

Communist Cuba:
The Monster I Helped Create and Maintain
And Which Now I Denounce

by

Andrés Alfaya Torrado

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FOREWORD

by Presenter

Andrés Alfaya Torrado knows quite well who are the true masters of Cuba – he worked for them.

Andrés was under the wing of “Che” Guevara since his teenage years. A fighter from the Escambray Mountains, he was fervently involved in the construction of a communist Cuba.

Because he was very close to the top leaders, he was able to discover what was at the root of their power. As organizer and member of the G-2, the Cuban secret service, he was able to determine the degree of penetration of the Soviets in the island nation and has reconstructed, for the benefit of all, the entire secret history of the Cuban revolution, a history which he now reveals in great detail.

He witnessed how the Soviets, through the Cubans, destabilized Angola as well as other Latin American states. He shows how the KGB shaped the Cuban G-2 in its own way, controlling the whole island nation through it.

Every word here has the weight of a revelation. This close companion of the “Che” Guevara was eventually suffocated by the totalitarian structures and cynicism of the true masters of Cuba. This book is not the work of a disenchanted intellectual, but that of a man of action who knows how he, and the rest of the world, have been, and continue to be, fooled.

INTRODUCTION

by **Andrés Alfaya Torrado**

In writing this book, my only purpose was to shed some light on the so controversial history of the Cuban revolution, which, without a doubt, was and still is one of the most enigmatic events in the history of the second half of the 20th century.

Its influence, in the political context of Latin America, Africa, and more generally in the context of the non-aligned countries, played a predominant role, that of a pawn used by the aggressiveness of the USSR's expansionist policy. Foreign observers who viewed Fidel Castro's revolution with some sympathy, as well as the group of young people who formed the Rebel Army in 1959, were far from thinking that behind this event lay the seeds of communism in America and that the "leader" of the revolution had been a communist agent since 1947, as well as his brother Raúl and many leaders of the insurreccional struggle.

As I have just returned from a dark and chaotic world, in which reality sometimes goes beyond the limits of fantasy, this book, which reflects it, has itself taken on a chaotic and baroque character. It is obvious that in order to be able to explain how I had access to a certain level of information, as well as to the structures and maneuvers of the secret services serving Cuban foreign policy, so discussed today, the first two parts of the book are autobiographical, although I tried, as much as I could, to enter the scene only when my presence became indispensable. I wanted to take the reader by the hand and make him relive twenty years of history, trying to make him understand how a man who had been part of the Rebel Army under the command of Commander Ernesto "Che" Guevara, in the "suicide squad", elite of the revolutionary troops, one of the founders of the Cuban secret services, the G-2, a man who has traveled all over the world on dangerous missions in Asia, Africa and America, has come to understand the "truth of international communism" and may have

felt suffocated by the structures of a totalitarian country and by the lack of the most basic freedoms.

The present work is not the product of a disenchanting intellectual who cannot satisfy his petty-bourgeois tastes in a socialist regime, on the contrary, it is that of a member of the "Nomenklatura" who has renounced his privileges to seek a truth that has led him to a total opposition, to an absolute refusal of communism.

The third part of the book is described in a totally different style, and if I finally decided to incorporate it into the whole work, it is because its content is extremely revealing. I have tried to describe in detail, precisely, cog by cog, all the repressive systems of the communist regime that allow this ideology to remain in power in totalitarian countries through a sprawling and omnipresent police regime. All the structures of the Cuban Ministry of the Interior, whether public bodies, independent bodies, counter-intelligence services or secret services, are described, as well as the close working relations with the KGB and with the advisors of this Machiavelian machine who have recreated in Cuba an exact replica of their own organization.

I would like to show readers the "truths of communism" for which I fought and defended ideologically until I began to see that I had been deceived like so many others, and that I was only a puppet in the service of the imperialist appetites of the Soviet Union. I am therefore addressing myself especially to those who, through their youth and their thirst for social justice, let themselves be caught up in the labyrinths of international communism. If someone asks himself the question of where the path to freedom leads, he will not find an answer in this book. I personally am not in a position to give him even an embryonic answer, but there is one thing I can tell him, and that is that this path does not go through Cuba.

1981

FIRST PART

A RIGGED REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

A STRANGE WAY TO SEIZE POWER

I have no intention of telling, as a historian, about the guerrillas in Sierra Maestra. I prefer to leave this work to others, who are much better qualified than I am to do it. I am thinking in particular of Commander Hubert Matos who, after twenty years in prison, has just left the country and is in exile in Costa Rica. No one, better than him, who was one of the heroes of the guerrillas, deserves so much to give his testimony. I am also thinking of Carlos Franqui¹ who was the leader of the Movement's propaganda of 26 July² in Sierra Maestra, and who, in exile, lives in Italy now.

When I started to make my first weapons, these two men were already veterans of Sierra Maestra. My incorporation into the rebel army was done in a way that was almost fortuitous. In the early days of December 1958, then 14 years old, I left Havana for Trinidad. I was going to visit, as I did every year on Christmas Eve, my family who are from this city. That year, the political situation in the country was very tense, especially in Las Villas province, and it was difficult for me to convince my mother to allow me to leave. In the end, she allowed me to do so with the promise of staying only a few days and returning at the slightest alert.

When I arrived in Trinidad, I discovered that my mother's aunt's estate³, where I was to stay, was a real nest of conspirators and that half of my family had taken to the bush. They all came to the family home for food at night. As soon as I realized that my cousins, who were about the same age as me, were among the fugitives, not all the old women in the house were enough to keep me there. I took the Escambray path too.

It was December 7, 1958. The commander in chief of the Escambray military region was then an Argentine, Ernesto Guevara. He

was preparing the final offensive against the army of the Batista dictatorship. By chance, my cousins had taken the rural guerrilla with the troops of the Revolutionary Directory, whose captain was Faure Choumon⁴, so I joined the troops of this guerrilla group after them. I didn't really understand everything that was going on because there were five different groups in the same theatre of operation: Ernesto Guevara, who had come from the Sierra Maestra to the Escambray Mountains by order of Fidel who appointed him commander-in-chief of operations; the Second Front of Escambray, whose captain was Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo; the PSP commanded by the old Felix Torres; the organization of the authentic Party, the "Triple A"⁵, whose command was unknown because all its leaders were angry with each other; finally the revolutionary Directorate.

I remember perfectly the turmoil that occurred because no one accepted the Argentinian's command. Each of the leaders wanted to control his own destiny and refused to let Fidel, from Sierra Maestra, make the law. Of all this heterogeneous mass of fighters, only the PSP⁶ troop, commanded by Felix Torres, complied with the orders without blinking. After many comings and goings, a certain unity was achieved and Ernesto Guevara was allowed to coordinate all operations. From 16 December, we began to carry out dynamite sabotage to destroy all bridges and roads. On December 21, Argentinean-led troops simultaneously attacked the villages of Cabaiguán and Guayos. December 22, 1958 was to be my first day of fire. The Directory troops, to which I belonged, decided to attack the village of Placetas, together with those of Guevara.

The day I joined the Directory guerrilla group, Commander Rolando Cubelas asked me if I knew how to handle weapons. When I told him yes, he gave me a two-shot gun that was older than Methuselah and had the breech attached with a wire. To make matters worse, I only had five cartridges. As I was walking through the camp with my "arquebus", an old guerrilla who was in the kitchen said to me: "Boy, don't you dare shoot yourself with this shit, you'll

kill yourself." Faced with this prospect, I returned furious to find Cubelas and asked him for another gun. He looked at me, as if to evaluate my youth, and replied: "The guerrilla must earn his weapons as best he can..."

On 22 December, at six in the morning, there was a meeting of the staffs of the two troops. Guevara, accompanied by Ramiro Valdés and Captain Figueredo (the Chinese⁷) of Faure Choumón, Cubelas and Curbelo on the Board side. The attack began at seven in the morning. While the staffs were holding their conference under a flamboyant light, Cubelas' Browning, some magazines and her bag were just a few steps away. The temptation was too great. During the Battle of Placetas, I fought with a 45 caliber Browning machine gun, and Cubelas had to settle for the old rifle he had given me. The same night, the army and police barracks surrendered after eleven hours of fighting.

At the end of the battle, Cubelas was looking for me everywhere like a madman because of the bad trick I had played on him. When he found me, the argument that broke out was Homeric. He wanted me to give him back the Browning at all costs, but I had no intention of doing that. The scandal we caused had attracted several veterans from the Sierra. They called the Argentinean. The latter listened to us without hesitation for a few moments, then said to me in a voice that did not admit the reply: "Give the Browning to Cubelas. "It was the first time I was in front of this man, and I can say that the tone of his voice, calm and quiet, echoed in my ears like a detonation.

Immediately afterwards, he said to Ramiro Valdés who was next to him: "Give this boy one of the Browning requisitioned, it seems to me that today he blackmailed him well."

Perhaps he made this decision in part to humiliate Cubelas, who was one of the heads of the Executive Board and refused to submit to his authority. Anyway, after my first fight, I saw myself noticed by the most uncompromising of leaders, and in possession of a weapon that was in itself a symbol of bravery. That night, many of the elders

of the Sierra Maestra watched with envy the powerful machine gun. Around two o'clock in the morning, the meal was distributed to the troop. After the coffee, someone started scratching on his guitar and singing:

*Ouch, "Che" Guevara, my commander,
He has a Browning he never cleans up,
Ah! how negligent he is*⁸...

It was only then that I understood the importance of the Argentinian's gesture. In a few moments, he had placed me at the level of the best veterans of the Sierra.

Then came the battles of Remedios, Caibarién and Camajuani, which was abandoned by government troops, where I fought like a tiger and my new Browning sang as loud as the first one.

When the battle of Santa Clara, the capital of the province, began on December 30, 1958, I was no longer a stranger in the troop, the veterans had adopted me and with the greatest benevolence they all wanted to give me advice.

The memories of the Battle of Santa Clara go through my memory as if on a screen: the headquarters of the rebel troops at the university, the battle of the armoured train on the road to Camajuani, the battle of Capiro Hill, the police station, the prison, the courtroom, the government palace, the poisoned fight against the snipers who had been fortified in the Grand Hotel. It was already January 1st and Batista had fled. The next day, the National Guard barracks "Leoncio Vidal" surrendered. While column 8, made up of veterans of the Sierra Maestra and the new recruits we had brought into the troops, fought these battles in the capital of Las Villas province, the men of the Revolutionary Directory, the "Triple A" and the Second Front were content to take barracks 31 of the National Guard which, paralyzed by fear, surrendered without fighting.

Each memory is associated with an emotion. For the first time I saw men die. During the battle for the police station, a maverick on

a roof killed Captain Roberto Rodriguez (the Little Cowboy⁹), leader of this suicide commando, beside me. When the Argentinean learned of the death of the "Little Cowboy", this man, brave in battle and hard in battle like no one else, cried... and in front of the body, he exclaimed: "They've killed us a hundred men!"¹⁰ I only fought a few hours alongside Roberto Rodriguez, so I can't say much about this giant. Carlos Franqui can certainly say a lot more, because they both belonged, in Sierra Maestra, to the column led by Fidel.

Aviation was the nightmare of the Battle of Santa Clara. The B-26s and jets that took part in the fight were constantly shooting at us, and the bombs were opening craters that were up to ten metres in diameter.

By a strange paradox of fate, the man who saved column 8 and Ernesto Guevara's life during the Battle of Santa Clara was a Frenchman.

Where he came from, I can't say; I think he joined the troops as they came down from the Sierra Maestra. Tall, thin, blond with light blue eyes, he had a strong foreign accent that could be heard a mile away. He was just one more man in the disparate group in column 8. As we were fighting, concentrated on Capiro Hill, on December 30, 1958, the B-26s and jets appeared like the horsemen of the Apocalypse, winged horsemen. The veterans had already fought the air force in the Sierra, but under very different topographical conditions. The location we were in had nothing to do with the first theatre of operations. From the first passage of the planes, the whole troop was panicked and the officers who were to command did not know where to stand themselves. It was there that the military character of the Frenchman Lavandeira¹¹ was revealed, who used all the knowledge of the art of war that he had learned in the French army. He began by placing the men in a safe place. Under a rain of 50-calibre bullets emptied by the planes, he succeeded in installing a 30-calibre machine gun and faced the air force, hitting the engines of a

B-26. For this action, Ernesto Guevara gave him the rank of officer and entrusted him with twenty troopers.

From Guevara as a doctor, I have no memory of him, I have never seen him treat a wounded man, but if anyone asks me about the guerrilla, I can say that wherever there was a difficult fight, the Argentine was certainly present.

Since I was in column 8, there had been two changes: the Argentinean had broken his arm in Camajuani and, in Placetas, he had engaged Aleida March with whom he married and had several children.

About this engagement, I remember that when Guevara was passing by, the younger ones would say: "Be careful, here comes Rudolph Valentino", and he was the first to laugh about it.

On January 2, Fidel gave the order to leave Captain Calixto Morales in Santa Clara with some men and take the road to Havana. On that day, Commander Camilo Cienfuegos had arrived at the head of the other column of the Sierra Maestra. He had fought in the northern part of the province and his advance had been delayed, particularly in Yaguajay, where he had to fight for ten days to clear the area. The meeting between the two chiefs and their staffs took place in the Public Works building in Santa Clara. The plans for the march on the capital were fixed there: Columbia¹² would be Camilo's objective, and La Cabaña¹³ that of the Argentinian.

Almost all of his column was made up of peasants, who had never been to Havana before. I remember him saying, "Go get me the student." It took me a little while to understand that it was about me and to answer the call. My mission was to accompany Commander Ramiro Valdés. I would be with him in the first jeep that would enter Havana, to show him the way to La Cabaña where he had to try to make a deal with the military chief of the fortress to avoid a bloody fight.

After a short rest, taking the national road, we left at half past five in the morning with a caravan of trucks and jeeps for Havana.

The same day, we arrived there and invested the assigned areas without a hitch. Unexpectedly, I, a newcomer to the troops, was with the first five men of the rebel army who set foot in the capital two hours before the rest of the troops¹⁴. Thus began, alongside Ramiro Valdés, a long journey through the Cuban secret services that was to last almost twenty years.

Gathered in the fortress of La Cabaña, the former military leaders of Batista's army had already discussed the act of capitulation at length. They brought it to the Argentinian for him to sign. In the place reserved for the signature appeared the name of Ernesto Guevara. He looked at us who were present and smiled: "I have a short signature," he said, and signed: "Che".

It was at that moment that Ernesto Guevara became "The Che". Until then, he was known as "the Argentinian", the commander "Sacamuelas¹⁵"; the most intimate, "the Asthmatic", and a few simply "Che". It was he who chose his war name.

Shortly after this mission, which I carried out with Ramiro Valdés, I unofficially became a "trusted man" and one of the founders of the rebel army's counter-intelligence services. This privileged position allowed me to see how the communists had to go about penetrating the Cuban revolution.

The many currents that had put an end to the Batista dictatorship through a more or less active struggle were very different from each other.

Let's start with the July 26th Movement. It included three important branches: the militias of the July 26 Movement, led by René Ramos Latour, which constituted the shock troops for all paramilitary actions: more than 500 bomb attacks and 300 with firearms from 1956 to 1959, unrest in cities, the most spectacular actions of the insurrection, for example the kidnapping of the automobile world champion Juan Manuel Fangio who revealed to the world the existence of a civil war in Cuba. Next came the Movement's Workers Front, led by David Salvador¹⁶, which was responsible for action

in the trade union movement. Its objective was to maintain a close fight against government trade unions, a fight that also extended to the communist sectors of the CTC ("Central de trabajadores de Cuba" - Central of Cuban workers). Finally the Student Front which tried in vain to control this sector which was already under the domination of the University Student Directory on March 13. There was also the parallel movement of the Civic Resistance led by Manuel Ray¹⁷, bringing together the liberal bourgeoisie that was fighting against the dictator Batista.

Fidel Castro led the guerrilla war from the Sierra Maestra. At the same time, he was the general secretary of the July 26 Movement and of the various branches that operated within the movement. The heterogeneous composition of his supporters forced Fidel to maneuver very tactfully between the moderate current and the other current that favoured radicalization.

Contrary to everything that has been said, including the theory of the "revolution betrayed" of which the first Cuban political exiles in Miami spoke, many of the guerrillas in Sierra Maestra were communists. While it is quite certain that the PSP, in its official capacity, never hinted that armed struggle was a tactic, a good percentage of its best cadres, guided by or with the consent of the political bureau, joined the guerrillas to take advantage of any eventuality.

The armoured train we had derailed at the entrance to the Camajuani road was too big a catch for the guerrillas. More than 500 soldiers, with an armament that had just arrived from England, were sheltered behind the thick armor of the cars. The hours passed without anything to advance the operation. The battle was likely to be endless, to last as long as government troops had water, food and ammunition. In the end, victory would be ours, but when? We already had the example of Camilo who, for ten days, had been besieging Yaguajay without obtaining his surrender.

Finally, Che, to discuss the conditions of the surrender, had an interview with Colonel Hernández during a truce that was agreed upon.

When Che came out of the interview, he took his personal notebook out of his pocket and gave Ramiro Valdés the name and clandestine address of Arnaldo Milián¹⁸, who was the general secretary of the provincial PSP, and a verbal message in which he asked him for 50,000 pesos. Ramiro left with Felix Torres, the old militant who had waited for Che in Escambray with his small troop, in search of the communist leader of the province. They returned with money and a reinforcement of 75 men who joined the troop. Colonel Hernández was given the money and, to honour the agreement, he was allowed to fly to Miami in a single-engine Cessna aircraft.

In May 1958, in the very heart of the Sierra Maestra, a conflict between the communists and the rest of the people was about to turn into a real sedition. Fidel was forced to intervene. He charged Raúl, his brother, to take command of the most problematic men (there were 67) and lead them to the northeast of Oriente province, in "Sierra Cristal". It was necessary to purge the army of the communist image that was beginning to appear. In a short time, all the communists of the province of Oriente, whom Fidel did not want to see near him because they had been too noticed, began a pilgrimage to the area of Mayari Arriba where the territory placed under the authority of Raúl Castro was. At the end of the war, there were about 1,200 communists on the Second Eastern Front led by Raúl.

While this front was fed by militant workers, the rest of the rebel army was composed of peasants, the vast majority of whom were illiterate. Despite Fidel's precautions to cover things up, Raúl and his gang of communists twice created problems for the sailors at the Guantanamo naval base. Once, the American consul in Santiago de Cuba had to intervene to free a group of sailors that Raúl had taken prisoner.

Another fact that I personally witnessed occurred during the capture of the city of Sancti Spiritus. Che's Column 8 began its offensive in Las Villas province and reinforcements were sent from the Second Front led by Raúl. At the head of these men was Commander Armando Acosta¹⁹. He attacked Sancti Spiritus who surrendered almost at the same time as Santa Clara. On January 2, as we were preparing to start the march on Havana, a group of activists from the July 26 Movement and notables from Sancti Spiritus came to Che and Camilo Cienfuegos to complain. Armando Acosta had the red flag raised on the town hall; when asked to raise the Cuban colours, he replied: "All flags are good for revolution." I remember Camilo turning red in anger and sending his personal help, "the Kid"²⁰, to see Acosta with the order to raise the Cuban flag, otherwise he would be shot.

Even after removing the most representative communist elements from Sierra Maestra in May 1958, many others remained who knew how to act without creating conflicts, some in high positions. For example: Flavio Bravo, who had been the secretary of the "Socialist Youth"²¹, had the rank of commander and was the head of Minas del Frío Recruit School. Or Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, who was a member of the SPP Political Bureau, was a captain. In addition, Camilo Cienfuegos and Ernesto Che Guevara, who were the leaders of the guerrilla movements in Sierra Maestra, were clearly on the left, the former as militant of the Socialist Youth, and the latter was an unknown. It seems that he never militated in any CP on the American continent, but his very attitude affirmed that ideologically he was a left-wing man. It is no coincidence that Fidel gave them command of the two columns that brought war to the western part of the island. To honour the truth, let us say that they were the ones who, from a military point of view, put the greatest pressure on the dictator's army.

There are dozens of cases of communists who have acquired a certain notoriety in the guerrilla hierarchy of Sierra Maestra, how-

ever one of them attracted my attention more than the others. With the advent of the revolution, when the military counter-intelligence service was founded, a strange man arrived who spoke Spanish with a strange accent and carried a rank of colonel that was not used²². Colonel Antonio Dahud, this fabulous character, had done the entire Sandino campaign in Nicaragua. Later, from 1936 to 1939, he was the training leader of the Arab Legion and Palestinian rebel troops. A personal friend of Mufti Hachamin Al-Hussein, he accompanied him to Germany where he met Perón. Later, he moved to Libya with the rank of Commander-in-Chief of the Arab volunteers who joined Rommel's troops. In 1947, he reappeared in Palestine and, on May 15, 1948, when Arab troops entered Palestine, he participated in the action with the rank of colonel.

A personal friend of Salem and Nasser, he prepared for them the Egyptian revolution. In Colombia, he led a large group of guerrillas in the revolution that overthrew General Rojas Pinilla. He also participated in the revolution in Venezuela and, through a magic trick, became the head of instruction at the recruit school led by the communist Flavio Bravo.

Sometimes with the communists, sometimes against them, but whenever there was a hot spot in the world, Antonio Dahud was present. Who was this legendary character?

There's not much we can say for sure about him. As easily as it had appeared, it disappeared without a trace. I think he was one of the high level illegal immigrants who supported the revolution from Sierra Maestra by order of the KGB. Another fact that makes me think that this corresponds to reality is that when he came to the premises of the military counter-intelligence services, he came to have an interview with Osvaldo Sanchez, who was a member of the party's national leadership and who had collaborated with the militias of the July 26 Movement under the leadership of René Ramos Latour.

Other movements involved in the insurreccional struggle were independent of the July 26 Movement: the University Students Directorate "March 13"²³, ranked second movement for popularity and combativeness. When the survivors of the Granma²⁴ took their first steps in the Sierra Maestra, this movement from the University of Havana attacked the presidential palace during a suicide action to bring justice to the dictator Batista. The action failed for a matter of minutes and Batista was able to escape unharmed. José Antonio Echeverría, who was the president of the FEU²⁵, went to "Radio Reloj Nacional"²⁶ from where he announced the death of the dictator. When he knew that the operation had failed, he tried unsuccessfully to take refuge in the University of Havana and was murdered. The commando that carried out the attack was almost entirely massacred by the police and army.

The repression in Havana lasted several weeks and was particularly bloody. Some of the attackers managed to escape. They created a guerrilla home in the Escambray Mountains, led by Faure Choumón.

The "Triple A" group was led by Aureliano Sánchez Arango and supported economically by former President Carlos Prío Socarrás, overthrown by Batista's military coup. This group fills Havana with illegal arsenals, but has never been able to organize an insurreccional movement. In May 1957, he tried to land a small expedition to the northwest of Oriente province, led by a trusted close friend of Prío: Calixto Sanchez White, on board the Corintia ship. The adventure ended in disaster. A few days before the landing, they were already expected by government forces who had prepared very effective ambushes.

Later, Prío tried to send a shipment of weapons to Cuba. He entrusted this mission to the Spanish Civil War Colonel Bayo, the instructor who had trained Fidel's troops in Mexico before the Granma landings. For this new attempt, he used his personal yacht, the Blue Ship. It was another failure for this movement. Mexican

police intercepted the shipment and seized the weapons. The last attempt was the attack on the Goicuría barracks, the main military fortress in Matanzas province. The death of all participants was the most tangible result. This group of the "Triple A" was not very active in Escambray, at least at the time I knew.

There was also the Second National Front of Escambray, which was under the command of Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo²⁷: Fidel called its members as *vacas*²⁸ in a speech in which he alluded to their lack of fighting spirit. However, it seems to me that the qualifier was unfair. It was Menoyo and his men who carried out all the bridge and road sabotage before the Las Villas offensive.

Finally, let us mention the Communists of the PSP who, apart from Raúl's troops in Sierra Cristal, maintained a small last minute guerrilla warfare in Escambray, under the command of Felix Torres, and to which I have already alluded.

Fidel Castro personally commanded no more than 300 guerrillas in Sierra Maestra. His camp was a safe haven where government troops never arrived. If anyone ever wonders how the small group of men who landed from the Granma²⁹ managed to survive, it is not in the official interviews of government members that they will find the answer. Fate would have it that Fidel met in this lost mountainous area Crecencio Pérez, an old highwayman (he was famous for attacking travellers, barracks, cattle), originally from Sierra Maestra and who had been on the loose for thirty years. This exceptional character, who knew every rock, every passage, every corner of the interior of this mountain, became the friend and savior of the small nucleus of guerrillas.

Although at the beginning of the revolution, the rebel army's counter-intelligence service recovered and destroyed all evidence of the guerrillas' criminal record who owed justice, I had the opportunity to review some of it. Crecencio Pérez had a particularly busy case: two convictions for cattle theft and one for murder; since his escape in 1929, he had been sought by the courts to complete the

sentence to which he had been sentenced. Since then, 4 murders have been added, including 3 involving members of the Constitutional Army, 2 kidnappings, 3 kidnappings of minors and more than 80 charges of theft. I knew this character perfectly well (still alive) who, without the slightest embarrassment, told his adventures in Sierra Maestra. Five of his sons are now members of the secret service. Another who was an officer in the rebel army is a political exiled in the United States.

It's not that I mean that the rebel army was a nest of bandits, but we didn't ask any questions about the past at the time of the incorporation. For example, I can mention the case of Roberto Rodríguez (the Little Cowboy), leader of Che's suicide squad who was killed next to me in Santa Clara. He had been convicted twice, once for illegal possession of marijuana and once for drug trafficking. The current general of the Cuban army, Tomasevich, who was the head of operations during the fight against anti-communist guerrillas in 1961, head of the internationalist Cuban guerrillas in Venezuela, advisor to the African leader and guerrilla Amílcar Cabral, and currently head of operations of Cuban troops in Africa stationed in Angola, is a major offender. When a group of political prisoners escaped from Boniato prison in 1957, Tomasevich, who was serving a 50-year prison sentence for a triple murder, escaped with them; however, his tortuous past did not prevent him from becoming commander of the rebel army. Efigenio Almejeidas, one of the Granma's survivors, won the rank of commander in Sierra Maestra. At the beginning of the revolution, he was appointed Chief of Police. He then participated, as head of the Cuban troops, in Algeria's conflict with Morocco in 1962. This eminent guerrilla, who was a key figure in the revolution in its early years, had a long list of convictions for drug possession and trafficking. That sounds exaggerated, but that is not the case. While some remained within the framework of socialist legality, others, such as Efigenio Almejeidas, could not follow a proper discipline. He was removed from office in 1968 be-

cause of the public scandals he caused in Havana, most often under the influence of drugs. The day he was arrested and removed from command, I personally led the operation. I arrested him at his home, in a beautiful residence on Varadero Beach³⁰. We seized 10 pounds of marijuana and a few vials of morphine, prepared and powdered, as well as hypodermic needles, syringes, etc. This gentleman, chief of police, spent his time giving bacchanals and orgies in his house in Varadero. He was simply removed from power and sent to run a state farm. However, his guests were severely condemned and the doctors³¹ who provided him with morphine were banned for life from practising their profession and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment.

This setback, which took place in September 1968, caused Fidel great concern and decided to make an example of it. We prepared the "Dolce Vita"³² operation and we received from Fidel the guarantee that, with the exception of the members of the party's political bureau, all the others could be the subject of our investigations.

After two weeks of research and in possession of the first results that allowed us to act, Fidel himself summoned the Security group of the G office to which we belonged and ordered us to abandon this work. If we had really intervened, no one would have remained standing. All the files were burned and the case went to the archives. Fidel had a meeting with all the leaders of the country of some importance to set things straight, those of average level were admonished in several speeches³³. We were only ordered to speak on behalf of the first secretary of the Oriente provincial party, Armando Acosta, because the financial scandal and the misappropriation of state funds he was operating for him had put the people of Santiago de Cuba (the provincial capital) on the brink of a popular explosion.

Castro had every reason to stop our research and prevent us from opening this new Pandora's box, because when I say that everyone was involved in the "Dolce Vita", I am not exaggerating: ministers, first secretaries of the party in the provinces, directors of in-

stitutes, senior officers of the armed forces and even a large number of comrades in the G-2 State Security. In short, all those who have become, over the years, the elite of power and a state within the state.

Let us go back to the first days of 1959. Fidel knew perfectly well that he was the undisputed leader of the revolution, and that his main asset was moral and only moral strength. What brought down the former dictator Batista was the general strike in the country, in which all the living forces participated. Victory was common. It is true that the guerrilla operations of December 1958 had been a success, but they were not militarily sufficient to put an end to the Batista dictatorship. With the general strike, the demoralization of the army increased and the vast majority of the soldiers abandoned the game, the others surrendered for money. If other military leaders had shown the same resistance as Captain Antonio Chong³⁴ showed against Camilo in Yaguajay, I think we would still be fighting.

On January 9, Fidel arrived in Havana. The caravan was formed by column 1, which he commanded, and by several thousand volunteers who had been added along the way, between Santiago de Cuba and Havana (960 km). Now almost everyone was a member of the rebel army and had participated in many battles, the others claimed they were illegal. With the fullest freedom, everyone had taken a weapon from the police stations that had been abandoned and, dressed in civilian clothes, armed to the teeth, they walked the streets with an armband of the July 26 Movement or the Directory. If 1% of this mass of junk heroes had participated in the struggle for good, Batista would not have remained in power for half an hour.

The barracks were invaded by these groups who had not made the revolution but who, on 1 January 1959, ransacked the houses of the tyrant's collaborators, the gambling casinos, everything they could get their hands on.

The fortress of La Cabaña was no exception. On January 9, with Fidel's entry into Havana, almost 2,000 men gathered there. They were gathered in the courtyard, waiting for Che's orders. When asked what we should do with it, he replied, "To hell with them. They left disenchanted but had no problem at all in joining other troops. Miracles of revolutions, for one who makes the revolution, one hundred claim its glory. But what is saddest is that these are the ones who submit with the most abject servility. What they have not been able to win by their courage, they try to deserve by blind obedience.

As soon as he arrived in Havana, Fidel was confronted with the first serious problem regarding the organizations that had participated in the struggle. The University Students Directorate "March 13" occupied the presidential palace and entrenched himself with all his weapons in the university. The struggle for power was beginning. Fidel had no alternative but to call for unity and offer posts as military attachés and ambassadors to the leaders of this movement who, candidly, accepted without suspecting that they were thus neutralized in an elegant way and that they left their men without leaders. If they had not accepted, the troops led by Camilo and Che were ordered to march against the presidential palace and the university, which would surely have caused a second civil war.

It seems that Fidel Castro was satisfied with the position of Secretary General of the Movement on 26 July and Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army. He moved into a luxurious suite at the Havana-Hilton Hotel and gave former magistrate Manuel Urrutia³⁵ carte blanche to assume the presidency of the Republic and form a cabinet³⁶.

Within this first government team, only the three expert consultants were members of the PSP.

The vast majority of the government was formed by personalities who had distinguished themselves from the Batista dictatorship,

members of the July 26 Movement of Urban Networks, members of the Civic Resistance and only three commanders of the rebel army.

Major Humberto Sori, a lawyer who joined the Sierra Maestra army from the beginning, served as minister for six months. Shortly after his dismissal, he was charged with treason and shot on April 20, 1961. His file never went through the military counter-intelligence offices of the rebel army of which I was a member and where I was considered to be the trusted man of his leader, Ramiro Valdés. I never saw any document that referred to Sori Marin's betrayal. He was taken prisoner by Raúl Castro's men and tried by a jury, also composed of men from Raúl's troops, behind closed doors. All this was very strange, the only explanation given was that it was a serious act. Twenty years later, I think we can deduce that it was a settling of scores that dated back to the Sierra Maestra. Paradoxically, it was Sori Marin who had legalized the death penalty by execution from that time on, based on the Constitution of the "Republic in Arms" of 1868 (first war of independence).

Commander Faustino Pérez, a doctor and a leading figure of the July 26 Movement, resigned from his post the same year (1959) to protest against the dismissal and imprisonment of Hubert Matos, which we will discuss later.

Major Augusto Martínez Sánchez, a lawyer and member of Raúl's troops, assumed the position of Minister of Defense for a few months. Although he was never an active member of the PSP, he was at least linked to its spheres. From the beginning, Raúl Castro wanted this ministry for himself, but he had neither the combatant profile nor the sympathies of the rebel army of a Camilo Cienfuegos or a Hubert Matos, and for this reason he led by proxy. Let us not talk about Che because even if he had been brilliant during the guerrilla period, once victory was achieved, his stature as a statesman became his main quality.

Later, Martínez Sánchez handed over the ministry to Raúl as agreed and took over the Ministry of Labour until 1965 when Fidel

made severe criticism of his working methods in a public speech. He tried to kill himself and his life was miraculously saved. Since then, he disappeared from public life and became Raúl Castro's inseparable companion.

Not everything was peace and prosperity in the early days of the revolution. The internal struggles were immense, even among the men of the Sierra Maestra. Augusto Martínez Sánchez was Minister of Defense, but the one who spoke the loudest in the rebel army was Camilo Cienfuegos, leader of the largest military base, Columbia, and the most popular guerrilla in Cuba despite his youth. Camilo was an extraordinary man, of unflinching honesty, which is why he did not hesitate for a moment to retire all the members of the corps of the former constitutional army who had twenty-five years' service. For this reason Camilo summoned us as members of the military counter-intelligence services to verify that no war criminals or those guilty of malfeasance were favoured by this measure.

After a month of work, we had checked all the files and they were ready for Camilo to sign them. On the afternoon of February 26, 1959, we were in his office when Raúl Castro, with his face broken, came in to ask him for an explanation on this case. After Camilo explained his plan to him, he replied that all former soldiers should be shot. The tone of the discussion rose to an unsustainable level and Raúl wanted to pull out his pistol, a gesture imitated by the men in his troop who were accompanying him. I remember perfectly well that Camilo took a grenade that he kept on his desk and said to him: "You leave here right away, or Samson dies with all the Philistines."

We all knew that this sentence in Camilo's mouth was not just a threat. Raúl put his gun away and came out red with anger.

During this first stage, it was more like a "western" than a revolution. Everyone got their hands on the weapon that suited them best and hung on to the belt three or four grenades. The shootings and deaths were no joke, so much so that Fidel admitted in a speech that

more rebel army members had been lost since peace than during the war.

While the army was in disunity, the communists were closing ranks and preparing to attack the government.

On March 3, 1959, Fabio Grobart, the Comintern's secret envoy to Cuba since 1927, about whom I will soon speak at length, and Fidel Castro had a private meeting in Che's offices in La Cabaña, from 2:45 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. It was a real secret conference. I remember the day and time because I was on duty and I had written all these details on the register. The next morning, the Che ripped off the leaf in question and told me not to comment.

I understand that the reason for this meeting was the double trip to the USSR and China of the PSP members. Carlos Rafael Rodríguez (captain of the rebel army and member of the political bureau) and Flavio Bravo (commander of the rebel army and first secretary of the Socialist Youth) travelled to the USSR, and in China, Severo Aguirre (member of the political bureau of the PSP), Max Figueroa (member of the secretariat) and César Escalante (member of the secretariat and brother of Anibal, second secretary of the PSP).

I said deduction because I obviously do not know what the three men talked about during the meeting, but I can guarantee that on March 6, all those I named left for their mutual destination, stopping in Madrid before continuing their journey.

In the counter-intelligence offices, we were given pictures of these five people so that we could handle passport applications under a false identity and organize the case in such a way that in the offices that handled the formalities at the Department of Foreign Affairs, we would not notice anything. I don't remember exactly how things went. It seems to me that it was Ramiro Valdés who ran the offices. After these first five forged passports, Ramiro had 40 to 50 passports in his office and a Minrex³⁷ stamp to give more authenticity to the documents. From that point on, the counter-intelligence

service also issues valid passports. One afternoon that we had nothing to do, we made a passport for Che in the name of Carlos Gardel³⁸. The joke cost us a 15-day break without being able to get out of La Cabaña.

Fidel was concerned more than anything about two serious problems: the wave of executions that had been unleashed, particularly in Oriente province where Raúl Castro was military governor, and the land reform that had begun with the support of the PSP without the government's consent.

While in La Cabaña there was an execution squad that only shot ex-war criminals who had been properly tried and whose guilt was certain through impartial judgments, Raúl shot all former members of the army and police who fell into his jurisdiction. We saw the case of a man who was to be released after being absolved by a public judgment; a few days later, Raúl announced that he had been shot.

This marked trend towards the radicalization of the revolution by Raul Castro in Oriente province caused serious problems in the ranks of the July 26 Movement and repeated protests by the government. Even Cuban and American public opinion was deeply moved by these waves of executions.

Fidel, as Secretary General of the "26 July", convened a national meeting of the Movement. It was the first and only meeting that took place because it marked a definitive break between all its members, as the trends were so diametrically opposed. The vast majority agreed to take social measures, but not to radicalize the revolution into communism. However, Raúl Castro, supported by his pro-communist troops, was pressing in the opposite direction.

The meeting ended in a tumultuous fight, and if it did not turn into a massacre it was because at the entrance everyone had been forced to leave their weapons on Fidel's orders. Despite this measure, there were two deaths on the way out.

Communists were a minority in all sectors and had undergone a regressive evolution since 1940. In 1940, they had 86,752 militants.

When Batista made his coup d'état in 1953, the figure was reduced to 20,000 and on 1 January 1959, to 6,856, not even 1% of the population. In the trade union movement, the same thing happened. In 1939, when the CTC (Confederation of Cuban Workers) was founded, the communists were in the majority. But at the time of the first trade union congress, after the triumph of the revolution, only 170 of the 3,241 delegates were communists, and as a result, the CTC's communist founder and leader, Lazaro Peña, was dismissed from his position as general secretary.

Despite the massive abandonment of the PSP, its organizational capacity had not diminished. If it was numerically inferior, it had become a party of executives. It had moved from quantity to quality.

On February 12, 1959, Fidel Castro assumed the position of Prime Minister, replacing Miró Cardona who had no difficulty in accepting his appointment as Ambassador to Spain.

The first step to power was taken, but significant obstacles remained to be overcome. The President of the Republic, Manuel Urrutia, was one of them. By his privileged position as President, he opposed any attempt at radicalisation with a firm attitude.

In February 1959, barely a month after the guerrillas took power, Fidel had a meeting with counter-intelligence personnel to investigate the reasons for the troops' dissatisfaction. Already at that time, Osvaldo Sanchez was working in the services as second in command. He was one of the few communists who had played a leading role within the urban networks of the July 26 Movement, a man of action considered a tough guy among the tough ones. His past activities justified his presence in counterintelligence, but not the large number of PSP members he had brought in as a result.

Members of the counter-intelligence services were recruited from all the movements that had participated in the fight. On several occasions, members of the Executive Board and the Second Front had met with Ramiro Valdés to confide in him a specific fact. At the end of the interview, they were often hired to be part of counterin-

telligence. This was the case of the captain of the Executive Board, Tony Santiago³⁹, or the member of the Front, known as "The Man from Maisinicu". The Film Institute made a film on the missions against the anti-communist guerrillas in which this man participated in Escambray in 1961, missions that cost him his life.

It did not matter where the agent came from, the recruitment criteria were based on the level of information he could have and the degree of trust he could be given for undercover or information work. The bureaucratic apparatus was in the hands of the communists who were the most disciplined and who, as a rule, came from the capital's offices, for the rest we were a group lacking cohesion and without any sense of discipline.

Chaos reigned in all sectors, the ranks of the July 26 Movement and other movements struggled in a whirlwind of contradictions. The first major tremor was the clandestine flight to the United States of the rebel army commander, Pedro Luis Díaz Lanz, head of the air force. He was a legendary character for the men of the "26 July", one of the founders of the movement in Santiago de Cuba. During the guerrilla period, he had carried out 13 flights in the Sierra Maestra to carry arms loads.

The situation was deteriorating. Fidel was the undisputed leader of the revolution but not yet his living God. He had never counted more than 300 men under his personal command, although at the time of the final offensive there were about 2,000. But among them, more than 80% had been recruited in the cities and had never lived the life of the guerrillas. Besides, they didn't identify with the leader.

The people of Cuba continued to cheer Fidel without knowing the inner drama that was being played out. The underground struggle of the various powers was fierce. The July 26 Movement was divided and the other organizations were undergoing the same process. The question was whether we were for or against the revolution. The main element of this discussion was the communists and their growing participation in the workings of the state. However,

unlike the others, their unit made it a tight nucleus, and each day they gained more ground.

In the first days of July 1959, the counter-intelligence services left their premises in La Cabaña. The promiscuity we had with the rest of the troops prevented a necessary separation between the personnel and those who provided information. We moved to a luxurious residence on 5th Avenue, at the crossroads of 14th Street. At that time we became an elite body and a state within the state. Che had already lost sight of us and the sense of austerity he had given us was dissolving in abundance.

I don't know why we changed our name to G-2 (State Security). This acronym did not correspond to any logical motivation, however this code is still used today. Already, at that time, I became head of the ex-war criminals' research section, but I was not ripe for the power struggle that was the daily bread of the other agents. However, when I was not yet 16 years old, I had been awarded a magnificent Lincoln, I directed all the investigations against the Batista soldiers, I had more than thirty apartments as a place for clandestine contacts, and the result of my research depended on the lives of hundreds of men.

When Che became Director of the National Bank, and later when he was Minister of Industry⁴⁰, I met him quite often. In most cases, it was to bring him mate⁴¹, which I obtained from Latin American refugees arriving in Havana, or which I asked for by diplomatic mail. It was the only thing Che always accepted, for the rest his austerity was incredible. In the early days of May 1961, I remember that when I went to the ministry to see him and, as he said, "have a chat"⁴², I was struck by the contrast between his luxurious office on the 7th floor and the old bleached uniform he was wearing. That day, he had an olive green uniform from the Antichrist and worn boots. It was the only time he asked me to find him a new uniform and a pair of boots, because he was waiting for a foreign journalist. Jokingly, he said to me, "What would we say at the UN if we

knew that a Cuban minister was a wreck? "I went out to get him the uniform and boots, and later I was still in his office when the journalist in question was announced: K. S. Karol, from the Observer.

On July 16, 1959, the newspaper *Revolution*, the official organ of the July 26 Movement, announced Fidel's decision to resign as Prime Minister, and added that the leader of the revolution would explain the reason in a television address.

Only the G-2 knew the purpose of the maneuver and had been notified 72 hours in advance so that he could take the necessary action. The Movement did not know the reasons that led its Secretary General to take such a decision.

That night, in a dramatic and gloomy speech, Fidel accused President Manuel Urrutia of being on the verge of treason and keeping secret contacts with former aviation chief Díaz Lanz. We who were members of State Security did not know this information, which obviously must have been false. On the other hand, it was certain that Manuel Urrutia had resigned several times, because he did not want to assume the historical responsibility for the change announced, without any doubt, by the increasing influx of communists into key positions. The maneuver was clearly intended to hide the President's resignation and to present the matter as if the masses, through popular pressure, had expelled him from power.

The new President of the Republic was to be Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado, with whom I had close family ties; one more reason for me to gain access from the highest levels of government and to open the doors of the power hierarchy to me. Osvaldo was a lawyer, he had campaigned on the left and was considered to be an eminent philosopher. Knowing Marxism-Leninism inside out, he was considered one of the most skillful Marxist theorists in America. He was a member of the July 26 Movement and had been one of the organizers of the aborted September 5, 1957 uprising in the city of Cienfuegos.

For connoisseurs, this appointment marked a turning point in Cuba's political destiny. Every day, the G-2 was recruiting more communists. By April 1959, 400 activists had been sent to the USSR. Upon their return, three months later, they were appointed to the State Security Department. They never said what they had done in the Soviet Union, but there is every reason to believe that they were trained in the KGB services, because upon their arrival almost all the administrative services were changed and the functioning of the offices was restructured with surprising rigidity.

A few months after the advent of the revolution, Raúl Castro realized his aspirations and became Minister of Defense. This decision was very badly received by the whole army, which wanted Camilo Cienfuegos to be minister. When the news was officially announced, the protests could have been seen as a sedition among the mass of soldiers shouting in the barracks: "Down with the Chinese woman!"⁴³

Raúl was known by the nickname of the "Red Chinese woman". "Chinese" because of his Asian features, and especially the affectation of his gestures which circulated a rumour that he was homosexual (his way of being and his appearance had changed a lot in the last twenty years, but in 1959 it is certain that his manners were shocking), and "red" because of his activity as a communist activist from the Sierra.

To avoid major problems, extraordinary disciplinary measures had to be taken, and thousands of recruits from the NRMs were brought into the army. (revolutionary national militias). These new elements within the armed forces were more docile to maneuver and did not know the conflicts in Sierra Maestra. In parallel with this decision, soldiers of the rebel army who were reluctant to join Raul's command were dismissed.

On 20 October 1959, a secret meeting was held in Fidel's house in Tarara⁴⁴, a place he had chosen for some time for important meetings. Present were members of the rebel army staff who had Fi-

del's trust, all G-2 senior officials from the PSP, and Fabio Grobart, the Kremlin man, accompanied by two foreigners I was seeing for the first time. The theme of the meeting was the analysis of the serious situation in the rebel army. I had not been invited to the meeting, which was much higher than mine, but I accompanied Ramiro and had coffee with the participants and saw them all. For more than half an hour, I stayed to discuss with the group until Fidel gave the order to start, and I left. In the night, I saw Ramiro at the G-2 headquarters and he told me that the next day Camilo was to leave for Camagüey to dismiss the military governor and commander of the rebel army, Hubert Matos, accused of conspiracy.

It seemed strange to me, I knew that this commander had resigned several times and that he had sent a letter to Fidel to alert him of the communist peril, but conspiring was something else. Osvaldo Sánchez was second in command of the G-2, a position from which he took the opportunity to begin a purge of former guerrillas of a certain level who did not want to submit. Commander Hubert Matos systematically opposed the communists in Camagüey province, preventing their participation in power. Although he was not part of Fidel's group of trusted men, he had reached the highest rank of the rebel army and was the first guerrilla leader to descend into the plain, controlling more than 2,000 square kilometres of territory at the end of the war. In the ranks of the fighters, he was a respected figure. Everyone knew that his troops had prevented Batista's army from advancing into the heart of the Sierra, and if the general staffs had enjoyed a certain amount of peace, it was because Matos had stopped the offensive operations. His abilities as a military leader were equal to those of Che or Camilo.

Years later, I was able to read Osvaldo Sánchez's report that provoked, or rather justified, his detention. He gave all the details of a supposed conspiracy that was to lead to a coup d'état and that used anti-communist arguments in its plans. The prosecution could not be accompanied by any material evidence, simply because it did not

exist. Some prosecution witnesses vaguely spoke of an attempt to recruit Matos, but their stories did not hold up. The only certain fact is that the province of Camagüey was one of the richest with a powerful bourgeoisie composed of landowners, herders and sugar factory owners and that, if they were stimulated in any way, things could end badly.

To remove Hubert Matos, it was necessary to choose carefully the candidate who would transform the order into reality; this was not an ordinary case, the fate of a giant of the revolution, whose person symbolized the discontent of the various organizations with the communist rise, was at stake. On the other hand, the eminent guerrilla would not hand over his command to just anyone. Three men could accomplish this mission: Fidel Castro as leader of the revolution, but the affair was risky if Matos really conspired... The possibility of a confrontation that would be harsh existed, no one could foresee its reaction; Che or Camilo Cienfuegos who had both been the "military arm" of the July 26 Movement and to whom anything was allowed because of the military prestige they enjoyed. However, Che was never to be counted on to interfere with internal problems; if we look closely at his post-revolutionary trajectory in Cuba, we can see that he never interfered in the problems between Cubans, his abstention in this sense was total. He never fought in Escambray against the anti-communist guerrillas, nor at the time of the invasion of the Bay of Pigs. He always gave me the impression that he limited himself to acting in certain conflicts because of his foreign character. One day I asked him the question and he didn't answer me, he smiled and changed the subject.

Only Camilo remained, and he was the one who carried out the mission. It is good to pause for a moment to analyze this man's controversial personality. Without a doubt, he was the very image of the guerrilla. Fidel's trusted man, he was as popular among the Cuban people as the leader himself. Before leaving Mexico with the Granma expedition group, he was a militant of the Socialist Youth,

and his ideological formation was undoubtedly Marxist. His PSP superiors considered him a safe and reliable asset. When, for economic reasons, he emigrated to the United States and then to Mexico, where he met Fidel, he never lost contact with the PSP. At the advent of the revolution, he was a faithful supporter of revolutionary radicalization, but he showed some scruples about communist participation and the methods used. His differences with Raúl were notorious and, far from improving, they were getting worse every day.

Camilo left for Camagüey on 21 October 1959, in a Cesna plane from Columbia Airport, accompanied by a pilot and "the Kid", his personal assistant⁴⁵. In the morning, he had an interview with Hubert Matos who was waiting for him at the airport. He informed him of his dismissal and gave him the orders that he should be taken to Havana. After talking to the dismissed chief's junior officers, he posted some of his troops, which had arrived by military transport, to the army headquarters in the Agramonte barracks. At 9:45 p. m., he left the staff and went to the airport to catch the plane that was to take him back to Havana. No one ever saw Camilo Cienfuegos again. There was talk of the possibility of a plane crash, several other hypotheses were considered. The search lasted more than fifteen days without finding any evidence. The plane had disappeared, swallowed by the sea, a rare occurrence because this type of Cesna 211 single-engine aircraft is designed to float, even in the event of total destruction, its components must remain on the surface.

The day after the news was announced, we left for Camagüey, a group of 5 men, to collect all the clues on the spot. Another tragedy was waiting for us. The officer who was on duty on the night of the events in the airport control tower, Ignacio Agramonte, committed suicide by shooting himself in the head. Only this man could confirm whether or not the plane had taken off. Camagüey airport received one or two flights a day in 1959, and often they were suspended for lack of passengers; little frequented as it was, at nightfall, there was only one officer left in the control tower to prepare for

any eventuality. Our last runway vanished because the military planes, by discretion, did not communicate their flight plan; no Havana airport received any message and the register of the Camagüey tower had disappeared.

Three weeks after Camilo's disappearance, his personal helper, "the Kid", was found dead on a beach in the Dominican Republic. The body was recovered by certifying to the Dominican authorities that it was one of the crew members of a missing fishing boat. No publicity was given to the case and the body was quickly buried. But we, who knew "the Kid", could not have been mistaken in front of the body we had seen at the morgue, it would be too great a coincidence that two men had the same tattoo on their forearms. With the elements of judgment I have, I am certain that, taking advantage of the Hubert Matos case, Camilo Cienfuegos was eliminated, killing two birds with one stone.

The trial of Hubert Matos ended on December 14. The latter was sentenced to 20 years in prison. The easiest thing would have been to shoot him, but that could have had serious consequences. The press kept the whole country informed about the trial, and the radio had installed microphones in the courtroom. It was clear that there was no evidence to support the triple charge of treason, sedition and conspiracy. The trial was obviously fabricated, and this was so obvious that Fidel, who had been called as a prosecution witness, tried to transform himself into an Advocate General in a final effort to influence public opinion in his favour. The irregularities led to a farce and no one, however ingenious, could believe half of what was said.

A wave of protests broke out at the national level, particularly in the rebel army. A purge led by Raúl killed more than 30% of the veteran guerrillas in Sierra Maestra who did not accept the verdict of the trial and criticized it. Although I was a member of the G-2, I never knew how this massive dismissal came about, it was a matter between Osvaldo Sánchez, Ramiro Valdés and Raúl Castro. Every-

thing seems to indicate that the military G-2 group, which was a communist stronghold, took the opportunity, in agreement with Raúl, to purge a number of officers; this was the second time they did so.

Hubert Matos' trial had repercussions in government circles. A ministerial crisis ended with the resignation of Commander Faustino Pérez⁴⁶ and Manuel Ray⁴⁷ in protest.

The demonstration was convincing, the communists had emerged victorious from their confrontation with the men of Sierra Maestra and the Movement of July 26. The other insurreccional movements that did not accept the accomplished fact either suffered the most severe purges in the army as well as in the administrative apparatus. More than 85% of the rebel army members were of peasant origin, the majority of whom were illiterate or semi-literate. This important reason guaranteed Fidel an infallible and undisputed caudillo⁴⁸ role. The remaining 15%, who were officers, because knowing how to read and write was a great advantage, had to choose: either to bow to the pro-communist line without questioning the future of Cuba, or to be eliminated.

To officially seal the communist turn of the Cuban revolution, Fabio Grobart, on behalf of the KGB, promised Fidel that a senior official of the USSR party and government would come to Havana.

This news had been known to senior government officials since November 1959. In December, a meeting⁴⁹ was held at G-2 headquarters to prepare and guarantee the security of the coming communist leader. Things did not happen as many historians of the revolution presented them, saying that Anastase Mikoyan discovered Cuba by chance in February 1960. Everything had been planned with precision.

It seems that the Soviets deliberately did not send a leader of Russian origin, although he enjoyed a great notoriety, to Havana in order to show the equal rights enjoyed by the other Soviet republics. The ideal man was Anastase Mikoyan, an Armenian national,

Deputy Prime Minister of the USSR and member of the CPSU Political Bureau⁵⁰. Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by a Soviet science and technology exhibition in Mexico City, Mikoyan stopped in Cuba on his way to its inauguration.

During his visit to Havana, it was planned that, during an official visit, the procession would lay a wreath in front of Martí's⁵¹ bust in the Central Park. The official ceremony ended in disaster. Mikoyan was almost murdered in a demonstration prepared by Catholic organizations that had agreed to prevent the ceremonies from taking place. The day after this anti-communist demonstration, thousands of PSP members, with *carte blanche*, operated as G-2 repressive agents. The figure of 38,000 detainees throughout the country gives the scale of the events. They all had to be released for lack of evidence. It was impossible to keep this mass of opponents in preventive prison at such difficult times, while the press remained free. The case was judged severely and considered an extremist act. It was agreed that in the future, except in cases of serious danger, members of the PSP, or any other pro-government group, should not be allowed to exercise indiscriminate repression that could only lead to civil war.

Although the prisoners were released and the incident was minimized, this threatening and shameless aspect of communism in its early days caused the group of opponents, who were against any left-wing radicalization, to engage in clandestine struggle and guerrilla warfare once again. Once again, the mountain range of the Escambray mountain range was populated by guerrillas.

The agreements of all kinds that Cuba was to sign with the USSR had already been prepared for several months, but they were only made public during Mikoyan's stay in Havana. The text mentioned that Cuba would sell 425,000 tonnes of sugar to the USSR in 1960 and 1 million tonnes in 1961. In exchange, the USSR pledged to sell oil in unlimited quantities and offered a credit of \$100 million at 2.5% annual interest. The real purpose of the visit was masked by

the trade show. Attention was also avoided to the economic expansion policy pursued by Moscow in the 1960s during its economic offensive in Third World countries.

While in Havana Fidel and Mikoyan played their role as Ingenuous statesmen who met without prior agreement, Raúl Castro was received in Moscow, together with Fabio Grobart and several agents of the "Caraïbe⁵²" group, with a high-level delegation from the PSP. The objective of the mission was to rearm the Cuban army and to determine the number of advisers who would settle on the island and their specialities. The Russians were well aware of the rise of opposition movements, as well as the decline in the popularity of the revolution. The number of clandestine organizations detected was worrying: Rosa Blanca, Movimiento Demócrata Cristiano, Movimiento 30 de Noviembre, Movimiento de Recuperación Revolucionaria⁵³ all had a national character. The CIA also acted, but in a veiled way, it had as its essential objective to know the integration of anti-Castro groups and to motivate the opposition in a subtle way.

The imminent danger was that the mass of opponents of the regime would unite with the underground guerrillas. In Escambray alone, there were more than 4,000 men who had openly taken the rural guerrilla. They were very poorly armed, without supplies, they lacked external support, but they were still a potential source of opposition.

The Kremlin leaders promised to send all the necessary weapons to support communism in Cuba, but they suggested that as a tactical measure, so as not to give meaning to this gesture, Czechoslovakia should make the first shipments.

Czechoslovakia had long been an exporter of old weapons recovered during the Second World War. She had already sold large quantities in Africa. Because of this trade⁵⁴, it had been compromised in international scandals. It was argued that Yugoslavia could also deliver weapons, but Fidel categorically refused this offer because he was angry with Tito for having sold important arms lots,

including coastal surveillance boats, to the regime of former dictator Batista. No other reasons should be sought for the poor relationship that the two men have never ceased to maintain between them. Castro never forgave the man he described in private circles as "collaborator of the dictator" and "that old shit"⁵⁵. This was the only proposal from the Russians that he did not accept, the rest of the program received no objections. Fidel Castro had just begun, with the support of the USSR, the arrival of communism in Cuba.

In reality, it was not a starting point but rather a marriage. It had been more than thirty years since communism had taken root in Cuba and the KGB had set up its "moles" there. They, patiently, patiently and stubbornly, had dug their galleries there in the shadows and in secret. We thought we were attending an engagement party, in fact the red worm was already in the Cuban fruit and was only waiting for a good opportunity to show up.

CHAPTER II

THE MAN FROM MOSCOW IN HAVANA

To find the hidden roots of communism on the American continent, we must go back to 1927, when the Italian Vittorio Vidali, alias Carlos, arrived in Havana in order to prepare the ground for the establishment of a vast underground organization. He was acting behind the facade of the Communist International that he represented among the youth. A year later, the real Moscow man, Fabio Grobart, a Polish national, a personal friend of Felix Edmandovitch Dzarjinski's, arrived and co-founded the Cheka with him on 20 December 1917. Fabio Grobart's mission this time was to set up in Cuba the management centre of the Communist International in America for clandestine operations.

The total lack of information on this period is hopeless. The void that exists between 1927 and 1959, even in the secret archives of the revolution, jealously guarded at the Palace of the Revolution, contrasts with the wealth of materials that can be found in other periods. The history of the Communist Party of Cuba (CCP) is full of contradictions, and its political dualism was the factor that forced it to hide its past.

The work that Fabio Grobart, the former head of the Soviet secret service in America, has done in this regard is incredible. Thanks to his privileged position as head of the history department of the CCP Central Committee, he recovered all compromising documents, thus evading more than thirty years of activity.

However, it is difficult to completely erase such a long period of history. There are still documents and testimonies somewhere that allow us to reconstruct the past. To return to this period, from 1927 to 1959, my efforts focused mainly on three men who were the main actors or witnesses: Raúl Roa, Juan Marinello and Juan Andreu.

Raúl Roa is the only politician of the 1933 revolution who succeeded in holding important positions in the 1959 socialist revolution. This survivor of the "1930s generation" became a character of international stature by historical chance. In 1930, as a left-wing intellectual and co-founder of the "Students Directorate"⁵⁶, he became a fierce anti-communist who, a few years later, wrote a series of articles in the magazine *Bohemia*⁵⁷ entitled: Why I am not a communist. At the time of the Russian invasion of Hungary in 1956, he wrote a book denouncing the Kremlin's foreign policy under the title: *Basta*⁵⁸!

Until 1959, his efforts as a writer were mainly devoted to justifying his divorce from communism in the 1930s. Because of his remarkable position as an avant-garde intellectual, a long-standing anti-imperialist polemicist and his opposition to Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship, he had to go into exile. After the revolution in January 1959, he was called upon to serve as Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations. When the Cuban revolution began to radicalize and the first government resigned, Raúl Roa was urgently recalled to Havana to replace Agramonte in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This decision was not made without reason. Roa's appointment as minister temporarily concealed the communist nature of the revolution, which had not yet been made public. Gradually, the Cuban chancellor gained a certain prestige in the diplomatic spheres of Latin America and, at the time of the invasion of the Bay of Pigs,⁵⁹ he was named "Chancellor of Dignity" in the continental press. It was too late to replace him, and despite the disagreement of the former PSP leaders, he was kept in this position, even with the serious problems of trust that this posed. He was Minister from 1960 to 1976. That year, he was skillfully removed from office to be appointed Vice-President of the National Assembly, a purely honorary position.

It is possible that his anti-imperialist ideas or his thirst for power pushed him to remain at the side of the Revolution, but what will happen the day when "My unpublished memories"⁶⁰, to which he

has alluded several times, will be published? I know that most of the manuscript is abroad and that it will be published after his death.

By using some of the schemes I have pardoned you for, I was able to read most of Raúl Roa's personal archives, as well as all the evidence compromising the Communist Party of Cuba that he kept in his safe. However, although this kind of unhealthy curiosity was part of my professional work as a secret agent, and despite the obligation in which I found myself to reserve the first release of my information to my superiors in the counter intelligence branch, I reserved all this information for myself without communicating the slightest detail.

The other source of information I could tap into was Juan Marinello, who had served as President of the CCP since 1936 and whose position as a writer was widely recognized. He had certainly preserved for history a large quantity of documents and testimonies. He was one of the few survivors of the party's senior hierarchy who could have dealt with these things. The other members who were still alive did not have the scale to do so; and if they had been involved in any action, they only remembered it in their memories.

I had met Juan Marinello at the University of Havana, when I attended diplomatic and consular law courses there.

At that time, Marinello was its rector, but for various reasons he also served as a professor of legal history for two semesters. It was not uncommon for me to lose a few school days due to service issues that I had to catch up on Saturdays and Sundays. For this reason, Marinello told me that I would be a "weekend lawyer", and he gave me the nickname "the man of the weekends".

When, thanks to mutual friends who were old PC militants, I was able to reconnect with Marinello in 1973, he had not been rector for a long time. He was only in charge of the "House of Martí studies"⁶¹.

I had to my credit the publication of four essays on the Latin American socio-economic panorama, which had circulated in a lim-

ited way in government circles, and a rather long work on the CIA south of the Rio Bravo⁶², in particular on the training bases for rangers in the Panama Canal area.

With this card of presentation of an avant-garde intellectual, added to a certain legend of a hard man of State Security, G-2, the rapprochement was not difficult. The personality of Juan Marinello, a man of the world and a writer of a certain audience, facilitated contact.

After a few months, a close relationship was established between us, to such an extent that I took his Memoirs under dictation and put his archives in order, because Marinello was almost blind and worked with extreme difficulty.

With this second character, I was able to complete my documentation and get a fairly broad idea of the subject I wanted to know. But that was not enough. My information came from a dissident on the one hand and a convinced communist on the other. To close the circle, I was missing a traitor.

My research in this direction allowed me to discover Juan Andreu, a writer who had frequented intellectual circles in the 1920s, and who had been Fabio Grobart's secretary. Andreu was an unknown character in the world of intellectuals, certainly eclipsed by his wife, the lyrical singer Zoila Gálvez, who was probably the best soprano of her time. As his wife's own impresario, he often travelled with her. He used these tours to accomplish the secret missions entrusted to him by Fabio Grobart.

In 1950, he was expelled from the Caribbean spy group, and his party card was taken away for alleged treason. It was thought that during a tour of the United States by his wife, he had contacted an American agent at Carnegie Hall, a well-known theatre in New York, and that he was immediately detained by the FBI. Two weeks after these events, Andreu had a serious accident. He was hit by a car that was running at full speed. He found himself completely paralyzed, having lost until he could speak. He died in 1961.

On several occasions, it was assumed that his widow's home had been robbed, without any valuable objects having disappeared. Obviously, the burglars were looking for something very specific. Was it Andreu's personal archives? No pressure was put on Zoila Gálvez because everyone knew that she had always ignored her companion's parallel activities.

Due to the simplicity of her character, it was not difficult for me to get close to Mrs. Gálvez and, in a short time, I was able to stay alone at her home while she was giving her music lessons at the Conservatory. For more than three months, I inspected the house inch by inch, until I discovered a double bottom in a closet. I was about to give up my research when the steel needle I was using to explore the walls entered the hiding place so well hidden. Needless to say, I will remove all the documents, some of which are of great value, such as the one that proves Fidel Castro's activity as a secret agent within the "Caribbean" group, led by Fabio Grobart, since 1947.

These three vital sources of information were soon complemented by two equally important ones. But for obvious security reasons, I cannot mention the names of my other informants, who were quite voluntarily. As for the first three, I have nothing to worry about. Raúl Roa, over 80 years old and Vice-President of the National Assembly, is untouchable. What could the Cuban government gain by causing one more scandal? As far as Juan Marinello is concerned, the question is even simpler, he is dead, and I don't think it bothers the dead much if they are played a bad trick.

As for Andreu's widow, with the ingenuity that characterizes her, who lived for forty years with a man without knowing anything about her activities, I am sure she has nothing to fear. Fabio Grobart, the first, was always convinced that she knew nothing.

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The choice of Havana as the centre of the Communist International's leadership in America and as the KGB's hub in this region of the world was not by chance. The geographical position of the island of Cuba is privileged. In the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, it is equally distant from North and South America, very close to Central America, and gives access to all the Caribbean, it is the ideal enclave for any type of operation on the continent.

The United States had understood these advantages very well and, at an early date, it made its influence felt. At the same time as the War of Independence, which began in 1895, against Spanish colonialism was coming to an end with the victory of Cuban troops, they organized the attack on the warship *Maine* (which exploded on 15 February 1898) and declared war on Spain, which led to the Spanish-American-Cuban war, which ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1898. This intervention was to cost the Cuban people dearly, as it was at the origin of the Monroe doctrine⁶³ and the creation of several military bases, including Guantánamo Bay, which remains today.

The USSR, for its part, arrived with a great deal of delay on the American scene and particularly in the Caribbean. When, in 1927, she decided to take her first steps in Cuba, the political situation did not allow her anything other than sending an agent to organize clandestine networks and act in the shadow of espionage. The general atmosphere on the island was favorable. A strong stream of sympathy, favorable to communism, existed among groups of intellectuals and students as well as among the working class. In 1927, it was living in a great revolutionary effervescence. One could not have dreamt of a better broth of culture than to launch the germ of communism. The President of the Republic, Gerardo Machado, established an iron dictatorship, which soon provoked a firm reaction from the popular masses. Strikes, demonstrations, dynamite attacks, and other events that showed clear opposition to the regime were daily.

From Moscow, the evolution of the Cuban political landscape was followed with the greatest interest and if, inside, the theoretical discussions between Stalin and Trotsky about the "permanent revolution" and "socialism in one country" turned to Stalin's advantage, this did not mean that the secret services underestimated the opportunity to establish themselves in Cuba through the Communist International.

The man chosen for this mission was one of the best agents Stalin could count on. He had shown his abilities since the beginning of the October Revolution, performing the most dangerous missions for the Cheka. Later, he served as a link between the leadership of the Communist International of Moscow and the rest of Europe, as Stalin's personal emissary. From both a political and espionage point of view, this enigmatic character was considered a grey eminence of the USSR's secret services, at a time when they were only in their first steps.

Who would have thought that this rich and respectable Polish businessman who landed in Havana one morning in May 1928, with a very valid passport and the plan to open a business, was Stalin's emissary in the New World?

When Fabio Grobart arrived in Cuba, the CCP's popularity had increased, but it failed to implement Moscow's directives, and the setbacks came one after the other.

As early as 1926, the government began repression against the communists, expelling the leader and founder of the party, José Miguel Pérez, who was deported to the Canary Islands. His successor, José Pineda Vilaboa, led the party until 1927, when he resigned for health reasons. In fact, his resignation was due to death threats he had received from the government. Joaquín Valdez succeeded him, but for a short time.

The party leadership had hitherto been in the hands of three workers, but, contrary to European custom, the first party secretary was a student, Julio Antonio Mella.

Within the very rigid framework of the party at the time, Mella appeared to be a discordant element in relation to the policy advocated by the Kremlin. He had publicly declared his opposition to Stalin's Marxist theory of "class-to-class" struggle, thus giving an example of his overly controversial spirit to the international communist family. Mella's name was beginning to be known throughout the continent. In 1923, he founded the FEU (University Student Federation⁶⁴), in 1924, the José Martí Volkshochschule and, in the same year, he organized tobacco workers' unions throughout the island. His stature as a political leader grew among the popular masses, but he did not follow a very orthodox path in Moscow's eyes. It must be said that the great pioneers of communism in Cuba were a pleiade of young people, anti-imperialist rebels, full of avant-garde ideas, who, more than Marxists, were the followers of Martí's ideas. Their incorporation into the Communist Party did not mean for them a break with their first ideology.

Faced with this situation, Stalin believes that it is time to intervene. He asked Fabio Grobart to take over the case directly. His first mission in Havana will be to eliminate Mella, but in such a way that the government takes responsibility for it. Thus the troublemaker will be transformed into a hero and his name will be a standard in future struggles.

Without wasting time, Grobart got to work. Vittorio Vidali is in charge of organizing the staging of the operation: one of the agents, a native of Cuba, who works as an illegal member of the International, sets a bomb in the "Payret" theatre in Havana, while another member of the group denounces Mella as the author of this terrorist act. The government is falling into the trap. He had the student leader arrested and opened a resounding trial. But public opinion was soon to force him to change his strategy, especially since Mella's hunger strike was putting his days in danger. Finally, a more practical solution was chosen: Mella would be deported out of the country.

It was in Mexico that the young leader found political asylum. Although the pitfall was successfully removed from Cuba, Mella's danger on Latin American soil was also great. Far from ceasing his political activities, he multiplied them, which caused serious disputes within the Mexican CP. Once again, international communism pulled out its claws. The young leader was murdered a year later, in 1929, under strange circumstances.

A captain of the secret police of the dictator Machado, whose mission was to monitor Mella's political activities in Mexico, received the sum of 5,000 pesos⁶⁵ from a stranger to execute the young man. This unknown was called Aurelio Randulfo García, he was a member of the Cuban CP (activist notebook number 3008 PCC) and belonged to the group led by Vidali, who had placed himself under Fabio Grobart's command upon his arrival in Havana.

It was through treason and assassination that Soviet agents entered Cuba and laid the foundations for what would become, over time, the largest KGB spy centre ever to operate in America.

In the early 1930s, for a country as dependent on the United States as Cuba was, whose main asset was sugar cane mono-culture, the crisis that began in 1927 was disastrous and had countless repercussions. Since 1926, sugar exports had been struggling to stabilize and the fall in prices was not long in coming. In 1929, sugar exports amounted to \$200 million, \$129 million in 1930, \$78 million in 1931 and only \$42 million in 1932. The Chase National Bank, which had granted many loans to the dictator Machado, not only refused to help him this time but demanded repayment of the existing debt. The nation was on the brink of ruin and popular struggles took the form of a national rebellion. The right wing of the opposition overtook the left in the insurreccional struggle. The "University Student Directorate⁶⁶" was created. It included both a right-wing current, a left-wing current and moderates. The ABC⁶⁷ was also born. It was made up of right-wing radicals.

These two organizations carried all the weight of the insurgency that rose against Machado while the CP maneuvered between two waters, waiting for a favourable outcome at little cost.

The dictator was unable to control the prevailing terrorism; he suspended constitutional guarantees and launched a brutal campaign against terrorism, most industries were paralyzed; the university had been closed since 1930.

In 1933, the new President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, seeking a solution to the Cuban problem, sent one of his trusted and skillful diplomats, Sumner Welles, to Havana to inaugurate what has been called the "good neighbour" policy.

For his part, Stalin ordered his secret agent in Havana, Fabio Grobart, to avoid at all costs that the CP engage in a frontal struggle against the government and wait for opposition forces to weaken among themselves before taking sides. Grobart was also asked to prepare for the reception of a number of KGB agents, a number that was growing, as Havana had become the hub for their penetration into Latin and North America. A few days apart, several dozen foreigners of Russian, Polish or German nationality arrived in Havana with pockets full of money. Without taking into account the existing economic crisis, and in contradiction with the most elementary laws, they bought various shops at a golden price in Muralla Street, a place of commerce par excellence, located in "old Havana", near the port, a district that still retains the charm of the colonial era. The absolute lack of civic-mindedness among immigration officials facilitated their entry into Cuba. In the majority of cases, they entered clandestinely or with false passports, and, with a bribe ranging from 200 to 300 pesos, quickly obtained Cuban nationality.

Since his arrival in Havana, Fabio Grobart had been part of the CP's national leadership, yet he was an unknown figure, even militants of a certain hierarchical level; only members of the political bureau knew his true role as emissary of the Kremlin and as the true "brain" of communism in America. Contrary to the party's hierarchi-

cal habits, it was this tenebrous character who received the communists of a certain notoriety who passed through Havana and talked with them. Despite his activist activity, he visited every day the immigrants on Muralla Street, most of them white Russians, who claimed to be defectors of communism when they were nothing more than men of the Soviet secret service intended to control the politics of the American CPs and to receive all the information possible to send him later to the USSR.

From the American embassy, Summer Welles tried to calm opponents of the dictator Machado by promising that if Machado's presidential term expired in 1934, the Chase National Bank would extend its credits and the American government would increase the Cuban sugar quota. Far from reaching an agreement between the parties in conflict, his approach revived the fire of the insurgency.

The general strike was declared throughout the country, turning the capital into a dead city. But the dictator did not give up and contacted the communist unions to obtain from them the suspension of the transport strike, which was most hampering the recovery of the economy. The director of the strike committee and member of the PC, César Vilar, agreed to the dictator's demands and ordered the unions under communist control to return to work.

Fabio Grobart had calculated that the time could be right to incorporate the party into the ruling machine and thus put a brake on other movements opposing the dictatorship. However, the maneuver failed, the workers did not return to work, forcing Machado to resign and go into exile. To overcome this failure, a scapegoat was needed. The one who paid the price was Jorge Vivó, Secretary General of the CCP, who was expelled from the party a year later, in 1934, for treason. In Jorge Vivó's political will⁶⁸, there is an open accusation of political interference by Fabio Grobart and the group of foreigners of the Communist International who had forced the party to take the decision that led to the conclusion of the agreement with the former dictator.

The Cuban nation was now governed by five people, a pentarchy presided over by university professor Grau San Martín, and became a constitutional government a few days later. The communists were excluded from any participation in the coalition because of their collusion with the dictator Machado during the general strike.

At first glance, it might seem that the CP had made a serious tactical error in its attempt to reconcile with the previous government, but this was not the case. Fabio Grobart simply did not want to compromise the existence of the underground group he led. By distinguishing itself from the framework of the insurreccional struggle, the CP better preserved the secret organization that was beginning to bear fruit in America and thus ensured the blind obedience of the Communist Parties of the New World to the Communist International.

Antonio Guiteras Holmes, one of the founders of the Student Directorate, was appointed by the latter to be part of Grau San Martín's cabinet as Minister of State. An obscure sergeant named Fulgencio Batista, who had led a committee of demands during the insurrection, became chief of staff of the army.

The triumphant revolution evolved on two parallel levels. On the one hand, the Grau-Guiteras government formed the coalition of people who had represented the opposition, and on the other hand the communists who did not accept the formation of a government without their participation.

The new laws enacted were at the highest level progressive and revolutionary for their time: an eight-hour day, a minimum wage, restrictions on the entry of foreign workers to defend Cuban workers, recognition of trade union rights, a 45% reduction in electricity and telephone tariffs for American companies, with plans for nationalization, cancellation of the debt incurred by dictator Machado, restrictions on land acquisition by foreign hands and promises of land reform.

The communists organized some sugar factories in the form of soviets and issued the instruction "all power to the soviets". These two parallel revolutions eventually collided. It was impossible for this state of affairs to continue. The government decided to dissolve the communist soviets and ordered the army chief, Fulgencio Batista, to intervene vigorously. But tensions, both internal and external, were leading the Grau-Guiteras government to asphyxiation. The open opposition of the CP, the intolerance of the right and the threat of the American colossus who concentrated his naval force around the island forced the government to resign on 15 January 1934. When he became a general, the army chief, Batista, made a dazzling breakthrough.

Antonio Guiteras Holmes did not accept that Batista seized power, he appointed the colonel of the war of independence, R. Mendieta, provisional president. Quickly, Holmes, who was a man of action, founded the "Joven Cuba⁶⁹" and embarked on a new insurreccional war. Once again, attacks, bombs and a state of siege reigned in the country. However, on September 8, 1935, the organization "Joven Cuba" was left without a head when Holmes was murdered.

A few months earlier, the PC had appointed a docile Kremlin puppet as first secretary in the person of Blas Roca; this obscure and not very bright character, a shoemaker, had been recruited by Fabio Grobart within the PC itself to be part of the support groups of the Communist International organization; as a reward for his docility and obedience, he received an honorary position. To become fashionable in Moscow, where Stalin meant "iron man", this tropical fuck-up adopted the name Roca (stone), because it was really necessary to be made of stone to play the Komintern game and to be at the head of a party vile enough to help the failure of Cuba's first republican revolution.

Grobart, at the head of the illegal immigrants, did not rest on his laurels. On the contrary, its participation in the interference in the

PCs of America was becoming more and more active. By that time, more than sixty agents had already passed through Havana and were operating on the continent. From 1933, the year Hitler became Reich Chancellor, the information they provided was increasingly appreciated by a concerned Stalin who needed to know the opinion of the world's political circles on Germany.

The network parallel to the Cuban network, which was also developing its activities in Vienna, Austria, was also particularly active, with one difference, however, because its main mission was to recruit natives from the various European countries and keep them "dormant". In other words, potential agents could be contacted if necessary or when the positions they were to occupy took on a national dimension. In the slang of espionage, this type of agent is called a "mole". According to information from Fabio Grobart's personal archives, the Vienna-based operation, known as "Spartacus", recruited 2190 agents of European origin from 1934 to 1938. In Havana, an operation that had begun on a small scale was taking on worrying proportions, a vast network of spies had been set up, real "eyes and ears" of Moscow on the other side of the Atlantic.

The resolutions of the VIIth Congress of the Komintern, held in 1935, defined the policy of the popular antifascist fronts as the goal of the moment.

Soon, the Grobart network came under pressure, using all its means. The clandestine agents were divided into several main branches: those who, as European communists, militated in the local CPs and controlled the sectors of the adherents' currents of opinion, exerted enormous pressure on the masses to adopt this new form of struggle. There was the group, which was completely clandestine, composed of liaison officers with American and South American agents who, thanks to a position of conciliation, opened the breach for the communists by proposing union. The illegal immigrants, who controlled local agents, carrying out espionage of an informative nature, multiplied their efforts; finally, the Soviet agents who

controlled moles, such as Goulart who became, two decades later, President of Brazil. At the same time, in the same country, the same agent, Pedro Da Silva, was recruiting Marsighella who chose the guerrilla route. We see that the Soviet secret services play with all the assets in their game to ensure that no eventuality escapes.

The list of agents (moles) recruited by the Russian secret services that I have seen is staggering. Few countries escape the massacre. They can be found in all sectors, from President Jacob Arbenz in Guatemala to the insignificant student Rigoberto López, who murdered Somoza in Nicaragua. However, KGB men sometimes fail. They tried to recruit Sandino in vain because, contrary to what many thought, the hero of the Segovia had nothing to do with communism. The same was true of Lázaro Cardenas in Mexico, who showed a real allergy to communism.

But let us return to the course of political events in Cuba. In 1936, Miguel Mariano Gómez was elected President of the Republic and dismissed shortly afterwards by the Chamber, which entrusted the presidency to Federico Laredo Bru. These changes at the head of the state had no meaning. In reality, power was in the hands of General Batista who, from the Ministry of Defense, controlled the situation.

Meanwhile, the PC was trying to publicly justify, through Blas Roca, the attitude it had had in 1933. Through public self-criticism, he acknowledged the left-wing deviations he had committed and denounced the line of the slogan "all power to the soviets". Moscow-led politics had led it to become a reactionary group by accepting the pact with Machado and yet, for the duration of the progressive Grau-Guiteras government, it systematically refused to get along with the far left.

When, in 1936, the Francoist uprising in Spain against the government of the Republic broke out, the networks of agents, whose headquarters were in Havana, were ordered to organize a pro-republican association with sympathizers to channel this movement

into the communist orbit. It was the agents who dealt with the movements of opinion outside the parties and those who controlled the Latin American PCs who organized a huge agitation apparatus. Later, the need to send military reinforcements to feed the ranks of the International Brigades became evident. At the same time, Stalin decided to send a troop of Soviet volunteers to fight in Spain. It was not a gesture of solidarity but a way to get rid of a large number of conflict-generating elements in the USSR. Iagodu, the chief of the Guepeou, advised them to send them to the slaughterhouse. To guarantee this operation, the establishment of a network of secret services, which could both monitor the embarrassing "Soviet volunteers" and establish an adequate information network within the republican troops, was necessary. It required a team of experienced spies with a good knowledge of Spanish and Russian.

Fabio Grobart was thus ordered to prepare the "Caribe Ibérica⁷⁰" operation, which consisted in withdrawing from America all the agents of Hispanic culture he could, with the exception of heads of missions, i. e. agents intended for the recruitment of moles or agents in sleep.

In September 1936, Juan Marinello, who was the president of the CPC, sailed for Spain on board the steamer Covadonga, under the pretext of participating in a meeting of pro-republican intellectuals in Madrid. His real mission was to accompany 63 Soviet agents as part of the "Caribe Ibérica" operation.

In Marinello's memoirs, I was able to find all the details about this operation, which was probably the only risky action he took during his long life as an activist. To give this trip a more authentic aspect, the president of the CCP was accompanied by communist intellectuals: Nicolas Guillén, poet, Manuel Navarro Luna, poet, Felix Pita Rodríguez, writer. In addition, there was a group of little-known intellectuals outside the borders of Cuban territory, but controlled by agents of influence.

The network of the American continent, which was codenamed the "Caribbean", was thus practically dismantled, and the majority of Soviet agents, heads of mission who had remained in America, became dormant agents. Only Juan Andreu maintained brief contacts with Grobart and, thanks to his wife's impresario's cover, continued to travel freely in America, supposedly in search of contracts... By reviewing the latter's documents later, I was able to check the codes of the various countries and their agents. For example, I now knew that "Caraïbe 1" or "Zorro des Caraïbes" corresponded to Fabio Grobart. On various occasions, these documents appeared in these documents: "From Caribbean I, liaison mission with Ant I." By checking the dates, we could see that at that time Andreu was in the United States. According to another document in my possession, Ant was reported as the code for the American network. From what I could deduce, Grobart's message (Caribbean I) was therefore intended for the head of the United States network (Ant I). In other documents, the codes were Ant II, III, IV... i.e. heads of lower hierarchical level or different heads of departments.

There are many testimonies that correspond to Andreu's travels abroad where we find the codes for "Viking" for Canada or "Maya" for Mexico, etc. It would be good here to point out that Andreu was leaving Cuba with a valid passport, but that he had about ten forged passports to travel in America under different identities⁷¹.

It is indisputable that the state of numbness suffered by the Soviet network in America at that time weakened it operationally but very little in the field, because the aircraft was not affected. In 1938, Stalin maneuvered from Moscow to place Earl Browder at the head of the United States CP, giving him the direction to follow: preaching united front politics and cooperation in the antifascist struggle. Then he ordered that all the CPs of the United States, liquidating what little independence they enjoyed, ensure a united political line under the supervision of the secret agents who, under the Communist International, modulated the internal functions of the CPs. To

win the sympathy of the West, Earl Browder, still remotely controlled by Moscow, developed the theory of the disappearance of class struggle.

In September 1936, in response to this line, the Cuban CP secretary, Blas Roca, agreed with General Batista and promised him that CP forces would support him in his 1939 presidential campaign. In exchange, they obtained the legislation of the Communist Party and the authorization to found the "Confederation of Cuban Workers" (CTC).

Acclaimed by PC militants on his return from a trip to Washington, General Batista appeared, at that time, almost as the leader of Cuban communism. However, during the 1939 elections, President Ramon Grau San Martín was elected and thus assumed for the second time the first state judiciary. He remained in power only until July 1940, when Batista maneuvered the Congress on the occasion of the new constitution that had just been voted on and forced it to dismiss the president and appoint him in his place.

With regard to the German-Soviet pact of 1939, the communist parties kept the strictest silence. The watchword was silence. When the USSR entered the war with Germany in June 1941, the orientations of the Komintern were very precise: the CPs had to assist the governments that would declare war on the Axis countries.

On July 30, 1942, Cuba declared war on Germany, Italy and Japan. Batista called for the formation of a government of national unity. For the first time in American political history, two communists, Juan Marinello and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, became ministers without portfolio. Stalin's old dream came true, the reds penetrated into the power structures of democracy. With an emotion that he could not control, Fabio Grobart showed his close friends Stalin's secret communication⁷² where he warmly congratulated him for having obtained such a great success.

As the Second World War unfolded, the foreign policy of the USSR changed; since 1943, immediately after the Battle of Stalin-

grad, which marked a turning point in the war, Stalin was no longer the same head of government, the one who begged for help from his allies; now he set his conditions and, in anticipation of what would later become the policy of the Cold War, he decided, by reestablishing the "Caribbean" group, to return their activity to the secret service networks in America.

At the end of 1942, Fabio Grobart was ordered to prepare everything for the establishment of a new spy network. All the details of the mission were communicated verbally to him by Isaac Cohen, a Jew of Polish origin recruited in Vienna, who had been a member of the Soviet secret service since 1934. Cohen entered Cuba on November 3, 1942. He soon left for Canada with a passport in the name of Nokovich on December 14, 1942. Among Juan Andreu's documents is a photograph of Cohen-Nokovich in Mexico in 1949. In 1970, long after the revolution, we find this singular character again, who became assessor to the Cuban Minister of the Interior, deputy in the Customs, Ports and Airports Department, under the name of Alexandre Misha. At his private home in Havana, I mean 1st Avenue, at number 1240, in Miramar, where I had the opportunity to visit several times, I could see, on the piano, another photograph of Cohen-Nokovich-Misha in Spain, with Dolores Ibarruri (La Pasionaria), during a political meeting in a coal mine in Asturias. It wasn't a joke. The USSR really sent its aces for everything related to the "Caribbean" operation.

In February 1943, a large number of Jewish political refugees fleeing Nazi persecution began to arrive in Havana; the phenomenon was not new, but the flow had changed; the pace, slow at first, had become a real haemorrhage. Not all the refugees who arrived were spies, but the organization that operated first in Vienna, then in France, under the code name of "Spartacus", organized a large quantity of leaks on its own account and channelled them to Havana as a landing place; this was intended to hide the arrival of the secret agents. The person in charge of this cover operation for the organi-

zation "Spartacus" in France was Roger Ginsburger, alias Pierre Vil-
lon, a great resistance fighter who manipulated Jewish resistance or-
ganizations for this purpose.

All coverage measures taken by the Kremlin were taken to ex-
tremes given the irregular situation around Jewish emigrants, which
did not allow American countries to be too scrupulous to study the
files necessary for the acceptance of residence permits.

It was in this atmosphere that many secret agents began to arrive
in Havana in February 1943. On the other hand, U.S. native agents
were ordered to enlist on ships that brought military supplies and
equipment to the USSR, with the objective of transporting high-
value, smuggled diamond shipments back home. This operation was
called "North Star", and the group that carried it out acted under the
code of "21", which made me think that the number of agents who
were in charge of this transport should be twenty-one.

These improvised sailors received diamonds in the USSR and,
later, on the territory of the United States, transported them to Cuba
by ordinary ferry lines serving the Havana-Key West line, or by
cargo ships touching the island to load sugar. This operation was
used to finance the implementation of the new espionage networks.
It is expensive to establish a spy in a foreign country and, in most
Latin American countries, it was necessary to buy residence visas at
very high prices and pay a good price for the services rendered and
the information received. The USSR was not in a position to have
large sums of money in hard currency. It therefore opted for the
self-financing of the secret services by using their own organisation.

The complex organization was set up with relative success. 35%
of diamond shipments were swallowed by the Ocean or vanished at
the time of delivery.

In the United States, there were four collectors who delivered
the shipments to a certain Roberto Venezi, who was in charge of di-
recting the precious packages to Havana. In the Cuban capital, Isaac
Levi received them and bought their content. About the man named

Robert Venezi, I don't know his true identity, but about Isaac Levi, I know that he was a Jew of Austrian origin, a jeweller by profession, and that he had been settled in Zurich in 1931 and 1932.

In a short time, Levi, with the help of the president of the Association of Cuban Jewellers, J. Iglesias⁷³, set up various workshops reserved for diamond cutting, which were under the control of "Caraïbe" agents. After six months, Havana became an important global diamond trading centre and, as was logical in wartime, as large capitalists sought safe havens to protect their money supply, the lots of cut diamonds that were offered at low prices in Havana were appetizing food for American billionaires who only had to travel 90 miles to negotiate these transactions. Every day, great American businessmen arrived in Cuba to buy huge lots. All travel expenses were paid by the vendors, including the stay at the National Hotel... The list of these millionaires who negotiated with the KGB is very long, it contains anonymous fortunes, but also families belonging to the elite of the United States.

May the readers forgive me if I do not satisfy the legitimate curiosity that these names may inspire them, I do not wish to create a hostile climate around some powerful American families. Suffice it to say that a future President of the United States came to Havana with his father, who made a very important transaction with Levi. Both were housed in the presidential suite of the National Hotel. I would like to repeat that none of the Americans who traded diamonds in Havana were aware of their partner's identity. If I give this clarification, it is because the North American press will certainly be looking for names that will not be difficult to find.

This operation of buying and selling the KGB was called "Pluto" and lasted until 1949. Without knowing it, the North American greenbacks financed the establishment of a huge Soviet espionage network in America. What is amazing is that the authorities never wondered where the fabulous quantities of diamonds that were cut

and sold in Havana came from. According to the most conservative calculations, more than \$200 million was sold⁷⁴.

This logistics base allowed the establishment of 300 KGB agents who operated from one end of the continent to the other. When Winston Churchill announced in Fulton's historical speech the beginning of the Cold War in 1946, Stalin already held ready the basic structure of the "Caribbean" operating centre, which, from Havana, controlled the Kremlin's spying machine.

From 1946 to 1947, countless agents entered the continent through this "Caribbean" group. Until 1967, Fabio Grobart was the head of these services, but with his replacement, Havana ceased to be the reception centre for all illegal KGB members while remaining a centre of leadership because of the facilities offered by the country's socialist regime. Currently, most of the illegal immigrants are entering the continent in the Panama Canal area, Mexico and Brazil. I was able to know most of this information, whose authenticity I had the opportunity to verify, thanks to the fact that in 1972 the KGB asked Fabio Grobart for a report on his activities in Cuba since 1928, in order to publish them with Colonel Abel's⁷⁵. It is natural that these two books had only a very limited circulation of a few dozen copies that circulated among the high-ranking officers of the KGB. Moreover, none of them arrived in Cuba.

In the period between 1972 and 1973, the "Zorro of the Caribbean" hardly left his office of the Central Committee (which is actually a large apartment), devoting all his time to writing his memoirs with two Soviet secretaries, Ivan and Yuri⁷⁶. Despite the alarm systems and the closed-circuit television system that constantly monitored his office, it was possible to collect interesting data. To tell the truth, Ivan and Yuri had a certain weakness for vodka, a weakness that bordered on obsession; after nine months in the offices, the claustrophobia that invaded them was only calmed by the strength of this drink. Let me make it clear to the KGB here: Grobart's two deputies are incapable, alcoholics, with the pretensions of bullies,

who would be much more at home on a farm in Siberia than in Havana. And to inform her in more detail, I will tell her that the worldly brigade in charge of prostitution cases at the Cuban Ministry of the Interior provided them with two black-skinned mistresses, registered for prostitution and pornography, Chelo and Hortensia, who were themselves giving information under the blackmail of the Security Officer who was in charge of them, information on all the movements and conversations of the two super agents. Nothing is perfect in life, and as far as the secret services are concerned, the chain is no stronger than the weakest of its links.

Here are the code names and the number of agents per country⁷⁷ (see table).

Country	Surface in millions of Km²	Population in millions of inhabitants	Number of agents	Code Name
USA	9363	220,3	38	Ant
Canada	9976	23,7	12	Viking
Costa Rica	51	2,2	1	Banana
Guatemala	109	6,8	1	Olmec
Honduras	112	3,1	-	-
Mexico	1973	67,7	19	Maya
Nicaragua	130	2,5	8	K-1
Panama	76	1,9	12	Siren
Salvador	21	4,5	-	-
Netherlands Antilles	1	0,3	-	-
Bahamas	14	0,2	-	-
Barbados	-	0,3	-	-
Cuba (operational centre)	115	9,9	100 a 500	Caribbean

Country	Surface in millions of Km²	Population in millions of inhabitants	Number of agents	Code Name
Grenada	-	0,1	1	Matias
Guadeloupe	2	0,3	-	-
Haiti	28	5,7	1	Anthropoid
Martinique	1	0,3	-	-
Puerto Rico	9	3,5	6	Pelican
Dominican Republic	49	5,3	2	Star
Trinidad-Tobago	5	1,1	2	Lizard
Bolivia	1099	5,2	4	Watcher
Colombia	1139	26,1	5	Emerald
Ecuador	284	8	1	P-20
Guyana	215	0,8	-	-
Paraguay	407	3	5	Walker
Peru	1285	17,3	6	Andean
Suriname	163	0,4	-	-
Venezuela	912	13,5	8	Ranger
Argentina	2767	26,7	13	Gaicho
Chile	757	11	5	Salt
Uruguay	176	2,9	2	Mill
Brasil	8512	118,7	16	Colossus

The codes on this list are consistent with two code names that I was aware of in 1967. In January of that year, I was on a mission in the international waters of the Gulf of Campeche, near the Mexican coast. I had to wait on board the shrimp fishing boat Tiburon⁷⁸ for the arrival of two Cuban agents from South America, Abelardo Sanchez (el Cura⁷⁹) and José Tamayo; moreover, I had to wait on the

night of the 17th of the same month, between midnight and five in the morning, for a boat that would be identified by three long and three short light signals. The man I was to meet was named after Omar and had in his possession half a ten-ruble ticket, the other half of which I kept. My code name was "Mariposa"⁸⁰. Indeed, on the scheduled date and within the agreed hours, a 35-metre yacht appeared with a Panamanian flag, registered under the name of Maria II; after mutual identification, Agent Omar gave me a large sealed envelope that he locked in a special metal case and told me that if discovered, I would do on the buttons on the left A, C and F, and on those on the right 1, 3 and 5, and that I would throw it away so that it could explode. He told me to communicate verbally to the KGB contact agent and member of Cuban Security Stanovich, who was a senior officer, Deputy Minister of Interior Ramiro Valdés, the following message:

"Unable to establish contact with Pelican I - Maya III requests a rapid-fire transmitter for Area 43."

Later, I was able to know that "Pelican" was the group from Puerto Rico and "Maya" was the group from Mexico, which confirmed the authenticity of the list. No doubt, the text of the messages had nothing to do with their true meaning, but the code names were correct.

It seemed to me that Agent Omar must have been a high level KGB mole and that he must have lived in Brazil. Indeed, unless it was misinformation on his part, he used Portuguese to address the only crew member on board.

On another occasion, a friend confessed to me that he had completed a similar mission at Montreal airport, where a stranger with a feather in his hat was to give him a verbal message. At the speed of the action, he could not correctly understand the text that said: "Edmundo Hormiga... el mundo hormiga..."⁸², in the end that was all he understood and the Soviet contact in Havana failed to decipher the

message despite an interrogation lasting several hours to try to draw something clearer.

To resume the course of events, in January 1949, Stalin decided that all the PCs in America should openly pass to the opposition, and if possible by changing their names, as the Cuban PC had done, which had become the People's Socialist Party (PSP).

Earl Browder wanted to be God; Stalin had used it as an instrument of his policy of rapprochement with the United States, but when relations between the two countries began to become tense, everything Browder had done or said now gave a negative image of communism. Already in April 1945, the Latin American CPs had launched a major offensive against Browder. Stalin's position in this case was very delicate; in 1943, he had promised the dissolution of the Komintern and was acting by pretending not to be interested in the activities of foreign CPs. Fabio Grobart informed the KGB that he alone could not support a unilateral battle against Browder and that it was necessary for the "Spartacus" group to support its attacks by engaging the agents who controlled the propaganda sector. In April 1945, in the *Cahiers du communisme*, an organ of the PCF devoted to theoretical problems, Jacques Duclos sounded the charge of the requested offensive. In a caustic article, he openly accused Browder of revisionism, of having liquidated the independent party of the working class of the United States, of having developed a theory leading to disunity about the disappearance of class struggle on a global scale and of having sown dangerous ideas and illusions based on the Tehran conference which had only had a protocol value. This accusation by the PCF, which was the beloved child of the already dissolved Communist International, was a clear warning to activists around the world: Moscow condemned Browder to ostracism. This warning was not only a problem of discussing two Marxist theories. Through Maurice Thorez, Stalin led a major campaign in Europe against the American PC leader. It is indisputable that, after the dissolution of the Communist International, Thorez was the official

spokesman for the policy dictated by Moscow and, together with Jacques Duclos, one of the pillars of the "Spartacus" group in Europe.

It is difficult to address such sensitive issues without unleashing an endless controversy and for the CPs to shout their innocence at all costs against all odds. Vienna first, then Paris, were the headquarters of the "Spartacus" network, and this is proven by the files of an infinite number of spies recruited in these two capitals. Certainly they themselves did not know the code name of the operation, because these spies had contact only with the officer who recruited them and they were in the most complete ignorance of the gears in which they found themselves.

The Federal Republic of Germany also had to suffer from this mole plague, which reached the highest level; we remember the scandal that splashed Chancellor Willy Brandt. Mr. Shimon Peres, when he was head of the Israeli National Defense at the time of Ben Gurion, was somewhat surprised to discover that a respectable colonel had given the plan of operations for the Suez War in 1956.

In both the "Caraïbe" group from 1928 and the "Spartacus" group from 1930-1932, the spying work carried out was fabulous. However, Havana had been the pilot experiment that will be renewed with even greater force after the Spanish War. As for the "Caribbean" group, one in three members had the task of recruiting moles; despite the establishment of this powerful operational base, especially after the triumph of the revolution, there were espionage networks that did not answer to the Cuban leadership and operated under the direct control of the KGB in Moscow.

There is a completely separate organisation on the fringes of this espionage work which, although keeping the same methods and the same compartmentalisation in the structures, is dedicated solely to the manipulation of terrorist groups. Most of the time, the latter do not know that they are toys in the hands of the KGB, whose purpose is to create political unrest. Only a few leaders were sent to the USSR to Patrice Lumumba University for special training.

The Soviet contact office with the Cuban secret service authorities operates under the name of "Bureau 13", and it is from this representation in Havana that joint projects are developed. The general rule is to communicate the names of the terrorists who are to come to Cuba, the organization to which they belong and the type of assistance requested by "Bureau 13". Almost always, it is a matter of keeping them for five or six months in the urban guerrilla and clandestine struggle training centres located in Sierra de los Organos (Camilo Cienfuegos special training centre).

This has long been a constant. However, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, an infinite number of hijacked aircraft arrived in Havana. Many were confused by adventurers or madmen, but 95% of these pirates were members of the organization "Black Panthers" manipulated by the "Bureau 13" and the KGB. The Soviets, taking advantage of the very strong Muslim current that existed within this organization, coordinated with Yasser Arafat and Houari Boumediene to send the leaders of these underground terrorist groups to Algeria to receive training in Palestinian guerrilla camps.

The perfection of "Office 13" is such that, personally, I have never met a single one of these black rebels who really knows who he was working for, to the point that almost all those with whom I spoke were often anti-Soviet, and only God knows how many I have met!

This paramilitary branch was recruited and organized under the beard of the FBI and CIA with almost total impunity. Later, it is certain that they neutralized and liquidated these groups by penetrating them at all levels, but I wonder if the CIA or the FBI discovered the KGB's claw in this case. Have they ever got to the bottom of the problem? Even the Cuban secret services, which collaborated to a large extent with the "Bureau 13" in this area, are not in a position to reveal the real game of the KGB.

Terrorist movements are not born in the world by spontaneous generation, and, as far as I know, it is not in universities that we

learn to use explosives or plastic, nor the use of a machine gun or the art of becoming an expert in conspiracy. Yes, Cuba has a lot to do with these facts, especially in Latin America, but also in Africa and elsewhere. The facade of a rebellious and belligerent Cuba is used to hide the KGB.

The evidence of what I'm saying? They are very difficult to present, but no doubt is allowed. How can we get a confession from a member of these international terrorist groups when they themselves do not know that they are being subjected to diabolical manipulation? Only high-level leaders know the contacts, the economic sources and they are the only ones who have been trained in Moscow. It is almost impossible to get a confession from these fanatics, and it seems that Havana is being asked to endorse the lower-level or less reliable executives. Every time a high-ranking member of the hierarchy is captured and speaks, he has surely been trained in Cuba.

This unreal universe of espionage, where the sun never penetrates, is in reality a world like Kafka's, full of confused ideas. But that is not all, the 75% of diplomats in the socialist countries are active members of the secret services, which, sheltered from diplomatic immunity, carry out espionage work; the remaining 25% are employees, an essential condition for being able to work abroad.

For Western counter-intelligence special radio listening services, knowing that shortwave band spectra are used to send messages from spy networks is nothing new; they transmit them in 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 and 2 metres with fast firing transmitters that send these messages to USSR embassies, preferably in Europe, or to those of other socialist countries. If, by any chance, there are a few unbelievers in good faith, I invite them to pass by any USSR embassy, anywhere in the world, so that they can see with their own eyes the profusion of receiving antennas that are installed there.

Legendary character? Who ever heard Fabio Grobart's name mentioned in the Cuban revolution? This unknown and tenebrous

genius was nevertheless the one who presided over the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in December 1975, in the presence of the leaders of the Communist and Workers' Parties of 85 countries of the world. From his strong foreign accent, he read the list of elected members, starting with Fidel Castro, to the last of the members of the hierarchy. What conclusions do international policy experts draw from this?

For insiders of the secret service world, Colonel Fabio Grobart's only merit is that he was the head of the "Caribbean" espionage network on the American continent until 1967, although he is known for other qualities: decorated as a "hero of the Soviet Union", four times decorated with the order of the "First Class Red Flag", twice decorated as a "socialist work hero". He is one of the few agents who received a decoration during a session of the Central Committee of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) for service to the Communist International.

If you refuse to believe that a foreigner presided over the 1st Congress of the CCP, you will only have to open any official Cuban document and you will see that the only foreign member of the Cuban CP is Fabio Grobart. For example, you can consult the periodical *Granma*, the official organ of the CCP, which during the month of December 1975 only spoke about the First Congress, or you can rely on the journals: *Cuba* or *Bohemia*. If these sources do not seem reliable to you, you still have information from foreign news agencies that have correspondents in Havana, such as the *France-Presse*, *Reuter* or *Efe* agencies.

KGB Colonel Fabio Grobart is a quiet old man who, from his position as a member of the CCP Central Committee and head of the History Department, reshapes pre-revolutionary events. He no longer heads the secret services of the "Caribbean" organization, but his influence on Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl is enormous and they have an almost mystical respect for him. Whenever there have been serious differences between Moscow and Havana, Grobart has

served as a mediator. He has always managed to maintain close contact with the KGB and the Cuban secret services, particularly in the field of collaboration and exchanges between services, when the Kremlin's external political line disapproved of the guerrilla movements sponsored by Cuba. While the Soviet leaders condemned Fidel Castro's hardline and his behaviour in Latin America, in the shadows and in the strictest silence, the KGB continued to work with us and supported terrorist groups, of which the hard elements of Castro were well aware.

Yes, Grobart's influence over the Castro brothers has a double explanation: Raúl was recruited in 1951 by Flavio Bravo⁸³ who was the general secretary of the Socialist Youth (PC youth branch), who also had an activity as an agent of the "Caribbean" group for the recruitment and selection of agents who were to act in the agitators' groups.

Raúl attended the "World Festival of Young Democrats" in Prague and, in 1952, attended a three-month training course in Moscow.

Fidel was recruited as a mole in August 1946 by agent Vittorio Vidali, also from the "Caribbean", who was a senior official of the organization. Fidel's first action as a clandestine agent was in 1947. In May of that year, Rolando Masferrer, who had been a member of the Communist Youth until 1945 and had fought in the International Brigades, organized an invasion with Eufemio Fernández and Manolo Castro, who came from the "Authentic Party", to free Santo Domingo from the dictator Trujillo. The plan of this armed operation went all the way back to the highest political levels. Manolo Castro, who was the president of the FEU (University Student Federation), was in direct contact with the Minister of Education, José Manuel Alemán, who was conspiring against President Grau San Martín and had received a large shipment of weapons from Perón, President of the Argentine Republic, providing the operation with equipment.

President Grau did not object to it; about 1,500 future fighters were training in Cayo Confites, the concentration of this troop, the vast majority of which was composed of gangsters from rival gangs, was about to generate a tidy battle.

The news was that the only way to start the invasion was to buy two landing boats and a few planes. However, in parallel with these rumours, we heard about the possibility of a coup d'état. Faced with this situation, President Grau San Martín ordered the army chief, General Pérez Damera, to disperse the concentration of troops in Cayo Confites, which he did without any objection from the occupants. In the end, this farce of Cayo Confitti, which, in theory, aimed to free Santo Domingo from Trujillo, then Nicaragua from Somoza, and so on all the dictatorships of Latin America, was set up by Mario Salabarría, leader of the MSR⁸⁴ faction, and Emilio Tro, leader of the UIR⁸⁵.

It goes without saying that the Cayo Confites operation was a public secret, known to everyone and followed step by step in the press at the time. This armed operation of a certain scale worried the "Caribbean" group, which infiltrated several secret agents. Among them was Fidel Castro, who was providing his first spy services there and who, at that time, already had some experience in the Cuban political scene. The PSP (People's Socialist Party) also sent its observers on its own account, and we find in this tower of Babel de Cayos Confites, Carlos Franqui as a journalist from Hoy and, supposedly a fighter, he stayed there for the three months that the training lasted.

This stage in Fidel's life, linked to gangsterism, dates back to my earliest childhood, but I have fond memories of it.

The first time my hands touched a real gun and I heard a gun detonating with that characteristic smell of burnt powder, it was Fidel's 45 caliber gun. My grandmother lived in San Rafael Street, 1107, a short distance from the university; at that time, my two aunts were in higher education and the house was always full of stu-

dents. My aunt Celia was in the same year of law school as Fidel, and the group of future lawyers was studying with my grandmother; there were, in addition to my aunt, Alfredo Yabur who was Minister of Justice of the revolutionary government until his death, Lidia Ferreido (Fidel's first private secretary after the revolution), who at that time was his fiancée, and others who escape my memory.

Every time they sat down to study around the big dining room table and I came to bother them (I was about 3 years old), Fidel would give me his gun so that I would stay calm, without ever thinking that this act could have consequences because, before he handed me the gun, he would take the magazine out of it. One day, without knowing how, I managed to take the magazine that was on the table and charge the gun. As expected, a blow went off and injured Alfredo Yabur who spent a month in hospital. Invariably, every time I saw Fidel after the revolution, he would allude to the case and say: "This is the only man who made me run on the rooftops of Havana."

This accident was a terrible thing for my grandmother because the house was invaded by the police, rushed because of the detonation. She called Fidel "the devil", and it is so true that at the time of the revolution, when she realized that Fidel Castro was none other than the leader, she said that a madman could not rule the country and she emigrated to the United States with her whole family (I was an exception).

Today my grandmother is ninety-two years old and lives in New York, but she still remembers that Fidel borrowed 300 pesos from her and never returned them to her. If by any chance you read this book, Fidel, remember that you owe Leonarda those 300 pesos and that you never gave them back. You also borrowed a blue gabardine suit from my uncle Daniel who never saw him again.

At that time, Fidel looked like a bully and, when he couldn't pass a university exam through the normal channels, he did it at gunpoint by intimidating professors. As an anecdote, I can tell you that one day he obtained for Alfredo Yabur, his friend, admission to a

third-year criminal law exam in exchange for a box of H. Upman cigars. After the revolution, Fidel joked with Yabur that he was a lawyer because of him, and that he knew the law as much as Donald Duck knew football.

But let's get back to the facts. After these comings and goings among the gangsters, and later after the farce of the events in Cayo Confites, we find Fidel alongside the communists. In April 1948, in an inexplicable way, Fidel left for Bogota, the capital of Colombia, for a meeting of Latin American students; what does not agree is that during this trip his great friend is Alfredo Guevara⁸⁶, president of the FEU for the Faculty of Philosophy and known for his communist activism. In addition, he had activities within the "Caribbean" group in the cells of agitation. This couple was very mismatched, Fidel's character did not match that of Alfredo Guevara, sweet and peaceful, who had even been accused of being homosexual because of his assignment. One of the participants on the trip, Amador Garcia⁸⁷, who was a law student, told me that Fidel, Alfredo Guevara and Eustaquio Diaz⁸⁸, who, like Fidel, had not previously demonstrated a political tendency, were lost on the night of 8 April 1948, and that the rest of the delegation had no news of them until they met them three months later in Havana. However, it was on April 9, 1948 that Jorge Eleicer Gaitán, leader of the Liberal Party, was assassinated, causing an extraordinary revolt in Colombia, a revolt better known as the "Bogota coup". When, on April 9, the insurreccional movement exploded, an OAS (Organization of American States) conference was to open in Bogota. She had to be suspended.

The FBI leaked information that Gaitán's murder was a communist plot to prevent the conference. This point is too obscure and it is very difficult to explain an event that took place thirty years earlier. That Fidel and Alfredo Guevara took three months to return to Havana is a sure fact that I have been able to verify by various witnesses, but as for their participation in the "Bogota coup", there is nothing certain. Only a Colombian resident in Havana since 1960,

Francisco Correa, who has the status of a political exile, and who spent his life from bar to bar, in a deplorable state, suggests, from time to time, that he was a comrade in Fidel's struggle in Colombia. I don't take this detailed testimony seriously, because we don't know if Correa (nicknamed "Pancho Bacardi"⁸⁹) is drunk all the time, if the alcohol drove him crazy or if he says anything.

The capture of the Moncada barracks in July 1953 is a piece that also does not fit into the puzzle of Fidel's biography. How can we explain that a man, not initiated into the art of conspiracy, could have succeeded in setting up an organization such that, when the future attackers first met in Santiago de Cuba (the city where the events took place), a few hours before the attack, they had never seen each other and they knew nothing about the mission they were about to accomplish. Very few had met before. Each group had trained in different places and only knew the members of their cell. Among more than 120 men, only 6 were aware of the mission, and each one had a partial vision of it. Fidel had not explained to anyone the plans for the project or its scope.

On these facts, journalist Robert Merle wrote a magnificent book, *Moncada, Fidel Castro's first fight*. The testimony gathered is of incalculable value and is very close to reality. However, some of the testimonies that the author only collected in writing do not satisfy me at all. The one that makes me think most that the truth has been hidden from him is Fidel Labrador. This former barracks attacker lives in the city of Artemisa (where many of them came from) and no one can interview him, not even the national press journalists. This character does not hide to say that Fidel is a bastard who hadn't said anything to anyone or explained anything before the arrival in Santiago de Cuba and that, if finally the majority of the attackers participated in the action, it was so that they would not be called cowards.

It is obvious that there are passages that have been hidden. For example, Jesús Montane Oropesa⁹⁰, denied until the end his partici-

pation in the attack, even after being tried. When he left the model prison on Île des Pins, he said that Fidel had led him on a boat. Later, he joined the fight against Batista again, and Fidel forgave him for his ambiguous attitude. Today, he appears as a worthy hero of the attack on the Moncada barracks.

The famous document History will acquit me does not enter into reality either. It was disclosed as the Defense used by Fidel. The full text was, in fact, written in the model prison on Île des Pins, and it had nothing to do with the pleading of the judgment.

On this episode, Robert Merle had an interview with Cuban journalist Marta Rojas, who attended the trial and testified to the veracity of the document and Fidel's attitude; however, it is worth recalling that the trial took place behind closed doors and the press was not allowed to enter. Marta Rojas had access to the courtroom because she had been the mistress of a Batista minister⁹¹ and represented *Prensa Libre*, a newspaper that supported the dictator. After the revolution, she had the choice between remaining the minister's girlfriend and following him to the United States, which was not very attractive for a mulatto in the country of racial discrimination, or becoming Fidel's privileged witness. What would you have done in his place? She opted for the second solution, which did not only give her small advantages in Castro journalism.

The staging of the attack is almost perfect, but I still think Fidel didn't act alone for the Moncada. I know it is tricky to venture on this point, but.... on July 26, 1953, Fabio Grobart was in Santiago de Cuba under the pretext of a PSP assembly.

On the night of July 25, 1953, Fidel Castro left Granjita Siboney, where the conspirators were gathered, for the city of Santiago with two men, Abel Santamaría and Pedro Trigo, under the pretext of seeing a friend⁹² who was to read a proclamation on the local radio. Abel left for the small village of El Cobre to pick up Dr. Muñoz and Trigo was ordered by Fidel to wait for him in a public garden called Aguilera. For two hours, Fidel remained alone in Santiago. The pre-

text to visit the radio commentator, Luis Conte, did not make sense. Fidel knew perfectly well that Conte was in Havana where the station had been transferred.

Until then, everything fits in with Merle's testimony about Fidel's departure from Santiago, however, I personally received the testimony of an old collaborator of Fabio Grobart who assured me that he had accompanied him a month earlier to Santiago, where they rented a house in Enramada Street at number 28 and that, during the night of 25 July 1953, Fabio Grobart and Fidel had a long interview there. The witness who reported these facts to me was Joaquín León, who for several years was the trusted man of the "Caribbean Zorro". Unfortunately, this extraordinary witness, who could damage many prefabricated theories and expose Fidel Castro, died in 1977 of a heart attack, but I know that even in his lifetime he would not have testified before any Western journalist, because he made this confession to me at the height of jubilation and presented me Fidel as "one of us".

What bothers me most is that I cannot prove this fact accurately and that it can be taken as an ingenious hypothesis. After many years spent with the ruling elite in Cuba, where I witnessed and often acted during the first twenty years of the revolution, my most sincere opinion is that Fidel Castro has been an agent of the KGB since 1947. Did Allen Dulles, who was CIA director when Castro came to power, foresee this possibility? What is certain is that a communist became head of government 90 miles from the United States without the American information services seeming to have been aware of it.

CHAPTER III

KGB LEADS THE GAME

With Anastase Mikoyan's visit to Cuba, doubts were dispelled. Even those who still had a glimmer of hope about the country's political destiny and had believed until the last minute in the victory of radical nationalism, understood that this choice of the East was definitive and that Fidel Castro had deliberately lied when he promised other horizons.

At the same time, all the print, radio and television media attacked in an open and aggressive manner. Until then, the criticisms had remained more or less veiled. Fidel's policy was defended by the periodical *Revolución*, the official organ of the July 26 Movement, and by the newspaper *Hoy*, of the PSP (PC).

Fidel's false promises were collapsing like a house of cards. In unison, several national newspapers devoted all their editorials to the contradictions in the Prime Minister's speeches and to unearthing the worst of the communists' history. It seems that in this battle, all blows were allowed.

The great offensive of the written press began with the publication of a few well-chosen sentences pronounced by Fidel during a press conference in New York on April 17, 1959, which were spread in large print on the front page: "I say in a clear and definitive way that we are not communists. "On the same page, and in even larger characters: "Our revolution is olive green like Cuban palms", and below: "The revolution is like a melon, green outside and red inside."

These and other blatant contradictions were revealed, sometimes with the seriousness that the case required, other times in a facetious tone so particular to Cubans.

Things did not stop there. The editorials that the newspaper *Hoy* had published about the attack on the Moncada barracks were pub-

lished by the opposition press. The communists had no escape. They had described this action as "gangsterism" and "classic putsch of the petty bourgeoisie". Members of the party's senior hierarchy must have known the plans, at least the political office and the secretariat were aware of them. The actions of the illegal immigrants were never mixed with those of the legal members, but for an action of this magnitude, there is no doubt that as a security measure they had been informed. In the end, the communists fell into the trap they had prepared themselves, because they could not make public Fidel's contact with the Kremlin and had to endure stoically that they were attacked with the arguments they had used to defend themselves in 1953.

Statements were published by members of the PSP national office who had been forced to comment on the events in Moncada because of the "coincidence" of their presence in Santiago de Cuba on 26 July 1953. All the statements were, without exception, virulent attacks against Fidel Castro, not to mention insults and insults. One of the members of the political bureau, Joaquín Ordoqui, called Fidel and all the attackers "a bunch of sons of bitches". However, one year after the revolution, the same gentleman was commander of the rebel army without having participated in the struggle and, even better, deputy minister of the armed forces later.

The 120-strong KGB group from the "Disinformation and Agitation Division" was tasked with monitoring the problem of press freedom in Cuba. Colonel Ulianov was the leader of this group of 85 Soviet specialists and 35 translators, most of whom were of Hispanic-Soviet origin, but all were agents. This group was housed in the Siboney area, in several residences that had been abandoned by their owners after their hasty departure for the United States.

Two days later, Ulianov gave us a lecture at the G-2 premises on the importance of misinformation and unrest during the transition phase of the system. The subtlety of the subject sometimes escaped us and it was difficult for us, the men of the Cuban G-2, to rise to

the occasion. The end of the presentation revolved around conscious and unconscious motivations, and mass psychology; more than a subject adapted to the secret services, it seemed to us rather a course in psychiatry.

When the conference was over, when the Russians had left, our chief Ramiro Valdés brought us together to tell us that he, too, had not understood much, but that we had to trust the advisors, that our role should be limited to discretion, and that anyone who said a single word would be shot. In any case, we were not very numerous, because only the section chiefs and trusted persons had been summoned, we did not exceed the number of 50.

It was a great relief for the G-2 agents to learn that they would not have to intervene alongside Ulianov. The Cuban side was chaired by César Escalante, who was a member of the political bureau of the PSP and brother of Anibal, the second secretary of the PSP; Edith García Buchaca was appointed second in charge for the cultural sector, she was herself a member of the PSP and the wife of Joaquín Ordoqui, another senior official of the PSP I have already mentioned. The rest of the staff were chosen by the PSP from among its activists. The nature of the operation had to remain hidden at all possible levels. Colonel Ulianov became the doctor of political science Ulianov, and the rest of the agents of the professors of Marxism, philosophy, journalists, etc. The G-2 officer Casimiro Quintana (Pacheco), a PSP activist, who was a lawyer, was in charge of contact missions at the level of the KGB directorates and special division and was the director of a group of 20 men who would deal with cultural issues.

The free press took its last blow when Fidel declared in a speech: "To betray Christ is to betray the revolution. "There was a shower of editorials calling him a Pharisee and a Judas, and the Christian Democratic Movement launched a large-scale campaign of terrorism.

The nationalization of the press was a sharp blow that decapitated the little hope of those who still believed.

The rhythm of the anti-Yankees and anti-CIA news that was daily scheduled exceeded the figure of 20 to 25; it was received directly from Moscow and adapted by the group of specialists who were in Cuba; moreover, all the press organs had to keep a rate of 75% of their spaces for agitation and maintain in the masses a permanent hatred against the symbols of capitalism.

Just read the newspapers of that time. The periodical *Revolución*, which had a special edition called *Lunes de la Revolución*⁹³ and had still kept a controversial tone, was also chaperoned by Edith García Buchaca. The organ of the July 26 Movement could not even go beyond the limits set by the rigid Disinformation and Agitation Division of the KGB.

After this plague came another one; true teachers of Marxism-Leninism arrived like a cloud of locusts to teach us the philosophy of the working class. No one could escape it, from Fidel, who had his private teacher, to the last of the militiamen who benefited from *Capacitación revolucionaria*⁹⁴ courses invariably given by an old communist militant.

During a visit I made to Che, I found him immersed in Karl Marx's *Capital*. He also attended the study program for senior executives. But at the same time, it was he who put Trotsky's *Armed Prophet* and Isaac Deutscher's *Political Biography of Stalin* in my hands. Che's personality will always intrigue me. There is no doubt about it, he was a left-wing man with advanced ideas, but I don't think he was a strong supporter of Soviet communism. His supposed break with Eastern Communism is to many observers based on his speech in Algeria on February 20, 1965, during the Second Afro-Asian Solidarity Economic Seminar, where he harshly criticized the forms of trade relations between the socialist and Third World countries. However, long before that, he had had to suffer from the dishonesty of his so-called friends. While he was Minister

of Industry, he had to face scams from Czechoslovakia, the Soviets, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Germans, etc. Czechs, he said they were thieves. And it is true that in 1960 they sold us for gold an old weaponry that was useless and that they made us endorse a gigantic factory (IMPUD of Santa Clara) which according to them possessed the most developed technology; to date, it has only ever produced pressure cookers. As for the Soviets⁹⁵, their premeditation was permanent, the equipment they provided us never had the minimum qualities required. In fact, they all exploited the ignorance and ingenuity of the Cuban leaders. In 1965, on African lands in Congo, when Che made his first attempt at internationalist guerrilla warfare, he once said: "I hope the Russians never arrive on these lands because otherwise these poor blacks will have to undergo a second colonialism. "It is desirable that the leader of the opposition in Angola, Holden Roberto, can one day talk about this subject, Che told him his concerns on this issue.

The drop of venom that increased anti-yankee hatred daily was used to prepare the culture broth that was simmered to declare the communist character of the revolution. On April 17, 1961, Fidel Castro removed his mask and declared his intentions. When he announced that Cuba was a socialist, the time was right, the invasion of the Bay of Pigs was coming, and the problem of conscience faced by every citizen was very difficult: to be with or against the Fatherland. The patriotic feelings of each citizen were at stake, and although the majority remained in doubt, another party, exalted by the historical moment and the aggravating circumstances of the invaded homeland, continued the struggle with the revolution.

The Americans were not very skillful in the Cuban case. The positions of strength, which began with Eisenhower and continued with his successor J.F. Kennedy, only fuelled the hatred of the powerful Yankee, so common among the peoples of Latin America. Kennedy's undecided character and weakness were other major reasons for the survival of the Cuban revolution. Kennedy could not

take advantage of the moment in the face of the exaltation of the Soviet leader Khrushchev and enforce his rights in America's area of influence.

I believe that the KGB's Disinformation and Agitation Division that settled in Cuba on March 3, 1960, was the determining factor that supported Fidel Castro in power during the first years of transition. Once Cuban executives were trained in this specialty, the services of Soviet advisors were reduced to a small number, although the majority of "directed" information continues to be received through Tass agency channels. Between 1962 and 1968, there was a cooling of exchanges between the services of the two countries, but labour relations never broke down. Traditionally, the leaders of the Cuban part of the NRC (Revolutionary Steering Committee), now called DOR (Revolutionary Steering Department), were former PSP militants, and the fact that they were not active members of the G-2 was respected.

In addition to these powerful paramilitary services that serve the interests of the G-2 through their parallel work, there are the two national television channels, all radio stations and control of the print media. In addition, it has a news agency, Prensa Latina, and a radio station that broadcasts its programmes in eight languages abroad: "Radio Havana Cuba". The work, in the national context, is purely in the field of controlled propaganda, and the newspaper Granma is used on rare occasions as a vehicle for misinformation to foreign observers. The majority of television, radio and press executives "Prensa Latina", all staff come from the G-2. In many cases, it uses the services of foreigners who act as external correspondents and are recruited agents. Apart from their work as journalists, they are also active informants in the intelligence services. Thanks to "Prensa Latina", a permanent flow of misinformation is sent abroad.

"Radio Havana Cuba" has a similar structure, with the particularity that its broadcasts are used to transmit code messages in many cases. Sometimes, speakers see editorial notes inserted into their

programmes that must be read and have content that has nothing to do with the line of the programme. They may suspect that there is something curious about this, but nothing transpires from the case. Foreign speakers are not directly linked to the workings of the G-2, but their treating officers "take care of them". This particular modality is only a kind of moral compromise and does not pass into the secret work sector. Its function is to solve daily problems in a country of shortage where there are food and industrial rationing. In these cases, silence is bought by the well-being of the belly.

This press control policy was absolute and, from the beginning, it included all sectors. As I have already said, only the newspaper *Revolución*, the official organ of the July 26 Movement, escaped this manipulation for a few months. The editor of the periodical, Carlos Franqui, as we know, had been the propaganda leader of Fidel's troops in Sierra Maestra but, although he was very close to the leader of the revolution, he was foreign to the mechanisms that were being established under the control of the KGB. The members of the communist leadership were suspicious of him because he was a dissident of the PSP. The reason for his expulsion had been the dispute that had existed, when he was a journalist from *Hoy* (the official organ of the PSP), between him and his director Anibal Escalante (the second secretary of the PSP); Franqui had procrastinated about the publication of Marxist texts. The issues of *Lunes de la Revolución* had considerable polemical content and sparked a heated discussion against the former leaders of the PSP. On June 16, 1961, Carlos Franqui and his collaborators were summoned to a meeting of intellectuals at the National Library without being informed of the topics to be discussed. Edith García Buchaca, who dealt with cultural issues, accused them in an unusual tone of all the counter-revolutionary crimes that might exist; the group of communists who were present attacked them with equal force. Two other meetings were held on the same subject. Carlos Franqui and his group did not want to give in to the communists, and Fidel intervened on June 30 to

prove the agents manipulated by the KGB right in a speech in which, practically accusing the members of *Lunes de la Revolución*, he said: "In the revolution all freedoms, against the revolution, no freedom."

Carlos Franqui was soon after removed from his position as director of the newspaper *Revolución* and remained condemned to ostracism until 1967 when Fidel called him to organize the Cultural Congress. He occupied this position of responsibility by chance. The leader of the revolution had removed him from the public arena, but to give a better image to the European intellectuals who met in Havana, it was necessary to choose a personality from Sierra Maestra. Cuba, which at the time was ideologically opposed to the Kremlin, wanted to seduce certain left-wing intellectuals who were not active in the PCs. Franqui had both the virtue of a guerrilla and that of a victim of the communists. For this reason, his revolutionary star shone again during the masquerade of the Cultural Congress. A year later, when Fidel began a new honeymoon with the Kremlin, approving the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops, all that remained for Franqui was to go into exile in Italy so as not to be ostracized again by his former friends.

With the arrival of the Disinformation and Propaganda Division, which came to advise the Cuban G-2 at the beginning of the revolution, the long apprenticeship of the secret services began for me.

In March 1960, a few days apart, 280 new advisers arrived whose objective was to give the G-2 a real operational and secret character and to completely overhaul everything that had been done so far. The aim was not yet to create the gigantic machine that the Cuban secret services are currently forming, but to lay the foundations for it. We, the new G-2 agents, were becoming clandestine agents operating under different names. We were not even supposed to reveal our true identity to the groups under our control.

The first steps towards the world of secrecy and silence that is espionage were difficult. All the parameters, way of life and personality, had to change radically. There were 50 of us chosen to take the

courses that would turn us into espionage experts and elite secret service men. It is worth recalling that these courses began in March 1960 when the communist character of the revolution had not yet been declared. Perhaps for this reason, only 15 of us came from the rebel army, everything else, with a few exceptions, came from the PSP.

The group was not representative of the general level of education of the revolution's leaders. Almost all its members had a university degree and a strong general and political culture. I was probably the exception, because I was the youngest (17 years old) and I had not yet finished high school, but I had the advantage of being fluent in English having studied in Miami. I also spoke Italian and French with a certain ease. I had learned Italian with two roommates from my school, the Milanese. Certainly this knowledge of languages had an influence on my career, but I believe that the decisive factor was my relationship with Osvaldo Dorticos, the new President of the Republic.

Divided into groups of 10 agents, we received very specialized and accelerated training. We were spread over several places. In general, these were farms around Havana.

After five months of intensive training, our teachers thought we were ready. The most difficult part was personal Defense, the Soviet instructor who taught the courses was a real savage. At a time when karate was still little known in the Western world, he taught us the Korean Kitsul which is even more violent and dangerous. Moreover, this internship ended badly for one of us, a 41-year-old lawyer and PSP activist, he was hit on the head and died of a hemiplegia.

Appointed lieutenant, each of us (there were only 49 of us left) was responsible for supervising between twenty and fifty officers who would act as contacts between the lower-level officers and the indicators.

The information was easy to obtain because the CDRs (Revolutionary Defense Committees) that had been created to ensure mass

surveillance kept giving information or making accusations. It was logical that this mass Humint⁹⁶ work was not very objective, but in general at least 10% of the information received was valid.

The contact agents under our command knew they were working for the G-2, but they knew nothing about the initial contacts with the KGB. They worked with different offices, and members of different departments did not know each other. They had a G-2 identity card in their name, but they used a war name for contact with lower ranks who also had an official card and did not know who they were working for, who their leaders were or where the management lived. The compartmentalization was so rigorous that I knew a base agent who was my neighbour (I knew this from the reports I received from him through the contact officers) and he never suspected that I was his head of department.

Between the heads of offices, I work in sectors, each one dealing with a particular sector. A weekly meeting ensured the coordination of the various services. For example, it could happen that a working group dealing with the Christian Democratic Movement discovered that a man from that movement had contact with the American embassy. In the coordination meeting, it was determined who was to handle the case, the embassy office or the office that was monitoring the counter-revolutionary movement in question.

All information was sent to the "5th Bureau". The latter, chaired by Ramiro Valdés, was composed of a small group of Cubans and a large number of Soviet advisors. We, who were office managers, did not know the identity of the members of the "5th Bureau", we did not even know where he was staying. Our contact was maintained by high-level agents who formed the top of the pyramid. In my particular case, the senior officer was Manuel Piñeiro⁹⁷, who almost always came with a Soviet named Ivan. I was limited to my level of information too, I only knew that the top group of the organization was in direct contact with the highest leaders of the revolution.

My job was still to prosecute former Batista war criminals and locate them outside. Perhaps the greatest disappointment I had in my work as a secret agent was that Batista died quietly in her bed in exile and that dozens of criminals who had helped her regime continue to live without problems in many countries. If there is anything wrong with the Cuban counter-revolution, it is that it has too often compromised itself with these criminals.

Perhaps there are other stages of my life on the guerrilla paths in the world that I will tell about one day, when time will have crossed the borders of hatred and it will only be a romantic past, but I have no shame in confessing that I have succeeded in capturing 321 former war criminals, 43 of whom were sentenced to death and the others to prison terms. It is also pleasing to me to have the full certainty that no innocent person was convicted.

Throughout 1960, intense work was carried out against anti-communist organizations that were increasing their activities. Despite the fact that they received discreet assistance from the CIA allowing them to maintain a constant rate of sabotage, and despite their clandestine structures, they were very vulnerable and G-2 agents often penetrated them without much difficulty up to the management level. The struggle for hegemony between them was another weakness. Within each group there were also many rivalries between leaders. It was practically impossible for two different organizations to cooperate on the same work. When it came to deciding who would lead the operation, everyone wanted to show that they were the strongest. This policy led them to failure. The majority of the conspirators were captured and, for fear of being shot, began to talk like parrots. Every time a saboteur or terrorist was captured, a whole network that had taken months to organize itself was exposed.

On the other hand, each group wanted to be sponsored by the CIA, which did not decide for anyone and offered its help in droves. Very often, the G-2 agents managed to penetrate the conspirator

cores by posing as CIA agents whose name alone inspired confidence, and as everyone wanted to be under the protection of the CIA, it was enough to set up a simple operation and create a legend about the undercover agent for it to work.

Taken in this competition to become the most aggressive organization, some leaders did not appreciate the consequences of their actions with sufficient objectivity. In the province of Camagüey, in September 1960, a terrorist found nothing better to campaign against childhood círculos⁹⁸ than to mix crushed glass with milk for children (aged between 6 months and 4 years). I participated in the interrogations of this man, he had been convicted three times for theft before the revolution. Why did the counter-revolution admit individuals of this kind into its ranks? Needless to say, these cases did not bring any prestige to anti-communist organizations, but rather created a state of popular repulsion, even among those who did not sympathize with the Revolution. Violence breeds violence. Whenever a terrorist of this kind was captured, he was shot and the members of the cell who were aware of the project and approved it. It is certain that there were also excesses and that people were shot for simple sabotage in the factories. The degree of tension was so high that it was the masses of the people who shouted in the streets: "Paredón"⁹⁹! "Practically, there was an escalation of violence on both sides, to such an extent that the urban struggle could be seen as a struggle in an asphalt and concrete jungle where the law of the fastest, strongest, bravest reigned and, unfortunately in many cases, the instinct for self-preservation prevailed over moral concepts. The struggle between men can be fierce and cruel, but the lives of the innocent must not be put at risk. Sabotage in kindergartens, schools, hospitals or factories full of workers not only does no credit to those who execute them, but also harms them.

All those who have experienced the violence, witnesses or victims, remain traumatized; I believe that no one has escaped this state of mind completely and that the entire nation has been affected.

The CIA has often been described as an unscrupulous monster that used all means to achieve its goals. However, personally, I believe that the CIA did not decide to provide more effective assistance to Cuban anti-communist groups precisely because it did not want to be involved in such inhuman terrorist acts.

Many former soldiers found a safe haven in anti-communist organizations. Almost always these elements left for the guerrillas in the mountainous areas, preferably Escambray. Of course, their military knowledge allowed them to quickly assume responsibilities. Not all former soldiers did so, those who were not involved in assassinations or torture were quickly assimilated by the population, and it is certain that their integration into the people did not cause serious problems. Nor can it be said that all guerrillas were fed or commanded by assassins, but when the leaders of the counterrevolution accepted this type of element into their ranks, they signed their disappearance. The Bâtista dictatorship was still too much in people's minds for the people to agree to cooperate with their former executioners.

All these elements were used to the maximum by government propaganda, advised by the KGB's Disinformation Division, which succeeded in passing off all men from the counterrevolution as murderers, thus creating a hostile current of opinion.

The case of Ignacio Sánchez, nicknamed "Cara linda"¹⁰⁰ is representative of the excessive union of anti-communists and former murderers. This individual had been captain of Batista's army in Pinar del Río province under the command of General Menocal¹⁰¹. He had on his file 108 proven murders and 53 that were under investigation. I had met several survivors who had been this man's prisoners. What they had been through was horrible. In particular, I had been informed of a number of castrations that this beast practiced for his pleasure on his prisoners.

"Cara linda" took refuge in the guerrillas of Cordillera de los Órganos, in the very province of Pinar del Río, with the majority of

the men in her gang, known as "the falcons". What I still cannot explain is why some leaders of the counterrevolution agreed to have contacts with this guerrilla group and wanted to appropriate the actions of this group of common criminals and torturers.

In December 1960, I was able to enter this gang through one of my agents who promised them that a CIA man would contact them to meet "Cara linda" and offer her an appointment by the CIA as a colonel in the liberation army. A few days later, the CIA agent's landing on a yacht on the province's coast was simulated. He was expected by members of a counter-revolution cell. I was the supposed CIA agent. I knew perfectly well the sagacity of the guerrilla leader who did not allow any armed person to approach him; for this reason, under my leather jacket, I had hidden a case containing a magnum 44 loaded with cyanide bullets.

After spending seventeen days in six contact houses and avoiding, by some miracle, being searched, I was able to enter the guerrillas. At that time, the G-2 had launched a gigantic encirclement operation because they thought I was already dead. When I was in front of "Cara linda" surrounded by soldiers, I told him that I would only deal with important matters with him alone, face to face, without the presence of his bodyguards, because the operative plans we were going to talk about were secret. After hesitating for a few seconds, he ordered his men to move away a few dozen metres. I continued the conversation to give him and his men enough confidence, who at first did not lose sight of me; after half an hour, they had forgotten me, but "Cara linda" did not remove her finger from the trigger of an M-3 machine gun with which he held me up throughout the conversation. I decided that the time had come and opened my jacket to give him the famous colonel appointment the CIA was offering him. He was perplexed for a moment in front of the paper, then decided to grab it and look at it more closely. It was time to act. I fired twice before disappearing into the nearby forest, towards the interior of the mountain, followed by the guerrillas who wanted to

take me alive. I was able to save my life thanks to the trap that had been set nearby by those who thought I was dead.

This operation was carried out by an external agent who had been captured and who had the code "Magnificent". From that date on, I was known by this name of war in the G-2 for almost twenty years.

After some successful operations of this kind, I had deserved to be finally considered as a man in his own right and even as a tough one. They forgot that I was the president's parent or the young boy whose mascot Che had made for a while. I had become "el Magnifico".

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAINS TO THE BAY OF PIGS

The year 1961 was one of the most eventful in the history of the Cuban revolution: increase in CIA penetration work, cleaning of the anti-communist guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains range, and finally the invasion of the Bay of Pigs.

During the first six months of the year, I hardly participated in national events. My work as a G-2 agent led me mainly to the United States. I carried out four undercover missions in Miami, which was already at that time the main centre of counter-revolutionary conspiracies, and where the CIA had also set up its operating bases against Cuba. My perfect knowledge of English, which I spoke without any accent, allowed me to adapt to the surrounding environment without any difficulty. The four missions I carried out were intended to infiltrate agents in the counter-revolution. The Miami entry point was located on the fishing docks of the "Coficher", a very poorly monitored area. My first three missions were limited to the city of Miami, where the G-2 owned several contact houses on Flagler Street and 8th Street S.W. The fourth trip took me to New York to contact some members of the Black resistance in the Harlem district. If I have one thing to reproach myself for on this fourth trip, it is that I infiltrated the United States Fellarie (el Moro¹⁰²), the Cuban agent who denounced the CIA's plan to assassinate Fidel, a plan that had been drawn up and organized with Rolando Cubelas on his return from the Cuban Embassy in Spain where he was military attaché. In truth, before being detected, he had had all the time he needed to carry out this attack, but at the last moment he lacked courage.

I had just returned from the United States when I was informed of the operation being prepared with the help of Alberto Delgado¹⁰³ (Maisinicu's man). The latter had succeeded in convincing some of the guerrilla groups remaining in Escambray that he was the strongest CIA man in the region and that he would smuggle them into the United States. Four groups were involved and all had in their midst former soldiers with questionable careers and some assassins from the Batista era. Later, during the period they had spent in the Escambray rural guerrilla, they had killed peasants who refused to help them and to collaborate by hanging them with barbed wire. These gangs, instead of trying to gain the trust of the natives of the area as other anti-communist guerrillas had done, wanted to establish themselves through terror.

Among all these gang leaders, the case of "el Carretero"¹⁰⁴ was of particular interest to me. I had been looking for him since 1959 for the murder of 21 people. This individual had been a sergeant in Batista's army, a situation from which he took advantage to terrorize the peasants in the area he commanded and to enrich himself in the shadow of the Cuban Sugar Company. Among the 21 deaths that weighed on his conscience were those of three teenagers aged 12, 14 and 16 whom he had hanged and that of an invalid old woman whom he burned alive in his house.

The operation consisted of dressing a gunboat with an American name and flag and dressing the crew in US Navy uniforms; all the personnel on board had to speak English. On an island in the Bahamas canal, the tapes that Alberto Delgado had brought up to there were collected. Once on board, we could take action against them. The plan worked perfectly the first three times, but the fourth time was too many. The leader of the gang, Cheíto León, discovered the rose pot and killed Alberto Delgado. In turn, he was liquidated shortly afterwards.

In January 1961, it was estimated that there were 8,000 anti-communist guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains range and more

than 40,000 collaborating with them. Practically all the members of the Second Escambray Front who had fought against Batista in this region had taken up arms again, as had the majority of the fighters of the Revolutionary Directory on March 13, as well as an infinite number of groups representing underground organizations. Historically, the Second Front and the Directory had both operated in the region during the guerrilla phase that brought Fidel to power, and they could count on the sympathy of the peasants of that region. The former paramilitary guerrilla networks were reactivated and, for a year, they led a peaceful life in the safe haven of this inhospitable region. Military actions were absent. The lack of armament and external support forced the guerrillas to remain in a state of lethargy until the CIA could help. But the United States could not decide to adopt this solution. Finally, Allen Dulles preferred to focus on the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, whose plan was still in its infancy.

The American decision was mainly taken because of the questionable morals of a few Cuban leaders and the disagreement between the far too many guerrilla groups. It was practically impossible to harmonize more than 30 hostile groups with each other. There were 8 chief generals and 3 chief commanders in Escambray. Of course, each of them claimed to direct the total of the forces raised.

It was not uncommon, when factions met by chance, for serious fights to break out between them over simple hegemonic discussions. On the other hand, a significant number of former Batista soldiers also took the path of guerrilla warfare, which further complicated matters. The former revolutionaries, who had become anti-communists, not only fought among themselves to seize power, but they fought to the death against the former officers of Batista whose ideology they rejected.

This makes it easier to understand why chaos reigned within the counterrevolution. In the Escambray Mountains range, each leader

thought that if his organization kept the leadership, the day the Americans landed on the island, he would be head of government.

The Second Front of Escambray and the Directory of March 13 had a few hundred sympathizers in the peasant mass. In 1959, before the triumph of the revolution, the prestige they enjoyed in the region was undeniable; later, in 1961, the dissatisfaction of the peasants and the fear of communism provided them with a real army of collaborators. Many indigenous people were agricultural workers by day, but at night they became hardened guerrillas. Very well informed about troop movements and also thanks to their perfect knowledge of this mountainous region, they were never surprised. They quickly became the government's nightmare.

The unconditional support of the peasants for these two organizations forced the former Batista soldiers to retreat to the north of Las Villas province, on the edge of Camagüey province. The hostility they were subjected to by the peasants led Batista's men to kill some of them. The propaganda took the opportunity to mount a campaign of discredit around the guerrilla movements by accusing them of being criminal gangs in the pay of the CIA.

In 1960, operations had been mounted against the guerrillas with little success. 12,000 soldiers and 80,000 militiamen were sent to Escambray without any significant results.

On 13 January 1961, a group of 400 anti-guerrilla specialists arrived in Havana. 250 were members of the KGB and 150 were members of the Red Army.

The problem had taken on a national rebellion look. In the province of Pinar del Río, Sierra de los Órganos was home to more than 200 guerrillas. In Matanzas province, the estimates were 120. In the Escambray Mountains range, they exceeded 8,000 and enjoyed the support of the population. In Camagüey, there were about 800 of them, almost all of them former Batista soldiers. In the province of Oriente, grouped around the Guantanamo naval base, there were some in the 300.

While the lack of arms and ammunition left these forces inactive, their mere presence was a danger to the regime and a factor of political destabilization that was difficult to redress. The sheer number of 8,000 guerrillas in Escambray was terrifying, and despite the fact that they only fought when they had to, they were able to paralyze the country the day they received external support.

The area where the greatest danger to the regime was located was in the Trinidad region. The "Villa de la Santísima Trinidad"¹⁰⁵ was one of the first seven cities founded by the Spanish in America in 1515. But while it had been one of the most prosperous cities in the New World after the War of Independence (1868), it had declined rapidly, undergoing a strong emigration that had left it almost bloodless. In 1961, it had 20,000 inhabitants. It is probably the best preserved of Latin American cities in terms of colonial architecture. When you visit it for the first time, you feel like you're taking a trip back in time. Its cobbled, winding and narrow streets, lined with houses with baroque facades patinated by centuries, exert a profound charm on the imagination.

The city, long forgotten by all the governments of Cuba, was not forgotten by Batista who, since 1935, personally cared for the region. Under his command, construction began on a sanatorium and a road in the Topes de Collantes mountains to connect Trinidad with the city of Cienfuegos. During the two long periods of Batista's rule in Cuba, this region without industry received preferential treatment, which resulted in the lowest unemployment rate in the country because people lived on public works. As a result, 98% of voters voted for Batista in the 1958 elections. The guerrilla groups operating in this region therefore received considerable help from the population, which had remained loyal to Batista and was still not accepting the new regime.

The confrontation between the State and the Catholic Church, which had been developing since the beginning of the revolution, was another major problem. Trinidad was the city with the highest

number of practicing Catholics in relation to the number of inhabitants, it was the bastion of Catholicism. Since time immemorial, the Holy Week celebrated in the city was so lavish that it could be compared to Seville's; thousands of tourists flocked to see this celebration, which was renowned as far away as Latin America and the United States.

As early as 1960, the government banned processions, the celebration of Holy Week and church chimes. As a result, the simple daily mass was more than a worship of God, it took on the appearance of popular rebellion and defiance of the regime. It was less and less rare to capture Trinidadians among the guerrillas and, even worse, the struggle often took the form of a crusade against communism: on many occasions, we had heard the cry of : ¡Viva Cristo Rey¹⁰⁶! facing the firing squad.

Having read all the facts of the problem, the 400 Soviet specialists who had come to crush the uprising proposed, in order to guarantee the success of their mission, to apply the scorched earth system.

To put an end to the armed opposition, it was decided to raise an army. All able-bodied men were called to join the militias. Those who refused lost their jobs if they were in managerial positions. If they were workers, they were given the toughest tasks and positions by being called counterrevolutionaries. Applying terror and whipping, 110,000 militiamen were assembled to support the 61,000 men of the regular army.

This mobilization caused a huge depression in the economy. Most of the factories were forced to cut their production in half, and sometimes even to close. Only the sugar industry was not affected. On the contrary, the surplus staff of the factories that had been closed were transferred to the agricultural or industrial work of the *zafra*¹⁰⁷. As a result, the year of highest sugar production, before the giant *zafra* of 1970, was 1961 with a figure of 6.5 million tonnes.

The first part of the plan was launched in February 1961. 20 kilometres from Trinidad, in a village called El Condado, what was supposed to be the prison and the interrogation centre for prisoners was built. Near a deserted road leading to the cemetery of El Condado, the building was built in record time. The plans were certainly inspired by the prisons in French Guiana: large naves 50 metres long were divided into small cells 2 metres wide, 3 metres long and 5 metres high. Instead of the roof, bars. The prisoners were guarded day and night by the guards who made their rounds on the narrow concrete passages that separated the naves from each other. The rest of the buildings were used as offices and staff housing. Watchtowers were then built with their projectors. Finally, security was further enhanced by a 4.30-metre high double electrified enclosure. This prison complex was completed in forty-five days. It had a capacity of 1,500 prisoners. As soon as it was completed, minefields were placed around it and traffic was banned in the area. Another similar complex was installed in the province of Camagüey, in La Cunagua, on the northern coast, on the border of the province of Las Villas, in a marshy area that is difficult to access. It was named El Serrucho and had a capacity of 500 prisoners.

Immediately the Russian scorched earth project was launched: 36,000 peasant families in the area were evacuated from Escambray, 23,000 men sentenced to prison for proven or unproven collaborative activities. A total of 79,850 people were interned in concentration camps (they still exist today, but with less rigour). The most characteristic of these camps was Ciudad Sandino in the province of Pinar del Río. Over time, it became a guarded state farm.

This forced depopulation was accompanied by the destruction of all crops, domestic animal farms and everything that could have been used as a source of food for guerrilla groups. Drinking water wells were contaminated and springs dynamited; rivers and streams contaminated and poisoned, and guards were permanently placed along their entire length.

The towns, villages and hamlets that were within the perimeter of Escambray were isolated and quarantined, no one could enter or leave. The 110,000 militiamen had their role limited to encirclement operations. As soon as a group of men, however insignificant, could be located, tens of thousands of militiamen surrounded the area, preventing the exit of all those inside, then thousands of soldiers and security men were sent to sweep the entire surface. At the beginning of the campaign, the guerrillas, because of hunger and thirst, surrendered quite often, but at the end things became more complicated because the mass executions were public knowledge and they preferred to die fighting.

Among the peasants, about 1,500 were won by promising to distribute the best land and richest farms in the region once the campaign was over. We formed with them the LCB (Lucha contra bandidos¹⁰⁸). They were, so to speak, the army's hunting dogs. Driven by ambition and profit, knowing the region inside out and all the possible hiding places, the members of the LCB played an important role.

48,000 prisoners did not pass through the jails of El Condado. Between 1,500 and 1,800 were shot, the exact number is unknown, as there was no trial and there was no register of convicts, who refused to give their identities in order not to compromise their families. Until 1964, all State Security operations were conducted from El Condado. It was also here that almost all of Cuba's political prisoners were interrogated. KGB Lieutenant Colonel Valentín Trujanov, Red Army Lieutenant Colonel Anastase Grigorich and KGB Political Commissioner Colonel Mijail Furmanov were the architects of this massive repression. They were assisted by 150 specialists for routine operations, plus 20 specialists for interrogation under the direction of a military psychiatrist, Yuri Karlinov; dozens of other technicians controlled the operation of the base.

Even the militiamen and Cuban army personnel who participated in the campaign were completely unaware of what was happening in El Condado prison. Once the prisoners were handed over

to the G-2 specialists, all we knew was that they were being taken to the base for questioning. On the Cuban side, contacts were maintained only between staff officers. When it came to operating at the squad, battalion and company level, the Russians were represented by Spanish-Soviet translators who operated under the cover of Spanish civil war veterans who had come to help Cuba. The many Spaniards who were seen in Escambray in 1961 as advisers to the Cuban army were nothing more than the translators who were part of the Soviet mission in Cuba.

The objective of this campaign was not to neutralize the guerrillas, but rather to completely exterminate the rebels. Despite the years that passed on Escambray, it was never possible to recover the coffee, fruit or livestock production figures that this region had brought to the national economy over the course of its history. The island's largest and best coffee production was abandoned. Today, tropical vegetation has invaded everything and only the remains of what were once residential houses remain, silent witnesses to this tragedy.

Tens of thousands of deportees still have no right to return home, to their lands. They live confined to "supervised farms". Even those who have been released after more than fifteen years cannot return to the region, they are placed in paramilitary work centres, under army surveillance, hundreds of kilometres away. Everyone remembers the horrible nightmare.

In the provinces of Pinar del Rio and Matanzas, repression was brief and bloody. After a few weeks of operations in these areas, the main leaders were captured and shot with their men. Those who managed to escape, terrorized, emigrated clandestinely to the United States.

In the province of Matanzas, the last guerrilla reduction was that of José Pimentel (Campito). This singular character had lived for twenty years in the mountains of the region, fleeing justice. His reputation as a highwayman was well known to all. During the guerrilla

war against Batista, he joined the July 26 Movement and was appointed captain of the rebel army in the city of Colon at the time of the revolution. A few days later, he attacked, with the men of his gang, the First National Bank of Canada, appropriating 125,000 pesos, then took back the rural guerrilla. The G-2 was able to capture him through an anonymous denunciation; it seems that a dispute over the distribution of the loot motivated this decision by part of the gang.

In the province of Camagüey, the operations were much more difficult because they were often the former soldiers of Batista who knew what would happen to them if they were captured. So they fought to the last man. The considerable advantage of being professional soldiers and knowing the tactics and strategy also guaranteed them greater ease in carrying out maneuvers in the field. Their main field of action was located in a triangle formed by the cities of Morón in the north, Ciego de Ávila in the south and Mayajigua in the northwest. The first two were in the province of Camagüey and the last one in Las Villas. This triangle was a densely populated area and had on its surface part of the cordillera del Nordeste de Las Villas. It was impossible to evacuate him like we had done in Escambray. Special LCB troops, which acted as counter-guerrillas, were organized with a strength of 3,000 men¹⁰⁹, while the G-2 carried out infiltration work among guerrilla collaborators. The El Serrucho prison and operations centre remained in operation until 1966. El Serrucho had only Cuban staff trained in El Condado. The number of detainees there was over 13,000. Most of them belonged to the local bourgeoisie.

The last guerrilla to be captured was Mario Bravo in April 1965. After having taunted Castro for five years and four months, carrying out more than 28 attacks against communist figures, interrupting transport by land and road a number of times, burning thousands of tons of sugar cane and cutting off power lines, having managed 36 escapes and supported 28 fights against the army, the day he under-

stood that the trap would definitively close on him, this prodigious healer shot himself in the mouth. He did not die until three days later.

With this man, the chapter of anti-communist guerrilla warfare in Cuba closes, one of the most ignored periods of the Cuban revolution, whose tragic events of the end I only experienced up close. However, before coming to the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, I want to report a small incident that was supposed to have some impact on my career, nothing very important, and yet this nothing marked me, I could never forget it. It is a story of hatred, a man's hatred against me, a hatred that clung to me like a leprosy. That was in September 1961. I had just come out of Alberto Delgado's operation against the four guerrilla groups I had already mentioned, when I was summoned to El Condado prison to recover a former soldier who had been captured (this former soldier had had an honourable attitude in the army and had only risen in solidarity with his friends).

After checking his file, I was able to establish that he had little to blame himself for and that he should only be tried for his pale participation in the guerrillas. So I decided to go to El Condado prison to question him and see if I could get some information about other soldiers.

It was the first and only time I entered El Condado. His sinister appearance did not bode well. A lot had changed during my absence, the G-2 was no longer a corps of Cuban secret agents, it had become the kingdom of the KGB. The mere fact that I knew that to enter El Condado I needed a safe conduct signed by the G-2 leader seemed strange to me and was not part of the labour standards I had known six months earlier. When I arrived on the scene, Officer Eddy Suñol¹¹⁰, political commissioner of the troops stationed in Escambray, was waiting for me.

I knew this commander by sight but I had never had any connection with him, which is why his warm welcome and invitation to lunch surprised me. All he wanted was for me to inform him of the

situation of the counter-revolution in Miami and to tell him about my missions in the United States. Things started to go wrong from then on, because I didn't want to tell him anything. The most politely in the world, I simply replied that for questions of compartmentalization of information, I could not tell him anything and that if he was curious to know more, all he had to do was officially request information. Such a sudden reaction on my part was due only to a conception of discretion that I had been well instilled. In fact, I didn't know if his curiosity was personal or if it was a plot to get the information from me and then communicate my indiscretion to the high command. I have personally experienced a number of cases of actions of this type, the struggle for power between former guerrillas and communists was daily. Anyway, my answer made him furious. He told me violently that he was my senior officer, that he was the Deputy Minister of Political Instruction of the Ministry of the Interior (which I didn't know), in short, he insulted me by using as many pejorative adjectives as he could find, until I got angry in turn and told him that he was not a commander, much less a fighter in Sierra Maestra, that what he had done so far was to watch over the guerrillas' whores, and that Raúl had given him his strings because he was a communist.

I was held for 48 hours and was only able to get out thanks to a few G-2 comrades who were operating on the base. They informed Ramiro Valdés of what had happened, and he sent a trusted man with orders to take me to Havana.

I had only spent two days in El Condado, but that was more than enough to know what was going on there that I would never have thought possible. Before leaving, I asked Sunol to see the prisoner I was to interview. He replied that he had been shot and that I was lucky that Ramiro Valdés sent for me, otherwise he would have shot me too, because I was just a coward and didn't deserve anything else. For this answer, I slapped him, which didn't help things. Finally, if I was able to get away with it, it was thanks to a new intervention by

Ramiro, followed by a telephone call from the President of the Republic himself, Osvaldo Dorticos, who used all the weight of his authority to get me out of there.

As a result of this incident, I was sent to G-2 diplomatic and consular law courses and turned the case around on the pretext that my nervousness was due to the too many dangerous operations I had carried out. I will not be fired. For the next five years, I was a student receiving a salary from the secret service.

I didn't want to become a diplomat, let alone a student again. I went to Che, the only man I trusted completely, to talk to him about my problem. I still remember what he told me: "I don't have much respect for the disorganized formation of Hispanic Americans. I would have liked to do systematic studies. It was quite different, despite myself I became a maverick. If you can grow up in the shade of the university, enjoy it. In the barracks, you will be no one."

Both he and Dorticos explained to me, or tried to explain to me, the problems of transition of the system, and they justified the altercation I had had with Suñol as a necessary evil of the revolution.

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As the radicalization of the revolution evolved with increasing vigour, the United States response could only gradually follow this process. In the summer of 1960, Eisenhower abolished Cuban sugar imports. In response, Che announced the nationalization of American properties on the island, worth \$800 million.

As early as March 1960, Eisenhower ordered the CIA to prepare a plan for an anti-Castro guerrilla operation along the lines of the one that defeated Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954. The plans were studied at length by CIA Director Allen Dulles, Robert Bissel, in charge of U-2 flights, Admiral Arleigh Burke, General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, President of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CIA Deputy Director General Charles P. Cabell.

When John F. Kennedy succeeded Eisenhower as President of the United States, after consulting with this group of advisers who favoured forming a brigade that would land directly in Cuba with enough force to destroy the communist regime, he gave the green light for the project to continue.

Already, on January 5, 1961, the procastrist organization that existed in the United States, the Fair Play For Cuba Committee, had asked Congress to investigate the CIA's secret training bases where the future invasion was being prepared. By early 1960, Cuban security services were aware of the CIA's regular and discreet recruitment of Cuban refugees.

The G-2 succeeded in introducing more than 40 agents into the various anti-Castro movements in the United States. I personally carried out some of these missions, the primary objective of which was to establish sources of information for the enemy. A few days before President Kennedy came to power, an attempt was made to neutralize the CIA's action by denouncing the Fair Play for Cuba Committee to Congress over clandestine activities against Cuba, but the new president did the one who knew nothing.

The American press let an infinite amount of news filter through which, added to the information of clandestine agents and the indiscretions of anti-castro organizations, made it possible to establish a fairly complete overview of the situation. In a television interview on December 31, 1960, Allen Dulles said that the next five months would be the most favourable to eliminate communism in Cuba.

All the information was consistent, there was no doubt that the attack was imminent. Only one detail was missing, we didn't know where and when it would take place. The G-2 agent, Conrado Matorros, had informed us that a group of Cubans were being trained as frogmen at a U.S. Navy base on Vieque Island. One of the American drunk instructors told him that a major operation was being prepared. We were aware of everything that was happening at the training bases in Trax, Retalhuleo, Helvetia, Garrapatenango. Re-

ports came in regularly. In Retalhuleo, a conspiracy was even organized against the command of Pepe San Roman, the head of the 2506 brigade, which ended with the arrest of 40 men who did not want to continue the training. They were locked up in Petén prison. This incident alone almost disrupted the invasion project, as Pepe San Roman resigned. It was only thanks to the intervention of Franck¹¹¹, the main person responsible for the execution of the plans, who intervened energetically, that the situation was saved.

It seemed that the CIA intended to provide all possible assistance to the 2506 Brigade, and once it had established a beachhead, the American army would have intervened. However, on April 12, 1961, J.F. Kennedy stated in a press conference that North American troops would not intervene in Cuba.

Three days later, the prelude to the invasion was to begin with the bombing of Cuban air bases. Already, at that time, we could see two opposing currents to the United States, on the one hand President Kennedy who represented the "doves" current, and on the other hand the CIA who supported the "falcons". In this discussion between the powers, the President imposed himself on his opponents as he did during the 1962 Caribbean crisis.

When, on April 15, the B-26 bombardments of the 2506 Brigade took off for the surprise bombardment of Cuban bases to destroy Castro's air force, it was not known whether the Mig-15 had arrived in Cuba or not. Anyway, the B-26s that operated in Girón were killed like flies by the Cuban Sea Fury fighters and the T-33 jet fighters. It was impossible to design support missions with the B-26s without strong hunting coverage to defend them. The situation was even more serious. The B-26s had been prepared to be able to load as much fuel as possible by eliminating the machine guns from the hold. This gave them a greater range of action, as they had to fly from Central America (Retalhuleo) to southern Cuba and back, but without Defenses, they became easy prey. The wing machine guns were used only for offensive operations and their only effective De-

fense was in the hold. Without it the heavy steel monsters were an easy target for the fighters who had nothing to fear. All the crews of the brigade were sent to certain death as well as an American crew that also perished during this operation.

Today we are still discussing whether we really decided to support the brigade or whether, for a matter of hours, the plans failed..., etc. Things must be called by their name: there was abandonment of the brigade without air cover and abandonment of the B-26s, which were left Defenseless.

The way the brigade was trained is another incomprehensible point. Undoubtedly, the 2,000 or so men of the brigade received good regular army training overall. I say overall, because it was discovered that a group of young recruits had never touched a weapon before the day of the attack. The most serious thing was that they were told that victory was certain, even though there was no retirement plan or concentration points in place in the event of a troop dislocation. How was it possible to conceive that 2,000 men abandoned to their fate, without reinforcements, without ammunition supplies, without air cover, without precise plans... could stand in front of an army of 120,000 soldiers equipped with artillery, tanks and air force?

The two main ships used for the landing were two old cargo ships¹¹² that were no longer in use, whose only air Defense was provided by two 50-calibre machine guns: the Houston, which served as a troop carrier, was easily sunk by the Castro Sea Furies, the Río Esccondido, which carried arms and ammunition, was also sunk, leaving the brigade completely destitute.

It is not my intention to tell the story of the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, on which much has already been written. I would just like to highlight a whole series of contradictions that are too eloquent to go unnoticed, even by a layman of military art.

The place chosen for the landing was also disastrous. Playa Larga and Playa Girón were the only two dry land points in the middle of

the Zapata swamps. In addition, they had only one access road, practically a dead-end trap: two strips of land and a road that connected them to the outside world, the rest was just an impassable quagmire. It was easy to establish a bridgehead in the Bay of Pigs, but after that? A minimum number of troops could delay the advance on the only feasible road and communication route. The operations plan had been designed with an initial phase aimed at a bridgehead that would last seventy-two hours. Then it would be the arrival of an interim government that would ask the United States for help. However, the decision to provide aid to the anti-Castro Cubans was changed, but not the plans, thus maintaining a military project that could not be carried out without American intervention.

The CIA had thought things would turn out differently and did not bother to check the topographical conditions. Instead of sandy beaches with low relief, the brigades found themselves confronted with sharp coastal reefs like knives. Instead of an abandoned place without a connection, they found an area occupied by high concentrations of military troops, equipped with good means of communication, and who were informed of the landing from the very beginning.

It is incomprehensible, knowing that there was a powerful internal resistance in Cuba waiting only for a sign to launch a wave of attacks that could have paralysed the country at the time of the invasion, that it had not been informed of anything. With a delay of more than twelve hours, Radio Swan¹¹³ began sending coded messages to the resistance. But it was already too late, at that time the G-2 had taken 56,000 prisoners, and within twenty-four hours the number had reached 120,000.

I did not participate in the fight in the Bay of Pigs. I was then with Che in Pinar del Río province, as I would be during the Caribbean crisis, because this province was the area defended by the Argentine guerrillas and their men. During this alert period, I was

called by Che to work as a liaison officer between the Western Army and the E.M.G. (general staff).

It is honest to say that the men of Brigade 2506 fought like lions and that nothing is more unfair than the epithets of cowards and mercenaries that Fidel used to describe them. There was only one blatant act of cowardice: Commander Nino Díaz had to land with 168 men in Oriente province to create a diversionary attack and bring confusion; instead, he was afraid and simply went around the island.

I had the opportunity to analyse with Che all the operations of April 1961, to be able to consult the results of all the interrogations of the 1,000 prisoners in the brigade and to study carefully the plans of the military operations they were carrying with them. With all those who have studied the problem, we agreed that the invasion of the Bay of Pigs was an act of cowardice on the part of the American leaders who abandoned the men of the brigade, without recourse, in the middle of the marshes.

Later, in 1964, I read the book by the American journalist Haynes Johnson, *La Baie des Cochons*¹¹⁴, which only confirmed everything I knew. The book in question contains the direct testimony of the survivors of the failed invasion. The author has gathered the smallest details in relation to these facts and gives the most complete account of them.

President Kennedy, wishing to reduce his guilt, organized, through his brother Robert, the payment of substantial compensation to the Cuban government to recover the prisoners of the 2506 Brigade. On December 29, 1962, the President, during a ceremony at the Miami Orange Bowl, received the brigade flag from his men. "This flag will fly in Havana," he said. Jacqueline who accompanied him congratulated the men in Spanish and called them: "The bravest men in the world."¹¹⁵

CHAPTER V

THE CARIBBEAN CRISIS

Since the end of the Second World War, it has been the secret services that have governed the fate of humanity. However, this reality is poorly accepted or ignored by public opinion. The Caribbean crisis of October 1962 is the most eloquent case of the diabolical game unleashed by KGB men from time to time in support of the USSR's expansionist policy. Many politicians, journalists, writers or men with some influence in the audiovisual media tried to give a satisfactory interpretation of this event but without highlighting all the points. However, the key to the conflict lies within the Soviet secret service itself. They have tried nothing less than to measure the North American government's response capacity and neutralize the CIA.

After the invasion of the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, Fidel Castro sought greater assistance from the USSR in the field of information exchange between the Cuban and Soviet secret services. The recruitment and training of Cuban exiles who were to participate in the invasion was never secret, but it was impossible to know the approximate date of the invasion, as well as the number of men involved in the operation, the armament and especially the exact location where the attack was to take place. The operation in the Bay of Pigs had been mounted by the CIA in such a secretive manner that opportunities to obtain information were not missed, and yet they were not taken advantage of. In the majority of cases, all we knew came from the open information published by many American or South American newspapers.

Commander Ramiro Valdés went to the USSR with the mission to discuss Fidel Castro's proposal and establish the necessary bases for this cooperation. As a result of this trip, two high-level commis-

sions for information exchange were created, and it was decided to strengthen the "Caribbean" group in Havana, providing it with all the infrastructure it needed to operate openly from the Cuban capital.

The attack on the Bay of Pigs had caused a strong impression all over the world. It had been the largest operation mounted by the CIA in its history. However, the KGB's political analysts, far from considering the political and military consequences of this event, focused their attention on the signs of weakness shown by the US President when he abandoned the attackers in the swamps to their fate, without providing them with the promised help. The American President had somehow ridiculed the CIA at the decisive moment, without himself being able to adopt a firm attitude.

At the Kennedy-Khrushchev summit in Vienna in June 1961, the Soviet Premier was convinced of the weakness of the North American president and his political immaturity. Proof of this is the confidence that J.F. Kennedy later made to the American journalist James Reston of the New York Times, explaining that, in his opinion, Khrushchev considered him immature because of the failure of the Bay of Pigs and was convinced that he would drive him back in any part of the world. This confidentiality was revealed by the authors of the official document of the Senate Committee of the Republican Party on the 1967 Vietnam War¹¹⁶. This opinion of the American President was based on his personal impression and on the confidential information sent to him by the CIA, which advised him to keep a hard political line, otherwise the world would be faced with serious and unpredictable events.

When John Kennedy refused any concessions, including in the negotiation of the peace treaty between the two Germany, the KGB experts continued to maintain their criteria: the North American head of state was working under pressure from the CIA, and the showdown had to continue without discussion.

A little later, the Americans began sending a large contingent of military experts to Vietnam and pressure on Cuba increased. We received information on the international situation through the Joint Commission of the Secret Services of Havana and Moscow on a weekly basis. It was explained to us that the hard political line chosen by the President was nothing more than a symptom of weakness, that behind this tumultuous foreign policy lay the CIA's arm, but that if the minute of truth came up again, the American President would be unable to react radically.

Cuba was increasingly isolated in the context of Latin American countries. During the meeting of the OAS (Organization of American States), held in Punta del Este, Montevideo, in August 1961, the "Alliance for Progress" was established, excluding aid and credits to the pro-communist Caribbean regime. In January 1962, still in Punta del Este, it was decided to expel Cuba as a Member State. In practical terms, Fidel Castro could not support such a situation with a country on the verge of economic collapse, whose livelihood was only guaranteed by the long umbilical cord formed by the Soviet fleet that transported essential items, including oil, between Moscow and Havana.

Despite Cuba's expulsion from the OAS, orchestrated by the United States, Soviet analysts were pleased to see that countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Ecuador and Bolivia voted against it. However, they represented two thirds of the territory of the Americas, four fifths of the population.

The secret information we received in Havana was shared with us during the meetings of the Bilateral Commission for the Exchange of Information. It had been foreseen well in advance that, in the event that the CIA sought revenge on Cuba, there were real possibilities that the President would be assassinated. On a large number of highly confidential documents, CIA officials were described as forming a group that wanted, with the agreement of the Pentagon

soldiers, to take revenge. However, the existence of the Cuban regime was guaranteed as long as John Kennedy remained President.

On November 5, 1962, the Americans elected a new House of Representatives and renewed one-third of the Senate. J.F. Kennedy himself had only just been elected, and it was almost certain that, during the election period, the tendency to minimize international problems would prevail. All the more reason for the Soviets to no longer doubt the weakness of the American state official when he learned of the installation of missiles in Cuba.

The decision of the Russians to install launch pads in Cuba was not yet known to the Cubans. The KGB advised it, then took it in agreement with Khrushchev and the political bureau of the Soviet Communist Party. All that was needed was to develop and implement a disinformation plan by the Cuban secret services to convince Fidel Castro.

From that moment on, the Soviet secret services began to bombard us with false information. It was rare for a day to go by without four or five documents telling us that we were preparing for a new invasion of Cuba. Unable to physically verify the veracity of the information provided by the KGB, the Havana regime merely considered it accurate. The Russians went so far as to specify the number of 150,000 American soldiers undergoing training for this operation and give the quantity of weapons that would be used. Soviet military experts sent to Cuba stated that because of the island's very long and narrow topography and geography, it was extremely vulnerable, and that given the firepower and the number of men who would intervene, the Americans could control the island after 48 hours of fighting, with losses of up to 25,000 men.

A climate of hysteria began to prevail in the spheres of government that were aware of this top-secret information from the KGB in Havana; they tried to find out whether the USSR was able to guarantee the permanence of a corps on national territory, not as a deterrent, but as the guarantor of our national sovereignty. Reports

from Russian military experts then came to show us that the Defense of the island was practically impossible, even if the Soviets did their best to help us. The theory of an air and sea blockade put in place by the Americans cut its wings in all hope. These catastrophic forecasts opened the doors to the Soviets. Any proposal to save the situation would be welcome. All the subjective conditions were created, all that was needed was to give Fidel Castro the final blow to make him fall into the trap.

Six months before the start of the installation of missiles on Cuban territory, Khrushchev's son-in-law, a senior KGB officer and editor-in-chief of the *Izvestia*, who was a member of the bilateral information exchange commission, arrived in Havana. Colonel Adjoubeï had made several visits to the island on other occasions for service reasons. This time, it was a different matter. The purpose of this trip to the Cuban capital was to inform the Cuban government that it would have to visit the United States at the invitation of Kennedy's staff.

Upon his arrival in Washington, Colonel Adjoubeï was received by the American President with whom he had long discussions. Three days later, we received a copy of the full text of these interviews in Havana. The content was alarming. According to the colonel, the president told him that the situation in Cuba was unbearable for the United States and that they were not willing to tolerate Fidel Castro's regime any longer. The most impressive part of the report was that Kennedy reminded the Russians "that the United States did not intervene at the time of the invasion of Hungary". Tacitly, the report revealed that the plans for the invasion were mature and that the American President was warning the USSR of the events in preparation so as not to upset the fragile balance of the policy of peaceful coexistence. The term "invasion" was not used in the report, but it was guessed between the lines. There was therefore no alternative to war and a holocaust for the Cuban people.

Soviet-Cuban negotiations accelerated to find a solution. The Soviet government pretended to be very concerned about this case and, in response to the conclusions of the Soviet Military Commission that had come to Cuba, it considered that a military alliance or enhanced assistance would not solve the problem. The Russians highlighted the honour of socialism in the world. Finally, they came to the solution that was at the root of all this dark scheme; they proposed to install SS-4 missile bases in Cuba, with a range of 1,020 nautical miles, as well as medium-power missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads 200 nautical miles away. With these weapons, one could reach almost the entire territory of the United States.

As if to confirm this set of true and false information that mixed in the clever cocktail prepared by Moscow, the CIA, for its part, did not stop ruminating about the most unlikely plots that could imagine to get rid of Fidel Castro. The Pentagon had also leaked information about a major military maneuver planned for the end of 1962, during which a landing would take place on an island near Puerto Rico. The purpose of this maneuver was to liberate the island from a dictator named Ortsac... Castro's anagram.

The KGB did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity and presented the plan to Fidel as a dress rehearsal of what the actual landing would be like. In the face of such evidence, acceptance of missile deployment was not long in coming.

From the perspective of strategic weapons experts, the installation of these devices in Cuba did not pose as serious a threat to the United States as has been said. The Soviet submarine fleet, carrying intercontinental missiles, was an otherwise serious danger because of its destructive power and difficult location. The Americans were well aware that the USSR had submarines that were equivalent to the American Polaris missile carriers. Both the Soviets and the Americans were convinced of the uselessness of fixed bases whose location was known. This system was overly exposed and was beginning to become obsolete. At that time, the Americans had already

ordered the dismantling of the missile bases in Italy and Turkey precisely because of their lack of strategic value. Finally, there was no reason to believe that a Russian missile, launched either from Cuba or from a Soviet submarine, would not have unleashed an attack on the territory of the Soviet Union, but only on the nuclear launch base. Nor did the proximity of the atomic base increase its extermination capacity. As for the time saved, it was reduced to a few minutes, which could be saved just as well from the submarines.

It was therefore only a blackmail to the atom that led to only two possible solutions: when the Americans discovered the presence of missiles, or J.F. Kennedy would give no energetic response for fear of atomic war, and the USSR would gain prestige, or the CIA would be forced to intervene directly and advise the President in a firm attitude, thus decisively reviving the struggle for power between moderate government circles on the one hand, and secret services and militarist circles on the other, which would inevitably cause a major crisis inside the American colossus.

The KGB services had divergent opinions on the subject. For many, it was certain that the CIA would try to get rid of the brake that President Kennedy represented for his activity. For the KGB strategists, the American secret service agents feared, because of Kennedy, that they would become nothing more than an organization without influence, incapable of manoeuvring freely, because it was almost certain that Congress would intervene through control commissions to find out what was happening inside this top secret organization, and finally to neutralize it.

Theorists were lost in a world of long-term speculation, but it was obvious that the USSR would win in this case. Soviet experts thought it could take years before the Americans realized the presence of missiles in Cuba. One of the aspects that attracts prodigious attention when looking at the American literature on the Caribbean crisis is the lack of a clear answer to the question on rocket installations. Why did the Russians run the risk of setting up missile bases

in Cuba if they were militarily outdated? What was their purpose? President Kennedy's former collaborators described the evolution of the crisis day after day, but the reason for the Soviet decision is everywhere absent¹¹⁷.

These authors, who were close collaborators of Kennedy and who followed all the developments of the case, could never foresee the long-term plot that the Soviet secret services had masterfully imagined. Has the prognosis for President Kennedy's assassination been fulfilled? Did the CIA lose its image in the world after the assassination of the American President? Has the top-secret American device become more transparent every day? Do the new CIA directors today have the same moral weight, an authority as great as those possessed, for example, by Allen Dulles?

It is probably still too early to answer all these burning questions. I simply want to suggest that we should not rush to reject them. Let us be humble, since we are not in the secret of the gods. Let us say that history has the last word. As in chess, the grand masters can predict more than twenty moves in advance while amateur players only see one or two. In the majority of cases, we are perplexed by the decisions and actions of the grey eminences of the secret services. It is only long after that that we know the truth.

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In the first days of May 1962, a Russian military delegation of missile experts undertook a topographical inspection of the island. The Cuban side was represented by Captain Núñez Jiménez, whom I have already mentioned. This excellent geographer was certainly the man who knew the island best.

On May 17, three Soviet ships arrived in the port of Havana containing heavy equipment and specialized equipment essential for the construction work. All this material was unloaded and stored in the military barracks of Managua, which served as a base for the motorized troops. On May 27, TU-114 aircraft, on a direct flight

from Moscow to Havana, carried the group of officers who were responsible for the military engineering work. Two days later, the passenger ship *Gruzzia* disembarked in the port of Santiago de Cuba 1,200 Soviet soldiers and specialized personnel. Unlike the senior officials who arrived by plane and were accommodated in luxurious residences reserved for official guests, the second group was immediately evacuated to the Gran Piedra mountain range, in the lonely area of El Ramón de Las Yaguas, where they lived in camouflaged country tents.

The delegation of missile experts who were inspecting the island met with Fidel Castro, his brother Raúl and the senior officers who had been appointed to represent the Cuban armed forces, as well as the members of the bilateral Secret Service Commission of which I was a member. Also present were the military attaché of the Soviet Embassy and a large group of Red Army officers, a member of the staff of the forces stationed in Cuba. The group of specialists stated that radar detection systems were insufficient and that, by 30 August at the latest, a new network with P-20, P-19 and P-17 long-range radars should be installed, as well as a more effective radio communication system to ensure inter-communications and establish a link with the USSR if necessary. The project included 20 missile bases with Soviet personnel, one with mixed Soviet-Cuban personnel and one central command post.

These facilities were completely independent of the Cuban army and only Fidel Castro, Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Raúl Castro, Minister of the Armed Forces, Commander Ramiro Valdés, Minister of the Interior and Head of the Bilateral Secret Service Commission, Commander Juan Almeida, Chief of the Army General Staff, Commander William Galvès, Head of the Central Army Corps, José N. Cause, Head of the Army's Political Instruction and Commander Ernesto Che Guevara, as Special Delegate of the Cuban Government. In addition, twenty-one of the members of the Bilateral Commission of which I was a member had

a special pass to discuss internal security issues with their Soviet counterparts in the facilities.

The army had to answer for this discretion, which in the language of espionage is called "Sigint", i.e. the interception of radio or electronic messages using electronic codifiers, or the use of coded language. For its part, the Bilateral Commission of the Secret Services guaranteed "Humint", i.e. information obtained from human sources, this second point was much more difficult to achieve, Cuban emigration to the United States was significant, and clandestine leaks also represented a high and constantly increasing figure.

The bay of Mariel, in the province of Pinar del Río, was chosen as the landing port for all the equipment that had to be brought in. In the Cubitas sierra, the construction of huge underground tunnels began, which included kilometres of galleries, large rooms, command posts, etc. This construction was abandoned when the Caribbean crisis broke out. The Cubans never knew what to do with a work of this size that had swallowed up the entire national cement production for months. The only thing we knew was that it was located in an area of very large electromagnetic disturbances, probably due to the mineral deposits that abound in this part of the island. Since October 1962, the area where this construction is located has been inaccessible, and it is the Cuban army that keeps it under its control.

The region chosen for the first missile sites was Sierra del Rosario, in the province of Pinar del Río, at a place known as San Cristobal, 80 kilometres from Havana and about 50 kilometres from the port of Mariel.

At a speed unusual in socialist countries, all the work began instantly. The Cuban government was not even aware of the number of Soviet soldiers arriving in Cuba. TU-114 special flights carrying personnel were flown one after the other at José Martí International Airport in Havana. Through the ports of Santiago de Cuba, Havana and Mariel, the same was happening.

On July 4, 1962, the representative of the Soviet mission that answered General Irving's war name asked Castro to provide him with 180 university students. The latter were intended to receive intensive training in order to be integrated into radar detection teams at the 11 Soviet-Cuban mixed bases. He also asked for 1,000 soldiers to monitor these bases. For the Soviet bases, he asked for 3,500 garrison men to provide circular Defense, but they had to stay one kilometre from the fences. The internal garrison and security were provided by Soviet personnel.

There are 35 different locations on the island, preferably solitary and inaccessible locations. It was decided that they would become no-go areas after the bases were installed, and even the peasants living nearby were evacuated.

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What for the world was the Caribbean crisis was codenamed "Operation Corsair". On July 15, during a high-level meeting in the Sierra del Rosario, the Soviets announced that Operation Corsair was entering its final phase. Despite all the explanations given, the Cuban group was concerned about the role that the US ship and reconnaissance aircraft surveillance network could play around the world. It was certain that Soviet ship convoys to Cuba were carefully studied along the entire length of the route from the Bosphorus to the Caribbean Sea. As the shipments were massive and could not go unnoticed, the objection was not bad; but the Soviet group continued to minimize the issue.

The CIA's work on Cuban refugees was also worrying. We knew that in Miami a special unit of the Agency, Task Force W, had set up a base in Opa Locka to interview all refugees. The number of refugees arriving in the United States every day was a guarantee of a great deal of human information, and the "Humint" work carried out by Spanish-speaking specialists was intensifying.

Fidel Castro proposed banning emigration and closing all possible escape routes. Instead, the Soviets insisted that we leave things as they were. Thus the CIA would have to classify so much contradictory information that it would lead specialists to septicism. It was certain that many refugees had seen missiles, but they were two-stage ground-to-air anti-aircraft missiles which, at that time, were conventional weapons and far from missiles carrying nuclear warheads. The Soviets told us that the existence of these rockets should be more or less known. As a result, Cuban personnel working in anti-aircraft rocket bases were ordered to go on leave for the first time. Given the Latin character of the Cubans, a wave of rumours immediately began to circulate, considerably increasing the CIA's files with the most contradictory intelligence.

The KGB secret services and the Red Army intelligence services were playing into the CIA's hands. Since July 4, 1956, American U-2 spy planes had flown over the territory of the USSR with impunity. Soviet radar networks had detected them, but they could not shoot down an aircraft flying at such an altitude. During four years the U-2 aircraft had collected information of all types of high value, until May 1, 1960, the day when the first of these aircraft, piloted by Francis Gary Power, was shot down by a SAM ground-to-air rocket.

These U-2 aircraft were the asset that the KGB services relied on to bring about the storm that would become the Caribbean crisis. The history of these top secret devices was well known to the KGB. First, the aircraft shot down in the USSR had been carefully studied, second, all the parameters of the aircraft had been delivered by its pilot, Francis Gary Power, during the interrogation sessions, then verified by other sodium penthotal sessions (truth serum); third, the KGB spy networks in the United States had collected a great deal of information about them.

The story began in February 1950, at the beginning of the Cold War, a period favourable to espionage activities, and at a time when American intelligence services required the most sophisticated in-

struments. When Dwight Eisenhower was elected president, he immediately showed a very keen interest in the request of the various secret services and judged that the CIA placed too much trust in information from human sources (Humint) and from the interception of radio or electronic messages (Sigint). His experience as a general during the Second World War had taught him that nearly 80% of usable tactical information was obtained through aerial photography. These were not missions for old aircraft of the ordinary type, whether fighters or bombers, who would have to be completely unarmed to be able to replace the charging potential with cameras and fuel. This modality made it too vulnerable for aircraft that had to fly at low altitude in dense atmospheric layers that were subject to high turbulence, which would have resulted in poor quality photos. The use of the gyroscope was not yet known, nor were the mounting dampers (for cameras). The thickness of the films was another weakness that prevented the cameras from being equipped with long lengths.

Different commissions were working on the problem of aerial photographic espionage. However, when the USSR carried out the first tests of the H-bomb in 1953, the general panic caused by the possibility of an atomic superiority of the communists caused an acceleration of research. At that time, the United States flew over Soviet territory with a system of sounding balloons equipped with heavy cameras which, with varying degrees of success, took a maximum of 300 to 350 pictures at an altitude of 20,000 m. The equipment was dropped by parachute once the balloons had reached Western European territory. The probability of success was 40%. Every day, a race took place between CIA agents in charge of picking up parachutes and KGB men based in Western Europe. In most cases the photos were not of the best quality, and to make matters worse, it was impossible to predict the trajectory of the sounding balloons that navigated according to the whims of the air currents.

In 1954, James Killian, rector of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, became president of a presidential commission to determine whether the United States could be attacked by surprise as at Pearl Harbor. This commission advised to restore air reconnaissance over the Soviet Union, but the US Air Force replied that no aircraft with sufficient technology to perform such missions was ready. The Presidential Commission therefore commissioned the aircraft construction firm Lockheed to study the project for an aircraft that would have the necessary tactical and technical conditions for the type of missions planned. The company's chief engineer, Clarence Kelly, presented the army with plans for an aircraft, but they were ridiculed by military experts. However, the Presidential Commission insisted on President Eisenhower who, as a knowledgeable expert on air reconnaissance, ordered Allen Dulles, Director of the CIA, to have the aircraft built in secret and as soon as possible.

The technological challenge of building such an aircraft exceeded the real possibilities available to the Americans at that time. However, the theoretical project was feasible, despite a set of specificities, difficult to conceive alone and contradictory all together. When the project was submitted to Pratt & Whitney Company for the construction of the engines, they replied that mathematically the construction was possible, but that it required many very expensive tests. The conclusions of all the experts coincided in stating that this was almost impossible; an engine capable of propelling the aircraft to an altitude of 25,000 m, i. e. 8,000 m more than the most sophisticated aircraft of the time; on the other hand, at this altitude, a reactor retained only 6% of its power at sea level, and as if that were not enough, the average consumption should not exceed 50 litres at 100 kilometres per hour.

Allen Dulles appointed one of his deputies, Richard Bissel, who had worked on the Marshall Plan and was a professor at Yale University before joining the CIA, to carry out the case. To this end, he

gave him comfortable financial coverage, using the Agency's secret funds to do so, so that the investment remained untouched. When Richard Bissel gave the green light to Pratt & Whitney and Lockheed to start production of the first prototypes, the latter chose Kelly Johnson, his best engineer and the father of the project. He had designed aircraft such as the F-80, the first American jet fighter and the Hercules C-130.

It was in the hangars of the Lockheed in Burbank, California, that the first prototypes of the U-2 were built, which looked more like gliders than planes. In August 1955, the first test flights were carried out during which the Americans lost three aircraft which, because of their characteristics, were not easy to fly. Both the US Air Force and the CIA faced serious difficulties during pilot training due to the number of accidents due to human error. The U-2s had a very strong tendency to glide, and the landing gear they were equipped with transformed each takeoff or landing into a real odyssey.

The Polaroid company was responsible for perfecting the camera devices under the direction of Edwin Land, the Harvard astronomer, and James Baker was in charge of the camera lenses. Eastman Kodak developed a super sensitive and super thin film to charge devices with tens of kilometres of film. Thanks to these photographic techniques in the service of espionage, the U-2 aircraft had the possibility of photographing the titles of a newspaper in a perfectly visible way at an altitude of 20 km, and as well by day as by night, thanks to its infrared equipment.

All these possibilities of U-2 espionage were widely known to the Soviets since 1960. Unfortunately, the Cubans were not as well informed. But in 1961, Life magazine presented a photographic report on the struggle of anti-Castro guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains range, the photos of which had been provided by the U-2 spies. The document was eloquent.

Havana repeatedly requested the supply of SAM ground-to-air anti-aircraft rockets to put them in the hands of Cuban personnel.

The University of Havana had been emptied of its engineering students and assigned to the strategic bases, but the result of the effort we had made was not very encouraging. Cuban engineers only worked on radar detection networks, and only two anti-aircraft rocket bases were under their control. They were still only old two-storey models that reached a maximum altitude of 10,000 m and were equipped with a technically outdated detection system. SAMs, on the other hand, had a computerized interception system and could reach a height of 30 km. Without a doubt, the aircraft of the United States combat and reconnaissance aircraft fleet were untouchable given the resources available to the Cubans. All service aircraft in the USA exceeded an altitude of 10,000 m and a speed higher than Cuban rockets could handle.

On August 3, 1962, the head of the Soviet group's translation services, Colonel José María Quiñones, of Hispanic-Soviet origin, sent a report to the Cubans outlining the undisciplined and seditious nature of the former students trained in the mixed bases. This phenomenon was the consequence of the return of the first soldiers who had studied in the USSR. The technical-military level that these troops had acquired allowed them to compare the real possibilities at their disposal. The head of the Soviet mission in Cuba, General Irving, supported the presentation by the head of translation services and this led to a very hard discussion between the Cuban and Soviet stakeholders.

It was a close call for the plans to be aborted. The number of unknowns surrounding the operation was growing every day. However, Fidel once again bowed to the KGB's game, and the problem was solved by his brother Raúl Castro's emergency trip to Moscow to discuss with Khrushchev. Fidel himself went on an inspection visit to the Cuban military to try to calm them down. Of the entire bilateral Commission, the only Cuban representative who did not accept these explanations was Commander Che Guevara. He made it clear that if someone could convince him that an aircraft flying at

an altitude of 25 km, recording high definition stereoscopic images over areas of 12,000 m² with a 4,000 m film load, was not a danger, he would change his mind. Perhaps, because of his foreign character in the Cuban delegation, he did not want to bring the discussion to its final consequences and gave in. If it had not done so, the Fidel-Raúl duo would have found itself completely isolated from the current of opinion of the Cubans in the commission and history would have been different, because Che was the second man in the revolution and his moral weight was considerable.

On the other hand, a serious problem arose with regard to the supply of food. The supply provided to Soviet personnel was not enough and he soon protested vigorously. The radicalization of agrarian reform, supported by the army since the promulgation of the law signed on 17 May 1959 in Sierra Maestra, had had dire results, and national agricultural production did not even meet the basic needs of the Cuban people, forcing the government to import 43% of food. The protocol signed with the Russians included a paragraph concerning the supply of military bases with an oversupply that exceeded Cuban possibilities, even by sacrificing the population's quotas. The consumption of Soviet personnel in Cuba was equal to that of the entire population of Havana, which represented 30% of that of the island, not to mention the consumption of milk or meat, which exceeded this figure. Although it may seem incredible, the 40% of the national production of rum was destined for the Soviets who used and abused it, since it was well known that senior military officials exported rum and cigars on their own account. Another point that shocked the population was the black market. Base personnel escaped with trucks loaded with food and exchanged it for gold with speculators.

The latter problem gave rise to a serious divergence and forced the Soviet command from Moscow to move General Irving and most staff officers and to have all disciplinary control carried out by KGB men. The new head of the mission was General Anatoli

Lefronov who arrived in Cuba on August 19, 1962, surrounded by a brand new staff.

Cuban production was plagued in several important sectors: cement production was insufficient, timber for construction work was also lacking, but the most incomprehensible point was the Soviet demand for electrical cables. In 1958, an American company had installed an advanced technology electrical and telephone cable factory in Cuba, Pheldrac, which was capable of producing both for domestic and export consumption. In no time at all, the hangars had run out of supplies and the factory was producing 24 hours a day. The Soviets urgently requested thousands and thousands of kilometres of cables every day. They justified their request by saying that it was preferable to make all communications by cable rather than by radio, because radio broadcasts could be received by CIA listening networks.

Havana's most luxurious residences had been requisitioned to house Soviet officers. The owners of these houses, most of them bourgeois, did not think twice before accepting the Cuban government's proposal to give them permission to leave the country in exchange for evacuating their homes; in other cases, force made up for reason.

From the first days of August, Soviet SAM anti-aircraft rocket bases were ready to open fire in the western region of Cuba. The westernmost base was located in the Cordillera de los Órganos, between the Güira and Punta de la Sierra; further away were the locations of Sumidero, Pino Solo, Herradura, El Toro, Taco Taco, San Cristóbal, Las Mangas and Vereda Nueva in Pinal del Río province. This high concentration of anti-aircraft equipment was due to the fact that the sites were planned along the Guaniguanico mountain range, which extends along the entire length of the province. Havana province had two SAM rocket bases in El Wajay and Loma Del Grillo. In the province of Las Villas, there were two other bases, one near Fomento and another near Remedios. In Camagüey province,

there were five SAM bases in the Cubitas mountain range, and finally, in Oriente province, the bases were arranged as follows: four in the vicinity of Holguín and two in Corajo Quemado, a place close to the North American naval base in Caymanera.¹¹⁸

As can be easily understood, the Soviets had an air Defense system spread over the entire length of the island and, if they had wanted to, they could have prevented the overflight of the island by U-2 aircraft. However, American aircraft reconnaissance flights were regularly conducted over Cuba. Cuban leaders had given the order to open fire on all aircraft within range of anti-aircraft rockets, but this was only an illusion because their range did not exceed 10,000 m and the 100 mm electronic gun batteries could only reach 5,000 m. The Indians of Montezuma must have had the same feeling of helplessness in front of the breastplates and armor of the soldiers of Cortés.

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On 29 August, the CIA's photographic interpretation unit, headed by James Lundhal, issued an alert. U-2 aircraft flights over Cuban territory had detected one of the bases of the SAM anti-aircraft rockets. In the following days, they discovered 10 more of the 25 installed or being installed. The situation was becoming critical; if the bases were defending Cuban airspace, why didn't they fire at the U-2s? The possibility that these bases could be used to defend nuclear missile installations created a major sense of insecurity among Americans. CIA experts did not understand the purpose of the Soviets. On September 1 and 3, the U-2 aircraft flew new reconnaissance missions over Cuban territory. The decision to send new planes was a serious one: if they wanted to, the Soviets could shoot them down and this could create a serious political conflict. The flights brought new facts, previous photographic images were confirmed. David's star configuration in the SAM bases was indisputable. Fourteen bases were thus detected.

On September 14, the Soviet Ambassador to Washington, Dobrynin, sent a personal message from Khrushchev to the President, in which he assured him that the USSR had no intention of creating problems in 1962, which was an election year (Senate and House of Representatives elections). The American President replied with very strong statements. He warned the Soviet Union of the serious problems that would result from the installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba. In response, the USSR stated that it did not intend to install such weapons on the island.

The KGB's secret plan was beginning to yield results. The US government apparatus already had points of divergence with the CIA. The majority of the American services accepted the Soviets' apology. If the latter had never set up nuclear bases in Eastern Europe, why would they do so in Cuba, which, in fact, belonged to the United States' zone of influence? However, John McCone, the new head of the CIA since Allen Dulles' disgrace following the failed invasion of the Bay of Pigs, did not accept this apology, nor Soviet reasoning, and pointed out that the Russians' intentions were quite clear to him and his group of specialists. The USSR intended to install nuclear warheads in Cuba. However, he did not go so far as to foresee that it was the destruction and neutralisation of the Agency that the Russians were planning and that the approaching crisis was the instrument. For John McCone, the installation of the bases would serve as a bargaining chip in the future. Against what? This was the question facing the American intelligence services. They could not find an answer, but for the CIA and its main leaders, Cuba was a land of revenge, and the spirit of revenge foreseen by KGB specialists was present.

The new reconnaissance missions did not bring anything that was not already known. On 19 September, the General Information Commission met in Washington to draw conclusions. There were representatives of the CIA, the National Security Council, the State Department and the Defense Secretariat. They informed the presi-

dent of their opinion on the unlikelihood of the installation of nuclear rockets in Cuba by the Soviets. Only John McCone disagreed with them and informed President Kennedy.

Things had changed in Cuba too. On September 3, a special flight of the Aeroflot landed twenty senior KGB officers in Havana. The military structures organized by the Soviet army on Cuban territory were passed into the hands of the Russian secret services. Army General Anatoly Lefronov introduced us to the new head of the mission. The men accompanying him replaced the chiefs of the various bases, but what was the least understandable was that the driver in charge of supplying the embassy's staff became Sokoloniv's assistant.

This change made us perplexed. Sebastian, that was his name, was a nice boy who had quickly got used to life in the country. He had learned Spanish very quickly, played dominoes with Cuban army officers, drank beer and rum, and was not asked to smoke a cigar. It was not uncommon for him, knowing the difficulties of the Cuban economy, to offer a pair of shoes for his friends' children, or to arrive home with his arms full of supplies. His adaptation had been such that instead of calling him Sebastian, everyone friendly called him "el Viejo"¹¹⁹. But from there to becoming the deputy of the mission in Cuba, there was a world! From that moment on, it was no longer a secret for us, the operation that was going to take place was under the direct responsibility of the KGB. The military only played a technical role. The direction of operations and decisions were taken by the Soviet secret services.

All these changes took place amidst incessant Cuban protests against the inertia of Soviet troops over the repeated flights of U-2 aircraft over the island. But it was too late to turn back, because Fidel Castro was now in a state of total dependence on the USSR. At that time, it was not known whether the SS-4 missile bases were already installed or whether the launch ramps for medium-range missiles were ready. The most total secrecy reigned.

On October 1, Khrushchev sent a personal message to Fidel Castro in which he announced that he should have no doubt about the Soviet attitude. In the name of socialism in the world, the Russians would defend the island of Cuba as an integral part of Soviet territory. As for the men who led the operations in the country, they were at the forefront of socialism and its safest Defenses. Finally, he assured Castro that, in the first week of October, the first strategic missile installations would be ready. As early as September, Cuba had decreed the general mobilization which, in the first days of October, turned into a real war hysteria. The entire island was under siege and more than 80,000 men had been mobilized.

In the United States, military experts threw the minimum figure of 25,000 casualties if the United States decided to intervene directly in Cuba. Provided, of course, that Soviet troops based on the territory do not intervene, otherwise the confrontation could turn violent, who knows, into a conflict between the USA and the USSR with unpredictable but dangerous consequences.

President J.F. Kennedy represented the moderate line in this case, while John McCone led those calling for strong action. The CIA increased its activities in Cuba. American experts knew that missiles had to be transported by existing roads and that movements to prohibited areas would eventually be seen by one of their agents.

The CIA's special unit, Task Force W, based in Opa Locka, continuously interviewed all Cuban refugees arriving in Florida and every detail related to missiles was set aside and checked to its satisfaction. On October 3, José García Perdomo, a CIA agent in Havana, spotted a truck carrying a long tube covered with a camouflage cloth. The statements of this agent, who had successfully fled Cuba by boat, the measures taken, the mode of transport, the vehicles used, as well as other details, reminded CIA agents that it was an SS-4 missile. The Opa Locka base immediately transmitted to Washington the information that had meanwhile been corroborated by last-

minute Cuban refugees, other trucks of the same type had been seen in the vicinity of San Cristobal, in Pinar del Río province.

With this information in hand, John McCone lobbied for new U-2 aircraft reconnaissance missions to be sent. There was almost no doubt about it, but if medium-range missiles with nuclear warheads were actually installed, it was possible that SAMs would come into action and try to shoot down the aircraft. The US Air Force decided to take responsibility and chose one of its pilots, Richard Heiser, who was a veteran of U-2 flights, while the aircraft used belonged to the CIA, because their electronic equipment was more appropriate to avoid SAM ground-to-air rockets.

The decision was made on October 10, but a large mass of clouds over the western region of Cuba prevented the mission from being carried out. The weather data predicted the possibility of clear skies for the dawn of October 14. The G-3101 Victor de l'Air Force mission took off at 7:32 a.m. local time from the La Florida military base and boarded Cuba at 8:30 a.m. along the southern coast of Pinar del Río province, crossing the island in six minutes. Fidel Castro and the Cuban group of the Bilateral Commission, as well as the staff officers who were aware of the installation of the rockets in Cuba, were watching the radar screens of the DAAFAR (Revolutionary Armed Forces Anti-Aircraft Defense). At 8:03 a.m., an aircraft was detected overflying the western part of the island. We were all aware that this was the beginning of the "Caribbean crisis".

At 8:15 am, Fidel Castro, expecting an immediate attack, ordered all armed forces to take position I. Six minutes of flight over Cuba brought about 1,000 stereoscopic photographs. It was now impossible for the Americans to ignore the existence of missile bases any longer. The Cubans found themselves mere spectators of the tragedy, yet they were the ones who ran the greatest risks. The protests were dry, it was too much... How can we tolerate the theft of U-2s any longer, with the consequences that this could have! What game were the Soviets playing with the Americans? Why did

they allow them to ensure the presence of strategic missiles? For the Cubans, the danger had never been greater than at that time. The KGB services had assured us that an invasion was about to take place and promised that the missile installations would prevent any maneuver against Cuba, but they allowed the United States media to ensure that these same bases were established.

Another obscure point of the conflict was that the command was in the hands of the KGB instead of being led by Red Army officers. It was neither a political nor a military maneuver, the real reason, one had to seek it from the grey eminences of the KGB.

There has been much talk of the CIA as an invisible government in the United States, but the KGB has always remained in the shadows, and few people give it the place it really occupies, that of true power hidden behind the USSR throne. Should the Caribbean crisis be seen as proof that the KGB plotted against the CIA and Khrushchev at the same time? Does the precipitous fall of the Soviet First on October 15, 1964 have anything to do with the Caribbean crisis that began on October 15, 1962? These may just be coincidences, but... What prompted the KGB services to assure Khrushchev that the missile installations in Cuba could not have been discovered, so that he did not hesitate for a moment to order the Soviet representative of the United Nations to deny the American accusations?

When Adlai Stevenson accused the USSR before the Security Council about these installations, Soviet ambassador Zorine vehemently denied everything. He soon regretted his virulence when the evidence provided by the photographic documents that brought the truth to light was revealed. Through his representative, the Soviet Prime Minister had lied to the world. This is an attitude that international politics does not forgive. Anyone who commits a fault is quickly condemned to disappear.

The October 14 mission facilitated the procurement of the equipment needed by CIA photographic laboratories to demon-

strate that strategic missile bases were ready in Cuba. The head of the interpretation service, Lundhal, after checking the photographs himself, had a telephone conversation with the Agency's Deputy Director, Cay Cline, who was in Langley, Virginia, to tell him the news. Lundhal was confident that he had detected bases equipped with SS-4 missiles with a range of 1,020 nautical miles, capable of reaching Washington. Immediately, Cline contacted the State Department's Chief Information Officer, Roger Hilsman, and briefed him on the situation.

We can truly say that the crisis began on October 15 at 7:30 a.m., when CIA experts gathered around President Kennedy in the White House and showed him the photographic evidence in their possession. In the days that followed, 25 U-2 aircraft missions flew over Cuba, allowing the Americans to discover 3 medium-range missile launch pads capable of carrying nuclear warheads 200 nautical miles away and others nearing completion. Despite Khrushchev's reluctance to give credence to the American accusations, the evidence was so clear and the accumulation of concrete evidence so great that the Soviet First was forced to publicly acknowledge the existence of these rockets.

The Americans imposed a blockade on Cuba and the Soviet ships turned back without further insistence. The Cubans understood that the USSR was not the greatest military power in history and that the declaration of 9 July 1960 by the Soviet First, where it threatened the United States, was nothing more than a bluster. Nothing could prevent the United States from continuing its policy in its area of influence and making law there.

In the streets of Havana, people shouted: "¡Nikita, mariquita, lo que se da, no se quita!"¹²⁰

The reality was sad and, despite Cuba's refusal to accept inspection of the island to verify the departure of the rockets, the country's dependence on the USSR increased further. The following six years, which for many specialists are considered to have been a period of

divorce and cooling, never saw the shadow of the KGB specialists who never abandoned their technical assistance to the Cuban Ministry of the Interior, in the secret service and counter-intelligence branches...

The CIA has never forgiven Kennedy for not taking advantage of the American advantage to get rid of Castro Communism after the evacuation of Soviet rockets.

This hallucinating story is almost forgotten today, and the only known versions have been published by the president's advisers or his closest collaborators. They undoubtedly have a historical value. Left-wing writers have also examined this case, such as Saverio Tutino in his book *L'Octobre cubain*, or K.S. Karol in the chapter of his essay *Les Guérilleros au pouvoir*, which he devoted to the Caribbean crisis. Each, in turn, highlighted some very interesting elements, but no one wanted to admit that in this case the KGB was the main culprit.

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The last silent witness to the tragedy of the Caribbean crisis: the most extraordinary bunker ever built in America. It is located in Sierra of Cubitas. Before its evacuation, Soviet troops dynamited the entrance to prevent access, leaving gigantic excavating machines, several diesel power plants that were to provide electricity for the entire complex, lighter machinery, trucks, tracks, excavators and thousands of kilometres of cables for lighting and communications systems inside.

Eighteen years later, one may wonder what was the purpose of this underground complex where each steel door is one metre thick. If one of those who led the construction of this complex ever reads this document, he will have to try to remember what the Russians left in tunnel 8, behind gate 21, which gives access to a large hall and other galleries, and that they blocked it with dynamite. Without anyone knowing, the Cuban territory may have the largest stockpile of

bacteriological weapons ever known in history, which could one day contaminate the entire American continent.

To guard these facilities after the Russians' departure, a platoon of 21 men from the Central Army Security Company, whose general staff is located in Camagüey, was placed. The site had been abandoned at the end of the Caribbean crisis, but the various mechanisms remained in place. For three months, the men of the platoons that served as garrisons had to remain on the scene without leaving and, before being relieved, had to undergo a medical examination.

In July 1965, soldiers Emeterio Polavieja and Marcos Villalobos, to pass the time, opened a breach and began to inspect the tunnels until they arrived at tunnel 8 and opened gate 21. A few hours later, they suffered from vomiting with convulsions and paralysis of the lower limbs. As the orders not to leave under any circumstances were very strict, the military hospital in Camagüey was called, and Drs Archibaldo Gómez and Andrés Expósito were sent urgently. The Centre's army staff sent a communication on the case to the Ministry of the Armed Forces. Twenty-four hours later, an Antonov 22 military transport aircraft airlift landed at Ignacio Agramonte Airport with 1,500 men and specialized equipment from the Ural Anti-Chemical Warfare Corps. For two months, the entire area was sprayed by plane with disinfectant chemicals, then all the surrounding areas were burned with flame throwers. Later, the Soviets sealed the tunnel entrances, first with concrete and then, using powerful bulldozers, the last remains were covered with earth.

The 21 soldiers and 2 doctors were urgently transported to the USSR. There was only one survivor of this fatal experience. He is hemiplegic and his mental capacities are reduced to 60%. This human wreck was sent back to Cuba in February 1976 after eleven years of fighting death at Lenin Hospital in Moscow. In his strange delirium, he talks about "an aluminium tunnel, with a very cold liquid that freezes lizards". I have concluded that these are stainless steel containers that contain liquid nitrogen.

At the Ministry of the Armed Forces, there are no documents relating to this accident. Officially, the case does not exist, but there are many who remember these events with apprehension.

After the Caribbean crisis, the Cuban revolution found itself in a situation of complete dependence on the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. The economic blockade decreed by the United States threw Fidel Castro into the Kremlin despite the differences that had separated them, Fidel knowing full well that he had only been an instrument in the hands of the Russian secret services.

Cuba's political position was extremely difficult. His return to the Western bloc was unimaginable as long as Fidel and the communists were in power. Moscow knew perfectly well that Fidel Castro could behave like a disobedient child and do a number of crazy things, but he also knew that at the slightest economic pressure utopian dreams and revolutionary romanticism would roll ashore. As an island in the West Indies, Cuba could not afford, because of its geographical position, what Yugoslavia had done in the centre of Europe. On the other hand, Fidel's megalomania and thirst for power pushed him to a safe shelter where he could protect his position. Only the USSR offered him this opportunity.

Since July 1961, Fidel Castro had made public his union with former members of the PSP. All the organizations that had fought against Batista were grouped together in a completely hypothetical way in the ORI (integrated revolutionary organizations). However, everyone knew that Anibal Escalante, the second secretary of the PSP, was acting as secretary. His brother, César Escalante, was in charge of propaganda, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, economics, Edith García Buchaca culture, Bals Roca, the first secretary of the PSP, political issues. The names of the 25 members of the management team were known, but their roles were unknown. In this list, PSP members were in the majority: Emilio Aragonés, Severo Aguirre, Flavio Bravo, Joaquín Ordoqui, Lázaro Peña, Manuel Lizardo, Ramón Calcines, Osmani Cienfuegos and Augusto Martínez

Sánchez; the other members were Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Ernesto Guevara, Osvaldo Dorticos, Fauche Choumón, Ramiro Valdés, Juan Almeida, Armando Hart, Sergio del Valle, Guillermo García and Raúl Curbelo, all men of the July 26 Movement, from the left except Faure Choumón and Raúl Curbelo who came from the March 13 Movement and were soon removed from power.

It was not only the national leadership of the ORIs that was controlled by the communists, but they occupied all the machinery of power at all levels. Not everything was in oil. In March 1962, Fidel Castro dismissed Anibal Escalante. The former communist leader, secretary of the ORI, sneakily wanted to seize power, but Fidel made him understand that if he was willing to share power within certain limits, he did not intend to let it be taken away. The purges that the government was doing in the ranks of the July 26 Movement were unpopular. In the revolutionary schools of instruction run by the communists, the latter falsified the history of the revolution, and the first role was reserved for the PSP. Fidel did not accept that the former PSP members he had brought from the shadows to power tried to take him away shortly afterwards.

The transactions that took place on this problem were difficult and it took Fabio Grobart's intervention to fix things. On behalf of the KGB, Grobart ordered Anibal Escalante to leave immediately for the USSR, then promised Fidel that the party would be loyal to the cause of the revolution without further trouble.

Hates and resentments were difficult to calm. The Student Directory of March 13 had had serious clashes with the communists during the struggle. They suspected that the communists had often reported them to the Batista police to get rid of them. One case was more particularly closely followed by the men of the Directory: four of the attackers of the presidential palace, on March 13, 1957, who had survived, were murdered by the police a few days later, on April 20. Fructuoso Rodríguez, who replaced José Antonio Echeverría as president of the UEB, told some of his friends that Marcos Ro-

dríguez, a communist element of the university, had found a refuge for him in a building on Humbolt Street, at number 7. Three other members of the Executive Board's management also shared this hiding place: Pedro Carbo Servia, Joe Westbrook and José Marchado. All were murdered at the time of their arrest.

The Directory had well-founded suspicions that Marcos Rodríguez (Marquitos) had reported the place where they were hiding to the police. Moreover, after these events, he left the country for México, without any problem. Two months later, he left on a scholarship to Czechoslovakia to continue his studies in art history. In 1959, after the revolution, the party used it informally in its inter-party relations department, and when Cuba established diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia, Marcos Rodríguez became cultural attaché of the Cuban Embassy in Prague. There were all the appearances of a second-rate civil servant. But the BRAC (Bureau for the Repression of Communist Activities¹²¹), which operated in Havana under the direction of Benjamin Castaño, passed on to the CIA all the documents it had on the "Marcos treason". The latter then used them as a means of blackmail to obtain information. Marcos was blackmailed by the consul of the Brazilian embassy in Prague, who was a very old CIA agent, to work for the Americans.

In the summer of 1962, Marcos' activities were detected by Czech counter-intelligence agents. They arrested him, but for lack of evidence, they released him and put him on probation. In the meantime, they had sent Havana a detailed report on the case. Some members of the Executive Board asked me about the progress of our research on this subject.

At that time, my work at G-2 was very slow. I was in law school. The pursuit of war criminals had almost been abandoned, and they were quietly walking the streets of Miami while Batista wasted the millions he had stolen from the Cuban people on Madeira Island.

I must confess that I was outraged by my exclusion, which was for me the most bitter blow of my life. For this reason, when Faure

Choumón and several members of the Executive Board came to me to ask me to help them resolve the Marquitos case, I agreed to cooperate with them, although I knew that the case would turn into a political accusation against the former members of the PSP.

Everything was strange in this case: it was Marquitos who had found, at 7 Humboldt Street, an apartment for the members of the Directory so that they could hide there. And that's where they were murdered by the police, who left no survivors. It was understandable that he had acted through a denunciation, as the police went directly to the scene. And if it had really happened that way, why had Marquitos not been arrested? On the contrary, he had reached Mexico in the most legal way, through Havana's José Martí International Airport, which was super-guarded. At that time, the only way to leave Cuba in this way was to have the status of a political exile and to be accompanied by foreign diplomats to the door of the plane. Upon his arrival in México, he contacted Joaquín Ordoqui and Edith García Buchaca, both senior members of the PSP, who obtained a student scholarship for him in Czechoslovakia. Such an approach was difficult for a simple party activist, and only members of the political bureau could obtain it in this way. Why give such a mark of distinction to an activist without history?

Marquitos, on the other hand, was considered a convinced communist and even a fanatic of Marxism. It was difficult under these conditions to believe in betrayal in an individual of this type, who carried an authentic political passion. However, according to the Czechs, he had passed on information through an official of the Brazilian embassy... That's when I thought that he could be blackmailed and that there must be a secret between Marquitos, Joaquín Ordoqui and Edith García Buchaca.

The first step we took was to intercept all correspondence he sent or received. Not surprisingly, we discovered a letter addressed to Joaquín Ordoqui and his wife Edith, in which Marcos threatened

to talk to them if they did not help him out of the critical situation in which he found himself.

With the agreement of Faure Choumón and members of the G-2 who had the Directory as their origin, we kidnapped Marquitos and took him to a farm near Havana. He was psychologically prepared to face an accusation of espionage, but he did not expect the ghost of the Humboldt Street affair to reappear. During the first interrogation, we explained to him that he had not been kidnapped for his spy activities but for denouncing the group of survivors of the attack on the presidential palace. We no longer had the slightest doubt because we had the personal archives of Benjamín Castaño, head of BRAC, and we had clearly established that he had denounced the group in exchange for his leaving the country. He did not even try to deny the facts and told us that it was true, that he had done so because the Directory did not allow the Communists to join their ranks and that Fructuoso Rodríguez, the new President of the UEB (assassinated on April 20), showed a fierce anticommunism. In addition, he had been ordered by Joaquín Ordoqui to do so. When we found this rift to attack the communists, we wanted to use it to the maximum. However, only Joaquín Ordoqui and Edith García Buchaca were aware of this case.

Morally, it would be a hard blow for the communists. Joaquín Ordoqui was a former member of the political bureau who was part of the national leadership of the ORI. He was also Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces. His wife was also a member of the national management of the ORI ¹²² and head of Culture in the country; in addition, she had been married to Carlos Rafael Rodríguez.

With all the information and statements from Marquitos, we went to President Osvaldo Dorticos to inform him of the results of our investigation. He summoned all those involved in the attack on the presidential palace to organize a confrontation. Faure Choumón pushed the case to the public accusation of the former members of the PSP and effectively transformed himself into an attorney general

to accuse the communists of sectarianism without further involvement of the traitor.

The scandal caused by this trial, where all PSP leaders were forced to take the witness stand, had a national impact. Fidel even had to intervene and do real wonders to ensure that his new ally (the PSP) was not implicated. As soon as Dorticos became aware of the case, Raúl Castro took care of Marquitos and kept him in custody under his control. Throughout the trial, the accused did not open his mouth. I think he was drugged so he wouldn't talk and complicate things any more. Marquitos was sentenced to death and Joaquín Ordoqui and his wife were dismissed from office and arrested in December 1964. Shortly before his death in 1975, Ordoqui was relieved of his faults for lack of evidence by an editorial in the Granma newspaper.

When this case was over, a hurricane hit me. I had to answer for my conduct before Fidel and Raúl. I believe they have never forgiven me for acting as a G-2 agent without consulting my superiors, let alone for making public the Faure Choumón scandal. I paid for my gesture, despite the interventions in my favour by Che, Dorticos and Ramiro Valdés.

At the end of 1962, in the midst of the Algerian-Moroccan conflict, I was sent to Algeria under the orders of Efigenio Almejeira (chief of police and commander of the Sierra, which I already mentioned in the first chapter). I am almost certain that the latter had received precise orders to keep me permanently in the most dangerous sectors and to entrust me with the most risky missions. If I came out of this short campaign alive, it was a miracle.

Back in Cuba, I finished my studies in diplomatic and consular law at the end of 1966. Everyone thought I would be given the position of ambassador to the UN, but it was Alarcón who was appointed. Later, I was proposed as an ambassador to UNESCO to replace Juan Marinello, but another one had the place and so on.... All the important posts, those that had to be approved by Fidel or Raúl,

were still forbidden to me despite the important actions I had accomplished within the framework of the revolution. In 1967, instead of becoming an ambassador, I was sent to Guinea with the guerrillas of Amilcar Cabral, then with the Palestinians of Yasser Arafat, for observer missions that were of no importance.

When in 1965 I stopped my law studies to accomplish an internationalist mission in Congo with Che, when I returned they didn't think I would let me continue my studies. It took Dorticos' intervention for me to be admitted again, on the condition that I submit within fifteen days all the exams for a semester that I had not attended. Sometimes I remember with sadness all the law I had to swallow in the hope of becoming a lawyer, as well as all my sociology studies, and then see myself walking around the world without having the right to practice my profession.

SECOND PART

THE MERCENARIES OF THE KREMLIN

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM

The Marquitos case was the last attempt to settle scores with former PSP militants. Fidel Castro could not allow the various insurreccional organizations that overthrew Batista's dictatorship to devour each other. On the other hand, he could not make public the high-level relations between pre-revolutionary communism and the July 26 Movement, let alone his contacts with Fabio Grobart and the KGB since 1947. He was practically at a dead end. Aníbal Escalante's first group showed him that the communists wanted, or at least intended, to seize power, and that they were doing everything possible to take over the country. To dismantle the new danger posed by the ORI¹²² as an instrument of power for former PSP militants, he decided to found the PURS (Single Party of Socialist Revolution), opening the way for more leaders from the insurreccional struggle.

I, who have been active in the three post-revolutionary parties, the ORI, the PURS and the CCP, could define them as having served only to solve the problems of power struggle between the members of the former PSP and the men of the armed struggle. First, the old communists of the PSP formed the structures of the ORI and placed their men as executives, relegating the representation of armed struggle to the background.

The second phase began in 1963, when Fidel Castro created the PURS and the guerrillas of the Sierra assumed power and hunted down the former communists. If direct action has not been taken against them, they are deprived of management positions and left without responsibility.

The third stage began in 1965. When the CCP was founded, the guerrillas dominated. When Fidel approved the invasion of Czechoslovakia and a new honeymoon began between Havana and the

Kremlin, the communists gradually climbed the steps of power until they reached almost absolute control. Of course, this is not a form of opposition to Castro, on the contrary, after the experience of the first Escalante group, they understood that, to keep the favours of the leader of the revolution, they must be as submissive and discreet as possible. In the end, if Castro had become the most servile satellite in the USSR, he could only find loyal allies among the former members of the PSP.

But not everything was so simple and the problems were not limited to the Cuban political context alone. The differences caused by the resolution of the Caribbean crisis between Castro and Khrushchev marked a pause in Cuba's domestic policy. The KGB gave Fidel Castro all kinds of explanations and excuses for this incident and if, at the party level, there was a cooling of relations until 1968, it was the opposite between the KGB and the G-2.

This duality in relations between Cuba and the USSR is the most flagrant contradiction that can be found in the history of two governments. While the political distance was considerable and observers thought that Cuba had stood out from the countries of the East, the KGB continued to provide aid to Cuban communism that I could define as preferential and silently approved of Cuba's aggressiveness in the Third World.

I am personally convinced that the KGB enjoys an autonomy that allows it to escape the Kremlin as a power. For example, its policy towards Cuba was very often diametrically opposed to the foreign policy of the USSR. Perhaps during Stalin's time, Liberia was able to achieve miracles of balance, but during Khrushchev's time, the KGB dethroned him by undermining his political bases both inside and outside. When there are serious international crises, it is the head of the KGB, who is still a member of the CPSU's political bureau, who makes public statements in the USSR. Since Khrushchev, and still today with Brezhnev as head of the Soviet

state, it seems that all resistance has been overcome, the head of the KGB is the king who hides behind the throne.

Where does all the armament for the Third World liberation movements come from? Without hesitation, I say that Cuba was used as an intermediary. And it does not matter whether the insurreccional movements are pro-Soviet, Pro-Chinese, Pro-Cuban, Trotskyist... The objective of the KGB is to ignite the flame of armed insurrection and destabilization by any means.

At the end of 1962, a well-organized operation to arm these groups began. The first case occurred with the FAL (Armed Forces of Liberation) of Venezuela. At that time, Fabricio Ojeda, a Venezuelan MP, visited Cuba quite regularly. He was promised all the help he needed to form a guerrilla front under the command of Douglas Bravo, a member of the political bureau of the Communist Party of Venezuela (CPV).

Things did not happen as reported by observers at the time. Douglas Bravo did not separate from the CPV at the end of 1963, when the boycott of the presidential elections won by A.D. Leoni failed, nor when the Icarara manifesto was signed in 1966, indicating that armed struggle was the only way. Already in 1962, the KGB provided some support to this movement through Cuba and encouraged the movement to recruit forces from among militants of the PCV, the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), the URD (Democratic Republican Union) and the AD (Democratic Action).

The first AKM rifles to leave the USSR were donated to the FAL in 1963. It is impossible to imagine by what miracle this could have happened! No Warsaw Pact country was equipped with this new infantry weapon. Cuba did not have one either. However, the KGB passed all this armament through Cuba before giving it to Douglas Bravo and Fabricio Ojeda so that Fidel seemed to be the donor.

Later, in 1964, all the weapons of the Western countries that existed in Cuba were collected and, together with a large shipment of German weapons from the Second World War, were sent by the

KGB to Cuba and from there to Latin America and Africa. If we are curious to check the American armaments held by these third world liberation movements, we will see that the numbers correspond to American shipments to Cuba before 1959. There were also Belgian, Spanish, French, etc. weapons; as for the weapons manufactured by the Nazis, their identification is impossible, especially heavy machine guns of MG infantry and pistols.

Today it is Vietnam that plays this role with more modern weapons, and the USSR distributes its AKM infantry rifles without complex; but in 1962, it was Cuba that played the role of arms supplier in the world for insurreccional movements, in perfect agreement with the KGB and in disagreement with the apparent policy of the Kremlin.

The current aggressiveness of the USSR's foreign policy seems to be directly related to the almost absolute control that the KGB exercises in the spheres of power in Moscow. It is no coincidence that Che Guevara, when he arrived in Beijing in February 1965, was received with coldness and was unable to obtain an interview with a single leader of a certain level, although he had indicated that he was then going to the Congo to start a guerrilla campaign there. The Cuban political line was apparently closer to China than to the USSR and a Sino-Cuban rapprochement would have been logical; moreover, Fidel had just harshly criticized the Soviet methods used in their controversy with Beijing. But the Chinese information services were aware of the double game of the Kremlin and the KGB and did not get caught in the trap into which Che had consciously or unconsciously fallen.

Economically, Cuba suffered from its inexperience and the inability of the socialist camp countries. Historically, it was an underdeveloped country whose economy was closely linked to the monoculture of sugar cane. But in a large number of industries, there was advanced technology that the socialist countries were far from having achieved, and as a result, the standard of living that Havana had

experienced surpassed all the dreams of communism. The Cuban capital had been a kind of laboratory where Americans experimented on the expansion of consumer society. Cuba was the first country where they exported Coca-Cola, the second country to have colour television, as early as 1957. Havana had the highest number of vehicles per capita in 1958¹²³. In some commercial and industrial companies, the technological advance even exceeded that of the United States, as some techniques were first tried, on a small scale, in Cuba. The country was really like a windshield wiper that, in its movement, went from sublime to ridiculous. While in the capital all the luxuries of the consumer society were present in their highest expression (there were the most luxurious department stores in the world: Sear's, El Encanto, Los Precios, Fijos...), in rural areas, poverty was wreaking havoc and farmers lived off the under-use of the cane harvest three months a year.

More than 80% of Cuban technicians emigrated to the United States, and Americans who worked in Cuban industries also packed their bags. The country clearly could not meet the technological challenge of restarting industrial equipment without its technicians, and when Cuba sought help from the socialist countries, the specialists who came were not up to the task and discovered a technological world they did not even suspect. Spare parts were also another insoluble problem for Cuban industry, as they were not available in socialist countries. Undoubtedly, dependence on the United States has led the country not to develop a domestic industry to solve its own problems. It was easier to call Miami to receive a part the next day than to manufacture it on site. After the breakdown of relations with the United States and the establishment of the economic blockade, we could only use the technicians from the East who were unable to help us effectively.

For all these reasons, national production has fallen sharply and Cuba has become even more dependent on the outside world. After the revolution, an agrarian reform law¹²⁴ was signed which placed

50% of the cultivable land in the hands of small landowners. The latter, unable to invest what they earned, lost the incentive to increase production, or simply to maintain the usual levels, and they produced only for their own consumption in a dangerous closed circuit that they broke only to sell on the black market. The government always tried to recover 50% of private production through compulsory sale to INRA (Institut national de la réforme agraire), but this objective could never be achieved. The farmer is too smart to sell his production to the State when he can get twenty times more on the black market. The peasant-worker alliance so praised by Marxism-Leninism does not go beyond the stage of an idyllic theory.

National production grouped in "People's Farms" and "production cooperatives" is a real failure, and when world-renowned specialists like Frenchman René Dumont report mistakes, they are accused of being CIA agents. It is very interesting to read Dumont Cuba's book *Is Cuba Socialist*¹²⁵? because it highlights Cuba's agricultural problems.

The help of the advisors of the socialist countries brought only various evils. Not only did they not have the desired level, but they also instilled in us the need to buy old technology factories, for which the country did not have the necessary raw materials (so we had to buy these materials in addition), without having made prior studies on their usefulness. In many cases, they sold consumer products in Cuba that could not be used on the domestic market, which provoked the legitimate anger of Cubans.

It costs me, perhaps more than any other, to recognize that Che, in his capacity as Minister of Industry, brought the country to ruin and caused a debt that will be impossible to recover even in twenty years of work. He never intended to bring the country to such a failure, but the stubbornness with which he administered Cuban industry for five years was fatal to Cuba's trade balance and led to an insoluble deficit.

He did not want to accept the structure of the Eastern countries in the organizational plans, but we are forced to recognize that the creation of the "Empresas consolidadas" was an adventurous choice on his part, because they could never adapt to the pace and style of Cuban production. Moreover, with his revolutionary romanticism, he accepted all the suggestions of the socialist countries (the best as well as the worst) without having an economic vision of investments, nor carrying out the preliminary market studies, which were necessary... His training as a doctor did not allow him, professionally, to perform the function of Minister of Industry, which at that time included all the national production of the various branches of the economy.

There are thousands of examples that can illustrate this industrial policy without discrimination. When Cuba bought a pencil factory in Czechoslovakia, it was only later discovered that there was no wood to make them, nor graphite. Made in Cuba, pencils cost 2.5 cents each, while imported from China, Germany or Czechoslovakia, they cost only 1.1 cents and were also of better quality. This factory, located in Batabano, was definitively closed after one year, after having operated only sporadically. Cost of the operation: \$1 million. Germany sent us 2 factories: 1 of pickaxes, 1 of shovels, for a price of 2 million dollars. After three months, the national market was saturated and the factories had to close. As there was no coal in the country, it was therefore necessary to import coal for forges and iron. There was iron in Cuba, but we were unable to produce it. As a result, each pickaxe left the factory at a cost price of \$2.08 per unit, whereas on the world market it could be obtained at \$0.47; for excavators, it was the same thing, they cost the country \$2.11 each and its international price did not exceed \$0.50.

All the socialist countries, without exception, sold as much junk as they could to Cuba, putting the country in debt beyond reasonable limits. Bulgarian telephone exchanges, of old technology, have never operated at more than 20% of the promised capacity. As for

the huge glass factory that Sofia sold us for \$50 million, after fifteen years of unsuccessful testing, it only produces bottles and glasses with strange shapes and full of defects. The IMPUD in Santa Clara is a huge industrial complex that the Czechs sold to us for \$120 million. The only objects it produces are pressure cookers. Refrigerators with German trunks and purchased engines are assembled there where possible. Western countries also entered this competition to see who would steal the most from Cuba. The most serious case was the nitrogen fertilizer plant that England sold to Cuba for \$120 million. For the past ten years, the first bag of fertilizer has not yet been produced, and it is not known what the various complexes installed are used for.

In Cuba, as in so many other formerly colonized countries, the arrival of socialism has brought only mistakes, betrayals and the triumph of incompetence on the economic level. Finally, capitalist exploitation gave way to a new type of socialist exploitation. To be more subtle, it is nevertheless harmful.

Many countries do not want to be called "underdeveloped" and prefer the term "developing". Sad illusion or pun intended? If we apply the law of relativity, we can see that this is not certain. When Christopher Columbus discovered America, the technological difference that separated the Indians from the Aztec, Mayan or Incan civilizations was a century compared to Europe. However, today they are separated by a huge gap, and with the current rate of development of underdeveloped countries, it would take them several centuries to reach the advanced technology that developed countries possess.

Historically, it is impossible for the evolutionary stage that brought the developed countries to their current level to be repeated, because they owe it only to the wealth obtained by the systematic plundering of what is now called the Third World, some with the old system of colonial exploitation, such as the European countries, others in the form of the neo-colonialism that emerged

from capitalism, such as the USA. Morally, the developed countries have contracted a very high debt to the Third World, the fourth dimension of today's world, in which 400 million people are starving to death, where 1 billion live below the lowest level imaginable to survive, where infant mortality is astronomical and where life expectancy is so short that people die in their youth. Yes, men kill by hunger, not like the bullet in the gun, but gradually by closing their claws and suffocating life.

The Cuban example is a symbol of these three types of exploitation. First Spanish colonialism, then North American neo-colonialism, then Soviet neo-colonialism. The cruel colonial exploitation led to a war of independence. The American neo-colonial system led to a revolution. What will Soviet neo-colonialism bring?

In April 1963, Fidel Castro made his first trip to the USSR, giving a new direction to the economy based on Soviet-Cuban trade agreements. The country was already suffering, from an economic point of view, from the weight of bilateral relations between the two countries and if, apparently, all the negotiations were favourable to Cuba, the reality was quite different.

In the international division of labour, Cuba was more or less given the task of producing sugar for the socialist camp, but without allowing it to enter CAME¹²⁶ (or COMECON) in its own right. It was necessary to create the "National Sugar Council", which later became the Ministry of Sugar. To renovate the entire old sugar-producing machine and raise production to 10 million tonnes in 1970, the amount of investment was enormous. They had to be made in dollars on the world market, and Cuba received the products of the socialist camp through economic conventions. The country had to invest what little foreign currency it had in order to honour the agreements with the eastern countries. In October 1963, it was also necessary to carry out a second agrarian reform which limited ownership to 47 hectares to ensure sugar cane seed plans.

On December 30, 1963, Nikolai Podgorny came to Havana to continue economic conversations and try to solve some of the problems posed by the unfortunate collaboration between the two countries. In mid-January 1964, Fidel made a second trip to the USSR to assure the Soviet leaders of Cuba's ability to produce sugar and convince the Kremlin that, despite political differences, he remained a strong ally. The one who introduced him and his lawyer during these discussions was Fabio Grobart who travelled to the USSR after the departure of the delegation led by Podgorny.

A lot of promises but nothing solid. In a speech to the nation, Fidel publicly announced that in 1970 the country would produce 10 million tonnes of sugar cane. He promised that in a very short period of time the first cane cutting machines would arrive in Cuba. Indeed, the USSR sent some heavy objects that were never useful for anything. It is only recently that Cuban technicians have obtained suitable prototypes. As for the famous cane cutting machines promised by the Kremlin, they were just another lie in an already long list.

When Khrushchev was deposed in October 1964, Che Guevara thought he could get a change in the USSR's economic policy towards Cuba. He went to Moscow with the intention of changing some things with Brezhnev, but he got no results. This was to be his last trip to the Soviet Union. On December 5, 1964, Che delivered a speech at the 19th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Although he had already taken the decision to break with the USSR and the Cuban position on how to bring socialism to its goal, he made no allusion and preferred to silence internal contradictions. Che resigned in December 1964, upon his return from the UN, but Fidel did not make it public until April 20, 1965, during an interview with foreign journalists.

From the beginning of 1965, Che sought a new field of action to promote guerrillas. To this end, he undertook a trip to Africa, Mali

and Congo-Brazzaville. Ghana, Guinea, Algeria and China followed. He was looking for political support.

The Kremlin was very concerned about the consequences that Che's resignation could have on Cuba's brand image, and on 17 February of the same year a three-year Soviet-Cuban agreement was signed, in which the USSR granted a new credit of 167 million dollars. Despite this gesture, three days later, on February 20, during the 2nd Afro-Asian Solidarity Economic Seminar, Che delivered a caustic speech on aid methods and the trading system used by Eastern European countries towards the Third World.

On March 1, Raúl Castro headed a Cuban delegation to Moscow to attend a preparatory meeting for a world conference of the PCs that the USSR wanted to organize. On 19 January, a communiqué was issued in Havana about a conference of all Latin American PCs (at an unspecified date in 1964). It was a ghost conference that was not attended by any communist leader of the continent. Its objective was to support Soviet theses on the unity of the world communist movement, so that the Kremlin would not interpret Che's position too harshly and would not be linked to Cuban politics.

When Che returned to Havana on March 15 after his Afro-Asian tour, he was received by Dorticos and Fidel at the airport. The gesture was more formal than political because the rupture was irreversible. It was there that the KGB took the opportunity to create a whole campaign of insurrection on the continent and destabilization of the Western world, in apparent contradiction with the Kremlin's policy, but always limiting the aid it provided to Che. Its objective was to rejuvenate the flag of revolutionary struggles, because the old banner of international communism was very worn out, but it still kept a margin of safety to allow the guerrillas to survive, but not to win.

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On October 3, Fidel presented Che's letter of resignation to the CCP Central Committee and read it. For us who knew the Argentine guerrilla and who were his friends, there was no doubt about it: by his silence, Che sacrificed all the differences on the altar of the poor of the Earth. At that time, I was in Congo with the Che guerrillas. As Fidel abandoned us in the African savannahs, he made his propaganda as follows: "En los nuevos campos de batalla llevaré la fé que tu me inculcaste"¹²⁷. "Every time I read this sentence, I am outraged. Che would never have written such a thing. Some sentences were introduced in this famous letter to exalt Fidel Castro's personality. Che preferred to keep quiet again rather than compromise the little help he was receiving and lose Cuba as a supply base.

Fidel Castro wanted to be friends with God and the Devil. It was certain that the whole strategy of the guerrillas' hard lines in the world was supported by the KGB and that if there was a fundamental political problem, it could be saved at any time. But to maintain a certain correlation of forces with the Kremlin, on 2 January 1966, he criticized China in a public speech and called Mao Tsé-Tung de viejo chocho¹²⁸ about China's refusal to increase the quantities of rice it delivered to Cuba. In reality, the Chinese government was selling rice, based on a quota of 6 pounds per person per month, at prices below those on the world market. But the Cuban government only distributed 3 and sold the rest at higher prices to third countries. In addition, it prohibited the entry of all Pro-Chinese propaganda literature. On the other hand, leaders of the FAR (Revolutionary Armed Forces) were punished for their pro-Chinese attitude.

For a few months, the tricontinental Conference, which was to bring together representatives of the hard, soft and even moderate line, had been in preparation. Finally, it took place in Havana from 3 to 15 January 1966. At the same time, OSPAAAL (Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America) was founded and given the Cuban capital as its provisional headquarters.

I returned from Congo at the end of the Tricontinental Conference. I was told to get in touch with some Latin American delegates to create the OLAS (Latin American Solidarity Organization). 27 delegates from South American countries attended this first meeting and it was agreed to hold the next congress in Havana.

Again, on February 6, Fidel attacked China and Mao Tse-Tung in a public speech. He stated that the latter had betrayed the good faith of the Cuban people. This had a huge significance, the famous "cultural revolution" attracted the attention of all the world's political movements, Mao's new communism was gaining followers every day. If Fidel took the liberty of criticizing and devaluing the doctrines of Chinese communism, it was because he could rely on the enormous moral strength represented by the world revolutionary movement. In my opinion, if the Cuban government maintained a certain distance from the Kremlin, with the support of the KGB, from 3 January 1966, when the Tricontinental Conference took place, until 21 August 1968, when Fidel approved the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, it was only a calculated political maneuver to discredit China and Mao Tse-Tung and divert the attention of the international leftist movements that were focusing their attention on the policy of the "Paper Tiger" man.

This is so true that Fidel embarked on a new cultural revolution in the interior of the country. During the 2nd Congress of the CTCR¹²⁹ (Central of Cuban Revolutionary Workers), the central themes were based on the low performance of Cuban workers and the high level of absenteeism. This congress took place from August 22 to 26 and was led to a hell of a train. It was clearly defined that the trade unions are one of the motors of the revolutionary impulse and not an organization intended to defend the workers. In Cuba, what is needed is to work harder every day, the time for demands will come later.

On September 28, Fidel laid down the principle of the policy of moral stimulation and harshly condemned societies based on mate-

rial stimulation. "The new man" had to come out of this new society thanks to these new moral conceptions. Cuba was beginning to create the man of the 21st century. As it was logical, Cuba became the focus of international attention. Even Mao had not gone this far in a social experience that was only the most elementary contradiction of the human condition.

On January 28, 1967, Fidel announced in a new speech that Cuba was withdrawing from the International Copyright Convention by declaring that culture is the heritage of humanity. On the other hand, a fight to the death was launched against bureaucratism. No national company would now maintain accounting services, production costs would not be known, there would be no archives, etc. Fidel proclaimed to the four winds that Cuban socialism had the characteristics of communism in its upper stage and that we were heading towards the disappearance of the State: Marx's dream. Internationally, he said that Cuba would release all its political prisoners (better said, all counterrevolutionary prisoners) if the rest of Latin America would release its own.

Unquestionably, Marxism was losing strength and was moving from being an ascending political current to becoming a static theory. All attention was now focused on Cuba, the island that apparently challenged the Kremlin in its foreign policy.

In April, Che sent a message to OSPAAAL urging the world's revolutionaries to create "two, three, many Vietnamese". This text had the effect of a bomb in international opinion. Making revolution and creating problems for the West was a game that had its limits. On June 29, the Soviet First, Kosygin, passed through Havana and had an interview with Fidel. He had just met with US President Johnson in Glassborough¹³⁰.

No more fun anymore. At this meeting between the Soviet Premier and the Cuban leader were present the advisers of the KGB. All material aid to the guerrillas had to stop. Che was practically condemned to death, as was the rest of the movements that Cuba con-

trolled in Latin America. Aid, weapons and advisers could continue to be provided to Africa, but the guerrillas in Latin America needed to be "cooled down" as soon as possible. It was as if the Glassborough agreements had signed the death penalty for guerrilla movements on the American continent.

In June of the same year, Fidel declared that "Cuba would fight alone in case of aggression". Pure rhetoric for propaganda in order not to discredit the OLAS Conference to be held in Havana from 4 to 11 August. During this conference, as usual, Fidel vigorously attacked Venezuela's CP and voiced veiled criticism of the USSR's systematic assistance to Latin American countries. This criticism of the Kremlin only favoured the Soviet political position in its struggle for peaceful coexistence with the USA at the international level. Inside, the troops prepared to assist Che in Latin America were waiting for the signal to leave (more than 1,500 men). They never received it, the death of the guerrillas had already been decided.

The months of August and September, as well as the beginning of October, were dramatic for us who were "in the loop". Through the dispatches of international agencies and the Bolivian army, we knew that Che was surrounded and that he could never get out of this situation without external support. All contacts were cut off with the guerrillas, who could no longer reach their former resupply bases.

On October 8, the inevitable happened, Che was captured and murdered and with him died the last hope of the Latin American guerrillas. In this regard, we remain disturbed by the reflection made in his Diary, shortly before his death, by Che on Régis Debray, who had been taken prisoner in Bolivia: "Me parece que el Francés habló demasiado"¹³¹.

Most of the guerrillas who accompanied Che to Bolivia were my former comrades in column 8. After the advent of the Revolution, as I have already told you, a group formed the DIER¹³², under the orders of the second in charge of the column, Ramiro Valdés. The rest

continued with Ernesto Guevara, first at the National Bank, then at the Ministry of Industries, where they trained the managers. Among the founders of DIER, who later formed the G-2, were Captain Eliseo Reyes (San Luis, and Rolando in the Bolivian guerrilla) and Captain Orlando Pantoja (Olo Antonio in Bolivia). With these men, I lost companions with whom I had fought for seven years, in the guerrillas, then in the secret services.

Others had been my comrades or leaders in the armed struggle for the liberation of Cuba under the orders of the Che, or later the comrades-in-arms in 1965 in Congo, such as Captain Gustavo Machín de Beche (in Bolivia Alejandro was his guerrilla name) or Che's first lieutenant and order, Carlos Coello (Tuma in Bolivia).

Captain Jesús Suárez Gayol (el Rubio), Captain Alberto Fernández (Pacho) and Captain Manuel Osorio (Miguel) had been my companions in Che's column 8 and in the early days after the advent of the revolution.

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Like the young widow who had just lost her husband, Fidel tried to mourn and make people believe in a certain fidelity. But what about a widow who remarries nine months after losing her husband, other than that the first union was not as perfect as they said. On August 21, Fidel approved the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. The most servile stage of the Cuban revolution as a satellite of the Kremlin was beginning.

Yes, between October 8, 1967 and August 23, 1968, a lot had happened! In January 1968, the International Cultural Congress was held in Havana. At the end of January of the same year, Anibal Escalante and other members of the former PSP were brought to justice for the second time on charges of creating small protest groups. The trial caused a scandal. 36 people were sentenced to prison terms of three to fifteen years. On March 13, a new wave of "cultural revolution" began, which was called the revolutionary offensive. This ju-

dicial episode was just another deception. Anibal Escalante ended his days as director of an important genetic centre in Matanzas province with all the privileges inherent to the caste of the leaders.

The Cultural Congress was nothing more than a well-organized show to maneuver the world's troops of progressive intellectuals. The purpose of the "revolutionary offensive" was to launch a general mobilization in agriculture. The 1970 zafra had to be "sold" and the 10 million tonnes of sugar announced by Fidel had to be obtained by all means, which would ultimately only be used to pay for the infamous junk of the socialist countries. Paradoxically, it was Che, the betrayed man, who served as the standard for this struggle and as a powerful magnet to attract sympathizers to the Cuban cause.

Hundreds of progressive intellectuals from around the world gathered in Havana for the International Cultural Congress. Today, I still wonder how it is possible to fool so many people at the same time. All of them, I mean all of them, as if by miracle, suddenly turned their eyes away from China and focused their attention on the Cuban phenomenon.

His competition with Mao was so open that Fidel did not hesitate to invite K. S. Karol, who had just published *Mao's China, the other communism*¹³³. I must admit that I did everything I could to ensure that the French journalist was not invited in 1967 and 1968. I already knew the man from his first two trips in 1961 and I had seen first-hand what had happened during his interview with Che. What he had published betrayed reality too much to satisfy me. But Karol's presence at the congress was a key objective in order to draw attention to Cuba and divert the promaoist current. However, when I later read his book *Les Guérilleros au pouvoir*¹³⁴, I was very favourably impressed. I am sure that this is the best work that has been done on Cuba. His accurate analyses provoked the anger of the Cuban leaders who, in an attempt to discredit him, accused him of being a CIA spy.

In the end, there is not much to blame for the intellectuals who were manipulated by Castro. I myself, who was part of this affair, was seduced by the Garibaldi-style romanticism of the revolution of the world's poor. When I woke up, it was a little late, but as Gramsci said: "The truth is always revolutionary. Better late than never. Perhaps from the depths of my conscience came the need to shed light on the nebula that the Cuban revolution represents in the global political context. We must not forget that for the last twenty years that have just been listened to, Fidel Castro's regime has had a place as a star... Myths always end up falling apart, no matter how masterfully staged. One day, the truth comes out.

Perhaps the strongest impression I had during this whole period was the Six Day War in the Middle East. Three days before the operations began, I had been sent to Algeria as an observer to contact the leaders of the Palestinian cause. A day later, accompanied by Captain Mohamed Nehin, I went to Cairo, then from there to the Golan Heights where a group of Cuban advisors were located. I am not going to tell you here everything I saw and felt during the four days I was in the theatre of operations, just summarize it by saying that the day Israel decides to invade the Arab world, it will succeed. After its victory, Israel will not have the necessary forces to maintain an occupation, but the penetration power of its army and the decision of its soldiers in battle will not find anyone able to resist them. If Rommel was the "Desert Fox", Moshe Dayan is the "Desert Devil".

I would like to clarify a point that may seem contradictory: the Cuban leaders, starting with Fidel, feel the strongest sympathy for Israel. Although circumstances forced them to be in the Arab camp, their feelings were more towards the Jewish cause. The leader of the Cuban revolution follows all Israeli military operations with the greatest interest and often calls them brilliant. I'm not exaggerating. When I returned from the Six Day War, I had an interview with Fidel to tell him what I had seen and give him my impressions. I could summarize this whole interview with a sentence that I remember

perfectly and that illustrates his position well: "El pueblo que se bata con tal coraje merece la victoria"¹³⁵.

Che's death was the catalyst that precipitated the appearance of the most diverse political and social unrest in many parts of the world. It is no coincidence that, in 1968, serious internal problems arose in many countries with the same common detonator: youth. The phenomenon has occurred in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Uruguay, Mexico, etc. The stature of the Argentine guerrilla went beyond the borders of history and became a legend that had nourished for several years the dreams of revolutionary romanticism of a whole generation.

The sociologists of each of the countries that have been included in this gigantic revolt have tried to explain the phenomenon solely through internal problems. However, they rejected the profound influence that Che's death had had. In the end, everyone can think what they want but, for me, I am sure that the most serious ideological changes were due in large part to this event. It is easier to rebel out of idealism than out of revolt against violent repression. In periods of decadence of civilizations, I am talking here about both East and West, men are looking for new moral values, because neither the State, nor the Church, nor the institutions represent sufficiently strong aspirations or paths to follow for the new generations. Revolutionary romanticism attracted our grandparents to Garibaldi's heroism, and we, to some extent, were inspired by Che.

At the beginning of October 1967, the day after the Argentinian's death was confirmed, the Italian publisher Fertrinelli¹³⁶ arrived in Havana, where he was already known to have been there several times. The next day, Fidel summoned me to his office to arrange for me to find documents on the Che for Fertrinelli. We did not yet own the Che Diary. The Italian publisher asked me to find him a photograph of Che to make a poster. I remember going to Celia Sanchez¹³⁷ with Fertrinelli. We examined a number of photos without him being able to decide on one of them. Then I thought

maybe we could find one of the ones I had made during the guerrilla war, which, although not of the best quality, were more representative of the guerrilla's true personality.

By chance, I discovered one, taken from the gallery during a commemorative ceremony held in memory of the sailors of the French ship *Coubre*¹³⁸, which exploded on 4 March 1960. Che still had long hair and a beard. He wore his black beret with the star of the rebel army commander. I sent the negative to the Minfar¹³⁹ cinema section for a facial enlargement and to print it on a line paper to give it a more pronounced contrast; finally this was the photo chosen. Who hasn't seen her? Tens of millions of copies were reproduced worldwide. It was the best-selling poster in history. However, I have never received a single cent of copyright.

The trend was on. From that moment on, long hair and beard became almost a symbol. They were signs of rebellion and disenchantment for a whole generation... a way of protesting against the inequalities and injustices of our world.

Fidel Castro knew how to take advantage of this situation. In Che's name, he asked for more work, more effort, more sacrifice every day. The year 1968 was declared "Year of the Heroic Guerrilla". Strange paradox.

In his speech of 13 March 1968, Castro relaunched the "revolutionary offensive". All services that were still private were nationalized and all night centres were closed. Havana had become a dead city. The general mobilization for agriculture was not long in coming. On August 17, the Minister of Labour, Jorge Risquet, imposed a kind of work card that noted the behaviour of each worker. With this new system of control, the last freedom enjoyed by the Cuban worker died.

On August 23rd, the wind blew again. In a television address, Fidel approved the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops. This event confused observers and all those who knew the Cuban revolution well. The Cuban leader's controversial foreign policy had

long been difficult to interpret, but this 180-degree change blurred all possibilities of analysis. We who knew the duplicity with which Fidel had acted in recent years, who knew how far the regime had gone in its intrigues with the KGB, should not have been very surprised; and yet never, in our wildest assumptions, would we have thought that the Cuban leader would have so much boldness. The conclusion was simple, the time had come when Fidel had abandoned international unrest and state terrorism to make way for a new policy of submission to the Kremlin, becoming the USSR's spokesman among the non-aligned and the satellite provider of mercenaries to defend Soviet hegemonic interests in the Third World.

Did the KGB understand that it was time to stop this escalation? I really don't know and I doubt that anyone can see clearly in their game. It is certain that, during Khrushchev's time, the KGB had conspired against him and that he had used Cuba as a decisive asset in this action. After 1962, despite the apparent or real divorce between the two countries, Cuba had maintained an aggressive policy on a global scale, but this policy only promoted the most intimate aspirations of communism. However, there were differences among the communist parties as the KGB continued to strongly support Fidel Castro. Was it a new way of conspiring against Brezhnev? A new power struggle? But it was undeniable that, despite Mao's role as an international agitator and rival political centre of attraction, the phenomenon was beginning to become dangerous and to create new risks of splits within the socialist camp. Indeed, Cuba had perfectly diverted international attention to its advantage, relegating the interest aroused by the Romanian or Czechoslovak experiences to second place, not to mention Tito, who had also lost importance and originality.

When Cuba and Germany (GDR) issued a joint communiqué at the end of November 1968 emphasizing the need to fight all forms of revisionism and opportunism, there was general astonishment.

All said and done, the great illusion of "original socialism" was collapsing like a house of cards. The saddest thing was that a whole generation of revolutionaries who had believed in revolutionary romanticism in good faith understood that they had been betrayed again. Cuba, as much as the USSR and the rest of the socialist countries, completely ignored the fate of the dispossessed of the Third World.

Fidel Castro understood that he could not make such a violent change without having internal problems. He had taken off the mask internationally, but he wanted to save his stature as a statesman and politician with great economic successes to his credit. A giant zafra of 10 million was the ideal way to achieve this.

The year 1969 was called "the year of the decisive effort". The internal propaganda was monstrous; it could be summed up as follows: everything for zafra. The continued attacks against North American imperialism and the genocide of the Vietnamese people made it possible to maintain an appearance of struggle and make the transition to the new docile satellite stage easier.

On 24 October 1968, during the United Nations Conference in Geneva (UNCTAD), a five-year agreement was signed allocating an annual quota of 2 150 000 tonnes of sugar to Cuba on the world free market. Cuba was undoubtedly the largest sugar producer¹⁴⁰ in the world, as well as the largest exporter.

This convention apparently reserved for Cuba the lion's share of the free market; but it was a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it stimulated a country like Brazil, encouraging it to increase its production thanks to the immense possibilities offered by its territory; on the other hand, it pushed prices down sharply. Fidel was only promising 10 million tons for 1970. Since 1964, sugar supply had exceeded demand, which was growing at a rate of 2% per year. The scandalous propaganda surrounding the 1970 zafra was practically an economic suicide and many of us, together with the specialists, asked for a certain discretion on the subject in order to make a bet-

ter profit from sales. All this was in vain, Fidel Castro needed this economic success to strengthen his international image.

Fidel Castro tried by all means to increase nickel production. In 1967, it was 34,900 tonnes; more than 65% was exported to Eastern Europe, but the remaining 35% was undoubtedly a good source of foreign exchange. But the United States banned the import of manufactured products that contained nickel from Cuba. The Soviets took advantage of the opportunity to leave the country, at derisory prices, about 85,000 tons of raw ore in addition to the 40,000 tons extracted in 1968, and to obtain free of charge the "tail" of radioactive minerals that accompanies Cuban nickel and that has 100 times more value than the ore itself.

Citrus production, which reached 152,000 tons in 1967 and had a low market in France, lost its upward trend. The markets that had been conquered with great difficulty had to be abandoned for non-compliance with the contracts and because Cuba had expelled Israeli technicians (they were the ones who had developed this branch of production) after the Six Day War. The Eastern European countries were collecting Cuba's debts in the form of food. Cubans no longer saw citrus fruits, but these items had become common in the markets of socialist countries. Meat was almost non-existent for the good reason that 85% of production was exported to the countries of the socialist bloc. The famous National Poultry Combination increased its egg and chicken production, but there was no progress on the domestic market. In 1967, 40% of the 1,200 million eggs produced were exported.

What was the point of producing more than 7 million head of cattle and more than 10 million pigs in 1967 if all the meat was exported to the socialist countries to settle the existing debt? Rather than foreign trade debt, it is better to talk about theft and banditry. In 1968, out of 36,000 tonnes of coffee produced, 34,000 were exported to the USSR. Instead, we bought coffee of the worst quality to satisfy the miserable rations given to the Cubans.

In the land of tobacco, this product was drastically rationed: two cigars and two packs of cigarettes per fortnight per person. If we want to find an element of comparison: in 1967, Cubans smoked 732 million cigars, suddenly the domestic market fell to less than 24 million! Wonders of the socialist economy and rationing! After the revolution, Cuba gradually regained the Spanish market, but today most of the tobacco in branches is exported to the USSR, which mixes it with its production in Georgia.

Another highlight of the national economy is the 18 million tonnes of bagasse that remain after the extraction of sugar cane juice and that must continue to be burned in the boilers of sugar factories, because the socialist countries did not want to provide us with the means to extract the cellulose contained in the bagasse, which would allow the manufacture of plastic materials, textiles, etc.

The 10,000 tonnes of lobster that the fishing industry provides are entirely earmarked for export. In Havana's markets, you can no longer see any shrimps, lobsters or quality fish. We must be satisfied with minor species that cannot be exported.

A people can accept to make sacrifices, provided they believe in their future. In 1967 and 1968, we were delighted to see that France was beginning to export good products to Cuba, not consumer goods but Richard Continental tractors, Berliet trucks, etc. Short-term illusion! Soon the USSR took over these items and continued to send us instead old tracked tractors, which are not very useful and do not have spare parts, as well as Soviet ZIL-V8 trucks, which are as expensive as French trucks, but smaller, of lower quality. They consume a lot of fuel and their operating life does not exceed three years.

The list would be endless, but it is possible to conceive through these examples what the economic relations of third world countries with the developed countries of the East are like. The exploitation of imperialism is difficult to bear, but the neo-colonialism of the Eastern countries is a thousand times worse.

It is easy to publish a country's economic data by linear economic projection for propaganda purposes, but the reality is quite different. Let's take a concrete example from the mining sector: chromium is an extremely rare mineral in the world. During the Second World War, Cuba exported all its production to the United States, which accounted for 20% of world supply. Currently, the country produces 58% of the world's production and all of it is exported to the USSR. However, its hard currency value is less than 10% of that of the 1940s, while production has doubled and ore prices have remained stable on the international market, even taking into account the rate of inflation!

Cuba pays for technical assistance from socialist countries 19% of its total exports. This is an overwhelming reality, one fifth of the value of Cuba's exports is spent on this aid; all technicians from the socialist countries working on the island are paid by the "dollar convention" system; that is, their wages must be deducted from the trade balance figure of their country of origin. This situation is aggravated by the rigid Cuban bureaucratic machine which cannot keep control of this phenomenon; in a large number of cases, "super-technicians" do not exceed the level of skilled workers and, with a few exceptions, do not justify the high salaries paid to them.

The aid of the Third World Socialist countries is conditioned by their political submission, and despite the will of governments to improve the internal economic situation, the neo-colonial system of trade treaties is so heavy that they are quickly crushed. When Cuba exports food to Eastern European countries, the control they undergo is very strict. We are obliged to send first quality products. But when we receive machines or technology in exchange, they are of inferior quality to the world market and at exorbitant prices.

The Third World is a kind of communist trash can that spills all the old technology into it that it can no longer assimilate because of its enormous production and maintenance costs and low efficiency.

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In Cuba, the housing problem is enormous; the population growth rate increased steadily until 1976 because of the State's policy in the field of family planning. There were no contraceptive methods and abortion was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Housing was started in urban areas in 1970, but they are distributed like the rest of the material goods, according to everyone's "merit", in other words, party activists have priority, while the worker has to settle for the crumbs; but the elite, the new class, does not have these kinds of problems.

Since the exodus of Cubans began in 1959, the Ministry of the Interior has taken possession of all the houses abandoned by their owners and distributed them as follows: 35% are distributed¹⁴¹, 10% become contact houses, 20% move on to urban reform which allocates them according to population-specific criteria; there have already been several scandals caused by the illegal sale of rights for these houses, which have led some of the organization's leaders to prison. Outside these houses, entire districts such as Koli, the New Vedado and Miramar were declared "frozen zones", and only Celia Sánchez, Secretary of the Presidency, could grant the houses in these districts, the most beautiful in Havana before the revolution. Ministers and senior officials have an annual quota of houses that they distribute at their discretion to their staff, family and friends.

Often, the various Security offices ask for a certain number of premises to be given to them for their work; this is not a problem for the Ministry of the Interior because it is its officials who seal the houses and inform the corresponding agencies of their confiscation. The transaction is done within the department and the offices then distribute them to their staff who take everything in the house for their own account, or to resell it, without ever paying rent to the government. The same scandal exists for valuables, furniture, electrical equipment; when someone takes over a house, if it has already been robbed, or if they simply want to change its furniture, they just have to go to the State's "recovery of assets" depots, and the case is

legalized by a sales certificate. I personally saw a 14-piece ebony dining room, hand-carved, acquired for 25 pesos, the price of a pound¹⁴² of black beans at the parallel market.

In this respect, the case of Captain Arangurén is instructive. He was not happy with the villa he had received and changed it to another with a swimming pool, and fully furnished. To make matters worse, he had everything in his new residence, furniture and objects, evaluated for 120 pesos; in the dining room, two Picassos could be admired!

The same thing happens with cars. We choose the most suitable one and pay a price that varies between 10 and 70 pesos while the same vehicle has a value of 25 or 30,000 pesos on the second-hand market. There are civil servants who buy two or three cars a year. Security privileges are found at all levels, the higher the level, the greater the level; even the most honest public servants are afraid to report its affairs. Anyone who dares to criticize Security knows he will have to pay a high price!

It is the secret service agents who are the most privileged because they have access to consumer societies. They deprive themselves of nothing and happily waste the people's money. In this micro-society withdrawn into itself at the gates of American Eldorado, the fetishism that surrounds certain objects that cannot be found here has turned them into symbols of power; the more expensive and sophisticated they are, the higher the level of their owner in the hierarchy of "men of silence".

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For the Cuban revolution, the years 1971 to 1975 were the years of the fat cows, sugar prices soared and the economy's development rate officially reached 10% per year. While sugar consumption was being reduced to bring in more foreign currency, the secret services were spending millions with their hands full. His agents were no longer satisfied with the old symbols of their power, now they were

changing their Rolex watch from steel to gold against an Omega digital watch, replacing their blue jeans and synthetic shirts with silk shirts and luxury suits. Under the pretext of work, senior officials and even heads and deputy heads of offices planned trips to capitalist countries to carry out their annual purchases. With them, the first imported cars appeared in Cuba because the ones provided by the State no longer suited them. The fashions and habits of capitalist society had fascinated and conquered them.

In 1976, the mess was born. As quickly as they had risen, sugar prices fell and the country found itself in an even more difficult situation than before, as the steep rise in oil prices had destabilized world market prices. Cuba could no longer provide only 45% of the country's industrial production and needed to import 87% of the essential raw materials to achieve this. The other raw material that could relieve the Cuban situation was nickel, but the economic blockade prevented any sale in the capitalist countries and Cuba was forced to sell this raw metal to the USSR at a price below that of the world market. Fishing had also been a good source of foreign exchange earnings, but it was now deprived of its areas of exploitation because of the limits imposed by the 200 nautical miles of territorial waters.

1976 was the year that brought the hardest blow to the Cuban economy. Only the increase in tourism could keep the island afloat; it had been predicted that, thanks to it, \$100 million could be expected before the end of the year. There was no other way out of it.

A wave of repression began to break out over the country as more tourists entered the country. When the borders of a dictatorship open, the danger of contamination by this disease called freedom increases. The G-2 men became fierce to defend their privileges.

Currently, the situation is desperate and Fidel is not far from economic bankruptcy, although supported by a repressive machine that is only there to defend his personal well-being. The economic

situation is getting worse and worse. More than 30% of sugar cane plantations are affected by an epidemic and tobacco plantations, which guaranteed the country \$45 million through exports, are destroyed by disease as a result of excessive genetic manipulation. Some economists say that the USSR sells oil at half the world market price and buys sugar at prices higher than the world market price, and that is true, but that does not compensate for the derisory prices that this country pays for nickel; nor is it considered the lower technical quality of the products sold by the Eastern countries, with their shorter lifespan, higher consumption and very high prices.

Popular discontent is no longer just a whisper, rebellion can break out at any time. Fidel was forced to place Ramiro Valdés again in the Ministry of the Interior, his reputation for firmness in repression is well established. This appointment is significant, there is a very strong dissatisfaction in the country that can be unleashed at any time. Today more than ever, the structures of the State are only there to defend it.

When the crisis began in 1976, we wanted to give the impression of democratization. This gave the people the illusion that they were participating in the life of the country through elections; the responsibility for economic chaos would be shared. No one believed it; the elections had been arranged in advance and the official candidates chosen; the representatives at the municipal level were nominated by the party and instructions to vote were given door-to-door (you have to vote for X... the party candidate); in the end, the same members of the government elite held the positions of responsibility at the head of the National People's Congress (there were some exceptions, some personalities who had made reservations were disposed of), the middle managers were found at the level of provincial and municipal assemblies. This new institution was apparently to administer and direct 75% of commercial or production enterprises at the municipal level, 85% of educational institutions at the provincial

level and 50% of public health institutions. In reality, this institution of popular power was only a purely decorative political palliative.

As early as September 1979, the men of Sector 40¹⁴³ conducted patrols with Soviet soldiers from the combat brigades and all the forces of the Ministry of the Interior; meanwhile, secret service agents were creating hotbeds of tension in Central America and the Caribbean. Nicaragua and Granada are the most striking examples of this destabilization campaign. We can try to export our own political problems or a serious internal situation with its many unemployed and disgruntled people, we can also create an explosive conflict by sudden exodus of more than 100,000 people, but the fact remains that Havana is increasingly transforming itself into an uncontrolled giant. The city's population has increased by 50% in twenty years and at the same time public services, such as transport, have decreased by 35%. The sharp decline in the growth rate, which from 1971 to 1975 was officially 10% and will not reach 1% in 1980, will not provide the necessary new jobs. Unemployment is astronomical in Havana and in the country's main cities. When foreign correspondents see the major demonstrations organized by the government, they are favourably impressed and believe that Fidel Castro still enjoys popular support.

But things are not going as expected; all workplaces close several hours in advance and employees have to leave together for the rally carrying signs and shouting the slogans that the DOR (Department of Revolutionary Guidance) has distributed. The party cells of each factory, as well as the administration, impose mandatory presence. All workers must be there on the scheduled day and sign a control sheet. The event is organized in zones according to DOR guidelines. Anyone who does not attend regularly knows that he or she may be declared surplus and will lose his or her job. Three months with 80% of salary, two months with 60% and one month with 50%. Then he is abandoned to his fate. Unemployment does not officially exist, it makes things easier. He will not have another job corresponding to

the one he held. Therefore, he will be noted in his work file that he has not fulfilled his political duties, and the officers of the counter-intelligence services will do the rest. The same system is used to send "volunteers" to Africa. All schools are also closed and the student body must attend or march, depending on the situation. Those who do not come to their study centre that day are reported as counter-revolutionary or uncombative; Young Communist cells also make a political assessment and schools are obliged to send attendance lists. Those who are not well rated politically will not exceed the 9th degree.¹⁴⁴ They are condemned to remain workers.

In cities, even those who do not work and study must also attend all these meetings; the CRDs (Comité de défense de la révolution) summon a certain number of people to each block of houses and, at a given time, they are brought to the meeting place, all the capital's means of transport having been requisitioned for this purpose, as well as the factories' means of transport (trucks, small buses, etc.). The persons in charge check the invitation forms on the spot to find out who has come or not. The same thing happens when speeches are made in cities in the interior of the country.

This is the real popular support enjoyed by Fidel Castro among the Cuban population, with the help of all the means of repression and surveillance put in place by his regime, foremost among which are the State Security and the advisers sent by comrades from the Kremlin.

CHAPTER VII

TIME OF DOUBT

On June 10, 1969, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez declared during the World Conference of Communist Parties in Moscow: "Cuba is in unfailing solidarity with the USSR. "It was from that date that Fidel Castro officially acknowledged his submission to the Kremlin, who must have thought that it was no longer necessary to use it as a spearhead against Maoism. In July of that year, the Soviet squadron visited the Caribbean island and, a few months later, to seal the new political turn that Cuba had just taken, Marshal Grechko, Minister of Defense of the USSR, also made an official visit to Cuba. Meanwhile, the secretary of the CCP organization, Armando Hart, had praised Stalinism in the 1930s in the USSR, saying that it was the example to follow. From 1969 onwards, Cuba imposed a muscular Stalinism and the leaders' caste, the Cuban Nomenklatura, flourished and spread like an epidemic. At the end of the year, more than 2,000 Alfa Romeo were delighting the new class as the people were exhausted preparing the 1970 zafra. The stories of a new society, where only moral stimuli and "new men" would exist, were already no more than lies, the only new man that Cuba had created was the successor of the new class.

Castro's stubbornness in leading the Cuban economy was producing more chaotic results than ever before. The Minister of Sugar Industry, Borrego, told the leader that the 1970 zafra could not reach the 10 million tonnes announced and that it was not to be expected to achieve this result until 1972. As a reward for his frankness, he was dismissed from his position.

In order for the big cities to be able to ensure their own consumption, Castro had the idea of creating the "cordon" system around the country's main cities. Everyone to the fields! Anyone

who didn't work wouldn't eat! We didn't know what to think anymore. Perhaps Fidel had been intoxicated by Thomas More's Utopia reading? It was unthinkable to launch the entire population of cities into agricultural work to the detriment of industrial production and bureaucratic operations. Let us take the famous Havana mountain range as an example. Castro wanted it to be used mainly for coffee cultivation. To this end, a variety called Caturra was imported from México, which did not need shade and was harvested early. It is fortunate that this experiment ended in failure (the Caturra coffee never adapted to the climatic conditions of Cuba), otherwise the population of Havana would have been condemned to harvest the beans for many years. Nevertheless, millions of man-hours of work had been lost in vain and the prophet of the revolution could afford to ruin the country economically with impunity. In the end, democratic centralism does not exist in Cuba, the country is governed solely by the will of the leader of the revolution, following the model of the Stalin of the 1930s, as Armando Hart so aptly put it.

Communism no longer had any secrets for me, I knew all the communist countries of the East. In Asia, I had witnessed the political fanaticism of China, Korea and Vietnam. I had the opportunity to meet Ho Chi Minh who, under the appearance of a quiet old man, hid the aggressive character of a thousand-year-old people. The Vietnam War had attracted worldwide sympathy for this people and the most severe condemnation for the United States, but one day these Asians came out with their claws and showed their true face.

I had been an exceptional witness of the guerrilla theatre in the world and I could understand the reactions of guerrilla leaders, such as Douglas Bravo in Venezuela, who openly attacked Fidel Castro. I had spoken with the main leaders of urban guerrillas, such as those in the mountains and forests of Latin America and Africa. I had very often been the contact agent for the Tricontinental in Latin America, with the Sandinista movement, and in Venezuela to the extreme limits of Patagonia and Chile. Survivors of that time will surely remem-

ber the contact that was codenamed "Antonio das Mortes"¹⁴⁵. Have the PLO or other organizations forgotten the observer sent by the Tricontinental Ali Khan¹⁴⁶? I prefer to bury this stage of my life, as I have already said. I will only talk about it when hatred has crossed the borders of oblivion. Perhaps one day, when I am old, my grandchildren will be able to hear the story of that romantic era, provided, of course, that the Communist secret services, in the meantime, have not settled my score for breaking the law of silence. Unfortunately, peoples continue to be more sensitive to the call of romanticism than to the lessons of history. Whenever the horrors of communism are denounced, there are always people who think in good faith that they are just lies made for propaganda.

I then began to understand that I no longer had a place in this communist machine, where I had let myself be led from 1959 to 1965. I woke up to this reality after the events in Congo. My doubt was immense and the internal contradictions exceeded my possibility of understanding. It was hard to oppose the cause for which I had fought so hard and in such good faith. How can I admit that I was wrong? I had become without realizing it a kind of ideologically marginalized person, I could no longer identify myself with communism and even less with capitalism. As for the miracle of the third position distilled by the "non-aligned" current, it is a myth.

In 1970, I began my career as a proscribed person. In February of that year, a PLO delegation arrived in Havana to coordinate the assistance to be provided by the Cuban government. At that time, Fidel Castro had made a compromise with the Kremlin: he abandoned Latin America to focus his action on Africa. As I had worked with this organization as an observer and participated in the fighting in the Golan Heights, I was asked to prepare a detailed report to situate this problem historically. Fidel, Raúl, Piñero (Head of the Secret Service) and the staff of the Secret Service were present during my presentation. For three and a half hours, I let myself go to give my opinion on the subject, until I discussed the situation in the

Palestinian refugee camps. Of course, I attacked Israel for its state terrorism, but I also denounced the hidden side of the matter, namely that the PLO forced Palestinians to remain in border camps by force and used them as bases for its guerrilla operations against the Hebrew state, knowing that, for each blow, the Israelis would respond with wild bombardments. The civilian population was thus cynically condemned to play the role of victim, and all this for political purposes.

So I advised, while this situation was going on, not to help Yasser Arafat. As the Palestinian delegation was present, this provoked a very lively discussion. Nor did I agree with the terrorism that the Palestinians were using against the Israeli civilian population to intimidate the new kibbutz settlers. I thought that sabotage actions could be limited to the war industry or the army, but that there was nothing to be gained by attacking civilians. In the end, Israel had nothing to lose. If, at the time of the partition of Palestine, the borders had not been fixed, it would have been easier to find a *modus vivendi* with those who had been their neighbours for millennia, rather than to declare a blind war. The PLO's refusal to accept the existence of the State of Israel carried within itself the seeds of a war that would last until the disappearance of the Jewish State or until this "race" was further dispersed throughout the world. Why rekindle the flame of a new war? At the end of the Second World War, the main allies of the young State of Israel had been the socialist countries. It seemed logical to use the full weight of international communism to find a peaceful solution to this conflict, which caused a localized war in the Middle East between the superpowers through other states.

After a week of debates, I was stripped of my party card for "deviationism". It was explained to me that, given my history as a revolutionary in the service of internationalism, I was not removed from either the G-2 or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in other words, the sanction was purely moral. My exclusion was only temporary. In

three years' time, a commission would meet to make a final decision on my case. Apparently, the degree of trust I enjoyed had not changed. I could attend the meetings of the party cell, but without voting. Despite everything, I knew very well that I had entered a new phase of my life.

My role in the Marquitos case had hardly been forgotten. It was most certainly he who prevented me from taking up positions of international responsibility, at least officially. While my former classmates had become ambassadors or high-level officials in international organizations, my arrival at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was almost anonymous and my stay there was only marked by constant secret agent missions. It was the responsibility of those in power to set my destiny within certain limits to punish me. However, I still think today that I learned much more from life and men through the fighting and the smell of burnt powder than through the experience I could have had as a diplomat. Finally, I feel much happier with my height of 1.87 metres, my 90 kilos and my status as an expert in martial arts and sniper than with my diploma in diplomatic and consular law.

I took refuge at the university again, but this time voluntarily. I had enrolled in the evening courses, reserved for executives, to follow the sociology courses for four years. This choice was undoubtedly linked to my desire to better understand the deep motivations of men and to try to understand an increasingly elusive world. At university, I had some problems with the rector of the Faculty of Arts because I had translated, for a study circle, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's book, *Le Défi américain*, as well as several articles published by American magazines on test practice.

I already knew I was condemned without appeal. I had just written an economic analysis on the Third World, only 500 copies of which were printed exclusively for the country's high political circles. For any explanation, I was informed that the people were not ripe to understand the economic problems and some of the differ-

ences that existed in the socialist camp... In 1978, I sent a political essay on the CIA's penetration of the Third World to the Casa de las Américas competition. Although he was selected by the jury as one of the three best of its kind, he was not admitted to compete. It was of course published, but only for the use of members of the Ministry of the Interior. Unwritten laws condemned me to ostracism. Not only was I a man without a past, but I was also deprived of the present and the future.

This period was also an eventful one. The 1970 zafra failed, the 10 million were not reached. Brezhnev made two visits to Cuba and the port of Cienfuegos became a supply base for the Soviet nuclear fleet. National life was in full swing. It was useless to ask questions about Cuba's future, since Fidel assumed his role as an infallible mystical character to perfection. His desires became law and nothing and no one could stop his ambition, given the power structures he had surrounded himself with.

The guerrilla movements in Latin America were almost forgotten. The government kept only rare contacts with the Tupamaros and the Sandinista Front, so as not to lose sight of them completely. Meanwhile, substantial financial assistance was available to Salvador Allende. It was certain that the few survivors of the Bolivian guerrilla adventure had escaped through Chile, but that was not a sufficient reason.

I had known Salvador Allende ("Chicho" for his Cuban friends) since the beginning of the revolution, when an invasion of revolutionary superheroes in Latin America settled in Havana's luxury hotels. Their struggle was limited to trying to seize the bulk of the beefsteaks served to them in restaurants, which the Cuban people were deprived of. The great friendship that apparently bound Fidel and Allende never existed. "Chicho" was like so many others who dream of the utopia of a new socialism. When Castro changed tactics and the guerrilla line was abandoned, the lider took the Chilean senator seriously for the first time.

I used to spend many evenings with "Chicho" to play chess in suite n° 1902 of the Havana-Libre hotel, and God only knows how many times I heard him complain about the lack of respect he was receiving from his host. I remember that, shortly before the elections that were to bring him to power in Chile, he came to Cuba to agree on how he would receive financial assistance for his election campaign. Shortly before his departure, Fidel and Raúl invited him to an outing in Sierra Maestra. After a few shooting sessions with AKM rifles (there is a world famous photograph showing Salvador Allende with an AKM¹⁴⁷), Fidel told him: "Since you have to go through Paris, tell Christian Dior to draw you a guerrilla uniform! We've given you enough money for that..."

Salvador Allende was always dressed in a very sophisticated way and loved perfumes. Jokes on this subject were frequent from Cuban leaders.

I personally had two interviews with R. Enríquez, one of the leaders of the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), to convince him to strongly support "Chicho", because this movement did not want to collaborate with the Chilean CP, led by Corvalán who was part of the opposition coalition. In the end, I think Salvador Allende is the main person responsible for everything that is happening in Chile right now. I was always convinced that he was like a great child with a noble heart. It was impossible for him to carry out a socialist revolution in his country when he had only been elected with a quarter of the working population. The nationalizations and expropriations of the State in favour of the mass of workers may well have a nationalist character while maintaining a democratic line, but declaring socialism in a country all at once, while maintaining political pluralism and bourgeois institutions at the helm of the State, was suicide.

It is undeniable that his name has lengthened the list of martyrs of Third World dictatorships, but, although "Chicho" was a personal

friend, I must admit that the disaster in Chile today is the consequence of the political immaturity of this unfortunate leader.

In July 1970, I opened Pandora's box for myself. All the evils of communism came upon me. The process of the revolution had always been marked by a curious mistrust of foreigners, but I had never thought that xenophobia could lead to tragedy. At that time, on the beach of Varadero, I met the young Frenchwoman who is now my wife. The classic love at first sight, no one escapes their fate.

Until then, I had rarely been bored with "petticoat" matters. My relaxed attitude was a little embarrassing to the old PSP militants and some PC militants. They had thought that I was leading a licentious life, not in line with the party's rigid discipline, and had complained to the G-2 Disciplinary Commission. Fortunately, my lawyer in this case had been Ramiro Valdés who, from his position as minister, kept me safe from all conspiracies and gossip. He said that I was a folk phenomenon, half intellectual, half adventurer, and that I was left alone.

Since 1961, when I had had this dramatic altercation with Eddy Sunol during my visit to El Condado prison, he had never given up on his revenge. Without knowing anything specific, I was almost certain that he spent his time watching me, spying on me, waiting, with the patience of the beast, for the opportunity, for my negligence on my part that would put me at his mercy.

When I met my wife in Varadero, he made a terrible report about me, combining lying and slander, saying nothing more or less than that I had become a potential enemy and had fallen into the hands of a prostitute. The case ended with a meeting in Ramiro Valdés' office. He was no longer Minister of the Interior, but as a member of the party's political bureau, he asked to take care of my case. Finally, I was cleared and Sunol got a good yelling. Ramiro added that he would do better to deal with purely political matters.

My future wife returned to Cuba in July 1971 with a group of tourists. That's when I had to make a decision. So that there was no

doubt about my intentions, and so that everyone would know that no selection criteria could be imposed on me, I decided to abandon all my activities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a while and to accompany the group as a guide during its trip to the island. This attitude left everyone perplexed. I defied the habits of power and violated Order Number 1 of the Ministry of the Interior, which prohibited all relations with foreigners outside operational work.

When my future wife left, I was imprisoned for forty-five days. I believe that the officers who questioned me exceeded their rights, because I was locked in a completely dark cell, one of those reserved for those sentenced to death. Moreover, it was almost a kidnapping, my pre-trial detention was not officially notified to anyone. From the beginning, I understood that the purpose of this particular detention was to create psychosis in me by trying to alter what specialists call the human biological clock. The cell was 80 centimetres wide by 2 metres long and 5 metres high. Inside, a tap with a hole underneath. A steel bar grille, lined with an iron door, prevented me from communicating with the outside world. The darkness was so thick that it took me several days to be able to recognize what was around me.

To help upset the internal balance of the personality, they played to the extreme with mealtimes. The first few days, they were served to me at a rate three times faster than the normal rate, then they were long periods without food. Sleep was another key factor in their strategy. Every ten or fifteen minutes, the guard who walked the long corridor separating the cells struck the metal door very hard. Inside the cell, the echo looked like a cannon shot. I understood their purpose from the beginning, but I had to bind all my will not to lose my footing. I knew that my disappearance could not go unnoticed for very long, and that I could only be blamed for a little indiscipline, not for being a spy. However, I was not so reassured, because I was sure that it was a maneuver of this pig of Suñol and his men.

After about twenty days spent in the dark, and without any contact with the outside world, I was picked up for questioning. The little neon light that lit the corridor is enough to blind me. When I entered the room where the interrogation was to take place, I was hardly surprised to see Sunol sitting behind the desk. In a threatening tone, he told me that I was going to speak, whether I like it or not. He wanted a confession at all costs, or he'd have me shot. Someone other than myself could have been judged on a simple conviction, but because of my background as a G-2 member, it was impossible for him to eliminate me without being held accountable. I feared, however, that he would not do so, because he seemed so angry with himself. A real madman. He was screaming that I was a CIA agent and that I had to report whoever recruited me, where it happened, etc. After screaming for more than half an hour without me opening my mouth, he got up and made the gesture of slapping me. I took the opportunity to see what my situation really was like by saying to him: "Sunol, you know full well that this is only an infamous scheme, if you touch one of my hair, when I get out, I will kill you." I realized that my words had hit the nail on the head. From that moment on, I became the strongest, I understood that he was not sure of anything and that he was only trying to buy time until the investigation started.

At the time of my arrest, very late at night, I was taken to the G-2 prison, Villa Marista¹⁴⁸. Probably because of the late hour, I had not been entered in any register. Sunol, as Deputy Minister of the Interior, could have a man kept in detention without being held accountable to anyone, but the case would inevitably come to light.

After this first interrogation, Sunol came to see me in my cell almost every day to ask me if I was ready to talk. The fourth time, in front of my silence, he announced to me that I would be shot that very evening. Honestly, it affected me. Every night I heard the cries of the men who were taken from the neighbouring cells to be shot and the steps of the squad along the corridor. It was a way for me to

know the time, because the executions were around midnight, and I calculated that it must be 11:30 when the men left the prison.

I was wondering if things would really go that far. He could ask for my execution on an angry outburst although he would then have to answer for his action. That night, the soldiers came to get me. The platoon leader told me I was going to be shot. An execution without judgment was strange, but all I had to do was obey. I was introduced into a closed truck that took us to the stone quarries of Cotorro, where Sunol was waiting for me. To make things more real, there was a hearse and a coffin in plain view. I thought that this time the time of truth had really come for me.

Sunol approached and asked me:

- Are you going to decide to talk?

I looked at him at length before answering him:

- Me cago en tu madre....

- Shoot him, you bastards! he started screaming in his anger.

When the soldiers placed me in front of the firing squad, I must confess that I was so overwhelmed by anger that I felt no fear. The order to fire came and the soldiers fired. I didn't feel anything. Either we died painlessly or it was a setup. A few seconds passed before Sunol gave the order to take me back to Villa Marista. Deep down inside, I thought he was the one who had fallen into the trap.

I had to undergo three more interviews in front of this man. Fortunately, one of the soldiers in the squad who was taking me and bringing me back to the cell recognized me. Despite the late night time, he went to Ramiro Valdés' house to try to see him and tell him what was happening to me. Fortunately, this boy's brother was part of the minister's escort. They managed to talk to Ramiro immediately. The latter called President Dorticos immediately, and they went together to Villa Marista. They stayed there all night talking, not because I was an important person, but because my case was a serious warning. How far could the excessive power of members of the secret service go?

Dorticos and Ramiro Valdés, it must be said, have always been exemplary godparents for me, most often giving me absolution and protecting me. The first for family reasons, the second because I had been his comrade in column 8 of Che. As long as the Argentine guerrilla remained in Cuba, he had, more than anyone else, avoided problems for me. Until that difficult moment I had just gone through, I had not really measured the consequences of my actions and I had behaved with an incredible lack of maturity. I thought I was part of the living history of my country, a hero of the revolution. I discovered that, hero or not, I had clay feet.

In any case, I understood that things had gone beyond the permissible limits and that I could no longer continue to believe in the ideology of Cuban communism. I was practically suffocated by the existing social structures. Any event other than that could have been responsible for my break-up. Since Manuel Pineiro (Redbeard), the head of the secret service, was married to an American citizen and no one bothered her for that, why blame me for wanting to marry a French woman? Several officers of the army or the Ministry of the Interior and other leaders were married to foreigners without any apparent problems. Was there a difference between a French woman and a Soviet woman? I believe that if in this case I had been forced to give in, I could never have forgiven him. In the name of what sacred right could the revolution intrude into private life? If I had exposed my life a hundred times for a cause I thought was right, how far did the limits of state power go to intervene in citizens' private decisions?

For giving up my job at Minrex and going around the island with a group of tourists, it was decided that I had to return the keys to a luxury apartment, the Alfa Romeo 1750 that I had been given, as well as my Makarov pistol and the Rolex watch, Fidel Castro's gift when I returned from the Golan. I was simply deprived of the symbols of the new power. Fortunately, they didn't mean much to me anymore. Ramiro then told me that he kept me as a Minrex press

agent, on condition that I renounce my marriage. Otherwise I would be dismissed from the G-2, and he would have to close the doors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to me.

Despite the many advices of my friends, my decision was already made. When I married in August 1972, I was no longer a member of the G-2 or the Department. I had moved to the Fisheries Institute, where I was offered a position as an adviser on maritime law matters related to tuna fishing. The Fisheries Institute was in a way a refuge for G-2 agents who had to leave the secret services for one reason or another. At that time, the Minister-Director of the Institute was Anibal Pelaez. He had been head of security in Las Villas province... And as in Cuba everything works by "clans" and "families", as in the Mafia, he would take back his former colleagues to make his own "family".

Between my departure from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and my entry into the Fisheries Institute, two important events occurred. With the first, I was relieved, in spite of myself, of the weight of my eternal enemy: Eddy Sunol. His wife worked as a policy officer number one (i.e. for the United States) in the Department of Foreign Affairs. She owed this position to her husband, to whom she had expressed her gratitude by decorating his head with a beautiful pair of horns. This situation made Sunol the laughingstock of all. He, who wanted to play hard to get, did not even have the first condition of the "macho".

Someone intercepted a telephone conversation between Sunol's wife and her lover. She made a nasty mockery of her husband's helplessness, and even described a scene about it. From a public booth, the recording was played in Sunol in his own office of the Ministry of the Interior. He couldn't stand the affront and killed himself. The case became known to everyone, as all the department's calls were recorded. When the deputy minister was found dead in his office, all we had to do was review all the recordings of the calls received to understand what had happened. We never knew who was the au-

thor, or authors, of this bad joke. I believe that, more than personal revenge, it was a settling of scores between "families" of the secret services.

Second event, despite my dismissal from the G-2 and my proscribed situation, the secret services called me to entrust me with an important spy mission. It was an undercover job in the entourage of the chargé d'affaires of the Swiss Embassy who represented American interests on the island.

The situation was extremely dangerous for me. If I said no, I would sign my own death sentence. I was trapped. I was not yet married and was waiting for my future wife to arrive in August. If I said no, I knew they wouldn't let her into the country. There were only two options left: either I left Cuba illegally or I took a much more difficult path by trying to cause the operation to fail. It was quite risky, but it was worth it. Not out of personal revenge, nor to settle the score with Cuban communism, it was a much deeper and more complex matter; perhaps the right price I was imposing on myself for the profound ideological transformation I had just undergone.

They were subjecting me to abject blackmail, why? Honestly, I haven't figured it out yet. Certainly my experience and knowledge of languages were not negligible, but that did not justify a decision as risky. Had anyone wanted to give me a new opportunity? No, this reasoning is illogical. I wouldn't have been pressured because of my wife's return. I suppose they expected my refusal so they could destroy me morally and materially. On the contrary, if I accepted, they could manipulate me thanks to a dirty undercover job that could last for years.

Worse still, to get me into this environment of diplomats reputed to be impenetrable, their master asset was precisely my expulsion from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the reasons I have already explained. A new way of making fun of me and reminding me every day of my situation and the punishment of unwritten laws.

Even if it would cost me my life, I had decided to make the operation fail, it was simply a matter of self-respect. In truth, things were not simple, because all the measures had been taken to ensure the success of the venture. On the other hand, Fidel Castro did not allow anyone to interfere in all matters concerning the United States, so he himself was in charge of the operations.

The case had started two years earlier. The Cuban secret services had recruited a number of engineers, technicians or simple minions from around the world, but they all had access, directly or indirectly, to work on nuclear energy.

At the end of 1968, the USSR promised to sell Cuba a third-generation nuclear power plant to produce electricity - it was to be installed in Cienfuegos - as well as an atomic fuel processing plant. This was done to provide the Soviet Atlantic submarine fleet with a repair and supply base.

From that moment on, the Cuban government tried to build a carrier rocket. To achieve this, military engineers and academics specialized in electronics, physics, and mechanics were recruited. The first works were to lead to the realization of a carrier rocket whose engine would be a Mig-21 and the electronic systems those of the ground-to-air and ground-to-earth rockets adapted for fire control. The first attempts failed, all of them. The use of Mig-21 engines was a doomed solution. First, because the turbine systems had to have large air intakes to burn the fuel, which was technically impracticable, and second, the firing orientation systems were imprecise.

Then we tried to develop the theories of engines without air intakes. Specialists expanded the ground-to-air rocket thrusters. But it had not been established that this engine would give speeds above Mac-2.9, almost three times the speed of sound, raising the rocket temperature to almost 3,000 degrees because of air friction. The rockets of this second stage disintegrated in the air due to metal wear and deformation. There was no need to use new alloys, such as

stainless steel or titanium, because of the short flight time of these machines. All that was required was the use of aluminum alloys such as those on the fuselage. It was another failure, due to the initial acceleration. The rocket then underwent the great vibrations during the passages of the first, then the second sound wall, finally the heat made them disintegrate.

Perhaps this subject is incomprehensible to a number of readers, but it should be remembered that the Germans opened the era of rockets at the end of the Second World War with the bombing of England by the V-2s. Cuba has not had much success in this area, and it has a long way to go, but there is already a carrier rocket on the island that can fly about 400 nautical miles. It is certain that its principle is the same as that of the V-2s, that is, it can fly towards an objective without anyone knowing exactly where it will fall. But given the proximity of American territory, it would only have to threaten Miami, located less than 200 kilometres away, to become a psychological weapon more than a real weapon of war.

For the time being, Cuba has not achieved the technological development necessary to launch an atomic programme, but the government's will is still there. As long as this dream or utopia does not come true, Cuban rockets (they have about 60% success) will carry high-powered explosives. This is a serious potential danger.

The rockets manufactured by Cuba are called "Libertadoras". They gave rise to a series of more or less serious accidents: in 1974, one of them fell on a stable in the Turiguano region, killing three workers and about forty cows.

I had a friend, a military rocket scientist, who told me in 1977 that the project was not abandoned despite the 40% failure rate. Fidel persisted in his idea, however, and the prototypes were launched one after the other. According to the lider maximo, it was not an aggressive weapon, but if the United States attacked Cuba directly, the rockets would immediately go into action as a reprisal. Because the atomic bomb was technically unlikely, there was little talk at the

time of bacteriological weapons. This soldier, whose name and rank I will not say, was, like many of his comrades, very concerned about the way things were going.

I am more and more convinced of Castro's complete madness every day. We are not allowed to play with fire as it does. His megalomania makes him think that towards the end of the century, Brazil and Argentina will be able to possess nuclear weapons. So why not Cuba?

With three critical generators and a nuclear fuel processing plant, Fidel thinks the adventure could begin in the early 1980s. For that reason, Cuba has not signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. To implement this grandiose project, a whole series of agents working in nuclear research had been recruited to work for Cuba.

It was precisely one of these agents, working at the Berne atomic centre, who was ordered to come to Havana to spy inside the Swiss embassy. An atomic spy was sacrificed to achieve penetration into an environment that was very difficult to spy on. The selection was made on an Italian married to a Swiss citizen.

When I joined the operation, the main objectives had been achieved. The two embassy code specialists had been "penetrated" by the Cuban secret services. Both of them had been able to be assigned female elements controlled through the worldly counter-intelligence brigade. When the staff left the embassy, the two men were visited by these beautiful women. Things got so bad that one of the two specialists, married, sent his wife back to Switzerland, following a marital dispute, to be more comfortable.

On the other hand, a young secretary of the embassy had become the Italian's mistress. She had also been recruited and was passing on very important information. My mission, as we know, was to neutralize one of the diplomats at the Swiss Embassy, who represented the interests of the United States and several Latin American countries that did not have relations with Cuba. The

Cuban secret service thought this diplomat was a high-level CIA agent.

So in a short time, I was able to get into the group through the Italian... and I began to operate, but in the opposite direction of Cuban Security interests. I am sure that the CIA has never had in Cuba an ally so well placed to defend its interests.

There was no way I was going to tell the Swiss diplomat everything. He would have thought I was crazy or provocative. Moreover, all the documents passing through the hands of the secretary, it is she, too, that I should have kept secret. And the first thing she would have done was to turn me over to the Cuban secret service. However, if they had the slightest suspicion of me, I was lost, because they would not stop falling into a trap. So it's understandable that I was playing with fire 24 hours a day. Yet I was not afraid. I was the only one who knew my secret and it was a great comfort to me. My salvation depended solely on me, my know-how and my perfect knowledge of the subtle rules of the spy profession.

All my work consisted in creating doubts on both sides, in slipping into the machine a few grains of sand that could only be detected by professionals as trained as me.

After a few months, without anything filtering outside the embassy, there was a great commotion. The two figure specialists and many civil servants were returning to their homeland. I understood then that I had won my bet. The entire plot woven by the Cuban services was dismantled and most of the work that had been done against American interests in Cuba was neutralized. Without false modesty, the work was masterful, neither of the two parties could detect my real activity.

The moral of the story is that a spy who works absolutely alone, without accomplices, has a more than 80% chance of succeeding if he does not make a mistake himself.

CHAPTER VIII

CUBANS IN AFRICA

Fidel Castro had promised the Kremlin to guarantee the pro-Soviet movements on the African continent a place in power. The USSR could not count on the troops of the Warsaw Pact to support its imperialist and hegemonic appetites. Until now, the communist armies had never exceeded the limits of their area of influence for direct intervention. On the other hand, Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary did not agree, especially Tito, who led the moderate non-aligned movement. Poland and Czechoslovakia had too many internal problems to embark on such an adventure, only Bulgaria and the GDR remained, but it was dangerous to use their armies. Nor did we know how the West would react to this situation. The solution remained to involve Cuban forces in this case. We know Fidel Castro's submission to the USSR, which allowed it to maneuver behind the scenes of international terrorism without compromising its political game with the other major powers. Thus, while Havana and Moscow were acting out the dispute between father and son and Fidel took his role too seriously, the USSR was gaining time in the policy of peaceful coexistence. In 1968, the two accomplices simultaneously removed their masks at the time of the Czechoslovakia affair. There had been precedents in Hungary, the GDR and Poland, but never before had the Soviet Union been so harsh and cynical as in the case of Czechoslovakia.

The USSR's aggressiveness abroad dates back to the end of the Second World War, after the capitulation of fascist Germany. The Iron Curtain had fallen on Europe. Independent states, such as Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, then disappeared as victims of Kremlin expansionism. East Germany was taken in turn. The peoples of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Albania suffered the

same fate. Communism settled in China, Korea, Indochina. Then came Cuba, Guinea, Algeria, South Yemen, Mozambique, South Vietnam, Angola, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Laos... People are subjected by force and lose their freedom. Others suffered the same fate and had to provide soldiers to fight against "imperialism", such as Cuba or Vietnam.

A perfect satellite, Fidel Castro, after destabilizing democracies in Latin America and the Caribbean, is now in charge of disrupting the balance of power on the African continent to tip the balance in favour of the Kremlin. Regarding Angola and Ethiopia, the Cuban intervention in Africa provoked a strong international protest, but this did not prevent guerrilla movements on the continent from seeing Fidel as an excellent ally. Of course, all the prosovietics: the Palestinians, the Polisario Front in Western Sahara, etc., are on this list. But is Fidel Castro's merry-go-round in the Caribbean or Central America still ignored by anyone? Nicaragua's leaders have all passed through Cuba's training bases without exception. And who subsidizes and supports the revolution in El Salvador?

Currently, Cuba is the spearhead of communism in the world. It is the country with the most aggressive foreign policy, and it is entirely under the orders of the Kremlin leaders. By the time the West wants to react and respond to this escalation, it may be too late.

To support this expansionist policy, the USSR spends fabulous sums on the arms race and keeps the most formidable imperialist army ever in existence on its feet. The Kremlin does not want a nuclear war, but it continues its aggression to the limit of the risk of a Western response. When the situation is extremely tense, it stops its operations, only to resume them a little later with its satellites, as is the case for Cuba. This policy, both sneaky and proactive, is that of the Kremlin despite the enormous risks it poses to world peace. Who knows where this escalation in aggression will end? The provocation is ever greater, and, in the face of the West's indecision, Moscow's leaders are tempted to go ever further. The existing bal-

ance is precarious. The USSR shares borders with China and Western Europe, but its hands are free in the rest of the world. While it attacks and massacres the peoples, some PCs in the free world, led by the French PC, approve and defend Moscow's foreign policy. As China develops as a nuclear power, it compromises the security of the USSR's borders, forcing it to maintain large numbers of troops there at all times. But China is also a communist country whose expansionism has already conquered the Third World. What will it do if it becomes a superpower?

Let us return to Cuban interventions in Africa, and more particularly in Angola. The first Cuban interventions on this continent were not spectacular enough to merit the attention of international public opinion. However, it was for allowing these interventions on a small scale that Angola's "coup" could occur, Angola where Cuba played the role of 40,000 Cuban soldiers. Later, Fidel was to support the Katangese, then Ethiopia... Who will be the next "protected"?

Since the failure of the Swiss Embassy's espionage case, my life had become extremely complicated. There was neither sufficient evidence nor certainty to charge me, but there was doubt. Since my forced transfer to the Fisheries Institute, I had made several trips to Western countries for labour issues. It deeply annoyed my old friends. I was one more person to watch for them. They were very afraid that I would be recruited by the CIA.

When I was assigned a new job, this time for an advertising company that handled tour packages, the scarecrow of my presence among foreigners who came to negotiate tourism issues with the government reappeared. This time, he moved again to a developing tourist area in the Escambray Mountains range.

At the end of 1977, I found myself lost in an inhospitable region far from the capital and the struggle for power. I must say that I was the one who caused this last transfer, because I saw new complications for me in the position I held. As this new job was at the end of the world and I didn't have any chance of contact with the outside

world, I was appointed director quite quickly. The government was ensuring good management of the investments made in this region, which exceeded \$50 million, and my presence was not dangerous.

If more violent pressure had not been brought to bear on me, I owed it to the fact that my wife and two daughters were living in France. Above all, there should be no scandal about a dissident when Cuba aspired to the presidency of the non-aligned countries.

A few months later, despite the undeniable positive results of my management of the investment plan, they decided to send me to Angola for an "internationalist" mission. I had repeatedly requested a 60-day exit permit to visit my wife and children, without any results. On the other hand, I could leave the country to be killed defending Soviet interests in Africa.

I didn't refuse to leave, quite the contrary. When I heard the news, I made my best smile. My plan was to leave a doubt. A new opportunity to become a double agent for my personal account presented itself to me.

When I arrived in Luanda, Angola, on the regular flight of the compañía Cubana de Aviación, I was part of a relief battalion, as a private soldier. As I arrived at the airport, I happened to see Lieutenant Colonel Harry Villegas, head of operations in the northern zone of Angola. We had fought together in column 8 of Che during the Liberation War in Cuba. Later, we were together in Congo with Che's troops, and again we met, while I was on observer missions in PAIG and FRELIMO. When Che went to Bolivia, he accompanied him and was one of the few Cuban survivors of this adventure. When he saw me, he first thought that I was coming to Angola for some secret information mission. I had to explain to him that I didn't and tell him about my adventures, or rather my misadventures. As an old fighting companion, he took me with him as his personal driver so that I would not have to suffer too much from my situation. The troops were living in very difficult conditions.

My stay in Angola lasted only two weeks. It was my destiny to meet the Chief of Operations of the General Staff in Angola, Major General Tomasevich, about whom I have already had the opportunity to speak. We had a fairly heated discussion about the napalm bombings that were taking place against the resistance centres. I was rushed back to Cuba. I think Tomasevich had sensed the danger of my presence, or perhaps he didn't want to take the risk of keeping someone he wasn't sure about among his soldiers, especially with the experience of the guerrillas and the knowledge of Africa that I had.

Despite the short time I spent in Angola, I had the opportunity to learn a lot about what had happened there and what is happening now. If I have not witnessed the events I report directly, they are nevertheless the result of the testimonies of the participants gathered on the spot.

It all began at the dawn of one of the first days of March 1975. The Cuban army's mobilization services called almost all reservists for a combat alert. The majority thought it was a tactical exercise, they were used to these comings and goings once or twice a year and did not attach much importance to it.

One hundred thousand men, quietly and with a smile, responded to the summons without knowing that it was the beginning of a military conflict in Africa of a size unknown until then for a Latin American country. Once in the military bases, the men were grouped by specialty, with greater emphasis on groups that had received training on Soviet tanks T-34, T-35, and T-62, specialists in the famous 122 mm Stalin "organs", and a smaller number of infantry soldiers trained for guerrilla warfare. In the latter category, members of the CCP are preferably selected and explained that it is an internationalist mission to Africa.

More than 35% of CCP activists refused to participate in this mission, claiming health or family problems. These bad reasons were not considered sufficient to take away their party activist note-

books and lead them to prison, but a wave of repression broke out to force others to accept. It was suggested that those who refused to leave would be removed from their jobs and declared "surplus".

The threat of job loss was real and everyone knew what it meant. Over the past month and a half, the Ministry of Labour had begun a nationwide reorganization, declaring tens of thousands of workers "in surplus". This was not the first time such a thing had happened. In 1965, a movement to fight bureaucracy had developed, leaving a painful balance. All the men and women who did not want to join the system had to leave their usual jobs to work in agriculture. The story was repeated on a much larger scale, but this time the decisive point in the choice was the "good will" of the worker for "internationalist" missions.

There was little hope left for those who refused. They knew that their worker file, which follows them throughout their working lives, would include a military notification of their refusal. They would never find any more jobs corresponding to their qualifications. For the "traitors", all that remains, in the best of cases, is to become a cane cutter.

Despite all these risks, more than 57% of those called refused to leave. And of the group that theoretically agreed, more than half, during or at the end of the training, and even at the time of boarding, backed down, preferring to face the punishment of unwritten laws. The others, those who were leaving, felt like they were going to the slaughterhouse. Once again, coercion and terror were joining hands. And yet, Fidel Castro claims to have established a democracy without equal in America!

So it was to begin, and until the reservists were ready, 3,000 soldiers of the Ministry of Interior's special troops flew to Luanda, the capital of Angola, with an Antonov-22 cargo airlift. For eighty-six hours, these heavy beetles crossed the Atlantic several times.

This small division would support the handful of Cuban instructors who supported Agostinho Neto's faction. He was the leader of

the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which was Marxist-oriented and entirely subject to the Kremlin. A doctor and poet, imprisoned in Lisbon for his activities against Portuguese colonialism, he was supported by blacks and mulattoes from the cities and by members of the Kimbundu tribe living near Luanda. 25% of the Angolan population was in favour of him but his group had never carried out any major guerrilla operations. The movement was above all political.

The second movement was the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), which came from the Bakongo tribe, which came from the north of the country, and was led by a Bakongo, Holden Roberto, Che Guevara's comrade in the struggle during his African guerrilla war and protected by Mobutu Sesé Seko, the strong man from Zaire. This movement also had 25% of the population in its favour.

The third movement, UNITA (National Union for the Independence of Angola) was the strongest politically. Its leader was the prestigious Jonas Savimbi, a doctor of law and political science, who graduated from a Swiss university. This movement was the only one that really fought the Portuguese for more than eight years. He was supported by the Ovimbundu tribe who live in southern and central Angola. The Ovimbundu represented about half of the country's population.

In this case, the Soviet Union was taking advantage of the fall-back position the United States found itself in following its defeat in Vietnam. The CIA discreetly provided \$32 million in arms assistance to the two non-Marxist movements, which began to reach them in April 1975. It was too little and too late. The U.S. Congress also refused a \$28 million credit requested by the U.S. government. As Henry Kissinger observed, for the first time in its history the United States did not respond to Moscow's military action beyond its orbit of influence in a piecemeal fashion.

Angola was the last major colony in Africa, and without Cuban intervention, a takeover by free elections would have been welcomed by the international community. The President-elect would have been, without a doubt, Jonas Savimbi. Out of a black population of 5.5 million, UNITA was supported by almost 2,750,000 of them. Portugal had not prepared its succession in Angola. Political problems and the fall of the military dictatorship precipitated events. 96% of the population was illiterate, resulting in a weakness of the three rival movements, both tribal and regional in nature, which made them vulnerable to manipulation by an outside power.

Neither the USSR nor the Warsaw Pact troops could intervene directly, but fortunately there was their faithful Cuban satellite to act in their place. When Fidel Castro agreed to the massive sending of Cuban troops to Angola, two Soviet ships were already loading weapons in a Black Sea port. Other ships under the GDR flag did the same in Baltic ports. A little later, an Antonov-22 air bridge of the Soviet Union forces headed for the People's Republic of Congo.

The weapons of this vast operation were extremely sophisticated and sophisticated: Mig-21 and Mig-23 fighter-bombers, T-34 and T-55 tanks, combat helicopters, 122 mm artillery, electronic anti-aircraft artillery and the most modern range of infantry weapons.

The USSR had decided to take sides with Agostinho Neto's faction and the MPLA, which it had been supporting for some time. None of the three movements was based on a consistent doctrine. Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi were described by the press as pro-Western, but it is certain that the foreign aid they received was shared between China and the United States.

After the April 1974 coup d'état in Portugal, it was decided to proceed with the decolonization of the African colonies. The Portuguese government had agreed with the three groups to form a provisional government in January 1975, each being represented in the same proportions... Free elections were to decide on the future

president in October. But neither Moscow nor Agostinho Neto could allow it, knowing that Savimbi was the clear winner.

While the Cuban reservists were undergoing intensive training, the 3000 men of the newly arrived special troops were preparing the final details of the operation and trying, without much success, to teach the illiterate MPLA troops how to handle the sophisticated weapons that were suddenly flowing into Angola.

Luanda's position was getting more difficult every day. It was impossible to ensure the supremacy of Neto's minority group. Cuban military officials asked for urgent reinforcements because the situation was out of their control and they could no longer consent to the conflict between the groups.

Anti-aircraft artillery unit 3052 was the first group of reservists to leave Havana to support the Cuban special troops and Neto's men. It had 100 mm electronic guns, 30 mm multiple guns and 57 mm guns. This unit was to provide anti-aircraft coverage of the capital and Defense of Luanda airport, the nerve centre of the regime's arms supply.

The 82 pilots of Mig-21 aircraft and Cuban army helicopters flying over African territory were constantly requesting air coverage at airports. The most basic requirements of modern warfare had to be respected because of the reality of South Africa's participation, which was helping UNITA forces commanded by Savimbi. The direct intervention of his regular army was always possible.

In the first days of September, Army General Díaz-Argüelles, head of operations in Angola, was told that he needed to start eliminating Neto's opponents and quickly control the capital, Luanda, until the massive arrival of Cuban troops scheduled for early October. The Cuban flagship, Sierra Maestra, had already left Mariel, in the province of Havana, with 3,500 men (it took between 22 and 25 days at sea). He was also promised the imminent departure of the boats Abel Santa Maria, Batalla de Jigüe and Vietnam Heroico, with a total of more than 13,000 men on board.

With the certainty of the departure of the reinforcements given by the general staff, General Diaz-Arguelles let the battle of Luanda break out, during which all supporters of the FNLA and UNITA movements were chased away. The Cuban troops, composed of the special troops and the 3051 unit, supported Agostinho Neto's men who were already massacring all opponents of their movement. For several days, persecutions and executions continued, the tribal nature of African struggles turned to Neto's advantage as a member of the Kimbundu tribe in the Luanda region, a factor that gave him a clear advantage in the capital.

The Cubans remained more or less on the fringes of this first conflict. Their role was limited to controlling certain strategic points in the capital, which allowed the majority group of the MPLA to murder more than 18,000 people with impunity. Once again, a storm of ancestral hatred, stimulated by tribal disagreements, was unleashed. The blood orgy lasted almost a week.

The two leaders of the UNITA and FNLA movements were quickly informed of the events. Holden Roberto had set up his headquarters in the Cabinda enclave, taking advantage of the existence of a separatist movement, the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC), which was favourable to him because its members were from the same region as the Bakongo tribe that supported him.

As he was neither a politician nor a military strategist, Holden Roberto organized a march on Luanda to help the part of his troops caught up in the fighting. Lacking military organization and armament, thousands of men, women and children left with the FNLA guerrillas for Angola's capital.

Jonas Savimbi, on the other hand, was a guerrilla leader who knew his trade well. He suspected the trap that was set for him. He knew that if he set out to conquer Luanda, he would only emerge weakened from the conflict, because as the situation stood, his men were headed for certain defeat. On the other hand, he was in contact with the Government of South Africa, with the aim of coordinating

military operations with the regular army of that country. He was also waiting for the weapons and instructors promised by the Chinese government. He therefore preferred to spare his men and limited himself to sending a few groups of guerrillas of 25 or 30 men whom he only charged with attacking the communication routes that gave access to the capital.

Cuban intelligence services had warned the command of the advance towards Luanda of several columns of guerrillas and civilians from Cabinda. The figures given ranged from 8,000 to 10,000 people. Another group, smaller but better organized, formed by Savimbi's men from Lobito, was also detected. The Cuban command understood that the capital was going to be taken in hand: in the north Holden Roberto's men and in the south Savimbi's men. His role as a spectator was over, the real battle of Luanda began.

It was necessary, at any cost, to keep control of the capital until the arrival of the first boats. General Díaz-Argüelles reported the situation in Havana: in a few days the capital would be attacked and Neto's men were unable to use the modern weapons at their disposal. In return, he was told that 122 mm heavy artillery specialists would leave immediately by plane. The commanders of the Cuban cargo ships carrying the reservists were ordered to push their engines to the maximum.

All strategic points in Luanda came under Cuban control. A Defense system, impassable because of its terrible firepower, was installed on the access roads to the capital. Reconnaissance aircraft were in charge of adjusting the distance of artillery fire to 20 kilometres for the K-30 anti-aircraft guns placed at the three main entrances to Luanda: the Northern Road, through which Holden Roberto's troops from Caxito would arrive; the small Savimbi troop was expected to the south and east, on the Bana Cuanza and Catète roads.

The K-30 guns date from the Second World War, but their firing rate of 1,500 shots per minute (the weapon includes 4 guns) becomes

terrifying against infantry. On the three access roads to Luanda, batteries of 10 pieces each with 3,500,000 incendiary projectiles were installed.

The plan of the operation was to machine gun the mass of Neto's two rivals' supporters at the gates of the capital and, after the inevitable stampede, to pursue them until they were completely destroyed using 122 mm heavy artillery pieces, the famous "Stalin's organs", mounted on trucks, with a power almost equal to that of 40 rockets fired at the same time.

Unit 3051 was composed of command officers from the regular army, the rest of the men were reservists. In the event of a possible failure of these men when firing on a mass of civilians, composed of guerrillas but mostly women and children, a member of the special troops was placed at the head of each battery.

On the 19th, the Cuban troops of the flagship Sierra Maestra landed in Luanda, and without waiting for the men to recover from the seasickness that many had suffered throughout the crossing, they were sent to take command of the T-35 and T-55 tanks that were to strengthen the capital's Defenses. As for the infantry, they started digging trenches around the city.

Holden Roberto's columns were already less than 30 kilometres from Luanda. Everywhere they went, the guerrillas had trained an impressive number of civilians. It was a huge caravan moving towards the capital amid gunshots, alcohol and drumming.

The orders were strict: when the huge human snake walking on the North Road arrived 100 metres from the K-30 guns, the camouflage would be removed and a heavy crossfire opened. Once the troop had moved back 2 kilometres, the heavy artillery, supported by the Mig-21s, would begin its bombardment to a depth of 20 kilometres.

The FNLA supporters could do nothing. The next day, around 10 a.m., the music of the drums began to be heard mixed with the cries and gunshots of the Cuban outposts. The huge crowd walked

unknowingly the last few meters to a certain death. Without them having had time to understand what was happening to them, a rain of incendiary projectiles decimated this crowd, mowing down large areas. At the same time, tanks opened fire with their guns firing direct-fire fragmentation projectiles.

The bodies fell, shredded, practically cut in half by the 30 mm incendiary projectiles. Soviet tank fire blew up the bodies in the air. This human mass was panicked and backed away as it could, leaving the road littered with dead people. When she had moved back 2 kilometres, she began to hear the whistles of the 122 mm rockets above her, followed by endless series of explosions that accompanied them for 20 kilometres. Reconnaissance aircraft were used to regulate indirect fire and, to add to the horror, the Mig-21s would dive and shoot at them like rabbits.

Few escaped the genocide. Even those who tried to hide in the forest were pursued by helicopters and machine-gunned to the last one. The MPLA men organized teams to collect and bury all the bodies. For two days, the bulldozers opened huge trenches that served as mass graves. The members of the Kimbundu tribe showed an unparalleled bloodthirsty character and savagery on this occasion. They killed all the wounded and looted the bodies. It was the African troops of the MPLA who took on this repugnant work because no Cuban wanted to participate. The stench of the bodies spread up to 20 kilometres around. Wild animals and birds of prey competed for bodies with gravediggers.

The reservists of Unit 3051 who had been assigned to the K-30 anti-aircraft guns had seen this horrible butchery up close. They were direct witnesses to the battle of Luanda. Everything they had seen or heard exceeded the limits of the moral resistance of a normal man. Their leader, Captain Orlando Quintana, committed suicide, leaving a letter in which he strongly reproached the Cuban government for its attitude and explained the reasons for his suicide: he had made men under his command murderers; he was a sol-

dier and a man of honour and no longer wanted to kill civilians. There were four other suicides among these men, and 42 had to be hospitalized with war psychosis. Many also suffered from nerve attacks or hallucinations.

A few weeks later, these men were flown back to Havana where they were kept for more than eleven months at the Naval Hospital without their families being aware of their whereabouts or their state of health. For many, the battle had been such a terrible shock that they could not be expected to return to normal life; for the others, their lives were marked forever and they lived under tranquilizers.

The Cubans gave Neto Angola's capital to Neto, but the panorama remained bleak. The leader of the MPLA may have held the seat of government, but the city was surrounded and its access roads cut off.

As soon as Holden Roberto received news of the rout of his men and the civilian population accompanying them, he ordered all roads to be mined and all bridges blown up. His troops fragmented into small groups of guerrillas with orders to harass the Cuban troops day and night to stop them from advancing. The road from Luanda to Cabinda was mined in its most strategic areas. To reach Cabinda by this coastal road, it was necessary to cross relatively large cities with good airports, Ambriz, N'Zeto and Soyo. In each of them, the FNLA organized resistance centres and their access roads were also mined.

From Luanda, another important road goes inland, taking the road to Caxito, Quiobaxe de Uige, then crossing the Muxicongos region in the north, before joining other roads that lead to Cabinda. In this area, the same Defenses were installed.

Holden Roberto requested urgent help from Mobutu Sesé Seko, his historical ally, to send him weapons and tens of thousands of mines. These were buried under the direction of Chinese military advisors along the main roads. A large group of FNLA guerrillas,

whose base of operations was located in Zaire, in the town of Mzanza Ngundu, crossed the border for new harassment missions. Another group also went to Angola to defend the city of Quimbele, northeast of Luanda, through the Kasongo Luanda border post.

The Chinese military advisors, who led FNLA operations from headquarters in the middle of the forest, were veterans of the Korean War. They were familiar with the strategy, and it was not difficult for them to understand that the upcoming military campaign would start from the north. It was therefore urgent to consolidate the nerve centre represented by the Cabinda enclave. Placed between Zaire and Congo, it could be used as a bridge between that country and Angola to transport the equipment. In addition, the region's port and mineral resources were of primary economic importance.

Holden Roberto asked Mobutu Sesé Seko to intervene directly in the conflict with his troops to defend the corridor linking Zaire to the Atlantic Ocean and protect the Cabinda enclave. The strong man from Zaire did not want to compromise himself and internationalize the conflict. He feared reprisals from Cuban forces and wondered whether Neto would not be tempted to let a war break out between the two countries once he had settled in Angola. On the other hand, the Katangese problem was latent in the south of the country and could break out any day now.

The American government, hampered by Congress, did not decide to take sides. Didn't the Vietnam War start with a similar conflict? Once started, it is necessary to fight to the end a fight of this type at the risk of losing its prestige as a great power. The challenge that the USSR was posing to them in Africa was therefore not met. For the Chinese government the situation was clear, Angola had a geographical position far too far from its borders for it to seek to intervene in a more direct way. Its role would be limited to sending military advisers and infantry weapons.

The two Angolan opposition movements did not have the necessary human equipment to use modern weapons. After the guerrilla war they had fought against Portuguese colonialism, they only knew how to use infantry weapons. The resistance would last five, ten years, they didn't know how long, but they were sure that Cuban troops would have to stay in Angola as long as Havana wanted to keep prosovietics in power in Luanda. More than one colonial power had exhausted itself in a war of attrition against guerrillas. For a country as small and remote from Africa as Cuba, the maintenance under military control of a vast territory, where political, military, geographical and climatic conditions are so hostile, can only lead to chaos.

The South African government feared that a promarxist group would come to power. He knew that this meant a new guerrilla base for blacks on his territory. It is only a small country, but it did everything possible in the South to help Jonas Savimbi's troops, which were largely supported by the population. He made a very great effort by sending 1,000 white soldiers to fight with the UNITA men, but Cuban superiority was overwhelming. The South African government felt a growing opposition from the guerrillas on its own territory, which forced it to keep many forces in reserve for its own operations. At the end of 1975, when the US Congress decided to end its military assistance to South Africa, it had no choice but to withdraw permanently from the conflict.

The general staff of the Cuban forces in Angola ordered the encirclement of Luanda to be broken. He knew he would encounter only weak resistance, but he had to move slowly. The extent of the mined areas exceeded all expectations. At every turn of the road, snipers prevented the army from advancing. The Brazzaville bridge was saturated with weapons to be fetched, as well as other essential supplies. The reinforcements arriving through the Baltic or Black Sea took too long, but Moscow did not decide to fly over Zaire territory to organize a direct airlift to Luanda.

The Cuban government could bring as many men as it wanted, but it lacked the necessary equipment to transport heavy weapons. For these maneuvers, he depended on Moscow and Berlin.

It was decided to advance north along the coast road to take the Cabinda enclave and keep waiting for the other troop transport boats that were still in the Atlantic. They would disembark at Cabinda and then advance towards Brazzaville to take possession of the weapons stocks there. From this first base of operation, they would launch an offensive to the south to control the main cities and dislodge the gangs of Holden Roberto from the villages.

In order to start this offensive to the north, General Díaz-Argüelles asked for an additional 2,000 troops to be flown in. They would remain in garrison in Luanda with the mission of ensuring order in the city and the protection of the Agostinho Neto government. Indeed, Díaz-Argüelles needed all the MPLA troops who knew the region well for its operation in the North. Nor did he want to leave the capital defenseless against a possible advance by Jonas Savimbi and South African troops.

Once again, the Antonov-22 cargo planes operated an airlift between Havana and Luanda. The start of the offensive depended on the speed of this operation.

The boats Abel Santa María, Batalla de Jigüe and Vietnam Heroico sent urgent radio messages to Havana. These ships were cargo ships. They were not made to carry men. On each of them, all the available space had been used to accommodate a minimum of 3,000 men per boat. Food supplies were almost finished and fresh water was insufficient. The boats were four days at sea from Luanda when they were ordered to wait to land. As time passed, the situation became desperate. Cases of dehydration were increasing every day, and even if they left immediately for Luanda, they would arrive in critical conditions.

However, they were ordered not to move. Two Soviet factory ships fishing in the area were heading towards them. They had to

wait another six days. Before the food and water arrived, 110 men had had time to die.

As soon as the bulk of the troops landed, it became clear that the 9,200 men who had joined the troops already stationed were not enough. The guerrilla war waged by the opposition was very difficult to control. A village was taken and, as soon as the army abandoned the place, the guerrillas took possession of it again. It was almost impossible to travel on the roads. Only large convoys could pass through despite the risks caused by mines and ambushes. The Chief of Staff, General Díaz-Argüelles, died from a mine explosion; Pascual Díaz, Chief of Special Forces of the Ministry of the Interior, was seriously injured in a leg in the same accident.

Raúl Castro himself came to Angola to prepare the southern offensive where Savimbi's troops and the 1000 men of South Africa's regular army were stationed. At that time, after two months of skirmishes, the number of Cuban army personnel was 32,000. The number of dead and wounded was 2,800. Western intelligence services have always estimated Cuban forces below their actual number. While more than 40,000 men were already in Angola, the Western press reported 20,000. At the time of the Ogadem War in Ethiopia and later during the offensive against Eritrea, the figure exceeded 57,000 men. However, no one suspected the importance of these operations. The number of troops that Cuba maintains in Africa (equipped, it should not be forgotten, with the most modern weapons) is a very important factor in destabilizing the continent. It can, without any problem, tip the balance and change the fate of many States. This is not in itself a huge force, either in numbers or militarily, but in the African context it is a considerable army, because we are part of a primitive community that is given guns, tanks, helicopters and jet planes, the ultimate in the art of modern warfare instead of ancestral spears. The balance was upset in Angola and then in Ethiopia. The Katangese experience failed, but Cuban forces did not intervene directly. Any country in Africa can become the

next prey of the communists. Fidel Castro is once again acting as if he is condemning the invasion of Afghanistan before international public opinion and within the non-aligned movement, while he would approve - as he has said - an intervention in Poland.

It is not easy to recruit men to serve as mercenaries. All men between 16 and 55 years of age, the age of active military service, have been combed through. They are convened by military committees whose sole purpose is to determine their willingness to participate in internationalist missions. Anyone who refuses knows that he will lose his job and remain without any resources in a society where the only boss is the State, where there is no social security and where the unemployment rate is rising by 18%¹⁴⁹ per year. Students who refuse to leave are expelled from universities.

All these men are told that they are going on an eighteen-month mission, but in reality the time is unlimited. I know of many cases of conscripts who have been in Africa since the beginning of operations in 1975 and have not yet returned. Those who are lucky succeed in sending one or two letters a year to their families, and this has only been possible since 1978 because, before that, there were no communications. In order not to aggravate the internal situation, deaths are not communicated to families. They usually learn of them by chance, through a friend of their son or husband's, who returned home after a long detour through the hospital. In principle, deaths are officially announced by military committees, but they are reluctant to do this kind of work because they are asked too many questions they cannot answer. For example, we don't even know where the dead are buried. The general staff did not bother to carry out this task. A tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Luanda, another in Addis Ababa give an idyllic image of the pits where almost 10,000 Cubans are buried.

From the age of 16, young Cubans are called up for military service. After forty-five days of training at Cuban military bases, they were sent to Angola and Ethiopia to join the occupation troops sta-

tioned in the middle of the forest. Once in Africa, they must defend their lives against the constant attacks of the guerrillas. He who does not know how to kill is killed. But more than gun bullets, diseases cause the most damage. Those who are evacuated by plane to Havana Naval Hospital have the best fate.

The people of Cuba are terrified by this situation. In every family where there is a man of wartime age, there is anguish. We only talk about Africa in a low voice. There are many stories of soldiers being eaten by cannibals. Any teenager of the age to be called lives in the terror of a summons from the military committee in his neighbourhood. This situation may partly explain the recent massive exodus of Cubans.

It is absurd to think that foreign correspondents and political analysts who only see the situation from the outside can understand what is happening and give an accurate interpretation of the Cuban crisis. Everyone sketches a theory based on their personal impressions, but the socio-political control and monstrous repressive apparatus of the Cuban state are beyond analysis.

This African problem is complex and often contradictory. While Fidel Castro supports Angola's pro-Soviet regime, it is the United States that exploits oil from the Cabinda enclave and accounts for 85% of the country's foreign exchange earnings. It seems that the business world does not know the most elementary moral principles. Why protest against Cuban intervention in Africa if we can benefit from it and count on solid protection for the most important mining centres, such as diamonds and oil from Cabinda? Why doesn't the United States help the FLEC (Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave) or do they allow no one to do so? Since 1970, this movement has been waging a fierce struggle to repair the arbitrary decision of the Portuguese colonialists. The Cuban army plays the same role in it as the Portuguese army did before. Meanwhile, the United States, which has remained out of the conflict, is searching the land for diamonds and exploiting oil.

The superpowers' tactics and strategy have much in common. Perhaps the most important is their total lack of interest in the plight of small countries. For them, they only mean potential markets and sources of raw materials, the rest is just propaganda for their political hegemony. Meanwhile, third countries are playing the role of mercenaries. The formula is not new, the Roman Empire not only perfected jurisprudence and laid the foundations for modern laws, but also showed future conquerors the way forward. Submissive peoples must contribute their share as soldiers to the cause of war. I sometimes seriously question the theories of "manifest destiny" and "geographical fatalism"¹⁵⁰: although outdated and described as unreal, they hold a part of the truth in our contemporary world.

It had been thought that "Operation Carlota"¹⁵¹, which marked the beginning of the Cuban intervention in Africa, would only be a short-term military operation. But just like the former colonial powers, Fidel Castro's regime was trapped. At the end of 1979, the number of deaths on the ground exceeded 14,000 (estimated by the Cuban Military Committee), and the losses due to disease were enormous. The worst part of the case is that many of these diseases are unknown in Cuba and have become real scourges (I myself had dengue¹⁵² during an epidemic that became a national epidemic in 1978), and I am not talking about parasitosis or the few cases of cholera that have developed in Old Havana, health controls being practically non-existent.

To achieve the "Cubanization" of Angola, the Havana government forcibly took 12,000 Angolan children and placed them as boarders in special schools on the Isle of Pines. It would be a glorious act if it had been the will of the Angolan people and if the purpose of this maneuver had not been political. The same system was used with children in the Ogadem region, then in Eritrea in Ethiopia. These children will have much better living conditions and will have access to education, that is for sure, they will at least live as

human beings. But no one has the right to take children to "brain-wash" them out of political interest. It is possible that, in ten years' time, they will return to their country of origin with technical diplomas, but they will have become above all the agents of Moscow's interests in Africa.

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After the events at the Swiss Embassy, I needed to think seriously about my situation. I was the first to be surprised by everything that had happened to me. I had gradually become an enemy of Marxist ideology. It was extremely dangerous. I couldn't risk my life indefinitely, let alone continue in this role as a double agent on my own account.

It was not a need for revenge that pushed me to defeat this operation, the reasons were much deeper, and I understood that sooner or later I would be tempted to repeat the experience, because they would come back to the charge. In the end, I was nothing more than a product of that company that had made me a secret agent. I responded to this situation according to the criteria of my profession, through the path of espionage.

I began to suspect Fidel Castro's betrayal in 1965. Little by little, I was able to verify the theory I had imagined and finally understand the game of international communism. First a doubt, then a conviction, and later the research that made me an opponent of his regime. This evolution has taken place in stages but always in parallel with an increasingly deep divergence of ideas.

Alongside the other enemies of the Cuban communist regime, I was seen as marginal. I could not identify with the other Cuban emigrants abroad who, despite the experience of the Bay of Pigs in 1961, had turned the counterrevolution into a successful business and nothing else. I had been a privileged interlocutor of the insurreccional movements of Latin America and Africa for the government of Havana. It gave me a broad view of these problems. It is not

at all the same to read or hear about political organizations, and even to see them as journalists, and to live or fight alongside them. Over the years, I had become a guerrilla and a specialist in secret organizations, a professional. I knew perfectly well that Cuban emigration was only raising funds to fill the pockets of four clever leaders. I had met men like Marhigella in Brazil who hated the regime in which they lived, but that didn't stop them from being crushed.

There is only one solution to the Cuban problem, and it is political. The Caribbean area has been well defined since the Yalta conference as part of the United States' zone of influence. The balance was upset in April 1961, when Fidel Castro declared the socialist nature of the revolution. For his part, J.F. Kennedy was too moderate in front of an exalted Khrushchev. The years have passed, and the island of Cuba in the central Caribbean has become an arrow in the side of the United States without the governments that succeeded the Kennedy administration having succeeded in finding a solution, because in this matter any negotiation must go through Moscow, and the Soviets are not willing to let go so easily.

Due to electoral problems, the various American presidents did not want to play their careers on such a complex case. Meanwhile, Fidel Castro and the Kremlin leaders are taking advantage of it as they see fit. If the United States invades Cuba, nothing will happen. Pentagon experts would be wrong to believe that Moscow would fight for Havana.

It is not internal counter-revolution that can dethrone Fidel Castro. Its position is guaranteed by the police regime and the brutal repression that control the country. All institutions without exception are designed to defend the state through a Machiavellian organization: intellectuals are gagged, UNEAC (National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists) prevents them from moving, its lifelong president is the poet Nicolás Guillén, a well-trained hunting dog; UPEC (Union of Cuban Journalists) ensures that discipline is not relaxed in the state press. Its lifelong president, S. Vera, is a docile in-

strument of government. All means of dissemination are in the hands of the State so that no one can escape its control. The Book Institute and the Casa de las Américas check up on the punctuation marks of each literary work. The President of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) is Raul Castro's wife, Vilma Espín. The Cuban woman who today does not belong to any mass organization knows that she has no right to work or study. With the CDRs (Revolutionary Defense Committees), the same thing happens, whoever does not want to be part of them is condemned to become a second-class citizen. The giant demonstrations that Fidel succeeded in organizing in the Revolution Square were only the result of pressure from these various organizations.

The CTC (Cuban Workers' Centre) has become another organization of repression against workers. It has nothing to do with the conceptions that Westerners may have of a trade union. This organization is only used to supervise workers, to force them to work more and under the worst conditions most often. Its leader is a former PSP activist who, in his speeches, only exalts Fidel's personality, because he knows how much the Cuban head of state likes to be flattered.

Pepe Ramírez, a well-known member of the PSP, joined Raúl Castro's troops in Sierra Cristal. He is the lifetime president of ANAP (National Association of Small Farmers). Why did you sign an agrarian reform law in 1959 that put 50% of the land in the hands of small farmers, forcing them to accept the nationalization of the same land today?

The United States and Western governments are well aware that Fidel Castro's regime is the most infernal dictatorship on the American continent and are well aware of the incredible system of repression that allows him to remain in power. However, no one is doing anything, or so little, except the CIA, which still has some activities on the island.

In 1975, Fidel Castro celebrated the 1st Party Congress (it took him 16 years), and in 1976 cleverly combined elections led him to head the government with more than 98% of the votes. He had been in this position since 1959 without consulting anyone. Despite this popular support, it is curious to see, four years later, a massive emigration of more than 110,000 people, especially considering the vexations of future candidates for exile and the limitations imposed by the government (no emigration permits are given to all those who request them).

The year 1980 ended badly for Fidel Castro who has already lost much of his prestige in the world. 43% of the country's industrial production is paralyzed because due to a lack of foreign exchange, it is no longer possible to buy enough raw materials or spare parts. More than 30% of the sugar cane harvest was affected by a fungus; 90% of the tobacco harvest was lost due to disease; the fishing industry is almost non-existent because foreign exchange royalties must be paid for fishing rights in the 200 mile zone; nickel is no longer available in capitalist countries. The only hope left to get out of this bad situation is the exploitation of the oil that exists in Cuba.

Aid to the communist regime in Cuba costs the Soviets about \$9 million a day. It's starting to become a heavy burden. If Western countries abandon Fidel Castro to his fate, the Soviet Union would be forced to do the same despite the sending, in 1978, of several Soviet combat brigades, or more than 25,000 soldiers, in the event of an internal uprising. Currently, the unemployment rate is over 22% in the male labour force, excluding women. To compensate for this imbalance between job offers and requests, the government maintains, in addition to the 120,000 men in the army and the Ministry of the Interior, 50,000 soldiers in Africa.

Although it may seem paradoxical, the country that can now save Fidel Castro's regime is France. In 1980, it signed a bilateral agreement with Cuba, including oil exploration by the Elf Aquitaine company. This oil exists in large quantities on the northern coast of

Matanzas province, more precisely in the Varadero area, but it must be fetched from the sea and the Soviets do not have the technology to carry out such drilling.

France's technological advance in this field will undoubtedly enable the exploitation of a new Macaraibo or a new North Sea under much milder conditions. But nothing is less certain, because if Cuban emigrants from Miami, which is 90 miles away, understand that the existence of Fidel Castro and his regime depends on the oil of the region, there will be constant sabotage on offshore platforms. We will then find ourselves in the situation of the Cabinda enclave where the Americans exploit oil in an area defended by Cuban army forces against attacks by liberation movements. France will take their place, but in the Caribbean Sea.

CHAPTER IX

THE EXPULSION

As soon as I had one foot on the plane back to Havana, I knew that everything would not be fine for me. I had to find a solution that would protect me from potential government retaliation at all costs. I had only one point in my favour, the conversations that had just opened between the Cuban government and the community of exiles in the United States. Havana refused to acknowledge the existence of political prisoners on the island and only accepted to speak of counter-revolutionary prisoners. But if Fidel wanted to receive an injection of foreign currency, which could only be brought to him in the form of tourism by members of the community who wanted to see their families again, whom they had not seen for twenty years (I do not believe that there is a single family in Cuba that has not been broken up by the revolution), he was obliged to accept the conditions imposed on him: the massive release of prisoners and the reunification of families. Priority was given to fathers and young children, and a few isolated cases were added.

If I could take advantage of these circumstances, I could get out of the impasse I was in fairly quickly, but I still needed some protection. In 1977, I had asked the French ambassador in Havana, during a reception for the celebration of July 14, for help in obtaining French nationality. A recent French law allowed a foreigner married to a French citizen to acquire French nationality if he so wished. But for a difference of a few months between the date of application of the law and the date of my marriage, the ambassador explained to me that it was impossible for him to grant my request.

Was that really the only reason he refused? Was he not afraid in the first place to dissatisfy the Cuban government, to create a small political scandal? However, I must say that I always thought, from

the way this conversation went, that he had indirectly offered me enormous support. He held my wife and I for more than an hour near him at the entrance to his residence, under the astonished gaze of his guests. I am sure that even before the reception was completed, Cuban Security agencies were informed of this meeting.

Officially, the ambassador had not promised anything, but the mere fact that he had spent part of the evening with me suggested unofficially that he was aware of my intention to leave the country and of any trouble I had had. The Cuban authorities certainly did not know what we had talked about, but there was doubt in his mind if there was any retaliation. The French Embassy could protest officially. Or maybe, because the Cubans couldn't stop my partner from leaving the country, were they afraid that once in France she would launch a press campaign?

In Cuba, there had been only one case of dissent, that of the writer and poet Eberto Padilla. But I didn't have the same profile as him at all. If, as a poet, Padilla was known, it is certain that a writer cannot do as much harm as a man capable of writing a well-documented political essay. In addition, when the Security officers screamed a little loudly, Padilla almost had a heart attack. He made his self-criticism and denounced all his friends. I wasn't, the authorities knew I wouldn't give in.

Anyway, my biggest concern was my wife and two daughters. They had already left the country, which allowed me to act more freely. Their exit visa had not been easy to obtain, it had taken several months to obtain, but in the end, in the face of fear of scandal, the emigration authorities finally gave in.

I could try to leave the country illegally, as so many others had done before me, but the surveillance I was subjected to did not make it easy.

Some time after my return, I went to see a person I knew on very good terms with the second secretary of the Venezuelan embassy and told him all my problems. We went together to see this

diplomat who behaved with me in a very noble way. He suggested that I go to his embassy the same day. Like all the diplomatic headquarters of Latin American countries, it is guarded by Cuban soldiers whose mission is to prevent the entry of all those who might seek asylum there. The diplomat advised me to tell these soldiers that I had an appointment with him. If they let me in, I would be granted asylum, and if the guard arrested me, the Venezuelan embassy would protest my arrest. This case could cause a first-rate diplomatic incident if I played along. He also offered to pick me up by car and break into the embassy in this way. He gave me every possible guarantee by certifying that, if I was ever arrested, he would let the Cuban authorities know that I had completed all the formalities for the right of asylum to be given to me and that the Venezuelan government was asking for me. If necessary, he would even grant me Venezuelan nationality.

There was nothing extravagant about this attitude on the part of a Latin American official. For some time now the Andean Pact countries had not known how to respond to Fidel Castro's policy on political prisoners. The Cuban government had announced that it would allow all former prisoners who have an entry visa to a foreign country to leave with their families. As a result, embassies were besieged with requests to leave. Cuba had convicted more than 60,000 people for political crimes. If they all wanted to leave with their families, this represented at least 250,000 emigrants that these countries had to welcome. However great the effort of the Latin American countries, Spain and the United States, they could not accept such a challenge. So I decided to change my tactics. Until then, I hadn't said or done anything, but I thought it might be worth creating some excitement.

The next day, I went to the French Embassy and had a meeting with the consul who, after consulting the ambassador, agreed to officially ask the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs for my release, my wife, a French citizen, having requested his intervention.

My wife also wrote to the President of the French Republic, Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. She received a reply from her Chief of Staff, who assured her of the interest shown in this case by the Elysée. It must be said that I had heard that several people had their exit problems solved by his personal intervention.

A few days later, I was shown the letter that the French ambassador had sent to the Cuban Chancellery asking him to let me go to France.

With or without diplomatic support, I found myself in conflict with the Cuban government, which I had always tried to avoid. Very quickly, I found myself organizing human rights demonstrations, speaking at blitzkriegs around Havana's embassies. During one of them, a crowd of 5,000 people wanted to go as far as the Canadian Embassy and was attacked by the police. A group of former political prisoners burned two patrol cars with Molotov cocktails. In a short time, I found myself at the head of a group of released prisoners, ready to do anything to defend his rights. What I had been waiting for with such apprehension had finally happened, I found myself engaged in an unequal struggle for human rights that could lead me to prison. The most absurd thing! Fidel Castro claimed that there were no political prisoners in Cuba but counter-revolutionaries. This offence no longer existed and the prisoners were all to be released, it was an already closed chapter in the history of the revolution!

I led a practically clandestine life while organizing demonstrations in front of foreign embassies. Almost every day I sent a letter signed with my first and last name and address to the head of the Immigration Department, Efrain, a former G-2 comrade, accusing his services of violating the Helsinki Agreements in all matters relating to the free movement of persons. On the other hand, I had written a letter to the party's Central Committee accusing its members in very harsh terms of human rights violations. This open letter was printed in 10,000 copies and distributed throughout the city of Havana.

I absolutely wanted to change the situation I was in quickly. So I went home, knowing full well that the house was being watched, and I continued to do my business. I even threatened to threaten the government with a demonstration during the next World Festival of Youth and Students and, later, for the 6th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. I made it clear that, if necessary, popular demonstrations would be organized during these two events on which Fidel Castro relied to improve his brand image.

Fidel Castro wanted to act as the magnanimous head of state who liberates political prisoners. But how did he free them? He would let them out of a small prison and put them in the big prison that the island of Cuba has become. There were more than 60,000 of them who could not be part of a society that denied them the right to work. With the economic crisis, more than 200,000 workers had their jobs cut, with no hope of finding another, because the State was the only boss.

In the middle of this chaotic situation, there was therefore no question of being able to assimilate this mass of former prisoners. But then what to do with it?

This low political maneuver by the Cuban government, which shouted to the four winds that any political prisoner who so wished was free to leave on condition that he had a visa for a foreign country, was brilliant. How, under these conditions, would these desperate men not have rushed to the embassies? In fact, it was not for the most part a political choice but a struggle for their survival. How could the Latin American governments that had diplomatic relations with Cuba, the United States, Canada and Spain accept such a terrible responsibility? Because, in fact, these men were not 60,000, there were also their families.

The internal political landscape was deteriorating a little more every day. It was necessary to take into account the 200,000 requests, considered as priorities by the Cuban exile community. If the

government wanted to maintain the lucrative "tourism" trade of Cubans residing abroad, it had to take into account their claims.

Ideologically, the influx of former gusanos alone created serious problems. How can we explain to people, and more particularly to young people, to whom we had told for twenty years that the capitalist countries were a real hell, where the working class was exploited in the most cruel way, that the citizens of these countries, who suffered the most unjust and difficult of political systems, had the right to travel freely, and above all that they could bear the considerable costs of such a journey, without forgetting the many gifts they brought in their suitcases, when they had always lived in the misery of the socialist paradise?

How can we explain to the worker who, in good faith, had believed in the magical power of socialism and worked like a beast to earn the right to buy an old black and white television set, which had cost him almost a year's salary, or a refrigerator, two years' salary, that his fellow worker, who had done nothing for the revolution, could acquire objects of which he knew nothing until now?

The new class was no longer the only one privileged, counter-revolutionaries and those with relatives abroad could hope to obtain those things that seem ordinary, but which represent for every Cuban the ultimate. I would like to see those who shout so loudly in favour of communism live the sad reality of socialism for one year. In the Western world, it is easy to protest or strike by blocking roads or airports, but try to do the same in a communist country and you will get lost in trying to count the kicks received.

As if by magic, signs began to appear:

"Trade two communist uncles with the party card for an uncle from the community."

The government had eliminated from the official vocabulary the terms gusanos, traitors to the Fatherland, sons of dogs, mercenaries, premature, homosexuals, social wounds, small fry... with which it had so far qualified those who had left. Now that they were bringing

the dollars so ardently desired by the State, they were called "members of the Community". The language of the people had also undergone an evolution. Wings had grown on the caterpillars flying from Miami to Cuba, a real metamorphosis had taken place, the pretty "butterflies" (that's what the Cubans now call them) loaded with gifts like wise men were adorned with the brightest colours.

In the clandestine newspaper¹⁵³ that we shot with stencils day after day, we denounced this situation stretched to the extreme, trying to show reality to the majority of citizens who no longer needed much help to wake up.

Shortly before the start of the World Festival of Youth and Students, I was picked up and taken to a Varadero Beach Protocol Residence under guard, with a ban on leaving it. After two weeks of this strange detention, an officer suggested that I call my wife in France, which I refused. I must confess that I was not treated badly, and that no one tried to put pressure on me. On the contrary, some former colleagues of the G-2 visited me to see if things could not be improved. The repression had changed in character. A year earlier, for half of what I had done, I would have been entitled to a minimum sentence of 30 years in prison. The image of democratization that the government wanted to offer before the non-aligned meeting could not be shattered by a campaign in favour of a dissident abroad. The fear of thinking that my wife would alert public opinion prevented them from acting. Fidel Castro had said that he did not want there to be a known dissident in the country under any circumstances.

The Cuban Embassy in Paris had tried to find out if my wife did not want to return to Havana, assuring her that she would not encounter any problems there. But I kept wanting to leave, so they had only two options: either they made me disappear at the risk of facing a scandal that was still possible, or they threw me out of the country. They opted for the second solution.

One day, as if by magic, an official immigration car came to pick me up and the officers inside asked me to accompany them to the immigration department, which I did. When I arrived there, I was given all my papers and my authorization to leave the country. Then they wanted to take me almost immediately to the airport. When I told them that I had been waiting for this authorization for more than a year and a half, that there was no urgency and that I did not want to leave Cuba without a valid visa for Spain, where I had to go, no one took the trouble to answer me. Of course, when I arrived in Madrid, the Spanish immigration authorities seized my passport. They even thought they'd send me back to Cuba! Finally, I was isolated in a hotel room, and the next day I was able to continue my journey to France.

I cannot say if other people left Cuba under the same conditions, but I was really expelled from my country. It is indeed inconceivable to send someone to a foreign country without the simple transit visa that is required. It seems to me that Cuban communism thought my presence was undesirable, because a dissident willing to do anything has, in a totalitarian country like Cuba, considerable moral power and this is an often contagious example; the dictatorships of the Eastern countries are increasingly afraid of this category of citizens.

Only my mother was still in Cuba and the possibility of problems that could have been made to her, although weak, existed; my first months in exile were therefore silent. However, my case was a concern in some spheres of government since they decided to send me an emissary to deal with me and give me a warning. With the best will, he tried to explain to me that it was neither my repentance nor my eventual return to Cuba that worried them the most, it was my silence. He had "officially" come to confirm that my mother could soon leave Cuba, as she had requested, for a period of three months. We had several conversations, and he probably made a favourable report, because my mother was allowed to leave for the

United States a month later, but only if she did not return to Cuba. I hadn't promised anything, however, at least not my silence.

Once this problem was solved, I still had friends in Cuba, which worried me a lot because they hadn't been able to leave. At the time of my expulsion, we were busy preparing the foundation of a Human Rights League for the respect of individual freedoms. We had prepared a manifesto and collected the signatures of intellectuals to make the free world aware of Cuban problems. After my expulsion, I lost all contact with them, and I tried to write or phone them in vain. It seems they moved to a new home without leaving a trace.

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On April 13, 1980, the inevitable finally happened. A group of desperate former prisoners, who did not know how to resolve their situation, decided to use political asylum and forcibly entered the Peruvian Embassy in response to the shooting of armed guards from the Cuban Ministry of the Interior. During this exchange of fire, Private Orlando Cabrera was to be killed.

The opportunity Fidel was finally waiting for had arrived, but by removing the military posts that prevented Cuban citizens from accessing the diplomatic headquarters, he did not appreciate the consequences of his act. Twenty-four hours later, 10,800 people were inside the embassy compound. This figure is not exaggerated as the government has tried to make it appear. I myself have had in my hands the official lists provided by the Embassy of Peru and published in the Cuban newspaper of Miami *El Diario de las Américas*, with the full name and age of each person.

Fidel then launched a second challenge: he allowed all those who wanted to go away to do so. They would be entitled to an exit permit, provided they pick him up at the Cuban port of Mariel (near Havana).

At first, the American authorities refused to allow this maneuver, but the port of Mariel was already overcrowded with boats

from Miami to look for candidates for departure. In about two months, 1,818 boats, which Miami refugees called the "Freedom Flotilla", brought 113,000 people to Florida.

Pressure from the Cuban government to try to stop this massive emigration has been very strong. A real hunt for prospective emigrants was launched throughout the island to paralyze people with terror. Members of the Ministry of the Interior and the army have murdered more than 200 people in Havana alone. They pushed groups of exalted people, or worse school children, to attack the homes of those who had asked for their release. According to the accounts of recent immigrants, there are more than 400,000 unmet exit requests in the capital alone. Those who managed to reach the port of Mariel had previously been locked up in a kind of concentration camp called Mosquito (mosquito) and treated like animals, beaten by the guards and bitten by the border guards' dogs¹⁵⁴.

The Cuban government, won by collective hysteria, took common law prisoners to Florida and forcibly took them out of prison, and sometimes even light morons from the Mazorra psychiatric hospital. The North American authorities have estimated that Fidel Castro's "special" mailings account for 2% of emigrants. To show the rest of the world that the Cuban people supported him, Fidel organized a huge demonstration that many news agencies accepted as such. But in reality, to be able to gather so many people, it was necessary to bring people from cities in provinces such as Pinar del Rio and Matanzas.

Why did Melba Hernández¹⁵⁵ commit suicide following recent events? Because even Castro's closest collaborators and oldest friends no longer accept the barbaric methods used by the Lider Maximo.

The whole world could see on television screens how the unfortunate people who came to the immigration offices were attacked, and then how the pathetic crowds of people queuing in front of the

headquarters of the American Interests Office had to take refuge inside to save their lives.

How far will Cuban communism go? How far will we let him go? President Carter proposed to Castro to open an air or sea bridge to allow anyone who wanted to leave to do so safely, because the route followed by the "Freedom Flotilla" is not very safe.

Fidel Castro is silent, silence is his best ally. It is always necessary to go through Mariel so that the Cuban traitors to the Fatherland continue to die during the crossing. The US-Navy and American border guard ships, with the collaboration of the US-Air Force, prevented the disaster from happening to hundreds of overloaded ships that were about to sink. Despite their efforts, there were 400 missing and 250 dead to testify to the cruelty of the Cuban authorities. Why not allow international organizations to control this massive emigration? No, that is not possible, we continue to attack the homes of those who asked to leave and they are still being pursued by groups remotely controlled by the government.

In early May 1980, the American government announced its intention to carry out air and naval maneuvers in the Caribbean area from the Guantanamo Bay naval base. Upon hearing of this, Fidel had a hysterical crisis and organized a maneuver by the Eastern Cuban army in the vicinity of the base. The psychosis of the war had so strongly permeated the troops that a Cuban Mig-21 patrol sank a Bahamas Navy coastal surveillance boat, violating Bahamas' airspace, causing additional tension in the area and killing 4 men. The Pentagon's military experts decided to suspend the planned maneuvers in this area. Everyone understood that, if they took place, Cuban troops could attack Guantanamo and that a war would become inevitable. All prey is good for a dying wild beast. Fidel should not be given an excuse to lead the Cuban people into a war that could only have disastrous consequences for them. Once again, American leaders have shown flexibility and appreciated the situa-

tion correctly. Fidel knows he can't hold out much longer and shouldn't be allowed to give him one last scratch.

Because the ghost of war has once again invaded Fidel Castro's mind. He ordered the Ministry of the Armed Forces to train territorial troop militias. All those who are capable of fighting and who have escaped the control of the Reserve Military Troops are obliged to be part of it. Castro openly accuses Ronald Reagan of not wanting to respect the 1962 agreements, which put an end to the Caribbean crisis, and of promising the naval blockade of Cuba if elected. Certainly Reagan proposed all this very seriously during his campaign for the presidency of the United States, but if he carries out his project, the island will probably find itself trapped, with its mined ports and its industry paralyzed by the lack of oil; but this blockade will at least have the advantage of suspending massive exports of food products to the socialist countries, and thus Cubans will be able to eat their fill.

For those who believe that Cuba's current problems are not as serious, I would like someone to read the letter sent to me by a friend of mine who recently left Cuba. She speaks for herself and I won't comment. The author of this letter is not an intellectual. His letter simply reflects how a man of the people experienced this situation. She tells, in her own way, the situation in the country and the true face of Fidel Castro's communist regime:

"« ... Our journey began on June 1st in Mariel. Lola and I left on the El Diamante Rojo boat with 840 people on board; it was the boat that brought the most people from Cuba. It's been terrible. Like the other 200 men, I had to travel in the hold. Women, children and the elderly have travelled on the bridge. Downstairs, it was so hot that people started vomiting because of seasickness. We stayed downstairs without drinking for sixteen hours. In the end, we were able to collect rainwater in a barrel with a piece of plastic and we were able to wet our lips; fortunately! because it took the boat more than twenty-six hours to get to Cayo Hueso. We arrived on June 2

at 9 a.m. We were then taken to a military base and given a rest. I ate my first apple in 20 years! In the afternoon, we were taken to the base in Opa Locka where the Americans began to distribute us and notify the family; we were able to leave on June 3 at 9 a.m. You can imagine what a state we were in... A little later, Jesús came to get us and took us to his house. He has a house by a lake. We stayed with him for several days to reconnect with our families. Now we are at a cousin's house, which is better for our work. I've already started with a long-time friend and I earn \$6 an hour. Lola works with the cousins in the company they own. I asked for mine to be taken out, I had to pay \$5,000 but it's worth it. I hope they will be here soon, and we will be together again, if I can get them out of there. In Cuba, it's a real Roman circus! Since we asked to leave, they have killed 200 people in the city with stones; groups are attacking the homes of those who were part of the system but now want to leave. Fidel is the one who orders them to do all this to terrorize those who want to leave. Everyone who has filled out the applications to leave loses their job overnight. There are half a million people in this situation in Havana, not counting the other provinces. Imagine, at Lucero¹⁵⁶ there was a sign saying that we were asking for drivers; the company had 14 drivers and there are only 4, maybe a little more left, which paralyses their work. Things are not going well. When my people went to Ciudad Libertad¹⁵⁷ to ask permission to leave and left the offices, they were shoved by 500 students and insulted with obscene words; they were scratched, pricked with ice picks and hit with spiked sticks; they had to run away and take refuge in the police station.

The others, those who attack houses, are plainclothes policemen who guide the crowd; they put signs on the houses and painted the doors as the fascists did against the Jews, but they stopped because it caused a division among the revolutionaries; if they fought Batista how could they behave like him, as in the past? There are wide differences of opinion between them, to the point that one of the

main people in the regime committed suicide¹⁵⁸. She had a very strong character, there must have been powerful reasons. I'll talk to you a little bit about everything quickly but I'll give you more details when we meet..."

THIRD PART

A CUBAN KGB

CHAPTER X

BIRTH OF A MONSTER

It was in 1964 that the KGB advised Fidel Castro to restructure the State Security Services, G-2. Cuba's foreign policy appeared to be an explosive mixture of concepts closer to Trotskyism and the theory of "permanent revolution" than to classical Marxism-Leninism. Despite differences between the two governments and the apparent cooling of Cuba-USSR relations, the weapons received were becoming more modern every day, and the number of Soviet military advisors was increasing. The same was true in the secret service sector, as well as in strategic sectors of the economy. Bilateral relations between the two countries had two sides: one public and the other private. The first was an assemblage of contradictions and divergences at all levels; this led not only the progressive intelligentsia but also the Cuban people to show a declared anti-Soviet attitude. The second facet showed that occult relations were closer and closer every day and revealed the all-powerful role of the KGB, real power in power.

The secret services did not challenge the socialist state, no, but there had been several failures, with Tito in Yugoslavia, Mao Zedong in China, and finally Albania. These three cases clearly showed that there was a clear difference between countries that had implemented communism from the "inside", by the will of their leaders, and those on whom the system had been imposed by force, a product of the politics of zones of influence. The KGB leaders knew full well that Fidel Castro had a personality as strong as a Tito or a Mao and would not allow him to be treated like a mere puppet. The Cuban leader's lack of maturity and impulsiveness had to be channelled to serve the hegemonic interests of the USSR. Thus Castro

would spearhead communism in Latin America at a time when the socialist camp was on the defensive.

At the time of the height of the guerrillas in Latin America and Africa, Cuban foreign policy was at its zenith and foreign observers thought that Cuba was defending an original line of socialist construction, in contradiction with that of the USSR.

It was only an illusion, a well-known myth, manufactured for a long time by the KGB's disinformation services to shift the boundaries of the socialist camp's area of influence and mislead world public opinion. In the end, Fidel Castro would have to bend before the USSR at the slightest economic pressure and, when that happened, a large number of intellectuals would have compromised themselves with Cuba and, for many reasons, would continue to defend it, or at least would be neutralized. The political courage to acknowledge a mistake was not the common denominator of this class, which is more afraid of ridicule than of defending an unjust cause, and prefers to remain silent and approving. They do not all show the same determination of which Sartre was an example in his search for the way forward, and often they refuse to acknowledge that they were wrong.

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It seems strange to say that the KGB increased its technical assistance to Cuba in December 1964 and that it has since then organized the second spy service on the American continent, after the CIA. The false image of the magnanimous hero and anti-imperialist guerrilla who would maneuver in an autonomous and completely independent manner from the Kremlin still prevails in public opinion, but Fidel has only usurped Che's personality and trajectory to create a legend that he is far from deserving. Unfortunately, it is the winners who write history and they always reserve the lion's share for themselves. Today events speak for themselves, and the colors of the disguise are faded, you can't fool everyone all the time.

On December 4, 1964, a large meeting was held with the KGB Security Advisors. Its purpose was to explain to G-2 officials and officers the reasons for the changes that were about to occur. For information, the group of agents attending the diplomatic and consular law course of which I was a member was invited. KGB General Valentin Ivanenko had come specially from Moscow to explain how the future G-2 would work, accompanied by a large group of senior officers from this elite corps.

Until then, methods of indiscriminate repression had been used, the criterion of an individual's social origin was sufficient to have him put in prison and tried without proof, and the moral conviction of the officer who had carried out the research was sufficient to convict him. This method had eliminated a large number of potential enemies, and was considered a necessary evil of the transition stage, but it was beginning to become archaic and it was dangerous to keep it. The Soviets explained that the revolution should no longer fight imaginary enemies. The presence of CIA networks was felt in the interior of the country, it gave information, sabotaged and disrupted the economy while the G-2 wasted its time fighting windmills that had become giants. In a word, if the ghost of counter-revolution were to be used for propaganda, the operational work had to be more precise and of a better technical qualification.

The masses of information that were systematically sent by the CDRs (Revolutionary Defense Committees) had become a gigantic imbroglio that was impossible to disentangle. Many CDR members had taken their role as whistleblowers too seriously and saw every disgruntled citizen as a CIA agent. Thousands of denunciations of enemy agents, or supposedly so, arrived daily at the G-2.

It was impossible to continue to make mass arrests, as they caused waves of terror in the population, and prisons already housed more than 40,000 inmates for crimes against State Security.

The information obtained from human sources (Humint) was not negligible, but the country's security could not be ensured by

this means alone. More sophisticated techniques and total surveillance had to be used. Everyone had to have an up-to-date control sheet in the State Security files, from the most erased worker to the top manager. No matter how insignificant, nothing should escape it. To sum up his lecture, General Ivanenko said: "Security is first and foremost a total lack of trust."

This conference was the first step in the restructuring of the Cuban secret services. In the eyes of an internal repression agent, any citizen was suspected of conspiring against the state and the working class until he proved his innocence. The inconceivable cruelty of this conception of justice makes state security agencies a power within power, because from the minister to the department's gatekeeper (who is a G-2 indicator), each is the subject of a liaison officer's attention.

The reign of the "men of silence" has undermined all sectors of the country's life at all levels. Only members of the party's political bureau, the party secretariat and some members of the central committee, old Fidel's companions since the time of Sierra Maestra, are exempt from this constant surveillance. They may only be investigated with the prior authorisation of the members of the Political Bureau. However, there have been cases where this rule has not been respected. The G-2 has conducted a series of investigations of government or state officials. The most typical case was that of Commander César Vallejo, an old fighter from Sierra Maestra who organized the guerrilla medical services. From the advent of the revolution until his death in 1969, he was Fidel's personal doctor and inseparable travelling companion, as the Cuban head of state leads a nomadic life. Whenever a stranger had an interview with Fidel Castro for one reason or another, Vallejo was present and very often served as an interpreter because he spoke English and French perfectly. A deep friendship existed between the two men, but Security Police did a huge amount of research on Vallejo; he was not a party activist because he was a deep believer and was involved in spiritual-

ism. When he died, he had already been chosen his replacement, Pepín Naranjo¹⁵⁹. If he hadn't died, I wonder how this case would have ended. What is certain is that the group dealing with his case had received orders from the Minister of the Interior, Ramiro Valdés, and Raúl Castro, to get rid of him in one way or another within three months.

All those who founded DIER¹⁶⁰ (of which I was one) suffered deeply from the evolution of the G-2. We respected a certain discipline and, as far as compartmentalization was concerned, we were used to keeping the necessary discretion to keep most activities secret, but what was now being asked of us was beyond anything we had ever known.

The Soviets have made secrecy a true doctrine. They surround everything they touch with a thick cloud of mystery. Perhaps the character of Stalin, half European, half Asian, had a great influence, only accentuating this characteristic already present in the time of the Czars. When we were told what the structures of the Ministry of the Interior and the secret services would be, we understood that it would be difficult to find out who was who. Only the names of two leaders within the secret organization would be known, the others would be ignored, and only senior officials would have access to the governing bodies.

For the secret services and those of counter-intelligence, it was established that almost all contact officers would have a clandestine house that would serve as their centre. Communications with the management of their service would be by telephone after identification by a war name. The officer who would receive the messages would not know the identity of his correspondents, nor the higher authorities to whom he sent the messages. Only the liaison officers of the Code Branch would know the contact officers and the houses where they worked. At the higher level, it was impossible to avoid contacts, but each section had to keep its line of work secret, and

only the section head would have access to the information necessary to coordinate certain operations.

Among these secret groups, only the name of Manuel Pineiro, who was to be the head of the secret service, was known, the others had not yet been chosen. This complex and baroque structure, full of nooks and crannies and labyrinths, allowed the KGB to place a specialist next to each section, department or office head, and thus control the pyramid of the G-2 and the Ministry of the Interior at all levels. The second advantage of this system was to make it more difficult for other foreign services to penetrate it. Even if an agent managed to infiltrate, his vision would only be partial, unless he could reach a very high level. On several occasions, Cuban agents have visited the West and, although they were middle managers, they were only able to provide limited information. I am convinced that if I had not done a lot of in-depth research at all levels, and although I was a G-2 agent for a number of years, I would not have achieved any significant results. If an agent suddenly decides to change sides, he has a general, but very limited, vision; it is only after years of investigation, with all the risks involved in seeing his activity as a double agent discovered, that we can have a chance of success. When I say double agent, I mean someone who spies for himself in the G-2, because if you work for a foreign service the chances of getting out alive are very low. An agent in the service of a foreign power necessarily needs contacts, even sporadic ones, but the insatiable appetite for information of his new masters, or his own need to enrich himself (because the greater the amount of information, the more money he makes) make him make mistakes. The foreign secret services can take him as a double agent, but they put pressure on him to obtain proof of his sincerity, and this is still a disadvantage because these missions are almost always impossible to carry out and end up being detected; we have seen the case of Cuban agents who, after a first contact, become afraid and are even denounced, by those who wanted to use them, the CIA for example,

and who think that they were not sincere. In any case, in case of doubt, it is better to eliminate a source of information than to run the risk of being intoxicated by misinformation.

For those who live far from this kind of occupation, this may seem like a complex problem, and the logic itself sometimes contradicts itself, but it is the rule of the game for men of silence. Only those who act without an accomplice can achieve relative success. Even the "moles" who spend twenty years in a given service end up, sooner or later, making a mistake. Those who run a service always have a mole infiltrated into an enemy service, and they always ask him for more without measuring the danger. In the end, they are the ones who receive the honours. Agents, on the other hand, only win a legend, at best. Their reward is almost always death.

That doesn't mean I know the whole truth. I too have been limited in some areas that I have not been able to penetrate fully. However, I believe I have a fairly complete overview of the Cuban secret services, which generally resemble those of all the socialist countries, and as they have never been revealed until now.

In this third part, I will successively describe each of the services of the Ministry of the Interior, both those of a public nature and the secret services that form the State Security, as well as their close relationship with the KGB.

In this description, I first separated the three basic bodies of the Ministry of the Interior in Cuba, then the autonomous groups.

Counter-Intelligence Services, or Division G, which includes Bureau G, the Tourism Bureau, the Diplomatic Bureau, the "Behavior Police", the Foreign Press Office and Vehicle Control.

Autonomous services such as special troops, sector 40, border guards and the DGSPD (General Department for the Personal Security of Leaders) or department 49.

Intelligence services that are trained by the Special Works Bureau (i.e. infiltration into anti-communist organisations or foreign

espionage services), the Technical Assistance Bureau, the Diplomatic Assistance Bureau, training camps and Bureau 15.

Finally, the corresponding public services of the Ministry of the Interior, namely the PNR (National Revolutionary Police), Traffic, DGTI (General Technical Research Department) and the "Jails and Prisons"¹⁶¹.

CHAPTER XI

DIVISION "G"

The "G" is the most important division of counterintelligence. It employs 42,000 men throughout the country. From the restructuring of 1965, the executives who were part of its management were the object of the most absolute secrecy. The name of the head of this division in the spheres of State Security, as well as that of the head of operations and supreme control (the office that deals with agents), is not even known. The management offices are located in a 14-storey building at the intersection of 11th Street and M Street at Vedado¹⁶². It has more than 85 contact houses or apartments spread throughout the city of Havana and several in each city in the interior of the country. The founders of the G-2, who knew all the secrets of the security services, know that only the supreme control service is in the hands of a Cuban. This position has changed leaders several times, but it is still assigned to a former PSP activist. However, the real leader, as well as the heads of operations, were all KGB officers.

Its leader was first Andrei Afilonov. In 1971, Stanislas Petrosian succeeded him as director, he must still be there. There have been countless changes in the heads of operations, almost every year. I believe that this must be the last position for KGB officers before they are appointed to the same position in any republic of the USSR.

Supreme control is exercised by old militants to facilitate the work process. The head of the supreme control keeps the incognito inside the services; he is known only to the tower chief officers (they are changed every 24 hours) and by the heads of departments. Currently, it can be assumed that the head of the supreme control is Evaristo Quesada, a former communist militant and founder of the DIER; he later moved to the G-2, at the time of its foundation, working under the command of Osvaldo Sánchez. In 1968, he was

Captain of Security and Head of the Diplomatic Office in January of the same year; he was sent to take a special seven-year course in the USSR to become a doctor of "police science".¹⁶³ Four other agents were part of this study group. Upon their return, all held important positions except Quesada, which, it was assumed, had had problems with the KGB. He was fired. Despite this history, he maintained sporadic contacts with the Ministry of the Interior, and in particular with the Deputy Minister in charge of Security, Abrahantes. For the price of his expulsion, he was given a second home in the suburbs of Havana; the most curious thing is that plain-clothes guards guard the area and you can see radio antennas on the roof of the house.

The "G" has a representation at the headquarters of the Ministry of the Interior on the Place de la Révolution; it is composed of coordination officers. The "G" controls the Diplomatic Office, the Tourism Office, the Foreign Press Office and it unofficially channels the activities of the Society and the Vehicle Control. Since 1968, it has been equipped with mainframe computers that keep in archives all documents of the Ministry of the Interior. It is significant to see that the first equipment of this type that entered the country was reserved for State Security. The department in which the "G" employs the largest number of officers is Surveillance. As a general rule, each factory, each office, each study centre, each hospital, etc., is subject to Security penetration; the treating officers recruit one or more people in each centre to periodically have information on the personnel who work there and on the progress of the case; the officer in question is not in contact with the company's managers, because he asks the base to provide him with information about them; another treating officer takes care of the basic personnel. In this way, we obtain cross-referenced information that gives a more complete overview. The same system moves up the hierarchy of departments to the highest level. For example, the dealing officer who is responsible for the Minister of Education has contacts with 3 or 4 different ministers. He is a senior officer and he never deals with the lower

levels; but another junior officer has contacts with the deputy ministers, another with the heads of departments and so on.

In all ministries, institutes, companies, factories, etc., a control of G-2 officers has been established. The large amount of information that is obtained by this means at the level of the treating officers is then passed on to analysis groups that periodically prepare reports for their higher authorities. Once analysts have reviewed the files and drawn conclusions, they are sent to the staff responsible for filing them. The latter sorts the information in the files and then directs it to the computer that stores the records of the entire working population of the country. Every time you enter a different department to work in it, and even when you change sectors within that department, you have to complete long questionnaires. All biographical information is verified and the level of trust that can be placed in an individual is determined, which will correspond to the level that the individual can achieve in the administrative hierarchy. Each time a new form is opened, which will be updated regularly with all the new information that has been obtained.

There are officers in charge of contacts with the CDRs (Revolutionary Defense Committees) at the neighbourhood level. They thus knew the attitude of each citizen in his daily life. All this information enriches the computer's files. No one escapes this surveillance system. As soon as a student starts secondary school, a file is opened that records all the assessments of his political behaviour made by the basic committees of the Young Communists of his study centre and those of the CDRs. Depending on the level of trust placed in him, he is granted a specific career at university. A student may, for example, obtain brilliant marks and want to study economics, but if his or her political level is deemed insufficient, State Security informs the Ministry of National Education that the student in question has not been recognized as suitable for this position. In the end, he had to be satisfied with studying accounting in a middle-level institute or even remaining a simple worker. This category of citizen

is relegated to the background and will have to remain there all his life, except in exceptional cases. He may be allowed to return to university, but he knows full well that he will never hold a position corresponding to his degrees. At the same time, he may find that a very large number of party members do not have the level of education that corresponds to his functions. This monstrous system even affects housewives, whose records are kept up to date by the RDCs.

Allow me to quote two excerpts from Fidel Castro's speeches that show this state of affairs in the field of education. The first was pronounced at the graduation ceremony of the "Manuel Ascunse Domenech" on 20 July 1977¹⁶⁴:

"If a man who drives a tractor wants to become an engineer... and obtains the title even if he continues to drive his tractor, he can do so. I am convinced that an engineer will make a tractor much more productive, drive it and maintain it much better."

We can also read his speech for the inauguration of the "Escuela Vocacional José Martí" in Holguín on 30 September 1977, where he reminded young people that "good conduct" in military service can lead to university entry if school marks have not allowed it; and we know what this means when the Cuban intervention in Angola had already begun. Anyone who wants to enter the University must first earn it, but according to very specific criteria.

No one, it is important to understand, no one can occupy a position, find work, access the University or benefit from any advantage of the system without the consent and approval of State Security. For example, even a senior official in a department, certainly a member of the party and highly rated by his superiors, is denied any promotion if his or her level of trust is deemed insufficient. Security intervened through the treating officer corresponding to the applicant's level and vetoed.

When a citizen appears on the blacklist, he is condemned to ostracism for the rest of his life. His negative record is not only on the

computers of the "G", but also on his file, kept in the Personnel Department of each work centre. It includes the different assessments made during his working life. This file follows him everywhere as the "sign of the Beast". This is the most serious violation of the individual freedom of the citizen, who cannot have any privacy, because everything is of interest to those who complete the files. This leads each individual to permanent self-censorship, even in front of those he knows well; no Cuban will say what he really thinks in a group that exceeds three people.

The new constitution has allowed the promulgation of a law that gives the Ministry of the Interior the right to violate correspondence. There are more than 40,000 people subject to this rule. Their mail is systematically opened. To complete this picture, it should be noted that approximately 25% of the correspondence circulating on the national territory is open. As a result, the average time to deliver a letter is three months and the loss in the mail is 15%. The correspondence from abroad is subjected to chemical analyses, microdots are searched for...

Telephone communications are also controlled through a listening centre that works with the "K"¹⁶⁵. The records are then sent to the "G". It can be considered that 45% of telephone calls in the country are intercepted by listening centres. Almost 3,000 people have their phones under permanent control (I am only talking about Cubans). All international communications are carefully recorded and analyzed. These systematic interventions on urban telephone lines and exchanges often cause technical problems that make these same communications difficult, but this does not prevent Security from adopting new control measures every day. The technicians of Empresa Nacional Telefónica¹⁶⁶ consider that State Security has far more resources than they do, and above all much more modern equipment.

The system of espionage that the "G" imposes on the population throughout the national territory is diabolical: the worker gives in-

formation about his leader and the leader about the worker, the minister about the deputy minister and vice versa; all accuse each other and suspect each other.

The instructions of the G-2 agents are those of General Ivaenko: "Mistrust is security. "Dragged into this spiral, their work gradually transforms them and the daily routine becomes psychosis. They are vigilant men, one cannot commit the slightest indiscretion in their presence, they keep nothing to themselves. If a comrade criticizes or disagrees with a specific fact, they do not consider it as the result of the great friendship that exists between two human beings, they see it as a trap and make a report to safeguard their responsibility in the event of double play. No one knows who the other is, each gesture or opinion is interpreted as a provocation. If Kafka had written about the secret services, I am sure he could not have imagined such a complex and unreal universe; it is impossible to describe the atmosphere of mutual distrust that exists, Machiavelian, monstrous, it is the negation of the human being as such.

The mainframes that control "G" Division are located in the Via Blanca area (east of Havana) in a well-monitored part of a military camp where several mechanized army units are stationed. It is at the bottom of this camp, completely forbidden to any foreign personnel, that they were placed. Communications between the various Security departments and the computer are carried out using independent cables. Each sector works with a different code that only gives it access to a certain level of information. But to put information in the computer's files, you invariably have to go through "G" Division. The PNR (Revolutionary National Police) has a computer terminal that gives it all the criminal history of the population. It is the only activity that is not part of State Security and has access to these services. I have only been inside this chamber once. The computer must be huge, because the room that houses it, as well as the programming rooms, repair rooms, etc., cover the area of a block, with the difference that they are underground rooms. The room is fully

air-conditioned and the humidity is strictly controlled. Mechanized companies in the area cannot operate with heavy equipment, this would disturb the computer, so their role is limited to camouflaging the area and defending it if necessary.

The hierarchical levels of compartmentalization and professional relations must be strictly respected in operational work. The members of the "G" who work in the building on IInd Street and M Street naturally know each other and know what each other is working on. In this building are located the following offices: Diplomatic Office, Tourism Office, Foreign Press Office, as well as a coordination delegation of the World Brigade and Vehicle Control. The heads of these bodies are heads of offices. They represent the highest authority. Each office has a control service that liaises with officers who do not have access to the building and work in the clandestine houses assigned to their office, as this is where contacts are made between field officers and office management, but they do not know the exact location of the clandestine houses in the other offices. The level of this information is also hierarchical and known only to the heads of offices; they also establish contacts at the higher level through control officers working at the Ministry's headquarters.

Orders from the Operations Department¹⁶⁷ and the "G" Division Directorate go up the hierarchy to the Supreme Control, which is clandestine (Evaristo Quesada?). The latter sends them to the senior officers of the Ministry of the Interior who take them down the same path. It is of course impossible to keep an airtight compartmentalization at a certain level, and on certain occasions the rules are violated and the work is done in a certain promiscuity. For this reason, counter-intelligence leaders are not as secretive as they should be and the "G" is not as complicated as it seems. When there are barracks or general alert states, the discipline loosens a little and a senior security officer can be seen going into the 11th Street building to directly coordinate an operation with an office manager. The

other agents know that he comes from the Ministry's Control if they have already seen him in the offices of the Revolution Square; the Deputy Minister in charge of Security¹⁶⁸ sometimes also comes to the central building accompanied by senior officers of the secret services to organize a mixed operation. As is logical, the officers concerned know these officers who have dual functions since they are also members of the staff of the division chief, who is a Soviet... The organization chart is as follows: Abrahantes, the Deputy Minister, is the direct head of the Operations Department. He is under the command of the head of the "G" division, who is in principle the Minister of the Interior, but in reality those who hold these two positions, as I said in the first chapter, are KGB officers who direct the activities of the "G" division with, as cover, an advisory title.

The apparent secrecy in Cuban counter-intelligence is not as strict as it seems. When there is an emergency in a case, the myth disappears and the work is done more or less openly. Although any comments are prohibited about the type of work in progress, the names of chiefs, places, etc., are known. Agents talk to each other and secrets become transparent inside the Ministry of the Interior. The Soviet advisors protested several times because of this promiscuity and lack of seriousness in respecting professional secrecy, but the character of the Cubans does not allow them to behave like Slavs. Their Latin origin impregnates too much popular idiosyncrasy for us to suddenly transform these men into English gentlemen of the "Secret Service"¹⁶⁹ or MI-6¹⁷⁰. Honestly, I don't know if things work as they do in England, in the strictest secrecy, but as far as Cuba is concerned, the agents all have a name and a first name. The ostentation of agents is another obstacle to professional secrecy; although high-ranking officers live in residential areas delicately called "frozen zones", where only leaders can reside (the best neighbourhoods of course), the symbols of power are still too visible in a society subjected to deprivation and material difficulties over the past twenty years.

To begin with, not all agents of a certain level dress with the annual shirt and pants to which normal citizens have been entitled for fifteen years with the rationing of industrial products, they only wear foreign clothes. The annual pair of shoes of the libreta¹⁷¹ really has nothing to do with the imported shoes on his feet. To this must be added symbols such as the watch or the car, etc., reserved for the leaders' caste. It is not uncommon for a super-agent, to distinguish himself from his neighbours who also have the status of a leader, to go home from time to time, dressed in olive green, with a Makarov pistol on his belt, with his rank of officer on his shirt. In the end, the legend of the secret services has been so nourished and the spies praised, that their vanity wakes up and sometimes they get their claws out. Oh, Vanity, mother of all vices!

State Security has fallen into its own trap; as the country is overwhelmed by waves of denunciations from one side or the other, and as each CDR¹⁷² gets involved in the lives of its fellow citizens, agents do not escape this manipulation and as soon as someone learns that their neighbour is a G-2 member, the rest of the neighbourhood knows it and takes it into account.

Senior officers who live in the "frozen areas" also sin by ostentation. In the end, it is possible to keep a certain amount of incognito in Western countries such as England, where no one cares about the private life of their neighbour and where they do not necessarily want to know where the latter has found the money to buy a luxury car or pay for their second home. It's only the tax inspector's business. In Cuba, things are happening in a very different way.

The Behavior Police

In socialist countries, contrary to the practice of Western countries, which place the "Socialist Brigade" in the hands of the criminal or judicial police, this apparatus of control and repression depends on the State Security services. Cuba had to deal more particularly with these serious problems because of the legacy left to the revolu-

tion by half a century of a pseudo-republic. It must be recognized that during the first years of the installation of the revolutionary government, the measures taken were positive. In particular, the "departemento de Lacta social¹⁷³" has succeeded in integrating a large part of this marginal sector of society into normal life. Despite this, in 1965, when the Ministry of the Interior was forged on the Moscow model, things changed.

On February 13, 1965, the first group of Soviet specialists arrived in Havana to organize the "Worldly Day". At the head of these 12 advisors was Colonel Ivan Micharov. They stayed in Cuba for more than three years. Among the Security Police members who knew the particular nature of the KGB members' mission, this gave rise to the most sarcastic jokes. For all of us, the prestigious Colonel Micharov was just the head of the Kremlin whores. Finding a Cuban counterpart, who would have to work with his advisors, became a delicate problem.

Cuban secret service agents found it offensive to deal with prostitution in the context of State Security. After two Soviet conferences, the obscure and incomprehensible point for us of the role of the worldly woman in a security service began to become clearer and only increased the scruples of these men of silence, who did not want to participate in such a matter. These events occurred in a complex historical context. The effervescence that reigned in the guerrillas attracted them especially for the heroism of the gesture. It was still the romantic era of the revolution and it was difficult to convince these "tough guys" that they had to take care of prostitutes and homosexuals. In the secret service world, the preparation of Che's first internationalist guerrilla experiment was not a secret. We knew that 1,200 men, who were supposed to take part in this action, were training at the 4th Motorcycle Mechanized Division in Remedios.

Finally, for the Cuban side, Captain Rosendo Barrientos was appointed as the leader of the Behavior Police. His history as a revolu-

tionary was little known; as a guerrilla, he had had no action that could have earned him the rank he held; he was a former member of the PSP and had been incorporated into the Security Services when his party had ordered many of its members to enter and control that organization... The newly created bureau was thus drowned by the members of this party. It was very quickly named "Put a militant"¹⁷⁴, even today we never call it the "Behavior Police" within the secret services.

The first mission carried out by this office was to select the people who were to be interned in the concentration camps (because this word must be used) of the UMAP (Military Production Assistance Units) which, under the cover of a paramilitary organization, was to gather a considerable number of workers under the control of the army. Things did not go as they had wanted to make people believe abroad. It has been said that in August 1965 we embarked on a very hard fight against homosexuals. In fact, it was not only the latter, the goal was above all political. The Behavior Police used the information provided by the CDRs in the neighbourhoods to list the people who would go to the UMAP camps. The parameters of this choice were very broad: first known homosexuals or those suspected of being known, then members of the religious sect of "Jehovah's Witnesses", all those who had asked to leave the country, or simply those who had a passport, all those who had a not very clear criminal record and who had not integrated into the revolution, finally intellectuals who had ideological problems.

The ages of these such heterogeneous groups ranged from 16 to 45 years of age. The system that had been implemented was part of the real concentration camp represented by the purest Nazi or Stalinist tradition. Up to 200 people were crowded in each barracks, working up to fourteen hours a day in sugar cane plantations (replacing the traditional trip to Siberia), the camps were surrounded by barbed wire up to a height of 2.50 metres, electrified. Special troops guarded the area with dogs and prohibited the entry of any

foreigners. The sadism with which these prisoners were treated led to 186 of them committing suicide. In many cases, battalions of homosexuals had been formed in which young people had been placed whose only crime was to want to emigrate. The same thing happened to many intellectuals who were the object of mockery by their guardians. These battalions of homosexuals were called the *Mari-cas*¹⁷⁵.

Battalions of delinquents, believers, *gusanos*¹⁷⁶ and a special company of punished revolutionaries were also formed, who, despite their status as prisoners, were entitled to better treatment and did not wear the uniform of shame (yellow with red letters). Sometimes, to humiliate someone in particular, he was sent to the mixed punishment battalions.

Seventy-two people died as a result of the ill-treatment and forced labour regime to which they were subjected, and 507 had to be hospitalized for psychiatric treatment, not to mention the amount of tranquilizers consumed by UMAP, representing 45% of national consumption.

All these figures correspond to the 38,641 UMAP convicts. They can be found in the archives of the Behavior Police or the FAR (Revolutionary Armed Forces), which I have had the opportunity to consult on several occasions, but I believe they do not fully reflect the disastrous consequences of this inhuman operation, especially if we take into account the fact that these men were convicted for facts, beliefs or opinions that are not considered violations of the law in any other country in the civilized world. As in Escambray in 1961, the war socialism that justifies everything was invoked. Eighteen years later, Fidel Castro took over the presidency of the non-aligned parties and ran as a human rights champion. It seems that its ardent defenders do not know the history of socialism in Cuba well, or rather that they are doing their job as KGB moles in the Western world to perfection.

As the work of the Behavior Police developed in this direction, the atmosphere among the members of the Security Service became hostile, to such an extent that it took the intervention of the Minister of the Interior to solve serious problems.

Not only men have been subjected to such high levels of pressure, but women have also suffered from these methods of systematic repression. Those who had relations with foreigners were the main targets of these operations; they were threatened to be sent to prison for prostitution if they did not cooperate with Security by providing information. While it is true that sometimes these were prostitutes who worked as "trades" among foreign technicians residing in the country, this was not always the case; in any case, the treatment was the same.

The Behavior Police thus controls a large number of prostitutes through these working methods. In exchange for the information they provide, they are allowed to work freely among foreigners residing in the country or passing through. There have often been attacks on prostitutes in Havana, but those in the service of Security Police still escape them. The "Cubatour"¹⁷⁷ repeatedly protested in vain against these prostitutes who revolve around excursions organized for tourists. Other organizations also explained the negative role of the latter on the image of the country that foreigners have of themselves. The worst thing is that they work in exchange for products that are sorely needed in the country, a pair of shoes, a dress, a pair of stockings or a few dollars. In all tourist hotels, there are special shops for foreigners where they are unofficially tolerated to accompany the foreigners in question. They do not, of course, deprive themselves of the opportunity to transform themselves into clients, while no Cuban has the right to enter these mini-paradises of capitalism.

The Behavior Police has three different offices to control prostitution: the Diplomatic Office, which deals with persons infiltrated into diplomatic circles or correspondents of foreign news agencies,

permanent or passing through (putas diplomáticas); the Navy Office, which of course deals with those who work with foreign sailors who land on the island (putas Marineras); the Foreign Technicians Office, which deals with those who are infiltrated into this environment, either among those residing in Cuba or among representatives of permanent or passing commercial agencies (putas técnicas).

There is one contact officer for every 15 prostitutes, and he is responsible for leading the research work on computers. Intimate scenes are filmed or photographed to force a determined person to give confidential information under the threat of scandal blackmail. This system is widely used, particularly in diplomatic circles. Sometimes the opposite happens; diplomats' wives, if they have committed the crime of having a lover, are blackmailed in the same way.

The case does not stop there; there is something for everyone; a good number of homosexuals, active or passive, are controlled according to the objective they want to achieve. Anything is possible to get information.

The Behavior Police constantly controls about a hundred female prostitutes and about fifty male prostitutes, not to mention the operations that she did not carry out herself, but of which she was aware and from which she intends to take advantage. It can be calculated that 35% of confidential diplomatic or commercial information is provided by the Behavior Police, which has *carte blanche* for all its activities.

It is in the country where we want to create the "new" man, with a communist conscience, that the Behavior Police owns, a few kilometers from Havana, on the beach of Santa María del Mar, a residence to organize bacchanals that are not exclusively used to trap foreigners by filming compromising scenes; sometimes, with all television circuits turned off, we give their day to the technicians who work there in order to "show" how they work to some leaders.

Although it seems incredible, the control exercised by the worldly woman is far from being suspected in its entirety. For ex-

ample, it maintained strict surveillance over foreign correspondents of news agencies working in the country for several years. As a result of his intervention, a permanent correspondent of a well-known Western news agency, who was a passive homosexual, was placed under control. When this journalist was selected to be sent to Cuba, this sexual tendency was not considered an obstacle, or simply not taken into account. As soon as this gentleman arrived in Cuba (whose name I will not say, nor that of his agency, because I do not want to create problems for him), the Behavior Police managed to infiltrate alongside him an active homosexual who controlled all his activities during the period when he remained in Cuba. One day, there was an argument between the two men over a jealousy issue, and the G-2 informant fought with the journalist who no longer wanted to see him. A few days later, the permanent correspondent was expelled from the country for a minor offence. In reality because he was no longer controlled by his former partner. He was convicted of exceeding his rights and defeating a promising operation. Of course, officially, he was convicted of homosexuality, laziness (it is repressed by law) and currency trafficking. A lesbian, whom the journalist kept at home, was also convicted, as were several of his friends. They came to participate in organized orgies to "stimulate", as he himself said, his man's sexual appetites.

Involuntarily, or who knows... this journalist gave the Behavior Police all the information he could learn from his colleagues in the foreign press who lived in the country or who were passing through. Because of the prestige of his agency, no one ever suspected that he had become a pawn in State Security. Perhaps this example will make foreign news agencies with correspondents in Havana think about their choice.

There have been several cases of foreign senior officials posted in Havana being trained by homosexuals or prostitutes. I could give a whole series of examples. One of them even made a name for himself without the truth ever being fully known. But I don't think that's

appropriate, because it's not my intention to intrude into people's private lives. Ultimately, the foreign ministries concerned are well aware of these facts and the ambassadors in question had to be changed.

The Behavior Police does not stop at the higher levels, all other officials of an embassy are potential candidates for these manipulations. Suffice it to recall here the case of the Swiss Embassy in which I was directly involved and which I have already told in the first part.

This kind of aggression against the diplomatic corps is a real and permanent scandal. The counter-intelligence services of countries that have relations with Cuba are well aware of this. Although the personnel who work within these missions are warned and warned of the existence of these facts, the human being is weak before the sin of the flesh and some succumb. Once they are caught in the spiral of espionage, it is difficult for them to escape without damage. The embassies specially monitored are of course those of Western countries, but some of the embassies of Socialist countries are also monitored, such as those of Yugoslavia, Romania, Czechoslovakia and China.

I do not know if the Behavior Police plays the same role in the other countries of the socialist bloc, but since the Cuban services are a faithful copy of those of the KGB, the conclusion seems self-evident.

The "K" sector

Sector "K" includes all the technical means of Cuban espionage (SIGNIT), with the exception of Vehicle Control, which has its own organization. It is generally considered to be the working group that receives the largest number of KGB advisers, as there are more than 80 at any given time; not only do they work in the field, but some are teachers in the various training courses and others are technicians in charge of dealing with often complex equipment and re-

pairs. It has a total of 2,800 employees, and the rate of recruitment of specialists among electronics engineering students remains constant. A small proportion of the staff is directly trained in the USSR.

The areas in which he operates are very diverse and he generally uses the most advanced espionage techniques in the modern world. Sector "K" is divided into three branches: a photography laboratory, a film section that deals with films but also television, and a sound section, for recordings and radio listening and sound effects systems.

The Photography Section is responsible for the photographic work of the intelligence and counter-intelligence services, both inside and outside Cuba. It is in his laboratory that the microdots sent out by the secret services are prepared. We also make the enlargements of those we receive. Coded messages are also incorporated into normal correspondence leaving the country using chemicals and special invisible ink that require a special developer to become visible again. This work is being carried out in coordination with the secret services, and although these techniques are a little out of fashion, they have an essential role to play; precisely that of microdots, which dates from the Second World War, and has been abandoned by the other services for years, is wreaking havoc on enemy counter-intelligence, which does not expect such archaic means. This laboratory also carries out the work of the counter-intelligence services. Unlike international laws that do not accept photographic documents as proof of guilt, in Cuba a photo is considered a valid and definitive document. But this work does not represent the bulk of its activity, as it is most often sporadic and its objectives are long-term. Its fundamental role is to photograph and photocopy the documents of tourists and journalists in hotels, to help the Behavior Police in her attempts at blackmail and to photocopy all the passports of foreigners who come to Cuba. It also forges the passports of illegal agents leaving Cuba. Almost all the equipment used is Japanese technology, even the laboratory, only the lenses are Russian

because it is believed that the lenses provided by the USSR for the secret services of the socialist countries are of better quality.

The cinema section is much more complex; here, the "K" sector is responsible, in coordination with the Tourism and Press Offices, for the operation of all closed-circuit television systems installed in the hotels and residences of the Protocol, as well as video equipment that permanently film foreign embassies and the homes of a few diplomats, which are, for one reason or another, kept under strict surveillance. They are also working on the various television cameras installed at the capital's nerve centres, mainly for surveillance and control in the event of disorder. In addition, it has about ten mobile patrols equipped with television cameras that can be activated at any time. The "K" sector only works in black and white, because the colour makes operations more technically difficult, as the equipment is too large and requires more light intensity.

It can be considered that this section controls more than 700 video cameras that operate in a closed circuit. Sometimes, when important interviews or interrogations take place, they are recorded. A few cameras have been installed on an experimental basis in the new prisons, in conjunction with the Jails and Prisons department, to lighten the surveillance work of the guards. For night operations, we use cinema techniques. Indeed, work that cannot be carried out due to lack of light is done with cameras loaded with highly sensitive films, or with special infrared films¹⁷⁸.

The sound section has a lot of work to do. It is responsible for all miniaturized microphone systems installed in hotels, Protocol residences, foreign diplomats' and technicians' homes, as well as embassies. The miniaturization in this type of operation is incredible and the technique of espionage (Signit) goes beyond the borders of the imaginable. The microphones used for this type of work are no larger than a thimble, they work with long-lasting batteries, a transmitter that exceeds 50 meters and an automatic power-on device at the slightest noise, with automatic power-off as soon as silence is re-

stored. These small and very ingenious devices are not detectable and it takes a real specialist to discover their presence in a hotel room or in a car.

This type of equipment is mainly used for fast and unexpected work. G-2 technicians can place them in a few minutes if the car or site could not be prepared in advance. There are also directed microphones that can pick up human voices up to a distance of 200 metres under good atmospheric conditions. It is enough to place the receiving barrel well to have satisfactory results. These devices are based on the following principle: acoustic waves are sent which are modified by the human voice and reflected by the voice waves as a signal reconverted by the device into audible sound; it is the same principle as radar or echo sound, i. e. the recovery of reflected waves, with the difference that voice and conversation are reconstructed by wave modulation and different tones. This system allows recordings to be made behind closed windows, the reflected wave even takes on more reality in this way. When you want to do such operations, you use nail microphones; it is a kind of nail that you stick remotely into a wall with a gun; the microphone is placed near the head on the outside, which allows you to collect the vibrations of the human voice inside the wall. For Vehicle Control, these are rifles capable of firing small emitters hidden in small, sticky rubber balls that stick to the surface of the car.

Thus, almost all Protocol residences, hotels and houses rented to foreign diplomats and technicians are full of microphones camouflaged in the bricks of the construction or in some electrical conduits, where they take the energy necessary for their operation, because otherwise their life span is too short and they cannot be changed. It can be assumed that after five years of work, 45% of these instruments should continue to operate. After this period of time, the inhabitants are asked to move under the pretext of repair in the premises. The walls are of course repainted and some repairs are made, but the real objective is to install new microphones.

Next to, in front of or above each embassy, there is an empty house or apartment that houses the technical group responsible for acoustic espionage and radio listening systems. All recordings are sent to a special laboratory that filters the sounds to make them intelligible when there is interference such as music or engine noise. Counter-intelligence radio listening systems are under the control of this section. It is composed of three groups of operators, each with 60 people, who work in eight-hour shifts to continuously intercept the radio waves. More than half of the equipment is used to receive encrypted messages sent by Cuban embassies abroad or, on the contrary, to transmit them to these embassies. They also carry out missions for intelligence, transmission and reception services. Sector "K" has encoders and decoders for this work, as well as the necessary devices to camouflage over-recorded messages to a background of music most often. These recordings are made on tapes that have a dual track, each at a different speed; when you listen to the tape at normal speed, you can only hear one track.

Interference groups are attached to these services and operate under the same direction. They have a continuous sound effect on the emissions of foreign radio stations entering the country. All areas of silence of the national broadcasting system are invaded by interference to prevent the entry of radio stations from outside, which Cubans are fond of. Political transmitters that dedicate a large part of their programmes to Cuba, such as the Voice of the Americas or Miami's Cubanísima, have their frequencies continuously disrupted. The majority are silenced, but the Voice of the Americas, whose transmitter has a power greater than one million kilowatts, cannot be eliminated on all its frequencies. In winter, the refraction of the waves of American television channels enters with great force on the northern coast of the provinces of Havana and Matanzas, interfering with Cuban television channels; to mitigate this climatological accident, the television sets sold in the country are prepared to pick up only the frequencies that correspond to those used in Cuba,

and the receiving antennas are specially designed for this purpose. Despite these precautions, a group of 40 GDR radio and television specialists, sent especially to Cuba by Marcus Wolf, head of the East German secret service, at Fidel's request, have been searching in vain since 1977 for a solution to this problem, much to the great joy of Cubans who discreetly circulate the drawing of the "good" antenna.

The "K" sector operations centre is located in a five-storey building specially built for this purpose in the Siboney district, a deserted residential area, as almost all its inhabitants emigrated in 1959. This central station is better known as "La Casa Grande"¹⁷⁹. The sector also has 65 houses and apartments where the electronic espionage substations that operate permanently are located; in the capital's hotels, they can occupy up to entire floors depending on their work, and in hotels in the interior of the country, one or two rooms are blocked if necessary.

The head of this department, since its creation in 1965, is Colonel Gerardo Figueredo. On two occasions he was punished for indiscipline and "dolce vita", but he always returns to the management of sector "K". Figueredo has reached a high level of knowledge of modern espionage techniques, he is undoubtedly the best prepared framework of Cuban Security in this field; ex-student electronics engineer, he joined the March 13 Movement at the University of Havana in 1956, he was one of the founders of the DIER and the G-2 later. In April 1965, he left for a special two-year course in the GDR and later, in 1974, he studied six months in Bulgaria and three months in the USSR.

The technical resources and devices of sector "K" do not correspond to those of an underdeveloped country with a population of 9 million. Only the world's major espionage powers can afford to maintain comparable services, ranging from telephone surveillance to miniaturized microphones. These facilities can be considered to have cost \$164 million, and their annual operating and maintenance

costs exceed \$10 million. These figures are astronomical compared to Cuba's gross national income.

The ridiculous thing is reached with the electron microscope with which the "K" sector is equipped so that little children (hear the technicians) can have fun, because it is not used for anything else. Countries such as the United States have only a few for their activities, which, with good work planning, is more than enough.

Vehicle control

One of the first objectives set for this office was to control the cars of embassies and the cars of foreign technicians residing in the country and circulating freely until then. In January 1965, the Vehicle Control Office was created. Captain Colomé Varona took over the leadership, surrounded by two personal advisors, one Soviet and one Bulgarian, who were named after Francisco and Javier; at all levels of operations were added 68 other Soviet advisors and 10 Bulgarians.

This is one of the few cases where the advisory committee was mixed. This situation was due to the fact that Bulgaria had developed the best working systems in this field; Bulgarians even worked as advisors in the USSR.

This mission was also to be used to test new methods, a way for her to put sophisticated techniques to the test. In February 1965, the preparation courses for the Cuban staff who were to work in this office began. The most difficult part was the training of the group of technicians who had to deal with radio communications and had to learn how to use direction finder, transmitters, etc. Although staff were recruited from among experienced technicians, it was a difficult job.

It was calculated that 120 diplomatic cars were in circulation, more than 180 for foreigners residing in the country, either as technicians or because they lived in Cuba before the revolution. To control them, a fleet of vehicles was set up as follows:

- 700 cars with private number plates;
- 120 jeeps with acronyms from different ministries;
- 100 taxis;
- 75 motorcycles;
- 60 light trucks ;
- 3 buses from urban lines;
- 12 buses on interprovincial lines;
- 20 heavy trucks ;
- 12 couriers.

This equipment was mainly intended for Havana, as there are no diplomatic representations in the interior of the country, and foreign technicians from Western countries work under the direct control and supervision of the security forces in the provinces. The honour of being monitored and followed with such refined methods was therefore reserved for foreign diplomats and technicians residing in the capital. It is only for special cases that operational groups are sent to the provinces. In the case of Cuban citizens under surveillance for their anti-communist activities, the office that is more specifically responsible for their surveillance asks for Vehicle Inspection specialists, but this happens only rarely.

To ensure the operation and maintenance of the enormous rolling stock at its disposal, the Control has 9 repair workshops, all located on the outskirts of the city and well equipped. While in other sectors of the economy there is often a shortage of spare parts, the Control Office lacks nothing. He has several people in charge of buying these parts abroad so that his warehouses are always full. Shipments are made by Merchant Navy ships that reach Western countries' ports. For small parts, the services of diplomatic couriers are used in emergencies.

There are 6 radio technical workshops located in the suburbs of the capital. Unlike the mechanical part, all their requests for spare parts are provided by the USSR. They fulfil their role with fewer material problems, but with relative success.

There is also a specialized group that works in coordination with radio listening services to detect, using goniometers, the radio transmitters still present. Twenty well-closed dispatch units, equipped with directional direction finder, form the "Rastreo"¹⁸⁰ group. The mission of the latter is to accurately locate the exact location of any clandestine emissions. For their location, the technique uses only two goniometers, each of which indicates the exact origin of the lens in a straight line. So we have the location of the transmitter's shot at the intersection of these two lines. This system dates back to the Second World War, but its effectiveness is surprising because the location of the transmitter is precisely determined. On the other hand, for rapid fire emissions, it is insufficient.

Since 1965, attempts have been made without any success to detect rapid-fire transmitters that are supposed to send messages to Western embassies. The system for locating these transmitters is the same in principle, but they are no larger than a portable radio, which makes it very difficult to detect them; the agents who use them can quietly record the message in code at home and go out on the street to send it at the time indicated; since these transmitters have a range of 200 km, it is like looking for a needle in a haystack. In general, these transmitters are used in the city centre at peak hours and since the message lasts only thirty to forty-five seconds¹⁸¹, the "Rastreo" group has just enough time to determine the transmission frequency and location, but the net that follows this first phase does not allow the agent to be found among the thousands of people who are in the indicated area. Sending a message from a stopped car at a red light is enough for five minutes later, when counter-intelligence services arrive on the scene, the officer is already far away; it is the same on public transport or on foot. Only once were the groups of operators in the area of emission by chance and the rapid-fire transmitter was recovered, but not the one that had used it. It seems that he noticed what was being prepared and abandoned the aircraft to avoid being

discovered. During this operation, 3,820 radio devices were checked piece by piece, the real transmitter was found in a bin.

These phantom emissions have been going on for more than fifteen years, so I wonder if this continuous operation is not part of the CIA's well-organized psychological warfare against Vehicle Control activities. There were messages that, after long decoding work and a terrible effort by specialists to get back to the initial recording speeds, said: "Bobo, get you organized... Bobo, get organized"¹⁸². "These failures put the agents of the "Rastreo" group in a very bad mood.

The use of walkie-talkies is prohibited to individuals in the country. If a ministry needs these devices, it must obtain a special authorization and indicate the frequency used; this permit can only be requested from the highest authorities, and the Ministry of the Interior puts up a whole series of obstacles to these requests before granting them.

At the Technical University¹⁸³ in La Cujae, a group of electronics engineering students from the suburbs of Havana, had made two walkie-talkies during the practical work sessions. They had the unfortunate idea of running them within the faculty. They were quickly detected and the two rudimentary devices were confiscated, as they had used the same frequencies as State Security. 17 students were arrested and held incommunicado for two weeks, the practical work rooms closed for almost a month. It took the intervention of the rector, then the Minister of Education, before they could be reopened.

For the vehicle monitoring system, the measures are even more stringent. None of the cars that circulate with a diplomatic or foreign license plate escape their vigilance, day or night. It is calculated that for every kilometre travelled by one of these cars, five different Security vehicles are used in turn in surveillance missions. During the day, 800 to 850 control cars share the four areas of the city with one operations centre for each. The city is divided into four parts,

but there is a higher density of vehicles in the embassy area. From 11 p.m. onwards, the workforce is reduced to 200 and between 2 a.m. and 6.30 a.m., there are about 100 of them with a reserve of 25 vehicles and drivers to meet any eventuality.

The Vehicle Control Office has 5,800 employees in its various branches¹⁸⁴. In 1972, to better monitor diplomats' cars, a service company was created for the diplomatic corps, with, in particular, the provision of embassy drivers. All those who did not want to be G-2 informants had to give up their positions to make way for those who agreed to do this kind of work. These drivers must have daily contact at the end of their working day with an officer of the Control Office to explain the purpose of the trips that have taken place; when the car is to leave Havana, he must be able to give in advance the route it must take to prepare the surveillance.

It is relatively common, when the office operates more particularly against a diplomat, for drivers to find some pretext to go out alone with the car, thanks to which small transmitters can be installed there that make them more easily locatable in the event of a night or unexpected exit. These very small devices are installed by technicians in special workshops. This operation is repeated every ten or fifteen days when the nickel-cadmium batteries lose their power. These transmitters are almost impossible to detect because the specialists carefully hide them and only allow the tiny antenna to protrude. If you don't know where they were placed, it takes weeks of very extensive research to find them.

This permanent surveillance is one of the most serious violations of personal freedom in Cuba, further aggravated by the fact that diplomatic immunity is not respected. No country in the world is exempt from this vigilance, but only the socialist countries allow themselves such relentless espionage against diplomatic representations. No Western country would dare to violate diplomatic immunity so systematically. Possible controls and some monitoring may exist, but never to such extremes. Yet these countries are well aware

that 75% of the representatives of the communist countries are secret service agents and the remaining 25% are their collaborators. Each one judges the others according to his own attitude, so the communist countries see a spy in each representative of a foreign country.

Havana's public transport is worse every day, and every bus ride looks like a real odyssey; a worker loses almost three hours to get to and from work when it should only take thirty minutes. Cars are reserved for the elite or middle-level leaders (who often walk alone), taxis are in limited numbers, paralysed by the lack of spare parts, while the people travel in crowded buses where people are crowded like cattle; but more than 1,000 Vehicle Control cars circulate day and night for Security with the idyllic mission of safeguarding the integrity of the Cuban people. If, instead of spending so much money and fuel, we bought a few extra buses for the population, I am convinced that they would feel much better "protected".

This Vehicle Control Office is under the direction of the Deputy Minister of Interior for State Security, Juan Abrahantes.

The Tourism Office

The Tourism Office is under the direct direction of Division "G", it is more specifically responsible for counter-intelligence work in this area.

With the advent of the revolution in 1959, tourism in Cuba had died. Despite the first-class hotel infrastructure that still existed, it had ceased to be the profitable activity that it had once been. A year earlier, a 25-storey Hilton had been completed and put into service in central Havana, hotels such as the Riviera, Capri, National and Rosita Hornedo, all for gaming, were left without the Americans who supplied the industry. Havana had dozens of first-class hotels for tourism, which made it a privileged holiday destination in the Caribbean region. Gambling casinos, but also cabarets such as the Tropicana, gave the city great prestige. In the interior of the country,

there were other similarly developed tourist centres, and large-scale tourism was beginning to develop towards Varadero beach, whose natural beauty is unparalleled in the world.

As early as 1957, the country's political situation had created serious problems for Cuban tourism. The American Mafia, controlled by Meyer Lanzki, had invested considerable sums in Havana. It owned the Riviera Hotel (it cost \$25 million to build) and the Capri Hotel (\$15 million). It had in mind the installation of a series of luxury hotels along the Malecón¹⁸⁵ whose first buildings were already under construction.

The film *The Godfather* (2nd episode) gives a partial overview of these Mafia affairs in Havana and the agreements between Vito Genovese and Lanzki for the control of the city. What he did not say was that these two gentlemen of the Cosa Nostra informed Lester Rodríguez¹⁸⁶, delegate of the July 26 Movement in Miami, and Abrahantes, head of the Movement's counter-intelligence services, that the Mafia was willing to take responsibility for making Batista disappear if Fidel guaranteed them the exclusivity of the game after the advent of the revolution. The negotiations were unsuccessful because the talks that had already begun went badly wrong because Fidel demanded, in addition to the dictator's elimination, \$25 million.

With the Cuban government's policy, which focused on internal problems, no one was interested in seeing tourism in Cuba reborn. On the contrary, we tried to avoid it by all means. However, the Cuban revolution aroused the greatest interest among progressive intellectuals all over the world, and they began, proportionally speaking, to flow in.

In 1960, Fidel said in a secret speech to State Security agents:

"It is your duty to create a sugar cane rampart to prevent the influx of foreigners, the vast majority of whom are CIA agents. In the future, great care will have to be taken in the selection of our guests and a political organization capable of meeting this objective will have to be created."

With such a conception of tourism in the mind of the Cuban leader, we can understand why this industry remained paralysed for many years. It was during this period that ICAP (Cuban Institute of Friendship with Peoples) was created to receive and care for foreigners invited by Cuban embassies abroad and for those who requested to visit the island and whose request had been accepted.

The Tourism Office appeared at that time, but with a very rudimentary structure because its only work was surveillance. The directors of this institute all came from Security, a habit that is still maintained, as well as the senior managers. At the Ministry of the Interior, all persons who spoke one or more foreign languages were selected as tourist guides. The government had defined this activity as political tourism and a counter-intelligence centre was set up.

Initially, ICAP had two modes of activities led by the Tourism Office. The first was to invite all progressive Latin Americans who could be "influenced". The aim was to have at his disposal later on agitators abroad capable of bringing propaganda into their respective countries. This point was fully exploited by the agents of the office who were under the orders of the head of the secret services, Manuel Piñeiro. The second was to receive the growing number of political exiles who arrived in Cuba. Of course, this hospitality was only a joke and it quickly turned into a business.

The decade of the 1960s was marked by a huge influx of people who arrived in Havana shouting: "Long live Cuba! Down with Yankee imperialism!" They instantly became official government guests, staying in luxury hotels at ICAP's expense; they were given an additional 250 pesos per month, which was the salary of a specialized technician. A paradise for the brave Latin Americans who were making the revolution entrenched in the palaces, while the Cuban people were facing new challenges every day. Paradise also for the agents, now ICAP officials, who did not fail to take advantage of this opportunity, using and abusing funds; senior security officials did not forget to use these facilities for their personal use. It was not un-

common to see a Security Officer staying for several months in a luxurious suite at the Riviera Hotel or Havana-Hilton, leading the train, at ICAP's expense.

As I occasionally had interviews with government guests or working relationships with foreigners entering the country, I was one of those with this credit card that was used in all luxury hotels, as well as in the club reserved for technicians and diplomats, which was located on the thirtieth floor of the Focsa¹⁸⁷ in the heart of Havana, in the Vedado district. I was amazed at the number of officers I knew who came to these centres for lunch and dinner, or to shop with their credit cards. Some even took bottles of alcohol or wine in whole cases: Napoleon, Martell, champagne, Chivas, etc.

At the end of 1961, I had a conversation on this subject with Che to express my concerns, not only for others but also for myself. At just 17 years old, and without knowing how it happened, I was driving in Lincoln, living in a luxurious apartment in Focsa, dressing at the best tailors in the capital, in other words my unlimited credit cards gave me a millionaire status. There was something wrong here, it was not normal to make the revolution to eliminate class inequalities and, at the same time, to create new rich people. This conversation with Che lasted a long time and I came out convinced that a new class had just been born and was growing in the midst of the revolution, power in power, or, as Che had told me, who was perhaps trying to reassure me, "a necessary evil of the transition period". But how far would it go, and how long will it last?

The other branch in which ICAP worked was to deal with progressive government guests visiting the island and to prepare the programmes of the various tours; a form of direct propaganda. A guest offered round-trip airfare, stay in luxury hotels, travel within the country, interviews with executives. In short, who was treated with such thoughtfulness could not afford unpleasant opinions about the Cuban government, if only out of courtesy.

In 1961, the Empresa de Turismo Internacional was created, dependent on INIT¹⁸⁸, but the real objective was to bring groups of tourists from socialist countries and in exchange for sending Cubans to the East; the only work of counter-intelligence was to study the requests in detail to ensure that no one would seek political asylum at the stops that the planes had to make in the capitalist countries.

During the 1965 restructuring, it was decided to create a better organized Tourism Office so that it could perform real counter-intelligence functions. Conversations were held with the Italian and French Communist parties to set up trips to Cuba as political trips. The Italtourist (Italian PC tourism agency) and the LVJ (leisure and youth holidays) for the French PC, started the business because the prices were very attractive. These two agencies have become partners of the Cuban tourism company. We were hoping that other companies would follow.

The initial idea was to make tourism first political before continuing in a more commercial way and thus obtain a new source of foreign exchange. From 1965 to 1967, the Tourism Office took its first steps, but its activity was limited to recruiting staff whose main task was to monitor tourists to prevent them from having any contact with the people. All programmes were prepared in advance and the excursions permanently occupied the foreign tourists who were accommodated in the Jibacoa campsite 75 kilometres from Havana; for excursions inland, entire hotels were requisitioned whose staff had been screened according to their political opinions, or recruited to provide the necessary information.

In January 1967, two KGB advisors arrived at Intourist¹⁸⁹ under the cover of tourism experts. They were to manage the Cuban international tourism company. On the other hand, four other advisors became the assistant directors of the Tourism Office of the "G" Division of State Security. The objective of this specialist mission was to set up Operation Jupiter to monitor and control tourism in Cuba.

The first step taken by the mission was to submit the architectural plans of the Riviera, Havana-Libre (former Hilton), National and Capri hotels to a group of Soviet specialists who were to install the electronic surveillance systems. All the staff working in these tourism centres were screened and only those who were perfectly integrated into the revolution and more likely to be recruited as informants were allowed to pass. To supplement the expulsions, trusted persons were introduced to the various posts. Each of these hotels had to have an officer from the Tourism Office. The latter was responsible for organizing a counter-intelligence section with the help of informants who formed a real cell inside the hotel. He was also responsible for making final decisions. The directors appointed by INIT (National Institute of the Tourism Industry, a kind of Ministry of Tourism) only dealt with administrative matters. In each of these hotels, several floors were prepared to accommodate tourists and keep them as separate as possible from the Cubans. Each of these floors had to have specially equipped rooms with microphones and closed-circuit television cameras; infrared lights and one-way transparent partitions (made of fibreglass) were also provided.

These "special" chambers were generally reserved for journalists but also for specific cases. It should be noted that every time a foreigner leaves the hotel, all his luggage is systematically searched and if, by chance, the slightest notes, letters or travel diaries are found, everything is immediately photographed and translated. If the various departments notice something abnormal, the films of the devices are veiled or replaced by films of the same brand veiled. To destroy the recordings of tape recorders, simple electromagnets are used (it is sufficient to pass people in front of these devices, at the airport for example).

To get an idea of the importance of this counter-intelligence work, it is enough to know that in the former Havana-Hilton, now Havana-Libre, there are 10 "prepared" floors for foreigners, which

represents about 200 rooms likely to allow espionage. At Hotel Riviera, there are 3 floors with 50 rooms, at Capri 6 floors with 85 rooms and at National 3 floors with 61 rooms.

These systems also exist at the Deauville Hotel, exclusively for foreigners from Western countries. It can be considered an important centre for counter-intelligence services, equipped with the most modern electronic espionage techniques; the top floor of this hotel is occupied by a technical surveillance unit. Other hotels, such as the Rosita Hornedo with a capacity of 512 rooms and 35 suites, were used to house technicians from socialist countries. Château Miramar, a 300-room luxury hotel, has also been placed under the control of the secret services.

A dozen other hotels in Havana, less luxurious and smaller, but which could be used for tourists, are also under the control of officers from the "G" Division Tourism Office, with the difference that only one agent is in charge of several hotels at the same time, that staff purges have been slower and that the surveillance does not use technical means. Other hotels and motels in tourist centres in the interior of the country have also been purged of staff and informant cells have been organized. Here too, technical means are not used, because they require specialized personnel and work that is too expensive for their installation and camouflage.

All staff who would be in direct contact with tourists had to work with Security. As a result, future informants had to take small basic training courses to learn how to obtain information and monitor movements. These staff had to inform their treating officer. It has sometimes happened, in a period of high traffic, that there are up to 20 treating officers in a tourist centre (for example in Varadero).

No travel, excursions or visits are made without prior authorization from the G-2, which is requested months in advance. The place to be visited is systematically and carefully examined and whether it meets the minimum necessary conditions; if it is decided that the

visit is possible, uncooperative staff are dismissed for a few days, and a welcoming committee composed of members of the administration and party members is prepared. All those who came to Cuba as tourists and had the opportunity to visit the island could only see what was shown to them, they are far from knowing the Cuban reality.

From 1976 onwards, tourism from Canada increased without causing too many problems. The majority of these Canadians were housed in the beach area, in areas closed to the public, known in the jargon of spying as "aseptic zones": Jibacoa Beach, Playa Megano and some tourist centres in Varadero. These tourists disembarked at Havana's José Martí International Airport and were taken directly to the place of their stay; they usually left a week later, always directly to the airport, without having had any contact with the island's population. Strange conception of tourism!

The flow of tourists in 1978 can be estimated at around 60,000 people (their number has since declined). To carry out this counter-intelligence work, 7,000 agents and 31,000 indicators were used through the Tourism Office among Cubans working in this sector and in the programmed visit centres.

By 1969, ICAP had created a new way of doing propaganda and agitation. The Venceremos¹⁹⁰ brigades inaugurated these operations by inviting various groups representing opposition movements in the United States. Its scope was then gradually extended to other continents. In general, we think that these "Venceremos" brigades come to Cuba to help build socialism by cutting sugar cane, but the reality is quite different. The members of these brigades stay in Cuba for three or four weeks, but if they stay one afternoon in a sugar cane plantation to take some pictures, most of their stay takes place in special camps where they are indoctrinated.

The Cuban authorities do not interfere in the internal discipline of these camps in which drugs circulate freely, as a matter of course. One of the American leaders of a brigade was nicknamed "Mari-

juana Kid" or "el hombre de la hierba dulce"¹⁹¹. He died in September 1969 of a morphine overdose during a trip to the interior of the island. The government gave another version of his death by saying that he had drowned in a swimming pool. The drugs are supplied directly by the Cuban authorities, who are well aware that the majority of its American guests are drug addicts and that a state of sudden withdrawal can cause serious problems.

In 1978, Fidel Castro found himself threatened with economic asphyxiation and his efforts to try to balance the balance of payments of foreign trade proved useless, while the gigantic tourist potential of the one and a half million Cuban exiles, who had always sought permits to visit their families on the island, was untapped. The time was politically favourable for an opening in this direction, which would be considered by the American government as a gesture of goodwill. President Carter had kept a certain discretion about the Cuban affair, and Fidel saw it as a breach to take the first steps towards restoring relations between the two countries. In this complex political context, the Cuban leader believed that this starting point could be a beginning of rapprochement with those he modestly called "the Cuban community abroad" after insulting them for nearly twenty years. After a thousand intrigues and lies, the conversations began with a group of community representatives who had been chosen from among the exiles.

The Cuban interlocutors who came to Cuba to discuss with Fidel were not doves and they imposed their conditions at the negotiating table; the political prisoners had to be released first, tourism would start afterwards. An agreement was more or less reached and Fidel was forced to promise the gradual release of these prisoners, and the possibility for former prisoners already released to leave the country. In truth, the latter provision was a double-edged sword. During the revolutionary period, about 60,000 people were tried for "activities against state power"¹⁹²; if they were all allowed to leave with their relatives, the number of candidates for exile would exceed

250,000 (out of a total of only 9 million inhabitants). In an attempt to make this situation, which looked like a failure, a Phyrus victory, the Cuban government declared that any former prisoner who had a visa for any country could leave with his direct family and that the problem depended on the countries that had diplomatic representation in Havana. This declaration was a challenge to the solidarity of the American continent; nothing like it had ever been seen in the history of America; almost a million Cubans live in the United States and, of course, all embassies were attacked by people seeking residence visas, which created great tensions. The mere idea of having a real chance to leave the country after so many years rekindled the hopes of thousands of families separated by the revolution, but everything seemed to indicate that these events would end in tragedy.

The political prisoners who were trapped in the country were gradually released, pending the decision of the American government to grant them asylum. Tension was rising inside the country. At the same time, the tide of "tourists" formed by Cuban exiles returning to the island was increasing every day. The government exploited them in an inhumane way, making them pay a golden price for the trip and forcing them to pay for a stay (including meals) in hotels, knowing full well that they would go with their families. More than 80% came to see close residents in Havana. However, they were disembarked in Santiago de Cuba, which forced them to pay for their taxi fare to the capital, 970 kilometres away! To take better advantage of the situation, special shops were opened where Cuban tourists could pay directly in dollars; this had nothing to do with special shops for international tourism; there, household appliances, food, tableware, in short, everything that was still badly needed in Cuba and that Cubans abroad were happy to be able to offer to their families, but the prices were 10 to 30 times higher than those on the international market. An old technology (tube) black and white television set that the Soviets sell in Cuba, because no one

wants it anymore in the USSR, cost about \$3,500 in these stores, one can imagine the rest.

The Cubans who came to the island not only left millions of dollars, but each one deposited a grain of sand in their minds; grains that, little by little, sprouted and gave "bad thoughts", ideas of freedom.

Despite the significant increase in the number of staff in the Tourism Office, which has just reached a considerable number of 16,000 people, the seeds sown in the population have awakened political instability. People who had finally gotten used to the deprivations are getting more and more nervous. In Hungary, Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, Russian tanks crushed popular rebellions. Cuba is too far away for this to happen again, but the conditions, both objective and subjective, are in place for such a rebellion to break out at some point in the Caribbean island...

The current head of the Tourism Office is Commander Andrés Penalver ("el Cojo"¹⁹³), this agent has taken a five-year course at KGB headquarters to "train" in this specialty.

The Press Office

The Press Office also functions as a dependency of the Counter-Intelligence Division "G". Its mission consists in monitoring the national press but above all in spying on international press correspondents accredited in the country, as well as journalists who come on fact-finding missions. It has 700 specialised agents, a small number of whom work abroad in embassies as press officers or as correspondents of the Cuban agency "Prensa Latina".

Although the national press is mainly placed under the supervision of the KGB's Disinformation and Agitation Division, through the Revolutionary Orientation Department, the Press Office has a parallel role in the field of counter-intelligence, which is done with the staff of this sector. But in reality, its most important efforts are directed at the foreign press. The starting point for these operations

is abroad, where Cuban embassy press officers compile all the publications of the country to which they have been sent and identify everything that is written about Cuba. Then, they send several copies of these publications. On the other hand, they are obliged to send periodically a report on each of the journalists in the print and television media, as well as recordings of the most politically interesting programmes.

Another task of the Press Office is to collect all possible information on journalists in contact with the correspondents of the Prensa Latina agency; they, protected by their diplomatic status, work as dealing officers with journalists or informants who have been recruited by the Cuban secret services.

At the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is a Foreign Press Department, which, under the coverage of a diplomatic service, functions as a counter-intelligence sub-office. All members of this department are officers of the "G" Division Press Office. Its activities are divided into different areas of interest, and its specialists deal with large defined regions or countries. The archives are common to all zone heads, but the information is grouped by country. More than 90% of the world's published print media is recorded in these archives in microfilm form. Thus, it is possible to obtain any article published after 1965 (previously, this service did not exist). This archive department consists of 25 specialists to index, sort and archive information; for this purpose they studied to become archivists at the University of Havana, then followed a special six-month course at the KGB.

A group of analysts composed of more than 100 specialists read the content of all the written press sent to the department. This work is also grouped by country with one or more specialists for each, but there is sometimes only one or more agents who deal with a single press organization; *Le Monde* and *L'Express* for France and *Newsweek* for the United States each have three specialists. Each foreign journalist is well known and has his or her file updated with

each new article he or she publishes; his or her political position is analysed every six months. This information is microfilmed, at the same time a copy of the summaries of the periodic analysis is sent to the Press Office of the "G" Division and another to the Intelligence Services; finally, a final copy, in triplicate, is sent to the party's political office.

There is a Study Commission which, after careful study of the information provided, determines whether or not foreign journalists may be granted entry visas upon request. This commission is composed of 25 agents distributed by zones. It is this working group that really determines whether a journalist, a radio or television crew can enter the country. His judgment is not final, but, in general, no official takes the risk of not following his advice, with rare exceptions. Sometimes we know that a foreign journalist will make a report that will give a negative image for external propaganda, but if it is possible to have certain information thanks to him, we take the risk of letting him come. World journalism stars coming to Cuba are subject to a lengthy analysis, especially if an interview with Castro is scheduled. Castro himself, before each interview, has long working sessions with the specialists in the Press Office to be well informed. All managers who have to meet foreign journalists do the same thing.

The tip of the iceberg is represented by the press officers who operate with diplomatic status at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters. With the title of first embassy secretary, the head of the press is a simple coordinating agent. The Director of Information, as senior as the ambassador, only deals in theory with cultural issues, but in fact he does not know them. The group of officers who work in this way under the coverage of official functions varies between 20 and 25.

The Head of the Press Department has a 20-person programming section under his responsibility, but he makes no real decisions and chooses no strategy; he is part of the camouflage of the "G"

Division section and, although he is a G-2 officer, as well as the coordinators, his function is purely bureaucratic.

When it has been decided that a journalist will be allowed to come to Cuba, he is obliged to complete a questionnaire asking him about the places and people he wants to see. Based on his answers, the Coordination section lists the journalist's various wishes and develops the programme of visits, even making hotel reservations if travel is planned in the interior of the country....

In fact, the Chief Information Officer, despite his status as an ambassador and the impression he gives of being in charge of the Ministry's press services, directs almost nothing. Almost always, the real management is based on an agent whose level is lower on the surface. Most often it is a simple press officer because, in the event of travel abroad, he enjoys diplomatic immunity without occupying a high-profile position.

When a foreign journalist arrives in Cuba, the press officer who will take care of him or her knows his or her political colour and that of the media organization he or she represents perfectly, as well as a good deal of biographical information and sometimes confidential information that embassy press officers have been able to gather thanks to their informants infiltrated into this environment. It is from this moment that the hunt really begins. Representatives of the foreign press are accommodated in hotels reserved for tourism and more particularly in rooms equipped with the systems we know.

Throughout their stay in Cuba, all journalists will be subject to continuous monitoring. He will never move in complete freedom. In the evening, after official work, or on "free" days, when he wants to go out alone, in search of information or for his own pleasure, without the press officer accompanying him, he will be followed by about ten agents in charge of following him in all his movements. The latter are informed of his outings by the core group of informants from the Tourism Office who work in the hotel: elevator boys or storey boys, receptionists. Barely has he stepped outside, that he

has behind him 10 agents well trained in this surveillance work, the *caminadores*¹⁹⁴ as they say in spy language. If he still manages to jump on a bus without an agent being able to follow him, the Vehicle Control department is notified and takes over. The same applies if he uses a taxi or any other vehicle. With this monitoring, no contact with the population will go unnoticed. Sometimes the socialite comes into play and also manages to get information from the prostitutes under her control.

If the counter-intelligence services become aware of photographic documents, recordings or films that are damaging to the regime, they must do everything possible to destroy it. If a journalist carries something deemed dangerous on him or her, a false attack is organized to neutralize him or her and remove the evidence.

As for the permanent correspondents, who represent the various press agencies present in the Cuban capital, the spying work is even stricter. This monitoring begins the moment the agency makes a request for one of its correspondents to come to Cuba. As this request must be made well in advance, the Press Office has all the time it needs to study the applicant's case and determine whether or not he or she will be accepted. After a study that goes from his political positions and his journalistic work to the smallest details of his private life, he is given or not the residence visa. This is a particularly complex problem because a foreign correspondent is often interested in the same things as enemy secret services. The only difference between the spy and the journalist is the place where the information is received; if it is a news agency, it is a journalist, but if it is an intelligence centre, it is a spy. As a general rule, it is easier to accept proposals from agencies if their correspondent is on the left, as they are often likely to be penetrated.

As soon as they arrive, they have a great psychological advantage. A foreign correspondent's salary in Cuba is significantly higher than what he or she has received so far, even in the richest Western country. The mere fact of being able to buy in the shops reserved for

diplomats, and thus have access to everything that is forbidden to a normal Cuban citizen, makes him, proportionally speaking, a kind of millionaire. His possibilities, as an individual, no longer have anything in common with the reality of Cuban society. He enters the privileged group, now belongs to the country's elite.

Cuba's climate also has a great influence. When you arrive in Havana from a country with a temperate or cold climate, the difference is remarkable: there is a tropical climate, with an average of 25° all year round, and the country is of surprising beauty to foreigners; it is no coincidence that Christopher Columbus described it as "the most beautiful land that human eyes have ever seen". It is therefore understandable that our journalist is immediately seduced. In addition, a car will allow him to enjoy all the advantages of the country when there is almost no traffic. Superb in his brand new clothes, which contrast nicely with the worn out and poor quality clothes worn by the people, everything contributes to making him a true lord.

The house assigned to him is far from the apartments he has had so far. It is no less than a former Cuban millionaire's residence abroad. He doesn't know that this superb residence is full of microphones but, if he suspects it, he usually prefers to pretend to ignore it. For a few dollars, he can afford one or two servants. In exchange for items purchased in the reserved stores, which they then sell on the black market, they will actually earn their 150 or 200 monthly pesos (skilled worker's salary), not to mention small gifts, food, etc. They even save between 400 and 500 pesos a month, if their boss is not stingy. Needless to say, these servants are G-2 informants who allow them to engage in these small traffics in exchange for information. If our journalist suspects or discovers the truth, he usually says nothing; the considerable material advantages he enjoys neutralize him.

The Behavior Police also plays an important role by offering her an "à la carte menu", another way to control her, I already mentioned

this at the beginning of this chapter. If he is nevertheless short of money, the State gives him credit knowing full well that he will not be able to pay his debts; he is often put in contact with Security agents who pretend to be black market dealers (which has taken on enormous proportions in the country). For example, by buying for \$50 in stores reserved for foreigners, you can get up to 1,000 pesos by selling these products to privileged Cubans. It should be noted that the average salary in Cuba is 110 pesos per month. With such benefits, all dreams can come true.

Perhaps our journalist came to Cuba full of good intentions, with a very keen sense of the duties of his profession, but caught up in this whirlwind of luxury and easy living, if he learns information whose dissemination promises to be unpleasant to the government and risks causing his expulsion, he will hesitate a long time before deciding. The human being always tries to preserve the material benefits acquired.

The head of the Press Office is Lieutenant Colonel Xavier Oliveira, who was previously the head of the Secret Service Training Section and Manuel Piñeiro's deputy. In this office, there are 4 permanent advisers in addition to some correspondents of the Tass agency who work closely with the office for the exchange of information and work in coordination with the KGB.

The Diplomatic Office

Diplomats do not escape the secret services, both intelligence and counter-intelligence, which carry out systematic penetration and surveillance using all the means at their disposal. All operations mounted against foreign technicians staying in the country are also under the responsibility of this office. From the most vile blackmail to the most refined techniques in the "K" sector, from simple surveillance and neutralisation to espionage and recruitment, everything is done to succeed. The victims of this permanent war, which leaves no respite, are neither dead nor wounded, and the confidential infor-

mation obtained is a great victory. When the work of a diplomat is neutralized, as was the case with a Mexican consul expelled from the country for espionage in 1969, propaganda turns the case into an international problem, and the government makes all the noise it can about a case whose real importance is much less than it is said.

The diplomats who are assigned to Havana are under much greater pressure than in other socialist countries. They must also endure the hostile attitude of the Cubans (officially but also unofficially), who have been instilled with mistrust of everything that comes from abroad, and all contacts are closely monitored.

The diplomatic colony, aware of these problems, was withdrawn into itself. His relationships are in a closed circuit. Constantly subjected to attempts at penetration, she tries to defend herself by her isolation, but on a practical level it is very difficult. Man is a social being and needs relationships with others. Even if Cubans are prevented from entering diplomatic spheres by any means, it is impossible to prevent contacts with the large number of foreign technicians. This is their Achilles' heel. Many of these technicians go to Cuba to fulfill the collaboration contracts that their employers have signed with the Cuban government, and they do not identify with communism; others, on the contrary, come after having signed a contract directly with the Cuban government because they sympathize with the revolution. Many of them are active in their country's CP, which makes it easier to recruit them. To sign a contract with a foreign technician on behalf of the government, the Cuban embassy must give his visa after having inquired about the person's political orientations. Sometimes these technicians are agents recruited by the secret services. They come to Cuba to try to penetrate diplomatic circles.

The approximation and penetration operations are carried out 95% by foreign technicians residing in the country or by agents of the Behavior Police. If some of them are distrusted and avoided, others achieve results and provide large amounts of information, both

in the diplomatic community and in that of other technicians who have nothing to do with these intrigues.

Although diplomatic staff sent to Havana are only accepted after very long delays, there are cases of officials being recruited by moral blackmail or other kinds of pressure. Whenever such a thing happens, informants are used both by the counter-intelligence division "G" and by the secret services through the diplomatic office. Once their stay in Cuba was over, the case went to the secret services, which continued to use the vein for operations of more direct interest to them.

Whoever falls into the trap can no longer escape. If the first works proposed to him are purely routine and involve only minor matters, soon, once compromised, the real hell begins for him. Anyone who does not have the courage to confess everything to his embassy will spend the rest of his life in the clutches of Cuban security.

Some of the espionage work against the diplomatic corps and foreign technicians is done almost openly. In 1966, the Diplomatic Corps Service Company was created to appoint all Cuban staff of embassies and foreign agencies with representations in Cuba. Only those who agreed to collaborate with the G-2 continued their work, the others were removed to allow in new staff who could be trusted. They are all, without exception, either informants or active agents in special cases.

The Diplomatic Corps Service Company is actually a subsection of "G" Division and is headed by the Diplomatic Bureau of Counter-Intelligence. All management personnel are active officers, and although their duties are civilian, there is military discipline; all personnel must be available 24 hours a day, and positions of responsibility are distributed according to military ranks. At the top is placed a commander who occupies the position of director, then a captain that of deputy director, and finally officers are in charge of the different departments and sections. 60% of the staff are active officers and the remaining 40% are informants.

This system has prevented embassies from choosing their own staff. Until its creation, embassies asked, before giving a job, for the recommendation of a priest who certified that the candidate was a believer, a practitioner, that he had nothing to do with the communists and, in addition, a letter of recommendation from a personality known to the ambassador or an official of the diplomatic representation.

The staff working in Cuba are subject to a number of enormous pressures that force them to live constantly on the alert. Unlike foreign press correspondents and technicians who accept or ignore these things, chancelleries fight daily against counter-intelligence services because they are under constant siege. I believe that Havana is the most difficult place in the world for the diplomatic corps.

I myself have been an agent of the Tourism Office, the Press Office and the Diplomatic Office and "I know the monster for having lived in his entrails". I was deputy director of a tourist complex in Escambray, press chief for Western Europe at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and I was well acquainted with the diplomatic circles in Havana.

If anyone can do a better radiography than mine of these specialized Cuban espionage bodies, I give him the floor.

CHAPTER XII

SECRET SERVICES (DGI¹⁹⁵)

The secret services have the same information partitioning systems and ways of operating as the counter-intelligence services. Their head office is located in a 12-storey building at the crossroads of Línea and A streets, in the Vedado district. They also own another 6-storey building in the Miramar district (where many embassies are located) in the former hotel "Château Miramar". They also have about a hundred houses and apartments that are either offices or places of contact between agents.

They operate through the Diplomatic Assistance Office, the "15" Office, the Technical Assistance Office, the training camps and the Special Works Office.

In proportion, no country in the world has such huge secret services as Cuba, nor does it spend such large sums of money to maintain them. For example, if the United States had corresponding services, in relation to its population and national budget, the CIA would have 70 times more staff and its budget would have to be increased about 120 times! Proportionally, the Cuban secret services have as many agents as the CIA and the FBI combined.

This reality of the Cuban situation is difficult to imagine, but, as unlikely as it may seem, and even if I appear to be a mythomaniac, I would like to expose it as it is and as I have experienced it, trying not to forget any details and highlighting everything that can help readers discover Cuban communism, based on a repressive apparatus and spy services trained, supervised and supervised by the KGB.

Since the foundation of the secret services, Commander Piñero has been in charge of them, and if in 1974 he was appointed head of the American department of the CCP Central Committee, this does not mean that he has lost the direction of the secret services. This

was only a new tactic to allow Piñero to deal with certain espionage cases under political cover. When he has interviews with certain personalities who come to Cuba, he does so as a politician, but his real motivations are in the hands of espionage. All his deputies followed him to the offices of the Central Committee. A few days ago, I was able to see, in a French television news programme, which had reported on Martinique, a Cuban who claimed to belong to his country's Communist Party and to be in charge of the "Solidarity" department. Actually, he was there under a false identity. His real name is Bernardo Cañizares (nicknamed King Kong), he was one of the agents who specialized in the KGB to operate in the Caribbean region. Now he works behind a political facade, sheltered from an official CC department under Piñero, known as "Barba Roja".

I could cite examples of this kind over and over again. Cuban foreign policy is at the service of communist espionage. Never in the history of mankind has there been a spy device as monstrous as the one created by Stalinism. The socialist countries conceive their trade and diplomatic relations with the West in a completely original way. The fantasy of aggressive imperialism hiding a spy behind every official is the dominant concept, and to respond to this threat, the Cold War organization is always kept alive. Communism has not evolved in its conceptions, it still reasoned as it did during the first years of the October Revolution. The idea of the besieged communist fortress is the constant that dictates their foreign policy to the socialist countries and remains the basis of all their relations.

To be able to preserve and maintain this formidable apparatus, Cuba spends fabulous sums of money from an already reduced national budget, a large part of which is in hard currency. It also requires that the country maintain a huge unproductive workforce.

The "15" Office

The "15" Office is the smallest department of the Cuban secret service; its staff has never exceeded 25 members, and among them

there are more than 10 agents who advise and coordinate its activities with the various socialist countries. The main part of its mission is the physical elimination of the enemies of the revolution abroad, or that of personalities dangerous to the socialist camp in general. This "maffia" of crime, which, at the international level, is formed by all the services of the communist countries, works in the strictest respect for secrecy and is at the top of the power pyramid. The head of this office is the Minister of the Interior himself. He is accountable for his work directly to the Head of Government. In general, the Chairman of the Security Committee at the level of the Political Bureau is the Minister of the Interior, but in Cuba, Raúl Castro, already Minister of the Armed Forces, First Deputy Prime Minister, Second Secretary of the Party and Vice-President of the State Council, is in charge of this function; above him is Fidel, who holds all the leadership positions. As we can see, nepotism is not absent. As if that were not enough, Fidel is also Minister of Culture and, since the beginning of the revolution, Commander-in-Chief of the army. Raúl's wife, Vilma Espín, president of the FMC (Federation of Cuban Women), heads the Ministry of Food to replace the incumbent minister, Pepín Naranjo, Fidel's private secretary. The Cuban Head of State also controls and directs agriculture, as if Cuba were his private "latifundio"¹⁹⁶.

For all these reasons, Cuba can be considered as the most typical example of socialist "democracies" where nepotism surpasses the best tradition of the empires of antiquity.

Fidel and Raúl, the megalomaniac and pederast, the most powerful men in the country, do not delegate their power to anyone with regard to the "revenge" of the State represented by the "15" Office.

Its beginnings date back to 1959, when the first agents were sent outside to eliminate certain elements dangerous to the evolution of the revolution. When I was at DIER, I requested the services of this group, which at the time was called the 5th Bureau, to repatriate certain war criminals from Batista, exiled in several countries of

America, which earned me a summons in Raúl Castro's office at the General Staff of the rebel army, to inform me that this group was used to physically eliminate the dangerous enemies of the revolution and that it could not waste its time to remove former criminals; a circular was issued prohibiting the disclosure of any information about this service from that date. He even disappeared from the DIER organization chart.

Due to the lack of sufficiently advanced techniques, from 1959 to 1965, the elimination of the enemies of the revolution was carried out in a rudimentary manner; the methods used ranged from attacks with short weapons, machine gun fire, to bombs, etc.

The wave of attacks on the counterrevolution in Miami, Puerto Rico, Venezuela and other countries was historically justified by the rivalries between the various exiles' organizations that massacred each other for reasons of hegemony. It is true that the counter-revolution in exile did not succeed in reaching agreement and that sometimes some of its leaders had exploited the good faith of the Cuban colony to enrich themselves. In the first years after the revolution, the general atmosphere had been conducive to settling scores. At that time, there were pro-castro groups in the United States, which indirectly helped to maintain these internal struggles. Several factions had formed, the former Batista soldiers and personalities of the former regime, the former revolutionaries who abandoned Cuba because of the communist evolution adopted by the country and Fidel Castro's supporters. These were, in broad terms, the main divisions that existed.

The streets of Miami and other emigration centres were the scene of these factional battles, but they were, without knowing it, the screen behind which the men of the 5th Bureau were hiding. After the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, the situation changed. Fidel Castro had announced the socialist nature of the revolution and opinions had evolved.

The acts of revenge of the men of the 5th Bureau continued in the same way, although more moderate. They were tried to hide them by revealing motives such as theft or accident, anything that could confuse the runways and rule out suspicions.

In January 1964, 15 G-2 officers were selected and told that they would take a course in the USSR to become submarine captains. These men were unaware until their arrival in Moscow that, in fact, they had come to specialize in political attacks against people; 23 other agents who had worked for the 5th Office since its foundation were also part of this fourteen-month course. During the training in Moscow, all activities of the Office on the Cuban side were suspended.

It was no longer a question of killing an individual X... with a pistol shot or having him hit by a car. Nowadays, modern science has passed to the service of espionage, and today there is nothing easier than to kill a man without leaving a trace.

At the end of the training, several tests were carried out to see if the Cuban personnel were ready. Pedro Dueñas (Chamaco) was one of those who, from the end of the course, operated, a kind of exit examination, against several dissidents from the socialist countries who had taken refuge in the West.

I had known Lieutenant Dueñas since 1959; he had been one of the founders of DIER, then G-2 and came from the Socialist Youth (former PSP organisation). When he was recruited in January 1964 to take a submarine captain's course, or supposedly so, he told me with great joy and in great secrecy. A year and a half later, when I saw him again, he told me about the odyssey he had just gone through. For almost a year and a half, they had been trained in the techniques of political assassination; of course, a pistol with silencer and poisoned bullets is not to be neglected, but it is considered an archaic and outdated instrument. According to Dueñas, they had spent about four months studying the attacks that could be carried out on cars, from the classic plastic charges connected to the contact

to the most subtle means of damaging the steering or brake systems; they had even been taught the maneuvers that could be carried out to cause a car accident.

The pens that threw poisoned needles were among the subjects covered, but this kind of almost perfect political attack could be discovered. There were pens prepared with an inert gas capsule that throws cyanide crystals at a distance of about 70 cm; the victim dies instantly, apparently from a myocardial infarction, and if the forensic scientist performing the autopsy does not conduct a microscopic study of the tissues of the corpse's face to discover the crystals, he can conclude to natural death. It was advisable to take a high dose of antihistamines, already prepared, before starting the cyanide, and when throwing the gas, to do so from behind, with the arm extended, avoiding breathing. Then you had to take another dose of antihistamines and get rid of the pen in the first sewer.

From the group of 5 Cubans specialized in this method, they were chosen and sent to Western Europe for their baptism of fire. Pedro Dueñas was one of them. He did not tell me which country he had been sent to, but he confessed to me that he had carried out two attacks in Europe, one against a Czech dissident and the other against a West German agent of Ukrainian origin who had been working for the Germans since the end of the Second World War.

The last time I met him was at the psychiatric clinic of the Ministry of the Interior. Visits were strictly prohibited in this facility, where only the patient's relatives are admitted; but in February of that year, I met his brother who was a military doctor at the Ministry of the Interior and when I asked him about his brother, he told me that he had been in this psychiatric clinic for three years, that there was no hope, and that his case was desperate. His obsession made him think he was braver than Billy the Kid because he had killed 26 people. I remember this scene with apprehension. I never imagined that a spy service could turn a man into a killing machine. I was a soldier on the front line and I killed to continue to live, I was

part of the specialized groups against the guerrillas, I was surrounded by a guerrilla group. The law of war is cruel, his own life depends on the death of the enemy, but executioner to kill in cold blood men we have never seen before, that's something else!

In September 1978, Hector Dueñas, Chamaco's brother, died in an ambush in Angola, in the Cabinda region; this is a high price that this family paid for the establishment of socialism in Cuba.

It was in 1965 that the "15" Office was organized. Its missions have become international, because there are exchanges of good practices between the various secret services of the socialist camp. It is possible that a Czech or Bulgarian "thorn"¹⁹⁷ could be eliminated by the Cuban secret services and a Cuban "thorn" could be eliminated by a German agent. This system allows the person performing the mission to save time and get out of the country faster. When Interpol is faced with a political assassination, the first suspicions fall on agents of the same nationality as the victim. This false trail has the merit of completely diverting research; when we realize it, days, months and even years have passed.

It is rare that those who carry out these political killings are arrested, the only way to take them would be to close the borders for an unlimited period of time, but if the officer is informed of any anomaly at border crossings, ports or airports, he goes into complete hiding until things calm down. There is no Western democracy that can close its borders to 100% as long as the manhunt lasts and it can last for a long time. In general, the agent carrying out these missions is in possession of several passports, one in his name and others with false identities, of different nationalities, which correspond to real people; the only thing we do is change the photo. They are obtained for between \$1,000 and \$1,500, depending on the country and the source of supply; it is the liaison officers who buy them in the crime scene by posing as smugglers or drug traffickers. Passports lost by tourists during their travels continue to be used in the world of espionage.

There are specialized markets, where you can choose the approximate height and weight, as well as the age and colour of your eyes and hair. In these specialized markets, passports are paid for very expensively. The main sales centres in the world are Rotterdam, Milan, Zurich, and London, but they can be found in other major European or American cities. This lucrative business seems to be placed in the hands of a well-organized group, because so far there has been no serious scandal.

Weapons are also the subject of a separate market. Indeed, special methods cannot always be used, it is necessary to be able to use pistols or high-precision rifles with telescopic sights. When a professional needs one of these particular items, he will not look for them in an armoury but in the parallel market of the criminal world. When it comes to short weapons, things are easier, you can choose from the existing stock, but if he needs high-precision rifles each specialist always has what he is looking for. Depending on the distance at which the shot is expected to be fired, one chooses one's weapon very carefully, because the length of the barrel, the striations inside the barrel, the weight of the rifle, the shape of the breech, the barrel, everything counts. The telescopic viewfinder is also an essential element, mainly lenses with magnifications of 14 to 18 times are used; when the supplier delivers the equipment, it is perfectly coupled and all mathematical calculations have been made so that the shot is made by direct fire¹⁹⁸. Projectiles are also special, from the powder to the shape of the bullet.

These special orders usually take a week. They can be made from anywhere in Europe. These weapons are manufactured in Belgium, but the manufacturer never knows the buyer; they agree through an intermediary to whom the applicant gives all the technical characteristics of the weapon. These works are real works of art that have to be paid a very high price. The price sometimes exceeds \$10,000 if the work is very complex.

In socialist countries, the services that are intended for political assassination work with the well-organized ally of the mob; each agent who carries out these missions always does so alone and keeps only the necessary contacts. In the language of spies, they are called "samurai". Operations can be organized in two ways: a samurai can travel to a particular country to carry out a particular mission, or a resident of the country can be assigned to do so because there are agents of the "15" Office, or his counterparts in other communist countries, who live abroad with coverage of political exiles or false identity papers.

In Cuba, the "15" Office is part of the secret service but, in reality, it is an autonomous body. When the physical elimination of a "thorn" is decided, the service specialist who is in charge of the case has an interview with the samurai who will do the work. To facilitate his task, he gives him as much information as possible: address, work, family, habits of the future victim. These are the only working relationships that exist between the department's management and the killer. Sometimes these contacts are made externally, and when the samurai belongs to a foreign service, the information is passed on to the management of the service of the agent's country, which does the rest.

I don't think the "15" Office has a fixed location or a central management. He must operate in several contact houses for interviews that provide him with information. The only place he uses permanently is a New Vedado¹⁹⁹ residence located near the large building that serves as the home of Raúl Castro and his escort. This is where the KGB advisers who are its instructors are located. Sometimes, when a member of the secret service has to go to a foreign country for a mission and it is the first time he has been there, he is prepared in that house by showing him films on the places he has to go to, by memorizing the maps of the cities where he will have to operate, the bus routes and the metro lines. This training centre is codenamed "Saturn". The instructors who ensure this preparation

can be Cuban or Soviet. Sometimes an agent is trained by first using a capital of a socialist country as a first objective. He will go there to follow a cycle of coordination and verification of what he has learned, the real training for a real mission will only begin afterwards.

Major dissidents, or defectors from the secret services of communist countries, can all be subjected to personal attacks at any time. Political dissidents sometimes become famous, and reprisals are used against the family left on the other side, but for secret service defectors, there is no leniency, everyone knows the rules, if one passes through the enemy camp, a file is automatically opened. Now a sword of Damocles is hanging over your head. A samurai can appear at any time.

A choice then has to be made: either you become an illegal immigrant with the help of the Western secret services, or you wait until hour H with calm, trusting your individual abilities to defend yourself. I wait quietly and without worry, but always alert. It is good for the "15" Office to remember that I am an expert in karate, that I followed extensive training in North Korea and that I am a sniper, both with a gun and a pistol. These characteristics put me on an equal footing with any samurai.

The "Special Works" office

This office is responsible for almost all espionage work that is more or less related to "moles" and staff recruited from other countries. Unlike the xenophobia that prevails in Cuba, at all levels, towards all foreigners, to the point of having become a real nightmare, it is better to say a collective hysteria, it is in the world of foreigners that the greatest number of "moles" working in Western societies are recruited. This office has about 1,500 staff, of whom only 300 are involved in liaison missions abroad, the rest are specialists or administrative staff. The budget at his disposal is unlimited, luxury hotels and restaurants all over the world are part of the fixed itinerar-

ies of the men in the "Special Works" office. This tactic of spending huge amounts of money on representation is part of a strategy to positively impress the foreign agents who work with them.

The belief that spies in the service of a socialist country do this work out of conviction and no longer evolve politically after recruitment is widespread. But this concept is false, a spy placed at a strategic point costs a fortune. If it is only a matter of a matter of little importance, it is possible to use blackmail, but if there is the possibility of placing someone at a strategic level, not only is it well paid, but it helps them to maintain a high standard of living if the work requires it. All these transactions are guaranteed by Swiss banking secrecy. There are spies who are collecting real fortunes deposited in this country. Information is almost never paid in cash or with money from the country where the spy lives; in general, he is given a certificate of bank transfer to his private account in Geneva or Zurich; sometimes he is paid a portion in dollars, with bills that are not serial and with different numbers.

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Until 1978, this office controlled a very large number of spies. Some did not realize the seriousness of their actions and gave some kind of information simply thinking that they were helping Cuba, but most of them are conscious spies and responsible for their actions. Of these agents, about ten are considered to be high-level "moles". In 1978, the total cost of these operations was \$35 million, including travel, stays, bonuses.... These sums appear in the 80-page report of the Central Committee's Security Committee, but it was only possible for me to recover a few pieces of the IBM cassette tapes to reconstruct the few pieces of information I have provided here. It was also with great difficulty and danger, as they were collected where all the documents were burned.

The office is located in the central building of the secret service of the "Special Works" of Línea and A. It also has offices at Château

Miramar and some 40 contact houses that are constantly changing. Its technical resources are great, its potential can be measured by knowing that it is allocated 518 cars. Some ministries have half as few at their disposal throughout the national territory. Havana is the main contact centre for this office and all recruitment, with a few exceptions, takes place in the Cuban capital. Each recruited staff member has a personal identification that must be presented to each external contact. It consists in showing a banknote of a Cuban peso cut in half. The individual keeps one half, the other half is placed in the file and must be confronted with the other half at each contact. The reason this system is used is that no contact officer ever has several interviews with a "mole" outside, and contact officers who travel have, thanks to it, a maximum of guarantees.

Each "mole" knows that, to make these contacts, a certain number of maneuvers must be performed; he or she may use a given metro station on a certain day of the month, every three months, every six months or every week, depending on the importance of the work he or she does. If he is not contacted, he must go to a café, then a store planned in advance... always public places and never less than three. Most often he is not contacted on the first day, the agents first do a counter-surveillance to make sure they are not followed, as well as the "mole". In general, these maneuvers last two or three days and contacts only take place afterwards. There is also an oral recognition sign and the half notes are compared afterwards. It is rare for a "mole" to know the agent who will contact her, this avoids the risk of denunciation. It is only during the interview that the date and place of the next appointment are communicated to him, and the information is given orally, nothing must compromise the agent. When there are documents to be transmitted, it is mandatory to use clandestine mailboxes, and agents are prohibited from collecting their contents; for this purpose, the services use other "moles" who, in turn, give the documents to an agent who operates with diplo-

matic coverage; in the event of detection, he enjoys immunity from his duties and runs no risk.

It is fair to mention that the Cuban secret services work with maximum security conditions. Anyone who violates the rules of the game is immediately replaced. A "mole" can talk, but it will be extremely difficult to prove the guilt of the contact agent; there may be a moral conviction and you can be sure that he is spying, but proving it is something else! The only time secret service men are at risk is when they collect written information, but this is done under diplomatic cover, because another embassy official is not far from the meeting place and, if there is a problem, he immediately notifies the ambassador to set up a political case and shout at the failure to respect diplomatic immunity.

The KGB probably does not work with greater security conditions or more rigorous discipline. Fidel Castro can no longer afford any more failures in his already battered foreign policy, the secret service machine must be perfect and function as a clockwork mechanism; however, nothing is perfect and, from time to time, an agent passes to the West. The wear and tear of time makes the incident disappear and a number of agents in the various spy centres of the free world must be changed; many agents working abroad thus lose their official privileges overnight. They cease to be these almighty gentlemen who travel the world with a millionaire lifestyle, they are no longer these feudal lords who dazzle a people in poverty, they no longer benefit from the favours of power, they are "burned". That's the rule of the game.

Secret service agents of a certain level sometimes carry out special missions on behalf of members of the elite: whims of their concubines or legitimate wives, small personal gifts... But we are really sure to have a lot of confidence when Raúl Castro asks you to buy the films recently released in the world. In the 10-storey building that serves as his residence and escort, there are projection rooms where the latest fashionable films are shown, spy films such as The

Jackal, or films in which the Mafia is the main element. We saw and saw *The Godfather* again, but there are also many American westerns lovers, starting with Fidel himself. Only the protégés and dignitaries, the Cuban nomenklatura, have access to these private screening rooms; if someone tells you that they saw a particular film at Raúl's, it is a sign of their power and also of their vanity that they display. I remember that when Pontecorvo Queimada's film was screened, Fidel wanted to analyse the film in detail and the discussion lasted until five thirty in the morning. Those who had attended the screening made it their main topic of conversation for several days. In these cinemas all films can be seen before their release in the country, if they are allowed to be released.

The secret in which the Special Works Office works is so great that in 1977, Captain Mario Cespedes was sent to Europe to accomplish a mysterious mission and in particular to pay in bank transfer and cash for certain information. No one ever saw him again. With all the spare passports he held and the training he had followed to lead an underground life, it is not surprising that he appropriated the \$250,000 he was carrying before he played the girls in the air. This was not the first case, there had already been two other cases. It seems that the trio is still in good health.

The number of KGB agents working in these services as advisers or contact agents exceeds 50. There are also delegations from other counterpart services in Eastern Europe. The head of this office is Colonel Honorato (that is his war name) but he was neither the founder of DIER nor of G-2, which leads me to believe that he is a former member of the PSP sent then to the USSR to specialize in the work of espionage, like many secret service executives.

Diplomatic Assistance Office and Technical Assistance Office

These two offices are like twin brothers, identical in structure and functioning; the only difference is that the former uses diplo-

matic coverage and the latter uses that of trade and technical assistance missions to the Third World.

75% of Cuban diplomats working abroad are secret service agents; only ambassadors and some members of missions are not active agents, but they do information work. An ambassador is chosen according to the importance of the country he is visiting; the most important capitals of the Western world are directly provided by Fidel Castro; it is Raúl Castro who is in charge of designations in communist countries; second-rate capitalist countries depend on Osvaldo Dorticos, and for countries of the unimportant third world, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is sufficient. Areas where there are anti-government guerrilla movements are owned by Fidel in coordination with the secret services.

When an ambassador is appointed in a highly industrialized country such as France or England, he or she can choose to accompany a small group of collaborators. Everyone, including the ambassador, must take a highly technical course on espionage and counter-espionage. Once there, they are required to report any conversations they may have with the country's citizens and to provide the smallest details of their contacts outside the diplomatic headquarters. The ambassador knows that he is only a representative figure and that important decisions are made by the head of mission, a secret service officer, who can be any member of the embassy, the cook, the driver or the porter, who knows.

The internal organization of embassies is governed by military discipline, to such an extent that protection services and keyboardists never leave the diplomatic headquarters; they are only allowed to go shopping in stores at the end of their stay and accompanied. In third world countries, with or without problems, the same thing happens, embassies are real spy centres with diplomatic coverage. Some are even considered to be subsidiary offices of the secret services in small countries.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, relations between administrative staff and security officers are not as marked because it is a much more bureaucratic job, but there is a State Security Office belonging to the "G" Division, such as the Press and the Protocol Office, which work under the orders of the secret services. Almost 95% of the staff working in the ministry are members of the Communist Party or Youth; they must write a monthly report about their personal relationships and friends, and report any irregularities. This may seem incredible to a Westerner, but all socialist countries have the same conception of diplomacy and their organization is a faithful copy of the one practiced by the Soviet Union.

Only the diplomatic representations of the socialist countries, purely "diplomatic", escape from this organisation. Raúl appoints all their members up to the rank of third secretary; the rest of the posts are distributed by the regime's senior officials. There are also exceptions here; in Yugoslavia, Romania and China, there are secret service branches that do not engage in activities against these countries but merely carry out observation missions.

The Technical Assistance Office carries out parallel work at the Ministry of Foreign Trade, with the same missions in the commercial field. Cuban trade missions abroad are governed by the same principles as those of embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as the Chamber of Commerce. Despite the strict control that exists, the number of civil servants who move to the West is greater, because when they change sides, it is because they generally have the possibility of appropriating a large sum in dollars, or when they sign a contract on behalf of the government with foreign firms and keep the 1 or 2% of the total purchase that is often offered; after several negotiations this makes considerable sums.

The other line of work is related to the technical insurance that Cuba provides to certain foreign countries, particularly in the Third World. These assistance missions are almost always composed of technicians (doctors, veterinarians, construction technicians).

Among the members who will compose these delegations, several secret service agents are introduced.

It is impossible to determine the exact number of agents working in these diplomatic or technical assistance offices, as they are constantly changing. This kind of work must include several hundred professional agents.

The staff in charge of these two offices are housed in the central building of Línea and A, in Miramar Castle and at the headquarters of the Ministry of the Interior. Their number exceeds 800 people. The Soviet advisors of the KGB are only present at the management level and their number is reduced to 10 or 12 people who carry out operations in coordination with their counterparts of the KGB and the G-2.

At the head of this office are comrades Amadeo Tristán and Belarmino Noriegas. Their functions are actually quite limited. They only implement the decisions of Fidel or Raúl Castro, because it is the latter who make them all, at least the important decisions. The Diplomatic Assistance Office operates under the code name of "Pegasus", and the Technical Assistance Office under the code name of "Prometheus".

Training Camps ("Crocodile" group)

Cuba had trained and supported some guerrilla movements before the formation of the secret service group, which would later carry out this work. First in Venezuela, then in Nicaragua, Colombia, Bolivia and then in other Latin American countries. The armed struggle was largely helped. In some cases, such as Argentina, guerrilla control was total. The journalist Jorge Enrique Maseti²⁰⁰ (Comandante Segundo) had founded a movement that depended, politically and militarily, on Cuba. In Africa, Cuba maintained close contacts with liberation movements and separatist groups. But until that time, the work was not done centrally, and there was some dispersion.

When in 1965, the political differences between Ernesto Che Guevara and the Castro brothers reached a complete breakdown, the Argentine guerrilla took his decision. He could no longer, or no longer wanted to, stay in Cuba. In fact, the responsibilities he had had at the Ministry of Industry had enabled him to reach the obvious conclusion that the socialist camp was not showing any selfless solidarity as he so loved to proclaim. When he expressed this reality, even in a veiled way, the reaction of Eastern European ambassadors and trade mission leaders had been more than violent. On his return from Algeria, he had a long interview with Fidel, which ended with his decision to leave definitively. Before this last meeting, which had a crucial role, the men who worked with him knew that things were going badly. He had made severe criticisms of the country's economic system and the lack of enthusiasm and fighting spirit at all levels. While the Minister of Industry was trying to understand past and present mistakes, the leader of the revolution did not speak the same language. There was no question of self-criticism, the revolution was a sacred temple and its infallible leaders.

Che analyzed the social phenomenon of revolutions with more passion than lucidity. His revolutionary romanticism did not fit into a society where the lowest passions and personal ambition already reigned. In 1961, when leaders of a certain level received their food through special quotas and were entitled to a store for imported industrial products, reserved for their personal consumption, the people were content with the meagre rations of the libreta. The only leader, I mean the only one, who did not accept this preferential treatment and even severely criticized it was Ernesto Guevara.

When he came back, I went to see him at the Ministry of Industries. In the room before his office, I found Braulio²⁰¹ warning me: "He is in a black anger, I think things are going badly."

In general, my interviews with Che were never of a political nature. It was more like a meeting between two old friends. He always wanted me to tell him the latest counter-revolutionary jokes that

were circulating, and he laughed when I told him about my life as a rich man again in socialist society and the fear that the G-2 inspired in the country's former bourgeoisie.

He often laughed at me because I had my measurements taken at a luxury tailor's and told Aleida²⁰² that I had even been photographed in underwear and that if the CIA found out, I would lose my prestige.

There were more serious moments, but the dominant tone was always joyful. That time, Che was unrecognizable and in a dark mood. Certainly, his decision had already been made. He told me a lot about Latin America and Africa, outlining various possibilities for continental guerrillas in these two regions. I walked out of his office with the impression that something strange was going on. It was shortly after I learned of his departure for Congo.

Fidel Castro's positive reaction to the idea of an armed struggle and the provision of systematic assistance to all emerging revolutionary movements gave a glimmer of hope to those who were aware of what was happening. Everyone thought that, if the two men had not understood each other at the national level, they seemed to have reached agreement at the international level.

Then the time came for major reorganizations in the Ministry of the Interior and the group "Crocodile", the code name for training camps for guerrilla movements, was created.

At the end of 1965, I was finishing my last year of diplomatic and consular law and starting to prepare my thesis when I was summoned to the General Staff to meet Juan Almeida²⁰³ and Raúl Castro. This unexpected meeting with these two senior officials was very intriguing to me, as I was not an element at their level. I had never been placed under their command and I had never worked with them, directly or indirectly.

At first I thought it was some confidential information they wanted to verify or an infiltration mission into the Revolutionary Armed Forces. When they explained the purpose of this meeting to

me, I was confused: I had been chosen to go to Congo as an instructor. The aim was to give a course with training on Chinese made 75 mm recoilless cannons, which were very suitable, because of their great mobility, for guerrilla warfare. Once in Africa, I was to command the Cuban batteries and train the Congolese, as well as various movements, in the use of these weapons. Once again, it was my knowledge of languages that had tipped the scales in my favour, English, French and Portuguese being decisive factors.

After a quick apprenticeship and a short but rather hectic trip to Congo, I found myself on the African continent at the end of 1965. However, after waiting about two months for the promised artillery and guns, I received a cryptic message asking me to return, as it was felt at the top that it was not appropriate to provide Chinese made weapons because of the ideological differences that existed. As for the rest of the forces promised by Fidel, no one has ever seen them.

As the ideological conditions were not ripe, the experiment was condemned to the most absolute failure. Che's presence in Africa was a mistake. Whites were not accepted by the population and there was a certain reserve on the part of African leaders regarding our role. Although Che tried not to appear as the leader and Commander Draque, who was blacker than a raven, was chosen to handle public relations, nothing seemed to work.

I have met the Che²⁰⁴ many times. He spent his time travelling around the region to draw up the topography. When I was able to see him to give him the return order I had received, he assured me that it didn't matter and that the whole group would soon follow; his new point of contact would certainly be Latin America. I was never to see him again.

I returned to Cuba and resumed my studies, as I have already told you, with great difficulty, still waiting for Che to signal me, as he had promised me. He came back to Cuba several times and I didn't even know it. Was it an unintentional omission on his part? I don't think so. I believe that the unease that had begun to germinate

in me little by little, as well as my non-conformism, and the critical spirit that I was beginning to exercise towards communism and of which we had spoken several times, made him take this decision. Or maybe he didn't want to take me on a hopeless adventure? In any case, I no longer believed that communism was the ideal remedy that could save the Third World. While China accused the USSR of political hegemony and reserved its harshest adjectives for the United States, it tried to penetrate the Western world through its ideology and fought on the Asian continent to keep its influence. The countries that were called colonialists, such as France or England, liberated their colonies, or lost them, to make way for a new type of exploitation: communist colonialism.

Time has proven me right, the former colonies where communism has managed to penetrate have become dictatorships. While Sékou Touré has not taken Guinea one step further and Guineans have harsher living conditions than during colonialism, his neighbours, assisted by France, are making giant strides. It all boils down to a struggle for markets and the exploitation of raw materials, especially in Africa, which belongs to no one, because the countries that had great colonial empires on this continent had little say in the great sharing between the two super-grands in Yalta.

Fidel Castro maintained a so-called tough policy in Latin America, Africa and the interior of the country. He pretended to be pro-maoïste, but in reality Cuba was a pawn of the Kremlin. The USSR did not want to return to the Cold War and, at the same time, refused to give way to the Chinese push. The only way to keep a political-military offensive was to use Cuba. In this way she did not compromise herself in the eyes of others. Fidel Castro was a difficult personality to control. At times, believing himself to be almighty and at the centre of a new revolutionary current, he had gone too far, risking to compromise the Soviet Union, but when the latter called him to order, he returned to the sheepfold as the sweetest of sheep.

Today, I wonder what would have happened if Che had triumphed? He would certainly have been a fierce enemy of the socialist camp. A third position? A new self-managing titism? It is not easy to answer such a question, the principles of the Great America of Bolivar was his favorite theme. To achieve this objective, he preferred to believe in Fidel's promises, who used him as an instrument of his propaganda. His prestige was immense, Fidel knew how to take advantage of it for himself, but without giving anything, or almost anything, in exchange, and especially not the material help his former comrade so badly needed. At the OLAS²⁰⁵ and Tricontinental conferences held in Havana in 1968, attempts to revive guerrilla warfare were unsuccessful, millions of dollars were spent to finance certain movements, but Che in Bolivia remained surrounded and gradually destroyed before the eyes of Cuban leaders. In the part of Che's diary that is at the end of the campaign, we can read some very bitter passages. I am convinced that he felt betrayed and abandoned in the middle of the forest.

What strategy or pretext can be used when there were more than 500 Cubans in Venezuela in guerrilla movements with superb Soviet weapons?

Commander Tomasevich surrounded the city of Caracas with 57 mm gun batteries. While he was ready to launch the final assault, he was ordered to suspend all guerrilla activities and return to Cuba. Che's troop never owned the AKM rifles that circulated in Venezuela and even less the 57 mm guns or 82 mm mortars. The 500 men of Venezuela were a mirage. Che never had more than 15 Cubans with him and his weapons were very poor. The Kremlin knew that Ernesto Guevara was a danger to his hegemonic ambitions, but he knew how to use his death as a standard of struggle.

The soldiers who were undergoing guerrilla training in the 4th Remedios Division were gradually reintegrated into their units and the camp was closed in 1966. In its place another one was opened in the Pinar del Río region, in Sierra de los Órganos. Manuel Piñero,

head of the secret services, was directly in charge of this new guerrilla school named Camilo Cienfuegos; Osmani Cienfuegos, Camilo's brother, was in charge of all recruitment activities and contacts at the OLAS level, of which he was president.

In the new guerrilla school, only members of opposition movements or insurreccional movements in favour of Castro were admitted; Cubans were only used as instructors, it was from that time onwards that Cuba no longer provided human aid to the guerrillas, with a few exceptions such as Amilcar Cabral. Specialists were allowed to be sent to Africa; they led the military operations of some liberation movements there.

The school has an area of 10,000 hectares and consists of several camps so as not to mix the different groups. At first, the largest number were the Katangese, but there were 10 or 12 other African nationalities and a significant core of Palestinians. One of these camps is specially prepared for urban guerrilla warfare training; all groups in the school must go through this camp for a period of 45 days to three months in some cases. I can guarantee that more than 80% of the leaders of the Sandinista movement have left these training camps. It is a common point for almost all leaders and executives of the insurgency in Latin America to have gone through this school. You can't improvise yourself as a guerrilla.

As for the African movements, I can assure you that they acquired their military training in Cuba in the same way; if not, how else can we explain the submission to the Kremlin of these peoples who still live as primitive communities and whose main problems are of a tribal nature? When they declare themselves socialists or popular, Moscow provides them with important assistance. Miracle of Marxist-Leninist doctrine? Certainly not, since 1960, Western countries have allowed an escalation of communism in the world, mainly the United States, which has abandoned its role as an international gendarme to make way for a policy of dialogue that the USSR has used to perfection, leaving its satellites to intervene.

I don't know what's worse for a third world country, colonialism or communist dictatorship? There is no big difference. Between the underdevelopment and exploitation of capitalism and a communist dictatorship, the difference is not great either, exploitation remains. While there has been great progress in the field of education and public health, these factors do not justify the survival, for more than twenty years, of an implacable dictatorship that has torn the Cuban people apart. Fidel Castro has deceived many intellectuals and politicians around the world until recently. The search for a fairer world through original socialism is over. The myth of the romanticism of the Cuban revolution has been completely erased; Fidel Castro, so-called defender of the Third World, has removed his mask to show his true face as a pawn of international communism.

Is the so-called socialist camp really on the left? The leader of the Eastern countries, the USSR, after a tsarist era so close to slavery (see Gogol's *Dead Souls*), spent a short Leninist period to sink into the most tenebrous dictatorship the world has ever known: Stalinism. All the current leaders of the USSR were trained under Stalinist ideology. So... for them, what is socialism? Freedom?

Training camps are a permanent activity, South American groups operate under the code name of "Jaguar" and those in Africa or the Middle East under the code name of "Constellation". I personally knew instructors who helped the independence guerrillas in Eritrea and then had to fight with the Ethiopian troops of Mengistu Haile Marian, the same thing with the Ogadem and Cabinda movements... What is the truth? When a soldier changes sides like a weather vane, he becomes a mercenary. With Cuban troops, the USSR has a solid corps of mercenaries who travel the world for their direct interventions or for more discreet actions, but always in the service of Moscow, shifting the balance of forces in favour of the communist camp.

The leader of these training camps is still Osmani Cienfuegos.

It is obvious that the "Crocodile" group no longer has the same resources as it did in 1965. He was born in the midst of a complex political and social situation, facing contradictions of all kinds within the insurreccional movements that existed at the time. Initially, it was not created to export terrorism and chaos, its main role was to ensure a certain brand image for Cuban foreign policy, and to give greater weight to what would become OLAS²⁰⁶ and the Tricontinental. Then, he undoubtedly participated in the destabilization of the West. At that time, the intervention group (now special troops²⁰⁷) already existed and it was on it that all the military weight of the Cuban attempts at subversion rested.

In its early days, the "Crocodile" group had a formidable mountain guerrilla training camp: "Camilo Cienfuegos", in which several hundred Cuban instructors trained thousands of future guerrillas from Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East (the Asians were few in number and were mainly interested in the handling of explosives). To fulfil this mission, the army provides more than 300 specialists from various military branches and the intervention group almost as many, despite a certain duality of function between these two structures.

Political indoctrination (brainwashing) was carried out by communist cadres who had studied political science at the Soviet university "Patrice Lumumba". They were apparently convinced (or so they said) that the hard line of the insurgency was the best and that the other socialist countries were wrong.

We were not talking about the case of China, nor about Maoism, in order not to create differences. Despite this politicization of the courts, it would be impossible to define the ideal of struggle of these men. We would find ourselves in front of the strangest amalgam of ideologies that can be conceived; From African blacks from primitive tribal societies, whose only life was the war between the tribes, who felt happy for the simple fact of owning a gun, to the most distinguished intellectuals of the promaoist movement, not to mention

Trotskyists, procubans, those who defended separatist, nationalist, Marxist-Leninist, Stalinist, Muslim, Palestinian and other movements. In short, a true tour of Babel of races, ideologies and languages.

Despite the measures taken within the Camilo Cienfuegos training camp to prevent the different nationalities from getting mixed up, terrible altercations sometimes occurred among Latin American groups, whether for ideological reasons or for differences between nationalities or even regional ones. There is no need to talk about Africans, because there were sometimes armed clashes between them.

The training of these men could last up to three months, depending on the urgency and needs of their return to their country of origin and their incorporation into the fight, but this period could be reduced or sometimes extended depending on the circumstances.

The courses were essentially practical, such as learning how to set up an ambush, withdrawing in case of danger, making good use of the topography of the terrain (mountains, forests, savannah or plain), breaking a circle, in short the a b c of the lightly armed guerrilla.

The best, and those with the highest cultural level, attended a special course for leaders that took place in the same camp but in an isolated place known as Monte Oscuro. They could stay there for a year and a half and receive military training to lead a column of 1,000 men with artillery. These officers received training corresponding to the level of a career officer in any army. Of course, their pro-castro activism was also taken into account, as they would be part of the future leaders of their country.

As for the urban guerrillas, it was something else, the education was spread over several districts of Havana, in the cities of the interior and in some clandestine houses. The principle of selection was not very different from that practiced for all guerrilla apprentices, only the destabilization that these future terrorists would exercise in

their respective countries, and that they still exercise today, really mattered. While the "Crocodile" group has given way to special troops in the case of guerrillas and liberation armies, its role remains as important as ever in the field of terrorism.

Attacks on persons, physical elimination, aerial piracy²⁰⁸, sabotage... are his main subjects of study. The end product of this hard learning is a perfect terrorist, a terrorist who knows how to use explosives as well as firearms, how to organize a plot or how to avoid all the traps of the most important police systems. (National police, Interpol and even CIA.)

It is no secret that terrorist organisations such as the IRA in Northern Ireland, ETA in Spain, the Red Brigades in Italy, as well as many other groups that are spreading terrorism in Europe, America, Asia or Africa are the result of the work of the Crocodile Group, and I am not talking about a recent past, I am talking about today. When a journalist or a state refers to this fact, many believe it is the result of an anti-communist hysteria... and yet it is a truth as big as a mountain.

In my opinion, more than 80% of the senior executives of these terrorist groups worldwide have been trained by "Crocodile". No matter how much they shout that they are nationalists, independentists or what they want, they are only puppets of international communism intended to destabilize Western democracies. Those who were not trained in Cuba through the "Crocodile" group, were trained in the USSR, at the "Patrice Lumumba" University, sometimes also, but rarely, in the GDR or Bulgaria, but anyway, it is the same.

Special Troops

The "special troops" form an elite corps prepared for Cuban military interventions abroad. They have 4,500 men who, although part of the Ministry of the Interior, are in fact at Fidel Castro's disposal,

who directly decides on their participation in any military intervention abroad.

The men of this elite corps are fully trained. They can be compared to the American "rangers", with one difference, however, since guerrilla warfare, both urban and rural, occupies a primordial place in their training.

All the men in this troop are taught to be frogmen and paratroopers. To this end, the special troops have their own aircraft for military training and operations, as well as a fleet of helicopters. They also have very modern equipment for maritime operations. It is estimated that the training of one of these elite soldiers costs at least \$80 a day, and that the weapons made available to them exceed the price of \$75 million. The maintenance of combat equipment, its operation and the training of men alone cost \$12 million a year, not to mention the salaries paid to these men.

This corps has a group of specialists who exclusively train guerrilla movements abroad to teach them how to use Western weapons. They also help to train officers of the armies of certain Third World countries under the influence of the socialist camp. Countries that have been colonized and then choose the path to independence generally inherit a large amount of light or heavy weapons from the United States, France, or Great Britain, which they do not know how to use. That's where the special troops come in.

In Angola, Ethiopia, etc., they have been the spearhead of the Cuban army, those who are paving the way for collaboration. These "enemy weapons" specialists were trained during the Vietnam War; each of the 250 instructors who exist today spent a minimum of three years in Indochina.

There are also specialists for guerrilla warfare in the countryside. They accompany the guerrilla troops and organize the struggle and military operations. It is in Africa that this method has been systematically used, from Palestinian guerrillas to the Polisario Front, including all movements in Black Africa. These functions are per-

formed by 200 specialized instructors who have, in most cases, a long experience in this type of work. The urban guerrillas have 180 specialists who operate abroad and who not only instruct, but also carry out acts of terrorism such as attacks against people, bombings, etc. Outside the military branch, these men studied at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba University to learn the best way to destabilize the governments of the countries where they operate. They have solid economic, political, ethnic knowledge... which allows them to have a very broad vision of the countries and continents to which they are sent.

They are specialized by area. If one of them is assigned to North Africa and the Middle East, it is unlikely that he will then be able to move to the South of the Continent and even less so to America. The Caribbean region is a good example of this division of operations; in 1977, it was anticipated that, little by little, all the islands in the area that were still colonies would gain their independence. If a good job was done in this direction, it should be possible to transform them into Cuba's satellites. At that time, 30 veterans chosen from among the instructors of the American zone were sent to the USSR to specialize again in the Caribbean region, because, in the end, there is not much more to be done on the American continent since 1968, and efforts are concentrated on all the mini-states that are emerging now or on those that are still colonies.

Special troops also provide security for embassies abroad. To enter this elite corps, it is essential to be a member of the Communist Party or Youth; these places are preferably given to members of the Ministry of the Interior or to sportsmen and women who can no longer participate in international competitions because of their lower performance but who have a good level of physical preparation.

Some specialties such as those of the intervention groups require a minimum of physical criteria for the selection of their men: a height of 1.75 m and a weight of 75 kg. It is also necessary to pass a

number of tests that take place once a year. The unsuccessful one is replaced and moved to another group that requires less difficult conditions to meet. One of these groups is specifically designed for parachuting or underwater operations, although all men are required to undergo training in these two specialties. Transport is provided by a fleet of 40 helicopters piloted by 120 pilots and co-pilots, and 4 IL-24 troop transport aircraft with 6 pilots and co-pilots. The technical staff consists of 25 people.

Personal Defense courses are taught by Korean, German and Soviet instructors who share the work with Cuban instructors. Karate is the basis of the teaching, but it is even more violent than the one practiced in Okinawa, because the techniques have been mixed with elements of Korean kitsul struggle. There were 350 Soviet instructors, 18 from the GDR and 25 from Korea, and they travelled from time to time to other socialist countries. The USSR provides all the armaments for these troops and reserves them a special place because they often defend the interests of this great power in the Third World. They possess a large quantity of American war material, light or heavy equipment that was transported to Cuba by the Soviet Union from Vietnam.

The secret services also have training camps for foreigners, but paradoxically enough the two services never mix their activities. Special troop instructors are completely isolated and never work with anyone but this elite corps. All operations, of any type, must have the consent of Fidel, who considers these men to be his small personal army. Sometimes DGSPD²⁰⁹ men carry out joint actions with special troops, perhaps because they too are part of the dictator's private army. During their existence, they helped Agostinho Neto in Angola, Mengistu Haile Marian in Ethiopia and supported them until the arrival of Cuban reinforcements; if their role were limited to these two facts alone, which allowed the conquest of two new satellite countries for the benefit of the USSR, their existence would be more than justified. But there is much more: the Polisario

Front, Palestinian guerrillas, South African guerrillas, economic and political destabilization in Latin America and the Caribbean...

In my opinion, this elite corps, whose operations centre is located in Cuba, represents the most offensive group of the USSR in the world outside its own troops. Taking advantage of the circumstances, the Russians used Fidel Castro, queen of the "moles", to carry out their aggressive designs as an imperialist country. I believe that the special troops that helped Haile Marian take power in Ethiopia and then exterminate the Eritrean guerrillas must be carrying out certain missions in Afghanistan, because they have acquired a great deal of experience in anti-guerrilla warfare on terrain similar to that country's topography and against resistance fighters of the same national character.

The Special Troop Corps was founded in mid-1962 as the "Solidarity Army". It changed its name and organization during the 1965 restructuring to the one it still has today.

I personally participated in his first campaign in Algeria, just after his independence, during the conflict against Morocco, as a liaison officer, my knowledge of French making my job easier. I worked with these troops in Guinea, also as a liaison officer, and then as an observer in the Middle East during the Sinai war.

Whenever a group has to leave Cuba, Fidel Castro holds a meeting with him to highlight the important points of the mission and add a series of last-minute details. Upon return, the rewards are distributed. In general, they are given a special bonus in foreign currency to buy what they want at international airports where they stop over during the trip that takes them back to the country. In Cuba, another bonus in Cuban money awaits them. It varies between 4,000 and 10,000 pesos. For the executives who command these men, same rewards according to their level. To this must be added a Rolex GMT watch, which Fidel gives them in person, and which has become a symbol of bravery among these men; only the "tough ones" are entitled to such a gift. Another common award: a

car, Lada 1200, Alfa Romeo, Chevrolet or Ford. When a mission has been very successful, its members are given houses or apartments according to their rank.

The head of the special troops and the senior managers of the various offices all have residences with swimming pools. Thus Pascual, their leader, wounded in Angola by the same bomb that killed General Díaz-Argüelles, head of the Cuban mission, was offered by Fidel the construction of an air-conditioned swimming pool to serve for the rehabilitation of his wounded leg!

CHAPTER XIII

INDEPENDENT BODIES

There are three of them: the Personal Security of the leaders, the "40" sector and the border guards.

Executive Personal Security (DGSPD)

General Department of Personal Security of Managers. It is still called unit "49".

This group also underwent major transformations in 1965. Before that date, Fidel already had a large and well-equipped escort under the command of Captain Emilio Aragonés.²¹⁰ But KGB specialists considered that this was insufficient, that larger, better organized and better trained forces were needed. The new head of this special group, which was called Unit 49²¹¹, was to be the commander of column 1 of the rebel army, Enio Leyva, a former communist militant.

A total of 4,000 men were selected who had to meet certain physical and psychological conditions and be party activists. The DGSPD was supposed to provide security for all government leaders with these 4,000 members, but in practice it is exclusively in the service of Fidel Castro, who thus has the largest personal security corps in the world. The President of the United States and the First Soviet Union together do not have as many men for their travel. Raúl Castro has a personal escort of 500 men²¹². The other members of the government do not have any, except Osvaldo Dorticos who has 20 people and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez who has 10. The other personalities (members of the political bureau or senior officials of the Conseil d'État) have a DGSPD driver and two or three guards permanently at home, while Fidel has 3,800 bodyguards alone.

During each of his trips, Fidel mobilized an impressive number of men to follow him; let's take an example: the escort closest to the leader was composed of 4 cars with 12 men on board. Their mission is to stop whatever little traffic there may be, to intervene in the event of an incident while remaining in radio communication with the group of cars that form the caravan in the middle of which the leader travels. The latest model Fidel travels in is a Soviet armoured car of the ZIL brand. It is accompanied by 3 or 5 cars covering the flanks, the vanguard and the rearguard; inside each car are 4 escort members armed with AKM machine guns and hand grenades. All DGPSD staff use bulletproof vests. Everyone is ordered to shoot first, then ask the questions.

Preceding this compact group, 4 or 5 light trucks carry troops ready to intervene in the event of a problem. There are 10 to 12 men per vehicle. At the same time, two other groups of 10 or 12 cars cover the parallel journey.

Any visit by Fidel must be scheduled at least twelve hours in advance; a coordination section plans all the operations to be carried out on the route. If it is a factory visit, it must be occupied by DGSPD troops several hours in advance. Surveillance posts are set up in the surrounding area to prevent staff from entering or leaving the area. There are no less than 200 men to handle these operations. When these are open-air meetings, up to 3,000 men are mobilized.

The escort who protects Fidel closely is divided into 3 work teams that rotate every eight hours. At Unit 49 headquarters, 50% of the staff must remain permanently on site, the other half must be back within 15 minutes of a state of alert.

Some of the functions of this unit are quite curious. As with the Roman emperors, a man, renewed every eight hours, must taste every food or drink Fidel consumes at least half an hour in advance; another particularity is a professional baseball player whose mission is to capture in the air any grenade that could be thrown and throw it as far as possible.

Being placed with Fidel is an important promotion, it means being part of the elite and enjoying the material advantages that this position entails: car offered by the State, home and solving all the problems of daily life, with a salary equivalent to that of a university professor. But you have to work hard to win this position, first as a party activist, then as an expert in pistol and rifle shooting, without neglecting a good level in martial arts practice. In short, a perfect gorilla. But a gorilla with a low level of education.... However, as Raúl Castro put it:

"Bodyguards have the mission to protect and the less they think it is better; the day a guard starts discussing the orders received, he ceases to be a good soldier."

Another mission for Unit 49 is the security of the leaders who are invited by the Cuban government. Various personalities from all over the world sometimes visit the Cuban capital, including a number of heads of state. The popular welcome offered to them is covered by 55,000 members of the State Security who occupy each house with access to the areas through which the procession must pass. No one can enter or leave these houses and, at each window, a member of the Ministry of the Interior is placed. All the large buildings in Havana have their terraces occupied to prevent a possible maverick from being stationed there. In addition, 70,000 soldiers, party activists and security informants are mobilized to train the cords along the route.

When Fidel has to walk the streets of Havana with a visitor, about 30,000 people living in the capital are put in preventive prison and 45,000 are asked to leave; the city's accesses are closed to traffic. On the course, which can vary from 10 to 40 kilometres depending on the circumstances, 172,000 men are mobilized. When Brezhnev came to Cuba twice, the figure exceeded 172,000 men, not counting the 40,000 KGB members who arrived a month earlier; no element

escaped these men, to such an extent that the sewers of the avenues through which the procession was to pass were searched.

In the monitored area, no person carrying a radio or any bulky object, no one with an arm or leg in a cast, no physically disabled person with crutches, cane, or in a wheelchair are allowed to be present. No car can park within a radius of several kilometres, and all people who wear a jacket or shirt outside their pants are searched. In other words, we are wary of anything that could conceal a weapon.

The history of DGPSD Unit 49 is a bloody one and far from what has been said. It is said that more than 200 attacks against Fidel Castro have been planned. There were four real attacks, three with guns and one with dynamite. In addition, they were poorly designed and executed. It was only the product of popular despair and not the manipulation of imaginary terrorists by the CIA. After the defeat of the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, the CIA did not stop ruminating about reprisals against Fidel Castro, but as far as the facts are concerned, it did not set up any of the plans that can be found in the report to the American Congress. There is a certain fantasy in these sophisticated plans, but the history of the political attacks has already been written. In today's world, if you want to eliminate a man, the simplest method is always the best: a good rifle with a telescopic sight and a sniper is enough.

The men in Fidel's escort must have about thirty burrs, deaths by "error". For example, in 1967, a mountain primary school was established in the Cordillera de los Órganos, in the province of Pinar del Río, near San Andrés de Caiguanabo, and Fidel came to attend the inauguration. As it ended, we saw arriving by the narrow mountain road, a truck full of farmers who had been delayed by a storm. It appears that the escort members were afraid of such a situation, as a whole series of maneuvers had to be carried out for the vehicles to cross paths; in any case, they fired on the truck. The result: 18 dead and 7 seriously injured. At the "Aguilar Noriega" cement factory in

Santiago de Cuba, a worker wanted to take out a matchbox to light a cigar. Unfortunately, he kept it in the inside pocket of his jacket; the gesture was interpreted differently by the escort who thought he was trying to pull out a weapon. The result: 3 dead and several wounded.

I could give many such examples. Fidel himself has repeatedly protested against the inappropriate interventions of his escort, but these men hear nothing, see nothing. They are real automatons who know only one thing: if Fidel is murdered, they will be shot.

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Not all of them are consumed fools. Unit 49 has a chemistry laboratory through which all gifts received by the Head of State must pass. They are subjected to the most diverse experiments to ensure that they do not contain poison. Foods intended for Fidel undergo the same analyses. Sometimes rice or beans are not accepted because they contain traces of chemicals used for their preservation. The concentration of toxic products in cans is determined and the tolerance is well below that of international regulations.

It is not an exaggeration on my part to say that the cigars Fidel smokes are all controlled by Unit 49. Three men in this group manage a small plantation that produces the plant varieties according to the leaf mixture preferred by the head of government. A skilled worker makes the cigars in a room near the laboratory. The milk Fidel consumes is also under control. A man is in charge of supervising the four Holstein cows reserved for Fidel and Raúl, and it is in the laboratory that their cheese is made. I will not give more details, but the list could be much longer. Perhaps the possession of four cows for personal use is not serious in itself, but what is unforgivable is that in the country where children are only allowed to drink fresh milk for up to six years,²¹³ these two gentlemen go so far as to choose the breed of their cows to satisfy their own tastes. Holsteins, it seems, produce a milk that is richer in fat. But the funny thing is

that this breed is not acclimatised to Cuba. So Castro's four cows live in an air-conditioned barn.

Some of the bodyguards have a better fate than cow guards. I know Virulo²¹⁴, a peasant from the Sierra Maestra, whom Fidel kept with him throughout the period of the armed struggle, then under the revolutionary government, not as a soldier but as an order. Although his cultural level is very low, he is very intelligent and has a keen mind. So many years spent with the lider have earned him a reputation for unfailing loyalty, which is why he is in charge of special missions. No, we should not think that he is a very high level spy, the missions he carries out are of a different nature: he goes abroad regularly to make purchases for the dignitaries of Cuban communism. I met him twice in Madrid where he asked me if I didn't want to go with him to the luxury stores to make some purchases. I accepted, but I was surprised when I took a look at his list, which included the most expensive and precious French perfumes, even nail polishes, all of which, of course, were intended for the wives of the strong men of the regime!

Virulo's most important mission was to accompany Celia Sánchez²¹⁵ on her trips to Switzerland to deposit funds. Incredible but true! Fidel Castro owns a safe in a Swiss bank. I don't know how much wealth there is, but it must be very high. Virulo confessed to me that when Salvadore Allende passed through Havana before the elections that placed him in the presidency of Chile, Fidel decided to finance his election campaign! Allende made the trip from Havana to Madrid, then went to Paris where he waited for Virulo to return from Switzerland with \$2 million in cash that he received personally. Later, he was given another \$8 million, sent to Mexico by diplomatic courier, and Virulo made another trip to Switzerland to take another \$5 million, which was given to direct collaborators of Salvadore Allende.

I don't want to accuse Fidel Castro of owning one of the world's largest fortunes for his personal use, far from it! Nor do I say that he

keeps this money in case of political change, none of that! I'm just saying that this account exists and if you can withdraw \$15 million so easily, it must contain a lot of money.

With a personal security group of 4,000 men and an account in Switzerland that seems inexhaustible, the Cuban head of government is certainly not the proletarian he claims to be.

The only brains thinking in the DGSPD are the members of the programming and coordination section; the others, when they are not on duty, train ten hours a day. The consumption of balls is 708 per day (average for the year 1978).

The scale of values and parameters that govern the life of a normal individual no longer have anything to do with the men in unit 49 who only see life through a prism. They believe they are forever in a jungle where only the law of the strongest prevails. To this unshakeable faith must be added the most incredible mystical adoration of their living God: Fidel Castro!

Unit 49 is autonomous in the organization of State Security. It reports directly to the Minister of the Interior and its supreme leader is Raúl Castro, who chairs the State Security Commission of the party's central committee.

The "40" Sector

The Special Bureau of Sector "40" is the group in charge of the work concerning internal repression. This very active office appeared in 1961 as the "Action Group". When the Ministry was modified in 1965, under the direction of the KGB, it changed its name and restructured under the command of the Deputy Minister of the Interior in charge of State Security, Juan Abrahantes.

There were several leaders of the "40" sector: Captain Emiliano Gádez, Captain Silvino Hernández; today he is commanded by Colonel Benito Echenique (Tintín) who operates under the war name of Huracán²¹⁶.

Whenever a G-2 officer has administrative or disciplinary problems, it is traditional to transfer him or her to this unit, which is purgatory of the least serious misconduct. Because of the type of work that is done there, after three or four months, everyone has enough: 24 hours of continuous duty, followed by 24 hours of rest. For these troops, there are no Sundays or holidays. At the slightest alarm or internal problem, they are the first to be mobilized and the last to be demobilized. In addition, the nature of their function is public, which prohibits a possible return to the elite security corps represented by counter-intelligence or secret services. They are practically condemned to remain in sector "40" or to be transferred to the border guard corps, also public, and whose working conditions are also difficult. When a man is transferred to sector "40", he knows that his career as a secret agent has ended and that he has lost all the privileges of the new class. Farewell to foreign travel, luxury, cars, and endless possibilities! When we lose the almost mystical status of secret agent, we must return to the harsh reality of Cuban socialism and the difficulties inherent in it.

In 1961, when it was still called the "Action Group", this corps carried out a terrible repression during the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, with many nets being carried out throughout the island. The result was more than 30,000 prisoners. The pretext was that they were a potential danger. Previously, during the operations against the guerrillas of the Escambray Mountains range, they had founded LCB²¹⁷ which directed its execution. He was also in charge of the transfer of thousands of peasants to the Ciudad Sandino concentration camp on the Guanacavibes peninsula.

Sector "40" and the Behavior Police are the two State Security groups that inspire repulsion, even among G-2 members, because of the content of their work. Violence is the common denominator for men in the "40" sector. An individual subjected to a 24-hour shift work regime undoubtedly ends up suffering from certain psychological alterations, especially if his work pushes him into a repres-

sive activity. This system imposes an enormous overload of work, 360 hours of work per month and, at the slightest problem, the obligation to remain in the barracks 24 hours a day. Sleeping for such long periods of time inevitably produces changes in metabolism and sleep with the onset of personality disorders. The medical services that deal with these staff have been able to observe an increase in the number of ulcers of nervous origin. On the other hand, 75% of these men are under treatment for mental disorders. During periods of mobilization, these same medical services prescribe very high doses of stimulants to overcome sleep. When this happens, the other Security groups prefer not to carry out any operations in collaboration with the men in sector "40", they become like mad and extremely dangerous because they use their weapons for nothing. They are responsible for the deaths of several G-2 members.

The patrol cars they use carry the acronym: "State Security Patrol - G-2". In Havana alone, there are 45 such patrols and about 20 patrols with a passenger car license plate. The accidents they have caused are countless, as they sometimes travel at speeds above 120 km/h in the streets of the capital and in broad daylight; at night, Havana sometimes looks like a car circuit, at the slightest call, these patrols run from the various sectors to the indicated place, to the maximum of their possibilities.

In 1978, there were 21 serious accidents resulting in 28 deaths and 46 injuries. That same year, a patrol car, an Alfa Romeo 1750, tore 19 poles off the Via Bianca from the neon central lighting before it could stop; for a light vehicle to achieve such a feat, it must have been close to 200 km/h. In the middle of town, at the intersection of 49th Avenue and 128th Street, another patrol car hit a bus just in the middle after running a red light. Fortunately, the accident had occurred at 2:30 in the morning and the transport vehicle was empty. The Leyland bus was almost cut in half, and to get the occupants out of the car, the heap of sheet metal had to be cut with a

torch. The head of one of the occupants was found 100 metres from the accident site.

During the twenty-four hours when men are supposed to rest, they are in fact obliged to follow six hours of political instruction and four hours of military training. Brainwashing is continuous. Only the section commanders have a certain cultural level, the others are almost all almost illiterate. The system that leads them to this state of numbness is the same as that used by some religious sects, little sleep and a lot of indoctrinement.

In 1980, a serious problem originated with a group patrolling the central Havana area. The habit of using Altedron or other stimulants was no longer enough for them, so they started looking for other types of drugs. They soon began to take infusions of a plant called Campana blanca before taking their service. The wave of violence was not long in coming. There was a huge scandal at the Ministry of the Interior that caused Minister Sergio del Valle to leave. The latter transferred to the Ministry of Public Health and Ramiro Vaidés took over the command of the Interior once again.

I personally knew several officers, who went through the "40" sector, who were later dismissed for nervous problems. For the majority, the trauma is irreversible. In the best cases, they have been reintegrated into civilian life after long months of detoxification, but they remain marked and no longer adapt to society. They are given a pension as "war cripples".

The brand image of the "40" sector was so disastrous that it was decided in 1968 to produce a counter-intelligence television series in which these men would be heroes. An attempt was made to give the population a different image of this repressive group. There was also a radio series on the same theme. It was opposed by the "good guys" of the "40" sector to the "bad guys" counterrevolutionaries helped by the horrible CIA, but it didn't change anything. For the people, they remained the symbol of the harshest repression. The government knows very well that every time these groups get in-

volved, things end badly, but they are still kept, playing a dual role as a law enforcement agency and a psychological weapon of intimidation.

A few years ago, exactly in 1977, a desperate man who could no longer bear the life he was leading in Cuba and who, like the vast majority, found himself unable to leave the country legally, decided to play one last card. The Belgian ambassador became the target of his action plan because he owned a yacht that could be used to escape, at least he thought so. Despair decided him to kidnap the ambassador before heading to the former American embassy occupied by the Swiss representation in Havana; from there, he headed to the French embassy where the French ambassador Antonioz agreed to let himself be kidnapped in solidarity with his Belgian colleague.

After several hours of waiting, Antonioz went out on the terrace of the French Embassy to discuss with the Cuban authorities and try to find a solution. But Fidel said he would not make any concessions, even if the two ambassadors were to die. Alas!..... A special patrol from sector "40" was sent to handle the case. Of course, the kidnapper died during the operation, but the most interesting thing about the case is that the officer who murdered him was locked up three months later in the Mazorra psychiatric hospital, where he is still, because of the aggressiveness he showed. Before his internment, he had killed 6 officers who were his co-workers and wounded 9.

These louts in sector "40" have the same power as privateers. They do as they please, enjoying the fullest immunity without the military courts being aware of their real activities. In the Ministry of the Interior, everyone knows perfectly well what is going on in this group, but no one dares to talk about it or ask questions about it. This is a taboo subject that we avoid talking about, because discussing the drug problem and the special treatment of men in sector "40", Fidel Castro's shock troupe, is a thorny subject that could get you into trouble.

This special group does not have KGB advisers on operations, but four KGB specialists, military psychiatrists. They determine the weight of political instruction these men must bear and the amount of training they are allowed. They also prescribe psychotranquilizers or stimulants as needed. Is this experience unique? Are there similar groups undergoing the same training in Eastern Europe? I don't know, but what I'm sure of is that the agent who enters sector "40" quickly becomes an automaton. The reputation of this service is such that many officers who commit minor offences and are normally destined to be transferred to this special body almost always prefer to leave State Security for "service reasons", an explanation that brings them back to the rank of second-class citizens in civilian life.

This reputation of the "40" sector has spread beyond the country's borders and is well known on the African continent. His men have sometimes been used as escorts for guerrilla leaders in Africa. At the time of the assassination of the PAIG guerrilla leader, Amilcar Cabral, 25 men from sector "40" were part of his escort. The exact circumstances of Cabral's death have still not been clarified, even today, but everything seems to indicate that the case began with a discussion between the African guerrillas and the Cuban escort and that the leader died in the ensuing shooting.

45 men from sector "40" were sent to Agostinho Neto for his personal escort to Angola. Two months later, the Angolan head of government sent a letter to Fidel thanking him for this gesture, but he asked him to take back his men, because they were creating too many problems with those of the MPLA. When certain elements that are too belligerent become embarrassing in Cuba, they are sent to Africa with any guerrilla group. In general, they end up crazy or become heroes of the revolution lost in the African savannah.

The reward these agents receive for their good and loyal service is to become bodyguards on Cubana de Aviación aircraft on domestic flights. Fidel was the inventor of this new modality of terrorism

based on aircraft hijackings, but she came back to Cuba like a boomerang. To avoid such inconveniences, armoured partitions had to be installed in the pilot compartment, and the access door to the cockpit was also armoured. A former member of the "40" sector who had worked in the aircraft surveillance service, armed with an AKM, regularly accompanies Cubana de Aviación's domestic flights with orders to prevent the aircraft from being hijacked at any cost and, if necessary, to detonate the aircraft in flight before it reaches foreign territory.

This type of kamikase action can only be performed by a madman, and only men in sector "40" have this characteristic. The pilots work under terrible pressure, locked in their armoured cabins, with a crazy bodyguard who will not hesitate to blow up the plane at the slightest danger. For all these reasons, there have been very many incidents on the Cuban routes; however, the press remains silent on these cases and the civil aviation authorities remain complicit in silence.

The only serious hijacking attempt to which some publicity was given occurred in 1966, and it was only known because the two hijackers had fled: the co-pilot and the navigator had agreed to divert a flight to Miami. They killed the bodyguard who fired a machine gun burst before dying, damaging the aircraft's instruments, and the plane was forced to make a forced landing in Cuba. As the two men had fled, the case and the photo of the pirates were published to help capture them. The pursuit lasted fifteen days until they were found in a church where they had taken refuge. The church was nationalized and since then has been used as a karate training room in sector "40". As for the two men, they were shot.

While it is inhumane to keep dissidents under psychiatric treatment in communist countries, the opposite is much worse: transforming men into hunting dogs using the most modern brainwashing techniques and the most sophisticated psychopharmacopoeia.

The 700 men who make up this repressive body represent the most serious danger facing the Cuban civilian population. In the event of a direct invasion of the United States, Sector "40" is responsible for arresting between 30 and 45,000 people not integrated into the system and likely to collaborate with the enemy, and preparing the conditions for mass executions. The Prisons Department must also hand over the "highly dangerous" political prisoners to them so that they can suffer the same fate. I am convinced that the agents of this group would not hesitate to kill their mother if they were ordered to do so; in the end, they are also the victims of the Monster whose paternity Fidel must assume.

The Border Guards

The border guard units are autonomous. They report directly to the Minister of the Interior. Their main role is to carry out coastal surveillance from the coastal area, as maritime surveillance is carried out by the surface units of the MGR (Revolutionary Navy), which works in coordination with coastal surveillance and border guard patrols. These units maintain a significant number of personnel in the border area of the Guantánamo naval base at all times.

The number of personnel in these units is 16,000. They work in this area on a permanent basis with 9,000 dogs trained for these coastal patrols. To this figure, 15,000 auxiliaries, inhabitants of towns and villages close to the coast, must be added and recruited by these services, which exempt them from compulsory military service. Despite such formidable units, border guards are constantly increasing their numbers year after year on the pretext that they cannot guarantee 100% surveillance of the entire coastline.

Day and night, the Cuban coasts are visited continuously by patrols. Many watchtowers are also used. The theoretical objective of these troops is to prevent infiltration by CIA agents or anti-communist groups, but in reality their real work is mainly to prevent Cubans from fleeing illegally abroad.

Special units are in charge of breeding and training German shepherds; to give them even more aggressiveness, they have been crossed with Siberian wolves. They have gained in size and weight but are more difficult to control. No matter how much we teach them to obey the voice during training, when they attack their instincts awaken and they bite the neck causing certain death. I have already seen several of these "dogs" who had up to 15 dead to their credit. Although this type of crossing is not genetically recommended and these animals should be used from the third generation, in Cuba they are used from the first progeny. The danger of this aggressiveness even affects the men who drive them. Often they turn against them and kill them.

When we think that these beasts are released against peaceful citizens whose only crime is no longer being able to support the communist regime and wanting to emigrate illegally, because the possibility of doing so legally is almost never granted to them, we do not fail to be outraged! Sometimes whole families prepare for months these clandestine runaways. When they are attacked by these dogs, the sight must be terrible. We will never know how many people died in their mouths, or how many drowned during the crossing of the Strait of Florida. The lowest figures are between 20 and 30,000²¹⁸.

Border guard troops, in collaboration with the MGR, captured more than 40,000 people who were subsequently convicted of "attack on state power",²¹⁹ and served prison sentences of up to 12 years. Between those who arrived in Miami or elsewhere, disappearances and convictions, there are more than 100,000 Cubans, that is, 1.5% of the population who have chosen to risk their lives knowingly to gain their freedom.

Border guard patrols have material compensation. Those who have captured the largest number of people who have tried to escape clandestinely in the past year, or who have been able to detect any infiltration into the national territory, are rewarded with a month's

holiday at the seaside with their family members, and sometimes by a motorcycle. The winners of this sinister emulation are sent to the Minint²²⁰ Officers' School.

According to the regulations, these troops receive one litre of rum for every three men in winter and cool nights, but in reality they are given rum or alcohol all year round to make them forget the very harsh conditions in which they operate on coasts infested with mosquitoes, insatiable jejenes²²¹, horseflies and other biting or biting insects.

Alcohol is the magic formula to compensate for these difficulties, but it only brings greater aggressiveness. Several incidents have taken place in the area adjacent to the Guantánamo base where Cuban citizens who were trying their luck were murdered. Invariably, Americans stationed on the base are accused, and a national and international press campaign is mounted to discredit the United States. The Marines are certainly not saints, but the most serious incidents have been caused by the Cuban border guards.

The leader of these troops was Captain Orlando Pantoja, nicknamed Olo; he became rich with the illegal leakage trade, collecting considerable sums to let some groups out. His ambition was limitless, and when in 1965, when thousands of Cubans were organized to leave through the port of Camarioca²²², as had recently been done through the port of Mariel, with a fleet of small boats leaving Miami to pick up candidates for exile, he managed to extort over 250,000 pesos in cash and a large quantity of jewellery. These facts were known to all, and the public scandal forced the government to remove him from office and put him in a disciplinary battalion of the Ministry of the Interior.

When Che left for Bolivia, he took Olo out of the disciplinary battalion and incorporated him into his group, probably because he was a column 4 veteran. Later, at the death of Pantoja (in Bolivia), the counter-intelligence services realized that the Camarioca case had brought in more than \$3 million in gold and a large quantity of

jewellery. It was also discovered that the head of immigration had been involved in the case, as well as almost all the heads of departments. The subsequent trial involved 32 members of the Immigration Department and 40 border guard personnel. It was only possible to recover a few jewels and a few kilos of gold. All the cash was gone. It is assumed that Captain Olo hid more than two million dollars in gold and jewellery somewhere in Cuba. Another version, unconfirmed, says he had more than 150,000 pesos in cash also hidden.

Despite all the misdeeds, atrocities and violence of which they are capable, the current border guards certainly have much less to blame themselves for than their predecessors. Until its reorganization in 1965, this group was called the LCP (fight against pirates). It had been well over a century and a half since the pirates had disappeared from the Caribbean and yet, from 1961 to 1965, this name was kept in service. Who were these 20th century pirates in the Caribbean Sea? The small number of infiltrated counter-revolutionaries who entered Cuba? Cubans who were smuggled to the United States? Or perhaps Fidel Castro wanted to revive the ghosts of Henry Morgan or Francis Drake?

What is certain is that the LCP men behaved like real pirates in the Caribbean. Until 1965, this group conducted patrols at sea using a fleet of fast boats carrying artillery equipment. According to the evidence I was able to gather and the reports I read during my years of research, LCB carried out 958 interventions in the international waters of the Gulf of Mexico where it exterminated the "pirates" who were very resistant to it. Of the 30,000 missing, I believe that 60% died during the hunts organized by Cuban communism.

If human rights organizations such as Amnesty International wanted to verify the truth of these facts, they could simply contact the 850,000 Cubans exiled in the United States, a number of whom had managed to escape the LCP. I'm sure they'll find many witnesses.

Pirates do not only meet in the China Sea, those of the LCP near the Cuban coast have been just as relentless. The ships of the Soviet Merchant Navy participated in this task. They captured all the shipwrecked people they saw in the Bahamas Canal and handed them over to the Cuban authorities. These brave sailors of the Russian empire stole the jewels and all the gold they found on these unfortunate and raped women.

The area known as the "Bermuda Triangle" was part of the LCP patrol areas. Many boats have disappeared because of the difficult weather conditions in this area, but the explanations given by Cuba have been forgotten. Through my research, I know that LCP, in direct coordination with the Mig-15, Mig-19 and Mig-21 aircraft at San Antonio Air Force Base, sank by "mistake" between 1961 and 1965, 17 United States yachts or small craft, one from Dry Tortuga²²³, two from Jamaica, two from Puerto Rico and one from Bermuda. The origin of the boats was only discovered after the intervention, but we were careful not to say so, and since no one protested, so much the better. Between 1965 and 1978, these "military errors" reached the figure of twelve boats, the majority of which were pleasure craft. Almost all of these incidents occur at dusk or dawn, when there is little visibility and the darkness does not allow the flags to be seen. These are not premeditated or systematic acts, but they do pose a danger to small craft navigation in the Caribbean. Certainly a large number of them are abandoned in the Gulf of Mexico to affect the insurance policy, but not all of them and the victims of Cuban operations must be quite numerous.

CHAPTER XIV

PUBLIC BODIES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

The Revolutionary National Police and Traffic

The Revolutionary National Police (PNR) has no similarities with the police forces of Western countries. Nor is it similar to the organizations that are its counterparts in socialist countries. As its function is not of a political nature, it can be considered as the Traffic Department, like the Cinderella of the Ministry of the Interior.

Since its foundation, it has had a bad reputation. In 1959, with the advent of the revolution, Commander Efigenio Almejeida, known as a marijuana salesman in Havana's unfamiliar neighbourhoods, was chosen to lead it and when he took possession of his post, he brought into the police ranks a large number of his friends' offenders who soon caused enormous difficulties. The whole body fell into such disrepute that the population was as suspicious of the police as of offenders, although all police officers caught engaging in fraudulent practices were severely punished.

The RDCs performed functions parallel to those of the police. Their function was essentially political, but they informally assisted the police in their anti-crime role. The scandal caused by Efigenio Almejeida²²⁴ because of the drugs and the "dolce vita" he practiced, led to his departure from this post and a huge purge had to be carried out in the police ranks. To replace him, Fidel Castro named Franco the Gallego²²⁵, a notorious former gangster of the 1940s and a companion to some of the adventures experienced by the leader of the revolution during this tumultuous period. From 1967 onwards, Franco struggled to organize a slightly more respectable police

force. It must be acknowledged that he did not, like many others, seek to take advantage of his situation and that his former life as a gangster and smuggler was well buried.

The police have a few police stations in the main districts of Havana and in the main villages and cities of the country. Their role is to draw up reports, receive information on criminal cases and keep all detainees under investigation in their prisons. It has a mobile patrol system consisting of 50 vehicles for the city of Havana and some 60 vehicles for the rest of the country, which is clearly insufficient given the crime rate in the country. In addition, since 1975, the PNR sectors have been opened, small premises where a police officer coordinates guard towers and surveillance rounds with the CDRs.

A curious phenomenon has developed since the revolution. The government has concentrated all its repressive efforts against anti-communist movements to such an extent that crime has been given full scope for action. This deficiency is still being felt today. When you call the police for a street incident, or a robbery... it takes hours to get to the scene or doesn't even come. On the other hand, for a political case, within five minutes of the call, several cars in the "40" sector appear as if by magic.

Sometimes the police are afraid to intervene. The rarity of all kinds of products causes huge queues to form instantly in front of the stores as soon as their arrival is announced. Despite the freedom of food products and industrial products that regulate the market, the population knows that when these products appear, they are in very small quantities and that the first customers to enter will be the only ones served (it must be said that those who buy them are not always the ones who will use them because they are often sold on the black market, which helps to finish the month, like the resale of tickets that we have not used). This situation causes real battles to be fought in front of certain department stores, which are then ransacked. On the rare occasions when the police intervened, it was attacked by the population who burned patrol cars on several occa-

sions. There are countless accidents that have occurred. I remember in particular, in a store, the collapse of a staircase because of the too many people waiting to be served.

This situation, characterized by a lack of everything, contrasts too much with the excesses of the elite. This can only lead to serious problems. The sons of the leaders first go to special schools reserved for the new class. Then we can see them go to university accompanied by Dad's driver in the luxurious official cars. As it is impossible to isolate this golden youth, the children of the people can only suffer from these differences. Because they have to settle for two pants a year, one for going out, another for work and yet another in poor quality fabric, a single pair of shoes, most often made of synthetic leather, two poorly cut shirts whose models are so little varied that in a bus you can find ten people wearing the same one. Yes, youth suffers, perhaps more so than seniors who can remember the life they led before; they suffer from being the disinherited in the system. Next to them, the leaders' sons are dressed in the latest fashion, have Japanese tape recorders and a good number of cassettes from the world charts, including singers banned from the radio. The desires of youth are thus stimulated, in complete opposition to the education they have been given, thus causing the most cruel disillusionment; the wonders of the Western world fascinate when one is condemned to poverty. Who wasn't young? Who didn't have dreams when he was young?

All parents want the best for their children and strive to make their lives easier. No one hesitates to buy a piece of clothing or a pair of shoes on the black market, even if they know that they are the product of a theft. Some go so far as to transgress their own moral code and become thieves, both old and young. When this happens in third world or Western countries, it is given a symbolic value. But if the revolution was made to reduce inequality and poverty, what is the difference between the nationalization of a foreign company, which the Cuban government has never paid for, and

the difference between a citizen who "nationalizes" an object on his own account? In the end, only a few members of the elite have the right to enjoy "socialism", i.e. the property of the rich who have been forced to leave.

There is also in Cuba a type of offender common to all societies, those called antisocial elements, but social inequality is always responsible. If Cuban leaders lived like the rest of the people and did not benefit from special food quotas, in other words if they set an example, perhaps there would be less shoplifting? Fidel Castro is right when he says that common law offenders and counter-revolution are becoming more united every day, but I would rather say that 80% of this delinquency is the result of a feeling of rebellion against the communist system.

Many factors come into play and the most varied interpretations can always be given, but... if the highest crime rate is found among the marginalized living in the cardboard and sheet metal houses in the suburbs of Havana, the State is entirely responsible for the social situation in these areas. If the army did not swallow 60% of national cement production and 45% of timber imports, we would have long ago ended these poverty-stricken neighbourhoods. If a large part of the national budget were not squandered to maintain the 40,000 troops on the African continent, to finance insurgencies or to maintain a huge machine of repression, the situation would be much better. Leaders are selected only on the basis of the political confidence that Security Police have in them, not on their skills. In most cases, they do not have the level of education that the positions they occupy would require. They too have led the country to economic ruin. We must add the economic exploitation of the "developed" socialist countries because, in the absence of other markets, the country must accept the conditions imposed by unfavourable trade treaties.

In Cuba, delinquency is almost exclusively a social problem. Indeed, if food stores are constantly robbed, such as those for indus-

trial products, thefts from private individuals, banks and any place where cash can be obtained, represent only 3% in the statistics. Limiting this phenomenon to pure delinquency therefore seems difficult to me. On the other hand, 86% of the accused are under 24 years of age, i.e. they belong to a generation that has known only communism, and 2.6% are made up of offenders whose criminal records were already in place before the revolution. Bankruptcy of the education system? I'd rather say the whole system!

In reality, the problems are much deeper and do not amount to a simple fight against offenders. The police are unable to control sporadic attacks on spontaneously emerging stores. The assistance provided by the CDRs is nil. 90% of the population is registered in this organization to respect the conventions imposed by communism.

To compensate for the shortage of personnel, a corps of public auxiliaries recruited from the population has been created, but it is not very effective; they try to stimulate men to enter this corps by exempting them from the mobilizations that the army schedules each year, which can last up to forty-five or even ninety days. The majority agreed, as it was better to do one shift per week than spend three months in military operations, not to mention general mobilizations that could reach a total of twenty-five days for a single year.

All these factors conspire against the PNR, which has been and remains an unimportant group, at odds with the monstrous Cuban system.

The Traffic Department is the group that deals with all vehicle traffic problems throughout the country and driving licences. There is a lack of both material and staff resources. Its main workforce is in prisons, because all the signs, all the signposts... are made by a prison labour force, as well as many road works. The service has only 10 trucks to do this work all over the country. Poor signage is therefore compensated for by drastic repression. A parking ticket costs 20 pesos, a stop sign 30 pesos and a red light 100 pesos. For

speeding, you can get up to 500 pesos. For three minor offences, withdrawal of the driving licence for one year, and for two serious offences, withdrawal of the licence for an unlimited period. If we consider that the salary of a truck driver is 120 pesos per month (it is the same as for taxi drivers), we can immediately see what situation they are in. When faced with a ticket, there is no Defense, if you have the misfortune of appealing, you are invariably condemned to pay double the amount; speeding is not proven by any material fact, the visual appreciation of an agent is sufficient. In 1975, the traffic control staff was increased by incorporating 600 police officers to control traffic in a new repressive campaign. Each of these officers had a minimum quota of tickets to issue, and an internal emulation was even organized to elect the best officer based on the amount of tickets issued!

It is true that the number of accidents in the country has become alarming, but it is not only due to the irresponsibility of drivers; it must be taken into account that most vehicles are poorly maintained, without spare parts, and that they have been operating for more than twenty years in a state of worrying decay.

Shortly after the implementation of this system, a bus driver from the Lisa depot in Havana accidentally killed a motorized agent from the Traffic Department: there were about 100 buses from different lines in the capital. The next day, traffic police began a hunt with tickets against these bus drivers. It ended with a general strike of the entire depot, which paralysed half the city. Other cases occur at the level of companies that own vehicles in circulation. They had to make deals with the service agents to reduce their pressure, because the truckers no longer wanted to take the vehicles out of the car parks.

On the other hand, repression by contraventions is highly appreciated by the government, which estimates that 20% of the mass of money circulating on the black market is the amount that this policy brings to the restoration of a completely uncontrolled monetary bal-

ance. Although wages are low, there is indeed no product on sale in the country that is able to play this role, and the astronomical sums that circulate from hand to hand most often end up in the black market.

The agents of this department have also caused problems for the government. Their salaries are low, they are barely enough to live on, like the majority of the people, and do not allow them to buy in the "parallel market"²²⁶ or on the black market. So they used a variety of expedient methods. The sale of driving licences has been widely used, as has the registration of stolen cars before they are put back into circulation. There have been several instances of this department's agents being identified as involved in vehicle theft and resale.

General Technical Department of Investigations (DGTI)

The DGTI is responsible for coordinating all technical means to combat crime. He is assisted in his work by the Ballistics Laboratory, the Institute of Forensic Medicine and the Study Centre, which is responsible for all chemical analyses, fingerprints, etc.

Despite the advisers of the socialist countries, its work leaves much to be desired because it lacks modern technical resources and surveys are, in 85% of cases, based on networks of informants. In the Ballistics Laboratory, there are two old comparative microscopes and several shooting tunnels dating back to the 1940s. I believe that the specialists who use this equipment do not have a sufficient technical level. On the contrary, the Institute of Forensic Medicine has good forensic scientists, highly specialized technicians and state-of-the-art analytical equipment. All the staff working in this branch of forensic medicine are staff of the Ministry of the Interior, although sometimes they receive their salaries from the Ministry of Public Health. In addition to their purely medical work, it is known that these forensic specialists are occasionally called upon to try to keep as long as possible a few prisoners who are in a serious condition

and from whom information is sought through the sodium pentothal (truth serum).

The rest of the activities, which I could call scientists, are grouped in the Study Centre. Their level is variable, more or less good, except for the fingerprint archives, which are clearly insufficient.

The trained dog units used for police investigations are undoubtedly the DGTI's major asset, not so much because of their highly developed sense of smell, but rather because of the fear they inspire. About any theft or crime, dogs are driven to the scene to detect odours. Meanwhile, the DGTI men carried out massive roundups. The suspects are lined up next to each other and introduced to the dogs. Woe to him whose dogs recognize the smell. He is lost. Either he confesses, or the dogs throw themselves at him. These massive roundups are not always used, this way of operating is reserved for serious cases, but the confrontation between dogs and suspects is carried out systematically. I must say that I have never seen these sheepdogs make mistakes; if they can detect a smell, they are able to recognize it in the middle of a hundred others.

The terror these animals inspire is such that criminals have become accustomed, for shoplifting, to spreading pepper on their way to prevent dogs from finding a runaway; they also use detergent powder or oil.

But these dogs are not always effective; after the first twenty-four hours, if something has not been found to make them feel, there is no way they can find a smell. In these cases, things become much more complicated for the unfortunate suspects. The investigating officers try to find evidence by all means to provide at least some evidence to those in charge of the interrogations. When they fail to do so, they lock the suspects in a cold room until they talk. This special treatment is called "Penguin". The cold is not enough to be deadly, but in an atmosphere of 8 or 10°, a naked man can only feel desperate after a few hours. Isolation in dark rooms is also used for

very long periods of time. Repeat offenders for whom confessions cannot be obtained, while officers are convinced of their guilt, are beaten mercilessly until they confess. It has become systematic, when detainees are kept in police station guards, to beat them hard so that they "mature" so that they are as soft as sheep when they fall into the hands of the DGTI. The population is beginning to fear this kind of indiscriminate treatment.

I have been familiar with the case of a party activist, the head of his work centre, who, after a two-year stay in Angola, gave a party at the home of one of his friends. There was so much noise that the police had to intervene. After being arrested, the host was taken to the police station and beaten by three members of the DGTI. When he was released, after 24 hours of detention, he was covered with bruises all over his body, he could hardly open his eyes and had lost 3 teeth. Back home, he grabbed his gun and returned to the police station where he killed 4 men and seriously injured 5 before being neutralized. The trial took place in camera, and he was sentenced to five years' house arrest. These personal revenge attacks against DGTI members or the police are beginning to become frequent in Havana as well as in other major cities across the country.

In response to this growing wave of theft, DGTI is replacing the lack of technicians who should handle investigations with brutal acts against detainees. In Cuba, police custody has no limits. You can keep a person in detention as long as you want, there is no law that protects citizens. There have been criminal cases or major thefts where suspects have remained in prison for ten years without trial.

Until 1969, there was an institution called the "Conseil supérieur de la défense sociale", headed by Captain Suzarte. Thanks to his intervention, any individual could be put in prison or on a state farm for *peligrosidad*²²⁷. The term was sufficient, there was no need for evidence or judgment. This magic word of *peligrosidad* allowed everything.

This Council was abolished in 1969, but peligrosidad came back into fashion in December 1975, at the time of the First CCP Congress. In Havana alone, 27,000 people were arrested for this reason and only released several months later.

When the 11th Festival of Youth and Students was held in the Cuban capital in 1978 and the meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1979, more than 30,000 people were locked in prisons several months in advance and 39,000 were banned from the city. 40,000 others were arrested by the DGTI and received a serious warning. They were placed under house arrest with a prohibition to leave under penalty of severe punishment. The monitoring officials in the RDCs were responsible for verifying the execution of government orders.

At the beginning of the revolution, these brutal methods were not used, but from 1968 onwards the situation gradually deteriorated, and if this continues, in a few years' time, people will murder and torture in Cuba and in other Latin American countries. When public institutions lose all moral sense and respect for the most basic human rights, there is a great risk of evolution towards dictatorship. Without a doubt, I believe that the repression in Cuba will have its "death squads" and its official executioners, protected by the government.

Fidel Castro has already entered the stage of the struggle for the survival of the regime and, as in ancient Rome, the decline of the Empire does not bode well. This is the beginning of the end.

"Jails and Prisons" ²²⁸

It is in this Prison Department that all the sadists of Cuban communism met. At the beginning of the revolution, the past of the Batista dictatorship remained too present in people's minds, with its disastrous consequences, deaths and torture, for us to immediately fall back into the same trap, but after some time, as the revolutionary process became more radical and fell into the orbit of interna-

tional communism, things began to change and cruelty became the common denominator of all Cuban prisons and the lot of all political or common law prisoners.

The opposition to the government headed by Fidel Castro soon took an alarming turn and the harshest repressive measures were immediately taken, as it can be said that the country has been under siege since 1960, when all the institutions and laws that protected the proper functioning of justice were abolished (they have still not been taken over). Since then, justice has only served to justify the settling of scores between the two groups, the one in power and those who have been against it for twenty years.

From the beginning of operations in the Escambray Mountains range in 1961, the island's prison system became a brutal organization. The fortress of La Cabaña, built in the 18th century, and the fortress of Morro, which dates from the 17th century, have been transformed into prisons. The military architects of this past era certainly did not know the most elementary principles of hygiene and located the dungeons near the ditches of the fortress, damp and without light, where all the residual water from the building passes. It is behind these 4-metre thick stone walls that political prisoners are interned. Otherwise, they are sent to the model prison on Isla de Pinos.

Ordinary prisoners are placed in Castillo del Principe, also a fortress of the colonial period, completed in the mid-19th century, and in the former prisons of the Republic's time. Soon, the number of inmates in these prisons exceeded all the figures forecast at the time of their construction. The model prison on Ile des Pins²²⁹ managed to accommodate 25,000 men after the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, La Cabaña and El Morro 30,000 others. For ordinary crimes, there are about 26,000 people living in identical prison conditions.

Fidel Castro himself ordered that they be given little food, just enough to prevent them from starving to death, because the govern-

ment was not willing to feed these parasites. It is therefore the families who must deprive themselves of their already fair quotas or buy food on the black market to bring them some food during the visits, if they are allowed.

It was finally thought that it would be best to organize forced-labor farms (because they cannot be given another name) to intern those who would accept rehabilitation plans. To force this criminal population to accept this modern-day slave work, all kinds of pressure were used. Food was further reduced, family visits were banned, correspondence was reduced to zero, and all communication with the outside world was cut off. Physical abuse became more frequent. Guards beat detainees for no reason, and night searches continued all night to prevent detainees from sleeping. The lights were turned off at 9 a.m. and silence ordered; at 3:30 a.m., the alarm clock was sounded, and during this interval, the excavations followed one another one after the other, preventing normal sleep. To further the offence, they wanted to force the unfortunate to wear the uniform of Batista's former soldiers, but the vast majority refused, preferring to remain in their underpants rather than give in to such a requirement, unacceptable to those who wanted to keep their dignity. Thousands of men began a hunger strike and refused to leave prison. The guards' response was brutal. Between the various forms of rebellion and hunger strikes, many political prisoners died without the authorities intervening to avoid this fatal outcome.

Those who accepted the rehabilitation plans were subjected to slave labour that destroyed their bodies and exhausted their physical reserves. Those who chose to stay in the prisons became the living dead. It can be said that none of those who passed through Fidel Castro's prisons escaped unharmed.

A former PSP activist, Commander Tarráu, was chosen to head this department. This sinister character settled in the model prison on Isla de los Pinos where he created a kingdom of terror. He went so far as to undermine the buildings, warning the prisoners that at

the slightest attempt at invasion by the United States, he would blow them all up. Almost 25,000 men now knew that they were living at the mercy of a madman out of hundreds of kilos of dynamite.

Members of the rebel army working for the Jails and Prisons department are counted. In general, the personnel who are part of this corps are chosen from among former communist militants in terms of executives and officers. The rest of the troops are chosen from former members of the LCB (Lutte contre les bandits²³⁰) who lost a family member in the fighting. On the one hand, we can count on class hatred and on the other hand, on the most primitive "vendetta"²³¹.

It would be impossible to list all the rebellions that have been reduced in blood. This horrible chapter in the history of communism should be told by men like Commander Hubert Matos, who spent twenty years in prison, no one knows him as well as he does.

Tarráu, a simple, totally unknown communist activist, obtained the highest military rank from the Ministry of Interior and won a seat on the CCP Central Committee, but how much suffering did this rise cost? I believe that we will never know the exact number of political prisoners who died in Cuba's prisons.

Mental torture is sometimes taken to extremes. Prisoners who have refused to work despite pressure are serving long sentences in the most difficult living conditions. When they reach the end of their sentence, they should be legally released. In fact, things are different. The law on "laziness" is applied to them. Because they refused to work, they are sentenced to an additional two years in prison. If they continue to refuse, two more years, and so on indefinitely. In other words, they are sentenced to life imprisonment.

While Fidel Castro recently decided to release political prisoners in Cuba, he did so only to recover the \$100 million in tourism money earned on the backs of Cuban exiles, who return to their homeland or visit family members.

Many people in Europe will think that I am exaggerating about prisons in Cuba. But in America, everyone knows the horrors of communism in Cuba. The massive release of political prisoners is already providing valuable testimony from the survivors of this epic.

Farms of forced labour in which prisoners are subjected to superhuman efforts, fortress prisons such as La Cabaña or El Morro, where thousands of men are crammed into the worst conditions, spending years without seeing the light of day, the prison for women in Guanajay where political and common law prisoners are deliberately involved... the innocent victims of the trials prepared in advance, those accused without evidence, the new prisons where terror reigns, the truth will soon be known. The Cuban people ignore this secret aspect, it is only recently that the sinister role of the "Jails and Prisons" department has begun to be discovered. Many thought that the stories that were circulating were all lies, but they had to face the facts with the release of the many prisoners.

I have carried out a very detailed investigation on this prison department in Cuba that I would have liked to publish; but I believe it is better to let the prisoners tell their own stories.

Department of Immigration and Foreigners

The Department of Emigration and Foreigners serves as a refuge for thieves from the Ministry of the Interior. Shortly after entering this service, you move from one house to another, find yourself with a car, dress in style or with imported fabrics, distinguish yourself by your jewellery and throw money away with your hands. All these changes come from the unfortunate candidates for exile who pay them in the hope that the promises made to them will be kept and that they will be able to leave Cuban hell. There are people who have been waiting for this authorization since 1959, locked up on the prison island, or trying to bribe immigration authorities to try to buy a desired exit for so long.

It is not always those who want to leave who make the first proposals. Sometimes, an office manager has advance knowledge of the lists of people who will be authorized to leave. Immediately, in agreement with elements outside the Emigration services, he proposed to those on the list, but who were not yet aware of it, to buy their exit. At other times, speeding up bureaucratic processes to acquire all the papers (which are deliberately slowed down) has to be expensive. With 10,000 pesos or \$3,000, gold, jewellery for the same value, etc., it is possible to get officials to offer authorizations more quickly for the signature of an official who gives exit permits.

There are cases where these officials receive huge sums of money without making the slightest effort to help with the exit. Unfortunately, they are the most numerous. The officials of this service can offer a certain person a way out if he buys them a car, or if he exchanges his house for the apartment where they live, and a thousand other similar small processes. If a complication arises and the emigration authorities believe that there is a serious impediment to exit, the sums they are asking for are astronomical and these unfortunate people must pay by trusting in the good faith of these officials, because no claim is possible. If someone has the misfortune to denounce a fraud to which he has been subjected, the guilty parties will certainly be condemned, but he too will be condemned for attempting to bribe the authorities, and his release will be definitively refused; after all, he is only a "traitor" who wants to leave the country.

This trade in selling services to help people leave is fruitful; therefore, few emigration officials resist the lure of such great profits, and even if the replacements know that they risk very severe sentences, this trafficking continues. The convictions involved two heads of offices and purges of up to 90% of the department's staff. Although they are closely monitored for sudden changes in their standard of living indicating that they are engaged in unethical traf-

ficking, they are taking their chances. They are often suspected, but cannot be proven. These officials are then transferred elsewhere.

The Emigration Department is divided into two distinct groups. The first, which covers about 80% of the staff, deals with the bureaucratic part. It is directed by Efrain Quiñones. The second, 20% of the staff, is composed of members of the State Security. It is under the direction of the Chinese Hans. Its job is to investigate enough to get a broad enough idea of a family's profile before granting it exit, and to monitor, through one delegate per office, that irregularities are not committed.

As for the Foreigners' Office, it is officially responsible for providing them with all documents, but in reality it is a counter-intelligence sub-office that carries out systematic surveillance in close coordination with the services of the "G" Division and the intelligence services.

Each province has an Office of Emigration and Foreigners, which receives emigration requests and carries out the necessary investigations before forwarding the files to Havana's management, which makes the decisions. Despite monitoring, it is impossible to avoid irregularities and fraud, especially in the interior of the country where housing problems are enormous.

When an official from the party, the army or the Ministry of the Interior is transferred, he must be found a house, and the only way for the government to do this is to let a family go and take their home. Officials throw themselves like birds of prey on their victims, they then look for the best home, the most beautiful furniture. Sometimes, it is a department that is looking for space to set up offices, or a provincial-level company, but the principle remains the same, we favour the exit of the most opulent, thus recreating a segregation between social classes, which favours, just as in the society that we claim to abolish, the richest.

However, it is the reason of State that comes into play. 70% of the houses on Varadero beach were still privately owned. In order to

nationalize these superb properties, the government facilitated the exit of all their owners. The same thing happened with the beaches of Guanabo, Santa María, etc. In the "frozen" neighbourhoods where the power elite lives, the exit of all residents was also facilitated to better isolate these areas from prying eyes. Often senior officials ask for the exit of a particular family to give their home to a member of their own family or an employee, this is quite frequent.

The reasons for influencing a decision to leave the country are so variable and change so often that, despite the fight against this type of private fraud, they end up being confused with the fraud practised by the State itself, which first set an example; and, today, no one is in a position to untangle the web of priority requests. All the control and monitoring systems that have been established are useless in the face of the privileges of the ruling class that is implementing "socialism".

For candidates for exile who have neither the means to pay bribes nor beautiful properties, waiting can become a real ordeal; their demands forgotten at the bottom of a drawer, age there without anyone thinking of following them up, or they get lost; it is then necessary to start all over again. The wait can be very long. It takes a minimum of six years, even if security informants do not consider you "dangerous". Indeed, the simple fact of having a member of his family already in exile, perhaps in contact with anti-Castro groups, is enough to prohibit the exit from Cuba. Families whose members have emigrated clandestinely suffer the same fate.

When you apply for emigration, you really have to be brave. You must submit a letter from the management of your place of work that ensures Emigration that they are well aware of your decision to leave. This is, of course, the best way to lose your job and not be able to find another one. Until 1971, all candidates for exile were sent to agricultural work. The inhabitants of Havana had to work for several years before leaving. Often they were removed from their work centres only to deprive them of their means of subsistence, to put

pressure on them and to make them renounce their project "spontaneously". Another cruelty is that an Emigration Commission comes to take an inventory of your house, then sometimes does it again several years later, but it doesn't matter, before you leave; nothing, absolutely nothing, must be missing; if, by chance, an electrical appliance breaks down, it must be repaired, if not removed; often, old American appliances, without spare parts, thus play an important role in a family's fate; these parts must be paid for on the black market. It is also important to plan that you will be brought a phone bill or rent at the last minute that magically falls off. You have to pay or you lose the opportunity to travel.

Emigrating from Cuba is a real adventure, but also something like a lottery, because in the end, it is chance that decides.

This situation has undoubtedly changed since the events of the beginning of the year, as more than 110,000 people have fled the country, and this example has given hope to all those who had given up because of the hassles of emigration. Today, a considerable number of Cubans are ready to leave the paradise of socialism.

NOTES

- 1 Carlos Franqui: PSP activist and journalist from Hoy, the official party organ, until 1947 when he was expelled. Later, he joined the movements of left-wing intellectuals and ended up as propaganda leader in Sierra Maestra. At the beginning of the revolution, he was appointed director of the newspaper Revolución and remained so until 1962. In 1967, he was called back to power by Fidel to organize the Cultural Congress in Havana. Later, he applied for political asylum in Italy. He has written several books on Cuba.
- 2 Name of the movement led by Fidel Castro during the guerilla war; it corresponds to the date (July 26, 1953) of the attack on the Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba.
- 3 La Empresa, located on the outskirts of the city; it had 7,000 hectares.
- 4 Survivor of the assault on the presidential palace on March 13, 1957. Ambassador of Cuba to the USSR, later Minister of Transport; currently, he has been stripped of all power.
- 5 Triple A: we don't know why this group took this name. It can be assumed that he meant to refer to professional baseball (the highest level with that name).
- 6 PSP: People's Socialist Party, new name of the CCP (Cuban Communist Party) after 1945.
- 7 "The Chinese."
- 8 To music by Pancho Allegre.
- 9 "The little cowboy."
- 10 "They killed us a hundred men."

- 11 After the revolution, he worked in Guevara's offices. Later he held important positions in the political section of Minfar (Ministry of Armed Forces) but due to his position in China, he was removed from office. He worked as a psychologist in various hospitals in Havana. He is currently working at the Havana Heart Institute.
- 12 Columbia: Havana's main military fortress.
- 13 La Cabaña: another fortress in the city centre.
- 14 Fidel Castro returned to Havana with his column and the rest of the rebel army on January 9, a week later.
- 15 "The tooth puller. "Because of the dentist's work he did in the Sierra where he pulled out his teeth without anesthesia.
- 16 Exiled.
- 17 Exiled.
- 18 Milián: Currently, he holds the same position as Party Secretary in Las Villas province, and is a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee.
- 19 Armando Acosta: he was the first party secretary in the province of Oriente. In 1967, he was stripped of the charge for fraudulent use of the state budget, which caused a scandal in the province. Despite this, he is currently head of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Central Committee.
- 20 "The baby," Captain Lopez.
- 21 Organisation of the PCC for youth.
- 22 The highest rank was that of commander.
- 23 University student directory of March 13.

- 24 Granma: name of the boat from Mexico that landed Fidel and 82 men at Playa Coloradas on November 30, 1956.
- 25 FIRE: Federation of University Students, founded in 1923.
- 26 Radio station in Havana.
- 27 Menoyo: he left clandestinely in 1960 and founded the Alpha 66 group in Miami; he then landed in Cuba in 1967 to incite a revolt; captured, he was sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment.
- 28 "Cow-eaters."
- 29 Carlos Franqui published a testimony under the title The Twelve; in reality the survivors were more numerous, but he did not want to add the names of several deserters from the July 26 Movement.
- 30 Very famous beach in Cuba.
- 31 Dr. Urbain Carmona (from Calixto Garcia Hospital) and Dr. Rodolfo Caminos (Clinico Quirurgico Hospital).
- 32 In Italian in the text.
- 33 See Fidel's speech on "La jeunesse dorée", Granma's weekly summary, in French, of 28 September 1968.
- 34 Of Chinese origin, career officer. He resisted with 50 men in the small barracks of Yaguajay against the assaults of Camilo's troops for ten days; when he surrendered, he had 46 wounded; they were without water and food and had exhausted their ammunition.
- 35 Currently in exile.
- 36 The first team was made up of: Manuel Urrutia, President of the Republic; Miró Cardona, Prime Minister (exiled); Roberto Agramonte, Foreign Affairs (exiled); Enrique Oltuski, Minister

of Communications, currently a junior official at the Ministry of Fisheries; Armando Hart, Minister of Education (he held various important positions in government and in the party, recently removed as Minister of Culture); Luis M. Busch, Secretary of the Council of Ministers (exiled); Humberto Sori Marin, Commander of the Rebel Army, Minister of Agriculture (shot); Faustino Pérez, Commander of the Rebel Army, Minister for the Recovery of Property of Malevolvers (now a second-class civil servant); Augusto Martínez Sánchez, Commander of the Rebel Army, Minister of Defense (has disappeared from public life); as expert consultants in the branches of Economics, Trade and Justice, Drs Regino Boti (deceased), Raúl Cepero Bonilla (deceased) and Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado (he replaced Manuel Urrutia as President of the Republic and remained in this position for a very long time until Fidel recently assumed the position of President of the State Council; currently he is Minister of Justice and member of the party's political bureau).

37 Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

38 Famous tango singer of Argentine nationality.

39 Tony Santiago will be abandoned in the open sea in the Gulf of Mexico by an anti-Castro group that detected him during a clandestine trip to the United States. He drowned.

40 In 1961.

41 Favorite drink of the Argentinians.

42 "Have a special conversation."

43 "Down with the Chinese woman!"

44 Cojimar beach district, near Havana.

45 Captain López.

- 46 Minister of "Recovery of assets from malversers".
- 47 Minister of Construction.
- 48 Military leader.
- 49 The meeting was attended by Blas Roca (First Secretary of the PSP), Anibal Escalante (Second Secretary of the PSP), Joaquín Ordoqui (Commander of the Army and Member of the Political Bureau of the PSP), Carlos Rafael Rodríguez (Captain of the Army and Member of the Political Bureau of the PSP) and Lazaro Peña (Member of the Political Bureau of the PSP, General Secretary of the CTC and Vice-President of the World Trade Union Federation).
- 50 Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
- 51 José Martí: Apostle of the Fatherland since the War of Independence in 1895. Poet and writer, precursor of modernism.
- 52 See chapter II.
- 53 The White Rose; Christian Democratic Movement; November 30 Movement; Revolutionary Recovery Movement.
- 54 Czechoslovakia had serious problems with France because of the Lidice ship carrying weapons to Indochina.
- 55 "You old bastard."
- 56 Student Directory.
- 57 A review of the pre-revolutionary period's large circulation (50,000 copies).
- 58 "That's enough!"
- 59 April 17, 1961.
- 60 "My unpublished memories."

- 61 Study house for the works of José Martí.
- 62 Río Bravo: border between Mexico and the United States, which separates Latin America from North America.
- 63 It allowed the United States, whenever it considered that its interests were in danger, to intervene in any part of Latin America.
- 64 University student federation.
- 65 About \$6,000.
- 66 University student directory.
- 67 Clandestine organization that fought against the dictator Machado; considered extreme right-wing and fascist in tendency.
- 68 Archives of the Revolution, document 3143, History of the CCP.
- 69 "Young Cuba."
- 70 "Iberian Caribbean."
- 71 As a curiosity, here is the list:
- Cuban nationality: José Pérez Pérez, merchant: Aníbal García Robledo, lawyer: Evaristo Peña Pérez, trader; Nicolás Pérez García, business traveller.
- Panamanian nationality: Augusto Zaldivar Ray, journalist: Dr Andrés Consolación Torres, doctor: Tolomeo Peralta Pérez, trader.
- Costa Rican nationality: Americo Silva Tene, writer.
- Salvadorian nationality: Pedro María García Cueto, trader.
- American nationality: Ray O'Hara, Trade Officer.
- 72 It is dated August 4, 1942: the text is in Russian.

- 73 Iglesias: in 1959, he began working at the Ministry of the Recovery of Malversers' Property; later he became Head of Sales of "Cubalse", a company responsible for selling works of art abroad under the direct control of Celia Sánchez, Secretary of the Council of Ministers. It was assumed that during his negotiations with Joe Leggo, a Canadian "businessman" who helped Cuba during the economic blockade, he embezzled \$2 million and had it deposited in Switzerland; arrested in 1975, he confessed to having taken \$950,000 from Levi that he lost at gambling, without confessing to embezzlement, although he had signed a contract for a safe in his name in a Swiss bank.
- 74 Figures put forward by Iglesias during his interrogations. In Juan Andreu's documents, the sum of 180 million appears. In the Marinello archives, where he laments the lack of financial support from "Caribbean" for the PC, the amount advanced is 240 million.
- 75 Soviet agent in the United States, exchanged for the pilot of the U2 spy plane, Gary Power, in 1961.
- 76 Ivan and Yuri are the only foreigners working in the Central Committee's restricted area.
- 77 From 1946 to 1950.
- 78 The "Shark".
- 79 "The priest."
- 80 "Butterfly."
- 81 Operational centre.
- 82 "Edmond Ant... the ant world..."

- 83 Flavio Bravo: during the guerrilla war in Sierra Maestra, he was in charge of the Sierra Recruit School in Minas del Frío. Currently, he is Deputy Prime Minister.
- 84 MSR: Revolutionary Socialist Movement.
- 85 UIR: Revolutionary insurreccional union.
- 86 Alfredo Guevara: Raúl Castro was recruited jointly with Flavio Bravo in 1951. At the beginning of the revolution, he became director of the ICAIC (Cuban Institute of the Film Industry) and, since 1978, he has held the position of deputy minister of culture.
- 87 Amador García: held various positions at the National Bank of Cuba (BNC) after the revolution. Detained for conspiracy in 1963, he remained in prison until 1978. On several occasions, he asked to leave the country without obtaining it.
- 88 Eustaquio Díaz: Colonel of the Minint (Ministry of the Interior) in the province of Santiago de Cuba.
- 89 Pancho: short for Francisco; Bacardí: traditional name for Cuban rum.
- 90 Currently member of the Central Committee secretariat.
- 91 Hermida, Minister of State.
- 92 The friend in question is Luis Conte Aguero, a local radio speaker, closely involved in politics. He was nicknamed "the strongest voice of Oriente" (the most eastern province of the island).
- 93 Revolution Monday.
- 94 Certificate of revolutionary aptitude.

- 95 They sold snowplows as street sweepers to the Ministry of Industry.
- 96 Human: information received by the secret services through information work of human origin.
- 97 Mr. Piñeiro: captain of the rebel army, head of the secret services from 1962 to 1974 where he became head of the American Department of the Central Committee.
- 98 Kindergartens created by the revolution.
- 99 "To the post!"
- 100 Cara linda: "Pretty face" (he was actually disfigured by a horrible scar).
- 101 General of sad memory, because of his cruel action in the province.
- 102 "The Moor."
- 103 See chapter III.
- 104 The Carrier.
- 105 "City of the Most Holy Trinity."
- 106 Long live Christ the King.
- 107 Sugar cane harvesting.
- 108 Fight against bandits.
- 109 1,500 from the province of Las Villas and 1,500 from the province of Camagüey.
- 110 Former communist activist. In Sierra Maestra, he commanded a small group of women called "las Marianas".

- 111 Franck Bender: CIA agent who maintained contact between the Agency and the brigade.
- 112 Garcia Lines.
- 113 Radio station maintained by the CIA on Swan Island.
- 114 "La Baie des Cochons", Haynes JOHNSON, Ed. Robert Laffont, 1965.
- 115 Los hombres mas guapos del mundo.
- 116 See The Vietnam War, paper prepared by the Senate Republican Policy Committee, released in Washington, DC, May 2, 1967, page 39.
- 117 Among these books, we can mention that by Arthur Schlesinger : A thousand days, John Kennedy in the White House (Houghton Mifflin C°, Boston, 1965), that by Theodore Sorensen : Kennedy (Harper and Row, New York, 1965), that by Robert Kennedy : 13 days, the Cuban Missile crisis (Mac Millan and C°, Londres, 1969, English edition).
- 118 Better known as the Guantanamo base, which is the nearby city.
- 119 "The old man."
- 120 "Nikita, sissy, you don't take back what you gave!"
- 121 Founded under Batista.
- 122 ORI: Integrated revolutionary organizations.
- 123 More than in the automotive capital, Detroit.
- 124 Currently, the government is nationalizing the land granted by this law as well as the land that was still private to stabilize all production.

- 125 Ed. du Seuil, 1970.
- 126 Economic mutual aid community.
- 127 "On the new battlefields, I will carry the faith you have instilled in me."
- 128 "Old spoilers."
- 129 The only existing government union.
- 130 Glassborough: From June 26 to 28, 1967, Kosygin talks with Johnson, Defense Minister Mac Namara and Secretary of State Rusk and other leaders about the Six Day War and Cuba.
- 131 "It seems to me that the Frenchman has spoken too much."
- 132 Rebel Army Investigation Department.
- 133 Edit. Robert Laffont, 1966.
- 134 Edit. Robert Laffont, 1970.
- 135 "The people who fight with such courage deserve victory."
- 136 Director of a major Italian publishing house that was the first to publish Dr. Jivago in the West.
- 137 C. Sanchez: Secretary of the Council of Ministers who kept Fidel's personal archives.
- 138 A French ship carrying a load of Belgian weapons; it was sabotaged in March 1960 by the CIA in the port of Havana.
- 139 Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces.
- 140 For the 66-67 harvest, the world's largest cane sugar producers, in millions of tonnes, were:
- | | |
|--------|------|
| Cuba | 6129 |
| Brazil | 4113 |

Mexico	2538
Australia	2446
India	2360
China	1850
S. Africa	1628
Philippines	1570
EEUU	1102
Hawai	1089
Argentina	1070
Perú	775
Formosa	770
Dominic. R	759
Puerto Rico	740
Others	8147
World production:	37128

141 25% is reserved for the army.

142 About 450 grams.

143 See further on.

144 Corresponds to the elementary patent in France.

145 Code name I have used quite often for missions in Latin America.

146 In the Middle East.

147 Soviet-made machine gun.

148 Former College of Marists.

149 18%, figure for 1978. Since 1975, 217,428 people have been declared "surplus".

150 Ideas set out by American President Monroe (1817-1825) who predicted that all Latin American countries would fall into the

orbit of the United States, the basis of the doctrine that bears his name.

- 151 Operation Carlota: name given symbolically in memory of an Angolan slave who fought in the Cuban War of Independence in 1868.
- 152 Disease due to a virus. Transmitted by a mosquito, also present in tropical America.
- 153 On the day of my expulsion, the premises of the small clandestine printing house will be taken over by the police and all the equipment confiscated.
- 154 See Part Three for a description of all these law enforcement agencies.
- 155 One of the two women who participated in the attack on the Moncada barracks; member of the party's CC and president of the House of the Americas.
- 156 Milk distribution company.
- 157 Former military barracks of Batista transformed into a school.
- 158 He is referring here to Melba Hernández's suicide.
- 159 Currently private secretary of Fidel and his new travel companion. At the same time, he is Minister of Food.
- 160 Rebel Army Research Department.
- 161 Prisons.
- 162 Havana district located in the center.
- 163 A unique diploma awarded by the Ministry of Interior in the Soviet Union.

- 164 Published in Granma on July 22, 1977. Official organ of the Cuban Communist Party.
- 165 "K": I will explain below how this panel works.
- 166 National Telephone Company.
- 167 Department in charge of all direct actions.
- 168 Juan Abrahantes.
- 169 The secrecy that prevails in the English secret services is well known.
- 170 MI-6: founded in Victorian times.
- 171 Ration booklet.
- 172 Revolutionary Defense Committee.
- 173 Department of Social Wounds.
- 174 The militant whore.
- 175 The "fags".
- 176 "Earthworms". This is what Castro called counterrevolutionaries and all those who did not agree with the new system.
- 177 State tourism company.
- 178 Infrared is imperceptible to the human eye, but the level of light it gives is enough to film.
- 179 The Great House.
- 180 Dredging.
- 181 30 to 45 seconds of these rapid-fire transmitters correspond to one hour of a normal transmitter.
- 182 "Idiot, I made you walk...."

- 183 For engineers only.
- 184 Including informants.
- 185 Large avenue at the edge of the sea, in Havana.
- 186 Rodríguez: Currently Minister of Mining Industry.
- 187 La Torre (The Tower).
- 188 INIT: National Institute of the Tourism Industry.
- 189 Official tourism agency in the USSR.
- 190 "We will win."
- 191 "The man with the sweet grass."
- 192 Charging the prosecutor against all political prisoners.
- 193 "The Gimp."
- 194 Walkers.
- 195 DGI: General Department of Inteligencia.
- 196 Name given to the large rural properties of South America.
- 197 This is called the person who needs to be eliminated.
- 198 Direct shot: when the trajectory curve does not exceed two metres in height.
- 199 One of the last residential districts built in Havana.
- 200 J.E. Maseti: he had been one of the fighters in Sierra Maestra and one of the founders of the Prensa Latina Agency.
- 201 Order of the Che.
- 202 His wife.

- 203 Attacker of the Moncada barracks, was part of the Granma expedition and leader of a column in Sierra Maestra. Currently Chief of General Staff and First Secretary of the Party in Oriente Province, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, Head of the Inspection Commission of the Central Committee, but he prefers to compose songs.
- 204 He called himself Ramón for the occasion.
- 205 OLAS: Solidarity Organization with Latin America.
- 206 Latin American Solidarity Organization.
- 207 See previous chapter.
- 208 An out of commission B-26 aircraft is used to study the best way to hijack an aircraft by taking passengers hostage.
- 209 Personal safety of managers; see below.
- 210 Emilio Aragonés: he was then appointed Director of the Fisheries Institute. Currently, Ambassador to Argentina.
- 211 Its first base was located in the Miramar district (Havana) on 49th Street.
- 212 This escort reports directly to the army.
- 213 From this age, the litre of milk is replaced by 6 boxes of concentrated milk per month, and from 11 years old, by 3 boxes. However, the State maintains a parallel market at a price 5 times higher than the usual price.
- 214 Evaristo Centeno, from the Pico Cuba in Sierra Maestra; Fidel's personal messenger during the guerrilla war.
- 215 One of the founders of the July 26 Movement, Fidel's secretary in Sierra Maestra. After the advent of the revolution, she became secretary of the Presidency and secretary of the Council

of Ministers; until her recent death, she was one of the most powerful people in the regime.

216 Hurricane.

217 See Part I, chap. IV.

218 Official calculation of Cuban refugees in the United States.

219 Clandestine leaks are condemned as political offences.

220 Ministry of the Interior.

221 Mosquitoes of the West Indies.

222 A small port near Varadero where a sea bridge had been organized, allowing the departure of a few thousand people in a few days.

223 Small island west of Florida.

224 See first part of the book.

225 Gallego: Galician, a term used in Cuba to describe anyone of Spanish origin.

226 These are relatively new stores where the state sells some basic necessities at higher prices, a kind of black market organized by the government.

227 Peligrosidad: refers to people who may be a danger to the diet.

228 The original terms in Spanish, "Cárceles y Prisiones", roughly translated as "Jails and Prisons", are two terms that could be translated merely as prisons, but while the first word ("cárceles") has the much broader meaning of any place where a person can be confined, such as state farms, the second ("prisiones") corresponds to the same word in English (prisons) and

could mean dungeons or cells in relation to prisons as defined in the department's role.

229 Now closed and transformed into a museum to Fidel Castro's glory.

230 See Part I, chap. IV.

231 In Italian in the text.

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