Fulgencio Batista ruled Cuba through a succession of puppet presidents and then seized power in 1952. His regime provoked years of violent opposition that propelled Fidel Castro to power.

**THE REBELS**

- **FIDEL CASTRO**
  - Leader of attacks on Batista regime
  - Joined in 1953
  - Hosted rebel headquarters at La Higuera
  - Began preparing to invade Cuba

- **ROLF CASTRO**
  - Fidel’s younger brother
  - Led the military effort to free the Sierra Maestra
  - Escaped to León, Nicaragua, in 1957

- **CARLOS FRANKS**
  - Commander of a 700-man rebel army
  - Attacked Batista’s army in southern Cuba
  - Escaped to the Dominican Republic

- **JOSE M. ESPINOZA**
  - Leader of the Rebel Movement
  - Organized an army of 2,000 in the Sierra Maestra
  - Escaped to the Dominican Republic

**ATTACKING BATISTA’S GOVERNMENT**

- Castro’s rise to power started with several failed attacks, but he had already earned the leadership of the people, who were tired of the government’s brutality and corruption.
- In 1957, the guerrillas launched successful campaigns against Batista’s army and took the provinces of Oriente, Camagüey, and Las Villas on the way to the island’s capital, Havana.

**CAMAGUEY, 1953-57**

- Castro and 82 men marched to Cuba aboard a freighter that had been called the Granma. They were forced to land on a beach and were unable to assail most of their resources.

- The Rebel Army faced resistance from Batista’s army, Castro’s brother Raúl, and the Cuban government.

- After a series of defeats, Cuba was in danger of falling to the Batista regime.

**CUBA, 1958-59**

- By the start of 1958, Castro had established rebel headquarters in La Higuera, and began a series of successful campaigns against Batista’s troops.

**CUBA BEFORE CASTRO**

- On October 29, 1940, Cuba became an independent republic, but U.S. intervention governed the island in a series of weak and corrupt governments.

- By the 1950s, U.S. companies owned two-thirds of Cuba’s land and most of its resources.

- The sugar industry was booming, and the United States was a major consumer of Cuban sugar.

- The FIDEL CASTRO URBANO REVOLUTION

- In 1959, Fidel Castro led a revolution that overthrew Batista's regime.

- Cuba became a socialist state, and Castro took control.

- The Cuban economy experienced significant growth and development.

**CUBA, 1959-1961**

- Castro established a socialist government, and Cuba began to develop a strong, independent economy.

- The U.S. government imposed a trade embargo on Cuba, which limited its economic growth.

- Castro sought to expand Cuba’s influence in Latin America and around the world.

**MAY 1958: THE ENDING POINT**

- Batista fled into exile, and Cuba was declared a socialist republic.

- Castro arrested most of Batista’s supporters and began the process of nationalization.

**JAN. 1, 1959: THE RISE OF VICTORIES**

- Castro declared victory over Batista, and Cuba became a socialist state.

- Castro began to modernize the Cuban economy and improve the standard of living for its people.

**FEB. 1959: CUBAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS**

- The United States recognized the new Cuban government, but relations were strained.

- Castro sought to establish economic ties with the United States, but the U.S. government remained skeptical.

**JULY 26, 1953: CASTRO’S FIRST ATTEMPT FAILS**

- Castro failed in his first attempt to overthrow Batista, but his efforts inspired others to join in the struggle.

- Castro and his followers continued to fight, and eventually succeeded in overthrowing Batista’s regime.

**DEC. 26, 1953: FIDEL RETURNS FROM MEXICO**

- Castro returned to Cuba after a year in Mexico, where he received support from the United States.

- Castro and his followers continued to fight, and eventually succeeded in overthrowing Batista’s regime.

**MAY 1959: THE BATTLE FOR POWER**

- Castro and his followers continued to fight, and eventually succeeded in overthrowing Batista’s regime.

- Castro became the leader of Cuba, and began the process of nationalizing the Cuban economy.

- Castro sought to improve the standard of living for all Cubans, and to establish a strong socialist state.

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