

DOSSIER CUBA 21



Totalitarianism in Cuba

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I Property statization, productive decline, inflation and collapse

The Cuban totalitarian system is collapsing. Cause and effect of its structural crisis, in the confluence of factors that have been pushing from its origins to this imminent denouement, three stand out **-the annihilation of private property, corruption and exodus-** each one of which separately contains enough dynamite to drag any country into the abyss. Hence the vital importance of returning to them again and again to outline the future of the new Cuba.

The following lines are dedicated to the first and most important: property. This institution, a determining factor in the growth of the economy and social development, has its origin in the primary right of everyone over his own person, extends to appropriable goods, and assumes greater significance in the redistribution of the results of production.

Thinkers of all times from Aristotle¹, Thomas Aquinas² and many others until today, consider private property as a necessary institution, justified according to its usefulness for the good of the human being. In Cuba, starting with Bishop Espada,³ outstanding personalities until today understood the importance of the promotion of small and medium property. José Martí would synthesize the importance of its distribution with the following statement: "A nation that has many small landowners is rich. A people is not rich when there are a few rich men, but when each one has a little wealth. In political economy and in good government, to distribute is to make fortunate".⁴

The 1901 Constitution (art. 32), which established the foundation of the Republic, established that no one could be deprived of their property except by competent authority and for justified reasons of public utility, while the 1940 Constitution (art. 87) endorsed the existence and legitimacy of private property in its broadest concept of social function. Both promoted economic growth and gave rise to an entrepreneurial national class of small, medium, and large businessmen.

But property relations as the foundation of the social order, when subordinated to ideological or other reasons, are distorted to the point of becoming a brake on development. On February 19, 1959, six days after taking office as Prime Minister, once power had been seized by arms and any resistance had been subjugated, Fidel Castro publicly announced a government program that he affirmed "would notably increase agricultural production, the consumption capacity of the peasant population would double and Cuba would erase its dreadful chronic unemployment figures, achieving for

¹ Aristotle (384 B.C.-322 B.C.), philosopher and scientist, considered, together with Plato, the father of Western philosophy.

² Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Christian theologian of the Order of Preachers, canonized in 1323. He was declared Doctor of the Church and patron saint of universities and centers of Catholic studies.

³ Juan José Díaz de Espada y Fernández de Landa, Bishop of Havana between 1800 and 1832.

⁴ José Martí. *Obras Completas*. Volume 7. Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1991, p. 134,

the people a standard of living higher than that of any other nation".⁵ **The subordination of property to state control over the means of production and services led the country to the greatest crisis in its history.** Let us look at some of these decrees, signed by decree, without the consent of the popular will, and at certain facts:

In May 1959, with the First Reform Law, agricultural extensions larger than thirty caballerías (402 hectares) were confiscated and property titles were given to some one hundred thousand tenants, sharecroppers, and tenant farmers; but **40% of the confiscated land passed into the hands of the State.**

In July 1960, under Law 851, the assets, and companies of natural or juridical persons of the United States were expropriated. In August, under Joint Resolution No. 1, U.S. banking companies were nationalized. In October, **Law 890 took advantage of the expropriation of 381 large industrial and commercial enterprises,** warehouses, deposits, and other goods; Joint Resolution No. 3 sealed the nationalization of the rest of the Cuban and American private enterprises, and with **Law 891 all the national private banking enterprises were expropriated.**

In December 1961, **Law No. 989 provided for the confiscation of all property of persons who were absent from the country on a definite basis.**⁶

In October 1963, the Second Agrarian Reform Law passed to the State all farms larger than five caballerías (67.1 hectares), **which expanded State lands to 70% of the total.**

In 1965, to annul money and eradicate mercantile relations, payments and receipts between companies were suspended, in addition to the abolition of taxes, interest collection and the accounting system.

In March 1968, with the "**Revolutionary Offensive**", more than 55,000 small and medium-sized enterprises still in Cuban hands were confiscated. This last measure demonstrated that the true objective of the "nationalizations" was the absolute statization of the economy.

In 1975, through a false process of cooperativization,⁷ a large part of the lands that belonged to small farmers were converted into state "cooperatives". In this way, **the state latifundia covered 75% of the best arable land in the country;** while the substitution of its former owners by bosses and administrators, acted against productive efficiency, by discouraging personal interest in the results of production and services.

As a consequence of these measures, whose seriousness did not become fully visible until the loss of the Soviet subsidies -equivalent to sixty-five billion dollars in thirty years:

⁵ Luis M. Buch Rodríguez, *Gobierno Revolucionario Cubano: génesis y primeros pasos*. Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1999, p.80,

⁶ (Official Gazette of the Republic of Cuba. Extraordinary Edition - Havana, Thursday, October 13, 1960. Fortnightly Volume, Number XIX.

⁷ According to the definition of the International Cooperative Association (ASCI), the associations created in Cuba do not qualify as cooperatives, because they did not arise from the voluntary union of the members, but from the State.

three times more than what all Latin America received from the Alliance for Progress-, **the national economic class was annihilated**, its resurgence was prevented, and all Cubans -except the top leadership- were subjected to the power of the State and became poor, which led Cuba to the debacle in which it is immersed today. Faced with a serious situation, the Government was forced in 1993 to convert part of the state-owned large estates into Basic Units of Agricultural Production (UPPA), With Decree-Law 259 (2008), it handed over unproductive state-owned land in usufruct. **Decree-Law 300 (2014) attenuated some of the restrictions, and so on, although without reaching a radical restructuring of property relations: which is why the productive decline continued its march.**

Four examples: sugar, cattle, coffee, and tobacco

The results of nationalization can be exemplified by four important traditional production lines on the island: sugar, cattle, coffee, and tobacco.

Despite its advantages as a renewable raw material, the favorable climatic conditions for its production, and its cultural implications for Cuban society, sugarcane was practically wiped out from the national territory. If in 1892 1 million tons were produced, in 1913 (in spite of the ruin generated by the War of Independence) 2.5 million tons were reached, and in 1952 7.2 million were surpassed, by 1970 -with a strenuous and useless effort to produce ten million tons- 8.5 million were produced, to gradually decrease to 3.8 million in 1999, and to **460,000 tons in 2022: a figure lower than the one reached in 1861.**⁸

Taking into account that every year some six hundred thousand tons are dedicated, and another 400 thousand tons are committed to the People's Republic of China, productions of less than one million tons make it necessary to import it, something already impossible due to the lack of foreign currency. In the current harvest, out of 22 factories that should have been milling at the beginning of January, only 11 started on time. To this is added the lack of sugar cane, which forces to transport it in trucks from one region to another, when there is not enough fuel and the railroad system does not work. That sentence attributed to José Manuel Casanova⁹ - "without sugar there is no country" - has undoubtedly come true.

For its part, cattle, the second most important item in the Cuban economy, in 1958 reached a proportion of one head of cattle per inhabitant, a proportion that decreased in 1967 to 0.74 per capita.¹⁰ Then the leader of the Revolution, with his exacerbated voluntarism, set out to turn Cuba into the Switzerland of America, creating a new breed that would simultaneously produce abundant meat and milk. The disaster was not long

⁸ Moreno Friginals, Manuel. *El Ingenio: Complejo económico social cubano del azúcar*. Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978, pp. 39-40.

⁹ José Manuel Casanova Diviño (1884-1949), Cuban businessman and politician, known as "The Sugar Czar".

¹⁰ Carmelo Mesa Lago, *Cuba en la era de Raúl Castro, reformas económicas-sociales y sus efectos*, Madrid, Editorial Colibrí, 2012, p. 98.

in coming: in order to guarantee a glass of milk for children under seven years of age, donations from the World Food Program (WFP) had to be accepted in silence¹¹.

In 2022, official figures assured that the national bovine mass was 3,645,000 heads¹², assuming such an optimistic figure, today the per capita is 0.32. But the reality may be much lower due to cattle deaths by "theft and slaughter" so they have decided to make a national census of cattle and horses.¹³

As for coffee in Cuba, the excellent characteristics for its production coincided with the benefit caused for Cuba by the Haitian Revolution in 1791, when it brought to our shores some three thousand French colonists and slaves, who developed this crop in the eastern mountains. In 1803 there were 108,000 coffee bushes, and in 1807 they already surpassed one million. **By 1830 Cuba took Haiti's place as the world's leading coffee exporter.**

In 1960, 60,000 tons were produced. By 2010, however, the harvest had been reduced to one tenth (6,000 tons), forcing the grain to be imported to partially cover domestic needs. The cause of this decline is clear. Before 1959, coffee growers were free to sell their production and buy the necessary inputs, they had freedom and constitutional support, which took the form of the founding of associations to defend their interests, such as the National Association of Coffee Growers of Cuba (Asociación Nacional de Cafetaleros de Cuba). After 1959, most of the private coffee plantations were confiscated and the producers were forced to sell almost the total harvest to the State at the price imposed by the State, among many other obstacles.

In more recent years, Cuba produced 9 to 10,000 tons annually, which does not even satisfy domestic demand (24,000 tons)¹⁴.

Tobacco, in turn favored by the island's climatic conditions, was the main source of income in the first quarter of the 18th century. The boom in its production was so stimulating that in 1717 King Philip V established a monopoly known as the Tobacco Tobacco Stamp, eliminated the middlemen and imposed a fixed price for the purchase. Protests and armed uprisings by the Creole *vegueros* forced the abolition of the monopoly in 1827.

With its back to historical experience, after 1959 the "revolutionary" government structured a system of obligatory collection of most of the production, at very low prices;

¹¹ On February 9, 2016, upon receiving a donation of 150 tons of milk, the Swiss ambassador to Cuba, Anne Pascale Krauer Müller, said that such donations had been going on for more than twenty years

¹² "Cuban cattle breeding has a great history and also the capacity to recover". Presidency of the Republic, November 7, 2022
<https://www.presidencia.gob.cu/es/noticias/la-ganaderia-bovina-cubana-tiene-una-gran-historia-y-tambien-capacidad-para-recuperarse/>

¹³ "Sale and purchase and slaughter of livestock banned in Cuba as of February 15", 14yMedio, 26 January 2024 https://www.14ymedio.com/cuba/prohiben-compraventa-sacrificio-cuba-febrero_1_1087075.html

¹⁴ Rojas, Lucia. "No coffee in Cuba?", 22 September 2023, OnCubaNews.
<https://oncubanews.com/cuba/economia/no-hay-cafe-en-cuba/>

it limited the *vegueros* to the cultivation of the leaf and reserved for the State the most lucrative operations. To compensate for their low income, the producers, as in the times of the Tobacco Stamp, began to hide a part of the harvest to sell it outside of government taxation.

According to the 2001 TABACUBA Statistics, in the twenty years from the **1980-1981 harvest to the 1999-2000 harvest, it dropped from 53 696 to 37 987 tons of leaves.** Twenty years later, **between 2018 and 2020, just over 30,000 tons were harvested annually.** While the 2021-2022 harvest fell below that figure.

In the fifties of the last century, national production placed Cuba in the first places in standard of living in Latin America. Cuban-owned enterprises, in addition to sugar, coffee, tobacco and cattle, produced footwear, textiles, paints, fruits, groceries, sweets, fish, pork, poultry, milk products and others. Nearly 80% of what was consumed was produced in the country. Today, as a result of the process described above, Cuba produces 20% of what it consumes and imports 80%. Or rather, it used to import, because the shortage of foreign currency currently prevents it from doing so.

MSMEs, another false step

In 1993, the structural crisis, aggravated by the loss of Soviet subsidies, forced the authorization of private work under the euphemism of "**self-employment**", limited to a restrictive list of feudal style, which only allowed some activities.

Failed in the measures implemented for decades, hit by the regulations of the U.S. administrations, by the Covid-19 pandemic, shaken by the 9/11 demonstrations, cornered in its own administrative incapacity, the Cuban government decided to create micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), a project, planned since 2011, emerged tied to the 2019 Constitution, whose articles 18 and 19 endorse that "**planning and not the free market will remain the distinctive feature of the economy**".

Ignoring the real causes of the disaster, the Cuban Government continues to dictate measures as ineffective as the previous ones, among them the failed **Tarea Ordenamiento**, which centrally and bureaucratically determined the prices for the purchase and sale of products and services between the State and producers; Resolution 11/2023 of the Central Bank of Cuba, known as the "corralito", which established limits for cash collections and payments in national currency, as well as its deposit, extraction and possession, in order to achieve zero cash circulation; and the "**Paquetazo**" -an increase in the prices of gasoline, transportation, liquefied gas, electricity and other consumer goods-, which will further slowdown production, export, import and distribution capacity, thus adding to the already unbearable hardship of Cubans, and increasing mass demonstrations and/or contradictions in the upper echelons of power.

In 2016, when Jeffrey, a journalist for *The Atlantic Monthly*, asked Fidel Castro about the validity of the Cuban model, he replied, "The Cuban model doesn't even work for us." Now, in 2024, **the dysfunction of the model has reached its terminal stage.** Hence the

imperative - regardless of the mode and duration of the collapse - to define the role of property relations in the next new scenario. It is vital to determine the path and the goal.

GAESA: the privatization of power

While in the first 30 years of the "Socialist Revolution" the process of the nationalization of property took place: appropriation of 75% of the land and all enterprises passed into the hands of the "government", at the end of 1989, with the trial of Cause 1¹⁵, a tendency that Fidel Castro put into practice from the beginning became public for the first time: the management of resources in a personalized and capricious way and the accumulation of capital outside the control of any state institution in the so-called "comandante's reserve"¹⁶ to be able to use it at will. That practice constituted the first seed of the future mafia state that is equal to what anthropologist Katherine Verdery called "the privatization of power"¹⁷.

The anthropologist points out that mafia organizations in post-socialist contexts are made up of collectives that take advantage of state resources and coverage to undertake clandestine economic activities, where they accumulate capital and power without being subject to oversight. According to Verdery, these mafias are sustained by networks of invisible horizontal connections that eventually supplant the role of the state.

In the case of Cuba, the antecedent of the process of conversion to a "post-communist mafia state", a concept coined by the Hungarian Bálint Magyar¹⁸, could be defined when the military -MINFAR and MININT- began to incur in economic activities without any government control. This took off at the beginning of the 1990s during the Special Period.

To this end, Fidel Castro used the business apparatus he created in the late 1970s and 1980s in various tax havens to launder capital and traffic arms, drugs, and people.

It was the network of companies created in Panama that created the premises for the process of transformation into a mafia state. In this initial stage, CORPORACION CIMEX S.A., created in Panama in 1978, was the one that initiated this process.

But when Raul Castro officially took control of the reins of the country in 2008, this process was completed in a radical way by Brigadier General Luis Alberto Lopez Calleja, CEO of Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A. (GAESA). company. The

¹⁵ The trial against General Arnaldo Ochoa for links with drug trafficking is known as Case 1 of 1989. See more info in Hypermedia Magazine "La oscura crónica de la Causa 1/89".

<https://hypermediamagazine.com/actualidad-noticias-prensa-sucesos-cuba/analisis-noticias-debates-actualidad/la-oscura-cronica-de-la-causa-1-89>

¹⁶ The "comandante's reserve," a fund that Fidel Castro managed at will without accountability to the government, dates back to as early as 1960 according to his bodyguard Juan Reinaldo Sanchez in his book *The Double Life of Fidel Castro* (St. Martin's Press, 2015).

<https://www.thehistoryreader.com/historical-figures/reserva-del-comandante/>

¹⁷ **Verdery, Katherine.** *What was socialism, and what comes next?* Princeton University Press, 1996.

¹⁸ **Bálint Magyar;** *Post-Communist Mafia State. The Case of Hungary*, CEU Press, 2016.

transformation of Cuban communism into a post-communist but still totalitarian mafia state was carried out under the leadership of Raúl Castro.

GAESA was founded by Army Corps General Julio Casas Regueiro¹⁹, and was formally attached to the Ministry of the Armed Forces (FAR). But in practice it is nothing more than a gigantic holding company managed by the Castro family and a group of oligarchs close to it, above all institutional control or auditing, including that of the FAR itself. This monopoly controls the main and most strategic sectors of the economy and more than 95% of the country's finances. This immense power has left the bureaucratic-institutional government, which is also controlled by this oligarchic mafia²⁰, without resources to guarantee the most elementary basic needs of the population such as food, health services, transportation, electricity, and access to drinking water.

It is in this oligarchic context of extreme voracious plundering -which does not allocate prioritized resources as under the former communist state to social services, but also does not allow economic freedoms for citizen initiative to generate prosperity- that the uncontrolled operation of GAESA has led to the collapse of the governance system.

In the history of the so-called Cuban revolution, never have the armed forces concentrated as much economic power in their hands as they do today. In fact, no armed force in the Americas has even remotely these extensive economic activities under its control.

At the time of Fidel Castro's government, GAESA played a minor role in the Cuban economy. Its commercial management was aimed at bringing in capital to be able to economically maintain the structures of the armed forces -which had been considerably reduced after the war in Angola and the arrival of the so-called Special Period crisis- and to stop being a financial burden for the state. Today the reality shows a different situation: GAESA has become a business octopus that has gradually spread throughout the most lucrative sectors of the Cuban economy²¹.

¹⁹ **Vincent, Mauricio.** "La muerte del jefe de la principal corporación militar cubana agita la cúpula política en la isla". El País. July 2022. <https://elpais.com/internacional/2022-07-01/la-muerte-del-jefe-de-la-principal-corporacion-militar-cubana-agita-la-cupula-politica-en-la-isla.html>

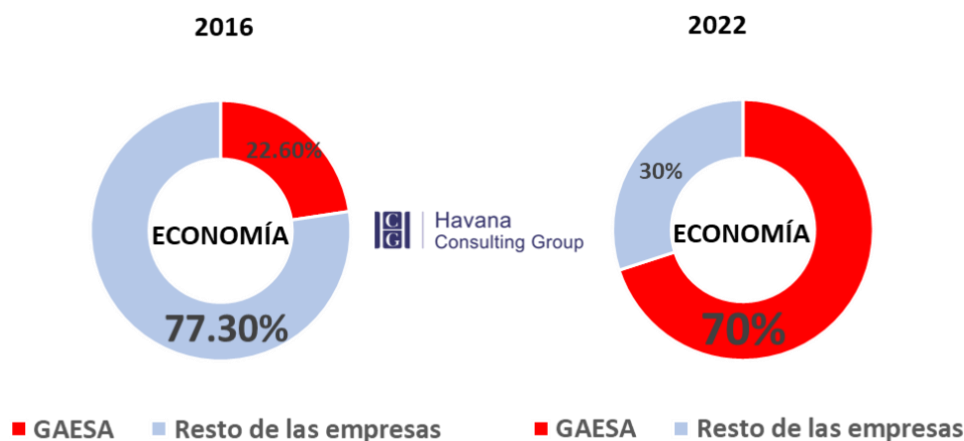
²⁰ **HCG Business Intelligence Unit.** "GRUPO DE ADMINISTRACION DE EMPRESAS (GAE S.A): Prerogatives

Special or a state within a state?". THCG Business Report, October 2020 No4, THCG & TECH.

²¹ **HCG Business Intelligence Unit.** "GRUPO GAESA, the business emporium of the armed forces". THCG Business Report, OCT-DEC 2017 No5, THCG & TECH.

With the acquisition of Corporación CIMEX S.A.²², the company Habaguanex²³, the company Palco²⁴, the Special Development Zone Mariel (ZEDM) and a significant part of ETECSA²⁵ -to mention the most important-, this gigantic monopoly currently covers around 70% of the economy, a huge leap in only six years. See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Cuba. Balance of power in the economy, 2016-2022.



Source: Prepared by Havana Consulting Group.

On the other hand, with the strategic award of the International Financial Bank (BFI)²⁶ in 2016, in just six years it has taken control of 95% of the country's finances. This was the hardest blow delivered by GAESA in its silent strategy to take over the country's wealth. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. Cuba. Balance of power in the country's finances. 2016-2022

²² **Morales, Emilio.** "GAESA does not manage a remittance business to Cuba, but a capital laundering business". DDC.

September 2021. https://diariodecuba.com/economia/1632135670_34208.html

²³ **CIBERCUBA.** "Habaguanex S.A passes from Eusebio Leal to FAR". August 2016.

<https://www.cibercuba.com/noticias/2016-08-01-u129488-los-militares-inundan-la-habana-vieja-eusebio-leal-lose-habaguanex-sa>

²⁴ **CIBERCUBA.** "Abraham Maciques removed as president of Palco". June 2021.

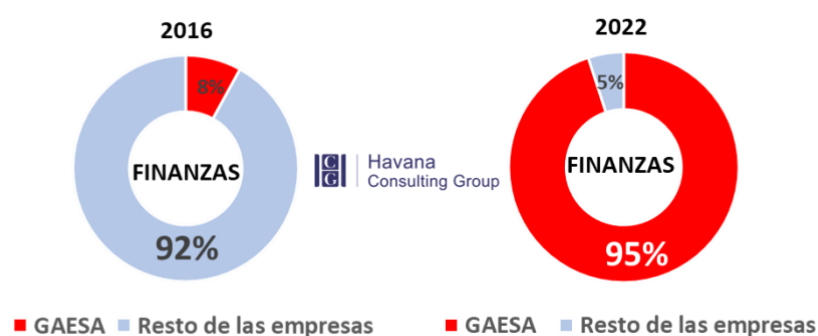
<https://www.cibercuba.com/noticias/2021-06-23-u191143-e191143-s27061-destituido-abraham-maciques-presidente-palco>

²⁵ **Morales, Emilio.** "GAESA takes over ETECSA in the shadows and pulls ORBIT S.A. out from under the sleeve". THCG

Business Report, February 2022 No1, THCG & TECH.

²⁶ **CUBANET.** "GAESA absorbs International Financial Bank". June 2016.

<https://www.cubanet.org/destacados/gaesa-absorbe-el-banco-financiero-internacional/>



Source: Prepared by Havana Consulting Group

Today GAESA is not only directly present in the most lucrative sectors of the economy through business structures subordinated to it, but it also exercises its power and control practically over the rest of the business structures in various sectors of the national economy. To this end, it uses two means of control. The first, by placing high-ranking officials at the head of these companies²⁷. The second is a kind of indirect power exercised by financial means through the International Financial Bank (BFI). This banking entity belonging to GAESA controls the financial activities of all the companies that operate under its umbrella and about 95% of the flow of commercial import and export operations carried out by all the national and foreign companies that operate in the Cuban market. This has considerably unbalanced the institutional economic power in the country. It has placed at one stroke about 95% of the country's finances in the hands of GAESA and has left the institutionalized bureaucratic government practically without financial resources, turning it into a kind of governance subordinated to this new supra-power.

In other words, this mafia elite in power is the one that has under its control every dollar that enters and leaves the island. A good part of it ends up deposited outside the country in various bank accounts distributed in an extensive network of non-visible companies that they have submerged in different tax havens. This sophisticated method of defalcation goes through the twists and turns of the government's legal apparatus by means of laws and decrees that determine how to structure the companies, how to create and merge them, who are their owner-shareholders and the front men who operate them, as well as establish the mechanisms to move and hide capital through them and channel investments within the country, who execute them and which sectors of the economy are prioritized according to their interests. All this is done under the protection of legislation legitimized with the false argument of protecting and developing the so-called "socialist enterprise".

²⁷ **Moloeznik Gruer, Marcos P.** "El futuro de cuba a la luz de sus fuerzas armadas". Revista Política y Estrategia Nº 125 - 2015.

Whoever wants to do business or invest in Cuba in one way, or another will have to go through the hands of GAESA. The mafia in power has structured the system in such a way that all roads lead to it. See Figure 3.

Figure 3. Structure and growth of Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A. (GAESA), 2022



Statization of property: the basis of totalitarianism

1959

40% OF THE LAND IS CONTROLLED BY THE STATE

In May 1959, with the First Reform Law, agricultural extensions larger than thirty caballerías (402 hectares) were confiscated and property titles were given to some one hundred thousand tenants, sharecroppers and tenant farmers; but 40% of the confiscated land passed into the hands of the State.

1960

EXPROPRIATION OF LARGE COMPANIES AND NATIONALIZATION OF BANKS

The assets and companies of natural or juridical persons of the United States were expropriated. A total of 381 large industrial and commercial enterprises, warehouses, deposits, and other assets were expropriated. Joint Resolution No. 3 sealed the nationalization of the rest of the Cuban and U.S. private companies, and with Law 891 all the national private banking companies were expropriated.

1963

70% OF THE LAND IS TRANSFERRED TO THE STATE

The Second Agrarian Reform Law passed to the State all farms larger than five caballerías (67.1 hectares), which expanded State lands to 70% of the total.

1968

LIQUIDATION OF 55,000 SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN CUBAN HANDS

With the "Revolutionary Offensive", more than 55,000 small and medium-sized enterprises that remained in the hands of Cubans were confiscated. This last measure demonstrated that the true objective of the "nationalizations" was the absolute nationalization of the economy.

1975

75% OF THE LAND IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE STATE

Through a false process of cooperativization, a large part of the land belonging to small farmers was converted into state "cooperatives". In this way, the state latifundia by 1975 covered 75% of the best arable land in the country.

1978

THE SEEDS OF THE FUTURE TOTALITARIAN MAFIA STATE

It was the network of companies created in Panama that created the premises for the subsequent process of transformation of the communist state into a mafia state. It can be considered that **CORPORACIÓN CIMEX S.A.**, created in Panama in 1978, was the seed that made this process possible.

2008

GAESA PRIVATIZATION OF ECONOMIC POWER

When Raúl Castro officially took control of the reins of the country, the process of non-state appropriation of the most lucrative sectors of the country was consolidated with the **Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A (GAESA)**. This new phase later reached its climax at the hands of Brigadier General Luis Alberto López Calleja.

2022

GAESA CONTROLS 70% OF THE ECONOMY AND 95% OF FINANCE

GAESA, which initially only operated the Gaviota Tourism Group, came to control 70% of the economy with the appropriation of companies such as CIMEX (2010), ETECSA (2011), Habaguanex Hotels (2015), among others. With the control over the Banco Financiero Internacional (BFI) in 2016, GAESA took control of 95% of the country's finances. This was GAESA's hardest blow to the national economy in its silent strategy to seize Cuba's wealth. The BFI controls the import and export trade operations carried out by all domestic and foreign companies operating in Cuba.



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II Relationship between corruption and totalitarianism

Corruption, an evil present in all societies, was turned into State policy by Cuban totalitarianism to subdue officials and keep them loyal. This strategy turned this scourge into a cancer that invaded the whole society. Together with the nationalization of property, which we analyzed in the previous chapter, this is another factor that is pushing the Cuban nation towards the abyss.

Some conceptual aspects

Jeremiah Bentham,²⁸ for whom utility is measured by the consequences that actions tend to produce, concluded that every action is socially good when it seeks to procure the greatest possible degree of happiness for the greatest number of people, and that each person has the right to be taken into account in the exercise of power.

Roberto Agramonte²⁹, for his part, understood collective morality as the norms that are followed, strengthened by the tradition that each man receives from the environment at birth. Relying on Spengler,³⁰ emphasized the relativism of conduct.

Corruption, a negative manifestation of morality, permeated the three fundamental moral aspects present in Cuba's history:

Civic morality, based on ethics, was a discourse of minorities, represented by illustrious figures from Bishop Espada,³¹ through José Agustín Caballero³², to Father Félix Varela, who criticized those interested exclusively in boxes of sugar and sacks of coffee. José Martí incorporated this discourse to his ethical arsenal and summarized it in twenty-one words: "I want the first law of our Republic to be the worship of Cubans to the full dignity of man". This moral aspect, foundation of the nation and source of Cuban identity in the 19th century, was present in the independence deeds and in the Republic, in the actions of the veterans of those wars, of the intellectual elite, and of the trade unionist and university youth up to the so-called centennial generation on 1953. However, some of the latter, upon taking power, set the compass in the direction of totalitarianism and laid the foundations for the generalization of corruption throughout society.

Utilitarian morality, a deviation from Bentham's utilitarianism, sustained selfish individualism and easy living, which took shape in gambling, vagrancy, the indiscriminate use of violence, to the point of making the violation of all provisions the norm of conduct. As examples suffice it to cite: the diversion of funds for the construction of La Cabaña in colonial times, which made that fortress the most expensive in the world; the

²⁸ Jeremiah Bentham (1748-1832), philosopher and jurist, father of utilitarianism, was born and died in London.

²⁹ Roberto Agramonte y Pichardo (1904-1995), philosopher, sociologist and politician, was dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and rector of the University of Havana. Minister of Foreign Affairs of the revolutionary government between January and June 1959.

³⁰ Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), philosopher and historian.

³¹ Juan José Díaz de Espada y Fernández de Landa, bishop of Cuba between 1800 and 1832.

³² José Agustín Caballero (1762-1835), exponent of an innovative philosophical thought. His *Philosophia electiva* was the first Cuban attempt to adapt to modern thought and one of the first efforts to systematize philosophical knowledge on the island.

gambling den and the cockfighting ring that Governor Francisco Dionisio Vives had for his entertainment in the Castillo de la Fuerza; the black curros of the Manglar, many of whom were pimps, murderers, thieves and swindlers; the banditry that proliferated in the fields with the eviction of the *vegueros* from their lands; Caniquí, the black of Trinidad, turned into the terror of Villa Clara, and Juan Fernández (el Rubio), bandit of Puerto Príncipe. In the first half of the 20th century this aspect of morality reappeared in the discourse of the political-economic-military elite that emerged from the wars of independence, who used public positions for individual ends, except for figures such as Tomás Estrada Palma³³. This picture was drawn by Carlos Loveira³⁴ in his novel *Generals and Doctors* (1920). After 1940, especially during the authentic governments, political-administrative corruption became one of the worst evils, to the point that, in 1951, Eduardo Chibás³⁵ took up the attack on this calamity with the slogan "Shame against Money!".

Survival morality, with its roots in the colonial system, manifested itself with greater force in the twentieth century, more pronounced in the second half, and due to its prolonged duration derived in actions to survive, such as: double standards, mimicry and "choteo" - that form of insular relationship, which according to Jorge Mañach does not take anything seriously. In this context, overflowing with totalitarianism, survival assumed predominance over the other aspects of morality, weakened civic responsibility and became the predominant behavior in society.

These three moral discourses - the civic, the utilitarian and the survivalist - were mixed and intertwined in the first thirty-three years of the Republic: they were present in the Protest of the 13 against president Machado, in the strengthening of civil and political society, in the "Revolution of 1930", in the abrogation of the Platt Amendment, in the Constitution of 1940, in the corruption of authentic governments, in the efforts at beautification made by the Society of Friends of the Republic, in the 1952 coup d'état, in the assault on the Moncada Barracks, in the armed struggle that triumphed in 1959, in the current struggle of the people to survive and in the minorities that, from the emerging civil society, are raising the defense and respect for human rights.

Corruption, therefore, is not new. What is new is its presence in all social strata. The wave of expropriations -which began with large foreign properties and did not stop until the smallest properties in the hands of Cubans were eliminated- **laid the foundations for corruption to burst into all of society and all activities.**

³³ Tomás Estrada Palma (1835-1908), participated in the war for independence that began in 1868. He held the positions of Secretary of War, Secretary of Foreign Affairs and President of the Republic in Arms. After the Peace of the Zanjón, he traveled to the United States, where he worked as a teacher and established political and personal ties with José Martí. Founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, and designated Delegate of the same at the death of the Apostle. He distinguished himself for his moral conduct. When he was president of Cuba, he used public vehicles instead of private cars. Because of his conduct, the phrase "Don Tomás can govern us with cups of coffee" became popular.

³⁴ Carlos Loveira y Chirino (1882-1928), Cuban novelist.

³⁵ Eduardo Chibás, lawyer, journalist and politician, unable to prove his accusation against the Minister of Education, Aureliano Sánchez Arango, took his own life on August 16, 1951.

Motivation is an irreplaceable driving force for the achievement of objectives and social development. Ownership of the means of production -and the cost of living wage ratio- are decisive in the interest of producers. When that interest disappeared in Cuba as a consequence of the aforementioned confiscations, **Cubans, disarmed of civic instruments, looked for alternative sources.** They responded to the absence of freedoms, with the submerged life; to the shortage of supplies, with the theft from the State through the appropriation of the so-called "property of all the people"; to the repression and the closing of all possibilities, with the exodus.

In these survival behaviors, from the resellers to the highest officials are involved. Robbery, theft and other illegalities are popularly designated with the terms "escape", "fight", "scrape" and "solve": actions expressed with the same discourse of the patriots of the 19th century, but not to abolish slavery, achieve independence and found a nation, but -I repeat- to survive; a conduct condensed in the popular phrase: *Here what there is not to die for.* Let's see a minuscule sample of its manifestations:

- In 1987, the president of the Civil Aeronautics Institute, **Luis Orlando Domínguez Muñiz** -who had served as secretary of the Union of Young Communists and was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (PCC)- was sentenced **to twenty years in prison for embezzlement.** His successors, Vicente Gómez López and General Rogelio Acevedo González, were punished for similar reasons.
- In 2001, faced with the excessive growth of corruption, the government created the Ministry of Audit and Control.
- In 2003, on November 8, the newspaper *Granma* published an article by an official of the Price Supervision Directorate of the Ministry of Finance, according to which, in the first eight months of that year, irregularities were found in 36% of the inspected establishments, while in markets, fairs, plazas and agricultural and livestock sales points, the rate was over 47%.
- In 2004, the *Granma* of February 20, 2004, quoted the words of the head of the Ministry of Audit and Control: "the **causes and conditions conducive to crime and other violations are well identified**". Among them, she mentioned from "insufficient confirmation of the origin or final destination of the products" to "insufficient supervision of the auditing system".
- In 2005, due to the **theft of fuel from gas stations**, all personnel were given forced vacations, and were replaced by young graduates from the schools of social workers that Fidel Castro had created. It became known that what was stolen was as much or more than what was taken in, but the theft continued with the brand new social workers.
- In 2007, the *Granma* of February 16, addressing the theft of the angles that support the high voltage electrical transmission networks, acknowledged that the "technical, administrative and legal measures applied so far have not stopped the banditry".

- In 2010, *Granma* reported on October 26 that in Corralillo, Villa Clara, more than 300 houses had been built with stolen materials, for which 25 kilometers of railway lines were dismantled and 59 angles of high tension towers were used.
- In 2012, *Juventud Rebelde*, on February 19 and 26, published an interview with the Comptroller of the Republic, who said: "In our experience, **the causes of corruption range from the fact that there was no control of contracts**, because the one who had to do it did not do it, and the one who had to review it did not review it either, or if he did review it, he did not do it thoroughly".
- In 2019, the official website *Cubadebate* reported that **"every hour 626 liters of fuel were stolen in Cuba"**; *Granma*, for its part, on October 2, 3 and 4 of that year, dedicated a daily page to the issue of illicit resellers.
- In the television program *Hacemos Cuba*, the vice-president of the People's Supreme Court said that "in the first three months of Covid-19, 1,516 people were sanctioned for spreading epidemics, illegal economic activity, the crime of receiving and other illegalities".
- In 2021, on May 22, the article "Soluciones contra engaños", published by *Juventud Rebelde*, when questioning one of the thousands of inspectors, he explained that when he exposed a crime, the offenders told him: "you have to live, you have to fight"; while those affected defended their victimizer.

However, **the Comptroller of the Republic is an entelechy with no real power to inspect the economy** in the hands of the main embezzler of the national wealth, which is the ruling elite, whose spawn -such as the military conglomerate GAESA, which has appropriated more than 70% of the national economy and 95% of its financial transactions from the battered Cuban economy- operate behind the back not only of the Comptroller itself, but -what is worse- on the margins and against the people.

Response from the leaders

In 2013, on July 7, at the closing of the National Assembly of People's Power, Raúl Castro said: "*We have painfully perceived, throughout the more than 20 years of the special period, the increased deterioration of moral and civic values, such as honesty, decency, shame, decorum, honesty and sensitivity to the problems of others*". To which he added: **"a part of society has come to see the theft from the State as normal"**. Ironical statement by a man directly responsible of installing the perception that theft by the state was normal.

In 2020, on April 29, *Granma* reproduced the words of Miguel Díaz-Canel, president of the Republic and secretary of the PCC: "nobody here can be doing illegal activity, nobody here is authorized to sell or resell anything, and it cannot be allowed [...]. There is no need to explain anything, we must act severely, because these are the people who are making the situation more complex".

In 2023, in July, at the closing of the 10th Legislature of the National Assembly of People's Power, ANPP, Díaz-Canel returned to the issue of crimes and illegalities: "the State and the Government cannot turn their backs on the increase of illicit activities that penetrate the social fabric like a cancer". In that Legislature, allusions to corruption were repeated. A small sample are the following quotes: "we are facing the theft of medicines and the illicit sale of imported drugs"; "the sales of products with abusive prices are assumed passively by the population"; "these behaviors are influenced by the tolerance of the population that does not always repudiate it or inform the authorities responsible for facing these facts"; "lack of coherence in the assimilation of the concept of abusive or speculative prices".

The permanence and growth of corruption -after decades of dictating control measures, forming corps of inspectors, and inspectors of inspectors, of making endless "exemplary" judgments, of calling on the people to fight the people, of blaming U.S. policy for the evils generated by totalitarianism, of making speeches and ideological appeals-, shows that actions on the effects, ignoring their causes, are incapable of eradicating or, at least, reducing the evil.

The solution is based on recognizing the totalitarian state as the main cause of widespread corruption, restoring civil liberties, decentralizing the economy, and allowing the formation of a national middle class.

The attempt to solve the Cuban crisis through changes in leadership or any other cosmetic change is insufficient. The experience of the last century shows that, in Cuba, because of its history, its culture and its current state, **any solution to the current crisis requires structural changes.**

The Cuban nation has a future, but it must go through ethical regeneration. Generally, great works -and the one Cuba is demanding is- are initiated by conscious minorities. **Hence the uselessness of aspiring to a social improvement on the part of the government leadership,** if the agents of the supposed improvement are incapable of changing: a thesis as simple as it is profound, supported by practice and thought in all times. **The current government consumed its turn.**

III The exodus, effect of Cuba's structural crisis and cause of its worsening

Whosoever nation lives shall help to establish the things of his homeland in such a way that every man can carve out for himself in active and applicable work an independent personal status.³⁶

Emigration, the geographical rearrangement of living beings, occurs when the natural or social conditions of a territory prevent the satisfaction of basic needs. This phenomenon, present in all times and places, reaches a sufficient potentiality to lead any country to the abyss, when it derives from property relations alien to human nature and from a socially generalized corruption: this is the case of Cuba, as can be seen in its history.

Eight or ten thousand years ago, the first settlers arrived on the island of Cuba, coming from neighboring regions, and endowed with a very rudimentary culture. A second group, belonging to the Mesolithic period,³⁷ arrived some 4,000 or 4,500 years ago. The third wave, more advanced (Neolithic),³⁸ reached the coasts of Cuba a thousand years ago. In the 16th century, colonizers from the Hispanic peninsula disembarked, and in the following centuries they brought enslaved Africans. In the second half of the 19th century, once slavery had been abolished, Chinese *culíes*³⁹ were hired to replace slave labor. From this mixture, with a preponderance of peninsulars and Africans, the Cuban population was formed.

In the 20th century, the different republican governments promoted immigration. In 1913, Major General José Miguel Gómez⁴⁰ granted permission to the Nipe Bay Company to import three thousand West Indian braceros for Central Preston (currently Guatemala). At the same time, immigrants from the Canary Islands, Syria and Lebanon arrived. When sugar production and prices contracted because World War I, President Alfredo Zayas⁴¹ demanded the reembarkation of the West Indian braceros. In 1933, during the presidency of Grau San Martín,⁴² the Nationalization of Labor Law was passed, limiting the number of foreign workers.

In the opposite direction, since the 19th century, Cuban cigar makers and musicians mainly emigrated to Florida and New Orleans. Despite the geographical proximity and the development of the northern nation, the 1910 census showed a little more than

³⁶ José Martí. *Obras Completas*. Havana, Ed. de Ciencias Sociales, 1991, t.8, p. 285.

³⁷ Prehistoric period of the Stone Age between the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods, characterized by nomadism, hunting and fishing.

³⁸ Last of the Stone Age periods, characterized by settlements and the use of livestock, agriculture and the manufacture of ceramic vessels.

³⁹ Laborers hired for a period of no less than eight years in exchange for transportation and a salary, who arrived in Cuba after the abolition of slavery.

⁴⁰ José Miguel Gómez J (1858-1921), Major General, veteran of the three wars of independence, was president of Cuba from 1909 to 1913.

⁴¹ Alfredo Zayas Alfredo Zayas (1861-1934), president of Cuba from 1921 to 1925.

⁴² Ramón Grau San Martín Ramón Grau San Martín 1881-1969), founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (Authentic) and President of the Republic of Cuba from 1944 to 1948.

fifteen thousand Cubans in that country. In 1959 the figure was estimated at about one hundred and twenty-five thousand: the growing exodus began after that date. First families linked to the deposed government: members of the "revolutionary" government who dissented from the totalitarian course; in 1960 and 1961, Cubans affected by the confiscation of their properties and by the exchange of banknotes in August of the latter year.⁴³

To control and exploit the growing migration, the "revolutionary" Government, with **Law 989 of 1959**, provided for the seizure of furniture, real estate, or any other kind of valuables from those who left the country, and in 1961 instituted the "**exit permit**" to regulate the time spent abroad. But the exodus did not stop. Let us look at some facts:

Between 1960 and 1962, with Operation Peter Pan, some fourteen thousand children were sent abroad by their parents.

In 1965, in the face of the unstoppable departures (pretending to demonstrate that the cause of the exodus was exogenous), on September 28 Fidel Castro stated:

And since this is so, we are even willing to set up a little port somewhere [...] We could set up, let's say -for example- the port of Camarioca, in Matanzas, which is one of the closest points, so that anyone who has a relative we give permission to come on the boat, whoever he may be. [...]; who are the ones to blame, I repeat, that someone drowns trying to get to the Yankee "paradise". Now the imperialists have the word; let's see what they do or what they say"⁴⁴.

From 1965 to 1973, among those who left by sea and/or air, there were two hundred and sixty thousand Cubans.

In 1976, the Cuban Government enacted Migration Law No. 1312 to establish the "**entry or exit permit**", which was in effect for thirty-seven years.

In 1980, when thousands of Cubans stormed the Peruvian embassy, Fidel Castro repeated the accusatory speech of 1965, **institutionalized the abominable "acts of repudiation" to discourage the stampede**, and called for the "March of the Combatant People" to give an image of massive support for the Revolution. As an additional punishment, the boats that arrived to pick up family members were forced to take a quota of prisoners and mentally ill people. Despite these measures, **one hundred and twenty-five thousand Cubans left the country in a few months, the same amount that migrated to the United States throughout the previous 5 decades of republic.**

In 1994, groups of Havana residents broke into diplomatic residences, hijacked maritime vessels, and on August 5 demonstrated in the streets of the city against the Government,

⁴³ On August 4, 1961, Law 963 was enacted to exchange the banknotes in use for others of equal value. Only up to 10,000 pesos could be exchanged, of which 200 were received in cash and the remaining 9,800 had to be withdrawn at a monthly rate of 100 pesos. The rest of the money was confiscated. This was the first step on a path aimed at eliminating the national economic class and preventing its resurgence.

⁴⁴ <http://www.cuba > speeches > eng>

an event known as the Maleconazo. As in 1965 and 1980, the United States was accused of encouraging illegal immigration. This time Fidel Castro said: "either measures are taken or we will not hinder those who come to look for their relatives"⁴⁵. As a result, **another thirty-three thousand Cubans fled the island.**

In 2018 Cubans took advantage of the Tourist Card that Panama granted to cuentapropistas for a thirty-day stay and the increase in multiple entry visas for a five-year term.

In 2021, at the height of the crisis - spurred by the Trump administration's measures following the "sonic attacks" on the U.S. embassy, the Covid-19 and the massive protest demonstrations on the island - Nicaragua announced to Cubans that they could travel to that country without a visa. According to the Vice Minister of the Interior, the measure responded to the requests of Cubans with relatives there and to the promotion of commercial exchange, tourism, and humanitarian family relations. **The real causes were different: a human trafficking business,** on the one hand. On the other hand, the United States had labeled the governments of Cuba and Nicaragua as dictatorships and imposed sanctions for human rights violations. It was therefore a case of killing two birds with one stone: the Cuban-Nicaraguan strategy, in addition to the human trafficking business, was intended to force the U.S. administration to suspend those sanctions.⁴⁶ As a result, thousands, and tens of thousands of Cubans desperate to leave the island sold their belongings to buy tickets and escape. At the same time, thousands more tried to migrate to Spain, reach Western Europe through the Balkans, and many others continued to escape in fragile sea vessels to reach countries in the region, such as Honduras.

At the end of 2020, the exponential growth of the exodus led to migration agreements under which the United States agreed to receive up to thirty thousand migrants per month from Cuba, Nicaragua, and Haiti, and in exchange, those who arrived in that country irregularly would be expelled or returned to Mexico. This agreement, although it tempers the crisis, does not solve it, since the U.S. compliance with the twenty thousand annual visas, added to another 100,000 who could leave through sponsors, does not cover, nor approximately, the number of those who are willing to leave.

In addition to the aforementioned groups, there is the flight of doctors who go on health missions and athletes who travel to events abroad, among them baseball players who - since the departure through the port of Mariel in 1980 until today - continue to leave the country. According to official data, from 2016 to 2021, some six hundred and thirty-five baseball players have left Cuba.

In the fiscal year **from October 2021 to September 2022, an average of six hundred Cubans entered the United States daily.** The following month, October 2023, the number surpassed nine hundred per day and in November there were already almost

⁴⁵ Fidel Castro, appearance before Cuban television on August 5, 1994.

⁴⁶ **Juan Antonio Blanco** *Why this new wave of migrants to the US?* **Cuba Siglo XXI, November 17, 2023.**

twelve hundred per day. Then, **between December 2021 and February 2024, more than half a million Cubans arrived in that country.**⁴⁷

The above cases are joined by those who have acquired or aspire to obtain Spanish nationality, plus Cubans who marry foreigners to leave the country.

In addition to the uprooting, loss of human lives and painful family separations, **the exodus has generated other serious social effects such as population decrease and aging**, also enhanced by the low birth rate and the decapitalization of professionals. The phenomenon is a threat to the uncertain future of the Cuban nation, which is aging at the pace of developed countries.

According to the 2010 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), **Cuba has the lowest total fertility rate (children per woman) in the Americas.** This data was confirmed by the government, recognizing a rate of 1.6 (the minimum replacement fertility for a population not to decrease over time is 2.1 children per woman on average). This reduction is a result of the worsening of living conditions and the lack of prospects, which force Cuban women to postpone the decision to have children.

In 1990, 12.1% of the population was over 60 years of age, but in 2010 it was 17.8%, a progression that indicates that by 2030, Cubans in that age range will reach an average of 30.8%. The difference with respect to developed countries with low fertility rates lies in the fact that these countries have high rates of labor productivity, which guarantees the preservation of high standards of living, quite the opposite of Cuba, which is sinking into galloping misery.

At a meeting on December 27, 2021 with members of the Cuban Academy of Sciences to discuss the demographic dynamics, Marino Murillo, then head of the Permanent Commission for the Implementation and Development of the CCP Guidelines, said that in the first quarter of 2020 there were 23,666 births, and deaths reached 27,269, a trend that, he explained, should continue during the year, which for the first time marks a decline in the population in the largest of the Antilles.

At the aforementioned meeting, President Miguel Díaz-Canel described population aging, which is a real tragedy for Cuba, as a conquest, as a result of what the Revolution has done in all areas.⁴⁸ At the meeting, Dr. Antonio Aja Díaz, from the Center for Demographic Studies of the University of Havana, said that aging is not reversed, it is not confronted; it is dealt with, and Cuba, faced with such low fertility rates, has no choice but to look for more births. What Mr. Aja did not say is that **to seek more births, it is necessary to improve the conditions of Cubans, especially women and the child population. This implies a structural reform that the regime refuses to undertake because it would likely crumble in the attempt.**

⁴⁷ U.S. deports 61 irregular Cuban migrants. *Diario de Cuba*, March 29, 2024.

⁴⁸ *Granma* Newspaper, Tuesday, December 28, 2021, p. 3.

The huge exodus provoked by the perversion of property relations and social corruption, together with the decrease and aging of the population resulting largely from that, constitute sufficient factors to collapse the Cuban totalitarian system.

To blame U.S. policy for the disaster that Cuba is today is a misrepresentation of the truth. While it is true that its different legislations -in 1966 Congress approved the so-called "Cuban Adjustment Act" for those who enter the territory through the air bridge, in 1996, it implemented the "wet feet dry feet" policy, and in 2006 it implemented the *parole* program for Cuban doctors- could have encouraged emigration in the face of the desperation of Cubans, **such measures are not the cause of the massive exodus that began long before they were dictated.** Likewise, the claim to the United States for the non-fulfillment of the 20,000 annual visas is pure propaganda, since the number of Cubans willing to leave the country is much higher than that figure.

The main cause of the exodus is internal: it began before the administrations of Joe Biden, Donald Trump and Barack Obama; before the "reformist" measures implemented by Raul Castro in 2008, before the 1966 Adjustment Act, and even before the rupture of diplomatic relations in 1961. If its causes are maintained. **The exodus will continue because it is impossible to stop it without cutting its root: the imposed totalitarian model, enemy of democracy and root cause of the chronic poverty endured by the Cuban nation.**

The dollarization implemented with the freely convertible currency (MLC), the New Exchange Market and the Tarea Ordenamiento have turned the already exhausted economy of the island upside down, generating an inflationary spiral that has condemned more than 80%⁴⁹ of the population to live in absolute misery, the main cause of the largest migratory stampede in the history of Cuba.

Migration has thrown out of our borders more than two million Cubans, the vast majority of whom are of working age. In the last two years, more than half a million have arrived in the United States; a figure higher than the sum of those who left through Camarioca, Mariel and the Guantanamo Naval Base (418,000), to which must be added more than 1.5 million who are being reclaimed through the humanitarian *parole* program. In the four months between October 2021 and February 2022 alone, almost 40,000 Cubans left. **The duration of this phenomenon - together with the declining fertility rate that is rapidly turning Cuba into a country of the elderly - because of the inability of the totalitarian model to meet the needs of Cubans, threatens the nation's demise.** However, the collapse of totalitarianism, precipitated in recent years, indicates that of its collapse.

To insist on the responsibility of the United States is to delay the solution of the structural crisis generated, and to increase the danger of a social explosion.

The cause of emigration began in 1959 with the stampede of Cubans fleeing the totalitarianism that suppressed liberties, confiscated property, dissolved civil society

⁴⁹ "88% of Cubans live in extreme poverty, report reveals", Bloomberg Linea, September 23, 2023.

and destroyed existing institutions. The prolonged duration of the exodus and its spiraling increase, considering, moreover, the sociological diversity of the emigrants, constitute sufficient reasons to confront its true cause, which is none other than the totalitarian control of the State over things and people that has prevented Cubans from realizing their aspirations within the national borders.

IV. Conclusion

The collapse of the Cuban totalitarian regime is a fact. The inefficient state property relations that were imposed for more than six decades, the generalization of corruption and the uncontrollable exodus make up a trilogy that has put that regime in checkmate. What is debatable is, in any case, the way (peaceful or violent) in which it will inevitably move towards another system and whether that society will still be autocratic (although no longer totalitarian) or finally democratic. The recently emerged social movement for the 5 Freedoms against totalitarianism⁵⁰ proposes a way to ensure that such change aims at a democratic society.



⁵⁰"Manifiesto The People's Counter-Packet: 5 freedoms (5L) against Totalitarianism".

<https://cubasiglo21.com/manifiesto-el-contrapaquetazo-del-pueblo-5-libertades-5l-contra-el-totalitarismo/>

About the author

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About Cuba Siglo 21

Cuba Siglo 21 is a Madrid-based NGO that promotes an open, democratic, and prosperous society based on the rule of law and a free market.

