

The cuban revolution

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



The plan was still in full force to revolt against the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista.

On July 26, 1953, in the isolated Moncada barracks, 130 men from the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro attacked Batista's forces. Hours after the bloodshed, most of the rebels were captured, arrested or killed. Fidel and his brother Raul Castro managed to escape but were then captured. A couple years before when Cuba was still a democracy, former army Sergeant Fulgencio Batista had been president from 1940-1944. He ran again for re-election in 1952 but Batista knew beforehand that he was going to lose in the upcoming elections.

When he was informed of the upcoming loss, he closed down the elections and seized power illegitimately through the infamous "power grab". The battle that took place on that day in the Moncada Barracks became known as The 26th of July Movement which marked the beginning of the Cuban revolution. The Cuban revolution was triggered by political, social, and economic matters. Many people were very unhappy living under Batista's regime. Castro, a Cuban citizen, had his rights taken away because he would have been elected senator if the elections would have taken place.

As a historical document specified, "Batista suspended the constitution; replaced Congress with an 80-man consultative council; and dissolved all political parties" (Mabry). The people favored a democracy over what they had to follow under Batista's regime because they had no rights as Cuban citizens. The Cuban people, distressed and overpowered in such hard times, looked up to Castro as a national hero. Castro was the leader of the 26th of

July uprising. He portrayed the common man who wanted to restore democracy and to improve the lives of the working class. Castro was also aware of the injustice in the majority of the people.

He endured tough conditions when he was arrested after the rebellion on June 26. For 76 days, he was locked in solitary confinement with the rejection of any legal aid. When Castro announced he would represent his own case, Batista ordered two prison doctors to sign a certificate declaring that he was ill. If the certificate declared he was ill then he wouldn't be able to appear in court. Castro's trial started the next day because the doctors knowing it was morally wrong never signed the certificate. During his trial, Castro gave a speech in which he stated " What unbelievable crimes this regime must have committed to so fear the voice of one accused man!" (Castro).

Clearly, there were acts done by the Batista regime that violated Castro's legal rights. There was a widening gap between the rich and the poor as stated in an article, " Before the Revolution, the life in Cuba was dominated by a minority of wealthy people, sugar barons, tobacco barons, corrupt politicians backed by big U. S corporations and later the Mafia" (" The Cuban Revolution"). Besides the gap, unemployment was very high; six hundred thousand Cubans were without work. Additionally, there was a decrease in job benefits that five hundred thousand farm laborers and four hundred thousand industrial workers had to deal with. There was injustice and extreme poverty in the lower working class, " Prosperity was uneven.

For the sugar cane worker who was unemployed half the year and discouraged from finding other employment so as to be available when the

plantation owner needed him, life did not improve”(Mabry). Life was hard for thousands of people trying to feed their families. They worked tough laborious work for less than the minimum wage. More than half of the Cuban population was illiterate peasants who lived in the countryside. A great portion of the poor class didn't even own a home. Although there were people that owned a home, most of them lacked electricity.

Besides suffering economically, police brutality and cruel punishment was inevitable on the island. Many men from the Rebel Army were harshly tortured. They had limbs cut off, had been forced to dig their own graves to later be buried alive, and prisoners were murdered without a trial. The government then covered up the truth by saying they died in combat. Graphic photographs of the deceased were taken to their families and fellow comrades to instill fear.

The soldiers that were supposed to be assisted in the city hospitals were actually murdered as one witness recalls, “ They broke into the operating room at the very moment when two of our critically wounded were receiving blood transfusions. They pulled them off the tables and, as the wounded could no longer stand, they were dragged down to the first floor where they arrived as corpses” (Castro). Batista's soldiers did not have any remorse in committing such horrendous acts. Haydee Santmaria, a Rebel soldier, was told that her fiance was dead but she answered with dignity, “ He is not dead, because to die for one's country is to live forever” (Castro). Even though there was mass murdering of Rebel Army troops, many of them continued to stay loyal to their country.

At last, after all the ruthless violence, Cuba wasn't dictated by a single man anymore. The Cuban Revolution lasted five difficult years of struggle from 1953-1959. Castro and his followers succeeded in overthrowing Batista's regime. Batista left Cuba on December 31, 1958 and fled to Jacksonville, Florida with his family. As well as thousands of the middle and upper class left the island.

Castro and his men marched into the heart of Cuba on January 2, 1959. Fidel's brother and Che Guevara were put in charge of "organizing squads to bring to trial and execute Batista's era 'war criminals' who had engaged in torture and murder under the old regime" (Minster). Justice would be served for the families of the deceased who fought during the Revolution. On May 17, the Agrarian Reform Act was passed under the new form of government. It eliminated large estates and "granted the ownership over the land to thousands of peasants who had been sharecroppers or leaseholders" (Mabry). The poor class benefitted from this act.

Likewise, the influence of the U. S. in Cuba would eventually be broken off in the next couple of years. The Cuban revolution was caused by many factors but the most relevant was the economic downturn, the uneven distribution of wealth among social classes, and the corruption of government. Since then it has set an example to other Latin American countries that freedom can be gained if oppression can be defeated through defiance of the people.