

## The Moral Sore of Our Cuban Policy Tainted JFK's Appearance at the UN

### On Students, The Right to Travel and the Right to Disagree

A week after the leaders of the student trip to Cuba went before the Un-American Committee, the *Free Cuba News* here put out a special report on the visit. It said a student group in Cuba succeeded in smuggling a letter into the men's room of the Havana Riviera while the Americans were there and then phoned their leader, Levi Laub, to tell him where it was hidden.

If the American students have a sense of humor, this letter must strike a sympathetic chord. For the Cubans complained that they had "no right to unrestricted travel abroad" and could not speak freely at home. Maybe they and the Americans ought to form a joint committee.

#### Hardly Pure Essence of 1776

For the leaders of the American students have been taken before a grand jury in New York. Their indictment is sought for breaking the travel ban. Our dissident student leaders are also charged—as no doubt their opposite number are in Cuba when they speak up—of being "foreign agents." Apparently—to echo the President's own words to the UN—Cuba is not the only country where "the fruits of the revolution" have been "falsely betrayed from within." Denial of freedom to travel and denial of freedom to disagree are not exactly the pure essence of 1776.

Cuba can defend its restrictions as a necessity so long as the CIA infiltrates the country and provides planes and bombs for attacks from Nicaragua. But our restrictions are a moral sore. Our policy toward Cuba taints all our pretensions, as it did Mr. Kennedy's appearance before the United Nations. Didn't his advisers realize that when he warned against "chronic disputes" and said "the badge of responsibility in the modern world is a willingness to seek peaceful solutions," many at the UN would ask—under cover of the applause—"Well, what about Cuba?"

Even as we relax elsewhere, the noose on Cuba is being tightened. Secretary Rusk in a TV interview on *Issues and Answers* Sept. 15 said that while Russian troops were being moved out of Cuba "the problem is not so much (military) units now as technicians and advisers." Our attempt to strangle Cuba undercuts those Marxists, from Khrushchev down, who stake their future, in the titanic Sino-Soviet split, on a declaration of faith in America's good intentions.

It is natural under the circumstances that the few pathetic and hounded pro-Castro organizations in this country have

#### Why I Withdrew from The New York Meeting

"After listening Thursday night in Washington to a panel discussion by the students just back from Cuba, I felt that if I went on as moderator with such a panel Sunday at Town Hall in New York I would be compelled either to engage in prolonged argument with the participants or appear to acquiesce in their views. These views seem to me a mixture of naivete, Negro nationalist distortions (understandable enough in the light of the Negro's anguish but still distortions) and out-of-this-world leftism. I defend their right to speak I believe they performed a public service in breaking the travel ban. I think it a joke at the expense of our country when a Congressional committee regards it as un-American to fight for freedom of travel. This is why, before realizing the narrow range of opinion represented, I originally accepted the invitation to be their moderator. But I do not wish to be identified with what I regard as hysterical exaggerations hurtful to an honorable settlement between the United States and Castro's Cuba." —Statement issued Sept. 13.

tended to be under pro-Chinese line leadership. This is true of the student trip to Cuba which was organized and led by a small ousted pro-Peking offshoot of the U.S. Communist Party, the so-called Progressive Labor Movement. Its tactics before the Un-American Committee made good reading in Peking but bad politics in America. It gave the Committee a chance to associate peace with Cuba and freedom of travel with pictures of screaming beatniks being hauled out by the police.

The police were brutal. The Committee is an abomination. But I don't want to carry coals to Newcastle. I want to talk sense in the bosom of the family. The student leaders had a chance to make fools of the Committee; its oafish informer had nothing really damaging to say about them or the trip. They could easily have turned the scales of opinion against the Committee as did Women's Strike for Peace. They chose instead to make an old-fashioned *agitprop* demonstration in the fashion set by Moscow in the early 30's.

The PLMers really believe peace with Cuba is impossible until capitalism is overthrown in America. Neither Cuba nor the rest of the world can wait that long. The same crowd is organizing a new trip to Cuba. We hope more sensible students will wrest leadership from them. The cause of peace and travel deserves advocates with better sense.

### Business Week, After On-The-Spot Survey, Finds Economic Upturn in Cuba

"Los Angeles, Sept. 20 (AP)—A high State Dept. official said today that an unrelenting squeeze from the U.S. isolation policy and massive Castro mismanagement has made a shambles of Cuba's once-healthy economy. Edwin M. Martin, Ass't Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, gave this assessment in a speech on Cuba and Communism in Latin America before the World Affairs Council."

—Washington Post, Sept. 21.

"Far from being in a state of collapse, Cuba's Soviet-supported economy now is showing signs of an upswing. . . . This is the conclusion that was reached by a Business Week reporter after a tour of the island. . . .

"Cuba boasts these achievements on the industrial front: About 25 light industry plants have been put into operation

. . . manufacturing everything from picks and shovels to sulphuric acid. . . . Despite a U.S. embargo on spare parts, the Cubans have managed to keep in operation oil refineries seized from Americans and the Nicaro nickel plant. . . . With Japanese and Soviet help, Cuba is rapidly expanding its commercial fishing industry. . . .

"This progress refutes any notion that Cuba's economic situation might generate all-out opposition to the Castro regime. There are still shortages of food and many consumer items, particularly in the cities. But no one is starving in Cuba, and many Cubans—including students and peasants who form the backbone of Castro's support—are eating better than ever."

—Business Week, Sept. 14.

## For Black Birmingham, It's Martial Law With Insult and Carbine

(Continued from Page One)

instead of giving a separate audience four days later to a white delegation from Birmingham. It is as if, even in the White House, there are equal but separate facilities.

The Negro leaders, facing the TV cameras outside the Executive Offices that Thursday afternoon, looked like men pursued by despair, afraid that at the slightest misstep they might be trampled under by the hopeless fury in the ranks behind them. The white delegation, the following Monday, had underling written all over it. The President of the United States could take time out to hear white Birmingham, but the Mayor was too busy and sent his secretary. With him were neither the Big Mules nor their Northern capitalist overlords; it is as if they had assigned their office boys to see the President. If what they told the press afterward was a sample of what they told the President, he too must have despaired of finding a solution. Even these supposed moderates could not shake loose from the mythology of white supremacy: if only outside agitators like Martin Luther King would stay away peace and quiet could be restored; many Negroes favored segregation, but apparently were afraid to say so except privately to their white friends. Hire a Negro policeman? That was a "profoundly difficult," "almost impossible," problem. Just why was never explained; perhaps Negroes do not look good in blue, with brass buttons.

### Our Ancient Double Standard

Four centuries of white supremacy have left their indelible mark in the double standard we whites instinctively apply to race relations. The Attorney General, rejecting a Negro appeal for Federal troops, said hearts could not be changed by bayonets. But few stop to think that the alternative is to leave the Negro community of Birmingham to the bayonets of the State troopers. Gene Grove in the *New York Post* Sept. 20 vividly pictured how the Negro community is ruled. When one reporter approached Col. Al Lingo of the State police "with a question, the only reply was a shotgun in the belly. Wednesday night the troopers beat an aged man in the Negro district of East Thomas and a young boy in the

### A Problem in Race Mixing

When the civil defense bill passed the House the other day, a first term Republican Congressman from Louisville, Ky., a Mr. Gene Snyder, tried to attach an anti-discrimination amendment to it. His amendment would have denied funds to any State or institution which failed to give "satisfactory assurances" that no one would be excluded from fallout shelters "because of race, color or creed." He was defeated 93 to 53. This will be reassuring to the South. Whatever happens to the country in a nuclear holocaust, everything possible is being done to keep white supremacy intact. The problem, however, may prove complex. Going in, it will be easy to solve; separate entrances, plainly marked, may be provided for white and colored. But afterward—can anyone be sure of ever sorting them out?

Negro district of Parker Heights, both for failing to move off the street fast enough. Yesterday morning they rode down the street with carbines perking from every window, shouting at Negroes sitting on their porches to 'get back in the house, niggers, get your ass the hell off the street.' The Mayor's Secretary looked surprised when a reporter asked him if he thought the manners of the State troops toward the Negroes were not provocative. He found no fault with it. Such ways and language, after all, are accepted institutions in the South, the way "peace and quiet" have been preserved.

When I was in Germany, I felt the empty wasteland of the German heart. I feel the same way about the hearts of my fellow white men in America, where the Negro is concerned. The good people there as here are in the minority and weak. Just as many Germans feel it was somehow the fault of the Jews that they got themselves cremated, so many whites here North and South, feel that the bombing wouldn't have happened if the Negroes weren't so pushy. As a white housewife in a Birmingham supermarket told Robert Baker of the *Washington Post* (Sept. 19), it was "terrible" but "that's what they get for trying to force their way where they're not wanted." Worse than the bombing is this inhuman chill.

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