CUBA AND THE REGIONAL BALANCE OF POWER

by

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The balance of power in the Caribbean, normally described as hegemony in favor of the United States,[1] is clearly changing as the result of regional and international trends. A partial catalog of the international trends would include detente, the emergence of a multipolar world, new forms of international power embodied in economic resources, the post-Vietnam dialogue on the efficacy of US-promoted nation-building efforts in societies of distinct cultural hue, and the schisms in world Communism.

The Caribbean region itself is experiencing a unique historical transition, the general outlines of which may be sketched as follows:

- The partial removal of a traditional European security presence (England and Holland).
- The emergence of newly independent former colonies, some as highly vulnerable microstates.
- The problem of maritime jurisdiction, as economic zones extend to 200 miles, although some fishing, continental shelf, and seabed exploitation issues remain unresolved.
- A region-wide commitment, albeit differentially expressed, to the goals of nation-building.
- The growth of Venezuelan economic importance and its political implications.
- A Latin American outcry against the inadequacies of the present inter-American system.
- The slow but certain discrediting of rightist authoritarian regimes traditionally closely linked to the United States.
- A resurgence of politically related racial and ethnic tensions in some parts of the former British Caribbean.
- The waning of consensus in favor of collective security embodied in the 1947 Rio Treaty.
- The emergence of radical reformist regimes.
- Changes in the US posture in Panama.
- The expansion of Cuban influence in the area.

Of critical importance in understanding the new Caribbean environment is the new Cuban role. The objective of this essay is to survey the dynamics of this role in view of Angola, Cuba's larger international role, institutional developments within Cuba, Soviet-Cuban relations, and interactions with a number of Caribbean countries. It will show that Cuba is becoming more pragmatic in its Caribbean dealings, and will suggest that further Angola-type involvement is not likely in the area.

THE IRONIES AND LESSONS OF CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA

Observers of the normally quiescent arena of inter-American affairs reacted with a mixture of confusion and distress at the level and the timing of Cuba's extrahemispheric involvement that became evident after the Portuguese formally and hastily relinquished the remnants of their authority in Luanda on November 11, 1975. It is often emphasized that international relations is not a zero-sum game. Accordingly, for the West, the loss of Angola to the Soviet/Cuban-backed Marxist MPLA and the establishment of Soviet/Cuban influence on a massive scale in Southern Africa must be balanced against certain developments. Most are positive, some are simply hopeful, and some may inspire reflection and produce wisdom. In their totality, they may be termed the ironies and

lessons of Angola. They frequently overlap and often appear to contradict, yet their intent is to highlight the historical magnitude of Soviet/Cuban-escalated involvement in Angola and to provide a context of dilemmas confronting the United States in the conduct of its world affairs. These developments are:

• Thwarted at subversion in the Western Hemisphere (the Andes never became the Sierra Maestra of the Americas), Cuba nevertheless effectively carried national liberation to another continent and has assumed what appears to be a permanent foothold in Southern Africa. Largely contained in this hemisphere and thought to have a basically defensive military establishment, Cuba, thanks to Soviet logistical support, functions in the role of surrogate for Soviet combat forces and performs an international security role far out of proportion to the size of its military establishment and its population base of somewhat over nine million.

• Cuba, only 90 miles from the most formidable military power in history, has become the first hemispheric nation to project power overseas and to actively engage in hostilities to support the foreign policy objectives of a major adversary of the United States—a contingency not covered by any interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine nor anticipated by the Rio Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance.

• Soviet/Cuban intervention in Angola, which induced the Ford Administration to strike the term detente from its political vocabulary, may provide an additional nudge for some form of US-Cuban detente, possibly leading to the restoration of relations. Thus the questionable value of detente with the duplicitous Soviets has been forcibly underscored by a country which the United States has attacked, quarantined, ostracized, and embargoed for the last decade and a half.

• In US policythinking and policymaking circles, African affairs are receiving more attention and a great deal more activism than before, as evidenced by former Secretary of State Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy to pressure Rhodesia into a peaceful transition to majority rule and United Nations Ambassador Young's recent efforts in Southern Africa. In addition, Western leaders and the new realities of African politics have exerted greater pressure on the defenders of *apartheid* to liberalize the system of socio-political control in South Africa.

• A sobering reappraisal of the dialectics of detente in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy and the accompanying range of issues in US-Soviet affairs have also focused attention on the overseas expansion of Soviet military capabilities, with special emphasis on their strategic designs in the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. Strategically, the high-level Soviet-Cuban political and military coordination required for the transshipment of 10-15,000 Cuban troops over long distances represents the first Soviet combat deployment of size outside of the Eurasian landmass, even though no Soviet troops were involved.[2] Such an event does not necessarily augur a repetition, but it does demonstrate the capability, the confidence, the intent, and the precedent for it.

• The post-Vietnam neoisolationist drift prevalent among the American people and the US Congress has recently yielded to a more realistic acceptance of the leadership role that the United States must exercise in the preservation of international order and peace.

• Angola paradoxically confirms Vietnam as a watershed in American history. The latitude afforded the executive in the conduct of foreign policy has been challenged and reduced by a Congress eager to avoid other Vietnams and their needless and wasteful commitments. A major lesson reiterated in the Angolan case is that the executive must coordinate more closely in the articulation of foreign policy ends and means and must involve the Congressional leadership in this endeavor.

• Cuban expansionism has also reawakened

a healthy concern about the viability of the emerging states and nation-states of the Caribbean and how these entities relate to Cuba. Welcome as it may be, this development may prove to be ephemeral—as it traditionally has been when the United States focuses its concern on the area.

• The Soviet Union, in the pursuit of its foreign policy objectives in the Third World, possesses an advantage over the West in the use of surrogate forces. The West would be thus morally discredited in employing surrogates, while the socialist bloc is freed from such opprobrium. In the international struggle for influence and geography, a successful precedent has been established by and for the Soviets.

• Angola may well demonstrate a recurring dilemma for American foreign policy in its future Third World dealings. Although former Secretary Kissinger stated that the United States would not tolerate other Angolas, the specific modes of a US response in such scenarios have not been identified. Though the objective international and Angolan circumstances of late 1975 were indeed unique, those circumstances need not be replicated *in toto* to effectively tie the hands of the United States. The use of military power as an instrument of foreign policy is severely circumscribed in certain sectors of the Third World—most notably where Soviet forces are involved. The cardinal rule that US and Soviet forces will avoid fighting each other also applies here. Moreover, in policymaking circles, the problems of nation-building in the Third World are only slightly better understood today than in the euphoric early 1960's.

• The reluctance of the United States to employ wheat as a weapon in order to penalize the Soviet Union for Angola may well suggest a long-term weakness for this country. To paraphrase historian John Lukacs—the United States is beginning to display the bookkeeping mentality that characterized the decline of the British Empire.

CUBA'S INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Cuban activities in Angola represent the most extensive of its commitments to assist national liberation movements and to project influence abroad. Cubans have been involved in African affairs since the early 1960's. They are today found performing security and technical advisory roles in Africa, the Middle East, Vietnam, and in the immediate Caribbean area. An inventory of Cuban aid commitments to so-called Third World countries is indeed quite impressive. According to one source, Cuba maintains over 2,500 nominally civilian technicians overseas in a variety of developmental and nation-building roles.[3] Since 1961, Cuban military personnel in either combat or advisory missions have been active in at least the following countries: Guinea Bissau, Syria, Angola, Algeria, South Yemen, North Vietnam, Laos, Zanzibar, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia, Congo-Brazzaville, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde, Nigeria, and Mozambique. A Cuban tank battalion served for a period in the Golan Heights after the Yom Kippur War. There are an estimated 650 to 1,500 military advisers in Somalia, and Cuban pilots are reported training airmen in South Yemen,

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while advisers are involved in training Dhofar guerrillas.[4] The potential significance of this presence on the Horn of Africa was recently underscored by Somalian President Syaad Barre when he referred to Cuba and to his country's relations with the Territory of Afars and Issas (Djibouti) in these terms: "In case of a foreign threat I am determined to appeal for help to anyone willing to give it."[5]

Closer to home, Cuba has undertaken efforts to upgrade its legitimacy by seeking closer relations and more influence in the immediate Caribbean area. Relations with Jamaica have been on the upswing. Both Fidel Castro and Prime Minister Michael Manley are staunch supporters of the Third World position, and they conveniently employ emerging ties with each other to augment internal and international support.

Relations with Socialist Guyana are warm due to ideological affinities. Castro has also loudly proclaimed Cuba's support for the Panamanian position on the festering Canal issue. Cuba has touched an even more sensitive US nerve by giving rhetorical as well as some material support to Puerto Rico's pro-independence Marxist liberation movement. Consistent with this strategy, the Cubans proposed a resolution to the United Nations Committee on Decolonization that would have recognized the movement "as representing the legal aspirations of the people of Puerto Rico for independence."[6]

Cuban foreign activities are a comparatively staggering enterprise for a country of small population and limited resources. It is estimated that close to 10 percent of the country's armed forces of approximately 175,000 is deployed in Angola.[7] Added to the 2,500 previously mentioned, the total of personnel and talent suggests that Cuban overseas commitments are subordinated to motivations perhaps less noble and inspiring than the humanitarian and revolutionary. Indeed, if that were not the case, Cuba would constitute the society most faithful to the pursuit of worldwide revolutionary goals, more so than its Soviet sponsors. The reason for Cuba's escalated involvement in Angola must be sought in Soviet-Cuban relations and the subordination of Cuban foreign policy to the needs of Soviet foreign policy. Before considering this aspect, it is important to review the Cuban Revolution, its institutionalization, and the growing Soviet influence in Cuba.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE REVOLUTION AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN CUBA

Cuban foreign policy has been directly affected by the ebbs and flows of the revolution. Students of Cuban affairs note that the erratic shifts and unfettered revolutionary idealism that characterized the foreign policy of the sixties has been steadily replaced by the pragmatic and bureaucratic approach that issues from the institutionalization of the revolution and the progressive Sovietization of Cuba and its foreign policy. Carmelo Mesa-Lago, the distinguished Cubanist from the University of Pittsburgh, notes that the Cuban Revolution went through five distinct phases. The first involved the liquidation of the capitalist system (1959-60); the second, the introduction of socialist institutions following the Soviet system (1961-63); the third, a debate of and experimentation with alternative socialist systems (1963-66); the fourth, the adoption and radicalization of the Sino-Guevarist system (1966-70); and lately, a return to pragmatism and the Soviet system.[8] Each of these had its impact on foreign policy.

The early years of the revolution involved a simplification of the social structure. The relative importance of Havana and the traditional social system that depended upon it declined with the exodus of nearly a half-million Cubans dissatisfied with the prospects of a classless society. Though this deprived the country of much-needed skills, it significantly reduced the potential for resistance to the installation of a revolutionary order. These initial stages also meant that the available wealth and services could be more equitably distributed. It is widely recognized that the vast majority of Cubans are significantly better off today than in pre-revolution 1959. The populace has

access to a more extensive range of social services: education, day-care centers, health care, and full employment (albeit in a socialist context). Moreover, the revolution has achieved the reduction of biases against women and blacks. Briefly stated: "Cuba has either already solved or is well on the way to solving every standard 'problem' whose solutions development specialists seek in their work."[9] Those achievements have not gone unnoticed throughout the developing world, though the Cuban model is hardly universally appealing or applicable.

The achievements of the revolution must be balanced against its negative aspects. Kalman H. Silvert recently observed about Cuba:

> Participation is not democracy. The *quantitative* facts of development do not assure the *qualitative* essence of a good social life. Egalitarianism is not *equity*. Increasing the number of urban persons does not increase the number of *urbane* ones. The *indicators* of development are not development.[10]

An earlier apologist for the Cuban Revolution wrote recently:

> . . . the Cuban experience is painfully similar to that of other Third World countries. First, Cuba is dependent on hardware supplies from a major industrial nation, the Soviet Union; second, Cuba defines state sovereignty almost exclusively in terms of its hardware potential; third, its people bear an enormous burden to support the military regimentation. Consequently, there is the same pattern of economic solvency through military rule that occurs in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and many other countries of the hemisphere.[11]

Orchestrating this prodigious effort to restructure society was the charismatic Fidel Castro, who led the mass mobilization. Mobilization was undertaken without giving sufficient attention to the building of institutions and an effective bureaucracy. This approach had disastrous consequences on economic productivity and had implications for the conduct of Cuban foreign policy—which was basically unconstrained by the interests and views of competing groups and institutions. These constraints are now developing, notably so under greater Soviet influence.

The revolution disrupted the economic base of the country as the result of deemphasis of sugar production, forced industrialization, the American embargo, the loss of the American market, and the exodus of skilled manpower. The economic failures that ensued, culminating in the failure of the 1970 sugar harvest, ultimately drove Cuba to greater dependency upon the Soviet Union—the very thing that Castro had attempted to avoid earlier. This dependence, in turn, has generated pressures for greater rationality and institutionalization in economic affairs. The upshot of this was that Cuba was locked into the Soviet bloc Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in 1972, she was committed to Soviet bloc five-year economic planning, and a large part of the Cuban sugar harvest was mortgaged to the Soviet bloc for some years to come. The major portion of Cuban trade—about 70 percent—is with the Soviet bloc.

Soviet economic assistance to Cuba, which extends to the presence of at least 6,000 advisers, has made the Soviet Union the major foreign interest group in Cuba. Reorganization of the economy along Soviet lines and integration into the CMEA have given the Soviets considerable leverage in Cuban affairs. There are over 3,000 Soviet military advisers and technicians in the armed forces, and Soviet KGB officers are reported to control the Cuban General Directorate of Intelligence. As Gonzalez and Ronfeldt tersely noted: "In sum, the Soviets enjoy control over or direct access to pivotal organs of power and security as well as policy making in Cuba."[12]

Institutionalization of the revolution has extended to the role of the military in Cuban society. In the early years of the revolution, the military was an instrument of social, economic, and political mobilization—being

one of the few strong organizations and a prime purveyor of the revolutionary tradition. Recently its role has receded to the more narrowly military, though the concept of the civic soldier permits the military to retain considerable influence society-wide. The broad civilian militia has been abandoned and a much more professionalized military has developed. Institutionalization of the military means that the military can now be employed more for military purposes. Moreover, the military itself must compete with other claimants for public resources. Yet, because of the militarization of Cuban society, the military commands a large amount of resources. The Castro brothers depend on the military and Ministry of Interior forces as their ultimate support.

Politically, by 1970 Cuban society displayed the following characteristics: militarization, administrative centralization in the governing elite, and weak party and union organization. Mesa-Lago summed up the Cuban political structure in 1970 as follows:

> The main feature of the Cuban political structure in the 1960's was extreme diffusion; there was no clear separation among the following three main institutions and their functions: the central administration, the party, and the army. Castro exerted a charismatic, personalistic type of government, characterized by the concentration of power in the 'Maximum Leader' and his inner circle of loyalists and by the lack of institutionalization.[13]

The 1970's have seen the separation of governmental functions and the introduction of some participatory types of institutions. The impact of this has been to constrain the small Castro-led elite of decisionmakers who were the basic policymakers of the state. Functionally defined ministries and agencies have been established within the government, a socialist constitution has been adopted, and the Cuban Communist Party has acquired top influence in decisionmaking, but not in the day-to-day management of the government, as was previously the case.

Institutionalization has its impact on foreign policymaking. Formerly, policymaking reflected the interests and perceptions of a few leaders; that number is broadening slowly. The small leadership class was interested in consolidating the radical social revolution and the dream of building a socialist-communist system—often to the neglect of internal and external political reality. Thus Cuba cast itself in the role of international revolutionary vanguard by supporting insurgency in Latin America and liberation movements elsewhere. However, the disintegration of the economy and the increased dependence on the Soviet Union forced the leadership to modify this policy. By 1969, the emphasis on the export of revolution had been abandoned. This did not mean that Havana altogether forsook its support for the revolutionary struggle; such support merely became more selective. Moreover, the Latin American political environment after 1969 augured well for a peaceful road to revolution and for the struggle against Yankee imperialism, e.g., the reformist nationalist governments of Allende in Chile, Torrijos in Panama, and Velasco Alvarado in Peru.[14]

CUBA AND THE SOVIET UNION

The foregoing discussion points Cuba in the direction of a conservative, bureaucratic, socialist, authoritarian dictatorship of the Soviet type.[15] The new constitution, with its extensive borrowing from the Soviet type of 1936, supports this appraisal. In foreign policy, it signifies a shift away from unqualified support of insurgency to a more pragmatic and cautious approach. It involves greater coordination with the Soviet Union in the pursuit of common international socialist policy goals, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, and a more sophisticated state-to-state technique in the hemisphere, designed to elevate Cuba to a status of greater legitimacy in regional affairs. The latter approach may in the long term be more successful in terms of respectability, international solidarity, and economic advantages than the export of armed revolution.

Cuban-Soviet relations in the first decade of the revolution were marked by the tension surrounding the need to maintain the autonomy of the revolution itself and the need to acquire Soviet economic and security assistance at the very same time. Much to the disappointment of the Cubans, the Soviets provided a decidedly conservative approach in their support for international revolutionary movements. Given the international conditions and the prospect of continued economic failures, the Cuban leadership abandoned some of its ideological misgivings and opted for closer ties with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has thus replaced the United States as the major support for the economy; they maintain the price of sugar and account for at least 40 percent of foreign trade. In the past 15 years, the Soviets have poured in more than $8 billion and currently subsidize the Cuban economy at the rate of nearly $1 billion annually. By agreement in 1972, the $4.6 billion Cuban debt to the Soviets is to be repaid over a period of 25 years after 1986 at no interest. There are disadvantages inherent for Cuba in being locked into the CMEA and long-term Soviet trading agreements. For one, the bulk of the sugar production is already committed to the Soviet bloc for some years to come at prices that are not internationally competitive—though the recent decline in sugar prices has been offset by a Soviet subsidy which maintains the price at 30 cents per pound. This subsidy is crucial to Cuba. Secondly, Cuba sorely needs Western, and particularly American, technology in order to increase the productivity of its sugar industry. Thirdly, the lack of diversified markets signifies considerable cost disadvantages in both imports and exports.

In return for its economic support, the Soviet Union receives considerable benefits from its relationship with Cuba. It is permitted the use of docking facilities, the Cienfuegos submarine tendering complex, a satellite tracking station, and refueling for its reconnaissance flights. Moreover, the Soviets enjoy the benefits of a client socialist state and a Marxist model with which to build flexible options to penetrate the Caribbean and Latin America. Cuba now wholeheartedly supports the Soviet position on international affairs, rhetorically as well as materially. As examples, Cuba was the first to defend the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and regularly tirades against China in the Sino-Soviet conflict. Cuba also supports East-West detente on behalf of the Soviets and generally extols the achievements of Soviet socialism.

Cuba's dependency on the Soviet Union explains in large part the motives for the Angolan intervention. Castro had for some time needed to reestablish his revolutionary image, since the alliance with the nonrevolutionary and pragmatic Soviets had tarnished it. Accordingly, the power vacuum left in Angola by the collapse of the Alvor agreement and the demise of Portuguese authority conveniently provided the Cubans an opportunity to demonstrate their revolutionary worthiness and to repay in blood the Soviet economic support.[16] In its African policy, the Soviet Union has attempted to penetrate states which sought independence from Western colonial influence. It has been frequently expelled as its motive to establish client states became evident. This mixed record notwithstanding, Angola became particularly enticing to the Soviet-Cuban alliance as a number of international and local trends converged. Briefly summarized, they were as follows:

- The decolonization of Angola was supervised by a prostrate, revolution-torn, and leftward-leaning Portugal.[17]
- The United States was mired in the post-Vietnam disenchantment with needless wars, and the Congress weakened the executive's foreign policy flexibility by refusing to continue military aid to the anti-MPLA forces. The United States was essentially left powerless to react to massive Soviet/Cuban involvement.
- Morally discredited South Africa entered the fray on behalf of the pro-West anti-MPLA forces, thus easing the justification for a Soviet/Cuban response against South African racism.[18]
- Angola also involved the fundamental contest for regional influence between the Soviet Union and China.
- The Soviet Union had suffered recent

setbacks in its Middle East diplomacy, as the United States assumed the leading role as mediator between Egypt and Syria and gained significant influence there in the process.

It is not altogether clear whether the Soviet Union or Cuba initiated the decision to escalate in Angola. The question is significant insofar as it may shed light on the level of autonomy Cuba enjoys within the Soviet-Cuban relationship and on the revolutionary fervor of its leadership. Apparently Cuba retains a significant level of autonomy in Angola. Writing on the competition between head of government Agostinho Neto and Soviet-leaning Minister of Internal Administration Nito Alves, one observer recently noted:

> Neto has likewise enlisted the support of the Cubans in his struggle with Alves. Kissinger, apparently unaware of the subtleties of Angolan politics, has failed to realize the Cubans' vital role in balancing off Soviet influence.[19]

CUBA AND THE CARIBBEAN AREA

Cuba's escalated involvement in Angola renewed fears about the export of revolution in the immediate Caribbean basin. Cuba's emerging rapprochement with the community of Latin American countries came to a halt as some regional leaders expressed disapproval of the Angolan initiative and searched for a reappraisal of Cuban intentions. The Ford Administration proceeded to the point of reviewing options for a Caribbean contingency. The following review of the Caribbean environment within which Cuba must conduct its foreign relations suggests that Cuba has proceeded with caution in an effort to win friends and influence people, and must continue to do so.

Relations with inter-American states and organizations have improved since the 1960's. Cuba currently maintains formal diplomatic relations with 12 countries of the hemisphere: Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, Colombia, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Costa Rica has established consular relations. There apparently have been overtures to Haiti, Surinam, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. During the 1960's, the militant posture of the Cuban Revolution and the conservatism of most Latin American regimes precluded positive relations with them and with inter-American organizations. Cuba was banished from the Organization of American States and vehemently refuses to reenter it in its current form. During the early 1970's, changes in the character of the Latin American political environment and the increased pragmatism of Cuban foreign policy have relaxed tensions and led to a type of *de facto* reintegration of Cuba into subregional affairs. At San Jose, Costa Rica, in July 1975, 16 of 21 members of the OAS, including the United States, voted to support the "freedom of action" resolution which allowed each government to determine for itself the nature of its diplomatic and commercial relations with Cuba. Cuba is also a member of SELA, the Mexican/Venezuelan-sponsored Latin American Economic System designed to promote regional consensus on trade and development. Finally, recent moves toward normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba have received much attention in the media.

Cuba's efforts to expand its influence in the hemisphere will be most notably felt in the immediate Caribbean area. The myriad political entities of the Caribbean Islands and Guiana region share some distressing characteristics, and these characteristics in turn affect Cuba's capabilities to expand its influence. The newly-emerging ministates of the former British Caribbean are basically unviable. The larger states—such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Trinidad-Tobago, Jamaica, and Barbados—suffer from many uncertainties: extractive, monocultural, export-oriented, and technologically dependent economies, often competitive with each other in commodities such as sugar, bananas, tourism, bauxite, and coffee; limited domestic markets for industry; high rates of unemployment, inflation, and, in some cases, relatively high population density. These economies have

been highly vulnerable to the international economic recession and the rise in petroleum prices.

Politically, undercurrents of racial friction exist in most Caribbean countries as the result of the traditional privileged economic and social positions of whites and mulattoes over blacks and between the politically dominant blacks and the underrepresented East Indians in Trinidad-Tobago, Guyana, and Surinam. Most have functioning parliamentary systems of government with scarcely a unifying ideological basis. Manley's Jamaica espouses a vague program of "democratic socialism," with a commitment to retain parliamentary democracy and some role for private enterprise in the economy. Guyana, under Prime Minister Forbes Burnham, has been developing a Marxist one-party state. In foreign policy, Caribbean countries uniformly support the Third World position for the improvement of trade relations with the industrialized countries. The older and more established continental states of Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Central America, and Mexico require a different set of rules in the adjustment of bilateral relations with Cuba.

To most Caribbean states, Cuba represents both a positive and negative image. Trade with other Caribbean island economies is a negligible factor—on the order of $10 million in 1974. It was substantial with Mexico—$39 million. Cuba's achievements in education and social development are known and often admired. So is its independence of the United States. In spite of cultural differences, Cuba and the English-speaking Caribbean share a heritage of colonialism and the common idiom of exploitation by outside powers. At the 1976 Sri Lanka meeting of the nonaligned, Cuba was chosen to host the Sixth Summit Conference of Nonaligned Countries in 1979. On the other hand, Caribbean leaders are well aware of the Marxist regimentation of Cuban society and its linkage with the Soviet Union. Despite these attributes, Cuba has been able to cultivate closer ties to Jamaica and Guyana. A review of these two cases and some others will illustrate the style and extent of relations Cuba may have in the Caribbean for some time to come.

Jamaican Prime Minister Manley's visit to Havana in July 1975 verified the emergence of closer ties between the two countries. Manley, a charismatic leader who faced a plethora of economic and political problems at home and who was recently called "a sincere friend of the Cuban Revolution" by the official Cuban government paper, *Granma*, seems to sincerely admire the achievements of the revolution. He has stated a commitment to retain parliamentary democracy in Jamaica, but he faces considerable criticism from leftists within his People's National Party to emulate Cuba in pushing more quickly for socialism. Edward Seaga's opposition Jamaican Labour Party, on the other hand, fears that the Cuban ties are an indication that Jamaica will go Communist. Economically, bauxite, Jamaica's main export, suffers from weak demand in the international market. Tourism, a major source of revenue, declined as the result of bad publicity surrounding the political violence in Kingston and partly as the result of worldwide recession. These problems are compounded by the steep rise in petroleum prices. Possibly to co-opt those within Jamaica who oppose him on the left, Manley chose to identify more closely with the revolutionary symbolism of Cuba. It is doubtful that Cuba can provide the assistance capital and the range of technological know-how needed to substantially improve the economy. It must be remembered that the bauxite and tourist industries are heavily dependent on American capital. What Cuba can offer to the magnitude of Jamaica's developmental needs is not substantial. It has been reported recently that 277 Cuban technicians, engineers, teachers, doctors, and farming experts are involved in a variety of projects in Jamaica, such as building schools and microdams, as part of a bilateral technical exchange agreement. In addition, some Jamaican policemen and construction workers are receiving training in Cuba. It appears that the landslide victory won in the December 15, 1976, parliamentary elections may secure Manley sufficient support for him to downplay the emerging ties with Cuba should he wish to do so in order to concentrate more on internal

development.[20] In the meantime, the bilateral technical exchange agreement will provide a case study of the effectiveness of a foreign aid program conducted by two small countries.

Relations with Guyana exhibit similar characteristics. Both Jamaica and Guyana expressed approval for Cuba's Angola action. The Georgetown government even permitted, for a time, the use of its airport for stopover and refueling on the flights to Luanda in the recent war. Guyanese-Cuban relations have been on the upswing since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1972. Prime Minister Forbes Burnham visited Havana in April 1975. Once again, the main motive for closer ties with Cuba may have been a need to undermine the opposition to Burnham led by Marxist and pro-Soviet Cheddi Jagan. Additional speculation may be that Guyana, five-eighths of whose territory is claimed by Venezuela and which borders with security-conscious Brazil on the south, needs friends to counter pressures from its neighbors.[21] Beyond this, Havana has little to offer that is relevant to Guyana's development imperatives: technical advice on establishing a fishing fleet. Rumors of some low-level Cuban security assistance serve to sensitize Venezuela and Brazil even more to Guyana's internal affairs. Thus the costs to Guyana and Jamaica of their Cuban alliance are different. In Guyana, the costs may come in international politics—Venezuelan and Brazilian concern; in Jamaica, the costs may come in economics—reduced tourism and foreign capital. In the case of both Jamaica and Guyana, Havana's emerging ties grant it a modicum of regional respectability and international solidarity.

Cuban foreign policy initiatives place strains on the emerging Caribbean international system. Cuba's involvement in Angola was not universally applauded and created further fissures within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)—the movement for regional economic integration—by spotlighting the diversity of regime types and their foreign policy perceptions. The emerging ideological divisions among the so-called Big Four—Barbados and Trinidad-Tobago on one side and the more radical Guyana and Jamaica on the other—are mirrored by issues that relate to Cuba. As an example, some sources attribute Barbados' turn to the right, signalled by the defeat of long-time nationalist Errol Barrow by Tom Adams in the September 1976 elections, partially to the issue of Cuban troop planes refueling in Bridgetown on their way to Angola.[22] Cuba's intrusion into these divisions in turn threatens consensus on a regional CARICOM foreign policy stance.[23]

At Cuban urgings, Guyana, badly hurt by declining sugar prices and anxious to acquire markets in Eastern Europe, declared its intention in January 1977 to apply for associate membership with the CMEA. At the same time, Jamaica established relations with Moscow, and a CMEA market for its bauxite and tropical products is being explored.[24] Such initiatives arouse mixed feelings, a sentiment voiced in Port of Spain's *Trinidad Evening News* as follows: "Jamaica's Prime Minister Manley might need to give his regional partners further assurances about his most recent statements (in praise of Cuban and Soviet Communism)." It further advised that Manley "may very well find not only his people in Jamaica, but his friends and neighbours both in and out of CARICOM, will need further assurances in the light of such reports."[25] On an entirely different level, the Cuban exiled terrorist sabotage bombing of a Cuban plane out of Barbados that resulted in the death of 73 passengers on October 6, 1976, caused a dispute among Venezuela, Guyana, Trinidad-Tobago, Barbados, and Cuba regarding legal jurisdiction over the perpetrators.

Panama illustrates the limitations of Havana's efforts to build bridges in the Caribbean. Cuba, consistent with its Third World stance and the strategy to identify with a Latin American anti-US position, loudly supports Panama's claim to full sovereignty rights over the Canal Zone, while urging caution and patience on General Omar Torrijos. General Torrijos visited Cuba in early 1976 to demonstrate his attachment

to the revolution and thereby his independence from the United States, for the purpose of co-opting leftist internal opposition in Panama. Torrijos was reportedly not impressed by Cuban socialism.[26] Moreover, too close an association with Castro would risk scuttling the fragile negotiations with the United States. The consuming objective of Panamanian nationalism to perfect sovereignty by recovering the Canal would thus be seriously threatened.

Venezuela represents, on the other hand, another sort of opportunity for Cuba. A leading target of Cuban subversion in the early 1960's, Venezuela has in recent years become a leading voice for the reintegration of Cuba into the inter-American system. It was recently announced that Venezuela and the Soviet Union concluded an agreement to exchange petroleum markets for a volume of 20,000 barrels a day. Under the agreement, Venezuela would ship crude oil to Cuba and the Soviet Union would take over some of Venezuela's West European markets. Cuba has been almost totally dependent on the Soviet Union for oil during the past 15 years. The arrangement, which has not yet been implemented, will only partially alleviate the problem of keeping Cuba supplied with oil.[27]

Mexico has traditionally (and selectively, as recent Mexican-Chilean relations demonstrate) observed the principle of self-determination in the conduct of its international relations. Consequently, it never broke with Cuba. President Luis Echeverriá was warmly received in Cuba during his worldwide tour in 1975. No ideological kinship was involved here. Echeverriá needed to polish his Third World credentials in the quest for the UN Secretary-General position. At the same time, he was able to identify with a symbol of revolution, and thereby mollify and co-opt leftist critics in Mexico and simultaneously demonstrate Mexico's independence from the United States. Alternately, Castro used Echeverriá to demonstrate Cuba's legitimacy in standing with a prestigious and influential Latin American country. The type of relations the López-Portillo administration will have with Cuba will probably be determined by the latter's commitment to give priority to Mexico's internal affairs.

The prospects for relations with the countries of Central America are negatively determined by the characteristics of the individual countries. Almost uniformly, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic and Haiti in the Caribbean have maintained their distance from Cuba. To the leadership of these countries, the Cuban model is anathema. These countries possess elitist and authoritarian governments operating in political cultures that lack institutionalized alternatives for resolving political disputes and are technically incapable of engineering development. They are led by anti-Communist and putatively modernizing military governments committed to the goals of socio-economic development, who frequently undertake cosmetic reforms designed for short-term rather than long-term redistribution objectives. The Cuban model of Socialist egalitarianism thus represents a threat to their very existence. This posture, however, does not altogether preclude such occurrences as the Cuban assistance to Nicaragua in 1972 for the Managua earthquake, $10,000 to Guatemala after the 1976 earthquake, the sending of Cuban medical teams during the Honduras floods of 1974, substantive agreement on the international pricing of commodities such as sugar, and Cuban participation in the fledgling Caribbean Multinational Shipping Line (NAMUCAR).

CAUTION, PRAGMATISM, AND BALANCE?

Recent Cuban foreign policy initiatives in Angola and the level of Cuban-Soviet political and military coordination in promoting the triumph of the MPLA forces have fed speculation about Cuba's intentions in Southern Africa and in the Western Hemisphere, notably in the Caribbean. This paper has argued that there is a basic continuity in Cuban foreign policy that issues from the nature of the Cuban Revolution and the character of Soviet-Cuban relations.

Cuban foreign policy is in large measure subordinated to the needs of socialist internationalism. Yet the international political conditions that gave rise to the successful Angolan intervention are not likely to be duplicated in Cuba's Caribbean backyard. The current Caribbean environment is conducive to a different style of behavior for Cuba—one marked by caution and pragmatism. Cuba's international behavior close to home appears to be constrained by the presence of the United States and the advantages of rapprochment with its northern neighbor.

Recent bilateral initiatives by Cuba and the United States, such as the delineation of fishing zones in the Straits of Florida, the release of a number of imprisoned Americans, the agreement to exchange diplomats, and the ongoing negotiations for the normalization of relations support this assessment.

NOTES

1. Jorge Dominguez, "Cuba, the United States, and Latin America After Detente," *SAIS Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1975), 20-31; Abraham Lowenthal, "The United States and Latin America: Ending the Hegemonic Presumption," *Foreign Affairs* (October 1976), 199-213.

2. Published reports indicate that by mid-December 1975, 3,000-5,000 Cuban troops had been outfitted by 27 shiploads and 30 planeloads of Soviet equipment sent directly from the Soviet Union. See Gerald J. Bender, "Angola: A New Quagmire for US," *Los Angeles Times*, 21 December 1975, cited in Edward Gonzalez, "Castro and Cuba's New Orthodoxy," *Problems of Communism*, 25 (January-February 1976), 1.

3. R. D. Heinl, "A Red Foreign Legion," *Detroit News*, 8 February 1976, Part II, p. 1. Also see Wolfgang Berner, "Cuban Intervention in Africa and Arabia," *Aussen Politik* (1976), 328-35.

4. Drew Middleton, "Cubans Reported in Red Sea Area," *The New York Times*, 5 April 1976; James Nelson Goodsell, "Cuba's African Presence," *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 February 1977, p. 3.

5. *Terzo Mondo Economico*, 1, No. 1 (October-November 1976), 48.

6. Hobart Rowen, "US Warns Cubans on Puerto Rican Role," *The Washington Post*, 27 June 1976, p. A15. By virtue of modern Soviet weaponry and training, Cuba becomes, apart from the United States, the "preeminent military power" of the area. Jorge Dominguez, *The Cuban Armed Forces and International Order* (unpublished paper, Harvard University, January 1977). This preeminence becomes more salient when personnel capabilities are fully appraised. According to Dominguez, the Cuban order of battle must be calculated at a minimum of 321,150 if regular and reserve troops are included. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

7. Some sources indicate an even higher level of deployments—20,000—to combat the Jonas Savimba-led opposition UNITA forces. See Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Castro's Africa Corps Keeps on Growing," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 December 1976, p. 11-A. On the prospects of the continuing UNITA campaign, see R. Bruce McColm and David Smith, "Angola Civil War Reported to Be Far from Over: Guerrillas Posing Threat to Government," *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 December 1976, p. 13.

8. See the penetrating analysis in Carmelo Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970's: Pragmatism and Insitutionalization* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974).

9. Kalman H. Silvert and Frieda M. Silvert, "Fate, Chance, and Faith," *American Universities Field Staff Reports*, North America Series (September 1974), 5. For a balance sheet on the mixed and largely negative performance of the revolution with regard to the social values of enlightenment, skill, well-being, respect, affection, rectitude, wealth, and power, see Jorge Dominquez, "Revolutionary Values and Development Performance: China, Cuba, and the Soviet Union," in *Values and Development: Appraising Asian Experience*, ed. Harold Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and John Montgomery (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976), pp. 20-54.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Irving L. Horowitz, "Military Origins of the Cuban Revolution," *Armed Forces and Society* (Summer 1975), 416.

12. Edward Gonzalez and David Ronfeldt, *Post-revolutionary Cuba in a Changing World* (Santa Monica: Rand, 1975), p. 18.

13. Mesa-Lago, p. 66.

14. On these points see Edward Gonzalez, "A Comparison of Soviet and Cuban Approaches to Latin America," *Studies in Comparative Communism* (Spring 1972), 21-35; and Herbert S. Dinerstein, "Soviet and Cuban Conceptions of Revolution," *Studies in Comparative Communism* (January 1971), 3-22.

15. This does not deny important differences between the Cuban and Soviet types. There are differences both at the top and at the bottom of the bureaucracy. For example, the principle of accountability applies in municipal assemblies to filter people's complaints to higher authority. *Latin America* (7 January 1977), 5.

16. For additional speculation on Cuban motives, see Gonzalez, pp. 18-19.

17. For the interpretation that Angola, rather than Portugal, was the prime objective of Soviet policy toward revolutionary Portugal (1974-75), see David Binder, *The Soviet Union, West Europe and Detente: The Russian Role in Portugal*, paper presented at the Portugal Seminar at the School of Advanced International Studies (hereafter SAIS), Johns Hopkins University, 26 February 1976. On the military and political aspects of decolonization see Douglas L. Wheeler, *Portuguese Withdrawal from Africa, 1974-75: The Angolan Case*, paper presented at the Portugal Seminar, SAIS, 9 March 1976.

18. Colin Legum, a leading expert on Southern African affairs, asserted: "The Russian and Cuban contention that their military intervention was the result of the South African invasion is clearly an ex post facto rationalization." Colin Legum, "The Soviet Union, China and the West in Southern Africa," *Foreign Affairs* (July 1976), 751.

19. Charles K. Ebinger, "External Intervention in Internal War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Angolan Civil War," *Orbis* (Fall 1976), 697-98.

20. Marvine Howe, "Jamaica Chief, Landslide Victor, Warns of Difficult Times Ahead," *The New York Times*, 17 December 1976, p. 3; also "Jamaica: Back to Business," *Latin America* (24 December 1976), 396-97.

21. Guyanese Foreign Minister Frederick Wills referred to Venezuelan claims to territory and Brazilian hostility toward

his country's socialism as the two biggest threats to Guyana's security. *Trinidad Express*, 13 January 1977, as transcribed in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Latin America* (hereafter *FBIS–LA*), 13 January 1977, p. V4. See also his note of caution: "The thing is, one should always be in a position to constructively criticize one's attitude, one's approaches and one's failures; we have to live here, and every calculation Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica–or even Chile in Allende's day–every political decision you make you have to take into account the possible American reaction." "Minister Wills Addresses Parliament on Foreign Policy," *Bridgetown Advocate News*, 8 January 1977, p. 4, as transcribed in *FBIS–LA*, 14 January 1977, p. V2. The Venezuelan newsweekly *Resumen* in its 21 March 1976 issue warned of Guyana's militarization with the establishment of the Guyana National Service (in addition to the regular Guyana Defense Force) "for the purpose of consolidating a one party police state." See "Guyana se militariza," p. 56.

22. "Barbados: Safe for Democracy," *Latin America* (10 September 1976), 279.

23. "Caribbean: Clash of Heads," *Latin America* (16 April 1976), 124.

24. "Cuba's Link with COMECON Pays Off," *Bridgetown Advocate News*, 24 January 1977, p. 5, as transcribed in *FBIS–LA*, 1 February 1977, p. S1; Karen DeYoung, "Guyana Seeks Trade Link With Communist Group," *The Washington Post*, 22 January 1977, p. A12.

25. As reported in Kingston *Daily Gleaner*, 11 February 1977, p. 9 and transcribed in *FBIS–LA*, 16 February 1977, p. S3.

26. David Binder, "How to Deal with Gringos," *The New Republic* (14 February 1976), 7-8.

27. In 1974, Cuba received 155,000 barrels of oil a day from the Soviet Union. See "Venezuela and Soviet Reach an Agreement on Oil," *The New York Times*, 10 December 1976, p. D3.