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Comment:



## Why Rebels Lost Faith in Castro

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The hope of former Castro Army officers that the Rebel Army itself may be induced to pull the rug out from under the Havana regime is based on their informed understanding of "the dynamics" of Castro's relationship to his army.

A spokesman for the exile group called "The Cuban Liberating Army" explains it:

"Castro injected into the Cuban Revolution the idea that Cuba necessarily had to be hostile to the U. S.," he said. "This took him into the Russian camp. The Rebel Army officers who actively disagreed went to jail or into exile. Most of those who did not privately believe that Cuba is 'simply too small' to make anti-Americanism the cornerstone of its revolution. But they accepted Castro's basic idea on faith.

"This faith," he said, "has gradually worn away. A final blow came when Castro himself tried to make peace with the U. S. The Army has seen Castro's final great gesture, his bid for 'co-existence' with the U. S., meet failure. The U. S. answered him by saying that Castroism has no future either in Latin America or in Cuba."

But by now Castro was getting a Soviet military build-up.

### MANY FAILURES

Behind this stretches a long series of Castro failures that the Rebel Army has had to share.

Castro's big reason for defying the U. S., says the former officer, was to get Latin American backing. When Latin America began to cool off toward him after the first flush of victory faded, Castro tried to get the Afro-Asian bloc behind him in a 1962 'summit' meeting. This fizzled.

The Soviet rockets that the Rebel Army command watched come in with awe meant that Cuba could in fact defy the U. S. — the rockets were 'equalizers.' But in the October 1962 confrontation, Castro's military support had to stand by helplessly as the Soviets removed the rockets, says the former Rebel officer.

### REACTION

Castro's reaction was to step up aggression in Latin America. During 1963 he began to shake his long-time target, Venezuela, with waves of terrorism.

"The Venezuelan resistance and the success of their 1963 elections was a hard blow to Castro's standing among the Army officers," said the Cuban.

"But something worse was to come later."

This was the Brazilian anti-communist revolution in 1964. Once that great South American repudiated its pro-communist leadership, Cuba's Rebel Army knew that Latin America would never back Castro.

The Cuban Army officers who simply followed Castro on faith now see him guilty of great lack of judgment, says the exile spokesman. The Russians have pulled back their 'equalizers, Latin America has turned down Castroism and the U. S. won't make friends again.

If this logic is dependable, the officers and men of Cuba's Rebel Army, to save their own skins, will have to dump Castro.