

Plot Against Castro

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Revolutions of the Cuban type are as intense, dangerous and highly charged as a nuclear weapon. The leader is always in danger of assassination and always an object of plots.

The plan to assassinate Fidel Castro, which Havana says has just been foiled, appears to have represented the most serious internal crisis in years. Yet, since it evidently failed, it will doubtless have the classic effect of strengthening the object of the plot—in this case Premier Castro.

As the Frenchman, Vergniaud, said in the first of these modern social revolutions, they "devour their children." Fidel Castro has been fortunate in that none of his "first born"—those who originally went up into the Sierra Maestra in December 1956—have turned against him. Ché Guevara's disappearance is still a mystery. It looks more and more as if its solution is to be found in some sanatorium in Russia, China or Mexico, but there is no evidence that Guevara defected or is dead.

The main figure in the present plot, Major Rolando Cubela, played a minor role as a guerrilla but an important one in administration in the early years of the revolution. That he, along with another major and five civilians, should have been involved in a plot to kill Fidel Castro—presuming the official statement in Havana is correct—shows a possibly deep and certainly dangerous focus of infection. It explains one puzzling fact about Cuba in the last three months—the refusal to grant visas for United States journalists to go to Havana.

Premier Castro blames the United States Central Intelligence Agency, but that is a stock charge. Aside from the moral factors involved in any American-engineered plot, the political consequences of making a martyr out of Fidel Castro would have been what is called in Spanish counterproductive. The Premier, it is now clear, has had an internal problem that he seems to have surmounted. Eternal vigilance, in addition to being the price of liberty, is also the price of survival in a social revolution.