)

As was stated in the introduction to this chapter, Cuba made a major effort in the early 1970's to re-establish diplomatic relations with Latin American countries and to open relations with newly independent African countries. In Latin America, diplomatic relations were re-opened with Chile in 1970; with Barbados, Peru, Jamaica, Guyana, and Trinidad Tobago in 1972, and with Bahamas, Venezuela and Panama in 1972. In Africa, diplomatic relations were established with Mali, Equatorial Guinea and Mauritania in 1972. In 1973 relations were established with Guinea-Bissau. In 1974 relations were opened with Senegal, Nigeria, Gabon, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana and Liberia. In other parts of the world, Cuba opened diplomatic relations with South Yemen in 1972 and Madagascar and Laos in 1974. For a small country with limited resources the cost of opening all of these diplomatic missions was substantial. The funds were obviously coming from the Soviet Union. In addition to the normal expenses associated with operating an extensive diplomatic service, Cuban military advisors were sent to many of these countries, particularly those in Africa.

#### Cuba and the Unaligned Movement

Fidel Castro became one of the leaders of the so-called Unaligned Movement. Castro attended the Fourth Summit Conference of the movement, held in Algeria in September of 1973, and made an important speech which is credited with triggering a movement towards an alliance with Socialist countries. Castro's speech represented a radical departure

The founders of the Unaligned Movement were Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Jawaharlal Nehru (India) and Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia). The movement, which is everything but unaligned, began its preliminary organization in 1956. In 1960, during the XV General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, final preparations were made for inviting the 21 original members of the movement for the First Summit Meeting of the Unaligned Countries, which was held in Belgrade in September of 1961. Cuba was one of the founding countries. The Second Summit Meeting was held in Cairo in October of 1964, with 47 member countries and 10 more as observers. The Third Summit Meeting was held in Lusaka, Zambia in September of 1970, with 54 member countries. At all of these meetings, members of guerrilla organizations fighting anti-colonialist wars in Africa as well as Palestinian and other revolutionary and terrorist groups were present. The rhetoric and the accords reached at these meetings became more anti-American and more pro-Soviet with each meeting.

from the traditional goals of the Unaligned Movement. His efforts to become a leader of the organization blossomed when he became the president of the organization in 1979.

A total of 75 countries participated in the 1973 conference as members of the organization. Eight other countries participated as observers. By 1979, the number of member countries had reached 95. In addition to the member countries and observers, several "Liberation Movements" attended as invited observers. These organizations were:

- Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
- National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA)
- African Party for the Liberation of Guinea and  
Cape Verde (PAIGC)
- Popular Union Party of Seychelles (SPUP)
- National Liberation Movement of Comoras (MOLINACO)
- Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO)
- South West Africa Popular Organization (SWAPO)
- Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)
- Commission for the Liberation of Sao Tome  
and Principe (CLC)
- Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP)
- Movement for the Liberation of Djibuti (MLD)
- African National Congress (ANC)
- Pan African Congress (PAC)
- Zimbabwe Popular Union (ZAPU)
- Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU)

The Unaligned Movement issued a declaration of solidarity with people fighting Portuguese colonialism and issued a pledge of economic, political and military support to them. This declaration was instrumental to justify Cuban military assistance to most of the groups listed above.

#### Cuba and Latin America

In Latin America, leaders of several countries began to call for an end to the economic and political isolation of Cuba. In 1972, President Raul Velasco Alvarado of Peru called for an end to actions taken by the Organization of American States against Cuba and asked that individual countries be able to individually lift sanctions against Cuba. President Luis Echeverria of Mexico also called for an end to the isolation of Cuba. Argentina provided large credits to Cuba to buy Argentinean products.

Cuban military tactics for exporting the revolution were revised based, on the experience of the 1960's. First, urban areas were seen as more viable for guerrilla warfare. The concept of rural guerrillas, although not entirely abandoned,

had been a failure, causing the loss of life to many Cuban military officers, as well as to native political leaders. The two principal tacticians who replaced the ideas of "Che" Guevara and Régis Debray were not Cuban.<sup>2</sup> They were Abraham Guillén and Carlos Marighella. They proposed the formation of urban guerrilla organizations to carry out kidnappings of prominent businessmen, American Government officials; executions of prominent local officials and business leaders; ambushes of police and military units and acts of sabotage. Another tactical change was that the Cuban Government was now seeking to form coalitions of revolutionary organizations. The "infantilism," as Lenin may have called the Cuban attempt to put down anyone who did not fully endorse the Cuban view of the world, was replaced with an emphasis to bridge differences between revolutionary groups so that they could work together for their common goals.<sup>3</sup>

The principal practitioners of the new urban warfare tactics were based in Latin America. The Tupamaros were formed in Uruguay and increased their activity between 1969 and 1972. One of their principal tools was kidnaping. Their activity prompted the Uruguayan military to take power and to place in motion a bloody anti-insurgency campaign that, within a short period of time, resulted in the destruction of most of the revolutionary cells of the Tupamaros. However, many innocent civilians lost their lives in the process. In Argentina at least two organizations formed urban guerrilla groups. They were the Montoneros and the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP). The Montoneros were formed by members of the old Peronist party. The ERP was a Trotskyist organization. Both groups used kidnaping, ambushes and sabotage as their primary tools of the trade. Their activities resulted in the military coup d'état and a bloody anti-insurgency campaign in which possibly as many as 10,000 people were rounded up, interrogated, tortured and executed. Many innocent civilians died in the process but the urban guerrilla cells were wiped out. Many Uruguayan and Argentinean urban guerrillas ended

<sup>2</sup> Please note that although Guevara was Argentinean and Debray French, their theories of revolution were regarded as "Cuban," because of the support given to them by the Cuban Government.

<sup>3</sup> In Argentina, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (FAR), a pro-Cuban organization made an effort in the early 1970's to form a coalition with other revolutionary organizations. In the late 1970's the Cuban Government organized Nicaraguan leaders into a coalition to overthrow Somoza. In the 1980's the Cuban Government has promoted coalitions of revolutionary organizations in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. In fact, Cuban military assistance is not provided to groups that are not willing to endorse the Cuban attempts to unify revolutionary organizations.

up finding their way to Cuba seeking refuge. These organizations now maintain their headquarters in Havana.

Marighella, author of the Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla ended up dead like Guevara trying to implement his theories. He was killed in Brazil leading an urban guerrilla organization.<sup>4</sup> The principal tactics of the Brazilian guerrillas were also ambushes, executions, sabotage and kidnaping. They even managed to kidnap the American Ambassador to Brazil. But despite much publicity gained by some of their extraordinary deeds, they failed. The Brazilian military and police forces were able to wipe out most of the guerrilla organizations.

Fifteen years later, Cuba has once again established diplomatic relations with Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil and the old attempts to actively promote the violent overthrow of the government of these countries would seem to have been set aside. The emphasis has been now placed in re-establishing economic and political relations and seeking support for Cuba's admittance to regional organizations. However, the long term goal of assisting Communists to take power in these countries is as strong today as it ever was. Only the tactics have changed.

#### Cuban Economic and Military Assistance

Another tactical change was the use of Cuban troops to perform civic duties, such as building hospitals, schools, airports, roads, etc. This was not a major discovery since American troops, particularly U.S. Navy seabees, have been performing similar tasks for many years. Cuban troops were sent to Peru after the earthquake of 1970 to assist in building new hospitals and delivering health care to the needy. In Africa, Cuban troops were sent not only to train local military forces, but also to build roads, airports and hospitals and the like in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Tanzania. After 1975, Cuban troops as well as civilians have been involved in similar civic duties in Angola, Ethiopia and in Grenada. Some of these construction projects may also have had a secondary military purpose. For example, the construction of airports would also provide Cuban military aircraft important operational stops for support of future military missions.

A major emphasis was also placed on military training and general education for potential revolutionary leaders in

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<sup>4</sup> Marighella's organization was the Action for National Liberation of Brazil. For a listing of his works see the bibliography.

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other countries. Thousands of students from Africa, the Middle East and Latin America have been provided with scholarships to study in Cuba. Thousands more have been trained by Cuban officers both in Cuba, as well as in Middle Eastern countries, mainly Lebanon, Iraq, Libya and South Yemen. Many of the men who were trained in the early 1970's later surfaced leading the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and guerrillas in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.



Castro visits Allende in Chile in November of 1971.



On the return trip from Chile, Castro visited with Gen. Velasco Alvarado of Peru.



Castro with Michael Manley during a visit to Jamaica.

## AFRICA

Fidel Castro went on a two-month tour of Africa and Eastern Europe in 1972. He visited Guinea, Algeria, Sierra Leone, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. This long trip was part of a major effort to win more friends throughout Africa and establish closer ties to Communist countries in Europe. He arrived in Conakry, capital of Guinea, on May 3, 1972, where he visited three cities with President Sekou Touré. Castro put on local dress (white pants, shirt and cap) and received enthusiastic and well-orchestrated welcomes. The press reports of neighboring African countries carried the stories of how the "man from the Sierra Maestra Mountains" had arrived on African soil. Algerian newspapers rejoiced at having Castro for the first time visiting Africa.

### Guinea-Bissau

In 1973, on the eve of the independence of Guinea-Bissau, Amilcar Cabral, the Communist leader of the PAIGC, was assassinated. The PAIGC was the principal guerrilla organization fighting against Portugal to obtain independence for Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. He had been a friend of Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders for several years and had received Cuban military assistance despite his Maoist tendencies. His brother, Luis L. Cabral, became the first president of the country after Portugal decided to pull out in 1974. He was also the recipient of Cuban military assistance and in turn helped Cuba to carry out military operations elsewhere in Africa. For example, in 1975 Guinea-Bissau provided assistance to Cuba and the Angolan MPLA to defeat South African forces and the UNITA and FNLA guerrillas. In 1976, they also cooperated with Cuban forces assisting friendly Communists to take power in Sao Tomé.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> In November of 1980, Luis Cabral was deposed by a coup d'état led by Joao Bernardo Vieira, a member of the small Papel tribe, who had also been a prominent leader during the war against the Portuguese. He has been less friendly to the Soviet Union and possibly the Cuban Government, managing to survive several attempts to overthrow him. See Phase V of this chapter for more details, p. 425.

## People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea (Conakry)

In 1970 Portugal attempted to invade Guinea to put an end to assistance being provided to guerrilla organizations fighting in near-by Portuguese colonies. The invasion failed and thousands of local anti-Communists, as well as Portuguese allies, were arrested, tortured and killed. Cuban troops provided valuable assistance to the government during this period. The visit of Fidel Castro to the Guinean cities of Conakry, Kankan, Kissidugu and Faranah, with President Sekou Touré and Prime Minister Lansana Beauvogui, helped to solidify the relationship between the leaders of both countries.

## MIDDLE EAST

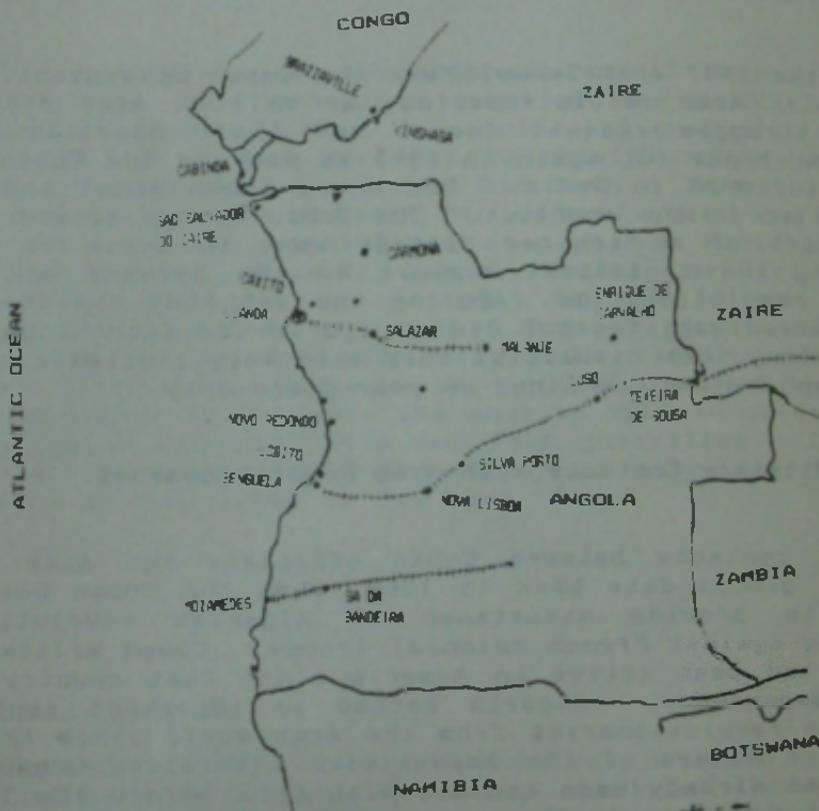
### 1973 Arab-Israeli War

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war the Cuban Government offered to assist Arab revolutionaries, as well as Arab states, in their struggle against Israel and their American allies. When war broke out again in 1973 as many as 500 Cuban troops were stationed in Syria. Little is known about their participation in the conflict. The Cuban troops seemed to have been part of an armored brigade sent to Syria to provide training and logistical support to the Syrians and Palestinian revolutionaries. During the war they operated tanks and armored vehicles but did not go to the front lines. Although they took casualties they were very limited since they were kept behind the lines on rear guard duty.

### Cuban Military Contacts with Arab Revolutionaries

Initial contacts between Cuban officials and Arab revolutionary groups date back to 1959, when the Cuban Government began to provide assistance to Algerian revolutionaries fighting against French colonial troops. Cuban military personnel had been active in Algeria since that country gained its independence. Algeria became an important center for training revolutionaries from the Arab world since the early 1960's. Members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) had already made contact with Cuba before the Tri-Continental Congress in Havana in 1966. After that congress, members of the PLO and other Arab revolutionary organizations were invited to receive training in Cuba or offered scholarships to attend Cuban schools.

After the defeat of the Arab armies in 1967, the relationship between the PLO, Fatah, and groups commanded by George Habash and Abu Jihad and the Cuban Government became stronger. Cuban military personnel were sent to Libya, Lebanon, Iraq and South Yemen to train Palestinians. Other Palestinians have been given training in Cuba. Joint Cuban-Arab groups have received training in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. Diplomatic relations between Cuba, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt had been established in 1960. Relations with South Yemen were established in May 1972, with Kuwait in 1974 and with Libya in March of 1976.



## AFRICA

## The War in Angola 14

The first known contact between Cuban Government officials and the leadership of guerrilla organizations fighting to end Portuguese colonialism in Angola is reported to have taken place in 1965. Ernesto "Che" Guevara and other Cuban officials met with Agostinho Neto, political leader of the MPLA, and his military commander-in-chief somewhere in present day Zaire or in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville). About two hundred Cuban troops led by Guevara were then involved in providing support to anti-government guerrillas fighting against Moises Tshombe in Zaire.

Within a few months of this meeting in 1965, Cuban troops began to train MPLA guerrillas both in Cuba and in Congo-Brazzaville. Cuban ships delivered large quantities of weapons to the MPLA through Congo-Brazzaville for over ten years. One unit of Cuban-trained MPLA guerrillas was named after Camilo Cienfuegos.<sup>15</sup> In 1966 Neto and other MPLA officials visited Cuba and from that time on the MPLA maintained close contacts with the Cuban Government. Angolan Communists were provided a safe haven in Cuba. Some were provided scholarships to attend Cuban schools.

The final assault to take over Angola came after the military coup d'etat in Portugal in 1974, which placed in power young officers interested in ending the colonial wars in Africa. The new Portuguese Government invited the principal guerrilla

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<sup>14</sup> Angola was a Portuguese colony from 1583 until 1975, when the colony was granted independence after several years of guerrilla warfare that started in 1961. The population of Angola is estimated at 6.8 million. The largest population groups are: Ovimbundo (38%), Kimbundo (23%), Bakongo (13%). Life expectancy at birth is 37 years for men and 40.1 for women. Literacy is estimated to be less than 15%. There are only 6 physicians per 100,000 inhabitants. The size of the Angolan Armed Forces in 1980 was estimated to number less than 35,000 men.

<sup>15</sup> Major Camilo Cienfuegos was one of the principal guerrilla leaders during the revolution against Batista. He was killed when his plane crashed in 1959. For additional information see Index.

organizations fighting for the liberation of Angola to participate in the formation of a transition government until the final withdrawal of Portuguese forces from that country.

The three guerrilla organizations, which had fought for years for the liberation of Angola, clashed in a bloody civil war to take control of the government. Zambia was offering support to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), led by Jonas Savimbi. This group had also received aid from the People's Republic of China. The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), led by Holden Roberto, was receiving aid from Zaire, North Korea and the People's Republic of China.<sup>16</sup> The FNLA was also receiving assistance from the United States, and had managed to take a large territory in the northeast and set up a capital at Camona.

South African troops had also entered the southern part of Angola as of August of 1975 and was giving assistance to UNITA and the FNLA. They had provided weapons and assisted in the organization of a military force headed by Daniel Chipenda, a former member of the MPLA who had defected to the FNLA. The Soviet Union and Cuba provided support for the Communist faction of the MPLA led by Agostinho Neto.

MPLA and Cuban officials met in May of 1975 and worked out plans for substantial Cuban military assistance to the MPLA. Major Flavio Bravo and Agostinho Neto met in Brazzaville.<sup>17</sup> At this meeting the MPLA asked for help from the Cubans to capture power after the departure of the Portuguese. A second meeting is said to have taken place five months later, in August of 1975, between Major Raúl Arguello and Neto in Luanda. By then the struggle for power between the different guerrilla organizations had placed the MPLA on the run. The leader of the MPLA requested Cuban military assistance as soon as possible. The Soviets were waiting until the departure of the Portuguese before they intervened directly in providing assistance to their friends in the MPLA.

According to press reports, United States and Cuban officials held high level talks in 1974 and 1975 about the situation in Angola. Assistant Secretary of State William Rogers reportedly made it clear to Cuban officials at a meeting that took place in September of 1975 that the United States firmly opposed Cuban military involvement in Angola. The meeting did

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<sup>16</sup> Holden Roberto and President Mobutu of Zaire were relatives by marriage.

<sup>17</sup> Flavio Bravo is now a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and President of the National Assembly of the People's Government.

not have much effect.<sup>18</sup> The Cuban Government was already in the process of sending military advisors and training personnel to set up four training bases for MPLA troops at Benguela, Saurimo, Cabinda and Delatando. They were trying to support the MPLA so that it could capture power upon the departure of the Portuguese which had been scheduled for November 11.

Three Cuban ships with men and an assortment of weapons and other equipment arrived in Angola in early October. The Cuban merchant ship "Viet Nam Heroico" arrived on October 4, the "Coral Island" on October 7 and the "La Plata" on October 11. But before they could establish their camps and train a large force of MPLA troops, the military situation grew worse for the Cuban allies. South African troops began to advance north toward the capital and the FNLA also began to close in from the north on MPLA held territory.

The Cuban Government then decided to send a battalion of special forces (650 men) to Angola by air to support the MPLA and the Cuban troops which had already arrived in October. The battalion was transported by air in 13 days, starting on November 7, 1975. They used old Bristol Britannia turbo prop airplanes, making refueling stops in Barbados, Guinea-Bissau and Congo-Brazzaville before landing in Luanda. Preparations began for sending thousands of additional troops by ship and air. This included at least one artillery regiment and a battalion of motorized troops.<sup>19</sup>

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18 "U.S. and Cuba reportedly held high level talks," New York Times (March 28, 1977), p.8, col. 4.

19 Did Cuba decide on its own to send troops to Angola or were they ordered to send them by the Soviet Union? This critical question about the Cuban involvement in Angola has not yet been answered with any degree of accuracy by any of the scholars who write on Cuban issues. It is well-known that the Soviets were flying weapons into Brazzaville for the MPLA throughout most of 1975. At least two Soviet Il-62 were also provided to Cuba in December of 1975 or January of 1976 to assist in the transportation of soldiers to Angola. One thing is clear, however, Fidel Castro took a major risk when he sent thousands of troops to Angola weeks before the start of the Congress of the Communist Party, which was held in December of 1975. He could have found himself with a tremendous problem on his hands had Cuban troops been routed in Angola. They had suffered several costly defeats from October to December 1975. Had some members of the United States Congress not undermined the efforts to assist the guerrilla organizations fighting against the MPLA, Cuba would have suffered substantial casualties and possibly a significant military defeat in Angola. This is another instance in which the American political system may be difficult to understand for

They used Cuban merchant ships, fishing boats, and an assortment of airplanes. The logistics were fairly primitive but effective enough to transfer large quantities of men and materials. Commercial airplanes and small cargo vessels were often overloaded in an effort to carry large numbers of troops quickly to Angola. Considering that Cuba had never been involved in any operation of this type, the results were commendable. But the key to the success of the operation was the ambivalence and lack of direction of the United States on the Angolan situation. Cuba would not have been able to intervene in Angola had the United States taken a strong stand and blockaded Cuban troops on the island.<sup>20</sup>

The Cuban forces entered combat almost from the time they arrived. The war in several fronts at the same time was not easy. They suffered several major defeats including one at Catufe, where South African forces surprised them and caused a substantial number of casualties. The months of November and December of 1975 were very difficult. Many mistakes were made and the Cubans losses included General Raul Arguello, a veteran commander of the revolution against Batista. Readers may remember that more or less at the time that the Angolan war was starting, the Cuban Government was in the process of going back to traditional military ranks. Thus, in some cases officers like Arguello are referred to as "Major" instead of his new rank of general.

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foreigners. Nevertheless, the law is the law, and once it was decided not to take action against Cuban troops in Angola, the U.S. Government stopped all military assistance to the guerrillas fighting against the MPLA.

<sup>20</sup> United States policy on the Angolan situation took the form of a marriage of a classical tragedy and a comedy. John Stockwell, a former CIA official who had led the task force which provided covert aid to pro-western forces, defected and published a book with the title In Search of Enemies. He accused high-level CIA officials of misleading Congress and the public on U.S. involvement in Angola. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young made a public statement in February of 1977 to the effect that Cuban troops in Angola provided "certain stability" to the country. The Arms Export Control Act, the War Powers Act and the Tunney Amendment passed by the Senate on December 19, 1975, and the House of Representatives on January 27, 1976, were used to bar assistance to pro-western guerrillas. The possibility of ending the ineffective U.S. "blockade" of Cuba in exchange for Cuban withdrawal from Angola was openly discussed in the press by high-level U.S. Government officials. In the meantime, Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev was pledging all-out support for Agostinho Neto and his followers. This general political environment made it possible for Cuba to set a new precedent in its military involvement overseas.

Cuban troop strength continued to increase. Most of the members of the General Staff were replaced by younger junior officers and sent to Angola to lead the battle. General officers like Victor Schueg Colas and Leopoldo Cintras Frias, Abelardo Colomé Ibarra, Raul Menéndez Tomassevich, along with the Casas Regueiro brothers (both Division Generals today) and many others took active part in the fighting.

By the end of January 1976, a total of between 6,000 and 7,000 troops were already deployed in Angola. Cuban planes used the Azores, particularly Santa Maria Island, between December 20 and December 30, 1975, as a refueling stop. Despite objections from the Portuguese Government, Cuban planes again used the Azores for the same purpose between January 10 and 15, 1976. The troops had been transported using Soviet manufactured IL-62 airplanes.

Cuban troops fought three campaigns in less than 12 months against the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) guerrilla forces in the north and south east and South African forces in the south. Cuban forces also joined MPLA troops in a bloody campaign to defeat the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) led by Francisco Xavier Lubota.

South African Prime Minister Pieter Willem Botha sent troops and military assistance to pro-western forces in Angola starting in 1975 to prevent a Communist victory. However, he was without any international clout due to the racist policies of the South African Government. Their participation was doomed from the start.

In July of 1977, October of 1979 and August of 1980, and on several other occasions, South Africa has sent troops with limited military objectives. However, South African troops have not had a major, direct clash with Cuban troops. Most of their raids into Angola have been directed against bases of Communist guerrillas fighting for the independence of South West Africa (Namibia).

The Cuban forces have been successful in keeping the MPLA in power but have been unable to defeat UNITA guerrillas. Without the support of Cuban troops and military advisers from the Soviet Union and East Germany, the Angolan Government would not have been able to retain power with its small and incompetent Army. The total number of Cuban combat troops and technical and support personnel has reached as high as 36,000 in the past 10 years. A large number of combat troops, possibly well over 150,000, have been rotated since 1975, thus providing a large number of Cuban military personnel valuable combat experience. During the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in February of 1986, several Cuban

generals sporting Angolan combat decorations sat among the 1,790 delegates to the congress in Havana's Convention Center. 21

Casualties in Angola have been relatively high considering the size of the Cuban population. However, in actual numbers perhaps about 3,000 Cubans have been killed and another two or three thousand have been wounded. Tropical diseases have also taken their toll, not only on the troops serving in Angola, but also back in Cuba where previously unheard of diseases imported from Africa have caused problems in agriculture, animal husbandry and in the general population, (i.e., dengue, conjunctivitis or red eye, rare strains of VD, and African swine fever, to mention only a few).<sup>22</sup>

Most of the fighting took place between 1975 and 1978, when the MPLA was able to consolidate its control of the Angolan capital and maintain most of the national territory with the support of Cuban troops. By March of 1977, the MPLA and Cuban forces had been able to stabilize their military control enough for Fidel Castro to visit Angola and several other African countries and brag about their victory. But two months later, in May of 1977, a coup was attempted against Agostinho Neto by Nito Alves and Jose Van Dunem with the support of several Army units. The bloody uprising was defeated, with Cuban troops playing an important role. Heavy fighting took place again in Cabinda Province in June of 1977 against FLEC guerrillas, who were routed. In July, about 4,000 more Cuban troops arrived to provide additional support to the MPLA. Despite the additional Cuban troops UNITA was able to launch a military offensive in December of 1977 against the government. New Cuban-supported military offensives against UNITA were carried out in April and June of 1978, but the guerrilla units led by Sabimbi had by then been able to consolidate their forces in tribal lands of people who support UNITA.

The Angolan Government was even able to survive the death of MPLA leader Agostinho Neto, who died after surgery in the So-

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21 Marilyn Achiron and Ron Moreau, "Castro: No Cardboard Tiger," Newsweek (February 17, 1986), p.10 (International Edition).

22 The war in Angola may have also contributed to an increase in homosexuality among Cuban soldiers. The author has interviewed Cubans who served in Angola, as well as young people who knew other young Cubans who fought in Angola and heard several reports of homosexuality among Cuban soldiers in Angola. The problems may not yet be over since it has been discovered that there may be a linkage between African Swine Fever and AIDS, and many people in that part of Africa seem to have the disease.

viet Union in September of 1979. He was replaced by José Eduardo Dos Santos as head of state. Dos Santos is married to a Cuban and has had a long relationship with the Cuban Government. To further consolidate MPLA power in Angola, thousands of Angolan children have been taken to Cuba to receive schooling at the Isle of Youth (Isle of Pines), to create young Communist leaders for the future. Captured guerrilla soldiers and Angolans arrested for opposing the MPLA Government and its Cuban allies have been tried and given death sentences. In 1980, in particular, hundreds were executed for opposing the government. With the assistance of Cuban intelligence officers, the Angolan Government has set up a very effective state security organization which has been instrumental in implementing effective control of the capital and several major population centers.

### Fidel Castro Visits Africa

In March of 1976, Fidel Castro travelled to Guinea to attend a meeting hosted by President Ahmed Sekou Touré, which was also attended by Agostinho Neto, leader of the Angolan MPLA and President Luis Cabral of Guinea-Bissau. This meeting took place as Cuban and MPLA forces were driving back into Namibia the South African troops which had invaded Angola. Holden Roberto's FNLA and his allies from Zaire were defeated and UNITA forces were retreating back to the southeastern part of the country. Cuban troops had performed well and a new chapter in Cuban-African relations was starting.

On the eve of the meeting in Guinea, American Ambassador Herbert Spiro and an American consular officer were declared persona non grata and forced to leave. The United States broke diplomatic relations in January of 1976, as a result of this incident. At the same time, Guinea was granting the Soviet Union use of the country's national territory to establish a naval base for reconnaissance squadrons. Internal persecution of political enemies of Sekou Touré was also on the rise, triggering United Nations Secretary General Waldheim and the Human Rights International League to intervene to stop a reign of terror in Guinea.

A year later, in March of 1977, Fidel Castro again visited Africa, this time travelling to Algeria, Libya, Angola, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Yemen. On this trip, Cas-tro may have been trying to mediate a dispute between Somalia and Ethiopia. Cuban military personnel were stationed in both countries to provide training to local military units. The Soviet Union was also providing tons of military assistance to both countries in exchange for naval bases. The Somali leaders wanted to expand the borders of their country to include Ethiopian territory inhabited for centuries by

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ethnic Somalis. The Ethiopians wanted to protect their own national boundary.

The conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia dated back to 1969, when General Mohammad Siad Barre led a coup d'etat and took over the Government of Somalia. One of his political goals was to unify all ethnic Somali people who were living in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya under the Somali flag. In 1974, Siad Barre signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union and provided the port of Berbera for a Soviet naval base. Tons of Soviet weapons and instructors from Communist countries soon began to arrive in Somalia. Cuban troops provided some of the training and the Cuban Government supported the Somali reunification goals. The Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), fighting in the Ogaden desert of Ethiopia seeking separation from that country, also received Cuban assistance and political support.

As the Ethiopian Government turned further to the left after the overthrow of Emperor Heile Selassie, Communist relations with the new military leaders of Ethiopia improved. Diplomatic relations between Cuba and Ethiopia were established in 1975. Soviet interest in establishing new military bases in the Ethiopian ports of Massawa and Assad and an airfield in Asmara seemed to have been stronger than their interest in supporting the Somali reunification goals. After Mengistu Haile Miriam, a Communist, became the new Ethiopian strongman in a coup d'etat in mid 1977, the Soviets and the Cubans were forced to take sides. Somali troops had moved into the Ogaden on June 17 and were supporting a major military offensive of the WSLF. Cuban special troops were acting as bodyguards for Mengistu and at the same time providing military assistance to Somalia. Obviously the Cuban Government and the Soviets had to choose sides.



Cuban troops during the war in Ethiopia against Somalia.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense

Some 3,000 Cuban troops took part in the Ethiopian war against Somalia in the Ogaden desert in 1977-78. They began to arrive in Ethiopia between July and September of 1977. The number of Cuban troops reached between 11,000 and 13,000 during the conflict, although press reports placed the number of Cuban troops in Ethiopia at 18,000. They spearheaded the Ethiopian offensive in February and March of 1978 and may have been the decisive factor in the defeat of the Somalian and Ethiopian recovery of the Ogaden province. Casualties were relatively high, not only from the war, but also from very unhealthy conditions in the region. Cuban pilots and tank crews, in particular, proved very important elements in the defeat of Somalia.

While the Cuban Armed Forces were being used in Africa, hundreds of Soviet pilots and technical personnel were transported to Cuba to take the place of Cuban soldiers that would have been employed in the island's defensive forces. In 1970, the number of Soviets in Cuba was estimated to be about 1,000. By 1980, the number of Soviets in Cuba had increased to about 5,000. In 1979, it was also disclosed that a Soviet combat brigade had been operating in Cuba for some time.

After Somalia was defeated the Cuban Government still faced another serious political problem. For many years, the Cuban Government had provided political support to the Eritrean separatists who had been fighting a guerrilla war against Ethiopia since the 1960's. The two principal guerrilla organizations were the Eritrean Liberation Front and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front. Cuban military personnel had trained members of these guerrilla organizations since the 1960's. Now the critical question was deciding if this assistance should continue or whether the Cuban Government should shift sides and support the Ethiopian Government in this internal conflict.

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<sup>23</sup> Ethiopia, which has also been known as Abissinia, is located in the north eastern corner of Africa. It is a poor country, mostly mountainous and covered by deserts. Emperor Heile Selassie I ruled the country for over half a century until he was overthrown in the mid 1970's. Mengistu Haile Marian took power in 1977 and set up a one-party Socialist state. The population of Ethiopia is estimated to be about 33 million, with life expectancy for men of 37 years and women 40.1. There is only one physician per 100,000 people and the literacy rate is only about 8 percent. Thousands of people have died in the past 20 years from famine caused by draught and inefficient agricultural methods.

Although the Cuban Government denied supporting the Ethiopian Government at first, information began to come out of Cuban military involvement in Ethiopian campaigns in Massawa, Ghinda and Dongollo against the Eritreans. This was followed by public statements in which the Cuban Government began to criticize the Eritrean separatists as puppets of right-wing Arabs and American imperialists. Once again Fidel Castro proved that there are no permanent friends, only permanent interests. Support to the Ethiopian Government in the war in Eritrea has continued over the years. The EPLF claimed in April of 1986 that 5,000 more Soviet technicians and pilots had been sent to Asmara to support a large Ethiopian offensive against the separatists. It was also reported that between 50,000 and 60,000 more men had been conscripted by the Ethiopian Government to launch a large-scale offensive against the EPLF.<sup>24</sup>

A three-week offensive in August of 1985, with considerable Soviet support, resulted in the capture of several important Eritrean strategic supply lines from Sudan and the key town of Barentu. But the offensive failed to capture the Eritrean stronghold of Nakfa, despite new APC's, T-55 tanks and additional Mig-23/FLOGGER fighters delivered to Ethiopia by the Soviet Union before the start of the offensive through the port of Aseb.<sup>25</sup>

Relations between Cuba and Ethiopia are strong and the Cuban military presence continues in 1986. Mengistu visited Havana in April of 1978, on the eve of the victory over Somalia and again in the Fall of 1979, to attend the Sixth Summit Conference of the Unaligned Countries. At this meeting Fidel Castro was elected "President" of the organization for the 1979-1982 period.<sup>26</sup>

#### Zaire Invaded

On March 8, 1977, an invasion force organized by the Congolese National Liberation Front (CNLF) entered the Shaba province of Zaire from Angola. This province is rich in important minerals, including copper, cobalt and uranium, which

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24 "Soviet Advisers Arrive in Eritrea," Jane's Defence Weekly (May 3, 1986), p.786.

25 U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power: 1986, p. 132.

26 Considering the close affiliation of the Cuban Government with the Soviet Union and the fact that Ethiopia has become the center of Soviet military activity in the Horn of Africa, the name of the organization is a farce.

are highly coveted by the Communists. President Mobutu claimed that this invasion had the support of the MPLA and Cuba and requested foreign assistance after his troops were routed. France, Belgium and Morocco came to his assistance. Morocco sent weapons and about 1,500 soldiers who played a major role in defeating the CNLF. Cuban participation in this operation was never proved but was very possible. The following year, in May of 1978, another CNLF force of about 2,000 men once again entered Shaba and pushed back the Zaire Armed Forces. As the government forces retreated, hundreds of whites and black civilians were killed by the advancing invasion force.

Once again President Mobutu requested international help. This time the United States supported his claim that Cuban troops had been involved in providing assistance to the CNLF and American planes were used to carry French Foreign Legion troops and Belgian paratroopers to rescue European whites and beat back the invasion. Within days the CNLF was on the run back to Angola.

### MIDDLE EAST

#### South Yemen (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen)<sup>27</sup>

In 1970, South Yemen declared itself a Marxist state. Relations with the Soviet bloc increased slowly until a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed between both countries in 1979. The Cuban Government established diplomatic relations in May of 1972. When Fidel Castro visited South Yemen in March of 1977, he was given a very friendly welcome by President Salem Rubaya Ali and Abdul Fattah in the capital city of Adem. From this time on, Cuban military and technical assistance has been provided to South Yemen. By 1979, it is estimated that as many as 1,000 Cuban troops were stationed in the country. Hundreds of Soviet and Cuban military advisers began to arrive after the signing of the treaty and the port of Aden became a major center port of Adem became a major center of Soviet military operations. Cuban troops have been known to use this country to train Arab/Palestinian guerrillas.

#### Yemen Arab Republic

Relations between the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and its neighbor, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen have

<sup>27</sup> Formerly People's Republic of South Yemen.

been difficult in the past 20 years. On the eve of a visit to South Yemen on October 12, 1977, President Ibrahim al-Handi and his brother, Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Mohammed al-Handi, were assassinated in the capital of Sana'a. A military junta formed by majors Ahmed Hussein al-Ghashmi, Abdul Aziz, Abdul Ghani and Abdullah Abdul Alim took control of the country.

North Yemen for many years received Soviet and Western assistance and maintained a close relationship with the larger and wealthier Arab neighbors. The leader of the country, under pressure from tribal leaders, maintained a more conservative society than South Yemen. It followed along Moslem religious lines. South Yemen elected for a closer relationship with the Soviet Union. However, in October of 1984, President Ali Abdullah Saleh of North Yemen visited Moscow and signed a 20-year Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union. With this new treaty, one can expect a growing relationship with the Cuban Government and the present leadership of North Yemen. Diplomatic relations between Cuba and North Yemen have existed for many years.

#### WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Cuban support for guerrilla operations in the Western Hemisphere had stopped in countries such as Venezuela, which had re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba.<sup>28</sup> However, in other parts of the continent Cuban military personnel once again began to provide support to revolutionary groups. In Chile, after the overthrow of Salvador Allende, local revolutionary organizations began to receive Cuban assistance. Several hundred Chilean supporters of Allende had been given

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<sup>28</sup> In October of 1976 a Cuban plane returning from Guyana and Venezuela was blown up by a bomb that had possibly been planted by anti-Castro Cubans. Several Cuban exiles, including Dr. Luis Orlando Bosch, a prominent leader of the anti-Communists were arrested and charged with the bombing. The Cuban Government demanded their extradition to Cuba but Venezuela refused to give in to the Cuban demands. In the United States and elsewhere Cuban anti-Communist terrorist organizations began to target Venezuelan property demanding the release of Bosch and the other Cubans. In New York City the Venezuelan consulate was bombed by OMEGA 7. In Miami, the Pedro Luis Boitel Commandos attempted to blow up a Venezuelan plane parked on a runway at the Miami International Airport. Within weeks, Venezuelan Communists began a wave of kidnappings and guerrilla attacks against small Army posts in Rural areas. The relative peace that had lasted several years came to an end obviously because the Cuban Government was trying to convey a message to Venezuela.

## PHASE V (1980-1986)

During the 1980's, Cuban military involvement abroad has continued, with large numbers of combat troops and advisors stationed in at least eight countries. It is estimated that the total number of military personnel serving overseas in one capacity or another in 1985 was between 44,662 and 45,062+. In addition to military personnel, it is estimated that between 15,000 and 16,000 civilians were working in at least 23 countries throughout the world. Between 1980 and 1985, the number of Cuban military personnel serving overseas seems to have increased by about 15,000. These figures do not include Cubans serving in diplomatic missions in at least 138 countries and about 20 international organizations. Possibly as many as 1,000 more Cubans are currently serving in the diplomatic corps overseas. In addition, an unknown number of Cubans are also serving in a military capacity with guerrillas fighting in Africa, Central and South America.

The total number of regular and ready reserve troops in 1980 was estimated at about 200,000 men. In addition, Cuba had about 90,000 reservists. If these figures are correct, approximately 11 percent of the Cuban military was stationed in Africa. In addition to the troops stationed in Africa, between 200 and 300 additional troops and about 100 civilians were stationed in South Yemen. Possibly as many as 500 soldiers were providing assistance to the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua and another 300 military and civilian personnel were working in Grenada. Several hundred more Cuban soldiers were providing assistance to guerrilla organizations in Central America, Africa and the Middle East and/or receiving training in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries.

By 1985, the regular and ready reserves had been expanded to about 297,000. The number of paramilitary personnel in the Youth Labor Army and Territorial Militia had been increased to an estimated 1,300,000. State security personnel and special forces under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior were estimated at about 21,000. Thus, although the total number of Cuban military personnel overseas increased from 1980 to 1985, they represented a smaller percentage of the total number of military personnel. The total strength of the Armed Forces were expanded to an estimated 1,618,000.

Fidel Castro said in an interview for the McNeil-Lehrer Hour on February 12, 1985, that Cuba had tripled the weaponry of the Armed Forces since the 1983 invasion of Grenada and increased regular and reserve troops to over 500,000 and over one million in the territorial militia. "Every Citizen is Armed for Defense," Mexico City News (February 13, 1985), p.1. These figures are supported by U.S. Department of Defense estimates.

CUBAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OVERSEAS<sup>2</sup>

	MILITARY		CIVILIAN	
	1980	1985	1980	1985
<b>Western Hemisphere</b>				
Guyana				
Grenada	?		?	30
Nicaragua	1,000	3,000	2,000	4,500
<b>Middle East-Africa</b>				
Algeria	?	?	?	100-150
Angola	19,000	35,000	5,000	5,000
Benin	?	?	?	39
Burundi			?	14
Cape Verde	?	12	?	14
Congo (Brazzaville)	?	400-800	?	100-200
Ethiopia	13,000	5,000+	?	600-800
Guinea	50	?	?	50-100
Guinea-Bissau	50	50	?	100-150
Iraq	?	?	?	1,000
Libya	?	?	?	2,500
Mali	?	?	?	6
Mozambique	215	700	?	600-700
Sao Tome	?	?	?	50-100
South Yemen	500	500	?	100
Tanzania	?	?	?	50-60
Seychelles	?	?	?	6
<b>Asia</b>				
Kampuchea	?	?	?	20
Laos	?	?	?	100
Vietnam	?	?	?	300
<b>1985 TOTAL:</b>		<b>44,662/45,062</b>	<b>15,270/15,880</b>	

Cuba was not alone in promoting revolution and supporting revolutionary Marxist governments overseas. The Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, North Korea and other Commu-

<sup>2</sup> Sources: U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Information Agency. Figures come from several publications and only represent educated estimates of the total number of Cuban military and civilian personnel overseas.

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nist countries were also very active in Africa providing military assistance to an increasing number of countries. Among these countries were Angola, Benin, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia. Several revolutionary organizations also receive direct assistance from the Soviet Bloc, including the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa and the Polizario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia al Hamra and Rio de Oro).

**Military Equipment**

According to published reports of the U.S. Department of Defense between 1977 and 1982, the Soviet Union provided the following major equipment deliveries to Sub-Saharan African countries:

**Major Soviet Military Equipment Delivered to Sub-Saharan African Countries 1977-1982** 3

100-150	Light Armor	1,590
5,000	Tanks/Self-propelled guns	1,140
39	Artillery (100-mm and over)	3,510
14	Major Surface Combatants	5
14	Minor Surface Combatants	45
100-200	Missile Patrol Boats	4
600-800	Supersonic Combat Aircraft	220
50-100	Subsonic Combat Aircraft	80
100-150	Helicopters	125
1,000	Other military Aircraft	70
2,500	Surface-to-Air Missiles	1,575

20  
 100  
 300  
 15,880

The estimated value of this military equipment was placed at \$5.6 billion dollars. In addition, the Soviet Union shipped military equipment valued at \$25.7 billion to the Mideast and North Africa during the same time period. A substantial portion of the equipment shipped to Africa was either being operated directly by Cuban military personnel in the African campaigns and/or being used by them to provide training to Africans.

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New weapons were also being shipped to Cuba. Between 1980 and 1985, the Cuban Government received large quantities of equipment from the Soviet Union. Over 265 thousand metric tons of military deliveries were received between 1980 and 1984 alone. The new equipment included at least 33 Mig-

U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power: 1986, p.91.

23's, 20 Mig-21's as well as 30 L-39 training aircraft for the Air Force. The Army received another 280 T-54/55 and T-62 tanks, 200 armored vehicles and at least 75 new artillery pieces. While these weapons could be classified as defensive, Cuba also increased its resources for offensive operations in the first half of the 1980's.

In 1975 the Cuban Air Force only had 2 AN-26 transport planes. By 1980 the number of AN-26's had increased to 25 and by 1985 five more had been added. Two new IL-76 transport planes were added between 1980 and 1985. In 1975 Cuba did not own any submarines. By 1980 two Foxtrot submarines had been added to the Navy and a third one had been received by 1985. Between 1980 and 1985, the Navy also received two Koni frigates and two Polnocny landing craft capable of transporting six tanks each. The addition of this equipment has given an offensive capability to the Cuban military that it did not have in 1975 before the start of the Angolan and Ethiopian campaigns. While the Cuban military would still need the Soviet Union for logistical support for operations in Africa, Cuba now has the capability to project its power in the Caribbean and Central America on its own.



Castro and Col. Mengistu during a visit to Ethiopia in 1977. Castro was presented with an album of pictures of the war with Somalia. On the picture in left, both men watch MIG airplanes flying overhead.

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4 In 1975 and 1976 the Cuban Government sent thousands of soldiers and weapons to Angola using limited resources without much if any assistance from the Soviet Union. With the equipment now in the hands of the Cuban military it would be easier to carry out a similar operation.

## AFRICA

The number of combat troops in Africa in the 1980's has remained high, but their location has changed somewhat depending on need. The largest concentration continues to be dependent in Angola and Ethiopia. About 1,000 soldiers were sent to Mozambique in the late 1970's to provide support to guerrillas of the Patriotic Front in neighboring Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. After the end of white-rule in Zimbabwe, the number of Cuban troops in Mozambique was reduced by about 300 men, but the number went back up by the mid 1980's. About 700 were stationed in Mozambique in 1985, and were engaged in providing assistance to the government of Samora Moises Machel. Cuban advisers are currently providing assistance to Polisario guerrillas fighting Moroccan troops in the Western Sahara and are present in about 15 African countries. Thousands of Cuban military and civilian advisors, medical teams, teachers and technical personnel are stationed all over the African continent.

### Angola: War With No End

The Cuban military involvement in Angola has lasted over ten years and has turned out to be a seemingly interminable ordeal that has resulted in thousands of casualties. The war against UNITA guerrillas does not seem to be approaching an end any time soon. Possibly up to 70 percent of the Cuban troops in Angola are reservists who have already completed their military service in Cuba. A substantial number of these troops serve voluntarily, although regular officers do not have a choice and have been forced to serve contrary to their will. Although Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders praise the dedication of Cuban soldiers to their internationalist duties in support of war of national liberation and in defense of friendly governments against imperialist powers and domestic right wing elements, the people of Cuba may not perceive the war in Angola the same way.

Cuban families and particularly young people often view the military campaigns in Africa as a punishment and not as a reward or a mechanism to get ahead in Cuban society. A long tour of duty in Africa often results in reduction of educational opportunities and a life in the future relegated to poorly paying jobs. In addition, upon their return to Cuba, the veterans do not receive many if any special material benefits for their sacrifice. Many of the soldiers return in poor health and some have deep psychological scars, typical of soldiers who have participated in any war. The fact that at times the government has sent men to fight in Angola as a

form of punishment reinforces the belief that there is nothing to be gained by participating in overseas military adventures. Troop morale has been reported low due to a number of factors, including danger, boredom, illness, lack of female companionship and even a higher than normal incidence of homosexuality.

Over 200,000 Cuban soldiers, according to statements made by Fidel Castro in 1985, had already served in Angola. Possibly as many as 50 percent of these men have been blacks or mulattoes. In fact, there is some evidence that points out to the ability of the Ministry of the Armed Forces to have selected a large number of blacks from the Eastern, Western and Central armies in Cuba and their ready reserve organizations to serve in both Angola and Ethiopia in the late 1970's. Although the Cuban population has "darkened" over the past 27 years with the emigration of about 700,000 whites the percentage of blacks in the African wars seems to have been well above their representation in Cuban society. Although this may have been done in order to foster better relations with the native population in Africa, it has also resulted in Cuban blacks taking a higher number of casualties.

Regular military units remained in Cuba to defend the island against possible attack and to train more reservists and paramilitary troops. With the exception of the officer corps, most of the enlisted men who have fought in Angola have been reservists. Over the past ten years, MINFAR has been able to develop an efficient troop rotation system which has served to provide combat experience to many members of the Armed Forces. Although since mid 1976 most of the troops who have served in Angola have acted as garrison troops to free local forces to fight the counterinsurgency operation against UNITA, many Cuban officers and special troops have taken direct part in the war.

#### Military Organization in Angola

The organization of the Cuban combat troops seems to be very different from that of the units stationed on the island. For example, company strength of units in Cuba is reported to be around 100 men. In Angola Cuban forces operate with full company strength, reported to be about 220 men. Battalions

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<sup>5</sup> The fact that a group of military officers were court-martialed after their questionable performance in Grenada in 1983, demoted and sent to Angola as punishment for their sins, serves to reinforce the idea that there is nothing to be gained by participating in the war. The rhetoric of the leadership is far from the reality faced by the servicemen and the veterans.

in Angola are also operating at full strength, with about 865 men, which is twice the strength of units in Cuba.<sup>6</sup> Regiments in Angola are reported to operate with about 2,000 men, which indicates that they may have three full battalions, plus a complement of artillery and other personnel.

The total number of Cuban combat troops in Angola at the end of 1985 were reported to total 25,000 by the Angolan Government. (U.S. Department of Defense estimates of Cuban troop strength in Angola are higher.) In addition, it is acknowledged that another 11,000 Cubans are providing technical support in health care, education and other critical areas of the economy. UNITA leadership claims that all 36,000 Cubans in Angola perform a military function, since all of them have received military training and are helping the Angolan Government in the war. Cuban military personnel are reported to operate the sophisticated SAM system in Angola. There are also Cuban pilots who fly some of the MIG 21's and all the MIG 23's and SU-22's in the Angolan Air Force.

### Weapon Systems

In the first six months of 1985 a substantial number of new aircraft, including at least 25 MIG 23's were added to the Angolan Air Force. In addition, many modern combat helicopters arrived during this period, possibly to be used in a major offensive against UNITA which started in August. These aircraft continue to be piloted by experienced Cuban pilots

<sup>6</sup> A typical infantry battalion in Cuba has about 365 men, divided into three infantry companies. Each company has about 77 enlisted men and six officers. Battalions in a war zone are expanded to include a mortar battery, an anti-tank platoon, a supply and maintenance platoon, an anti-tank other infantry platoon for battalion headquarters. A representative infantry regiment has about 1,010 men, divided into two infantry battalions. In an active military campaign, the size of the regiments are increased by the addition of a reconnaissance platoon, an anti-tank platoon, a mortar battery, a transportation platoon, a supply and service platoon, a signal company, a medical unit and an AAMG company.

<sup>7</sup> Almerigo Grilz, "The War in Angola: forces and organization," Jane's Defense Weekly, (November 16, 1985), pp. 1086-87. Also, report in Jane's Defense Weekly of February 1, 1986, p. 164.

despite the fact that many Angolans have been trained in the Soviet Union to take over this role.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviet Union has been the largest supplier of military hardware and technical training to the Angolan Government. However, several Western European countries have also sold military hardware to the Angolan Government. Spanish, Swiss and French equipment has been purchased and used in the war.

#### UNITA Guerrilla Organization

The FALA (Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola) of UNITA is reported to number about 60,000 men. Of these forces, about 26,000 operate in conventional units and 34,000 are reported to be engaged in guerrilla warfare. Their weapons are a mixture of captured Soviet weapons and weapons left over from the war against the Portuguese colonial regime. South Africa has also provided substantial military support to UNITA. New weapons, including missiles, are expected to be introduced in the war by UNITA, as a result of military aid from the United States.<sup>9</sup> It was reported in the press that the United States would be providing anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles to UNITA soon. This development is bound to produce a much tougher assignment for Cuban forces in Angola and produce many more casualties.<sup>10</sup>

#### Casualties

The extent of Cuban involvement and casualties in Angola can be best illustrated by a review of press reports on the war in the last days of 1984 and those during 1985 and 1986. At the end of 1984, on December 21, 1984, UNITA claimed that its forces had killed 196 government soldiers and 16 Cubans during fighting between December 8th and 12th. The fighting was reported to have taken place in the northern provinces of

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<sup>4</sup> In 1985, the Soviet Union delivered to Angola Mi-24/Hind and Mi-17/Hip H helicopters, additional Su-22/FITTERs, Mig-23/FLOGGERS and SA-13 SAMs. Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power: 1986 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 131-132.

<sup>9</sup> "Sabimbi Eyes U.S. Missiles Before April," Mexico City News (February 18, 1986), p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> "Regan Decides to Send Weapons to Angola Rebels," New York Times (February 19, 1986), p. 1, col. 1.

Huambo, Bie Kwanza Sul, Kwanza Norte, Luanda and Uige.<sup>11</sup> Three months later it was reported in the press that 11 Cubans had been killed in the bombing of the Almirante Hotel in Huambo on March 25, 1985. In this bombing about 75 people were reported to have been killed, including high ranking Angolan officers and several Bulgarians.<sup>12</sup> In June of 1985, it was reported that 21 Cuban troops had been killed in clashes with UNITA forces.<sup>13</sup>

Between August 18 and September 11, 1985, the Angolan Army, with the support of Cuban combat troops and Soviet technical personnel started a major offensive in an attempt to capture Cazombo and UNITA headquarters at Jamba. Some of the heaviest fighting in the war took place in this offensive which resulted in heavy casualties for both UNITA and government forces.

In September of 1985 press reports carried stories of 11 Cubans having been killed along with Angolan and Soviet troops in action between August 23 and September 3, 1985, in combat with UNITA forces. Most of the fighting took place in the Cuando-Cubango province. One of the reports on the results of the offensive claimed that 41 Cubans had been killed and 52 wounded in August and September of 1985.<sup>14</sup> These casualty reports were gathered from UNITA reports and could not be verified since the Angolan Government does not release details of casualties.

UNITA again reported in February of 1986 that they had shot down two MIG fighters that were being piloted by Cubans. The planes were reportedly shot down in Moxico (a province of Angola), between the villages of Dala and Kanje during a large government offensive against the guerrillas. UNITA also reported killing 13 Cubans in combat between February 1st and

11 "Angolan Rebels Claim 212 Gov't Cuban Troops Killed in Fighting," The Mexico City News (December 21, 1984), p. 12.

12 "Angolan Rebels Claim Hotel Bomb Kills 75," The Mexico City News (March 25, 1985).

13 "Angolan Rebels kill 224," Jane's Defense Weekly, (June 8, 1985), p. 1065.

14 Helmoed-Romer Heitman, "Angola: SA military may intervene," Jane's Defense Weekly (October 12, 1985), p. 776.

3rd, together with over 100 Angolan soldiers, large numbers of military equipment were also reportedly captured.<sup>15</sup>

According to UNITA reports, some 259 Cubans were killed in combat between January and November of 1985. It is possible that an average of 25 Cubans per month are losing their lives in Angola; roughly about 300 per year. There is no way to confirm the casualty figures, but it can be assumed that close to 10,000 Cubans have been killed fighting in Africa between 1975 and 1985. Thousands more have been wounded.<sup>16</sup>

A major offensive against UNITA has been expected in 1986. Soviet General Yuri Petrov, a counterinsurgency expert is said to be coordinating the preparations for the expected offensive. Without a doubt thousands of Cuban troops will participate in the offensive and casualties will increase before the year is over.

Indicative of the level of activity in the Angolan war was a report by UNITA to the effect that their forces had staged a massive preemptive strike against an Angolan/Cuban military air base at Cuito-Cuanavale. UNITA claimed that their forces had destroyed the base's radar, anti-aircraft guns and most of the artillery, bombs and munitions. The report also stated that in the 24 hours prior to the attack, Cuban-piloted MIG's had been conducting bombing raids against their positions. According to the report, thousands of Cuban-supported troops had been poised at Cuito-Cuanavale and Monongue to an offensive against rebel bastions in Kuando Kubango province.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "Angolan Rebels Claim 2 Mig Jets Downed," The Mexico City News (February 6, 1986), p. 3. ( This article was based on a UPI report from the Lisbon office.)

<sup>16</sup> During the Vietnam war roughly 0.26 percent of the American population was killed in the conflict. In the past ten years, an estimated 0.11 percent of the Cuban population has been killed in African wars. These estimates are based on an average population in the United States between 1965 and 1975 of about 220 million people, and an average population of 9.3 million between 1975 and 1985 in Cuba. About 58,000 Americans were killed in Vietnam and about 10,000 Cubans have been killed in Africa.

<sup>17</sup> "Angolan Rebels Hit Air Base On Eve of Expected Attack," The Mexico City News (August 12, 1986), p.9.

## Projection for the Future

The Soviet Union has converted Angola into a major military operations center. The harbor of Luanda, one of the best in West Africa, has become the center of operations for the Soviet Navy's West Africa Patrol. They have moved a floating drydock to the harbor and have built a base at the Luanda airport for Tu-95/Bear D reconnaissance aircraft to patrol the South Atlantic sea lanes. A squadron of Soviet An-12/CUB transport planes stationed in Angola provides support to the Angolan and Cuban troops operating against the UNITA guerrillas. Luanda has also become an important transiting point for the Soviet Pacific Ocean Fleet. The Soviets and the Cubans are prepared to stay in Angola until they have full control of the entire country.

The Cuban presence in Angola can no longer be seen only in the context of domestic military developments in Angola. This African country has become the center of a vast network of intelligence and military operations organized and controlled by Cuba and the Soviet Union to promote Communist-style revolutions throughout the continent. Fidel Castro stated at the meeting of the so-called Nonaligned Movement in Zimbabwe in September 1986, that Cuban troops would remain in Angola until the South African Government was overthrown and the African National Union (ANC) captured power in that country. During a four-day visit to Angola after the meeting in Zimbabwe, Fidel Castro spoke to about 3,000 Cubans in Luanda and once again stated that Cuban troops would remain in Angola until apartheid is defeated in South Africa and that country stops sending assistance to UNITA and Namibia becomes independent.<sup>18</sup> But even if this were to take place, the attention would be shifted elsewhere in Africa. The goal is to take over the entire continent and the Cuban military presence in Angola is an important element to reach this goal.

South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and Popular Army for the Liberation of Namibia (PALN)

The territory South West Africa, also known as Namibia, was invaded by Germany under Bismark and William I, at the end of the 19th century. During WWI, British troops invaded the German colony from South Africa. After WWI, the League of Nations placed the territory under the protection of adminis-

<sup>18</sup> "Cuba retirará tropas de Angola cuando desaparezca el apartheid: Fidel Castro," Uno Mas Uno (Mexico), (September 10, 1986).

tration of the Union of South Africa. After WWII, South Africa announced its intentions to annex the territory, despite objections from the United Nations.

In 1966, SWAPO led by Sam Nujoma, began a guerrilla war for the liberation of the territory. The PALN is the military arm of SWAPO. South African troops have managed to contain the insurgency, however, after the victory of the MPLA in Angola and of ZANU in Zimbabwe, the guerrillas of SWAPO/PALN have increased their activities. They have established training camps in Angola and have received substantial help from the MPLA and the Cuban Government. For example, they receive weapons, training and logistical support from Cuban military personnel based in Angola. Students from Namibia have also been provided scholarships to study in Cuba. Considerable Soviet assistance has also been provided over the last ten years.

South African regular soldiers, as well as troops of the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF), have raided SWAPO/PALN bases in Angola on several occasions in the past ten years and have come into battle with Cuban troops fighting alongside the guerrillas. SWATF forces, consisting in about six infantry battalions, a motorized brigade and paramilitary organizations are the principal force used by South Africa to fight against the Cuban-sponsored SWAPO/PALN guerrillas.

#### South Africa

The conflict between Cuba and South Africa over political and military influence in Southern Africa dates back to at least 1975, when troops from both countries faced each other in Angola. The Cuban Government has been providing assistance to South African blacks fighting against the racist government of that country ever since. Cuban support for the African National Congress (ANC) is no secret. Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC, arrived in Cuba on March 23, 1986, and was warmly received at the Havana airport by a large number of South African blacks studying in Cuba on scholarships. He was received by Isidoro Malmierca, Minister of Foreign Relations, René Rodriguez, President of the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP), Jorge Risquet, an important member of the Politburo of the Cuban Communist Party who handles African affairs for the Cuban Government and General Victor Schueg Colias, a veteran of the Angolan war. Upon his arrival in Cuba Oliver Tambo declared that "Cuba is present

in Africa, fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with us against the same enemy." 19

Without a doubt, Cuban military personnel have been training ANC guerrillas and providing technical assistance and support to other groups fighting to overthrow the South African Government. Fidel Castro reiterated his support to the revolutionary movements in South Africa at the meeting of the Nonaligned Countries in Zimbabwe at the meeting of the future, now counting with strong world-wide public opinion opposition to racist policies in South Africa, in September of 1986. In Cuban military support to the revolutionary groups in this country can be expected to increase.

#### Guinea-Bissau/Cape Verde

In November of 1980, Luis Cabral, an old friend of the Cuban Government was overthrown by a military coup led by Joao Bernardino Vieira "Nino," who had been one of the principal military leaders of the struggle against Portuguese colonialism. The Council of State and the National Assembly were disbanded. A Council of the Revolution under Vieira's control was formed to run the country in place of the old political system. Cabral was placed under arrest but was later released and allowed to go to Cuba to live. Plans for the unification of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, a pet project of Cabral's, were suspended and diplomatic relations between the two countries were broken.

In 1982, under the auspices of Samora Machel, leader of Mozambique, Vieira met with Aristides Pereira, head of state of Cape Verde. The meetings were held in Maputo. After this meeting diplomatic relations were re-established and Cabral went to live in Cape Verde.

At least two attempts were made to overthrow Vieira in 1981. On July 21, 1986, several officials who had been implicated in a coup attempt were executed. Vieira has been less friendly to the Soviets and possibly to the Cuban Government than Cabral. All the political problems in this country seem to be based on rivalries between leaders of the struggle for independence from Portugal and officers of the 6,000-man military establishment who are Marxists for the most part. A large number of these men have been trained in Cuba and Cuban advisers have been present in the country for several years. Cuban military personnel have also been present in next-door Guinea. However, the Cabral government and the Guinean

19 Orlando Gómez, "Llegó Oliver Tambo: cumple invitación del Partido Comunista de Cuba," Granma (March 24, 1986), Año 21, No. 13, p. 1.

Government had strained relations due to disputes over the location of the border between both countries in an area that may have oil.

### Equatorial Guinea

As explained in Phase I (1959-1965), the Cuban Government made early contacts with Communist leaders of Equatorial Guinea. Masie Nguema Biyondo, who had been associated with high officials of the Franco government of Spain, took over as ruler of the country from independence in 1968 until he was overthrown by a military coup in August of 1979, led by Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasasogo. The Nguema Biyondo government was very repressive from the start, jailing and killing thousands of political enemies. In 1976 Amnesty International announced that there were at least 10,000 political prisoners in this small country. The Soviet Union, East Germany and the People's Republic of China as well as the Cuban Government, had maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with the dictator.

After the 1979 coup, Nguema was arrested, tried and executed for crimes against humanity. However, the new government continued some of the old practices. A new political party was formed. It was called the Democratic Alliance for National Reunification. It is the only political party in the country. New economic and commercial ventures were opened with France, Spain and the United States. Soviet and East German presence was reduced. Moroccan troops were invited to come in to provide military training. However, as of 1985, it is estimated that as many as 200 Cuban troops may be stationed in Equatorial Guinea providing military training to local troops, which may be facilitated by the fact that the official language of the country is Spanish.

As of 1983, the total strength of the Armed Forces was estimated at 1,550 men. If this is the case, a unit of 200 well-trained Cuban troops with thousands more in near by countries represents a potentially strong force in local affairs.

### Guinea

The 26-year presidency of Sekou Touré in Guinea came to an end with his death at age 62 while receiving medical treatment in a hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1984. His body was taken back to Guinea for burial and the funeral was attended by Vice President George Bush, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Yasir Arafat, leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and a number of other world leaders. Considering the political background of Sekou

Touré, a close associate of Cuban leader Fidel Castro over most of his 26-year rule, the funeral looked like a political fruit cocktail, with all political persuasions represented.

Prime Minister Lansanda Beavogui took over as acting president upon Sekou Touré's death, but did not last very long. Armed forces leaders took power by coup d'état in April, 1984, promising to reverse the actions of Sekou Touré, whom they qualified as a bloody and ruthless dictator who had killed thousands of people. The principal military leaders, Colonels Lasana Conte and Diara Traore, also promised that they would encourage free enterprise in Guinea. They called the revolution led by Sekou Touré a failure. He had hoped to turn the country toward Socialism. The political turmoil did not end with this coup. In July of 1985, another coup d'état attempt was foiled. It was led by Colonel Diara Traore. 20

In 1977, after flirting with the Soviet Union and providing a base in Guinea to the Soviets for their BEAR reconnaissance aircraft, Sekou Touré withdrew the permit. However, the Soviets have continued to use the port of Conakry even after Sekou Touré's death as a regular port of call for their African naval patrol. The Conakry airport also continues to be used by the Soviet Union and Cuba as a refueling stop in flights carrying military supplies to Angola and rotating troops serving in that country.

Colonel Konté, despite his relationship with the Soviet Union, has taken steps away from Socialism in order to improve the economy of the country. Government-owned enterprises have been sold back to the private sector and assistance has been requested from France, Japan, West Germany, the United States and other western non-Communist countries.

### Sao Tome and Principe Democratic Republic

This small country is composed of the islands of Sao Tome and Principe and several smaller islands in the Gulf of Guinea. The total national territory is not more than 1,000 square miles and the population numbers about 100,000 people. The official language is Portuguese and most of the people seem

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20 "Guinea's military assumes control; seals nation; says Sekou Toure was dictator," New York Times (April 4, 1984); "Coup attempt foiled in Guinea; Army searches for rebel leader Col. Diarra Traore," New York Times (July 6, 1985), p.1.; Charles T. Powers, "Guinea renewing contacts with outside; Sekou Toure dead, his revolution a failure," Los Angeles Times (August 23, 1984), p.9. col. 1.;

Portugal maintained a very strong and repressive colonial government in these islands, which led to the formation of the Sao Tome and Principe Liberation Front (MLSTP) in 1969. This organization developed strong ties to the Angolan MPLA, the PAIGC of Guinea-Bissao and Frelimo of Mozambique. After the military coup d'etat in Portugal in 1974, the country obtained its independence in 1975.

The leaders of the MLSTP declared themselves as Communists and took over the banking, expropriated the land owned by foreign companies, formed a militia and began to receive help from Cuba and other Communist countries. An attempt by right wing elements to invade the islands from Gabon failed in 1978 with assistance from the Soviet block. Miguel Trovoada, the first Prime Minister after independence, was deposed by more radical members of the MLSTP. In 1981 another movement to overthrow the government was also defeated. Mass organizations, an internal security force and a militia have been organized to maintain power in the hands of a National Assembly, which has been led by president Manuel Pinto da Costa since 1980.

Cuban public health specialists, teachers and technical personnel have been providing assistance to the government since independence. With the departure of most of the Portuguese technicians after independence the economy deteriorated rapidly. Substantial Cuban civilian and military assistance have served to establish excellent relations between the two countries.

#### People's Republic of Benin (Dahomey)<sup>21</sup>

This former French colony became independent in 1960 under the name of Republic of Dahomey. In the next twelve years, the country suffered a tremendous level of political turmoil, with about one new ruler every year. In 1972, a coup d'etat led by Major Ayhmed Kerekou was able to take control of the country. Within two years, Kerekou had nationalized foreign property, declared himself a Marxist, changed the name of the country to People's Republic of Benin, and established close contacts with the Soviet Union and other Communist countries.

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<sup>21</sup> This small and poor African country has a per capita income of about \$310 and an international debt of over \$600 million. About 17 percent of the population is illiterate and there is only one doctor per every 17,000 people. The size of the population in 1983 was estimated at 3.7 million people. The Armed Forces had an estimated 3,200 men in 1983. The capital is Porto Novo.

In 1977, Kerekou was able to survive an attempted invasion which seems to have been organized with help from France, Morocco and Gabon. After this attempt to overthrow his government, Kerekou has taken additional steps to strengthen his military with help from Cuba. Cuban troops have provided training for the Army of Benin and have assisted in the organization of a strong state security apparatus. Indicative of the support being provided by Cuba was a visit in the first week of September 1985, of Jorge Risquet Valdés, the top Cuban official on African affairs to Benin.<sup>22</sup>

### Mozambique People's Republic

The Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) was formed in 1963 by Eduardo Mondlane, an official of the United Nations, born in Mozambique. In September of 1964, the first guerrilla actions of Frelimo against the Portuguese Government of Mozambique started and continued until independence was obtained in June of 1975. By then Mondlane had been killed during the revolutionary period and Samora Moises Machel had emerged as the leader of the revolution.<sup>23</sup>

There were two principal political groups within the Frelimo movement. One wanted to obtain independence from Portugal and set up a nationalistic African state. The other, led by Machel, wanted to set up a Marxist state. Although Machel identified with the People's Republic of China and Maoism, the Cuban Government established close ties with the revolutionaries almost from the start of the guerrilla war against Portuguese colonialism. Cuban military officers assisted in the training and general education of Frelimo leaders.

After independence, Cuban troops were sent to Mozambique to assist in the organization of a new military establishment, as well as to set up bases to train guerrillas fighting to overthrow the white-ruled Government of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). After Zimbabwe revolutionaries capture power from the white minority government in 1980, Cuban troop strength in Mozambique was reduced to about 250 men. However, as a counterrevolutionary guerrilla force of the National Resistance of Mozambique (RENAMO) picked up strength with assistance from South Africa, Cuban military presence increased once again to between 700 and 900 by 1985.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS Report, September 4, 1985.

<sup>23</sup> As this book was being prepared to go to press, Samora Moises Machel was killed in a plane crash on October 20, 1986. "Mozambique's Leader Killed in Plane Crash," Chicago Tribune (October 21, 1986), p. 1, col. 2.

tance of Mozambique (RENAMO) picked up strength with assistance from South Africa. Cuban military presence increased once again to between 700 and 900 by 1985.

Several military offensives in 1981, 1982 and 1984 have failed to defeat RENAMO. The economy of the country has not only been affected by the nationalization of key industries and the migration of the European population but also by the continuing guerrilla war and draught. South African raids against suspected bases of guerrillas of the African National Congress in Mozambique and assistance to the MNR have contributed to the deterioration of the economy.

The United States has made several attempts to improve relations with Mozambique to the point of sending not only economic and humanitarian assistance to the victims of draught, but also increasing military assistance for Machel. Thus, the approximately 13,000 members of the Armed Forces are sporting Soviet and American weapons and receiving military assistance from the Soviet Union, Cuba and the United States. (It is too early to tell what will happen in the future as a result of Machel's death.)

The Soviet Union has provided millions of dollars in military equipment to Samora Machel. In 1985 alone, the Soviets have sent to Mozambique Mi-24/HIND helicopters, PT-76 light tanks, BTR-60 APC's, artillery pieces, BM-24 multiple rocket launchers, SA-3's, SO-1 patrol boats and many other weapons. In addition, the Soviets have approximately 850 advisors and technicians in Mozambique helping the government in the war against RENAMO.<sup>24</sup>

#### Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)

The war between the white-controlled Government of Rhodesia and black guerrillas reached a high point between 1978 and 1979. The war spread to neighboring Mozambique and Zambia, when Rhodesian troops attacked guerrilla sanctuaries in those countries, where some Cuban military advisers were providing assistance to the black guerrillas. Casualties in the war mounted with the increasing violence of the war.

The government of Ian Smith sought to find a peaceful transition to black rule and called for elections with black participation for the first time in 1979. Bishop Abel Muzorewa, of the United African National Council was elected as the new head of state by the parliament. These elections were followed by a cease fire and new elections in 1980.

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<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power: 1986, p. 132.

which signaled the full transition to a black government. Robert Mugabe, leader of the ZANU was elected as the new head of state.

Joshua Nkomo, leader of the ZAPU, and several of his followers were offered participation in the government. However, within a year, problems began to arise between the leaders of the old guerrilla organizations. In February of 1981, members of ZANU and ZAPU fought inside Army barracks at Balawayo. Nkomo was stripped of his position as Minister of Interior although he was allowed to remain in the cabinet. But the problems continued, as ZAPU began to receive covert assistance from South Africa to take power.

In 1983, fighting broke out again in Matabele, an area where the predominant ethnic group supported ZAPU. Troops of the 5th Brigade, trained by North Koreans, were used to slaughter followers of Joshua Nkomo, who fled to Botswana after being arrested in Harare. Since then, Mugabe has been able to increase his control of the country.

The Cuban Government and Robert Mugabe have excellent relations, which stem from Cuban military assistance which started during the war against the white government. Cuban troops arrived in Havana on October 7, 1985, invited by the Mugabe leadership.<sup>25</sup> Although Cuban troops do not seem to be present in large numbers at the present time in Zimbabwe, they could be providing training in Zimbabwe to guerrilla organizations operating in South Africa and Namibia.

Relations between the United States and Zimbabwe deteriorated in September of 1986, and resulted in the cancellation of economic assistance programs through the Agency for International Development (AID). Several anti-American statements, insults and a series of incidents prior to the meeting of the Nonaligned countries in September of 1986, led to relations cooling off. The Reagan Administration called the attacks against the United States by Zimbabwe officials "highly offensive and counterproductive" and cut off further economic aid. These incidents may signal a move to the left and the start of a much closer cooperation between Cuba and the Government of Zimbabwe.<sup>26</sup>

### Middle East and North Africa

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBI Report, October 8, 1985.

<sup>26</sup> Sheila Rule, "Sanctions Test Mettle of the Leaders at Harare," New York Times (September 7, 1986), p. E3.

Cuban troops are present in South Yemen, Syria, Libya and possibly Lebanon and Afghanistan in the Middle East and North Africa.<sup>27</sup> Their presence has been acknowledged by Gerardo Mazola, Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister for Africa and Asia and confirmed by many other independent sources. Nevertheless, their numbers and specific assignments are clouded in secrecy.

However, it is well known that Cuban military personnel have provided in the past and continue to provide at the present time assistance to several Arab revolutionary organizations throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The following section provides a breakdown of the most prominent of these revolutionary organizations which have received Cuban assistance.

**Polisario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia al Hamra and Rio de Oro)**

The Cuban Government has officially recognized the Saharan Democratic Republic led by President Mahammed Abdelaziz and named Raul Barzaga as Cuban Ambassador.<sup>28</sup> Cuban military personnel are providing support to the guerrillas fighting for independence of the old Spanish Sahara in their war against Morocco. Some training has been provided in Cuba and some in Algeria. Cuban and Moroccan troops have been clashing in different conflicts in Africa since 1963.

The war in the Sahara dates back to at least 1975, when the government of Francisco Franco arrived at a compromise with King Hassan of Morocco, to pass control of the Spanish colony to Morocco and Mauritania. A large Moroccan Army invaded the territory and has been fighting ever since to defeat the Polisario guerrillas. The guerrillas were estimated to have about 15,000 members in 1983. The Moroccan Army has kept about 50,000 men fighting in the Sahara for several years, but suffered several major defeats at Mahbes, Uarkaziz and

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<sup>27</sup> Cuban forces may have participated in the bloody civil war in South Yemen in February of 1986, or may have simply been caught in the fighting. No specific information about Cuban involvement has been available in the press, but considering that over 13,000 people have been reportedly killed in a fairly small country, it is reasonable to believe that Cuban casualties are a very strong possibility.

<sup>28</sup> Cuban radio carried the story of a meeting between Ambassador Barzaga and President Abdelaziz in March of 1985, and reaffirmed Cuban support for Polisario. FBI Report (March 30, 1985).

Guelta Zemmur. But the Moroccan Army has developed a new method of fighting the guerrillas in the past three years.

The new tactics consist of the building of walls of sand miles long, with fortifications in the north of the Sahara. These walls of sand are moved forward slowly as the Moroccans secure the areas behind. With the use of sophisticated radars and modern weapons, they have been able to keep the guerrillas out of a large area. King Hassan also signed accords with Libya and made efforts to neutralize leftist Arab organizations which had provided assistance to Polisario in the past. Most of these accords are now dead.

Representatives of the POLISARIO movement were invited to attend the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in Havana in March of 1986. They received pledges of support from Fidel Castro during his keynote speech to the delegates. Castro pledged his continued support for the war of liberation being waged by POLISARIO against Morocco. He accused the United States and other western countries of arming King Hassan's armies to oppress the people of the Sahara. Further pledges of support were made at the meeting of the Nonaligned Movement in Zimbabwe in September of 1986.

#### Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)

The history of the PLO goes back to 1947, when the United Nations approved a plan to create two new countries, one Arab and one Jewish, in Palestine. The territory had been under British control from the end of WWI until the end of WWII. At the time, there were about 1.25 million Palestinian Arabs and about 500,000 Jews in the area. More Jews began to arrive in large numbers after WWII and began to join radical Zionist organizations which wanted to establish a strong Jewish state. Arabs and Jews clashed and war broke out as the surrounding Arab countries attempted to invade the area and put an end to terrorist attacks against Arabs conducted by Irgun, a radical Zionist group. The Israelis defeated the Arab armies and were able to establish a Jewish state.

Palestinian Arabs by the thousands began to leave the area and moved into Jordan and other countries in the region. In 1965, under the leadership of Ahmed Shuqairy, the PLO was formed, as an umbrella organization, to fight for a homeland for the Palestinian Arabs. The creation of the PLO was followed by the creation of several guerrilla organizations including:

-Al Fatah-Movement for National Liberation, formed in 1965 and led by Yasser Arafat. Associated with Al Fatah was Al Yassifa, as the military branch of the organization.

- Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), formed in 1967 by Dr. George Habache, a self-declared Marxist.
- Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), formed by Nayef Hawatmeth. This Communist led group has some connections with the Israeli Communists Party.
- Al Saika, formed in 1967 and led by Zuheir Moshen. This group has strong ties to Syrian organizations and possibly to the Syrian Government.

Several of these organizations were invited to participate in the Tri-Continental Congress, in Havana, in 1966. At least since this meeting in Havana, the Cuban Government has been providing assistance to Palestinian revolutionary organizations.

After the defeat of the Arab armies of Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon in 1967, the Palestinian Arabs became more radical and intensified their guerrilla efforts against Israel. Cuban military personnel intensified their training of Palestinian guerrillas both in Cuba, as well as in Lebanon and in North Africa. Hundreds of Palestinians have received military training and logistical support from the Cuban military since 1967.

In 1969, Yasser Arafat was elected president of the PLO. After his rise to this important position, his visits to Cuba and his contacts with the Cuban Government increased. But as his organization was picking up strength, conflicts developed between the PLO and the Jordanian Government. In September of 1969, the Jordanian Government expelled the PLO and thousands of Palestinians from Jordan after several days of bloody fighting. This conflict brought about the creation of new guerrilla organizations which increased their use of terrorist tactics. One of them was the Black September movement, named after the fighting in Jordan.

War broke out again between Israel and its neighbors in 1973. As was stated in Phase III, about 500 Cuban troops were present in Syria and provided support to the Syrian Armed Forces. After the war, in 1974, the Arab League recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians and this was followed by an invitation to join the United Nations as an observer. With these developments, the Cuban Government further increased its relationship with the PLO. However, the PLO leader has faced mounting challenges to his leadership from more radical leaders. In addition, an Israeli invasion of Lebanon in July of 1982, led to the destruction of the PLO headquarters and the transfer of the headquarters to Tunis. These new headquarters were also

raided by the Israeli Air Force, after several terrorist attacks against Israeli targets.

Cuban training of Palestinian guerrillas seems to have been transferred to new camps in South Yemen in the 1980's to avoid attacks by Israel. PLO headquarters were also moved to South Yemen in mid 1986.

### South Yemen

About 1,000 Cuban military and civilian personnel have been stationed in South Yemen since about 1979. In January of 1986, civil war broke out as two Marxist groups attempted to control the government. The Soviet Union first publicly supported the Marxist government of South Yemen and then attempted to bring about a cease fire. Finally, the Soviets threw their support behind the rebellious troops who had more radical Marxist politics than the government. Cuban forces followed closely the position of the Soviets. Before the fighting came to an end, thousands had been killed and widespread damage was inflicted in this poor country. Without a doubt, the Cuban personnel in South Yemen suffered casualties in the fighting, but the numbers of dead and wounded have not been made public. However, they ended up on the winning side.

### Libya

As has been covered in previous sections, the Cuban and Libyan Governments have maintained a close working relationship for several years. Fidel Castro has visited Libya and key Libyan officials have travelled to Cuba. The Libyan Government has provided military assistance to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and has worked with Cuban military officers to support countries and revolutionary organizations with which both governments have strong ties. Very little is known about the presence of Cuban military personnel in Libya, although it has been alleged that Cuban troops have provided training on Libyan soil to radical Arab guerrillas groups.

On July 11, 1984, the Cuban and Libyan governments signed an agreement calling for cooperation in the areas of economics, housing, construction, transportation and culture. The Cuban Government also pledged solidarity with the "Libyan people's struggle against imperialism and Zionism." Although military cooperation was not specifically spelled out, it is understood that the "solidarity" includes military cooperation. For example, Libya and Cuba have cooperated with the Sandinista government in Nicaragua by supplying weapons and techni-

cal military personnel. They have also worked together in support of Palestinian guerrilla organizations.

The Soviet weapons and training that have been provided to Libya over the past ten years is similar to that provided to the Cuban military. These include SA-5 surface-to-surface missiles and Mig supersonic fighters and bombers. The destruction of several long-range and medium-to-high range missile sites, military aircraft on the ground and in the air, as well as missile-firing patrol boats by the U.S. Navy and Air Force in April of 1986, show that these systems are not invincible. In fact, they proved to be rather weak against modern and sophisticated American weaponry.

The U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983 and the attacks on Libyan targets in 1986 in retaliation for terrorist attacks have been used by Fidel Castro to support his concept of "war of all the people." The failure of Soviet weapons to defend the Libyan military against American technology may have also shaken up Castro's military. In the future this may result in more redundant anti-aircraft defense systems in Cuba and anywhere Cuban troops are deployed.

During the meeting of the Nonaligned countries in Zimbabwe, Muammar Khaddafi, Daniel Ortega and Fidel Castro met and offered support to each other in the struggle against the American imperialists and their allies. Khaddafi stated that he had attended the meeting to meet with other revolutionaries, such as Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega and not the heads of state of African countries who belong to the British Commonwealth or former French colonies still associated with the French Government. He threatened to lead a movement out of the organization of unaligned countries to form a new organization of anti-imperialist nations, calling the unaligned movement "useless" and "funny." It is possible that before long the trend started by Fidel Castro at the meeting of the nonaligned countries in Algeria in 1973, which called for closer cooperation with the Communist, and current moves by Khaddafi will spell an end to the organization. It would be followed by a new organization of countries waving the anti-imperialist flag and in open support of the Soviet Union against the United States. Castro once again urged at the meeting in Zimbabwe that the Soviet Union be anointed as the "natural ally" of the developing countries.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Sheila Rule, "Sanctions Test Mettle of Leaders at Harare," New York Times (September 7, 1986), p. E3.

The Clash in Grenada 39

Cuban involvement in the Caribbean Island of Grenada started after Prime Minister Eric Gairy was overthrown in March of 1979 by Maurice Bishop. Bishop's New Jewel Movement (NJM) became closely allied with several international revolutionary groups and the Governments of Libya, Nicaragua, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba and the Soviet Union. The revolutionary government headed by Bishop slowly began to move to the left and toward the establishment of a Socialist government patterned after the Cuban version.

The Armed Forces were increased and Cuban military personnel began to arrive in Grenada to provide military training. Other Grenadians were sent to Cuba or the Soviet Union to receive military training in sophisticated modern weapons of Soviet manufacture. Hundreds of Grenadians received training from Cuban military technicians. Secret military agreements were signed with Cuba, the Soviet Union, and with other Communist countries including North Korea. This was followed by the arrival of thousands of weapons, including rifles, machine guns, BTR-60 armored personnel carriers and anti-aircraft guns.

The United States Government began to make public statements on developments in Grenada after Cuban personnel began to build an airport at Point Salines. The Grenadian Government claimed that the new airport was needed to expand tourism. The U.S. pointed out that such an airport with military operational capabilities would make it possible for Cuban aircraft to expand their radius of action throughout the whole region. It also would have made it possible for weapons to be ferried from Europe and Africa to Nicaragua and Cuba without a need for refueling stops. The airport could also have been used as a staging area to provide military supplies to revolutionary groups in South America.

The end of the Cuban-Grenadian connection came after a power struggle among members of the NJM led to the assassination of Maurice Bishop in the fall of 1983. Bishop, his Secretary of Education, Jacqueline Creft (who was pregnant with Bishop's

friends say," The Miami Herald (October 21, 1986), p.1. col. 1.; Doyle McManus and William R. Long, "Bay of Pigs Veteran Still Fighting Communism in Nicaragua," The Mexico City News (October 17, 1986), p. 10. (This article was syndicated by the Los Angeles Times.)

39 Grenada is a small country in the Eastern Caribbean, which obtained its independence from Great Britain on February 7, 1974. The population of this small island-nation is 109,000.

lined up against a wall and shot by radical-pro-Cuban military officers. The bodies were dumped in an open pit, doused with gasoline and set afire. Possibly as many as 100 close supporters of Bishop were rounded up by the radicals and shot. This coup d'etat led to a military intervention to overthrow the radicals who had taken control of the government. The United States and members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States landed over 7,000 troops in Grenada on October 25, 1983. Within 48 hours resistance by Cuban and Grenadian military units came to an end and about 600 Cubans surrendered.

Fidel Castro personally went to the airport in Havana to receive the dead and wounded Cubans after they were released by the United States, reportedly looking tired and angry. They were given heroes' receptions, with bands playing and troops in formation. <sup>40</sup> The ones who surrendered without having received a scratch in the fighting did not seem to fare so well.

Cuban President Fidel Castro ordered his men in Grenada to fight until death, together with Grenadian troops, to defend the island against imperialist aggression. But the outnumbered Cuban and Grenadian troops surrendered after token resistance. The Cuban officer in command of the troops in Grenada was Colonel Pedro Tortolo Comas, who prior to his arrival in Grenada had held the position of Chief of Staff of the Cuban Central Army. Another high-ranking Cuban officer was Julian Toreros Rizo, who had held the post of Ambassador to the Commonwealth of Dominica and St. Lucia in 1980, and was one of Cuba's experts on the Eastern Caribbean. In May of 1984, it was reported that both men had dropped out of sight and had been punished for not following orders and surrendering. <sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> "Castro welcomes wounded Cubans; looking tired and dazed they receive somber greetings - military band plays," New York Times, (November 3, 1983), p. 10.

<sup>41</sup> "2 Cubans involved in Grenada drop out of sight (Julian Torres and Pedro Tortolo Comas)," New York Times, (May 14, 1984), p. 6. According to the FBIS Report of June 19, 1984, Colonel Pedro Tortolo and at least 42 other soldiers in Grenada were court-martialed. The number of soldiers court-martialed may have been as high as 54. Tortolo was demoted to private and sent to join Cuban troops fighting in Angola. Fellow officers received similar sentences but no details were provided. It seems that Tortolo and the others found their way to the Soviet Embassy in Grenada, while several civilians fought to their death. Tortolo and the others became the butt of public ridicule. At the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, it became clear that several high-

According to the Cuban Government, when U.S. forces landed in Grenada on October 25, 1983, there were 784 Cubans in Grenada, including diplomatic personnel, women and children. Reportedly, 24 Cubans died fighting against the American troops. An analysis of information published in Cuba on the background of the 24 men who were killed in combat revealed that only four of them were old enough to have participated in the revolution against Batista. These men were 51, 49, 45 and 44 years of age when they were killed. Their ages in 1959 when Batista was overthrown ranged between 17 and 24 years. Three were members of the Communist Party and one was "aspirante" to become a member. Twelve of the men killed in combat ranged in age from 28 to 41 years. This means that they were from one to 14 years of age in 1959. Four of them were members of the Communist Party and one belonged to the Young Communist Union. The rest, 8 in total, were born after 1959 and ranged in age from 23 to 27 years. Three were members of the Young Communist Union.

The highest ranking official killed was Carlos Andrés Díaz Larranaga, 41 years old, and Chief of the Caribe Section, of the America Department of the Central Committee of the Communists Party. He had only been in Grenada a few hours before the landing of U.S. forces. At least two officers in the Armed Forces were among the men killed in combat. Sergio Erico Grandales Nolasco, 49 years old, was a member of the CCP and a captain in the transportation corps of the MINFAR. Oscar A. Nuñez Gil, 30 years old, was a first lieutenant in the reserves. However, all the men in Grenada at the time of the landing had been members of the Armed Forces at one point or another, since a compulsory military service law has been on the books in Cuba since 1963.

The racial composition of the 24 men killed is also interesting. Four appear to have been black. Two may have been mulattoes, but the other 18 were caucasian. They were fairly representative of the racial composition of Cuba. From the pictures, which must have been taken months before they were sent to Grenada, they seemed to be older than their ages when they were killed. They obviously suffered some hardships in their lives.

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ranking members of the Ministry of the Interior (MININT) were being fired, demoted or had their membership in the Central Committee of the party stripped from them. These men included Minister Ramiro Valdés, who was replaced, and General José Joaquín Méndez Cominches, who was ousted from the Central Committee. They were blamed for the intelligence failure in detecting the coup against Bishop and activities leading to the American landing. Failure is not tolerated in Cuba.

The Grenadian incident is of tremendous historical significance because it is the first encounter between Cuban and American military forces. Cubans and Americans had always fought on the same side before. Despite close to 25 years of Communist rule in Cuba and numerous confrontations, Cuban and American troops had never come head-to-head in combat, particularly with so many men involved. The over 7,000 American troops could have defeated the approximately 600 Cubans with baseball bats, considering that they outnumbered the Cubans by a ratio of about 12 to one. However, even though the Cubans in Grenada were not regular troops and were not prepared to fight, they put up a strong resistance. If regular troops had been in Grenada the fighting could have produced many more casualties to the invaders.

Another significant military outcome of the battle for Grenada was that only about five U.S. servicemen were killed by enemy fire and about 15 were killed in accidents when their helicopters crashed or when special forces drowned because they were dropped into the water with equipment that was inadequate. However, accidents like this can be expected in an operation of this size.

### Cuban-Sponsored Guerrillas in Central America

At the present time there are Cuban-sponsored guerrilla organizations active in El Salvador, Guatemala and to some extent in Honduras. The principal group in El Salvador is the Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces (FPL). It has between 5,000 and 10,000 members. The Cuban Government has trained a substantial number of members of this organization in Cuba and Nicaragua. The Cuban and Nicaraguan Governments have also supplied the Salvadoran guerrillas a substantial amount of weapons, ammunition and other military supplies. In Guatemala the principal guerrilla organizations are the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) and the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR). Both have received substantial assistance from the Cuban Government. In Honduras the two principal guerrilla organizations are the People's Revolutionary Union/ Popular Liberation Movement (URP/MPL) and the Popular Revolutionary Forces - Lorenzo Zelaya (FPR). The first one is active mostly in San Pedro Sula and the second in the capital of Tegucigalpa.

Cuban support for these revolutionary guerrilla organizations is open and strong. Fidel Castro has worked through his operatives to unify the different revolutionary organizations to strengthen them and increase their effectiveness. Hundreds of Central Americans have been trained in Cuba and been supplied with weapons and logistical support. It is even possible that Cuban military personnel may be fighting alongside some of these guerrilla organizations in El Sal-

organization have been trained in Cuba and provided weapons and logistical support in their effort to overthrow General Pinochet. The MPR is also pro-Cuban and has received substantial military assistance from Cuba. This organization used terrorist tactics, including assassinations and kidnappings, as frequent tools of the trade.

Cuban assistance to Chilean Marxist revolutionaries has been repeatedly documented. For example, in August of 1986, Chilean security forces uncovered a large stockpile of weapons that allegedly were delivered to the Chilean coast by Cuban or Soviet fishing trawlers. Whether or not Cuban military personnel took an active part in the landing of the weapons, using rubber dinghies, is not known. The Chilean secret police (Centro Nacional de Información) reported that security forces had discovered 10 tons of weapons and explosives near a beach on the northern part of the country near Carrizal Bajo. The weapons were mostly American M-16's used in Vietnam and Soviet anti-tank rockets and enough ammunition to arm about 600 men. One of the three guerrillas captured during the operation was said to have been trained in Cuba for 13 years.<sup>47</sup>

### Twenty-Seven Years of Overseas Adventures: An Analysis

At any given time in 1986, between 40,000 and 60,000 Cuban military personnel have been or will be serving outside of Cuba as advisors, body guards, combat troops or receiving advanced military training in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. These numbers are equivalent to almost twice the size of the Cuban military establishment before the triumph of the revolution in 1959. Over 200,000 troops served overseas between 1975 and 1985 alone. The Cuban military's overseas activities have come a long way from the romantic efforts to export the revolution of the 1960's. It is now a well-coordinated intelligence gathering organization, with excellent training apparatus, competent logistical support systems, and an even better international public relations machine dedicated to glorify the military achievements of the Cuban Government.

his leadership. They seized the city of Concepción in the in 1972 and carried out other similar acts which helped to radicalize and unify the opposition to Allende leading to his overthrow by General Pinochet.

<sup>47</sup> "Chile Intercepts Soviet Arms Aimed for Rebels," The Mexico City News (August 12, 1986), p. 8.

Cuban military personnel have become the primary backers of Marxists revolutionaries throughout the world. "internationalists" have been participants, generally in the forefront of all major military events of the past ten years throughout the world. They have trained and lead guerrilla groups, carried out counterinsurgency operations and used classical Soviet "steamroller" tactics with massive usage of artillery and armor in conventional warfare. Cuban officers and enlisted men are well-trained, literate, indoctrinated politically to be loyal and disciplined, and are well aware that cowardice or failure to meet goals will be severely punished. Nothing but success in overseas missions is tolerated by Fidel Castro and principal commanders of the Armed Forces.

Even for military personnel with low morale, who may feel that participation in overseas adventures is a form of punishment and not an honor, violations of disciplinary rules seem out of the question. They are well aware that severe penalties are applied to those who do not fulfill their obligations. They live and work in an atmosphere of unquestioned obedience. Abandonment or surrender of troops, equipment, or ground to the enemy is punished with sentences of 10 to 20 years in prison or death by firing squad.

Despite some failures, as for example in Grenada in 1983, the Cuban military will probably continue to expand its overseas role in the future. If anything, Fidel Castro has taken steps in the 1980's to expand the Cuban military to limits previously never considered possible. New concepts, such as the "War of All the People," have become the driving force for the total mobilization of Cuban society, and are directly linked to internationalist duties to export the revolution. Castro is willing to postpone programs and the accomplishment of major domestic goals to become militarily and ideologically stronger to fulfill internationalist duties. Despite the tremendous costs of following these interventionist policies, Castro has the resolve to continue expanding Cuban overseas military activities.

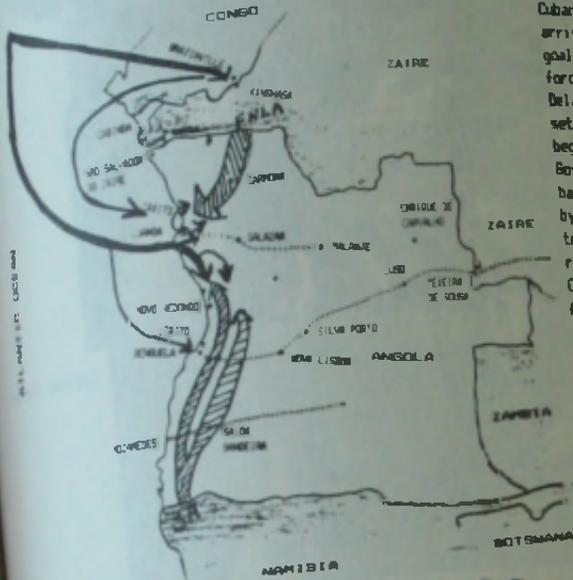
The only thing that would stop Cuban overseas adventures would be a major thrashing, an abysmal failure resulting a substantial loss of prestige both within Cuba, as well as in the eyes of world public opinion. A major defeat in Africa or Central America, leading to widespread surrender of enlisted men and officers, might force a reconsideration of the internationalist policy of the Cuban Government. Only major shock waves throughout Cuban society, as a result of a clear defeat, would stop Cuban expansionism with Soviet support. Cubans dare to win all the time, while western powers normally retreat when faced with a challenge. As long as the Cuban daring goes unchallenged the major military defeat needed to stop Cuban adventures overseas will never take place.

ATLANTIC OCEAN

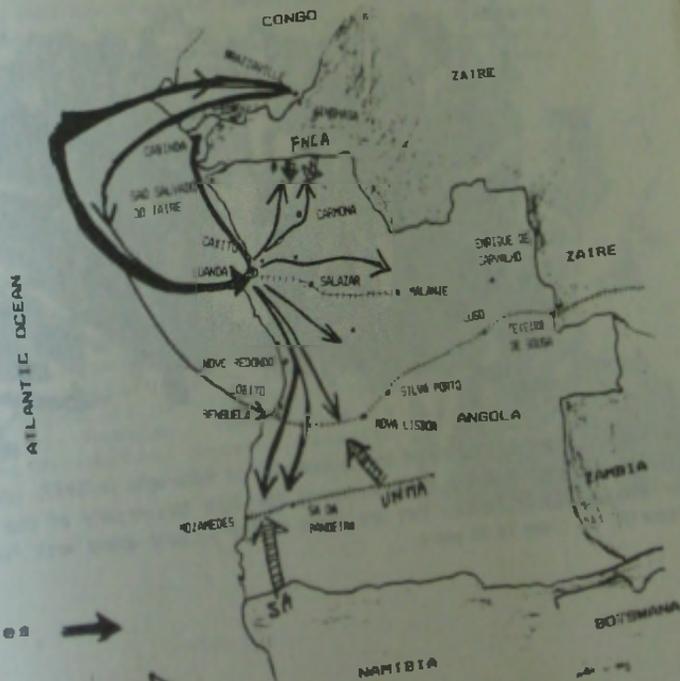
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# THE WAR IN ANGOLA 1975-1976



Cuban ships with troops and weapons began to arrive in Angola in October of 1975. Their goal was to set up four training camps for MPLA forces at Benguela, Sauro, Cabinda and Delatando. However, before the camps could be set up, South African, UNITA and FVLA troops began to advance toward Luanda. The Cuban Government sent between November 7 and 25, a battalion of special forces (650 men) to Angola by air to support the MPLA and the other Cuban troops already in Angola. The planes made refueling stops in Barbados, Guinea-Bissau and Congo-Brazzaville before landing in Luanda. Additional troops were sent by sea, including at least one artillery regiment and a battalion of motorized infantry. They entered into combat from the time they arrived, suffering major defeats including one at Catofe. However, by January of 1976, the Cuban and MPLA had managed to push back FVLA troops toward the Zaire border and South Africans back to Namibia. By March of 1976, the South Africans had retreated to the Namibia border. UNITA had retreated to the south eastern corner of Angola.



Cuban and MPLA forces →

South African, UNITA and FVLA forces ←

# Granma

La Habana, 31 de marzo de 1986  
Año del XXX Aniversario  
del Desembarco del Granma  
Año 21 / Número 13

## OLIVER TAMBO

● Cumple invitación del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba



Oliver Tambo, President of the Executive Committee of the ANC, arrived in Havana on March 21, 1986, heading a delegation invited to visit Cuba by the Cuban Communist Party. They were received at the airport by Jorge Risquet, Esteban Lazo, Isidoro Malierca, René Rodríguez and General Victor Schwab Colla, Eloy Valdés and Casimira Torres. Blanca La Gusa, representative in Cuba of the ANC, and a large number of black South African students that have been granted scholarships to study in Cuba were also present for the arrival of Mr. Tambo.

On April 14, 1980, members of the Colombian guerrilla organization M-19, took over the Dominican Embassy in Bogota during a reception. This action resulted in the kidnapping of U.S. Ambassador Diego Asencio and a large number of diplomats accredited in Colombia. The 61 day affair ended with the departure of the M-19 kidnapers to Cuba. The picture above shows M-19 leader Rosenberg Pabón Pabón as he came out of the airplane that took him to Havana. Behind him is General José Abrahantes Fernández, present Minister of the Interior and head of the Cuban intelligence services.



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# APPENDIX I

## ORGANIZATION OF THE CUBAN MILITARY AND POLICE FORCES

Cuban military and police forces, including intelligence and counterintelligence organizations are under the jurisdiction of two ministries or departments of government. They are: the Ministerio de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (MINFAR) and the Ministerio del Interior (MININT).

The complexity, redundancy and compartamentalization of the entire security apparatus of the Cuban Government is such that it is difficult to make generalizations about these two ministries. However, MINFAR is for the most part in charge of military forces, such as the ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE and Territorial Militia troops. MININT is a modification of the pre-revolutionary Ministry of Government (Ministerio de Gobernacion), which had jurisdiction over the National Police Force and the Secret Police. MININT administers the National Police and the Department of State Security including a vast intelligence organization, Special Forces, Border Guards and fire fighters. The following is a description of these two key branches of the Cuban Government.

### 1. Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR)

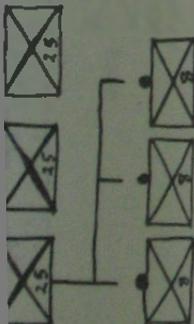
The Cuban Armed Forces come under the jurisdiction of the Ministerio de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (MINFAR). The Minister of the Armed Forces is Lieutenant General (Also referred to as General of the Army) Raul Castro, President Fidel Castro's brother, who is regarded by most scholars on Cuba as the apparent heir to take over the government upon Fidel Castro's retirement or death.

It is estimated that over 30,000 civilians work for MINFAR in addition to a large number of military personnel performing civilian jobs. The total strength of the Armed Forces could be as high as 1.7 million strong, counting the ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, Border Guards, paramilitary organizations such as the Territorial Militia Troops and the intelligence organizations of the Cuban Government.<sup>1</sup>

The following breakdown of troop strength represents the best estimates available in the public domain at this time. However, they may be short of the actual current manpower due to recent growth. For example, President Fidel Castro in February 1985, stated in the MacNeill-Lehrer News Hour that Cuba

<sup>1</sup> Several of these military units are part of the MININT.

...ers for supply and maintenance and anti-tank support. The anti-tank platoon may be armed with 57/76/85 mm. anti-tank guns. Each company has six officers, four sergeants and 73 enlisted men. Each platoon has three platoons of 24 men and one officer. Each platoon has three squads of eight enlisted men. The standard infantry weapon is a 7.62 mm. assault rifle. They are also armed with 82mm-7 anti-tank grenade launchers and 9 mm. pistols.



has over 500,000 regular troops and over one million in the Territorial Militia and other paramilitary organizations. He also claimed that the Cuban military had vastly expanded its equipment during 1984 and that the military budget for 1985 would be expanded by about 25 percent over 1984.

#### MINFAR TROOP STRENGTH

ARMY (Ejército Revolucionario)	130,000 Active duty 135,000 Ready Reserves
NAVY (MGR)	13,500 Regulars 7 Ready Reserves
AIR FORCE (Defensa Antiaerea y Fuerza Aerea Revolucionaria):	18,500 Regulars 7 Ready Reserves
Civil Defense	100,000 Paramilitary
Territorial Militia (MIT)	1,200,000 Paramilitary
Youth Labor Army	<u>100,000 Paramilitary</u>
TOTAL	1,697,000

#### Organization of MINFAR

In addition to the Minister, MINFAR has three First Vice Ministers, who hold the rank of division general. They are at the present time:

Div. Gen. Senén Casas Regueiro  
Div. Gen. Abelardo Colomé Ibarra  
Div. Gen. Ulises Rosales del Toro

There are also ten vice ministers who hold the rank of brigadier, division general or vice admiral. Each vice minister has a specific directorate or branch of the military under his command. The current holders of these positions are:

Div. Gen. Sixto Batista Santana, Chief, Central Political Directorate  
Div. Gen. Rogelio Acevedo González, For the Rear Services  
Div. Gen. Julio Casas Regueiro, Chief of the Antiaircraft Defense and

Revolutionary Air Force

- Brig. Gen. Francisco Cruz Bourzac, Armament and Technology
- Div. Gen. Pedro M. Garcia Pelaez, Combat Training
- Div. Gen. Rigoberto Garcia Fernández, Chief of the Youth Labor Army
- Div. Gen. Raul Menéndez Tomassevich, Chief of the Territorial Militia Troops
- Col. Rafael Morales Velázquez, For Construction and Troop Housing
- Div. Gen. Arnaldo T. Ochoa Sánchez, who has served as military adviser in Nicaragua
- Commodore Pedro M. Pérez Betancourt, Chief of the Revolutionary Navy<sup>2</sup>

Among the units of the MINFAR are:

- Directorate of Foreign Relations
- Economic/Administrative Directorate
- Directorate of Human Resources
- Patriotic Military-Education Commission
- Society for Patriotic-Military Education
- Civil Defense
- Central Directorate for Construction and Housing
- Directorate for Territorial Militia Troops
- Central Political Directorate
- Directorate for Propaganda and Agitation
- Directorate for Organizational Work
- Propaganda
- Press, Radio and Television Section
- Social Science Section
- FAR film studios
- Union of Young Communists
- Directorate for Combat Training and Military Training
- Directorate for Rear Services
- Directorate for Armaments and Technology
- Youth Labor Army

<sup>2</sup> The position of Chief of the Navy was held for many years by Vice Admiral Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado. He was removed from office late in 1984 or in the first weeks of 1985. He seems to continue on active duty but was stripped from the position of Chief of Staff, possibly due to excessive drinking or other unknown problems. Two commodores have served since then in the position vacated by Santamaria, but have not been promoted in rank to vice admiral.

NAVY (MGR)  
Antiaircraft Defense and Air Force (DAAFAR)  
Geodesic and Cartographic Institute

General Staff of the FAR  
Security and Service  
Directorate for Gen. Staff  
Political Section  
Directorate for Cadres  
Finance Directorate  
Tenth Directorate  
Directorate for Military Prosecution  
Directorate for Military Tribunals  
Directorate for Military Training Centers and  
Noncombat training  
Directorate of Operations  
Directorate of Artillery  
Directorate of Armor  
Directorate of Chemical Defense  
Directorate for Engineering  
Directorate for Organization and Mobilization  
Military Counterintelligence Directorate  
Planning and Economic Directorate  
Communications Directorate  
Security and Operations Battalion

Coordinator of Cuban Forces Overseas: ?

Commander, Cuban Troops in Angola  
Division General Leopoldo Cintas Frias

Commander, Cuban Troops in Ethiopia  
Brigadier General Miguel A. Llorente León

Commander, Cuban Troops in Nicaragua  
Brigadier General Nestor López Cuba

## 2. Ministry of the Interior (MININT)

The Ministerio del Interior (MININT), established in 1961, is the principal branch of the Cuban Government in charge of domestic intelligence and counter intelligence. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 employees of MININT work in intelligence areas. Several thousand more are part of special troops, police and fire fighting organizations.

MININT TROOP STRENGTH

Policia Nacional Revolucionaria	10,000
Civilian Auxiliary Corps to National Police:	52,000
Departamento de Seguridad del Estado (DSE)	15,000
Special Battalion of Police	?
Special Troops	2,000+
Border Guard Troops (TGF)	4,000
TOTAL	83,000+

In late 1985 the long time Minister of the Interior, Ramiro Valdés Menéndez was replaced by former First Vice Minister, Division General José Abrahantes Fernández. There are several versions of why Valdés was removed from MININT. A reason for the change may have been Valdés's membership in the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. According to Communist sources, it was determined that membership in the politburo and the holding of important offices in the bureaucracy provided a shelter from criticism of performance by the Politburo. One recent area of concern has been an increase in the crime rate and the inability of the police forces to control its growth. Valdés was removed from both the Politburo and MININT. General Abrahantes was not given membership in the Politburo at the Third Congress of the CCP in February of 1986. Another more credible version of why Valdés was removed from office is that it was the result of the intelligence failures before, during and after the Grenada invasion in 1983. Valdés and other MININT and CCP officials were fired or demoted and several MINFAR members were court martialed.

The Ministry of the Interior has in addition to the Minister one First Vice Minister and four Vice Ministers. Each Vice Minister heads one of the principal components of the ministry.

Minister: Div. Gen. José Abrahantes Fernández

First Vice Minister: ?

Vice Ministers:

Col. Haydee Diaz Ortega, Chief of the Identification

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and Information Directorate  
Div. Gen. Pascual Martínez Gil, Internal Order and  
Crime Prevention  
Brig. Gen. Angel Mariano Martí Carrión  
Div. Gen. José Joaquín Méndez Cominches<sup>3</sup>

The principal components of MININT are:

Central Political Directorate

Director: Brig. Gen. Marcos A. Gutiérrez Bello  
F. Dept.: Brig. Gen. Felix Veliz Hernández  
Dept. D.: Col. Edermo Castillo Ruiz  
Col. Federico Mora Díaz  
Lt. Col. Ernesto Pérez Shelton  
Lt. Col. Oriando Guerra González

National Emulation Commission  
Cultural Section  
Union of Young Communists (UJC)

Directorate for Minors

Directorate for Services

Vice Ministry for Security

General Directorate (Brig. Gen. Pedro R. Pupo Pérez)

General Directorate for Intelligence (DGI)

Div. Gen. José Joaquín Méndez Cominches

Vice Ministry for Internal Order and Crime Prevention

Div. Gen. Pascual Martínez Gil

General Directorate for Counterintelligence

General Directorate of the National Revolutionary Police

Director: Brig. Gen. Luis Felipe Denis Díaz

Dept. Dir.:

Col. Raul García Rivero

Col. Lain Martín González

Col. Eduardo Reyes

Lt. Col. Raimunda Rodríguez Rocha

-Political Section

-Criminal Investigations Office

-Central Criminology Laboratory

-Embassy Protection Unit

-Public Safety Office

-Traffic Safety Office

-Police Training Department

(School "Antonio Briones Montoto")

-Department of Analysis and Planning

-Department of Crime Prevention

<sup>3</sup> General Méndez was a member of the CCP Central Committee until the Third Party Congress in February of 1988. He may have been ousted due to the failure of intelligence units under his command to detect the events leading up to the Grenada invasion.

Directorate of Identification and Information  
-Registration of Foreign Residents

National ID Card and Population Registration Section  
General Directorate for Penal Establishments  
Director: Brig. Gen. Arsenio Franco Villanueva

General Directorate for Fire Fighting and Prevention  
Director: Col. Carlos Figueredo Rosales

General Directorate for Immigration and Naturalization  
Director: Brig. Gen. Justo de Medina Hernández  
Hurtado

National Protection Directorate  
-National Physical Security  
-State Secrets and Physical Security  
-Physical Security for Construction Sites

Directorate for Personal Security

Directorate for Training and Cadres

Directorate of Instruction

("Martires de la calle Patria Escuela Nacional")  
(Instituto Superior del Interior)

Directorate of Construction

Border Guard Troops

Director: Brig. Gen. Amado Valdés González

Chief of Staff: Col. Miguel Bermejo Laredo

Political Section

Information Section

Western District: Col. Rolando Matos Bozán

Central District: Col. Humberto del Blanco

Eastern District: Lt. Col. Eligio Gómez

Directorate of Special Operations (DOE)

Director: Brig. Gen. Alejandro Marrero Ronda

At the provincial level MININT has a provincial headquarters under the direction of a FAR officer of either the rank of brigadier general or colonel. Each provincial headquarters has a Departamento de Seguridad del Estado (Department of State Security), which is also headed by a FAR officer with the rank of major or above.

Please note that all of these officers may have changed positions by the time this book is published. However, their names are important because despite Fidel Castro's directive to the Third Congress of the CCP in February of 1986, about the need to promote new people, not much has changed. The same people continue to hold all the key positions in the government. Even if the officers listed here have changed jobs, they are probably performing similar functions elsewhere.

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APPENDIX II  
REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (ER)

The Cuban ARMY (Ejercito Revolucionario) is the principal branch of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (FAR). It has an estimated troop strength of 130,000 regulars and an estimated ready reserve of at least 135,000, organized into at least 15 infantry divisions, three armored brigades, and 8 independent brigades. The infantry "divisions" are in fact brigades which MINFAR chooses to call "divisiones."<sup>1</sup> Brigades were eliminated after the reorganization of the Armed Forces with Soviet assistance in the early 1970's. Regiments are now used as basic structural components of divisions. Regimental size units have also been organized to operate as independent special forces units.

The total strength of the ARMY is much higher than these figures indicate due to the large number of reservists and the relatively ease in which the reserves can be mobilized. In addition, most of the Cuban troops fighting in Angola, Nicaragua and elsewhere are often classified by the Cuban Government as composed of reservists and therefore not included in the count of the standing regular ARMY. It has been estimated that up to 70 percent of the troops that have fought in Angola and Ethiopia have been reservists.

The population of Cuba in 1981 was placed at 9.7 million people, of which about 50 percent are males. About 10 percent of the male population is between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age. Another 13 percent of the male population is between 25 and 44 years of age. Based on these figures, one can determine that about 2.2 million males are of military age. Considering that Cuba has an obligatory military service law and that all males should have undergone military service, the power of the Cuban Government to recall to active service a large force is substantial.<sup>2</sup>

The Militia (Milicia de Tropas Territoriales) is administered by the three Army Corps and is considered an extension of the regular Army. The officers in charge of coordinating regional militia units as part of the three Corps will be

<sup>1</sup> If one takes into consideration the estimated number of regulars and ready reserves, the Army could have as many as 32 divisions. If one considers the total potential strength of the Armed Forces, including the militia (MTI), over 2,000 divisions could be organized by MINFAR.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XX, p.325 for additional details on the estimated numbers of Cubans that will be available for military service in the late 1980's.

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listed here. However, Appendix V covers in detail the history of the militia.

### Deployment

The ARMY is deployed in three Field Armies: Army of the East, Army of the Center and Army of the West. The Eastern Army has two Army Corps: Camaguey Army Corps and the Southern Army Corps.<sup>3</sup> The Central Army includes the Las Villas Army Corps, and the Western Army the Pinar del Rio Army Corps. Each Army Corps is composed of about five infantry divisions and one armored division. Several of these units may be part of the ready reserves. (Remember that a Cuban division is roughly equivalent to a conventional brigade).

According to fairly reliable sources, the Cuban ARMY has an estimated total of 59 infantry regiments and 8 independent infantry battalions, including 2 paratrooper battalions; 12 mechanized cavalry and armored regiments and 11 independent armored units; 12 independent motorized reconnaissance battalions and 24 artillery regiments.

### Field Army

A typical Cuban field Army has about 70,200 men. It is composed of three mechanized infantry divisions; one Army Corps with three infantry divisions of which two are formed by ready reserves; one armored division; one artillery brigade; one antitank battalion; three infantry divisions of which two are part of the ready reserves; one medical battalion; one signals battalion; one chemical defense battalion; one service battalion; one transportation battalion; one maintenance battalion; one engineer battalion; one armored reconnaissance battalion; and one air defense artillery battalion.

### Army Divisions

Each division is similar in composition to a Soviet motor rifle division with an artillery complement but without tanks. The size of each Cuban division is either 6,200, 8,200 or 9,900 men, depending on its main military mission.

<sup>3</sup> The so called "Camaguey Army Corps" is also referred to in some literature as the "Holguin Army Corps."

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## Mechanized Infantry Division

A Mechanized Infantry Division has about 8,700 men. They consist of three Mechanized Infantry Regiments of about 1,560 men; one Tank Regiment with about 840 men; one Artillery Regiment with about 975 men; and one ADA Regiment. In addition, each Mechanized Infantry Division has one Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, one Engineer Battalion of about 300 men, one Maintenance Battalion of about 150 men, one Transportation Battalion, one Chemical Defense Company of about 45 men, a Supply and Service Company, one Signals Battalion of about 250 men and one Medical Battalion.

## Mechanized Infantry Regiment

A typical mechanized infantry regiment has about 1,560 men. They consist of three mechanized infantry battalions of which one may be part of the ready reserves; one armored reconnaissance company; one engineer company; one maintenance company; one transportation company; one chemical defense platoon; one supply and service platoon; one signals company; one medical platoon; one mortar or howitzer battery; one tank battalion; one antitank artillery battery; and one antiaircraft artillery battery.

## Mechanized Infantry Battalion

A typical Mechanized Infantry Battalion has about 450 men and consists of three mechanized rifle companies. Each rifle company has about 101 men (six officers and 95 sergeants and enlisted men). Each rifle company has three platoons of 30 men and one officer. Each platoon has three squads with ten men. The basic weapons are the 7.62 mm assault rifle, 9 mm pistols, RPG-7 antitank grenade launchers, 82/120 mm mortars and 57/67 light antitank guns. About 30 armored personnel carriers are assigned to each battalion as well as an assortment of trucks and other equipment.

## Infantry Regiment

Each Infantry Regiment has 1,010 men including officers. Each regiment has three battalions of about 365 men including officers. Each Regiment has one independent reconnaissance platoon, one anti-tank platoon, one signals company, a supply and service platoon, one transportation platoon, one mortar battery, a medical section and one AAMG company for antiair-

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craft support. Two of the battalions are composed of regular troops and one is composed of ready reserves.

### Infantry Battalion

Each Infantry Battalion has three companies of about 100 men including officers. A typical infantry battalion has one independent mortar company armed with 82/120 mm mortars and two independent platoons for supply and maintenance and anti-tank support. The anti-tank platoon may be armed with 57/76/85 mm anti-tank guns. Each company has six officers, four sergeants and 73 enlisted men. Each company has three platoons of 24 men and one officer. Each platoon has three squads of eight enlisted men. The standard infantry weapon is a 7.62 mm assault rifle. They are also armed with RPG-7 anti-tank grenade launchers and 9 mm pistols.

### Armored Division

A typical armored division has about 6,600 men and is composed of three tank (armored) regiments, one mechanized infantry regiment, one antiaircraft artillery regiment, and one artillery regiment. In addition, each armored division has one armored reconnaissance battalion (230 men); one engineer battalion (270 men); one transportation battalion (230 men); one maintenance battalion; one chemical defense battalion; one main-tenance and service battalion; one signals battalion and one medical company.

### Armored (Tank) Regiment

Each armored regiment has between 720 and 840 men, including officers, and is composed of three tank battalions. In addition, each armored regiment has one engineer company; one transportation company; one armored reconnaissance company; one chemical defense platoon; one supply and service company; one signals company; two antiaircraft defense batteries and one medical platoon. Each armored regiment has between 63 and 100 medium tank and SU-100 assault guns, three + PT-76 light tanks and about 12 self-propelled or towed antiaircraft guns or missile batteries. They are also provided an assortment of armored personnel carriers and reconnaissance vehicles, trucks, bridging equipment and mine-clearing devices.

### Tank Battalion

Each tank battalion has between 110 and 150 men and between 20 and 30 medium tanks and SU-100 assault guns. They are organized into three tank companies with between 26 and 36 enlisted men and three to five officers. A typical tank company operates between seven and ten medium tanks and assault guns in addition to armored personnel carriers, armored reconnaissance vehicles and mine-clearing devices. One of the tank companies may be a ready reserve unit. Normally a tank company has three platoons with three medium tanks or assault guns divided into three squads of about 12 men. Each tank battalion also has a supply and service platoon.

### Independent Units

Most independent units are classified by MINFAR as "brigades." Their size and equipment depends on the purpose of the organization. The eight independent regiments include a "Brigada de Aterrizaje y Asalto" and a "Contingente de Tropa Especial."<sup>4</sup>

### Independent Artillery Brigades

A typical independent artillery brigade has about 1,200 men and six battalions: one light artillery battalion, one medium/heavy artillery battalion, one rocket launcher battalion, one transportation battalion and one maintenance battalion. The strength and equipment of each battalion is similar to regular artillery battalions. Each independent artillery brigade has a complement of armored personnel carriers, reconnaissance vehicles and air defense guns. They may have one signal company, one reconnaissance company, one service company and one medical unit.

### Other Military Units

In addition to the three Field Armies, the Army operates military schools and industrial enterprises throughout the country. The "tail" of the Cuban Army is very long. The rear services and intelligence units, for example, employ thousands of men. Another 30 to 40 thousand troops are also

<sup>4</sup> Landing and Assault Brigade (BDA) and special forces or commando units.

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General Staff (Estado Mayor General, FAR)

- Chief of Staff of the FAR: Div. Gen. Ulises Rosales del Toro<sup>5</sup>
- Deputy Chiefs: Brig. Gen. Urbelino Betancourt Cruz<sup>6</sup>  
Brig. Gen. Victor Chueg Colas (1)
- Security and Service Unit: Col. R. Hernández Suárez  
Chief of Troops: Col. Angel Martínez Sierra
- Directorate of the General Staff  
Political Section: Brig. Capt. Alfredo Salas Labrada
- Directorate for Cadres  
Chief: Brig. Gen. Gustavo Chui Beltrán
- Finance Directorate  
Chief: Brig. Gen. Juan Antonio Rodríguez

ARMY OF THE EAST

- Chief of Staff Army of the East: Div. Gen. Ramón Espinosa Martín
- First Deputy Chief: Brig. Gen. R. Sotomayor García<sup>7</sup>
- Deputy Chief: Brig. Gen. José N. Causse Pérez
- Political Section Chief: Lt. Col. Dagoberto Delgado Morgado
- Southern Army Corps  
Chief: Brig. Gen. Nestor López Cuba

<sup>5</sup> The Chief of Staff is also a First Vice Minister of the MINFAR.

<sup>6</sup> Brig. Gen. Elio Avila Trujillo held the position before Gen. Betancourt.

<sup>7</sup> This position was held before by Brig. Gen. Jorge Suárez Lorenzo.

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### Holguin Army Corps

Chief: Brig. Gen. Victor Chueg Colas<sup>8</sup>  
Chief of Staff: Col. Gregorio Junco  
Political Section: Col. Evelio Ramirez Kindelan  
Rear Services: Col. Pablo Cabrera Piloto

### Guantanamo Frontier Brigade

Col. Orgelino Pérez Pena

## ARMY OF THE CENTER

Chief of Staff Army of the Center:  
Brig. Gen. Gustavo Fleites Ramirez  
Deputy Chief: Brig. Gen. Iraldo Moro Crozco

Chief of Staff: Col. Carlos Lezcano Pérez  
Political Section: Col. Roberto Cruz Enriquez  
Chief of Troops: Lt. Col. Miguel Camacho Barrio  
Combat Training: Maj. José Roig Palenzuela

### Las Villas Corps:

Chief: Brig. Gen. Orlando Lorenzo Castro  
Chief of Staff: Maj. Leonardo Ramirez  
Chief of Operations: Col. Rigoberto Rivero

## ARMY OF THE WEST

Chief of Staff Army of the West:  
Brig. Gen. Samuel Rodriguez Planas<sup>9</sup>  
First Deputy Chief:  
Brig. Gen. Carlos Lezcano Pérez<sup>10</sup>  
Deputy Chief for the MTT (Militia)

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<sup>8</sup> Brigadier General Victor Chueg Colas is a black officer with African experience. He is often seen receiving visiting African delegations in Havana, despite the fact that his command is in Holguin. His name has been spelled in many official documents as "Schueg." See Appendix for more details.

<sup>9</sup> This position was held before by Div. Gen. Joaquin Quintas Solas.

<sup>10</sup> This position was held before by Brig. Gen. Ramón Pardo Guerra.

Col. Lino Carreras Rodriguez  
Pinar del Rio Army Corps

Chief: Col. Jesús Almeida Hernández  
Chief of Staff: Lt. Col. Miguel Baullosa García  
(Two Brig. Gen. are attached to this Army Corps in unidentified capacity: Brig. Gen. Manuel Lastre Pacheco and Brig. Gen. Iraldo Mora Orozco)

Great Havana Garrison

Chief: Brig. Gen. Roberto T. Viera Estrada  
Deputy Chief: Col. Ciro del Rio Guerra  
Honor Guard Company  
Chief: Lt. Col. Elio Guerrero Ramos

Isle of Youth (Isle of Pines) Military Region

Chief: Col. William Mastrada Pérez  
Chief of Staff: Lt. Col. Pablo Barcelo  
Political Section: Col. Inaudi Barrios Rios

Overseas Forces

Commander of Cuban Military Missions:

Ethiopia: Brig. Gen. Miguel Llorente León  
Angola: Div. Gen. Leopoldo Cintra Frias  
Nicaragua: Brig. Gen. Nestor López Cuba

Training

The Army operates four senior military academies for officers:

- Maj. Camilo Cienfuegos School for Artillery Officers
- Gen. Antonio Maceo Interservice Cadet School for Armor, Mechanized Units, Signals and Other Officers.
- Gen. José Maceo Interservice School
- Gen. Carlos Roloff Communications and Chemical Troop School

In addition, the Army runs a number of schools at the provincial level called Camilo Cienfuegos schools, which provide preparatory and high school education to students that will be candidates to enter the senior military academies. Students at these schools are between 16 and 20 years old and members of the Communist Youth League. The Students are

<sup>11</sup> This position was held before by Brig. Gen. Marcelo Verdía Pardo.

often called "Camilitos." (For more details on military education see Chapters XIX and XX).

#### WEAPONS SYSTEMS

For detailed information on these weapons systems, please consult other technical publications. This listing is provided here only to serve as a guide to the wide range of weapons available to the Cuban Armed Forces.

#### INFANTRY WEAPONS

Rifle 7.62 mm AK-47 (USSR)  
9 mm pistols  
Mortar 82 mm M-42 (USSR)  
RPG-7 Antitank grenade launchers

#### ARTILLERY

75 mm M-116 pack howitzer (USA) 12  
105 mm M-101 howitzer (USA)  
122 mm M-31 gun (USSR)  
122 mm M-38 howitzer (USSR)  
122 mm M-55 gun (USSR)  
130 mm M-54 gun (USSR)  
152 mm M-37 gun (USSR)  
BM-21 Multiple rocket

FROG-4 Missile (USSR) (30 to 45 are estimated to be in service in Cuba. It can be used to launch nuclear or chemical warheads up to 30 miles away. However, these warheads may not exist in Cuba.

#### ANTI-ARMOR WEAPONS

57 mm M-43 GUN (USSR)  
85 mm M-45 gun (USSR)  
RPG-7 Sagger (USSR) Portable antitank missile carried by infantry forces.

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<sup>12</sup> Some of these old U.S. manufactured artillery pieces may still be in Cuban hands.

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## APPENDIX III

### ANTIAIRCRAFT DEFENSE AND REVOLUTIONARY AIR FORCE (DAAFAR)

The Cuban Air Force is the largest and better equipped in Latin America. The Soviet Union has provided the Cuban Government advanced training and sophisticated equipment over the past twenty five years to make the Cuban Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense System the best trained and equipped in the Western Hemisphere after the United States. It has between 18,500 and 20,000 members and over 350 aircrafts. It is organized into at least 12 fighter-bomber/interceptor squadrons and 24 SAM battalions. The Cuban Navy also has a helicopter force which includes at least 18 Mi-4 helicopters. The Army also has a sophisticated inventory of anti-aircraft equipment for support of its ground forces.

#### Mission

The Air Force is designed to provide air cover for ground forces and attack enemy targets in front lines as well as strategic support areas in the rear. It can also support operations over long distances, including transporting troops and supplying ground forces. Following the Soviet pattern, Cuba's frontal aviation is equipped for supporting combat operations of ground forces and is designed for attack. The role of defending ground troops is primarily a function of a well developed system of antiaircraft weapons including missiles. DAAFAR is not equipped for long-range operations and does not have long range bombers. But the radius of operation of the aircraft in the Cuban arsenal could be effectively used in most of the Caribbean, Central America and possibly in South of the United States. The capacity for transporting airborne troops and supplies has been increased in the past ten years as Cuban involvement in Africa and Central America conflicts has expanded.

#### History

Before the 1959 revolution, there were two air units in Cuba, one operated by the Army (Fuerza Aerea Ejercito) and the other unit by the Navy (Fuerza Aerea Marina de Guerra). Most of the planes were of WWII vintage and of American and British manufacture. Cuban pilots were trained for the most part by American instructors at Pensacola, Florida and in Texas.

After the triumph of the revolution in 1959 most of the pilots who had served Batista were retired, fired or arrested and tried for their participation in the air war against the rebel troops and bombing of civilian targets.<sup>1</sup> Even some of the pilots who had sided with the anti-Batista forces or who had been in the Rebel Army and joined the Revolutionary Air Force after 1959, including the commander of the force, Major Diaz Lanz, resigned and went into exile when the regime became more radical and moved to the left.

Prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion on April 13, 1961, B-26 bombers of the invasion force raided the Cuban airports and destroyed several planes, most of which had already been out of service for lack of parts and service. Only six planes were left operational, including two B-26's, two Sea Furies and two T-33 jet trainers. One of the B-26's was shot down, but the other planes were able to sink several of the ships in the invasion force and to shoot down several of the sixteen B-26's of the invaders.

### Training

The Soviet Union and other Eastern European Communist countries began to train Cuban pilots in substantial numbers particularly after 1961. Soviet planes began to arrive in Cuba together with Soviet instructors soon after, and in a matter of a few years the Revolutionary Air Force had been expanded and reorganized based on the Soviet model.

Until the 1980's, all Cuban pilots were trained in the Soviet Union and possibly East Germany. Of all the branches of the Armed Forces, the DAAFAR probably gets the better educated students for officer training. Two of the Camilo Cienfuegos high schools are operated by the Air Force for training future officers. Pilot training is now conducted at the new school Escuela Militar para Pilotos Aereos (EMPA), located on the grounds of the old San Julian Airfield in Pinar del Rio. The first pilot-officer class graduated in July of 1984.

Since 1981, DAAFAR has received a substantial number of jet aircrafts for training pilots. Basic flight instruction is provided with L-39/ALBATROSS and ZLIN-36 Czech made airplanes. Other training aircrafts include UMig-15's, UMig-21's and UMig-23's. Foreign pilots are also receiving training in Cuba with these airplanes.

On the grounds of the old Jesuit school "Colegio de Belén," a Military Technical Institute (ITM) was set up in 1967 to train technical officers for the DAAFAR. At this school, of-

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVIII for additional information.

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train technical officers for the DAAFAR. At this school, of-  
ficers are trained in either a two, four or five year program  
to operate the antiaircraft defense weapons, radiocommunications,  
electronics, mathematics, and some other engineering  
specialties. Some Army and Navy officers also attend this  
school. Entrance to this facility is tightly controlled by  
MINFAR. Other DAAFAR officers employed in the antiaircraft  
defense branch, are graduates of the Maj. Camilo Cienfuegos  
Artillery school located at La Cabana.

Enlisted personnel receive considerable training in the oper-  
ation of antiaircraft weapons and in servicing aircraft and  
antiaircraft batteries. Specialists in radar and weapons  
systems are given extensive training and practice in Cuba.  
Some enlisted men and women are also sent for further train-  
ing in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

### Organization

The DAAFAR is organized into four separate branches: the  
Fuerza Aerea Revolucionaria (FAR), which operates the air-  
planes; the Tropas Coheteriles de Defensa Antiaerea (TCAA),  
which operates the Surface-to-Air Missile batteries; the  
Tropas de Reconocimiento Territorial (TRT) or Air Surveillance  
Troops; and the Tropas de Defensa Antiaerea or Air Defense  
Artillery troops.

The island has been divided into three air zones, along the  
lines of the Revolutionary Army: Eastern, Central and West-  
ern. The headquarters is located on the grounds of the old  
Camp Columbia Airfield, which was renamed after the revolu-  
tion "Ciudad Libertad." The old San Antonio de los Baños  
Airfield, which was built by the United States during WWII  
and used by the Cuban Air Force as a principal airfield has  
been taken over by the Soviet Union.

In Soviet military aviation, an aviation division is divided  
into three or four air regiments, composed of a mixture of  
aircraft. Each regiment has 32 bombers or 40 fighters or  
ground attack aircraft, and is subdivided into three  
squadrons, which can operate alone or with other aircraft  
possibly of a different type. Each squadron is in turn sub-  
divided in aviation flights of four aircraft which can be  
fighters and fighter-bombers. These aircraft, particularly  
the fighter-bombers usually operate in pairs.

An aviation regiment is commanded by a colonel, an aviation  
squadron by a major and aviation flights by a senior lieu-  
tenant. The DAAFAR probably uses a command structure similar  
to the Soviet.

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### Command Structure

Chief: Div. Gen. Julio Casas Regueiro

Deputy Chiefs: Brig. Gen. Ladislao Baranda Columbie  
Col. Rubén Interian Rodríguez  
Col. Gustavo Millán Rivera  
Col. Ricardo Díaz González  
(Chief of troops)

Western Air Brigade  
(Bay of Pigs Guard Aerial Brigade)

Chief: Col. Juan O. Hernández Méndez  
Air Combat Instructor: Brig. Gen. Rafael del Pino Díaz

#### Missile Troops

Central Antiaircraft Missile Brigade  
(Santa Clara Battle Guard Brigade)

Chief: Col. Heriberto E. Martín Hernández

Antiaircraft Missile Group for the Defense of the Capital

Antiaircraft Defense of the Ground Troops

#### Training and Production Centers

Training Center for Junior Specialists (CEPEM)  
School of Aviation Cadets

Great October Socialist Revolution Military Industrial  
Enterprise  
Yuri Gagarin Military Industrial Enterprise

Manpower: 18,500 to 20,000

Military Airports: There are at least 194 airfields  
throughout Cuba. At least eight of these airfields can be  
used for full military operations.

#### Military Airports

San Antonio de los Baños: runways over 2,500 meters  
San Julian: runways over 2,500 meters  
Camaguey: runways over 2,500 meters  
Santiago de Cuba: runways over 2,500 meters

Guantánamo  
Santa Clara  
Havana  
Manzanillo  
Ciego de Avila  
Varadero

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### Airfields With Military Capabilities

Guantánamo:	runways over 2,500 meters
Santa Clara:	runways over 2,500 meters
Havana (José Martí):	runways over 2,500 meters
Manzanillo:	runways over 2,500 meters
Ciego de Avila:	runways 2,200 meters +
Varadero:	runways 2,200 meters +

### AIR FLEET

#### 4 SQUADRONS OF MIG 23 FLOGGER AND MIG 27s<sup>2</sup>

It is estimated that Cuba has about 48 MIG 27's and MIG 23's organized into four squadrons. Soviet pilots may be flying some of these planes. Both planes have common frame features but the Mig 27 has more armor plating to protect the pilot. The Flogger D had the forward section of the fuselage redesigned to install a laser range finder in place of the nose radar used in the Flogger B model. The design of the Flogger D has also been improved to provide the pilot more downward visibility to assist in its principal mission of ground attack. It can also use prepared grass runways and can be assisted with booster rockets for takeoff.

#### MIG 23- Flogger (B)

Combat radius: 1,300 km

Armament: one twin barrel 23 mm GSh-23 gun

two AA-7 APEX

two AA-8 APHID Air-to-Air missile

#### MIG 27 - Flogger (D)

Combat radius: 1,200 km

Armament: one-six barrel 30 mm gatling gun

four 1,100 lb bombs

four UB-16-57 rocket pods

(Can carry tactical nuclear weapons)

Speed: 980 knots



<sup>2</sup> The first 12 Mig-27's arrived in 1978 and the second group of 12 in 1982. Four have been lost in accidents and have been replaced. The other planes have arrived since 1982. Details are not available in the public domain.

30 SU-7 single-seat ground attack fighters  
(These planes may be organized into two fighter squadrons)

Combat radius: 260 nautical miles

Armament: Two 30 mm NR-30 cannons with 70 rounds each

Two 1,650 lb bombs

two 1,100 lb bombs

or in place of bombs: four UB-16-57  
rocket pods or ten 160 mm rockets, or  
or four 240 mm rockets, or two AS-7  
guided missiles.

Maximum speed: 1,055 mph

Length: 18.5 meters

Wingspan: 8.9 meters

#### 5 MIG 21 INTERCEPTOR SQUADRONS<sup>3</sup>

It is estimated that Cuba has between 50 and 70 early version MIG 21's (bis) and 30 later version MIG 21's (F's) and 17 Mig-21's (L's) organized into five interceptor squadrons. Although the MIG-21 is a single seat airplane, two seat versions exist and the Cuban Air Force may have them. The MIG-21 was first place in service by the USSR in 1956. New versions with improved payload, avionics, electronic countermeasures and range for more effective offensive role were built in the 1960's.

#### MIG 21 Delta Wing Fighter

Combat radius: 478 miles

Armament:

- one twin-barrell GSH-23 gun with 200 rds

- four UB-16-57 rocket pods with 16 57 mm  
rockets each

- two 1,100 lb bombs

- two 500 lb bombs

- four S-24 240 mm air-to-ground missiles  
(this planes are equipped with Atoll  
AAM's)

Speed: - Mach 2

Length: 55 feet

Wingspan: 25 feet

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<sup>3</sup> About 17 Mig-21's now in Cuba may have been transferred to the Sandinistas for training Nicaraguan pilots. These planes are possibly at the San Julian Airfield and could be used in support of the Sandinista Government from Cuban bases if necessary. They could fly into combat in Nicaragua from Cuba and be able to land at new airfields built with Cuban support in Nicaragua for refueling after the first mission is flown from Cuba.

## 2 MIG 19 (PF Farmer) INTERCEPTOR SQUADRONS

These two interceptor squadrons are composed of 40 Mig 19's high performance day fighter/interceptor (single sit).<sup>4</sup> These planes may now be part of the reserve forces of DAAFAR.

Combat radius: 1367 miles  
Armament:           - three 30 mm NR-30 guns  
                      - ATOLL missiles  
                      - two 550 lb bombs  
Speed: 920 m p/h  
Service ceiling: 13,08 meters  
Wingspan: 9 meters

## 4 MIG 17 FIGHTER-BOMBER SQUADRONS

These four fighter-bomber squadrons have 75 MIG 17's, all weather fighter/interceptors (single sit). Two squadrons of about 20 airplanes are operational and the other two may be part of the reserve forces of DAAFAR.

Combat radius: 913 miles  
Armament:           - one 37 mm cannon  
                      - one 23 mm cannon  
                      - three 23 mm Nudelmann-Rikter NR-23  
                          cannon  
                      - four eight-rocket pods or two 550 lb  
                          bombs  
Speed: 711 mph  
Service ceiling: 54,460 ft  
Length: 11 meters  
Wingspan: 9.5 meters

## 1 SECOND LINE MIG 15 FIGHTER-BOMBER UNIT

This unit has about 15 old MIG 15's.

## MILITARY TRANSPORTS

The Cuban Air Force and the civilian airline company Cubana de Aviación have about 148 transport planes and a large helicopter fleet.

35- An-2 (Colt)  
20- An-24 (Coke)

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<sup>4</sup> These planes may be replaced soon with newer aircrafts.

12- An-24 (Coke) - operated by Cubana de Aviación, civilian airline.

30- An-26 (Curl)

16- Il-14 (Crate)

10- Il-62M (Classic)

7- Tu-154 (Careless) - Operated by Cubana de Aviación.

11- Yak-40 (Codling)

2- Il-76 (Candid)

1- Il-18 (Coat)

3- Bristol 175-318 (Britannia)

1- Douglas C-47/DC3 (Skytrain)

### TRAINING AIRCRAFT

- 6 MIG- 23U's
- 30 Zlin 326's
- 10 Mig-21U's
- 15 Mig-15U's
- 27 L-39C's (?)

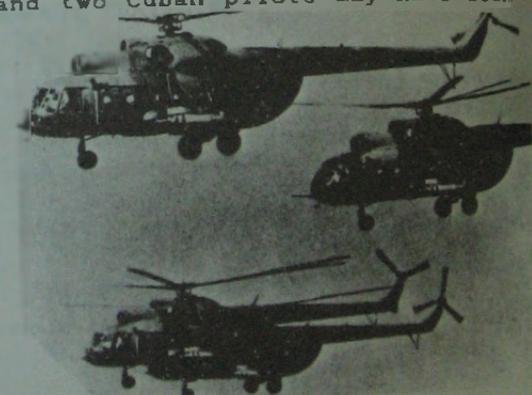
### HELICOPTERS

The number of helicopters in the Air Force is estimated at between 70 and 100. They include Mi-1 Hare's, Mi-4 Hound's, Mi-8's and Mi-24 HIND-D's assault helicopters.

The principal mission of the helicopters is to provide air mobility for ground forces, as anti-tank weapons and to provide air support to ground forces. They perform an important role in fire support, transport, supply and evacuation, as well as in reconnaissance and airborne landing operations. They can also be important weapons to insure air support to ground forces in all types of weather particularly when fixed-wing aircraft are unable to operate.

Cubans have piloted helicopters for the Nicaraguan armed forces and at least one helicopter has been shot down by anti-Communist guerrillas and two Cuban pilots may have been killed in December 1985.

- 15- Mi-1 Hare
- 2- Mi-2 Hoplite
- 24- Mi-4 Hound
- 20- Mi-8T Hip
- 12- Mi-8F Hip
- 16- Mi-17 Hip-H
- 12- Mi-24 Hind D



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The Mi-24 or armed to 8, and and Air F has a com aph. It bombs and has a tur an excell

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The Mi-8 helicopters can carry 26 troops with armament and equipment, and have a combat radius of over 200 km and a speed of 250 km per hour.

The Mi-24 helicopters can be used as assault troop carrier or armed gunship in support of military units. It can carry 6 to 8, and possibly as many as 13 troops. Both the Cuban Navy and Air Force operate these helicopters. This helicopter has a combat radius of 220 miles and can fly at up to 175 mph. It can carry in excess of 2,000 lbs of 57 mm rockets, bombs and precision guided antitank missiles. In the front it has a turret-mounted rotary 12.7 mm gun. It is said to have an excellent fire control system.

In addition to these helicopters operated by the DAAFAR, the Cuban Navy has at least 30 Mi-1's, 25 Mi-4's, and 4 Mi-14's. All of them are shore-based.

### 24 SAM BATTALIONS<sup>5</sup>

This battalions are equipped with SA-2 Guidelines - 144 launchers with 6 launchers per battalion.

600 VK 750 SAM's

(7) SA-6

This missiles are designed to be used against enemy high-performance aircraft approaching friendly ground troops. It is used as an antiaircraft weapon to hit targets at ranges over five miles. At closer ranges other portable missiles and automatic anti-aircraft cannon are used.



<sup>5</sup> For additional information on Cuban antiaircraft weapons, see Appendix II. We elected to list them with the Army ground forces, although they are technically operated by the DAAFAR.

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## APPENDIX IV

### REVOLUTIONARY NAVY (MGR)

The Cuban Navy, known as Marina de Guerra Revolucionaria, was the last of the military branches to receive a major increase in tactical and material equipment and training as part of the build up of military forces in Cuba by the Soviet Union. However, the Cuban Navy in 1986 compares very favorably with the naval forces of much larger countries in Latin America, like for example Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. Although it does not have aircraft carriers like Brazil and Argentina, Cuban naval vessels are modern and have sophisticated weapons systems. The strength of the Navy is estimated at about 13,500 men. In addition, the Navy has a new naval infantry unit undergoing training for landing assaults. It is composed of about 800 men (battalion strength).

### HISTORY

The Cuban Navy was born under the administration of President José Miguel Gómez (1909-1913), when the Cuban Government increased the Coast Guard and purchased several new ships. They included the cruisers CUBA and PATRIA. They were used as training vessels and contributed to protecting shipping in the Caribbean during WWI. During WWII the Cuban Navy also provided valuable assistance in protecting allied shipping in the Caribbean. In fact, the Cuban Navy managed to sink German U-boat 176 using an 83-foot surface vessel, a record that holds to this day.

Until at least 1979, the Cuban Navy consisted of three U.S. built frigates ("Antonio Maceo," "José Martí" and "Máximo Gómez"), completed in 1944 and acquired from the U.S. Navy in 1947, and an old cruiser launched in 1911 and built for the Cuban Navy in Philadelphia (CUBA). In addition, the Cuban Navy had two escort patrol vessels also acquired from the U.S. Navy (PCE type) named Caribe and Siboney, built in the 1940's, and 18 Komar type missile boats transferred from the Soviet Navy in the period from 1962 to 1966; 12 SOI type patrol vessels transferred from the Soviet Navy in the period from 1964 to 1967; 6 KRONSTADT type submarine chasers transferred from the Soviet Navy in 1962; and 24 torpedo boats (P6 and P4 types) received from the Soviet Union between 1962 and 1964. The Cuban Navy also had in its fleet about 13 old coast guard cutters and about 21 motor launches and auxiliary crafts for the most part built in the United States and inherited by the Revolutionary Government in 1959.

Starting in 1980, the Cuban Navy has received more sophisticated and larger equipment from the Soviet Union and began to retire old ships, including some that had been in the fleet for as long as 60 years. New equipment includes submarines, hydrofoils, frigates larger than the old U.S. built ships, and landing crafts which have given the Cuban Navy attack capabilities that had previously not been present.

The strength of the fleet now consists of at least 157 vessels on active duty and five additional ships in reserve. Together with the merchant marine, the Naval Air Force with attack helicopters, and the increased operational capabilities of the Cuban Air Force, the Navy is well prepared and capable of staging offensive operations within the region.

### TRAINING

The Cuban Naval Academy has a 70-year history and a long tradition of training good officers. The old building that housed the Naval Academy at Mariel, has been replaced with a new campus at Punta Santa Ana. Construction was completed in 1983. This school is used to train officers for both, the Navy and the Merchant Marine. Naval officers are often rotated between both services as well as the Cuban large fishing fleet. Most cadets have completed their high school education at one of the two schools run by the Navy, located in Cienfuegos and Playa Baracoa. At least six months are spent at sea during training in one of the Navy's training ships: José Martí, XX Aniversario and Vietnam Heroico.

Some Naval officers also attend one or more of the service academies operated by the Army and Air Force, which provide specialized training in several engineering fields and weapons specialties. Some officers have also been sent to the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries to study.

### COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Headquarters of the Navy continues to be housed in the building as in pre-revolutionary days, on the Havana Harbor waterfront, near the ancient La Fuerza Castle. The Navy had been organized into three regional commands that follow the basic organization of the ARMY and DAAFAR:

Eastern Naval District: Headquartered at Nicaro, in the North Coast of the old Oriente Province. It covers the provinces

of Ciego de Avila, Camaguey, Las Tunas, Holguin, Granma, Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo.

**Central Naval District:** Headquartered at Cienfuegos, in the South Coast, and covering the South Coast of Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos and Sancti Spiritus Provinces.

**Western Naval District:** Headquartered at Cabañas, on the North Coast of Pinar del Rio, and covering the Provinces of Pinar del Rio, La Havana, the shoreline of the capital of Havana, and the Isle of Youth (Isle of Pines).

In addition to the regional command, the Navy has commands by service or role of fleet ships: the Navy has commands by Anti-Submarine Command and the Coastal Command and the was established at Cienfuegos. The Navy has been reorganized into four flotillas based in Mariel, Havana and Cienfuegos, and each flotilla has been subdivided into squadrons by ship type.

Shore commands include the Naval Academy at Punta Santa Ana, the Training Center at Playa del Salado, the Naval Shipyard and Repair Station at Casablanca in Havana Harbor, the Mariel Naval Base and the Hydrography Institute (Instituto Cubano de Hidrografía).

**Chief of Staff:** Commodore Pedro M. Pérez Betancourt<sup>1</sup>

**Deputy Chiefs:** R. Adm. Emigdio Baez Vigo  
Ship. Capt. Pedro Perera Ruiz

#### Staff Sections

**Chief of Staff:** Ship Capt. Pedro Perera Ruiz  
**Deputy Chief:** Frig. Capt. Julio Hernández Fernández

#### Political Section

**Chief:** Ship Capt. Gonzalo González de la Rosa  
**Deputy Chief:** Ship Capt. Miguel Valle Miranda

**Manpower:** 9,000 to 13,500

<sup>1</sup> Vice Admiral Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado served as Chief of Staff of the Navy from 1965 until 1984. He was replaced possibly due to personal problems including alcoholism. However, he seems to continue on active duty and has represented the Cuban Government in visits to other countries since 1984. The current Chief of Staff was not promoted in rank when assigned to this job.

Naval Academy: Punta Santa Ana

Director: R. Adm. José L. Cuza Tellez-Girón  
Deputy Director: Corv. Capt. Carlos Hernández

Training Center for Junior Specialists

Director: Brig. Gen. Juan Daniel Rodríguez Acosta

Training Center for Naval Specialists

Granma Military Industrial Enterprise

Chief: Corv. Capt. Armando Ojeda Bartumeu

Naval Bases: Mariel, Habana, Varadero, Cienfuegos, Cabanas,  
(Punta Ballenatos and Canasi)

Cienfuegos Base

Chief: Ship Capt. Generoso Escudero Gonzalez

Eastern Flotilla: Cienfuegos

Submarine Flotilla: Cienfuegos

Western Naval District (Mariel)

Chief: R. Adm. Pedro Pérez Betancourt

Western Flotilla - Mariel

Chief: Ship Capt. Leonardo Díaz Rodríguez

Central Naval District - Havana

Chief: Frig. Capt. Sabino Fernández Goyenechea

Central Flotilla - Havana

Operational Capabilities: At least 400 nautical miles

## FLEET<sup>2</sup>

### SUBMARINES

#### 3 FOXTROT CLASS (USSR)

Dimensions: 300.1 x 26.2 x 20 feet (91 meters)

Armament: six 21 in. (533 mm) torpedo tubes bow  
four 16 in. (400 mm) torpedo tubes stern  
Carries 22 torpedoes and/or 44 mines

<sup>2</sup> The Cuban Navy has at least 110 warships.

Speed: 18 knots p/h surfaced  
16 knots p/h dived  
Range: 9,000 miles (70 days)  
Complement: 70 to 75

#### 1 WHISKEY CLASS (USSR) (Not Operational)

Dimensions: 249.6 x 21.3 x 15.1 feet  
Armament: four 21 in torpedo tubes in bow  
two 16 in torpedo tubes in stern  
Speed: 18 knots surfaced  
14 knots dived  
Range: 13,000 miles  
Complement: 75

### FRIGATES

#### 2 KONI CLASS (USSR)

Dimensions: 311.6 x 42 x 13.7 feet (95 meters)  
Armament: SAM  
one twin SA-N-4  
four 12 barreled BMU's  
Range: 2,000 nautical miles (3,700 km at 27 knots)  
Complement: 110

One KONI class frigate was added in 1981 and the second in 1984.

### PATROL CRAFTS

#### 9 SO 1 CLASS (USSR) (Corvettes / Submarine Chasers)

Dimensions: 137.8 x 19.7 x 5.9 (42.3 meters)  
Armament: 4- 25 mm guns in twin mountings  
4- RBU 1200  
2-16 in torpedo tubes  
12 mines

Complement: 25 to 30  
Range: 1,100 miles (1,240 km at 25 knots)

#### 4 KRONSHADT CLASS (USSR) (Corvettes)

### EAST ATTACK CRAFT

5 OSA 1 CLASS MISSILE BOATS (With SSN-Styx missiles)  
(9 of these boats may be in existence in Cuba)

Dimensions: 39.3 meters  
Armament: Four SS-N-2 STYX Missiles  
Four 30 mm guns  
Complement: 25 to 30  
Range: 1,240 km at 25 knots

**14 KOMAR CLASS MISSILE BOATS (With SSN-Styx missiles)**  
(18 of these boats may be in existence in Cuba)

Dimensions: 25.5 meters  
Armament: Two SS-N-2 STYX Missiles  
Two 25mm guns  
Complement: 20  
Range: 640 km at 30 knots

**9 TURYA CLASS HYDROFOIL**

Dimensions: 39.3 meters  
Armament: Four 533 mm torpedo tubes  
Two 25mm guns (twin mounts)  
Two 57mm guns (twin mounts)  
Complement: 30

**6 P6 CLASS TORPEDO BOATS**

Dimensions: 25.5 meters  
Armament: Two 533 mm torpedo tubes  
Four 25 mm guns (twin mounts)  
Complement: 25  
Range: 1,100 km at 30 knots

**12 P4 CLASS TORPEDO BOATS**

Dimensions: 19.1 meters  
Armament: Two 457 mm torpedo tubes  
Two 25 mm guns (twin mounts)  
Complement: 12  
Range: 759 km at 30 knots

**21 ZHUK CLASS PATROL BOATS**

**2 SONYA CLASS MINESWEEPER / HUNTER**

Dimensions: 155.8 x 26.2 x 6.6  
Armament: 2- 30 mm twin guns and 2-25 mm twin guns  
Complement: 43  
Received in 1980 and 1981

**10 YEVGENYA CLASS (msi) (USSR)**  
(There may only be 9 of these boats in Cuba)

Dimensions: 79 x 16.4 x 3.9 (26.2 meters)  
Armament: Four- 25 mm twin guns

Complement: 10  
Range: 1,000 miles

1 K-8 CLASS MINESWEEPER (Polish)

### AMPHIBIOUS FORCES

2 POLNOCNY CLASS LSM (Polish)  
(Built in Poland between 1963 and 1972)

Dimensions: 239.5 x 27.9 x 5.8 feet (76 meters)

Armament: 2- 140 mm rocket launchers  
Possibly 2- 14.5 mm or 2- 300 mm guns

Complement: 40

Range: 900 km at 18 knots

Can carry about 350 tons, including up to six tanks. Speed is estimated at 18 knots p/h.

7 T4 CLASS LCM (Medium Landing Crafts)

Dimensions: 19 meters

Complement: 5

Range: ?

### SURVEY VESSELS

1 BIYA CLASS AGS (Polish) Name: Guama H 103

### MISCELLANEOUS CRAFTS

6 NYRYAT 1 CLASS MOTOR LAUNCHES Pennants: H91 H92 H93 H94  
H95 H96

TRAINING SHIPS XX ANIVERSARIO  
VIETNAM HEROICO  
JOSE MARTI

1 YELVA CLASS DIVING TENDER

1 PELYM CLASS DEGAUSSING SHIP

2 Lighthouse tenders (British) Name: Enrique Collazo  
Bertha SF 10

1 OKTENSKY CLASS OCEAN TUG (USSR) Name: Caribe

3 Auxiliary boats for harbor use (USA) Pennants: A1 A2 A3  
(1949 vintage)

#### COAST GUARD

3 Seventy foot crafts Pennants: GF 101 GF 102 GF 103

4 Forty foot crafts Pennants: GF528 GF720 GF725 GF825

6 Small boats (Spain) Names: Camilo Cienfuegos, Escambray, Maceo, Cuartel Moncada, Finlay and Marti (Vintage 1972)

#### NAVAL AVIATION

18 to 25- Mi-4 (Hound) Helicopters

Can be used as an assault troop carrier or as armed gunships in support of military units. Both the Cuban Navy and Air Force have these helicopters. See Appendix III for more details.

4- Mi-14 (Haze) Helicopters

At least four Mi-14 helicopters equipped for anti-submarine warfare have been added to the Navy in the past three years.

30- Mi-1 (Hare)

#### COASTAL DEFENSE

50 SAMLET SSM's for coastal defense

#### MERCHANT AND FISHING FLEETS

The Cuban merchant fleet has about 100 ships of 1,000 gross registered tons and a fishing fleet of about 235 ships, of which about 50 were of 1,000 gross registered tons or more. In addition, Cuba owns about 12 tanker ships that can be used to refuel Navy ships. In the past ten years these ships have been used to support the wars in Africa and to provide logistical assistance to guerrilla groups in many parts of the world. For example, Cuban vessels have been suspected of offloading weapons and ammunition as well as other supplies to Chilean Communist guerrillas during 1986. But even as far back as 1963, during the war between Algeria and Morocco,

Cuban merchant vessels were used to ferry combat troops to Algeria.



Cuban troops carry out amphibious landings in training exercise.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense

## APPENDIX V

### TERRITORIAL MILITIA TROOPS (MTT)

In March of 1959, Raul Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara began to organize a militia force only a few days prior to a visit to the United States by Fidel Castro. Within two years a large militia force with an estimated 200,000 members had been organized and trained, receiving its baptism of fire during the Bay of Pigs landing in April of 1961. Since 1961 the militia has been reorganized at least three times. A year after compulsory military service was established, in 1964, all weapons were taken away from the militia. Weapons would only be distributed in case of national emergency. In April of 1973, the militia was put on military "reserve" and all members were granted the honorary title of "sublieutenants" and sent home. Again in May of 1980, Fidel Castro called back the militia, this time under the name of "Territorial Militia Troops (MTT)."

### HISTORY

The use of militia units in Cuba was not a new experience when it was formed in 1959. During colonial times, the Spanish formed regular militia units to perform police functions as well as to assist the regular troops in the defense of the island. The British attack that led to the fall of Havana after a three month battle in 1762 convinced Spain of the need to organize a strong local militia. After Spain regained control of Havana two years later, a militia unit was formed with creoles and Spaniards and a parallel organization with blacks that volunteered to become members. These militia units are credited with keeping Cuba loyal to Spain for several generations while the rest of the colonies obtained their independence.

Slowly the militia units were replaced with regular police units and regular Army troops. But with the start of the Ten Years War in 1868-1878 and again during the War of Independence in 1895-1898, Spain formed two militia-style units to fight against the Cuban revolutionaries. They were the Guerrilleros and the Voluntarios. The Guerrilleros were Cubans who fought on the side of Spain against the Cuban revolutionaries who wanted independence. The Voluntarios were



The Soviet Union has continued to add to Cuba's military strength with such weapons systems as the FOXTROT-Class submarines, KONI-Class frigates, EB-N2 STYX naval cruise missiles and the SA-3/GDA surface-to-air missile.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense

Spaniards who had immigrated to Cuba and volunteered their services in support of the Spanish administration.<sup>1</sup>

After 1902, when Cuba became independent, the use of militia units was always authorized by the military service laws in effect. For example, in 1906, President Estrada Palma called for the formation of a militia to fight against the rebellion of members of the Liberal Party. Again in 1912, President José Miguel Gómez formed a militia to assist the military to put down a black uprising. However, regular troops did most of the fighting on both of these occasions.

In 1930, President Gerardo Machado ordered the formation of a 1st Company of militia, to be composed of 100 men to assist the police. In fact, he was trying to increase his forces to fight against growing dissent against his dictatorial administration.<sup>2</sup> Again during World War II, during the presidency of Fulgencio Batista (1940-1944), several volunteer units were formed to assist in the war effort. This included the Emergency Volunteer Military Service Corps and a Women Civil Defense Corps in 1942.<sup>3</sup>

The new Territorial Militia Troops have been organized as a vital part of the new Cuban military concept of "war of all the people" or "guerra de todo el pueblo." The primary role of the over 1,200,000 men and women members of the MTT is to harass enemy forces in the rear and delay their movements. Their primary function is defensive.

## TRAINING

There are about 24 militia training centers throughout the country for privates and sergeants. At least three days (22 hours) of basic training is given to all volunteers before they become members of a militia unit. Additional combat training is provided at a rate of at least 40 hours per year, given in four-hour sessions on Sundays once a month. Although this training may seem limited, many of the members of the militia have been on active duty in the past and are not serving their reserve status as part of the militia. In ad-

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1 For more information on Guerrilleros and Voluntarios, see chapters V and VI.

2 "President Machado orders formation of 1st company of Cuban militia, to be composed of 100 men, to aid Havana police when not on other duty." New York Times (January 11, 1930), p.12, col. 5.

3 For more information see Chapter XIII.

dition, substantial training was given to many members of the old militia in the 1960's. According to the Cuban Government, up to 40 percent of the MTT members had some prior military service before joining the militia.

There is at least one major school for training officers for the MTT: Escuela de Oficiales de las Milicias de Tropas Territoriales "Andre Voisin." This school is located in Havana. Another MTT training school is known to be located in near Villa Clara.

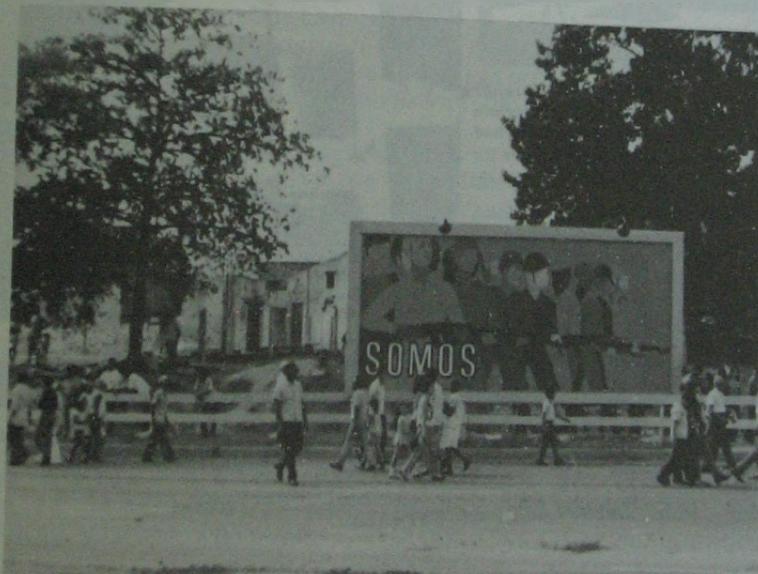
### COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Territorial Militia Troops are managed by the Directorate for MTT of the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR) as well as by municipal and provincial governments. All training and leadership is provided by regular officers of the FAR. The highest rank for the MTT is that of colonel. All flag-rank officers in command of militia units are regulars.

Each municipality has MTT officers in charge of registration, mobilization and training. At the municipal level the Chief of Staff of the MTT may hold the rank of major or lieutenant colonel.

#### National Chief of the MTT:

Div. Gen. Raul Menéndez Tomassevich



## APPENDIX VII

### CURRENT MILITARY LEADERSHIP

It has been very difficult to obtain biographical information on flag-rank officers of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces. The methodology used for obtaining the information presented here includes an extensive review of books on Cuba published in the past twenty-seven years, as well as a review of periodical literature. The information gathered was cross-checked with a substantial number of documents and by personal interviews with Cuban exiles in Miami, Florida. An interesting finding was that even recent arrivals did not seem to know much about Cuban military leaders. The Cuban Government has been very careful to safeguard personal information about its top military commanders. The general population in Cuba does not seem to know who the top commanders of the Armed Forces are. The author also showed the list of flag-rank officers to some of the top scholars on Cuba, who had gathered at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in August of 1986, for the annual meeting of the Institute for Cuban Studies. Even these top scholars did not recognize the names of the vast majority of the top Cuban commanders today. Even when a name was recognized, these scholars did not know many details about the background of these men. Limitation of available information is even greater for some of the younger generals of the Armed Forces.

The information presented here is from very sketchy to non-existent for most of the top Cuban commanders today. Nevertheless, this is more than has previously been available in the past for researchers on Cuba. It is hoped that this information will stimulate further research on this subject. Without a doubt, these men will play a major role in the government of the island in the future.

Commander-in-Chief:  
Fidel Castro Ruz



General of the Army:  
Raúl Castro Ruz



Minister of the Revolution-  
ary Armed Forces (MINFAR)

#### DIVISION GENERALS

Abrahamantes Fernández, José  
(Possibly born in  
Mexico in 1932)



Minister of the Interior  
(MININT)<sup>1</sup> Member of the  
Central Committee, CCP.

General Abrahamantes is a mem-  
ber of the Central Committee  
of the Cuban Communist Party  
and a veteran of the revolu-

<sup>1</sup> Before being named Minis-  
ter of the Interior in 1986,  
Gen. Abrahamantes held the  
position of Vice-Minister  
under Ramiro Valdés, and was  
in charge of Security.

tion against Fulgencio  
Batista. During the revolu-  
tion 1956-1958. General  
Abrahamantes was a member of  
the Directorio Revolu-  
cionario Estudiantil (DR-13-  
M). He was possibly a mem-  
ber of the youth group of  
the Cuban Communist Party  
(Partido Socialista Popular)  
and a member of Castro's M-  
26-7. He might also have  
joined Castro's organization  
while he was living in the  
United States as a political  
exile. He supposedly lived  
in Chicago in the 1950's for  
an unknown period of time.

Abrahamantes went back to Cuba  
as a member of a military  
expedition on February 8,  
1958, landing at Nuevitas,  
in Camaguey province. Other  
members of the expeditionary  
group were Faure Chomón,  
Rolando Cubelas, Armando  
Fleites, José Moleón, Ramón  
Guin, Juan Martínez, Raúl  
Arguello, Julio Castillo and  
Juan Miranda.

General Abrahamantes was  
trained by the Soviet KGB,  
possibly during 1961 and  
1962, and is widely regarded  
as the organizer of the  
internal security and  
intelligence gathering  
organization in Cuba.  
Despite his leading role in  
the organization of the  
intelligence community,  
which has resulted in his  
being called the "Beria" of  
Cuba, he is not disliked by  
the public as much as Ramiro  
Valdés, whom he replaced as  
Minister of the Interior.  
However, he does have many  
enemies among high-ranking  
officers of the Armed  
Forces, possibly including  
Raúl Castro. His association

with Ramiro Valdés goes back to the early years of the revolution, when Valdés ran the Investigation Department of the Rebel Army. Abrahantes is believed to be very loyal to both Fidel Castro and Ramiro Valdés.

General Abrahantes held the position of chief of body guards for Fidel Castro for several years and is believed to be very close to him. He is often seen in pictures next to Fidel Castro during his overseas trips, acting as his principal body guard. He also served as chief of the Department of State Security starting around 1962. He then held the rank of captain.

Although General Abrahantes is a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, he was not elected to the powerful Politburo at the Third Congress of the CCP in February of 1966. His predecessor as Minister of the Interior, Ramiro Valdés, had been a member of the Politburo during his tenure as Minister. Abrahantes is believed to have been married at least three times and to like the company of women. He is a sportsman and likes to party. However, he does not show up in public meetings very often and seems to prefer to work in anonymity. These are typical characteristics of intelligence officers anywhere. He is about 5' 9" and weighs about 190 lbs. He dresses well and has a strong streak of vanity.

Acevedo Gonzalez, Rogelio  
(Born in Remedios: 1942-43)



General Acevedo is a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and holds the position of Vice-Minister of the MINFAR for Rear Services (Retaguardia).

General Acevedo was born in the town of Remedios, in the province of Las Villas. His father was a Spanish immigrant who owned and operated a drug store and a gas station in his home town. As a young teenager Rogelio Acevedo and his brother Enrique joined in the struggle against Batista. They participated in student demonstrations and fought against the police in the streets. Without their parents consent, both brothers went to the the Sierra Maestra Mountains and joined the guerrilla forces of the 26th of July Movement. Gen. Acevedo joined the guerrillas when he was only 15 years old. His brother Enrique, who is now a brigadier general was only about two years older. Since he had practically no beard due to his young age, he let his hair grow long. During the war he was often referred to as the "blond kid," because of his long

blond hair, which made him look like a girl.

During the revolution against Fulgencio Batista, he was a member of the M-26-7 and participated in the invasion force led by Camilo Cienfuegos and Ernesto "Che" Guevara, that started from the Sierra Maestra Mountains and moved west toward Central Cuba and eventually to Havana. He fought in the Escambray Mountains in Central Cuba and was wounded in the chest by a grenade during the invasion. His commanders included both Raul Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara. By the end of the war in January of 1959, he had reached the rank of captain.

General Acevedo participated in the capture of his hometown of Remedios, as well as in the battle of Santa Clara, the last major battle of the war. After the government forces in Remedios surrendered to Major Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Rogelio Acevedo and his brother entered the town as conquering heroes, disobeying the orders of their commander who had told them to remain on guard duty in the outskirts of the town. At the Army installation in downtown Remedios, Rogelio Acevedo and Guevara are said to have had a confrontation because the young rebel wanted to carry out "revolutionary justice" and execute several officers of the government forces for participating in acts of repression. Guevara chastised him for having disobeyed orders and for his immaturity. Rumor has it

that Guevara explained to him that if the troops who had surrendered were not granted permission to be evacuated to Havana without reprisals, other government garrisons nearby would never surrender and it would be more difficult to win the war. Acevedo reluctantly acceded to Guevara's decision.

During the battle of Santa Clara, Acevedo's forces captured the provincial jail and the Palace of Justice. After the surrender of the government forces and the collapse of the dictatorship, Acevedo and several followers took a new luxury car, a 1958 Chrysler, and went for a joyride through the town. Despite his experience as a soldier and troop commander, which had earned him the rank of captain, he often behaved like what he was, a young and rebellious teenager.

In 1959, he was one of the principal organizers of a large militia force, together with Raúl Castro and Sergio del Valle. In the 1960's he headed the militia and has been a member of the Central Committee of the CPC since 1965. He has held important military positions in Cuba and has participated in so-called "internationalist" duties abroad. He is thought to be close to Raúl Castro and to be one of the officers who does not get along well with General Abrahantes.

General Acevedo has distinguished himself over the years as a trusted officer

who can well carry out missions assigned to him. He has always been a fanatical leftist from his early teens. He is possibly married, but very little is known about his personal life.

**Batista Santana, Sixto**

Central Committee Communist Party (Politburo)  
Vice Minister of the MINFAR  
Chief, Central Political Directorate

General Batista was awarded the Bulgarian George Dimitrov 100th Birthday Commemorative Medal in September of 1980 together with Generals Ulises Rosales del Toro and Abelardo Colomé Ibarra. However, he may be now in disfavor for unknown reasons.

**Cabrera González, Francisco**

**Casas Regueiro, Senén**



First Deputy Minister,  
MINFAR  
Central Committee Communist Party (Politburo)  
Chief of the Antiaircraft Defense and Air Force

He was a member of the M-26-7 and fought in the Sierra Cristal Mountains of Eastern Oriente in the so-called

"second front," under Raul Castro. He was the first commander of the Eastern Army in 1961, and then held the rank of captain. His brother is also a Division General.

**Casas Regueiro, Julio**

Commander of the Air Force  
Central Committee of the Communist Party (Politburo)

He was a member of the M-26-7 and fought in the Sierra Cristal Mountains of Eastern Oriente under Raul Castro. He joined the guerrilla forces of the 26th of July Movement at a very young age. He was born in Oriente and belongs to the inner-circle formed by several revolutionary leaders from that province. He also fought in Angola, where he gained fame and experience. Julio and his brother Senén are both considered to be strong "Raulistas."

**Cintras Frias, Leopoldo<sup>2</sup>**

Commander of Cuban Troops in Angola

<sup>2</sup> General Cintras Frias may have been promoted to Division General recently, but information available is not very credible. He is listed also as a Brigadier. Please see next section for additional information.

Colomé Ibarra, Abelardo



First Deputy Minister,  
MINFAR  
Member of the Central  
Committee and Politburo of  
the Cuban Communist Party

Furry" Colomé Ibarra is a member of the so-called "vieja guardia" who fought against Batista under Fidel and Raúl Castro. Colomé Ibarra was sent by Frank País, leader of the urban underground of the M-26-7 in Santiago de Cuba, to join the guerrilla forces fighting under Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra Mountains in March of 1957. A year later, he was one of the guerrilla leaders who followed Raul Castro to the Sierra Cristal Mountains in the Eastern part of Oriente to form a new guerrilla front. General Colomé commanded one of the columns in the second front under Raúl Castro, with the rank of captain.

General Colomé led Cuban troops in Angola and fought against the South African forces, which had invaded the Southern part of that country in 1975. On January 1, 1984, on the anniversary of the revolution, the Council of State passed resolution No. 250 granting

General Colomé the title of Hero of the Republic of Cuba and the Order of Máximo Gómez. The medals were granted due to his "extraordinary merits in the struggle against tyranny and imperialistic neocolonial domination and the defense of the Socialist State and accomplishment of heroic internationalist missions."

General Colomé has received many honors, including the Bulgarian George Dimitrov 100th Birthday Commemorative Medal, which he received together with Generals Sixto Batista Santana and Ulises Rosales del Toro. He is considered by most scholars on Cuba as the top general in terms of prestige at this time. In February of 1986, he was elected to the Central Committee and the powerful Politburo of the CCP, bypassing other generals who had enjoyed greater prestige in the past. He is without a doubt one of the rising stars in the Cuban Government. Indicative of his rapid movement upwards in the organization, is the fact that he now holds a higher "political" rank than other generals who are his superiors in the military.

Espinosa Martin, Ramón

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Chief, Eastern Army

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3 FBIS Report, January 4,  
1984.

**Fernández Gondín, Carlos**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

**García Pelaez, Pedro**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

Vice Minister of the  
MINFAR

For Combat Training  
(Preparación Combativa y  
CEM)

**García Fernández, Rigoberto**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

Vice Minister of the  
MINFAR

Chief of the Youth Labor  
Army

General Garcia is a member  
of the "vieja guardia," and  
close to Raúl Castro. He  
was a member of the M-26-7,  
and fought in the Sierra  
Cristal Mountains of Eastern  
Oriente, under Raúl Castro,  
during the revolution  
against Batista.

**Martínez Gil, Pascual**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

Vice Minister, MININT  
For Internal Order and  
Crime Prevention

(Intelligence)

**Méndez Cominches, José  
Joaquín**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

Vice Minister, MININT

Director, General Direc-  
torate for Intelligence  
(DGI)

General Méndez organized the  
G-2 in Santiago de Cuba af-  
ter the victory of the revolu-  
tion in 1959 and is said  
to be a member of the inner  
circle of Raúl Castro. He  
may have taken the blame for  
the lack of intelligence and  
subsequent defeat in  
Grenada. If he is a  
"Raulista" and General Abra-  
hantes and Raúl Castro and  
his friends do not get along  
well, it is possible that  
Abrahantes may have tried to  
place the blame for the  
failure on the shoulders of  
"Raulistas," such as General  
Méndez. However, this infor-  
mation is highly speculative  
and cannot be supported with  
facts.

General Mendez was a member  
of the Central Committee of  
the CCP until the Third  
Party Congress in 1986. He  
may have been ousted due to  
the failure of intelligence  
units under his command to  
detect events leading up to  
the coup against Prime Min-  
ister Bishop in Grenada.

General Méndez's wife is the  
"Directora General, Escuela  
de la Infancia."

**Menéndez Tomassevich, Raul**

Vice Minister, MINFAR  
For the Territorial  
Militia Troops (MTT)

General Menéndez was a mem-  
ber of the M-26-7, and  
fought on the Sierra Cristal

front under Raúl Castro during the revolution against Batista. Before Raúl Castro moved from the Sierra Maestra to the Sierra Cristal to form a second front, Menéndez commanded a guerrilla group that often behaved like bandits in the region of Mayarí/ Alto Songo, in the early months of 1958. When Raúl Castro arrived in the Sierra Cristal he encountered several groups which were a mixture of guerrillas and bandits and set out to either destroy their organizations or convince them to come under his command. Menéndez and a few other men joined him. Others were exterminated by Castro and his followers.

On March 5, 1958, General Menéndez captured a Rural Guard post at Mayarí Arriba with his guerrilla force. This is one of his claims to fame. Other leading guerrilla leaders who fought with him under Raúl Castro were: Ciro Frias, Félix Pena, Reinerio Jiménez Lage and Efigenio Ameijeiras.

Since the victory of the revolution in 1959, General Menéndez has served as Chief of the Army of Oriente and he has been a member of the Central Committee of the CPC for several years. He fought in Angola and obtained prestige for his participation in that conflict. General Menéndez is of humble origin. He is regarded as a very astute individual but not as a man of strong principles.

Ochoa Sánchez, Arnaldo T



Present position unknown; Member of the Central Committee of the CCP

General Ochoa joined the revolutionary guerrillas of the 26th of July Movement in 1958, while still a teenager. He was a member of the Antonio Maceo Column lead by Major Camilo Cienfuegos and participated in the invasion force from the Sierra Maestra Mountains to the West, which ended in the battle of Santa Clara and the overthrow of Batista. Upon the victory of the revolution on January 1, 1959, he had reached the rank of captain. Since the revolution he has held several important positions, including that of Commander of the Army of Havana.

General Ochoa received special training in the Soviet Union in the mid-1970's, and from there went to Angola in 1976 to take part in the war. He left Angola in April of 1976 and returned to Cuba. In December of 1977, General Ochoa was sent to Ethiopia as Commander of the Cuban combat troops in the Ogaden war. In the early 1980's he was in charge of combat readiness in Cuba. He then went to

Nicaragua  
der of  
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On Jan  
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Nicaragua in 1983 as commander of the Cuban troops in that country. He departed about two years later.

On January 1, 1984, the Council of State granted him the title of Hero of the Republic of Cuba and the Order of Maximo Gomez. Resolution No. 251 of the Council of State declares that General Ochoa "carried out several internationalist missions with particular spirit of sacrifice, brilliant performance as commander of Cuban troops in Ethiopia, as well as for his honesty, unselfishness, spirit of sacrifice, purity, desire to excel and heroism." Along with General Abelardo Colomé Ibrarra, Ochoa is seen by most experts on Cuba as one of the top Cuban commanders today.

Quintas Solas, Joaquin

Chief, Western Army

Rosales del Toro, Ulises



First Deputy Minister

MINFAR

Chief of the General Staff, MINFAR

General Rosales del Toro is one of the most respected

<sup>4</sup> FBIS Report, January 4, 1984.

commanders of the Cuban Armed Forces has been given several awards. He was awarded the Bulgarian George Dimitrov 100th Birthday Commemorative Medal in September of 1980 together with Generals Abelardo Colomé Ibarra and Sixto Batista Santana.

### Vice Admirals

Santamaria Cuadrado, Aldo



Former Commander of the Navy (MGR)<sup>5</sup>

Present position unknown

Admiral Santamaria was a member of the M-26-7, and participated in the revolutionary war against Batista. His brother Abel was one of the leading commanders of the ill-fated attack on July 26, 1953 on the Moncada Army barracks in Santiago de Cuba in which he was killed in action. His sister, Aidé, was one of the principal leaders of the underground in Oriente during the revolution. Her boyfriend was

<sup>5</sup> After his dismissal as Navy Commander, the Cuban Government has not promoted any other flag rank officer of the Navy to Vice Admiral.

also killed in the Moncada attack. According to some unverified accounts, Batista's men showed her her boyfriends testicles as well as her brother's eyes as part of their effort to get her to talk and provide information on her co-conspirators. She took her own life in 1980.

Admiral Santamaria has never distinguished himself much during or after the revolution and may have obtained his assignments on the bases of his family's contributions to the revolution. He has been accused in the United States of complicity in the drug trade.

One of Admiral Santamaria's closest friends in the underground during the revolution against Batista was Carlos Franqui, who defected after holding important positions for several years in the Revolutionary Government.

Admiral Santamaria served as Chief of the Navy from 1965 to 1984. One possible reason for his dismissal as Commander of the Navy is an alleged problem with alcohol. He is no longer a member of the Central Committee of the CCP. Since his relief he has visited several countries as a representative of the Cuban Government at special celebrations. His present position is not clear.



PROMINENT GENERALS  
AND POLITICAL  
FIGURES DURING THE  
THIRD CONGRESS OF  
THE CUBAN COMMUNIST  
PARTY IN 1966.



BRIGADIER GENERALS

Acevedo González, Enrique  
(Born in Remedios: 1940-41  
?)



Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee CCP

General Acevedo is a veteran of the guerrilla war against Batista. He joined the guerrilla forces with his brother Rogelio at a very young age. Rogelio is now a Division General. Prior to joining the guerrillas Acevedo had been active in student politics and was arrested by the police when he was 14 years old for participating in student demonstrations against the government. He was wounded in both arms on September 8, 1958, in the skirmish that took place at La Federal in Camaguey Province. He fought in the Escambray Mountains of Central Cuba and participated in the battle of Santa Clara. He was a member of the M-26-7 and fought under Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Raúl Castro. Guevara let him command a squad of guerrillas.

General Acevedo's father was a Spanish immigrant who owned drug store and a gas station/repair shop in

Remedios. For additional information see the biography of his brother Division General Rogelio Acevedo.

Avila Ochoa, René

Eastern Army (Exact title not available)

Baranda Columbie, Ladislao

Deputy Chief of the DAAFAR

General Baranda was a member of Column 6 "Juan Manuel Ameijeiras," in Raúl Castro's guerrillas in the Sierra Cristal Mountains of Eastern Oriente during the revolutionary war against Batista. His brother Félix, also fought under Raúl Castro.

Barreiro Caramés, Germán  
(La Habana: 1941)

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Chief, General Staff, MININT

General Barreiro was a member of the M-26-7 during the revolution against Batista, but left the country and went to Spain in 1958. He has never been in the Armed Forces. In the past 27 years he has been a member of the Cuban intelligence network and has received several awards, including the "XX Anniversary of Moncada," "10 Year Service Medal MININT," and "20 Year Service in State Security."

Bernández Cutiño, Jesús

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

Carreras Rojas, Enrique

General Carreras is a member of the DAAFAR and a veteran pilot who served under Fulgencio Batista and received training in the United States. He was arrested for participating in the Naval uprising in Cienfuegos in October of 1957 and was sentenced to jail by a court martial. After the victory of the revolution in January of 1959, he was released from jail and became a member of the Cuban Revolutionary Air Force. In 1961, he was one of the three pilots who flew what was left of the Cuban Air Force against the Bay of Pigs invasion force. He is credited with sinking landing crafts and helping to defeat the landing force while piloting a T-33 jet trainer.

General Carreras may have been sent to Chile in 1971 to assist Salvador Allende in the organization and training of a security force and workers' militia.

Caussé Pérez, José

Deputy Chief, Eastern Army

General Caussé was a member of the M-26-7 and fought with the guerrillas commanded by Raúl Castro in the Sierra Cristal Mountains of Eastern Oriente.

General Causse may be a member of an old Oriente family of French/Haitian background. He may also be related to a young Cuban Communist who grew up in the United States and who was killed in a confrontation in North Carolina with members of the KKK in the early 1980's

General Causse has been regarded by some scholars on Cuba as one of Fidel Castro's favorite commanders.

Chueg Colás, Victor (See  
Schueg Colás, Victor)

Chui Beltrán, Gustavo

Directorate of Cadres,  
MINFAR

Cintras Frias, Leopoldo

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Commander of Cuban troops in  
Angola

General Cintras Frias was a member of the M-26-7 and fought under Raul Castro in the Sierra Cristal Mountains of Eastern Oriente during the revolution against Batista. He is an expert in artillery and distinguished himself in the Angolan war in 1975 and 1976. General Cintras has served several tours of duty in that country.

Crespo Fernández, Manuel

MININT - State Security  
(DSE)

**Cruz Bourzac, Francisco**

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Vice Minister of the MINFAR  
For Armament and Technology

**Denis Frias, Luis Felipe**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
MININT  
Director, General Direc-  
torate of the National  
Revolutionary Police

**Escalante Font, Fabian**

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
MININT

**Escalona Roguera, Juan**  
(Manzanillo- ?)

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Minister of Justice (MINJUS)

General Escalona is the son of former Vice-Minister of Public Health, Dr. Mario Escalona, now deceased. The Escalona family has a long history of association with the Communist movement in Cuba and several members of the family were militant members of the prerevolutionary Partido Socialista Popular. Despite the long association with the Communists, the family belonged to the "alta" bourgeoisie. He was born in Manzanillo and is said to have been married twice.

**Fernández Crespo, Manuel**

Chief, Directorate of  
Security, MININT

**Fernández Falcón, Manuel**

Director of the Senior  
Service School, General  
Máximo Gómez Revolutionary  
Air Force Academy

**Fernández Pérez, Julio**

Sub Chief, Rear Services  
(Retaguardia)

**Ferrer Martínez, Harold**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party

**Fleitas Ramirez, Gustavo**

Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Commander of the Central  
Army

**Franco Villanueva, Arsenio**

Director, General Direc-  
torate for Penal Establish-  
ments  
MININT

**Gálvez Rodríguez, William**



Present position unknown.

General Gálvez was a member of the M-26-7, and fought in the guerrilla war against Batista. He was a captain at the age of 25, when he served under Camilo Cienfuegos in Col. 2 "Antonio

Maceo," together with Pablo Cabrera, Sergio del Valle, René López and Alfonso Zayas. One of the significant aspects of his participation in the guerrilla war was that his column had several members of the old Communist Party (PS). Other guerrilla commanders did not want to have PSP members under them. Gálvez fought in the battle of Yaguajay against Captain Abon-Ly (or Lee), who would not surrender his forces to the revolutionaries.<sup>6</sup> Gálvez was superficially wounded during this battle. General Gálvez's father was a shopkeeper.

García Frías, Lorenzo

Deputy Chief of the Western Army  
Combat Training

Guardia Font, Patricio  
(Pinar del Rio or Havana:  
1938?)

Chief, Central Staff, MININT  
(Intelligence)

As a teenager, General Guardia Font was described as an intrepid and fearless young man. He participated in activities against Batista and got into trouble with the police. He was arrested in Pinar del Rio. His family sent him and his twin brother to

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<sup>6</sup> It is traditional in the Cuban Armed Forces that Chinese-Cubans never surrender and fight to the end. See chapters V and XVI for additional information.

study in the United States to get them away from the political turmoil of the late 1950's. They attended a private prep-school in the United States but continued to keep in touch with anti-Batista revolutionaries and sent weapons bought in the United States to the guerrillas. His twin brother, Antonio, is also a general in the Cuban Army but his present assignment is not known. Both brothers have been trained as paratroopers.

General Guardia Font comes from one of Cuba's aristocratic families (Calvo de la Puerta). One of his predecessors was governor of Louisiana during colonial times. His father is a graduate of New York University and worked on the design and construction of the Empire State Building in New York City. A cousin married American millionaire Howard Johnson. A third brother, who is not Communist, remained in the United States, graduated from Georgia Tech and is a businessman. As a young man, the twin Guardia brothers were high-divers, collected old WWII weapons, were very active and liked to shock people. For example, they showed up at the aristocratic Miramar Yacht Club with black friends to upset racist members who did not allow black members. General Guardia also likes to paint.

Guardia Font is about 5' 10" and weighs 175 lbs. He has been married at least twice and one of his wives was a Cuban-Chinese. His twin-

brother Antonio married the daughter of Raul Roa.

**Gutiérrez Bello, Marco Antonio**

Central Committee of the Communist Party  
Director, Central Political Directorate, MININT  
(Intelligence)

**Hernández Hurtado, Justo de Medina**

Director, General Directorate for Immigration and Naturalization, MININT  
(Intelligence)

**Kindelán Bles, Rolando**



Central Committee of the Communist Party

General Kindelán participated in the war against Batista and reached the rank of lieutenant in the rebel army. He commanded a squad in the rear guard platoon in the column led by Camilo Cienfuegos. During the guerrilla war he had a Browning submachinegun with him at all times.

**Lara Roselló, Cesar**

Military Advisor  
Militia (MTT) Havana

General Lara Roselló was a member of the M-26-7 and fought in the Sierra Cristal front under Raul Castro.

Since the revolution he has held several important positions, including that of Chief of the Independent Army Corps in Camaguey province.

**Lastre Pacheco, Manuel**

**Lezcano Pérez, Carlos**

Sub Chief of the Western Army (Dec. 85)

**Leyva Fuentes, Enio**

Chief, MININT headquarters in Pinar del Rio

**Llorente Leon, Miguel A**

Commander of the Cuban troops in Ethiopia

Prior to his appointment as commander of the Cuban troops in Africa, General Rosello was the Chief of Staff of the Militia (MTT) in the Capital (Havana).

**López Cuba, Nestor**

Central Committee of the Communist Party  
Commander of Cuban troops in Nicaragua

His previous position was Chief, Southern Army Corps of the Eastern Army

**Lorenzo Castro, Orlando**

Central Committee of the Communist Party  
Commander of Las Villas Army Corps

**Marrero Ronda, Alejandro**

Director, Special Forces  
Directorate, Special Op-  
erations, MININT

**Martínez Gil, Pascual**

MININT

**Martir Carrión, Angel Mari-  
ano**

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Vice Minister, MININT  
(Intelligence)

**Milián Pino, José A**

Chief, Directorate of  
Organization and  
Mobilization, MTT  
(Militia)

**Méndez Sierra, Juan Agustín**



Military Committee, City of  
Havana

**Moracén, Rafael**

Military Adviser  
Militia (MTT) Matanzas

**Morfa González, José Arnaldo**

Chief, Directorate of  
Artillery MTT (Militia)

**Moro Orozco, Iraldo**

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Sub Chief, Central Army

**Oduardo, José R.**

Chief, Rear Services, Youth  
Labor Army

**Olivera Moya, Filiberto**  
(Position not available)

**Pardo Guerra, Ramón**



Deputy Chief, Western Army

General Pardo was a member  
of the M-26-7 and fought in  
the Escambray during the  
revolution. He was a member  
of "Che" Guevara's column  
and participated in the  
capture of Santa Clara with  
Angel Frías, Rogelio  
Acevedo, José R. Silva,  
Hemerio Rodríguez and  
Roberto Rodríguez

**Pérez Lezcano, Sergio**

Chief, Tenth Directorate  
MINFAR

**Pujol Sanchez, Juan**

Directorate of Military  
Training Centers and  
Noncombatant training MINFAR

**Pupo Pérez, Pedro Ramón**

Director, General Direc-  
torate MININT  
(Intelligence)

**Rodes Moros, Carlos**

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Sub Chief, General Staff

Oduardo, Jose R.  
Chief, Rear Services  
Labor Army

Olivera Moya, Filomena  
(Position not available)

Pardo Guerra, Juan



Deputy Chief, Western Army

General Pardo was a member  
of the M-26-7 and fought in  
the Escambray front during  
the revolution. He was one of  
of "Che" Guevara's lieutenants  
and participated in the  
capture of Santa Clara.

Angel Frias, Juan  
Acevedo, Jose R.  
Hemerio Rodriguez  
Roberto Rodriguez

Perez Lezcano, Sergio  
Chief, Tenth Directorate  
MINFAR

Pujol Sanchez, Juan  
Directorate of Military  
Training Centers and  
Noncombatant Training

Pupo Perez, Pedro Juan  
Director, General Staff  
Directorate MININT  
(Intelligence)

Rodes Moros, Carlos

Rodiles Planas, Samuel<sup>7</sup>



Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Chief of Staff, Western Army

General Rodiles was a member  
of the M-26-7 and fought in  
the Sierra Cristal front  
commanded by Raul Castro.  
He served in Col. 6 "Manuel  
Ameljeiras" and under Major  
Efigenio Ameljeiras. Sev-  
eral members of his family,  
including his brothers, were  
also guerrillas.

Rodriguez del Pozo,  
Guillermo

Vice Minister MINFAR  
Chief, Civil Defense

Rodriguez Pérez, Juan Anto-  
nio

Chief, Finance Directorate  
MINFAR

Rodriguez Puertas, Orlando  
(Present position unknown)

Ronda Marrero, Alejandro

Chief, Directorate of  
Special Operations MININT

Schueg Colas, Victor

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
Sub Chief of the General  
Staff of the Armed Forces<sup>8</sup>

General Schueg is a large  
black man, who is said to  
have a pleasant personality  
and to have distinguished  
himself in the war in Angola  
in 1976. He is one of very  
few black generals in the  
Cuban Armed Forces and has  
become one of the experts on  
African affairs in the Cuban  
Government. He is often  
seen with Jorge Risquet and  
other Cuban officials re-  
ceiving important delega-  
tions that arrive in Cuba  
from Africa. For example,  
he was one of the officials  
who received the head of the  
South African ANC, Oliver  
Tambo, when he visited Cuba  
in March of 1986.

Very little is known about  
General Schueg's background.  
He is one of the officers  
who has come up through the  
ranks in the past 27 years  
and may not have had much,  
if any, experience during  
the war against Batista.

Sotomayor Garcia, Romarico

Chief of the General Staff,  
Eastern Army

Suárez Lorenzo, Jorge

Deputy Chief, Eastern Army

<sup>7</sup> His full name is Samuel  
González Rodríguez Planas.

<sup>8</sup> General Schueg held the  
position of Chief, Holguin  
Army Corps, of the Eastern  
Army until recently.

Valdés González, Amado

Chief, Border Guard Troops  
MININT

Velez Hernández, Félix

Alternate Member of the  
Central Committee of the  
Communist Party  
First Deputy Director,  
Central Political Direc-  
torate, MININT  
(Intelligence)

Verdecia Perdomo, Marcelo

Chief, Isle of Pines Region

Viera Estrada, Roberto T



Commander of the Militia  
(MTT) in the Western Sector

His prior position was  
Chief, Greater Havana Army  
Garrison.

#### REAR ADMIRALS

Baez Vigo, Emigdio

Deputy Chief of the Navy

Cuza Tellez-Girón, José L



Chief of the Navy from 1984  
to 1986.  
(Present position unknown).

Admiral Baez was born in  
Santiago de Cuba, where he  
joined the M-26-7 at a young  
age. He worked in the un-  
derground and later joined  
the guerrillas in the moun-  
tains.

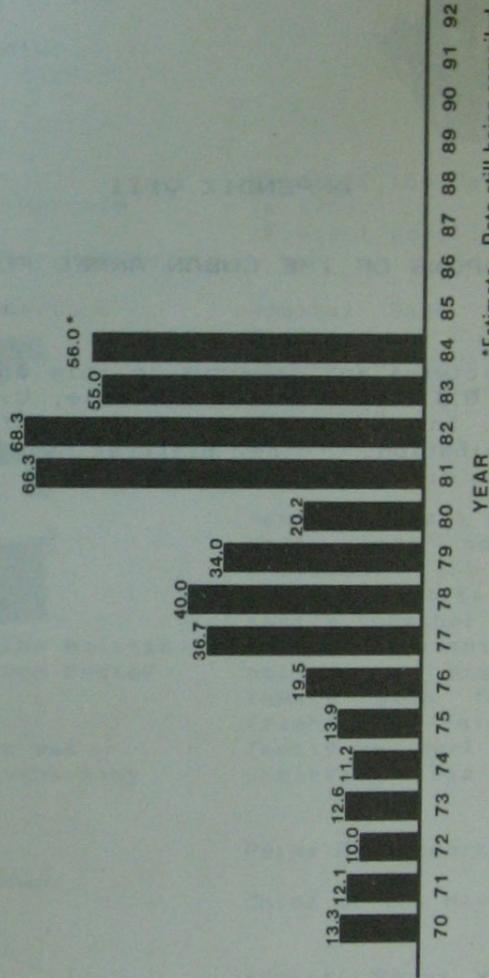
Admiral Baez's mother was a  
widow with several young  
children. She was admired  
for her efforts to keep the  
family together under diffi-  
cult circumstances. She did  
not remarry and raised her  
family with the help of  
friends and relatives. The  
family was part of the bour-  
geoisie but had no money.

Pérez Betancourt, Pedro

Chief of the Navy- 1986

Admiral Pérez was a member  
of the M-26-7 during the  
revolution against Batista.

**SOVIET MILITARY DELIVERIES TO CUBA  
THOUSANDS OF METRIC TONS**



\*Estimate -- Data still being compiled.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense

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