Alpha 66's leader clasped my arm and said, "Tell your readers every day young Americans come here and ask to fight for us. Well, we don't want your sons. There are enough Cubanos ready to join us. All we ask is that we be let alone to fight Castro."

...Here is an inside look at daring Florida-based guerrillas who have pledged their lives to making Cuba a democracy again.

The small group, armed with M-16's and submachine guns, crouched behind a sand dune until their joints ached. Dampness from the waters of Bahia Baracca chilled them. It must have chilled that damn sentry, too—they could hear him coughing in the still night.

Why the devil didn't he move off? He was a Cuban, and these guerrilla fighters didn't want to kill a fellow Cuban, even if he was one of Fidel Castro's soldiers. But time was running out. Almost midnight, September 10, 1970. Off shore circled a yacht loaded with arms and supplies to give Fidel more trouble than...
Anti-Castro Cubans train in Florida for clandestine operation in homeland. U.S. authorities have harassed freedom fighters.

"FREE CUBA NOW"
continued

just another poor crop of sugar cane. Move on, sentry... move on and live. But the slight, stooped sentry seemed rooted to the sand. Perhaps he was too frightened to leave the open beach for the sinister shadows of the cove; young and inexperienced, he couldn't know that if invaders were to land safely it would have to be right where he stood—and in desperation they would kill to protect themselves.

If there were no signal by midnight from the anti-Castro fighters ashore, the munitions boat would head back to its Florida base.

Col. Vincente Mendez whispered to himself—"Young friend save us the pain of killing a countryman."

But the youth only shuffled nervously, a fragile figure against the starlit sand. A guerrilla sergeant prodded a rifleman beside him. The latter moved along the shadows of the dune. Then, shoeless, he silently sprinted the distance between his cover and the sentry. The young man turned... too late. The stock of the M-16 already was arching down on him. It smashed his skull, and he reeled back, arms and legs flaying in rubbery reaction.

The rifleman knelt beside him and touched his throat lightly for a trace of pulse. His fellow guerrillas were rushing toward him. He looked up at them blankly, and his voice cracked. "My God, I have killed him."

Mendez pulled him to his feet. "He had to die. We must get on with it."

A guerrilla pulled a red-filtered flashlight from his bush jacket and flashed a sign toward the horizon. Pulses of light returned, and soon the guerrillas heard two powerful marine engines cough to life, then throttle down to a low hum as the vessel approached the beach.

The Estrellita hove into sight about 100 yards off-shore and cut back to idle. By this time, the guerrillas were manning three assault boats. They tied to the Estrellita's side and, wordlessly, the men began taking on boxes and casks from the bigger boat. Last off the Estrellita were 14 volunteers, Cuban refugees returning to fight Castro after exile in Miami.

Col. Mena-Ruiz led recent landings.

The Estrellita moved off. The assault boats were beached, and the guerrillas vanished into the still tropical night. The odds seem formidable, but the Castro soldiers are confident they have frightened the guerrillas off... Shortly before midnight, the stillness...
The vehicle is broken by a sharp clank. A soldier's sleepy voice calls, "Something has hit the tank."


They join with the infantry squad in seeking cover, but the gunners rake the beach—those still able to run. They leave behind weapons and sleeping bags.

The beach is clear. Colonel Mena-Ruiz flashes a signal. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.

On September 23, 1970, Guido Garcia Inclán, official spokesman for Radio Progresso in Havana, released the communist version of the action at Baracoa. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita disgorges supplies—and 15 more men for the anti-Castro force.

This time the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.

On September 23, 1970, Guido Garcia Inclán, official spokesman for Radio Progresso in Havana, released the communist version of the action at Baracoa. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita disgorges supplies—and 15 more men for the anti-Castro force.

This time the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.

On September 23, 1970, Guido Garcia Inclán, official spokesman for Radio Progresso in Havana, released the communist version of the action at Baracoa. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita disgorges supplies—and 15 more men for the anti-Castro force.

This time the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.

On September 23, 1970, Guido Garcia Inclán, official spokesman for Radio Progresso in Havana, released the communist version of the action at Baracoa. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita disgorges supplies—and 15 more men for the anti-Castro force.

This time the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.

On September 23, 1970, Guido Garcia Inclán, official spokesman for Radio Progresso in Havana, released the communist version of the action at Baracoa. For the second time in a few days, the Estrellita disgorges supplies—and 15 more men for the anti-Castro force.

This time the Estrellita takes aboard a passenger. He is known as Manuél and had landed three days before. He takes back to Miami a packet of letters and a case of choice Cuban cigars. The guerrillas again vanish into the Sierra Maestra. But this time they have even more recruits. Some of Castro's soldiers have returned to join them in fighting the Red government in Havana.
I answered without hesitation to Alpha 66.

"The soldier," he answered.

Manuelo, "I have meager needs and turn to other racoas for cigars. "There is the proof I was there," he said.

"Don't forget to leave your keys, Julio." I took them from him.

"We'll show you in a minute, Mr. Sargent. "

Wild Bill Morgan, ex-Marine and ex-Paratrooper, was a mercenary for Fidel Castro. He married a Cuban national and shortly after the revolution ended was denounced by an associate of Raul Castro and sentenced to death. His last request was that he be permitted to command his own firing squad. He became a hero of the counterrevolution. This brought up a point I had been wondering about: I put the question to Sargent. "Is there any truth to Castro's claim that you people are employing mercenaries?"

"No mercenaries!" I answered decisively. "Do you remember the Yangui incident? He killed more innocent Cubans than his entire unit killed Batistianos! No mercenaries for us!"

The weapons were transferred to another auto and transported to a cache in a residential section of Coral Gables.

Next we visited the Estrellita moored in the Miami River near the yacht basin.

"U.S. Customs seized her shortly after we returned from the September 14 mission." a freedom fighter explained. "That makes a total of 10 ships seized, valued at $250,000. Your government makes our revolution a costly one!"

We returned once more to headquarters and I was introduced to "Rosario." A lean, dour man, he scrutinized me with open suspicion.

Manuelo talked rapidly to him in Spanish and I caught a few phrases: "Korea... specialist... flame warfare... William Morgan."

When the late Bill Morgan's name was mentioned, Rosario's suspicion vanished. "You knew Bill Morgan?" he asked me.

"Yes." I told him I had been in the Sierra Maestra. Chiswah! What a soldato he was. I cried for three days when Fidel had him shot. Then I caught a fishing boat for Florida."

Wild Bill Morgan, ex-Marine and ex-Paratrooper, was a mercenary for Fidel Castro. He married a Cuban national and shortly after the revolution ended was denounced by an associate of Raul Castro and sentenced to death. His last request was that he be permitted to command his own firing squad. He became a hero of the counterrevolution. This brought up a point I had been wondering about: I put the question to Sargent. "Is there any truth to Castro's claim that you people are employing mercenaries?"

"No mercenaries!" I answered decisively. "Do you remember the Yangui incident? He killed more innocent Cubans than his entire unit killed Batistianos! No mercenaries for us!"

We talked through the night, interrupted occasionally by freedom fighters arriving and leaving on their mysterious errands. The saga of Alpha 66 unfolded:

Andres Nazario Sargent has the look of a scholar. There is nothing in his appearance that even mildly suggests the soldier, yet most of his 60 years has been spent fighting tyranny on the island of Cuba.

When Fulgencio Batista seized control of the Cuban government, Senor Sargent was director of the Tobacco Growers Association in Camaguey Province. He was worth several million pesos and a power in local politics.

Sargent watched the new dictator with jaundiced eye. The cells at Los Cabanazos began to fill with political prisoners waiting for the tender mercies of Roland Masferrer, Batista's personal instrument of torture. Senor Sargent decided things had gone far enough. He voiced open support for the young attorney Fidel Castro, who was organizing the students into a revolutionary group.

Inevitably, he was forced to flee to the United States. But he returned in 1957 to get into the Sierra Maestra and then into the Escambray where Camilo Cienfuegos gave him command of the Second Front.

Commandante Sargent's column advanced so rapidly in the last days of the revolution that they were ordered to wait in the suburbs of Havana and permit the Santa Clara column led by Che Guevara to catch up and pass through.

Once more Sargent watched a dictator seize control. Businessmen were neutralized. Russian and Chinese "advisers" began to swarm onto the island. Fidel Castro went to Cuba to Campo Columbo to supervise the mass executions.

Sargent denounced the new regime and was forced once more to flee or face the pared y patio—the wall in the courtyard.

There was a period of inactivity, for Sargent could not align himself either with the Batistianos or the followers of deposed President Carlos Prio Socarras. Then a ray of hope appeared.

A CIA agent recruited Sargent for the Bay of Pigs operation. He went happy to Guatemala and on April 14, 1961, led a company ashore on Cuba's coast.

Nine hours later, he was pulled aboard a U.S. destroyer battered, bloody and in shock. He sat alone refusing food, coffee or conversation offered by solicitous U.S. sailors.

"How could this thing have happened?" he wondered. Nothing materialized. None of the promises were kept. No air support. No fire support. The second amphibious force was not landed. The parachute drop was not affected. What happened?

Sargent's head dropped onto his knees and he wept.

Andre Nazario Sargent suddenly raised his head. He shuddered and stood erect. He called to a nearby sailor: "Hola Sopa, por favor?"

The seaman brought him a bowl of soup and watched him drink it down. The Cuban asked for and was given another bowl. He drank it also. He was going to need all his strength in the days ahead. The Bay of Pigs had been a humiliating defeat—but Andres Nazario Sargent was ready to fight again.

The next morning a Cuban businessman in Miami looked aghast at the
filthy, blood splattered spectre that walked into his office.

"Who are you?"

"I am Andres Montes and I have just come back from the Bay of Pigs."

"Mother of God! What do you want of me, sensor?"

"Money and support to free Cuba."

"What do you wish?"

And for an explained.

By Christmas day of 1961, he had 65 others pledged as fanatically as he was to freedom for their homeland. They met in Puerto Rico, and formed Alpha 66, the first letter of the Greek alphabet, 66 symbolizing the number in the original organization.

One of their number was Lazaro Escambray Alfara. He was a Mestizo, that mixture of Spanish, Indian and Negro peculiar to the Caribbean. Lazaro stood during the last meeting.

"Exactly what do you think we can do?"

"Why, I think we are all agreed. We must raise money and recruit men to carry out commando raids on Cuban soil."

"But that will accomplish nothing."

All eyes turned to the huge, dark Mestizo.

"Defeatist!" Someone cried.

"No! I am a realist!" Lazaro retorted. "What you propose is terroristic, something not worth our efforts. What we need is a leader in Cuba to coordinate and recruit our people there. Otherwise there will just be more killing of Cubans by Cubans."

"Who could be such a leader?" someone asked.

"Who would do such a thing?"

"What army are you with?"

"I suppose we are your prisoners."

Lazaro looked searchingly at the faces around him. "Let me ask you to explain this to everyone here sworn to their task?"

Sixty-five voices affirmed their loyalty.

The dusky giant hesitated, then spoke again. "All right. I will be the militant in Cuba. You will hear from me shortly."

He turned and walked from the room. The others stared after him in silence. "I wonder about Lazaro, then half forgot him. There was a..."

The Cubanos looked back to sea and watched the growing pile of M-16 rifles and 9-mm pistols, grenades, ammo, prisoners.

"I suppose we are your prisoners..."

"Who are you, hombre?"

"Col. Vicente Mendez, old one. And I have come home! To stay!"

Fifty-three men began leaving the boat to stand behind Mendez.

"None of us understand this," Medina told MAN'S. "Castro sends Che Guevara to Bolivia and openly brags our armed, trained guerrilla fighters on the island... but we are first, last and always Cubanos. Cuba is our home. We only want to be left alone to fight Castro and the communists."

And they are doing it relentlessly! Since 1964, Alpha 66 has landed some 300 armed, trained guerrilla fighters on the island.

H e turned to the men who were already unloading ammunition and explosives. "Andele, andele!"

They worked faster, knowing time was precious. The ever present Chinese government informed...watched from the edge of the growing crowd. He slipped to a telephone and dialed the nearest military garrison.

"Americanico guerrillas! Bahia Bara-
In 1961 he fled to the U.S. and has been a member of Alpha 66 since its inception.

El Negro, the mysterious Lazaro, Escambra Alfara, is also a hell of a soldier. His guerrilla tactics are excellent. He is waging a classic clandestine war against Fidel Castro, both political and psychological.

His forces hit where it hurts the most; where it will damage the already shaky economy. An example is the attack on the Patrice Lumumba tanning factory where they burned a warehouse containing $1,000,000 worth of leather goods meant for export to Russia. Or imagine if you will the consternation of the Chinese military when three teams of their "advisers" at Tamara were killed to the last man. Cuban soldiers are killed only when absolutely necessary.

Their support is also excellent, if what I saw at the Miami office of Alpha 66 can be considered a criterion. In spite of harassment by U.S. government agencies, they always manage to raise funds and purchase arms, equipment and boats.

"We have to use boats," Manu elo told me. "The Soviet and Chinese radar on Cuba keeps us from using planes like Fidel did. It's a shame we have to lose so many of them, but we always manage to get another when we need it."

The taciturn Rosario spoke up with a rare smile, "Tell him why we went in September, Manu elo."

"Si. This is very funny. You remember when President Nixon called for a crash program to stop airplane hijackings? Well, we thought American surveillance on Alpha 66 would be relaxed. We were right. So we took Col. Mena-Ruiz to Cuba without a hitch." He shrugged philosophically, "But they were sure waiting when we got back. Whew!"

Sargent broke in, "Don't misunderstand him. Your government agents are all courteous and apologetic. They are only doing their jobs."

"That is very charitably of you, senor."

"Nada. It is true."

As I started to leave Alpha 66, Sargent stopped me. He gave me the Cuban embrazo and told me, "Mi casa su casa." My house is your house. The most friendly and courteous gesture a Latino can make—especially to an Anglo.

He held my arms tightly and looked into my eyes, "And Mr. Writer—tell your people something for Alpha 66. We love America, but we must go back home. Every day young Americans come here and ask to fight for us. Well, we don't want your sons. There are enough Cubanos ready to join us. And there's the need for money, we can raise it among ourselves. All we ask is to be left alone to fight Castro. It may take six months or it may take six years. But we are going back and form a democratic government in Cuba. Comprende?"

I understood.

Author's Note: Maria Perez is 23 years of age. Her family fled Castro's Cuba when she was 15. She went to work for Alpha 66 the day she arrived in Miami and has been at the office every day for nine years. My heartfelt thanks to her for her painstakingly accurate translation of documents and conversations during this writer's interviews.

---

ALPHA 66 GUERRILLA LEADERS ARE FIGHTING INSIDE CUBA AGAINST THE SOVIET PUPPET FIDEL CASTRO

WHY? TO HELP THE CUBAN PEOPLE IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM
READ SOME OF THE EVIDENCE:

CUBAN YOUTHS REFUSE COMMUNIST INDOCTRINATION:

Official spokesman Guido García Inclán, Radio Progreso, Oct. 27, 1969:

"The youth refer to our Central Park as Miami. Why? Because they want to be in Miami. That is their environment, so let them go there. It is time we cleaned house. Youths wear uniforms, but they refuse to go to school..."

Guido García Inclán, Radio Progreso, Sept. 2, 1970:

"Dissension, failure to get to work on time, difficulties raised by them when they are of military age. Doing things they should not be doing during class hours... Youths always have a derisive joke to make against our revolution... and when they have to work, they produce their membership cards in the C.D.E.

Fidel Castro, January 5, 1969:

"There are 400,000 children and young persons between the ages of 6 and 16. There are 1,702,000 children enrolled in school, but the other 400,000 are not. What are they doing? What are their occupations? What does this absenteeism mean for the country?"

Armando Hart, Secretary of Organization, Cuban Communist Party, Oct. 16, 1970:

"There are 80,000 youths in Oriente Province between the ages of 13 and 16 who are neither studying or working... Oriente Province should be declared to be in a state of educational alarm..."

CUBA'S WORKERS OPPOSE CASTRO'S COMMUNIST REGIME:

Labor Minister, Captain Jorge Risquet, August 7, 1970:

"Absenteeism, lack of discipline, negligence, disrespect for the revolution, poor use of the workday and other infractions... are growing problems against which a multi-faceted battle must be waged..."

Luis Hurtado, Superintendent of Train Repair, Camagüey Province, Nov. 1, 1970:

"Absenteeism has prevented us from complying with the work quota for this repair shop. It is necessary and urgent that this terrible situation be liquidated..."

Angel Alfonso, transportation chief, Matanzas Province, Feb. 12, 1970:

"At the Cuba sugar mill the discipline of the comrades has broken down. The problems are caused mainly by poor operational maintenance. Discipline is lax..."

Capt. Jorge Risquet, Minister of Labor, Aug. 6, 1970:

"The productivity of the country's 2 million workers is low. We have to say that there are many shirkers, while the lack of discipline and high rate of absenteeism pose a serious problem.

THE CUBAN PEOPLE SABOTAGE CUBA'S COMMUNIST ECONOMY

Fidel Castro, Sept. 18, 1968:

"On April 6, counterrevolutionaries attempted to burn the former Rancho Club in Guantanamo where a great quantity of coffee was stored... on May 1, they burned the Juan Manuel Marquez sugar warehouse containing 70,000 sacks of sugar... on May 5, incendiari sm of the Patrice Lumumba tanning factory resulted in the loss of more than $1 million... on September 7, a warehouse in Camagüey containing dry goods was burned to the ground with losses of an estimated $1.5 million..."

Fidel Castro, March 13, 1969:

"A day will come for those incapable of adapting to our life, those who are incorrigible and unrehabilitated... We may have to face the need to eliminate them radically..."

Fidel Castro, Dec. 22, 1969:

"From now on we are going to murder, without the least compunction, whoever tries to sabotage our sugar harvest..."

CASTRO OFFICIALS AND OTHERS DEFECT FROM REGIME

Ismael Suárez de la Paz, former 26 of July chief, deserted in July, 1970:

"I don't believe the revolution is any solution for Cuba... I see no solution, and certainly not with the present leadership... The country will demand a change... A solution will have to come from somewhere..."

Orlando Castro Hidalgo, former member of General Directorate of Intelligence. Defected in Paris, March, 1969:

"I defected from my important position in Paris because by supporting the Cuban regime meant prolonged treason against my country. Cuba is a Soviet colony..."

John Clytus, Negro, was in Cuba from 1964-67:

"If you are a puppet or a yes-man for the Communist regime you can expect favors from them and you can expect to have the essential things to exist. But if you are not, a puppet, you can find yourself in economic trouble because you won't be able to find a job and you will never find a place to stay..."

"Parents are afraid to talk to their children freely for it may be reported as being anti-revolutionary. Anyone who says that the Cuban revolution is taking place..."
ALPHA-66 IS AN INDEPENDENT, DEMOCRATIC, ORGANIZATION WHICH DECLARES ITS RIGHT TO SUPPORT THE CUBAN PEOPLES' STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY. WE ARE NOT CONNECTED IN ANY WAY WITH ANY GOVERNMENT OR FOREIGN ORGANIZATION.