

On Surface There's Liberty In Cuba, But Behind Scenes Dictatorship Brews

EDITOR'S NOTE: In this second article of a series of three, William L. Ryan, Associated Press Foreign News Analyst, gives some answers to the question of whether another dictatorship is likely in Cuba. Ryan has just conducted a new survey of developments in Cuba since he was last there as the Batista dictatorship collapsed.

By WILLIAM L. RYAN

AP Foreign News Analyst

HAVANA (AP)—It can be unwise for a Cuban to be careless about questions nowadays.

He might ask casually of the wrong person: "How do you think things are going these days?" and be told partly: "That's a counter-revolutionary question."

El Jefe Maximo — the topmost leader — of the revolution, Prime Minister Fidel Castro has a strange idea of democracy. To win Cuba seems to represent the purest form of Athenian democracy because the crowds come out at his beck and call to cheer for his leadership.

Castro rails against dictatorships in Latin America, and it is likely he is completely sincere in believing himself a champion of liberty. On the surface there's liberty in Cuba.

A man can talk openly if he chooses. But if he is overheard, he can be in for trouble. A newsman can print what he wants without a censor looking over his shoulder. But when it appears in print he can find himself in hot water.

There seems little prospect for free elections in Cuba for years—nor is there much prospect for formation of real opposition political activity.

Castro, however, does not appear to relate these things to dictatorship. It's just that he does not seem to permit Cubans any doubt about the road they're traveling.

Some aspects of the developing

revolution have an ugly look, though on the surface they might appear innocent enough.

For example, there are the "Patrullas Juveniles"—the youth patrols. On the surface these are little more than Boy Scout-type organizations devoted to fine and patriotic ideals. But underneath they seem something else again.

The youth patrol made its appearance in olive drab uniforms in the big parade celebrating the July 26 anniversary of Castro's movement. The boys were executing a curious little twisted goose-step. They are part of Castro's revolution.

The "Patrullas Juveniles de la Policia Revolucionaria" is billed as an organization intended to "help the police." The youths in the patrol are supposed to inform the police of what happens in their neighborhoods.

In the old days under Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship, such a person would have been called a "chivato"—meaning a little bleating goat, informer or, to put it in the proper colloquial English, stool pigeon. Now they are being called "young civic citizens."

Up to the present about 27,000 are enrolled in the organization, operating thus far only in Havana under the direction of a dynamic, middle-aged woman leader named Caridad Alvarez Alamo. It is supposed to enroll youngsters from 7 to 14 years, but the age actually ranges up to 17 or 18.

Leader Alvarez has been quoted as saying she wants to indoctrinate the boys in "comradeship, courage, class spirit and democratic conscience." This has a melancholy similarity to the regimentation slogans that have become familiar in recent decades. One parent who refused to enroll his son in the organization got a furious reaction and says he expects unpleasant consequences.

Other ominous portents include

So far the public works program seems in good shape under the able direction of Manuel Ray Rivero, the young, vigorous public works minister. Ray believes Cuba can take a "manageable deficit" without risking runaway inflation.

His department now is spending 13 million dollars a month and this probably will go higher. The money is going into a useful program of roads, schools, hospitals and bridges. About 50,000 workers are on the rolls and another 20,000 probably will be added.

The critical time for Castro is still months ahead — perhaps in 1960. That's when his promises fall due.

In the notion of many workers, including some sugar cane campesinos, that the revolution permits them to strike at the drop of a hat for the most outlandish demands. While this may be a temporary phase spring from workers' glorying in unaccustomed freedom, it is being used by Communist agitators to foment restiveness.

In some areas Communist-infiltrated unions now are sufficiently powerful to become a clearing-house for the labor force with full control over job assignments and wages.

These are only symptoms. Perhaps much of this will be over-



REV. RYAN

New Bethel To Hold Revival

Rev. Malcolm King, Minister of Evergreen Baptist Church will be the evangelist in a series of meetings at the New Bethel Baptist Church, beginning with an all-day service Sunday, August 16.

Services will be held each night at 7:30 with Rev. Billy Ryan as the speaker. The public is invited to attend.

come. On the whole, even among the harassed middle class, there is much well-wishing for Castro's revolution, and much confidence it will succeed in the long run despite gloomy portents.

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