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SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST OR MARX

Religion in Revolutionary Cuba

Unlike churches in the rest of Latin America, those in Cuba did not embark at the outset of the 1960s on a period of liberalization and innovation in theology, pastoral forms, lay participation and political strategies. Rather, the coming to power in 1959 of a revolutionary government and the initiation of substantial societal restructuring reinforced conservatism within the churches. Strong challenges to the legitimacy of the government by the churches from 1959 through 1961 were not effective due largely to institutional limitations and their identification as bulwarks of prerevolutionary structures. Hence, in spite of a marked increase in participation and contributions, the churches' counterrevolutionary stance had limited impact. Contributing to this was the exodus of many religious activists to the United States and Spain, and a turning in upon themselves by the churches which came to serve as refuges from change. During a period of religious ferment in the rest of Latin America, the Cuban churches entered a period of stasis from which they only began emerging in the late 1960s, challenged by the consolidation of the revolution and by international developments.

The crisis which the Cuban churches underwent was the result primarily of institutional and theological conservatism which sprang largely from the nature of their own and Cuba's historical development. While the churches were weak, Christianity was a pervasive cultural presence which encouraged negative reactions to the introduction of socialism. This helps explain why resistance to the revolution based on religious motives was greater than the low levels of participation in church services and activities in prerevolutionary Cuba would suggest.

After a period of retreat and quiescence from 1963 to 1968, the Catholic and Protestant churches began exploring the possibilities of rap-

prochement with the government and experimentation with new theological definitions and pastoral programs better adapted to the reality of Christians living in a socialist society. This process has proceeded slowly and with more caution than comparable activities in other areas of Latin America, partly the result of the fact that, rather than having the opportunity to react and adapt gradually to rapid change, the Cuban churches were swept up in a period of turbulence in which many of their basic premises were directly challenged. Hence, it was only in the early 1970s that Cuban churchpeople really began exploring the implications of such developments as liberation theology, increased lay participation in ecclesiastical decision-making, and other innovations. To a considerable extent, the Cuban revolution, rather than transforming the Cuban churches, reinforced traditional policies and behavior, making the churches today less open and innovative than those in most other Latin American countries.

In order to better understand the distinct nature of the Cuban churches as compared to those in other Latin American countries, this essay will analyze religious affiliation, practice, and attitudes in Cuba through an examination of the evolution of the protestant and Catholic churches principally since 1959. Institutionalized rather than Afro-Cuban religion (*santería*) will be emphasized, as the former appears to have been more directly affected by the revolution, and more empirical studies have been undertaken concerning it. Due to the absence of survey data regarding Cuban Judaism, it will not be included. The data available consists of some dozen studies dating from 1940 to the present dealing with both national and subnational samples (Cepeda, 1966; Davis, 1942; de la Huerta Aguiar, 1960; Echevarría Salvat, 1971; El Equipo Diocesano de Jóvenes de Camagüey, 1967; Noguiera Rivero, 1962; Rochon, 1967; Universidad Central "Marta Abreu" de las Villas, 1959; Torroella, 1963). These include the results of a survey of some forty Cuban church leaders, both clerical and lay, resident in Cuba, Europe, and the United States, whom I interviewed in 1973, 1974, and 1976. The interviews were in-depth explorations of both prerevolutionary and postrevolutionary conditions designed to elicit not only individual attitudes, but also evaluations of general trends within institutions.¹ Since the surveys are not generally fully comparable, the data available are suggestive rather than definitive and are most revealing in the context of other sources. In addition, given the high degree of ideological permeation of both Catholic and Protestant belief systems, no attempt has been made to isolate religious from

ideological factors. Indeed, the presence or absence of change in Cuban religious attitudes is more comprehensible if one regards them in the context of ideological developments.

I. Prerevolutionary Background

It is widely held that religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular were relatively weak in prerevolutionary Cuba (Aguilar, 1974: 21-22; Davis, 1942: 49; Dewart, 1963: 93-99; Nelson, 1970: 268; Houtart and Rousseau, 1971: 113-114; and Ruiz, 1968: 162). This opinion is based primarily on the nominal nature of many Cubans' commitment to Catholicism, the numerical weakness of Protestants and Jews, and the noninstitutional nature of the Afro-Cuban sects. Other factors include the urban concentration of Catholic and Protestant personnel and institutions and their consequent scarcity in rural areas, emphasis on institution-building and elite education rather than pastoral duties, higher percentage of female over male formal participation, limited number of Cuban vocations, and the image of the churches as foreign institutions—the Catholic Church being tied to Spain and the Protestant churches to the United States.

While all this is true, certain cautions should be kept in mind. Although throughout Latin America the frequency of attendance at services traditionally has been low and the institutional churches often the object of considerable hostility, Christianity exerts a predominant influence which in moments of crisis can result in a reassertion of loyalty to the churches. The Cuban case is an apt demonstration of this, for while the vast majority of Catholics in the prerevolutionary period rarely practiced their religion according to standard indicators, many Cubans rejected the revolution, in part, because of the strong animosity toward Marxism which socialization in a predominantly Christian society encouraged. The appearance of weakness on the part of the Catholic Church was stimulated, in part, by the fact that Cuba was the object of the most intense proselytizing efforts by U.S. Protestants in all Latin America. In addition, the importation of substantial numbers of Africans as slaves up through the mid-nineteenth century resulted in the proliferation of spiritist beliefs which became mingled with Christian ones. The presence of Protestant, Jewish, and Afro-Cuban religions not only provided competition for the Catholic Church, but also gave Cuba perhaps the most diverse religious scene in all Latin

America, particularly in the post-World War II period.

The presence of a multitude of denominations and sects contributed to a degree of flexibility and casualness toward religion that was reinforced by the increasing secularization of Cuban society. Nevertheless, even in rural areas most Cubans identified themselves as Christians, though they may never have had any contact with a church. Such individuals can be found among those who adduce religious motives for leaving Cuba after 1959. The so-called weakness of religion in pre-revolutionary Cuba was primarily institutional rather than cultural and, to a degree, due to the nature of the historical evolution of the Catholic Church in the island.

Catholicism was introduced into Cuba with the arrival of Columbus. The transformation of the island into a way-station or staging area for expeditions to the more heavily populated mainland colonies meant that it became of secondary, or even tertiary, importance to colonial authorities both civil and ecclesiastical. By the nineteenth century decay in the Catholic Church was pronounced. Increasingly the island was populated by miscreant peninsular clerics exiled to Cuba for punishment or conservative priests and religious fleeing from the newly independent mainland Spanish colonies. This combination contributed to the development of reactionary attitudes within the Church and lax observance of clerical duties. The conservatism of the Catholic Church was demonstrated by the hierarchy's strong opposition to Cuba's breaking away from Spain. Yet even after independence, when the Catholic Church's prestige was very low, the influence of the values it encouraged was evident. In 1900, for example, 80 of 107 Cuban municipalities, three of six provincial governors, and all but one judge of the first instance opposed the legalization of civil marriage (Ruiz, 1968: 161). This reflected the fact that the religious values of Cubans and the opinions and actions of church personnel were not necessarily identified as one by the general populace. Generalized religious belief and esteem for religion continued in spite of unpopular political and social positions taken by the churches.

The temporal and spiritual poverty of the Catholic Church in Cuba at the outset of the twentieth century provided opportunities for more liberal and populist competitors, such as the U.S. Protestants, as well as political movements, such as the socialists. This stimulated an internal reevaluation of Catholic strategies and by the 1920s the Church had recouped somewhat and was beginning to reassert its political clout. Part of its strategy derived from a belief in the desirability of main-

taining an alliance with secular power and extracting from it financial benefits and a guarantee of a religious monopoly. The Cuban Catholic Church became aware of pressures for modernization, particularly among the urban bourgeoisie—the prime source of its vocations and local financial support. In an effort to cultivate the loyalty of this group, lay organizations were expanded and given a more activist orientation. In the late 1920s Catholic Action, aimed at keeping the bourgeoisie active in the Church while helping Catholics adapt to changing times, was introduced from Spain. This organization opened up decision-making to limited lay input and tended to focus energies on the creation of an idealistic new Christendom which bore little relevance to the Cuban reality.

The challenge of socioeconomic injustice in Cuba, as well as competition from secular groups such as political parties and labor unions, was also felt by the Protestant churches in the 1920s and 1930s resulting in increased emphasis on social welfare activities, particularly in the unevangelized rural areas. There was also a rise in interest in *santería* and pentecostalism, which provided a more direct sense of participation and a supportive community wherein problems of daily life were dealt with. Increased resources and the appearance of greater relevance resulted in more widespread religious activity in Cuba in the 1940s and 1950s. This encouraged a sense of optimism within the churches (Crahan, 1977, 1978). There was an upsurge of involvement not only in nontraditional organizations, but also in traditional ones such as Hijas de María and Caballeros Católicos. These groups reduced the possibilities of integrating churchpeople into secular movements, a factor which contributed to the churches' marginalization during the 1950s conflict between the forces of Fulgenico Batista and Fidel Castro.

Prior to 1959 the Catholic Church, and to a degree the Protestant denominations, largely adhered to a policy which Levine (1973) has defined as "traditional interventionism," which emphasized the cultivation and manipulation of elite secular ties. Such tactics are characteristic of highly stratified societies in which power is concentrated in the hands of a few who hold sway over a relatively noncomplex institutional order. In such situations the Church benefits as a result of the strength of allied structures more than from its own actions or those of its membership. Given the weakness of secular institutions in Cuba, due primarily to the heavy influence of the United States in the prerevolutionary period, the civil-ecclesiastical linkages which existed did not provide the churches with the degree of influence resulting from this

strategy in other Latin American countries. The dependency of Cuban political and economic structures on the United States and the fact that the Catholics and Protestants received most of their funding and personnel from abroad caused the churches to suffer from a double dependency. Dominance first by Spain and later by the United States undercut the development of strong national institutions. This encouraged political instability and contributed to the turning to strongmen, such as Gerardo Machado and Fulgencio Batista. Most churches attempted to build links with these regimes even in the face of corruption, repression, and maintenance of acute socioeconomic injustices. This further contributed to the low esteem Cubans held for the institutional churches.

The strategy recommended by Vallier (1970) that Latin American churches build an independent base for themselves as articulators of universal values would have been unworkable in Cuba given the substantial gap between social classes. This meant that goals would have to be, and were, defined in terms so general as to have little possibility of implementation. This helps explain the difficulty clerics encountered in proselytizing among the urban and rural poor, who tended to identify the churches as bulwarks of the status quo. Notable is the degree to which religious values did permeate Cuban society. Such penetration of Christian beliefs, including Afro-Cuban versions, has been repeatedly attested to in the anthropological and other literature (Barnet, 1968: 56-57, 84-86).² The depth of the roots of generalized religious belief helps explain the negative reaction of many ostensibly nonreligious Cubans as the revolution became increasingly Marxist.

Within six months of the establishment of the Castro government, many churches, particularly the Catholic, experienced growth in membership and activities as they became the prime institutional opponents of the revolution. Attendance at Mass and other services increased and there was an influx of new members and contributions to such groups as Agrupación Católica, while 1,000,000 Cubans turned out in Havana for the National Catholic Congress in November 1959, a gathering which previously had attracted about 10,000. In this period the traditionally low levels of formal participation were reversed and the churches became highly politicized (Crahan, 1976). Growth was not sustained to a considerable extent as a result of the emigration of a substantial proportion of the faithful, as well as 70% of the Catholic priests and 90% of Catholic religious, together with 50% or better of

Protestant clerical and lay leaders.³ It was this exodus more than any other single factor which threw the Cuban churches into crisis.

II. Religious Affiliation

Church estimates of the number of nominal Catholics in pre-revolutionary Cuba cluster around 70-75% of the total population (@7,500,000), while estimates for the 1970s range from 60-65% of 9-10,000,000 people. In the pre-1959 period there was approximately one priest for every 10,000 Cubans, and since the mid-1960s one for every 40,000. In 1970 it was reported that two-thirds of the population were still being baptized and buried in Catholic ceremonies, as compared with 95% for the rest of Latin America (Hageman and Wheaton, 1971: 30-31; López Oliva, 1970: 180). The number of currently practicing Catholics is well under a million (IH 4731191).

In a 1957 survey of 4,000 agricultural workers throughout Cuba, 52.1% claimed to be Catholic, while 96.5% expressed belief in God. More than half (53.5%) claimed never to have seen a parish priest and only 7.8% admitted having any dealings with one. A substantial proportion (41.4%) of rural workers insisted they had no religion whatever (Echevarría Salvat, 1971: 14-15; Domínguez, 1975: 16-17). A 1958 survey of rural youths in Las Villas province, where there was a relatively high concentration of clerics, revealed a far smaller percentage professing no religion—13% of the males and 11.3% of the females, 84.8% of the men and 83.3% of the women asserting they were Catholics (Universidad Central, 1959: 29-30). Two years later, in 1960, a survey of 4,000 Cubans in all six provinces revealed that 72.5% claimed to be Catholic and 19% professed no religion. The same investigation reported that in Bayamo in rural Oriente only 48% were Catholic, while 30% had no religion (de la Huerta Aguiar, 1960: 45-47). These figures highlight the concentration of Catholics in urban areas and the resultant weakness of the Church in the countryside. Nevertheless, the vast majority identified themselves as Christians.

In both prerevolutionary and revolutionary Cuba not only was there a scarcity of pastors, but they were distributed very unequally throughout the island. In 1972 there were 211 priests in Cuba: 102 in Havana Province, 36 in Oriente, 25 in Las Villas, 18 in Camagüey, 17 in Matanzas, and 13 in Pinar del Río. An equal number of nuns was distributed with like disproportion—176 located in Havana Province, while 32

of 37 male religious were there (Wallace, 1973: 5). This compares with 232 priests in urban Havana in 1953, 200 of whom were teaching in private schools (Houtart and Rousseau, 1971: 115). There were also approximately 3,000 Catholic religious in Cuba at that time, mainly in the cities engaged in nonpastoral work. As a consequence, there were rural areas and even some urban neighborhoods which were virtually unevangelized or, at most, superficially so. This helps explain the loose hold of the institutional church over the bulk of the population, as well as its identification with the urban bourgeoisie.

In 1958 Protestant officials claimed from 150,000 to 250,000 adherents. This was substantial growth from a 1940 estimate of 40,000 to 50,000 by U.S. sociologist Davis, who surveyed Cuba's 440 organized Protestant churches. Davis believed there were 35,000 Protestants in ten main groups (Northern Baptist, Church of God, Society of Friends, Protestant Episcopal Church, The Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, Salvation Army, West Indies Mission, Southern Baptist, and Seventh Day Adventist), with 5,000 more in small independent congregations. Active membership constituted one percent of the total Cuban population of 4,200,000. Annual Protestant growth was 10.5 new members per church (Davis, 1942: 52, 62-63), which if maintained would have added 83,160 to the Protestant rolls by 1959 for a total of 123,160. Given the repeated references to membership increases and expansion of the number of churches in the late 1940s and 1950s, an estimate of 150,000 Protestants in Cuba by the time of the revolution does not seem exaggerated.⁴ Data from the 1950s, however, indicate more substantial increases. A 1957 survey of 4,000 agricultural workers reported 3.3% of the respondents were Protestant, while a 1958 survey of Las Villas reported 3.1%. A 1960 study claimed the somewhat inflated figure of 6% (Echevarría Salvat, 1971: 14; Universidad Central, 1959: 29-30; de la Huerta Aguiar, 1960: 45).

Recent estimates of Protestant strength range from 25,000 to 65,000.⁵ Evidence from most Protestant churches supports substantial declines as exemplified by the Methodists, who constituted the largest non-Catholic denomination in 1960.

CHANGES IN METHODIST MEMBERSHIP, 1957-1974*

| <i>1957</i> | <i>1960</i> | <i>1972</i> | <i>1974</i> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 7,847 | 10,347 | 2,629 | 2,478 |

* (Lewis, 1960; United Methodist Information, 1972: 1; Ordoñez, 1974).

Losses resulted primarily from migration abroad, particularly prior to 1970. A 1969 survey of Catholic parishes in urban Havana projected that by 1972, 50% to 70% of their prerevolutionary membership would have left the island (Jover, 1974: 27). A small Baptist church in Oriente lost 49 of its 80 members from 1960 to 1969, nine of them in the period 1961 to 1964 because the pastor was not sympathetic to the revolution. Some of these became members of the Communist party, although most did not (García Franco, 1970: 6-8).

Other congregations reflected such declines. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Luyano reported a drop from 266 members in 1959 to 94 in 1970, in spite of 142 new members having been received during that period. The prime reasons were departure from Cuba of 105 members or loss of commitment by 129. The average age of Luyano members or aspirants in 1970 was 45.5 years, with 60.6% over 50 and 48% having six years of education or less. Thirty-eight percent were housewives, 28% workers, 14% retired males, with an equal percentage of students, while the remainder was unclassified (Wallace, 1973: 6). These and other data confirm that churchgoers in contemporary Cuba are often individuals who reached their majority before the revolution, with a continued heavy proportion of females, children and older persons, rather than adult males. There are exceptions, such as the Catholic parish of San Juan del Monte in a working-class neighborhood in Havana. In the prerevolutionary period it was quite active and has suffered fewer losses than, for example, the wealthier parishes of Vedado. Baptist congregations in Oriente have also held firm, aided by the fact that almost none of their pastors migrated abroad.

Davis' 1940 data concerning the occupations of Protestants identified approximately 29% as housewives, 20% as workers, 1% as retired, and 23% as students. A comparison with Luyano thirty years later reveals some changes precipitated by the revolution. The drop in student membership suggests that the ideological transformation prompted by revolutionary education was having its impact on Cuban youth. Proportionally more housewives and retirees participated in 1970, indicating less integration into revolutionary society, as well as more leisure time for these groups. Such comparisons can only be hypothetical without further data and consideration of other variables.

Overall, the Catholic Church and the less populist Protestant denominations (Methodist, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians) suffered the greatest losses of membership and pastors. Groups whose appeal

TABLE 1
Occupations of Protestant Faithful in 1940 and 1970

| OCCUPATIONS | P E R C E N T A G E S | |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | NATIONWIDE 1940* | LUYANO 1970** |
| Housewives | 29 | 38 |
| Workers | 20 | 28 |
| Students | 23 | 14 |
| Unemployed | 13 | 0 |
| Retired | 1 | 14... |
| Unclassified | 14 | (males only) 6 |

* Davis, 1942: 74

** Wallace, 1973: 6

was traditionally to the poor and which were more adaptable were better able to weather the ferment of the 1960s in Cuba. The Baptist Convention of Western Cuba, for example, reported in 1971 that the denomination was "alive and growing" with 7,000 members, 319 having joined in 1970 and 22 students enrolled in a four-year seminary course. They also claimed that there were 9,000 Baptists in the Eastern Convention (Religious News Service, 1971: 7; Ordoñez, 1974: 11). This would make them, together with the Jehovah's Witnesses, the most rapidly growing denomination in Cuba. Statistics on the Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists are difficult to obtain. Estimates by officials of the Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches place their strength at 20,000 to 35,000 with an increasing number in Havana, although prior to the revolution they were concentrated in the rural areas (IH 47413; IH 471119; IH 3703212). Such groups, as well as other fundamentalist sects, provide alternative communities for those who resist integration into the socialist society being built in Cuba. Individuals, for example, who oppose universal military service, public education, and the collectivization of small privately held farms, find reinforcement among the Jehovah's Witnesses. For those who wish to publicly express

their disaffection from the present government, membership in such groups is an obvious means.

The limited evidence available suggests that there has been less of a decline in adherence to Afro-Cuban beliefs than to institutional religion. Prior to 1959 *santería* was identified primarily with the rural lower class and did not exclude formal affiliation with an institutional church. While only one percent claimed spiritism as their religion in a 1957 survey of agricultural workers and in a 1960 national sample, other evidence indicates that one-quarter of the Cuban people engaged in spiritist practices (Echevarría Salvat, 1971: 14; de la Huerta Aguiar, 1960: 45, 48). Given the syncretic nature of Afro-Cuban beliefs, their adaptability to changing conditions in Cuba appears greater than that of the more institutionalized religions.

III. Religious Practice

Afro-Cuban religious services, as well as Catholic and Protestant ones, have remained substantially unchanged since 1959. Those adaptations which have occurred are as much the result of international factors, including Vatican II and new theological formulations, as Cuban circumstances. This is not to say that the revolution has not stimulated attempts to make religion responsive to the challenges posed by contemporary Cuba. The tremendous membership losses most churches suffered, however, encouraged passivity and left many congregations without a critical mass to generate new programs and strategies. Only in the late 1960s, and more especially the 1970s, have serious efforts been undertaken to make the churches consonant with their existential situation.

Nonetheless, a frequently expressed opinion of current church leaders in Cuba is that their congregations are stronger, having been purified of members whose commitments were superficial. As one patriarch of the Presbyterian Church expressed it:

Before, many became members of the church precisely to take advantage of the benefits of the primary schools and of the colleges, to be a candidate for a scholarship in the United States, to receive help—social and economic—from the church. There were 600,000 unemployed in Cuba before the triumph of the Revolution—it was a society of crisis, no? You can imagine how a pastor

could be of influence, can't you? But people come to church now because of a profound religious conviction; we have members of greater quality [Wallace, 1973: 7].

Consequently, the decline in membership does not upset some pastors and, as in the prerevolutionary period, there is considerable variation in the level of activity almost always related to the vitality of a particular congregation's leadership, as well as the services rendered.

According to a 1966 survey of agricultural workers, only 0.7% of the 4,000 Catholic and non-Catholic respondents had attended church four or more times a year; 93.5% had not attended at all. Of professed Catholics, 88.8% reported not having attended Mass in a year, with 4.3% attending three or more times (Echevarría Salvat, 1971: 15-16). A 1958 study of Las Villas Province revealed that only 3.8% of 201 male Catholic respondents had attended Mass in the previous month, while 5.1% of the females had. Close to 90% of the females and 92.6% of the males had not attended any sort of church service (Universidad Central, 1959: 32). Nine years later, a 1967 survey of the diocese of Camagüey revealed that 3,597 of the province's residents, some 0.6% of its population, were attending Mass regularly.⁶ This included 1,618 children, and with the exception of the city of Camagüey, most of those attending were children. For the entire diocese, 49% of those frequenting Mass were 24 or younger. A comparison of these results with 1965 diocesan statistics reveals that the socioeconomic status of those who attended Mass remained essentially the same, with housewives constituting one-half and students one-fifth. Workers and professionals amounted to 3% and 9% respectively. Of those who attended Mass, 12% never received communion, while 10% received only once a year. Forty-seven percent received communion occasionally. The most frequent communicants were in Camagüey, Ciego de Avila and Morón—urban centers with 100,000 populations. This implies that the greater availability of church facilities and personnel in cities continued to influence the level of religious activity (El Equipo Diocesano, 1967: 12-14).

In 1940 Davis reported that only 25% of Cuban Protestants were active in their respective churches, with the remainder neither attending services nor contributing financially (Davis, 1942: 56, 63). Close to two decades later Protestant attendance in Las Villas was 82% of those males claiming to be Protestants and 88% of the females, a substantial increase. This confirmed frequent reports in the 1950s of increasing

fervor on the part of congregations (Universidad Central, 1959: 32). In the Luyano Presbyterian Church in 1970, 48% of the 130 members interviewed regularly attended services, 33% irregularly, and 19% never. It was also reported that a good number of young people were beginning to attend services (Wallace, 1973: 6). In the same year a 33-member Baptist Church in Oriente claimed 42% of the congregation were regular attendees, 33% rarely, and 25% never (García Franco, 1970: 5-6, 10). The growth of Protestantism in Cuba begun in the 1950s was obviously shortcircuited by the turmoil precipitated by the revolution, as was the level of participation in church activities of all denominations.

Attendance at religious instructions in the Catholic diocese of Camagüey in 1967, for example, was 1.1%, or 1,641 of all elementary school age children. Fifty-five percent of the Catholic children were receiving instruction at home. Religious instruction for adults was emphasized beginning in 1962, with 50% of the Catholic faithful having some type of formal instruction between 1962 and 1967. This would seem to have been partly an effort to counteract the ideological inroads of Marxism-Leninism. Nine percent of the Catholic adults who were active in the diocese served as catechists, while 7% helped prepare liturgies, and 6% participated in discussion groups. Such activities were concentrated in Camagüey city where the greatest number of trained leaders were, as well as the strongest tradition of church involvement (El Equipo Diocesano, 1967: 10-21).

The continued urban concentration of militant Catholics and church activists in Havana, Santa Clara, Santiago and Camagüey, in the face of difficulties with the government in the 1960s, was ascribed by the former Catholic Action leader, Mateo Jover (1974: 23), to the more flexible attitudes of civil officials in urban areas. No doubt the relatively greater strength of church people in these areas also helped. This is linked to greater access to means of religious formation, including more contact with clerics.

Reforms stimulated by both domestic Cuban conditions and international factors such as Vatican II were implemented slowly and with some tension between those who regarded the church as a refuge from change and those who looked to reform as a means of making the church more relevant to the existing situation. The pattern is similar in the Protestant churches, which shared a preoccupation with encouraging and maintaining religious loyalty, particularly among young people, in order to guarantee the churches' institutional futures.

Prior to the revolution, lay activists and priests, ministers, and other religious were frequently recruited through the church schools. The nationalization of private schools in 1961 eliminated that source. With one exception, the present and former church leaders I interviewed had all attended such schools. This was in spite of the fact that approximately 60% of them came from families which were not formally religious, illustrating the phenomenon that the chief appeal of church schools was their reputation for quality education. The departure from Cuba of a high proportion of the teachers in such schools meant a vacuum was created in the early 1960s with respect to the religious formation of youth. Traditional groups, such as Catholic Action and the Protestant Student Christian Movement, also suffered.

By 1962 the churches were counteracting or responding to Marxism with catechetical instruction and discussion groups which met to explore the relevance of Christian faith to their daily lives (El Equipo Diocesano, 1967: 10; IH 5771112). Such groups would later raise basic questions concerning the goals and functions of the churches, and served in some instances as stimuli for internal reforms and liberalization of church attitudes toward the revolution. Perhaps the most basic was whether or not church people should continue to oppose the government, since it was making some headway in remedying such chronic socioeconomic ills as unemployment and poverty, particularly in rural areas. This prompted explorations of whether a Christian might at times support a political system traditionally condemned by the churches. As such discussions progressed, a liberal minority began to argue that one achieved salvation not simply through rectitude in one's own life, but also through struggle to achieve socioeconomic justice in one's community. These conclusions combined with the development of liberation theology in the rest of Latin America to stimulate increased questioning of traditional theological formulations, hierarchical authority, and pastoral strategies by a minority of Cuban Christians.

IV. The Churches in Prerevolutionary and Revolutionary Cuba as seen by Cuban Christians

In spite of continuing traditionalism among most church people in contemporary Cuba, all 40 of the clerical and lay Catholic and

Protestant church leaders I interviewed residing both within and without the island were critical of their institutions in the prerevolutionary period. Some held that radical changes were and still are needed, while others supported more limited measures which were essentially adaptive, not just to changing conditions in Cuba, but also to trends within the international ecclesial community. Progressivism was stronger among Protestants than Catholics, but in both cases reformers have recently captured high positions within their institutions. The result is that church leadership is sometimes more liberal than the faithful. The trauma of the radical changes initiated by the revolution and the political and economic isolation of Cuba instigated by the United States helped insulate Cuban Christians from liberalizing currents which were present in the rest of Latin America in the 1960s. Receptivity to the policies of the progressive leadership has consequently been somewhat limited. Beyond this, an almost exclusive dependence on theologies developed in response to European and North American circumstances left the churches with few resources to bring to bear on their actual situation.

Major criticisms of the churches in pre-1959 Cuba were elitism, lack of concern with socioeconomic justice, autocracy, over-preoccupation with financial matters, using charitable gestures to avoid confronting the structural bases of poverty and exploitation, cowardice in the face of political repression and corruption, overdependency on foreign and domestic political and economic elites, and failure to assume a prophetic role in a highly inegalitarian society. In addition, the churches were scorned for racism, pietism, pacifism, triumphalism, enclavism, puritanism, paternalism, individualism, and escapism.⁷

The charge of racism sprang from the fact that some church schools and organizations were unwilling to admit blacks. In addition, the predominantly Spanish Catholic clergy harbored attitudes of superiority which, at times, depreciated Cuban culture as well as Cuban capacity to administer church institutions. Something akin to this existed in most of the U.S.-dominated Protestant churches. Among both Catholics and Protestants there was a pietistic emphasis on devotional aspects of religion and individual regeneration as the means to salvation. This permitted Christians to limit their responsibility for those less fortunate to occasional acts of charity. Given the widespread emphasis on misfortune as the "will of God," religion in prerevolutionary Cuba served to encourage acceptance of the status quo. For the poor the churches alleviated some of the pain of everyday existence by promising a reward

in the hereafter. As the conflict between the forces of Batista and Castro escalated in the 1950s most churches maintained themselves aloof from the struggle, although some individual churchpeople assumed partisan roles. It is illuminating to note that one cleric who distinguished himself for his social activism in the 1950s and who subsequently left Cuba as a result of fear of communism, estimated that only 1.5% of Cuban churchpeople were seriously engaged in attacking endemic socioeconomic problems in the prerevolutionary period (IT 57311). He and other churchpeople concede that they did little to transform Cuba in pre-1959 period to conform more closely with Christian ideals. This would appear to be supported by the opinion of several thousand agricultural workers in a 1957 survey in which only 3.4% of them expressed any belief that the Catholic Church would be of any assistance in improving their lot (Echevarría Salvat, 1971: 25).

Belief by religious leaders that to change society it was necessary simply to change the individual and his or her values has changed somewhat since the revolution, with progressive and liberal sectors accepting the necessity of structural change and rejecting the notion of the churches as neutral or apolitical. There has also been a move away from the position that one can separate a church from the political, social, and economic contexts in which it exists. This has resulted in a push to abandon the role of the Church as primarily a consoler of the suffering and protector from divine wrath. In its place is offered the concept of a Christian community totally compromised in the struggle for socioeconomic justice.

While a prime impetus for this has been the revolution, the majority of Cuba's Christians did not conceive of the possibility of far-reaching changes resulting from the triumph of the 26th of July Movement. In reality the support of churchpeople for Castro's movement prior to 1959 sprang largely from opposition to Batista.⁸ Hence the widespread reaction, both within and without the churches as radical changes began to be introduced, that the revolution was being betrayed. Such feeling was particularly strong within reformist groups such as Catholic Action and the Young Christian Workers, together with the Student Christian Movement. Castro's declaration of his Marxism-Leninism strengthened the sense of having been duped, an opinion which continues to hold sway among some Cuban churchpeople.⁹

This was reinforced by the loss of church personnel through emigration, the marginalization that retreat into religion as a refuge from change caused, and divisions within the churches. Further, the Catholic Church had no long-range strategy of response, nor did it appear to

comprehend the realities of the situation (Jover, 1974: 20-21). The Protestant churches, less obviously counterrevolutionary than the Catholic, followed a policy of neither supporting nor opposing the revolution, but rather placing emphasis on Christian witness and opposition to atheism. They were also concerned with dissociating themselves from the counterrevolutionary image of Catholicism. Yet their greater identification with the United States presented its own problems given the anti-American turn of the revolution (United Methodist Information, 1972: 3; IH 471191; ISM 472115).

A 1964-1965 survey of Protestant youth found that the turn toward socialism was generally considered a betrayal which resulted in replacing one dictatorship with another. Some said they had expected it and that it was the fault of U.S. policy which drove Castro into the arms of the Soviet Union. A minority held it was a natural and logical step and in reality the only option. Pietism came into play with those who felt that, since God had permitted it, then it was all for the best. Some believed it was a challenge to proselytize the communists (Cepeda, 1966: 25-26). Reactions among Catholics were generally negative, with a good proportion feeling that opposition to the revolution was a moral responsibility.

Even prior to Castro's declaration of his Marxism-Leninism, disaffection had been growing over agrarian reform, nationalization of businesses, and executions of Batistianos and active counterrevolutionaries. For many Christians the agrarian reform law of 1959 was a violation of what they regarded as the Christian principle of the sanctity of private property (Dewart, 1963: 147-148; Rivas, 1971: 6). However, by 1965 a majority of Christian youth surveyed felt that it had been a pressing necessity and an unavoidable step, although some objected to what they regarded as injustices resulting from it. Support for the government's nationwide literacy campaign in the early 1960s was also strong, although 6% regretted what they felt was its ultimate objective—communist indoctrination. The reaction to the 1961 closing of the church schools was very negative—87.2% still opposing it in 1964 and 1965, although 81% approved of the nationalization of industries and businesses. This latter was a far more liberal stance than that of older churchpeople. Finally, 100% of the Protestant youths surveyed opposed the official executions which occurred in the early years of the revolution (Cepeda, 1966: 25). These youths must be regarded as atypical, as a national survey in the early 1960s revealed that only 3.5% of Cuban young people wanted to emulate Jesus Christ,

and most regarded piety as an indication of a weak individual (Torroella, 1963: 21-22, 38-39, 45).

Church youth in the mid-1960s essentially contented themselves with being Christian witnesses, while minorities were either fervently prorevolutionary or antirevolutionary (Cepeda, 1966: 22). More recently there has been a small number of young people from non-religious backgrounds who have been attracted to the churches in the hopes of finding solutions to some of the transcendental questions which they do not find satisfactorily answered by Marxism-Leninism (Jover, 1974: 29; Wallace, 1973: 6-7). Most Cuban youths, however, continue to be relatively unattracted to religion.

Overall, the reaction of the Cuban churches was more direct and less complex than that of the Chilean churches to Salvador Allende's attempted introduction of parliamentary socialism from 1970 to 1973. Religious, political, and economic changes throughout Latin America in the 1960s reduced the traditional hostility toward Marxist options, and there was within Chile a vocal minority of Christians who strongly supported this development. The very correct relations between the Chilean episcopacy and Allende's government are in contrast to the early responses of most Cuban church leaders. The differences between the Cuban and Chilean reactions highlight the diminishing of cold war tensions in the 1960s and the growing diversity of political analysis within the churches, although the leadership continues by and large to emphasize institutional preservation via traditional strategies.

V. The Churches in Revolutionary Cuba

The revolution precipitated crises within the churches not simply as a result of the official adoption of Marxism-Leninism, but also because of tremendous losses in the ranks of the laity and the emigration or expulsion of priests, ministers, and other religious. Voluntary departures caused sometimes acrimonious debate within the churches and served to emphasize the differences between those who supported the revolution, those who argued it was the responsibility of the individual to stay and bear Christian witness, and those who felt their only recourse was to leave Cuba.¹⁰ The reaction of Protestant youth to pastors and lay leaders who left ranged from acceptance to criticism of what they considered the abandonment of the flock in the face of the wolf (Cepeda, 1966: 27-28).

In the mid-1960s some clerics and laypersons were drafted into the Military Units to Aid Production (UMAP), a short-lived manual labor program for tramps, pimps, homosexuals, common criminals, and others regarded as deviants. A few pastors were jailed for counter-revolutionary activities and some 30 Baptist ministers for dealing with blackmarket currency. The reaction of Protestant youths to this was unanimous: if the pastors or lay leaders were imprisoned for counter-revolutionary activities and no other reason, then it was justified. However, if the actions considered counterrevolutionary were simply the preaching of the Gospel or the free exercise of their beliefs, then prison was deemed unjust (Cepeda, 1966: 28). Of significance is the fact that those of my informants who had been in jail or in UMAP all made the point that the most painful thing had been their sense of having been abandoned by their churches. The shock of doing manual labor alongside individuals they normally would not have come into contact with occasioned for some a reevaluation of the meaning of religion in their lives, while for others it resulted in a further retreat into traditional views. Furthermore, all resumed their church activities upon their release, some being greeted warmly as martyrs, while others were regarded with some discomfort (García Franco, 1966; IM 5771112; IH 4701181; IH 377221).

The loss of substantial proportions of their staffs resulted in opening the way for increased lay participation in the churches, which combined with international currents to stimulate reform. Pressure for change resulted in some liberalization, most notably in the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches and less so among the Catholics, Episcopalians, Seventh Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Within the Catholic Church it precipitated a crisis which came to a head in the late 1960s just prior to the issuing of the conciliatory pastoral letters of 1969 which broke the silence maintained since the early 1960s. In a 1972 article, "Cuban Catholics and Castro," the Cuban emigrée political scientist, Jorge Domínguez, ascribes the issuance of the conciliatory April 10, 1969 document to four factors: a desire for "political reinsertion or breathing space in the prevailing system"; "doctrinal reintegration into the post-conciliar church"; "transnational interaction within the Church"; and "ecumenical dialogue" (Domínguez, 1972: 25). A fifth factor was the struggle within the Church over internal liberalization.

Prior to this time the reforms envisioned by Vatican II had been ignored and unrealized in Cuba, due in large measure to the resistance to change which a sense of being beleaguered encouraged. Catholic

theology and seminary training adhered to prerevolutionary forms and the theology of liberation made only slight inroads. This was in spite of strong lay support for reforms in the manner of saying Mass—94% in the diocese of Camagüey in 1965 and again in 1967; reception of communion—72% in 1965 and 75% in 1967; and reduction of the number of statues in churches—65% in 1965 and 58% in 1967 (El Equipo, 1967: 17).

By the late 1960s three main groups emerged among Catholic activists: conservatives who were not enthusiastic about liturgical and other reforms promoted by Vatican II and the 1968 Latin American bishops meeting at Medellín, Colombia, and who in general supported a passive witnessing church; the pragmatists who favored tight episcopal control of any move toward rapprochement with the government and were lukewarm toward substantial increases in lay participation; and the reformers, who included some of the most militant advocates of lay participation and who felt that dialogue with the government should proceed only if the Church recognized its obligation not only to support the government for its positive accomplishments, but also to criticize it. The episcopacy's argument that relatively uncritical support was first necessary to win the confidence of the government in view of past difficulties was rejected by both conservatives and reformers. The precise nature of the Catholic Church as critic was detailed by the ex-president of Cuban Catholic Action Youth, Mateo Jover, in a 1969 seminar in New York. Jover suggested the initiating of dialogue between Christians and Marxists at the grass-roots level. The feedback to government cadres which would result from this, he felt, would help open them up to Christian opinions to a greater extent than if the dialogue was limited to the upper echelons of church and state (Jover, 1974). Clearly, the presumption was that both institutions would better reflect the attitudes of the bulk of their adherents if this path was followed.

The Cuban bishops rejected both the reformist and conservative positions, publishing on August 10 and September 3, 1969, pastoral letters appealing for the lifting of the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba and emphasizing support for national developmental goals and the need to respect the atheistic position. These letters precipitated internal crises. The reformers objected to what they regarded as the episcopacy's failure to balance support for the government with the raising of critical issues, and the conservative majority regarded the declarations as evidence of the treason or cowardice of the bishops. A good number of Catholic activists left the Church at this point, and a papal emissary

was sent from Rome in an effort to ameliorate some of the divisions.

One hundred lay leaders and an equal number of priests met in Havana in October 1969 to discuss Church-State relations and reform within the Church. An alliance of clerics and lay conservatives held sway against the calls for substantial lay participation in decision-making relating not only to internal Church matters, but also to relations with the government. In the aftermath of this meeting, some new Christian communities were formed by the disaffected, a few of which emphasized charismatic practices (IM 5771112). While relations with the government did improve after 1969, in some respects the divisions within the Church became more pronounced. Rapprochement with the government was favored, however, by the positive impression Castro obtained when he met with progressive Christians in Chile in 1971 and increased contacts of Cuban churchpeople with such progressives throughout Latin America. Episcopal strategy since the late 1960s has been marked by caution. Current emphasis is on pastoral renewal and spiritual regeneration.

Comparable but less severe struggles occurred within some of the Protestant churches. Here, too rapprochement with the government was actively pursued by most churches beginning in the late 1960s. This reflected the increasing consolidation of the progovernment left in positions of leadership, in spite of the fact that many Protestants continued to oppose the revolution. As late as the mid-1960s many Protestant youths who were generally more liberal than their elders continued to be against their churches taking a public stance for or against the revolution—44% against; 17% in favor; 39% no opinion (Cepeda, 1966: 27). Most local churches regarded political involvements as taboo, although the national leadership of such denominations as the Presbyterians and Methodists and the Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches increasingly took stands on national and international issues in favor of government policies. This was the result of a desire to insert themselves into revolutionary society not only as the most pragmatic course, but also as the most prophetic.

The majority of Cuban church people, however, continued into the 1970s to be negatively disposed toward the revolution, a fact which one minister noted condemned the churches to be constituted largely of social outcasts. Those changes which had occurred within the churches he deemed inadequate.¹¹ A World Council of Churches official, a frequent visitor to Cuba, estimated in 1971 that 95% of Cuba's Protestants seemed ill-at-ease in their own society. In addition, he found a tendency in them to idealize the past and to look to emigration as the

solution to their discomfort (Tschuy, 1971: 4). This was especially true of the more middle-class congregations, whereas the rural, lower-class churches were less inclined toward inner or exterior migration and more open to the possibilities offered by the revolution. Overall, the churches attracted a fairly high proportion of the disaffected, with indications that those groups least integrated into contemporary Cuba, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, were the fastest growing (IH 47413; IH 471191). Today the churches as institutions provide some shelter for those who do not accept the revolution, while within the marginalized religious community those churches which are most conservative provide reinforcement and justification for dissatisfaction with the current system.

Those who desire to substantially change the values and opinions of churchpeople look to the conscientization of the Cuban Christian through new pastoral programs, revised educational materials, and more prophetic theological formulations. As Cuba's leading theologian, Dr. Sergio Arce Martínez, phrases it, the future of the churches in Cuba "will depend greatly on the way we are able to get a wide biblical-theological education and create serious Cuban theology that is adequate to our specific situation.¹² This attitude is shared by the former papal nuncio in Cuba, Archbishop Cesare Zacchi, who was instrumental in the period between 1963 and 1975 in bettering relations with Castro's government. Zacchi holds that Catholics should integrate themselves into the revolution through the mass organizations. Such action, the nuncio feels, would produce a beneficial interchange between Christians and Marxists which could result in the introduction of Catholic ideals into the revolution (López Oliva, 1970: 63; IH 4714111). Such positions run into opposition from those who feel, as does Jover, that at the level of systems legitimation and values an absolute impermeability exists between the Catholic Church and the revolutionary government. Unlike Arce and Zacchi, Jover feels that Marxist-Christian agreement over national virtues and objectives does not imply any fundamental agreement over values. Hence, he and others continue to urge the Catholic Church to work toward a situation where "there will be a pluralism of systems of legitimacy and permeability on the level of both values and norms" (Jover, 1974: 28). Given the manifold weaknesses of the churches in Cuba, such a strategy has limited viability.

Resistance to change within the Cuban churches can be explained, in part, by the fact that the impulse for renewal has come primarily from the leadership rather than the base resulting in limited involvement

of the laity. The outcome has been a degree of resentment on their part towards church officials. In the early 1970s this resulted in the defeat of some progressives in Protestant church elections, as well as a period of quiescence and reassessment within the Catholic Church. By 1974 the progressives were again gaining strength and consolidating their position. There was also some movement toward the formation of fundamentalist and charismatic groups within and without the church. Thus, in terms of religious beliefs and resultant actions, the strongest tendency is toward the continuance of prerevolutionary patterns, although some are expressed in new forms. What is new is the slow increase in progressive leaders and the theological conceptualizations they promote.

The most essential of these is a new definition of salvation which deemphasizes other-worldly elements in favor of the responsibility of the Christian to seek the kingdom of God on earth. Influenced by liberation theology, the emphasis is on the obligation to struggle for socioeconomic justice and collaborate with those movements which appear most likely to achieve it. Stress is laid on the integration of one's Christian commitment and one's socioeconomic contribution to an equitable society, even if it involves the overthrow of existing secular as well as ecclesial structures. This position conflicts with the division many Cuban Christians continue to make between the spiritual and the secular. In 1967 forty percent of the Catholics in the diocese of Camagüey felt that one's religious life and secular life are independent entities. In addition, the notion of divine intervention remained strong, with 37% regarding God as the one to turn to for solutions to problems (*El Equipo*, 1967: 18-21). These attitudes set them apart from the majority of Cubans who were strongly imbued with secularism well before the revolution (*Torroella*, 1963: 14-28). New theological definitions to date have failed to transform the world view of most Cuban Christians.

VI. Conclusion

Religion in prerevolutionary Cuba appeared to be weaker than in the rest of Latin America due to the institutional limitations of the churches and their reliance on a dependent national bourgeoisie and foreign sources of funding and personnel. This, combined with a relatively high degree of secularism in Cuban society, tended to relegate the churches to a marginalized position. These weaknesses resulted in

the churches' power being less feared than in some other Latin American countries, which may, in part, explain the revolutionary government's apparent lack of deep concern even in the tense early years of 1960. Yet Cuba was a strongly Christian country which had been evangelized not only by Spanish Catholics, but also by U.S. Protestants, which resulted in the widespread dissemination of certain cultural values and norms even among those Cubans who never had any contact with formal religion.

The generalized Christian orientation of Cuban society contributed to a negative reaction to the revolution as it became more socialist. The situation was compounded by strong anticommunism among elements of the Spanish Catholic clergy and the U.S.-linked Protestant churches. While involvement in the churches was greater on the part of the urban bourgeoisie, the nature of religious certitude resulted in counterrevolutionary reactions on the part of strong believers from all classes, even when they were not frequent practitioners. Hence, even among the rural poor who were, by and large, the prime beneficiaries of such revolutionary programs as the expansion of public health and educational facilities, upgrading of housing, and elimination of unemployment, there were those who believed that support of the Castro government was totally inimical to their duties as Christians. Since the Church proclaimed itself the center of value and source of all meaning in life, the government's attempt in the early 1960s to capture the ultimate loyalty of all Cubans was regarded as antireligious. Under threats to its existence both from within and without Cuba, the government was suspicious of churches whose ultimate allegiance was to a source of meaning and values which had temporal links to western capitalism. As mutual hostility receded, in part as a result of the migration of the more negatively disposed church personnel and laity abroad, the churches turned in upon themselves in response to a desire for refuge from turmoil.

For some the revolution reinforced commitment to traditional religious practices, and there was a general tendency to escape into pietism. However, government mobilization of the population, particularly in programs aimed at dealing with traditional societal ills, prompted some positive response by a minority of churchpeople. In instances where there was enough latitude within the individual's church to allow for the operation of a dual commitment, there was the possibility of remaining one of the faithful. This was not the case with many churches, and between 1962 and 1968 there was considerable

attrition in church membership beyond that caused by emigration. Increasingly in the late 1960s and early 1970s, losses appear to have resulted from conflicts within the churches. The possibility of the disintegration of the churches as constituted stimulated reflection aimed at rooting the churches firmly in their existential context, a task which required major theological reformulations and structural modifications. This process is more advanced in some Protestant churches than in the Catholic, in part because of the more flexible authority structures of the former.

As the churches were exposed to foreign explorations of Marxist-Christian dialogue and cooperation, they became more open. Church leadership was stimulated to join with the government in identifying problems of mutual concern and cooperating in such areas as education, health care, and the establishment of ethical goals. The churches were, in fact, challenged by the government's successes in eliminating such chronic problems as gambling, prostitution, and begging. Individuals began to voice their feelings that the churches' only means of survival was to integrate into the revolution. The definition of this process resulted in tensions between those who urged the churches to establish themselves as both supporters *and* critics of the government. Since the revolutionaries feel the only valid criticism is that which comes from within the process, such a strategy requires greater integration into the revolutionary process than that desired by many churchpeople.

A continuing problem has been doubts within the churches that they have the spiritual, intellectual, and emotional resources to assume a prophetic role in society. A majority of Protestant youth surveyed in the mid-1960s did not think their institutions possessed such abilities (Cepeda, 1966: 26). The attitude within the Catholic Church is pessimistic too; only six of 100 young activists from Santa Clara in 1970 were still with the church in 1975 (IM 5771112). Some Christians hope for a change in the government's ideological stance, but the increasing institutionalization of the revolution and the orthodoxy of the Party Congress in December 1975 does not encourage this. The Constitution adopted at that gathering provides for freedom to practice one's religion, although the government officially supports atheistic materialism. There is also some possibility that the greater democratization mandated by this document, particularly the establishment of nationwide representative assemblies under a program known as Popular Power, may result in more diversity within the revolution which could encourage increased integration of Christians.

The consolidation and institutionalization of the revolution, however, will probably result in increased ideological pressure on Christians, as well as on those who harbor Afro-Cuban beliefs. Given the small minority of Cubans presently affiliated with churches, such pressure over the long term could have substantial impact on the churches as institutions. Furthermore, changes outside Cuba may very well reduce the ability or willingness of international ecclesial structures to support them.

The beliefs of Cuban churchpeople are not changing rapidly enough to cause them to incorporate themselves into the revolution in any number, nor would this necessarily secure the future of the churches given the ideological distance between Marxism and Christianity. Even those who are most positively disposed toward the revolution and who accept Marxist economic analysis do not accept the materialist explanation of life. This is the most profoundly disturbing dilemma for those progressives I interviewed. If they maintain a belief in a transcendental explanation of life, there will always be the possibility of conflict of goals with the government. Revolutionary change in Cuba has already had a tremendous effect on the churches as temporal institutions. Only if substantial numbers of Cubans feel a strong need for an otherworldly explanation of life is there a likelihood that the churches will recuperate. Even then, it is probable that believers will seek to change their churches substantially to meet their specific needs in a socialist society. This portends even greater upheavals for the Cuban churches in the future than those already experienced.

NOTES

1. These interviews are subsequently identified throughout the paper by a series of numbers beginning with IH, IT, ISM and IM. Since they are privileged in nature, further information is not available. Therefore, they are not listed in the reference section.

2. Pertinent studies not listed in the references include the works of Fernando Ortiz, Lydia Cabrera, and John Dumoulin.

3. Approximately 550 of 800 Catholic priests left and 2,700 of some 3,000 religious. Of these, approximately 8% were expelled by the Cuban government for alleged counter-revolutionary activities. Beginning in 1963 some Cuban and Spanish priests returned, joined by a few French and Belgian clerics. In the late 1960s the government indicated its willingness to grant residence permits to some 100 foreign religious if they could be recruited. This process has been slow (Houtart and Rousseau, 1971: 124; IH 4714111). The mainline Protestant denominations were hit particularly hard, losing as much as 50%

or more of their congregations and 80% to 90% of their ministers. More populist groups, such as the Baptists and Pentecostals, were less severely affected (United Methodist Board of Missions, 1971b: 3; Tschuy, 1971; Rivas, 1971: 7).

4. This is the sum claimed by Cepeda (1966: 11) and Hageman and Wheaton (1971: 31), while the *Libro de Cuba* (Anonymous, 1954: 747) reports 400,000 active Protestants.

5. Hageman and Wheaton (1971: 31) estimated 50,000 in 1970, when membership appeared to be stabilizing. Wallace reiterates that number two years later (Wallace, 1973: 10).

6. The study included parishes in Camagüey, Ciego de Avila, Morón, Florida, Nuevitas, Guaimaro, Santa Cruz del Sur, Jatibónico, Amancio Rodríguez, Vertientes, and Esmerelda.

7. Such criticisms have been reiterated by Tschuy, former Latin American Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and in evaluations by some U.S. churches of their prerevolutionary operations in Cuba (Rivas, 1971: 4; United Methodist Board of Missions, 1971a).

8. Of 50 Christian youths interviewed in the mid-1960s, 24% claimed to have been members of anti-Batista clandestine organizations. Only 2% claimed to have been pro-Batista (Cepeda, 1966: 25). Of the 33 Methodist ministers in Cuba in the 1950s, 15% were nonviolent anti-Batista activists; 60% passive opponents, and 25% claimed neutrality (Rivas, 1971: 5).

9. For a perceptive analysis of the impact of Castro's declaration, see Dewart (1963).

10. For the impact of the Cuban emigrées on the U.S. churches, see Cuban Research Center newsletters, 2 and 4. More recently there has been some liberalization among these individuals as attested to by the formation of progressive groups such as the Florida-based Cuban Christians for Justice and Freedom, which supports the end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba and encourages the resumption of diplomatic relations.

11. Reverend Israel Batista as quoted in Hageman and Wheaton (1971: 53).

12. Arce as quoted in Hageman and Wheaton (1971: 171).

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