CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE CUBAN POLITICAL ELITE, 1959-1976
W. M. LEGRANDE
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William M. LeoGrande
Assistant Professor
Hamilton College

February 6, 1980

Mr. Harry Schrecengost
Defense Technical Information Center
Cameron Station
Alexandria, Va. 22314

Dear Mr. Schrecengost:

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Sincerely,

Edward N. Lundstrom
Research Documentation Officer
Office of External Research
Bureau of Intelligence and Research
In 1970, Cuba failed to achieve the goal upon which its leaders had staked the prestige of the revolution—the production of ten million tons of sugar. This failure marked a decisive turning point for the nation, and in its wake the revolution embarked upon a "new phase" of development. Perceiving that the economic failure was due in part to the weakness of the "provisional" political institutions created during the first decade of revolutionary government, the leadership initiated a comprehensive reorganization of the entire political system. The First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (Partido Communista de Cuba--PCC), convened in December 1975, marked the culmination of this process, and the composition of the Central Committee elected at that Congress reflects the profound changes that have occurred in the Cuban political system in recent years.

The aim of this study is to examine, through a diachronic analysis of the Cuban political elite, the dimensions of these changes and to suggest some of the dynamics accounting for them. Specifically, we will be examining the changing pattern of institutional relationships within the Cuban political system and the integration of the political elite. The data will show that during the 1960's the Cuban communist party did not play the "leading role" in politics which is typical of ruling communist parties, and that during this period the party was torn by serious factionalism. Since 1970, however, there is evidence that this factionalism has been reduced, that the political elite has become increasingly integrated, and that the party has finally emerged as the dominant institution in the Cuban political system. Further, we shall find
that these major changes were accomplished quite smoothly, with a minimum of attrition among members of the elite. Faced in 1959 with a political landscape devoid of viable institutions, Cuba's revolutionary leaders have now, some seventeen years later, succeeded in creating a political system which corresponds to the Marxist-Leninist model they adopted in 1961.

The foremost task and often the foremost problem of every elite study is formulating a definition of who constitutes the political elite.¹ This study utilizes a positional criterion, defining the Cuban political elite at three points in time as the National Directorate (1962), the first Central Committee of the Communist Party (1965), and the second Central Committee of the Communist Party (1975).²

The positional approach, defining the national elite as the party's central committee, is by far the most common approach in examinations of communist political elites, but it predominates by default; a dearth of information renders the alternative reputational or decision-making strategies virtually impossible.³ Few scholars would argue that the positional approach is ideal. Central committees in communist political systems vary considerably in authority, and very often the primary locus of national decision-making lies elsewhere (e.g., in the Central Committee's Political Bureau). The usual justification advanced for the positional approach is that central committee members are, nevertheless, the most influential political participants, despite the central committee's often subordinate role in decision-making.⁴ Thus central committee membership is viewed not as the source or basis of an individual's elite
status, but rather as evidence of it. Individuals are not members of the political elite because they sit on the central committee; they sit on the central committee because they are members of the political elite. The basis of an individual's elite status is thus their performance of some other key political role. Indeed, we typically find in communist systems that virtually every central committee member does hold some additional important political position. Thus the central committee can be viewed as a representational elite, or, as one study describes it, "...a composite of representatives of key functional groups."^5

Among communist systems, however, there is considerable variation in the roles represented on the central committee. Different "key functional groups" are not represented in the same proportions from one system to another, or even in one system over time. Part of this study rests upon the premise that the role composition of the central committee can be taken as a measure of the relative influence of various institutions in the political system.^6 Thus the occupational roles held by individuals at the time of their elevation to the central committee will be used to examine the systemic pattern of institutional relationships.

Institutional representation within the Cuban Central Committees was calculated by categorizing individuals on the basis of their primary institutional affiliation when they became Central Committee members. In cases where an individual simultaneously held posts in two institutions, a judgement was made as to which position was primary.

Data for this study was compiled primarily from Cuban press
sources, including Revolución (official newspaper of the 26th of July Movement); Gramma (official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba); Cuba Socialista (journal of the Communist Party); and Verde Olivo (magazine of the Revolutionary Armed Forces).

The National Directorate of the ORI and PURS

The first comprehensive attempt to build a new political system in Cuba to replace the one swept away by the revolutionary war took place between 1961 and 1962. Most socialist revolutions have undertaken the process of forming new political institutions with the communist party at center stage. Forged during the struggle for state power, the party constitutes the organizational core around which the new political system is erected; other institutions are constructed under its guidance and at its direction.

The Cuban revolution, however, was the first socialist revolution to succeed without a Leninist party in the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle. The victory over Batista's dictatorship was won instead by a loose coalition of political groups, foremost among them Fidel Castro's 26th of July Movement (Movimiento de 26 de julio--M-26-7). Shortly after victory, the anti-Batista coalition began to disintegrate over the issue of what the future course of the new revolution should be, and even the M-26-7 divided into warring factions. Always more a movement than an organization, the M-26-7 was by 1961 so atrophied from disuse and so riddled by defections that the meager infrastructure it possessed initially no longer existed. Thus, as the revolutionaries turned to the task of creating
a new Cuba, there was no party apparatus through which to govern.

In April 1961, when the revolution was finally and explicitly declared to be socialist, only three political groups (it would be an exaggeration to call them organizations) remained in the political arena: the M-26-7, minus its right wing; the Revolutionary Directorate (Directorio Revolucionario-DR), essentially a student group; and the Popular Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Popular--PSP), the old communist party.

These groups having reached a general consensus on the socialist goals of the revolution, it became necessary to decide how this consensus was to be reflected in the creation of a new political system. The solution was to merge the three groups into a new vanguard party--the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (Organizaciones Revolucionarias Integradas--ORI)--thus providing a unified forum for policy formation and an infrastructure for mobilizing resources, both human and material, in pursuit of chosen policy.

Initially, the leadership of the ORI was dominated by former members of the PSP since only the PSP had any apparatus with which to undertake the task of building a new party. Aníbal Escalante, former Organizational Secretary of the PSP, became Organizational Secretary of the ORI and in that capacity directed the new party's construction throughout 1961. Other high ranking PSP veterans identified as ORI officials by the press during 1961 included Blas Roca, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, Cósar Escalante, Ramon Calcines, Joaquin Ordoqui, and Edith García Buchaca.

As the construction of the ORI proceeded, it became clear that
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Secretariat N=6</th>
<th>Total N=25</th>
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<td>Party Apparatus</td>
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<td>Government Apparatus</td>
<td>33.3</td>
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<td>Mass Organizations</td>
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<td>Cultural/Scientific</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other/Unknown</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
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</table>
Committee has not yet been collected.

Date on the pre-revolutionary affiliation of the 47 new members of the 1975 Central

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<th>(6.37%)</th>
<th>(0.43%)</th>
<th>(0.57%)</th>
<th>(16.75%)</th>
<th>(0.0%)</th>
<th>(0.0%)</th>
<th>(16.75%)</th>
<th>(0.0%)</th>
<th>(0.0%)</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.66%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>76.66%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

N=60
N=9
N=13
N=100
N=6
N=25
N=5

National Directorate
1965 Central Committee
1975 Central Committee

Table 1: Pre-revolutionary Affiliations of Cuban Elite Members
Escalante was using his powerful position as Organizational Secretary to pack the emerging party apparatus with PSP veterans, to the virtual exclusion of revolutionaries who had fought with the M-26-7 or the DR. The ORI was fast becoming little more than the old PSP under a new name. In March 1962, after several months of personal travel and investigation, Fidel Castro publicly denounced Escalante's attempt to dominate the new party through bureaucratic machination, and within a few months the ORI had been totally dismantled.

It was on March 8, 1962, just as this crisis was about to break, that the National Directorate of the ORI was formed. This leadership body then presided, from 1962 to 1965, over the dismantling of the ORI and its replacement by the United Party of the Socialist Revolution (Partido Unido de la Revolución Socialista—PURS).

While Aníbal Escalante was initially listed among the 25 members of the National Directorate, it is clear that his performance as Organizational Secretary was already under criticism within the revolutionary leadership when the National Directorate was constituted. In the announcement of the members of the National Directorate, he was listed ninth (a clear demotion from his eminent and relatively unrestricted role during 1961) and, moreover, he was not designated as Organizational Secretary. On March 22, after Castro had begun his series of public criticisms of the ORI, the National Directorate met to elect commissions, and it appears that Escalante may have been removed at that meeting. Shortly thereafter he went into voluntary exile in Czechoslovakia.
The composition of the Secretariat, the executive body of the National Directorate, reflected the "recapture" of the party apparatus by M-26-7 veterans. While most of those referred to as ORI leaders (dirigentes) during 1961 had been PSP veterans, five of the six members of the Secretariat were from the M-26-7 (Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Ernesto Guevara, Osvaldo Dorticós, and Emilio Aragonés; see Appendix for full listing of the membership of the leadership bodies). Similarly, on the Directorate as a whole M-26-7 veterans outnumbered PSP veterans fourteen to ten (Table 1).

While the National Directorate was too small to permit a comprehensive representation of key roles in the political system, nevertheless many of the revolution's most important leaders were to be found in its ranks; it included eleven of the seventeen members of the Council of Ministers, and five of the nine most senior military commanders. Conspicuously absent, however, were the people who, next to Aníbal Escalante, had been most responsible for creating the new party--the provincial general secretaries of the ORI. None of the six provincial secretaries were members of the National Directorate, thus reflecting the serious conflict within the revolutionary leadership over the way in which the construction of the new party had begun. Within a few months, four of these six provincial leaders had been removed from their posts.⁹

Taking the composition of the National Directorate as an indicator of the relative influence of institutional groups within the Cuban political system, the government apparatus and the military stand out as the dominant groups (Table 2). Forty percent of the National Directorate's members held government posts and 32% held
military posts, while only 16% held posts in the party apparatus. This low level of party representation is not surprising, given the fact that the party apparatus was not only incomplete but, moreover, was on the verge of being wholly dismantled.

Nor is the relatively heavy military representation unexpected, given the crucial political role played by the armed forces during the first few years of the revolution. The struggle against Batista had been led by the Rebel Army, and from 1959 to 1961 when the socialist character of the revolution was being consolidated, the armed forces had acted as the "politico-military vanguard," serving as an army, a party, and an administrative bureaucracy all in one. The large proportion of military officers on the National Directorate may also have been related to the conflict between the PSP veterans and those who had fought with the M-26-7. Since most of the M-26-7's top leadership had been commanders of the Rebel Army, many of them still held posts in the Revolutionary Armed Forces in 1961. A majority of the National Directorate were M-26-7 veterans so it comes as no surprise that a sizeable number of these were from the armed forces. In fact, of the 8 military officers on the National Directorate, 6 had fought with the M-26-7, and only 2 with the PSP.

The First Central Committee of the Communist Party

The second attempt to build a new Cuban communist party began in the summer of 1962 with the dismantling of the ORI. Cadres selected by Castro were dispatched to the nation's work centers where they solicited from rank and file workers nominations for
membership in the new PURS. By 1965, this "mass method" of choosing party members had been completed in the island's largest work centers and in much of the armed forces. With the initial phase of party construction completed, Castro formally inaugurated the new party in October 1965, introducing its Central Committee and announcing that its name would be changed to the Communist Party of Cuba (Partido Communista de Cuba--PCC). The 100 members of the Central Committee were selected by Castro personally, as were the 8 members of the Political Bureau and 6 members of the Secretariat. In his speech announcing the membership of the party's leading bodies, Castro affirmed that the Central Committee was quite consciously representative of key functional groups in the political system:

There is no historic period in the history of our revolution that is not represented here. There is no sacrifice, there is no combat, there is no feat--either military or civilian, heroic or creative--that is not represented. There is no revolutionary social sector that is not represented...I speak of the workers, I speak of the youth, I speak of the farmers, I speak of our mass organizations.

The size of first Central Committee of the PCC constituted a major expansion of the party's leading body; whereas the National Directorate had only 25 members, the Central Committee had 100. Thus while the National Directorate could include only the foremost revolutionary leaders, the first Central Committee was large enough to encompass many from the "second echelon" of political leadership. In addition, the representation of the top leadership from the various major institutional groups in the political system became much more comprehensive; 16 of the 18 members of the Council of
Ministers were included, as were 9 of the 11 senior military commanders, 5 of the 6 provincial First Secretaries of the party, and all 5 leaders of the mass organizations. In this sense the new Central Committee represented an improvement in the integration of the Cuban political elite by expanding and systematizing the representation of the political system's major institutional groups. 13

Unquestionably, though, the institutional group which benefitted most directly from the Central Committee's expanded size was the armed forces. Fifty of the Central Committee's 80 new members (62.5%) were active military officers--i.e., they held positions in the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR) or the Ministry of the Interior (MININT). Thus of the total Central Committee membership, 56 (56.0%) were serving in the military. 14 Officials from the government apparatus, by contrast, held only 22 Central Committee seats, and members of the party apparatus held only 12. (Table 3). The Political Bureau of the first Central Committee also had a large proportion of military officers. Of the 8 Political Bureau members, five held posts in the armed forces: Raúl Castro (Minister, MINFAR); Ramiro Valdés (Minister, MININT); Juan Almeida (First Vice-Minister, MINFAR); Sergio del Valle (Vice-Minister, MINFAR); and Guillermo García (commander, western army).

If we compare the composition of the 1965 Cuban Central Committee to central committees in other communist political systems, the difference is striking. From 1952 to 1961, military personnel comprised, on the average, only 9.3% of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and among Eastern European parties, the post-war average is only about 11%.
Table 3: Institutional Representation in the 1965 PCC Central Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political Bureau N=8</th>
<th>Secretariat N=6</th>
<th>New Members N=80</th>
<th>Total N=100</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party Apparatus</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Apparatus</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military/Police</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Organizations</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Scientific</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Representatives of the party apparatus, on the other hand, comprised about 54% of the Soviet Central Committee. Even in China, where the party and the armed forces were nearly indistinguishable during the civil war (thus making the Chinese case more similar to the Cuban), the military held no comparable predominance after liberation. At the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China, the last before the Cultural Revolution, only 22.9% of those elected to the Central Committee held military posts.

Only the Central Committee selected at the Ninth Congress of the Chinese party is comparable to the 1965 Cuban Central Committee in terms of the military's heavy representation. The Ninth CPC Congress, held in 1969, produced a Central Committee with a military contingent comprising between two-fifths and three-fourths of its membership, thus reflecting the pivotal role played by the PLA in the Cultural Revolution.

As in China, the predominance of military personnel in the first Cuban Central Committee reflected the centrality of the military in politics. In Cuba, however, the military did not act as an arbiter of intra-elite conflict; Fidel Castro performed that role himself. Rather, the military’s high representation reflected the fact that it was an indispensable part of the regime’s administrative apparatus. During the early years of the revolution the army constituted the only existing apparatus through which the revolutionaries could exercise power. By 1965, however, the construction of the new party was fairly well advanced. In view of the “leading role” ascribed to the party in Marxist-Leninist theory, one would have expected the PCC to move to the forefront and take command of the
Cuban political system. The composition of the first Central Committee, however, betrayed the continued weakness of the party apparatus and the continued predominance of the armed forces.

One reason for the party's weakness was the persistent distrust between veterans of the PSP and the rest of the revolution's leaders. The ouster of Aníbal Escalante and the dismantling of the ORI in 1962 had by no means closed this rift, and in 1964 mutual animosities were enflamed once again when two PSF veterans were implicated at the trial of Marcos Rodríguez. Differences on key policy issues also tended to reinforce the old organizational lines of cleavage. The old communists found themselves at odds with other elite members over Cuban policy during the 1962 missile crisis, over the organization of economic planning, and over the proper mix of moral and material labor incentives.

The PSP veterans lost all these policy debates, and as a result they seemed to be relegated to a sort of "second-class citizenship" within the revolutionary leadership. While 40% of the National Directorate had been PSP veterans, their membership on the 1965 Central Committee dropped to 21%. Moreover, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee contained not a single member of the old communist party (Table 1).

The composition of the first Central Committee of the PCC indicates that by 1965 the political elite had become increasingly integrated, both horizontally and vertically. Horizontal integration was improved through the more comprehensive representation on the Central Committee of the key political roles in the constituent institutions of the political system. Vertical integration,
though largely restricted to the party apparatus, had nevertheless improved considerably over 1962, when none of the provincial general secretaries of the ORI were selected as members of the National Directorate.

However, the major political task facing the revolutionary leadership--the creation of a new vanguard party to direct the political process--was still uncompleted in 1965. Though the inauguration of the PCC was heralded with much fanfare, it was clear that the bitterness left within the revolutionary leadership as a legacy of the ORI had not dissipated, and that the party apparatus had yet to take the reins of leadership from the armed forces.

The Second Central Committee of the Communist Party

In December 1975, fully ten years after the party's founding and seventeen years after the victory over Batista, the Communist Party of Cuba held its First Congress. The Congress was a major event in the lengthy reorganization of the Cuban political system begun in 1970. This reorganization, called the "new phase" of the revolution by the Cubans, had as its primary goals the "institutionalization" and "democratization" of the political process. All the major political institutions were affected by the reorganization, foremost among them the party. For the first time, internal coordination and control were systematized, institutional functions were specified, and the boundaries between institutions were clearly demarcated. The military, which had been a dominant force in politics during the 1960's, and had literally taken over the administration of the economy in 1969-1970, was, in the 1970's separated
from political and administrative tasks unrelated to national defense.

During the 1960's, the PCC was the smallest ruling communist party in the world with a membership that never comprised more than .7% of the population. The second smallest party, in contrast, was the Albanian Labor Party with a membership nearly five times larger than the Cuban party's, and the average size of ruling communist parties at this time was over 6% of the population. Another symptom of the weakness of the party apparatus during the 1960's was the emergence of serious problems in organizational coordination when the party began nationwide operations in 1965, and complicating this problem was a persistent shortage of skilled party cadres. In 1969, Jose Machado, Central Committee delegate to Matanzas province, acknowledged that a shortage of party members and poor organizational work had left many key work centers without any party organization. In some factories, Machado added, things were so disorganized that party members were not even functioning together as a unit.

Thus, by 1969, even before the beginning of the "new phase," it had become clear that a substantial improvement in the functioning of the party apparatus was essential. Consequently, a campaign for the "construction and growth" of the party was begun, and it continued into the 1970's. By September 1975, on the eve of the First Congress, party membership had reached 200,000--nearly a fourfold increase over the 1969 membership level.

Improving internal coordination and control within the party also became a priority under the "new phase." After a year of
internal discussion in a series of "evaluation meetings," the party apparatus was thoroughly reorganized in 1972. The most important results of this process included the establishment of a routine reporting system from lower to higher party bodies, a specific delineation of the PCC's relationship to the government bureaucracy and the mass organizations; the beginning of regularly scheduled meetings of PCC bodies which had previously met only sporadically; and the expansion of the Secretariat of the Central Committee from 6 to 11 members to facilitate a wider division of responsibilities. The final stage of the party's consolidation was completed with the adoption of statutes and a party program at the First Congress.

Coincident with this expansion of the party's capabilities, the Cuban armed forces were increasingly separated from non-military affairs. During the late 1960's, the military had been given virtual administrative control over the economy in the effort to produce ten million tons of sugar in 1970. Under the "new phase," however, economic management returned to civilian control and the military was confined almost exclusively to the task of "national defense."

These changes were dramatically confirmed by the composition of the new Central Committee elected at the First Congress in 1975. (Table 4). The proportion of Central Committee members holding positions in the party apparatus rose from 12.0% in the 1965 Central Committee to 29.0% in 1975. The proportion of members from the government bureaucracy also increased slightly from 22.0% to 28.2%. The proportion of active military officers, however, fell drastically from 56.0% in 1965 to only 29.8% in 1975. Whereas in 1965, the military held an absolute majority of Central Committee seats, there
Table 4: Institutional Representation in the 1975 PCC Central Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political Bureau N=13</th>
<th>Secretariat N=9</th>
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<th>New Alternate Members N=12</th>
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<td>Mass Organizations</td>
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<td>Cultural/Scientific</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
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is, in the new Central Committee, an almost exact parity in representation from the three major institutional groups in the political system. (Table 5).

The reduced influence of the military was also reflected in the composition of the new Political Bureau. Whereas 6 of the 8 members of the 1965 Political Bureau held military posts, only three of the 13 members of the new Political Bureau are active military officers, and two of these (Fidel and Raúl Castro) hold the highest posts in the party and the government as well. This shift in the composition of the Political Bureau is due in part to a circulation of people between institutions (Valdés, Almeida, and García are still Political Bureau members, but they have exchanged their military posts for positions in the party and government). Primarily, though, the changed composition results from the addition of 5 new Political Bureau members, none of whom are active military officers. In fact, 5 of the 13 present members of the new Political Bureau have never held posts in the armed forces.²⁴

The strengthening of the PCC's apparatus since 1970 is also discernable from a closer examination of the party contingent within the 1975 Central Committee. In 1965, when the internal coordination of the PCC was poor, the First Secretaries of Pinar del Rio province and the Isle of Pinas did not even sit on the Central Committee. All the provincial first secretaries were included in the 1975 Central Committee, as were a number of other provincial party officials.²⁵ While the 1965 Political Bureau included no one from the provincial party apparatus, the 1975 Political Bureau included the First Secretaries of Havana, Oriente, and Las Villas provinces (though it
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<td>N=47 Central Committee</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
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<td>11.0%</td>
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<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=124 Central Comm. New Members, 1975</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=100 Pre-Congress</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=100 Central Com.</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=100 1975 Central Com.</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=25 1962 National</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=25 1962 National</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=25 1965 National</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Institutional Representation in the Cuban Political Elite, 1962-1975
should be noted that, since the politico-administrative redivision in 1976 which replaced Cuba's six provinces with fourteen, these three leaders—Machado, Hart, and Milián—no longer serve at the provincial level).

Another indication of the greater strength of the provincial party apparatus has been its increased differentiation from the armed forces. During the 1960's, most PCC provincial executive committees included several military officers, and some were headed by military men. In 1975, no provincial executive committee of the party included more than one military officer, and several included none at all. Overall, of the approximately ninety members of provincial executive committees, only about 6% held positions in the armed forces.

The composition of the new political elite also suggests that the intra-elite conflict between PSP veterans and other revolutionary leaders, which plagued the party during the 1960's, has diminished considerably. The Political Bureau of the 1965 Central Committee, it will be recalled, did not contain any veterans of the old communist party. At the First Congress, however, three PSP veterans were elevated to the Political Bureau: Elías Roca, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, and Arnaldo Milián. This increasing integration of the elite is attributable to a variety of factors; the PSP veterans who were the most strident opponents of the Fidelistas have almost all been removed from the party, and since 1970 the policy differences between the old communists and the veterans of the M-26-7 have been considerably reduced. Finally, the mere passage of time may be partially responsible for the reduction of hostilities.
The "institutionalization" of the political system as a whole was also reflected in the composition of the newly elected Central Committee. For the first time, the Central Committee included everyone holding a top leadership post in one of the nation's major political institutions. It included all 10 members of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, all 13 senior military commanders (i.e., Ministers, members of the FAR General Staff, and commanders of the three main armies), and all 5 leaders of the mass organizations.

With the creation of the Organs of People's Power in 1976, the government apparatus was altered considerably, with the Council of State superseding the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers as the highest government body. Overlap between members of the new government bodies and the 1975 Central Committee is presented in Table 6. All executive officers of the Council of State and Council of Ministers are Central Committee members, and most are members of the Political Bureau.

In short, the composition of the 1975 Central Committee and Political Bureau of the PCC reflect the fact that the institutional relationships within the Cuban political system have finally been brought into line with the prevailing pattern in other communist systems. The pre-eminent directing role of the party has been established, the influence of the military has receded, and the overall integration of the political elite has improved as a result of the "institutionalization" process. Thus, it is no longer possible to regard Cuba as distinctly anomalous among communist polities.
Table 6: Personnel Overlap Between PCC and Government Leadership, 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Political Bureau (N=13)</th>
<th>Central Committee (N=111)</th>
<th>Total (N=124)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council of State (N=31)</td>
<td>13 (42%)*</td>
<td>17 (55%)</td>
<td>30 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Officers (N=7)</td>
<td>7 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>7 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Ministers (N=45)</td>
<td>8 (18%)</td>
<td>19 (42%)</td>
<td>27 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Officers (N=10)</td>
<td>6 (60%)</td>
<td>4 (40%)</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* excludes Political Bureau members

**percentage of the government body's members who are also members of the party body in question.
Continuity and Change in the Cuban Political Elite

One of the striking things about the major shift in the pattern of institutional influence which has occurred in Cuba over the past few years is the relatively low degree of elite attrition that has accompanied the shift. The turnover in central committee membership resulting from the First PCC Congress was quite low; 77% of the 1965 Central Committee sits on the 1975 Committee, and so only 30% of the 1975 Committee are newcomers. (Table 7). Comparable figures for the Soviet Central Committee in the post-war period have been, on average, 72% and 41% respectively, making the PCC's leadership slightly more stable than the CPSU's.28

Of the 23 members of the 1965 Central Committee who are not on the new Committee, only 13 were actually removed by the Congress; 7 others were no longer living and 3 had been expelled during the 1960's. Thus, the 47 new members of the Central Committee were accommodated by a 24% expansion in the size of the Committee, from 100 to 124 (including 12 alternate members). The practice of recruiting new members by expanding Central Committee membership rather than by the removal of incumbents is a familiar one to scholars of the Soviet political elite; in fact, the expansion of the PCC Central Committee matches almost exactly the average post-war expansion of the Soviet Central Committee at each Party Congress--29

Changes made at the First Congress in the Political Bureau and Secretariat of the PCC follow a similar pattern. All 8 members of the 1965 Political Bureau were reelected in 1975, and 5 additional members were added. The Secretariat, as mentioned earlier, was
### Table 7: Turnover in the Cuban Political Elite, 1962-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National Directorate N=25</th>
<th>1965 Central Committee N=100</th>
<th>1975 Central Committee N=124</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incumbants</strong></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20 (20.0%)</td>
<td>77 (62.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Members</strong></td>
<td>25 (100.0%)</td>
<td>80 (80.0%)</td>
<td>47 (37.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members dropped from succeeding Central Committee</strong></td>
<td>5 (20.0%)</td>
<td>23 (23.0%)</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expanded in 1972 from the original 6 members to 11. The Secretariat elected in 1975 has nine members, all of whom were members of the pre-Congress Secretariat. Two pre-Congress members, Osvaldo Dorticós and Faure Chomon, have been dropped. This probably does not indicate any loss of influence for Dorticós, who has recently been concentrating increasingly upon economic planning. For Chomon, however, it does seem to represent a demotion; he was relegated to a second echelon post in the Oriente party provincial apparatus. Choman appears to be the only prominent figure to have suffered in the selection of the new leadership bodies.

Since the turnover in Central Committee membership has been so modest, the substantial shifts in institutional representation on the Cuban Central Committee has resulted from two other factors: the circulation of elite members between institutions and the institutional affiliations of the 47 new Central Committee members. The profile of new members' institutional affiliations differs very little from the profile of the new Central Committee as a whole. (Table 4). Thus, it is not primarily the institutional affiliations of the new members which has brought about the institutional realignments evident in the new Central Committee. The affiliations of the new members have done little more than reinforce the realignment which had already taken place before the First Congress met. The institutional profile of the Central Committee as it stood immediately before the Congress shows that it did not differ greatly from the institutional alignments which emerged from the Congress. (Table 5). That is to say, the Congress merely ratified the new
pattern of institutional relationships that had developed in the preceding years of political reorganization; the Congress was not so much a new departure as it was a culmination.

Since the circulation of elite members between various institutions in the Cuban political system is clearly responsible for the substantial shifts in institutional representation between the 1965 and 1975 Central Committees, this circulation deserves closer examination. Of the 77 people who have been members of both Central Committees, 32 hold posts in a different institution now than they did in 1965. (Table 8). The circulation pattern of these people is quite revealing, and demonstrates why the proportion of military officers in the new Central Committee is so much lower than it was in 1965. Personnel circulation between the party apparatus and the government bureaucracy has been relatively balanced, with three people shifting from the party to the government and five shifting in the opposite direction. Circulation between the armed forces and these other institutions, however, has been wholly unidirectional, with 18 officers leaving the armed forces, 7 for party posts and 11 for government posts. No one entered the armed forces from the other institutions. Many of these former officers took over extremely important positions: 5 became Deputy Prime Ministers, 2 became Ministers, and 2 became members of the PCC Secretariat. This pattern of elite circulation confirms the thesis advanced by several scholars that in the late 1960's and early 1970's the armed forces were acting as a "super agency" supplying highly trained personnel to the rest of the political system. 30

Another, more general, hypothesis about elite change in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party Apparatus</td>
<td>/8/</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Apparatus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>/10/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military/Police</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>/24/</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>/2/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
revolutionary societies is not supported by the data, however. Kautsky was among the first to suggest that the requirements for winning a revolutionary struggle and for managing a post-revolutionary society are different, and that we should therefore expect to find intra-elite conflict in post-revolutionary societies between "revolutionary modernizers" and "managerial modernizers." Though a precise means of distinguishing between these elite groups has never been successfully formulated (as Kautsky himself has subsequently pointed out), the policy preferences of elite members usually play a pivotal role in such differentiations. Revolutionary modernizers, it is argued, tend to prefer more idealistic policies which move the nation relatively quickly towards the goals of the revolution. Managerial modernizers, on the other hand, are more likely to be pragmatists, tolerant of delays and detours in the face of a sometimes intransigent reality.

In the Cuban case, one can quite clearly identify chronologically the point at which highly idealistic policies gave way to more pragmatic ones: this occurred in 1970 with the beginning of the "new phase." However, we do not find any major turnover in elite personnel which would substantiate the hypothesis that an intra-elite struggle between revolutionary and managerial modernizers preceded the policy shift. On the contrary, the low turnover rate between the 1965 and 1975 Central Committees indicates that the revolutionary modernizers and managerial modernizers have been the same people—highly idealistic initially, and more aware of the limits of the possible after having encountered some difficulties.

There are also some preliminary indications that the Cuban
political elite may be able to avoid another problem that has plagued political elites in revolutionary socialist regimes—the generational problem. Both the Soviet and Chinese political systems have had difficulty integrating new age-cohort generations into the political leadership. Most members of the PCC's leadership are still relatively young, even seventeen years after the seizure of power. Fidel Castro, for example, is still only 49 years old. Thus, it is still too early to expect any substantial change in the generational composition of the PCC Central Committee; a new generation of age-cohorts has yet to arrive on the political scene.

Nevertheless, if we modify slightly the usual conception of cohorts, we find that the Cuban elite has been relatively flexible in elevating to top leadership posts people who were not among the foremost leaders of the revolutionary struggle. Three of the 5 new Political Bureau members added at the First Congress, and all 5 of the new Secretariat members added in 1972, can be characterized as "second-generation" leaders. Although they were all active in the anti-Batista struggle, they were not among the top leadership at that time and they were not included in initial leadership body of the new party--the National Directorate. In contrast, all 11 members of the Political Bureau and Secretariat of the 1965 Central Committee were former members of the National Directorate.

**Clientelist Politics in Cuba: A Factional Model of the Political Elite**

A number of commentators have suggested that a division exists in the Cuban revolutionary leadership between the personal followers
of Fidel (fidelistas) and those of Raúl Castro (raulistas). During most of 1958, the guerrilla war was fought on two major fronts, the first in the Sierra Maestra commanded by Fidel, the second in the Sierra Cristal commanded by Raúl. This strategic division of the guerrilla forces, it is argued, gave rise to differences in personal loyalties among the guerrillas that fought on the two fronts, and who now constitute informal but potentially conflicting groups within the political elite.

The consensus among adherents of this argument is that the militarization of the late 1960's indicated, or was the occasion for, a significant rise in the influence of the raulistas, who tend to be concentrated in (and indeed, control) the armed forces. In view of the important implications such a division could have for Cuban politics, this hypothesized division requires closer scrutiny.

This, in essence, is a clientelist explanation of Cuban politics. Clientelist models attempt to explain political behavior on the basis of informal networks (factions) of political actors, held together by patron-client relationships among faction members. Lemarchand and Legg define this clientelist relationship as "a personalized and reciprocal relationship between an inferior and a superior, commanding unequal resources..." Such a relationship is, in essence, a "lopsided friendship." The significance of the clientelist model is its assertion that political factions crosscut institutional and interest group affiliations and transcend these other alignments in their significance for the political process.

Important contributions to the study of both Soviet and Chinese politics have been made by scholars utilizing a clientelist
perspective, and thus the application of this approach to Cuba, while not as well developed analytically as other applications, deserves serious consideration.\textsuperscript{34} This is particularly so since the low level of institutional development in Cuba during the 1960's provided a climate that would not discourage factional politics, and because there is strong evidence of factions other than fidelistas and raulistas in Cuban politics during this period.

Factions based upon the pre-revolutionary organizational affiliations of elite members played an extremely important role in Cuban politics during the 1960's. Aníbal Escalante's attempt to capture control of the ORI was based upon developing a clientelist network of old PSP members under the rubric of the new party. This network was destroyed in 1962 when the ORI was dismantled, and denounced as a "nest of privilege, toleration, of favoritism, a system of immunities and favors." Escalante and his followers were described as "dispensers of patronage," who had created a party the authority of which derived from the fact that "from it, one might receive or expect a favor, a dispensation, or some harm or good."\textsuperscript{35} The dissolution of the ORI did not end the division in the revolutionary leadership between veterans of the PSP and veterans of the M-26-7 and DR. It persisted at least until the 1970's, and the composition of the Cuban political elite clearly indicates the inferior position accorded to veterans of the PSP.

Assessing the argument for the existence of fidelista and raulista factions is more difficult, since there has been no open political conflict to confirm their operation. The following brief analysis examines a population of 49 Rebel Army officers who fought either in the Sierra Maestra with Fidel (N=20), or in the Sierra
Cristal with Raul (N=29), and who currently hold leadership positions in the regime. By examining where these officers are located in the current power structure, and how their location has changed over time, we should be able to detect any significant differences between these informal groups and thus judge whether their existence has any important implications for Cuban politics.

The data in Table 9 indicates that there are few significant differences between fidelista and raulista representation in key leadership positions, and that this situation has changed only marginally since 1965. Both groups have virtually equal representation in every key institution, with the exception of the Political Bureau of the PCC, which has consistently been dominated by fidelistas.

The argument that raulistas have become increasingly dominant in the armed forces is simply not confirmed by the data. The composition of the FAR's top leadership shows a balance between fidelistas and raulistas that has been stable for a decade. Considering the whole membership of each of the two groups, we find a nearly equal proportion of each presently serves in the armed forces: 8 out of 20 fidelistas (40.0%); and 13 of 29 raulistas (44.8%). It is not the case that raulistas tend to be disproportionally concentrated in the FAR, or that they dominate the leadership positions of the military.

Vellinga's study of 110 members of the Cuban military elite also attempts to identify individuals as either fidelistas or raulistas. At the highest echelons of the FAR, Vellinga found, as we have, an even balance between the two groups. Among middle echelon FAR officers, however, a majority could not be identified as
Table 9: Fidelistas and Raulistas in the Cuban Political Elite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1965 Fidelistas (N=20)</th>
<th>1965 Raulistas (N=29)</th>
<th>1975-76 Fidelistas (N=20)</th>
<th>1975-76 Raulistas (N=29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communist Party</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Bureau</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretariat</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Committee</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
<td>16 (55%)</td>
<td>15 (75%)</td>
<td>22 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of State</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Ministers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Armed Forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Staff &amp;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army Commanders</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Membership of individuals in the fidelista or raulista group is based upon data contained in Ramón L. Bonachea and Marta San Martín, *The Cuban Insurrection, 1952-1959* (New Brunswick, Transaction Press, 1974), pp. 332-338. Membership on party, government, and military bodies was drawn from a variety of Cuban press sources.
belonging to either faction. This may be due to a paucity of information, or it may indicate that the hypothesized factional networks do not exist.

No doubt the personal friendships and loyalties forged in the hardships of guerrilla combat have played an important role in Cuban politics since 1959. It does not follow from this, however, that such loyalties have developed into contending political factions. There is virtually no evidence that fidelistas and raulistas constitute such factions, that there has been any serious political conflict between the two groups, that either has come to dominate particular institutions, that one is significantly more influential overall than the other, or that their relative influence has shifted dramatically in the past decade. In short, this approach to Cuban politics helps us explain very little.

**Conclusion**

The changes in the composition of the Cuban political elite over the past decade and a half reveal a number of significant developments in the structure of the Cuban political system. First, there has been an important realignment of the pattern of institutional influence. The party has gained greatly in political power, primarily at the expense of the military, which has now been relegated to the subordinate position typical of most other communist political systems. The "institutionalization" process underway since 1970 has also resulted in a more explicit and efficient institutional framework for the political process, and this has been reflected in the increasingly comprehensive representation of key institutional leadership roles of the Central Committee. Further it appears that
the deep intra-elite cleavage between veterans of the PSP and veterans of the other revolutionary groups has been greatly reduced in recent years. Finally, all this has been accomplished with a minimum of explicit intra-elite conflict; there has not been a major purge of elite members since the dismantling of the ORI in 1962.

These developments undoubtedly constitute strengthening of the Cuban political system, but the change which probably has the most direct policy implications is, of course, the establishment of party hegemony over the armed forces. In the late 1960's the party apparatus and government bureaucracy were so poorly developed that they proved unequal to the mobilization and administrative tasks of the drive to produce ten million tons of sugar. The control of the economy was turned over to the superior organizational apparatus of the armed forces. The military brought to this task the administrative methods of military men everywhere: a strictly hierarchial command structure in which superiors give the orders, subordinates carry them out, and branches of discipline are punished severely. The great majority of the working population was thus enlisted in a vast army of production. In this there was no semblance of democracy, and the promise of mass input into economic decision-making had to be relegated to a future time when the problems of the economy would be less acute.

After over a year of extraordinary effort which taxed the morale and loyalty of the population severely, these methods had nevertheless failed to accomplish the task to which they had been set. Ten million tons of sugar could not be produced. The cost, both to the economy and to the regime's base of political support, was such that this command method of economic administration was abandoned. With the concomitant decline of the military's political influence, it is unlikely that such methods will be resorted to again.
Appendix: Leadership Bodies of the National Directorate, 1965 Central Committee, and 1975 Central Committee

I. National Directorate (1962)

**Secretariat**
- Fidel Castro, First Secretary
- Raúl Castro, Second Secretary
- Ernesto "Che" Guevara
- Osvaldo Dorticós
- Blas Roca
- Emilio Aragónés

II. Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba (1965)

**Political Bureau**
- Fidel Castro, First Secretary
- Raúl Castro, Second Secretary
- Osvaldo Dorticós
- Juan Almeida
- Ramiro Valdés
- Armando Hart
- Guillermo García
- Sergio del Valle

**Secretariat**
- Fidel Castro
- Raúl Castro
- Osvaldo Dorticós
- Blas Roca
- Faure Chomon
- Carlos Rafael Rodríguez

III. Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba (1975)

**Political Bureau**
- Fidel Castro, First Secretary
- Raúl Castro, Second Secretary
- Juan Almeida
- Osvaldo Dorticós
- Guillermo García
- Armando Hart
- Ramiro Valdés
- Sergio del Valle
- Blas Roca
- José Machado
- Carlos Rafael Rodríguez
- Pedro Miret
- Arnaldo Milián

**Secretariat**
- Fidel Castro
- Raúl Castro
- Blas Roca
- Carlos Rafael Rodríguez
- Pedro Miret
- Isidoro Malmierca
- Jorge Ríosquet
- Antonio Pérez
- Raul García
- Antonio Pérez
- Raul García
Appendix (cont.)

*Listings are in the order given by the Cuban sources

**These members were added to the Secretariat in 1972 and were confirmed in office at the First Congress of the PCC in 1975.

Notes


8. The April 1962 issue of Cuba Socialista lists the members of the commissions created at the March 22 meeting; it also lists the full membership of the National Directorate, and Aníbal Escalante is not among them. "Nombran las ORI su Dirección Nacional," Cuba Socialista, No. 3 (April 1962), 136-137.


14. Jorge I. Domingues asserts that the figure is approximately 51%; Domingues, "Institutionalization and Civil-Military Relations," Cuban Studies, 6, No. 1 (January 1976), 57. The most commonly cited proportion of military officers in the 1965 Central Committee is 67%. While 57 members did hold military commissions, some of these people had not held posts in the armed forces since the guerrilla war.


18. In 1964, Marcos Rodríguez, a former PSP member, was tried and convicted of treason for having betrayed four revolutionaries to Batista's police in 1957. At his trial, Rodriguez implicated two high ranking PSP officials--Joaquin Ordoqui and Edith Garcia Buchaca. The best brief account of the Marcos Rodriguez affair is Hugh Thomas, "Murder in Havana," New Statesman, May 29, 1964, pp. 838-840.


24. The five are Dorticós, Hart, Roca, Rodríguez, and Milán.

25. In 1976, Cuba's six provinces were reorganized into fourteen, plus the Isle of Pines. Of the fifteen new first secretaries in the reorganized PCC provincial apparatus, twelve are Central Committee members. "Executive Bureaus and auxiliary organs of the Party at provincial and municipal levels set up according to the new politico-administrative division," Granma Weekly Review, December 5, 1976, p. 1.

26. See the descriptions of the provincial party meetings held in preparation for the First PCC Congress, in Verde Olivo during November and December, 1975.

27. Members of the Council of State and new Council of Ministers are listed in Granma Weekly Review, December 12, 1975, p. 5.


29. Ibid.


36. See Bonachea and San Martín, pp. 332-338.

37. Vellinga, p. 255.