

A full understanding of Soviet policy does indeed require a thorough grounding in Russian history with all its techniques, tactics and strategies for brutally expanding and maintaining its traditional empire; this is vitally necessary and all too often ignored. Equally important, however, is a fundamental comprehension of original Marxist theory, also of its very warped Russian variety and its probable impact on the thinking and actions of both the Russian leadership and self-proclaimed communists everywhere.

Despite this criticism, and it is a serious one, I must conclude that this is a very important and valuable book. A knowledge, too, of the concrete, contemporary aspirations of the non-Russian peoples within the Soviet Union is indispensable to any serious study of international affairs. Dr. Dobriansky has collected the facts and marshalled sound arguments, insightful illustrations and persuasive rhetoric. The discussion of the captive nations, of "confetti diplomacy" and of East-West trade highlight the practical implications of this knowledge and are presented in the author's uniquely attractive style.

Reviewed by ROBERT A. SCHADLER

Failures of Fidelismo

Cuba est-il socialiste? by Rene Dumont, *Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1970. 246 pp.*
Guerrillas in Power: The Course of the Cuban Revolution, by K. S. Karol; translated from the French by Arnold Pomerans, *New York: Hill and Wang, 1970. 624 pp. \$12.50.*

FOR A DECADE after his seizure of power in 1959, Fidel Castro had the outspoken and generally uncritical support of large numbers of prominent leftist intellectuals in

Europe and the Americas. In recent months, however, scores of these leftists have questioned and even condemned Castro's policies, leading by mid-1971 to them and the Cuban government.

The immediate cause of the break was the "Padilla affair." Last March Fidel Castro personally ordered the arrest of Heberto Padilla, a well-known young Cuban writer who had been denounced in 1968 for his "counterrevolutionary" poetry. Padilla was released after a month in prison, and after he had "confessed" his deviations from the line of the Revolution. Several dozen intellectuals in Europe (among them a number of Latin Americans) who had long been supporters of the Cuban Revolution immediately expressed their concern over the implications of Padilla's arrest. In a letter to Castro in May, sixty of these intellectuals proclaimed their "shame and anger" over Padilla's "confession," which they concluded must have been forced, and which recalled "the most sordid moments of the era of Stalinism, with its prefabricated verdicts and its witch-hunts."

Without a moment's hesitation Fidel excommunicated them all—including Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Rossana Rossanda, Alberto Moravia, Susan Sontag, Carlos Franqui, Carlos Fuentes, and José Revueltas—from the camp of the "true revolutionaries." In speeches given between April and June he declared that they were all "brazen pseudo-leftists" and agents of the imperialists; he advised them never again to pretend to defend the Cuban Revolution and announced that they would be barred from visiting Cuba "ad infinitum." Castro concluded on June 6 that liberal and bourgeois attacks on his Revolution had become so discredited that "the style now is to attack the Revolution from communist positions, from socialist positions, from Marxist positions, and from leftist positions."

The roots of the split, however, go much deeper. Many of Castro's closest friends of almost a decade have been disturbed by the

direction of Cuban foreign and domestic policies since Fidel's endorsement of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Those who have given voice to their reservations, however, have found that critical support for the Cuban Revolution is not enough to satisfy the Maximum Leader.

Dissension first became unmistakable in 1969-70 when René Dumont, a professor at the National Agronomic Institute in Paris, and K. S. Karol, a Polish-born "Maoist" correspondent who lives in France, each recently returned from his fourth visit to Cuba, began publishing highly critical accounts of the present course of the Cuban Revolution. Although both were long-time supporters of Castro's effort to build his own form of socialism, Fidel promptly branded them "superleftists" (it has since become "pseudo-leftists") and read them out of the ranks of the "true revolutionaries." Not surprisingly, Padilla's "confession" branded them both agents of the CIA.

Both Dumont and Karol have declared their continuing sympathy for the revolutionary undertaking in Cuba. Their critiques are so severe, however, that lingering Fidelofiles have asked: "With such friends, who needs enemies?" To this Dumont and Karol would reply, that whereas Fidel's friends and advisors, in order to remain his friends and advisors, often tell him only what they think he *wants* to hear, they endeavor to tell him what they think he *needs* to hear in order to check what they regard as the rapid deterioration of the Cuban situation.

Both critics are concerned with Castro's policies since 1959—Karol even includes a chapter on the Communist Party in Cuba before 1959—but emphasize what Dumont calls the "hard realities" of the 1968-1970 period. In many cases they agree on what these "hard realities" are: the excessive power, frequently misused, in the hands of Fidel Castro; the absence of free discussion and popular participation in decision-making in the government and in the "au-

thoritarian" mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, and youth; the rapidly expanding role of the military throughout society; the increasing "Stalinization" of the Revolution; and the deepening of popular disillusionment with the government. Both conclude, most reluctantly, that Fidel Castro has failed to develop socialism in Cuba, indeed that he is farther from that goal now than he was five years ago.

The two do not always emphasize the same "hard realities," however, or suggest the same changes in Cuban policies. René Dumont concentrates on domestic issues, in particular on the Cuban economy. He stresses the problem of Fidel Castro himself: his insistence upon making all decisions, whether or not he has the necessary expertise; his refusal or inability to learn from foreign advisors (who will speak frankly to him) or from past mistakes; and his repeated adoption of ill-conceived grandiose projects. Dumont also draws particular attention to the increasing popular frustration with the rationing of all necessities and ever-lengthening queues for the goods that are available, resulting in ever-greater skepticism regarding Fidel's repeated promises of a better future, and to the growth of a new privileged class, which not only exercises power but gets better food, does not have to queue up for necessities, and drives the Alfa Romeos. Among Dumont's reform proposals are the adoption of material incentives and policies generally similar to those followed in Czechoslovakia under Dubcek and in Yugoslavia.

Dumont's critique of domestic conditions in Cuba is the most devastating yet published on the Cuban Revolution; had Castro paid more attention to his proposals over the years the Cuban economy today would not be in such a state of exhaustion, held together only by an increasing number of advisors and massive aid from the Soviet Union.

K. S. Karol strives above all to explain the Cuban Revolution in terms of international relationships, which Dumont tends

to underestimate, directing his attention chiefly toward the Soviet Union. According to Karol, Cuban dependence on the USSR, particularly economic dependence, had become so great by the end of the 1960's that Fidel Castro had been unable to carry out the revolution that he (and even more so Che Guevara) had originally wanted. The Revolution had been corrupted and could only be revived by the reassertion of Cuban independence from the Soviet Union, by a return to the goal of fostering the growth of political consciousness before economic development, and by a complete reorganization of the Cuban social system. *Guerrillas in Power* is an unusually provocative examination of Castro's years in power, even though Karol's undisguised contempt for the Soviet Union and his idealized view of the Chinese Communist experience (loosely his model for Cuban regeneration) sometimes distort his appraisal of Cuban domestic and foreign policies.

Castro was right on June 6 when he noted the marked increase in attacks on the Cuban Revolution recently from leftist positions. These attacks do not come from an international "mafia of pseudo-leftists" out to promote the "counterrevolution," however, as Cuban leaders have begun to charge. Rather, they come from leftist intellectuals who still wish the Revolution well but who, in large part because of these books by Dumont and Karol, can no longer ignore the "hard realities" of life in Cuba today.

Reviewed by WILLIAM E. RATLIFF