



Fidel's slide into fundamentalism

Fidel Castro's early training by the Society of Jesus has taken its toll over the last year. In a major late July speech, the Cuban President called for a "strategic alliance" across Latin America between Christians and Marxists, arguing that "there is only one road, that of revolution, of revolutionary armed struggle" for the troubled nations of Latin America.

The predictable outcome of such a strategy would be a head-on collision with the United States—precisely the policy Ronald Reagan's Latin American advisers prescribe from the opposite side.

With this redefinition of Cuba's strategic orientation, Castro placed himself in the camp of those who, also like Reagan's advisers, would use Christian fundamentalism in Latin America the way Khomeini has used Islamic fundamentalism in Iran—to destabilize the entire developing sector and drive it back into a new Dark Age.

Castro's adoption of a policy of forging a "strategic alliance" with the Liberation Theology movement marks the latest, lowest step in his slide into full-fledged fundamentalism. As recently as one year ago, at the Non-Aligned summit in Havana, Castro did a constructive job of organizing the developing sector behind a policy of rapid industrialization in cooperation with advanced sector nations. This approach laid the basis for positive relations between "North" and "South," and opened the door to broader collaboration with the pro-development forces behind the European Monetary System.

But even at the Havana summit there was a dangerous element present in Castro's strategic perceptions: he viewed the Iranian Revolution as a laudable example for the developing sector, and its anti-technology terrorism as a viable form of "anti-imperialism."

In March 1980, Castro sank to the level of fully supporting the four unrepentant Puerto Rican terrorists who U.S. Attorney Benjamin Civiletti freed. He endorsed their declaration of war against the United States.

Then in May 1980, during the weeks following the aborted American rescue mission in Iran, Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca offered the Iranian government Cuba's full "moral and material support" against the United States. Castro even went so far at the time as to call on Iraq—a pro-development Arab nation violently opposed to Khomeini's glorification of backwardness—to end its hostility towards Iran and stop trying to overthrow the Khomeini regime.

And now Castro has taken his support for Islamic fundamentalism and generalized it to its Latin equivalent: the Jesuit Theology of Liberation.

Fidel Castro today probably remains *personally* committed to the necessity of industrializing the developing sector, and of using the best that modern science and technology have to offer to develop Cuba. But he has cast his lot with the Theology of Liberation radicals who are totally hostile to any form of science or modernization for Latin America, radicals who have hypnotized Castro with their "leftist" jargon and promises of alliances with mass Christian movements.

It is this near-total support for the "left" side of the Jesuit scenario of confrontation for Latin America that has made Castro Ronald Reagan's strange bed-fellow.

Photo: United Nations