

What extent did
castros ideology have
history essay



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The present historical investigation deals with the following research question - To what extent did Castro's ideology have an Impact on the long-term relations of Cuba with USA?

The scope of the historical investigation includes the influence of Castro's policies on the Cuban economy as well as its political spheres. In this regard Castro's importance is evaluated with his socialist ideology that led to the growth of anti-capitalist attitude among the Cubans, as they did not want US to interfere with their internal affairs. This had an impact on the Cuban economy too, as Cuba was dependent on US for its economic sustenance.

The method of investigation includes the evaluation of primary and secondary sources related to the research question. Two important sources used for this historical investigation are as follows - The first source is Fidel Castro on Imperialist Globalization- Two speeches, that give details of Castro's speeches and secondly Imperial State-the United States and Revolution and Cuba-1952-1986 by Morris H Morley, which deals elaborately on Castro and his policies.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Right from the 19th century, Cuba was under the control of Spain and it was one of the last countries to remain as a Spanish colony, the people of Cuba also felt the need to be free from colonial domination. An economic crisis in the post Ten Years War period (1868-78) allowed the US companies to purchase huge amounts of land in Cuba. By 1898, after the Cuban war of independence, US launched an attack on Spain and it successfully took control of Cuba. Hence Cuba came under the influence of USA.[1]

In Cuba after the Batista military coup in 1952, the country became more vulnerable to foreign influence. This resulted in the development of an economy based on the domination of the foreign companies and a corrupt administration. This led to the growth of social tensions from which, new political forces emerged with an aim to bring Cuba out of the external influence.[2]

Castro's ideology-Castro emphasized that revolution is a key instrument for change, and he further said " A revolution only be born from culture and ideas". For creating a socialist consciousness, Castro felt that revolutionary legislation had a prominent role to play.[3]Inspired by various Latin and Central American anti-imperialist struggles, Castro's movement was similar to those national liberation movements that mobilized the masses against powerful traditional elites and attempted to break away from the US influence regarding economic control.[4]

Neo- Colonization and globalization- Neo- liberal globalization implies a new form of domination in which a stronger country controls a weaker country not politically, but in economic aspects.[5]Whereas Neo- Colonization is the last stage of imperialism, when a stronger country tries to impose itself onto a weaker country and turn it into a colonial territory.[6]Cuba feared that US would implement this and take control over its territory.

Political and Economic Blockade by the US on Cuba-

Initially Cuba- US relations were not strained as US helped in the consolidation of the political authority in Cuba after the Spanish regime. In September 1900, the military government established by US in Cuba called

for a convention to adopt a constitution outlining the relationship between the United States and Cuba and providing for the election of a Cuban government to assume control of the island.[7]In course of time, US influence became more profound and began to politically dominate Cuba.

Economic control of Cuba by US started from the time when Spanish authority was overthrown. Initially the US capitalists heavily invested in Cuba but in course of time the US government in order to weaken the nationalist and socialist regime in Cuba imposed economic sanctions. During this period not only Cuba but other third world countries were also vulnerable to economic exploitation.[8]Even after Fidel Castro came to power in Cuba economic sanctions from US continued in some way or the other. The main area that affected the Cuban economy was the blockading of sugar and oil by US.

C. EVALUATION OF SOURCES

1. Castro, Fidel, Fidel Castro on Imperialist Globalization: Two Speeches, Zed Books, London, 2002

This book is one of the significant source that throws light on Castro's ideology and his views on various facets and effects of globalization on Third World countries, with more emphasis on Cuba. It consists of one of the speeches of the Cuban leader- Fidel Castro; " A revolution can only be born from culture and ideas". He delivered this speech on the eve of the new century; he critically studied the mechanisms of the imperialist world order, exhibited in new forms of economic exploitation, attacks on national

sovereignty, and cultural subjugation.[9]He believed that US was the root cause for the entire problem.

Regarding capitalism and neo-liberal globalization Castro says that even after 300 years of capitalism the world still has 800 million hungry people. There are also 1 billion illiterates, 130 million people who have no access to education and 250 million children who work regularly. Neo- liberal globalization implies a new form of domination in which a stronger country controls a weaker country economically.[10]

Castro further emphasized that Neo-liberal globalization aimed at transforming all the Latin American countries into private properties. [11]Here Castro had indirectly pointed towards US and its economic sanctions on weaker countries, especially Latin American countries. Castro in essence wanted political sovereignty, economic independence, and cultural differentiation for Cuba.[12]He did not want Americanization of Cuba's economy and advocated for Cubanization. He wanted a quick growth in the national economy in order to be independent; he didn't want Cuba to depend heavily on any country.

2. Morris. H. Morley, *Imperial state-the United States and Revolution and Cuba-1952-1986*, Cambridge University press, Cambridge, 1987.

USA played a pivotal role in Cuba's development politically and economically during the first half of the twentieth century. American policy makers viewed the emergence of Batista dictatorship in 1950's as a threat to American interests. The major concern for the Eisenhower administration was to deny political power to Castro's forces that was short of direct military
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intervention. Subsequently, American policy towards Cuba had focused on reasserting US influence over the island. This study conveys analysis on the Kennedy and Johnson administration's efforts to isolate Cuba politically and economically within Latin America and throughout the capitalist world. During the Nixon, Ford, and Carter presidencies, the economic blockade was enforced upon Cuba. The book also deals on the responses of the US Congress and the American business community to White House policy in the 1970s.

ANALYSIS

Cuba had been at trouble with US since Castro took over in 1959.

[13]Castro's ideologies did affect the relationship US shared with Cuba, but not immediately after he took over. It was only after Castro began to nationalize American estates and factories that the relations between two countries began to disintegrate. Until today, we see hostility between the two countries in various issues including polity and economy.[14]It is essential we investigate what transpired then that still affects US-Cuba relations.

USA wanted to get control of the island and what was responsible for its anger was Castro. They detested Castro's charisma and tenacity and even tried to invade Cuba and overthrow him in 1961.[15]They felt he was the root cause for instilling the idea of a revolution, and socialism and was the one who infused this idea into the people's minds. Castro in his speeches had asserted that " Revolutionary legislation was what contributed the most to creating a socialist consciousness in Cuban people." [16]He also shaped a new state structure, mostly socialized the means of production, he <https://assignbuster.com/what-extent-did-castros-ideology-have-history-essay/>

disenfranchised bourgeois political institutions and neutralized non-working class opposition. This made it really hard for the US to destabilize Cuba and overthrow the revolutionary regime.

Due to Castro's ideologies Cuba in its initial stages did had to suffer. US imposed economic blockades on Cuba in order to disperse the Cuban revolution. From 1962 to 1964, they practically banned export of all strategic military goods, machinery; there were also minimal airline links between Cuba and capitalist world.[17]US made sure that none of its other capitalists trading partners would help them by defying the embargo and most of the countries feared going against the imperial power.[18]Cuba was in a stranglehold between 1962 and 1964 as their percentage of total trade had already dropped by almost half. The Cubans had to pay well over normal prices in order to get major equipment imported from Europe, all of the suppliers feared having ties with Cuba.[19]Although, England and France were motivated by commercial considerations, they decided to maintain economic ties with the Cubans through their trade.”[20]

US failed to deter Cuba; it wasn't a failure in entirety. US decided to focus on other forms of opposition, trying to halt the multiplier effect of the Cuban revolution in the hemisphere.[21]By 1964, US wanted to isolate Cuba and were successful in doing so temporarily, but all of this imperial control lied on a weak socio-economic foundation that invited the revival of nationalist struggles.[22]In early 1970's, Cuba's political exile status broke down and it once again threatened the imperial power's regional position.[23]

CONCLUSION

Castro emphasized on the aspect of revolution as the key to build up socialist structure to counter Neo-Liberal Globalization. This influenced Cuba to counter US effect but, the proximity to Cuba and its own interests made US to have political surveillance and impose economic sanctions by restricting trade to Cuba, so it could hold supremacy on its economy. This made Cuba to initially depend on US especially in sugar trade, machine spare parts and oil refining but, with the assistance of non-capitalist agencies, Cuba could find an alternative source in order come out of the crisis. This was not acceptable to US and from time to time it made attempts to isolate Cuba economically. In course of time, the various developments in Latin American region and the growth of global interdependence began to break the isolation of Cuba. Further, the persistent spark of revolution as initiated by Castro and a durable government in Cuba led to the establishment of relations with the socialist world. This considerably reduced US influence on Cuba, but it continued to monitor Cuba's movements.

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