

Abstract

This is the question with which this paper will be seized as the Cuba, Castro, Communism. Invariably linked; sometimes in praise, often in condemnation.

In Jamaica, we have passed through the phase in which Castro's Communist Cuba was anathema to the large majority. We shared the anti-Castro feelings of the North Americans (U.S.A.) and gave to "Guantanamo" the significance imbued it by the Cuban exiles. We feared Cuba's communism more through misconceptions and exaggerated accounts of its problems than through any real understanding of it. Now, with the increasingly friendly attitude of our country towards Cuba, we find there is much in that country's experience to admire, to adopt and if necessary, adapt to our own reality.

There is indeed, much that Jamaica and other Third World countries can learn from the Cuban experience. Its rapid internal development has given Cuba the ability to help the developing countries to find solutions to their problems in a variety of fields.

However, Cuba's internal development cannot be seen outside the context of its external relations and in this too, the developing countries can be guided, as they come to realize that it is not enough to seek first the political kingdom. Not when that kingdom can be controlled externally and its leaders are purse-string puppets. The fact that Cuba has successfully rid itself of external dominance originating from the U.S.A., may be encouraging to leaders determined to free their people from U.S. dominance. One cannot deny, though, that there is place for the question: change - or exchange? with the implication that Cuba may well have taken onto itself Soviet masters in place of its former U.S. masters.

This is the question with which this paper will be seized as the Cuban experience in the decade beginning 1961, is analysed with a view to determining whether Cuba's radical change gave it the independence so craved by Third World Countries. As will be seen from this analysis of the Cuban Experience, it is not enough for a new developing country merely to switch to socialist organization, when it remains economically dependent on an external force. It will be seen that dependence carries similar penalties on the external front, in capitalist as well as in socialist/communist spheres of influence.

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