

THE "CUBAN REVOLUTION" AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 1948*

WILLIAM S. STOKES**

I

Latin Americans have long demonstrated a tendency toward the employment of force and violence in organizing, maintaining and changing their governments. *Machetismo*, *cuartelazo*, and *golpe de estado* are familiar methods of mobilizing violence in politics, and manifestations of each are to be found in both large and small countries, advanced and less advanced, for almost all periods. In the years from 1943 to 1949, for example, no fewer than eleven governments were changed by force. Too, overtones or threats of violence characterize the peaceful methods of establishing and maintaining governments in Latin America; methods such as *imposición* and *candidato único* and *continuismo*. Although no systematic analysis of the techniques of organizing and changing governments in Latin America has been made for all the countries for the entire period of their independent existence, sufficient evidence does exist to conclude that force and violence unquestionably are relied on as the norm, whether actually employed or threatened. Force seems to be institutionalized in Latin-American politics. On the other hand, revolution is seldom found. The term "revolution" is frequently inaccurately employed to designate one or another of the above methods of using violence in the political game of "ins" versus "outs," whereas the term must be defined to mean fundamental change in the nature of the state, the functions of government, the principles of economic production and distribution, the relationship of the social classes, particularly as regards the control of government—in a word, a significant breaking with the past. Examples of "revolution" are difficult to discover in Latin America, and even mass employment of violence is rare.

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**The author is professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin—Ed.

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In Cuba, however, it is significant that the governing group professes genuine economic, political, and social revolution, and the term when used conveys exactly that meaning in present-day Cuban politics. This paper is concerned with the relationship of the presidential elections of 1948 to the "Revolution." Obtaining power in 1944, the government of the "Revolution" was for the first time put on general electoral trial in the campaign of June 1, 1948. Out of frenzied groupings of Cuba's splinter parties, Machiavellian give-and-take over the spoils of government, controlled conventions, bombastic oratory, lavish use of both public and private funds, and occasional reliance on force and violence, but with maximum popular interest, effective freedom of speech and press, and honest counting of the ballots, the Revolution triumphed by about a 45 per cent popular mandate. The Government of "Cubanidad" of President Ramón Grau San Martín was succeeded by the Government of "Cordialidad" of President Carlos Prío Socarrás. The election of 1948 was of the greatest significance to the Cuban Revolution, and systematic analysis of it should clarify some aspects of important contemporary Cuban politics. In addition, the exciting campaign illustrated many of the principles and problems of the organization and changing of governments in the island republic.

II

The preëlection favorite among the major Cuban parties was the popular PRC (A) or Party of the Cuban Revolution (Authentic), which played a leading role in the drafting of the Constitution of 1940, and formed the nucleus of the coalition which won the presidency in 1944 and both houses of the legislature in 1946.¹ The PRC (A) approached the 1948 elections as the government party, but it was also in a real sense the mass, popular party as well. It is axiomatic among Cubans that the only parties capable of winning a national campaign are those which opposed the dictator Machado in the 1930's.² Of such parties, the PRC (A) emerged the unquestioned leader.

¹ W. S. Stokes, "Parliamentary Government in Latin America," *American Political Science Review* (June, 1945), pp. 532-535; "The Cuban Parliamentary System in Action," *The Journal of Politics* (April, 1949), pp. 335-364.

² I found this view common among prominent Cuban political leaders, such as "Eddy" Chibás, presidential candidate of the Cuban People's Party, Dr. Carlos Saladrigas, defeated presidential candidate (1944) and head of the Democratic Party, Dr. Juan Marinello, presidential candidate of the Popular Socialist Party, Senator Pelayo Cuervo, Dr. Jorge Martí, editorial writer for the liberal newspaper *El Mundo*, and many others. See also, "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, June 20, 1948, p. 59.

The party's origins go back to a meeting of February 8, 1934, presided over by Félix Lancis which resulted in an alliance of the *Bloque Septembrista* and the National Revolutionary Coalition which, in turn, was made up of fourteen revolutionary organizations.³ After approximately three months of debate, the new party published its program under the signatures of the fifty-nine members of its national committee.⁴ The document featured economic and political nationalism and social justice as general objectives. Although the program was silent on the question of peaceful or forceful methods of achieving political power, the party encouraged insurrection, sabotaged the electoral census on Mendieta's government, and participated actively in the abortive general strike of March, 1935. It was mainly for these reasons that the leaders were forced into exile. While outside Cuba, the PRC (A) made contact with *Joven Cuba*, a revolutionary organization formed on January 10, 1934, by Antonio Guiteras (now a party martyr). With the inclusion of *Joven Cuba*, the PRC (A) created a "shock corp" (May, 1935) for activities involving violence called the OA (*Organización Auténtica*). Although it was the strategy of the party until 1939 to seize power by force, some leaders, including Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín, questioned its wisdom. Guiteras' "Pact of Mexico" failed when the arms of *Joven Cuba* were seized on the Mexico-United States frontier, and other attempts to marshal arms for a *golpe* were abortive. By 1939, the insurrectionists realized that their position was utopian, and their capitulation to the more conservative elements permitted all segments of the party to cooperate in pushing the electoral method.⁵

From its formation, the PRC (A) monopolized the symbol of "revolution" in Cuban politics to promote a program of economic-social reform. Some critics have labeled the effort "demagoguery,"⁶ while others cynically condemn all Cuban parties—the PRC (A) included—for lacking principles beyond political opportunism.⁷ Nevertheless, the PRC (A) has committed itself firmly to fundamental, even revolutionary, reforms, and in part at least it was judged in the 1948 elections on its performance of

³ One scholar insists that the date of origin is February 10, 1934. Dr. Raoul Alfonso Gonsé, "Síntesis histórica del PRC (A)," *El Mundo*, July 23, 1944, p. 3.

⁴ *Programa constitucional del Partido Revolucionario Cubano Auténtico* (1934), p. 32.

⁵ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 66.

⁶ Dr. Raoul Alfonso Gonsé, "Panorama político," *El Mundo*, October 23, 1942, p. 2; Gonsé, "Los sin partido," *ibid.*, January 16, 1944, p. 2.

⁷ Alfredo T. Quilés, "La selección ante las urnas," *Carteles*, May 2, 1948, p. 13; "Nuestro momento económico y financiero," *Cuba económica y financiera*, March, 1948, p. 5.

these. The official program of the party emphasized strongly the right of Cubans to participate more fully in the economic resources of the country.⁸ The party interpreted this provision to mean specifically governmental control of wages, hours, and conditions of employment in the sugar industry (in the anti-management sense, of course). Such control was initiated in President Grau's administration (1944-1948) and continued in that of his successor. The workers' benefits that resulted stimulated organized labor to demand that government guarantee similar conditions in other industries, particularly those which were foreign-owned. The party early expressed a policy of firm nationalism in its Cuban-American relations by declaring that any Cuban who accepted foreign intervention was a traitor.⁹ In addition, the colorful leader of the PRC (A), Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín, amplified the program of the party (in the 1944 presidential campaign) to include a Tribunal of Accounts to perform a post-audit of government expenditures, a budget law, a merit system in the civil service, reorganization of the tax system, creation of a merchant marine, a rural school program, hydro-electric construction, and country highways.¹⁰ In his inaugural address to Congress, President Grau also committed the party to the establishment of a national bank. Throughout its history, and particularly after it obtained power in 1944, the PRC (A) promised repeatedly to guarantee honesty in administration, even going so far as to ask for a "law of probity." When he won power, President Grau insisted on declaring his entire wealth before a notary, and his ministers immediately followed his example.¹¹ Carlos Prío, Grau's selection for the party in the 1948 election, reiterated the program of the PRC (A) as stated by Grau almost word for word. "The Revolution," Prío declared, "aspired above all to a *renovación* of Cuban life in the social, political and economic realms."¹²

On the eve of the 1948 presidential nominations, then, the PRC (A) enjoyed positive political assets that augured well for victory: (1) its leaders had opposed Machado and stood firm in the face of exile, torture, and death; (2) the party stood vigorously for Cuban dignity and independence in relations with the United

⁸ *Programa constitucional del Partido Revolucionario Cubano*, p. 6.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰ Speech before the Rotary Club of Havana, *El Mundo*, June 9, 1944, p. 1.

¹¹ *El Mundo*, October 11, 1944, p. 1; August 28, 1945, p. 1; October 7, 1944, p. 1; October 10, 1944, p. 14.

¹² Arturo Alfonso Roselló, "Carlos Prío Socarrás habla sobre sus propósitos de gobierno," *Carteles*, May 16, 1948, pp. 29-30.

States; (3) there was an aggressive, colorful, and successful *jefe máximo* who could provide cohesion within the party; and (4) a program existed that effectively used the symbols of revolution, economic independence, social justice, youth, and modernity to oppose the principles and policies of government of the colonial past. In addition, the party had controlled the government during four years of tremendous prosperity for which it claimed—rightly or wrongly—the full credit.

On the other hand, the PRC (A) was undeniably weaker in 1948 than in 1944. To be sure President Grau's government had acted in the interests of labor, some public works projects had been started, especially workers' housing, a rural school program of importance was in evidence, and roads were considerably improved. But diversification of agriculture was not seriously attempted; the granting of union demands, time after time, tended to discourage investment of capital in Cuba and hence development of industrialization; social justice was not realized in the area of racial discrimination; no Tribunal of Accounts was created; no budget law passed; no national bank; no law of probity; no merit system. These were things the party had promised but failed to achieve. More importantly, perhaps, the administration not only did not protect consumers from the black market but seemed to be encouraging illegality through administrative ineptitude and tolerance of personal dishonesty. The Grau government did not give sincere support to the principles of the parliamentary system,¹³ and it was evident, quite early in the administration, that graft and corruption on an almost unprecedented scale was taking place. One commentator declared cynically, "Cubanity (the government of Grau) has made many things, some good, some bad, but above all it has made millionaires."¹⁴ President Grau's minister of commerce, Inocente Alvarez, was forced by the legislature to resign for allegedly using his position for profit in exchanges of Cuban sugar for Argentine fats and oils.¹⁵ "Inciso K" of the Tax Reform Law permitted the minister of education to handle millions of dollars without accountability, and it was publicly charged and commonly believed that Minister José Manuel Alemán was guilty of appropriating such funds for his personal benefit.¹⁶ Even before the end of

¹³ Stokes, "The Cuban Parliamentary System in Action," *loc. cit.*

¹⁴ Francisco Ichaso, "Las delicias de Capua o riesgo y ventura del PRC (A)," *Bohemia*, August 22, 1948, p. 37.

¹⁵ *El Mundo*, September 21, 1945, p. 1; September 23, 1945, p. 1; September 26, 1945, p. 1, September 27, 29, October 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 21, 1945.

¹⁶ *El Mundo*, May 5, 1948, p. 11.

Grau's administration many Cubans were talking openly of the great deficit that was sure to be found. It was charged that monies had even been misappropriated from special funds which did not belong to the state but which were only under its care. The Sugar Retirement Fund was thought to be short about \$40,000,000. Senator Pelayo Cuervo charged President Grau himself with misappropriations of \$174,241,840 during his administration, and the Supreme Court assumed responsibility for seeing that the charges were investigated and tried. In this regard it is important to note that responsible people almost immediately appeared to offer testimony in support of the charges of fraud against the former president. Dr. Carlos Manuel de la Cruz, for example, president of the Compañía Azucarera Central Ofelia, S. A. accused Dr. Grau of misappropriation of \$18,000,000 of the "sugar differential."¹⁷ It is interesting to note that one of the first things the new president did was to announce the intentions of his government to seek a \$200,000,000 loan.

All of these factors tended to weaken the PRC (A). Many Cubans were disillusioned and the comment could be heard and found in print that Grau and the PRC (A) had betrayed the "Revolution" through failure to implement the very principles which the party professed.¹⁸

The Party of the Cuban People (Orthodox), an opposition offshoot of the PRC (A), dates its origin to a meeting of the assembly of the PRC (A) which took place in Holguín (in Oriente province) on July 14, 1946. A majority of the Assembly, led by "Millo" Ochoa, nominated "Eddy" Chibás for president on the *Auténtico* ticket. Chibás immediately demanded in a radio address that the PRC (A) win power in 1948 without allies in order to rid the party of elements not "*auténtico*" and to administer a government without compromises with the professional politicians. Chibás concluded by declaring that in this way a genuinely revolutionary government could be started. The movement was aided by a group of dissatisfied *Auténtico* senators¹⁹ who had supported an opposition motion in the Senate accusing Grau of violation of the constitution and who now expressed their in-

¹⁷ From January 20, 1949, on, accounts of this important development are found in all the media of communication. See particularly the newspapers *El Mundo*, *Diario de la Marina*, and *Alerta* and the weekly events magazine, *Bohemia*.

¹⁸ See particularly the penetrating study, Carlos González Palacios, *Revolución y pseudo-revolución en Cuba* (Habana, 1948), pp. 177 ff.

¹⁹ There were: "Millo" Ochoa, Adriano Galano, Agustín Cruz, Pelayo Cuervo, and Aurelio Álvarez.

transigence by siding with Chibás. They and nine representatives signed a document expressing their recognition of Chibás as the leader of the PRC (A).²⁰

A complete break with the PRC (A) was precipitated, according to Chibás, by three factors: (1) his realization that the Grau administration was corrupt; (2) the rehabilitation program—rural schools, cement floors in each *bohío*, sanitary latrines, good wells—was stopped in its tracks and Grau did not seem to do anything but make promises; and (3) belief that Grau intended to perpetuate himself in office or effect *continuismo* by hand-picking a successor.²¹

These powerful reasons, however, failed to explain Chibás' inability to perceive obvious peculation on the part of Grau's officials in the years 1944-46. The Inocente Alvarez episode, for example, took place in 1945. I questioned Chibás at some length as to how he could defend Grau and the *Auténticos* repeatedly on his radio program only to discover in a flash that they were grafters, then denounce them and father an opposition movement. His answer was that his enthusiasm for the program and his loyalty for Grau blinded him to what he should have clearly seen.²² But leaders in most of the Cuban parties, the PRC (A) included, declare that Chibás' deviation from time-tested support of the chief of the party came when Grau listened with mock seriousness and evident sympathy to Chibás' divulcation of presidential aspirations, then promptly ridiculed the idea into oblivion with the *Auténtico* organization.

It does appear, however, that although Chibás felt he must break with the Grau-dominated PRC (A), he was reluctant to abandon what he considered to be *Autenticismo*. When the final break came, he bound his supporters to five points, which he declared emphatically were calculated to rescue the principles of *Autenticismo* from official hands and to establish a truly revolutionary party. The program, "economic independence, political liberty, and social justice," assuredly was in the *Auténtico* pattern. Chibás logically insisted that the party should maintain its organization free from pacts or political alliances without ideological content.

The formerly powerful ABC Party surprised political opinion by dissolving and throwing its support to Chibás, but in the 1948

²⁰ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, pp. 67-72.

²¹ "Explica Chibás la causa y origen de su divorcio del Doctor Grau," *Carteles*, May 23, 1948, pp. 28-29. Conversations with Primitivo Rodríguez, Rubén de León and Carlos Prío supposedly convinced Chibás of Grau's desires for "continuismo."

²² Interview with Chibás, August 25, 1948.

reorganization of all Cuban parties, his party got only 164,875 registrants, which led the lukewarm to abandon Chibás for whatever deals they could make with other parties.²³ This however, unified the organization under the leadership of Chibás.

The PRC (A)'s principal political partner in the 1944 and 1948 campaigns was the reactionary Republican Party.²⁴ The reconciliation of the "revolutionary" politics of the PRC (A) with the reaction of the Republican Party produced a disquieting problem among the leaders of both political organizations. The explanation of the distinguished Cuban-historian, Dr. Herminio Portell Vilá, for this union of political opposites, namely that Cuban parties do not represent principles or programs,²⁵ is commonly accepted in Cuba. The origins of the party, however, throw additional light on its election alliance.

The conservative Democratic Party was split by internal disagreement on its presidential candidate in the 1944 elections. When President Batista (as head of the Democratic Party) selected Dr. Carlos Saladrigas as standard bearer, the opposition labeled this move "continuismo" and broke away to form the Republican Party.²⁶ If this opposition group did not support the candidate of President Batista, it would logically be forced to affiliate with the PRC (A) or the Communists or campaign independently. Expediency, in part at least, dictated collaboration with the PRC (A).

The first crisis of the party occurred in 1945 when the President of the National Executive Committee of the party (Dr. Cuervo Rubio) resigned because of President Grau's collaboration with the Communists. Dr. Menocal also retired, mainly because the leaders of the party were disposed to support an *Auténtico* candidate for the *alcaldía* of Habana, thus thwarting his own ambitions for reelection. These developments favored the ambitions of the astute politician Guillermo Alonso Pujol who seized leadership and demonstrated his ability to maintain it in the 1945 and 1947 reorganizations of the party.²⁷

²³ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 72.

²⁴ "Reaction," "conservative," etc. are words frequently used by Cubans to describe the philosophy and program of the Republican Party. See *El Mundo*, January 16, 1944, p. 2; February 10, 1946, p. 19.

²⁵ Interview with Portell Vilá, July 1, 1948.

²⁶ Among the recalcitrant were included Raul García Menocal of Habana, Alonso Pujol y Nodal of Matanzas, José R. Andreu of Los Villas, Pardo Machado and Aguilar Recfo of Camaguey, and "Mon" Corona and "Pepon" Alberni of Oriente.

²⁷ For a documentary history of the background and origin of the Republican Party see Diego de Pereda, *El nuevo pensamiento político de Cuba* (Habana, 1945), pp. 34-53, 705-713, 784-786; see also, "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 67.

Alonso Pujol is credited with establishing the principles of the party in a speech on June 22, 1946. He authored the expression "*permanente renuevo*" which was followed, less happily, by the rejoinder, "*permanente rejuego*." By "*permanente renuevo*," Alonso Pujol meant (1) "*no continuismo*" (or, positively, alternation in power); and (2) "*no comunismo*." More specifically, he committed the party to a "defense of the capital and traditional values of our society, the tutelage (*tutela*) of the family, social order (*del ordenamiento social*), Christian morality, and the rule of law."²⁸ The party managed to attract 236,570 registrants for the 1944 campaign²⁹ (fourth among eight parties) and 282,154 in 1948³⁰ (third out of six parties).

The Liberal Party was the oldest, largest, and most important of the pre-1933 parties. It registered 584,440 supporters for the 1944 campaign and 357,469 for the 1948 contest.³¹ The Liberal Party appeared on the Cuban political scene in 1905 as a fusion of two groups, the "National Liberals" and the "Republicans." The Conservative Party, which opposed the Liberals in the November 14, 1908 elections, combined with disillusioned liberals to form the *Conjunción Patriótica* which won the election of November 1, 1912 with General Mario García Menocal and Enrique José Varona. The Liberal Party was further weakened when Alfredo Zayas deserted ranks and emerged a presidential victor in the 1920 election as a candidate of the Popular Party, although aided by the conservatives. On November 1, 1924, the Liberals ran General Gerardo Machado and Carlos de la Rosa against Conservative General Menocal and Domingo Méndez Capote. The victory of Machado rejuvenated the party but ultimately proved its nemesis. Machado had run on a non-reëlection plank, but he combined with the conservatives to create what was called *cooperativismo* which permitted reform of the constitution to expand the presidential term to six years, make the provision retroactive, and abolish the vice-presidency. With this preparation he was the *candidato único* of the three official parties—Liberal, Conservative, and Popular—in the elections of November 1, 1928.

It was in Machado's second term that the excesses of dictatorship created deep-seated, almost fanatical opposition, and the "butcher of Las Villas" brought himself and his party to ruin in the 1930's. When a general strike forced the abdication of most

²⁸ G. Alonso Pujol, *El permanente renuevo* (Habana, 1947), pp. 29 ff.

²⁹ *El Mundo*, December 3, 1948, p. 1.

³⁰ José D. Cabús, "Ante las urnas: lo que dicen los números," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 67.

³¹ *El Mundo*, December 3, 1948, p. 1; Cabús, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

of the Machado administration by August 12, 1933, decree law (September 19, 1933) promptly dissolved the three parties which made Machado's regime possible and prohibited their reorganization. It was only after an intense press campaign of the liberal newspaperman, Ramón Vasconcelos, that the Council of State, following the instructions of Col. Batista, restored the Liberal Party to legality. In the presidential elections of January 10, 1936 the Liberal Party formed the "Tripartite Alliance" with *Acción Republicana* and *Unión Nacionalista* (also of Liberal origin).

In the reorganization of 1939, the Liberal Party fell into the hands of a new chief, Senator Alfredo Hornedo, who helped form the Democratic-Socialist Coalition made up of liberals, conservatives, nationalists, and communists which, with Batista and Cuervo Rubio, defeated Grau and Carlos E. de la Cruz in the 1940 campaign. The Liberal Party appeared to begin a decline in 1943 when Batista forced the Liberals to sacrifice their natural candidate to his choice for the presidency, Dr. Carlos Saladrigas.³² There is some evidence, however, that the inability of the Liberal Party itself to agree on a single candidate was the major cause of its defeat.³³ In the reorganizations of the Party in 1945 and 1947, Dr. Núñez Portuondo was designated the head of the National Executive Committee of the Liberal Party.

The main strength of the party is in its excellent provincial organization, and it is fair to say that the party stresses loyalty and organization more than program or issues.³⁴ In philosophy and program it is conservative to moderate, depending on specific problems and issues. Financial rectitude, administrative competence, protection of person and property, and modest concessions to welfare demands express, in general, the positive characteristics of the Liberal program. Negatively, of course, it is associated with the terrible excesses of Machado and the unpopularity of Batista.

The Democratic, like the Liberal Party, stems from conservative sources, but whereas the Liberal Party represents "organization," the Democratic Party represents "individualism."³⁵ General

³² Diego de Pereda, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-330; "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1943, p. 66.

³³ Stokes, "The Cuban Parliamentary System in Action," *loc. cit.*

³⁴ The Liberal machine in Pinar del Río was headed in 1948 by Benítez, Garriga and Casanova; in Habana by Alfredo Hornedo; in Matanzas by Calvo Tarafa and Prisciliano Piedra; in Las Villas by Eduardo Suárez Rivas; in Camaguey by Rosell; and in Oriente by Portuondo Domenech. See Dr. Raúl Alfonso Gonsé, "El Partido Liberal," *El Mundo*, March 5, 1944, p. 2.

³⁵ Dr. Raúl Alfonso Gonsé, "El Partido Demócrata," *ibid.*, March 12, 1944, p. 2. See also Diego de Pereda *op. cit.*, pp. 162-165.

Menocal, who appealed to Cuban voters for power in 1908, 1912, 1916, 1924, and 1936, hoped to amalgamate the conservative forces into a majority party. He particularly wanted to weld together the *Conjunto Nacional Democrático* (created in 1935) and the Democratic Republican Party (created in 1939), but his death in 1941 prevented realization of this objective. His followers, led by Guillermo Alonso Pujol, succeeded in 1942, however, and to the above groups was added another of liberal origin, the National Union Party, and parts of *Acción Republicana*. In the congressional elections of 1942 the Democratic Party showed powerful strength with 457,164 votes. In the reorganizations of 1943 the party attracted 562,756 registrants and was second only to the Liberal Party.³⁶ However, this auspicious beginning was slowed by a struggle between Gustavo Cuervo Rubio and Carlos Saladrigas for leadership in the party. When President Batista threw his strength to Saladrigas, many of the leaders resigned to form the Republican Party. When Saladrigas was defeated in the 1944 elections, a large number of the members of the Democratic Party deserted for the PRC (A) and Republican parties so that for the 1948 campaign the party registered only 188,610 votes.³⁷

The Popular Socialist Party is not socialist but communist. One can find a background of socialist organization, however, in the activities of Antonio Rodríguez Feo, Manuel Martínez, Ambrosio Broges Figueredo and Diego Vicente Tejera, who formed a Socialist Party in 1899. The party died on birth, although it reappeared under the leadership of Tejera in 1901 with the name Popular Party and participated in the municipal elections.³⁸

Carlos Baliño and Julio Antonio Mella founded the Communist Party in 1925, but it was declared illegal by Machado and many of its supporters were imprisoned. Beginning as a revolutionary force, the party fought all other political organizations equally. The failure of the March, 1935, strike, however, precipitated a drastic revision of tactics. The party created the “*consigna*” “*Unidad Popular*” and collaborated in the years 1936-1938 with other revolutionary sectors in the fight for the Constituent Assembly and the drafting of a new Constitution. The party had created a semi-legal entity called Revolutionary Union to protect itself from Batista’s repression, but in September, 1938 it reached a surprising agreement with its erstwhile antagonist. Communists then formed the Communist Revolutionary Union Party,

³⁶ *El Mundo*, December 3, 1943, p. 1. ³⁷ Cabús, *op. cit.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

assisted in the formation of the Democratic Socialist Coalition in 1940, won seats in the lower house of the national legislature and in 1942 elected Francisco Rosales *alcalde* of Manzanillo (the first time a communist was elected to such a position in Cuba).

The name was changed to Popular Socialist Party for the elections of 1944 which saw the communists supporting Batista's candidate Saladrigas. They won three seats in the senate and ten in the lower house. With the defeat of Saladrigas, the party shifted its support to the victor, Grau San Martín, but was forced out in the later years of President Grau's administration.³⁹

The leader and presidential candidate of the communists in the 1948 elections contends that the Cuban communist party is the best organized and disciplined in America. Although it registered 157,283 supporters for the 1948 campaign and received almost as many votes in the election, it considers only about 35,000 reliable and prefers to work through this militant core. The postulates of the party are three: (1) accept the program; (2) pay the quota (1% of earnings); and (3) be a member of a group and work within it.⁴⁰ The communists have attracted excellent leaders, the most astute probably being Juan Marinello, Lázaro Peña and Salvador García Agüero. Others include Blas Roca, Joaquín Ordoqui and César Vilar.⁴¹ The internal immediate program of the party is improvement in the conditions of employment of workers (not "middle class" workers) with socialization of productive facilities as the ultimate economic goal.⁴²

III

American scholarship has failed to produce definitive studies of the determinants in nomination or the power factors in politics that condition success or failure at the polls in the United States. Even the casual voter is aware, however, that in the nomination and election process such things as sectionalism and "availability" are considered more or less seriously by the leaders in the Republican and Democratic parties. It would be unrealistic not to recognize the same considered opportunism in Cuban *políticos*, although the attitudes (perhaps myths) that dominate their thinking might not be susceptible of any greater scientific demonstration than their counterparts in American politics. Thus, in Cu-

³⁹ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 66.

⁴⁰ Interview with J. Marinello, August 5, 1948.

⁴¹ *El Mundo*, October 24, 1942, p. 2; see also, Diego de Pereda, *op. cit.*, pp. 447-455, 497-501.

⁴² Interview with J. Marinello, August 5, 1948.

ban politics the sectional formula (importance of selecting a candidate from a large, doubtful section) is not a conscious factor. Both Grau and Prío were born in Pinar del Río, next to the smallest province in number of votes, and in political campaigns they never attempted to obscure their early residence there by emphasis on their long professional careers in powerful Habana. In the elections, however, the important money and political talent are thrown into Habana, Oriente, and Las Villas in that order (the largest provinces).⁴³

The components of a Cuban version of "availability" include: (1) at least passive Catholicism. A successful candidate need not be a practicing Catholic, but I was assured on all sides that leadership would not consider an active Protestant; (2) an acceptance and defense of *criollo* culture in respect to general attitudes on life; (3) an emphasis on intellectual attainment. Military prowess as a political asset has seemingly been superseded since the Machado administration by this factor, and the *doctorado en filosofía*, or a professional degree, are virtual prerequisites to success in the Cuban electoral arena; (4) ability to speak and write in such a way as to capture the popular imagination. Although women vote in Cuban elections, there does not seem to be any effort made to accommodate a candidate to the women's vote, at least not in the sex-appeal sense. Thus, a candidate can lack the usual physical attainments of attraction, such as height, strength, pleasant features, etc., and still be considered seriously. Nor is a man's deviations from established standards of morality a disqualifying factor. Certain presidents in recent years, reputedly, had illicit or extra-marital relations well-known to the public, yet in no instance were these relations made an issue in the campaigns. The same generalization is applicable to malfeasance in office. General Batista failed to put over his candidate Carlos Saladrigas in the 1944 campaign, yet the fact that Batista had become a millionaire in office by his own admission⁴⁴ was not made an issue and did not seem to be a relevant point in explaining his defeat. Alonso Pujol, who won the vice-presidency in 1948 on the *alianza* ticket, fled to Europe on June 11, 1938 with several million dollars in Public Works bonds, precipitating what has been called one of the greatest scandals in Cuban republican life.⁴⁵ The cases of Inocente Alvarez, José Manuel Alemán, César

⁴³ That some interest is developing in the sectional implications of Cuban politics is seen in Tomás M. Montero Jr., "Con solo dos provincias puede ganarse la presidencia," *Bohemia*, May 23, 1948, pp. 12, 115.

⁴⁴ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, August 1, 1948, p. 56.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, April 11, 1948, p. 57.

Casas and others in recent Cuban political history are commonly known and discussed.⁴⁶ These general considerations must preface an analysis of the specific techniques and problems of nomination in 1948.

About a dozen politicians coveted the presidency to the extent of making known their availability for nomination. Among the *Auténticos* were President Grau himself; Carlos Prío Socarrás, prime minister and long-time friend of the president; José R. San Martín, minister of public works and cousin of the president; and Miguel Suárez Fernández, president of the Senate. In addition, there were Senator "Eddy" Chibás of the Cuban People's Party, Dr. Raúl G. Menocal of the Democratic Party, Dr. Ricardo Núñez Portuondo of the Liberal Party, Guillermo Alonso Pujol of the Republican Party, Juan Marinello of the Communist Party, and Miguel Coyula (since deceased), editor of the important Habana daily, *El Mundo*.

One might expect potential presidential candidates to campaign actively in the provinces in an effort to capture sufficient strength to dominate the national nominating conventions of parties or coalitions. The highly personalistic nature of Cuban parties, however, relegates such tactics to the periphery of political planning. President Grau, for example, occupied the crucial position in the nomination struggle of the PRC (A). It is true that candidates sought provincial support and campaigned for it, but it is also undeniably true that they (and the electorate at large) were more interested in discovering the candidate the *jefe máximo* would support. The president delayed in the announcement of his choice, and in so doing sharpened the tension of the campaign. One common explanation for the president's planned silence was that he was thoroughly aware of the dissatisfaction of many segments of Cuban opinion with the record of *Auténtico* government and wanted to be certain that his final choice was the strongest candidate in the PRC. But another explanation, less sanguine, is that the president longed to perpetuate himself. Congressman Primitivo Rodríguez (loyal Grau supporter, appointed minister without portfolio in the new government) informed me in detail that Grau had asked him directly and specifically to propagandize for reelection. When the effort proved unpopular, Grau ordered Rodríguez to discontinue the campaign for *continuismo*.⁴⁷ Un-

⁴⁶ Occasionally one finds bitter charges that capacity, training, integrity and public welfare are not considered in the selection of presidential candidates. See Juan Jacobo, "Tabletas comprimidas," *Cuba Económica y Financiera*, March, 1948, p. 51.

⁴⁷ Interview with Rodríguez, August 19, 1948. The radio broadcasts of Primitivo Rodríguez on the reelection of President Grau are, of course, a matter of public record.

certainty as to Grau's final decision kept most of the candidates in line and prevented complete party disintegration. On the other hand, "Eddy" Chibás became convinced that he was not on Grau's active list, and he made his bid through the formation of the Cuban People's Party. In addition, in January of 1948, Dr. Miguel A. Suárez Fernández, president of the Senate, indicated his lack of confidence in his chances with Grau by writing a letter to the liberal newspaper *El Mundo* announcing his candidacy. He declared that no more complete statement could be made until the "legal" problems of the assemblies of Matanzas and Camaguey were resolved.⁴⁸ It was common knowledge that he hoped to capture the two provincial delegations and force Grau and the other *Auténtico* leaders to accept him. Suárez Fernández surmised correctly that Grau would not voluntarily support him, for, by the former president's own admission, he did not even consider Suárez Fernández a true *Auténtico*.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, in the nominating fight in the province of Matanzas, the forces of Suárez Fernández prevailed, although not without bloody conflict between the César Casas and Diego Vicente Tejera groups in which at least three persons were wounded.⁵⁰ In addition, Suárez Fernández won control of Las Villas which with Matanzas gave him forty-two delegates at the *Auténtico* convention, with the favorable possibility of obtaining the twenty-one of Camaguey. At this time the other *Auténtico* candidates collectively could not count on more than sixty-three convention votes.

The position of Suárez Fernández was further strengthened by the growing conviction on the part of many political leaders that the only practicable method of defeating Grau was by uniting all anti-Grau forces. Dr. Raúl G. Menocal withdrew from the presidential race early in January and urged that the opposition parties agree on a *candidato único*.⁵¹ Menocal and other leaders of the Democratic Party had gone along tentatively with the carefully calculated plan of the newspaper *El Mundo* to nominate Miguel Coyula, editor of that liberal paper, as a non-political candidate representing the opposition parties.⁵² Coyula, however qualified and distinguished, was old and lacked aggressiveness; in addition, he did not have machine support to carry his candidacy through the hard fights at the local and provincial level. Further-

⁴⁸ *El Mundo*, January 2, 1948, p. 8.

⁴⁹ "Porque hice presidente a Carlos Prío," *Bohemia*, January 30, 1949, p. 65.

⁵⁰ *El Mundo*, January 2, 1948, p. 11.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, January 6, 1948, p. 1.

⁵² Interview with Dr. Jorge L. Martí, editorial writer for *El Mundo*.

more, the Liberals, the strongest opposition bloc, refused to go along. Coyula's public statement released late in January declaring that he did not seek the presidency was a graceful exit from a contest he could not win.⁵³ "Eddy" Chibás announced on his Sunday radio broadcast on January 4 that the Party of the Cuban People pledged support of a plan to unite opposition to Grau. However, he qualified his stand by stating he would support any candidate not connected with the Liberal or Democratic parties.⁵⁴ This maintained his own campaign open, and, of course, it encouraged Suárez Fernández to believe that he might obtain the support of the Cuban People's Party. Chibás' bold rejection of Liberal or Democratic affiliation was not entirely a matter of principle. He had accepted a pact with the Liberals of Las Villas and also with *Acción Republicana* in 1940 and with the Republican Party and some Liberal groups in 1944. The evidence demonstrates that he personally stumped in Las Villas and Matanzas in an effort to persuade the *Auténticos* there to support these pacts.

The national assembly of the Popular Socialist Party nominated Juan Marinello and Lázaro Peña as their presidential and vice-presidential candidates, respectively, on January 10, but at the same time voted to direct a letter to the chiefs of the Liberal, Orthodox, and Democratic parties proposing a common front in the forthcoming elections. Representatives of the Democratic, Liberal and Cuban People's parties began conversations, on January 14, in an effort to find a program formula to unite the opposition. The communists were not invited to collaborate, and Suárez F. was not represented. The firm position of Suárez F. in the total picture was seen, however, in the meeting of the national assembly of the PRC (A) on January 22, in which the delegations of Las Villas and Matanzas, which he controlled, did not attend.⁵⁵

By the end of January and the first week of February, all opposition segments (except the communists) were in consultation on the establishment of a Third Front against the government coalition. All but the Liberals appeared willing to accept Suárez F. as the opposition candidate, although with the uneasy misgivings that Suárez F. might be utilizing opposition vehicles to bludgeon the *Auténticos* into accepting him as the government

⁵³ The statement was in the form of a letter to Guido García Inclán, *redactor* of the column, "En la trinchera del deber," of *Prensa Libre*. See *El Mundo*, January 28, 1948, p. 1.

⁵⁴ *El Mundo*, January 6, 1948, p. 11.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, January 11, 1948, p. 1; January 15, p. 1; January 23, p. 1.

candidate. The *Ortodoxos* were credited with the proposal that the impasse be broken by agreement on a candidate outside all of the opposition parties, the so-called thesis of the equidistant candidate (*candidato equidistante*). The Liberals reiterated their intransigent attitude, however, and declared that they would campaign alone with their choice (Núñez P.) if necessary.⁵⁶

These fumbling attempts to crystallize opposition parties stimulated PRC (A) candidates to greater activity. José Manuel Alemán (never an announced candidate) withdrew officially from the struggle and publicly extended his support to Carlos Prío in February. Despite this tremendous bonanza, the Prío forces were agitated by an insistent rumor to the effect that President Grau was working for the *imposición* of his cousin, minister of public works José R. San Martín. It was manifest that San Martín was receiving large budgets for construction of bridges, highways, etc. Santiago Rodríguez and Segundo Curti (Prío supporters) both castigated the minister of public works for unfairly assuming personal credit for public works construction. For entirely different reasons the supporters of Miguel Suárez F. declared on February 16 that they would not vote for the nomination of San Martín on the *Auténtico* ticket.⁵⁷

Late in February Suárez F. concluded that the time had arrived to push his bid for the PRC (A) nomination, and he announced that he was ready to discuss means of solving the crisis within the government party. President Grau remained conspicuously silent, however, and as the days passed Suárez F. was not approached by any emissary from the *tercer piso* (third floor headquarters of President Grau in the presidential building). In his radio address of February 29, Chibás declared that he was ready to talk Third Front politics. This firm invitation plus the failure of the government to evince any interest whatever in Suárez F. galvanized the latter into action, and on Monday, March 1, he met with democrats, *Ortodoxos* and groups from other parties.⁵⁸

In a controlled convention, in the meantime, the national assembly of the Liberal Party met and nominated Núñez P. for the presidency. Senators Simeón Ferro and Manuel Pérez Galán, chiefs of the Democratic Party in Pinar del Río, had shown reluctance on other occasions when the Third Front was mentioned. Now they openly pleaded for a pact with the Liberals. It ap-

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, February 8, 1948, p. 19; February 10, p. 11.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, February 4, 1948, p. 11; February 5, p. 11; February 11, p. 11; February 15, p. 19; February 17, p. 11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, February 27, 1948, p. 11; March 2, p. 11; March 4, p. 1.

peared, however, that the majority of the Democratic leaders favored a union with Suárez F. and the *Ortodoxos* and, on March 5, they appointed a committee to try to work out a method for reaching a unanimous decision. Suárez F. met on Saturday morning (March 6) with Drs. Carlos Saladrigas, Raúl Menocal, Jorge García Montes, and Miguel de León to demonstrate province by province how they could win in June. The Democratic leaders were less than completely convinced, and they continued their discussions that night in Dr. Raúl Menocal's home, agreeing finally to meet with Núñez P. on Sunday for an exchange of views. This expedient did not unite internal differences within the party, but the same group tried again Monday night (March 8) until 1:00 A.M. in an effort to achieve agreement. This evidence of irreconcilably divided leadership was corroborated by the decision to poll the provincial chiefs separately on the issue in a last attempt to reach working accord.⁵⁹

Liberal, "orthodox" and Democratic leaders conferred the next day, but the conditions for success were lacking. It was obvious that the Liberals simply would not discuss the Third Front unless it were first agreed to accept their candidate for the top position. When Raúl Menocal merely implied that it would be desirable to seek a candidate who would be accepted by all parties, Núñez P. petulantly announced that he would withdraw if that would unify the opposition forces. This was the signal for the Liberals to walk out of the meeting, and the following day the six provincial chiefs of the party officially requested Núñez P. to withdraw his resignation as a candidate, declaring emphatically that the Liberal Party would run him with or without pacts as their presidential candidate.⁶⁰ The *Ortodoxos* were no more willing to give ground. Chibás and others created the impression, publicly, that they were willing to make all sacrifices for the Third Front, but Chibás informed me personally that he never seriously considered any candidate from any of traditional parties as a suitable leader for an opposition coalition and would never have approved Núñez P.⁶¹

On March 11 in the afternoon seventy-nine *Auténtico* delegates met at the party headquarters in Habana (at Quinta and "A" in Vedado) to nominate Carlos Prío and Guillermo Alonso Pujol for the presidency and vice-presidency on the PRC (A) ticket. The seventy-nine delegates comprised what was called a "functional quorum," inasmuch as Suárez F. controlled the representa-

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, March 5, 1948, p. 1; March 6, p. 1; March 7, p. 1; March 9, p. 1.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, March 10, 1948, p. 1; March 11, p. 1.

⁶¹ Interview with Chibás, August 25, 1948.

tives from Las Villas and Matanzas, and they stayed away. Not all the seventy-nine delegates officially present were actually present, Grau and Alemán included. It was evident from the formal accounts of the proceedings that the convention was rigged. Florencio Nibot, delegate from Pinar del Río, presented Prío's name and asked for unanimity in a standing vote, which was given without opposition or debate. Then, in accordance with the provisions of the electoral code, the leadership asked for and got a formal vote. Party stalwarts mounted the rostrum and delivered addresses—"Tony" Varona, "Manolo" Rivero Setién, Primitivo Rodríguez, "Lolo" Soldevilla, and finally Carlos Prío himself. In the meantime, crowds of people congregated before the *Palacio* to wait for the name of the candidate. This is where Grau had his headquarters, and it was obvious that the populace expected the decision on the nomination to emanate from that source rather than the convention hall.⁶² Both Cubans and long-time American residents informed me that the word was passed to the crowds that Prío was the man even before the vote had been taken in Vedado. If there is any doubt that the convention merely rubberstamped President Grau's selection, one has only to refer to a remarkable statement by Grau himself published in *Bohemia* (most widely read Habana weekly magazine) on January 30, 1949, entitled, "Why I made Carlos Prío President"⁶³ Grau outlined frankly the political, personal and ideological factors that conditioned his thinking and led him to the selection of Prío. His statement vividly sharpens the picture of personal party control, and one is left with the feeling that Grau was the one element of genuine importance in the nominating process of the PRC (A). The candid, even brutal, revelations of Grau were cause for acute suffering among the Prío supporters who were handed the "democratic" banners of the "Revolution" to maintain aloft. Grau spoke of his former minister of education in the most glowing terms, and declared that if Alemán, who controlled three of the four delegations, had not been loyal, the nomination of Prío might not have been possible. The president alluded to the charges that Alemán had stolen from the public treasury and declared: "He has a lot of money? All right, he is a senator, and senators get I don't know how much."⁶⁴

The nomination of Carlos Prío precipitated a crisis for the Third Front. Around noon of March 12, Drs. Carlos Saladrigas

⁶² *El Mundo*, March 12, 1948, pp. 1, 11; "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, March 21, 1948, p. 57.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

and Raúl Menocal notified Dr. Suárez F. that the Democratic Party not only vetoed his nomination but demanded the provincial government of Las Villas and a number of senators in the provinces controlled by the Suárez bloc as a price for continued participation in the Third Front talks. This drastic decision appeared to be an excuse for withdrawal of the Democratic Party in the event more favorable political affiliations should become available. Suárez F. immediately countered this prelude to disintegration with an invitation to the national assembly of the Democratic Party to meet in the interests of a united front of opposition. He declared that he was willing to delegate the nomination of president and vice-president to committees of the three groups making up the Third Front.⁶⁵ On Saturday night (March 13) the leaders of the incipient "front" met at the *finca* Louisiana, owned by Senator José Manuel Tarafa, and Suárez F. made a determined effort to unify support for his nomination. Even in the face of the new-formed unity of the PRC (A), the "front" group failed to subordinate personal and party ambitions, and no genuine agreement resulted.

Suárez F. now authorized Diego Vicente Tejera and Porfirio Penda to contact the Prío forces and accept any agreement as long as they got four senators in Las Villas, four in Matanzas and one in each of the other provinces. These secret overtures seemed to produce favorable results, for the representatives of Carlos Prío viewed the proposals of Suárez F. with sympathy, and definitely approved the approach in principle. Suárez F. permitted this introductory victory to beguile him into relaxing his efforts to establish the Third Front on a working basis. Although he waited for ratification of his plan from the Prío headquarters, none developed. In desperation, he sought another meeting, and again the Prío forces evinced interest. At this juncture Grau broke his silence with the firm recommendation that Prío sanction no agreements or understandings whatever with Suárez F. Although Suárez F. and his advisers met several times at the homes of "Tony" Varona or Sánchez Arango, it was evident that Grau had prevented Suárez F. from realizing even small fruits from the *Auténtico* power which he possessed.⁶⁶

The only possibility that now remained was the revival of the Third Front, and Suárez F. made vigorous efforts to bring the divergent forces into a working opposition team. On Tuesday,

⁶⁵ *El Mundo*, March 13, 1948, p. 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, March 14, 1948, p. 1; "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, March 21, 1948, pp. 58, 62.

March 16, he and his advisers mapped a campaign of action at the home of Dr. Manuel Capetany in Vedado which was followed the next night by a serious session of all three elements—Democratic and Orthodox parties and the *Auténticos* led by Suárez F.—in the Salon of the Presidency of the Senate. One night later the national assemblies of the Democratic and Orthodox parties nominated Drs. Miguel Suárez F. and Raúl G. Menocal for the presidency and vice-presidency respectively. This was but a paper semblance of unity, however, and the Third Front did not last ten days. One apparently insuperable obstacle was the intransigence of Antonio Martínez Fraga of Las Villas who was closely affiliated with the Liberals and had worked unceasingly for Núñez P. A rumor of failure (March 25) cushioned the fact of Democratic withdrawal. The next day the leaders of the three groups agreed to transmit a letter to their respective national assemblies withdrawing the nominations for president and vice-president. The Third Front was dead.⁶⁷

With the final unified threat to the PRC (A) dissipated through default, the individual segments coalesced or went their several ways, depending upon real or imagined self-interest. The Liberals completed their ticket by selecting Dr. Gustavo Cuervo Rubio to campaign as a running mate for Núñez P. The national assembly of the Democratic Party accepted fourteen senators and three provincial governments in return for supporting the Liberal Party candidates. The PRC (A) completed its plans by formalizing a partnership with the Republican Party under which the latter would receive, in the event of victory, the vice-presidency, sixteen senators, and three provincial governments.⁶⁸

Even these agreements were not consummated in an atmosphere of sweet reason. Neither Grau nor Prío seemed to be able to persuade the *Auténticos* to accept the party's senatorial and gubernatorial candidates in the provinces. Only Pinar del Río was characterized by party regularity. There were two slates of candidates here and there, and the Camaguey *Auténticos* flatly demanded more than the three senators allotted them. The *alcalde* of Nuevitas, Dr. Sergio Brice, a delegate to the provincial assembly of the PRC (A) for Camaguey, was kidnapped and immobilized politically from December 29, 1947 to March 30, 1948. Representative Arturo Vinent was killed in Oriente in an inter-

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1948, p. 1; March 19, pp. 1, 4; March 26, p. 1; March 27, p. 1; March 28, p. 1; "en Cuba," *Bohemia* March 21, 1948, pp. 57-58.

⁶⁸ *El Mundo*, March 30, 1948, p. 1.

necine *Auténtico* quarrel, and serious disputes involving violence took place in Las Villas and Matanzas as well.⁶⁹

The Cuban People's Party (Orthodox) maintained the isolation it had long supported and nominated "Eddy" Chibás and Roberto Agramonte for the presidency and vice-presidency by unanimous vote on April 6.⁷⁰ The Communists had long been quarantined by all other parties and were forced by circumstances to campaign alone.

IV

Carlos Prío Socorrás, the handsome, always smiling candidate of the government party was born July 14, 1903, in the little town of Bahía Honda in Pinar del Río. His family moved to Habana when he was young, and he was educated at the University there. Prío's interest in politics developed when he was a student in the law school, and he was elected unanimously to the only executive position of the anti-Machado organization, the *Directorio Estudiantil*, which was set up in 1930. When, in September of that year, the student leader Rafael Trejo was killed in a protest demonstration, the leaders included Carlos Prío.⁷¹ As a result of these activities, Prío was incarcerated in Castillo del Príncipe for 105 days, and when freed he rejoined the groups endeavoring to oust Machado by force. Prío participated in the uprising of August, 1931, and with its failure was finally forced into exile. In 1932, however, he returned clandestinely to rejoin the fight and was one of the small group in the *cuartel* "Máximo Gómez" which, on August 12, 1932, demanded the resignation of President Machado.

During the government of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Prío served as president of the *Junta Revolucionaria de Colombia*, which established the government of the *Quinquvirato* which in turn made way for Grau's first government. Prío supported Grau loyally, although he did not occupy any official position in the government. He was secretary of the Cuban delegation to the Montevideo Conference (where he discussed Cuban problems with Hull), and on his return he worked energetically in the *Auténtico* organization. Prío was a delegate to the 1939 Constituent Convention and from 1940 on was a senator from Pinar del Río. As a member of the Government, he served as minister of labor and as prime minister. In the former position he im-

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1948, p. 1; April 1, p. 1; April 2, p. 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, April 6, 1948, p. 13.

⁷¹ The others were: Alpizar, Fuentes Blandino, Rubén de León, Mujar, Pablo de la Torriente, Raul Roa and "Tony" Varona.

plemented President Grau's anti-communist program by destroying Popular Socialist (communist) control over the labor movement.⁷² Communist Juan Marinello accused Prío of leading "divisionist and anti-democratic" attacks on the Cuban labor movement in the interests of the "Yankee imperialists" and charged that Prío was a "reactionary."⁷³

Carlos Prío, his close friends declare, is likeable, amiable, in a word *simpático*, but his strongest point is that of personal and party loyalty.⁷⁴ Indeed, it was due in large part to Prío's unswerving loyalty that Grau supported him for the presidency.⁷⁵ Others describe him as a mediocre but clever politician who substitutes audacity for capacity and who does not presume honor, "nor can he."⁷⁶ I found the attitude widespread in political circles, even among a number of *Auténtico* leaders, that Carlos Prío had accumulated a sizeable fortune as a member of Grau's government.

Ricardo Núñez Portuondo, the candidate of the Liberal-Democratic coalition, was born in Philadelphia in 1893 where his father, General Emilio Núñez, was an active member of the revolutionary independence group. When independence was achieved the family returned to Cuba and Ricardo went to primary and secondary schools, then the school of medicine of the University of Habana where he graduated in 1914. He continued his medical studies in Pennsylvania and New York, and after a trial at pediatrics, he concentrated on surgery. Núñez P. entered the University in 1926 as a professor and later distinguished himself as secretary and president of the Cuban Medical Federation. In 1934, however, he was forced from his university position by students who charged that he was tied to the Machado administration. President Batista restored Núñez P. to his post in the University. He sought unsuccessfully to obtain the leadership of the Liberal Party and run as its candidate in 1940 and 1944, but in the reorganization of 1945 he emerged as national chief of liberalism.⁷⁷ Although regarded as an outstanding surgeon, exemplary gentleman, and a man of rectitude and honor, Núñez P. had been out

⁷² Some of the formal details of Prío's career are found in, "La biografía del presidente electo Carlos Prío Socarrás," *Carteles*, June 6, 1948, p. 32; "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 72.

⁷³ Juan Marinello, *Discurso en la interpelación senatorial al ministro del trabajo Carlos Prío Socarrás* (Habana, 1948), pp. 5, 9.

⁷⁴ Interview with Raul Ros, August 9, 1948.

⁷⁵ "Porque hice presidente a Carlos Prío," *Bohemia*, January 30, 1949, p. 65.

⁷⁶ José Pardo Llada, "Por cual votar?" *Bohemia*, January 30, 1948, p. 57.

⁷⁷ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 72.

of Cuban politics for many years, had never filled an executive post, was regarded as a poor speaker, and wasn't known to write much except in learned medical journals.⁷⁸

The most colorful candidate in the 1948 campaign was "Eddy" Chibás, neither doctor, nor lawyer, nor politician, at least not the *simpático* type of Cuban politician. He might more accurately be characterized as a "professional agitator" shouting passionately "in constant denunciation."⁷⁹ A man in his early forties, Chibás began his political career in 1927 as an anti-Machado member of the *Directorio Estudiantil Universitario*. He worked actively against the reelection of Machado and the *prórroga de poderes* and was expelled from the university and imprisoned for four months for these activities. Although later exiled, he managed to reënter the country secretly in 1930. With the defeat of Machado he participated in the government of Grau in 1933 but without holding an executive position.

Chibás early demonstrated an almost fanatical courage. He was a delegate to the Constituent Convention where his proposal of aid to Finland raised strong communist opposition against him. His first conspicuous success in Cuban politics came in 1940 when he was elected to the lower house from Habana, which was followed by election to the Senate from the same province. From 1944 until the formation of the Cuban People's Party, Chibás supported Grau loyally on his weekly radio program. Chibás was easily the most successful commentator on the air, largely because of his exposés and blunt disregard for personal or political security.⁸⁰ His opponents, and even some of his friends, argue that he is a man without profound appreciation of public issues and problems and without great administrative ability, but every person I talked to agreed that Chibás was a man of unblemished probity. Former President Batista once remarked in a public interview that although other *Auténticos* had approached him for favors, even money, when he was President, Chibás never once asked for anything.⁸¹

Juan Marinello Vidaurreta, the presidential candidate of the Popular Socialist Party, is about fifty years of age and from Las Villas. Professionally, he is known as a professor (in a secondary school), poet, and essayist. Marinello has been prominent in politics since 1923 when he was associated with a movement

⁷⁸ José Pardo Llada, *op. cit.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 72; interview with Chibás, August 25, 1948; with Saladrigas, August 3, 1948.

⁸¹ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, August 1, 1948, p. 56.

called Veterans and Patriots. He was jailed several times for outspoken opposition to Machado, and while in Mexico his left-wing tendencies matured. On his return to Cuba in 1933 he became president of the Anti-Imperialist League, which was created under the auspices of the Communist Party. Later Dr. Marinello became president of the *Partido Unión Revolucionaria*, which worked with the Communist Party in the election of delegates to the Constituent Convention of which Marinello was a member. He ran for *alcalde* of Habana in 1940, but was defeated. In 1942, however, he was elected to the lower house, and in 1943 was brought into Batista's cabinet, the first communist in Latin America, I believe, to occupy such a position. In 1944, Marinello was elected to the Senate from Camaguey and was made vice-president of that body.⁸² Although there are some experienced men in Cuban politics, themselves anti-communist, who believe that Marinello represents a kind of domestic, nationalistic communism,⁸³ my extended conversations with Marinello led me to the conclusion that he was clearly a Leninist-Stalinist.⁸⁴ He is a good orator and superior writer.⁸⁵

V

In all political systems in which the approbation of the people is required by leadership the centers of political strength must be ascertained and captured in accordance with appropriate techniques. In Cuba the most cohesive and powerful popular or mass groups include organized labor, especially the sugar, transportation, and dock workers, the veterans, and the university students. Women voters function in these categories, but their vote is, in addition, tied in part to the Church. Among racial groups the Negroes are easily the most important, but the Chinese and Jews are numerous enough to command attention in Habana and some of the other larger centers. Middle-class groups and the powerful landed, commercial, and manufacturing elements command attention, if not for the numbers of votes they possess as individuals, for the influence their intelligence and affluence provide.

The parties and coalitions solicited support from these groups through various media of communication. Indeed, if success of the democratic process could accurately be measured by the ex-

⁸² *Ibid.*, May 30, 1948, p. 72.

⁸³ Interview with Alvarez Tabio, July 14, 1948; with González Alfonso, August 16, 1948.

⁸⁴ Interview with Marinello, August 5, 1948.

⁸⁵ José Pardo Llada, "Por cual votar?" *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, p. 57.

tent to which party viewpoints were presented to the public, this Cuban election would receive the maximum rating. For two months prior to the election political propaganda crowded the air waves, newspapers, weekly periodicals, and billboards. Every lightpost, tree, house, barn, building, bridge, or other stationary object was plastered with campaign literature; monster demonstrations were staged nightly; and auto caravans covered most of the republic.

The evidence of extensive campaign activities on all sides suggested the expenditure of very large sums of money. Speaking of congressional elections, Dr. José Manuel Cortina, the distinguished exponent of the Cuban parliamentary system, declared: "I believe the cost for candidates in Cuba is the highest in the world." He went on to estimate that such elections would cost the candidate between \$50,000 and \$100,000.⁸⁶ Important members of both the Grau and Prío governments informed me that the administration had given the secretary of the *Juventud* section of the PRC (A) \$122,000 for his congressional campaign. (The man still lost!) The same politicians estimated that the government had spent at least \$6,000,000 of public monies in the campaign.⁸⁷ I mention this figure because of all the statements I was able to obtain from the leaders of the respective party groups, it was the lowest. Carlos Peláez, defeated candidate for the Senate from Habana, declared that, "Senator Pelayo Cuervo spent between \$200,000 and \$250,000 in the campaign. The cattle producers contributed only \$80,000 [of this amount] and his fellow party member "Fico" Fernández [contributed] with a check for \$50,000."⁸⁸ José Manuel Casanova, leader of the Liberals of Pinar del Río and a sugar magnate (now deceased), said: "In recent times I have spent \$457,000 in the Party."⁸⁹ There were rumors of vote-purchasing by the government in which up to twenty dollars per vote was allegedly paid.⁹⁰ President Grau caused about \$110,000,000 to be expended in public works from 1946 to March, 1948, and every public construction job exhibited a large bill-board sign proclaiming it a product of the Grau administration and propagandizing for the PRC (A). It was axiomatic that the various departments of government should cam-

⁸⁶ M. Millares Vásquez, "Entrevista con el Doctor José Manuel Cortina," *Carteles*, May 9, 1948, p. 41.

⁸⁷ Data from interview materials in my files obtained in August, 1948.

⁸⁸ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, June 20, 1948, p. 59.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁹⁰ Interview with Jesús Montero (editor and publisher), July 1, 1948.

paign for Carlos Prío, the candidate of the PRC (A). One critic declared bluntly that such activities were carried beyond the realm of propriety by the Ministry of Education, and charged that their practices approached robbery.⁹¹

The parties did not expend these huge sums primarily to educate the voting populace on specific issues of public policy. All parties were engaged in a desperate struggle to win votes, and an exposition of views on serious issues in the economic, social or governmental realms was resorted to only for the benefit of those small numbers of citizens who could be attracted through no other technique. The masses, however (in a manner certainly not limited to Cuban politics alone), were bombarded by emotional charges against persons, gross over-simplifications of complex problems, and calculated misrepresentation of issues, as well as expression of honest and sincere enthusiasm for party, personnel, and program.

The *Auténticos* propagandized with a sure touch. The landed, commercial, and manufacturing classes were assured by inference that the basic institution of private property would be protected, whereas the small farmers were promised land reform and the city workers an expanding program of industrialization.⁹² But it was "The Revolution" that had the magic ring which Pied Pipered the hopeful common people to the polls. It was manifestly difficult to defend the government of the "Revolution" in terms of specific accomplishments. It was even embarrassing to discuss the personnel of the party of the "Revolution," for so many of them were generally believed to have dishonored general morality and the revolutionary movement by their base thievery in public office. Instead, the leadership of the PRC (A) happily joined the "Revolution" in conflict with an obnoxious straw man, *Machadismo*. As the Liberal-Democratic coalition constituted

⁹¹ Raúl Lorenzo, "Está el Ministerio de Educación sumergido en una fétida ciénega," *Bohemia*, July 8, 1948, p. 51.

⁹² "Prío, Chibás y Núñez Portuondo ofrecen al pueblo sus programas," *Bohemia*, May 23, 1948, p. 76. The Federación Nacional de la Propiedad, made up of forty local associations throughout the country, was unimpressed with the *Auténtico* views on private property. See Editorial, *Revista Nacional de la Propiedad Urbana*, June, 1948, p. 3. The Asociación Nacional de Industrias de Cuba in its publication *Boletín Semanal* constantly questioned Grau's policies in respect to property, and the editorials in *El Mundo Azucarero* reflected similar attitudes. Organizations representing men who employ practically all Cuban labor are: Asociación de Colonos de Cuba, Asociación Nacional de Hacendados de Cuba, Unión de Fabricantes de Tabaco, Cámara Nacional de Minería, Asociación de Cosecheros de Papas y Frutos Menores, Colegio de Corredores Notorios Comerciales, Colegio de Corredores de Aduana, and Asociación Nacional de Comisionistas del Comercio Exterior.

the most serious obstacle to another four years of government for the "Revolution," the *Auténticos* determined to transfer the odium of Machado to Núñez P. and Cuervo Rubio. A leading propaganda vehicle read:

Cuban People:

Do you want the ominous figure of Gerardo Machado to reappear, or do you prefer to strengthen the *Patria* as the founders dreamed?

To vote for the coalition of millionaires and aristocrats of Núñez P. and Cuervo Rubio is to take a step back toward the abyss that Cuba rejected on August 12, 1933.

The huge placard depicted Machado as the "soul of the Liberal Party," whereas a picture of Martí was represented as the "inspiration and guide of the PRC (A)." An extract from the same emotional, vote-getting strategem read:

You can decide, *Cubano*: on voting you will be choosing between the history of crimes, of resentments, of vengeances, and of feudal backwardness represented by resurrected *Machadismo*, and the history of the political creed of *Autenticismo*, which in spite of all the obstacles and perverse machinations of the remains of Machado and Batista in congress and in the streets, has done more for Cuba in four years than was realized by all the other governments in the forty years of the Republic."⁹³

Other selected examples of the efforts of the *Auténticos* to win by the commonly used transfer device of American politics include the following:

"Stop this from being the next statue." (Then a life-size portrayal of Machado and the *Avenida de los Presidentes* in Vedado.)

"Take a step forward on June 1. Vote against reaction."

"Vote against the Syndicate of Millionaires."

In many of such exhortations to the voter to express his opposition to Machado by voting against the Liberal-Democratic coalition, the *Auténticos* implied through a widely quoted slogan that force and violence might otherwise result. The slogan was: "Asegure la paz con Prío Socarrás." Another key slogan which played on the same theme of peace and harmony with the *Auténtico* candidate was "Un Presidente Cordial."⁹⁴

⁹³ *El Mundo*, April 29, 1948, p. 10. This and similar full-page propaganda statements were released generally throughout the country, but for brevity in documentation I am citing only *El Mundo*. The Cuban press in Habana includes, in addition: *Aleria*, *Avance*, *Bohemia*, *Carteles*, *El Crisol*, *Diario de la Marina*, *Ellas*, *The Havana Post*, *Información*, *Mañana*, *Prensa Libre*, *El País* and *Vanidades*.

⁹⁴ *El Mundo*, May 2, 1948, p. 22; May 23, p. 32; May 25, p. 9.

Radio, mass public demonstrations, sound trucks, periodicals, and other media hit repeatedly at the same theme. The effectiveness of the technique cannot be measured scientifically, of course. One assuredly cannot give serious attention to the evaluations of revolutionists who had broken with the Grau revolutionaries. Nor can an unbiased appraisal be expected from the opposition organizations and their vehicles. I was concerned, however, to determine whether men who had fought for the Revolution without joining either the opposition or the inner circle of plunderers in the Grau government were willing to fight the Liberal-Democratic coalition through the ghost of defunct *Machadismo*. There were not many in this category, but among them I found only one man of recognized stature who publicly committed himself to the technique. This was Dr. Raul Roa of the social sciences faculty of the University of Habana. He wrote, "Ricardo Núñez P. represents a return to the past. To vote for him is to vote for the *Machadato* . . . to vote against him is to vote for the future." On another occasion he penned perhaps the most vitriolic personal attack on Núñez P. of the entire campaign.⁹⁵

But other important, liberal-minded men who had been with Grau were unwilling to support, personally, a political technique which seemed patently dishonest. Perhaps the most dramatic and telling of such expressions of opinion came from Senator Pelayo Cuervo, a man of great prestige and ability, who declared, "The *continuistas* of Grau, which includes those who entered power poor on October 10, 1944, and now exhibit gigantic fortunes; those who have profaned the Revolution with repugnant crimes and scandalous robberies are now developing a repellent campaign of defamations and vituperations against Dr. Ricardo Núñez P."⁹⁶

Another powerful indictment was that of Dr. Herminio Portell Vilá, prominent historian at the University of Habana and one of the early leaders of the "Revolution." He declared in part: ". . . the friends of Prío and Alonso Pujol attack those of the Coalition as a 'Syndicate of Millionaires.' With what moral authority can those who have been accumulating millions during the past four years in the face of the hunger of the people and through all kinds of evil devices, in an outrageous parade of palace-like houses in the cities, on *fincas* and at the beaches, and in other demonstrations of irresponsible maladministration, criticize the 'other' millionaires?"

⁹⁵ "Machadato a la vista," *Bohemia*, May 16, 1948, pp. 48-49, 83-84; see also, "La disyuntiva electoral," *Ibid.*, May 30, 1948, p. 61.

⁹⁶ "Prío, Chibás y Núñez Portuondo," *El Mundo*, May 25, 1948, p. 6.

"The accusation of *Machadismo* is another of those (charges) which lacks validity. In the first place, the errors, ambitions and corruption of many revolutionaries from 1933 to the present are at least as condemnable as those which characterized the *Machadato*."⁹⁷

These statements were but isolated islands standing out in the main stream of the campaign, and even taking into account the commanding prestige of Pelayo Cuervo and Portell Vilá their influence could not dam the transfer-device technique the *Auténticos* employed so persistently and successfully. Furthermore, the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance was immeasurably aided by two facts. On the one hand, the Liberal-Democratic coalition was contaminated in part by remnants of the old Machado and Batista gang.⁹⁸ And there were some millionaires in the coalition, supposedly sixteen in all.⁹⁹ More important still, "Eddy" Chibás charged on his radio program that Ricardo Núñez P. had given a two-hour speech on February 24, 1930, praising Machado as "... continuer (*continuador*) of Martí, example of austerity and virtue and deserving of the eternal gratitude of his people."¹⁰⁰ University Professor Reinaldo Márquez explained over Station CMQ that Núñez P. had given the speech as part of his official duties as first vice-president of the Federación Médica de Cuba, and as proof that what he said did not represent his personal views it was demonstrated that Núñez P. had endorsed the anti-Machado resolutions of the Asamblea Médica Nacional of Sancti-Spiritus in December of 1932.¹⁰¹ The charge of *Machadismo* tended to stick in the popular mind, however, and one of the leaders of the coalition declared publicly that it was fatal to the campaign of the Liberal-Democratic coalition.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 20, 1948, p. 22.

⁹⁸ The names of the most important ones, checked for accuracy as carefully as I was able to do in the summer of 1948, were: Vásquez Bello, Viriato Gutiérrez, "Emilito" Núñez Portuondo (brother of the presidential candidate), Carmelo Urquiaga, Anselmo Alliego, Guas Inclán, Salvador García Ramos, and Carlos Miguel de Céspedes.

⁹⁹ "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, August 1, 1948, p. 56.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, May 2, 1948, p. 50.

¹⁰¹ Even if personal motivation was not involved in the speech of February 24, 1930, it was difficult to explain how any person genuinely opposed to Machado could speak without at least calling attention to the assassinations of men like Comandante Armando André, Captain José Aguiar and Colonel Blas Masó (all veterans of the war of independence), Bartolomé Sagaró and Francisco Laguardo Jaime (newspapermen, the latter a Venezuelan), Enrique Varona, Noeke Yalob, and Claudio Bouzon (labor leaders). Moreover, when Núñez P. spoke, Machado had suspended party organization and had maneuvered his own *continuismo*.

¹⁰² The man was José Manuel Casanova. See "en Cuba," *Bohemia*, June 20, 1948, p. 59.

The *Machadismo* campaign of the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance did not preclude energetic promotion of the political candidates as such. It is fair to say, however, that the *Auténticos* did not emphasize the preparation, training, experience, and general qualifications of Carlos Prío. They caused the presidential candidate's smiling countenance to appear everywhere, they reminded Cubans repeatedly that Prío was an old-line revolutionist, and they vowed that as president he would never sign away any of Cuba's rights or prerogatives.¹⁰³ The alliance also defended, in general terms, the material progress achieved in the 1944-1948 period of government of the Revolution.¹⁰⁴

Carlos Prío's campaign program was published in *Bohemia* on May 23 and included the following planks: *economic*: 1, creation of a National Bank; 2, industrialization of the country; 3, agrarian reform; 4, protection and development of the export industry; 5, maintenance of a high percentage of employment; 6, continuation of the policy of no foreign loans; *administrative*: 1, extension of the existing plan of public works with particular emphasis on country highways; 2, a budget law; 3, a merit system in the civil service; *social*: 1, to fight increasingly for the class interests of Cuban labor; 2, better technical and other educational facilities for both city and country people; 3, especial attention to the health of children (school breakfasts, summer camps, maternity hospitals for public employees); *political*: 1, protection of public liberties; 2, protection of the principle of political equality, guaranteeing women and colored Cubans opportunity to rise in state employment; 3, maintenance of the foreign policy of the Grau government. Prío had, of course, elaborated on each of these points from time to time during the campaign.

The weekly magazine *Carteles* persuaded each of the presidential candidates to answer a series of questions in respect to specific issues. Prío did not distinguish himself in his responses. He evaded a direct commitment to fulfil constitutional requirements in respect to the semiparliamentary system, and in his commentaries on the merit system he so weakened his stand that it was apparent that nothing would be done which would limit the "rights" of loyal Alliance supporters to public employment.

¹⁰³ See particularly the dramatic photograph of Carlos Prío's hands with the promises below that they would never sign documents inimical to Cuba's interests. *El Mundo*, May 30, 1948, p. 29.

¹⁰⁴ The most complete of such statements appeared in most of the major newspapers throughout the country. They may be found in *El Mundo*, May 2, 1948, p. 2; May 30, p. 4.

His statements on economic policies appeared as platitudes rather than as sound understanding. On being challenged as to his advocacy of industrialization for a country that lacked coal, he failed to demonstrate comprehension of the problem and replied simply that it was his understanding that other such countries had been able to create a manufacturing economy. Nor did he perceive any relationship between high wages (which he guaranteed) and the necessity for higher and more efficient production.¹⁰⁵

The voter segments which the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance selected as political targets were all included in the official program, but, as has already been demonstrated, the primary interest was focused on the masses by means of the anti-Machado appeal. It is significant to note, however, that the alliance assiduously cultivated distinctive elements of political strength. Slogans such as: "*Joven*, do not betray your generation"; "*Obrero*, by voting for Carlos Prío Socarrás you will be selecting a man who will never sign a law contrary to your interests"; "*Hombre de color*, by voting for Carlos Prío you will be assuring respect for your race and . . . your citizenship rights as opposed to [the policies of] the prejudiced aristocrats who hate you and [who] have used you for almost fifty years by means of the censurable activity of the Liberal Party," are examples of such techniques. When fourteen intellectuals, thirteen of them university professors, signed a document opposing Prío and the alliance and declaring that such men, ". . . do not represent the ideals of the Revolution and cannot demand once more from the public faith, aid, and sanction for their acts and their conduct as administrators," the *Auténticos* promptly replied with a list of fifty-eight university professors who were loyal and later in a full-page statement published the names of 1,600 doctors of medicine who supported Prío. The most dramatic evidence of political aiming with a rifle is seen in the efforts of the alliance to capture the women's vote. In a full-page sweep, a typical, ordinary Cuban woman (high-heeled shoes, worker quality dress, black *mantilla* covering her head) is on her knees praying to a large Christ-on-the-cross above her, with the prayer appearing as follows:

Señor. . . .

Do not permit

the cruel whip of Communism to lash our flesh. . . .

us to lose the liberty, peace and tranquility which we have.

¹⁰⁵ "Responde el Dr. Prío Socarrás al cuestionario de 'Carteles,'" *Carteles*, May 16, 1948, pp. 31-32; Arturo Alfonso Roselló, "Carlos Prío Socarrás habla sobre sus propósitos de gobierno," *ibid.*, p. 30; Editorial, *ibid.*, May 23, 1948, p. 13.

incompetent men to drown us in their inexperience. . . .
those to return who yesterday did nothing who want today
to destroy what has been gained for Cuba at such sacrifice.
Give us a good president, Señor. . . .

Comité Femenino pro PRIO PRESIDENTE¹⁰⁶

The *Auténtico*-Republican alliance with its *Machadismo* issue forced the Liberal-Democratic coalition into a defensive position from which it was never able to emerge. Outmaneuvered at the outset, the ineptitude of the coalition was prolonged into final defeat. The documentary evidence in the campaign as well as the oral reports of political strategists agree that Núñez P., the standard bearer of the coalition, swallowed the bait presented to him and vigorously repudiated the charges of *Machadismo* from one end of Cuba to the other: "Enough of lies!" "This is the only past that in truth can be attributed to Ricardo Núñez Portuondo." "Answer of Dr. Ricardo Núñez Portuondo to his slanderers." "The people of Cuba acclaim Núñez Portuondo as he repudiates the propaganda of lies." These titles are leads to some of the major propaganda efforts of the coalition.¹⁰⁷ However, these negative thrusts never matched the crusading spark of the alliance. On the other hand, when Núñez P. momentarily freed himself from the obligation of demonstrating that Machado was not an *ex officio* member of his entourage, he bored audiences with technical fiscal data on alleged governmental mismanagement by the "Revolution." He dwelt on complicated issues of public policy in such a way that the public could scarcely comprehend him. His radio and platform technique left much to be desired.

The two most dangerous charges in the *Machadismo* campaign of the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance were that Núñez P. and his supporters represented potential reaction and dictatorship. The program of the Liberal-Democratic coalition was conservative but assuredly not reactionary. The coalition's major planks were: respect for democratic liberties and the principles of the constitution; honesty in administration and probity in the management of public funds; protection of the right of private property with the economy organized for the general welfare; emphasis on private initiative in expanding the productive and distributive facilities of the state but with governmental aid, assistance

¹⁰⁶ *El Mundo*, April 29, 1948, p. 10; May 4, p. 1; May 7, p. 1; May 27, p. 16; May 30, p. 25.

¹⁰⁷ *El Mundo*, May 20, 1948, p. 20; May 23, p. 22; May 25, p. 8; May 30, p. 27.

and guidance, particularly in respect to land use and to credit problems;¹⁰⁸ strengthening of the semi-parliamentary system and firm opposition to communism.¹⁰⁹ However, in neither the official program, nor in public addresses, nor in propaganda statements did Núñez Portuondo offer specific reform proposals for meeting manifestly serious economic, social, and political problems. His general statements were so broad as to suggest fence-straddling, and his specific commentaries on issues so buttressed with conditions as to indicate hedging. Even more important, close questioning of newspapermen led the presidential candidate of the coalition to utter statements which came very close indeed to corroborating charges of both reaction and dictatorship.¹¹⁰ Núñez Portuondo's pamphlet entitled "The Two Revolutions" (1. to give full effect to the constitution; 2. the revolution of honor) was demonstration to some of his inherent conservatism.¹¹¹

This does not mean that Núñez Portuondo did not possess and use positive assets of practical political value. His own cultural and intellectual achievements in the field of medicine generated general attraction, and he caused himself to appear in the role of his profession whenever possible.¹¹² His integrity was a powerful appeal to middle and upper class groups who feared that their taxes were being siphoned off by politicians for their own personal gain. Finally, the distinguished contributions of Núñez Portuondo's father to Cuba's independence constituted a debt some voters would want to repay with their political support. The well-led, firmly organized provincial machines could be counted on to get out the coalition vote on election day.

The intrepid, colorful, aggressive "Eddy" Chibás capitalized on the lack of powerful party organization and inadequate campaign funds of the Partido del Pueblo Cubano by authoring the hard-hitting slogan, *Vergüenza contra dinero*. In conversations with most of the national leaders in all of the parties, I was told

¹⁰⁸ "Prío, Chibás y Núñez Portuondo ofrecen al pueblo sus programas," *Bohemia*, May 23, 1948, pp. 77, 87-88.

¹⁰⁹ "Responde el Dr. Núñez Portuondo al cuestionario de 'Carteles,'" *Carteles*, May 30, 1948, pp. 32-33.

¹¹⁰ See particularly Rafael Estenger, "Núñez Portuondo habla de la Revolución," *Bohemia*, April 11, 1948, p. 41; Arturo Alfonso Roselló, "La llamada política de salarios altos es una falacia: todos los ingresos los absorbe la bolsa negra," *Carteles*, May 30, 1948, pp. 28-30.

¹¹¹ Raul Lorenzo, "El Nuñiamo delata su espíritu conservador," *Bohemia*, May 2, 1948, pp. 41-42.

¹¹² Núñez P. pictured in hospital uniform ostensibly ready for surgery appeared frequently. See *El Mundo*, May 2, 1948, p. 12.

repeatedly that it was the generally held opinion that this slogan won a large part of Chibás' voters for him. In his dramatic oratory, Chibás hit over and over again at the Grau and Prío forces for their dishonesty in government. The intense appeal of Chibás for a return to morality in public office and his own personification of the ideal attracted some of the most distinguished statesmen in Cuba to his banner. Among them were included Dr. Fernando Ortiz, in many ways Cuba's greatest living intellectual, who had not taken an active part in politics for twenty years, and men like Jorge Mañach and Herminio Portell Vilá. The men Chibás selected as his lieutenants were also of a high order with superior political records, men such as Roberto Agramonte (the vice-presidential candidate), Manuel Céspedes, Manuel Bisbé, Gustavo Loredo, and Iglesias Betancourt. Everywhere Chibás spoke he attracted large audiences, and he declared in an address before the Lion's Club in Havana that the Grau and Prío forces had offered him half the positions in the council of ministers including Treasury, Education, and Commerce in return for his support, but he replied that the only guarantee he wanted from the administration was that they would bring suit in the courts against all those who had defrauded the public treasury. Other slogans were used by the Chibás forces, such as

"Contra el Nefasto Presente Vote a Chibás Presidente."

"Ni un paso atrás! Presidente Chibás."

But "Vergüenza contra dinero" caught on, and Chibás electrified the masses with it.¹¹³

Chibás probably won votes from supporters of the "Revolution" who otherwise might have cast their ballots for Carlos Prío. On the other hand, Chibás' bitter attacks on the Liberal-Democratic coalition and its presidential candidate in particular might have helped the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance as much as himself. And the program of the Cuban People's Party did not differ on general principles from that of the "Revolution" and not significantly on specific points. Raise the standard of living of the *guajiro*, provide a cement floor for each *bohío* and a sanitary latrine and artesian well; give the rural farm laborer land and create transportation and market facilities for him; social insurance legislation—these were points included in the demands of the "Revolution." Of all party programs, however, that of

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, May 26, 1948, p. 1; May 30, p. 40; May 5, p. 1; May 2, p. 40; May 23, p. 40; May 25, p. 24; May 30, p. 40.

Chibás was the longest and most detailed.¹¹⁴ The point was that Chibás and the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance competed for the same voter groups, and by the failure of Chibás to solicit support from power segments which seemed to support Núñez P., there was the danger that the popular vote would be so split as to give the election to the Liberal-Democratic coalition which Chibás hated perhaps even more than the alleged corrupt leadership of the PRC (A).¹¹⁵

The campaign of the Popular Socialist Party was perfunctory and uninspired. Juan Marinello and the other leading communist leaders had been able to form coalition agreements with both Batista and Grau in earlier and more fruitful years, but in the 1948 campaign the party was forced to struggle alone. Not only was the presidency beyond reach, it was even doubtful that seats in Congress could be won. To add to the difficulties of operation the Radio Division of the Ministry of Communications closed the communist radio station *Mil Diez* on May 1, alleging violation of frequency rules.¹¹⁶ The P.S.P. newspaper media, particularly *Hoy*, the largest, featured issues and tactics common to communist parties everywhere. However, the communists counted on a disciplined core of about 35,000 and still maintained remnants of labor strength and a loyal following among the Negroes, particularly in Santa Clara.

VI

On June 1 men and women voters were obliged by law to help elect a president, vice-president, nine senators for each of six provinces, and one governor for each province and representatives to the lower house, divided according to population in the following manner: Matanzas, 5; Pinar del Río, 6; Camaguey, 7; Las Villas, 14; La Habana, 18; Oriente, 20. June 1 was a legal holiday, and employers were prohibited by statute from interfering with their employees' obligation to vote. The Australian ballot permits straight ticket voting with a single X mark, but the voter can split his ticket and write in candidates as well.

¹¹⁴ "Prío, Chibás y Núñez Portuondo ofrecen al pueblo sus programas," *Bohemia*, May 23, 1948, pp. 77, 88; "Explica Chibás la causa y origen de su divorcio del Doctor Grau," *Carteles*, May 23, 1948, pp. 28-31; "Responde el Sr. Chibás al cuestionario de 'Carteles,'" *ibid.*, p. 32.

¹¹⁵ Dr. Enrique C. Henríquez, "A Eduardo Chibás, al borde del abismo," *Bohemia*, May 23, 1948, pp. 25, 93.

¹¹⁶ *El Mundo*, May 2, 1948, p. 1.

The registration totals for each party before the elections of June 1 were:¹¹⁷

PRC (A)	790,327
Republicans	282,154
Liberals	357,469
Democrats	188,610
Ortodoxos	164,875
Popular Socialists	157,283

Taking into account the facts of political alignment in the campaign, the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance had potentially 1,072,481 votes to 546,079 for the Liberal-Democratic Coalition. On the basis of voter registration the alliance advantage was so great that the coalition could not win even if it received all the votes that had been registered for the Cuban People's Party and for the Communists. On the other hand, if all the opposition parties had been able to merge their strength in a Third Front coalition the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance would have been hard pressed indeed to achieve victory. Of course, in politics the imponderables not infrequently are the determinants in the final indication of voter preference. In the 1948 election disillusionment in respect to the four years of government of the "Revolution" created an atmosphere of uncertainty as to the election results.

In the presidential elections of 1940 and 1944 approximately 73.5 per cent and 80.9 per cent respectively of the registered voters actually voted, and it was expected that at least 80 per cent would turn out in the 1948 contest. All election accounts agree that the citizenry voted with decorum and that election administration proceeded with a minimum of violence. The first returns gave the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance a lead in every province which was never relinquished. The Liberal-Democratic coalition was in second place in all six provinces, with Chibás and Marinello running in that order in all provinces. Carlos Prío's lead was sufficiently impressive to compel Núñez P. to admit defeat on June 2.¹¹⁸ The final, virtually complete, vote by provinces was as follows:¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ The most complete and accurate pre-election figures are found in José D. Cabús' "Ante las urnas, lo que dicen los números," *Bohemia*, May 30, 1948, pp. 54-55, 92-93.

¹¹⁸ *El Mundo*, June 3, 1948, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ The best election analysis is José D. Cabús, "Después de las urnas; la voz de los números," *Bohemia*, June 13, 1948, pp. 48-49, 69-70.

Province	Auténtico- Republican Alliance	Liberal- Democratic Coalition	Cuban People's Party	Popular Socialists
Oriente	175,270	107,067	79,428	29,470
Camaguey	93,018	60,660	28,035	12,583
Las Villas	192,654	129,138	51,896	28,754
La Habana	258,111	176,268	127,226	60,975
Pinar del Río . . .	83,936	72,286	14,039	3,340
Matanzas	93,010	49,592	20,305	7,911
Total	895,999 (45.83%)	595,011 (30.42%)	320,929 (16.42%)	143,033 (7.33%)

Carlos Prío and the alliance thus won a plurality in every province, and under Cuba's electoral provisions clearly won the presidency. On the other hand, his victory was less than a "great popular mandate." He did not receive a majority of the popular votes. However, there is no sound reason for concluding that a Third Front would have automatically defeated Prío. If Núñez P. had been the Front candidate, for example, it appears very likely that Chibás' voters would have switched to Prío.¹²⁰

Comparing the registration totals with the election results makes it evident that Chibás won a great moral victory at the expense of the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance. The alliance received 176,482 fewer votes than it registered, whereas Chibás increased his votes over the registration totals by the amazing total of 156,054. Some of his votes might have come from the Communists who lost 14,250 votes but not from the Liberal-Democratic coalition which received 48,932 more votes than it had registered. It was the Chibás showing that excited comment in political circles, rather than the Prío victory. And many Cubans and long-time residents in Cuba agreed with Sergio Carbó that, "There is not the least popular enthusiasm for the victory of Prío."¹²¹

Straight-ticket voting gave numerical control of both houses to the *Auténtico*-Republican alliance, 78 to 58 in the lower house and 36 to 18 in the Senate.¹²² Actual working control of the

¹²⁰ Rafael García Barcena, "Reflexiones postcomiciales," *Bohemia*, July 11, 1948, pp. 27, 92-93.

¹²¹ *Prensa Libre*, June 4, 1948; see also the statement of a supporter, Raul Roa, "La Universidad y Carlos Prío," *Bohemia*, July 11, 1948, pp. 47, 72-73.

¹²² *El Nuevo Mundo*, August 15, 1948, p. 11.

legislature by Prío was by no means assured by the composition of the two houses, however. In the Senate, for example, I have included eleven *Miguelista* senators in the totals for the government, and there were a number of representatives whose loyalty to the *Auténticos* was questioned.

VII

It is manifestly impossible to interpret, definitively, the nature of the Cuban "Revolution" and to project completely the course of its future development on the basis of analysis of one time-segment of the process, such as the presidential elections of 1948. Even revolution reorients personal and institutional life at varying rates of speed. The elections of 1948 did challenge the continuity of the "Revolution," however, and forced its leaders to parade party, program, accomplishments, personnel, and future potentialities before the Cuban voter.

In an important sense the elections defined the "Revolution" as symbol rather than substance. It is even possible to argue that the elections proved that the Cuban "Revolution" is no revolution at all. The fact is, for example, that Prío and the victorious alliance campaigned on a reform platform, not a revolutionary program. Both Grau and Prío associated themselves with modernization of government and material and moral improvement of the masses, and Prío, in his first year of office, signed bills creating a budget system, a national bank, and formal procedure for assuring constitutional guarantees. But Grau and Prío and the other top level *Auténtico* leaders cherished no monopoly of reformist proposals in the economic, social, and political areas. Batista and even Machado stood for detailed reform, and both were in part successful in their reform programs.¹²³ What the presidential elections of 1948 revealed in sharp detail was that the party of the "Revolution" did not intend, for the foreseeable future at least, to remold the basic institutions under which the Republic existed. Indeed, the campaign demonstrated a reluctance to attack any of the existing institutions—family, church, army, educational system, economic organization—as so impeding realization of objectives as to require basic revision. It had long been a cardinal principle of the "Revolution" to oppose foreign loans, yet hardly had Prío achieved victory before he

¹²³ Fulgencio Batista, *Sombras de América* (Mexico, 1946), pp. 442, *passim*, Antonio Berenguer y Sed, ed., *General Gerardo Machado y Morales, sus discursos y su obra de gobierno* (2 vols., Habana, 1926-1927), pp. 220, 472, *passim*.

advocated a \$100,000,000, then a \$200,000,000 loan, and he made it clear that American sources would be among those solicited. President Prío went further on February 25, 1949, and declared that the government was breaking revolutionary traditions by inviting in foreign capital, because Cubans themselves weren't investing rapidly enough. This, he declared, was not imperialism. Within the next month, Prime Minister Manuel A. Varona, Senator José Manuel Casanova, and Prío himself welcomed American capital to construct "ports, piers, docks, warehouses, hotels, waterworks, and health resorts."¹²⁴ Some of the governmental innovations of the Constitution of 1940, particularly the semi-parliamentary system, broke sharply with the past, yet Prío and the alliance failed to discuss them in any such perspective. Nor, in the economic realm, did the "Revolution" propose solutions to Cuba's problem of land tenure nor advance beyond more than the most general discussions as to how industrialization might be achieved. In the social area, the orators of the "Revolution" did not consider the principles of miscibility and miscegenation upheld in Brazil as applicable to Cuba's race problem. The campaign of 1948, like that of 1944, revealed the "Revolution" to lack an ideology. It would perhaps be too much to look for a José Martí or a Enrique José Varona, but it is a fair question to inquire who are considered to be the thinkers of the movement. Whatever the sources consulted, it becomes evident that literary figures have done little to explain and defend the "Revolution."¹²⁵ Not even the literature of the Mexican Revolution was used in the campaign of 1948.

There is considerable evidence that powerful segments of Cuban political opinion, very probably the majority of voters, still longed for fundamental reorganization of various institutions and still thought of the "Revolution" as the embodiment of those aspirations. The leadership of the "Revolution" lagged in reciprocating such attitudes. Ramón Vasconcelos, long-time Liberal who was made Minister without portfolio in Prío's government, declared in *Alerta* on February 1, 1949:

¹²⁴ *Havana Post*, February 26, 1949, p. 1; March 3, p. 1; March 5, p. 1; March 9, p. 1; March 31, p. 1.

¹²⁵ See, for example: Felix Lizaso, *Panorama de la cultura cubana* (Mexico, 1949), pp. 147; Diego de Pereda, *El Nuevo pensamiento político de Cuba* (Habana, 1945), pp. 823; Raimundo Menocal, *Origen y desarrollo del pensamiento cubano* (Habana, 1947), II, 653; Julio César Fernández, *En defensa de la revolución* (Habana, 1936), pp. 221; Amleto Battisti, *La próxima era* (Habana, 1947), pp. 188; Carlos González Palacios, *Revolución y pseudo-revolución de Cuba* (Habana, 1948), pp. 117. These are the major volumes dealing with recent Cuban government and politics but none of them establishes an ideology for the Cuban Revolution.

Grau demolished and disintegrated all discipline, defrauded the people and disorganized the Republic, and he wasted for Cuba four years, which, with a little organization and good government, would have converted it into an emporium of wealth and a land of promise.

Grau dominated the *Auténtico* machine to the extent of permitting him to hand-pick his successor. But the new leadership did not inspire renewed confidence and enthusiasm. Dr. Raoul Alfonso Gonsé, perhaps the outstanding political analyst in Cuba today, wrote in *Alerta* on December 7, 1948, that bankrupt leadership compelled the masses to seek elsewhere for relief for their disillusionment.¹²⁶ There is the strongest evidence that Cuban political opinion desperately desired the "Revolution" to mean, at least, fundamental departure from the venality, corruption, and fraud so characteristic of Cuban colonial and republican politics. The evidence is seen in the great support given to Chibás, whose almost sole campaign asset was rectitude and integrity and passionate insistence on honesty in government. His cries for genuine revolution, to begin in this area, released emotional enthusiasm in all classes, and he rallied many of Cuba's great men to his cause.

The strong point of the party of the "Revolution" in the 1948 elections was the discipline and cohesiveness that characterized its organization. In many respects the pyramidal structure and the emphasis on personal loyalty called to mind the great city machines in the United States. On the other hand, the 1948 elections mirrored disturbing peripheral movements among the top-level personnel. The most serious manifestation of disintegration was the deviationism of Suárez Fernández and Chibás. Of course, the loyal (Prío) was rewarded. However, it was disturbing to note that not a single former president attended the traditional New Year's reception at the *Palacio* on January 1, 1949 (excepting Carlos Hevia who attended as a member of the new government). The Cuban version of the spoils system asserted itself immediately after Prío's victory, despite the fact that the employees dispossessed were themselves *Auténticos* in the main, although of Grau vintage. Minister of Education Dr. Aurelio Sánchez Arango appeared before the Senate on December 15, 1948 to explain why he had dismissed so many school teachers and inspectors. He blandly declared that appointments had been sold and issued wholesale in an illegal manner (under

¹²⁶ See also Francisco Ichaso, "La difícil situación del gobierno actual ante las malversaciones del anterior," *Bohemia*, January 30, 1949, p. 27.

Grau) and therefore now had to be revoked. By early 1949, former President Grau openly and publicly attacked President Prío, and Prío retaliated by firing Minister of Agriculture Francisco Grau Alsina (Grau's nephew).¹²⁷ Even more serious, Fulgencio Batista returned to Cuba as senator from Las Villas and promptly organized the Unitarian Action Party, which obtained support from some of the Republicans in the Prío government and from the *Auténtico* followers of Grau!¹²⁸ These developments put in serious question the ability of the *Auténticos* to maintain intact their hitherto strong organization.

The "Revolution" was able to guarantee a free, fair election in 1948 as Batista had done in 1944. What the elections did not show clearly, however, was that important terrorist cells, clubs, and movements failed to perceive that victory of the "Revolution" at the polls eliminated the necessity for continued unofficial employment of violence. During Grau's administration many of the political assassinations were the natural consequence of vendettas begun in the old days of the Machado administration. The murders continued long after it would appear that desire for personal vengeance had been satiated. During the first year of Prío's administration the exploding of bombs in ministries, the machine-gunning of prominent figures, including officers of the student body of the University, the discovery of a cache of arms on the University campus, even the murder of union officials, all pointed to political *pistolero*. Among the most important of such organizations is the Movimiento Socialista Revolucionario (with offices at San Lázaro No. 6 in Habana) and Unión Insurreccional Revolucionaria. Police Chief Col. José M. Caramés has been quoted as saying that Orlando León Lemús and Policarpo Soler, particularly vicious *pistoleros*, "were protected by members of the government."¹²⁹ Grau sponsored no legislative proposals whatever to curb gangsterism, but by July, 1949, President Prío had the Group for the Repression of Subversive Activities (GRAS) operating, and he declared that the government would "eventually" wipe out illegal employment of violence.¹³⁰

In a word, the presidential elections of 1948 seriously chal-

¹²⁷ *Havana Post*, December 16, 1948, p. 1; December 18, p. 8; see also *Información*, December 1, 1948.

¹²⁸ These events commanded the sharp attention of all the major media of communication in the first week of February, 1949.

¹²⁹ *Havana Post*, May 6, 1949, p. 1.

¹³⁰ The origins of GRAS go back to May. See *Havana Post*, May 7, 1949, p. 1; May 11, 1949, p. 8; July 24, 1949, p. 1.

lenged the right of the *Auténticos* to lead the Revolution, and it is fair to question the ability of the governing group to win future electoral contests. The other and more optimistic interpretation centers on the retention by the *Auténtico* machine, despite the insurgence of Chibás, of "Revolution" as a symbol of aspirations very generally held. Reiterated use of the term as such might continue to win elections, and might well in time force broader visions on the part of *Auténtico* leadership in the direction of fundamental reform. Some members of the Grau government and some in the Prfo administration spoke with appealing urgency and sincerity. Dr. Alberto Oteiza Setién, first minister of health under Prfo, declared on beginning his new responsibilities:

"Look at our countryside. There are approximately 305,000 miserable *bohíos* without sanitary facilities. They must be provided with cement floors, with partitions to prevent promiscuity of sexes, with sanitary latrines, with covered wells equipped with pumps. We must stimulate school attendance. We must create in children the habit of going to school. We must provide youngsters with shoes. . . ."¹²¹

If this kind of reform zeal can prevail among *Auténticos*, it is possible that with their continued triumphs in national elections, Cuba might yet experience revolution, but by the slower process of evolution.

¹²¹ *Havana Post*, October 14, 1948, p. 1.