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What's happening in Cuba? An Anarchic look at the 11-J Protests

Interview with comrade Gustavo Rodríguez

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strikes have been outlawed for six decades? do they not have their headquarters and/or branches in other latitudes where we enjoy a wide presence? Just these days, I read in related pages about an arson attack against the embassy of the dictatorship in Paris. Definitely, solidarity is much more than words and is expressed in a thousand practical ways.

AI: *Would you like to add anything else?*

It is inadmissible to add anything after this historiographic soap opera, to which I have also added extensive Notes. They were concise questions but they demanded extensive answers. As much as I tried to summarize, it was impossible. Answering these questions requires a much deeper analysis than what can be provided in the framework of an interview. However, any loose ends would facilitate the distortion of my words, feeding the officialist grammar. In fact, I am convinced that there will be no lack of the usual attacks and slander, because it is not that the defenders of the dictatorship are unaware of the facts, but rather that they do not want their ignominy to be divulged. They aspire to continue channeling all the rebellious and insurrectional energies around the hypothetical “unity of struggles”, to impose on us, for the umpteenth time, “Law and Order” in the name of the Social Revolution or the Workers’ State, consolidating the domination of the left of Capital. It only remains for me to thank Anarquía Info for this space and to congratulate them for the questionnaire.

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In recent years, we informal and insurrectional anarchists have accumulated a long list of comrades in prison around the world; the party of order has undoubtedly grown stronger in every corner. However, they have not been able to control our creativity. Much less have they been able to stifle our passions or annihilate our insurrectionary desires. They put out a fire but there always remains a spark to be rekindled, there is always a loophole for insurrection. Anarchist warfare is permanent and conflict is present at any time and in any place.

Anarchists cannot prop up authoritarian regimes in the name of a hypothetical unity of “revolutionary struggles”. To link our aspirations to the perspectives of a State project, associating anarchist passions with its pretensions of domination, is to pave the way to the gallows and to cooperate with our executioners, putting the rope around our necks. We have to build our own route, stoking the rupture and the daily conflict, confronting power and Capital on a world scale; conscious that our struggle does not recognize borders. Our only commitment is with Anarchy, not with other currents, not with those who govern or pretend to govern tomorrow in the name of Revolution, Socialism or Communism. We must get in touch with those comrades who are experiencing forms of attacks on power, to act in solidarity with them, without distinction with the regimes that prevail today or those that may succeed them.

In this sense, I am reminded of the arson attack recently (3-24-2021) by a group of comrades in Malmo, Sweden, against a shopping center of the transnational IKEA, in solidarity with our comrades repressed in Belarus; considering that this capitalist company cooperates with the dictatorship of Lukashenko. And I wonder how many capitalist trusts are trading with impunity with the Cuban dictatorship and are swollen with dollars doing business with the Cuban generals, taking advantage of the benefits offered by the revolutionary paradise which does not allow independent unions and where

cal manuscript entitled “Cuba, the Marxist State and the New Class.”³⁵

In a note in the official newspaper Granma (propaganda organ of the PCC) in 2012, the government acknowledged having a prison population of 57 thousand people. With all the makeup of the figures, the Cuban state was then in sixth place in the international ranking of prisoners per capita. Despite the secrecy of the General Directorate of Prisons of Cuba, which considers this data, as well as the number of prisons and “rehabilitation centers” (about 300), as of mid-January 2020, some Human Rights NGOs reported 794 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants, placing it above the United States and El Salvador. According to the same report, the number of convicts and sentenced persons annually exceeded 127,000 people; of these, 90,000 were in prison (of which 38,000 had no criminal record); the rest were in “situations of judicial and police control”. The report highlights the category of “prisoners for antisocial behavior” or “behavior contrary to socialist morality”, among which are trans women (incarcerated in prisons for men), sex workers, political dissidents and young rebels, mostly Afro-Cubans; who, in general, have not committed any crime but are considered “potential criminals” by the dictatorship and are sentenced to 1 to 4 years in prison.

Of course, Black Live Matter politicians ignore these facts and celebrate the continuation of the dictatorship. Similarly, no section of the Anarchist Black Cross has ever been interested in this situation and, I understand: “it is not politically correct to point fingers at progressive governments”. Instead, they have defended spies of the Castro dictatorship “kidnapped in the belly of the Empire”. Abolition has priorities!

AI: *How can we, the insurrectional anarchists of the world, support the struggle of our kindred in Cuba?*

³⁵ *In an Addendum to his sentence, it is ordered “as for his work, destroy it by fire.”*

Part One

These days we have received a torrent of statements generated in the mass disinformation media about the recent protests in Cuba. On the one hand, there are those formulated by the Cuban officialdom and the leftists of the world in the name of anti-imperialism and in defense of what they still call the «Cuban revolution», on the other hand, there are the traditional right-wing media that accuse the «communist dictatorship» of the lack of freedoms and rights.

The Cuban Communist Party and its international acolytes call for solidarity with the regime, arguing that they are facing a new intervention of «Yankee imperialism» which is taking advantage of the disastrous economic conditions caused by more than sixty years of blockade and the greatest health crisis in its history. While the supporters of the free market and the right-wing forces claim that what is happening in the country is the result of its citizens’ oppression due to the lack of opportunities in the socialist regimes.

In these times of post-truth we are suspicious of all these positions, but also, as anarchists, we are not only suspicious of these channels of manipulation but we identify positions that are contrary to our praxis and enemies of our desire for total liberation.

Unfortunately, the information we have received so far with a clear anarchist position from the territory controlled by the Cuban state is minimal. That is why we chose to interview an anarchist voice with whom we identify and asked him to share with us his perspective of the facts from his experience as an exile of Cuban origin, in order to better understand what is happening in Cuba.

From **AnarquíaInfo (AI)** we have always given place to the reflections of our comrade **Gustavo Rodríguez (GR)**, hosting in our blog almost all his contributions to the informal anarchist tendency and to the development of contemporary insur-

rectional anarchism, reaffirming the black path of Anarchy and promoting permanent insurrection through an international conspiracy that concretizes the Black International in our days.

AI: Comrade, for us it is a pleasure that you have agreed to this conversation. For some time we had been contemplating doing an interview with you but more focused on issues related to the perspective of the informal and insurrectional anarchist tendency, and your emphasis on «the need to abandon all that is alien». This concern became even greater after reading your last contribution (**Against The Tide**), where you state that we anarchists «really are «sectarian», «purist», «intransigent» and even «totalitarian».» However, with the passing of time, the revolts in Cuba arose and this made us reformulate this interview, but leaving pending for a future occasion the approach of these crucial issues for the development of a new anarchist paradigm. And well, on this particular occasion, we would like you to comment on your impressions about what is happening in Cuba, with the intention of clarifying things and forming a criterion more in line with our praxis. With this interest in mind, we have formulated the following questions:

AI: *What is happening in Cuba?*

GR: Comrades, the immense pleasure is mine. First of all, I would like to thank you — for a long time now — for promptly hosting and disseminating my contributions on your *website*. I also thank you for the opportunity to expose my views on the Cuban situation; however, I declare myself incompetent to answer your first question in all the extension it demands. However, this plea does not arise from the impossibility of being present in the country and/or not having participated in this struggle — there are those who even being there have been unable to take the pulse of the insurrectional moment they are living — but by the vast diversity of perspectives generated by these events from many different points of view, including the different lenses that, in one way or another, claim to be libertarianism and insular anarchism.

tavo Arcos Bergnes (10 and; 8 years)³⁴ ; among others, stand out. They also showed great inclemency against the revolutionary dissidence of my generation -the so-called sons and daughters of the Revolution-, imprisoning young anarchists, Trotskyists, communists, conscientious objectors, artists and critical and gay intellectuals; sentenced for “ideological diversionism”, “counterrevolution”, “improper conduct”, “not having labor ties”, “attempting to leave the country illegally” and “refusing to perform the Compulsory Military Service”. One of the most notorious cases was that of Ariel Hidalgo, award-winning historian and pre-university professor of Marxist Philosophy; sentenced to eight years in prison for writing a criti-

the islands of the Bahamas from where he began to operate against the Cuban government, being imprisoned again by the U.S. authorities. In December 1964, he led a landing in Baracoa, Cuba; after a month of resistance in the region, he was captured by the army and condemned to death in a summary trial that lasted 30 minutes. His sentence was commuted to 30 years in prison in exchange for a televised “mea culpa”. In 1970, he received an additional 25-year sentence for “conspiring from prison”. On December 20, 1986, he was released from prison under international pressure after 22 years and deported to Spain. In mid-1995 he traveled to Havana to meet with Fidel in search of “reconciliation and a peaceful transition of the regime”; for which he was branded a traitor by the Cuban exile community. He died in Havana on October 26, 2012, after his unsuccessful attempt at “political opening”.

³⁴ *In July 1953, he participated in the assault on the Moncada Barracks together with Fidel, with whom he served his sentence on the Isle of Pines, after being seriously wounded in combat. Once released from prison, he went into exile in Mexico, where he participated in the preparations for the Granma yacht. He was number 83 on the expeditionary list but could not embark due to his precarious state of health. At the end of 1957, he returned clandestinely to Cuba and joined the struggle against Batista. After the revolutionary triumph, he was appointed Cuban ambassador in Brussels until 1966. His critical positions against the dictatorship cost him the diplomatic post, being prosecuted and sentenced to 10 years in prison, of which he served 3, after a long hunger strike that put him on the verge of death. Years later, he would be imprisoned again for attempted “illegal exit from the country” and sentenced to 8 years in prison. He served the full sentence despite his deteriorating health and being the oldest prisoner in Cuban jails. He died in Havana on August 8, 2006, at the age of 79.*

litical prisoners” (more than 10 thousand), accused of counter-revolution although, paradoxically, a very high percentage had been “revolutionaries”. Their sentences ranged from 10 to 30 years in prison. The cruelty against the so-called “critical revolutionaries” or “traitors” -former comrades of the dictator Fidel Castro in the struggle against Batista-, was of cannallesque proportions. The sentences of Commander Hubert Matos (20 years/1959-1979); Pedro Luis Boitiel (10 years/1961-1972)³¹ ; Mario Chanes de Armas (30 years/1961-1991)³² ; Commander Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo (30 years, served 22/1964-1986)³³ ; Gus-

³¹ *Leader of the student movement, militant of the MR-26-7 and responsible for the clandestine radio plant of this organization. Arrested and tortured twice during the struggle against the Batista dictatorship, he was forced to go into exile in Venezuela until the triumph of the revolutionaries. In 1961, he was accused by the new regime of “conspiracy against the State” and sentenced to 10 years in prison; once imprisoned, his sentence was extended on two additional charges. He died on May 25, 1972, at the age of 41, after a prolonged hunger strike (53 days) in the prison of the Castle of the Prince in Havana.*

³² *Assailant of the Moncada Barracks on July 26, 1953, taken prisoner together with Fidel, with whom he shared prison in the Isla de Pinos Model Prison. Founding member of the MR-26-7 and organizer and participant of the Granma yacht expedition (together with Fidel, Raul and Ché). At the triumph of the Revolution he was imprisoned in Batista’s jails for being responsible for “action and sabotage” in the province of Havana. Once released he collaborated in the revolutionary high command. He was arrested at the end of 1960 on direct orders from Fidel and convicted on the charge of “conspiring by word of mouth” against the dictator, being sentenced to 30 years in prison.*

³³ *Son of Dr. Carlos Gutiérrez Zabaleta, major of the Republican Popular Army during the Spanish Civil War. He was an urban guerrilla of the Revolutionary Directorate (DR) from the age of 21. He participated with his brothers in the failed assault on the Presidential Palace on March 13, 1957, where his brother Carlos was killed in combat. He was head of “action and sabotage” for the DR in the province of Havana. In November 1957, he accepted the command of the National Front (Escambray) and initiated in Banao, Las Villas province, the rural guerrilla against Batista. After Batista’s escape, his troops were the first to arrive in Havana, recognizing Fidel’s triumph. When he noticed the Stalinist turn of the Revolution at the end of 1959, he confronted Ché and Raúl and, immediately after, he tried to reorganize his guerrilla group in the Escambray, this time to overthrow Castro. In 1961 he fled to the United States and was detained in Texas for six months. By 1963, he established a base on one of*

Undoubtedly, I can transmit you a balance of the facts through the related reflection of comrades in situ and I will also share with you my perspective from my experience as an exile of that singular banana national socialism¹ that for more than six decades reigns with blood and fire in the largest of the Antilles. In that sense, I can assert that last July 11, there was an unprecedented social outburst, with presence in all 16 provinces. Of course, according to the narrative of the Cuban dictatorship, this social explosion never occurred, but rather there were attempts of «public disorder» and «riots» instigated by «vandals», «delinquents» and «antisocial elements» belonging to the «most vulgar and indecent sectors of society» and manipulated by the «cyberwar orchestrated by the Empire». Evidently, what is happening in Cuba is that a deeply rebellious generation that has lost its fear, despite the omnipresent control of the repressive mechanisms, has gained prominence. It happens that to the six decades of authoritarian epidemic was added the Covid pandemic, with its nightly curfews and «sanitary encirclements». It happens, that the myth of the Revolution (with capital letters) is over and the grammar of the «socialist paradise» is exhausted; evidencing the enormous inequality gap generated by the ruling class in the name of «Communism». It happens, that the deep classism and acute racism of the political elites has come to light, beyond the «egalitarian» rhetoric and discursive demagoguery. It happens that during the protests, the National Socialist State took off its mask, revealing its true face -which is not at all different from the repressive role of the Chilean, Colombian, American or any other State, as the global revolt of the last years has

¹ And for the record, to qualify the Cuban dictatorship as national socialist is not to resort to any epithet, there is plenty of evidence to confirm it; only that its singularity was obtained thanks to the incorporation of the Stalinist discourse and the conjunction of both fascist practices.

shown-, as anticipated by Ramón García Guerra.² Thousands of people were arrested during the demonstrations and half a thousand are still imprisoned (some of them minors, such as Marcos Antonio Perez Fernandez) under the accusation of «contempt», «insulting the president», «damaging property» and «spreading contagion», among other charges. It happens, that there are about twenty disappeared; a dozen of people wounded by firearms (of exclusive use of the repressive forces) and, a hundred of women and men savagely beaten by civilian and uniformed agents. It happens that the young Afro-Cuban Diubis Laurencio Tejeda (Aka, Piquiky Rasta), was cowardly assassinated by the regime's henchmen. It happens that, for the first time, hundreds of young people from the poor neighborhoods and marginal strips, those who put their chests on the front line in Oaxaca, Santiago de Chile or Portland and promote subversive indiscipline and propagate illegalism -living daily Anarchy beyond the «classics», discursive rhetoric and politically correct verbiage-, responded to the bullets with stones; They overturned patrol cars, expropriated supermarkets, and confronted the agents of repression hand to hand.

AI: *What originated the protests?*

Sickness and the rage of hopelessness have been the origin of these protests -as in the rest of the planet-, which highlights the absurdity of the Cuban «exceptionality» that the international left (from social democracy to post-modern Leninism) is raising, wielding all the discursive demagogy of the dictatorship, with its old story of medical excellence, the greatness of its educational system and the high «Human Development Index» (HDI). A «medical excellence» -all the oratory for ex-

² In the year 2019, during the discussions of the preliminary draft of the Constitution, García Guerra, rightly pointed out that if the new Magna Carta was approved «sooner rather than later, we would see the riot police firing rubber bullets, hitting with water jets and beating a defenseless people with sticks».

imposition of terror; thousands of young people remain determined to exercise the “constitutional right to demonstrate peacefully”. In this sense, they defend “the legitimacy of social activism”, with the intention of “promoting respectful debate” and “promoting the collective construction of a better country”. Proposals that are not only inscribed in the democratic discourse of “rights and duties” – alien to our anarchic objectives – but also, they are written down with candor in a letter to Santa Claus, taking for granted that the fox will renounce his nature and share, in peace and harmony, the henhouse with the hens. In this context, I consider that our place, as anarchists, is not in the streets with our faces uncovered and in broad daylight, but in the darkness of the night, as we do in all the latitudes where we have a presence. Expropriations, sabotage, the relentless attack on the structures of capital and the State, reprisals against the police, all these tasks characterize our anarchic actions and, in Cuba, it does not have to be different. The enemy is the same in any part of the planet and also represses, imprisons and shoots in all the confines.

AI: *What is the situation of the prisoners of the revolt in particular and prisoners in Cuba in general?*

So far there is little information on the judicial processes of the prisoners of the revolt. As I mentioned at the beginning of the interview, it is known that around 500 people are still imprisoned and that many of those who have been released are in home confinement, which in Cuba is classified as “correctional work without internment”. It is also known that summary trials have been carried out and that most of the defendants are accused of “public disorder”, “contempt” and “damage to property”; but the sentences are still unknown.

As for the situation of the prisoners in general, it is an open secret for all Cubans that the archipelago is one big prison. That has been the real social record of Castroism and not the vaunted education or health “achievements”. Between 1960 and 1980, the prison population was mostly made up of “po-

its general secretary, Fidel Castro; which demanded the immediate “purification of its members” and the overcoming of “the errors of sectarianism”. In this context, on March 26, 1962, the United Party of the Socialist Revolution of Cuba (PURSC) was formed and Fidel Castro was unanimously elected as General Secretary of the Central Committee. Finally, on October 3, 1965, it would be constituted as the “Communist Party of Cuba” (PCC), ratifying Fidel as its “maximum leader” for life. By then, the Stalinists had not only exterminated any vestige of anarchism or anarcho-syndicalism, but eradicated all traces of its passage and influence in the so-called “workers’ movement”; changing at a stroke the history of its struggles. Thus, well-known Creole anarcho-syndicalists became, overnight, “leaders of the working class in transit to Marxism”.

AI: What’s next after the riots?

Actually, I have never been given to astral predictions. However, I can anticipate the obvious; that is, the intensification of repression, prohibitions, censorship, surveillance and convictions for “conduct contrary to socialist morality”, “disrespect”, “damage to property” and “public disorder”. Tools that the dictatorship has used throughout six decades and which it is not going to give up at this stage of the game.

As I am informed by comrades on the island, the main cities of the country are militarized and the Black Wasps (the new repressive anti-riot corps) are making frequent rounds in the marginalized neighborhoods with the determined intention of reestablishing the fear that had ensured the tranquility of the ruling class for 62 years. To that end, they have again staged the “brigades of rapid reaction of the fighting people” to prevent any attempt of protest and; the atrocious “rallies of repudiation”, using Young Communists and Party members to attack with stones and graffiti with government slogans the houses of people the regime considers “disaffected”.

In the face of the return of repressive control -under the slogan “the streets for the revolutionaries”- and, in spite of the

ternal consumption-, which in reality, is far from the official quibble, with hospitals without doctors or beds and health centers (Polyclinics) lacking hygiene and running water; of course, not to mention the lack of ambulances (one for every ten patrol cars) and the constant shortage of medicines.³ This is in stark contrast to the juicy export of «human capital», through the leasing of medical brigades in «international missions» (one of the main sources of income of the economy)⁴ and the excellence provided in dollars by the lucrative «medical tourism» -surpassed only by sex tourism, sorry, I meant leisure tourism (second source of foreign currency of the regime) and the sending of remittances from Miami. An «educational greatness» that, in fact, is reflected in insufficient teachers and the grow-

³ In Cuba the universal right to health is «constitutionally» guaranteed; however, as Cuba’s prestige as an international reference in health care has grown, through its «medical missions», the export of drugs and vaccines «against cancer» and, «medical tourism», the internal services to the population have been deteriorating, becoming alarming the deficit of galenxs, the lack of material resources and the brutal shortage of medicines; Despite the fact that, of the 619 drugs that the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP) labels as «basic», 359 are produced domestically through the state-owned biotechnology company BioCubaFarma; however, for some years they have been prioritizing the production of drugs for export. It is worth mentioning that in the last five years, they have allocated a much larger budget to the repressive forces.

⁴ It should be noted that Cuban doctors earn twice the national average salary, but their fees fluctuate between \$40 and \$100 dollars per month (the latter salary for specialists in «critical medicine» and «internal medicine»); however, as «volunteer cooperants» in international missions, they earn approximately US\$ 950, while the Cuban State receives US\$ 10 thousand dollars for each one, as a lease to the country of destination. It is worth noting that in 2018, the Cuban State received income of US\$ 6, 400 million (above what was collected in the tourism sector) for the outsourcing of «professional health services» through the export of «internationalist doctors». As an additional fact, it should be emphasized that these professionals, once in the country of destination, are stripped of their passports by Cuban diplomatic authorities and subjected to a strong surveillance to prevent their desertion, evidencing a sort of modern slavery or forced labor with the consent of the contracting country.

ing desertion of young people between 15 and 16 years of age in the High School levels. An HDI that in practice, leaving aside the official figures historically made up, translates into one of the countries in Latin America with the highest suicide rate among adolescents and young people.⁵

However, it should be pointed out that the underlying tone of the protests was not the demand for «solutions» to the shortage of all kinds of medicines, or the poor conditions of hospitals, or the criminal increase in the prices of basic foods, or the lack of housing and the precariousness of the buildings (while GAESA builds thousands of luxury hotels, marinas and golf courses⁶), much less, the lack of teachers; but the resounding

⁵ According to the 48th edition of the 2019 Statistics Yearbook of the Ministry of Public Health (Minsap) of Cuba, in that year 13 people per 100 thousand inhabitants took their lives (yielding a total of 1462); less than one point of what was recorded in 2018 where 13.3 people per 100 thousand inhabitants were counted (1 501); however, according to reports from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO), Cuba was already the country in the Americas with the highest suicide rate in 2014, occupying the ninth cause of death with respect to overall mortality and third place in the 10–19 age group (Minsap Statistical Yearbook, 2014). It should be noted that since 1969, suicide has been among the first ten causes of death in the country. In the 1980s and 1990s, the rate of deaths from self-inflicted causes exceeded previous records of 20 cases per 100 000 inhabitants. In 1982, the highest rate was reached (23.2) and, during the so-called Special Period, in 1993, 2374 people committed suicide, reaching the highest point in the last sixty years. It is worth mentioning that in 1986, the Minsap established the «National Program for the Prevention of Suicidal Behavior», with the objective of reducing mortality from this cause, without succeeding in reducing it.

⁶ The Armed Forces Business Administration Group (GAESA), under the «executive presidency» of General Luis Alberto Rodríguez López-Calleja (former son-in-law of Raul Castro), plans to finish by 2025 in the city of Havana, 7,500 luxury rooms. According to information published during the period 2018–2019 in the official media, as recorded in the reports of the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR) submitted to the National Assembly of People's Power -during that same period of time-, the Gaviota Tourism Group (owned by the army, under the «executive presidency» of Major General Luis Pérez Róspide) and the real estate company Almest S.A. (also presided by General

number 2, being forced to participate in some combats. Thanks to previous contacts with Raul, the communist leader Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, in July 1958, would go up to the Sierra de San Luis to visit him and from there, he would go to the Sierra Maestra to meet with Fidel and offer him the “unconditional support of the PSP”, playing all his cards.

By November 1959, the tropical Bolsheviks managed to turn the tables and install themselves in the political leadership of the regime. From the 18th to the 21st of that month, the X National Congress of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (Revolutionary) took place, under the leadership of Fidel, who pointed out – in the face of the positioning of the different currents – that “the worst are some who pretend to defend the Revolution”; concluding that the only spirit that can prevail is “the party of us, the party of the homeland”³⁰. At the end of the Congress, David Salvador would be ratified in the general secretariat of the CTC-R (the man proposed by Castro) but in reality Lázaro Peña, historical Stalinist leader of the CTC (the man imposed by Batista) took control again. In 1961, in spite of having been diluted in the so-called “Integrated Revolutionary Organizations” (ORI), together with other organizations; the Stalinists of the PSP continued measuring muscle and taking political control. In that same year, the XI Congress of the CTC would be held. The Confederation would change its name to Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, abandoning the old anarcho-sindicalist influences in the workers’ movement. It eliminated the affiliation to federations and imposed the affiliation to state unions, consolidating corporativism. Thus, it constituted itself as the sole representative of the Cuban workers under the command of Lázaro Peña; its main objective being “the unification of the interests of the working class”, in both trade union and political terms, around the new Party and

³⁰ *Speech given by the dictator at the opening of the X Congress of the CTC, November 18, 1959. Available at: www.fidelcastro.cu*

adjective “Revolutionary” (CTC-R) and imposed a “Provisional Coordinating Committee”, led by David Salvador. By the 20th of that month, the Council of Ministers, through Law No. 22, regulated the “restoration of trade union democracy” and announced the “purification of the workers’ movement” with the expulsion of “all the splinter currents”; a clear allusion to the anarcho-syndicalist, Trotskyist-Mujalist and Stalinist-Batista PSP leaders. However, in spite of their troubled past and their proven complicity (and servility) with Batista, the Stalinists managed to avoid Fidel’s anti-communism and, above all, the firing squad. Castro had managed to carry out the (delayed) nationalist revolution, but he was late. Fascism and National Socialism were the great losers of history: the defeated of World War II. It lacked allies to confront Yankee imperialism from a “third position”, reaffirming its anti-communism. Perón had been defeated three years earlier and lived begging for asylum among related dictatorships (Paraguay, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Dominican Republic and Spain). He had no alternative but to turn to the USSR. Although the US hostilities left the Castroites no other option, the ñángaras²⁹ had been paving the way to survive the imminent fall of Batista for some time. One of the first approaches of the Party was through erotic-affective relations with his brother Raúl, but Fidel’s visceral homophobia was the first impediment. Only eight months before Batista’s escape, the PSP founded the guerrilla detachment “Máximo Gómez” under the orders of “commander” Félix Torres González, in the mountains of Bamburanao and Gumuhaya, in the region of Yaguajay. They never fired a shot and according to testimonies, the only things they killed were pigs and cows, but when Camilo Cienfuegos passed through Las Villas, they joined Column

²⁹ A derogatory adjective used by the Abakuá ekobios to refer to the Bolsheviks – since the beginning of the 20th century – as a result of the influences and closeness with Creole anarchism.

demand for «freedom» and the unanimous cry that demanded loudly «down with the dictatorship». As a young comrade recently commented from Havana, «we do not ask the State for solutions because we know that the State is the problem» and, he adds, «we have to look for the solution in the garbage, because that is what the State is: garbage».

AI: *Who participated in the protests and how were they coordinated?*

As I could see in multiple videos that were transmitted live during the protests and, as confirmed by friends with whom I am in contact, the participation was varied, with people from all strata and political positions (including apolitical ones), highlighting in a significant way the intervention of young people. Particularly extensive was the presence of the poorest sectors -those excluded from the system-, where the Afro-Cuban population stands out in a preponderant way (it is not by chance that it is the majority in the prison system, in contrast with its reduced representation in the dominant elite).

As for the «coordination» of the protest, it is worth noting that it was the great absentee. There was no call whatsoever, neither in the social networks nor through the word of mouth of the Cachitas and the Cheos. It was a spontaneous explosion. So spontaneous, that it not only took by surprise the different opposition groups but also the whole framework of repression and surveillance, despite the thick alphabet soup (MININT, PNR, CDR, FMC, UJC, FEM, FEU and a long etcetera)

Rodríguez López-Calleja), are building 120 tourist projects in the country, with 92 thousand «five star» rooms, at a total cost of 13 billion dollars; which represents 70% of the projected investments in the Island for the year 2030. GAESA also controls the companies Tecnotex and Tecnoimport (dedicated to import and export); the only foreign currency supermarket chain; the company responsible for the Mariel Integral Development Zone (Zdimsa); the Union of Military Constructions; and the port, customs, transportation and wholesale services company (Almacenes Universales).

that makes up the control system; leaving the networks of informers and the sophisticated listening system of the dictatorship in a very bad shape. The only thing that helped the extension of the protest was the dissemination of the mobilizations in real time, through digital platforms and the network of virtual links, which allowed -in a matter of minutes-, that the anti-systemic demonstration originated in the municipality of San Antonio de los Baños (31 km from the city of Havana), to be replicated almost simultaneously. This caused the Viennese cake of several floors that separates, by means of a dense jam of grievances, the multiple layers of the Cuban social cake, until reaching the top floor, where the royal family and the first circle of the privileged dwell, to wobble. However, it cannot be ignored that the success of the «surprise factor» resided in the confidence of the oligarchy in its sophisticated system of surveillance and repression and, above all, the security offered by having implanted fear and inoculated paranoia in wide sectors of society. This excess of vigilance has allowed for years the local oligarchy and its acolytes (as well as a wide range of opportunists who enjoy benefits and perks) to live as true «foreigners» in their country, which has prevented them from feeling the accumulated weariness and the rage of hopelessness. Much less have they had the capacity to foresee the coming insurrection.

AI: *Has the U.S. blockade played a determining role in aggravating the causes that provoked these protests?*

Before answering this question, I must emphasize the need to dismantle certain Manichaeisms — completely alien to anarchist praxis-, which inexplicably have a place in our tents and, every time the criticism of the Cuban, Venezuelan or Nicaraguan dictatorship is addressed, they resurface from the deepest recesses; as if from anarchism there were something to rescue from those States in particular. These strange libertarian postures always constrain us to take sides, deliberately forgetting that anarchists — by our very essence — do not take

ole Christians to assume a violent opposition (being brutally repressed)-, very soon they had the opportunity to return to the “revolutionary abode” through the back door. To that end, they endowed the nascent Revolution with “ideology”, promoting the thesis of “Humanism” in an attempt to distance themselves from communism and the dominant capitalism. Thus, they once again occupied leading positions and even “joined” the ranks of the party, demonstrating once again “the immortality of the Holy Mother” and her capacity to always play with the bases loaded (to put it in baseball lexicon).

The third force to confront would be an old acquaintance. The eternal archenemy of anarchic praxis: the Bolsheviks. With an incredible shrewdness, the banana Leninists — just like the Church — showed their capacity to always play with the bases full and demonstrated “the immortality of the Party”. Years later, they would be even more explicit, evidencing their Machiavellian strategy under the slogan “men die, the party is immortal” (or immoral?). Indeed, during the first six months of 1959, they juggled to save their skins. At the beginning of January, the MR-26-7 took over the leadership of the Confederation of Cuban Workers, to which they added the

demanding their expulsion from certain state functions (teaching, for example) and access to university studies, among others. These institutional regulations against “believers” included all “cults”, including Afro-Cuban religions, which were fought with particular viciousness (highlighting the persecution and infiltration of the Abakuá plants). It was then that they implemented the Military Units of Aid to Production; better known by its acronym UMAP (1965–1968), a euphemism that disguised the forced labor camps, where religious, lumpen proletarians and homosexuals, among others, were confined. In 1991, in the midst of a severe economic crisis, which was called “special period” -after the collapse of the Soviet Union-, the dictatorship reduced the coercion on religions and the (only) Party backed down, accepting the militancy of “believers” in its ranks. In an attempt to alleviate the crisis, they then promoted “religious reactivation”, allowing a greater presence of religions in Cuban society and “social assistance” through donations of humanitarian aid for schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly and social works; in addition to participating in social and economic development projects; displaying the historical Bolshevik opportunism.

Minister of Labor, of being “anarchist” for “promoting these demagogic experiments”, condemning him to exile.²⁷

The second force to be confronted was the Church. From the pages of *El Libertario* and *Solidaridad Gastronómica*, the anarcho-syndicalists bluntly pointed out the imminent penetration of the clergy in the “revolutionary government”. The participation in political-administrative posts of hundreds of prominent “laymen” and militants of the University Catholic Action (graduates of the Royal College of Belen, La Salle, Maristas and the University of Villanueva); as well as the strong ties of some clergymen of the Catholic hierarchy with the ruling elite, were proof of this. Although it is true that this marriage was short-lived, coming to an end once the government declared all religious cults illegal²⁸ -which motivated some Cre-

²⁷ *“One day I made a criticism — and I believe it was a well-made criticism — against that demagogue whom I called anarcho-crazy, because in reality he was nothing else, that one fine day, out of politicking, in those days when there were a series of currents, that there were people who adopted purely demagogic measures, who unthinkingly and without consulting anyone, decided on a problem such as the problem of equalizing the salaries of the construction sector in the interior with those of the capital, without taking into account the tremendous repercussion that this was going to have on agriculture and on the displacement of the labor force from agriculture to construction. And precisely, those days when the Revolution had initiated a series of works to provide employment, as one of the many means to put an end to unemployment before agriculture acquired greater development.”* Speech by dictator Fidel Castro, June 30, 1963. Available at: www.cuba.cu

²⁸ *When Fidel Castro promulgated the Marxist-Leninist character of his government, numerous pastors, priests and nuns were expelled from the country, just as Franco had done with the sector of the Church he considered “opposition”. In 1963, all religious schools (Catholic, Protestant and Jewish) were nationalized, prohibiting religious education. In 1965, the Communist Party of Cuba was consolidated as the hegemonic political force, forcing the “integration” of all the currents that had intervened in the insurrectional struggle against Batista in the only political institution allowed, under the Leninist conception of the construction of socialism as the central objective. Thus, it imposed in its Statutes the priority of eradicating “religious obscurantism”, which was immediately translated as the exclusion of “believers” in all political-social activities. Such measures not only prevented their militancy in the Party but also*

the side of any state (or at least, we should not). Of course, it is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that some so-called «anarchists» take sides in these state disputes and demand the cessation of sanctions by one state against another or, failing that, demand the cessation of sanctions by one state against another; failing that, demand the tightening of sanctions, embargoes and blockades, as was the case of those who -from anarchist positions — energetically supported the international embargo on South Africa, without paying much attention to the probable damage that the lack of oil and the subsequent paralysis of its economy would cause to the population, but with the just intention of putting an end to the apartheid imposed by the praetorian dictatorship. Something similar had already happened after the fascist coup of General Franco, with the pressures of the representatives of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism exiled in Mexico (some of them members of the so-called «government in exile») so that the Mexican State would prevent the admission of Spain to the nascent UN, since the Franco dictatorship «had been established with the military cooperation of foreign States». These pressures on the «democratic governments of the world» demanded the «isolation of Spain» (a sort of exacerbated «blockade»); a strategy which, at the beginning of the 1960s, motivated the libertarian syndicalists to visit some countries of the so-called «socialist camp», highlighting the negotiations with the former Yugoslavia and Cuba. The latter not only did not break off relations with the caudillo, but also strengthened them.⁷ The idyll between the two caudillos became so strong that, by orders of the (now stoned) «commander in chief», the

⁷ The Cuban State has maintained uninterrupted diplomatic and commercial relations with the Spanish State since 1902. At present, 300 Spanish transnationals have interests in Cuba, among them the hotel companies Meliá, Iberostar, Be Live of Globalia and Barceló; the tobacco company Altadis; the banks BBVA and Banco Sabadell; the travel promotion companies

Cuban State declared national mourning upon the death of the tyrant.

Having expressed the above, I must now clarify — giving the benefit of the doubt to some comrades — that the term «blockade», in the case that concerns us, must always be placed in the grammar of the dictatorship and the panegyric discourse of its henchmen (inside and outside the island). Of course, I hope that with this statement I will not be accused of supporting Washington's sanctions against the Cuban State -although I must confess that, at this stage of my life, it is not an issue that keeps me awake at night-, but I consider it unacceptable to continue playing the game of the regime and not calling things by their name.

In this regard, it is worth remembering that the «imperialist blockade» is an undeniable fact of recent history, which took place during 13 days in October 1962, with the so-called «Missile Crisis», in the context of the confrontation between the two imperial powers during the «cold war» (1945–1999); when Kennedy ordered the (literal) blockade of the Cuban archipelago, creating a siege with his naval fleet and increasing the troops and planes in the south of Florida and the Guantanamo base. After the «Kennedy-Kruschev Pact» -where the agreement not to invade Cuba was settled-, the blockade was ended and the initial position was returned to; That is to say, the economic embargo imposed on February 7, 1962, which prohibited the importation of «all merchandise of Cuban origin into US territory» and which reinforced the embargo of October 19, 1960 -implemented by President Eisenhower, after the nationalization of US companies in Cuba for a value of 1 billion dollars-, which prevented US exports to Cuba, «except medicines and foodstuffs». During Bill Clinton's administration, the Cuban Democracy Act

Amadeus and Viajes El Corte Inglés; and more than 40 companies with investments in the Special Development Zone Mariel (ZEDM).

tro revolution, had to face multiple adverse forces. Almost all of them known enemies and some yet to be known. In the first place, they had to face the bourgeoisie. Particularly, the sectors that had dressed in olive green and were “revolutionary government” but -as was to be expected-, were opposed to the radical transformations. Faced with the eventuality of workers' control, what was at stake was not only the ownership of the means of production but the probability of preserving their privileges, now as “specialists” and “technocrats”, in positions that would allow them to have decision-making power. Everyone knows the happiness experienced by the Creole bourgeoisie when they realized that the most radical measures of the Revolution were limited to the nationalization of the means of production; assuring the continuity of domination through State capitalism which left intact the scaffolding of subjection: leader-producer; guide-followers; rulers-governed; guardians-supervised. Of course, there were also segments of that expropriated bourgeoisie that felt betrayed and unleashed a bloody struggle to regain their lost property and privileges. Naturally, the majority of the middle class maintained strong ties with the new ruling class with which they shared customs and culture, which facilitated their automatic passage into the new building of domination through “integration” (a very fashionable word in those years). Thus, they recovered their role as a ruling class, assuming their place in the new administrative elite, not only in the production process but in all social orders. Thus, they massively joined the party and occupied all the political leadership positions of the new state apparatus, glorifying the speeches of the dictator and “the successful leadership of a single man”. They went so far as to confront the weak attempts at workers' management and the timid proposals to put an end to wage labor through the creation of workers' councils (Trotskyists) and collectivities (anarcho-syndicalists); denouncing them as “fifth columnists”, “demagogues” and “anarchists”. Castro himself, in one of his speeches, accused Manolo Fernández, his

lution; being the “working class” — with few exceptions — the great absentee²⁶. Likewise, it has been proven that they never set out to destroy the capitalist system (as demonstrated by the establishment of State capitalism since 1961) and, much less, to promote a Social Revolution. In fact, not even the remnants of anarcho-syndicalism, which had joined the armed struggle against Batista, promoted such an outcome. The whole discourse around the alleged “libertarian vocation” of the Cuban Revolution is framed in mythology. Unfortunately, some “comrades” still echo the myth, masking the most vulgar distortions.

AI: *What forces did Cuban anarchists face from the first days of the Revolution?*

In 1959 there was no “anarchist movement” but rather an anti-authoritarian tension, as I mentioned earlier. That tension was embodied in the Libertarian Association of Cuba which, according to the minutes of the II Libertarian Congress, in February 1948 registered 153 delegates throughout the archipelago. By the end of the 1950s, the decline was considerable. Revolutionary nationalism and reformist syndicalism had wreaked havoc in anarcho-syndicalist ranks. However, the comrades who survived all these onslaughts, at the triumph of the Cas-

²⁶ *The resounding failure of the “general strike” of April 1958 called by the MR-26-7, is an irrefutable demonstration of the distancing of this political-military organization from the “workers’ movement”. The trade unions had been under the control of the Stalinists since August 1933 (with the assault on the CNOC in collusion with Machado). Their power was reinforced in 1939 with the gift from General Batista of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), imposing Lázaro Peña as secretary general, and their interference in the “workers’ movement” would continue until 1947. It was then that the unstoppable decline of the Popular Socialist Party (PSP) would begin, losing the leadership of most of the unions. During those years they would also lose more than half of their militancy. Later, the Trotskyists would take the baton through the Workers’ Commission of the Cuban-Authentic Revolutionary Party, reaching positions in the main trade unions under the leadership of Eusebio Mujal and, after the new military coup (March 10, 1952), they would go over to Batista. It is worth noting that the PSP (Stalinists), in its Manifesto of April 12, 1958, strongly condemned the “unilateral call” for a strike called by the MR-26-7 for April 6, 1958.*

of 1992 (also known as the Toricelli Act)⁸ and the Cuban Liberty and Democracy Solidarity Act of 1996 (Helms-Burton Act), extended the embargo extraterritorially, prohibiting US subsidiaries in third countries from trading with the Cuban State, which intensified political hostilities against the Castro dictatorship. To these sanctions, the government of Joe Biden recently added the freezing of accounts and assets under US jurisdiction and the prohibition of visas to travel to the United States of the director of the National Revolutionary Police (PNR), Óscar Alejandro Callejas Valcarce and Eddy Manuel Sierra Aria (deputy director of the same repressive body);⁹ within the framework of the Magnitsky Act.

After this long peroration, by way of a historical account, it only remains for me to inform -to those comrades who, out of ignorance, repeat the propaganda of the regime to the point of exhaustion-, that the United States is among the 20 main commercial partners of the Cuban State,¹⁰ being the largest sup-

⁸ Despite the intensification of political sanctions against the dictatorship, the Torricelli Law (named after Congressman Robert G. Torricelli, who sponsored it) authorized the export to Cuba of food, medicines and medical supplies for humanitarian purposes; without stipulating the need for payment in advance, but the verification of final use.

⁹ On the same «black list» are the Minister of the Interior (MININT), General Lázaro Alberto Álvarez Casas; the Minister of the Armed Forces (FAR), General Álvaro López Miera and; the high and middle commanders of the MININT Special Brigade (the feared «black berets»).

¹⁰ Venezuela, China, Spain, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, Italy, Germany, France, Vietnam, Algeria, Argentina, Holland, the United States, Belgium, South Korea, Portugal, India and Colombia are among the main trading partners of the Cuban State, out of a list of 70 countries with which the dictatorship maintains the largest exchange of goods and services. According to the latest figures published (not updated) by the official National Office of Statistics and Information (ONEI), only in 2018, China held a commercial exchange for 2 billion 990 thousand; while with Spain the amount reached 1.39 billion 260 thousand pesos. In that same year, Cuba exported goods for 2 billion 372 million 779 thousand pesos and imported a total of 11 billion 483 million 653 thousand pesos; yielding a trade deficit of 9 billion 110 million 874 thousand pesos that was compensated with tourism activity

plier of «red meat, frozen turkeys and chickens, cereals, powdered milk, perishable foods, herbicides, medicines and medical supplies for humanitarian purposes (including ultrasound equipment, laboratory reagents, cannulas, prostheses, among others).¹¹ Therefore, when ordinary Cubans (not the oligarchy, nor the privileged of the regime, nor the opportunists who swarm in different Cuban institutions) talk about «blockade», we invariably refer to the one implemented by the dictatorship for more than sixty years. And yes, this «internal blockade» has played a determining role in the aggravation of the causes that provoked these protests. The other, the «imperialist blockade», has been the regime’s resource par excellence to tax the precariousness of the excluded sectors and to impose surveillance and repression against any son or daughter of a neighbor, using the same label with which Hitler insulted the Jews («worms»), within the framework of the internal anathema.

Part Two

AI: *Do you think a U.S. military intervention instigated by the annexationist yearnings of the Cuban exile is possible?*

To speak in the singular of “Cuban exile” is to refuse to see the whole picture. We must refer to “the exiles” and, not only for chronological but even “ideological” reasons. One should mention, for example, a first exile, which originated in December 1958 and the first half of 1959, with the flight of

and the export of services in the health branch. (information available in the Statistical Yearbook of Cuba 2018 /Edition 2019).

¹¹ Between 2001 and 2020, the total value of U.S. exports to Cuba in agricultural products, food, medicines and medical supplies amounted to \$ US 6 308 778 608, according to data from the **Economic Complexity Observatory**. By 2018, the United States ranked eighth in origin of imports with a total of 4.04 %; while Cuba ranked 60th (out of 226) of the U.S. food and agricultural exports markets, says a **report** published by the United States-Cuba Economic and Trade Council.

gans as “Cuba for the Cubans”, inherited from the failed Revolution of 1933, and the xenophobic laws of the ultranationalist mandate of Grau-Guiteras. Nor can it be forgotten — to have a clearer vision of the plot — that Fidel, in his university days, was accompanied by Mussolini’s “The Doctrine of Fascism” and Sorel’s “Reflections on Violence”, books that he always carried under his arm. The first time he traveled outside Cuba (1948), he was sponsored by General Juan Domingo Perón, to visit Caracas, Panama City and Bogota, as a delegate to the Inter-American Conference of Students that was held in the Colombian capital in opposition to the IX Pan-American Conference that would give rise to the Organization of American States (OAS), actively participating in the so-called “Bogotazo”²³. However, it is a proven fact that the Cuban Revolution was a bourgeois democratic revolution, whose objective was “the full restitution of the 1940 Constitution”. The tropical Bolsheviks maintained the same purpose, demanding then “clean and democratic elections”²⁴; while the anarcho-syndicalists invited to “return to the country the subjugated freedom”²⁵, taking for granted that before March 10, 1952 it was fully enjoyed.

The middle class and the upper echelons of the oligarchy were the human, economic and ideological quarry of the Revo-

1962 (at the height of the “Missile Crisis”), as military advisors and instructors of his newly created Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR). It was no coincidence that he was in contact with a network of Nazi arms dealers headed by Otto Ernst Remer, to whom he ordered the purchase of thousands of Belgian-made machine guns. Or, that he agreed with Franco the purchase of Pegaso buses for public transportation to replace the Yankee General Motors. Or what do you think?

²³ *Of course, there are those who speculate in a dilettante manner that Perón’s National Socialism was (and is) “leftist”. Of course, the need to ask what the fuck is the “left” is increasingly evident.*

²⁴ *Manifiesto of the National Committee of the Popular Socialist Party, June 28, 1958; signed by Juan Marinello and Blas Roca.*

²⁵ *Report of the National Libertarian Conference, National Council of the Libertarian Association of Cuba, Campo Florido, April 24, 1955.*

organizing a constituent assembly for a new Magna Carta that defended without any concealment “a Cuba for the Cubans” (Constitution of 1940), flaunting his xenophobic ideals. At the end of the 1930s, he would remorselessly award the Order of Merit to Nazi ministers Joaquin von Ribbentrop and V. von Bulow Schwant. In that context, several organizations and parties of National Socialist affiliation would be created, highlighting the Nazi Party of Cuba (October 1938) and the National Fascist Party (founded that same year). At that time, the National Revolutionary Syndicalist Legion; the Student Legion of Cuba; the Cuban Falange (Spanish Falange Party of Cuba, founded in June 1936) and the Winter Campaign Fund were registered. In this sense, an infinite number of pamphlets and “organs of diffusion” were published. Nazi propaganda and anti-Semitic campaigns -for the “Cubanization” and in “defense of the native interests” against the invasion of the “human garbage”, the “merchants thrown out of the temple” and of “the Yankee-Jewish entity”, which announced a future where “we will then suffer the consequences of a new type of capitalism that does not speak our language, nor does it believe in our God, nor does it feel our God, nor does it feel the consequences of a new type of capitalism that does not speak our language, nor does it believe in our God, nor does it feel the consequences of a new type of capitalism that does not speak our language, nor believes in our God, nor feels our concerns”- came to be spread in radio programs and newspapers of wide circulation (*Diario de la Marina*, *Diario La Discusión*, the newspaper *Alerta*, the newspaper *El Avance criollo* and the magazine *Sí*). The Catholic Church would also play a decisive role in support of the Spanish fascists, defending the Francoist uprising from the pulpit and through teaching in Catholic schools, whose teachers were mostly Spanish nuns and priests of Francoist affiliation who had migrated to Cuba fleeing “the anarchist terror”. A large part of the Cuban and Spanish bourgeoisie residing on the island sent their children to be “trained” in those centers of religious education, which is why many of them identified themselves with this ideological side. Such would be the story of Fidel Castro Ruz, whom his father (a Galician landowner sympathetic to Franco), would enroll in 1943, at the age of 16, in the Real Colegio de Belen (a Jesuit institution, founded in 1854 by Queen Isabel II), after having completed his primary studies in La Salle (1935) and Dolores (1938). In spite of such coincidences, perhaps it was a product of causality that Fidel, in his plea (“History will absolve me”) after the ill-fated assault on the Moncada barracks, pronounced a speech very similar to the one issued by Hitler in his defense, for the failed coup d'état of November 1923 (Beer Putsch Hall): “Pronounce us guilty a thousand times, that the goddess of the eternal court of history will smile and break to pieces the decisions of the state prosecutor and the verdict of the court, for she will acquit us. ” No doubt it was also chance that motivated him to call his opponents “worms” (würmer), just as Hitler did a couple of decades earlier. Or hiring former Waffen-SS and former Nazi paracadists in

high-ranking army and police officers of the Batista dictatorship (most of whom — including Batista — did not obtain visas to enter the U.S.). Another one immediately after, between December 1959 and January 1961, where the aristocracy and the upper classes of the society (sectors that, curiously, had financed the struggle of the Catholic nationalists to overthrow “the black man” who governed the Island in an apocryphal way¹²). A third wave would follow, which originated between 1962 and 1965, with the departure of the middle class. During those years, Cuban anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists also went into exile; some of them after having served “political imprisonment”. The story would be similar for a large group of rebels who had fought against Batista — including Castro’s former comrades of the 26th of July Movement — who opposed the Stalinist turn of “their” Revolution. From 1966 to 1979, the first leftist dissidents fled in dribs and drabs. 1980 would be a turning point for Cuban migration with the mass departure of the “scum” (an epithet used to designate thousands of artists and intellectuals, considered until then “sons and daughters of the Revolution”). In 1994, a new chapter was opened with the flight of thousands of “rafters” who risked their lives in order to escape from the “socialist paradise”. These last two migrations stand out for the high incidence of Afro-Cubans from the poorest strata. And, of course, with the different waves of exiles, there is also evidence of diverse political-ideological positions, from the conservative right to the ultra-left (including libertarian socialists, Trotskyists, Maoists, Stalinists, Luxemburgists and “pure” Marxists), without forgetting the more hackneyed expressions of that same National Socialism which, from the extremes of the pendulum,

¹² It is worth mentioning that even when Fulgencio Batista was president, this divine caste (deeply racist) did not allow him to be a member of the “select” Miramar Yacht Club because he was a “mulatto”. However, they did not hesitate to support the insurrection of the “pichón de gallego” who had sworn to dethrone him.

aspire to a Castroism without Castro. A reliable example of that political-ideological diversity was the customary edition of the anarchist magazines *Guáncara Libertaria* and *A Mayor*, in the heart of Miami.

Once these nuances have been highlighted, it only remains for me to underline that the only thing that gives a certain “unity” to the different exiles is the unison rejection of the dictatorship. This common denominator, in fact, has never exceeded the limits of a local industry (very lucrative) that is far from being a binding force capable of capitalizing some political leadership and, much less, consolidating a uniform and monolithic ideological vision (Fortunately!). And this is where the theoretical-practical heterogeneity comes in, which influences behaviors as disparate as the choice of the method of struggle or the geographical site we choose as residence. Of course, in this extensive political-ideological plot, there is also the annexationist position. However, it is necessary to point out that this political figure had a certain prominence in the 19th century and, at present, it is reduced to an entelechy fabricated by the dictatorship. “Annexationism” is significantly small and caricatured. It is so buffoonish that it leaves no doubt that those who express it — on this side of the Florida Straits — are probably on the payroll of the Cuban State.

As for a “possible U.S. military intervention”; we must also insist on who is promoting this grammar. We cannot forget that this discourse has always been inscribed in the grandiloquence of the dictatorship and, logically, it continues to be part of the rhetoric of that gloomy puppet that has been ordered to pass itself off as president. It is the old movie of the marines disembarking on the island — so often used and reiterated since the early days of Castroism — which established, with the cry of “Fatherland or Death”, the macabre patriotism that has characterized the regime. However, it is no less true that there are sectors, inside and outside the Cuban archipelago, that welcome the “hope” of interventionism. From this shore, the narra-

tic), which emerged after the nationalist revolution of 1933; the Cuban Orthodox People’s Party, -established in 1947 by Eduardo Chibás, after his break with the “authentic” ones-; the Cuban Revolutionary Nationalist Party (Authentic), which was formed in 1947 by Eduardo Chibás, after his break with the “authentic” ones; the Revolutionary Nationalist Party (PNR) of José Pardo Llada (co-founder of the Orthodox Party) and; the Free People’s Party, instituted by Márquez Sterling and a group of assailants of the Moncada barracks who had broken with Castro and precociously warned: “We come from armed struggle, exile and clandestinity. We have shed blood [...] and we invite you to break the hateful conspiracy of silence and fear. Against Batista. Against the Dictatorship. Against the useless blood that serves as a pedestal for new pernicious dictators”²¹. Among the “revolutionary movements”, the following stood out: the July 26th Revolutionary Movement (MR-26-J) led by Fidel Castro; the Revolutionary Directorate (DR), created by José Antonio Echeverría – assassinated during the ill-fated assault on the Palace – and led by Faure Chaumón; the Federation of University Students (FEU) and the Radical Liberation Movement, founded by Amalio Fiallo and several “moncadistas” who also distanced themselves from Castro’s dictatorship.

It should be noted that nationalism was the hegemonic ideology of ALL the political opposition (electoral and/or revolutionary) to the Batista dictatorship; displaying very dissimilar nuances that oscillate between bourgeois patriotism and national socialism²². This is evidenced by such despicable slo-

²¹ *Manifiesto to Public Opinion*, Partido del Pueblo Libre, June 30, 1958.

²² *After the failed nationalist revolution of 1933 and the coming to power of the ultra-nationalist government of Grau-Guiteras (the “government of one hundred days” in 1934), fascist ideas coming from Europe began to gain strength. The Nazi-fascist ideology would become even more prominent during the presidency of Colonel Federico Laredo Brú (1936–1940), with the implementation of corporativism, the creation of the Civic-Military Institute and the imposition of Decree 55 (January 1939) and Decree 937 (May of the same year) that prohibited the entry of immigrants. Laredo Brú, would take on the task of*

Huber Matos, Níco López, Haydée Santamaría, among other members of the “Orthodox Youth” of the Cuban People’s Party (Orthodox)¹⁹ who would found the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement (MR-26-7).

The opposition to the Batista dictatorship was made up of a coalition of traditional nationalist (anti-imperialist) parties²⁰ and the so-called “revolutionary movements” which — from diverse and equally nationalist perspectives — were articulated in the course of the struggle. Among the traditional parties, the following stood out: the Cuban Revolutionary Party (Authen-

if half a dozen of his current ministers and trusted collaborators were prominent members of the Communist Party? “; Castro, Fidel, “¡Basta ya de mentiras!”, in Revista Bohemia, Year 48-No. 29, July 15, 1956, Havana, pp. 63–84 Available at <https://dloc.com/UF00029010/02676> Che Guevara, years later, would describe Fidel in a letter to Ernesto Sábato, as “an aspiring deputy for a bourgeois party, as bourgeois and as respectable as the Radical party could be in Argentina; who followed in the footsteps of a disappeared leader, Eduardo Chibás, with characteristics that we could find similar to those of Yrigoyen himself [...] above all, he is, above all, a man who is a bourgeois [...]. above all things, he is the binder par excellence, the undisputed leader who suppresses all divergences and destroys with his disapproval. Using many times, challenging others, for money or ambition, he is always feared by his adversaries”. In: Constenla, Julia, Sábato, el hombre. La biografía definitiva, Editorial Sudamérica, Buenos Aires, 2011.

¹⁹ In June 1952, Fidel Castro ran as a candidate for the House of Representatives of the Cuban Congress, for a constituency in the province of Havana, but Batista’s coup d’état overthrew the government of Carlos Prío Socarrás and annulled the elections. The coup — recognized by the U.S. government — provoked Castro’s dismay, who would use his contacts with the Youth of the Orthodox Party to gather a group of young people for the assault on the Moncada Barracks.

²⁰ Displaying their opportunistic mood, the Leninists of the Popular Socialist Party (PSP), celebrated the creation of what they called a “united front” against Batista — their former presidential candidate and patron — and gave their “full support” to a “government of national unity”, where they intended to participate before the debacle of the dictatorship, despite their sad past, next to Machado’s dictatorship (the “mistake of August 1933”) and his alliance with Batista (1934–1944). Just in that period, with the support of the paramilitary batons (first Machado’s and then Batista’s) they dedicated themselves to assassinate anarchists, anarcho-sindicalists and Trotskyists.

tive of the military invasion is restricted to the domestic electoral circus that, every four years, exploits those “hopes” of liberation of all those who yearn to be reunited with their families and return to their “homeland”, ensuring the vote of the sequestered. The Cuban-American politicians of the Republican Party have known how to benefit from the ingenuity of the Cheos and the Cachitas in these latitudes; the detail is that Marco Rubio does not pretend to be president of Cuba but of the U.S. On the other side, the people admit that the mere idea of a military intervention causes them terror. Many fear that an action of this magnitude would unleash an unstoppable spiral of violence (with lynchings, assaults, robberies and revenge) which could target the first circle of relatives, friends and lackeys of the royal family; the privileged sectors (generals, colonels, managers, businessmen and high-level professionals); and a considerable percentage of mid-level army commanders, police, State Security agents and snitches, who make up the intricate repressive machinery of the regime. Those who do harbor “hopes” in the US intervention are the excluded sectors — the poorest of the poor —, that mostly Afro-Cuban population which, as the racist joke goes, “have no FA (Family Abroad)” and every night they pray to their Orishas that the traditional nine o’clock cannon shot be replaced by the first Yankee missile to put an end to their agony. But in the face of the impotence and dismay of the excluded, the double standards of the left wing of Capital arises once again, pointing them out as “lumpenproletariat” and accusing them of being “fifth columnists” at the service of the Empire.

I am categorically opposed to any military intervention. Not because I assume myself to be a pacifist — a conduct complicit in domination which I reject in all its manifestations — but because I am an anarchist, consequently anti-war. However, this has not always been the position of all anarchists. Without much effort, we can list an infinite number of interventionist demands throughout our history. Suffice it to recall the posi-

tion of Kropotkin and the other signers of the Manifesto of the Sixteen, in favor of Allied military intervention in World War I. This was the action that motivated Lenin to call on the Allies to intervene in the First World War; This action motivated Lenin to accuse him of being a “petty bourgeois” and “jingoist”, but did not prevent the Bolshevik hierarch, years later, not only from taking advantage of the context of the imperialist war but also from asking Kaiser Wilhelm II for support to reach Petrograd and overthrow the Czar, which earned him multiple accusations of “treason” from different revolutionary fronts. Of course, history repeated itself during World War II, with the anarchist (and communist) partisans who fought against fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, in the service of the Allies. Even recently, under the maxim of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend”, we experienced the tactical alliance of the Maoist guerrillas of Kurdistan with the American invaders, in order to overthrow their archenemy Saddam Hussein during the so-called Gulf War, and even allowed themselves to be armed by the “Yankees” to continue fighting the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad and the Islamic State. In fact, there are many anarcho-communists who support this struggle (some have given their lives for that cause) and, to this day, I have not read any mea culpa about it. Much less have I read in our tendencies, statements against the Kurdish independence fighters, accusing them of being “fifth columnists”, “petty bourgeois”, “jingoists” and “traitors” in the service of the Empire.

AI: *Do you think these revolts will bring about the fall of the regime?*

No doubt they provoked an earthquake that shook the foundations of the dictatorship, but from there to bringing down the repressive edifice and the system of privileges imposed by the oligarchy, there is a long way to go. And the majority of ordinary Cubans know this, which explains why they did not come out en masse to protest without this necessarily implying their adherence to the regime. The rebellion of misery, in any corner

First of all, it is necessary to examine thoroughly who were the forces in conflict in 1959; what were the motivations and; above all, the ideological limitations of those involved. Of course, this is an exercise fraught with difficulties for those who continue to be fascinated by the official mythology¹⁷ and; equally difficult for those who — from different points of view, even dissidents — cling to the supposed tendencies raised by certain protagonists (Camilo Cienfuegos, Hubert Matos, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, Pastorita Núñez, for example), as if trying to decipher (at a distance of six decades) what would have been the attitude of this or that character in a specific situation or whether or not he or she was right at a given time and what would have been his or her action if he or she had greater political weight in the process. In that tenor, the legends of Camilo “anarchist”; Matos “socialist”; Che Guevara “Trotskyist” and Pastorita “feminist” arose. All dilettante speculations that in no way help to understand what those figures hypothetically opposed to revolutionary autocracy and bureaucratization represented. Unfortunately, these digressions do not manage to escape from the legends that must be demolished. Neither Cienfuegos was “anarchist” nor Matos “socialist” nor Che “Trotskyist” and, Pastorita, much less “feminist”. By the way, the latter came from the old nucleus of Fidel Castro’s nationalist militancy¹⁸ ; as did

¹⁷ *All the historical accommodations made by the dictatorship have been “certified” since 1987 by the Institute of Cuban History. This institution was established after the merger of different political-ideological organizations that preceded it: the Department of Cuban History of the Institute of History of the Cuban Academy of Sciences (1962); the Institute of History of the Communist Movement and the Socialist Revolution (1972) and the Center for the Study of Military History.*

¹⁸ *“...I have been a member of only one Cuban political party, and that is the one founded by Eduardo Chibás. What morals does Mr. Batista have, however, to speak of communism if he was the Communist Party’s presidential candidate in the 1940 elections, if his electoral pamphlets were covered under the hammer and sickle, if his photos hang around with Blas Roca and Lázaro Peña,*

tional praxis” than what we have previously read or heard from the island. However, I must confess that this communiqué caused me serious doubts. I found it strange that it was published in Indymedia. I also doubted its authenticity, because of the use of the “x”. For us, the use of inclusive language is very common, but it does not correspond to the way of writing in Cuba. Besides, I found its aggressiveness unusual. Undoubtedly, it is written in the same tone in which we usually write our communiqués but, just for that reason, I considered it apocryphal. I asked several comrades and they informed me that they shared my astonishment. However, the younger comrades who maintain international contacts told me that the use of the “x” was nothing to be alarmed about, particularly if it was prepared for “foreign consumption”. They also explained to me that among young people the aggressive message is recurrent and referred me to several lyrics of songs of anarcho-punk bands openly against the State, called to emulate Vailant’s actions. They even commented that they found it sincere. We will have to keep an eye out for the next release of the bottle — if they ever release it — and, above all, for their actions in situ. And well, I believe that with this confession, their concern about the number of informal groups and the consistency of their actions on the Island is also answered. Definitely, the insurrectional proposal in those latitudes is a blue unicorn that continues to be absent in time and space, which will have to materialize sooner rather than later, carrying the fire on its horn.

Part Three

AI: *To what extent was the 1959 revolution willing to destroy the system of domination and its protagonists determined to promote a Social Revolution?*

of the planet, ends as soon as the crumbs arrive. That is why in Cuba, “emergency measures” have already been put into practice to appease the miserable. Three days after the riots, “exceptionally and temporarily, the importation of food, toiletries and medicines was authorized without limit of import value and free of customs duties”. In popular neighborhoods bordering on extreme poverty, they have begun to distribute cans of Russian meat, as well as rice, beans, sugar, pasta soups and edible oil, coming from Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela, as donations which the pro-government press qualifies as “solidarity gifts” from the government. They have also authorized (exceptionally and only until December 31) that almost half a million internal migrants who live outside their native provinces and who, according to the laws and regulations for the control of social mobility, are considered “undocumented”,¹³ may buy the shitty subsidized food offered by the ration book. They also announced the commercialization of solar cells and photovoltaic systems (until now prohibited) in retail stores selling in dollars and the reduction in the rates of cellular telephone and Internet services;¹⁴ likewise, they notified the elimination of the miser-

¹³ *With the imposition of this sort of apartheid, people from the eastern provinces (predominantly Afro-descendants) are prevented from moving to Havana and the western provinces, where they have greater opportunities for survival. These “illegals” in their own country are called “palestras” or “Palestinians”; a derogatory, deeply racist, classist and regionalist noun, which is used in a comparative way in clear allusion to the discrimination suffered by the native Palestinians in the State of Israel. This pejorative has been widely accepted and has become dangerously incorporated into the Cuban daily lexicon. Constantly harassed and persecuted by the police – who demand official documentation, using discriminatory criteria to identify them (the regional accent when speaking and the color of their skin) – these people are not only denied to buy the products of the ration book for not residing in their native provinces, but they are constantly detained and deported to their places of residence.*

¹⁴ *ETECSA (Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba S.A.), is the tropical telecommunications monopoly that controls all mobile and Wi-Fi data connections, calls, text and voice messages, Transfermóvil services, fiber optics and everything related to Information and Communication Technologies, until its*

able prices that the state monopoly (Acopio) had imposed on the peasant producers for the purchase of agricultural products. All these measures are evidence of that “internal blockade” — which I mentioned before — which enriches the oligarchy and suffocates the people on their feet, and which is completely alien to the everlasting “Yankee blockade”.

Of course, the dictatorship is aware that these “band-aids” are temporary and that is why, in one hand it has a carrot and in the other a big stick. Beyond the shortages, the voices that prevailed during the revolts were clamoring for “freedom” and the end of the dictatorship, and such unrest cannot be quietened with crumbs. This rebellious youth, who have shed their fear, intuitively perceives that insurrection is the way forward. It is no coincidence that last year (2020), in the middle of the pandemic, the dictatorship bought from the Spanish State more than 1 million Euros in military equipment (revolvers, automatic pistols and anti-riot equipment)¹⁵ and imported from China close to 3 million dollars in surveillance equipment (those drones with facial recognition cameras that two weeks after the riots continue to identify demonstrators) and anti-riot devices (the armored shields and Robocop suits, which surprised both demonstrators and those who support the system).

AI: *What participation have anarchist groups had in these revolts?*

To speak in the plural of “anarchist groups” in Cuba is a fallacy. Let us not forget that with the rise of Castroism they were suppressed. On the other hand, we can recognize, in the midst of the incipient countercultural movement that has been developing in the last two decades, an increasingly anti-authoritarian and markedly contestatory sphere,

concession “for the commercialization of public telecommunications services” expires, without a definite date.

¹⁵ According to data published by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism of the Spanish State.

Cuban State that has produced the only vaccines in Latin America against Covid-19”, they only exacerbate my skepticism and, unfortunately, make me doubt to what extent, “as anarchists in Cuba”, they are willing to be part of “that new reality”. As the saying goes: “text out of context is pretext”.

Undoubtedly, it is about the distinction between real consciousness and possible consciousness. As Lucien Goldmann rightly warned, there will always be obstinacy in people who have been attached to a thesis that they have defended tooth and nail, denying everything that calls into question their previous commitments and takes them away from the security of what is known.

For communication to take place, it is indispensable to speak the same language. In this context, I have to accept that for some years, I only maintained communication with a member of TLAL, who signed his contributions under the pseudonym of Marcelo Liberato Salinas and that I even called him “compañero”; in the understanding that we spoke the same dialect, and that is why “compañero” sometimes meant the word kinsman, which, as Ekué recalls, also means brother beyond blood kinship. That is why I find it hard to accept that today he cowardly assumes these positions. I do not know the rest of the members of that collective but I live convinced that we do not speak the same language and, I reaffirm it, when my affinities inform me that a certain Ahmed — in the same language of the enemy — calls me “infiltrator”, demonstrating the absolute and definitive absence of all those ingredients that, with premeditation and malice aforethought, constitute us as anarchists.

AI: *As a result of the revolts, a communiqué from the Anarchist Intervention Group appeared on the networks expressing a position more akin to informal and insurrectional praxis: how many informal and insurrectionalist groups are operating in Cuba and what do their actions consist of?*

I fully agree with the assessment you point out. Indeed, this position is much “more in line with the informal and insurrec-

and Bolsheviks -which in those years were synonymous;- most of the “anarcho-syndicalist militants” ended their days swelling the ranks of the most pedestrian reformist syndicalism or; widening the gangsterism that characterized the years following the 1933 Fascist revolution.

As for the possible generational bridges between the current protagonists of the revolts and the struggle against the Batista dictatorship promoted by the Marti anarcho-populists of the self-styled “centenary generation”, I consider it necessary to insist once again that the anarchist remnants were practically eliminated since the first months of 1959 and their ideology methodically extirpated from the collective imaginary; therefore, it is impossible to dream of any generational continuity. After a prolonged eclipse, Anarchy has made itself manifest and today its subversive disposition is once again clearly appearing, beyond the sacred ideological bibles and the heavy scams.

AI: *Recently, in a text we published on our website, you pointed out the distortions of the Libertarian Workshop Alfredo Lopez (TLAL), which condemned in a communiqué the provocations aimed at social explosion, openly opposing any attempt of generalized insurrection in Cuba. What has been the position of this group in the face of the outbreak of the revolts?*

In spite of the lack of self-criticism and the fact that they have not retracted such foolishness, I must admit that in their most recent text they turned up the volume a notch. However, they continue to be trapped in an ambiguous language (to say the least) that constantly appeals to the exaltation of the promoted “conquests of the Revolution”, within the framework of the pestilent discourse of “yes, but...” so recurrent in the international left when it comes to dealing with the “Cuba case”. Of course, they may argue that they do it with subtle sarcasm, but it is still a mistake that they fall into the trap of commonplaces and use phrases from the dictatorship’s own rhetoric. When they prescribe us “That same Cuban State that has turned solidarity into a mark of international identity” or, “The same

where the “libertarian” grammar has managed to become axiomatically entrenched. So in quotation marks. And it is not by chance that I use a term that I have always refused to use as a synonym for anarchism. In this context, we can find an infinity of very focused examples -particularly associated with different artistic expressions but also, sectors concretely involved in social issues (homophobia, lesbophobia, transphobia, gender discrimination, racism, environmental destruction, anti-statism, etc.) – that began to radiate in specific spaces at the end of the nineties, giving way to an embryonic “libertarianism”.

During this long process of “aging”, we will notice a manifest terror to the use of words; that is to say, to mention “anarchism”. So much so, that one of the main referents in the region, when it began to take shape (even within a certain academic dissidence with strong Trotskyist roots and a very light criticism of the dictatorship) used the word in a surprisingly ephemeral manner; immediately changing its original acronym from TAAL (Taller Anarquista Alfredo López) to TLAL (Taller Libertario Alfredo López). That is why, every time I have addressed the possibilities of revolt and the opportunity to extend the insurrection, I have always referred to the excluded youth who, without ever having read Bakunin, push subversive indiscipline and propagate illegalism, confronting every authority 24 hours a day.

And yes, we cannot speak of “anarchist groups” in the revolt but, of course, there was the presence of anarchist individualities – of those who assume themselves without any concealment – and confronted the repression with the same determination that they confront informers and police in the daily life of their neighborhoods. However, I consider that these protests, loaded with patriotic pacifism, are not the appropriate means of participation, although they can be the space to give life to anarchic action with that passion that characterizes us, as we do in Chile, the United States, Greece, Indonesia, Mex-

ico, Russia or in any other corner where we have a presence. In that sense, there was a lack of gasoline. And yes, there is also a lack of vision to glimpse the insurrectional present that we are already experiencing.

AI: *There is evidence of the intervention of anarchists in the armed struggle that in 1959 culminated in the so-called Cuban revolution. In spite of being a movement much more attached to anarcho-syndicalist practices, as the book *Anarchism in Cuba* shows us, its members assumed the insurrectional proposal as a method of struggle. With this background in mind, do you think there are generational links that contribute to the resurgence of the insurrectional practice from an anarchic perspective?*

It is urgent that the anarchic germs that are beginning to incubate assume these insurrectional practices. Of course, taking care of the risks of repetition. That is to say, that they incorporate these practices but conscious of their historicity; coupling with the anarchist tension ascribed to contemporary insurrectional informalism, in tune with international impulses. Believe me, there is nothing to emulate from those attitudes. It would be appropriate to point out that such practices were not registered then as a “movementist” impulse but responded to individual positions that were not inscribed in the anarchic praxis either, affected by the populist tendencies and the nationalist airs that were rarifying the atmosphere. It is worth remembering that at that time, there was no “movement” as such -neither anarchist nor anarcho-syndicalist-, but rather an anti-authoritarian tension that was reduced in practice to a minority sector that, against all odds, was making its way in those difficult years, as was the case of the Libertarian Association of Cuba.

It should also be noted that the book by comrade Frank Fernandez (*Anarchism in Cuba*), is a tight summary of the long itinerary of insular anarchism. In its pages he concatenated – in search of a linear development – different moments of Cuban libertarian syndicalism. In such a way, he managed to

link the different stages of that current, connecting its mutualist beginnings with the participation and/or influence in the so-called mass unions at the beginning and middle of the 20th century. At the time, comrade Fernandez’s systematizing effort fulfilled the objective of denouncing the atrocities of Castroism and recovering the silenced history of anarchism in exile, but it definitely does not cover the explicit actions of the different currents that simultaneously embodied the anarchist ideal to its ultimate consequences throughout our history. It is enough to mention the innumerable actions of “propaganda by the deed” – carried out in the period comprising the last decade of the 19th century and the first years of the 1930s – to obtain a fairly clear picture of the leading role played by the various affinity groups and anarchist individualities that stood out in that context, with strong internationalist links. If we delve into the anarchist actions of the time, we will find multiple dynamite attacks, constant reprisals against authorities (political-military and police) and representatives of the “bosses”; as well as punctual expropriations that nourished the anarchist publications of those years.

After the defeat of the Spanish Revolution, anarcho-syndicalism in Cuba suffered a disaster of apocalyptic proportions, as in the rest of the world. The rise of proto-fascist nationalism (with acceptance in broad sectors of the population) and the Bolshevik assault on the trade unions through their participation in the different spheres of government – within the framework of the so-called Popular Fronts promoted by the Comintern¹⁶ – were responsible for inexorably burying this current. Except for honorable and rare exceptions who held firm to their convictions and confronted Machadists and Fascists (first) and (later), Batista

¹⁶ *Let us not forget that the then telegraph sergeant, Fulgencio Batista, was supported and was even a candidate for the Popular Socialist Party (nickname used by the current Cuban Communist Party to obtain registration in those years).*