



VMUN 2019

Cuban Council of Ministers, 1959

CRISIS BACKGROUND GUIDE



VANCOUVER MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Cuban Council of Ministers, 1959. This is a crisis cabinet in which delegates will assume the roles of ministers of Cuba's government in 1959. I believe that crisis committees provide an excellent means for delegates to experience not only the many facets needed to manage a government efficiently and effectively, but also the struggles in decision-making that confronted these historical figures. Unlike other Model UN committees, crisis committees allow delegates to see the positive and negative consequences of their decisions and challenge them to engage in personal diplomacy—balancing individual agendas with collective compromise.

The committee will start on February 16, 1959, and end in either 1963 or 1964, depending on both your progress and my discretion. During particularly pertinent crises, the committee's timescale will slow down drastically, emphasizing the stressful and severe nature of these crises. Despite being a crisis-focused cabinet, your directives and decisions during routine debate will have lasting consequences that follow the committee in whichever way it goes. You will be presented with both historical and hypothetical scenarios and crises, determined both by your actions and those of external forces within the simulation.

Within this committee, you and your fellow ministers must decide the future of Cuba, fight for political dominance, and make compelling arguments for your plans. I encourage you to research your role thoroughly and brainstorm possible solutions that suit your character's ideology and ideals. Be prepared to play your role and make snap judgments on whatever topics crop up during the committee.

I, along with your chair, Zachary Forbes, and crisis staff, Vivian Gu, hope you all have a wonderful experience at VMUN 2019.

Sincerely,

William Tsai
Cabinet Director

Position Paper Policy

What is a Position Paper?

A position paper is a brief overview of a country's stance on the topics being discussed by a particular committee. Though there is no specific format the position paper must follow, it should include a description of your positions your country holds on the issues on the agenda, relevant actions that your country has taken, and potential solutions that your country would support.

At Vancouver Model United Nations, delegates should write a position paper for each of the committee's topics. Each position paper should not exceed one page, and should all be combined into a single document per delegate.

For the Cabinet Committee, position papers are mandatory, especially for a delegate to be considered for an award.

Formatting

Position papers should:

- Include the name of the delegate, his/her country, and the committee
- Be in a standard font (e.g. Times New Roman) with a 12-point font size and 1-inch document margins
- Not include illustrations, diagrams, decorations, national symbols, watermarks, or page borders
- Include citations and a bibliography, in any format, giving due credit to the sources used in research (not included in the 1-page limit)

Due Dates and Submission Procedure

Position papers for this committee must be submitted by midnight on January 13, 2019.

Once your position paper is complete, please save the file as your last name, your first name and send it as an attachment in an email, to your committee's email address, with the subject heading as your last name, your first name — Position Paper. Please do not add any other attachments to the email or write anything else in the body.

Both your position papers should be combined into a single PDF or Word document file; position papers submitted in another format will not be accepted.

Each position paper will be manually reviewed and considered for the Best Position Paper award.

The email address for this committee is *cabinet@vmun.com*.

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Cuban Council of Ministers, 1959

Overview

It is February 16, 1959. Dr. Fidel Castro has just been sworn in as Prime Minister of Cuba, replacing José Miró Cardona, who unexpectedly resigned just three days prior. Castro, leader of the revolutionary 26th of July Movement (M-26-7), oversaw the fall of Cuba's authoritarian dictator, Fulgencio Batista, over the course of five brutal years of civil war. Now, American businesses dominate the Cuban economy, social and political issues demand attention, and Cuba must decide its foreign policy on the world stage during the tense Cold War.

As members of the cabinet selected personally by Fidel Castro, either for your skill or for your loyalty, you must lead Cuba through thick and thin as this fledgling nation attempts to prosper amidst the crossfire of the Cold War. To accomplish this, the entirety of Cuba's economic, political, social, and military resources are at your disposal; however, your efforts may only be as united as infighting within the committee allows. There is a wide spectrum of liberals, socialists, and communists within this committee, each vying for control over the cabinet, and thus, Cuba itself.

The committee will follow VMUN 2019's Official Rules of Procedure for Crisis Committees and will run as a perpetual moderated caucus with frequent opportunities to raise points or propose motions. You will need to work quickly and decisively to resolve crises that come your way by writing and submitting collective and individual crisis directives; the extent of your individual actions will be determined by your portfolio powers and by your role within the cabinet.

While the Cuban Council of Ministers is a historical committee, do not let any knowledge of future events affect your decisions. Certain incidents are bound to differ from reality and should be dealt with accordingly. Although not historically accurate, Prime Minister Fidel Castro, represented by the Director, will remain relatively neutral throughout the proceedings; nevertheless, Castro reserves the right to veto any extreme or unrealistic directives, e.g. intentionally inciting nuclear armageddon.

Please try to fully represent and immerse yourself in the mindset of both your character and your setting by acting in your and/or Cuba's best interests. You may, however, still backstab, overthrow, or execute any of your colleagues if you deem it necessary. In the case that a character is unable to continue in their position within the government, that delegate will be given a new role along with a short background on that character's life and ideals.

Timeline

August 25, 1515 — Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar founds the town of Havana on the island of Cuba, marking the beginning of Spanish dominion over the island.

February 24, 1895 – February 15, 1898 — Cuba rises up against the Kingdom of Spain in the Cuban War of Independence.

February 15, 1898 — The American battleship USS *Maine* is mysteriously sunk in Havana Harbor, antagonizing Spain in the eyes of the American populace.

April 21–August 13, 1898 — The United States of America declares war on the Kingdom of Spain, eventually freeing Cuba from Spanish rule but placing Cuba under temporary American occupation.

May 20, 1902 — The Republic of Cuba gains formal independence; however, the United States maintains its right to intervene within Cuba and leases Guantánamo Bay indefinitely.

September 4, 1933 — The Sergeants' Revolt overthrows President Carlos Manuel de Céspedes y Quesada and leads to a succession of puppet presidents under the control of Fulgencio Batista.

October 10, 1940 — Fulgencio Batista himself is elected President of Cuba; he installs the wildly-progressive Constitution of 1940. After his term in office, Batista moves to Florida.

March 10, 1952 — After returning to Cuba and losing the presidential election, Batista leads a military coup d'état with funding from the United States of America.

July 26, 1953 — Revolting against Batista's new authoritarian platform, Dr. Fidel Castro leads a guerrilla attack on the Moncada Barracks, resulting in his imprisonment.

May 15, 1955 — Castro is released after being granted amnesty for his crimes; he flees to Mexico with his revolutionary 26th of July Movement (M-26-7).

December 2, 1956 — The yacht Granma, carrying Fidel Castro and his Cuban revolutionaries, arrives at Cuba, beginning a guerrilla war within the Sierra Maestra mountains.

March 14, 1958 — Due to the revolution and popular opposition to Batista, the United States imposes an arms embargo on the Republic of Cuba, hindering Batista's ability to fight the rebels.

June 28, 1958 — Batista launches Operation Verano, an offensive designed to defeat Castro's rebels once and for all.

August 21, 1958 — Following the failure of Batista's assault, Castro and his forces descend from the mountains to occupy the rest of Cuba.

January 3, 1959 — After Batista's defeat and escape, Manuel Urrutia Lleó takes office as Cuba's new president with José Miró Cardona as prime minister.

February 16, 1959 — Prime Minister José Miró Cardona unexpectedly resigns and Fidel Castro is sworn in as the new prime minister.

Historical Analysis

Not long after its colonization in the 16th century, Cuba became one of the most valuable assets within the growing Spanish Empire due to its strategic position near the centre of the Caribbean. By the 1800s, Cuba had overtaken Jamaica as the largest producer of sugar in the world, foreshadowing Cuba's unhealthy economic reliance on the sweet substance.¹ With the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic conquest of Spain, the ideas of nationalism and self-governance were brought to Cuba, along with a historic proposal: U.S. President

¹ Leslie Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7.

Thomas Jefferson offered to buy Cuba during the Spanish Empire's trying times.² While the suggestion was rejected, American influence over the island would remain ever-present.

Following two unsuccessful Cuban liberation wars, the Cuban War of Independence began in 1895, with the rebels citing their goal as an independent and sovereign Cuba free from foreign influence.³ Pressure on Spain only grew as the Philippine Revolution erupted the following year. Wanting to protect American lives in Havana, the USS *Maine* was sent to the port of Havana in January 1898. On February 15 of the same year, a mysterious explosion sank the *Maine*, along with 258 of its crew. The incident was publicized across the United States; reports squarely blamed Spain for its hostile actions against the U.S. With the backing of the American people, the United States of America declared war on Spain, defeating the declining empire in both the Pacific and Caribbean theatres. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1898), with Cuba gaining formal independence and the United States dabbling in imperialism with its annexations of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.⁴

The United States left Cuba after three years of occupation, but not before giving itself the right to intervene in Cuban affairs and inserting imperialist restrictions into the Cuban constitution, forcing Cuba into the United States' sphere of influence.⁵ The next year, Cuba leased the naval base of Guantánamo Bay to the U.S., cementing American authority on the island to this day. When Cuba's first president rigged the succeeding election, the ensuing revolt prompted the U.S. to intervene and once again occupy the island for three years, from 1906 to 1909. In following years, Cuba remained quite stable, yet it was still dependent on both sugar and the United States. This was highlighted perfectly in 1920 with the Dance of the Millions: a sugar market boom and crash which resulted in both Cuban sugar producers and the Cuban government itself approaching American banks for aid.⁶

Running as the candidate of the Liberal Party, Gerardo Machado was elected to the Cuban presidency in 1925 with a large majority of the vote. However, in 1929, the infamous Wall Street Crash collapsed both the American and Cuban economies, festering hatred towards the increasingly-dictatorial Machado. As the number of protests and strikes grew, Machado resigned from the presidency on August 12, 1933, handing the office to Carlos Manuel de Céspedes y Quesada, who established a provisional government. Just half a month later, on September 4 and 5, Sergeant Fulgencio Batista led a coup d'état deposing Céspedes and giving way for Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín to become president. Grau led a short-lived and progressive government, permanently repealing the United States' right to intervene, promoting Cuban workers' rights, and opposing American business interests for the betterment of Cuba.⁷ This, however, did not sit well with the Americans, who backed Batista to once again overthrow the government, leading to a string of right-wing puppet-presidents supported by the colonel. In 1934, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed a new treaty with the Cubans, ending American political influence within the region.⁸

Batista defeated Grau in the first fair presidential elections in 1940 following the instatement of the new Cuban constitution, enacting popular social reforms yet maintaining friendly relations with both the United States and

² Ibid., 9.

³ José Martí, *Manifiesto of Montecristi* (Monte Cristi), 1895.

⁴ *Treaty of Peace between the United States and Spain*, 1898, Paris.

⁵ *Cuban–American Treaty of Relations*, 1903, Havana.

⁶ Kevin Grogan, "Cuba's Dance of the Millions: Examining the Causes and Consequences of Violent Price Fluctuations in the Sugar Market Between 1919 and 1920," University of Florida, August 2004, http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0006301/grogan_k.pdf.

⁷ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 54.

⁸ *Cuban–American Treaty of Relations*, 1934, Washington, D.C.

American companies. After his presidential term, Batista moved to Florida in 1944, returning to Cuba in 1952 to run again for president. On March 10, 1952, Batista, losing in the polls, led a military coup against the government, cancelling the elections and declaring himself president once again. Under this new regime, he ordered mass executions and encouraged further American economic exploitation. On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro and his fellow anti-Batista rebels attacked the Moncada Barracks. Outnumbered and captured, Fidel Castro delivered his famous four-hour-long “History Will Absolve Me” speech while being tried; he was subsequently imprisoned for 15 years.⁹ After renaming his revolutionary movement the “26th of July Movement”, he and his organization were granted amnesty in 1955 as Batista’s popularity plummeted.

Fleeing to Mexico to plan their revolution, Castro and his movement received guerrilla warfare training and returned on the yacht Granma on December 2, 1956. Despite facing heavy casualties after landing, the survivors began a guerrilla war against Batista’s forces in the Sierra Maestra mountain range for the next year-and-a-half. The revolution, harkening back to the Cuban War of Independence before it, advocated for Cuban nationalism as it fought against the American-backed Batista.¹⁰ On February 17, 1957, American reporter Herbert Matthews interviewed Fidel Castro, whom Batista claimed was killed in the Granma landing.¹¹ This pivotal interview, which claimed that Castro was an anti-communist, combined with reports on the atrocities of Batista, turned the American public against the strongman, eventually resulting in an American arms embargo. On June 28, 1958, Batista launched Operation Verano, designed to destroy Castro’s armed insurgents within the mountain range. Castro and his forces decisively defeated Batista’s army in several engagements despite being heavily outnumbered; however, in the last battle of the offensive, Castro was caught in a trap and decided to negotiate. Both sides managed to agree to a ceasefire, which immediately proceeded Castro’s surprise counter-offensive. Descending from the mountains against a demoralized enemy and gaining more troops as news of their victories spread, Castro and his guerrilla army captured the island within months.¹²

Batista, realizing his defeat, fled to the Dominican Republic on New Year’s Day. With a feeling of triumph in the air, Fidel Castro brought in the liberal lawyer Manuel Urrutia Lleó as president and the left-leaning José Miró Cardona as prime minister.¹³¹⁴ Despite fervent anti-communism spreading across the United States in the 1950s, the Cuban revolution was widely praised in the country for its seemingly democratic, pro-U.S., and liberal ideals. On February 16, 1959, with the resignation of Miro, Fidel Castro was sworn in as prime minister.¹⁵

Current Situation

Cuba–United States Relations

The relationship between Cuba and the United States is more complicated now than ever. Then-senator John F. Kennedy stated that “At the beginning of 1959, U.S. companies owned about 40 percent of the Cuban sugar lands, almost all the cattle ranches, 90 percent of the mines and mineral concessions, 80 percent of the utilities—and

⁹ Fidel Castro, *History Will Absolve Me* (Santiago de Cuba, 1953).

¹⁰ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 96.

¹¹ Matthews, Herbert, “Cuban Rebel Is Visited in Hideout,” *New York Times*, February 24, 1957, <https://static01.nyt.com/packages/html/books/matthews/matthews022457.pdf>.

¹² Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 91–93.

¹³ “Urrutia is anti-communist, pro-U.S.,” *United Press International*, January 3, 1959, <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1959/01/03/Urrutia-is-anti-communist-pro-US/6149212204416/>.

¹⁴ McCarthy, Francis, “Castro becomes Cuban Premier,” *United Press International*, February 17, 1959, <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1959/02/17/Castro-becomes-Cuban-premier/2361518304343/>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

practically all the oil industry—and supplied two-thirds of Cuba's imports.”¹⁶ ¹⁷ This domination of Cuba's economy by the United States of America can be directly attributed to both the United States' previous quasi-imperialist attitude towards the Caribbean nation and Batista's support of American businesses on the island; American companies reaped the rewards of their investments while Batista's government did nothing to help the underpaid Cubans.

Although slightly skeptical, the United States welcomed the revolution along with the seemingly-progressive but non-communist Prime Minister Fidel Castro at its helm.¹⁸ Fervent anti-communism was one of the two major reasons the United States supported Batista's coup in the first place, the other being American corporate interests. Castro and his revolutionaries, who had fought for the Cuban people, wanted to support workers' rights to improve the lives of ordinary Cubans. However, due to Cuba's deep reliance on the U.S., the Cuban government will have to tow a fine line of diplomacy in order to preserve its economy as well as fulfill its promises to better the lives of the Cuban populace. The worldwide Cold War still rages on and if Cuba–United States relations begin to deteriorate, the other world superpower—the Soviet Union—will gladly welcome a new communist ally so close to the U.S. Nonetheless, the American government will be focused on Cuba's every move. Should American interests be interfered with or communism emerge victorious, the United States will not hesitate to once again intervene in Cuban affairs.

Economy

During Batista's rule, while statistically, Cuba appeared successful, placing third in life expectancy and fifth in per-capita income in the Western hemisphere, the rural farming population faced significant poverty and hardship.¹⁹ Sugarcane, the crop at the heart of the Cuban economy, left hundreds of farmers unemployed as they only worked four months of the year.²⁰ Furthermore, with the United States' aforementioned subjection of the Cuban economy, almost all the profits from Cuban minerals, sugar, cattle, and oil went to American businesses and not to the Cubans who had harvested those resources. With government spending focused on developing the urban centres of Cuba to promote tourism, income inequality only grew as the rural populace had no access to both education and healthcare, impeding their social mobility.²¹ The goals of the cabinet will be to alleviate the struggles faced by rural Cubans and to potentially reduce the United States' influence within the economy, allowing Cuba to develop both sustainably and independently.

Politics

By the end of the Cuban revolution, aside from American businesses and corrupt Cuban officials, the public, both Cuban and American, had turned against Batista. The Cuban revolution had widespread support among all walks of life, leading to many different ideologies giving their backing to Castro and his revolution.²² The revolution had united the Cuban people against a common enemy, but with the revolution's end, the political differences among them had begun to manifest. Cuba's new government demonstrates this fact perfectly, with the current liberal President Urrutia, suspected communist Prime Minister Castro, and a variety of communist,

¹⁶ John Kennedy, *Speech of Senator John F. Kennedy, Cincinnati, Ohio, Democratic Dinner* (Cincinnati, 1960).

¹⁷ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 98.

¹⁸ Stephen Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 123.

¹⁹ “Pre-Castro Cuba,” *Public Broadcasting Service*, November 15, 2015,

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/comandante-pre-castro-cuba/>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 90.

leftist, liberal, conservative, and anti-communist ministers. Cuba has yet to declare itself a socialist nation, but communist elements are starting to coalesce with the re-emergence of Cuba's communist party, the Popular Socialist Party, among influential members of Castro's movement—particularly his brother and Che Guevara.²³ With the Cold War brewing in the background, an ideology or a coalition of ideologies may come to consolidate power within Cuba's new fractured government.

Education and Healthcare

As in the case of income inequality between the urban and agrarian classes, access to education, running water, and healthcare is also severely limited for the rural population. Forty percent of the countryside population is illiterate, fifteen percent lack running water, and hospitals and schools are largely located only within the bustling cities.²⁴ Fidel Castro mentioned in his "History Will Absolve Me" speech that his revolutionary government would reform both Cuba's educational and medical systems to incorporate the rural population that had been struggling for so long.²⁵ This cabinet must work quickly and efficiently to directly help troubled Cubans in the countryside acquire reliable access to these basic services.

Possible Solutions

Cuba–United States Relations

Almost all of Cuba's actions will affect Cuba–United States relations in one way or another. Despite this, there are two general outlines of what Cuba may do to pursue deeper diplomatic ties with the United States, or what Cuba may do to distance itself from the U.S. in order to secure friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Firstly, the United States will strongly oppose any Cuban policies that hint at Cuba's possible communist future. Recognizing the substantial amount of American investment in Cuba, the U.S. will also defend its corporate interests, albeit to a far lesser extent than its political bounds. The current American administration headed by staunch anti-communist Dwight D. Eisenhower has been seen to take action against nations that do not acknowledge these two conditions; in Guatemala and Iran, both of which were feared to be communist and threatened American banana and oil industries respectively, suspected-American-sponsored coups were executed just years prior.²⁶

Economy

One possible solution to help Cuba's languishing economy is to look outward for direct foreign aid, either from the United States or the World Bank.²⁷ Such funds could be used directly to tackle Cuba's growing unemployment and poverty, build local infrastructure to increase the productivity of Cuba's rural communities, or diversify the economy by promoting industries other than sugar. While this would surely benefit the economy and fight unemployment, reaching out for foreign aid may seem like a betrayal to the revolution, seeing how one of its main tenets was the enshrinement of Cuban nationalism against foreign influence. This solution also further ties Cuba's economy to the United States, seemingly accepting that Cuba is once again going to be ruled by foreign powers. If the cabinet fears angering fellow revolutionaries and communist ministers in the government, other options to stimulate economic growth must be considered.

²³ Ibid, 91.

²⁴ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 88.

²⁵ Fidel Castro, *History Will Absolve Me*, Oct. 16, 1953.

²⁶ Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 55.

²⁷ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 98.

In stark contrast to the first solution, land reform appears to be a popular idea among the more radical elements of the revolution.²⁸ Land redistribution would greatly benefit Cuba's farming population, reallocating land to the poor who have worked there for years. This initiative could possibly go even further, redistributing any foreign-owned farms to the local people or forcing these newly-created farms to diversify their crops, decreasing Cuba's reliance on the United States or sugar respectively. Despite this, there are many possible negative consequences associated with enacting agrarian reform. Land reorganization is inherently socialist, potentially angering or driving the upper or upper-middle class, fearing communist influence within the government, to emigrate. This may also trigger American intervention in Cuba, appearing to counter the U.S.' goal of halting the worldwide spread of communism. Besides that, preventing foreign businesses from operating farms within Cuba would directly anger Washington due to the significant American investments in the Cuban sugar industry. Lastly, diversifying exports would help Cuba's economy in the long run, reducing reliance on trade with the U.S., Cuban sugar's largest buyer. However, sugar is Cuba's most profitable crop for a reason, and converting many of Cuba's already-profitable sugar plantations would severely damage the economy in the short term.

Politics

Through the formation of new political parties, seeing as legitimate political parties were dissolved when Batista led his coup d'état, blocs in the cabinet itself will try to lead Cuba with their own interests and goals in mind. Communists, pressing for anti-imperialist, ultra-egalitarian, and socialist policies, believe that Cuba should ally with the Soviet Union and play its part fighting against capitalism and imperialism, two ideologies that have had detrimental, long-lasting effects on Cuba itself. The leftists in Cuba, advocating for egalitarianism and social welfare, believe that Cuba should be a social democracy with a mixed market economy. Most of the leftists will accept a communist or liberal government, but depending on the state of Cuba at the time, they may be forced to choose a side. Liberals, characterized by their support of ethical businesses, freedom, and democracy, are heavily anti-communist. Lastly, conservatives are against any leftist or socialist policies and instead believe in growing Cuba's domestic market through promoting entrepreneurialism, a characteristic of many capitalist societies that Cuba lacks.²⁹ Though the conservatives and liberals may want to formally ally themselves with the United States, Cuban nationalist and moderate anti-imperialist sentiments exist within both movements.

Education and Healthcare

One solution to the lack of education and healthcare in rural communities would be to send doctors and teachers into these areas to work; nevertheless, without the proper facilities, this method would be inefficient and drastically limited in scale. This approach would also require the qualification of many new doctors and teachers who would be employed in the countryside. The construction of hospitals and schools in these communities could also work, increasing access to these facilities; however, this will be both lengthy and expensive, and encounter again a shortage of qualified professionals. An alternative to this solution is to bring rural students and medical patients into urban schools and hospitals respectively, being much cheaper and quicker to implement. Still, this does not mean it is without repercussions; roads or public transportation will have to be built in order to transport them efficiently and dormitories may have to be built for rural children living away from home. This migration of students into urban centres will also have a negative impact on the urban population already living there; schools and hospitals may become overcrowded with an influx of new clients. A combination of these solutions may also work, but would likely be even more costly. No matter the solution chosen, something must be done to restore Cuba's rural public.

²⁸ Che Guevara, *Cuba: Historical exception or vanguard in the anticolonial struggle?* (1961).

²⁹ Bethell, *Cuba: A Short History*, 103.

Portfolio Overviews

Please note that all of these positions are relatively fluid and do not necessarily have to follow their indicated ideologies throughout the entirety of the conference.

Prime Minister Fidel Castro (Position held by committee Director.)

Description: Prime Minister Castro was the leader of the M-26-7 Movement and war hero of the revolution. There are some rumours that he is a suspected communist.

Portfolio Powers: May veto any inappropriate or unrealistic directives proposed by the committee and advise cabinet members to issue specific directives.

Advisor to the Prime Minister: Che Guevara

Description: Guevara was a commander of the M-26-7 Movement serving as Castro's right-hand man. He is also a proponent of agrarian reform and member of Cuba's communist party, the Popular Socialist Party.

Portfolio Powers: May make policy recommendations directly to the prime minister. Will receive further portfolio powers as time within the committee progresses.

Minister of State: Roberto Agramonte

Description: Agramonte was a founder of the now-defunct Orthodox Party. As such, he is a left-wing populist with strong nationalist and anti-American values.

Portfolio Powers: May represent Cuba in diplomatic talks with all foreign governments. (Note: Ambassadors retain diplomatic primacy with their respective countries.)

Minister of the Treasury: Rufo López-Fresquet

Description: A staunch conservative, López-Fresquet is pro-American and anti-communist, wanting to establish new trade deals with the U.S. while combatting growing Marxist influence in Cuba.

Portfolio Powers: Must approve large government expenditures and the imposition of new taxes. May encourage foreign investors from specific countries.

Minister of Health and Welfare: Julio Martínez Páez

Description: Martínez was both a commander and Head of Health of the revolutionary M-26-7 Movement and is also a known communist.

Portfolio Powers: May sponsor the establishment of healthcare and welfare programs and commission the construction of new hospitals.

Minister of Commerce: Raúl Cepero Bonilla

Description: A strong advocate for excluding American interests from Cuban affairs, Cepero is a communist who wishes to reduce Cuba's trade with the United States.

Portfolio Powers: May manage Cuba's exports and imports by amending Cuba's international trade laws.

Minister of Education: Armando Hart Dávalos

Description: A leftist and a member of the M-26-7 Movement, Hart is focused on extending education to the impoverished rural populace.

Portfolio Powers: May determine the government's education policy and set Cuba's school curriculum.

Minister of the Interior: Luis Orlando Rodríguez

Description: A former founder of the dissolved Orthodox Party and former commander of the M-26-7 Movement, Orlando is left-wing populist who wishes to combat corruption to avoid another Batista-like regime.

Portfolio Powers: May determine the government's national security and immigration policies.

Minister of Public Works: Manuel Ray Rivero

Description: A pro-American liberal, Ray looks to modernize Cuba's infrastructure and prevent Cuba from turning communist.

Portfolio Powers: May commission new infrastructure projects throughout Cuba.

Minister of Agriculture: Humberto Sori Marín

Description: An anti-communist conservative, Marin was a member of the M-26-7 Movement.

Portfolio Powers: May administer the utility and improvement of Cuba's agricultural lands. Responsible for managing potential agrarian reforms.

Minister of Recovery of Misappropriated Assets: Faustino Pérez Hernández

Description: A former commander of the M-26-7 Movement, Pérez is a communist.

Portfolio Powers: Must dispose of the illegal assets of previous Batista officials. May reallocate appropriated assets to certain ministries or people.

Minister of Revolutionary Laws: Osalvdo Dorticós Torrado

Description: Dorticós is anti-American and a member of Cuba's communist party, the Popular Socialist Party,

Portfolio Powers: Must approve the institution of all new revolutionary reforms and laws. (Note: This includes agrarian reforms, new taxes, healthcare and education developments, etc.)

Minister of Defence: Augusto R. Martínez Sánchez

Description: Martínez is a communist and was a member of the M-26-7 Movement.

Portfolio Powers: Must approve any military operations conducted by the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces.

Minister of Communications: Enriquez Oltuski Osacki

Description: A former member of the less-radical branch of the M-26-7 Movement, Oltuski is a leftist.

Portfolio Powers: May issue press releases on behalf of the entire cabinet and control Cuba's press censorship laws.

Minister of the Economy: Regino Boti León

Description: Boti is a communist and focused on the diversification of the Cuban economy in preparation for reduced American influence and imports.

Portfolio Powers: May encourage economic growth within specific industrial sectors through government incentives.

Chief of the Army: Colonel José M. Rego Rubido

Description: In charge of the Moncada Barracks at the time of the revolution, the conservative Rubido earned his position by defecting from Batista and giving the barracks over to the revolutionaries.

Portfolio Powers: May issue direct orders to the Cuban Revolutionary Army.

Chief of the Navy: Gaspar Brooks Avella

Description: Much like the Chief of the Army, liberal Avella defected from Batista after his humiliating defeat at the Battle of Las Mercedes.

Portfolio Powers: May issue direct orders to the Cuban Revolutionary Navy.

Head of the National Revolutionary Police: Efigenio Ameijeiras

Description: A longtime member of the M-26-7 Movement, Ameijeiras is a liberal and an anti-communist.

Portfolio Powers: May direct police activities throughout Cuba and investigate or interrogate any Cuban official or citizen.

Ambassador to the United States: Ernesto Dihigo López-Trigo

Description: An elderly liberal, López-Trigo was the former foreign minister of Cuba in 1950 under the presidency of Carlos Prío Socarrás.

Portfolio Powers: May represent Cuba in diplomatic negotiations with the United States of America.

Ambassador to the Soviet Union: Antonio Núñez Jiménez

Description: A communist and environmentalist considered the father of Cuban speleology, Núñez was a former member of the M-26-7 Movement.

Portfolio Powers: May represent Cuba in diplomatic negotiations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Secretary-General of the Workers' Central Union of Cuba: David Salvador Manso

Description: Despite being a former member of Cuba's communist party, Manso is now staunchly anti-communist.

Portfolio Powers: May direct the various different labour unions in Cuba and remove specific members from the Workers' Central Union of Cuba.

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