

# Cuba's UN Mission wins friends

by T. D. Allman

(PNS) New York — The cocktail party, held in the United Nations enclave here, was not an unusual one. Guests included diplomats, journalists, university professors, officials of foundations and several of those chic, thirtyist women who are the diplomatic equivalents of snow bunnies.

In one corner, two Cuban diplomats were engaged in a heated argument. What was unusual was that they were arguing with each other, rather than with Americans. Whether the Cubans were aware of it or not, their amicable but lively debate had a highly favorable effect on the other guests.

"I've visited many communist countries," said one U.S. foreign policy expert, "and you just never see a pair of Russian or Chinese officials disagree with each other in public. I find the Cubans likeable and impressive."

While United Nations membership is important to Cuba, Cuba's New York mission is absolutely vital to its growing dialogue with Americans — a dialogue that is more lively than ever, despite the fact that the two countries have had no diplomatic relations for more than fifteen years.

The objective of Cuba's diplomacy in New York is so clear that not even the Cubans themselves make any secret of it. Though the official course of U.S.-Cuban detente has been blocked following the Cuban military intervention in Angola, an unofficial, behind-the-scenes Cuban effort to promote renewed diplomatic relations is flourishing.

From their UN mission, Cuban diplomats armed with invitations to Havana have been seeking out Americans they believe will be influential policy-makers after the presidential election, whoever wins.

As a result, the trickle of important U.S. visitors to Cuba — including legislative assistants and members of the major northeastern universities, think tanks and foundations — has grown into a small stream. Several small air charter firms in Miami have even begun specializing in flying American visitors south across the Straits of Florida to Havana.

The visitors tend to be personally conservative, even when they favor major liberalizations in U.S. foreign policy, and therefore their personal reactions are especially interesting. Most such visitors dislike the communist-style austerity of Cuba. But they are greatly impressed by Cuba's social accomplishments, and they remark again and again about the absence of secret police, the lack of fear among Cubans, their friendliness and their frankness, even in political discussions with foreigners.

"For all its faults, I still would prefer a liberal democracy like Venezuela," said

one such visitor, Robert Bond, who is a research fellow at New York's Council on Foreign Relations. But, he added, "if one is to choose between the dictatorship in Chile and the dictatorship in Cuba, I would prefer Cuba. Castro has not only given the people bread. He has given them dignity."

Even during the darkest days of the U.S.-Cuban confrontation, Americans and Cubans retained much in common for the simple reason that historically no other Latin American country, not even Mexico, has been so close to the United States. The expertise of Cuba's America watchers clearly remains great and the Cubans seem correctly to have recognized that they can only gain by giving Americans a largely unimpeded look at themselves and the socialist society they have built since Castro entered Havana in 1959.

Why, nonetheless, are the Cubans so eager to re-establish diplomatic relations with a country which historically has exploited Cuba, and which, since 1960, has done everything from blockade the country to conspiring to have its national leader assassinated?

Both Americans and Cubans point out that it was never Cuba that broke off diplomatic relations with the United States, or withdrew from the Organization of American States. Rather it was the U.S. which severed ties and attempted to ostracize Cuba from inter-American relations.

"They are also terribly proud of what they have done," said another visitor to Cuba, Richard Haas, who is an American Rhodes Scholar and former legislative assistant to Senator Claiborne Pell. "Yet in spite of the total independence they now have from America, we are still terribly important to them. It is almost as though by re-establishing ties with Washington they would gain the final, ultimate legitimacy."

Cuban officials frankly state that they would benefit from renewed trade ties with the U.S. and from access to American technology. And in return, high ranking Cuban officials, in marathon conversations with visiting Americans, have offered the possibility of what once were some unthinkable concessions.

According to Americans recently returning from Cuba, these include an end to the propaganda war with the U.S., some form of reconciliation with the Cuban exile community in America, which amounts to ten per cent of the entire Cuban population, an end to Cuban pressure at the UN and elsewhere for Puerto Rican independence and even discussing the question of compensation for nationalized U.S. holdings in Cuba.

Cuban officials, while strongly defending the Angola intervention, state that it was a product of unique circumstances, among them Dr. Kissinger's own unwar-

ranted hostility to the MPLA. They point out that they have counselled the government of Angola to establish diplomatic relations with all nations, including the U.S.

And they express the hope that Dr. Kissinger's present African diplomacy will succeed to the extent that another Angola-type situation — and hence another need for Cuban intervention — will not arise again.

The question cannot help posing itself: Is the Cuban eagerness for relations with the U.S. a function of the same dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union that ultimately has driven countries as diverse as Ghana, Egypt and China into better relations with Washington?

Conservative American visitors to Cuba state that the Russian presence, while very important, is discreet, respectful of Cuban sovereignty and that in unusually frank discussions with Cubans no trace of irritation with the Soviet Union emerged. "Of course, they can never forget what Khrushchev did during the missile crisis," one such American remarked. "But there also is the fact that Moscow itself favors Cuban-U.S. detente."

Both the Cuban mission in New York and the foreign ministry in Havana are watching the U.S. presidential election carefully, and have attempted in a low-key but consistent manner to build bridges to the Carter camp.

The Cuban effort already may have enjoyed some important successes. At a recent private but high-level meeting at the Center for Inter-American Relations in New York, recent visitors to Havana discussed their experience.

There was no apparent hostility to the idea of re-establishing relations with Cuba at the meeting. Indeed, the atmosphere was one of guarded but real optimism that U.S.-Cuban relations sooner rather than later can be restored on a mutually respectful basis.

Cuban officials privately say that they have no illusions that the road back to correct relations with the U.S. will be an easy one, whether Ford or Carter wins in November. And they correctly point out that U.S. concessions on the Panama Canal may complicate any eventual U.S.-Cuban rapprochement by making either Ford or Carter even more reluctant to permit an eventual return of the U.S. Guantanamo base to Cuban sovereignty.

But the Cubans are equally convinced that their patient, low key good neighbor policy toward individual members of the U.S. foreign policy community is successfully building a domestic appreciation of Cuba's accomplishments, and friendly intentions, that no administration in Washington will be able to ignore forever.

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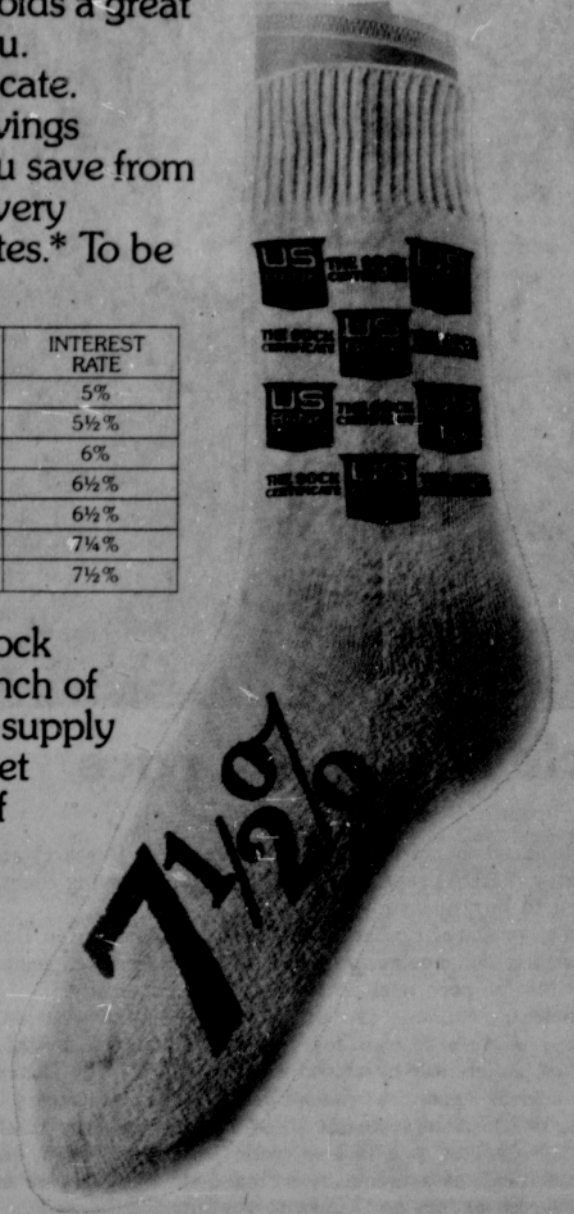
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## Congress tries to limit nuclear export race

by Jack Saunders

(PNS) — The booming export of U.S. nuclear technology — only a decade ago the most tightly controlled technology in the world — is stirring mounting Congressional resistance to what critics view as dangerously loose government controls on nuclear exports.

Some fear that the high profitability of nuclear export coupled with the precarious financial state of the industry has locked both the State Department and private companies into an escalating nuclear export race.

The key concern, reflected in recent amendments to energy bills pending before Congress, is the unfettered sale of nuclear material to nations that do not accept international safeguards.

At least 41 countries have now elected to go nuclear, up from 32 just two years ago. The three newest members of the nuclear club are Indonesia, Poland and Turkey.

According to the recently released annual report of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 20 countries are now capable of building crude but effective nuclear explosives from the spent fuel of nuclear power plants. Nearly twice that many will have stockpiled enough plutonium from nuclear plants to build atomic bombs during the next decade.

In addition, the Geneva-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a UN group, now proposes to scatter nuclear fuel recycling centers — which yield

deadly plutonium — around the world to serve the 454 reactors now operating or planned outside the U.S.

Yet only one-third of the current nuclear nations now observe the IAEA safeguards against malfunctions, sabotage or theft, and most are not members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which bans development of nuclear weapons.

Said President Ford in his recent arms control address to Congress, "A world of many nuclear weapons states could become extremely unstable and dangerous."

But despite the acknowledgement, the administration and the nuclear industry have resisted current congressional efforts aimed at limiting nuclear exports.

Those proposals, sponsored by Senator Stuart Symington (D., Mo.) and Representative John Anderson (R., Ill.), would, among other things:

- \*Entitle Congress to approve or disapprove all nuclear export licenses to countries that have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty;

- \*Insist that all U.S. nuclear customers adhere to IAEA safeguards;

- \*Ban military aid to countries supplying or receiving nuclear technology unless both countries were party to international safeguards agreements.

### The Economic Factor

Administration resistance to such proposals stems from economic and diploma-

tic considerations. The State Department, for instance, would be restricted from using nuclear technology as a diplomatic plum, as in the 1974 agreement to sell reactors to Egypt and Israel, neither of which are members of the NPT.

Equally important is the economic angle: Nuclear sales abroad promise huge revenues at home, fast approaching the level of U.S. arms sales abroad.

During July hearings before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on a proposed 13-ton shipment of enriched uranium to India, a non-NPT member, Rep. Clarence Long (D., Md.) charged that dollars — not safety considerations — were dictating U.S. nuclear policy.

"We've built such a huge nuclear complex, with so much capital and so many jobs dependent on it," said Long, "that now people are willing to say that the destruction of the world is inevitable and we should relax and make money on it."

The impact of nuclear exports on the U.S. balance of payments is suggested by figures from the U.S. Export-Import Bank, which finances foreign purchases of U.S. goods and helps the Nuclear Regulatory Commission judge the merits of nuclear export license applications.

The bank's projected outlay for countries buying U.S. nuclear technology over the five-year period ending in 1978 totals \$11 billion — its largest single loan category.

Many of those loans went to poor, (Please turn to p. 4 col. 1)

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