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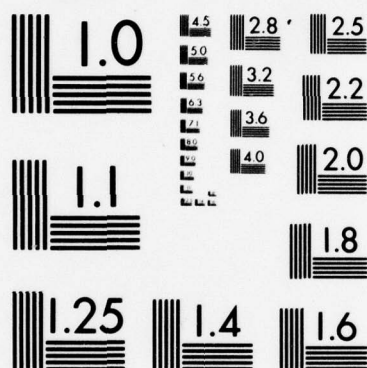
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**THE FUTURE OF
SOVIET-CUBAN RELATIONS**



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THE FUTURE OF SOVIET-CUBAN RELATIONS

by

Gabriel Marcella

and

Daniel S. Papp

1 February 1979

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FOREWORD

This memorandum explores the future of the Soviet-Cuban linkage and the related question of whether it is wise for the United States to seek to dissolve it. The authors assert that Soviet-Cuban political and military cooperation may best be viewed as a temporary coincidence of national interests and policy objectives. Although the convergence of interests and benefits is vulnerable to erosion, the authors see no definite end in sight for Soviet-Cuban cooperation. They conclude that the best the United States can hope for is to selectively reduce the areas of coincidence between Cuba and the Soviet Union.

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This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

DeWitt C. Smith, Jr.

DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.
Major General, USA
Commandant

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE AUTHORS

DR. GABRIEL MARCELLA joined the Strategic Studies Institute in 1974. He graduated from St. Joseph's College with a bachelor's degree in Latin American studies, earned a master's degree in history from Syracuse University, and a doctorate in Latin American history and politics from Notre Dame. His foreign studies include a Fulbright-Hayes fellowship to Ecuador. Dr. Marcella's professional background includes teaching Latin American studies at Chestnut Hill and Rosemont Colleges, Temple University, the University of Indiana, and Notre Dame. He has written on a broad range of topics relating to Latin American history and international affairs.

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THE FUTURE OF SOVIET-CUBAN RELATIONS

The New York Times' picture of Cuban Defense Minister Raul Castro beaming across a table to a jovial Leonid Brezhnev and Dmitry Ustinov eloquently expresses the cooperative relationship which exists between Cuba and the Soviet Union.¹ That relationship has undoubtedly been further strengthened by the rout of the Somalian army from the Ogaden Desert, a rout achieved by joint Ethiopian, Cuban, and Soviet forces.

Nonetheless, a considerable body of Western opinion does not accept the political-military cooperation of these two disparate Socialist states as an accomplished fact, and argues that if the United States were able to implement the "correct" policy toward Cuba, the Soviet-Cuban relationship could be weakened and perhaps dissolved. Given the role that Cuban military forces in particular have played in recent conflicts in Africa, this is a claim which necessitates close examination. Before such an examination can be undertaken, however, it is first necessary to understand the nature of the Soviet-Cuban relationship.

This essay undertakes exactly that task by exploring the forces behind the Soviet-Cuban relationship, the trends which may be discerned in the relationship, and the future of the relationship

from the perspective of both Moscow and Havana. This essay concludes with a discussion of the impact which the United States may hope to have on the future of Soviet-Cuban relations.

OVERVIEW: THE BACKGROUND TO CURRENT SOVIET-CUBAN COOPERATION

Soviet-Cuban relations have been rather tumultuous ever since Castro took power. In some instances, Soviet-Cuban agreement has been striking: the early stages of the Cuban Missile Crisis, condemnation of American involvement in Vietnam, Cuban support for the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the recent joint forays into Africa will suffice as examples. In other cases, Soviet-Cuban disagreement has been just as pronounced: the latter stages of the Missile Crisis, Soviet disapproval of Cuban efforts to export revolution, and Soviet efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in sugar production by 1980 in competition with Cuba serve as examples.

Thus, in a historical context, current Soviet-Cuban political-military cooperation may best be viewed as a convenient coincidence of national interests and policy objectives. As a convenient coincidence, such cooperation may be extended indefinitely or peak within a relatively near timeframe. Regardless of which scenario evolves, it is evident that both nations derive considerable benefit from the current state of the relationship.

From the Soviet vantage point, a close relationship with Cuba offers several advantages. First, the Caribbean island represents a Communist outpost in Latin America. Second, Cuba has in recent years become the rarest political phenomenon—a Socialist state amenable to pro-Soviet orientation without military occupation. Third, and most recently, Cuba provides a method to further Soviet global objectives in areas other than Latin America. Finally, Cuba offers potential as a military facility well within the defense perimeter of the United States.

From the Cuban standpoint, close relations with Moscow are similarly beneficial. The Soviet Union provides the Castro government critical economic subsidies. Additionally, Soviet military and technical assistance have lessened traditional Cuban weaknesses in both areas. Thirdly, the Soviet Union serves Cuba as a political sponsor willing to promote and support Cuba's

aspirations of Third World leadership. Finally, the Kremlin acts as protector of Cuban independence from the United States.

Thus, from the viewpoint of both capitals, a close relationship provides certain benefits which would not otherwise be available. A *quid pro quo* relationship clearly exists. Given the historical record of uneven Soviet-Cuban relations, we must now turn to each aspect of the *quid pro quo* and see how deep—and potentially enduring—the harmony may be.

THE VIEW FROM MOSCOW—KTO KOVO?

Revolutionary Cuba has presented Moscow with fascinating and perplexing foreign policy options. Ever since Castro's accession to power, Soviet policy toward Cuba has illustrated the Kremlin's quandary of how best to take advantage of a self-proclaimed (and eventually Moscow-recognized) Socialist outpost in the Western Hemisphere.³ From the Kremlin's perspective, at least through most of the post-1959 period, too much or too little Soviet support and/or interest in the Caribbean nation could lead to adverse results for Soviet foreign policy objectives. Either excess may have resulted in American intervention in Cuba, thereby highlighting Soviet impotence in the Caribbean region, or in Cuban alienation, thereby depriving the Soviet Union of basking in the reflected glory of allying with one of the few Marxist-Leninist regimes which gained power without benefit of Soviet arms. To be sure, the Kremlin on occasion fell prey to the urge to pursue more adventurous policy lines in its relations with Cuba, but for the most part, the Soviet leaders have been cognizant of the strictures within which their policy toward the island nation must operate.

Nonetheless, it is evident that as far as the Kremlin is concerned, Cuba is the sole Communist outpost in an otherwise hostile Western Hemisphere. Cuba consequently serves the Soviet Union as a "showcase of Communism," a showcase which must succeed both from an ideological and, as we shall see, a pragmatic viewpoint. The Caribbean island may therefore be viewed as the only sign to which the Kremlin may point as proof that Soviet Marxism-Leninism has relevance to the economic and social growth of developing nations.

Beyond this, the Cuban revolutionary experience marks the *only* instance of an indigenous national movement which gained power

through its own efforts, adapted Marxism-Leninism to its own needs and circumstances, and adopted a predominantly pro-Soviet orientation. While this is a fact often overlooked in the West, it is one of which the Kremlin's leaders must be acutely aware. Basing much of their own political legitimacy on the universality of their credo, and gaining much of their international appeal because of the assertion that national paths to socialism and communism are possible, Brezhnev and his colleagues cannot but be cognizant that the only revolutionary experience which legitimizes the twin claims of national paths to socialism and universality of Soviet-style Marxism-Leninism is the Cuban one. From this perspective, then, Castro's nation is consequently of paramount importance to the Soviet leadership.

Yet another benefit the Soviet Union obtains from close relations with Cuba is Cuban support for Soviet foreign policy objectives and/or initiatives outside Latin America. The most spectacular instances of this have been in Angola and Ethiopia, where Soviet-equipped Cuban troops have fought for Soviet-supported political movements. At this time, it is not relevant to argue whether Cuban involvement in either African nation was Soviet-initiated or Cuban-initiated. Rather, the point to be made is that Cuban forces clearly rendered a service which furthered Soviet foreign policy objectives in both African nations *regardless* of who initiated their involvement.

Finally, the Soviet Union benefits from close relations with Cuba in a purely military sense through its use of facilities on the Caribbean island. The use of Cuban facilities for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft is advantageous to Moscow. Additionally, the Kremlin operates communications facilities in Cuba, and shares intelligence data with the Cubans.

Obviously then, the Soviet Union has some impelling reasons to maintain close ties with Cuba. Still, the question need be asked, what disadvantages exist in a close relationship, as seen from Moscow?

Perhaps the most obvious disadvantage is the necessity for long-term large-scale economic subsidy. The following section discusses the scope of that subsidy. Nonetheless, given the Soviet Union's own economic miasma, the continued growth of that subsidy—\$1.2 billion in 1976—indicates the importance with which the Kremlin views the existence of close Soviet-Cuban ties.

A second disadvantage with close ties is the continued risk, even though minimal, of Soviet-American confrontation over any of a number of disagreements between Cuba and the United States. Cuba's revolutionary activism, though currently congruent with Soviet policy objectives in Africa, has historically been determined by Havana's perceptions of its own interests. Thus, if Soviet policy objectives and Cuban activism diverge in the future as they have done in the past, the close identity between the two nations may at first involve the Kremlin in Cuban initiatives which the Soviet Union deems not in its interest. From the Kremlin's point of view, then, close Soviet-Cuban ties do imply certain though indefinite liabilities.

What, then, is the sum total of these Soviet calculations? While a definitive answer is of course impossible, it is evident that the Kremlin currently believes the advantages of close relations with Cuba far outweigh the disadvantages. Recently, the trend has been toward increased cooperation as indicated not only by the joint African adventures, but also by high levels of Soviet economic aid.

Still, this trend need not necessarily continue. Seeds of discord, as viewed from Moscow, do exist, even though they are currently insignificant. Soviet client states have in the past proved less than totally compliant to Soviet desires, and the Soviet leadership has shown little hesitancy to reduce its support for regimes in disfavor.

Nonetheless, this remains only a possibility, not a probability. All things remaining equal, there is nothing on the present military-political horizon which suggests that the Soviet Union will downgrade its relations with the Castro regime. With this in mind, we now turn to Soviet-Cuban relations as seen from Havana.

THE VIEW FROM HAVANA—ADONDE VAMOS?

The link with the Soviet Union is useful to the Cuban leadership in a number of ways. In the face of an economic embargo and the posture of hostility maintained by the United States and Cuba toward each other, that linkage provides the political, economic, and military support of an ideologically sympathetic superpower to a militarily vulnerable and geographically and politically isolated island. Thus, the search for national security has been a major force driving Cuba to seek closer ties with the Soviet Union. Despite past disagreements on matters of foreign policy, the

political and economic structuring of Cuba's Socialist system, ideology, and the role of the Cuban Communist Party, there exists sufficient convergence of interests for Cuba and the Soviet Union to have forged a limited but formidable political-military alliance for the pursuit of what appears to be common objectives in international affairs, with the most spectacular results in Africa. This alliance is a new phenomenon in Cuban history, giving that country a bargaining position in world affairs that it never possessed under the pervasive influence of consecutive Spanish and American "imperialisms."⁴

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 and retain Soviet economic and security assistance at the very same time. Much to the disappointment of the Cubans, the Soviets provided a decidedly conservative response to Cuba's efforts to spearhead guerrilla warfare and national liberation in Latin America and Africa. Concurrently, the ongoing Revolution disrupted the economy as the result of the deemphasis and later reemphasis of sugar production, forced industrialization, loss of the US market, and the loss of skilled manpower to emigration. Given continued American hostility toward Cuba, the defeat of the strategy of guerrilla warfare signalled by the death of Che Guevara, increased diplomatic isolation within Latin America, the prospect of continuing dismal economic performance that culminated in the disastrous 1970 sugar harvest, and severe economic pressures imposed by Moscow (such as the reduction of petroleum shipments), Havana drew closer to Moscow. Cuba thus abandoned its ideological misgivings about Soviet pragmatism and conservatism and opted to accept greater Soviet assistance and progressively greater guidance in its own affairs. It may thus be said that historically Cuba entered its third phase of imperialism—the Soviet phase of "socialist solidarity," a relationship which may be no less exploitative than the previous forms.

In 1968 Castro saw the virtue of rapprochement with the celebrated approval of the Brezhnev doctrine of "limited sovereignty" exercised in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Relations solidified further with the July and December 1972 agreements that made Cuba a member of the Soviet bloc Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), and which secured a

stable market for Cuban sugar and nickel through long-term trading agreements and follow-on technical assistance programs. It was further agreed that the accumulated Cuban debt of \$4.6 billion would be suspended until 1986 over a period of 25 years. Currently, Cuba receives an annual subsidy in excess of \$1.2 billion from the Soviet Union. The latter maintains the price of Cuban sugar at 21 per pound above the current international market price (agreement on this expires in 1980), assists in tasks of economic reorganization and development, provides petroleum, and in sum accounts for nearly 60 percent of Cuban trade. The subsidy and trade are crucial to Cuba, permitting Havana the luxury of buying time for the further reorganization and diversification of an economy which gives every indication of continuing to be monoculturist—heavily dependent upon sugar and to an increasing degree upon nickel (Cuba has the world's fourth largest ore deposits). Additionally, the Soviet Union provides equipment, training, and personnel for the Cuban military establishment. Soviet pilots have recently been reported flying air defense missions in place of Cubans sent to Africa. Without the price supports and outright subsidy, Cuba would be hard put to free sufficient manpower resources for its extensive overseas technical assistance, security assistance, and combat deployments to Angola and Ethiopia⁷ now estimated to be 20,000 and 17,000 respectively.

Of Cuba's total trade, 70 percent is with Communist countries, including the People's Republic of China.⁶ In 1976, Cuban exports to CMEA reached \$2.2 billion and imports \$2.1 billion. Soviet trade accounts for 80 percent of Cuba's intra-CMEA trade. In 1976, Cuban exports to the USSR were estimated at slightly over \$2 billion versus \$1.8 billion in imports. Sugar comprised about 90 percent of Cuba's exports to CMEA with the USSR importing 85 percent of the total. Cuba will continue to be an important source of sugar for CMEA. However, further trade volumes are uncertain since the Soviet Union plans for self-sufficiency in sugar by the early 1980's. The Soviet Union receives 53 percent of Cuba's sugar exports at the subsidized price of 30 cents per pound. It purchases three-fourths of Cuba's nickel production at \$6,050 per ton compared to the international market price of \$5,400 per ton. Citrus, a growing component of Cuban export agriculture, is also intended for the CMEA market but here also the Soviet Union is increasing its own production.

In the area of imports, the Soviet Union provides 99 percent of Cuba's petroleum requirements at \$7 per ton, a considerable advantage over the world price of \$14 per ton, and the \$8 per ton that the Soviet Union charges East European consumers. Cuba imports a variety of Soviet capital goods, such as equipment for electric power generation, railways, and the nickel industry.

At the same time Cuba is interested in diversifying trade with the West. It is reasonable to assume that such trade for the foreseeable future, because of long-term trading agreements with CMEA and the Soviet Union when combined with the vagaries of sugar production and pricing, will probably be in the area of 30-40 percent of total Cuban trade. With the improved prices that sugar commanded in 1974, trade with the West leaped to 41 percent, whereas it averaged 30 percent in the early 1970's. The volume of sugar production, its price, and its access to alternative markets in a period of increasing world production and stocks, will thus go a long way in determining the extent and composition of Cuba's trade with CMEA, the Soviet Union, and the West. One reliable measure of the degree of convergence of Soviet and Cuban interest will be the extent and duration of the Soviet subsidy of the Cuban economy. Future US participation in Cuban trade (optimistically projected at \$600-700 million) is not likely to make an appreciable dent in the Soviet subsidy cost.

The foregoing discussion does not sufficiently explain certain aspects of Cuba's contemporary foreign policy behavior. Military and economic dependence upon the Soviet Union does not explain the apparent contradictions of this behavior—for example, deployments in African wars juxtaposed with the drive to normalize relations with the United States and the search for Western capital and technology. In a recent article in *Problems of Communism*, a leading scholar on Cuban affairs, Edward Gonzales, posits three theses for Cuba's international behavior.⁷ According to Gonzales, the assumption that Cuba is dependent on the Soviet Union implies that Cuba is a surrogate or proxy for the Soviet Union—essentially doing the Soviet bidding whenever and wherever the Soviet Union desires, where also the Soviets themselves are for a variety of reasons reluctant to go. This characterization is erroneous, Gonzales argues, since it does not account for Cuba's own foreign policy interests in its capacity as an autonomous actor.⁸ Moreover, it clearly overlooks cases where

Cuba has not met Soviet policy preferences and acted completely autonomously of the Soviet Union and its logistical support (Africa and Latin America in the 1960's).

The second thesis, that ideology is the force pushing Cuba to spearhead the Third World revolution, is also deficient by itself since it does not explain certain pragmatic aspects of policy or the urge for normalization with its ideological enemy—the United States. Gonzales places emphasis on internal determinants—economic necessity and the role of pragmatic technocrats—as important modifiers of Cuban behavior. Accordingly military institutional factors, i.e., increased professionalization, promotes overseas deployments at the very same time that Cuba seeks to broaden its state to state relations in the hemisphere, and seeks normalization with the United States.⁹

Cuba sees itself providing considerable benefits to the Soviet Union in return for the Kremlin's support. As far as the Cuban leadership is concerned, the Kremlin's close ties with Havana confer a considerable measure of ideological respectability and international prestige upon the Soviet Union, as well as support Moscow's claim of socialist solidarity. Cuba thus genuinely views itself as a state freely associated with the Soviets, not coerced into pro-Soviet orthodoxy by occupying Red Army forces as in Eastern Europe. The absence of brute coercion indicates that close ties with the Soviets are therefore possibly more acceptable to the Cuban leadership and to Cubans in general than to their Eastern European counterparts. Does it also suggest that Cuba can unbind itself of the Soviet link more easily? Certainly, but only if and when that link is no longer necessary for the survival of Socialist Cuba.

Thus Cuba enjoys the friendship of a Socialist superpower sponsor that literally brings its economic and military presence within the shadow of the United States and helps create the image of an alliance with which to promote joint objectives in the Third World, which Cuba as a self-styled Afro-Latin nation considers its legitimate domain of activity. There is hardly, moreover, a question in international affairs where Cuba and the Soviet Union do not agree on the appropriate joint policy. They thus both support East-West detente and extol each other's Socialist achievements. They work in tandem to undermine the US international position by tirading against the shortcomings of American society and its foreign "imperialism." Cuba promotes

selective nonalignment (Havana will host the 1979 conference of nonaligned nations) and regional organizations such as the Latin American Economic System which exclude the United States.

Cuba's activist foreign policy thus enhances its relatively limited power and increases its bargaining position versus the United States and the Soviet Union. It does so by interposing itself in issues of international and regional concern as an actor with distinctive needs and demands that must be reckoned with by other powers. Ultimately it seeks to establish as irrefutable the legitimacy of its Socialist revolution and the inviolability of its sovereignty. In a sense, Cuba has externalized the Revolution in order to defend it at home—both from its internal and from its external enemies. Externalizing the Revolution also has the collateral effect of rationalizing to its own people the shortcomings of Cuban socialism represented by the parlous and dependent nature of the economy, which the Cuban media attributes to the economic warfare (embargo) waged against the nation by the United States.

However it rationalizes its linkage with the Soviet Union, there are definite costs and contradictions that Cuba must endure. Cuba's economic and military dependency upon the Soviet Union is well known and not admired by Third World countries—the very arena where Cuba seeks to project itself as an independent actor. Moreover, its military activism is feared by those with whom Cuba has something to gain in respectability. Cuba has literally ostracized itself within Latin America and is hardly seen as a disinterested revolutionary in Africa.

If Cuba's close association with the Soviet Union is resented by many Third World countries, it also isolates itself more within the fractured world of communism. The association earns it the opprobrium of Communist China, but perhaps more importantly it puts it out of touch with Euro-communism—a movement which increasingly asserts ideological independence for the Soviet Union and speaks on behalf of national roads to socialism. The ultimate cost is the continued mortgage of its sovereignty. If Cuba is so evidently dependent upon the Soviet Union, then it is not independent in the eyes of the world. There is, moreover, the remote possibility that the Soviet Union may weaken its support of Cuba in order to concentrate on internal needs or to pursue its own political objectives elsewhere. To render this possibility even more remote, Cuba must make itself indispensable to the Soviet Union

while at the same time maintaining the contradictory appearance of an independent and sovereign state. Such behavior ultimately involves a compromise of those attributes, since Cuba is small and relatively powerless by itself.

Other disadvantages ensue for Cuba from the linkage with the Soviet Union. The long-term trading agreements with CMEA complicate Cuba's efforts to diversify trade and acquire sorely needed Western capital and technology. Trade with CMEA and the Soviet Union is done mostly on a barter basis whereby Cuba does not receive hard currency for the transactions. Moreover, Cuban trade has only once generated a positive balance with non-Communist countries in the past 5 years—1974 when the price of sugar reach 68 cents per pound. With depressed sugar prices and limited quantities available for export to non-CMEA economies, large negative trade balances followed. The intra-CMEA trade balance has, on the other hand, been favorable.

To sum up, Cuba believes that the advantages of close ties with Moscow are more than sufficient to outweigh the disadvantages. Cuba is involved in a very sophisticated game of asserting its autonomy within a relationship of dependency. How it will extricate itself from this contradiction is not clear, but certainly Cuba's success in establishing leverage will be critical. In the final analysis, Cuba must develop and then retain sufficient leverage to achieve and protect its own autonomy. Thus, the contradictions of Cuba's foreign policy make sense only within the context of Cuba's perception of its relations with both the Soviet Union and United States.

THE FUTURE OF SOVIET-CUBAN RELATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR US POLICY

When all is said and done, what may be deduced about the evolution of Soviet-Cuban relations? On the basis of the preceding analysis, it would appear that the relationship will remain rather close through the near-term. Despite certain strains in the relationship, the preponderant evidence indicates numerous instances of mutual advantage will continue to drive the two Socialist states into an intimate relationship.

Such an assessment is further strengthened when one analyzes the leadership of both nations. In the Soviet Union, geriatric

decision-makers have long argued for international Socialist solidarity, support for the Cuban revolution, and the provision of necessary assistance to friendly Socialist states. Given the other benefits the Kremlin accrues from its Cuban connection, it is highly unlikely that the present Soviet leadership will alter its current Cuban policy.

The same argument may be made for the current Cuban leadership, most particularly Castro. Castro still retains a siege mentality and his revolutionary fervor combined with new willingness to act in remote areas have undoubtedly heightened his perception of an American threat. Without even considering Soviet economic subsidies, it is evident that Castro's Cuba benefits from close Soviet-Cuban relations. Thus, from the Cuban leader's perspective, there appears little likelihood of change in that relationship.

What impact may the United States hope to have on this relationship? Given the many congruencies of Soviet-Cuban interest now and in the near future, as well as the political vagaries and inclinations of both Soviet and Cuban leadership, it is almost impossible to foresee more than negligible impact of US actions on Soviet-Cuban relations in the near term. Even by examining the two extremes of probable US policy—on the one hand, a solidification of economic sanctions in response to Cuba's African adventures, and on the other hand, "normalization" of Cuban-American relations including an elimination of the trade embargo—the evolution of the Soviet-Cuban relationship would doubtlessly be dominated by factors beyond Washington's influence. If the "hard-line" US policy option were adopted, current Soviet-Cuban solidarity would inevitably be perpetuated. If the "soft-line" US policy option were adopted, it would doubtlessly enable the Kremlin to reduce at least some of its economic subsidy to Cuba, but there is nothing to suggest that this reduction would be significant or crucial within the context of Soviet-Cuban relations. Indeed, it seems a possibility that in the short term, such a contemplated US policy may even serve to *solidify* Soviet-Cuban ties as Castro moves to counter the possibility of "neo-neocolonialism," to coin a phrase.

It must again be stressed that the preceding analysis addresses the near-term impact of US policy on Soviet-Cuban relations. When a long-term view is taken, the picture somewhat changes.

We will first examine the long-term impact of a "hard-line" US policy toward Cuba. Under such a scenario, all other things being equal, Cuban leaders after Castro would still be faced with a menacing superpower to their north, and few policy options from which to choose. In essence, they would be forced to minimize their differences with the Soviet Union and accentuate their policy congruencies, even as Castro is currently doing. Since policy advantages which the Kremlin presently reaps from its close ties with Havana appear not to be time-sensitive, it is safe to assume that the post-Brezhnev Soviet leadership would continue to bear the Cuban economic burden. Thus, given the assumption of a "hard-line" US policy toward Cuba, a continuation of the status quo appears likely.

It is the long-term impact of a "soft-line" US policy which presents a different picture. In the 1985-2000 time-frame, it is almost inevitable that the leadership of both Socialist nations will change, and it is in the period after the nearly inevitable Cuban leadership change transpires that the benefits—and the dangers—of a hypothetical "soft-line" US policy would accrue.

Put simply, a soft-line US policy would increase the options available to post-Castro leadership. This leadership, probably seeking to solidify its own hold on Cuban power, may be both willing and able to choose policy options not available to Castro—not available to him both because of his own political-ideological attitudes and because those options have been precluded by American policy. A "soft-line" US policy would remove the second obstacle, and the post-Castro leadership may remove the first itself. The danger of such an American policy, of course, is that Castro and his successors may view it as indicative of American equivocation, and hence conducive to additional Cuban foreign policy adventurism.

In conclusion, then, it would appear that Soviet-Cuban relations will remain intimate throughout the near future. The minor problems which still exist in that relationship are likely to have significance only in the long term, and even then, only if a number of factors favorable (from the American viewpoint) coincide.

It appears that if the United States were to adopt a "soft-line" policy, the probability of reduced Soviet-Cuban intimacy in the long term would be maximized. However, such a policy decision would also increase the risk of Soviet-Cuban adventurism in the

short and mid-term since a "soft-line" US policy could be misconstrued by the Socialist countries as indicative of weak American resolve.

US policy makers are thus faced with a difficult choice. Their decision must be based on the answers to a series of other questions which, unfortunately, is beyond the scope of this paper. Is a comprehensive improvement in Cuban-American relations in the American interest? Would continued Soviet-Cuban adventurism compromise American security? If so, how much? Whatever the answers to these and similar questions, it must be remembered that current national policy congruencies need not be future ones. Indeed, they seldom are.

ENDNOTES

1. *The New York Times*, February 2, 1978.
 2. The order of presentation of perceptions—Moscow first, Havana second—is not intended to imply order of importance.
 3. Although Castro proclaimed his revolution Socialist during an oration following the initial Bay of Pigs bombardments in April 1961, and avowed himself a Marxist-Leninist in a December 1, 1961 speech, the Soviet Union made no reference to socialism in Cuba until April 11, 1962, when *Pravda* finally acknowledged that the Caribbean island was moving on a Socialist road.
 4. Cuba's pre-1959 place in international affairs is described in the following: Cuba never held a strong bargaining position in international affairs, having always been in the position of a client among the nations of the world. After the establishment of the republic in 1902, the proximity of the United States and the value of the American domestic sugar market made the United States its principal patron. This dependence was intensified by a series of trading and fiscal agreements establishing and strengthening economic ties which lasted until 1960, by the explicit assertion of American political authority under the Platt Amendment from 1902 to 1934, and by the reliance placed on American influence by every Cuban government since 1902 unsure of its ability to retain power by manipulating internal forces. The foreign policy of the republic had accordingly been more a matter of organizing foreign influence, especially that of the United States, for use in internal politics than of pursuing a distinctive line abroad.
- Wyatt MacGaffey and Clifford R. Barnett, *Twentieth-Century Cuba: The Background of the Castro Revolution*, New York: Doubleday, 1965, p. 374.
5. For speculation that overseas combat operations hurt the Cuban economy, see Carmelo Mesa-Lago, *Present and Future of Cuba's Economy and International Economic Relations*, unpublished manuscript, University of Pittsburgh, 1977, pp. 9, 13 and footnote 16.
 6. This economic analysis is derived from Lawrence Theriot, *Cuba in CMEA*, US Department of Commerce, 1977, pp. 3-5.
 7. November-December 1977, pp. 1-15.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 9. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10; William J. Durch, *The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East: From Algeria to Angola*, Arlington, Virginia: Center for Naval Analyses, September 1977, p. 36a.

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