

3 Establishment and consolidation of Castro's rule

Timeline

1959 Jan: Office of Revolutionary Plans and Co-ordination is established

Feb: Castro becomes prime minister

May: National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) is set up

Jul: Urrutia resigns as president; Osvaldo Dorticós takes over

Oct: Huber Matos and supporters are imprisoned

1960 Sep: Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs) are set up

1961 Apr: Bay of Pigs incident

Jul: 26 July Movement, communist PSP and Directorio Revolucionario (DR) merge to form the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations (ORI)

1962 Mar: Escalante is removed from positions

1963 Jul: ORI becomes the United Party of the Socialist Revolution (PURS)

1965 Oct: PURS becomes the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC)

Nov: Camarioca Exodus

1968 Feb: 'Microfaction' Affair

1976 Dec: Fidel Castro becomes president

1980 Apr–Oct: Mariel Boatlift

1989 June–July: Ochoa Affair

1992 Sep: Aldana is sacked; purge of reformists from PCC

1994 Aug: Malecón Exodus

1995 Mar: actions against the Centre for the Study of America (CEA) group

2002 Jun: National Assembly amends constitution to make socialist system of government permanent

2003 Mar: Varela Project activists are arrested

2008 Feb: Fidel Castro announces his resignation; Raúl takes over

Key questions

- How did Castro establish his power in the period 1959–75?
- What measures were taken after 1975 to further consolidate Castro's power?
- What other methods did Castro use to consolidate his power?

Overview

- After 1959, Castro began to create a politically centralised one-party state – with political, social and economic decision-making concentrated in his hands and those of his *Fidelista* élite.
- During 1959, Castro began to establish a situation of dual power by creating alternative organisations that increasingly bypassed the government.
- Castro also began to move against liberals opposed to his more radical policies. By July, Urrutia had been forced to resign and other liberals and anti-communists either resigned or were gradually removed over the following months.
- Between 1961 and 1965 the 26 July Movement, the DR (the *Directorio Revolucionario*, the successor to the DRE) and the PSP were merged to form the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) – taking action in 1962 against Escalante for attempting to promote his own supporters.
- In 1965, the numbers of Cubans leaving Castro's Cuba increased in what became the first large 'exodus' – this Camarioca Exodus and two others (the Mariel Boatlift in 1980 and the Malecón Exodus in 1994) effectively 'exported' potential oppositionists.
- From 1968, internal opposition also emerged within the PCC and from groups of intellectuals (such as the Varela Project): first it was against the growing ties with the Soviet Union; then in the late 1980s opposition developed in response to Gorbachev's liberal reforms in the Soviet Union; and later, in the 1990s, it emerged during the Special Period.
- On 18 February 2008, illness forced Fidel Castro to resign his leadership posts and his brother Raúl took over.

How did Castro establish his power in the period 1959–75?

In January 1959, a new government was installed. The president, as promised by Castro before 1959, was the moderate judge Manuel Urrutia. José Miró Cardona was prime minister. They presided over a cabinet in which there were only three members of Castro's rebel army (and only one of these was from the 26 July Movement). However, it soon became clear that the real power lay with Castro, who was appointed military commander-in-chief of the new Rebel Armed Forces.

As promised by Castro, there were trials (broadcast on TV) of several hundred of Batista's political supporters, especially senior police and torturers. Most were found guilty and many were executed by firing squad.

Dual power, January–November 1959

In January 1959, Castro formed the Office of the Revolutionary Plans and Co-ordination (ORPC), an unofficial committee composed of his closest advisers, including his brother Raúl and Guevara. This soon created a situation of **dual power** between the ORPC and the cabinet, as the former began to push forward the revolution Castro wanted.

In February, Castro became prime minister, taking on extra powers, and presiding over a government comprising both radicals and moderates. In April, he announced the suspension of elections and, in May 1959, the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) was set up, absorbing the ORPC. Castro was its president, and Núñez Jiménez – a Marxist economist – its director. Its formal role was to deal with the issues of agrarian reform and industrial development, but INRA quickly became, in practice, the effective government.

In June 1959, several moderate members of the cabinet resigned over what they saw as 'communistic' policies. As communists were increasingly appointed to administrative posts, Urrutia and others began to make public criticisms of the growing influence of communists.

Castro then decided to end the dual power situation. In July, Urrutia was forced to resign. He was replaced by a supporter of Castro, Osvaldo Dorticós. More sympathetic to the communists, Dorticós remained in post until 1976.

By the end of November 1959, most of the remaining moderates or liberals had either resigned or been forced out of office; four more went in 1960. The removal of anti-communists and non-communists resulted in a new coalition containing several communists.

Revolutionary consolidation

From 1960, Castro and this new leadership consolidated a centralised form of rule by Fidel and a handful of friends, via a cabinet that held all legislative and executive powers. By December 1960, the press had been brought into line – often through seizure by communist-led trade unions. Castro also assumed the power to appoint new judges.

dual power This term refers to a situation where political power, in reality, is shared between the formal government and an unofficial body. Such situations rarely last for long, as each authority tries to impose its power.

Question

Why was Castro's formation of INRA important in establishing his power?



Fidel Castro in 1964, relaxing while planning consolidation of his revolution

Fact

The Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), established in 1965, had never functioned as a mass party. It did not even hold its first congress until 1975. In 1972, it was given a new party structure, with a 100-strong central committee, as well as a smaller politburo and secretariat. It also produced new party statutes and a new programme. Membership rose steadily from 50,000 in 1965 to over 500,000 by 1980. By then, over 9% of all Cuban citizens aged over 25 belonged to the party. These changes turned it into more of a typical ruling party. At the same time, the proportion of military personnel in the leading bodies dropped significantly, making it a more normal civilian party.

However, from 1968 Cuba became increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union. New state structures and institutions were developed along Soviet lines. In 1972, the cabinet was enlarged, with an executive committee of eight which took over many of Castro's functions. The shift from individual to collective responsibility was designed to create a more formally democratic system and give greater political stability. At the same time, the Communist Party was also enlarged and reorganised along more 'orthodox' lines to make it more representative.

Castro thus no longer had the unlimited authority he had in the 1960s. Despite differences at the top over later economic policies, Castro's regime remained fairly stable and united.

Opposition

There were many opponents of the regime in the early years. Many in the movement disliked the growing influence of the communists in Castro's regime. On 19 October 1959, Huber Matos, the governor of Camagüey province and one of the leading figures of the revolutionary war, resigned in protest. Matos, along with others sharing his views, was put on trial for 'rebellion'. Castro then used this crisis to further establish his own position by creating armed militias as part of the new revolutionary structure of power.

Some opponents, whose social and economic interests were threatened by the revolution, resorted to counter-revolutionary guerrilla warfare. This was often supported by the USA. Thousands of Cubans died in this civil war between 1960 and 1966. By 1966, however, these opponents had been convincingly defeated.

The US-sponsored Bay of Pigs incident (see page 180) in April 1961 had led to the immediate arrest of all suspected 'counter-revolutionaries' – about 3500 were detained in Havana alone. The resulting wave of nationalism and pride following Cuba's victory meant those opposed to Castro's regime could be seen as traitors. However, the political centralisation and state control that followed was partly a response to genuine feelings of insecurity.

SOURCE A

According to US Senate reports, the CIA's second largest station in the world was based in Florida. At the height of the undercover American offensive [against Cuba] in the 1960s and 1970s ... the CIA controlled an airline and a flotilla of spy ships operating off the coast of Cuba, and ran up to 120,000 Cuban agents, who dealt in economic sabotage, assassination and terrorism, and economic and biological warfare ... Over 600 plans to assassinate Castro were devised. Nearly 3500 Cubans have died from terrorist acts, and more than 2000 are permanently disabled. As an ex-CIA agent has said, 'no country has suffered terrorism as long and consistently as Cuba'.

Balfour, S. 2009. *Castro*. London, UK. Longman. p. 190.

With the most serious oppositions defeated by the mid 1960s, Castro felt able to consider a more 'liberal' approach.

The Communist Party

As the 26 July Movement was mainly a guerrilla army, Castro needed the political experience provided by the communist PSP. The PSP had had long experience of party politics and of organising mass movements such as the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) and, unlike members of the 26 July Movement, it had prior governmental experience. Castro began negotiations with leading members of the PSP for the creation of a new Communist Party. He hoped to fuse this with the more radical wing of his movement, and so strengthen his control. In July 1961, the 26 July Movement, the DR and the PSP merged into the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations (ORI).

Initially, the old PSP came to dominate the ORI. Anibal Escalante, the ORI's Organisation Secretary, was particularly powerful – he gave preference to his old PSP comrades who were likely to be loyal to him. So, in March 1962, Castro denounced Escalante for 'sectarianism' and removed him from his post. A massive restructuring of the ORI then took place – almost half its membership was expelled, most from the PSP faction. Huge efforts were made to recruit new members. In 1963, the ORI became the United Party of the Socialist Revolution (PURS); on 3 October 1965, the PURS became the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC). Thus, by the end of 1965, revolutionary power had been consolidated and Castro had established his pre-eminence over all potential rivals.

Fact

The USA's offensive against Cuba, to undermine its government and society, was massive. Castro used these real US threats to increase his control, to bring about a one-party system and to mobilise the people to transform Cuba.

Fact

The organisation of party cells, selection of party members, and all promotions and dismissals had to be cleared through Escalante's office. Increasingly, party cells asserted their authority over administrators, and a preliminary system of political commissars was introduced in the armed forces. Much of this was similar to the methods used by Stalin as general secretary of the CPSU in the Soviet Union to establish a powerful position for himself during the 1920s (see [Chapter 2](#)).

Question

What were the main stages in Castro's formation of the PCC between 1961 and 1965?

However, this did not mean that Castro was in full control of the new party. From 1965 to 1968, his criticisms of the Soviet Union over peaceful co-existence and revolution in developing countries (see page 182) were opposed by some traditionalist communists in the PCC. In February 1968, their leaders were put on trial for factionalism. The result of this 'micro-faction' affair was even greater control for Castro. After 1968, the party posed no serious challenge to Castro.

Mass organisations

As well as the communists, there were several mass organisations through which opposition could be expressed. In particular, Castro made early interventions to influence the trade union movement and university students, in favour of unity between communist delegates and anti-communists within his movement.

Federation of University Students

On 18 October 1959, the election for president of the students' union, the Federation of University Students (FEU), was between Rolando Cubelas (the 'Unity' candidate, backed by the PSP) and Pedro Boitel, the 26 July Movement's candidate. After Castro intervened, the election was won by Cubelas, who later aligned the FEU closer to 'Marxism-Leninism'.

The trade unions

In November 1959, the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) held its 10th Congress to elect a new leadership. The 26 July Movement's slate seemed certain to win a clear majority, but Castro pushed for 'unity' with the communists.

However, in 1970, opposition emerged from the trade unions and the workers – shown by absenteeism and poor productivity. On 26 July 1970, in a long speech to a massive crowd, Castro admitted his mistakes and argued for more democratic methods of consultation at grassroots level, and greater delegation of powers from the centre. Up until this point, Castro accepted, the government had tended to treat workers as a production army.

What measures were taken after 1975 to further consolidate Castro's power?

By the end of 1975, Cuba had a well-established and well-organised communist system. The mid 1970s saw Castro attempt to consolidate his rule by changes to the system of popular representation. This was done in 1976, via a new constitution, which introduced a system of *Poder Popular* (see page 184).

Rectification campaign, 1986–87

The changes to government and party structure in the early 1970s meant Castro no longer had unlimited authority. However, he remained as head of the Communist Party and of the armed forces; and, on 2 December 1976, he replaced Osvaldo Dorticós as president. In the mid 1980s, Castro was able to use these positions and his personal authority to impose his will on domestic economic policy.

At the Third Congress of the PCC, Castro had launched a new campaign – the 'Rectification of errors and negative trends'. While this was mainly connected to economic issues (see Unit 4), it also became a drive against corruption and those who Castro felt were opposed to what he saw as Cuba's economic needs.

In the mid 1970s, the System of Direction and Planning of the Economy (SDPE) had been set up to introduce decentralisation of planning and management, and to replace moral with material incentives to encourage greater productivity. In 1985, a plan was drawn up, in line with these principles, by the Central Planning Board (*Juceplan*). The board's director was Humberto Pérez, a Moscow-trained economist. However, Castro decided that this system and the new plan failed to take account of the new economic crisis in Cuba. So Pérez was removed from his post and from the politburo (the most important committee in the Communist Party). Castro then by-passed *Juceplan* by setting up a new committee to draw up a revised plan, which attempted to introduce some increased centralisation.

During 1986 and 1987, Castro widened his campaign, making a series of speeches in which he admitted 'errors', criticised the economic liberalisation of the 1970s and attacked signs of corruption. In particular, he singled out bureaucrats and technocrats, and those who had enriched themselves under the 1970s' market mechanisms that were introduced into the Cuban economy on the advice of the USSR. In large part, this campaign was a response to growing dissatisfaction amongst workers who were angry about increasing shortages and income differentials. Castro put himself at the head of this popular discontent as their self-appointed spokesperson, thus increasing his personal prestige.

The Ochoa Affair, 1989

In June 1989, Cuba experienced its most serious internal opposition crisis since 1959. Four senior military and intelligence figures – including General **Arnaldo Ochoa** – and several others were arrested on charges of corruption and drug smuggling. They were tried by military tribunals. Four, including Ochoa, were condemned to death and executed on 13 July; others received prison sentences ranging from 20 to 30 years. There is speculation that Ochoa and the others, who favoured Gorbachev-style reforms, were planning a coup. The crisis caused serious divisions in Cuba. However, the economic crisis of the Special Period that soon followed (see pages 202–04) brought about a new sense of unity.

Fidel Castro and Mikhail Gorbachev embrace during an official visit by the Soviet premier to Cuba in 1989



Arnaldo Ochoa (1930–89)

Ochoa was in charge of the Cuban troops sent to Angola to fight against South African forces in 1988. The Cuban troops won an impressive victory at Cuito Cuanavale on 14 February 1988. This helped force South Africa out of Angola and Namibia, contributing to the collapse of apartheid in South Africa. Two years later, Nelson Mandela was released from prison and, in July 1991, he visited Cuba to thank the country for its role in the struggle against apartheid. Ochoa had, as a result, become something of a hero.

Question

What were the main reasons for the Ochoa Affair in 1989?

Fact

Gorbachev visited Cuba in April 1989. He was associated with three reforms – *perestroika*, *glasnost* and *demokratizatsiya*. He introduced these in the Soviet Union after 1985, and encouraged their adoption by the Eastern European regimes. Castro associated these policies with the fall of these regimes in the period 1989–91.

Aldana and the 1992 purge

However, during the ‘Special Period in Time of Peace’ (see pages 202–04), announced by Castro at the end of 1990, another reformist tendency emerged in the PCC and the Young Communist Party, where several members admired Gorbachev’s policies. This opposition was led by Carlos Aldana, and called for some limited political pluralism.

The collapse of the regimes of Eastern Europe and then the Soviet Union in the period 1989–91 made Castro decide to move against this opposition, as well as other groups of reformists. In 1991, with the Soviet Union no longer a reliable ally against the USA, Castro created Rapid Response Brigades of volunteers to act against potential ‘fifth columnists’. These brigades often harassed oppositionist groups demanding political reform and the various organisations calling for human rights. In September 1992, Aldana was sacked from his party; and Castro, using his personal authority, began a purge of other reformists from the party.

To help diffuse this opposition, amendments to the constitution were made in 1992 to make *Poder Popular* more of a reality. Despite the post-1991 economic suffering, these reforms were relatively successful, and Castro’s regime did not collapse like the Soviet bloc states in Europe, as some had speculated would happen. In part, this was because most Cubans saw the revolution as *their* revolution – whatever its failings, it had also had real successes.

Fact

Set up in 1988, the CEA was mainly composed of academics, most of whom belonged to the PCC. By 1990, they had begun to suggest reform of Cuba’s internal political system. After Castro made moves against them in 1996, some went into exile to continue their opposition.

US actions, 1992–96

The idea of a revolutionary Cuba under siege is part of the mythology of the revolution, and had led to mass mobilisations, revolutionary political offensives and popular militarisation. In the 1990s, moves against potential opponents were also a response – once again – to increased threats from the USA. The Torricelli Act of 1992 and the Helm-Burton Act of 1996, respectively, tightened US economic sanctions against Cuba and sought actively to ‘assist’ in the creation of the USA’s form of democracy in Cuba. In March 1996, Castro acted against academics in the Centre for the Study of America (CEA). They did not lose their jobs, but they were moved to different posts.

‘Re-moralisation’ and the Varela Project

By 1996, most of the economic measures of the Special Period had been stopped (see page 203); then, in 2003, Castro decided on a partial return to anti-market centralisation. This also involved the ‘re-moralisation’ of economic life. Associated with this were further moves against potential opponents, dissidents and human rights activists. The minister for economics and planning and the minister of finance, both of whom were closely connected to the liberalisation policies under the Special Period during 1993–96, were replaced by ministers favouring centralised political control of the economy and society.

After the 2000 US presidential election, the USA stepped up its attempts to interfere in Cuba’s internal politics and President George W. Bush included Cuba in his new ‘axis of evil’. This led to renewed fears of an imminent US invasion. Castro then became concerned about the activities of members of the Varela Project, who were campaigning for a law of democratic reform and more private enterprise. Castro’s government organised a counter-petition to amend the constitution to make the socialist nature of the Cuban constitution

Fact

The Varela Project was named after Felix Varela, a 19th-century advocate for Cuban independence, and was associated with the Catholic Church. Its leader was Osvaldo Payá, who had been involved in the Christian Liberation Group. Its members tried to use the clause in the Cuban constitution that said a new law could be proposed if a petition with 10,000 signatures was presented to the National Assembly. They managed to get 11,000 signatures, and presented it during a visit by ex-US president Jimmy Carter, who supported them.

'irrevocable'. This counter-petition included 8 million signatures – about 99% of the electorate. At the same time, the Cuban authorities began to harass members of the Varela Project. On 15 March 2003, 75 members were arrested and many received long prison sentences.

Mass organisations

As well as with repression, Castro has tried to consolidate his regime by increasing the participation of citizens in a range of mass organisations. Since 1976, such organisations and methods have been used and adapted to make *Poder Popular* more of a reality, and so integrate the population of Cuba with the regime.

Unions

The main mass organisation is the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), which unites all 19 unions and organises national congresses for workers to discuss issues. These are preceded by months of meetings of workers' assemblies at local level. Castro and other leaders participate at times, to answer questions and to explain important issues. According to Saney, the workers' assemblies have considerable input and say in their workplaces and in major national political decisions. By law, workers meet twice a year in their workplaces to discuss their company's economic plans. They can reject management proposals, decide production norms and rates, and any new proposals are subject to ratification. Though they work closely with the PCC, they are independent of the government, which must consult the unions on all labour matters.

PCC

The PCC attempts to integrate citizens by 'promoting the development of a socialist consciousness and society' by trying to persuade people to put society's needs above those of the individual. While Hobart Spalding and others see the influence of the PCC as suffocating, according to Peter Roman the party does not meddle in the operation of people's power. Though it does 'screen' those selected as candidates, Carolee Bengelsdorf argues that Cuban citizens exercise significant political sovereignty.

About 1.5 million Cubans (15% of the population) belong to the PCC and its youth body, the Union of Young Communists (UJC). Massive nationwide discussions – open to both party and non-party people – take place before the party congresses.

What other methods did Castro use to consolidate his power?

Castro has also tried to maintain his revolution in other ways.

Committees for the Defence of the Revolution

With control over the FEU and the CTC established by 1960, the leadership created a militia with tens of thousands of members to build support, intimidate internal opponents and defend Cuba against external enemies. Particularly important were the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs), established in September 1960 primarily for civil defence. CDRs were set up in every city district, in each large building, factory or workplace.

Question

What was the Varela Project?

Fact

In 1994, the CTC rejected plans to tax workers' wages; in 1995, they rejected proposed alterations to social security, which were sent back for amendment.

Fact

In later years, CDRs became involved in recycling drives, cultural and educational activities, and health campaigns (e.g. vaccination and blood donation). Though they are grassroots organisations, they do not necessarily function effectively as a way for people to express their views.

In the early days of Castro's regime, they involved the people in identifying enemies of the revolution and repressing counter-revolutionary opinions and activities (e.g. sabotage and terrorism). They are the largest of all the mass organisations, with a membership of over 7 million – helping many people identify with the revolution.

Emigration and exile

From the mid 1960s, waves of Cuban emigrants went into exile in the USA. The first wave were supporters of Batista, and especially those who had tortured or killed his opponents. Between 1959 and 1961, at least 40,000 emigrants left Cuba. The next wave of emigrants were disillusioned middle-class liberals, as well as members of the business and professional élites who opposed Castro's increasing moves towards communism after 1961. In the period 1961–62 alone, at least 150,000 left.

Question

How did the large numbers of Cuban emigrants help Castro to consolidate his regime?

Since then, there have been several major emigrations – the Camarioca Exodus in 1965, the Mariel Boatlift in 1980 and the Malecón Exodus in 1994. According to Leslie Bethell, while the loss of professional and technical skills had a negative impact on Cuba's development, the 'exporting' of potential leaders of opposition or counter-revolution helped Castro establish political centralisation and control.

Castroism

Castroism, or *Fidelismo* – the idea that the Cuban Revolution is largely based on the teachings and principles of Fidel Castro – has not resulted in an obvious cult of personality, as happened for instance in the Soviet Union under Stalin or in China under Mao. In Cuba itself, there are not many posters depicting Castro – although Che's image is found almost everywhere.

Posters on a wall in a street in Havana. Che Guevara is depicted in the top-left poster



Castro certainly had great charisma – even liberals who went into exile acknowledged this – and the ability to speak well to crowds, sometimes for 12 hours at a time! This was apparent when, before 1959, he broadcast on *Radio Rebelde*. Since 1959, Castro has made good use of television to explain his aims and policies.

Question

Who do you think is depicted in the top-right poster?

Despite difficulties, many still had faith in him; as long as he was in charge, they did not seem to mind what he did – even when he moved towards Marxism. Castro's legitimacy was also based on his identification with the heroic myths of Cuban patriotism – and on his personal ethics: he has not used his position to amass a private fortune. His prestige was strengthened by the development of *Poder Popular* from the mid 1970s. Yet Castro appears not to have wanted any adulation. His general style was much milder and warmer than other rulers of one-party states; and his good relationship with the public meant ordinary people felt able to approach him and speak of their problems and dissatisfactions.

On 18 February 2008, after almost two years of illness, Fidel Castro announced his decision to stand down as president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. His brother Raúl, the acting head of state, took over.

Although he is no longer directly in charge, Fidel still exerts influence; despite five decades of US economic and military actions against himself and his Cuban Revolution, he managed to turn Cuba into one of the best-educated and healthiest societies in the world.



Raúl Castro, acting president of Cuba, looks at the empty chair of Fidel Castro during a session of Cuba's National Assembly in December 2006; Fidel finally resigned in February 2008, and Raúl took over as president

End of unit activities

- 1 In pairs, carry out further research on the different opposition groups that emerged in Cuba after 1959 – both within the 26 July Movement and the Communist Party, and amongst intellectuals and artists. Then try to establish the reasons for their lack of success. You can then present your findings in the form of two charts – one to show how the different groups were formed and what they did, and another to show how and why they were defeated.
- 2 Find out more about the different reasons why so many Cubans emigrated to the USA. Were they mainly political or economic reasons? Why do you think Castro usually tolerated this emigration?
- 3 Carry out an investigation to explain why Castro's popularity remained so high among so many Cubans, right up to – and beyond – his resignation in 2008, despite Cuba's many political and economic problems.

Historical debate

There is considerable debate amongst historians about the support for/opposition to Castro's policies and the regime he created. Some, like Bethell, are negative, while others, such as Saney, present a much more optimistic picture. Which 'side' do you think presents the most realistic assessment?

Activity

Using the information in the units of this book that you have already read, and any other materials you have access to, write a couple of paragraphs to explain how the USA's actions against Cuba made it easier for Castro to consolidate his power.

Question

As you work through the next unit, try to analyse the relative importance of Fidel Castro's various economic and social policies in helping to maintain his power from 1959 to 2008. Were these more or less important than repressive measures?



Theory of knowledge

History and art

Most people would agree that artists should be free to express their views and thoughts. Yet many governments – especially those in one-party states – have tried to confine art to those works that support their political and economic system. Is it possible to make a case for Castro's assertion in 1961 that creative freedom could be allowed 'within the revolution', but not 'against the revolution'; or his appeal in 1971 that art should be a 'weapon of the revolution'?