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Who Are We?

Cuban Libertarian Movement

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Retrieved on 7th May 2021 from utopianmag.com
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Most recently, unemployment in Cuba has grown geometrically, while the system of free public health care screams for modern technology and the scarcity of medicine has become truly frightening. Meanwhile, the educational system, which is totally complicit with the system, and particularly in the mobilization of “voluntary” labor in agriculture, is totally lacking in any type of critical thinking and humanism.

Students can neither think about freedom or even discuss or criticize the educational system.

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with a human face” for us, while they bridle struggles for self-determination and self-management throughout the continent and the entire planet. Today, the Cuban regime, with all of its supposed advances that its supporters still crow about, is no longer the example or the road to follow, even for its defenders.

Today’s Cuba is a huge plantation in the fist of a cruel and bloody overseer who does not hesitate to repress with all the means at his disposal. Cuba needs and desires freedom, both individual and collective. After the collapse of the Soviet “ancien regime,” the economic crisis in Cuba has reached catastrophic proportions, while nutritious frugality is daily transformed into dire poverty. The Cuban working class has lost all its rights, while the trade unions are nothing but organs of the state. Protest is a sin and striking is a crime. All this may seem exaggerated, and actually, it is, but it is the reality under which the island lives. And we invite all comrades who wish to corroborate these facts to visit Cuba, away from the “revolutionary” tours and the sirens’ songs.

The ultimate redoubt of Castroism is an efficient and imaginative propaganda apparatus. In 1992, we saw it at work during Castro’s visit to the Iberian Peninsula where he went to celebrate, along with the rest of the corrupt rulers of the world, the Fifth Centenary of Spanish genocide, justifying with his presence 500 years of ignominies on the Latin American continent carried out by the “mother country” and other, no less cruel stepmothers. On that occasion, we could verify just how far these hypocritical “leftists” would go when they denounced the other governments that lent themselves to this “celebration,” while passing over in complete silence Castro’s participation in the event. Recently, this typical “leftist” hypocrisy was also apparent during Castro’s visit to Argentina, at the inauguration of Nestor Kirchner, who explicitly promotes MERCOSUR (the Common Market of southern Latin America), as the human face of capitalism.

Of course, Castroist propaganda reiterates this slogan on the global level with all the power of its dollars and its invitations of free vacations in Cuba, while a myriad of hacks and scribes well versed in obscuring reality with sermons and parables have never been lacking. All of which leads us to an objective vision of today's Cuba: an island morally, physically and economically ruined, whose inhabitants risk incredible dangers to escape and where, ironically, funerals are free. A gigantic satrapy oppresses our people, and when anyone denounces the crime, he/she is accused of being in the pay of imperialism. Nevertheless, the reality is evident, as all curious travelers who don't wish to sing the siren's song can prove to themselves.

Within the anarchist movement today, those who oppose Castro's regime are not (at least not in their majority), the same as those anarchist sectors which in the past denounced Castro's crimes against anarchist comrades. Today, such denunciations of Castro's dictatorship are heard in all corners of the world. We can also see that each day there are fewer hardcore defenders of Castro's tyranny in the current movement of the oppressed, in the nuclei of resistance to Capital, among those involved in direct confrontations, and among the men and women who fight in a decentralized and autonomous fashion for workers control of the factories, the indigenous communities, the universities, the oppressed communities, and our own lives. On the contrary, today Castro's defenders are to be found among the rank and file of the reformist movements and of Social Democracy, among those who vote "Leftist," among the militants of Lula's Labor Party, among the sympathizers of Kirchner, in the Bolivarian bureaucracy of Hugo Chávez, and among the ideologues of Christian Democracy, in short, among bureaucratic left-wing organizations, ranging from parasitic trade unions and patronage organizations to fossilized student federations and Popular Fronts (in capital letters). They are also found in European and Latin American groups of capitalists who today invest in Cuba and are preparing "capitalism

The aim of the Cuban Libertarian Movement (CLM) is to encourage revolutionary anti-authoritarian activism in Cuba, in particular, and on the American continent, in general, with the goal of creating a more effective anarchist movement that can actively participate both in the current struggle of the workers for control over their lives and in the international counter-cultural resistance.

We are not an anarchist organization or, much less, a closed circle of the "elect" that pretends to lead or judge Cuban anarchism. On the contrary, we are a network of collectives with sections in different cities of the world that is seeking to establish more effective coordination among the distinct currents that make up Cuban anarchism today, from anarcho-syndicalism, revolutionary anarchism, anarcho-communism, cooperativism, communalism, primitivism, eco-anarchism to libertarian insurrectionism.

If you are an anarchist or anti-authoritarian, anti-patriarchal, anticlerical, rebellious and idealistic, you too can be part of this network and actively participate, in an individual or collective fashion, in the development of today's

A Little History

Cuban anarchists have actively participated in the fight for the liberation of the proletariat since the days of colonial oppression. The struggle developed during the middle and final years of the 19th century, headed by the "group of the three Enriques": Enrique Roig de San Martín, Enrique Messonier and Enrique Creci, who exemplified the movement. By 1888, this revolutionary anarchist nucleus publicized its class position against politics and the state in the pages of the anarchist periodical, *The Producer*, which published a series of texts entitled "Reality and Utopia" (I to VI). These articles explain in broad strokes the general conceptions of our comrades of that

period, in a true struggle against the current, that is, within a movement in which democratic, liberal, annexationist, autonomist, and pro-independence-nationalist (the “liberation of Cuba”) ideologies predominated. Nevertheless, the historical falsification of the history of the workers movement that continues in Cuba to this day has obscured the importance of the anarchist/libertarian ideal in the development of the anti-state struggles of the oppressed.

Cuban anarchists also participated in the difficult struggles against the dictatorships of Machado and Batista. Against the latter, they fought on all fronts, some with the guerrillas in Oriente Province or with those in the Escambray Mountains in the center of the island; others joined the underground and participated in the struggle in the cities. They also built bridges between the organized sectors of the struggle against Batista in Cuba and the anarchist anti-Franco struggle in Spain via comrades Antonio Degas (member of the CNT living in Cuba) and Luis M. Linsuaín, the son of another outstanding anarchist revolutionary killed in Alicante, Spain, at the end of the Spanish Revolution. The aims of the anarchists coincided with the desires of the majority of the people: liquidation of the military dictatorship and an end to political corruption, as well as the creation of a more open arena for the enjoyment of democratic liberties, which would make ideological continuity possible.

The pamphlet, *Libertarian Projections*, published in 1956, which attacked Batista, also described Castro as “not meriting any confidence,” and as one who “does not keep promises” and “fights only for power.” It was with this in mind that Cuba anarchists put themselves in greater contact with other revolutionaries. By the time the insurrection had triumphed, Castro had made himself the leader of the entire process, largely as a result of an incorrect evaluation on the part of the opposition, which considered him a “controllable” evil—necessary but temporary—owing to the modest, social democratic nature of his program.

federation of Labor and the Iberian Anarchist Federation) and an infinite number of other anarchist federations, groupings and collectives throughout the world also demonstrated their solidarity.

The Present Reality

Today, as was the case 40 years ago, the Cuban people live in the face of the threat of Yankee intervention, while suffering the terror and despotism of Castro-Fascism, with the only difference that today the Castroist system is more sophisticated and even more oppressive. The jails remain full of oppositionists and young people who continually rebel against totalitarianism and the lack of freedom. The executioner’s wall is still the alternative for those who struggle against the regime or intend to flee its absolutism.

Yet, inexplicably, the “Cuban Revolution,” as “leftists” like to call the Castroist dictatorship, continues to receive so-called “critical support.” We see how broad sectors of the “left” who oppose the death penalty, universal military service (the draft), censorship in the mass media, frame-ups carried out against fighters for social justice under the guise of fighting terrorism, as they denounce gag laws that prohibit free radio stations, as well as nuclear power, while facing surveillance carried out by the repressive apparatus of the States, nevertheless justify, and even applaud and support, these same outrages in the name of anti-imperialism. “Critical support” has been and still is a slogan for external but not internal consumption. It is based on a totalitarian and Manichean type of thought: “with the revolution and against imperialism,” in other words, those who don’t support us are in favor of Yankee imperialism and therefore reactionary. This way of thinking is the same as that of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco.

United States. Also working in this group was Abe Bluestein who, like the rest, identified with the Cubans. It was this group of anarchists that had founded the above mentioned Libertarian League, whose mouthpiece was a bulletin called Views and Comments. Without the collaboration of all the people in this anarchist association, the work of the Cuban anarchists would have been much more difficult.

In August 1960, a pamphlet of 16 pages, titled Manifesto of the Anarchists of Chile on the Cuban Revolution in the Face of Yankee and Russian Imperialism, was published in Santiago, Chile. This document denounced Castroism for the first time on the hemispheric level and was in full agreement with the manifesto published by the libertarians in Havana. This work, which is not well known owing to poor distribution and to sabotage on the part of the Chilean Leninists, further clarified the position of anarchists on the question of Castroism. The manifesto remained buried in the shadows of mystery.

Condemned to 20 year prison terms, Isidro Moscú and Plácido Méndez were stuck in the Cuban jails. Suria Linsuaín completed a minor term, but his brother, Luis, was condemned to death for attempting to assassinate Raúl Castro. As it helped the former, the CLME mobilized inter-national anarchist opinion to save Luis' life, while activating international solidarity in support of all the anarchists suffering in Castro's jails.

In 1962, the members of the CLME launched its propaganda campaign with the publication of the Libertarian Information Bulletin, receiving selfless and spontaneous support from Views and Comments in New York and the endorsement of the Argentine Libertarian Federation by virtue of a resolution passed at its Vth Congress, held in Buenos Aires, and publicized in its organ, Libertarian Action. Both the Argentine and the North American comrades responded to the call of the exiled Cuban anarchists from the first moment and this support was never to waver in the difficult years to come. Shortly thereafter, the CNT-FAI (the Spanish National Con-

In the early days of 1959, the libertarian publications, Foodworkers Solidarity and The Libertarian, expressed in their first issues a favorable, and at the same time, cautious and hopeful, attitude toward the "revolutionary" government.

Nevertheless, the National Council of the Cuban Libertarian Association (CLA) published a manifesto which "exposes, informs and judges the triumphant Cuban Revolution" and, after explaining the opposition of anarchists to the past dictatorship, proceeded to analyze the present and the near future. It declared that the recent "institutional changes," while opening up a new stage for Cuba, should arouse "no enthusiasm or illusions," although it didn't deny, with a degree of irony, the "certainty, at least for awhile, that we will enjoy sufficient liberties to enable us to carry out propaganda." It continued with a well-aimed attack against "state centralism" as a road toward an "authoritarian order." The document concludes with a reference to the workers movement, emphasizing again the efforts of the Cuban Communist Party (CCP) to "regain the hegemony over the workers movement they enjoyed under Batista," although ending with the opinion that this will probably not occur. The manifesto concludes on a note of optimism: "The panorama, taken as a whole, is breathtaking..." Along the same lines, on February 15, 1959, Foodworkers Solidarity published another manifesto to the workers and the people in general, warning that although the revolutionary government might not, in such a short time, "set up functioning workers institutions, it is our right to have the norms of freedom and democratic rights respected and exercised... Elections in the trade unions must be organized, the (workers) assemblies must begin to function..." Finally, it left to the workers of each union the question of how to handle removing the old bureaucrats from office. "It is crucial that the workers themselves decide on removing and disbaring their past union leaders, since to do this in any other way would be to fall into the same authoritarian practices we fought against yesterday." The same pub-

lication, in its editorial of March 15, bitterly condemned the “dictatorial procedures (of the Congress of the Workers of Revolutionary Cuba—CWRC)...deals and orders from above that impose measures, fire and install leaders.” It also accused “elements...in the assemblies which, without being members of the unions themselves, vote en bloc in favor of particular groups of leaders.” Among the other abnormalities and “procedures” it denounced were the following: “...periodically packing the assembly rooms with armed militiamen in flagrant attempts to coerce the workers; the lack of respect for normal rules of procedure; and stooping to the lowest types of maneuver to maintain control over the unions.” As we know, the struggle to liberalize the workers movement was, unfortunately, lost despite the crucial efforts of the anarcho-syndicalists in that arena.

The opposition to anarcho-syndicalism came directly from sectors of the July 26 Movement (J26M), instigated by elements of the Cuban Communist Party who had infiltrated that organization, which, in turn, had taken over the leadership of the unions of the entire island in virtual military fashion. This takeover was said to be temporary, with the objective of purging the most corrupt elements inherited from the Batista dictatorship until new and free elections could be held. As could have been predicted and was customary in Cuba, the temporary turned into the permanent. But where did these union elements come from, since it was a known (and notorious) fact that the July 26 Movement never had a base in the unions or even a general sympathy among the workers, let alone an active working class leadership? The new trade union leaders mostly came from two antagonistic camps: the syndicalists of the Workers Commissions, who had oriented to electoral politics and had been enemies of the old government, and members of the Cuban Communist Party. The first were motivated by cynical opportunism and lent themselves to manipulation by the state. The second were extremely dangerous and, in spite of their stormy past, clearly enjoyed official support from the

This was not the first time that Cuban anarchists had sought refuge in the United States. Since the 19th century, Tampa, Key West, and New York, where they had the opportunity both to earn a living and to maintain the proximity to Cuba necessary to continue the struggle, had been the sites of choice of those persecuted comrades. During the Machado and Batista dictatorships, the exiles had gone to the same spots, where they were able to make contact with other anarchist groups present in New York.

In the summer of 1961 in New York, a group of Cuban anarchists exiled in that city formed the Cuban Libertarian Movement in Exile (CLME). At the same time and with the same purpose, another group of Cuban anarchists, known as the General Delegation, was organized in Florida. The group in New York, almost all anarcho-syndicalists from the FoodWorkers Union, established the first contacts with Spanish anarchists based in Boston, who, through the efforts of Comrade Gómez, had been organized in the Aurora Club. Also in that period, contacts were made with another group of Spanish comrades located in New York, guided by J. González Malo and grouped around the longtime libertarian organ, Proletarian Culture.

But without a shadow of a doubt, the largest measure of cooperation and solidarity that the Cuban Libertarian Movement at that time received came from an anarchist group known as the Libertarian League, guided by Sam Dolgoff and Russell Blackweil. The latter had fought in the Spanish Civil War and enjoyed some renown among the anarchist movement in North America despite, or perhaps because of, his prior history as a Trotskyist. Sam Dolgoff was at that time one of the most respected figures in the North American anarchist milieu and possessed a significant revolutionary history, aside from exercising great influence within the North American left. We can't forget his companion, Esther Dolgoff, always at his side and often in front, a woman dedicated since her youth to the social struggle and to the liberation of the working class in the

with weapons. We also did all we could to help the guerrillas commanded by Francisco Robaina (Machete) who operated in the same mountain range.” Our comrade, Augusto Sánchez, a fighter in these guerrilla struggles, was assassinated after being taken prisoner. Since the guerrillas were considered to be bandits by the government, the lives of those captured were rarely spared.

Besides Augusto Sánchez, the following “combatant comrades” were killed: Rolando Tamargo and Ventura Suárez, shot; Sebastián Aguilar, Jr., killed by rifle fire; Eusebio Otero, murdered in his home; Raúl Negrín, harassed by persecution, shot himself. In addition, aside from Moscú, the following comrades were arrested and sentenced to prison terms: Modesto Piñeiro, Floreal Barrera, Suria Linsuaín, Manuel González, José Aceña, Isidro Moscú, Norberto Torres, Sicinio Torres, José Mandado Marcos, Plácido Méndez and Luis Linsuaín, these last two, officers in the Rebel Army. Francisco Aguirre died in prison; Victoriano Hernández, sick and blinded by the tortures of imprisonment, committed suicide; and José Alvarez Micheltorena, died a few weeks after getting out of jail.

On May 1, 1961, Castro declared his government “socialist,” (in reality, Stalinist). This posed a dilemma for the libertarians inside and outside Cuba. The regime demanded total commitment from its militants and sympathizers. There was no right to abstain or to take a neutral position. That had gone the way of the dodo. The Third Republic, presided over by a budding dictator, offered no alternative but to be under its control or to choose one of three options: jail, the wall (execution), or exile.

After their initial encounters with the most Stalinist sectors of the CCP, the sections of the Association of Cuban Libertarians understood that the regime, well on the road to totalitarianism, was not going to allow an anarchist organization to exist. The Cuban anarchist movement, persecuted by the repressive organs of Castro’s dictatorship, was forced to go into exile.

highest levels of the government. Both sectors hated each other and prepared for an overt struggle for hegemony over the proletarian sector, but, as we will discuss, wound up forming an amalgam that would prove disastrous for the Cuban workers movement.

By July, the Cuban State was completely in the hands of Castro and his closest group of collaborators. Members of the Cuban Communist Party were still seen in the highest positions of government. The anarchists noted this with considerable alarm; they understood correctly that the influence of the CCP in the government and the trade unions meant a mortal blow to them, both in the short and in the long run. The anarchists’ most frightening nightmares soon became the reality. Castro publicly declared that he had no relationship with the CCP, although he recognized the existence of “communists” within his government along with persons with anticommunist affiliations.

Towards the end of the year, the Xth National Congress of the CWRC was held, at which a majority of those present voted to accept the thesis of “Humanism.” This was a new species of philosophy that had been created at the beginning of the year and was said to rise above the traditional camps of communism and capitalism that had been established by the Cold War. It proclaimed the slogans of “Bread with Liberty” and “Liberty Without Terror.” Cubans, creative as always, had invented a totally new socioeconomic system in order to come up with at least some sort of ideological justification for the new regime. David Salvador, the top leader of the July 26 Movement faction, presented himself as its most intrepid chief. For its part, the PCC, well represented at this congress although in an obvious minority, put forward the musty slogan of “Unity.” By November 23, the congress found itself totally divided on the questions of passing resolutions and electing leaders. The anarchists in the Cuban Libertarian Association published in *Solidarity*, on the 15th of that month, a “Call to the Xth Congress,”

in which it declared that “The congresses that we so long endured had as their only important issue the question of the distribution of the posts of the apparatus.” It ended on an optimistic note: “...but we would like to hope that the present congress will mark a step forward in the advance of revolutionary syndicalism,” and added hopefully “that it might help raise the profound questions facing the proletariat above the level of personalism and sectarianism of cliques and parties...” None of this happened. In the face of the division over the road forward, Castro personally addressed the congress. He insisted on the necessity of “defending the revolution,” which required “truly revolutionary leaders,” by electing a leadership that could be supported by all the delegates to the congress, and proposed David Salvador for that position. The only faction that ought to prevail is “the party of the country,” Castro declared. In effect, as in the old days of the Republic (as much as one would like to renounce and forget the fact), the government turned the General Secretary of the CWRC into an appendage or minister of the government. The Executive Committee was composed of delegates from the M26J and the CCP. On the 25th of November, the last day of the Congress, the “communist” leader, Lázaro Peña, assumed control of the leadership of the workers organization, although David Salvador remained its nominal head.

It was only logical that the trade union representatives of the J26M, who had opposed the CCP taking control of the congress and the CWRC as a whole, would, after listening to the explanations of the Fidel Castro, the “supreme leader,” accept the government’s directive without objection. This was for the simple reason that orders came from above that indicated that one either agree to it or go to jail. “Fatherland or Death, We Will Win!” And so the congress, nicknamed the “congress of melons” (olive green—the color of the M26J—on the outside; red—the color of the CCP—on the inside), ended, thus closing a century of trade union struggles through which the workers

These “nationalizations” and expropriations were not criticized by the libertarians. What they opposed, according to the Declaration, was the state-ization of the entire wealth of the country in the hands of Castro and the CCP. It was then necessary to take to the hard road of clandestine activity or exile in order to begin the struggle against the new and powerful dictatorship, which, as Casto Moscú explained, “...had convinced us that all our efforts and those of our people had been in vain and that we had arrived at a situation that was both extremely difficult and far worse than any of the evils we had hitherto struggled against.” In the face of the totalitarian situation, the great majority of Cuban anarchists decided to revolt, initiating a struggle that was condemned from the first day to end up as a total fiasco.

In the face of the Castroite repression, many of the anarchists who had fought against the Batista dictatorship with the different guerrilla struggles in the western, central and eastern parts of the country, saw no other road than to resort once again to arms. As Moscú said, “an infinite number of manifestos, denouncing the false postulates of the Castroite revolution and calling the people into opposition, were written.

Meetings were held to debate themes and to make people aware of the disgraceful reality that confronted us,” and “plans were made to carry out sabotage against the key props of the State...” Now totally committed to the armed struggle, according to Moscú, these militants “began to participate in cooperative efforts to support guerrilla struggles that already existed in various parts of the country.” This involved in particular two important guerrilla groups in the same area that were operating with great difficulty owing to the fact that the Sierra Occidental is not very high, while the province in which the struggle occurred is narrow and very close to Havana. “More direct contact existed with the guerrillas led by Captain Pedro Sánchez in San Cristóbal, since our comrades were actively involved in the guerrilla struggle there, including supplying it

ing to the CCP and Roca. One month before, the Libertarian had dedicated its July 19 edition to celebrating the “Heroic attitude of the Spanish anarchists in July 1936.” The components of the CNT in Havana, enthusiastic at the revolutionary triumph, called for the violent overthrow of Franco. That same issue, virtually entirely dedicated to the libertarian role in Spain during and after the Civil War, gave an account, on its last page and in an almost pathetic fashion, of the CLA and the “struggle against the Batista dictatorship.” The print run was large and the newspaper reminded the government of the Cuban anarchists’ commitment to revolution and freedom. Those were the last ideological shots fired. The Libertarian disappeared that same summer.

The most militant Cuban anarchists had few choices. After the Declaration they knew they would be harassed by the blind servants of the regime who, converted into true sycophants, assigned themselves the task of denouncing any Cuban who was not in agreement with the revolutionary process. An accusation of “counterrevolutionary” was a one-way ticket to jail or a trip to the executioner’s wall. The reasons the libertarians decided to struggle against State terrorism through violence were as valid then as they had been before. Anarcho-syndicalism within the trade unions and the workers federations had, as we’ve seen, passed into the Hereafter. There was no space in which to exercise freedom of the press or carry out propaganda in favor of one’s ideas. To attack the regime was a crime of lese patria. The economic policies of the regime were leading to the Sovietization of Cuba with all its negative consequences. All who proposed any ideas different from those that came from the State were persecuted with a ferocity hitherto unknown, while the State had come to take over all the homes, large properties, businesses, ranches, sugar plantations, tobacco fields, in short, all the richest of the country that, until that moment, had been owned by the wealthiest layer of the bourgeoisie, national capitalism and the Cuban-North American banks.

had managed to achieve some gains in the struggle against employer abuse. At this point, however, everything changed. In a few short months, the State had turned itself into the true, one and only, boss.

The visit of the German anarchist Agustín Souchy to Havana in the summer of 1960 is not well known. Even less known is the publication of his pamphlet, “An Eyewitness Account of the Cuban Revolution,” which conveyed his opinion about the Cuban peasantry and the new Agrarian Reform Law, with which Castro tried to astound and fool the world, beginning with the Cubans. Souchy had been a famous figure in the Cuban libertarian milieu since the previous year, when, knowing that he was considering visiting Cuba, Solidarity had published, over several issues, his long essay, titled “Libertarian Socialism,” with the purpose of clarifying basic libertarian concepts and as a hidden hope that these ideas might take concrete form in a new society whose basic outline he had sketched out.

Souchy’s visit came at a difficult time, when, as in all revolutions (and in war), the people bounced between fear, uncertainty and hope. At the beginning of the year, provocations against the anarchists had begun, in the form of veiled false accusations made by the official organ of Castroism, Revolution. Nevertheless, Souchy’s visit, invited as he was by the government to study and offer his opinion of Cuban agriculture, filled many comrades with enthusiasm, and the German writer was greeted with jubilation in various events organized in his honor and in a cordial welcome held by the libertarian milieu on August 15, 1960.

As a student of agrarian problems, Souchy had written a pamphlet, much commented upon in Europe, titled *The Cooperatives of Israel*, about the organization of the kibbutzes in that country. The Cuban government hoped for something similar from him as a means of promoting its massive agrar-

ian program and as propaganda intended for the international anarchist milieu. This didn't happen.

Souchy traveled all around Cuba with his eyes and his heart open to all he was shown and all that he could observe on his own. Cuba, he said, was approaching too closely to the Soviet model; the lack of freedom and of personal initiative could lead nowhere but to the centralization of the agrarian sector. He noted the same process in the entire economy. Souchy was comparably honest throughout his account and his pamphlet was published without official censure. However, three days after he left Cuba, the entire edition of this work was rounded up by the Castroist government at the suggestion of the leadership of the CCP and destroyed in its entirety. Luckily for history, the editorial board of *Reconstruction* in Buenos Aires, Argentina, reproduced Souchy's complete original version, with an excellent preface by Jacobo Prince, in December of the same year.

In June 1960, convinced that Castro was leaning more and more toward establishing a totalitarian government of the Marxist-Leninist type, the road to which was slowly asphyxiating all freedom of expression, communication, association and mobilization, the majority of the sections of the Cuban Libertarian Association decided to put out a Declaration of Principles, presented as representing the Libertarian Syndicalist Grouping and signed by the Group of Revolutionary Syndicalists. The purpose of using this name was to "avoid repression against members of the CLA." The aim of this document, which is vital for understanding the situation of the Cuban anarchists at that time, was, besides orienting the Cuban people, to warn the government about the disaster toward which it was heading and to open polemics with the CCP, some of whose figures were still to be found in important positions in power. The Declaration consisted of eight points which attacked the "State in all its forms": it described, consistent with libertarian ideas, the economic functions of the unions and the federations, declared that

the "land" should "belong to those who work it," held up "collective and cooperative work" as an alternative to the centralism proposed in the government's Agrarian Reform, emphasized free collective education for children, likewise with culture, polemicized against nationalism, militarism and imperialism, which it denounced as noxious, opposed the plans to militarize the people, fearlessly attacked "bureaucratic centralism" in favor of federalism, proposed the immediate granting of individual liberty "as a way to achieve collective liberty" and, finally, declared that the Cuban Revolution was like the sea, that is, belonged to everybody, while energetically condemning the "authoritarian tendencies that are developing within the very heart of the revolution." There's little doubt that this was one of the first direct attacks against the regime that came from an ideological standpoint.

The response was not long in coming. In August, the organ of the CCP, *Today*, under the signature of the party's General Secretary, Blas Roca, the highest ranking leader of the "communist" cadres, replied to the anarchist declaration in violent terms, using the same false charges as those of 1934, and adding the dangerous accusation that the authors were "agents of the Yankee State Department." In the words of one of the authors of the Declaration, Abelardo Iglesias, "...finally, the former pal of Batista...Blas Roca, answered us in the Sunday supplement, piling insults on injuries." It was significant that in response to an attack on the Castro government it was the highest leader of the CCP who came out in defense of the regime. In the summer of 1960, all doubts about the nature of the regime began to be dispelled.

From that moment, those anarchists who were enemies of the regime had to go underground. A polemic against Roca's attack was planned, but, in Iglesias' words, "we did not succeed in convincing our printers, already terrorized by the dictatorship, to print it. Nor was it possible to put out an underground edition." This was a question of a pamphlet of 50 pages reply-