

CUBAN EMIGRE COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES
AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR HOMELAND,
1852-1895

BY
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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1983

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



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To Betty Kay, Jeremy, and Noel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is the result of several years of research at the University of Florida, the University of Texas at Austin, the Library of Congress, and the Archivo Nacional de Cuba and Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti in Habana. Funds for research in Cuba during January-June 1982 were generously provided by the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. Since this dissertation would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many, I would like to express my gratitude to the following individuals and institutions:

- * Dr. Andres Suarez, Dr. David Bushnell, and Dr. George Pozzetta of the University of Florida History Department who not only patiently read the manuscript and offered excellent comments, criticisms, and suggestions, but offered encouragement and backing when my continuation in the doctoral program seemed all but impossible.
- * Rosa Q. Mesa, Director of the Latin American Collection at the University of Florida, for her interest in my project and the great wealth of bibliographic information at her disposal that she readily shared with me.
- * Dr. Robert Glover, Director of the Center for the Study of Human Resources at the University of Texas at Austin, who granted me a six-month leave of absence from my job to return to Gainesville and complete my course requirements during 1979/1980.
- * Dr. Helen Safa, Dr. Franklin Knight, and Dr. Richard Sinkin for their recommendations on my behalf to the Fulbright-Hays program and the Cuban authorities.

- * Dr. L. Glenn Westfall and Dr. Louis A. Perez, Jr., for sharing research information with me over the years.
- * Dr. Julio Le Riverend, Director of the Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, for taking time from his busy schedule to discuss my dissertation topic with me. His courtesies are greatly appreciated.
- * The staffs of the Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti and the Archivo Nacional de Cuba, especially Luis Alpizar, Nieves Arencibia Martinez, Ramon de Armas, Israel Echevarria, and Tomas Fernandez. They helped me at every opportunity.
- * Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP) and Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (MINREX), which sponsored my visit to Cuba.
- * Jorge Ibarra, Rafael Cepeda, Walterio Carbonell, Roberto Friol, Luis Toledo Sande, Diana Abad, Olga Cabrera, and Emilio Godínez. My conversations with these Cuban academics helped clarify my topic, locate important sources, and deepen my interest in Cuba and its history.

Finally, I want to express special gratitude to my family. They, above all else, made this study possible. My wife, Betty K. Bradfield, and two children, Jeremy and Noel, were heroic in their patience and loving in their encouragement. My parents, Sergio and Gerry Poyo, were always there to provide much needed moral and financial support. Tom and Laura Bradfield shared their home and our poverty with us for six months. Lastly, none of this would have occurred without the influence of Sergia Alvarez y Rodriguez, my grandmother, who taught me to love Cuba and its history.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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August 1983

Chairman: Andres Suarez

Major Department: History

Throughout the final half of the nineteenth century, Cuban emigre communities in the United States served as guardians and propagandists for the Cuban separatist ideal. Between mid-century and 1895 the movement to eject Spain from Cuba underwent a radical political and social transformation. While Cubans rejected Narciso Lopez in the 1850s, they greeted enthusiastically Jose Marti, Maximo Gomez, and Antonio Maceo in 1895.

Politically, emigre separatism evolved from a conservative, annexationist, and diplomatically oriented thinking in the 1840s and 1850s, to a populist, pro-independence, and self-reliant force in the 1890s. This reflected a change in the social composition of the movement. While during the forties and fifties expatriate

separatism was led by Habana "aristocrats" and the island's liberal socioeconomic elite, during the eighties and nineties its leadership was of middle-class and working-class extraction. Also, for the first time, the movement reflected the racial composition of Cuban society.

This transformation in the emigre movement, of course, did not occur without considerable conflict. Differences over separatist strategy and the slavery question caused rifts in the emigre communities during the 1850s and 1860s. Bitter polemics between annexationists and independentistas paralyzed exile efforts in support of the Revolucion de Yara during the 1870s. And, during the next decade, class and racial animosities reflected in confrontations between Cuban anarchists and nationalists in the Florida colonies kept the expatriate movement divided.

Despite these bitter conflicts, groups of activists in New York and Florida reorganized the emigre colonies in the late 1880s, but only with the emergence of Jose Marti as the most effective separatist propagandist, was the movement's enthusiasm reignited. Founded in 1892, the new revolutionary organization, the Partido Revolucionario Cubano, relied on the working-class and military veterans in the Florida communities. Based on a populist and highly nationalistic ideology, Marti's new movement succeeded in defusing the political and social tensions among emigres sufficiently to launch the final assault on Spanish authority in Cuba during 1895.

INTRODUCTION

A cursory survey of Cuban historiography reveals that a primary concern of historians has been with the independence process of the nineteenth century. Literally hundreds of published materials, including studies, memoirs, diaries, correspondence, and other documentation, focus on the almost century long effort by Cubans to evict the Spanish from their homeland.¹ It is noteworthy, however, that few of these studies treat the emigre communities, which served as the organizing centers for the separatist movement throughout most of its history. The importance of the Cuban expatriate centers in maintaining and developing the movement is noted in study after study, but the traditional research has examined them only briefly and very superficially, emphasizing their patriotism and commitment to Cuban separation from Spain while ignoring the colonies' ideological and socioeconomic character, diversities, and conflicts.²

Throughout the final half of the nineteenth century, Cuban emigre communities in New York, New Orleans, Key West, Tampa, and numerous other cities in the United States served as guardians and propagandists for the separatist ideal. They maintained separatists' political viability even when on the island the movement seemed inactive and unpopular. Most of the primary separatist

leaders at one time or another travelled to or resided in the exile centers of the United States, and many of the movements' political ideas emerged from these communities. Since political conditions in Cuba throughout the century did not allow dissidents to air their grievances, they were expressed in a vigorous exile press that was active as early as the 1820s. Moreover, the various communities in the United States included all segments of Cuban society, providing the researcher with a unique opportunity not only to trace the development of separatist thinking over the years, but to examine the role of the socioeconomic forces within the movement and understand their attitudes toward the various political currents. This dissertation, then, seeks to increase our understanding of the Cuban independence process through studying the political, economic, and social dynamics of the Cuban communities in the United States from 1852 through 1895.

In tracing the ideological evolution of separatism, existing literature has failed to consider the development of separatist thinking from the 1840s through the 1890s as a single, evolving process. There are numerous works that relate to each distinct historical period (e.g., the annexationist years, 1840s-1850s; the Ten Years War, 1868-1878; the inter-war years, 1878-1895; and the War of Independence, 1895-1898), but there has been a tendency to view each in isolation of the rest. The ideological development and transformation of the separatist movement from one period

to the next has been conspicuously overlooked, or considered only briefly.

In one of his classic works, the prominent Cuban historian Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring argued that the war of independence was a thirty year struggle that began in 1868. This was an important observation in that he recognized a political continuity between 1868 and 1898, but unfortunately he failed to develop the theme in detail. Other studies suggest that the date should be set back another twenty years. In their studies, Vidal Morales y Morales and Herminio Portell Vila characterize the annexationist years as the initiation of the independence process. They both insist that the rebels of the 1840s and 1850s were the ideological precursors of the insurgents of the 1870s.³ Although this view is unpopular in more recent Cuban historiography, it seems inescapable that the political thinking of the earlier rebels influenced the latter. To what extent and how that influence manifested itself is the pertinent question. It is also clear that the dominant ideology and political dissensions in the emigre communities during the 1880s had their roots in the experiences of the previous decade when exiles fought bitterly over separatist political definition and strategic considerations. Although the era from the late 1840s through 1895 has been viewed traditionally as three distinct periods in the history of Cuban separatism, in reality, it was one active, evolving process. The emergence of the unified nationalist political movement

during the first half of the 1890s that launched the war of independence in 1895 is better understood in the context of the experiences of the previous forty years.

This understanding is not achieved simply by tracing the development of political thinking in the emigre colonies, however. Of equal importance is understanding the role of the social forces driving that ideological dynamic. Existing literature of the separatist movement reveals an almost exclusive concern with political affairs and biographies, to the detriment of research aimed at identifying the socioeconomic elements composing the movement and understanding the relationship between the ideas and the social groups.

The traditional research, of course, is essential and provides a framework within which to pursue the latter. Separatism's perennial inability to present a unified front against the Spanish, for example, is consistently noted in the traditional studies, but no major work has yet undertaken to specifically explain the underlying causes of the factional disputes. Marxist historians Raul Cepero Bonilla and Jorge Ibarra were the first to argue that social tensions within the movement were primarily responsible for divisions during the Ten Years War, but they offer only scattered references to support their arguments.⁴ It is also noteworthy that little has been written regarding the bitter social disputes in the Florida communities during the decade after 1885

that pitted social radicals against the traditional patriot leadership. Class and racial animosities were sharp, yet the effect of this on the separatist ideology of the 1890s has never been examined. The socioeconomic interpretations offered by Cepero Bonilla, Ibarra, and others are provocative and provide a not yet effectively utilized framework within which to examine the Cuban separatist movement.

Despite the abundant literature available on the subject at hand, it is primarily episodic in nature. This study attempts to synthesize much of the existing literature and combine it with fresh research on politics and socioeconomic developments in the emigre centers of the United States to produce a better understanding of the process by which Cuba attained her independence from Spain. Since the focus is the exile communities, political and economic developments in Cuba are unfortunately slighted, although an effort has been made to provide basic information regarding affairs on the island. This study represents only the beginning of a broader effort to provide eventually a comprehensive history of the Cuban independence process. Should it encourage others to undertake similar research and raise historiographical issues that further clarify this important period in Cuban history, one of the project's goals shall have been accomplished.

Notes

¹See the following reference sources: Jose Manuel Perez Cabrera, Historiografia de Cuba (Mexico: Instituto Panamericano de Geografia e Historia, 1962); Luis Marino Perez, Bibliografia de la Revolucion de Yara (Habana: Imprenta Avisador Comercial, 1908); Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968); Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Bibliografia de la Guerra Chiquita (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, Editorial Orbe, 1975); Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Bibliografia de la Guerra de Independencia, 1895-1898 (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, Editorial Orbe, 1976); Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (MINFAR), Historia de Cuba. Bibliografia (Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educacion, n.d.).

²The only study that has had the emigre communities as its central theme is Juan J. E. Casaus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953). Three important community studies of Key West and Tampa are Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935); Manuel Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro. La emigracion. Notas historicas (Cienfuegos, Cuba: Imprenta de M. Mestre, 1904); Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June 1958).

³Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, La guerra libertadora de los treinta anos (Habana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de la Habana, 1952); Vidal Morales y Morales, Inicidores y primeros martires de la revolucion cubana (Habana: Imprenta Avisador Comercial, 1901); Herminio Portell Vila, Narciso Lopez y su epoca, 3 vols. (Habana: Cultural, S.A. and Compania Editora de Libros y Folletos, 1930-1958).

⁴Raul Cepero Bonilla, Azucar y abolicion: Apuntes para una historia critica del abolicionismo (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1971); Jorge Ibarra, Ideologia mambisa (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967); Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (MINFAR), Historia de Cuba (Habana: Direccion politica de las FAR, 1967). This MINFAR study was written by Jorge Ibarra.

CHAPTER 1

THE RADICALIZATION OF THE CUBAN SEPARATIST MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES, 1852-1868

During the course of the 19th century, the economic relationships between Cuba and the United States, combined with increasing political and economic dissatisfaction on the island, gave rise to small but flourishing Cuban communities in Gulf and Atlantic coastal cities of the United States. While numerically insignificant in the context of United States immigration experience, these Cuban centers came to exert substantial influence on the island's political development and on North American-Spanish relations throughout the century. Originally settling in New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, Cubans arrived as early as the 1820s as the political and economic destinies of the two nations became intertwined. Already by 1830 Cuban exports to the United States exceeded the island's exports to Spain, and by the late 1850s almost fifty percent of Cuba's exports were shipped north. This commercial relationship not only prompted North Americans to establish themselves in Cuba, but encouraged Cubans to move north, where many founded commercial houses in New Orleans and New York. Also, breaking with tradition, Cubans increasingly sent children to the United States for their education, although Europe was still

preferred by most of the Creole elite.¹ Those Cubans moving to the United States for economic and educational purposes were joined by numerous political dissidents whose vocal propagandizing gave the Cuban emigre colonies reputations as centers of separatist agitation. Many of these individuals also established commercial enterprises whose profits they used to fund the conspiratorial and organizing activities of the constantly growing nucleus of Cuban separatists in the United States.

By 1860 some 1,957 West Indians resided in New York, 1,154 in Louisiana, and 709 in Pennsylvania. One can assume a significant number were white Cubans and Puerto Ricans since the status of Negroes in the United States on the eve of the Civil War likely discouraged immigration from the predominantly black British and French possessions in the Caribbean. In any case, these figures represent the maximum number of Cubans in those three states in 1860.²

Not until after the termination of the Civil War, however, did Cubans begin to arrive in the United States in significant numbers. This later migration represented a broader cross-section of the island's urban society. While prior to the 1860s most Cuban emigres were predominantly white professionals, merchants, landowners, and students, after 1865 workers began migrating north to seek employment in the growing post-war cigar industry. In this market the Havana cigar was considered one of the finest products; a

reputation enhanced by Spanish and Cuban tobacco entrepreneurs who established cigar factories in New York, New Orleans, and Key West. Discouraging the importation of manufactured cigars from Cuba while allowing Cuban tobacco leaf virtually free access to the North American market, the United States' tariff structure was an important force in drawing the island's tobacco capitalists and workers north.³ This migration received additional impetus when civil war erupted in Cuba during late 1868, sending a flood of political refugees of all economic classes and races to the traditional Cuban emigre centers, to south Florida, and to numerous cities along the east coast of the United States. Of the approximately 12,000 Cubans living in the United States by the mid-1870s, an estimated 4,500 were in New York, while about 3,000 lived in New Orleans and another 2,000 in Key West. At least an additional 2,500 were scattered in cities along the east coast, including Jacksonville, Savannah, Charleston, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, Jersey City, Wilmington, and Boston.⁴

During the 1870s New York's Cuban colony was the most important, economically as well as politically, and its socioeconomic composition to a great extent reflected that of Havana. New York's community included prominent members of Havana's socioeconomic elite, a large number of middle-class professionals and merchants, and a multi-racial working-class community employed primarily in the cigar trade. Of the 1,526 activists enrolled in

the Cuban rebel Junta's directory during the decade, 499 were tobacco workers, while 85 listed themselves as obreros (workers), constituting 31% of the politically active Cubans in the city. Two hundred and seventy-one others in the directory (17%) listed other occupations, including 80 merchants, 12 manufacturers, 24 physicians and dentists, 17 journalists and publishers, 19 clerks, 24 students, 10 military men, 7 propietarios (property owners), and 24 in miscellaneous trades such as cooks, engineers, sailors, conductors, coopers, runners, and pilots. Almost 43% in the directory, however, failed to specify an occupation, making it impossible to determine whether most of the political activists were of working-class or middle-class origins.⁵

The establishment and growth of these communities throughout the century were a source of great concern to Spanish authorities in Cuba since they served as the guardians of the separatist ideal during times of repression on the island. With the final surrender of Spain's imperial army in Peru in 1826, Spanish authority had been dislodged from the entire western hemisphere, except for Cuba and Puerto Rico. Although Cuban separatists conspired throughout the period 1810 to 1830 to lead the island along the path blazed by Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin, they were consistently thwarted.⁶

During 1824 and 1825 the first Cuban separatist newspaper published in the United States, El Habanero, called on the island's

inhabitants to organize, revolt, and establish an independent republic. Edited by an exiled priest, Felix Varela, the newspaper became a symbol of Cuban separatism, but the forces of continuity on the island and international resistance to rebellion in Cuba ensured continued Spanish dominance. In the midst of a sugar boom and a prosperous slave trade, Cuban and Spanish planters and merchants had no desire to break with the metropolis. Added to this was the widespread fear that any effort to initiate a rebellion might easily lead to repetition of the tumultuous social revolution that had devastated Haiti. Just as important, however, was the attitude of the United States. Convinced the island would eventually become a North American possession, the United States opposed plans by Latin American patriots to invade the island. Once independent, Cuba would be lost forever; thus until Spain was ready to cede the island, as it had Florida in 1819, North American administrations preferred Spanish control.⁷

As a result, it was not until the late 1840s that separatism again constituted a viable threat to Spanish authority in Cuba, but unlike the conspiracies of the 1820s, the new movement was dominated by advocates desiring annexation of the island to the United States. For many Cubans an association with the United States was a more practical and safe solution because this goal could probably be achieved without massive political and social turmoil. The idea had been advanced during the Spanish-American

wars for independence and by the 1840s enjoyed substantial support among the island's creole elite, leading to the emergence of a militant movement largely financed by Cuban and North American slave interests. It was also backed by the island's liberal socioeconomic elite who were interested in ending the slave trade and eventually the institution of slavery itself.⁸

Slaveholders viewed annexation as a guarantee of their slave property. Throughout the 1840s and the first half of the next decade, Great Britain's aggressive international posture against the slave trade, and slavery itself, frightened the Cuban slave interests. Also, in 1844 Spanish authorities had discovered a conspiracy inspired by the British consul in Habana. Its goal was to mobilize Cubans in support of the island's independence and the abolition of slavery. Although the plan failed to attract the backing of many whites, it caused a great deal of unrest among free blacks and slaves, leading to a harsh Spanish reaction that resulted in the execution of many. This incident--known as the Escalera conspiracy--and British pressures on the Spanish to act against the slave trade, mobilized the Cuban slaveholders in favor of the annexation plan.⁹ At the same time, Cuban liberals also viewed the island's incorporation into the United States as an acceptable alternative to Spanish rule. Although ideologically opposed to slavery, liberals feared British involvement in the "social question" on the island, especially after the Escalera affair. Many believed that,

as part of the United States, Cuba would gradually rid itself of slavery without the risk of slave rebellions. One of the most prominent liberal annexationists in New York, Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros (El Lugareno), was especially optimistic regarding the slave problem in the United States:

Y los Estados Unidos no son los que estan resolviendo sabiamente el problema humanitario de la libertad de los esclavos? Hoi tiene mas Estados libres que los primitivos confederados. El ano entrante tendras al Delaware libre de esta plaga vergonzosa para la Republica. Pronto seguira la Virginia . . . En fin, la esclavitud tendra su termino, pero lo tendra como debe tenerlo: se amputara un miembro gangrenado, pero la amputara un experto cirujano, i no el hacha de un carnicero.¹⁰

In addition to this self-delusion, annexation was attractive to liberals for other reasons. Under North American tutelage, they believed Cuba would enjoy the benefits of a freer economic environment and would avoid what they considered was the inevitable political chaos characterizing an independent Cuban state. The Latin American experience since 1810 convinced many that only within the constitutional framework of the North American confederation could civil strife be avoided. In any case, argued El Lugareno, Cubans did not possess a particularly impressive or distinct national heritage. The strong Negro influence, he believed, had so bastardized Cuba's cultural heritage that it precluded the possibility of a dynamic, independent Cuban nationality.¹¹

In this way the liberals rationalized their collaboration with the slave interests to ensure Cuba's annexation to the United States. The movement publicly called for annexation and suppression

of the slave trade, but rejected all suggestions that social changes constituted a part of the separatist program. A liberal call for even a gradual abolition of slavery would have divided the movement, so the social issue was simply avoided in public debates. As one group of Cuban liberals in New York emphasized in a resolution reasserting the rebel program in 1853, "se ha dicho ya . . . la revolucion no va a herir de muerte intereses creados; va a protegerlos; no va a exitar conflagraciones desastrosas y salvajes; va a reprimir-las, a destruirlas, sofocando en su origen y con mano fuerte, la barbara amenaza del tiranico Gobierno Colonial."¹² The threat they spoke of was the plan announced by Spanish authorities to emancipate all slaves acquired illegally and to allow the importation of free Negro apprentices from Africa to fill the island's labor needs. Cuban liberals opposed the plan, considering it a first step to radical abolition and an effort to "Africanize" the island.¹³ In theory, they wanted slavery abolished, but in practice they feared any plan not firmly grounded on the concepts of gradual emancipation and indemnification of slave property.

Although the separatist movement of the late 1840s and early 1850s contained abolitionist elements, in practice the program served the interests of Cuban and North American slave interests, a reality that was not lost on one sector of the liberal separatists. With the demise of the last annexationist initiative between 1852 and 1855 it became clear to them that their coalition with the

slaveholders had not only failed to dislodge Spain from Cuba, but had given the entire movement a reactionary character and reputation. This plunged the separatist cause into an ideological crisis that prompted some to reconsider the movement's basic program. As a result, by 1866 Cuban separatism was transformed from an essentially conservative force dominated by pro-slavery elements into a genuinely revolutionary movement openly dedicated to a radical abolition of slavery. Moreover, for the first time since the 1820s the emigre separatist program included the possibility of establishing Cuba as an independent republic.¹⁴

The transformation began subsequent to the abandonment of the separatist movement by its most conservative partisans throughout the decade of the fifties, leaving it in the hands of its most progressive element. By 1855 the changing international situation combined with domestic developments in the United States and Cuba to convince many in the separatist camp that annexation was no longer a possibility or even a necessity. Already by that year most of the prominent Cuban slave interests had withdrawn from the movement. Great Britain relaxed efforts to pressure for Spanish action against slavery, recognizing that their activities only fueled the annexationist cause, a political movement they naturally strongly opposed.¹⁵ Many Cuban liberals then left the separatist cause when it became evident North American sectional politics made annexation a virtual impossibility and after receiving indications from Spain

that significant reforms on the island would be forthcoming. The withdrawal of these elements also resulted in a major loss of financial resources and decline of the movements' political credibility. By 1856, Cuban separatism was no longer a threat to Spanish authority.

During the next decade, those remaining in the separatist camp quietly reflected on their experiences and in 1865 revived the movement. Led by the sympathizers and closest associates of the noted rebel chieftain, Narciso Lopez, who died at the hands of the Spanish in 1851 when his invasion of the island failed, Cuban exiles in New York founded La Sociedad Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico, to "poner en ejercicio los medios que estan a nuestro alcance para separar a Cuba y Puerto Rico de la dominacion espanola y adquirir una patria libre e independiente."¹⁶ The reemergence of separatist activism in New York was predictable given the animosity of the emigre communities to Spanish control in their homeland. It was prompted, however, by Spain's aggressive posture toward Latin America during the early 1860s and the growth of a reformist political alternative in Cuba that threatened to permanently destroy the separatist vision as a viable political force on the island.

Spain never quite accepted the loss of its American empire and during the 1860s took advantage of the United States' preoccupation with its civil conflict to increase its own influence in the

hemisphere. During 1861, the Spanish fleet joined the French navy in occupying Veracruz, an action taken to force the payment of Mexican debts, but resulting in the French occupation of Mexico and the installation of Maximilian as Emperor. During the same year, Spain agreed to annex her former colony of Santo Domingo on the request of the sitting President, but a substantial opposition in the country made the action impolitic from the very outset. Within two years a major rebellion forced a humiliating Spanish withdrawal from the island, allowing the Dominicans to reestablish their republic. These Spanish activities drew the attention of Latin Americans, but not until the appearance of a Spanish fleet on the Pacific coast of South America in 1863 did fears concerning the intentions of the Spaniards become acute.

The fleet's original mission was to investigate debt claims by Spain against the Peruvian government and to undertake scientific studies, but a series of incidents resulted in the Spanish occupation of Peru's guano-rich Chincha Islands in 1864. Subsequent political tensions culminated in the fleet's bombardment of the Chilean coastal city of Valparaiso and a declaration of war by Chile, Peru, and Bolivia against Spain. Outraged by Spain's aggressions, delegates from Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru met in October 1864 to call for an evacuation of the Spanish fleet from the Chinchas, initiating a continent-wide

campaign condemning Spain's apparent disregard for the sovereignty of her former colonies.¹⁷ These concerns regarding Spanish aggressions underly the creation in New York during 1864 of La Sociedad Democratica de Amigos de America, dedicated to defending the "republican-democratic institutions in the American hemisphere," counteracting European aggression in America, and more specifically, providing support to the Dominican rebels. Although open to all enemies of Spain, the society's leadership was in fact composed primarily of Cuban and Puerto Rican exiles. With the independence of the Dominican Republic, however, the organization lost its impetus and soon reappeared as the Sociedad Republicana.¹⁸

While the international situation provided the initial stimulus for renewed separatist activity, political developments in Cuba also contributed to goading the exiles into action. Beginning in 1859 under Captain General Francisco Serrano and extended by his successor in 1862, Domingo Dulce, Spanish colonial policy gave strong indications that significant changes would be instituted in the Antilles. Encouraged by Spain's new "politica de atraccion," leading creoles--many formerly of the separatist cause--organized a reform movement to lobby for tariff reductions, political liberalization on the island, Cuban representation in the Spanish Cortes, and the definitive suppression of the slave trade. Responding to these initiatives, the Spanish government issued a royal decree in

November 1865 establishing a Junta de Informacion de Ultramar to study the reform proposals. Much to Spain's surprise, the reformists swept the elections for representatives to the Informacion, confirming their popularity among the Cuban electorate.

These developments threatened to bury the already waning political appeal of separatism. The defection of so many prominent separatists to reformism and the apparent new flexibility of the Spanish government did not augur well for the future of the separatist cause. Accordingly, separatists in exile initiated a vigorous and shrill campaign to discredit the reformist position as well as its representatives to the Junta de Informacion, for if successful reformism would undoubtedly sound the death knell for efforts to terminate Spanish domination in Cuba.

By the mid-1860s, then, Cuban exiles in New York were working fervently to translate the hemisphere-wide animosity against the Spanish into a revolutionary situation in their homeland. Their activities gained impetus with the arrival in that city during late 1865 of Benjamin Vicuna Mackenna, a prominent Chilean political and literary figure, carrying a commission from his government to do whatever possible to discredit Spain before the North American people. He was to act as an agitator and draw United States support to the Chilean and Peruvian cause against Spain.

Within two weeks after arriving in New York, Vicuna determined that in addition to his propaganda activities in the North

American press, a newspaper directed at the Hispanic peoples of the Americas could well serve to combat the Spanish threat. Indeed, Vicuna saw New York as the perfect location for such an enterprise: "Desde New York estabamos pues como en una encumbrada tribuna donde nos oirian los pueblos de nuestra raza i los ajenos . . . el punto estrategico mas importante . . . para las operaciones de esa gran fuerza moderna que se llama la publicidad."¹⁹ Without delay two members of the Sociedad Republicana, Juan Manuel Macias and Jose F. Bassora, approached the Chilean agent offering their writings on Cuba and Puerto Rico. The presiding officer of the Sociedad, Macias, had arrived in the United States in the mid-1840s presumably to attend school. When the annexationist agitations began, however, he joined El Lugareno in publishing the exile newspaper, La Verdad, in New York. He later joined Narciso Lopez when the rebel leader arrived in the United States to organize his expeditionary forces. A Puerto Rican surgeon residing in New York, Bassora was also a separatist activist and served as Vice-President of the Sociedad.

Recognizing the benefit to Chile if internal strife could be fomented in Spain's Caribbean possessions, Vicuna opened the pages of his newspaper, La Voz de America, to Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists. Furthermore, the Chilean agent provided funds to equip a privateer to harass Spanish shipping in the Caribbean, but prior to the vessel's departure, United States authorities embargoed it and placed Vicuna under arrest for violation of neutrality laws.

Displeased at adverse publicity caused by the arrest, the Chilean government recalled their agent, but before departing for home Vicuna turned La Voz de America over to Macias and Bassora, who continued to edit it in conjunction with Cirilo Villaverde until its demise in early 1867. Judging from the newspaper's tone, Villaverde became its primary editor. A long-time separatist, Villaverde was another participant in Lopez' early conspiracies in Cuba and accompanied him into exile as his personal secretary. A great admirer of Lopez, Villaverde believed in the general's revolutionary activism during the 1850s and was now ready to resurrect his name and praise his accomplishments. Once under the editorship of the Cubans, La Voz de America turned its attention primarily to Cuban affairs and the separatist cause.²⁰

Led by Villaverde, Macias, Bassora, and other long-time separatists, the Sociedad Republicana and La Voz de America developed an activist, revolutionary separatism inspired by the boldness and militancy of Lopez' activities fifteen years before. Indeed, the activists of the 1860s viewed themselves as continuing his work, although modified to avoid the many errors in attitude and strategy they considered the rebel chieftain committed. La Voz de America published numerous lengthy articles extolling Lopez' virtues and critically analyzing his political program and activities, from which emerged a new revolutionary ideology that carried its formulators into the Revolucion de Yara, the civil conflict that erupted in 1868.

Fundamental to the strategy advanced by the new separatist party was the need for unconditional revolutionary militancy. The Spanish were not about to retire from the island voluntarily, so like their martyred leader, the separatists emphasized armed insurrection as the only means available to destroy Spanish authority in Cuba. During the 1850s the commitment to armed struggle was a source of controversy within the separatist cause, resulting in the political factionalization of the emigre communities. Based in New Orleans, Lopez and his followers, including Villaverde, Macias, Jose Sanchez Iznaga, Jose A. Gonzalez, Domingo Goicuria, Jose E. Hernandez, and Plutarco Gonzalez, to name just a few, insisted on immediate armed action to be accomplished by launching several expeditionary forces against the island. Their views were in sharp contrast to the more conservative group of emigres in New York who consistently feared the consequences of armed rebellion. Composed of liberals like El Lugareno, El Conde de Pozos Dulce, and Porfirio Valiente, and slaveholders such as Cristobal Madan and Jose Luis Alfonso, the New Yorkers were essentially cautious men who preferred a peaceful diplomatic solution to the Cuban problem. Their hope was to arrange an outright sale of the island to the United States. Moreover, they enjoyed the confidence of a group of wealthy conspirators in Cuba who formed a secret organization known as the Club de La Habana. The Habana club provided the vast majority of funds

for the exile movement thus giving the New Yorkers political control of the emigre effort.²¹

Although initially the New York and Habana annexationists accepted the necessity of launching expeditionary forces, after Lopez' first failure they withdrew their support, considering him a dangerous adventurer they could not control. In a letter to Jose A. Saco during October 1850, for example, a leading figure of the New York faction, Alfonso, wrote, "Lo que se corre en la Habana sobre la nueva expedicion de Lopez es falso, o por lo menos exagerado en extremo. Nosotros los que estamos aqui . . . sabemos que Lopez tiene a su disposicion armas y hombres cuantos quiera; pero le falta lo principal, que es dinero para llevar la expedicion a la isla . . . de manera que si Lopez lleva otra expedicion, no podra ser sino una pequena y de todos modos no le sera facil desembarcar en la Isla. Yo no tengo por consiguiente muchos temores por este lado."²² Already by 1850, then, some influential New York separatists had become strongly opposed to the revolutionary option.

During 1852, subsequent to Lopez' death, the emigre factions in New York and New Orleans initiated negotiations to establish a unified organization, hoping to reinvigorate the movement. The martyred general's followers insisted they would join a unified Junta only if its program contained three main points: first, that the object of the Junta "sera la independencia de Cuba por medio de la revolucion"; second, that the rebellion would be launched by a

strong expeditionary force free of foreign influence, that is, commanded by a Cuban; and finally, that revolutionary organizing would not be suspended or slowed in favor of negotiations with the Spanish for reforms on the island or with the United States for an international treaty aimed at purchasing the island.²³ Initially, prospects for unifying the emigres were bleak since the Lopistas were convinced the New Yorkers had no intention of backing such a program. During September, J. L. O'Sullivan, a North American sympathizer of the separatist cause and member of the Junta organizing committee, complained that the New York-based emigres had little interest in the revolutionary option. "I have learned positively, by the frank declarations of Mr. Betancourt [Cisneros] what I had of late strongly suspected," he noted, "that . . . an expedition is only a secondary and ulterior object of that Junta; that its primary object is a negotiation for purchase, either by, or through the mediation of the U. S., and that its policy is to collect the means adequate for a formidable expedition, with the double and divided view; 1st, of thereby influencing the two governments in favor of the desired purchase, and 2nd, of eventually making an expedition only in case of the failure of the former alternative." O'Sullivan resigned from the organizing committee, declaring, "I am in great doubt whether either the body of Cuban patriots in exile in this country, or those in the island, would be willing to place the reigns of the revolution in the hands of a junta thus diplomatic

rather than revolutionary."²⁴ During that month, however, a representative of the Club de la Habana, Porfirio Valiente, arrived in New York and succeeded in uniting the emigres by insisting the Habaneros supported the revolutionary avenue.²⁵ Although the newly established Junta included Hernandez and Goicuria, representatives of the Lopista faction, three of its five members, El Lugareno, Valiente and Manuel de Jesus Arango, were of the New York and Habana groups, and very shortly it became apparent they had not closed the door to the diplomatic possibilities. Writing to Macias during June 1853, Villaverde asked, "Que hacen los junteros en sus viajes de N. York a Washington i de W. a N. York? Se maneja la cosa por hechos i diplomacia, O por diplomacia solamente con hechos en amago?", adding, "se me hacen los sesos agua pensando en lo que tenga que ver el gobierno americano con la revolucion de los cubanos."²⁶ The Lopistas became even more concerned when the United States government dispatched Pierre Soule, a Louisiana politician known for his strong annexationist sympathies, to Madrid to negotiate a purchase of the island. The New York Junta gave him a grand send-off, proclaiming its support for the administration's efforts.²⁷ Villaverde again complained to Macias, bitterly objecting to the Junta's public demonstrations of support for Soule's mission. "Yo traduciendo he dicho que todo eso no significa mas que los cubanos apesar de sus compromisos . . . esperan i quieren que sus paisanos

en Cuba esperen, que la cuestion se resuelva pacificamente, en dos o tres papeladas diplomaticas."²⁸

Although the Junta began organizing an expeditionary force, the Lopistas continued to suspect what O'Sullivan had earlier suggested--that any effort to launch an expedition would come only after all United States diplomatic efforts to arrange a sale had failed. But even the plans for the expedition were suspect. The Junta had contracted with a pro-slavery annexationist from Mississippi, General John Quitman, to organize and command the force. The Lopistas considered this a mistake since as a North American Quitman's interests were quite different from those of the Cubans, and indeed, their worst fears were confirmed during early 1855 when Quitman resigned his commission after it became clear he did not have the support or encouragement of the United States government. Quitman's withdrawal left the emigres with little chance of launching a force to Cuba. The outnumbered Lopista members of the Junta, Hernandez and Goicurria, bitterly charged the other three with duplicity, suggesting they never intended to send an expedition. Hernandez noted: "en mi opinion la verdadera causa de los males que deploramos consiste en que la mayoria conservadora de la junta no se cuidaba tanto de llevar a Cuba la revolucion como de la manera de impedir que la revolucion produjese estragos." Goicurria suggested that the Junta's designation of Quitman to organize the expedition had doomed it from the very outset.²⁹

During 1853, El Filibustero, a New York newspaper critical of the Junta, edited by Juan and Francisco Bellido de Luna, had characterized the body as dominated by "negociadores," warning: "Su gran problema politico se reduce pues, a combinar las cosas de modo que la patria se convierta en objeto vendible, a fin de que alguno pueda comprarla, y ganar ellos asi, sin arriesgar nada en el cambio."³⁰ As far as the Lopistas were concerned, El Filibustero had assessed the situation correctly and they suggested that only a bold rebel leader like Narciso Lopez could successfully take the revolution to Cuba. Lopez, argued Macias in early 1856, was the revolutionary figure Cubans should emulate, "porque ejecutaba en vez de perorar y escribir lindos discursos; porque en vez de comprar popularidad a peso de oro, hacia ganarla a fuerza de sacrificios personales; por que en vez de pasarse a consultar a los politicos, se iba derecho a los hombres de accion, sinceros hombres de Cuba . . . ; porque en vez de perder tiempo en sondear la politica de los gobiernos, se dirigia a su fin con la inflexible tenacidad del genio . . . ; porque en vez de mal gastar el dinero y el calor natural en obsequios publicos a ministros Americanos y en pasear banderas por las calles de N.Y., buscaba recursos . . . En una palabra, Lopez fue caudillo de la revolucion, heroe de los verdaderos revolucionarios cubanos."³¹

This commitment to armed insurrection by the Lopistas-- composed of annexationists as well as independentistas--reflected

their belief in the right of the Cuban people to self-determination. A purchase of the island by the United States through an international treaty clearly violated this principle, prompting the emergence of a coalition between "revolutionary annexationists" and advocates of absolute independence. Both insisted that the future political status of the island be determined by a popular referendum once the Spanish were evicted, while those seeking a diplomatic solution were apparently not much concerned with popular will. The revolutionary annexationists believed that most Cubans desired some association with the United States, but they were ready to accept the establishment of a sovereign republic should the Cuban people choose that alternative. Annexationists such as Juan Bellido de Luna joined independentistas like Francisco Aguerro Estrada in combatting the New York and Habana activists seeking to ensure a purchase of the island by the United States. During 1854, Bellido's El Filibustero published a resolution by a group critical of the Junta, declaring the separatists' "primer objeto es la libertad conquistada por las armas: . . . y la proclamacion de la Soberania Popular," adding, "La anexion misma a los Estados Unidos es para nosotros como cuestion aplazada, y la discutiremos solo en teorias y bajo el aspecto de una probabilidad fundada en la futura seguridad de los destinos de Cuba: a la voluntad del pueblo toca despues la via de los hechos."³² These critics accepted only a revolutionary solution to the Cuban

question, believing a purchase of the island by the United States a crime against the right of the Cuban people to self-determination.

Although the separatist movement was dominated by annexationists between 1848 and 1855, the cause did include advocates of a sovereign Cuba. The independentistas, however, did not often engage the annexationists in public debate over the political question, believing it would only divide the movement. They no doubt felt that once put to the test of a referendum, the independence ideal would triumph among the Cuban people, so they directed their energies to making common cause with revolutionary annexationists who also insisted on Cuban self-determination. The two groups differed only in that the annexationists believed Cubans would vote for statehood in the North American republic.

By 1855, however, some independentistas began to take a more aggressive attitude and made their political sentiments known. Agüero Estrada's El Pueblo, for example, argued it had always questioned the need for annexation, while Goicuria published a pamphlet openly calling for the island's independence. Both suggested that the United States' opposition to the Cuban revolutionaries determined the need for a pro-independence position. Not only had the United States opposed Cuban separation from Spain during the Spanish American wars for independence, noted El Pueblo, but it actively undermined the Lopez and Quitman expeditions as well. "[L]os E.

Unidos han perdido para siempre a Cuba," the rebel newspaper concluded.³³ Many annexationists saw the logic of El Pueblo's arguments and became convinced the United States would never sacrifice for Cuba; that is, risk damaging relations with Spain and Europe for the sake of acquiring the island. The North Americans would only annex Cuba under their own terms and at minimal political risk: peacefully through an international treaty. The New York Junta also lost confidence in its own policy of relying on North American support after it became clear no help for the movement would be forthcoming, even subsequent to Spain's refusal to sell the island. By the end of the 1850s, the staunchest annexationist newspaper in exile, La Verdad, had also embraced the concept of self-determination: "El periodico La Verdad quiere que los cubanos conquisten luchando su independencia; que rompan de una vez para siempre con Espana, y que duenos enteramente de su destino, decidan, en uso del derecho . . . lo que mas puede convenirles para el porvenir. La Verdad no combatira el deseo de los cubanos."³⁴

It was not only the United States' negative attitude toward the Cuban rebel movement that made many question annexationism however. It also began to be questioned on other grounds. Some argued that annexation was the political solution of the island's wealthy who feared losing their dominant social position were the Spanish to be evicted without the stabilizing influence of North American involvement. This perception was seemingly confirmed

by the socioeconomic elite's withdrawal from the movement in favor of reformism when it became clear the United States would not force the Spaniards to cede the island. Finally, annexationism was in direct contradiction to a growing nationalist sentiment among Cubans, most eloquently expressed by Saco in his anti-annexationist tracts of the 1840s and 1850s. Although a committed supporter of a reformist solution for his homeland and tainted by racist attitudes that excluded non-whites from his concept of nationality, Saco forcefully argued his preference for independence over incorporation into the United States. Annexation, he argued, would result in the destruction of the island's Latin heritage and in the domination of political and social life by Anglos. He often pointed to the French experience in Louisiana as evidence of what Cuba could expect as part of the North American union.³⁵ While cultural nationalism was not a major force among separatists before the 1860s, it would increasingly come to the forefront of separatist ideology, causing many to abandon annexationism in favor of the establishment of an independent Cuban republic.

The various calls for a sovereign Cuba in 1855 signalled the emergence of absolute independence as a major force in separatist circles. Cuban separatism in the United States continued to include annexationists, but annexationists who recognized the right of the Cuban people to self-determination. Those seeking a United States purchase of the island or direct intervention abandoned

separatism when it was clear neither would occur. The Sociedad Republicana's membership included individuals of both political persuasions. Vicuna informed his government the Sociedad's members favored Cuba's independence, and undoubtedly its most influential leaders, Macias, Villaverde and Bassora, did, but Agustin Arango and Plutarco Gonzalez, for example, appear to have held annexationist sympathies throughout the 1860s.³⁶ Publicly, La Voz de America adopted a policy of neutrality to avoid divisive debates. The newspaper sometimes pointed to the benefits of independence while other times praised annexation, but it invariably upheld the doctrine of self-determination.³⁷

During the 1860s, then, the Lopista leadership of the Sociedad Republicana blamed the failure of the rebel movement of the 1850s on the New York and Habana separatists. They attributed the wealthy Habaneros' timidity to their personal unwillingness to risk sacrificing wealth and position in an effort to forcefully evict the Spanish from Cuba. Lopez' major mistake, argued La Voz, was depending on the financial support of the island's socioeconomic elite because their concern was economic continuity, not separatism. Writing in 1853, Macias expressed little surprise that popular support could not be raised among the mass of the exiled Cubans for the Junta's activities, noting:

No me sorprende . . . porque es muy natural que asi suceda en un pueblo virgen en revoluciones que todavia no saben elegir sus jefes y companeros mas propios para la accion, y que solo fian empresas tan importantes y vitales a hombres que por su caracter, edad, posicion social y educacion espanola son los menos apropiados para dirigir esa clase de negocios en que se necesitan actividad, valor, independencia, y firme resolucion de afrontar el peligro cuando este presente. Esta submission casi natural de los pueblos, a ciertos y ciertos hombres muchas veces les es funesta y siempre perjudicial y como tal es necesario combatirla y destruirla si fuese posible. Trabajar con este fin es trabajar por el bien de la patria.³⁸

When it was no longer in their interests to support Lopez and other revolutionary activists, the Habaneros withdrew their resources, leaving the separatist movement to die in its own inactivity. La Voz concluded:

Aquellos aristocratas revolucionarios odiaban el despotismo espanol, querian de veras efectuar un cambio en el regimen del pais, creian que echados los dominadores por un golpe de mano, la anexion a los Estados Unidos seria un escudo fortisimo contra los desordenes interiores i las maquinaciones de afuera . . . pero le tienen horror serval a la revolucion.³⁹

What, then, was the alternative to a separatist revolution financed and directed by Habana's socioeconomic elite? An answer was suggested during the 1850s by the Junta's critics, and reasserted in the rebel program developed by La Sociedad. As early as 1855, many separatist newspapers in exile called for a revolutionary program based on a broader cross-section of Cuban society and led by different social elements. One of the former Lopista members of the Junta, Hernandez, suggested that "es preciso que la revolucion se haga 'por el pueblo cubano y para el pueble cubano' . . . y para esto . . . es preciso sacar las riendas de las manos de unos pocos

viejos ricos y de sus fieles servidores y mandatarios," while El Filibustero argued that "los hombres ilustrados, el pueblo, y la clase media son la palanca de toda revolucion."⁴⁰ El Pueblo noted that a revolution should be a mass movement, "de cualquier clase, condicion, i nacionalidad que sean," adding, "no dudamos tampoco ni aun echar mano de los esclavos, si lo demanda asi la circunstancia," and El Cometa, edited by Jose Mesa and Miguel Tolon, declared: "La causa de la liberacion de Cuba no es ni puede ser empresa exclusiva de tales o cuales hombres, ni monopolio de tal o cual Club o Corporacion; la causa de Cuba pertenece al Pueblo Cubano."⁴¹

Like these publicists of the 1850s, La Sociedad suggested the revolutionary party look to the Cuban people, of all classes and races. According to La Voz, "La Sociedad Republicana ha reconocido el error i ha procurado i conseguido levantar el espiritu del PUEBLO, i hacer por fin que la REVOLUCION no sea aspiracion del egoismo esclavocrata, sino la manifestacion ostensible de los deseos del PUEBLO en jeneral."⁴² The revolution, the newspaper argued, had to be broad based and required the incorporation of "el ignorante, el guajiro, el tabaquero, el liberto, el esclavo, el verdadero PUEBLO," and not just the rich and literate. Indeed, the great triumph of the Sociedad Republicana, proclaimed one exiled publicist in La Voz in September 1866, was "haber logrado elevar la REVOLUCION al corazon de las masas."⁴³ This rhetoric, of course, was not in the tradition of the "aristocratic" annexationist movement of the

1850s and represented a deep ideological transformation regarding which social classes were now responsible for initiating the separatist revolution. As we will see, La Voz's positions were even more radical than those of the critics of the 1850s, as it called for the active participation of the working classes and slaves. The Filibustero had emphasized the middle classes and rejected the incorporation of slaves, believing they would turn against whites at first opportunity, and even the most radical opposition newspaper of the 1850s, El Pueblo, only called for using slaves if circumstances required. La Voz suggested that without slaves the insurrection would be impossible.

Faithfulness to this position, of course, required a radically different attitude on the slavery question itself. As we have seen, Cuban liberals of the 1850s ideologically supported an indemnified, gradual abolition of slavery, but because of their political alliance with the pro-slavery interests, they did not often raise the issue. Not until 1854 did some elements of the separatist movement openly question their association with slave interests, demanding that the rebel cause publicly and assertively proclaim its opposition to the institution. Edited by Carlos Collins and supported by Lorenzo Allo, Juan C. Zenea, and Aguero Estrada, an abolitionist newspaper, El Mulato, appeared on February 20, declaring its intention to "atacar la esclavitud de cualquier modo que se la disfrace, por creerla funesta, incompatible con la legitima y verda-

dera libertad," adding, "Un pueblo que como el de Cuba, ha jemido largo tiempo en la mas dura tirania, un pueblo . . . por cuya independenciam se hicieron tantos sacrificios y derramandose abundante sangre, no puede ser grande, fuerte y feliz, conservando en su seno mas de medio millon de esclavos." Although the newspaper agreed that a gradual emancipation would be necessary, it insisted that the issue be debated actively and that steps be taken promptly to initiate the emancipation process.⁴⁴

Some considered El Mulato's proposition counterrevolutionary. At a mass meeting called to condemn El Mulato, attended by such prominent liberal separatists as Francisco de Armas, Jose Mesa, and Juan and Francisco Bellido de Luna, a resolution passed declaring the newspaper's ideals not representative of the rebel ideology of the emigre communities, warning, "Y como esas insidiosas publicaciones pueden bajarse al nivel de las clases abyectas de la poblacion difundiendo en ellas maximas alarmantes y perniciosas, no es dificil que aquellos escritos preparen el horrible asesinato de la patria . . . Los cubanos aqui reunidos deseamos y condenamos todos los conceptos de ese prospecto."⁴⁵ Nevertheless, at a public lecture in March at the prominent emigre socio-political organization in New York, the Ateneo Democratico Cubano, Allo condemned slavery and offered a gradual emancipation plan. Allo noted, "si obedeciera solo a los deseos de mi alma, la ley de manumision para los esclavos de Cuba seria muy sencilla--se declaran libres a todos

los esclavos de Cuba," but because of political and economic realities, in his view a gradual plan was necessary. The plan was well received by most in attendance. El Mulato's propaganda gained support among many within the emigre communities and, after 1855, never again would a pro-slavery position be associated with the separatist movement.⁴⁶

The separatist activists of the 1860s in New York took the issue a step further. Although initially the rebel leadership argued that a gradual transition to free labor might be acceptable in principle, they noted that Spanish and Cuban slave interests could never be trusted to implement it faithfully. La Voz therefore criticized the reformistas' plan for gradual abolition in no uncertain terms. In questioning the logic of gradual emancipation, the rebel newspaper referred to a story President Lincoln had been fond of telling, "el cual refiere haber conocido a un hombre de Illinois, que teniendo que cortarle la cola a su perro, discurrio que lo mejor seria ir cortandosela a pedasos de cuando en cuando para hacerlo padecer lo menos posible."⁴⁷ La Voz presented its argument for abolition, not only pointing to the moral imperatives, but to certain practical realities. It suggested the abolition of slavery in the United States had initiated a process that would inevitably lead to a world-wide demise of the institution, adding that the slaves in Cuba were perfectly aware of these developments. Thus, the threat of slave uprisings now came not from efforts to bring slavery to an end, but from policies attempting to keep the insitution intact.

A more pervasive line of reasoning, however, argued that the revolution could not be successfully carried out without the active support of the island's free men of color and slaves--a support not forthcoming unless slavery was immediately abolished. Writing to his wealthy and influential slaveholding brothers in Camaguey soon after the outbreak of the Civil War in 1868, Dr. Agustin Arango, a founding member of the Sociedad, insisted they embrace the abolition of slavery. "Pues ademas de ser la esclavitud incompatible con nuestra revolucion," he wrote, "es de absoluta necesidad hacer soldados de los negros." "En fin," argued the separatists in 1866, "la Sociedad Republicana trata de abolir la esclavitud, porque el acto de emancipacion de los negros sera la carta de libertad del pueblo de Cuba."⁴⁸ The separatist emigres, then, were one of the few organized political groups in Cuban politics prior to the outbreak of the rebellion which were adamant about the immediate abolition of slavery. Indeed, when the Cuban revolution seemed to drag its feet on the issue in late 1868, the New York Junta, organized by the former members of the Sociedad, sent a statement with a departing expeditionary force encouraging the rebel leadership to enact prompt abolition.⁴⁹

In addition to advocating the broadening of the revolutionary base through courting the people and abolishing slavery, the Sociedad Republicana called on the separatist community to abandon the traditional strategy of depending on the initiative of foreign

interests and exiles to bring about the insurrection-- another issue raised in the 1850s by the critics of the New York Junta. The Lopez expeditions had been composed primarily of North American adventurers and mercenaries and only a handful of Cubans, and as we have seen, the Cuban Junta's proposed expedition after 1852 was entrusted to the command of General Quitman. Many in the exile centers questioned the Junta's judgment in appointing a North American, resulting in bitter disputes when Quitman abandoned the enterprise. This experience not only convinced Cubans they should not depend on foreign interests, but prompted them to question the entire idea that by simply landing an expeditionary force they would guarantee a successful revolution on the island. Lopez' fate obviously called this into question. As Goicuria noted after resigning from the New York Junta in 1855, "errada politica fue, sin duda, de los que nos precedieron en los trabajos revolucionarios, indicar como base necesaria del movimiento, y como garantia indispensable . . . el desembarco en Cuba de una expedicion."⁵⁰ Having now proclaimed the revolutionary movement a responsibility of the masses, the Sociedad Republicana in the mid-1860s also rejected the separatist filibustering tradition in favor of creating a domestic political movement capable of launching the rebellion internally. La Voz noted:

La idea de una espedicion del exterior que vaya a comenzar la revolucion en Cuba es un pensamiento que mata el espiritu de iniciativa, retarda la accion, trastorna los planes del patriotismo i quita a los impulsos del valor toda su fuerza vital. Debe esperarse un auxilio, porque tenemos razones para confiar

en que no nos encontraremos solos i abandonados a nuestra suerte en la hora de las pruebas, pero cualquiera que aconseja la demora de todo proyecto hasta que se vean en el horizonte las velas del extranjero que debe ir a prestarnos el apoyo de que habremos menestar i de este modo someta lo primordial a lo accesorio, ese no sabe lo que es lucha, ni ha meditado en lo que son los pueblos, ni es hombre.⁵¹

To promote the internal revolt, the exile propagandists directed articles to Cuban workers, primarily tobacco workers who were viewed as possessing revolutionary potential. Moreover, noting that a significant number of Cuban tobacco workers were migrating to New York during the mid-1860s, the exile leadership called on them to remain in Cuba and organize against the established authority: "basta organizarse para estar en armonia con lo que todos desean hacer; protegerse mutuamente para ser fuerte; armarse para tener con que practicar la defensa; comprometerse a conservar la union," adding, "lo que manifestamos respecto a los tabaqueros se refiere igualmente a todos los artesanos de nuestro pais."⁵²

During June 1866, Captain General Francisco Lersundi, the conservative governor who replaced Dulce, caused a great deal of unrest among workers when he prohibited reading in the cigar factories. This was the traditional practice of allowing workers to hire an individual to read aloud to them while they worked. The authorities feared its revolutionary potential, for it was indeed common practice to read clandestine newspapers and other literature considered subversive by government officials. La Voz de America quickly took up the issue and called for workers to resist the

decree banning reading. "No!", proclaimed the newspaper, "la obediencia en este caso es una humillacion; no debe obedecerse i teneis el derecho de la insurreccion. Se os prohíbe leer en el taller, pues reunios en otra parte i leed; os asaltan en vuestro hogar, pues defendeos, luchad i entonces sera vuestro triunfo." For the first time in Cuban history, a rebel organization called for a mass movement among Cubans to lead the rebellion instead of relying on "las clases acomodadas y las jentes ricas."⁵³ Ultimately, Cubans achieved independence to a great extent through this reliance on workers, but in the mid-1860s this position was anathema to those who had traditionally led the separatist movement and now advocated a reformist solution to the political question.

The reformist electoral victory for representatives to the Junta de Informacion in March 1866 marked the culmination of reformism in Cuba, but it also prompted a vocal campaign against the ideology of colonial reforms by La Voz. The campaign was characterized by a vehement and highly personal tone against the Cuban representatives in Madrid--a journalistic style that became distinctive of the more radical revolutionary newspapers in exile during the Ten Years War.

In its articles, La Voz drew a sharp distinction between the "evolucionarios" or "concesionistas" and themselves, the revolutionary party: "En todos los paises i en todos las epocas ha ecistido un partido enemigo a la revolucion, es decir del progreso,

compuesto en su mayor parte de privilegiados, ricachos i vividores. Este partido esta representado hoi en Cuba por los reformistas y los negreros." More explicitly, the newspaper characterized the reformist group as the "Partido Oligarca," whose position with regard to any given political movement was simply a function of how it affected their economic interests. As to the individuals elected to the Junta de Informacion, the newspaper charged they were not representative of the nation's aspirations and "que ecepcion de tres o cuatro de ellos todos los demas son personas vulgares; de mas i menos fortuna que van en busca de posicion personal y a remover el asunto de los intereses de los amos de esclavos." The only praise directed at any aspect of the Informacion came in the newspaper's support for the Puerto Rican delegates who demanded immediate abolition of slavery.⁵⁴

The antagonistic attitude of La Voz toward the reformist leadership is basic to understanding at least part of the political dissension that appeared in the exile communities after the outbreak of the Revolucion de Yara. La Voz' concern with the basic difference in interests between the wealthy "concesionistas" and the revolutionary masses--in effect, a class or social doctrine--was equally apparent in portions of the emigre community in 1869 and 1870. However, the thesis that the island's established classes were opposed to a popular revolutionary movement to evict the Spanish was not based on a sophisticated socialist analysis, but on the editors' experiences during the 1850s and 1860s. It was clear

to Villaverde and his associates in 1866 that Cuba's middle and upper classes opposed armed insurrection and hoped for a solution within the framework of the Spanish empire. Accordingly, in their view, the separatist movement had little choice but to rely on the workers, libertos (freedmen), and slaves as the basis of the revolutionary party. These emigre leaders were intransigent activists who considered any compromise of the separatist vision tantamount to treason; a crime the Cuban liberals embracing reformism had committed and for which they would be held accountable even after they eventually returned to separatism. A nationalist self-determinism stood as the central feature of the separatist political program. The Cuban rebels of the Sociedad Republicana had opposed efforts by the island's established classes to arrange a North American purchase of Cuba during the 1850s and now condemned their desire to seek an accommodation within the Spanish empire.

It is interesting to speculate whether this appeal to class distinction in the separatist program enjoyed the broad support of the emigre communities in the United States. Although the majority of the expatriate Cubans no doubt supported the separatist ideal, the many wealthy merchants and businessmen with substantial interests on the island probably did not view the call for a working-class uprising with much enthusiasm, as evidenced by criticisms they directed at the newspaper. Many in New York were friends and associates of the reformist leaders and they did not consider La

Voz' harsh personal attacks to be fair or even founded in truth; thus they refused to provide the necessary funds after the Chilean monies were no longer available, resulting in its demise in early 1867.⁵⁵ It is probable, however, that the growing number of working class Cubans in exile gave the radical separatists moral, if not financial, support. For the first time Cuban separatist leaders were suggesting that not only the traditional socioeconomic elite and the middle-classes had something to offer in the political arena. It is not surprising Cubans failed to rise in support of Lopez' expeditions, for the invaders publicly offered only more of the same under new masters. Recognizing this, the separatist movement of the 1860s sought a broad base through a populist program promising a more democratic future.

The effect of the Sociedad Republicana's radical propaganda on affairs in Cuba is, of course, impossible to gauge, but it is clear La Voz and other political literature successfully reached the island. Clandestine groups in support of the radical exiles formed, and a political flyer issued by one such group, signed La Voz del Pueblo, appeared in Habana on the 1st of May 1866, calling on Cubans to rise: "cubanos, blancos, negros, mulatos, hombres que seais hombres, tomad las armas, incendiad, destruid, matad, obligad; no tengais miedo; llegada es ya la hora de la lucha, del sacrificio y de la verguenza."⁵⁶

Despite the activities of the exiles, not until it became apparent that the Junta de Informacion would yield nothing in the

way of reforms for Cuba did significant conspiratorial activities appear on the island. Centered in the eastern provinces, by late 1867 organized groups led by disgruntled creole landholders had emerged. One such group led by Francisco Vicente Aguilera, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Pedro Figueredo, and others, in Bayamo, Oriente province, approached the reformist leaders in Habana in an effort to organize an island-wide conspiracy. The Habaneros, however, were not yet interested in armed struggle. Finally, on October 10, 1868, the conspirators in Bayamo launched the insurrection. Accompanied by 37 men, Cespedes proclaimed Cuban independence on his plantation, La Demajagua, near Yara. Organized into the Junta Revolucionaria de la Isla de Cuba, the rebels issued a manifesto denouncing arbitrary government, abusive taxation, corrupt administration, exclusion of Cubans from government employment and the Cortes, and deprivation of political, civil and religious liberties. In addition, the revolution decreed the gradual and indemnified abolition of slavery, although Cespedes freed his slaves immediately and incorporated them into his rebel force.

Although the insurrection did not immediately represent the radical movement called for by La Voz, members of the Sociedad Republicana in New York gathered at Jose E. Hernandez' residence during early November and formed a revolutionary committee to organize support for the rebellion. Another political activist of the

Lopista tradition, Serapio Recio, presided, and was joined on the committee by Mantilla, Arango, Gonzalez, and Bassora, all founding members of the Sociedad. Macias was in Buenos Aires and would not arrive in New York until early the next year, but Villaverde lent his support. By the end of the month a personal envoy from Cespedes, Jose Valiente, arrived in New York and became President of the newly established Junta Central Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico, constituting the body as the official representative of the rebellion in exile. Another addition to the Junta, Francisco Javier Cineros, represented the Junta Revolucionaria de la Habana.⁵⁷

Between the end of November and March of the next year this group organized the exile effort, wasting little time in organizing juntas in other emigre communities, establishing a newspaper, and initiating the work of raising funds for an expeditionary force. On December 10, the first issue of a periodic publication, El Boletín de la Revolucion, appeared and before the end of the year the steamer, Galvanic, reached Cuba with the first contingent of rebels and arms for the revolution. In January, commissioned by the New York Junta, Plutarco Gonzalez arrived in New Orleans and established a revolutionary committee, and soon thereafter another agent from Cespedes, Ambrosio Valiente, landed in Key West and organized a political club there.

Taking the lead in forming the Galvanic expedition was Manuel de Quesada, a veteran commander in Benito Juarez' campaigns

against the French, who after Maximilian's defeat moved to New York and offered his support to the separatist cause. Attracted by the Junta's activism, during September 1868 Quesada made a clandestine trip to Camaguey, his home province, hoping to convince his compatriots to launch a rebellion, but meeting with little success, he returned to New York. Commissioned by the rebel Junta in New York to organize the first expedition, Quesada received funds from the local emigres and the Habana rebels, and during mid-December he departed Nassau commanding the Galvanic, landing on the coast of Camaguey soon after. On disembarking, Quesada issued a manifesto calling his countrymen to arms, concluding, "Nuestro lema es Union e Independencia. Con union seremos fuertes. Con union seremos invencibles.

Unity, however, would be tragically elusive during this phase of the Cuban separatist struggle. Although rebel factionalism would be the result of a number of factors, in the coming months the separatists of the former Sociedad Republicana and the Habana reformists joining the insurrection would compete for domination of the insurrectionary movement in exile. Steeped in the revolutionary tradition of Lopista activism, the New York separatists viewed themselves as the initiators, the precursors of the Cespedes rebellion, but the Habana liberals arriving in New York during 1869 suggested the insurrection was the logical consequence of the

frustrated reformist movement, not of what they characterized as the pro-slavery and reactionary tradition of Narciso Lopez.⁵⁹ The stage was set for confrontation.

Notes

¹Francisco Lopez Segrera, Cuba: Capitalismo dependiente y subdesarrollo, 1510-1959 (Habana: Casa de las Americas, 1972), 136; Julio LeRiverend, Historia economica de Cuba (Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educacion, 1974) 382-394; Leland Hamilton Jenke, Our Cuban Colony: A Study of Sugar (New York: Vanguard Press, 1928), 18-21; Manuel Moreno Fragnals, El ingenio, 3 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1978), III, 80.

²U.S. Census Office. Population of the United States, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 196, 346, 439. As with all census figures these should be viewed with caution.

³La Voz de America (New York), January 20, August 20, 30, 1866; Willis Baer, The Economic Development of the Cigar Industry in the United States (Lancaster, PA., 1933), 106-110.

⁴These figures are estimates based on the following sources: El Pueblo (New York), August 9, 1876; "Expediente por nuestro Consul en New Orleans," Boletin del Archivo Nacional (Habana), 19 (1920), 66; Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968), 186-231. For demographic information on the Florida communities see chapter 5 of this study. See also, Arturo Cuyas, Estudio sobre la inmigracion en los Estados Unidos (New York: Thompson y Moreau, 1881), 15, which states that 8,836 Cubans immigrated to the United States between 1871 and 1880.

⁵"Libro indice de cubanos residentes en Nueva York- Documentos procedentes de la Junta Revolucionaria de New York, 1868-1878," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones, (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 40, numero 54.

⁶For information on the early separatist conspiracies see: Jose Luciano Franco, La conspiracion de Aponte (Habana: Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional, 58, 1963); Roque E. Garrigo Salido, Historia documentada de la conspiracion de los Soles y Rayos de Bolivar, 2 vols. (Habana: Imprenta el Siglo XX, 1929); Adrian Valle, Historia documentada de la conspiracion de la Gran Legion del Aguila Negra (Habana: El Siglo XX, 1930).

⁷See Felix Varela, Escritos politicos (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1977) and Jose Ignacio Rodriguez, Vida del presbitero Don Felix Varela (Nueva York: Imprenta de "O Novo Mundo," 1878). The diplomatic complexities of the Cuban question between 1808 and 1826 are included in Jesus F. de la Teja, "Cuba and Caribbean Diplomacy, 1808-1826," Seton Hall University, M.A. Thesis, 1981. The study argues that the United States, England, and France all had an interest in the Cuban status quo during this period. In addition, it suggests Columbia and Mexico had pressing concerns and were unwilling to divert resources for an invasion of Cuba.

⁸This distinction between the annexationist slaveholders and liberals is a variation on Herminio Portell Vila's "anexionistas por motivos economicos" and "anexionistas por motivos partioticos," in Narciso Lopez y su epoca, 3 vols. (Habana: Cultural, S.A. and Compania Editora de Libros y Folletos, 1930-1958), I, 186-209. Portell's distinction between "economic" and "patriotic" reasons for supporting annexation is misleading since the liberals, of course, had their own economic motives for backing annexation. Also, it should be noted that it was Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros who originally pointed to the existence of distinctions within the movement. See letter, Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros to Jose Antonio Saco, February 20, 1849, in Jose A. Fernandez de Castro, ed., Medio siglo de historia colonial de Cuba, 1823-1879 (Habana: Ricardo Veloso, 1923), 99-102.

⁹David R. Murray, Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), chapter 11; Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, Manual de historia de Cuba, desde su descubrimiento hasta 1868 (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1971), 407-444.

¹⁰Letter, Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros to Jose Antonio Saco, October 19, 1948, in Fernandez de Castro, ed., Medio siglo de historia colonial, 93.

¹¹Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros, Ideas sobre la incorporacion de Cuba a los Estados Unidos, en contraposicion a los que ha publicado Don Jose Antonio Saco (New York, 1849). See also Betancourt Cisneros' correspondence to Saco in Fernandez de Castro, ed., Medio siglo de historia colonial.

¹²El Filibustero (New York), February 15, 1854.

¹³C. Stanley Urban, "The Africanization of Cuba Scare, 1853-1855," Hispanic American Historical Review, 37 (February 1957); El Filibustero, August-November 1855.

¹⁴The relationship between the separatist movement of the 1840s and 1850s and the separatism of the 1870s has been the subject of dispute in Cuban historiography. Traditional studies view the liberal annexationists of mid-century as precursors of the Ten Years War, although they recognize the movement included reactionary pro-slavery elements who used annexationism to advance their slave interests. The participation of the reactionaries was short-lived, however, and the movement's primary leaders are characterized in this literature as individuals in principle opposed to slavery and admirers of the North American republic's economic and political system; patriots who considered Cuba's incorporation into the United States as the only viable alternative to Spanish domination. According to this view, the annexationist movement of the 1850s was an early manifestation of Cuban patriotism leading directly to the independentista ideology that emerged during the Ten Years War. Prominent exponents of this interpretation are Portell Vila, Narciso Lopez y su epoca, I, 210-216 and Vidal Morales y Morales, Iniciadores y primeros martires de la revolucion cubana (Habana: Imprenta Avisador Comercial, 1901). A revisionist literature, however, distinguishes between what it considers the pro-slavery and anti-nationalist annexationism of the 1850s and the abolitionist, highly nationalistic and transitory annexationism of the late 1860s. The first is characterized as essentially reactionary, an aberration that can in no way be considered a precursor of the second. As Jorge Ibarra's Ideologia mambisa (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967), 44-46, explicitly states:

No es valido . . . hacer enfasis en la supuesta continuidad ideologica que representa al 'anexionismo' de Ignacio Agramonte con relacion al anexionismo de Betancourt Cisneros y Narciso Lopez . . . No puede haber . . . continuidad ideologica entre los que aspiraban a constituir una nacion y los que aspiraban a su desaparicion. No puede haber continuidad ideologica entre los que aspiraban unir etnicamente a la nacion y los que aspiraban a suprimir las minorias etnicas.

This chapter explores the ideological linkages between the emigre separatists of the 1850s and the 1860s in an effort to shed light on this historiographical problem.

¹⁵Murray, Odious Commerce, 231-240.

¹⁶Raul Roa, Con la pluma y el machete, 3 vols. (Habana: Siglo XX, 1950), III, 164-165. The founding members were: Juan Manuel Macias, President; Jose F. Bassora, Vice-President; Cirilo Villaverde, 2nd Vice-President; Juan Clemente Zenea, Secretary; Ramon I. Arnao, Vice-Secretary; Francisco de Paula Suarez, Treasurer; Agustin Arango, Vice-Treasurer. Other founding members: Plutarco Gonzalez, Antonio Jimenez, Luis Felipe Mantilla, Ramon Roa, Juan Martinez Hernandez, Pedro Santacilia, Fernando Rodriguez. See La Voz de America (New York), September 20, 30, 1866 for additional information on La Sociedad Republicana.

¹⁷Guerra y Sanchez, Manual, 591-592.

¹⁸Raul Roa, Aventuras, venturas y desventuras de un mambi en la lucha por la independencia de Cuba (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1970), 20-21. La Sociedad Democratica's leadership included Macias, presiding officer, Villaverde, Mantilla, P. Gonzalez, Bassora, Roa, Angel Lono, and Francisco Javier Cisneros. Juan Bellido de Luna established an affiliate in Matanza, Cuba. See also, Constitucion de la Sociedad Democratica de los Amigos de America (New York: Imprenta de S. Halleter, 1864), in Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Domingo Delmonte Manuscript Collection.

¹⁹Benjamin Vicuna Mackenna, Diez meses de mision a los Estados Unidos de Norte America como agente confidencial de Chile, 2 vols. (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta La Libertad, 1867), I, 1, 13, 284.

²⁰Vicuna Mackenna, Diez meses de mision, II, 130-131; appendix, 136-151. The last issue of La Voz published under Vicuna's editorship was June 21, 1866. See that issue for biographical information on the new editor, Macias. Also, for information on Villaverde's role in the newspaper see Portell Vila, Narciso Lopez, III, 458.

²¹For detailed information on the differences between the two groups see Portell Vila, Narciso Lopez, II, 93-127; III, 7-32. See also, Guerra y Sanchez, Manual, 508.

²²Letter, Jose L. Alfonso to Jose A. Saco, October 20, 1850, Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Coleccion Cubana (hereafter, BNJM, CC), C. M. Alfonso, Legajo 29-33, numero 91.

²³"Programa de Sanchez Iznaga," BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, Legajo 2c.

²⁴Letter, J. L. O'Sullivan to Mssers. E. Hernandez, Betancourt, Goicurua and F. de Armas, September 7, 1852, BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, Legajo 2c, numero 17.

²⁵Letters, J. L. O'Sullivan to J. Elias Hernandez, President of Committee of Conciliation, September 1852. BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, Legajo 2c, numero 13.

²⁶Letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Juan M. Macias, June 8, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Villaverde, numero 23.

²⁷See Basil Rauch, American Interest in Cuba, 1848-1855 (New York: Octagon Books, 1974), chapter 10, for a discussion of United States efforts to purchase the island. Although on many occasions members of the Junta, including El Lugareno, publicly opposed achieving separation from Spain through a sale of the island to the United States, evidence suggests that privately they accepted such a solution as a guarantee against a destructive armed rebellion.

²⁸Letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Juan M. Macias, August 8, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Villaverde, numero 26.

²⁹El Eco de Cuba (New York), November 10, 1855; Domingo Goicurua, Al pueblo de Cuba (Nueva York, Septiembre 20, 1855).

³⁰El Filibustero, December 5, 1853.

³¹El Eco de Cuba, February 1, 1856.

³²El Filibustero, February 15, 1854.

³³El Pueblo, June 19, 1855; Guerra y Sanchez, Manual, 555.

³⁴Guerra y Sanchez, Manual, 554-559; La Verdad (New Orleans) October 10, 1859.

³⁵Fernando Ortiz, ed., Contra la anexion: Jose Antonio Saco (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1974).

³⁶Cesar Garcia del Pino, "Pugna entre independentistas y anexoreformistas antes de la revolucion de Yara," Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti 3rd series, 17 (September-December 1975), 64-65. Subsequent to the 1850s, Villaverde and Macias consistently asserted that not only had they always supported absolute independence, but so had Narciso Lopez. See La Voz de America, June 21, 1866 and La Independencia (New York), March 4, 1875. In his extensive study of Lopez, Portell Vila argues the rebel leader had always favored absolute independence for Cuba, but never emphasized it publicly so as not to alienate the wealthy annexationists who provided the needed financial resources. Other Cuban historians, such as Sergio Aguirre in Eco de caminos (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1974), chapters 20 and 21, reject this view and condemn Lopez as a willing agent of the pro-slavery annexationists. However, rather than judging the separatists of this period on whether they favored annexation or independence, given the context of the times, it might be more useful to consider them in light of their positions with regard to the concept of self-determination. From this perspective, it can be argued that even annexationists supporting Cuban self-determination may be considered precursors of independentista ideology. For evidence of Arango's annexationism see his letter to his brothers in Cuba, Vidal Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68: Rafael Morales y Gonzalez (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), 191, while P. Gonzalez's position is clear in his pamphlet, The Cuban Question and American Policy, in Light of Common Sense (New York, 1869).

³⁷Annexationist sentiment is expressed in La Voz de America, August 10, December 20, 1866, February 11, 1867, while pro-independence sympathies are evident in June 11, 21, 1866.

³⁸Letter, Juan M. Macias to Plutarco Gonzalez, September 19, 1853, BNJM, CC, C. M. Anexion, numero 51.

³⁹La Voz de America, July 31, 1866.

⁴⁰El Eco de Cuba, November 10, 1855; El Filibustero, November 25, 1853.

⁴¹El Pueblo, July 20, 1855; El Cometa (New York), July 1, 1855.

⁴²La Voz de America, September 30, 1866.

⁴³La Voz de America, September 30, 1866.

⁴⁴El Mulato (New York), February 20, 1854.

- ⁴⁵El Filibustero, February 15, 1854.
- ⁴⁶El Mulato, March 11, 1854.
- ⁴⁷La Voz de America, December 31, 1867.
- ⁴⁸La Voz de America, March 10, April 11, June 21, September 20, 30, 1866; January 10, 20, 1867. Arango's letter appears in Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68, 191-192.
- ⁴⁹La Revolucion (New York), March 31, 1870.
- ⁵⁰El Eco de Cuba, June 22, 1855.
- ⁵¹La Voz de America, August 20, 1866.
- ⁵²La Voz de America, August 30, 1866.
- ⁵³Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, et al., ed., Historia de la nacion cubana, 10 vols. (Habana: Editorial Historia de la Nacion Cubana, 1952), VII, 251; La Voz de America, August 10, 1866.
- ⁵⁴La Voz de America, March 10, May 11, July 10, October 10, 1866.
- ⁵⁵La Voz de America, September 30, 1866.
- ⁵⁶Guerra y Sanchez, et al., ed., Historia de la nacion cubana, IV, 34-41. The political flyer is available in Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Domingo Delmonte Manuscript Collection.
- ⁵⁷Juan J. E. Casasus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 67-68.
- ⁵⁸Carlos Manuel de Cespedes y Quesada, Manuel de Quesada y Loynaz (Habana: Siglo XX, 1925), 8-11, 44-47; Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68, 140-143; Juan Arnao, Paginas para la historia de la isla de Cuba (Habana: Imprenta La Nueva, 1900), 179; Letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Jose Gabriel del Castillo, June 23, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 423, no. 21.

⁵⁹La Revolucion, February 8, March 15, March 31, 1870. See also, Angel Lono y Perez, Vindicacion de los patriotas cubanos mal juzgados por 'La Revolucion' de 8 de Febrero de 1870 (New York, 1870). Despite efforts since the 1870s to dismiss Lopez and his followers as a reactionary force in Cuban intellectual history, there is sufficient evidence to argue just the contrary. During the 1840s and 1850s, they clearly operated within the ideological parameters of the time; that is, many were annexationists in principle and supported only a gradual and indemnified abolition. Their activist tradition placed them in the vanguard of the ideological evolution that gave birth to the Sociedad Republicana, the most radical separatist organization of the 1860s. It is simply not accurate to place Villaverde and Alfonso, for example, within the same ideological framework. Regarding Lopez, although it was not possible to definitively characterize him as an abolitionist and independentista during 1848-1851, as Portell Vila would have us believe, had he lived it is likely he would have been a Lopista of the 1860s and not a reformist.

CHAPTER 2

TRADITIONAL SEPARATISM RESURRECTED: THE NEW YORK REVOLUTIONARY JUNTA, 1869-1870

On the evening of January 21, 1869, pro-Spanish voluntarios in Habana stormed the Villanueva Theatre where a production rumored to include sympathetic references to the Cuban rebellion was in progress. The enraged voluntarios opened fire on the audience inside the theatre and on the streets, initiating three days of terror that marked the definitive end of efforts by Spanish authorities to negotiate a solution to the insurrection begun on October 10 of the previous year. During the next six months, a mass exodus from Cuba scattered Cubans all over the Americas and Europe, including almost the entirety of the former reformist leadership. Those reformists joining the rebellion went to New York where they promptly took over direction of the revolutionary junta, becoming a prominent force in the separatist movement.¹

The political transition of these men to separatism was a slow methodical process determined by the failure of the Junta de Informacion and the subsequent reimposition of traditional Spanish authoritarian colonial policy after the fall during July 1866 of the liberal regime in Spain under Leopoldo O'Donnell. The successor conservative government, the so-called Moderados, proved hostile to

colonial reforms, and their Captain-General in Cuba, Francisco Lersundi, terminated the political concessions granted by Serrano and Dulce that gave rise to the reformist initiatives. Although the island's representatives to the Informacion returned to Cuba with promises of political and economic reforms and the gradual abolition of slavery, it soon became apparent that their work in Madrid had been discarded. New taxes were imposed, political representation in the Spanish Cortes did not materialize, and slavery continued undisturbed. In addition, the country had entered a period of economic crisis, convincing many the time had arrived for drastic action.²

During 1867 and 1868, the reformist group disintegrated as an organized force and political dissent spread across the island. Spanish intransigence prompted a rash of conspiratorial organizing in the eastern provinces during 1867, but the Habana reformist leadership did not favor such activities until the following year when it became clear that dissatisfaction was indeed rampant. During August and September 1868, a group led by Jose Morales Lemus, a prominent lawyer and reformist activist who had attended the Informacion, commissioned Francisco Javier Cisneros to travel through the interior to gauge the state of political opinion. Cisneros met with separatist conspirators in Camaguey who informed him of similar groups in Tunas, Holguin, Manzanillo and Bayamo. On returning to Habana, the envoy recommended that the western portion of the island organize as well, a suggestion accepted by Morales

Lemus and others associated with the reformist cause.³ Many Habana reformists had come to the conclusion the time was ripe to establish a secret organization in the capital city to consider the separatist alternative, but they were caught by surprise when news arrived that on October 10 the separatists in Bayamo had declared Cuban independence and initiated an armed rebellion.

Despite the reformists' flirtation with separatism during the two months prior to the Grito de Yara, they did not abandon the pursuit of a reform solution. In mid-September, an insurrection in Spain brought to power a liberal regime under General Juan Prim favoring a constitutional monarchy. Besides the prominent liberal, Prim, the new government included Serrano and Dulce, the two well known governors of Cuba whose liberalism encouraged the emergence of the reformist movement on the island. Sweeping changes were instituted in Spain, including universal manhood suffrage, freedom of the press, assembly, education, and religion, and indications appeared that the long awaited reforms in Spanish colonial policy were imminent, including action on slavery.⁴

Initially, the Habana reformists reacted in a mixed manner. Some remained skeptical of Spanish intentions while others expressed hope the liberals in Spain would act on Cuban grievances. Writing from New York where he was vacationing, the prominent Habana planter and reform leader, Miguel de Aldama, suggested to his colleague, Jose Manuel Mestre, that "la revolucion no tendra otro

resultado que conseguir un simple cambio de ministro . . . Nosotros los cubanos pagaremos los gastos de la guerra y cuando mas o menos obtendremos alguna frase melosa de Serrano o Dulce."⁵ Less skeptical, Mestre expressed confidence that if Cubans extended support to the Spanish liberals, they would reciprocate. Whatever their personal convictions regarding liberal Spanish intentions in Cuba, most prominent reformists joined in efforts to encourage the government in Madrid to alter the traditionally repressive colonial system. The Comite Republicano de la Habana appeared to agitate publicly for suffrage, freedom of the press, speech, and association, and the abolition of slavery and monopoly.⁶ It soon appeared, however, that Aldama's assessment of Spanish intentions was not far from the truth. During mid-October Mestre observed that the Spanish colonial minister had assured the Cuban conservatives and slave interests their position would not be undermined. Although the Spanish liberals had little in common ideologically with the island's slave interests, the latter group represented a strong political and economic force the new peninsular government could not easily disregard. "Si ese gobierno," wrote Mestre, "no quiere guardar conciencia en Cuba con el programa proclamado por Espana, los que no son propietarios de negros, o los que saben ser fieles a los principios del liberalismo, sabran a que atenerse respecto de nuestro conservadores, y desentendiendose de ellos buscaran la salvacion en el puerto que pueda prometersela."⁷

Finally, hoping to obtain assurances the Spanish government's liberal program would be applied to Cuba, the leading reformists, including Morales Lemus, Mestre, and Jose Antonio Echeverria, requested a meeting with Captain-General Lersundi. The new Spanish regime had not yet moved to replace the conservative Lersundi who made clear his disdain for the revolution in his homeland and opposition to the application of the liberal reforms on the island. At the highly publicized October 24 meeting with the Cubans, the Spanish governor virtually accused them of complicity with the recent rebellion in Oriente and dismissed their demands for reforms as sedition.⁸

Although the reformist leaders were in no way involved in the Cespedes uprising, their initial reaction was one of cautious interest. Their instincts dictated a continuing pursuit of a reform solution, but evidence indicates they maintained a pragmatic attitude, opening communications with the rebels, undoubtedly convinced that a limited rebellion would serve to pressure the Spanish authorities to grant reforms. Subsequent to the Lersundi meeting several reformist leaders, most notably Morales Lemus and Mestre, began actively supporting the insurgents under the umbrella of the Comite Revolucionario de la Habana. During November the Habaneros provided funds for an attempted rising in Vuelta Abajo, which was discovered and repressed, and they sent Cisneros to join the rebel

junta in New York. In December monies were sent in support of Quesada's Galvanic expedition.⁹

Seemingly, the reformists were finally committing to the rebellion, but their enthusiasm for revolution waned at the end of the year when news arrived that the liberal, Domingo Dulce, had been appointed to replace Lersundi as Captain-General. The Spanish government had decided to placate the Cuban liberals. Dulce arrived in Habana during early January, bringing with him full authority to grant freedom of the press and assembly, and promises that Cuban representatives would soon be admitted to the Cortes. Conspicuously, however, the press freedom decree prohibited the discussion of slavery and religion. Nevertheless, many Cuban liberals believed their demands were finally being granted and they established a newspaper, La Verdad, to support the new Captain General. The paper praised Dulce's previous administration in Cuba, but called on authorities to move swiftly in implementing the promised reforms before the insurrection--a legitimate and just movement according to the editorial--advanced to a point of no return. The editors warned Dulce to "tratar franca y lealmente sin engano, ni doble intencion con el gobierno de los insurrectos; y hacer encontrar a estos dentro de la nacionalidad espanola cuanto pudieran aceptar como nacion independiente ahorrando asi torrentes de sangre hermana y una lucha sacrilega." Heeding this advice, Dulce declared a general amnesty for political prisoners and all rebels who laid down their arms, and

dispatched two peace commissions to negotiate with the rebel chiefs.¹⁰ Despite considerable dissent among some members of the *Comite Revolucionario*, not at all convinced the Spanish were proceeding in good faith, the Habana rebel committee led by Morales Lemus slowed its activities to give Dulce time to implement his reforms. The Habaneros encouraged rebel organizers in Las Villas and Matanzas to postpone their risings and they held up shipments of arms to them. Morales Lemus also entered into negotiations with Spanish liberals in Cuba, hoping to arrange a coalition in support of the reformist Captain General.¹¹

Dulce, however, had arrived in Cuba too late. The insurgent leaders rejected his offers of reform, refusing to negotiate for anything less than absolute independence from Spain. Also, the pro-Spanish elements had already organized militarily and they called for unconditional repression of the insurgents in their newspaper La Voz de Cuba. Dulce's conciliatory gestures toward the insurgents enraged the voluntarios, prompting their campaign of terror against all liberal voices toward the end of January. Soon after the Villanueva Theatre incident, Aldama's palace in Habana was stormed and burned, making it clear what the reformist leaders could expect from the intransigent pro-Spanish party. Writing to Morales Lemus in New York during mid-February, Aldama characterized the reformist effort as hopeless: "Dulce pues tiene que luchar con la revolucion de Yara y con la actitud tomada por los voluntarios.

Como podra el manejarse en tan temible situacion? Como podra el salvarse de las consecuencias de una o otra. La situacion pues es muy critica."¹² Without an effective military force to counter the voluntarios, Dulce lost all authority on the island and in June the pro-Spanish leaders placed him on a ship to Spain. By February it was clear to the Cuban liberals in Habana that all hopes of obtaining effective reforms had died in the face of the intransigence of both the separatist rebels and the voluntarios, prompting a significant number to join the exodus into exile and separatist ranks.

The first of the now former reformists leaders to reach New York was Morales Lemus who arrived in late January as an official envoy of the Habana revolutionary committee. Prior to his departure from the island, however, the Habana committee, the insurgent leader, Cespedes, and the head of the New York Junta, Valiente, had agreed that upon arriving in New York, Morales Lemus would become the rebellion's official representative in exile. Interested in obtaining the support of the Habana liberal community for the insurrection, Cespedes confirmed this in mid-March when he sent Morales Lemus his credentials as "enviado extraordinario y ministro plenipotenciario" before the North American authorities, a position reaffirmed by the Cuban republic established at Guaimaro during April.¹³ During the next few months, many of Morales' reformist colleagues followed him north, most notably Aldama, Mestre and

Echeverria--the individuals who succeeded him as official representatives in exile after his death in June 1870.

The new arrivals in New York reorganized the exile community, establishing five officially recognized entities as the heart of the revolutionary effort outside of Cuba: the offices of Agent General and Diplomatic Envoy, the Junta Central Revolucionaria de Cuba y Puerto Rico, the Club Politico Cubano, and the official newspaper, La Revolucion. The Agent General undertook the responsibility of organizing the revolutionary activities, including naming agents in other Cuban communities abroad, centralizing fund raising activities, and coordinating the formation of expeditions. The Diplomatic Envoy, on the other hand, was responsible for representing the Cuban government-in-arms before the international community, but in practice, primarily before the United States government. Initially, Morales Lemus held both positions, but as Diplomatic Envoy he found it awkward to be involved in launching expeditionary forces in direct violation of North American neutrality laws. Recognizing this incompatibility, after Morales Lemus' death the Cuban government formally separated the offices, naming Aldama the Agent General and Mestre and Echeverria, diplomatic representatives.

Although the Junta Central Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico initially established itself as the authority in exile during November 1868, subsequent to Morales Lemus' arrival it became an

advisory body to the official representative, under his authority.¹⁴ During the first several months the Agent sat as the Junta's President, but in June its members were arrested in New York for violation of United States' neutrality laws. Consequently, the Agent withdrew from the Junta, naming Aldama as its presiding officer when it organized again in November--in this way, the rebellion's official representatives could not be directly implicated in future Junta activities.¹⁵ Finally, during September 1870, in his capacity as Agent General after Morales Lemus' death, Aldama dissolved the Junta Central, believing it only hindered the activities of the exile representatives. Thereafter, he and his closest associates functioned as an informal group known as the Junta Cubana.¹⁶

On reorganizing in March 1869, the Junta Central designated La Revolucion as its official mouthpiece. Established by Nestor Ponce de Leon, the former editor of the last reformist newspaper in Habana, La Verdad, the organ received a portion of its operating funds from the Junta. The editor and his associates managed the day-to-day affairs of the paper, but they clearly looked to the Junta for editorial policy. Ponce de Leon served as editor until September 1869, when he was followed by Enrique Pineyro. The following September Rafael Merchan assumed editorial responsibilities. Like Ponce de Leon, Pineyro and Merchan had supported reformism through January 1869. A distinguished and experienced journalist, Merchan co-edited the original reformist newspaper, El

Siglo, and its short-lived successor El Pais, through 1868, and then collaborated with La Verdad. In April 1870 he founded El Diario Cubano in New York, but it ceased publication shortly before he assumed the editorship of La Revolucion. On the other hand, it appears Pineyro had little journalistic experience, although he was active in literary circles in Habana and served as Morales Lemus' personal secretary in exile.¹⁷

Finally, in an effort to mobilize and involve the mass of the emigre community without expanding the Junta Central to an unmanageable size, the exile representatives encouraged the formation of the Club Politico Cubano in October 1869, which Aldama presided over as President.¹⁸ Theoretically, the club was to support the Junta and provide a forum for communication with the community in general.

By the end of 1869, the former reformists dominated the entire exile revolutionary structure, including the Junta Central and the Club Politico Cubano. On reorganizing the advisory body in March, Morales Lemus initially retained four members of the original Junta established the previous November, but by year's end it was composed entirely of Habaneros, except for one, all prominent former activists of the reform movement.¹⁹ Also, at least four of five executive officers of the Club Politico were Habaneros of the same political background.²⁰ Within a period of nine months, the leadership of the exile community changed from the traditional separatists

of New York, inspired by the Lopista revolutionary tradition, to the former reformists from Habana who brought with them a mandate from the rebel government to pursue diplomatic negotiations with the United States authorities and to seek the annexation of the island.

The new leadership in exile represented a sector of Habana's liberal socioeconomic elite who, faced with a choice between joining the insurrection or supporting the status quo on the island, opted for the former although their clear preference was peaceful reform within the Spanish empire. Some historians have suggested that as a group they were wealthy and even after February 1869 not wholly committed to the separatist cause and the abolition of slavery.²¹ In fact, however, they were primarily liberal, middle-class professionals--lawyers, physicians, merchants, professors, entrepreneurs, journalists, and bureaucrats--though closely associated with the island's established and wealthy classes. Indeed, these professionals provided their services to the socioeconomic elite, and, on that basis, enjoyed a great deal of social and political prestige and influence, but they were a socioeconomic group distinct from the large landowners and slaveholders; they were "La gente liberal."²²

There were important exceptions, however. The exile leadership in New York did include a group of very wealthy individuals who broke ranks with the majority of Habana's socioeconomic elite to openly join the rebellion. Among the propertied, with

slaves, were Domingo and Miguel de Aldama, Jose and Antonio Mora, Federico Galvez, Ramon Fernandez Criado, and Jose G. Angarica. By far the wealthiest were the Aldamas who controlled four ingenios, three potreros (pastures or ranches), 1037 slaves, and 544 Chinese contract laborers. Together the others listed above owned seven ingenios, three additional rural holdings, 1,246 slaves and 684 contract workers from China. Others with rural holdings but no slaves included Miguel Embil, Carlos del Castillo and Francisco Valdez Mendoza, with nine holdings ranging from pastures and ranches to ingenios.

Interestingly, however, a greater portion of the New York exiles' wealth was in the form of stocks in the island's financial institutions, railroads, shipping lines and warehouses. Although these assets were associated with the sugar industry, their interests were not directly in slave property; a fact that no doubt made them more flexible on the slave question. Again, the Aldamas were the wealthiest, with stock values in excess of \$840,000, while those with holdings of more than \$100,000 included Fernandez Criado (\$278,500), Francisco Fesser (\$272,600), Carlos del Castillo (\$121,600), Morales Lemus (\$119,000), and Leonardo Delmonte (\$105,000). In addition, all the individuals mentioned above owned some forty-five urban dwellings, mostly in the Habana area.²³

Even among the wealthy in New York, then, excepting the Aldamas, the Moras, and Fernandez Criado, their assets were not

dominated by slave property. The New York emigres only controlled some 2,300 of the approximately 300,000 slaves on the island. Accordingly, from the standpoint of the Cuban liberals in New York, since reformism was no longer an option, the sooner Spanish rule was terminated and slavery abolished, the more quickly they could establish a stable, laissez-faire economic system in which they would figure as the most dynamic sector.

Traditionally, these Cuban liberals had feared the consequences of a long drawn-out civil conflict that could threaten their position and possibly unleash slave rebellions. After years of dedication to seeking an acceptable accommodation with their Spanish rulers, however, they finally despaired and threw their support to separatism--a decision, it should be noted, not embraced by all the reform leaders. The Conde de Pozos Dulce and Nicolas Azcarate, for example, condemned the insurrection and continued their quest for changes in Spanish colonial policy in Paris and Madrid respectively. What prompted the New York reformist exiles to embrace the insurrectionary route, an option they had for years characterized as certain ruin for Cuba? Their analysis of the situation was quite different from that of those reformists who either condemned the rebellion or simply slipped off to Paris and Madrid to await developments. The reform leaders joining Cespedes indeed viewed the insurrection as compatible with their own political and economic goals, once reformism had been eliminated as a viable option. Specifically, the

reformers shared the rebellion's initial positions on slavery, annexation, and diplomacy, and viewed favorably Cespedes' willingness to give them a prominent place in the rebel camp.

As we have seen, as far back as the annexationist period, Cuban liberals had traditionally placed political and economic matters, that is, political representation, administrative reforms and reduction of taxes and tariffs, above the "social question" on their agenda for change, although in principle they opposed slavery and hoped for its eventual abolition. Interested in obtaining the conservative slave interests' support for their political and economic reforms, liberals tended to deemphasize the slave issue, and even at the Junta de Informacion only took a public stand favoring gradual emancipation with indemnification to counter the radical abolitionist position taken by the Puerto Rican delegates.²⁴ The rise of liberalism in Spain and the outbreak of the October 10 revolt in Cuba, however, drove a wedge into this long-standing political coalition. Fearing the Spanish government intended a radical abolition, the conservative slaveholders took a firm stand with Lersundi against all reforms, alienating the liberals, who concluded their coalition with the conservatives was at an end.²⁵ Still driven by their primary concern for political change and free-trade economics, the liberals shifted their support to the separatist cause, well aware this could lead to a radical emancipation rather than the gradual process they wanted, but, representative of

an emerging financial and capitalist elite with the bulk of their assets not directly in slave property, they were willing to take the risk.

To their satisfaction, Cespedes' initial pronouncements on slavery were cautious. The rebel chieftain's first manifesto on October 10 stated only that "We desire a gradual and indemnified abolition of slavery," a position reaffirmed in a December proclamation that, while stating slavery was incompatible with the revolution, added that the issue would be confronted and dealt with upon the attainment of independence. The statement also recognized the principle of indemnification and ruled out the confiscation of slave property for those supporting the rebellion. This policy, of course, was perfectly acceptable to the Habana liberals who had long called for such a program. Also, Cespedes' pronouncements gave the rebellion a generally moderate tone, a factor not likely overlooked by the wavering reformists.²⁶

Soon after the reformists embraced the rebellion, however, a more radical position on the slave question emerged. The Cuban constitution written at Guaimaro in April 1869 stated simply that all Cubans were free, and although the legislative chamber subsequently enacted labor laws to control the emancipation process, in practice the measures were unworkable. In effect, a radical abolition had been declared, with no provisions for indemnification. Nevertheless, this radicalization of the slavery policy did not

alienate the former reformists now in control of the exile rebel effort. In fact, the New York Junta expressed strong support for the Cuban constitution, and even went so far as to reject the concepts of indemnification and labor legislation. Once in New York, involved in the diplomatic maneuvering to attain support for their cause, the former reformists recognized the importance of taking a strongly abolitionist position. They were sensitive to the criticisms of abolitionist societies which viewed the rebels' initial stance on slavery as no more progressive than the Spaniards'. They knew that a forthright abolitionist policy would be needed to attain the support of the North American public and government.²⁷

During 1870, La Revolucion carried on a propaganda campaign in defense of the Cuban revolution's slavery policies, prompted by the liberal Spanish regime's efforts to enact emancipation legislation. Faced with a strong opposition from Cuban slaveholders, however, only a modest plan known as the Moret Law cleared the Spanish Cortes. Its primary article was a free-birth provision declaring all Negroes born on Spanish soil free, but a tutelage system leaving them in the hands of the planters until age eighteen diluted even that provision. For all practical purposes slavery as an institution remained unchanged in Cuba.²⁸ La Revolucion ridiculed the law, pointing out that in free Cuba slavery no longer existed. Virtually no one in the exile centers opposed the revolution's policy on slavery, but some called for indemnification and

effective labor legislation to protect against the collapse of the Cuban economy once the Spaniards were evicted; a view advanced by a group in New Orleans whose primary political purpose was to combat annexationist ideology. After thoroughly denouncing slavery as "la mancha mas asquerosa que tendra todavia que lavar much tiempo la humanidad," one of their political pamphlets contined: "El ser que acaba de soltar la cadena del esclavo queda indeciso, desconfiado, temeroso: la primera idea que ilumina su frente es la de huir del lugar que has sido testigo de su pasada ignomina. Es preciso detenerlo para que reciba el bautismo de la civilizacion." For the slaves' own good, argued the New Orleans group, labor legislation should be enacted. "No nos hagamos ilusiones," contined the argument, "la emancipacion completa del hombre llega en el momento en que adquiere la doble masculinidad de fuerza bruta y la fuerza intelectual, es decir, cuando puede conducirse sin ayuda y posee el conocimiento pleno de sus deberes y de sus derechos. Nadie nace libre, todos nacemos para la libertad." In addition, the pamphlet called for indemnification. To ensure the absolute independence of Cuba, a viable economy had to be maintained and this was only possible by providing working capital to the planters who were about to lose their labor force. In essence, the author suggested, Cuba could achieve absolute independence only if social chaos and economic collapse were avoided; otherwise annexation would be all but unavoidable. On a more philosophical note, the inviolability of

property rights was also raised, and only through indemnification could this basic liberal tenet be respected.²⁹

In an editorial on June 4, La Revolucion took issue with the New Orleans group. Regarding indemnification, the newspaper suggested the legitimate need for capital could be provided by financial institutions, and compensation of the former slaveholders was clearly not a requirement for ensuring a viable economy. It also noted that defending indemnification on the basis of inviolability of property rights was irrelevant in this case since by definition human beings were not property. Furthermore, the article attacked the concept of labor legislation, arguing that despots have always utilized the reasoning of enslaving for the enslaved's own good, sarcastically noting:

Los negros de Cuba, por consiguiente, no merecen su completa emancipacion sino despues que se haya legislado sobre el trabajo; y si su estado actual de ignorancia no es imputable a ellos mismos sino a otros, ellos sufriran el castigo y los otros recibiran el premio. Basta presentar el argumento para destruirlo.³⁰

Thus, whatever their personal convictions prior to the revolution, it is clear that by 1870 the representatives of the Cuban government-in-arms in exile had embraced unconditional emancipation of the slaves. Even Aldama, the largest slaveholder among the exiles in New York, officially freed his slaves, an action formalized in Paris during 1872.³¹

Besides adopting radical abolition to obtain international support for their cause, the members of the New York Junta viewed it

as the price for their new political creed, annexation of Cuba to the United States. With a Republican-dominated United States Congress and a new chief executive who had led the Union forces against the Confederacy, it was evident emancipation of the slaves in Cuba would be a prerequisite to any serious consideration of annexation. Soon after the outbreak of the revolution rebel leaders on the island publicly expressed an interest in annexationism. Although independentista thought had gained substantial support during the 1860s, annexation continued to dominate among the island's creole elite. Some were annexationist by conviction, while others simply viewed Cuba's incorporation into the United States as the only feasible alternative to Spanish rule. Many preferred the creation of a sovereign Cuban state, but believed that only a North American intervention could ensure Spain's defeat. Accordingly, annexation was held out as the carrot to encourage the support of the United States. Writing from Cuba in December 1868, a New York Times correspondent observed, "for annexation there is a strong party and for independence another party stands up in Cuba; but free and sincere discussion of the subject would probably end up by unifying both parties upon annexation." The previous month the New York Tribune had published a report by the Habana Revolutionary Junta which concluded, "we want no reforms. Our cry is 'Independence of Spain, and annexation to the United States'."³² Also, during November the predominantly annexationist Camagueyanos joined the rebellion,

strengthening this political perspective in revolutionary ranks. At Guaimaro, in April 1869, the newly established Cuban legislative chamber issued a proclamation to the United States government calling for the island's incorporation into the North American republic, a position officially intimated as early as October of the previous year in Cespedes' first message to President Johnson in which he wrote, "los pueblos de America estan llamados a formar una sola nacion y a ser la admiracion y el asombro del mundo entero."³³

If the rebel leadership in Cuba espoused support for annexation, it is not surprising that a portion of the exile community should be of the same tendency, especially given its long tradition among many of these emigre Cubans. Although the pro-slavery rational had obviously disappeared, many continued to fear slave rebellions in the event of a prolonged conflict on the island. A political pamphlet approved by the Junta Central in New York appeared in 1869 suggesting "the passions which revolutions let loose would find their vent, probably, in a war of races and factions, and we might see the horrors of San Domingo revived."³⁴ It called for a quick end to the rebellion through North American intervention and annexation. Another propaganda sheet observed, "en su situacion comprometida entre las dos razas que la dividen, negra y blanca; . . . quien no ve, con estas circunstancias, hoy tan alarmantes, la ley de la necesidad, que la impele a buscar en los

Estados Unidos una fuerza tutelar inmediata." Many believed that a race war could be averted only by joining the United States.

Other arguments were advanced as well. The allusions made during the 1850s alleging the inevitability of political and economic chaos in an independent Cuba were again repeated after October 10, 1868, and sentiments revealing a deep resentment toward Hispanic sociocultural traditions were voiced. Praising the Protestant Reformation and ridiculing southern Europe's "servidumbre fanatica, [y] adoracion estúpida al Papa," one propagandist suggested, "las naciones meridionales . . . se quedaron fijos, encadenados al sistema absurdo, despotico y corrompido de la corte romana. Tal es el cuadro tan diferente que ofrecen al mundo civilizado las costumbres, la vida social y politica de Italia, Espana, Portugal y de los pueblos hispano-americanos, que laboran todos en la misma cuita." An even more fanatical piece denounced what it considered Spain's literary deficiencies: "Languages are but conversational signs or sounds used for the purpose of mutual intercourse, and the Spaniards in particular have been striving to obliterate their own, since they produce no work inciting study." Annexationist tracts also rejected the independentista concern for preserving Cuba's nationality and "Latin race," suggesting such concepts were irrelevant. Cubans never had a nationality, argued one writer, "because Cuba was not in the family of nations. They must, therefore, become Americans, abandoning their provincialism as did the states now forming this

Republic." The same propagandist who was concerned about the backwardness of southern Europe even denied the existence of the "Latin race," suggesting it was merely a conglomeration of Romans, Visigoths, Moors, Negroes and Jews: "No existe, pues, tal raza latina." This anti-Spanish, anti-clerical sentiment revealed a deeply ingrained hostility against the Latin heritage, revealing why annexation and all it implied for the island's cultural integrity was attractive to many Cuban rebels.³⁵

The four key figures of the New York Junta, Morales Lemus, Aldama, Echeverria, and Mestre were all known for their annexationism. The first three had been prominent in the annexationist Club de la Habana during the 1850s, and after the defeat of reformism they returned to this political alternative. Their vigorous reformist activities, however, indicate that these individuals did not share the deep anti-Hispanic sentiments revealed by some annexationist propagandists; rather, their concern was with ensuring political and socioeconomic stability in Cuba once the Spanish departed.

The reemergence of annexationism among many reformists became apparent soon after the failure of the Junta de Informacion. During 1867, two aides of General Grant passing through Habana on their way to Mexico were invited to a much publicized dinner by Aldama and others, where the Cubans offered toasts to Grant's victory over the Confederacy and made clear references to their interest in having Cuba annexed to the United States. Aldama greatly

admired the United States, as he expressed in a letter to Mestre which characterized the country as "lo mas grande que dios ha creado." Once definitely in the separatist camp, Aldama became increasingly insistent on annexationism as he observed the exile communities fall victim to bitter political factionalization. He apparently came to share the traditional annexationist argument that characterized Latin Americans as incapable of democratic and constitutional self-rule.³⁶ Only by joining the United States, therefore, could political stability in Cuba be assured.

Mestre's thoughts also turned to annexationism during 1867. Writing to his reformist colleague, Azcarate, during October, he reported, "El partido reformista dejo de existir . . . Y si me preguntas ahora, Que piensan los Cubanos? Te dire que nada. Quizas piensen de nuevo en una anexion que acabando de una vez con el cancer de la esclavitud, nos ponga en el verdadero camino de la libertad." The political dissensions in the rebel camp also concerned Mestre. In June 1870, he wrote another friend, "lo mas sensible es que por Cuba Libre (segun parece tambien) cunden las disenciones y rivalidades. Cada dia me corrobo mas y mas en mi anexionismo; cada dia me penetro mas de que la unica solucion practica y conveniente para nosotros es la anexion de Cuba a los Estados Unidos, y cuanto antes mejor."³⁷

Although essentially annexationist, the Junta Central understood that considerable sentiment existed for an independent

republic, prompting the exile leaders to adopt an official position they hoped would avert divisive political debates over the future status of the island. Since the mid-1860s, the emigre communities had agreed that the immediate goal of any revolutionary effort was separation from Spain, and only once established as an independent entity would the nation consider annexation. The New York Junta reasserted this position, and its organ La Revolucion made it clear it would not enter into debates concerning the island's political future. The question of the day was exclusively separatism, and this continued to be the Junta's policy throughout the Ten Years War. During 1876, for example, the Junta's new organ, La Verdad, reasserted the need to delay discussion of divisive issues, noting: "unidos no hay peligro. Desunidos, la derrota seria cuestion de horas."³⁸

Nevertheless, either unwittingly or by design, La Revolucion and the Junta gained an image as sympathetic to annexationism. Never in the context of an editorial, but in numerous articles the newspaper gave considerable publicity to annexationist sentiment--too often, as far as the supporters of independence were concerned. In May 1869, the paper published a letter from Cuban insurgent leaders Donato Marmol and Felix Figueredo who concluded their correspondence in the following way:

The Revolution, which five months ago broke out at Yara, . . . is . . . the unanimous expression of all native Cubans who . . . are gathering under the banner of independence with the object of forming, perhaps at no distant day, a free state--and this is the most popular opinion--of the great American Republic.³⁹

In April the newspaper reprinted the preface of a widely circulated political pamphlet which, in part, stated: "Cuba, freely annexed will form one or two states of the confederation and will retain her language, religion and laws. She knows that the United States will early fund 500 million francs to reimburse the slave owners, and that annexation will bring to her independence and wealth."⁴⁰ Again, in August, rather than simply ignoring an anti-annexationist article appearing in the New York Sun, the paper chose to challenge its contention that little support existed in Cuba for annexation, simultaneously reminding its readers that discussion of the issue was divisive and should be left for another time.⁴¹ Later in the year the Junta gave its approval to another political pamphlet (cited earlier) asserting that annexation of Cuba to the United States was inevitable in the long run: "The political position of the island geographically considered and the interests of both Cubans and the United States must lead to that. In every point of view, then, this is an American question."⁴² Although directed at a North American audience, the pamphlet added to the perception that the Junta was openly annexationist and clearly, it violated the Junta's own call not to raise the issue. As one prominent critic

noted, the Junta represented a party "que trabajara por la anexion de la isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos de America."⁴³

The final element operating to attract reformists into the separatist camp after October 1868 was the recognition that Cespedes intended to seek North American involvement. Despite the reformists' fears of the consequences of armed revolt, they were willing to risk civil conflict provided major efforts were undertaken to ensure United States aid and eventual intervention. By January 1869, Cespedes had already fired off two notes to the Johnson administration requesting a recognition of belligerency status for the revolution and intimating he viewed annexation with favor. Now he arranged for the diplomatically experienced Morales Lemus to become his government's official envoy in the United States.

Many Cubans, meanwhile, had been encouraged by Grant's election and expansionist tendencies. They knew the new North American chief executive was not well disposed toward the European powers, including Spain, for their recognition of the Confederacy and interference in American affairs during the Civil War. By January, when Morales Lemus and others finally committed themselves to the insurrection, members of the United States Congress had already introduced bills calling for recognition of Cuban belligerency and the island's annexation to the United States. Moreover, between the outbreak of the revolt and the end of the year, public manifestations of support for the insurgents had become common,

especially in New York where the Junta had commenced its work. There is little doubt the former reformists expected the United States to recognize Cuban belligerency in short order, which would be followed by a quick end to the rebellion and annexation.⁴⁴ During August 1869, a prominent Cuban reformist leader in Madrid, Nicolas Azcarate, made efforts to persuade Morales Lemus to accept Spanish offers of autonomy for Cuba within the Spanish empire, but the Cuban envoy made it clear nothing less than the island's separation from Spain was now acceptable, and he dedicated the final year of his life to this end.⁴⁵

On arriving in New York, Morales Lemus immediately initiated the task of presenting the Cuban case and requesting recognition of belligerency from the newly inaugurated Grant Administration. During March, on separate occasions, the Cuban diplomat met informally with the President and the Secretary of State Hamilton Fish. Although Grant did not receive the Cuban in his capacity as official representative of the Cuban republic, he expressed strong sympathies for the insurgents' plight; but Fish proved wholly unsympathetic, an attitude that eventually prevailed in the Grant Administration.

Very early Morales Lemus recognized the necessity of establishing a viable and universally accepted insurgent government in order to obtain credibility with North American authorities. Surprised by the unexpected rising in Oriente, the rebel groups in

Camaguey, Las Villas, and Matanzas had not followed suit immediately. Not only did the conspirators in Camaguey resent the unilateral action by Cespedes, but they were dismayed by his initially conservative declarations, including his self-designation as Captain-General and his failure to declare an immediate abolition of slavery. The island's intense regionalism likewise played a part in Camaguey's refusal to submit to Cespedes' authority once it had joined the insurrection in November. Between late 1868 and March of the following year the two provinces operated independently of each other despite efforts to unify them. From his first contacts with the insurgents, Morales Lemus had urged all to recognize Cespedes as the primary authority, and once in exile he wrote both camps pointing out the urgency of establishing a united revolutionary movement. Finally the rebels put aside many of their differences, and in April 1869 at Guaimaro representatives from Oriente, Camaguey, Las Villas, and Occidente met, wrote a constitution, and established a revolutionary government. Dominated by youthful liberals from Camaguey, Las Villas, and Habana, the constitutional assembly produced a governing document placing ultimate political authority in the hands of a legislative chamber. It elected Cespedes President of the republic and reaffirmed Morales Lemus' position in exile. The Diplomatic Envoy could now point to the constitutionally established Cuban republic as the source of his authority.

Although Morales Lemus' initial intention was simply to obtain recognition of belligerency status for the republic, considering this the first step toward eventual North American intervention, Secretary of State Fish approached the Cuban envoy with an alternative strategy. Interested in avoiding an immediate recognition of the Cuban republic, an initiative being forcefully advocated to the President by Secretary of War John Rawlins, Fish suggested the United States attempt a mediation between the Cubans and Spain. Fish's proposal included Spanish recognition of Cuban independence in return for a Cuban indemnity to Spain of not more than a hundred million dollars (to be guaranteed by the United States), recognition by all of the abolition of slavery, and a complete armistice during negotiations. Initially reluctant, Morales Lemus was won over to the negotiation by Fish's verbal assertion that should the Spanish fail to accept the terms belligerency status would be forthcoming. Several Cubans working closely with the Junta objected to the proposed indemnity, but Morales Lemus consented, apparently with the approval of the Cuban government-in-arms. In the meantime, however, the Cubans' greatest advocate in Grant's cabinet, Secretary Rawlins, died, leaving Fish to dominate the scene.

The negotiations between Fish and the Spanish proceeded throughout the summer of 1869. Although the Spanish government initially expressed some interest in the mediation, it soon became clear that it was in no position to grant Cuba independence. Many

Spaniards viewed the North American involvement as simply a ploy to eventually annex Cuba, but, in addition, politically powerful Spanish commercial and Cuban slave interests forcefully opposed any relinquishment of the island by Spain. In mid-September the Spanish made clear that the terms were unacceptable and demanded the Cubans lay down their arms before negotiations were initiated, a position rejected by the rebels. Despite his previous assertion to the Cuban envoy, Fish then failed to recommend recognition of the Cuban republic to the President, who by this time had reassessed his sympathies for the rebel cause in light of other United States foreign policy considerations. Grant clarified his attitude toward the rebellion in his presidential message to Congress on December 6, where he indicated the United States would not interfere in the problems between Spain and her colonies but would uphold the nation's neutrality laws being consistently violated by Cuban emigres. Recognizing he had been the victim of Fish's misrepresentations regarding United States policy, the Cuban Diplomatic Envoy retired to New York leaving other members of the Junta in Washington, D.C. to continue lobbying in the halls of Congress where substantial support for the Cuban cause still existed. On the same day of Grant's message, Morales Lemus wrote President Cespedes informing him of the results of the negotiations and the North American government's "mala fe."⁴⁶

While Morales Lemus engaged in these diplomatic maneuverings, the Junta Central worked to dispatch expeditionary forces

to Cuba, an activity of great concern to the United States government. After launching the Galvanic under Quesada's command in December 1868, the Junta named Francisco J. Cisneros to take charge of the next project. The Mary Lowell sailed out of New York in January for the Bahamas, where it waited for a second force from Jacksonville in the Henry Burden. Unfortunately for the rebels, the poor condition of the vessels, British interference in Bahamian waters, and a bold Spanish entry into British waters to capture the Mary Lowell ended the venture. Not discouraged, the Junta commissioned Cisneros to organize another expedition in April. The Perit left for Cuba during May with 250 men, arms and munitions, landing on the northern coast of Oriente a week later. For the rest of 1869 and during 1870, expedition after expedition formed, but most were foiled either by North American authorities or by British officials patrolling Bahamian waters through which the expeditions had to pass.⁴⁷ Whether the failures reflected a deficiency on the part of the Junta and the expeditions' organizers or demonstrated the effectiveness of those combatting the activities both in the United States and the British possessions is difficult to establish, but the consistent inability of the Junta to land significant expeditions in Cuba, combined with the diplomatic failures, left it open to considerable criticism from its political enemies.

Although the first round of negotiations failed in obtaining belligerency status for the revolt or achieving a mediated

settlement, the Junta continued to place its faith in diplomacy as the most likely means by which Cuba would attain its freedom from Spain. Like the liberal annexationists of the New York and Habana separatist clubs of the 1840s and 1850s, Morales Lemus, Aldama, Mestre, Echeverria, and others associated with the Junta preferred to avoid an extensive civil conflict in Cuba. They accordingly resurrected the diplomatic strategy discarded by the separatists of the Sociedad Republicana during the 1860s. Initially it was a policy formulated and directed by the rebel government on the island, which was confident of obtaining quick recognition from the United States. However, as it became evident that the North American authorities were unwilling to become directly involved, many in Cuba began to listen to a small group in the emigre centers who were raising their voices against the Junta's commitment to what they considered the traditional separatism of mid-century based on negotiations and annexation. The Junta's political program was in direct conflict with the radicalized separatist ideology formulated during the decade after 1855--a program that held Habana's socio-economic elite directly responsible for the separatist failures of the past. To the Junta's critics, a return to those policies was unacceptable.

Notes

¹Cuban historiography fails to offer a clear vision of the ideological perspectives the reformist leadership carried with them into the separatist rebellion, an essential undertaking for understanding why they failed to establish themselves as credible leaders in the exile communities during the 1870s. Existing studies either glorify them as patriots for their incessant diplomatic activities as representatives of the Cuban republic in the United States, dismissing their critics as disruptive, egotistical elements whose activities were unpatriotic, or vilify the reformists as agents of Cuba's slave interests basically out of step with the revolution's ideals. No study, however, offers a detailed examination of their political program, its relation to the rebellion, and its reception by the emigre centers. Portell Vila's, Historia de Cuba, 4 vols. (Habana: J. Monetro, 1938-1941), II, contains an excellent in-depth examination of the Junta's diplomatic activities, as do several other works included in footnote 46 of this chapter. These works, however, fail to consider the Junta's ideological make up and political program. On the other hand, the body of literature condemning the Junta as a reactionary element bases its interpretations on underdocumented socioeconomic assumptions. Raul Cepero Bonilla's Azucar y abolicion: Apuntes para una historia critica de abolicionismo (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1971), is the basic source for this view. Cepero argues that, as members of Habana's socioeconomic elite, the Junta represented a reactionary force in the revolution whose aim was to minimize the damage to its economic interests through preservation of its slave property if possible. Little evidence for this is offered, as Cepero merely assumes the Junta's members had no economic or political interest in supporting the abolition of slavery in Cuba. This chapter attempts to explain why many reformists joined the insurrection and examines their ideological perspectives and program once in charge of the New York Junta during 1869 and 1870 in order to clarify their role in the separatist cause.

²For information on economic conditions in Cuba just prior to the outbreak of the Ten Years War, see Benito A. Besada, "Antecedentes economicos de la Guerra de los Diez Anos," Vida Universitaria, 19 (September-December 1968).

³For biographical information on Morales Lemus and Cisneros see the following: Enrique Pineyro, Morales Lemus y la revolucion de Cuba (New York: M. M. Zarzamendi, 1871); Alfredo Bateman, Francisco Javier Cisneros (Bogota: Editorial Kelly, 1970); and, Hernan Horna, "Francisco Javier Cisneros: A Pioneer in Transportation and Economic Development in Colombia," Vanderbilt University, M. A. Thesis, 1970.

⁴Arthur F. Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1866 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 215-217.

⁵Letter, Miguel de Aldama to Jose Manuel Mestre, October 1, 1868, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Jose Ignacio Rodriguez Collection (hereafter, LC, JIR), Box 134.

⁶Jose Ignacio Rodriguez, La vida del Doctor Jose Manuel Mestre (Habana: Avisador Comercial, 1909), 98; Portel Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 208-209; New York Herald, October 30, 1868; New York Tribune, November 28, 1868. A copy of the Habana Republican Committee's proclamation is contained in National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Despatches From United States Consuls in Havana, 1783-1906," 133 microfilm reels, reel 51, October, 1868.

⁷Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery, 227-228; Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 99-100.

⁸Accounts of this meeting may be found in Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, Manual de historia de Cuba, desde su descubrimiento hasta 1868 (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Socliaes, 1971), 690-692; Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 112-114.

⁹Although the Comite Revolucionario was apparently headed by Morales Lemus and other reformists, long-time separatists such as F. J. Cisneros and Agustin Santa Rosa cooperated as well. References to the Comite's activities during October-December 1868 may be found in the following sources: New York Tribune, November 6, 12, 24, 30, 1868; Francisco Javier Cisneros, La verdad historica sobre los sucesos de Cuba (New York, 1871); Vidal Morales y Morales, Hombrea del 68: Rafael Morales y Gonzalez (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), 70-90; Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 114-123; Regarding monies sent to New York from Habana see "Actas del primer comite de New York, 25 Noviembre 1868 - 20 Febrero 1869," Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Coleccion Cubana (hereafter, BNJM, CC), C. M. Ponce, numero 104.

¹⁰Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, 2 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), I, 206-209; A copy of the first issue of La Verdad is included in National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Despatches From United States Consuls," reel 52, January 1869.

¹¹Cepero Bonilla, Azúcar y abolición, 214-217; Sergio Aquirre, Ecós de caminos (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1974), 190-192; Juan Bellido de Luna, Cuestión individual (New York, January 8, 1870); Juan Bellido de Luna, "La historia negra," La independencia (New York), April 5, 1876; "Diario de Jose Gabriel del Castillo," March 5, 1871, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 426, numero 15. This diary entry states: "Dijo Aguero . . . que ha oído a Juan Bellido de Luna decir, en publico, que a fines de 1868 fue J. M. Mestre a Matanzas, y que a el, otros muchos, les dijo 'en nombre de Carlos Manuel de Cespedes', que este ordenaba que el Departamento Occidental 'no se moviese'--y que Mestre impidio la sublevacion de Matanzas." See also, Resoluciones celebradas en casa del Marques de Campo Florido, los dias 13 y 18 de Enero de 1869 (Habana, Febrero 1, 1869).

¹²Letter, Miguel de Aldama to Jose Morales Lemus, February 18, 1869, BNJM, CC, C.M. Aldama, numero 1.

¹³La Revolucion (New York), September 24, 1870; Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, I, 129; Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 241-243. The Junta's opponents in exile charged that Morales Lemus usurped authority in New York, but evidence suggests Cespedes indeed gave Morales Lemus full authority to take command in exile. The critics' position is stated in Cirilo Villaverde, "La revolucion de Cuba visto desde New York" (New York, 1869), reprinted in Comision Nacional Cubana de la UNESCO, Cuba en la UNESCO: Homenaje a Cirilo Villaverde (Habana, 1964), 27-28.

¹⁴La Revolucion, September 18, 1870. Also, the name was changed from Junta Republicana to Junta Revolucionaria.

¹⁵La Revolucion, November 11, 1869; Juan J. E. Casaus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 81.

¹⁶Eladio Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera y la revolucion de Cuba de 1868, 2 vols. (Habana: El Avisador Comercial, 1909), I, 68.

¹⁷For additional information on the newspaper's editors see the following sources: Rafael M. Merchan, Patria y cultura (Habana: Ministerio de Educacion, Direccion de Cultura, 1948); Nemesio Lavie Vera, La personalidad de Rafael Maria Merchan (Habana: Siglo XX, 1951); Jose Alvarez Conde, Nestor Ponce de Leon (Habana: Siglo XX, 1952). A study of Pineyro is included in Manuel Sanguily y Garritte, Obras de Manuel Sanguily, 7 vols. (Habana: A. Dortbecker, 1925-), IV.

¹⁸La Revolucion, October 28, 30, November 9, 25, 1869.

¹⁹Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68, 149; Casaaus, La emigracion cubana, 94.

Junta Central Revolucionaria de Cuba y Puerto Rico, March 1869

Pres. Jose Morales Lemua (Former reformist/Habana)
 V-Pres. Hilario Cisneroa (Former reformist/Habana)
 2-V-Pres. Agustin Arango (Soc. Rep./NY, Nov. 1868)
 Treas. Plutarco Gonzalez (Soc. Rep./NY, Nov. 1868)
 V-Treas. Jose Valiente (Cespedes' envoy/NY, Nov. 1868)
 Sec. Jose Bassora (Soc. Rep./NY, Nov. 1868)
 V-Sec. Francisco Fesser (Former reformist/Habana)

Junta Central Revolucionaria de Cuba y Puerto Rico, November 1869

Pres. Miguel Aldama (Former reformist/Habana)
 V-Pres. Hilario Cisneros (Former reformist/Habana)
 Treas. Carlos del Castillo (Former reformist/Habana)
 Sec. Jose M. Mestre (Former reformist/Habana)
 Vocales Manuel Marques Streling (Former reformist/Nuevitas)
 Jose Maria Mora (Former reformist/Habana)
 Francisco Fesser (Former reformist/Habana)
 Agent General and Diplomatic Envoy -
 Jose Morales Lemus (Former reformist/Habana)

²⁰La Revolucion, October 28, November 25, 1869. The Club Politico Cubano's executive officers were as follows:

Pres. Miguel Aldama (Former reformist/Habana)
 V-Pres. Miguel Cantero (?/Las Villas)
 Treas. Leonardo Delmonte (Former reformist/Habana)
 Sec. Jose Maria Cespedes (Former reformist/Habana)
 V-Sec. Francisco Valdez Mendoza (Former reformist/Habana)

A membership list of the club is included in La Revolucion, February 21, 1870.

²¹See Cepero Bonilla, Azucar y abolicion, chapters 13-17.

²²Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 101.

²³Cuba, Gobierno y Capitanía General, Datos y noticias oficiales referentes a los bienes mandados embargar en la isla de Cuba por disposicion del gobierno superior politico (Habana: Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitanía General, 1870). This document is a summary of properties embargoed by the Spanish authorities through August 1869 and includes most of the exile activists. According to the report, of the 1200 individuals embargoed, only 175, including 15 in New York, were listed as possessing properties of sufficient value to confiscate. In addition to the individuals cited in the text, the following were included in the report:

Ignacio Alfaro	- \$1,000 stocks 2 urban dwellings
Nestor Ponce de Leon	- \$1,013 stocks 4 urban dwellings
Antonio Fernandez Bramosio	- \$22,987 stocks 3 urban dwellings
Jose M. Mestre	- \$36,182 stocks 3 urban dwellings
Manuel Casanova	- Assets not embargoed because held in partnership. Villaverde married into the Casanova family during the early 1860s.

²⁴Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery, 189-214.

²⁵Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 99-101.

²⁶Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery, 225.

²⁷Anti-Slavery Reporter (London), April 1869. North American proposals on the Cuban question consistently included the abolition of slavery. See U.S. Department of State, Correspondence of the Department of State in Relation to the Emancipation of Slaves in Cuba, and Accompanying Papers Transmitted to the Senate in Obedience to a Resolution (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870); Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, I, 371; Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 74-75. This study of Mestre reveals he was staunchly anti-slavery for many years, but he believed that political realities in Cuba required a moderate approach to the slave question.

²⁸Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery, 239-254; La Revolucion, June 25, July 14, 28, 1870.

²⁹La Propaganda Politica, A los habitantes de Cuba. La Indemnizacion, (New Orleans, June 15, 1870).

³⁰La Revolucion, July 4, 1870.

³¹La Revolucion de Cuba, February 8, 1873; Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 74.

³²New York Times, December 25, 1868; New York Tribune, November 12, 1868.

³³Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, I, 112; Luis Marino Perez, Biografia de Miguel Jeronimo Gutierrez (Habana: Editorial Hercules, 1957).

³⁴Plutarco Gonzalez, The Cuban Question and American Policy, In Light of Common Sense (New York, 1869), 5, 9. Minutes of the meetings of the Cuban Junta indicates it provided funds to print the pamphlet (LC, JIR, Box 145).

³⁵Un Habanero, Probable y definitivo porvenir de la isla de Cuba (Cayo Hueso, August 1, 1870); New York Times, December 25, 1868.

³⁶Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68, 102; Letter, Miguel de Aldama to Jose M. Mestre, August 19, 1868, LC, JIR, Box 143; Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, I, 134. This source also indicates Echeverria and Hilario Cisneros supported annexation. For additional information on Aldama see, Antonio Alvarez Pedroso, Miguel de Aldama (Habana: Siglo XX, 1948) and Joaquin Llaverias, Miguel Aldama o la dignidad patriotica (Habana: Molina y Cia., 1937).

³⁷Rodriguez, La vida de Mestre, 96-97, 125-127, 157: Morales Lemus' annexationism is mentioned in Enrique Pineyro, Morales Lemus y la revolucion de Cuba, 83-84; Juan Arnao, Paginas para la historia de la isla de Cuba (Habana: La Nueva, 1900), 235; Allan Nevins, Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration, 2 vols. (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957), I, 241.

³⁸La Verdad, April 8, 1876.

³⁹La Revolucion, May 8, 1869.

⁴⁰La Revolucion, April 28, 1869.

⁴¹La Revolucion, August 11, 28, 1869; New York Sun, August 9, 1869.

⁴²Gonzalez, The Cuban Question, 9.

⁴³Villaverde, La revolucion de Cuba, 33.

⁴⁴Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, I, 110-112, 176-178.

⁴⁵See Morales Lemus' responses to Azcarate, La Revolucion, September 6, 22, 1870.

⁴⁶A great deal has been written about these early diplomatic activities of the Junta. In addition to Portell Vila's contribution cited in footnote 1, the following titles are useful: Pineyro, Morales Lemus y la revolucion de Cuba; Manuel Marquez Sterling, La diplomacia en nuestra historia (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967); Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, I, 370-384; Nevins, Hamilton Fish, I, 176-248; Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States, 2 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1963), II, 198-223.

⁴⁷Detailed accounts of expeditionary organizing are included in Francisco Javier Cisneros, Relacion de cinco expediciones a Cuba (New York, 1870) and Casasus, La emigracion cubana, 75-111.

CHAPTER 3

TRADITIONAL SEPARATISM CHALLENGED: FACTIONALIZATION AND OPPOSITION TO A DIPLOMATIC SETTLEMENT OF THE TEN YEARS WAR

During the Ten Years War the emigre communities played a controversial role and were in many respects a disappointment to those fighting Spanish domination in Cuba. While Cuban rebels struggled to maintain the republic-in-arms alive with the barest essentials of warfare, Cubans in exile engaged in bitter polemics and succumbed to political factionalization, resulting in a failure to supply arms and munitions required by their compatriots to successfully conduct the insurrection. Rich and poor, independentistas and annexationists, whites and blacks, social progressives and conservatives, and cautious men and radicals, all joined in a unanimous rejection of continued Spanish rule in Cuba, but once the initial revolutionary euphoria dissipated, the inherent contradictions in this broad political and socioeconomic coalition became evident. Disagreements regarding Cuba's political destiny and revolutionary strategy became pervasive among separatists, but it was in the emigre communities that the differences were aired publicly, since they were not burdened with the daily task of confronting the

Spanish army. A vigorous emigre press and propaganda pamphlet literature thus continued the process of definition begun during the two previous decades, which by the end of the Ten Years War transformed substantially the very political nature of the Cuban separatist movement.¹

Divisions appeared among the emigres virtually from the moment of the Junta's reorganization by Morales Lemus, and within a year, they became institutionalized as formal opposition newspapers and clubs emerged to publicly challenge the rebellion's designated leadership in exile.² Utilizing its moral authority as a representative of the Cuban republic, the Junta initially made strong efforts to establish revolutionary discipline and prohibit divisive discussions of sensitive political issues. When one critic initiated an aggressive campaign in mid-1869 to challenge the policies of the new leaders in New York, the Junta responded by urging his expulsion from the Club Politico Cubano. The effort backfired, however, and a group of prominent exiles withdrew from the club protesting what they termed the Junta's dictatorial methods. They announced the formation of a new organization, the Club de la Liga Cubana, in January 1870. Seeking to maintain at least the illusion of emigre unity, the Junta agreed to dissolve the Club Politico in favor of the more representative Liga, whose charter guaranteed a diversity of views in the executive positions of the organization. The new club's bylaws provided that the president and secretary

would be elected at-large by the membership, but that four vice-presidents and an additional four secretaries would be chosen on a regional basis to ensure representation in executive offices of individuals from Oriente, Camaguey, Las Villas, and Occidente.³ It is clear that the Junta's domination by members of Habana's liberal socioeconomic elite was a source of concern for many.

Although the emigre breach was temporarily avoided, basic political differences within the membership were not resolved and dissent continued throughout 1870. The Junta's critics consistently asserted their right to publicly differ with the exile representatives. "Puede un ciudadano desaprobado los actos de la junta," argued one critic, "sin que haya motivos para que se le considere como mal patriota. Siempre que no salga del circulo de la legalidad, el hombre esta obligado a hacer lo que le parezca mas favorable a la salud de la patria."⁴ Given this attitude, disagreements virtually always became public, leading to bitter polemics that by September finally led to the dissolution of the Liga Cubana and the creation of political clubs representing the various factions. Revolutionary discipline fell victim to a flourishing exile press. La Libertad in New Orleans, El Republicano in Key West, and La Voz del Pueblo, El Democrata, La Estrella de Cuba, and El Diario Cubano in New York, provided the Junta's critics with ample opportunity to express their concerns. And when the newspapers would not

cooperate, political tracts were published independently as pamphlets or broadsides.⁵ All efforts by the Junta to discourage public discussion of sensitive issues failed, revealing sharp political differences among Cubans in exile.

Among the first to challenge the Junta under Morales Lemus were old-line members of the Sociedad Republicana who clearly resented his appointment to head the exile effort. Only two years before they had vilified him and other Habana reformists for their participation in the Junta de Informacion, and for what they perceived to be their aristocratic pretensions. But of equal concern was the critics' conviction that the new leaders in exile were essentially conservative men who valued their economic interests more than any specific revolutionary program, raising suspicions as to the extent of their commitment to the separatist cause. As evidence, they pointed to the former reformists' belated adherence to the separatist revolt and their background as members of the Club de la Habana during the 1850s, which they held largely responsible for Lopez's failures. In addition, they had abandoned separatism once and could be expected to do so again should that be favorable to their interests. Many long-time separatists simply could not understand why the Cuban government had placed the exile representation in the hands of the conservative Habaneros. They clearly did not share Cespedes' view that the rebellion would profit from the reformists' support.

With backing from a portion of the traditional emigre community, which included rebel activists of the 1850s and a group of established merchants in New York, the nominal leader of the old Lopista faction, Villaverde, publicly indicted the former reformists at a meeting of Cubans in July 1869. His speech was subsequently published in pamphlet form and distributed throughout the emigre centers and, no doubt, in Cuba. Reminiscent of the rhetoric of La Voz de America, Villaverde declared: "Ya anexionistas, ya concesionistas, ya reformistas, ya autonomistas: segun que una o otra de estas banderas les conduzca mas pronto y con menos riesgos a su fin, salvar los intereses--tarde o temprano les vuelven la espalda a todos los hombres de accion en la hora de prueba." "No dudamos," he added, "que esos hombres representan el capital del oeste de la isla, mejor dicho, la aristocracia del dinero, negamos sin embargo, que representan las ideas del pueblo, que tengan verdadera conciencia de sus aspiraciones, sobre todo que obren de acuerdo con el espiritu de la revolucion cubana."⁶ During the mid-1860s, Villaverde, Macias, and others had publicly rejected the leadership of the established classes which they felt could never be counted on unconditionally to support the separatist ideal. Now, once again, the Habana liberal elite had managed to establish itself within the heart of the movement, creating a weak link that Villaverde suggested could doom the rebellion at any time. Throughout the decade-long struggle Villaverde remained in violent opposition to the

Junta's leadership, and in 1876 he founded a weekly, El Tribuno Cubano, from which he continued his uncompromising attacks on the exile representatives and the rebel government responsible for their appointment.

Villaverde and the traditional emigres, however, were not alone in their suspicions of the exile representatives. During the course of the decade, many Habana liberals turned against the Junta as well, though some more quickly than others. Among the earliest and the most prominent were Carlos del Castillo, his nephew, Jose Gabriel del Castillo, and Jose de Armas y Cespedes. From a wealthy and established Habana family, Carlos del Castillo edited an early mouthpiece of Cuban liberalism, El Faro Industrial, during the 1840s and served as director of one of Habana's major financial institutions, La Caja de Ahorros, during the 1860s. In February 1869, he and 249 others were arrested and deported to the Spanish penal colony of Fernando Poo off the west coast of Africa for their liberal inclinations and possible connections with the Comite Revolucionario de la Habana, but Castillo managed to escape captivity, travelled to New York, and became the treasurer of the Junta. He resigned from the Junta shortly, however, and joined Villaverde in his attacks on the exile representatives. Castillo backed the opposition newspaper El Democrata, edited by his nephew, Jose Gabriel. The elder Castillo's characterization of the Junta coincided with Villaverde's. He resented their aristocratic pretensions, their close association with Spanish authorities prior to

joining the rebellion, and their generally conservative nature. In a letter to President Cespedes in which he attempted to convince the Cuban chief executive of the mistake that had been made in naming Morales Lemus as exile representative, Castillo noted:

Lo mismo Morales Lemus que un numero crecido de personas que lo rodean, pertenecieron en la Habana a lo que alli se llamo partido reformista, concesionista, o conservador. Muchos de ellos han mediado a la sombra de ese mismo gobierno a quien hoy le hacemos guerra; casi todos han ocupado destinos y desempenado cargos, con sueldos algunos bajo el gobierno espanol, y esto hace que muchos retraigan de asociarles y que no esten dispuestos a depositar en ellos entera confianza.

Armas y Cespedes also arrived in New York in early 1869 and offered his services to the Junta, but by the end of the year he had withdrawn support. During the mid-1860s, Armas was known for his opposition to the reform leaders, but he was also considered a political opportunist. Although apparently in favor of absolute independence for Cuba, he collaborated briefly with the reformist newspaper El Siglo, and during January 1869 he participated in one of Captain-General Dulce's peace commissions to the rebel camp. It is not clear why Armas collaborated with Dulce, but a political pamphlet issued soon after his departure from the island explained that he feared incarceration had he refused the mission. In addition, he believed that by cooperating he could gain important first-hand information about the insurrection. His intention, he explained, was to encourage the rebels should their situation be favorable, or aid them in attaining just terms should their position prove untenable. Whatever his motives on that occasion, by early

1870, Armas had become one of the Junta's most vocal and rabid opponents. He carried out an aggressive propaganda campaign from the pages of La Patria, a newspaper he established in New Orleans which raised concerns similar to those voiced by Villaverde and the Castillos.⁸

Other prominent exiles joining the Junta's opposition later in the decade were Jose Maria de Cespedes, Jose J. Govantes, and Francisco Valdez Mendoza. Followers of Morales Lemus and Aldama in Habana during the reformist period and in New York through 1871, these men slowly withdrew their backing as the emigre colonies developed their own political dynamic. Govantes was the most active, and as we will see, he established a newspaper, La Voz de la Patria, in 1876 to combat the Junta.

During early 1870 another important exile publicist, Juan Bellido de Luna, engaged the Junta as well. An editor of El Filibustero in the 1850s, he had sharply criticized the liberal Habaneros for their revolutionary timidity and elitism, a theme he resurrected upon arriving in New York in late 1869. Bellido had returned to Cuba in the late fifties after the demise of the separatist cause, but he remained apart from the reformist crusade, preferring instead to embrace the activities of the Sociedad Republicana. Subsequent to the outbreak of the Revolucion de Yara, he joined in efforts to revolutionize his home province of Matanzas, but--as he charged in a political broadside published in New York in

January 1870--these efforts failed when Morales Lemus, Mestre, and others heading the revolutionary committee in Habana during 1868 ordered a delay while they negotiated with Dulce for reformist concessions. "El movimiento revolucionario," noted Bellido, "se estrellaba . . . contra la falta de dinero, de armas y sobre todo, contra las resistencia del partido conservador cubano, compuesta de los propietarios, hacendados y capitalistas, que . . . se oponia, entonces, a la revolucion armada en al Departamento Occidental."⁹ Like the other critics, Bellido deeply resented the former reformists' lack of commitment to separatism during those crucial months and blamed them for the failure of the rebel uprisings in the western provinces. In 1873, he founded La Independencia, a news-weekly that became the most influential in New York and a leading opponent of the Aldama-controlled Junta.

These critics, in addition to others we will meet later, led the opposition to the Junta in New York during the course of the decade-long struggle. They included members of the traditional emigre communities as well as former reformists from Habana, and as a socioeconomic group they differed little, if at all, from the Junta's backers. Although the critics often condemned the exile representatives for their aristocratic pretensions, in reality all the leading political activists in New York were middle-class to upper-class liberals fighting for a break with Spain, the abolition of slavery, and the establishment of a laissez-faire economic system. What, then, caused the deep divisions that virtually paralyzed

the exiles' ability effectively to aid the rebellion? This chapter and the next will explore the differences in political ideals and revolutionary strategies of the Junta and its critics.

From the critics' standpoint, Morales Lemus, Aldama, Mestre, and Echeverria were the inheritors of the policies and attitudes that destroyed the Lopez initiatives of the 1850s; they were political opportunists who opposed separatism during the mid-1860s and compromised the rebellion in the western provinces in early 1869; they were only reluctant rebels who joined the cause after reformism had lost all political leverage; and, most seriously, they represented a fifth column that would eventually compromise the Cuban rebellion. This last point was of greatest immediate concern. Accordingly, it was with distress, though not surprise, that Villaverde watched the new representatives in exile travel to Washington in March 1869. In his estimation, this was to place the destiny of the insurrection in the hands of North American diplomats: a replay of events a decade and a half earlier. After 1855, those remaining in the separatist movement abandoned the traditional reliance on the United States as a central feature of its program, a policy now resurrected by Morales Lemus and his associates. The critics recognized that the Junta's policies had been approved by the rebel government, but they considered President Céspedes unaware of the implications of a revolutionary strategy designed to obtain the involvement of the United States. Yet, they

admired Cespedes and hoped to convince him of the dangers they perceived.

Villaverde raised the concern in his 1869 pamphlet. Although he had traditionally accepted the idea that debate over the future political status of the island should be publicly considered only after the eviction of the Spanish--the Junta's official position--, he now had grave doubts in light of what he considered to be Junta's efforts to settle the issue diplomatically, regardless of popular will in Cuba. "Porque hemos de contentir," he argued, "que unos cuantos cubanos; sean cuales fueran su posicion y sus dineros, comprometan desde ahora y para siempre los destinos de la patria, todavia mas, que entreguen atada de pie y manos la naciente republica de Cuba a la merced de la politica de la actual administracion de los Estados Unidos?" Villaverde concluded: "Claro parece por lo tanto, que en concepto de Morales Lemus y de sus amigos aqui, la salvacion de Cuba, su libertad e independencia, no han de fiarse hoy en mas al brazo de Cespedes y sus valientes companeros, sino a la diplomacia y poderosa influencia del gobierno americano." Believing this was precisely the strategy of the New York and Habana separatists of the 1850s, he considered Morales Lemus' diplomatic arrangements with Fish an extension of those policies. Several months later, in a letter to Macias, he revealed the extent of his animosity regarding the annexationist tendencies of the Junta: "sabe que si nosotros, a pesar de su hostilidad, ganamos la libertad e

independencia, ahorcaremos como traidor al que hable de anexion."¹⁰ To Villaverde and other critics, a diplomatic solution to the Cuban question arranged by the United States was synonymous with annexation.

As the secret negotiations between the Cuban diplomat, Secretary Fish and the Spanish government proceeded during the summer of 1869, more voices of alarm were heard. In August, a "Manifiesto-Protesta" appeared in New York signed by numerous exiles, most notably Jose Valiente, Morales Lemus' predecessor as President of the New York Junta, strongly objecting to any solution to the Cuban problem based on the sale of the island or requiring the payment of an indemnity. "Aspiramos a obtener nuestra independencia sin condiciones, sin pactos, sin intervenciones diplomaticas y con la fuerza de nuestro valor y el sacrificio indefinido de nuestra sangre y nuestros intereses, como cumple a los pueblos que saben apreciar la libertad," noted the broadside. Although cooperating with the Junta, Juan Macias also publicly rejected the indemnity provision of the peace proposal, declaring the island belonged to the Cubans, who were under no obligation to pay for it. Animosity toward the Junta grew even deeper when rumors began circulating that the exile representatives were actually negotiating an outright sale of the island to the United States.¹¹ This was not true, but, for some, whether it was a sale or a United States-guaranteed indemnification, it made little difference: they both would lead to North American control over Cuba.

The critics' opposition to a negotiated settlement stemmed from many years of experience in dealing with United States and Spanish authorities. They were convinced the Spanish had no intention of negotiating seriously, though they would seek to placate the United States by entering into what appeared to be sincere discussions. As one critic noted, "Los espanoles . . . siguiendo su politica tradicional, aparentan disposicion a transigir y entretienen con engano, al mismo tiempo que aran el mundo buscando recursos para exterminar a los desarmados y desprevenidos patriotas." He concluded: "Cuba Libre ignora lo cierto: tiene puesto su confianza donde menos debiera ponerla."¹² At the same time there was little confidence among the critics of the Junta that the United States would aid the rebels. Like its predecessors of the 1850s, the Grant administration viewed the acquisition of Cuba as a long-term proposition, which would not require a war with Spain if handled diplomatically. Thus, recognizing Cuban belligerency was unacceptable to Secretary Fish, who fashioned the administration's Cuba policies. Villaverde, Macias, and others had seen the United States turn its back on the rebel separatists of the 1850s in order not to complicate relations with Spain and Europe. As far as these activists were considered, President Grant was pursuing a similar policy, which caused them to oppose all North American involvement in Cuban affairs short of recognizing belligerency. In 1869, the New Orleans

newsweekly La Libertad declared: "Nosotros no queremos que los Estados Unidos tengan una guerra extranjera. Solo pedimos el reconocimiento de nuestro derecho." Two years later, New York's El Pueblo reaffirmed this view, noting, "Cuba no pretende ni quiere ninguna intervencion del Gobierno Americano antes de reconocerle su derecho de beligerante, porque no se concibe que pueda ser favorable de ningun otro modo, dado su actitud y aspiraciones."¹³

The members of the Junta, of course, did not share this distrust of the United States, especially since they did not oppose annexation. While La Revolucion denied the exile representatives were considering or supporting a sale of Cuba to the United States, it did view North American involvement in securing an international treaty to end the conflict as in the island's best interests. The Junta considered a negotiated settlement based on an indemnification to Spain a small price to pay for a quick conclusion to the struggle, and it rejected its critics' charges that the policy amounted to an indirect sale of the island to the United States. La Revolucion noted:

Los Estados Unidos no puede pretender la compra de Cuba porque Cuba no tiene hoy otro dueno que los cubanos . . . Los Estados Unidos no derramara jamas una sola gota de sangre cubana por obtener nuestro territorio. La codiciaran, la necesitaran tal vez, estara en sus planes futuros ser los senores de Cuba . . . pero solamente por la libre voluntad de los cubanos, expresado por el sufragio, podria llevarse a cabo no la compra, no la conquista . . . sino la anexion.¹⁴

Although initially the opposition to diplomacy stemmed from concern over the Junta's annexationist sympathies, after the

failure of the Fish negotiations and Grant's speech in December 1869 announcing he had no intention of aiding the rebels, exile critics began to suspect that Aldama, Mestre and Echeverria might now consider an accommodation with the Spanish based on something less than complete political separation. Indeed, during the spring of 1870, rumors circulated in the emigre communities about secret meetings between "cubanos prominentes" and the Spanish Minister in Washington. La Revolucion denied the rumors, but the critics were not entirely convinced and remained on their guard.¹⁵

The critics' concerns were not unfounded. Indeed, Spanish officials in Madrid also believed the Junta might now be ready for some agreement directly with Spain. Two Spanish envoys were dispatched to approach the Junta during late 1870: one offering a solution similar to the Fish package, while the other advanced an agreement based on the reformist principles of the 1860s. The liberal regime in Madrid had tired of the war and was determined to bring it to an end one way or another.

The first envoy approached the Junta's representative in Paris, offering Cuba independence in return for an indemnity. Aldama and Echeverria were notified immediately and after a series of preliminary negotiations in Paris, the Spanish envoy travelled to the United States where he met directly with the exile representatives. Although a treaty similar to the Fish package was agreed to and signed by the Cuban and Spanish diplomats, it came to naught

when the Spanish head of state, Juan Prim, died at the hands of an assassin, altering the political situation in Spain and dooming the agreement. The new authorities in Madrid made it clear they would not consider independence. The details of the plan were never made public, but rumors of the Junta's meetings with the Spanish envoy raised suspicions in the emigre centers.¹⁶

During October 1870, the other envoy, Nicolas Azcarate, one of the few Cuban liberals still actively seeking a reform solution, arrived in New York with autonomy proposals from the Spanish government. While he publicly stated his presence in the United States was for personal business, the Junta's critics soon learned of Azcarate's mission, which caused grave concern since he was a close friend and associate of the Junta's leadership. Aldama, Echeverria, and Mestre met secretly with the Spanish envoy and agreed to dispatch a runner to the Cuban government with the peace proposal, but they emphasized in a letter to President Cespedes their personal opposition to the plan. Their experiences of the 1860s had made them extremely skeptical of Spain's sincerity or even ability to honor such an agreement over the opposition of the voluntarios on the island.

La Revolucion initiated a propaganda campaign to discredit the autonomy plan but denied reports published in El Democrata that the Junta had sent an envoy to Cuba, or that it had even met with Azcarate. It is possible the editors of La Revolucion were unaware

of the Junta's meetings, but it is more likely they feared the exile representatives would be sharply criticized should they admit to forwarding the proposals to the government-in-arms. Perfectly aware of the Junta's activities, El Demócrata concluded the exile representatives were engaged in negotiations to betray the insurrection and considered La Revolucion's attacks on Azcarate simply a smoke-screen.¹⁷

Fearful of the Junta's influence with the Cuban government, the critics asserted it was treason even to propose a solution not based on absolute independence. During December, Jose de Armas y Cespedes published an article in La Revolucion arguing that the authorities in Cuba could not legally negotiate a treaty leading to the demise of the republic without first holding a referendum in all the Cuban provinces, including Habana and the emigre communities. Responding, La Revolucion's editors suggested such a vote was impractical and that if the government concluded hope of victory was nonexistent and signed a treaty based on autonomy, it would be valid simply by virtue of "fait accompli." If the rebel army laid down its arms, by definition the republic would disappear and the exile communities would have to accept that result or return to Cuba and carry on the struggle themselves. Armas' legalistic position reflected a concern that the Junta might succeed in convincing the rebels in Cuba to accept a settlement with Spain; La Revolucion's response seemed to legitimize just such a course. Armas

charged the rebel newspaper had embraced "el derecho a la traicion" when it suggested the death of the republic might be acceptable under certain circumstances.¹⁸

Early in November, while Azcarate and the Junta awaited news from Cuba, rumors surfaced that Juan C. Zenea had departed for the island carrying the Spanish proposals and letters of recommendation from Aldama and Mestre. Again, La Revolucion denied these rumors, deepening the critics' conviction that plans were well advanced to negotiate away the insurrection. The newspaper's denials continued until early January, when the Spanish press on the island and in New York announced Zenea had been captured with a safe passage guarantee from the Spanish Minister in Washington, forcing the Junta to finally admit it had met with Azcarate and had indeed communicated the proposals to the Cuban government. They insisted, however, that it was their duty as official representatives of the Cuban republic to forward the Spanish offer to their superiors, and they denied having anything to do with the Zenea affair.¹⁹

As Aldama and Mestre explained in letters published in La Revolucion, Zenea had approached them for letters of reference, indicating he planned to travel to Cuba and gather information for writing he wanted to do. Because of his reputation as a long-time separatist and his close association with the Junta, his motives were not questioned, but, as it turned out, Zenea had come to a prior agreement with Azcarate to deliver the autonomy proposals.

Zenea had apparently come to the conclusion the war could not be won and that the total destruction of Cuba would be the result if peace were not soon attained. He agreed to cooperate with the Spanish Minister in Washington and without informing the Junta of his real intentions departed for the island. On meeting with Cespedes, Zenea apparently made no effort to openly argue in favor of autonomy, but he did express the opinion that little could be expected from the exile communities, discouraging many in Cuba and prompting a wave of surrenders by disheartened soldiers of the liberating army.²⁰

There is no evidence that Aldama or Mestre were involved in an autonomist conspiracy with Zenea, but their secretive manner in the entire affair and consistent denials of having met with Azcarate not surprisingly convinced their critics that the Junta wanted an end to the conflict. In early February 1871, La Liga de las Hijas de Cuba, chaired by Villaverde's wife Emilia Casanova, an intransigent opponent of the Junta from the day it was reorganized under Morales Lemus, adopted a highly inflammatory resolution (published in El Democrata) charging Zenea with high treason and proclaiming Aldama and Mestre accomplices for their letters on his behalf. Over the following weeks, the opposing newspapers exchanged bitter denunciations and condemnations. Finally, on March 18, Agent General Aldama announced his resignation, arguing he was no longer able to effectively discharge his duties.²¹

During the first half of 1871 another controversy created even greater certainty in the emigre communities that the Junta was furiously seeking an autonomy solution to the Cuban question. In February, the diplomatic envoys, Mestre and Echeverria, appointed Macias as their official agent in London. Totally disheartened by their failures to attract support from President Grant, the representatives in exile turned their sights on Europe, especially Great Britain, hoping that nation would take the lead in pressuring Spain to some solution, presumably based on independence for Cuba. However, Macias' mission became the subject of concern as well. On arriving in England, Macias wrote the representatives in New York outlining his strategy with the British government. Noting that the British were a colonial power themselves, and not likely to support a rebel movement seeking independence from its metropolis, Macias indicated he would seek their sympathy by suggesting the rebels were not entirely closed to the idea of an autonomy solution. Mestre and Echeverria did not raise objections to the proposed strategy but suggested he use extreme caution, since the rebel government clearly opposed negotiating on that basis. In addition, they noted:

Suponemos que al indicar V. en sus conversaciones con personas notables la disposicion de nuestros compatriotas a aceptar un Gobierno semejante al del Canada, lo ha hecho V. considerando que entre las soluciones posibles del conflicto cubano, cabe la de un protectorado, bajo la garantia de una gran potencia, y que esta pudiera ser Inglaterra, la cual de esa manera obtendria facilmente ventajas comerciales.²²

Clearly, as seasoned diplomats, the members of the Junta maintained a pragmatic attitude and were willing to consider a variety of diplomatic approaches, but in reality they had little faith in the autonomy option. Could they have been convinced that the Spanish would effectively implement reforms, including the abolition of slavery, they might have supported such an approach, but like their critics, the exile representatives did not believe that Madrid could control or dictate to the established economic interests on the island. As Echeverria noted in a letter to Macias in 1875, "Los cubanos serian muy necios si dejasen imponerse otra vez el yugo, aun cuando esa imposicion se hiciere bajo las garantias de todas las potencias de Europa: Espana tendria mil medios de eludir el pacto y nosotros seguiriamos esclavizados, hasta que volviese a estallar otra revolucion mas sangrienta si cabe que la actual."²³ Thus, the only hope, as they saw it, was to attain the support of a power influential enough to pressure the Spanish into granting Cuba her independence.

This pragmatism, however, backfired and further discredited the Junta in the United States communities. During the summer of 1871, in London, Macias published a propaganda pamphlet, Cuba in Revolution, containing an introduction specifically noting that the autonomy solution had not been absolutely discarded by the rebels. This constituted, in effect, an official statement, since it had been authorized by a duly appointed revolutionary agent.

Although Mestre and Echeverria did not oppose its publication, noting privately to Macias that it was perfectly calculated to attract the sympathy of the British people, they added, "no hemos juzgado prudente llamar demasiado la atencion sobre el folleto en 'La Revolucion' ni en ningun otro periodico, temerosos de que volviera a encenderse la calumnia."²⁴ Their fears were justified. Unfortunately for the Junta, Jose Gabriel del Castillo was also in London, and in an article published by New York's La America he lambasted the pamphlet. "Los cubanos se han declarado 'independientes'," he noted, adding that autonomism was no longer acceptable to Cuban patriots.²⁵ For many in exile there was no doubt that Aldama and his backers had betrayed the separatist cause. Soon after this incident, Echeverria and Mestre followed Aldama's example and resigned their positions as Diplomatic Envoys of the Cuban republic-in-arms.

President Cespedes' decision to accept the resignations of the exile representatives revealed that he had lost confidence in the original diplomatic strategy that he had himself approved. This was earlier apparent in a letter to Mestre during 1870: "Por lo que respecta a los Estados Unidos tal vez estare equivocado, pero en mi concepto su Gobierno a lo que aspira es a apoderarse de Cuba, sin complicaciones peligrosas para su nacion y entre tanto que no salga del dominio de Espana, siquiera sea para constituirse en poder independiente; este es el secreto de su politica y mucho me temo que

cuanto haga o proponga, sea para entretenernos y que no acudamos a buscar de otras amigos mas eficaces y desinteresados."²⁶ Between October 1868 and early 1870 Cespedes came to the same conclusion Villaverde had arrived at fifteen years earlier: the United States was unwilling to sacrifice its relations with Europe to attain Cuba. The Cuban leader recognized that little could be expected in concrete support from the Grant administration. Accordingly, like the Lopistas of the 1850s, Cespedes now rejected diplomacy and annexation in favor of a self reliant rebel movement dedicated to the establishment of a sovereign republic. This was not, in any case, a difficult shift in policy for Cespedes since apparently his annexationism had been based on political expediency and not conviction.

On accepting the resignations of Aldama and his associates, Cespedes commissioned his Vice-President, Francisco V. Aguilera, and Secretary of Foreign Relations, Ramon Cespedes to replace them as Agent General and Diplomatic Envoy respectively. The new appointees arrived in New York during late 1871 but during the next year failed to unify the communities and raise significant funds to aid the rebellion. The divisions in the emigre centers were deeply entrenched, and Aguilera succeeded only in creating one more faction, his own. The Cuban Vice-President shared in the suspicions of Aldama and his associates, but he was also offended by the Villaverde-Castillo group's intransigence and refusal to

cooperate with the former representatives. Aguilera agreed with Villaverde and Castillo in their political critique of the Aldama group and would later make common cause with them in combatting Aldama, but during 1871 and 1872 his efforts to compromise succeeded only in alienating both camps, leaving him isolated and entirely ineffective in mobilizing the exile centers.²⁷ Impatient for the arrival of a significant expeditionary force, the President recalled Aguilera and Cespedes in late 1872, replacing them with Carlos del Castillo, Felix Govin, and General Manuel de Quesada. Quesada had arrived in New York from Cuba during March 1870 on a special mission to raise a military force and had promptly joined the Villaverde-Castillo faction in its disputes with Aldama. Cespedes' decision was clearly calculated to facilitate Quesada's organizing activities and indeed during October 1873 the new exile representatives launched the Virginus, loaded with men, arms, and munitions to reinforce the liberation army. This was the second major expedition arranged by Quesada since going abroad, but on approaching the coast of Cuba the vessel was sighted and captured by a Spanish gunboat.

The Cuban President had gambled on the exile opposition and had lost. As we shall see in more detail in the following chapter, the Cuban legislature had sided with Aldama in his disputes with Villaverde, the Castillos, and Quesada, and, on learning of Cespedes' new appointments in New York, the legislators determined to replace him. The President's decision to abandon the policies

outlined at Guaimaro, signalled by his shift in support from the New York Junta to its critics during 1870 through 1873, mobilized the legislature against him, resulting in his constitutional removal from office as 1873 came to an end. He was replaced by Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, the President of the legislative chamber, who promptly reappointed Aldama and Echeverria to head the exile communities. The diplomatic strategy confirmed at Guaimaro was thus reaffirmed in early 1874.²⁸

Meanwhile, the Spanish gunboat that captured the Virginus had escorted the vessel into Santiago de Cuba, where authorities began executing the expeditionaries, including numerous North American citizens. An international outcry soon ended the killing, but the United States now determined to initiate a major effort to end the conflict. Heartened by the Grant administration's announcement to that effect, in early 1874 Aldama met with Secretary Fish and expressed the Junta's support for a United States mediation based on the island's independence from Spain. It soon became evident, however, that what Fish had in mind was a diplomatic initiative calculated to attain Spanish support for an autonomy solution. The North American Secretary of State had concluded that the Spanish would never accept Cuban independence, so he directed his new envoy to Madrid, Caleb Cushing, to seek autonomy and the abolition of slavery.²⁹ Although the exile representatives indicated this was not acceptable to the rebel government, Cushing succeeded in attracting the support of a number of prominent Cuban exiles in Paris and

Madrid to the initiative.³⁰ In addition, the military situation on the island during 1874 and 1875 prompted some influential, traditionally intransigent pro-Spanish planters in Cuba to seriously consider the autonomy option for the first time. Almost overnight, a political base had emerged in support of a compromise solution to the Cuban conflict.³¹

The new attitude of some of the Cuban planters was the direct result of the military successes of the rebel forces during late 1874 and 1875. In January 1875, the rebel general, Maximo Gomez, marched his army into Las Villas, burning the island's sugar plantations as he advanced.³² Until now, the rebellion had been contained to the eastern sectors, and most of the sugar areas had been spared the torch, but fearing the Spanish army would be unable to prevent Gomez' advance on the west, the heart of Cuba's sugar wealth, many planters joined the Paris and Madrid autonomists in supporting Cushing's mediation. During early 1875 a manifesto appeared in Habana calling for such a solution, and plans were made to publish an autonomist newspaper, La Paz.³³

Besides convincing the Spanish government to support such a plan, of course, it would be necessary to convert the rebels. Once again, behind-the-scenes secret negotiations became the order of the day, and rumors linking prominent elements within the insurrection to the autonomist drive permeated the exile communities

during 1874 through 1876, reinitiating the bitter disputes that shook the emigre communities during 1870 and 1871.

As early as mid-1874, the New York Herald published a letter from a "trustworthy source" that the Captain General had issued passports to two delegates from President Cisneros to travel to New York and meet with Aldama, presumably to discuss an autonomist solution. Other reports from Cuba spoke of disagreements between the Cuban President and Gomez, who, it was said, opposed entering into discussions with the Spanish. During August, Villaverde informed Jose Gabriel del Castillo that he had received similar news of negotiations between elements in the rebel camp and Spanish authorities, and the following June emigres in New York were informed that Aldama had met secretly with a Spanish agent from Cuba, Juan Ceballos.³⁴ Even more distressing was a report that a prominent Cuban autonomist in Madrid had commissioned the President's son, Agustin Cisneros, to present Cushing's plan to his father. The report indicated that Agustin Cisneros had travelled to New York and departed for Cuba on the Junta's Octavia expedition in mid-1875, which never reached the island.³⁵

In early 1876, Jose Govantes, editor of La Voz de la Patria in New York, received a letter from a Paris exile who openly charged the Junta with conspiring to destroy the rebellion. The letter noted:

El nombramiento de Caleb Cushing como Ministro en Madrid se hizo de acuerdo con nuestros representantes en los Estados Unidos, Echeverria y Aldama, que fueron consultados por Mr. Fish, con motivo de un plan de autonomia . . . como el medio mas seguro e inmediato para poner termino a nuestra guerra. Los señores Echeverria y Aldama ni lo rechazaron, ni lo dejaron de aceptar, solo dijeron que ellos no tenian ordenes de su Gobierno para entrar en negociaciones con semejantes bases; pero que ellos creian a la emigracion en el derecho de poder juzgar los destinos de su patria e imponerse a los que combaten en los campos de Cuba Libre, en el caso de que la mayoría de los emigrados creyesen dicho plan autonomico aceptable, por lo cual aprobaron que fuese el Gobierno Americano, por medio de sus representantes en Madrid, quien tomase la iniciativa y aconsejaban comenzase la propaganda por los centros de emigracion que existian en Paris y Madrid, que hacia tiempo venian trabajando en dicho sentido. Que ellos por su parte pondrian todo su valor e influencia tanto en Cuba Libre como en el Exterior, para que la mayoría se inclinase a favor de dicho plan.⁵⁶

In April, Villaverde received a similar letter, charging that "Al principiar el ano 1875 se convinieron en Nueva York los Sres. Jose M. Mestre y Pedro Martin Rivero para servirse de los Sres. Aldama y Echeverria para hacer un arreglo con los espanoles . . . Los iniciaron con D. Juan Ceballos, que se habia avistado con el Sr. Aldama, y habiendose puesto de acuerdo con varios espanoles en la Habana, que entraron en el negocio." The letter also charged that Jose de Armas y Cespedes, until then a critic of the Junta, had been designated to travel to Madrid to confer with the Spanish authorities. Not able to prove the accuracy of the letter, Villaverde did not publish it in his Tribuno Cubano until October, when a pamphlet written by Armas appeared in Paris confirming that discussions had indeed taken place in New York between Spanish envoys and prominent members of the rebel community. "Los Sres. peninsulares

referidos," wrote Armas, "ponian ante todo la condicion de que se conservara siempre en Cuba la bandera espanola; pero como en ultimo resultado el Gobierno de Espana y el de los insurrectos eran los que debian resolver la cuestion, parti, para la corte, lleno de esperanzas de abarcar un feliz avenimiento." Villaverde considered this sufficient evidence of the Junta's complicity and duplicity to publish the letter. Aldama and Echeverria denied the critics' allegations, responding that had they been interested in participating in secret negotiations with the Spanish, they surely would not have entrusted such a mission to one of their most active and severe critics, Armas.³⁷

By mid-1875, then, Villaverde, the Castillos, Govantes, Bellido, and others suspected that Aldama, Echeverria, and President Cisneros might well be involved in an autonomy conspiracy to compromise the rebellion, but since there was no firm evidence they relied on their traditional arguments in combatting the Junta. During July, however, word reached the emigre communities that General Vicente Garcia, based in Las Tunas, had issued a manifesto from Lagunas de Varona demanding the Cuban President's resignation, constitutional reforms, and new elections.³⁸ Seeing Garcia enjoyed the support of a significant force, Cisneros complied after a series of negotiations, much to the relief of the Junta's opposition in the emigre centers who believed Aldama and Echeverria would soon follow suit. In New York some suggested the Cuban general had actually

intervened to disrupt the alleged autonomist negotiations between the Captain General and Cisneros. Writing in La Revolucion de Cuba, Ramon Rubiera de Armas, a survivor of the Virginus and close associate of Villaverde, asked in a letter to the editor: "Que hacen los periodistas de Nueva York que no ilustran al pueblo publicando la protesta proclama de Vicente Garcia contra los manejos de Santa Lucia, en complicidad con los espanoles y con los agentes actuales en Nueva York?"³⁹ Most emigres opposed Garcia's challenge to established authority in Cuba Libre, and most of the newspapers refused to publicize it, but Villaverde and Rubiera, closely associated with several of the dissidents who joined with Garcia, defended the General's actions. In February 1876, Rubiera added:

Cual fue . . . la causa real, la verdadera del pronunciamiento de Oriente contra el gobierno de C. S. Cisneros? . . . Pues, desde principios del ano pasado, mas, desde mediados del anterior, mas que uno en Cuba Libre tuvo motivo para sospechar que also torcido pasaba entre el C. S. Cisneros, sus agentes en N. Y. y los espanoles en Cuba o en Espana.

Rubiera went on to say that intercepted correspondence between the exile agents and Cisneros demonstrated that, in fact, "habia manejos." In response, according to Rubiera, "sucedió la reunion de las Lagunas de Varona."⁴⁰

As if to ratify this suspicion, the newly elected President, Juan Spotorno, issued a proclamation on taking office which decreed that anyone involved in negotiations with the Spanish not based on independence would be considered a traitor and dealt with

accordingly. The new Secretary of Foreign Relations, Tomas Estrada Palma, later recalled that soon after taking office, "se presento en la residencia del gobierno un joven . . . con cartas del General Villate y D. Pedro Agüero, dirigidos al Marques de Santa Lucia como autoridad superior en el campo rebelde. Por medio de ellos se proponian los remitentes persuadirle sobre la conveniencia de deponer las armas."⁴¹ Spotorno and Estrada then agreed that communications across rebel lines had to cease and the result was Spotorno's decree. In New York, La Independencia suggested that the measure "ha venido a autorizar y sancionar la justicia de nuestros ataques y protestas contra los encapotados autonomistas que asomaron la punta del cabello en Paris ultimamente . . . mientras los representantes oficiales de nuestro gobierno en el exterior no han desplegado sus labios para protestar . . . Ha cumplido nuestra representacion oficial con el deber que le prescribe . . .? No!"⁴²

With the rebel government under Spotorno unequivocally on record opposing the autonomy propositions, the negotiations were in practice doomed, although Cushing continued his activities hoping to gain general European support for his initiatives, and Cuban pro-autonomy propagandists in Paris and Madrid expressed their support as well. Throughout 1876, the Cuban press in New York, most notably La Independencia, El Tribuno Cubano, and La Voz de la Patria, vigorously condemned the Cuban autonomists in Europe and kept up constant

attacks on the Junta, which they considered to be aiding the reformist cause.⁴³ Unlike 1871, however, Aldama and Echeverria did not resign, and in fact they were confirmed in their posts by Spotorno, who obviously did not consider them implicated in the autonomist intrigues.

Despite the understandable suspicions of Villaverde and of virtually every prominent exile leader in the United States not associated with the Junta, there is no direct evidence that Aldama and Echeverria more than passively encouraged the autonomists. As suggested in the letter to Govantes cited earlier, they recognized reformism as a legitimate option, but until it was demonstrated to be a feasible solution, they would not take effective measures to support it. They had no faith in the Spanish government's ability to implement either political reforms or the abolition of slavery, which was a requirement for any negotiated settlement. On the other hand, the Junta consistently advised the rebel government that sooner or later United States would force the Spanish to accept a negotiated settlement based on independence in return for a North American guaranteed indemnification, a solution that satisfied their annexationist instincts. This was their goal--not reformism.

The emigre factionalism during the Ten Years War was clearly the result of a basic disagreement over what the separatist movement represented and how separation from Spain was to be achieved. The Junta's political pragmatism and commitment to diplomacy stemmed from its desire to ensure United States involvement in

the Cuban question. Its ultimate goal, of course, was Cuba's annexation. The exile representatives maintained a highly patient attitude, believing that eventually the United States government would tire of Spain's refusal to negotiate seriously and become directly involved. On the other hand, the critics felt that the Junta was seeking some accommodation--annexationist or autonomist--in order to bring the conflict to an end as soon as possible and salvage their economic interests and political and social position in Cuba. Accordingly, they called for a self-reliant rebel movement capable of defeating the Spanish and establishing an independent Cuban state. Although the critics spent much time combatting the exile representatives, they also made efforts--as will be seen in the following chapter--to develop their own political program and convince the rebel government to adopt their nationalist vision of the Cuban rebellion.

Notes

¹The underlying causes of the bitter dissension in the exile communities during the Ten Years War have never been the subject of detailed scrutiny in Cuban historiography, even though it is generally acknowledged that the emigres' inability to provide significant amounts of arms and munitions was an important reason for its failure. Traditional historiography leaves the distinct impression that rivalries were merely a result of personal antagonism, regional jealousies, and strategic disagreements. This view is apparent in Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, 2 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), I, 82-90 and Manuel Marquez Sterling, La diplomacia en nuestra historia (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967), 123-131. A revisionist interpretation suggests the dissensions were a result of ideological and socioeconomic differences but no in-depth study has effectively demonstrated this. Raul Cepero Bonilla, Azucar y abolicion: Apuntes para una historia critica de abolicionismo (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1971); Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias, Historia de Cuba (Habana: Direccion Politica de Las FAR, 1967); and Jorge Ibarra, Ideologia Mambisa (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967), all allude to the ideological and socioeconomic diversities and conflicts in the emigre centers but offer only scattered references to support their arguments. This chapter and the next seek to isolate the factors that paralyzed the exile communities during the Ten Years War and to reveal their effect in rebel ranks in Cuba Libre.

²Conflicts between the Junta and some elements of the New York community are apparent as early as March and April 1869. See the following pamphlets: Jose Valdes Fauly, La Junta Central de Cuba y Puerto Rico, establecido en esta ciudad, ejerciendo facultades dictatoriales que no se sabe como, ni cuando, se le han conferido (New York, 16 Abril 1869); Cirilo Villaverde, "La revolucion de Cuba visto desde New York" (New York, 1869), reprinted in Comision Nacional Cubana de la UNESCO, Cuba en la UNESCO: Homenaje a Cirilo Villaverde (Habana, 1964), 30-31.

³La Revolucion (New York) February 17, 22, March 12, 24, 1870; Letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Juan Manuel Macias, February 10, 1870, Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Coleccion Cubana (hereafter, BNJM, CC), C. M. Villaverde, numero 3-37. Leading the efforts to establish the new organization were Rafael Lanza, Plutarco Gonzalez, Juan M. Macias and F. Ruz.

⁴Jose de Armas y Cespedes, Discurso pronunciado por Jose de Armas y Cespedes, (New Orleans, 1870).

⁵For information on the exile press see Teresita Batista Villarreal, Josefina Garcia Carranza, and Miguelina Ponte, eds., Catalogo de publicaciones periodicas de los siglos XVIII y XIX (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1965). The most influential opposition newspaper during 1870 was El Democrata, founded early in the year by Rafael Lanza. Soon after, Jose Gabriel del Castillo's La Voz del Pueblo merged with it, and Castillo became the editor. See La Voz del Pueblo, May 14, 1870.

⁶Villaverde, La revolucion de Cuba, 33, 47. Early supporters of Villaverde included Jose Sanchez, Ramon Martinez y Hernandez, Jose and Manuel Casanova, Felix Govin y Pinto, Jose Francisco Lamadriz and Plutarco Gonzalez, all merchants established in New York prior to the outbreak of the Ten Years War.

⁷Letter, Carlos del Castillo to Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, September 17, 1869, in D. Justo Zaragosa, La insurrecciones en Cuba, 2 vols. (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernandez, 1873), II, 805. Other attacks by the Castillos against the Junta included: Ricardo Estevan, Revista general de la situacion de Cuba en los cinco anos de guerra (New York, 1872), a pamphlet written by Jose Gabriel del Castillo; Carlos del Castillo, Carta . . . al Director de La Independencia de New York respondiendo a su articulo editorial de 28 de Agosto de 1874, titulado "Digamos algo sobre nuestros asuntos" (London: Wertheimer, Lea y Cia., 1874); Carlos del Castillo, Carta . . . al Director de La Independencia con motivo de su articulo editorial (12 Agosto) titulado "La Tea y Siempre la Tea" (London, 1875). Roland T. Ely, Comerciantes cubanos del siglo XIX (Habana: Editorial Libreria Marti, 1961), 187, characterizes the Del Castillo family as an "Antigua y distinguida familia cubana; ricos por sus haciendas y por sus numerosas actividades comerciales."

⁸Zaragosa, Las insurrecciones en Cuba, II, 166; Francisco Javier Cisneros, La verdad historica sobre sucesos en Cuba (New York, 1871). A letter from Donato Marmol in Cuba to Jose Valiente in New York defends Armas' activities as a member of Dulce's peace commission; see Luis Fernandez Marcane, La vision grandiosa de Vicuna Mackenna (Habana: Cultural, 1943), 55.

⁹Juan Bellido de Luna, Cuestion individual (New York, 1870).

¹⁰Villaverde, La revolucion de Cuba, 48-49; letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Juan M. Macias, February 10, 1870, BNJM, CC, C. M. Villaverde, numero 3-37.

¹¹Herminio Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba 4 vols. (Habana: Editorial J. Montero, 1939), II, 288; Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States, 2 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1963), II, 208; Allan Nevins, Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration, 2 vols. (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957), I, 242. See also Macias' newspaper, La Estrella de Cuba (New York), April 9, 1870.

¹²"Manuscrito. Artículo titulado 'La patria esta en peligro,' refiriendose a la Junta Central, sin firma, sin fecha," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 425, numero 3. The tone of the argumentation suggests this article was written by Carlos or Jose Gabriel del Castillo.

¹³La Libertad (New Orleans) May 12, 1869; El Pueblo (New York), December 20, 1871, January 11, 1872. Cesar Andreu Inglesias, Memorias de Bernardo Vega: Contribucion a la historia de la comunidad puertorriquena en Nueva York. (Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracan, Inc., 1977), 89-90.

¹⁴La Revolucion, July 21, 1869.

¹⁵La Revolucion, May 7, 1870.

¹⁶Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 347-348.

¹⁷See New York's La Revolucion and El Democrata, October-December 1870; Un Contemporaneo, Apuntes biograficas de Emilia Casanova de Villaverde (New York, 1874), 122-135.

¹⁸La Revolucion, December 27, 31, 1870, February 16, 21, 1871.

¹⁹La Revolucion, November 22, 26, 29, December 1, 10, 27, 1870, January 7, 14, 1871.

²⁰La Revolucion, February 14, 1871; Enrique Pineyro, Vida y escritos de Juan Clemente Zenea (Paris: Garnier Hermanos, 1901); Antonio L. Valverde, Juan Clemente Zenea: Su proceso de 1871 (Habana: Siglo XX, 1927). Pineyro's study of the Zenea affair suggests he was an unwitting tool of Azcarate, while Valverde argues Zenea was in clear complicity with Spanish authorities to undermine the rebellion. Neither study argues that Mestre and Aldama were knowingly involved. However in his FAR study, Historia de Cuba, 205-207, Jorge Ibarra argues that the mere transmittal of the autonomy proposals by Mestre and Aldama to the rebel government constituted support for them. This is debateable, since the exile

representatives considered it their duty to inform the government of all diplomatic developments in the emigre communities. A review of Echeverria's diary for November-December 1870 reveals that the exile representatives consistently opposed all suggestions of a solution to the Cuban conflict based on autonomy. See ANC, Donativos, Legajo Fuera de Caja, numero 34.

²¹Un Contemporaneo, Apuntes biograficos de Emilia Casanova de Villaverde, 122-135; Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968), 214; La Revolucion, February 14, 1871.

²²Letter, J. M. Mestre and J. A. Echeverria to J. M. Macias, February 23, 1871, BNJM, CC, C. M. Guerra, numero 43.

²³Letter, J. A. Echeverria to J. M. Mestre, October 1, 1875, BNJM, CC, C. M. Guerra, numero 47.

²⁴Letter, J. M. Mestre and J. A. Echeverria to J. M. Macias, July 6, 1871, BNJM, CC, C. M. Guerra, numero 44.

²⁵La America (New York) July 15, 1871. See also, La Voz de la Patria (New York), July 7, 1876.

²⁶Jose Ignacio Rodriguez, Vida del Doctor Jose Manuel Mestre (Habana: Avisador Comercial, 1909), 241-244.

²⁷See Eladio Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera y la revolucion de Cuba de 1868 2 vols. (Habana: Avisador Comercial, 1909) and Panfilo D. Camacho, Aguilera: El precursor sin gloria (Habana: Ministerio de Educacion, Direccion de Cultura, 1951), for information on Aguilera's activities during the Ten Years War.

²⁸Céspedes' removal was a result of various factors. For details, see Aleida Plasencia, "La destitucion del Presidente Céspedes," Universidad de la Habana, 32 (October-December, 1968).

²⁹Nevins, Hamilton Fish, II, 871-887; Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 458-459.

³⁰Letter, Miguel Aldama to Subsecretario de Relaciones Exteriores de la Republica de Cuba, January 2, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 462, numero 30; La Voz de la Patria, September 1, 1876.

³¹Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 476.

³²Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, II, 303-325.

³³Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba, II, 476.

³⁴New York Herald, July 11, 12, 23, 1874; La Revolucion, July 18, 1874; La Independencia (New York), July 16, 1874. The articles in the two Cuban newspapers deny the charges of rebel transactions with the Spanish; letter, Cirilo Villaverde to Jose Gabriel del Castillo, August 20, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 423, numero 21; El Tribuno Cubano (New York), October 21, 1876. Although many suspected Aldama of negotiating with the Spanish on the basis of autonomy, in his secret meeting with Ceballos he apparently insisted on independence. See letter, Juan M. Ceballos to Miguel de Aldama, June 4, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 154, numero 31-9, and Jose A. Echeverria, "Apunte dado a Miguel Aldama para que lo presente al espanol Don Juan Ceballos, que le ha indicado la posibilidad de un arreglo . . . por estar aquellos dispuestos a separarse de la metropoli para conservar sus intereses," April 19, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 180, numero 197.

³⁵Letter, Dr. Aguirre to Jose J. Govantes, February 5, 1876, in Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, II, 289-291. Letter, Agustin Cisneros Betancourt to Juan G. Diaz de Villegas, October 12, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 153, Numero 26-2, reveal Agustin Cisneros was indeed aboard the Octavia, although it does not clarify his mission.

³⁶Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, II, 289-291.

³⁷El Tribuno Cubano, October 21, 1876; Jose de Armas y Cespedes, Manifiesto de un cubano al gobierno de Espana (Paris: Libreria Espanola de E. Denne Schmilz, 1876). For the Junta's response, see La Independencia, May 17, 1876 and letter, J. A. Echeverria to Ramon Roa, Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, November 27, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 173, numero 150.

³⁸Traditionally, the Lagunas de Varona revolt against President Cisneros has been viewed as a major contributing factor to the defeat of the rebel cause, because it interfered with General Gomez's advance to the West. See Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, II, 254-262 and Sergio Aguirre, Ecos de caminos (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1974), 195-196. Recent interpretations of the incident are more conciliatory toward General Garcia, but they continue to see his action as a blunder. See Maria Cristina Llerena, "Una personalidad discutida: Vicente Garcia," Universidad de la Habana, 32 (October-December, 1968) and Armando Hart Davalos, "Discurso . . . en el centenario de la toma de Las Tunas por las tropas mambisas," Santiago 25 (Marzo 1977). Details of the Lagunas de Varona incident are included in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

³⁹La Revolucion de Cuba (New York), November 13, 1875.

⁴⁰La Revolucion de Cuba, February 5, 1876.

⁴¹Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, II, 264-266; Juan Bellido de Luna and Enrique Trujillo, eds., La anexión de Cuba a los Estados Unidos. Artículos publicados en El Provenir (New York: El Porvenir, 1892), 91-93. Although there is no direct evidence Cisneros was sympathetic to an autonomy solution, it is clear Spaniards were continually communicating peace proposals to him, giving the illusion he was indeed open to such discussions. Regarding Spanish proposals to Cisneros, see Guerra y Sanchez, op. cit. II, 245-246; "Proposiciones que el gobierno español hicieron a los cubanos durante la revolución de 1868 a 1878," ANC, Academia de la Historia, Legajo 505, número 647; "1868/1874-Notas sobre arreglos cuestión cubana," ANC, Donativos, Legajo 468, número 8; letter, Vicente Garcia to Maximo Gomez, October 20, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 471, número 11.

⁴²La Independencia, May 6, 1876.

⁴³See 1876 issues of New York's, La Independencia, La Voz de la Patria, and El Tribuno Cubano. The Junta defended itself in La Verdad (New York).

CHAPTER 4

THE NATIONALIST ALTERNATIVE DURING THE TEN YEARS WAR: ABSOLUTE INDEPENDENCE AND UNCONDITIONAL REVOLUTION

Opposition to traditional separatism--annexationism and reliance on a diplomatic solution to the Cuban question--reflected a growing nationalism among Cubans that expressed itself in a broad-based fashion soon after the outbreak of the Revolucion de Yara. Already by the mid-1860s, nationalist sentiments had redefined Cuban separatism, and the perceived return to the political program of the 1850s by the rebel government at Guaimaro set in motion a dissident movement that openly challenged the underlying assumptions and strategies of the patriot leadership in New York, as well as in Cuba. The dissenters consistently attacked the diplomatic and negotiating strategies of the exile representatives, believing such approaches to solving the Cuban problem to be essentially anti-nationalist. Only through an entirely self-reliant rebel movement directed by its own military leaders, they argued, could Cuban sovereignty be preserved. Some embraced this view quickly, while others came to the same conclusion only after it became clear United States authorities did not intend to recognize openly the legitimacy of the Cuban republic.¹

One who lost confidence in the United States very quickly, for example, was Jose Gabriel del Castillo. During 1869 he noted in his diary that a North American purchase of the island was still a legitimate option, but within a year Castillo was unconditionally opposing all suggestions that the United States even mediate a solution to the Cuban conflict. Also, in time, like Villaverde, he lost confidence in the revolutionary potential of the Cuban established classes. "Creame cuando le digo," he wrote to the Puerto Rican activist Ramon Betances in 1877, "que lo unico de entre nosotros que racionalmente se pueden fundar esperanzas es el pueblo, los campesinos y los artesanos." Although it was ignorant, he noted, "es la unica porcion de la sociedad cubana que no esta podrida y repodrida."² While some of the exile militants, such as Villaverde and Castillo, tended to include a social dimension in their analysis of the separatist movement, most of the critics who came to form the opposition to the New York Junta were motivated primarily by the growing sense of nationalism permeating the rebel cause. The establishment of an independent Cuban state became the central and uncompromising feature of the dissident ideology during the Ten Years War.

The force of nationalism was seen in the Cuban emigre communities shortly after the establishment of the annexationist Junta in New York. During May and June 1869, the local emigre newspaper in New Orleans, La Libertad, openly challenged annexationist thinking. "Nosotros creemos que Cuba puede llegar a ser una

nacion tan grande y respetable como cualquiera," it noted, adding, "y no esta ni en los intereses de los Estados Unidos, ni en los de Cuba, terminar la revolucion con una anexion que ni nuestras aspiraciones, ni nuestras costumbres, ni nuestra posicion topografica, pueden sancionar sin grandes perjuicios."³ Hoping to avoid this kind of public discussion, La Revolucion responded with a reprimand, suggesting it was fundamentally unpatriotic to raise divisive issues prior to achieving separation from Spain. "Los cubanos no tienen mas que dos caminos que seguir," the New York newspaper declared, "O ser Espanoles o ser patriotas. Colocado en el segundo extremo, no hay vacilacion posible." The other New York papers, El Diario Cubano, La Estrella de Cuba, and La Voz del Pueblo, all founded during the first third of 1870, initially came to La Revolucion's support, fully in accord with its policy of discouraging divisive debates.⁴

The independentistas in New Orleans were not intimidated by the New Yorkers' reprimands, however, and in early 1870 they organized a formal political club dedicated to propagandizing for Cuban sovereignty. They were led by a Habana physician and former reformist, Juan G. Hava, who openly rejected the traditional emigre policy of avoiding discussion of the issue. He also opposed the idea that supporters of absolute independence and annexationists could work together in a united separatist movement. As far as Hava was concerned, the two political ideals were incompatible.

Calling for an unceasing war against annexationist ideology in a series of political pamphlets under the banner of Propaganda Politica, the New Orleans club reflected Saco's sense of Hispanic cultural nationalism. The club asked Cubans to sustain the autonomy of the "Latin race" in the Americas by doing "cuanto este a nuestro alcance por buscar apoyo y simpatias a la nacionalidad de Cuba; jurar defenderla, decidida e inquebrantable." Pamphlets appeared in January, May and September. Entitled, "La Anexion No . . . La Independencia," the tract issued in May declared the ideal of the revolution to be the conquest of "la nacionalidad" and absolute independence. The pamphlets made it clear they could not accept the Junta's position that Cuba's destiny be determined in the future. As these militants viewed it, even questioning absolute independence was a negation of the revolution itself. They declared annexationism a political aberration to be combatted unconditionally, adding, implicitly, even at the cost of rebel unity.

Besides arguing for the preservation of the island's cultural heritage, the Propaganda Politica flyers rejected the traditional annexationist fears that an independent Cuba inevitably would be doomed to the same political instability of her sister republics in Latin America. After all, they argued, Cuba had the advantage of an additional seventy years of experience and a strong economic base from which to build. They also suggested that annexationism implied turning the island's wealth over to North American interests.

Finally, the flyers revealed a resentment toward United States' efforts to politically manipulate an annexation. One tract, in part, read:

Negar Cuba la nacionalidad que tiene asegurada por la naturaleza misma, es ponerla en la triste condicion en que se encuentran, despues de tantos anos de esclavitud, la Polonia y la Ungria. La Rusia de Cuba habia de ser sin remedio la federacion americana, porque ambicionando la anexion de nuestra patria, nos niega el derecho a la nacionalidad y nos convierte de hecho en esclavos sin mas apelacion que la muerte . . . Nuestros esfuerzos de hoy figurarian en la historia de los pueblos que han perecido sin gloria y sin honor, como las tribus primitivas de todo el continente americano y las asociaciones coloniales mas recientes que habitaban la Luisiana, Florida, Texas y California. Quien honra la memoria de esos pobladores que renunciaron a la nacionalidad condenados por la cesion, la venta o la anexion a la Republica de los Estados Unidos?

Unlike the socially progressive independentista philosophy of the Villaverde faction, however, the New Orleans group represented a conservative thinking that suggested absolute independence could be achieved only if socioeconomic continuity and stability on the island were maintained. As we have seen, it was this group that expressed its support for indemnified emancipation and the enactment of labor legislation as a guarantee against the collapse of Cuba's economy, which if not avoided would lead to certain annexation.⁵ Support for the independence ideal came from a variety of social and economic interests.

For the first time, then, backers of Cuban sovereignty were taking an uncompromising and public stand in defense of their position. Their traditional toleration of the annexationists within the separatist camp had come to an end. Annexation was now rede-

fined as anti-nationalist in character. Initially, the Junta's critics in New York were reluctant to enter into political polemics over this question, but as the exile representatives became more deeply involved in secret negotiations with North American and Spanish authorities their attitudes changed. Only by taking an openly pro-independence position, many came to believe, could they legitimize their hostility toward the negotiation tactics of the Junta, which were seen as nothing more than a covert annexationism.

During 1869 the Grant administration had moved swiftly to attempt an annexation of Santo Domingo, an initiative begun under the previous administration but in line with the new President's expansionist sentiments. On September 4, the Chief Executive's envoy in Santo Domingo signed a treaty of annexation with the Dominican President despite considerable opposition both on the island and in the United States Congress. Many congressional supporters of Cuban annexation opposed the Santo Domingo project fearing it would detract from the growing attention being given to the issue of Cuban belligerency, for many North American legislators, a first step in annexing Cuba.⁶ Probably taking its cue from these congressmen, La Revolucion decided on a public position opposing the Dominican treaty. A Puerto Rican exile, Eugenio Maria Hostos, was given the task of preparing the articles. A first piece appeared in La Revolucion during December which merely commented on the fierce anti-annexationist movement in Santo Domingo, but a

second article a week later challenged the concept of annexation directly, clearly intending to include the Cuban and Puerto Rican situations as well. Hostos emphasized that Santo Domingo and Haiti, "como todos los pueblos que tengan su situacion geografica y social, sus tradiciones, sus costumbres," would lose their nationality before the onslaught of the more vigorous and practical North American society. In essence, he argued, "raza anexionada, raza absorbida." Another article appeared the following March vigorously attacking Grant's policies: "clamamos contra la conducta de Norteamerica en Santo Domingo." An independentista, Hostos obviously hoped to challenge the Junta's annexationist bias by engaging in this vigorous denunciation of United States policy and raising the discussion to a philosophical level. Clearly, the newspaper's editor, Pineyro, had not intended for Hostos to engage in any such broad-ranging discussion of the issue, and the result was a dispute leading to Hosto's resignation from the weekly. Pineyro denied a charge that he was annexationist and noted that "La Revolucion cuida de no representar solucion fija e invariable de ninguna especie para la cuestion que se agita." In subsequent articles, La Revolucion took a decidedly neutral position on the Santo Domingo issue.⁷

During the course of 1870, the disputes between the Junta and its critics intensified dramatically, resulting in the dissolution of the tenuously united Liga Cubana during September and the

emergence of clearly defined political clubs. Villaverde, the Castillos, Bellido de Luna, Jose F. Lamadriz, Ramon Rubiera de Armas, Miguel Bravo y Senties, and many others, established a formal opposition organization known as the Sociedad de Artesanos Cubanos de New York. Unlike the previous clubs in New York, the Artesanos explicitly defined itself as independentista. "Cuestion o trabajo que no este basado en la idea de la independencia sin condiciones, es estrano al objeto y fines de la sociedad," stated the second article of the charter. Article three added: "El caracter independiente de la sociedad le impide toda fusion, aceptacion o union con toda otra asociacion cuyo credo politico sea anexionista, concesionista, o reformista; es decir, que no asuma el mismo principio de independencia."⁸ The Artesanos gained the immediate support of important sectors of the emigre populations in Key West and New Orleans. In November, the Club Patriotico Cubano of Key West, led by Jose Dolores Poyo, a journalist and reader in a cigar factory, voted to send its monthly financial contributions to the Artesanos rather than the Junta. The following month, Los Artesanos de Nueva Orleans formed and affiliated with the New Yorkers.⁹

The exile press in New York also began to abandon its initial backing for La Revolucion's policy of avoiding political discussions. Throughout 1870 and 1871 Castillo's El Demócrata, Jose Maria Cespedes' La Republica, and El Pueblo questioned the diplomatic strategies pursued by the exile representatives and raised the

banner of independence. In June 1871, La Republica wondered who posed a greater threat to the rebellion and Cuban freedom: Spanish soldiers or Mr. Fish? Later in the year, El Pueblo declared: "No acertamos a explicarnos el motivo fundamental que inclina hoy nuestra vista hacia el capitolio de Washington . . . queremos a Cuba libre e independiente, y el Gobierno Americano no da senal alguna que nos indique su aquiescencia a esta solucion."¹⁰ Many Habana liberals initially backing the exile representatives concluded that the Junta's annexationist sympathies and the Grant administration's open hostility to the insurrection represented a grave threat to the establishment of a sovereign Cuban state. As one propagandist wrote, "Los Cubanos pensamos que el gobierno de la union se ha conducido de una manera infame con nosotros, desacreditando los principios del liberalismo, de justicia y de amor positivo al gobierno propio."¹¹ Within three years after the Grito de Yara, a significant sector of the Cuban emigre community had lost confidence in the official leadership and in the sincerity of the United States' constant proclamations of sympathy for Cuba Libre. The ideology of absolute independence was now firmly implanted in the exile centers.

With resignations of Aldama, Mestre and Echeverria as exile representatives during the first half of 1871, many believed that annexationists had now been purged from influential positions in the Cuban government. Their successors, Aguilera, Ramon

Cespedes, Castillo, Govin, and Quesada, were all associated with the pro-independence ideal, and debates regarding the political future of the island disappeared from the emigre press. The issue had seemingly been decided. However, the return of Aldama and Echeverria to their posts in early 1874 revived the ideological conflicts. Rumors regarding the Junta's involvement in secret autonomy negotiations during mid-1875 reinitiated the lively disputes, which were carried on with as much bitterness and venom as they had during 1870.

Fearful the Junta would compromise the rebellion through annexation or autonomy, Jose Govantes, Aguilera's staunchest backer in exile, called for the reestablishment of a rebel club dedicated exclusively to the nationalist cause, absolute independence. The New York Artesanos had disbanded soon after Aldama's resignation in 1871, as the result of an internal dispute between Bellido de Luna, the club's President, and the Castillos, Villaverde, Lamadriz, and several others. Bellido had agreed to cooperate with a new organization, La Auxiliadora de Cuba, founded by Aldama's backers shortly after his resignation. Rather than participate with Aldama, however, the dissident Artesanos resigned, charging that article three of the charter, prohibiting cooperation with organizations not openly defined as favoring absolute independence, had been violated. La Auxiliadora's charter did not specifically reject annexationism, argued the dissenters, thus they would not join it.¹² The Artesanos

soon dissolved. In any case, the divided pro-independence faction apparently no longer considered such an organization necessary, until the reappointment of Aldama and Echeverria.

Writing in La Independencia during early 1875, Govantes declared that the rebel cause was again in grave danger from the activities of the exile representatives. "Nuestros heroicos hermanos han sabido arrancar nuestra nacionalidad de las garras del tirano," he noted, "pero si nosotros seguimos como hasta aqui, los trabajos solapados de los anexionistas y autonomistas adquiriran mayor vigor cada dia, y la independencia de nuestra patria tendra que haberselas manana con un enemigo poderoso."¹³ Govantes' call mobilized the pro-independence factions, and during the year La Sociedad Independencia emerged. Despite this effort to unify the pro-independence groups in New York, internal bickering prevented them from cooperating against the Junta. Bellido's willingness to compromise with Aldama in 1871 had won him the eternal enmity of the Villaverde-Castillo-Quesada group.¹⁴ Also, as editor of La Independencia, during 1874 and much of 1875 Bellido refused to engage in divisive polemics, prompting Govantes to establish his own newspaper, La Voz de la Patria, in collaboration with Aguilera.¹⁵ In an editorial, "Necesidad de la polemica," Govantes declared his intention to raise his voice whenever necessary to protect the ideological purity of the Cuban rebellion, adding, "Hemos dicho en nuestro programa que defendermos la independencia solamente, porque bajo el

simpatico nombre de la libertad de Cuba cabe la anexion y aun la autonomia y nosotros a cada cosa llamarla por nombre."¹⁶

Militant independentistas in New Orleans and Key West followed the example of their compatriots in New York. The Obreros de la Independencia de Cuba formed in the Louisiana city, approving a resolution favoring absolute independence and condemning "a la reprobacion universal a todos aquellos que pretendan combatir la independencia y libertad de Cuba," while in Key West Poyo led in establishing La Sociedad Independencia de Cuba. He also established a newsweekly, La Igualdad, to combat the Junta's newspaper on the Key, La Libertad, edited by Federico de Armas. The ideological battle in Key West had already become quite acute by 1874. Aldama's agent, Federico Hortsmann, resigned his position charging that the anti-Junta group, led by Poyo and Enrique Carrero, were using his annexationist convictions to further discredit the exile representatives. During the next two years propaganda battles were waged in the local press, and readers in the cigar factories became influential in forming political opinions among the mass of the tobacco workers.¹⁷

The exile polemics became even more aggravated during mid-1876 when Aguilera received word from Cuba indicating that the newly elected President, Tomas Estrada Palma, as well as other prominent officials in the executive and legislative branches, were staunch annexationists. Writing to Jose G. del Castillo, Govantes noted:

"ha manifestado nuestro Presidente actual y casi todos los de la camara que sostendrian a Aldama, mande o no mande recursos, porque ellos son anexionistas y esto es el fin que se proponen." Aguilera immediately called together the leaders of the various pro-independence factions in New York and suggested the formation of a unified political party to defend the ideal of absolute independence within the rebel movement.¹⁸ They agreed to establish the Partido Radical Independiente with Aguilera as President and Quesada, Lamadriz, Ramon Martinez, and Govantes as officers.

La Voz de la Patria outlined the party's program in a lengthy editorial:

estamos identificados con el credo de la revolucion--la libertad y la independencia absoluta de Cuba--considerando como contraria a tan nobilissimos fines, toda doctrina anexionista, y considerando como traidores a cuantos publica o secretamente busquen la autonomia bajo la odiosa ensena de nuestros implacables enemigos.¹⁹

The editorial also declared its adherence to a broader program of independence and nationality for the Caribbean and Latin America generally, and called for "el establecimiento de la Republica y de la democracia representante en Cuba y Puerto Rico" and "la creacion de una potencia internacional por medio de la confederacion de las Antilla."²⁰ This program represented the culmination of the emigre communities' transition from support for the Aldamista Junta's policies during 1869 and 1870 to an embracing of a militant ideology calling not only for Cuban independence, but for the creation of a

political power in the Caribbean capable of containing the annexationist interests in the United States. During the next several months, La Voz de la Patria received and published many statements of support for this program containing hundreds of signatures, revealing the existence of a broad backing for the Partido Radical Independiente.²¹ Never again would the separatist movement raise the banner of annexation, or be dominated and led by annexationist sympathizers.

The Junta's critics, however, were not content simply to voice independentista rhetoric, for as long as rebel policies were directed at involving the United States, Cuban independence was threatened. Drawing on the concept of revolutionary self-reliance, proclaimed in 1855 and again in La Voz de America a decade later, the Junta's critics called for unconditional revolution and a military victory over the Spanish, without United States involvement except to recognize Cuban belligerency status. From their point of view, a military victory over the Spanish required two basic elements: An executive power in the Cuban government sufficiently empowered to conduct effectively military campaigns and the implementation of a war policy of burning and destroying the property and wealth of the island's economic interests not supporting the rebellion, particularly in Las Villas and Habana provinces. According to the critics, the Junta objected to both elements for a variety of

reasons, including their fear of a popular victory that would displace them as key political figures after the war, their desire for annexation, their suspicions of the intentions of prominent military figures such as General Quesada, and their desire to spare the island's wealth from total destruction. Many believed that it was to avoid the possible consequences of unconditional revolutionary war that the Junta consistently emphasized a diplomatic solution to the Cuban question.

From the moment of the establishment of the Cuban republic at Guaimaro in April 1869, certain elements within the rebellion considered it imperative that a strong executive, with a military orientation, direct the effort against the Spanish. President Cespedes himself had attempted to maintain himself as the supreme authority at the outbreak of the conflict, but he found that only by agreeing to share power could a unified movement be organized, resulting in Guaimaro and the emergence of a constitutional structure. Nevertheless, many opposed the legalistic approach to revolution believing it only created severe obstacles for the conduct of the military campaigns. Most prominent among the dissatisfied was General Manuel de Quesada.

After disembarking on the coast of Camaguey in late 1868, Quesada took command of the rebel forces, and at Guaimaro he was appointed commander-in-chief of the liberation army by the newly created legislature. This display of harmony at the constitutional

assembly, however, quickly proved itself extremely fragile. The aggressive and charismatic Quesada soon revealed his disenchantment with the democratic and legalistic institutions and procedures that limited his ability to conduct the war. Indeed, Quesada did not hesitate to appropriate cattle, provisions, munitions, and other necessities of war from local plantations and farms under rebel control, or forceably recruit soldiers when needed, in direct violation of the new republic's constitutional and legal guarantees. The general explicitly stated his views in a letter to President Cespedes during 1871:

En cuanto a organizacion interior, sigo creyendo que todo lo que no sea operarla militarmente, es atrasar nuestra revolucion y su triunfo . . . vigorizar la revolucion debe ser la tendencia de todo buen patriota; y no veo medio mas eficaz que la constitucion de un poder que tenga aptitud para imprimir al curso de la revolucion toda la energia, actividad y firmeza que se necesita . . . No encuentro razon de ser a una Camara, elegida entre bayonetas del ejercito enemigo y del patriota.²²

Naturally, this attitude alienated the youthful idealists of the Cuban legislature who saw Quesada as a prototype military figure intent on creating a military caste to rule Cuba in the tradition of post-independence Latin America. The legislators were determined to protect civil authority from the encroachment of what they considered was Quesada's militant militarism, resulting in a series of political confrontations that culminated in December 1869 when the Chamber voted to relieve the commander-in-chief of his duties. Although several of Quesada's officers suggested he simply dissolve the legislature, the Cuban military leader surrendered his

command. The civil-military controversy was far from over, however. It haunted the separatist movement throughout the next thirty years.²⁵

President Cespedes took no active part in this confrontation between Quesada, his brother-in-law, and the legislators, but there seems little doubt he sympathized with the general's contention that the war needed to be conducted more vigorously. By the end of 1869 it was becoming apparent to the Cuban President that his high hopes for an early recognition of belligerency by the United States were unrealistic, which in turn suggested a need for greater effectiveness on the military front. This required obtaining arms and munitions from the emigre communities, which were not arriving. Accordingly, without consulting the legislature, which surely would object, Cespedes commissioned the deposed commander to travel to the United States and organize an expeditionary force in cooperation with the New York Junta. During February 1870, Quesada and his aides arrived in Nassau, where they were received by Carlos del Castillo and Jose de Armas y Cespedes.

Already openly in defiance of the Junta, Castillo and Armas informed Quesada of the political situation in the emigre communities and joined with him in formulating a plan to obtain support for the general's expedition. They contacted Poyo in Key West to serve as their agent in that increasingly important emigre

center, and Armas departed for New Orleans to organize support there.²⁴ Quesada and Castillo made their way to New York.

Apparently, in order to facilitate his activities in the exile communities, Quesada kept his conflicts with the Cuban legislature confidential, giving the impression his mission was sanctioned by the entire government. Unaware that the general had been deposed by the legislature, the New York Junta organized a grand reception at Jersey City where Quesada's steamer arrived on March 1. Hundreds of Cubans turned out to greet the prominent rebel leader they had heard much about, including Mestre, representing the Junta, three officials of the political club, and La Revolucion's editor, Pineyro, representing the newspaper and the ailing Morales Lemus. As La Revolucion described it, "Reino en la recepcion el mayor entusiasmo y la bandera de la Republica de Cuba flotaba al viento desde el vapor, y siguio flameando en el coche que condujo al Hotel de Hoffman, al General y su comitiva."²⁵

This harmony was short-lived, however. Although the general and the Junta initially made efforts to coordinate their activities, these gestures collapsed when it became evident neither would take a secondary role in the expeditionary preparations. Also, news arrived from Cuba concerning Quesada's removal as commander-in-chief. Furthermore, when La Revolucion learned that Quesada's mission had not been ratified by the legislature, it suggested that this activities were, in fact, unauthorized. In an effort to

clarify the situation, the newly formed Liga Cubana named an investigating committee to report on Quesada's activities. The committee concluded the general has been deceitful and that his activities inside as well as outside Cuba were detrimental to the rebellion. Finally, the report asserted that Quesada was subject to the authority of the Junta while in exile, and a copy was forwarded to the President of the Cuban legislature, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt.²⁶

Although the Junta resented Quesada's aggressive, authoritarian, independent manner, they were more concerned with his militarist inclinations; a concern that deepened when they received reports from the island that his mission to the emigre centers was part of a conspiracy devised with President Cespedes to raise a military expedition capable of dissolving the legislative body and establishing a dictatorial authority in its place. During July a member of the legislature, Luis Ayestaran, arrived in New York and reinforced this perception, ensuring the Junta's support for the Cuban chamber in its conflicts with President Cespedes.²⁷

While there is no evidence the President and Quesada ever conspired to dissolve the legislature, many Cubans in New York believed this to be the case. During April, La Revolucion published articles rejecting the idea that the military be given precedence over civil authority in Cuba.²⁸ Meanwhile, in New Orleans, Armas recruited Hava to Quesada's cause, and together they mobilized that

community in favor of the general's activities. On March 30, the Junta's agent in Louisiana fired off a telegram to Aldama: "Cubanos reunidos anoche citados por Armas, comisionado de Quesada. Este hizo acusaciones a la Junta--ha creado atmosfera desfavorable para ella."²⁹ Several days later in a speech to the New Orleans Cubans, Armas asserted that a victory in Cuba would be impossible unless the military element were given greater authority and freedom of action. "La cuestion diplomatica! La cuestion diplomatica!" he declared, "Consistira en suplicar al gobierno americano que se haga cargo de nosotros?" Without a doubt, Armas noted, "los malos resultados que ha tenido esa cuestion es lo que por fin decidio a nuestro Presidente a mandar al General Quesada para que se ocupase de la cuestion de guerra, que es la importante." Armas suggested that those placing obstacles in the way of the liberation army were the conservatives who "a fin de asegurar su triunfo en el presente y en el porvenir han acudido a un recurso ingenioso: a hablar contra el militarismo." He concluded that "En Cuba militarismo quiere decir patriotismo."³⁰

In New York, El Democrata, edited by Jose G. del Castillo, upheld the virtues of constitutional rule but condemned what it believed to be the misdirected idealism of the youthful legislators more concerned with legalities than with pressing on to defeat the Spanish army. Miguel Bravo y Senteis, a physician from Cardenas who had been deported to Fernando Foo in early 1869, called for a

constitutional reform which would dilute the power of the legislative branch of government by adding a senate. He observed, however, that conditions in Cuba did not allow for ideal republican forms and suggested that of primary importance was the creation of "un ejercito numeroso, bien armado, y sobre todo bien mandado." Building an effective military force, he noted, "es el espiritu del militarismo que dicen reina en Cuba y que tanto alarma a algunos."³¹

During the next three years, this was the primary source of controversy both inside Cuba and in the emigre centers between the legislature, supported by the Junta, and the executive branch, backed by Quesada, the Castillos, Villaverde, Armas, Hava, and Poyo. Although the resignations of Aldama, Mestre, and Echeverria in mid-1871 suggested that those favoring a stronger executive, radicalizing the war effort, and jettisoning negotiations as a major rebel strategy had gained the upper hand, Cespedes' removal from office proved the contrary. By 1874, the legislative and executive branches of the Cuban government were firmly in the hands of those dedicated to preserving the constitution and seeking a diplomatic solution to the conflict: Aldama and Echeverria were accordingly reinstated as exile representatives. Nevertheless, the former President's followers in Cuba and the Junta's critics in exile did not flag in their efforts to regain control of the executive branch. They were heartened by growing popular disenchantment with the interim President, Cisneros Betancourt, both in Cuba and in the

exile communities, sparked by rumors of his willingness to listen to autonomy proposals and by his apparent inability to unify the military leadership behind his administration. Dissent was particularly acute in Oriente, where family and followers of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes formed a secret political society, Los Hermanos del Silencio, apparently dedicated to the overthrow of Cisneros.

One of the leaders of the political opposition to the interim President in Oriente was Miguel Bravo, who returned to Cuba during 1872, and joined Cespedes' cabinet as Minister of War. Bravo probably played a central role in having Aguilera recalled as exile representative and replaced by Castillo and Quesada. On assuming the presidency in late 1873, Cisneros ordered Bravo to Oriente province, where he joined in the dissident movement against the new chief executive. Although the extent of his coordination with Aldama's opposition in New York is not clear, Bravo knew he could count on the support of the Castillos, Villaverde, Rubiera, and others in his efforts against Cisneros.

Bravo and his supporters received their opportunity when Cisneros became involved in a disagreement with General Vicente Garcia over the management of the war effort. Hearing of the conflict, Bravo encouraged the general to lead a political movement, resulting in the Lagunas de Varona revolt and proclamation.³² Inspired if not actually written by Bravo, Garcia's manifesto demanded the President's resignation, new elections, and a

constitutional amendment creating a senate. Bravo's primary goal, however, was Cisneros' removal and replacement with an individual more inclined toward a radical war effort. In fact, the demand for a constitutional change was abandoned when Cisneros agreed to step down, and on hearing that Juan B. Spotorno, a patriot with a solid revolutionary reputation, had been selected to replace Cisneros as interim President until new elections could be held, Bravo considered the movement had been successful.³³

That Garcia was totally aware of the ideological implications of the dissident movement against Cisneros is not clear, since he was an individual of strong regionalist inclinations tending to resent presidential authority, but he and Bravo shared a common interest in removing Cisneros. In fact, some believed that the general had been an unwitting tool of the Cespedistas, for, as Spotorno noted, the movement was the work of "los parientes y amigos de Carlos Manuel y de sus compinches los Quesada," who took advantage of the personal differences between Garcia and Cisneros to provoke an uprising with clear ideological overtones.³⁴

It is ironic that the movement against Cisneros came just after Maximo Gomez' penetration of Las Villas and while efforts were being made to send him reinforcements. Gomez himself attributed the failure of the offensive to the political disruptions caused by the very elements who claimed to be his most avid backers. Nevertheless, the Junta's critics in New York applauded Garcia's actions and

were heartened by Spotorno's quick and unconditional rejection of autonomy negotiations. Also, as Francisco Valdez Mendoza noted in La Independencia, Spotorno had a better reputation in military matters. Cisneros, he argued, "creyo llegar al fin mas pronto, respetando la vida de nuestros enemigos y conservando la riqueza del Departamento Occidental," while "el Sr. Spotorno mas radical en ese sentido, no ve la conclusion de la guerra, sino incendiando y destruyendo los centros de produccion del enemigo."³⁵

In addition to desiring a strong executive with a military orientation, supporters of radicalizing the war effort had since 1869 called for a policy of burning the island's sugar wealth still under Spanish control. Although the policy was in fact decreed by President Cespedes in October 1869, Villaverde, the Castillos, Bellido, and others in exile believed that outright destruction of Cuba's wealth and property was consistently discouraged and stymied by the legislative chamber on the advice of the Junta in New York, which continued to believe in a diplomatic solution. While the Junta expressed support for the tea, or burning policy, in La Revolucion during 1869, it also called for a discriminating implementation, noting that "los radicales quieren dar fuego a toda la isla, desde Maisi hasta San Antonio, y los conservadores desean conservar lo que no sean necesario destruir." The article continued: "la destruccion de la propiedad no es un fin, sino un medio . . . destruir la propiedad cuando esa destruccion no dana al

enemigo, es danarnos a nosotros mismos. Nuestro ideal no es Cuba convertida en ruinas, sino Cuba prospera, rica y feliz."³⁶ The Junta's critics, however, interpreted this as indirect opposition to a policy which they could not openly oppose. In 1875, subsequent to Gomez' invasion of the west, Bellido initiated a publicity campaign in La Independencia favoring a radical tea policy. "Fuego, pues, a los ingenios azucareros, sin consideraciones a sus propietarios, sea cual fuese su nacionalidad y la bandera que enarbolan en sus fincas . . . Fuego a la cana! Fuego a los esclavistas! Y perezca con sus defensores la institucion de la esclavitud," proclaimed the newspaper. Bellido charged the Aldama group with secretly combatting this policy because of their economic interests. He noted that not only would Aldama's ingenios on the island suffer the consequences, but so would his sugar refinery in New York, which, he claimed, received its sugar from Cuba. "Como podia estar de acuerdo el Sr. Aldama con mis articulos?" asked Bellido. "No es posible."³⁷

In fact, however, the Junta had always expressed support for the tea because it provided them with negotiating leverage. In a letter to then Secretary of Foreign Relations, Estrada Palma, Aldama and Echeverria noted that increased military pressure would serve their diplomatic ends. They wrote:

Importa, pues, infinito que la guerra se sostenga con toda energia aun a costo de esfuerzos sobre naturales, pero al mismo tiempo con la mas consumada prudencia, sin empenar acciones decisivas, a no ser con grandes probabilidades de vencer, porque seria funesta en las circunstancias actuales, y activando sobre todo la destruccion de ingenios en Occidente, que mas que ninguna otra cosa ha estimulado, y ha de seguir estimulando la intervencion de este Gobierno como la de las otras potencias que comercian con Cuba.³⁸

Clearly, the exile representatives believed that only diplomacy or a direct foreign intervention would bring an end to the conflict, and they hoped that enough destruction and commercial disruption would provoke increased North American diplomatic pressures on the Spanish; or more desirable, possibly a direct intervention by United States forces.³⁹ Aldama and Echeverria had little faith that the Cubans could, on their own, achieve a military victory, and in any case they feared the consequences of such a victory should their political enemies gain power on the island. Nevertheless, while they supported the tea, within the emigre centers the perception remained that the Junta, and its supporters in the Cuban government, opposed a vigorous military offensive aimed at destroying the island's sugar plantations. It was therefore hoped that Cisneros' removal would be followed by the appointment of new representatives in exile and that the new Cuban government would dedicate itself exclusively to reinvigorating the war effort.

Despite the exile critics' initial enthusiasm for the new President, Spotorno reconfirmed Aldama and Echeverria in their positions, and the new elections resulted in essentially the same legislative body. They again felt defrauded. The effort to alter the

composition of what they considered to be a timid rebel government had failed. Commenting on the new legislature, El Tribuno Cubano noted that "Pocos . . . son diputados nuevos, pudiendo decirse, por lo contrario, que la mayoría pertenece al grupo famoso de la Constituyente de Guaimaro." It added that five of them had taken part in the meeting where President Cespedes was deposed.⁴⁰ Only Bravo, noted the paper, represented the Cespedistas in the new government. He had been elected as a representative from Oriente. The supporters of unconditional and radical warfare had again been defeated by the pro-diplomacy forces who looked to Aldama and Echeverria for a solution to the Cuban conflict.

While Bravo and other followers of Cespedes conspired against President Cisneros during 1875, the Junta's critics in the United States were involved in their own determined effort to install a president who would remove Aldama and Echeverria as exile representatives. Subsequent to President Cespedes' deposition, in accordance with the law of presidential succession, Cisneros became interim President until the Vice-President, Aguilera, could return to the island and assume the office. Since Aguilera had still not arrived in Cuba by mid-1875 when Cisneros resigned, Spotorno also took the position on an interim basis. The Vice-President had initiated his efforts to embark for his homeland soon after Cespedes' removal, with the support of the other anti-Junta factions.

All concerned, including the exile representatives, knew that on assuming office Aguilera would replace Aldama and Echeverria.

Although in essential agreement on ideological matters, the Aguilera group and the Villaverde-Castillo-Quesada faction had been consistently at odds since 1871. More conciliatory toward the Junta, Aguilera was often criticized by the Castillos, who considered any cooperation with Aldama tantamount to treason, but with the return of Aldama to office, Quesada decided to put aside personal antagonisms and aid the Vice-President. Residing in Paris, General Quesada offered Aguilera \$21,000 to purchase a steamer. He, in turn, approached Aldama and proposed a joint expedition which he would command. Aldama agreed after much discussion and negotiations, but by April 1875 the Agent General had still not concluded the preparations or announced a departure date. Convinced Aldama was stalling to prevent his return, Aguilera departed on his own, with Quesada's help. Throughout 1875 and 1876, the Vice-President made several efforts to land in Cuba, all to no avail. Foul weather conditions and close guarding of the coasts combined to foil the attempted landings.⁴¹

Meanwhile, Aldama and Echeverria kept up a constant flow of correspondence, first to Cisneros and then Spotorno, characterizing the Vice-President as a disruptive force in the exile communities. Indirectly, they suggested Aguilera would be detrimental to the rebel cause should he assume the presidency.⁴² Finally,

in March 1876, the new legislature elected after Lagunas de Varona removed Aguilera from office and chose Estrada Palma as the new Chief Executive. As already noted, the latter was a strong supporter of the exile representatives, he held annexationist sympathies, and he was committed to a United States-sponsored mediation of the conflict. Aldama and Echeverria were quickly reaffirmed in their offices.⁴⁵ Their critics had once again been outmaneuvered.

This had been the opposition's final chance to gain control of the Cuban government and remove the exile representatives, who they believed were directing the entire rebellion from their comfortable homes in New York city. However, although unable to depose them from office, by late 1876 it was clear that the Junta's opposition had won the hearts and minds to the mass of the emigre communities. Their nationalist vision of the separatist movement had been successfully disseminated throughout the exile centers. In this respect, the opposition emerged triumphant from the Ten Years War, although ironically the divisions they instigated played a central role in the demise of the rebellion. Indeed, it is probable that many preferred to return to Spanish rule than see an annexationist victory. As far as the independentistas were concerned, the separatist movement had become the independence movement. They no longer viewed the annexationists as partners in the struggle to evict the Spanish from their homeland.

In the midst of another diplomatic initiative by Aldama and Echeverria during 1877 and early 1878 to attain a United States mediated settlement based on independence, news was received from Cuba that the legislative body had revoked the ban on autonomist discussions with the Spanish and that a treaty had been signed ending the Ten Years War.⁴⁴ Once again the Cuban separatists had been defeated, and inevitably many rebels discarded their rifles in favor of a political system based on principles of reform and autonomy within the Spanish empire. But those remaining in the emigre communities quickly made it clear their intention was to continue agitating for a separatist revival. They raised the ideological banner of absolute independence and unconditional revolution.

It is apparent that the internal divisions within the rebel movement during the Ten Years War were primarily ideological in nature. Obviously, personal rivalries, regional conflicts, and social antagonisms influenced and aggravated the disputes, but the bitter polemics between the Junta and its critics were motivated by differing perceptions of what the separatist movement represented politically.⁴⁵ The Junta's political pragmatism, its interest in annexation, and confidence in the United States' fundamental sympathy for the Cuban cause was in direct conflict with the critics' intransigence on the question of Cuban national identity and their distrust of North American intentions toward their homeland. Because of the fundamental contradictions between the ideologies of

absolute independence and annexation, the decade-long process of definition was probably inevitable. For most, by the termination of the 1870s the question of the island's future political status had been decided. During the next decade, strategic and social issues would test the solidity and cohesiveness of the Cuban revolutionary movement, but annexation and diplomacy would never again dominate the ideology of the patriot cause.

Notes

¹Traditional historiography has produced studies of the Junta's leadership, including Morales Lemus, Aldama, Mestre, but few studies exist of the individuals leading the opposition in exile. Accordingly, biographies are needed for Villaverde, the Castillos, Bellido de Luna, Govantes, Armas y Cespedes, and the other prominent political figures. Only Aguilera and Quesada have been the subject of biographical study.

²"Diario de Jose Gabriel del Castillo, 1869-1871," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 426, numero 15. Letter, Jose Gabriel del Castillo to Ramon E. Betances, December 5, 1877, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 422, numero 25.

³La Libertad (New Orleans), May 12, June 20, August 1, 1869.

⁴La Revolucion (New York), May 15, 1869; La Voz del Pueblo (New York), May 21, 1869; La Estrella de Cuba (New York), June 4, 1870.

⁵Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Años, 2 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), II, 95; La Propaganda Política, A los habitantes de Cuba: La Anexión No--La Independencia (New Orleans, May 1870); La Propaganda Política (J. G. Hava); A 'Un Habanero' (New Orleans, September 1870); La Propaganda Política, A los habitantes de Cuba. La indemnización (New Orleans, June 1870). See also, La Libertad, July 11, August 8, 1869.

⁶Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States, 2 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1963), II, 211.

⁷La Revolucion, December 4, 21, 1869, March 29, April 7, June 4, 1870. For additional information on Hostos see Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, Hostos y Cuba (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1974) and Camila Henríquez Ureña, ed., Eugenio María de Hostos. Obras (Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1976).

⁸El Democrata (New York), September 9, 21, October 26, November 1, 2, 1870. Cesar Andreu Iglesias, Memorias de Bernardo Vega: Contribución a la historia de la comunidad puertorriquena en Nueva York (Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, Inc., 1977), 92-93.

⁹El Demócrata, November 17, 1870. For details regarding the Key West Cubans, see Gerald E. Poyo, "Key West and the Cuban Ten Years War," Florida Historical Quarterly, 57 (January 1979).

¹⁰La Republica (New York), June 18, 1871. El Pueblo, December 20, 1871.

¹¹La Republica, June 4, 1871.

¹²La Revolucion, March 9, 14, 23, 28, April 13, 1871; Juan J. E. Casaus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editoria Lex, 1953), 116.

¹³La Independencia (New York), February 11, 1875.

¹⁴Regarding conflicts between independentistas see, La Independencia, December 2, 1875, January 8, 1876 and El Correo de Nueva York, February 10, 1875. El Correo was edited by Jose de Armas y Cespedes.

¹⁵La Independencia, February 25, 1875; Emilia C. de Villaverde, La Liga de las Hijas de Cuba a los cubanos (New York, September 23, 1874); La Voz de la Patria (New York), April 7, 1876.

¹⁶La Voz de la Patria, April 7, 14, 1876.

¹⁷La Independencia, April 19, 1876; La Voz de la Patria, April 21, 28, May 5, June 2, 30, December 15, 1876; letter, Federico Hortsman to Miguel Aldama, January 20, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 157, numero 49-37.

¹⁸Eladio Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera y la revolucion de Cuba de 1868, 2 vols. (Habana: Avisador Comercial, 1909), II, 353-365; letter, Jose J. Govantes to Jose Gabriel del Castillo, September 23, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 423, numero 41. Estrada Palma's annexationist sentiments are revealed in his correspondence. See Carlos de Velasco, ed., Desde el Castillo de Figuera: Cartas de Estrada Palma (Habana: Sociedad Editorial Cuba Contemporanea, 1918), 72-75.

¹⁹La Voz de la Patria, October 16, 1876. The officers of the club were as follows: 1st vice-president, Manuel de Quesada; 2nd vice-president, Ramon Martinez; Treasurer, Jose Francisco Lamadriz; Secretary, Jose J. Govantes. Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, II, 365.

²⁰La Voz de la Patria, October 6, 1876.

²¹La Voz de la Patria, October 13, November 1, December 8, 1876.

²²Carlos M. de Cespedes y Quesada, Manuel de Quesada y Loynaz (Habana: Siglo XX, 1925), 118.

²³For detailed accounts of the Quesada-Chamber controversy see Cespedes y Quesada, Manuel de Quesada, 73-99; Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, I, 317-321; Vidal Morales y Morales, Hombres del 68: Rafael Morales y Gonzalez (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1972), 259-273.

²⁴Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968), 187; Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935), 221.

²⁵La Revolucion, March 3, 5, 1870.

²⁶Accounts of Quesada's dealings with the Junta are numerous. The following are useful: Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, II, 84-90; Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, I, 55-60; Cespedes y Quesada, Manuel de Quesada, 99-106. See also, New York's La Revolucion, April 23, 26, 30, August 2, 6, 9, 1870, and, Club de la Liga Cubana, "Carta y informe. Al ciudadano Presidente de la Camara de Representantes de la Republica de Cuba, 18 de Abril de 1870," Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Jose Ignacio Rodriguez Collection, Box 145.

²⁷Plasencia, Bibliografia, 132, 137, 208-209. Jose Manuel Perez Cabrera, Vida y martirio de Luis de Ayestaran (Habana: Siglo XX, 1936), 45-53.

²⁸La Revolucion, April 26, 28, 1870.

²⁹Plasencia, Bibliografia, 198; Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, I, 58.

³⁰Jose de Armas y Cespedes, Discurso pronunciado por Jose de Armas y Cespedes (New Orleans, 1870). See response by La Revolucion, May 5, 1870.

³¹El Demócrata, September 28, October 7, 1870.

³²Letter, Miguel Bravo y Senties to Vicente Garcia, July 21, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 463, numero 38. In this letter Bravo thanks Garcia for his support. "Yo estimado General, doy a V. con la efusion de mi alma las mas expresivas gracias por haberse puesto al frente del movimiento politico." See also, Guerra y Sanchez, Guerra de los 10 Anos, II, 198, 248, 258, and Maria Cristina Llerena, "Una personalidad discutida: Vicente Garcia," Universidad de la Habana, 32 (Octubre-Diciembre 1968).

³³Letter, Miguel Bravo y Senties to Vicente Garcia, July 20, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 463, numero 38.

³⁴Plasencia, Bibliografia, 156-157.

³⁵La Independencia, October 28, 1875.

³⁶La Revolucion, September 29, 1870.

³⁷La Independencia, April 5, 1876.

³⁸Letter, Jose A. Echeverria y Miguel de Aldama to Tomas Estrada Palma, Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, October 25, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 173, numero 150.

³⁹Two other examples of the exile representatives' expression of support for the tea are the following: Letter, Miguel de Aldama to Maximo Gomez, March 11, 1875, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 150, numero 7-19, and Miguel de Aldama to Francisco Vicente Aguilera, August 19, 1871, in Aguilera Rojas, Francisco Vicente Aguilera, I, 67-72.

⁴⁰El Tribuno Cubano (New York), May 4, 1876.

⁴¹Panfilo D. Camacho, Aguilera: El precursor sin gloria (Habana: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educacion, Direccion de Cultura, 1951).

⁴²Letter, Jose A. Echeverria y Miguel de Aldama to Tomas Estrada Palma, Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, March 1875-April 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 173, numero 150.

⁴³Letter, Tomas Estrada Palma to Miguel de Aldama, August 5, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 155, numero 39-18.

⁴⁴For a brief review of this final diplomatic effort, see Jorge Ibarra, Ideologia mambisa (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967), 97-100.

⁴⁵In light of this conclusion, it is necessary to reevaluate the interpretation that characterizes the divisions as primarily social or class in nature. For example, see Philip Foner's A History of Cuba, II, chapters 17 and 19. A more recent study offering a similar interpretation is Jorge Gilbert, Cuba: From Primitive Accumulation of Capital to Socialism (Toronto: Two Thirds Editions, 1981), 95-100. While socioeconomic factors would later play a central role in dividing the rebel movement, during the Ten Years War the rebels divided primarily along political lines. Individuals with clearly conservative socioeconomic inclinations, for example, joined with socially progressive elements to support a nationalist conception of the rebellion. Social antagonisms indeed existed, but the primary concern during this phase of the separatist struggle was the establishment of the movement's independentista character.

CHAPTER 5

THE CUBAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, THE 1880S: REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVISM AND POLITICAL DEBATES*

For the vast majority of Cubans the Zanjón Pact signalled the termination of the separatist revolt and the initiation of another effort to implement colonial reforms and establish Cuba as an autonomous province within the Spanish Empire. Prominent ex-separatists such as José Galvez, Juan Spotorno, Miguel Bravo and others founded a Liberal Party, which like its reformist predecessor of the 1860s, sought to obtain political and economic liberalization of Spanish rule and gradual, indemnified emancipation of the slaves. During the next decade and a half, Cuban autonomists vainly struggled to obtain significant reforms, a failure that in 1895 led to the final and successful push to eject the Spanish from the island.¹

While many Cubans were lured into the autonomist movement during the final two years of the 1870s and the following decade, the mass of the emigre communities remained committed to separatism. On learning of the Zanjón Pact, the exile centers mobilized in

*An early version of this chapter was published as "Cuban Patriots in Key West, 1878-1886: Guardians of the Independence Ideal," Florida Historical Quarterly, 61 (July 1982). I express appreciation to the Florida Historical Quarterly for permission to reproduce it here.

protest. Patriot activists in New York established a Comite Revolucionario to replace agents Aldama and Echeverria, who resigned their offices on learning of the demise of the Cuban republic. In Key West a similar organization began raising funds and enlisted men to support the remaining forces in Cuba under the command of General Antonio Maceo, who in March at Baragua announced his refusal to accept the Zanjon Treaty and his intention to continue battling. Although by June the last of the rebel forces, including Maceo, had surrendered, the emigre rebels continued their organizing activities.

Those heading the reorganization of the Cuban exiles represented a new leadership, who in general considered themselves the heirs of the revolutionary faction loyal to Carlos Manuel de Cespedes and Manuel de Quesada. Although Quesada himself remained inactive after 1878--as did a broad cross-section of the exile leadership, including Aldama, Echeverria, the Castillos (Carlos died in 1879), Valdez Mendoza, Armas y Cespedes, and others--his followers raised the banner of revolutionary activism and definitively removed reliance on the United States as an integral element of the separatist cause. The ideals of the Sociedad Republicana had emerged triumphant after ten years of bitter political conflicts in the exile centers. Elected to head the New York Comite Revolucionario were Jose F. Lamadriz, Ramon Martinez, Leoncio Prado, Leandro Rodriguez, and Fidel Pierra, all noted during the Ten Years

War for their opposition to the Aldama Junta.² Except for Prado, who was the son of the Peruvian President, Mariano Prado, the members of the Comite were established merchants and businessmen in New York. In Key West, by now the second most important exile center in the United States, Jose D. Poyo and Carlos M. de Cespedes y Cespedes, son of the former President, reorganized the movement at that rebel center, composed primarily of tobacco workers. In August, the Key's separatist leaders founded a secret patriot society, Orden del Sol, dedicated to propagating the ideal of a free Cuba, and on October 12, Poyo published the first issue of a new rebel news-weekly, El Yara, which for the next twenty years would be in the forefront of the exile press.³

Later in the year, General Calixto Garcia, a prominent rebel military chieftain during the past war, arrived in New York and offered his services to the revolutionary committee. True to its political commitment to a centralized, military conduct of the movement, the emigre leadership in New York turned its full authority over to the general, who promised to lead the new insurrection. Garcia immediately established the Comite Revolucionario Cubano and called on Cubans interested in advancing armed rebellion on the island to organize similar committees subject to the authority of the central organization in New York.⁴ Patriot clubs instantly appeared throughout the emigre centers in the United States, including Key West, Jacksonville, Charleston, Baltimore, and various other cities.

In Key West, activists met on November 7 at San Carlos Institute, an educational, social, and political organization established in 1871, and founded the Club Revolucionario Cubano de Cayo Hueso. After electing officers and listening to speeches by San Carlos' long-time director, Martin Herrera, and Lamadriz, representing the New York Comite, the new club notified Garcia it would support his efforts. Lamadriz remained on the Key, becoming the emigre center's most influential political leader. He had been active in the separatist cause since the late 1840s, and his presence in south Florida lent additional prestige to this increasingly important emigre community. The following month, forty Key West women, led by Rosario Lamadriz, L. Piedad Figueredo, and Clara, Celia and America Poyo, formed the Club Hijas de la Libertad, one of the most active organizations backing Cuban independence for the next two decades.⁵

Conspirators in Cuba also organized and by mid-1879 established a sufficiently large network of rebel clubs across the island to initiate the new insurrection, La Guerra Chiquita. Some six thousand Cubans rose against Spanish authority, and during the next year the emigre communities launched two modest expeditions in their support. The second was commanded by Garcia, but by September 1880 the last insurgent leader still fighting, General Emilio Nunez, surrendered to the Spanish. Weary of warfare, the mass of the Cuban people failed to join the rebellion, leaving the rebels isolated and

ill-armed to face a Spanish force of some 25,000 well trained soldiers.⁶

With the failure of the Guerra Chiquita, the rebel communities in the United States experienced a temporary decline in revolutionary activism. In New York the rebel newspaper La Independencia ceased publication in late 1880 and the political clubs disbanded, while in Key West the rebel community fell into inactivity. El Yara, however, did not miss an issue, remaining as the sole newspaper that worked for a renewal of the Cuban insurrection. While many Cubans returned to the reformist fold, hoping the Liberal Party in Cuba would provide a solution to the island's political and economic grievances, the Key West newspaper voiced the opinion that little could be expected from the autonomists. "Creer que la esquilhada metropoli espanola puede darle a Cuba lo que necesita para salvarse y prosperar," declared El Yara during December 1880, "es una quimera . . . No hay mas que un camino de salvacion: el establecimiento de la Republica Cubana, donde cubanos y espanoles encuentren paz, trabajo y progreso."⁷

The editors of El Yara were not the only Cubans who saw little future in the reformist solution. Key West and New York began to receive an influx of rebel veterans who viewed the two cities as the most prominent locations to continue their propaganda and organizing activities against the Spanish. Those who arrived on the Key during 1881 and 1882, seconding El Yara's call not to abandon the struggle, included such figures as Fernando Figueredo,

Gerardo Castellanos, Enrique Canales, and Jose Rogelio Castillo.⁸ El Yara welcomed them, declaring, "Bienvenidos seais, hermanos . . . Tambien como vosotros hoy, muchos somos los que tuvimos que abandonar el suelo natal hace anos agobiados no por la miseria sino para trabajar por romper la ergastula de Espana . . . Recibid nuestra bienvenida . . . y sea el abrazo que os enviamos simbolo augusto de indestructible confraternizacion para marchar unisonos en los trabajos por la independencia y libertad de la patria."⁹ The new arrivals became deeply involved in the community, with Castellanos and Canales opening small cigar establishments and Castillo joining El Yara's staff as typographer while he learned the trade of tobacco selector. Figueredo, on his part, became one of the primary rebel leaders alongside Lamadriz and Poyo.

A participant in the Protesta de Baragua in 1878, Figueredo had continued beside Maceo until surrender became inevitable, and in Key West he immediately lent his prestige to reorganizing the community. Soon after arriving on the Key in late 1881, the veteran mambi presented a series of lectures at San Carlos describing his experience during the Ten Years War, accounts subsequently published as La Revolucion de Yara, one of the classic accounts of the struggle. He also founded a short-lived newspaper, La Voz de Hatuey, whose militancy prompted complaints from the Spanish ambassador in Washington and criticism from the local Anglo press that condemned what it considered the weekly's advocacy of violence against loyal

Spaniards in Key West.¹⁰ Figueredo's activities were clearly calculated to keep the issue of Cuban independence in the public arena and together with the presence of the other veterans on the isle kept the revolutionary ambience flourishing.

During these years Key West also enthusiastically received a new generation of rebel publicists and propagandists who chose exile rather than to remain on the island. They included Cirilo Pouble, Martin Morua Delgado and Rafael Serra.¹¹ On arriving in Key West, Pouble, a secret conspirator in Habana during the Ten Years War, wrote his New York compatriots announcing that Cuban opinion increasingly supported the resumption of the revolution. He noted: "La opinion de Cuba se ha declarado ya . . . espera y desea la Revolucion: los espanoles con temor, los cubanos con ansiedad. Todos trabajan por ella: los primeros con su intransigencia; los segundos por liberarse del ferreo yugo que los oprime."¹² Young Negro journalists Morua Delgado and Serra immediately used their writing talents to call on black compatriots to support a renewal of revolutionary activities. By late 1882, however, the three had transferred to New York, still considered the central emigre center, where they joined established personalities in reorganizing that community. Among the organizers in New York was the young publicist and orator Jose Marti, who had arrived in early 1880 after being deported from Habana for his activities in that city's rebel committee. Immediately joining the Club Revolucionario, Marti became its

president when Garcia sailed for Cuba in May; he soon emerged as one of the most influential Cuban patriots in New York. In November a Comite Organizador was formed for the purpose of reorganizing the New York community with such well known separatists as Cisneros Betancourt, the former President of the Cuban Republic, Cirilo Villaverde, Juan Arnao, and Rafael Lanza among its leaders. During 1883 two rebel clubs appeared, the Club Ignacio Agramonte and Club La Independencia, as well as a new patriot newspaper, El Separatista, edited by Pouble, Morua Delgado, and Ramon Rubiera de Armas, Villaverde's collaborator on El Tribuno Cubano during the mid-1870s.¹³

Meanwhile, in Key West, direct military efforts to launch a new rebellion had already begun. During late 1882 the local patriot society authorized Carlos Aguero to initiate armed actions on the island. A veteran of the Ten Years War and former aide-de-camp to the noted insurgent General Julio Sanguily, Aguero took a small force to Cuba and initiated isolated guerilla activities against the Spanish authorities. Shortly after, in early 1883, another veteran, Ramon L. Bonachea, arrived in Key West, where he outlined a plan for organizing an expeditionary force. After an encouraging reception there he continued to New York and received the support of the newly established rebel clubs, which during August formed a unified committee to coordinate the various rebel initiatives. Also, independently of Bonachea, another expeditionary

force began forming in New York under the leadership of Limbano Sanchez, Francisco Varona Fornet, and Rafael Lanza, veterans and activists during the Ten Years War.¹⁴

Revolutionary enthusiasm became even more exalted in late 1883 when Agüero arrived on the Key from Cuba to raise additional funds in order to expand his operations. Soon after arriving, however, local authorities arrested the "guerrillero" on the basis of a Spanish request for his extradition as a common bandit. Angered by Agüero's detention, Cubans on the isle threatened the Spanish consul, prompting federal authorities to dispatch agents with instructions to survey the situation and guarantee the diplomat's safety. Also, naval vessels arrived in the area to guard against the departure of expeditions to Cuba.

Always ready to please their Cuban constituents, members of Florida's congressional delegation and the state's Lt. Governor, former Key West Mayor Livingston Bethel, introduced resolutions and lobbied in the United States Congress against turning the Cuban rebel over to Spanish authorities. The resolution demanded the President prevent the delivery of Agüero to Cuba "until it shall be ascertained that the charges against him are true," and called on the Attorney General to prevent extradition if the request appeared to be politically motivated. After a hearing on February 21, the U. S. District Judge in Key West released the Cuban patriot, sparking a demonstration five thousand strong, which included the Mayor, the

Customs Collector, and even the Lt. Governor. A short time later Aguero slipped out of Key West for Cuba, where with a small band of men he conducted guerrilla warfare for almost a year before finally being defeated and killed.¹⁵

The Bonachea and Sanchez expeditions followed Aguero to Cuba during the next year, but they met the same fate, revealing to the exile communities that revolutionizing Cuba would require prominent rebel figures such as Gomez and Maceo with well financed and coordinated expeditions. The two veteran generals had initially expressed reluctance to resume overt rebellion believing the moment was not ripe, and even criticized the exile communities in the United States for supporting the activities of Aguero, Bonachea, and Sanchez, who in their view were only wasting valuable resources; but the continual call by the rebel communities in the United States that they assume leadership of the movement, combined with the enthusiasm of those communities, finally convinced them that significant resources could be obtained. They accordingly developed a program outlining the conditions under which they would accept the leadership positions.¹⁶

Written by Gomez, the program called for the creation of a unified Junta Gubernativa which could later serve as the basis for the provisional government in Cuba once the revolt erupted. The jefe superior of the movement, to be named by the emigre communities, would be responsible only to the Junta, from which he would

receive ample powers to organize the rebel army and "facultades para formular reglamentos y ordenes generales, especiales que ayuden y faciliten la ejecucion de los planes de la guerra." Most importantly, the program insisted on the absolute suspension of all laws of a civilian character promulgated during the Ten Years War that no civil institutions be created. During 1875 Gomez' military campaign into the western provinces was frustrated, not by the Spanish army, but by political disturbances among insurgents that denied the Cuban general the forces required to penetrate the heart of the island's sugar producing areas he had hoped to destroy. This campaign was the rebellion's last serious threat to Spanish domination in Cuba during the 1870s, foiled, as Gomez viewed it, by the rebellion's own internal dissensions. Similar conflicts would be avoided in the future by placing all authority in the hands of a capable military figure concerned exclusively with a victory over the Spanish. The democratic republic would be constructed after the defeat of the Spanish. Gomez' rebel program was thus the logical consequence of the experiences of the 1870s. Gomez sent the document to New York, where the revolutionary committee accepted its terms. Furthermore, a wealthy Cuban in New York, Felix Govin, offered \$200,000 to the cause, settling Gomez' financial concerns and prompting him and Maceo to set out immediately for the United States.¹⁷

After a rather subdued reception in New Orleans, the two received a tumultuous greeting in Key West, where during September

1884 they met with community leaders and numerous comrades of the Ten Years War. By the mid-1880s the potential for raising well financed expeditions had increased substantially in Key West. Besides obtaining the traditional support of the Key's workers, Gomez and Maceo also attracted a prosperous group of cigar manufacturers and other entrepreneurs to the organizing sessions. During the late 1870s, Cuban-owned factories were usually modest enterprises struggling to survive in a poor economic environment made worse by constant labor agitation and strikes. This situation did not promote significant contributions to the rebel cause, but the economic recovery of the early 1880s had changed matters. Significantly, wages disbursed by the industry increased from \$337,966 in 1880 to two and a half million dollars four years later. The wage figure had reached one million in 1875, but depressed earnings during the later years of that decade suggest why funds would not be readily obtained for the Guerra Chiquita. Together, seven of the cigar manufacturers attending the Gomez-Maceo organizing sessions represented a capital investment of \$187,000 and profits of over \$400,000 in 1884/1885. The expanded and profitable operations of the Cuban manufacturers as well as increased earnings of the workers insured funds would be available for the rebel leaders in 1885.¹⁸

During their brief stay in Key West, Gomez and Maceo raised some \$5,000 to be utilized as operating expenses until Govin in New York provided the promised funds. Arriving in New York in

late September, the two Cuban generals were joined by Marti, by now one of the leading exile personalities in the city. Though news of the renewed activism was well received there, events soon soured the initial optimism. Govin retracted his financial commitment, explaining he was involved in delicate negotiations with Spanish authorities to recover property in Cuba. The revolutionaries, therefore, had to devise plans for a major fund-raising drive. Gomez, Marti, and Maceo met to consider their next step and they decided Marti should travel to Mexico. However, Gomez' authoritarian manner offended Marti who two days later informed the general he was withdrawing from the rebel effort. In his letter to Gomez, Marti declared that he would not participate in taking "un regimen de despotismo personal" to Cuba. "Un pueblo no se funda, General, como se funda un campamento," he noted.¹⁹ As we shall see, this dispute caused a deep political rift in the emigre communities that would take years to heal. The rebels were thus deprived of the young orator's extraordinary ability, so evident in the 1890s, to mobilize the Cuban emigre centers.

Not allowing these setbacks to dampen their spirits, Gomez and Maceo directed agents to all the cities offering possibilities of support, selecting Gomez' aide Rafael Rodriguez to go to the most important Cuban center, Key West, where he immediately began to form an expedition. Rodriguez was followed there in early January 1885 by Dr. Eusebio Hernandez, hoping to raise at least \$20,000. The

organizers had estimated that Gomez would need \$55,000 for his first expedition, and believed only Panama could produce the equal of Key West. The other proposed fund-raising locations were Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Kingston (Jamaica), each estimated to produce \$3,000; Santo Domingo, \$1,000; and New York, \$5,000.²⁰

On arriving in Key West, Hernandez obtained the active cooperation of Lamadriz, Poyo, and Figueredo, and initiated rounds of the cigar factories. Cigar manufacturers Gato, Cayetano Soria, Francisco Marrero, and Enrique Canales, and one of the most prosperous merchants on the isle, Carlos Recio, offered to loan the revolution \$30,000; with another \$10,000 collected among the workers, Hernandez quickly had double what leaders in New York thought could be obtained on the south Florida isle. Although Hernandez accepted the manufacturers' loan, in later years he observed, "No censuro a los que prestan su dinero en momentos en que el dinero es el factor principal, no; pero permitidme que aplauda a los que lo dan con todo su corazon y con su vida."²¹ In this he demonstrated a deep respect for the enthusiasm and sacrifice of the tobacco workers.

If the Key West community offered its uncompromising support to Gomez, after the general's dispute with Marti, New York became withdrawn, offering little material aid despite the constant efforts of the city's rebel organization. During December 1884, Gomez left New York for New Orleans and in a farewell letter to Juan

Arnao lamented the lack of response to the new movement by the Cuban residents of New York. "A todos he tocado publica y privadamente y ningun ha respondido de un modo formal y positivo al llamamiento que se les ha hecho," noted the general, adding that it was not too late and another effort should be made to encourage unification behind the new insurgent movement.²² By June of the next year the situation in New York had not improved. Writing to a rebel leader, Lamadriz reprimanded his compatriots in the northern city: "crea V. que no me conformo con su actual inercia, ni con ese caracter de indiferencia, o retraimiento, con que, en estos criticos momentos aparece, y que sin duda, es de mal efecto, y perjudicial a la necesidad de reunir la mayor suma de recursos para el movimiento que se prepara." In addition, Lamadriz made reference to the disagreements between Gomez and the important group in New York led by Marti. The Key West activist wrote:

Bien pudo el General Gomez, cuando se presento ahi, por cierto que fue lleno de entusiasmo, y de fe y esperanza a plantear su organizacion en pro de los trabajos auxiliatorios de su plan, de que esa emigracion esperaba, bien pudo, le repito, cometer algun error involuntariamente, hijo de sus habitos militares, de su caracter impresionable, o de su inexperiencia en el modo de entenderse en las cosas del exterior, pero el General Gomez, ademas de las cualidades que como militar todos le reconocen, es un patriota verdadero y un hombre honrado, de corazon puro y generoso, y por esto, y el hallarse secundado por todos los jefes de prestigio de nuestro ejercito, era, como es, el hombre de la situacion, y habiendo ahi patriotas dignisimos, a quienes estimo y considero capaces de hacer en el altar de la patria valiosos sacrificios, hubierame regocijado al verlos esforzandose en enmendar lo errado, y tratar de encaminar a la emigracion por la senda del patriotismo.²³

Since New York had traditionally served as the political center of the emigre communities, Gomez had originally intended to establish the Junta Gubernativa in that locality, but as a result of the city's retrenchment the general placed it in Key West. On March 18, Gomez issued a circular announcing the creation of the Comite Central, composed of Lamadriz as president, and Figueredo, Poyo, Francisco Lufriu, and Enrique Perez, the latter two veterans of the Ten Years War. This action caused resentment among some on the New York revolutionary committee, and by June it had still not ratified the general's decision. To ensure support for Gomez in New York, a group of his backers called a meeting of the rebel committee and ousted the leadership, replacing it with individuals unconditionally supportive of the general. Led by Dr. Jose M. Parraga, Rubiera, Rufino Rodriguez, Leandro Rodriguez, Pouble, Morua, and others, the new revolutionary committee promptly recognized the Key West Comite Central under Lamadriz' presidency. Now firmly organized, the rebels continued their fund-raising activities, placing their hopes on the tobacco workers and capitalists of Key West.²⁴

In September, Maceo and Hernandez cabled Key West explaining they wished to visit the isle for another fund-raising effort. Having travelled to New Orleans and New York, where they met with limited success, the two decided another jaunt to south Florida was necessary, though Hernandez expressed reluctance, feeling the city had already contributed more than its share.

Nevertheless, they wasted little time after receiving a reply urging them to come. Arriving during October 1885, they were met in the traditional manner by a huge crowd at the docks. Loud cheers, a 21-gun salute, and a procession to San Carlos Hall led by the Cuban brass band in a drenching rain initiated a week of activities.

At San Carlos Hernandez took the podium to explain why the insurrection had not yet erupted, but the crowd packing the building interrupted, shouting that explanations were unnecessary and expressing support for the expedition. After Maceo's speech, men began emptying the money from their pockets, and women removed jewelry, placing it all in the hands of the fund-raising committee. Viewing this scene with amazement, tears of emotion swelling in his eyes, Maceo came to understand the importance of the community to the Cuban independence cause. Throughout the week, La Semana Patriotica, speech-making and fund-raising activities in the cigar factories provided Maceo with close to \$10,000 for his expedition.²⁵

The euphoria created by Maceo's successes, however, gave way to disillusionment during the first half of 1886, as a series of setbacks overtook the revolutionary effort. Having decided to launch his expedition from the Dominican Republic, his homeland, Gomez sent the war materials he had collected there from New York during late 1885, but an unexpected change in government unfavorable to Cuban exile activities resulted in Gomez' arrest and confiscation of the arms. Although the general was soon released and deported from Santo Domingo, the war materials could not be recovered, delaying any possible invasion of Cuba by months.²⁶

Though distressed by the loss of the weapons, Cubans in Key West continued supporting the planned revolt until their attention was distracted by their own disaster. On the evening of March 30 a fire originating in the San Carlos Hall blazed out of control, enveloping large portions of the city, and before it could be extinguished some 600 buildings worth an estimated two million dollars were left in ashes: a disaster unprecedented in the city's history. Details of how the fire started are not clear, but some suspected it was not accidental. Perhaps a Spanish agent's attempt to destroy San Carlos, symbolic of the revolutionary community, developed into something more than intended. Whatever the cause, the fire paralyzed and hopelessly demoralized the revolution's most active center, depriving the insurgents of critically needed resources and moral backing. As Parraga in New York wrote Maceo, "El Cayo yase en ruinas y nuestro baluarte reducido a la miseria," destroying any hope of raising sufficient funds to replace the Dominican losses.²⁷

These developments caused many to reconsider their commitment to the insurgent effort, and in Key West the leadership advised Gomez that insurrectionary organizing should be temporarily halted. Rodriguez also wrote the general explaining that little hope existed of mobilizing the community, but Gomez and Maceo continued their activities. Maceo addressed an open letter to the "Emigres of Key West," explaining among other things that his expedition was in its final stages of preparation and that he would soon be in Cuba. He

asked for continued support. The expedition never departed, however, for in July the shipment of arms destined for his men in Jamaica was thrown into the sea by a steamer captain fearful of being apprehended.²⁸

Again assessing the general situation on the Key, local leaders repeated their advice to the revolution's chiefs that another fund-raising drive would not be well received by the community. Recognizing that without Key West it would be virtually impossible to mount a credible effort, Gomez, Maceo, Hernandez, and others accepted reality and reluctantly called an end to rebel activities. In a letter to Gomez from Key West, Hernandez explained: "A la confianza ha sucedido la duda, a la esperanza la incredulidad, al entusiasmo el silencio, al carino la indiferencia, a la accion eficaz la quietud desorganizadora, Silencio Sombrio! tal es en estos momentos el Cayo."²⁹

Although the loss of the Key to the rebel cause in 1886 was the immediate reason for the failure of the revolutionary activities of the mid-1880s, it is clear that fundamental political deficiencies in the movement made the launching of a successful insurgency improbable from the very beginning. The lack of a well organized rebel organization with widespread popular support in Cuba itself doomed the rebel initiatives, a reality recognized early by some elements in exile who refused to extend their support to Gomez and Maceo.

As we have seen, the debate among Cuban exiles over how to most effectively revolutionize the island dated back as far as the Lopez years. Lopez and his "hombres de accion" had always considered that if a significant expedition could be landed in Cuba the people would rise in support to ensure victory over the Spanish army, an unfounded calculation that cost Lopez his life. The Lopistas themselves recognized the fallacy of this strategy in the mid-1860s, during their reorganization of the emigre revolutionary party. La Voz de America had pointed out that only after a well organized internal rebellion had been planned could exiled military leaders expect to obtain significant support. At the same time, the experience of the 1870s demonstrated the importance of the emigre centers to an internal insurrectionary movement and how exile ineffectiveness could doom it to certain failure. Thirty years of rebel experience revealed that the Cuban insurrection would require a broad-based movement, including close collaboration and coordination between Cubans on the island and in the emigre communities.

It was the totality of this revolutionary experience that Gomez, Maceo and their followers in Key West and New York failed to appreciate properly in their reformulation of the separatist strategy during the first half of the 1880s, giving rise to the opposition led by Jose Marti. In their impatience and enthusiasm to reinitiate the struggle against the Spanish, a significant portion of the emigres in the United States placed their resources at the

disposal of veterans promising to land expeditionary forces in Cuba and conduct the rebellion with an exclusively military orientation.

By 1879 most of the rebel leaders remaining in the separatist cause supported the idea of organizing the insurrection exclusively behind military leaders. In Key West, Lamadriz and Poyo, who had been intransigent backers of President Cespedes and General Quesada, joined with war veterans Figueredo, Castellanos, Castillo, Lufriu, and others, in calling for a highly centralized, military-dominated, insurrectionary movement that would take the rebellion to Cuba. Like Gomez and Maceo, they wanted to avoid civilian institutions that in their view would simply create obstacles for the liberation army. In New York a similar leadership emerged, led by such figures as Parraga, Rubiera, Morua Delgado and B. Rico. A physician who served with Donato Marmol and Gomez during the 1870s, Parraga represented the veteran element in New York, while Rubiera, editor of La Republica, successor to El Separatista in 1884, had been associated with the same political group as Lamadriz and Poyo in the emigre communities during the Ten Years War. Finally, there is little doubt that the revolution's basic constituency, the tobacco workers in Key West and New York, enthusiastically backed Gomez and Maceo. Admirers of the bold "initiator" Cespedes and the activist Quesada, the emigre workers saw in Gomez and Maceo the men of action required to dislodge the Spanish from their homeland. It is noteworthy that Rubiera, Morua Delgado and Rico were labor activists and strong backers of the insurgent generals.³⁰

In the first issue of La Republica appearing during November 1884, soon after the break between Gomez and Marti, Rubiera made known the fundamental tenets of the new revolutionary movement:

Conocidas nuestras opiniones y la de la mayoria de nuestros compatriotas, no debemos escusarnos de declarar, que estamos opuestos, como lo estuvimos en la historica lucha de diez anos, a la constitucion de poderes civiles, erigidos en lo que se llamo Camara de Representantes, porque este cuerpo, que llenaria sus facultades en tiempo de paz, es una remora en tiempo de guerra . . . Pedimos y defendemos el establecimiento de un Gobierno Militar. Solo el sable puede resolver la cuestion y darnos patria.

He clarified, however, that dictatorship could never be the ultimate result of this revolutionary strategy, because, once victorious, "esos hombres grandes, cuando la independencia este asegurada, entregara su poder al pueblo soberano," adding, "defendemos la independencia, la republica federal, la abolicion de la esclavitud, la igualdad civil de todos los habitantes de Cuba, el progreso en todas sus formas, la libertad de cultos, de opinion, prensa y palabra."³¹

Although Gomez apparently received unanimous support in Key West, on arriving in New York during late 1884 the veteran general had to contend with the analytical skills of the dynamic patriot organizer, Jose Marti, by now one of the most prestigious figures of the Cuban community of that city. Although Marti aided in efforts to reorganize the New York exile center after the Guerra Chiquita and seconded all efforts to convince Gomez to join the new movement, as a result of the short-lived conflict of 1879-1880 he

concluded that a new strategy had to be developed to obtain significant support among the Cuban people in future insurrectionary efforts. The very limited response to General Garcia's landing in 1880 no doubt convinced him of this. Marti tested his ideas on Gomez in a letter written in 1882:

Ya llego Cuba, en su actual estado y problemas, al punto de entender de nuevo la incapacidad de una politica conciliadora, y la necesidad de una revolucion violenta. Pero seria suponer a nuestro pais un pais de locos, exigirle que se lanzase a la guerra en pos de lo que ahora somos para nuestro pais, en pos de un fantasma. Es necesario tomar cuerpo y tomarlo pronto, y tal como se espera que nuestro cuerpo sea. Nuestro pais abunda en gente de pensamiento, y es necesario enseñarles que la revolucion no es ya un mero estallido de decoro, ni la satisfaccion de una costumbre de pelear y mandar, sino una obra detallada y previsoramente de pensamiento. Nuestro pais vive muy apegado a sus intereses, y es necesario que le demostremos habil y brillantemente que la Revolucion es la solucion unica para sus muy amenaguados intereses. Nuestro pais no se siente aun fuerte para la guerra, y es justo, y prudente, y a nosotros mismo util, halagar esta creencia suya, respetar este temor cierto e instintivo, y anunciarle que no intentamos llevarle contra su voluntad a una guerra prematura, sino tenerlo todo dispuesto para cuando el se sienta ya con fuerzas para la guerra. Por de contado, General, que no perderemos medios de provocar naturalmente esta reaccion. Violentar el pais seria inutil, y precipitarlo seria una mala accion. Puesto que viene a nosotros, lo que hemos de hacer es ponernos de pie para recibirlo. Y no volver a sentarnos.³²

Although Gomez' authoritarian manner offended Marti, serving as the immediate reason for the break between the two men, it was not the idea of military dominance of the rebellion that Marti fundamentally opposed, because he knew as well as anyone it would require capable veterans like Gomez and Maceo, invested with authority, to defeat the Spanish forces. Rather, Marti rejected the notion that military leaders without a sophisticated political program could by themselves, independently of all other sectors of

Cuban society, launch a successful armed insurrection. In Marti's view, a great deal of political groundwork had to be laid in order to obtain the confidence of the Cuban people before a revolution could take root on Cuban soil, especially since an important sector of Cuban society was again being tempted by promises of reform. Indeed, obtaining support for a rebel movement would probably require waiting until Cubans became completely disillusioned in their efforts to attain political and economic liberalization from their Spanish rulers. Marti believed this would occur eventually and at that moment the emigres could act. In the meantime, the exile centers had to present their ideas to the Cuban people as a legitimate alternative through the creation of an effective political and military organization. The Guerra Chiquita had provided ample evidence that, unless the rebels could count on the support of a significant portion of the population, their efforts would be futile. A successful movement required attracting the support of Cubans of differing social classes and races, who would all expect, and indeed had the right, to contribute to the formulation of a revolutionary program. "Otros sabran otra cosa," wrote Marti, "yo si se que para atraerse un pueblo, se ha de hacer lo que le inspire confianza, y no se ha de hacer lo que teme. Cuando se sabe lo que un pueblo teme, y se quiere ganar su voluntad sin engano y con grandeza, incurrir en los actos temidos es confirmar su miedo."³³ Marti believed further that military expeditions from abroad, led by self-proclaimed

dictators, were more likely to inspire fear than confidence among the mass of the Cuban population. Like Villaverde in the mid-1860s Marti believed any rebellion had to be initiated by the island's inhabitants through careful political organizing, then the military expeditions would be welcomed and their leaders held up as heroes.

Marti's analysis was received with disdain by most of the emigre Cuban activists. It was considered timid and lacking in revolutionary commitment. Gomez, Rubiera, and Rico initiated a strong campaign in New York to discredit Marti, but slowly the middle-class professionals and businessmen in New York came to his support.³⁴ Repelled by the militarist experience of 19th century Latin America, many among this element feared an independence movement led exclusively by military figures. Although Marti made no effort to publicly combat Gomez' movement, he obtained the sympathy of a significant sector of the New York and Philadelphia Cuban centers, represented by the newspaper El Avisador Cubano, edited by Enrique Trujillo. In an editorial in July 1885, Trujillo wrote, "Vayan en hora buena los guerreros con su cota de malla a los campos de la lucha . . . Alla que hay polvora, fuego, balas, Dictaduras." But, he continued, "Aqui donde tenemos que buscar, que pedir, que publicar, que hacer propaganda, que no se hable de dictadores, ni de omnipotentes, que todos se unan, y que se oiga la voz de la razon y del patriotismo." With such support, Marti maintained his political prestige and obtained his vindication when Gomez and Maceo announced

the termination of their activities in 1886.³⁵ The importation of the revolution to Cuba had proved impractical, demonstrating the need for a new approach and providing Marti with an opportunity to put his ideas into action.

Many in the emigre communities now looked to Marti as the most dynamic leader of the independence movement. His writings and political oratory attracted the attention of two military veterans of the Ten Years War, Juan Fernandez Ruz and Flor Crombet, who during mid-1887 suggested to Marti that he lead the reorganization of the movement. With the backing of all the prominent rebel organizers in New York, including his political enemies Parraga and Rubiera, Marti wrote a revolutionary program, constituting his first effort to publicly and concretely define his vision of the rebel movement.

The program contained all the basic political elements Marti had called for throughout the decade. The first article--"Acreditar en el pais, disipando temores y procediendo en virtud de un fin democratico conocido, la solucion revolucionaria"--reaffirmed Marti's belief that the mass of the Cuban people had to be educated regarding the democratic nature of the independence movement and the necessity of revolution. Article two--"Proceder sin demora a organizar, con la union de los jefes afuera, y trabajos de extension, y no de una mera opinion, adentro, la parte militar de la revolucion"--recognized the critical role to be played by the traditional

military figures, but in the context of a broad-based political movement on the island. The program also called for the unification of the exile communities "con espiritu democratico y en relaciones de igualdad."³⁶ The polarization of the New York and Key West communities would have to be mended as a first step to launching a new rebel movement.

The New York revolutionary committee sent Marti's document to all principal military leaders, and Ruz and Crombet initiated the task of raising necessary funds in the Florida communities. In the newly established emigre colony in Tampa, the patriot club Flor Crombet backed the effort, but in Key West many still resented Marti and were skeptical that his program was a suitable replacement for Gomez's bolder and more aggressive style. During October 1887, Morua Delgado, now in Key West editing a newspaper, El Pueblo, criticized Marti and Enrique Trujillo, charging they were actually flirting with an autonomist solution to the Cuban question. Although they vigorously denied the charge, as late as August 1888 some in the emigre communities continued to believe Marti was considering the reform option.³⁷

Marti's initiative made little headway on the Key. Writing to Gomez during April 1888, Poyo advised him that little enthusiasm existed for the new organizing efforts. "El Directorio de New York," he noted, "no ha logrado-que yo sepa-adquirir aqui proselitos, aunque lo ha pretendido. Hay dos o tres clubs nominales y el

espíritu patriótico que se advierte en muchos es el resultado lógico de la constante propaganda de unos pocos y del estado de Cuba, cada vez más favorable a la Revolución."³⁸ Even Crombet indicated to Gomez that in Key West most still considered him the movement's natural leader. He too considered Martí's politics too timid and had argued with him in New York.³⁹ In addition to the political divisions among the patriot activists, however, emerging social disturbances on the Key and in Tampa distracted the workers' attention from the rebel activities--a further obstacle that by the end of 1888 contributed to the failure of this first effort by Martí to organize the exile communities behind his political program.

Notes

¹For information on the autonomist movement see Luis Estevez Romero, Desde Zanjón hasta Baire, 2 vols. (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), and Enrique Gay-Calbo, "El autonomismo y otros partidos políticos," in Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, et al., eds., Historia de la nación cubana, 10 vols., (Habana: Editorial Historia de la Nación Cubana, 1952), VI, 71-115.

²Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, 3 vols., (Habana: Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1949-1951), I, 3.

³Raoul Alpizar Poyo, Cayo Hueso y Jose Dolores Poyo: Dos simbolos patrios (Habana: Imprenta P. Fernandez, 1947), 58-60.

⁴For additional information on General Calixto Garcia, see Juan J. E. Casasus, Calixto Garcia (el estratega) (Habana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad, 1962) and Olga Curi Francis, Calixto Garcia: El conspirador (Guines, Cuba: La Comercial, 1943).

⁵Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, I, 43-130.

⁶See the following on the Guerra Chiquita: Jose M. Perez Cabrera, "El periodo revolucionario de 1878 a 1892," in Guerra y Sanchez, Historia de la nación cubana, V, 329-357 and Biblioteca Nacional Jose Martí, Bibliografía de la Guerra Chiquita, 1879-1880 (Habana: Editorial Orbe, 1975). The revolutionary period of the 1880s has been studied primarily through the numerous biographical studies of the prominent rebel figures such as Jose Martí, Maximo Gomez, Antonio Maceo, and others. The only general studies are Enrique Trujillo, Apuntes historicos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895 (Nueva York: Tip. de El Porvenir, 1896); the already cited Perez Cabrera article; and Juan J. E. Casasus, La emigración cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 183-206. An interesting critical review of Trujillo's study is included in Rafael Serra's newspaper, La Doctrina de Martí, published in New York during 1896-1898.

⁷El Yara (Key West), December 11, 1880.

⁸For information on Figueredo, Castellanos, Castillo and Canales, see the following: Fernando Figueredo, La Revolucion de Yara, 1868-1878 (Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educacion, 1967); Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Soldado y conspirador (Habana, 1923); Jose Rogelio Castillo, Autobiografia del General Jose Rogelio Castillo (Habana: Instituto Cubano de Libro, 1973); Casaus, La emigracion cubana, 387-389, 402-403.

⁹El Yara, December 11, 1880.

¹⁰See La Voz de Hatuey (Key West), March 1, 1884 in National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Notes from the Spanish Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1790-1906," 31 microfilm reels, reel 25, March 17, 1884.

¹¹Information on Pouble, Morua Delgado, and Serra may be found in the following sources: Union de Juventud Comunista, Comision Nacional de Historia, Diario de Cirilo Pouble y Allende (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1972); Rufino Perez Landa, Vida publica de Martin Morua Delgado (Habana: Carlos Romero, 1957); Leopoldo Horrego Estuch, Martin Morua Delgado: Vida y mensaje (Habana: Editorial Sanchez, 1957); Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux, Rafael Serra y Montalvo: Obrero incansable de nuestra independencia (Habana: Union de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba, 1975); Pedro N. Gonzalez Veranes, La personalidad de Rafael Serra y sus relaciones con Marti (Habana: La Veronica, 1943).

¹²Letter, Cirilo Pouble to Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, March 21, 1882, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Academica de la Historia (hereafter, ANC, Academia), Legajo 481, numero 331.

¹³Perez Landa, Vida publica de Martin Morua Delgado, 57-58; Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 7-9; Union de Juventud Comunista, Diario de Cirilo Pouble, 27-28; Casaus, La emigracion cubana, 183-193.

¹⁴For details of Bonachea's activities see Juan J. E. Casaus, Ramon Leocadio Bonachea: El jefe de vanguardia (Habana: Libreria Marti, 1955). See also, "Actas del Comite Revolucionario Cubano de New York, Agosto 1883-Mayo 1884," ANC, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 307, numero 61.

¹⁵U. S. Congress, Senate Journal, 48th Congress, 1st Session, 272; House Journal, 48th Congress, 1st Session, 531, 635; House Executive Documents, 48th Congress, 2nd Session, I, 493-495, 502-521; National Archives, "Notes from the Spanish Legation," microfilm reel 25 (see correspondence for 1883-1884); Weekly Floridian (Tallahassee), February 12, 26, April 4, 15, 1884; New York Herald, January 10, March 4, 1885.

¹⁶Antonio Maceo, Ideologia politica. Cartas y otros documentos, 2 vols. (Habana: Sociedad Cubana de Estudios Historicos e Internacionales, 1950-1952), I, 219-224, 226-227, 230-234.

¹⁷See Gomez' program in Ramon Infiesta, Maximo Gomez (Habana: Academia de Historia de Cuba, 1937), 221-223. See also, Jose L. Franco, Ruta de Antonio Maceo en el caribe (Habana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de la Habana, 1961), 93-107 and Maximo Gomez, Diario de campana, 1868-1898 (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1968), 177-178.

¹⁸Alpizar y Poyo, Cayo Hueso y Jose Dolores Poyo, 73; Walter Maloney, Sketch of the History of Key West, Florida (Newark, N.J., 1876), 25; U.S. Census Office, Statistics of Manufacturers, 1880 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 207; National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Schedules of the Florida State Census of 1885," Monroe County, Florida. See "Census of Manufacturers."

¹⁹Jose L. Franco, Antonio Maceo: Apuntes para una historia de su vida, 3 vols. (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), II, 267-274; Guerra y Sanchez, Historia de la nacion cubana, V, 362-364.

²⁰Eusebio Hernandez, Maceo: Dos conferencias historicas (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1968), 144; Hortensia Pichardo, ed., Maximo Gomez: Cartas a Francisco Carrillo (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1971), 39.

²¹Hernandez, Maceo, 145-147; Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935), 232. For biographical information on Carlos Recio, see George Chapin, Florida: Past, Present and Future, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1914), II, 313-314.

²²Letter, Maximo Gomez to Juan Arnao, December 29, 1884, ANC, Archivo Maximo Gomez (hereafter, ANC, Maximo Gomez), Legajo 81, numero 8. See also letter, Maximo Gomez to Juan Arnao, January 20, 1885, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Juan Arnao Manuscript Collection.

²³Letter, Jose Francisco Lamadriz to Manuel de la Cruz Beraza, June 1885, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 553, numero 42.

²⁴Letter, Jose Francisco Lamadriz to Manuel de la Cruz Beraza, April 4, 1885, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 553, numero 43; "Circular a los clubs y comites revolucionarios cubanos," March 18, 1885, ANC, Maximo Gomez, Legajo 81, numero 8; La Republica (New York), June 20, 1885. A biographical sketch of Parraga, President of the New York Comite, is available in New York's, El Porvenir, September 9, 1891.

²⁵Hernandez, Maceo, 154-156.

²⁶Franco, Antonio Maceo: Apuntes, I, 292.

²⁷Jefferson B. Browne, Key West: The Old and the New (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 125, 152-153; New York Herald, March 31, April 1, 3, 12, 15, 1886; letter, Jose M. Parraga to Jose A. Maceo, April 7, 1886, Cuba. Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Coleccion Cubana, C. M. Figarola, numero 8.

²⁸Maceo, Ideologia politica, I, 313-314; Franco, Antonio Maceo: Apuntes, I, 312.

²⁹Hernandez, Maceo, 161-164.

³⁰Martin Morua Delgado, Obras completas, 4 vols. (Habana: Comision Nacional del Centenario de Don Martin Morua Delgado, 1957), III, 111, 147.

³¹La Republica, June 20, 1885.

³²Jose Marti, Obras completas, 28 vols. (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1963-1973), I, 167-171.

³³Marti, Obras completas, I, 182.

³⁴An interesting discussion of Gomez and Rubiera's efforts to discredit Marti is found in Jorge Ibarra, Jose Marti: Dirigente politico e ideologo revolucionario (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1980), 61-87.

³⁵El Avisador Cubano (New York), July 1, 1885; Ibarra, Jose Marti, 82-84.

³⁶Marti, Obras completas, I, 216-222.

³⁷Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June 1958), 27; El Avisador Cubano, August 1, 1888; Abelardo Padron Valdes, El General Flor: Apuntes historicos de una vida (Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura, 1976), 271-272; Marti, Obras completas, I, 206-207.

³⁸Letter, Jose Dolores Poyo to Maximo Gomez, April 1, 1888, ANC, Maximo Gomez, Legajo 4, numero 56.

³⁹Letter, Flor Crombet to Maximo Gomez, May 17, 1888, ANC, Maximo Gomez, Legajo 4, numero 60.

CHAPTER 6

CUBANS IN FLORIDA: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIAL TENSIONS, 1870-1887

By the mid-1880s, political activists recognized Key West as the most important rebel center in exile, superceding even New York. During the Ten Years War the Key had consistently contributed financially to the rebellion, but a limited economic base and relatively unknown leadership determined its somewhat marginal influence in political matters. With the onset of the eighties, however, an economic boom gave the isle's political leaders increased influence within the movement, as we have seen, prompting Gomez to place the conspiracy's central Junta in the hands of the Key's political bosses in 1885. But, as the community grew, its socioeconomic composition broadened, creating diversities that threatened its traditional and almost exclusive focus on the independence cause. Although outwardly the Key West Cuban community gave the appearance of a committed revolutionary center concerned with reinitiating armed rebellion in their homeland, internally it suffered from the political and socioeconomic ills and conflicts characteristic of all rapidly developing communities--a process that sorely tested the colony's deeply felt focus on the separatist cause.¹

Key West's frenzied growth after 1880 strained relationships between important sectors of the Cuban colony and led to damaging confrontations that by 1890 forced a reformulation of the separatist movement's ideological program based on the political and socioeconomic realities of a new age. During the 1880s popular sectors of the rebel movement, concerned with socioeconomic issues other than abolition (which was rapidly becoming a non-issue as slavery neared extinction), began questioning what they considered to be the narrow ideological focus of the separatist program developed during the 1860s and 1870s. The movement outgrew the separatist program of the previous two decades as the popular constituencies became more conscious of the social and economic ills that affected their emerging industrial community. Although political and socioeconomic conflicts among separatists were not limited to Key West, it was on this small south Florida isle that working Cubans were influential enough to effect the ideology of the separatist movement.

The Key's extraordinary growth during the final third of the 19th century was based primarily on the cigar industry, established in 1869 by an emigre Spanish tobacco capitalist from Habana, Vicente Martinez Ybor, who fled Cuba soon after the outbreak of the Revolucion de Yara.² The United States' tariff structure that discouraged the importation of manufactured cigars but contained relatively low taxes on tobacco leaf combined with the presence of a

substantial number of exiled tobacco workers to convince Ybor that a prosperous industry could be developed on the south Florida island.³ With the marketing support of the De Bary Company in New York, Martinez Ybor launched the Florida cigar industry.⁴ He was quickly joined by the New York-based Seidenburg Company, the McFall and Lawson firms, and the H. R. Kelly Company, the four original cigar manufacturing operations of significance in Key West.⁴

In addition to the political exiles, Key West began receiving large numbers of tobacco workers from Habana seeking employment in the flourishing industry, and within a short time the city gained a national reputation for its quality Habana cigars, cheaper than those imported directly from Cuba.⁵ The protective tariffs, lower than average wages for the United States industry, and a genuine Cuban product gave the Key West factories a significant advantage, resulting in a booming industry until the end of the century. In 1869, the factories produced some 8 1/2 million cigars, a figure that climbed to 25 million annually six years later, 67 million in 1885, and some 100 million by 1890, the industry's zenith during the 19th century. The number of establishments increased from three or four in 1870 to some 44 a decade later, and 90 in 1885. By 1880 the industry employed an average of 1377 workers, which increased to 2811 by 1885. Key West's population almost quadrupled between 1870 and 1890, with the Cuban population making up approximately one-third of the inhabitants throughout the final

thirty years of the century. The almost 1100 Cubans in 1870 increased to about 5500 by 1885 and some 7,000 by the end of the decade, establishing the Key as one of the most important Cuban exile centers in the United States.⁶

During the 1870s, the Martinez Ybor and Seidenburg factories dominated the tobacco industry, each producing over 10 million cigars in 1875 and employing between four and six hundred workers apiece during the decade.⁷ On the other hand, the Key's Cuban manufacturers were generally small operators, all but one employing fifty workers or less in 1880. In that year, ten manufacturers employed 100 or more workers in Key West, but only one, J. S. Navarro & Co., was Cuban-owned, reflecting the fact that the Cuban operators were generally political exiles or tobacco workers who became cigar entrepreneurs only after arriving in the United States.⁸ Of the prominent Cuban manufacturers of the 1880s, only Cayetano Soria was in business on the isle in 1875. A political exile who worked as a mechanic of modest means in Cuba, Soria established a small store-front cigar operation, or chinchal, on the Key soon after arriving. The operation struggled through the economically sluggish seventies employing some fifty workers, but in the following decade the factory grew rapidly, and by 1887 some 400 tobacco workers labored in the establishment.⁹ Although the final five years of the 1870s were highly unstable economically, and labor strife was rampant, the Cubans established small enterprises that

survived as a result of the low wage scales and excess labor. Several small Cuban entrepreneurs relocated during 1876-1879 from New York, where conditions from the recession were apparently worse, including Eduardo H. Gato, Francisco Marrero, Antonio del Pino and brothers, and Manuel Barranco.

A tobacco worker from Santiago de las Vegas, Gato arrived in New York in 1869 hoping to find his way to rebel territory in Cuba. After several unsuccessful efforts to land on the island and join the liberation army, he established a small cigar manufactory in 1871, but remained active in revolutionary matters. He acted as treasurer of the Sociedad Independencia de Cuba during 1875. By 1876 Gato had relocated his tobacco operations to Key West and within a decade employed some three to five hundred workers on the isle. (The former Cuban tobacco worker became one of Florida's leading entrepreneurs.) In addition to his tobacco interests, by the late 1880s Gato owned the Key West street car system, was one of the leading owners of real estate on the isle, and sat as Vice-President of the Bank of Key West. He was undoubtedly the wealthiest and most influential Cuban in the state.¹⁰

Marrero, the Pinos, and Barranco followed Gato to south Florida. A merchant from San Antonio de los Banos, Marrero was also a political exile, deported to the Spanish penal colony of Fernando Poo, off the west coast of Africa, during February 1869. He managed to escape and made his way to New York, where he cooperated with the

revolutionary juntas and established a cigar manufactory. Like Gato, he saw the advantages of relocating in Key West, and by 1880 his establishment employed fifty workers, a figure that rose to 200 by 1887.¹¹ Antonio del Pino was also active in rebel organizing in New York throughout the 1870s as a member of the Sociedad Independencia de Cuba with Gato and Marrero and later as an activist of the fifteen-member Comite Revolucionario organized in New York in March 1878 to protest the signing of the Zanjon Pact and responsible for launching the Guerra Chiquita. By July 1880 Del Pino operated a small cigar factory in Key West employing 25 workers, by 1887 expanding to 355 employees in four factories, one of the leading cigar companies on the isle. Barranco's experience was similar. A rebel activist and small cigar entrepreneur in New York, he followed his compatriots to Florida and shared in their successes. His factory of 50 in 1880 tripled its labor force in seven years.¹²

In addition to these factories established in the late 1870s, other Cuban cigar enterprises appeared and prospered in Key West during the next decade, making the Cuban cigar entrepreneurs a leading economic and political force in the city. Among the new factories opened in the early years of the eighties were those of Teodoro Perez, Enrique Canales, A. M. Castillo, Romualdo Perez, Jose Angulo, Cecilio Henriquez, R. F. O'Halloran, and Martin Herrera, to name but a few. None, it appears, were tobacco capitalists in their homeland. Teodoro Perez arrived in Key West at the age of

eleven after being captured in the manigua in 1870. A decade later he was working as a retail grocer, but by 1887 Perez owned a cigar factory employing some 100 workers. A veteran of the Ten Years War who served with Maximo Gomez, Canales arrived on the Key in the early eighties and promptly established a small manufactory that by 1887 employed 200 operatives. He also extended his interests and served as a member of the board of directors of the Bank of Key West. A tobacco worker, Castillo helped organize the first unions on the isle in the 1870s but by 1885 operated a cigar factory of some 150 employees. The others--R. Perez, J. Angulo, Henriquez, O'Halloran and Herrera--also arrived with little but managed to prosper during the eighties.¹³

The flourishing cigar industry, then, provided employment to the mass of the Cuban community in Key West. Of the 1066 employed Cubans in the city fourteen years of age and over in 1880, 842 or 79% worked in the cigar establishments. Of these, 18.1% were of color, that is black or mulatto, and 9.1% were women. The remaining 21% of the working Cuban inhabitants were involved in a variety of economic pursuits, including unskilled laborers, service workers, artisans, and professionals. In the unskilled category, Cubans worked as laborers, servants, launderers, and hucksters, comprising 23% of those employed outside the cigar industry, while grocers, cooks, restaurant keepers, clerks, merchants, carpenters and sailors made up 55% of those not involved in the cigar trade.

The remaining 22% worked in a variety of fields from physicians and dentists, to wheelwrights, coffee roasters and photographers. One of the most prominent merchants in Key West was Carlos Recio, an officer in the liberating army who arrived on the isle in the early 1870s to help raise funds. He established a small grocery store which grew into one of the largest and most important commercial houses in Key West. Thus, while the Cuban social structure included a wide variety of occupations, it was overwhelmingly a working class community, relying heavily on the cigar industry for its livelihood.

Racially, the Cuban community in 1880 was mostly white; 21% were black or mulatto, and only .3% of Chinese origin. Sixty-six percent of employed Cubans of color worked in the cigar factories, while the rest found employment primarily as cooks, laborers and servants, reflecting their limited social possibilities in Cuba. The six Chinese men with Spanish surnames reflected in the 1880 census worked as restaurant keepers, retail grocers and cooks. Most women in Key West of all races were housekeepers, but those employed worked mostly in the tobacco industry and as laundresses and servants.¹⁴

During the 1870s and the first half of the next decade, Key West contained the only important Cuban emigre community in Florida, although a small colony existed in Jacksonville. Like their compatriots in Key West, Cubans in Jacksonville concentrated on the tobacco trade. The first important cigar manufactory, the

"El Modelo" factory, was established in the mid-1870s by Gabriel Hidalgo-Gato (apparently no relation to the Key West Gatos). Hidalgo-Gato's brother-in-law, Jose Alejandro Huau, built another factory and together they employed almost 400 workers. These Jacksonville factories had no difficulty in attracting workers from Key West where during the late 1870s unemployment was a severe problem. By the mid-1880s, the Cuban colony in the northern Florida city had grown to some 300 inhabitants.¹⁵

Not until 1886, however, did the second major Cuban center in Florida appear in the Tampa Bay area. As we shall see in some detail, by 1885 a powerful labor movement on the Key prompted Martinez Ybor to commence a search for an alternate site for his cigar operations, hoping he could escape the continually increasing influence of workers' organizations. Deciding on the small fishing village of Tampa, the Key West cigar capitalist obtained significant tracts of land on the outskirts of Tampa where he and a Spanish manufacturer from New York, Ignacio Haya, constructed factories. They began production in early 1886, but it was not until the Key West fire of March 30 that the incipient cigar industry of what became known as Ybor City took on proportions that would soon make it the most important tobacco manufacturing center in the United States. Before it could be extinguished, the fire in Key West destroyed 18 cigar factories, including the Martinez Ybor and Seidenburg establishments, two of the largest operations, sharply

curtailing economic activity in the devastated town. Hundreds of Cuban workers, homeless and unemployed, packed aboard steamers for Cuba or up the coast where the nascent cigar industry in Tampa offered some hope of work. With his factory on the Key destroyed, Martinez Ybor made his permanent move to Tampa, abandoning all interest in continuing operations on the south Florida isle.¹⁶

During its first decade as a manufacturing center, Tampa grew from less than 1,000 inhabitants to almost 20,000, surpassing the Key's population, which in 1895 stood at 16,502. Beginning in 1888, numerous additional factories from Key West, New York, and Philadelphia relocated in the Tampa Bay area. Among the Key's enterprises moving to Tampa were Manuel and Fernando Del Pino & Co., Emilio Pons & Co., Teodoro Perez & Co., Julius Ellinger & Co., Manuel Barranco & Co., O'Halloran & Co., Severo Armas & Co., Trujillo, Benemetis & Co., Seidenburg & Co., Lopez Trujillo & Co., and Martin Herrera & Co.¹⁷ By 1900 Tampa had clearly surpassed Key West as the primary producer of Habana cigars in the United States, producing some 111,000 annually. Other small Cuban communities appeared in Ocala and Gainesville, where modest cigar establishments were opened in the early 1890s. Known as Marti City, the colony just outside Ocala was led by patriot and labor leaders like Carlos Balino and Guillermo Sorondo, while the most prominent Cuban in Gainesville was the Ten Years War veteran Gerardo Castellanos. By

1895 approximately 10,000 Cubans resided in Florida, some 2.5% of the state's population.¹⁸

The dynamism of the cigar industry's expansion during these years not only created a group of prosperous Cuban manufacturers, merchants and professionals, but prompted the appearance of labor activists, initially at the Key, who although supportive of the separatist movement also directed their energies to the establishment of unions to protect the interests of the tobacco workers. Labor-management relations emerged as a delicate issue within the Cuban colony, since two sectors of the community--both important economically to the patriot cause--confronted each other during the 1870s and 1880s. Within the ideological construct of the rebel movement, the socioeconomic and political perspective of the working classes had never carried much weight. In fact, the revolutionary leadership generally perceived labor activism as divisive, thus detrimental to the independence cause. By the late 1880s, however, conflicts between labor and capital were a deeply entrenched reality within the Key West Cuban community, forcing the rebel leadership to adopt a new attitude regarding the relationship between the nationalist political cause and the emerging socioeconomic movement supported by the mass of the workers.

The first manifestations of worker activism appeared soon after the onset of the national financial crisis of 1873 when the employment situation in Key West, until then healthy as a result of

the cigar industry, began to take on an unstable character. During that year and the next, the Martinez Ybor and Seidenburg factories laid off large numbers of workers causing considerable concern within the primarily working-class Cuban community. Although efforts were made by emigre leaders to establish a fund for the unemployed, conflict could not be avoided after the largest manufactories announced a significant wage reduction in July 1875.¹⁹ The workers reacted immediately. Until this time the workers had dedicated their organizing activities entirely to the rebel cause, but this assault on their economic security led to the formation of a strike committee organized by Federico de Armas and Manuel Escassi, President and Vice-President respectively of the patriotic association, Asociacion del Sur. For the first time in the Key West tobacco industry the workers declared a work stoppage. The Asociacion's mouthpiece, El Republicano, issued flyers denouncing the manufacturers' actions and calling on all workers to leave the Key unless an appropriate settlement could be reached, a strike strategy that would become traditional in Key West but a source of concern to rebel leaders who feared the disintegration of one of the most active pro-revolutionary communities in exile. The workers also published a strike newspaper, La Huelga, and initiated efforts to establish as Caja de Ahorros to support this and future strike actions.

Defending their action, the strikers pointed out that in just a few short years Key West cigars had established a solid reputation nationally as a result of the skill and diligence of the Key's workers but that "the insatiable ambition of the jobbers in this city has not yet reached its limit nor is it contented with the profits which we have gained for them, but as a last resort, they wish to lower the wages of the operative four dollars for every thousand cigars. Such an abuse forces a cry of indignation."²⁰ Unable to raise sufficient strike funds locally, the workers sent a commission to New York to request support from the head of the revolutionary Junta, Aldama; but, as a later account explained, "ese Agente, olvidando nuestros servicios, nuestra abnegacion y nuestros repetidos sacrificios, ni siquiera se digno atender a la suplica de nuestros comisionados, que volvieron para aca con el dolor en el alma de verse desairados en tan aflictivos momentos." Devoid of funds and poorly organized, the workers conceded defeat after only two weeks, but the action represented the beginning of labor organizing in Key West, an activity that would continue with great vigor throughout the remainder of the century.²¹ It also demonstrated to the workers that at times there would be contradictions between their roles as labor activists seeking to better their social condition and their role as revolutionary organizers working to redeem their homeland.

The rest of the decade was extremely difficult for the Key's tobacco workers due to the constant economic fluctuations caused by the soft market nationally and to an increased immigrant flow that saturated the isle with excess labor. In 1876, for example, the largest manufactory in the city, Seidenburg & Co., closed its operations, leaving some five hundred unemployed, though its doors opened again the next year. By May 1878 an estimated 5,000 inhabitants of Key West were without work.

Labor leaders never ceased their organizing efforts, periodically calling strikes to defend their position, but their successes were rare. Even the Caja de Ahorros, the workers' only insurance in case of lay-offs or a strike, disappeared.²² Finally, in 1878, the labor activists' efforts paid off. During that year the workers succeeded in organizing unions among the cigar makers, the selectors, the classers, and the strippers, and during the next year all these were brought together under the umbrella of the Union de Tabaqueros, composed of representatives of the four organized tobacco trades. Also, hoping to gain control of a portion of the industry, the union established a fund to launch cooperative production, an idea inherited from the popular cooperativist movement of the 1860s, but which soon proved impractical. Led by Escassi, A. M. Castillo, Eduardo Paredes and others, the union called what became the Key's first successful strike during October 1879, in an effort to gain recognition for the labor organization from the

factory owners. The workers demanded wage increases, the creation of industry-wide standardized wage scales, and the regularization of lax cigar classification procedures that had traditionally allowed the manufacturers to pay low prices for the finer cigars. The strike succeeded as the industry came to a virtual standstill, and negotiations commenced.²³

During November, the rebel leaders General Garcia and Jose F. Lamadriz arrived from New York to raise funds for their projected expeditionary force to Cuba. Several days later a settlement to the strike was reached, suggesting the general intervened in the matter and encouraged a compromise settlement for the benefit of the revolution.²⁴ Accepting a compromise solution, the workers agreed to only slight wage increases in return for recognition of their union and a standardized price list. In reality the strike was a major victory for labor on the Key, for the manufacturers had finally been forced to recognize the legitimacy of their workers' organization, and Seidenburg, Martinez Ybor, Gato, Rawson, Marrero and other prominent manufacturers endorsed a price list issued by the union. The following spring, when Garcia landed in Cuba with his rebel force, the Union de Tabaqueros joined with the Key's rebel organizations in a massive street parade, demonstrating the continuing determination among the city's tobacco workers to support the independence cause.²⁵

Now established, the union made plans to secure a substantial wage increase and a voice in the administration of the factories through election of their foremen. The demands were issued during the summer to the Key's largest manufacturers, but rather than submit the factory owners declared a lockout. Apparently affecting only the large enterprises, the work stoppage lasted throughout the summer, and a large number of workers left the Key. Finally, in early August, the lockout ended, with the New York-based manufacturers' trade journal, Tobacco Leaf, reporting that the "brief interval of enforced idleness cured the operatives of their desire for domination, and they are now all at work, and the former relations of master and man are resumed." The manufacturers' organ also had the following to say about the Union's demands:

It will be remembered that some three or four months ago the cigar-makers in El Principe de Gales factory [Martinez Ybor] struck because they would not be allowed to control the administration of the place. They wanted to organize a branch of the Habana Cigar-Makers Directory in one factory, so that they might decide who and how many might be employed, the kinds and sizes of the wrappers to be used, and do pretty much as they pleased. Their foreman was to be from their own ranks, . . . Pretensions so preposterous could not, of course, be entertained for a moment.²⁶

The dispute left much bitterness, and the manufacturers immediately prepared to take action against the workers; the union had become too strong for their liking. During early 1881 the factory owners announced they had formed an association and would no longer recognize the union. Out to destroy the workers' organization, the manufacturers declared that henceforth only non-union

workers would be given employment in their factories, and since seven-eighths of the workers belonged to the union, virtually the entire industry was paralyzed.

Until now violence had not been a factor in labor-management disputes on the Key, but the increased tensions resulted in the killing of a labor organizer during April 1881. Suspecting that Francisco Marrero was responsible for the murder, some 1500 demonstrators gathered at his factory in protest, but city officials called out the volunteer militia, the Key West Rifles, to protect Marrero. Tensions reigned on the Key, and according to the Tallahassee Floridian, "threats to fire the buildings of the manufacturers were frequent."²⁷ In the end, the manufacturers recognized they could not break the union, but the workers themselves accomplished what the factory owners could not. The bitterness and violence associated with the events of 1880 and 1881 apparently divided the union leadership, because in September the Union de Tabaqueros dissolved after a public dispute between union members in the columns of El Yara and El Obrero, the union newspaper.²⁸ Although it is not clear, it is possible that union leaders associated with the independence cause advocated moderation in their relations with the factory owners while the radical leaders counseled intransigence. As we shall see this conflict between rebel and labor interests would reappear during the final years of the decade.

After the labor disputes of 1880 and 1881 and the dissolution of the tobacco workers' union, labor agitation diminished as a period of economic prosperity appeared. Organizing inactivity did not last long, however, because a large influx of workers from Cuba after 1881 again threatened wage rates and job security. The attraction of the Key's booming cigar factories threatened to inundate the isle with an overabundance of workers, a condition that had placed labor at the mercy of the factory owners during the previous decade. In addition, the manufacturers began taking advantage of relaxed union activity to erode the gains made by the workers during the strike of 1879. Especially irritating to Cuban labor was the return of the manufacturers' practice of underclassifying the high quality cigars, so as to pay cheap prices for them.

The first to reactivate their union during June 1882 were the selectors. By September 1884 the cigar makers and other occupations had followed suit. Shortly thereafter, the various unions again joined together as they had in 1879 under the umbrella of a general tobacco workers union, led by Manuel Gutierrez, Mateo Leal, Eduardo Pajarin, Carlos Balino, Ramon Rivero and others. Preparing for the worst, the manufacturers also reorganized, electing as officers of their trade association Cuban factory owners prominently connected with the revolutionary cause, including Navarro, Teodoro Perez, Gato and Canales, in an apparent attempt to use their influence within the rebel movement to intimidate the workers.²⁹ When

Maximo Gomez and Antonio Maceo arrived on the isle during 1885 to place themselves at the head of a new round of rebel conspiracies, these manufacturers immediately offered their financial support, no doubt out of their traditional and deeply felt patriotic commitment, but many workers suspected ulterior motives as well.

Finally, during August 1885 the expected confrontation between labor and the factory owners erupted, bringing cigar production to a halt. Labor leaders demanded wage increases, a return to regularized cigar classification procedures, and, once again, worker election of factory foremen. Unwilling to yield, the manufacturers dug in hoping to outlast union strike funds, reputed to be small. After a month-long strike monies indeed gave out, forcing the union to send representatives to New York and Habana where funds were successfully raised. Spanish officials in Habana usually cooperated with strikers from Key West, aware that this benefitted the Cuban industry but, more importantly, hoping to weaken the revolutionary organizations supporting Gomez and Maceo. The rebel leadership on the isle viewed Spanish cooperation with concern--another issue that would cause much dissension in Key West in 1889, when a strike of major proportions rocked the industry.

Recognizing the negative effect the strike would have on rebel activities if not settled quickly, revolutionary leaders joined in negotiating sessions after several bargaining meetings in New York failed to provide a solution. An agreement finally emerged

after the major stumbling block, the issue of worker election of foremen, was settled in a compromise allowing union representatives into the factories to investigate grievances, but leaving the foreman as a management position. The settlement was officially witnessed by Gomez's aide in Key West, Rafael Rodriguez, and Santos Benitez, the popular foreman of the Martinez Ybor factory. Once again the patriot element within the community contributed to settling a strike, but many workers felt dissatisfied with the rebel leadership's traditional position of counseling moderation and compromise in labor disputes, a concern that exploded into open conflict between labor and rebel chieftains three years later.³⁰

This sense of frustration among the tobacco workers was aggravated when the Key West fire in early 1886 made the union's continued existence untenable. With a large portion of the workers unemployed and its bargaining position totally undermined, the Union de Tabaqueros had little choice but to dissolve. In its final act, the workers' organization distributed \$900 among its membership and donated another \$480 to the city-wide relief fund.³¹

The labor leaders, however, were determined to continue their organizing, and among the tobacco workers departing for Tampa to seek work in the newly established factories were Ramon Rivero and Carlos Balino, veterans of the labor struggles on the Key. Rivero had been the last secretary of the Key's union, while Balino was prominent in the ranks of the Florida Knights of Labor, which he

represented at the labor organization's national convention in Richmond during 1886.³² Although in establishing the new cigar industry on the outskirts of Tampa, Martinez Ybor utilized the "company town" concept, hoping to control labor activism, Rivero and Balino succeeded immediately in forming a chapter of the Knights in Ybor City. The first strike for higher wages erupted in January 1887, led by the prominent Cuban organizer from New York, Ramon Rubiera. Intent on breaking the union before it could be firmly established, Martinez Ybor hired scabs and had Rubiera, his striking foreman Santos Benitez, and seventy-five workers deported, an action that led to confrontations resulting in the death of one worker and the wounding of three others. The deportations and bloodshed caused such indignation that the Spanish manufacturer was forced to allow the return of the deported workers to their jobs before a settlement could be reached.³³

Thus, the Cuban community leaders in Tampa, unlike the Key West emigre center, were labor activists, interested as much in local socioeconomic issues as in the traditional political concerns relating to their homeland. The patriot leader Poyo moved to Tampa during mid-1886, following the Martinez Ybor factory where he worked as the lector, and briefly published El Yara, but he soon returned to the Key to work as lector in the rebuilt Ellinger factory. His place in Tampa journalism was filled by Rivero who founded La Revista de Florida, primarily a labor newspaper. Rivero supported the

independence cause, but he was representative of a new generation of Cuban exiles who believed the political movement was of a long-term character and should not interfere in the day-to-day socioeconomic struggles of the tobacco workers. Joining Rivero on the newspaper's staff were two other labor activists, Jose I Izaguirre and Francisco Segura, who wrote in defense of Tampa's working classes. As Segura noted, the newspaper would consider all complaints from workers, and "si en ultimo termino viene el 'boicot,' poco nos importa pues no sera la primera vez y ni quizas la ultima, en que el hambre nos tiende su descarnada mano."³⁴ He was, of course, speaking of a possible boycott against the newspaper by manufacturers opposed to its pro-labor positions. The Tampa weekly would be in the forefront of efforts by labor activists to redefine the relationship between the socioeconomic and independence movements during the final years of the decade.

While the conflicts between capital and labor caused damaging public confrontations between segments of the Cuban community during the 1870s and 1880s, another social concern manifesting itself less dramatically but with equal detriment to the independence cause added to the polarization of the emigre centers. As we have already noted, in 1880, 21% of the Cubans on the Key were black or mulatto, and almost from the formation of the exile center the Cubans of color expressed disenchantment with the racial attitudes of some sectors of the revolutionary leadership. Race relations

would emerge as a problem within the Key West patriot community, creating a difficult challenge for those seeking to create a unified movement against Spanish authority in their homeland.

The Cuban blacks in south Florida were always a distinct social group with their own leaders and institutions. Clustered together in their own neighborhoods, they shared a sense of community even apart from their white compatriots, and although they belonged to the white Cuban institutions, such as San Carlos and the rebel clubs, they also created their own socio-educational organizations. During the 1870s, for example, a local Negro leader, Guillermo Sorondo, founded the Colegio Unificacion for the Key's black Cuban inhabitants, while ten years later another organization, Sociedad El Progreso, served as the Negro community's central institution. Directed by such prominent black leaders as Sorondo, Segura, Morua Delgado, Carlos Borrego, Francisco Camellon, Emilio Planas, Joaquin and Manuel Granados, and Juan de Dios Barrios, El Progreso became the primary institution for the entire Cuban community when San Carlos was destroyed by the fire in 1886. Although the Cuban blacks were never shut out of the community-wide institutions and organizations, they apparently felt a need for their own.³⁵

During the Ten Years War many Cuban Negroes in exile questioned the political evolution of the rebellion, believing their concerns and interests had been relegated to secondary status by a rebel leadership suspicious of the intentions and motives of the

Cuban free men of color joining the insurrection. As we have already seen, the rebel government in Cuba had initially demonstrated great reluctance to decree the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery, and when it was finally declared in April 1869, the legislative chamber quickly passed labor legislation aimed at controlling the emancipation process. Although the labor laws had little effect, the enactment of the measure could not have inspired a great deal of confidence among the free Negroes supporting the newly established republic.³⁶ For the black Cubans in exile, it was probably also a source of concern that throughout the Ten Years War the New York Junta was entrusted by the rebel government to prominent former reformists who had long been known for their gradualist approach to the abolition of slavery. It was also probably not lost on them that no blacks could be found among the friends, associates, and advisors of the Junta. Only one black, a worker by the name of Prospero Martinez, was active in the Club Politico Cubano of New York during 1869, and even he joined the Junta's opposition when the political disputes began to divide the emigre centers.³⁷

In Key West, by 1874, local politics had already created strains between the black community and the New York Junta's representative. Although prominent Negro leaders like Borrego, Camellon, Sorondo, and others figured prominently in the Key's rebel clubs, the mass of the black community withdrew from revolutionary activities, a phenomenon observed by Francisco V. Aguilera when he

travelled there to raise funds for his expedition to Cuba during 1875. Noting that few blacks attended the patriot functions, Aguilera asked to meet with the Negro leaders, to whom he insisted that the abolition of slavery and independence were the revolution's prime objectives. As he explained to Aldama, "se hacia la propaganda entre la jente de color de que la actual revolucion no se habia hecho para favorecerlos; que esta no era la revolucion que debian auxiliar, sino que despues de declarada la independecia de la Ysla, debian ellos iniciar una nueva para vengar todas las ofensas que se les habian inferido durante la epoca de esclavitud, y con especialidad los crimenes perpetrados en al ano de 1844." Although most blacks were probably not swayed by such arguments, it seems clear many were disillusioned with the revolution, which they considered was being led by former slave holders not much interested in their political or socioeconomic advancement. Nevertheless, the black Cubans in Key West were impressed by Aguilera's revolutionary credentials and sincerity and must have applauded the fact that one of the Vice-President's closest aides, Manuel Morey, was a mulatto. The Key's black community sponsored a dinner and patriotic event in Aguilera's honor prior to his departure, demonstrating their fundamental commitment to the Cuban independence movement.³⁸

These racial tensions in rebel ranks were skillfully manipulated by the Spanish authorities in Cuba, warning white Cubans that blacks such as Antonio Maceo were gaining control of the

insurrection. Raising the spectre of Haiti, the Spaniards successfully convinced many rebels that a danger indeed existed, thus laying the basis for an incident of 1880 that disillusioned many black Cubans. Shortly before the departure of the first expeditionary force that would launch the Guerra Chiquita, General Calixto Garcia informed Maceo he had been removed as its commander, explaining that his race would cause fears in Cuba. Although Garcia replaced Maceo for strategic reasons, apparently several of his advisors in New York indeed feared the mulatto general would emerge as the most prominent rebel leader. When the conspirators in Cuba learned of Garcia's decision, many became dispirited, and some consider that Maceo's absence from the island at the beginning of the new revolutionary effort sealed its fate.³⁹ This incident no doubt had its effect in Key West as well.

In addition to these concerns directly related to revolutionary politics, the Negro community in south Florida also had to contend with the post-civil war political and social climate of the North American South, where relations between blacks and whites became increasingly strained as the century wore on. Upon arriving in Key West, Cubans of all races became involved in United States politics, joining the Republican Party because of its reputation as the party of emancipation, but also because the Republicans actively courted the Cuban vote. As one immigrant from Cuba noted, "Desde que empezo la revolucion en Cuba, los cubanos que llegaron al Cayo,

blancos y negros, se unieron al partido republicano por que este era el que habia dado la libertad a los esclavos de este pais; porque hay semejanza en la constitucion sobre derechos de igualdad, etc., y porque los Republicanos dieron a los cubanos participacion en todos los negocios publicos: mientras que por parte de los llamados Democreatas, no han recibido los cubanos mas que ofensas terribles."⁴⁰

Thus, Cubans worked in two realms politically: that related directly to the patriot cause and that connected with the political system in their new place of residence. The two, however, did not exist independently of each other, since the insurrection initially proved to be the focal point of all political decision-making in the community. In fact, it was the Grant administration's initial sympathy toward the Cuban rebellion that drew the entirety of the emigre community to the support of the Republican Party.

By 1870, the Republican Party of Monroe County had pieced together a formidable political coalition, including Cubans, the so-called "carpetbag" element of the Anglo community, North American blacks, and Negro immigrants from the Bahamas who began arriving in Key West in significant numbers subsequent to the Civil War. Within a short time this political alliance produced electoral successes. In 1868 local elections gave Democratic candidates a victory, but within two years, with the near absolute support of the Cuban immigrants, Republicans in Monroe County won congressional and state elections, becoming the majority party on the Key. As rewards for

their support Cubans received state and federal appointments, including positions as justices of the peace, internal revenue collectors, and customs house employees. Indeed, so influential was the Cuban vote in Key West that when Carlos Manuel de Cespedes y Cespedes, son of the Cuban Republic's first President, announced his intention to run for mayor in 1875, he gained the immediate support of all elements of the Republican coalition and won the election easily.

By 1872, however, the Grant administration's negative attitude toward the Cuban insurrection began to take its toll on the Cuban Republican bloc vote. Although Florida Republicans unanimously and publicly supported the rebellion and constantly presented resolutions in Congress urging the recognition of Cuban belligerency, between 1870 and the termination of the Grant presidency in early 1877 the party in Washington did little for the cause. Accordingly, during 1872 and 1874 significant numbers of Cubans in Key West voted the Democratic ticket, a clear warning to the local Republicans that Washington's attitude toward the Cuban insurrection was undermining their credibility with Cubans.⁴¹

Despite this erosion of the Cuban bloc vote during the early 1870s, however, most Cubans remained loyal to the Republicans because of local economic and social considerations. This was especially true after the termination of the Ten Years War since the national Republicans negative attitude toward the Cuban insurrection

no longer impacted local Key West politics. In general, Cubans backed the Republicans, in Key West at least, because the party's grass-roots composition was primarily of a working-class and minority character. The leadership of the Cuban Republicans during the 1870s, for example, included prominent blacks like Sorondo, Borrego and Camellon; labor activists such as Manuel Escassi and Federico de Armas; and traditional patriot figures such as Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Manuel Govin, Juan M. Reyes, Federico Hortsmann, and Martin Herrera.⁴² For the most part, Cubans were not attracted to the Democratic organization, composed of the isle's Anglo inhabitants who, in general, had sympathized with the Confederacy and brandished their racist attitudes proudly. During the 1880s one Cuban worker characterized the Anglo Democrats as "antiguos confederados del sur . . . animados de un odio formidable e invencible hacia la raza de color." He also noted:

Esos floridianos llevan a tal grado su enemiga hacia los antiguos esclavos, por cuya servidumbre aun suspiran, que hasta en sus leyes, tan proclamadas de igualdad, prohiben la union del blanco y el negro estableciendo contra el ministro que casase a dos de diferentes razas las penas de destitucion y multa de mil pesos. Existen instituciones de senoras que se comprometen y ligan para no dar trabajo a ningun hombre de color. El odio a los republicanos por haber abolido la esclavitud y la inquina y la persecucion de la raza de color en la vida publica y la privada, es uno de los razgos de la flamante republica del Norte America . . . En un pueblo de tal modo organizado y constituido, los obreros cubanos, a quienes tenian y consideraban como a raza inferior y casi al igual que a los negros de Nassau han sido objeto del peor trato y mas duro proceder que cabe concebir.⁴³

This perception of the Democratic Party by Cuban workers and blacks ensured that they would remain in the Republican camp.

Nevertheless, Democrats did succeed in attracting a group of white Cubans to their party after the mid-1870s.

By 1876, Cubans in New York were thoroughly disgusted with the Grant administration, and when the presidential electoral campaign opened that year, two Cuban newsweeklies, El Pueblo and El Tribuno Cubano, initiated a vigorous support for the Democratic candidate. Furthermore, at the suggestion of Florida Democratic Congressional candidate John Henderson, who promised full support for Cuba's insurrection, Agent General Aldama used his prestige as the official representative in exile to influence the elections in Key West in favor of the Democrats. Writing to his agent on the Key, Benjamin Perez, Aldama suggested that patriotic Cubans were duty-bound to vote against the party that had for eight years ignored the rebel cause, prompting Perez to organize a Cuban Democratic Club among a group of military figures little concerned with the local political and social realities that had traditionally attracted the Cubans to the Republican organization. With the moral authority of Aldama's letter, the Cuban Democrats lured a significant number of their compatriots into the club.⁴⁴ In New York, Cuban patriot leaders were unaware or uninterested in local conditions on the Key that made their compatriots' support for the Democrats difficult.

Immediately the Cuban Republicans on the Key denounced Aldama's interference in local affairs, arguing that, although the

Republicans might have done little for their cause, there was no guarantee the Democrats would be any more sympathetic. Given this reality, they insisted, Cubans were reduced to principles, and no Cuban of good conscience could vote for the Democrats, whom they characterized as the party of "slavery and annexation."⁴⁵ Indeed, in complaining to Aldama's secretary in New York, Hilario Cisneros, the president of the Cuban Republicans, Federico Hortsmann, reduced the dispute to what he considered its basic element: "nosotros, por nuestro amor a Cuba, antes que parecer sospechosos a nuestros hermanos de color, nos decidimos aunque acatando, a desobedecer cuanto pueda herir o rebajar su clase." The Key's black community clearly resented the Agent General's involvement in favor of the Democrats, and the Cuban Republican executive committee, which included Negro leaders Borrego, Sorondo, Silvestre Nisperuza, and Jose J. Agramonte, approved a resolution condemning the interference by Aldama and the two New York newspapers.⁴⁶

This political dispute might have been a momentary problem, but the elections of 1876 brought the Democratic Party to power in Florida, initiating a sharp decline in Republican influence in the state and prompting many Cubans into the now dominant Democratic organization. Although most of the tobacco workers and Negroes remained loyal to the Republicans, over the next several years a group of economically established and influential Cubans, including Angel Lono, Carlos Recio, Cayetano Soria, Teodoro Perez, Manuel P.

Delgado, Jose R. Estrada, Pedro Someillan, and Ramon Montsalvage, joined the opposing party. Their working-class and black compatriots no doubt wondered what attraction the Democratic Party offered, but to these manufacturers, professionals, merchants, and office-seekers the advantages were clear. Their interests were no doubt better served by the more affluent, and now more influential, Democratic organization than by its primarily working-class Republican counterpart.

In effect, this movement of Cuban professionals into the Democratic Party represented the integration of the immigrant community into the Key's socioeconomic structure, as political decision-making began to reflect more than just the Cuban separatist cause. Cuban manufacturers no doubt considered the Republicans in Monroe County too closely tied to the workers to take effective action against the aggressive labor organizing of the 1870s and 1880s. During 1887, for example, the Republican Mayor of Key West, J. W. V. R. Plummer, was praised by the Habana anarchist newspaper, El Productor, for his support of workers' causes.⁴⁷ This clearly did not please the Cuban cigar capitalists and professionals, who found a more sympathetic hearing among the Democrats. Cuban involvement in Monroe County politics, then, intensified racial and class antagonisms within the emigre community, causing many workers to suspect the motives and revolutionary purity of prominent rebel activists like Lono, Soria, Recio, Perez, Gato, Delgado, and others, who in

their mind were supporting a political party in Key West representing the very antithesis of what the Cuban insurrectionary ideal stood for.

While the political and socioeconomic dynamics in Key West exerted divisive pressures on the Cuban community, the most influential patriot leaders, such as Lamadriz, Poyo, and Figueredo, remained clear of local political debates not related directly to the rebel cause and called on their compatriots to keep their attention on their homeland. Of the three leaders, only Figueredo participated in United States politics, achieving election to the Florida legislature in 1884, but as an independent and on his reputation as a Cuban war veteran. During the early 1870s, Poyo had warned against mixing North American and Cuban politics and criticized Aldama's agent for his active participation in local political affairs. He reaffirmed this view in El Yara during 1885 when he published an article by Eusebio Hernandez, entitled "Nuestra mision en el destierro," which noted that if Cubans became involved in local politics "afiliandonos en sus distintas afiliaciones politicas, censurando sus habitos politicos, imponiendo nuestras ideas, perderemos la estimacion de los mas." Hernandez added, "Puede el hombre que se ocupa en obra tan grande como la independencia patria mezclarse conjuntamente en las cuestiones de otro pais diverso que reclama--ademas--especial atencion?" His answer was an adamant no, and he concluded: "Nuestra politica aqui, mientras luchamos por la

independencia, debe ser la de nuestra revolucion."⁴⁸ Many of the prominent rebel leaders viewed their stay in Key West as temporary and therefore opposed divisive involvement in local political and social concerns, but they represented a minority, for clearly most Cubans were deeply involved in the daily affairs of their emigre community. This was a reality that presented a serious challenge to the independence movement during the final half of the decade of the eighties.

Notes

¹The traditional studies of the Key West and Tampa Cuban exile centers have emphasized their patriotism and dedication to the independence movement, ignoring the serious political and socioeconomic divisions that existed and threatened their commitment to the revolutionary cause. Nevertheless, these studies are invaluable and fundamental for the study of the Florida emigre colonies. The most important are: Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935); Manuel Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro. La emigracion. Notas historicas (Cienfuegos: Imprenta de M. Mestre, 1904); and Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June 1958), 5-140.

²For a useful biography of Martinez Ybor and the development of his cigar enterprise see L. Glenn Westfall, "Don Vicente Ybor, The Man and His Empire: Development of the Clear Havana Industry in Cuba and Florida in the Nineteenth Century," University of Florida, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1977.

³Willis Baer, The Economic Development of the Cigar Industry in the United States (Lancaster, PA., 1933), 106-107.

⁴The Tobacco Leaf (New York), March 29, 1879.

⁵The Tobacco Leaf, February 14, August 7, 1880; El Republicano (Key West), July 13, 1875.

⁶National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Schedules of the Federal Population Census of 1870," Monroe County, Florida; U. S. Census Office, Statistics of Population, 1880 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 501; National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Schedules of the Federal Population Census of 1880," Monroe County, Florida; U.S. Census Office, Statistics of Population, 1890 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), 405, 615; U.S. Census Office, Statistics of Manufacturers, 1880 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 103; Tallahassee Sentinel, September 17, 1870; Weekly Floridian (Tallahassee), November 30, 1875; Cigar Makers' Official Journal (New York), February 17, 1885; New York Times, May 15, 1873; Jefferson B. Browne, Key West: The Old and the New, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 128.

⁷Tallahassee Sentinel, February 12, 1876; New York Times, January 11, 1874; Walter Maloney, Sketch of the History of Key West, Florida (Newark, N.J., 1876), 25.

⁸The Tobacco Leaf, July 3, 1880.

⁹Unless otherwise specified, statistical information relating to the cigar manufactories was obtained from the following sources: Tallahassee Sentinel, February 12, 1876; The Tobacco Leaf, July 3, 1880; National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Schedules of the Florida State Census of 1885," Monroe County, Florida. See "Census of Manufacturers"; Tobacco Leaf Publishing Company, Directory of the Tobacco Industry of the United States and Havana (New York, 1887). Information on Soria was obtained in Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 699, numero 11, and Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Bienes Embargados, Legajo 148, numero 47.

¹⁰Juan J.E. Casasus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 142, 418; ANC, Donativos, Legajo 699, numero 11; Key of the Gulf, (Key West), July 1, 1876; Weekly Florida Union, (Jacksonville), September 8, 1877; The Tobacco Leaf, August 8, 1885; Key West Democrat, March 20, 1886; Weekly Sun, (Gainesville), August 17, 1889.

¹¹Jose Miguel Macias, Deportados politicos a Fernando Poo: Espression de profesiones, edad, naturalidad y fecha de prision, fuga y fallecimiento (New York, 1882); La Revolucion de Cuba, (New York), November 13, 20, 1875.

¹²Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, 3 vols. (Habana: Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1949-1950), I, 4-5.

¹³Casasus, La emigracion cubana, 434; The Tobacco Leaf, November 8, 1879; Juan Perez Rolo, Mis Recuerdos (Key West, 1928), 29.

¹⁴This analysis is based on 100% of the Cubans included in the 1880 federal census schedules on microfilm for Monroe County, Florida. However, according to United States Census Office, Statistics of Population, 1880, page 430, the population of Monroe County was 10,940, while only 8,218 appear on the schedules, indicating 2,722 entries are missing. Because Enumeration District No. 17 contains only four pages of schedules while the other districts include at least 20, it is probable the missing pages belong to this district. In any case, the vast majority of Cubans are included in this analysis. Information on Recio comes from the following sources: Letter, Benjamin Perez to Miguel Aldama, October 23, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 161, numero 70-17; George Chapin, Florida: Past, Present and Future, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1914), II, 313-314.

¹⁵Weekly Florida Union (Jacksonville), September 8, 1877; Gustavo J. Godoy, "Jose Alejandro Huau: A Cuban Patriot in Jacksonville Politica," Florida Historical Quarterly 54 (October 1975).

¹⁶Westfall, "Don Vicente Martinez Ybor," chapter 3; Durward Long, "The Historical Beginning of Ybor City and Modern Tampa," Florida Historical Quarterly, 45 (July 1966), 31-44.

¹⁷Florida, Census Report of the State of Florida for the Year 1895 (Tallahassee: Floridian Printing Company, 1897), 14-15; Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," p. 9, 31-32.

¹⁸Gary R. Mormino, "Tampa and the New Urban South: The Weight Strike of 1899," Florida Historical Quarterly, 60 (January 1982), 339; Browne, Key West, 128; Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," pp. 65-66, 87-89; El Yara (Key West) February 2, 1895. El Yara estimated that over 10,000 Cubans resided in Florida and over 25,000 in the United States in 1895; Castellanos, Motivos de Cayo Hueso, 300.

¹⁹New York Times, January 11, 1874; El Republicano (Key West), October 31, 1874. Only Westfall's study of Martinez Ybor has considered labor organizing among Cubans prior to the 1890s. Two earlier articles on Cuban cigar-makers in Florida left the impression workers had little interest in union activism. They are John C. Appel. "The Unionization of Florida Cigar-makers and the Coming of the War with Spain," Hispanic American Historical Review, 36 (February 1956), and Durward Long, "Labor Relations in the Tampa Cigar Industry, 1885-1911," Labor History, 12 (Fall, 1971). Appel, for example, wrote: "A large part of the labor force in Florida's cigar factories had come from Cuba where there was no labor union tradition. It was not easy to sell the idea of unionism to them." (p. 39) As we will see, this was not the case.

²⁰El Republicano, July 13, 1875; La Independencia (New York), July 29, 1875.

²¹La Independencia, April 26, 1876; Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968), 191; Weekly Floridian, August 17, 24, 1875.

²²La Independencia, August 26, November 4, 1876; El Republicano, January 8, 1876; La Voz de la Patria (New York), August 11, 1876; Daily Sun and Press, (Jacksonville), May 5, 15, 1878.

²³Cigar Makers' Official Journal, December 10, 1879, February 10, 1880; The Tobacco Leaf, November 8, 1879; Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, II, 216, 252, 274; III, 44; Weekly Floridian, July 9, 1878, November 18, 1879.

²⁴Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, III, 17.

²⁵Cigar Makers' Official Journal, December 10, 1879; Archivo Nacional, Documentos para servir a la historia de la Guerra Chiquita, III, 154.

²⁶Weekly Floridian, August 3, 1880; Cigar Makers' Official Journal, August 10, 1880; The Tobacco Leaf, August 7, 1880.

²⁷Weekly Floridian, April 5, 1881; Browne, Key West, 155.

²⁸El Yara, September 3, 17, 1881.

²⁹La Voz de Hatuey (Key West), March 1, 1884 in National Archives Microfilm Publications, "Notes From the Spanish Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1790-1906," 31 microfilm reels, see reel 25, March 17, 1884; Antonio Diaz Carrasco, "Bosquejo historico del gremio de escogedores," Revista de Cayo Hueso, June 26, 1898, 22-24; The Tobacco Leaf, October 25, 1884.

³⁰New York Herald, August 4, 5, 25, 28; September 2, 1885; The Tobacco Leaf, August 8, 15, 22, 1885, Westfall, "Don Vicente Martinez Ybor," 39-46; Cigar Makers' Official Journal, September, 1885.

³¹Weekly Floridian, April 8, 15, 1886.

³²Cigar Makers' Official Journal, January 1886; Journal of United Labor, (Philadelphia), August 1886; Knights of Labor of America. Proceedings of the General Assembly, 10th Regular Session, Richmond, Virginia, October 4-20, 1886, p. 18.

³³Westfall, "Don Vicente Martinez Ybor," 59; Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," pp. 24, 27; Joan Marie Steffy, "The Cuban Immigrants of Tampa, Florida," University of South Florida, M.A. Thesis, 1975, 24-25.

³⁴La Revista de Florida (Tampa), December 16, 1888; Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," p. 22.

³⁵La Voz de la Patria, April 21, June 23, 1876; letter, Benjamin Perez to Miguel Aldama, February 14, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 161, numero 70-17; Martin Morua Delgado, Jenios olvidados: Noticias biograficas por Francisco Segura y Pereyra, (Habana: El Comercio Tipografico, 1895), 25; Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro, 32.

³⁶See discussion in chapter 2.

³⁷La Republica (New York), July 3, 1871; letters, Carlos del Castillo a Jose Gabriel del Castillo, see correspondence for 1876 for references regarding Martinez' anti-Junta sentiments, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 421, numero 26.

³⁸La Voz de la Patria, June 2, 9, 1876; Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, Coleccion Cubana (hereafter, BNJM, CC), C. M. Ponce, numero 190-191; Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Asuntos Politicos (hereafter, ANC, Asuntos), Legajo 71, numero 10; Fernando Portuondo, ed., Francisco Vicente Aguilera: Epistolario, (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1974), 143-144; letter, Federico Hortsman to Miguel Aldama, September 12, 1874, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 157, numero 49-37.

³⁹Jose M. Perez Cabrera, "El periodo revolucionario de 1878 a 1892," in Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, et al., Historia de la nacion cubana, (Habana: Editorial Historia de la Nacion Cubana, 1952), V, 350-352; Jose L. Franco, Antonio Maceo: Apuntes para una historia de su vida, 3 vols. (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), I, 187-188.

⁴⁰Letter, Enrique Parodi to Miguel Aldama, September 20, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 161, numero 69-27.

⁴¹For a detailed discussion of Cuban involvement in U.S. politics during these years see Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics, 1868-1876," Florida Historical Quarterly, 55 (April 1977).

⁴²La Voz de la Patria, December 15, 1876; "Sesion Directiva del Club Republicano Radical Cubano," November 22, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 171, numero 136.

⁴³El Espanol (Habana), "Lo de Cayo Hueso," November 26, 1889, ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 260, numero 4. This anonymous article was probably written by the newspapers' secret correspondent in Key West, Enrique Parodi, who usually signed, "El 2do Centinela del Cayo." A tobacco worker who helped the separatist cause during the Ten Years War, Parodi became an autonomist and sympathizer of the

labor movement during the late 1880s, severely attacking the independence movement in the Spanish press. For an example of his signed articles see El Espanol, "Cara de Cayo Hueso," October 18, 1889, ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 260, numero 2. See also, ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 82, numero 27, which identifies Parodi as "El 2ndo Centinela del Cayo."

⁴⁴Letter, Miguel Aldama to Benjamin Perez, August 12, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 150, numero 7-39; letter, Enrique Parodi to Miguel Aldama, September 20, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 161, numero 69-27; letters, Benjamin Perez to Miguel Aldama, October 9, 23, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 161, numero 70-17.

⁴⁵Letter, Miguel Aldama to Benjamin Perez, September 16, 1876, ANC, Donativos, Legajo 150, numero 7-42; Daily Florida Union (Jacksonville), November 7, 1876; Plasencia, Bibliografia, 192.

⁴⁶Letter, Federico Hortsmann to Hilario Cisneros, October 26, 1876, BNJM, CC, C. M. Ponce, numero 575; La Voz de la Patria, December 15, 1876.

⁴⁷El Productor, (Habana), September 27, 1888.

⁴⁸Plasencia, Bibliografia, 824; The article appeared in the February 6, 1885 issue of El Yara. A copy of the article was provided to the author by Dr. Rafael Cepeda, Habana, Cuba.

CHAPTER 7

CHALLENGES TO THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, 1886-1890: ANARCHISM AND ANNEXATIONISM

Despite the constant organizing activities of the patriot leaders in the exile centers, by the late 1880s political and socioeconomic divisions and tensions were creating havoc within the independence movement. Many Cubans began to question the feasibility of a revolutionary solution to the Cuban question. The failure of the Gomez-Maceo plan convinced many that the emigre communities were, in fact, incapable of coordinating and landing a rebel expeditionary force of sufficient size to revolutionize the island. Others believed the Spanish were simply too well entrenched. Although the separatist ideal remained intact, sectors of the expatriate communities began redefining their priorities, giving rise to two radically distinct political tendencies that challenged the legitimacy of the independence movement and its leadership. Based on very different political and socioeconomic assumptions, the emergence of the two movements represented a reaction to the failure of the traditional rebel strategies, presenting the patriot leadership with a serious dilemma.

The first challenge came from the radicalization of the Key's labor movement that since the early 1870s had been seeking a

balance between patriot and workers' issues. By 1885 many of the Cuban labor activists had come to the conclusion that the tobacco workers' traditional unquestioning support for the patriot cause had worked to their disadvantage. Not only had independence not been achieved, but their willingness to forego social militancy to ensure funds for the rebel chieftains had, in their view, retarded the growth and undermined the cohesion of their labor organizations. Many came to believe that as long as labor struggles were influenced by the patriot leaders, the workers' interests would never be advanced. Moreover, now that the possibilities of landing a significant rebel force on the island seemed negligible, radical labor activists called on the workers to turn their attention to socioeconomic issues.

Rapid industrial growth and urbanization, combined with the widespread exploitation of the working classes, characterized socioeconomic development in the post-Civil War United States. This gave rise to labor movements that subsequent to the depression of the 1870s finally managed to establish their presence in the nation's social and economic life.¹ Although some Cuban workers and activists in the Florida communities initially expressed interest in cooperating with North American labor organizations, by the mid-1880s most were committed to associating with the more radical labor movement in their homeland. During 1880, for example, the Key West Union de Tabaqueros contacted the New York-based Cigar Makers'

International Union. The Cubans informed the International Union's president, Adolf Strasser, he had been named an honorary member of the Key West organization. Although Strasser acknowledged the Cubans' action and emphasized his desire to see all cigar makers in the United States join his union, the relationship did not mature. Not until 1889 did the International Union manage to organize a chapter on the Key, and then it only operated until early the next year. Also, when the Knights of Labor gained national prominence during the mid-1880s, Cuban activists joined, including Carlos Balino, Ramon Rivero, and Martin Morua Delgado. The mass of the Cuban workers, however, were more responsive to the exclusively Cuban unions that traditionally dominated in south Florida.²

The failure of North American labor organizations to gain widespread support among the Cuban tobacco workers was partially the result of conflict between United States and immigrant workers and the negative attitude of North American organizers toward the Cubans. In Key West during 1888 the Knights of Labor could only claim some 126 members, while the Cigar Makers' International had even less success. North American workers resented the massive presence of Cuban tobacco workers and organizers were openly contemptuous because they believed the immigrants were unorganizable. As one Cigar Makers' Union organizer in Jacksonville noted, "on the first day I visited the El Modelo factory, spoke to some few old veterans, addressed the Cubans wherever I could meet them, in shops and

saloons, but could convince them of nothing. They are opposed to all American institutions. They can not, nor will not understand reason, got no use for the Int. Union." After visiting Ybor City and meeting with a similar situation, the organizer concluded, "such is the composition of cigar makers there and I am told that Key West men are of the same stamp, or a little worse. Judging from what I have learned from the cigarmakers of Tampa and Ybor City, I concluded that it was unnecessary for me to go to Key West."³ Although Cubans in Florida had been active in workers' organizing since the early 1870s, the Cigar Makers' International organizer wrote them off as opposed to labor activism. In Key West, one of the prominent activists of the Knights, Charles B. Pendleton, editor of the Key West Equator-Democrat, consistently demonstrated his animosity toward the Cuban and black Bahamian immigrants who regularly arrived on the Key during the mid and late eighties. Also, his membership in the Democratic party probably did not contribute to building confidence among these immigrant workers. It is not surprising, then, that the mass of Cuban workers remained aloof from the Knights, even though prominent Cuban organizers joined the organization for a short time.⁴

It is possible, however, that a more fundamental reason drew the Cubans into the immigrant unions. They may have been more attracted to the radical ideologies that came to dominate the labor movement in Cuba during the course of the eighties than to the

doctrines espoused by their North American counterparts. A central and controversial tenet of the Knights' ideology, for example, was the rejection of the strike as a legitimate tool of struggle for workers; a doctrine contrary to the traditions of the Cuban tobacco workers in Key West.⁵ Prior to the eighties, labor ideologies in Cuba were similar to those of the major unions in the United States, stressing education, arbitration, and cooperativism as the primary means for improving the condition of the working classes. By 1882, however, labor leaders influenced by the socialist ideals of Spanish Anarchism began gaining prominence, culminating in the founding of the Alianza Obrera during 1887. Leading figures in this process were Enrique Roig de San Martin, Enrique Messonier, and Enrique Creci. They firmly established socialism as a major tendency within the Cuban labor movement.

Primarily a tobacco workers' organization, La Alianza represented those who rejected the reformist assumptions of the traditional labor movement in favor of a socialist concept of class struggle, advanced most effectively by Roig's newspaper El Productor, which began publishing in mid-1887. Speaking for La Alianza, El Productor characterized its followers as "revolutionary socialists," but they soon became known as anarchists because of their militancy and rejection of political movements, whether of bourgeois or working-class character, as contrary to the interests of the workers.⁶

The constant movement of workers between south Florida and Habana throughout the eighties ensured the radicalization of Cuban and Spanish labor in Key West and Tampa, although socialist philosophies did not first appear on the Key with the rise to prominence of the Habana anarchists. Labor organizers espousing socialist ideals had been well received on the south Florida isle almost since the formation of the Cuban center in the early 1870s. The prominent political figure, Federico de Armas, president of the patriot organization the Asociacion del Sur and editor of El Republicano during 1874 through 1876, openly proclaimed socialist doctrines, and, as noted earlier, organized the first tobacco workers' strike in 1875. Before arriving in New York during 1870 to join the rebel effort, Armas resided in Madrid where he had been active in the Socialist International. Despite his close association with the disliked Aldama, he became a popular figure in Key West on arriving in 1872. Armas supported the insurrection in his homeland, but his socialist preachings in the rebel newspaper caused some to question his priorities, as well as his commitment to the cause. Armas "trueno contra el cristianismo, contra la propiedad," wrote one critic, adding, "dice que el modo de ser de la familia es tan corrompida como la sociedad en que se agita . . . niega la patria." Another patriot wrote off El Republicano under Armas' editorship as nothing more than a "gacetilla socialista."⁷ This would not be the last time nationalist and socialist sentiments came into conflict.

Other labor activists with clearly socialist sympathies gained prominence in Key West and Tampa during the final half of the 1880s, lending their support to the ideals espoused by El Productor. Among the leading organizers were Balino, Sorondo, Oscar Martin, Eduardo Pajarin, and Mateo Leal; all veterans of the Key's labor movement. They, in turn, received support from a group of publicists and journalists, including Morua Delgado, Federico Corbett, Pedro Pequeno, Nestor Carbonell and Jose de C. Palomino. Morua's El Pueblo and La Nueva Era, Corbett's La Justicia, Balino's La Tribuna del Trabajo, and El Cubano, edited by Pequeno and Carbonell, all sympathized with the emerging militant labor movement in Key West. Palomino expressed his ideas in an anonymous column from the Key appearing regularly in El Productor during 1888 and 1889.⁸ In Tampa, La Revista de Florida, edited by Rivero in collaboration with Segura and Izaguirre, defended the interests of the working classes in the south Florida communities.

The increase in labor militancy among Cuban workers in Florida did not reflect a clearly defined ideological position, but rather a general radicalization of the tobacco workers. The labor troubles on the isle since the early 1870s made the workers susceptible to the socialist ideals disseminated by the new generation of labor militants in Cuba. As Palomino declared in El Productor, "Las doctrinas socialistas . . . van abriendose paso de una manera sobre natural, pues en estos ultimos veinte y cinco anos, su iniciacion y

practica ha sido adoptada por multitud de proletarios que ven en ellos su solucion."⁹ The pro-labor publicists in exile began defining themselves as socialists, although their interpretations of what that meant varied. During mid-1889, La Revista de Florida openly declared: "La bandera del socialismo es nuestra bandera: Ella significa: Libertad, Igualdad y Fraternidad. Ella es la equidad, la reivindicacion del honor." On the other hand, Morua Delgado noted, "El socialismo es la nivelacion, no de las riquezas, sino de los derechos del hombre para procurarlas, para poseer las, para disfrutarlas. No es la igualdad de las fortunas, no, es si la igualdad individual para el acceso a ellos."¹⁰ Balino offered a more clearly Marxist perspective:

Yo no creo que la esclavitud ha sido abolido, sino que ha sufrido una transformacion. En vez de esclavitud domestica para los negros solamente, tenemos la esclavitud industrial para blancos y negros. El esclavo de la plantacion ha sido sustituido por el esclavo del taller. Y tan ardiente abolicionista soy para una forma de esclavitud como para la otra.^{††}

For these labor militants, the struggle for a more equitable society was necessary and socialism provided the general framework within which to challenge what they believed to be a growing and unbridled exploitation of workers throughout the industrialized world and in their own communities.

Throughout the late 1880s, socialist propagandists constantly attacked the established order. El Productor's Key West correspondent took the local manufacturers to task for their efforts after the fire in 1886 to reorganize the working community in line

with the "company town" concept so popular among capitalists of the period. According to the activist, the manufacturers "abarcaron por poco costo grandes lotes de terreno y al derredor de la manufactura, y a semejanza de las grandes empresas mineras y ferrocarrileras del Norte, construyeron centenares de pequenas habitaciones," creating "barrios" in mosquito-infested areas lacking all hygiene, which were then rented to workers at inflated prices. Thus, continued the critic, "claro esta que el burgues no puede desatender lo demas que se relaciona con la existencia de su feudatario y para proveer a ella en todos los ordenes instala el 'bar roon,' o tienda de bebidas y comestibles," owned by the manufacturers and, in the correspondent's view, calculated to keep the worker in a constant state of moral decay and sociopolitical inactivity. In addition, the critic consistently denounced the low wages, gaming and lotteries sponsored by the capitalists, discrimination against Negro workers in the factories, abuse of workers' dignity, and the general state of exploitation that he believed existed in Key West.¹² These ills, he suggested, could only be eliminated by the creation of a militant labor organization dedicated exclusively to socioeconomic concerns.

During these years the terms socialism, revolutionary socialism, and anarchism were used interchangeably when addressing socioeconomic concerns, but when focusing on political questions they became more defined. Socialist militants who rejected political movements were known as anarchists or revolutionary socialists.

El Productor popularized the anarchist proposition that workers not participate in politics. In an article entitled "La patria y los obreros," for example, the Habana newspaper asked: "Es que la independencia de la patria consiste en tener un gobierno propio, en no depender de otra nacion, etc., etc., aunque sus hijos esten en la mas degradante esclavitud? . . . es que puede existir la patria sin hijos?" Answering the question, the article continued, "Creemos que la patria la constituyen sus hijos, y que no hay patria libre si mantiene en su seno hijos esclavos; importando poco para el caso que el que los esclavice sea el extranjero o sus propios ciudadanos: el hecho es lo mismo." Accordingly, "Los trabajadores no podemos ni debemos ser otra coas que socialistas, porque el socialismo es el unico que hoy por hoy se presenta frente a frente del regimen burgues que nos esclaviza." The Key West newspaper El Cubano echoed similar sentiments, noting: "En todas partes del mundo los obreros han sido la masa de canon en las resoluciones politicas; el blanco de todos los gobiernos; la escalera humana por donde han subido a la cuspide del poder y riqueza los ambiciosos de todos los tiempos."¹³ In effect, these newspapers suggested there was a basic contradiction between nationalism and socialism and called on the workers to embrace the latter.

Although socialism was attractive to Cuban workers in Florida, they were nationalists by tradition. Nevertheless, anarchist influence began to be felt in the Florida communities as

workers suspected that the rebel movement had lost touch with the concerns and aspirations of the emigre working-class colony. During the 1870s and early 1880s most workers accepted the necessity of sacrificing a militant labor movement to advance the various rebel organizing efforts, but the defeat of the Gomez-Maceo plan brought about a change in attitude. As one labor activist now suggested, "Yo soy cubano y deseo la independendencia . . . porque me hago la ilusion de que con ella tendremos mas libertad, gozando de la absoluta libertad de imprenta y de reunion . . . Nosotros, los de ideas separatistas, cuando llegue el momento oportuno debemos luchar en el campo de batalla con las armas en la mano por el triunfo de nuestro ideal." But, he added, "mientras permanezcamos en el taller, seamos, antes que todo, obreros, imitando a los burgueses que antes que politicos, son burgueses." He also noted that although independence might bring some additional liberties for workers, it would have no effect on their socioeconomic condition since the bourgeoisie controlled the rebel movement.¹⁴

Many Cuban workers no longer viewed the traditional independence movement as worthy of their uncompromising support. As some perceived it, for ten years an important sector of the rebel leadership in Key West, especially those with extensive economic interests such as Gato, Recio, Soria, Teodoro Perez and others, had manipulated the movement to their advantage and had even joined the racist Democratic party to protect their interests against the

organizing workers. This they were no longer willing to tolerate. Should the revolution erupt, most would be willing to support it, but they would no longer ignore their class and racial grievances in favor of conspiratorial activities, which in any case most believed a futile undertaking. As another militant in Key West noted, "si creyera yo que la independencia de Cuba la habiamos de hacer en Cayo Hueso, de seguro que daria mi apoyo," but there was little confidence that the emigre communities were capable of revolutionizing Cuba.¹⁵

The labor leaders began to gain support in Key West and Tampa during 1887, presenting the patriot chieftains with a serious problem. Their traditional policy of seeking compromise between capital and labor in order to ensure the primacy of the independence movement was now being viewed with scorn by the usually responsive workers. Although patriot leaders like Lamadriz, Poyo, and Figueredo had always enjoyed a good relationship with the tobacco workers, they now had to contend with a labor leadership that accused them of plotting with the patriot capitalists to undermine the interests of the workers. El Productor's Key West correspondent, for example, charged that the rebel leaders had often been responsible for foiling strike actions. "[C]uando se hacia una huelga," he noted, "los caciques, por medio de los periodicos formulaban una suscripcion, a favor de tal o cual general, y este pobre pueblo cuando se le decia 'la patria necesita' no replicaba e iba a trabajar como

mansos corderos, con la huelga perdida, los precios rebajados y dispuestos a vaciar sus bolsillos en manos ajenas . . . esos son sus explotadores."¹⁶ The correspondent had earlier concluded that "los raqueteros de la politica" were the real enemies of the workers: "esos que viven sin trabajar." Presumably, with them out of the way, the capitalists could be subdued.¹⁷

The primary patriot leaders in Key West had never opposed labor organizing among the tobacco workers, but this new attitude caused grave concern because of what they believed was its divisive and anti-nationalist character. Although El Yara did not become involved in doctrinal disputes regarding the merits or drawbacks of socialism, it rejected the call for workers to abandon compromise in matters of labor-management relations and condemned the anarchists' political propositions. Since 1878, the patriot newspaper had militantly advanced the rebel cause and it was not about to change its position now even if it meant alienating a sector of the Key's working-class community. El Yara characterized anarchism as essentially pro-Spanish since it combatted Cuban nationalism. It confidently declared during late 1888 that the workers' rebel traditions would remain intact in south Florida. El Yara noted:

La emigracion politica cubana de Cayo Hueso esta hoy en el puesto que le marca el deber patriotico . . . Son vanos, pues, los temores y esperanzas que . . . pueden abrigarse de que este 'historico baluarte de la revolucion cubana'--como con sobrado acierto ha sido bautizado por egregios proceres de nuestra independencia--pueda alguna vez ser absorbido por el elemento genuinamente espanol de Cuba.¹⁸

Within a year, however, events demonstrated that the patriot leaders had badly underestimated the extent of dissatisfaction among the Key's workers, leading to a confrontation that seriously undermined the rebel cause locally.

Although El Productor and its followers established a presence in Key West during 1887, not until the Habana tobacco workers' strike of July 1888, led by the Alianza Obrera, did the radical labor activists begin to gain a substantial following in Florida. Support for the Habana strike in Key West and Tampa was immediate, and a workers' commission from the island received an overwhelming response when it arrived to raise strike funds. On the Key some 1000 workers gathered at Jackson Square in solidarity with the strikers, and there was a similar reception in Tampa when the commission arrived there a few days later.¹⁹ The enthusiasm of the workers so impressed the Habana anarchists that after the strike two prominent organizers and leaders of the Alianza, Messonier and Creci, went to Key West to lend support to the ongoing organizing activities.

Local activists, Segura, Leal, Palomino, and others, had been attempting to reorganize the tobacco workers union since 1887, but this was not accomplished until the following year.²⁰ On October 11, over four hundred of the Key's workers gathered and established the Federacion Local de Tabaqueros. Present at one of the organizing meetings, Messonier "hizo aqui sus primeras armas de un

modo brillante y su discurso . . . fue una exposicion sobria, razonada y convencente de la bondad que encierra el principio de asociacion y de los altos fines que por medio de ella esta llamado a realizar el proletariado." Messonier's presence, however, caused concern among those fearful the new union would fall under the control of the Habana anarchists. At one meeting, Manuel P. Delgado, a tobacco worker and staff member of El Yara, firmly committed to patriot activism, proposed the new union include in its charter an article prohibiting any formal association with Habana labor groups, clearly intending to block formal linkages with the Alianza. After a heated debate the workers voted the proposition down, revealing that Messonier's supporters had gained control of the organization.²¹ Sorondo, Segura, Palomino and other labor militants emerged as the leaders of the Federacion and although they probably never established a formal association with the Habana anarchists, the Key West union became a de facto affiliate of the Alianza Obrera.²²

Many of the Key's workers, however, remained apart from the new union because of their allegiance to the independence movement, which the radical leadership was now openly ridiculing as merely a tool of the cigar capitalists. The selectors, for example, whose leaders included war veterans such as Jose Rogelio Castillo, Alejandro Rodriguez and Ramon Mola, had formed a patriot organization, Club Independientes, during May 1887.²³ They, no doubt, had

severe reservations about the new labor leadership on the Key. Palomino complained that the diversity of ideals among the workers made unity all but impossible. "Tal vez no exista en todo el mundo obrero un lugar donde impere mas heterogeneidad de ideas que en Cayo Hueso," he declared, adding, "Entre los que componemos el elemento proletario en esta isla hay grandes rencillas y enemistades, producidas por las doctrinas imperantes de antano, la politica incompetente, borrascosa e imprescindible en la vida de esta localidad, pues esta en primera linea, es la principal causante de nuestro desconcierto."²⁴

Once organized, the Federacion initiated efforts to extend its influence among the workers, competing directly with the rebel community for their allegiance. Throughout 1889 an ideological polemic raged in the columns of El Yara and El Productor, the former stressing nationalist activism while the anarchist organ emphasized socioeconomic issues. The Habana newspaper accused the patriot weekly and the "patrioteros" generally of being nothing more than agents of the factory owners. "Yo no puedo afirmar que El Yara este vendido a los manufactureros, porque no he visto dar o recibir dinero," noted the anarchist columnist in El Productor, "pero es necesario ser muy topo para no verlo tan claro como la luz del dia."²⁵ In response, the rebel newspaper defended the Cuban community's traditional focus on patriot issues, noting that the Key's workers were becoming so concerned with social questions that "nos

olvidamos de redimir la patria." So intransigent was Poyo on this matter that as lector in the Ellinger factory he refused to read El Productor, referring to it as a Spanish newspaper. This resulted in his dismissal by the factory workers; evidence of the important gains being made by the radical labor leaders.²⁶

Not only did El Productor encourage the militants, but so did several newspapers in the Florida communities. During early 1889 Balino's short-lived weekly, La Tribuna del Trabajo, called on the workers to continue their agitation, noting:

A toda medida de reforma, a todo movimiento progresivo, a todo paso que da la humanidad en el camino de su mejoramiento, precede necesariamente, el periodo de agitacion. Es la obra de agitadores . . . sembrar en los animos el descontento con respecto al orden existente, y el deseo de realizar un cambio en las cosas. El progreso se realiza con nosotros o sin nosotros, pero mas bien que abandonarse a la ciega fatalidad y esperar a ser arrastrado por la fuerza del conjunto, deben los hombres de voluntad . . . coadyurar con sus esfuerzos a la propaganda emancipadora y la realizacion de nuestro comun ideal.²⁷

In July, La Revista de Florida also came to the support of the labor activists, declaring, "Cuando los obreros del universo se preparan a realizar la gran obra de la reivindicacion del trabajo, triste, pero triste en extremo es el papel que representan los que, con malas artes, pretenden, ora con pujos politicos, o con refinado egoismo, detener la corriente de las ideas modernas; que cuando se encarnan en la masa popular, no hay dique que pueda contener su reconocida impetuosidad."²⁸

The previous month, Rivero had travelled to Habana, apparently representing La Federacion, to inform the anarchist leaders

of the Alianza of a possible strike on the Key. He asked them to dissuade workers from seeking work there for the time being. Subsequent to Rivero's return to Tampa, El Yara's correspondent noted in him a growing indifference toward the independence movement. Just two years before, Rivero had supported the political club in Tampa backing Flor Crombet's activities, but he was now apparently in full accord with the socioeconomic movement in south Florida. El Yara's Tampa correspondent complained that since his return from Cuba, the editor and lector of the Martinez Ybor factory, "ha cambiado mucho, pues antes leia con gusto los periodicos separatistas y hasta colaboraba con ellos, pero ahora, no tan solo habla y escribe lo contrario, si no que se niega a leer El Yara."²⁹

The bitter ideological debates of 1889 were also accompanied throughout the year by a series of strikes in Ybor City and in the Del Pino and Ellinger factories on the Key, but it was not until mid-October that a long-expected general strike rocked the cigar industry in Key West.³⁰ It was sparked by the cigar makers at the Gato factory who demanded that the manufacturer honor a contract signed the previous February guaranteeing a wage increase of \$1 per thousand cigars. A general lock-out followed, and by the end of the month virtually the entire industry was paralyzed. Messonier quickly formed the Comite de Medios y Arbitrios de Key West to coordinate the financial aspects of the strike and launched the Boletin de la Huelga with the support of Creci and other union

activists. Resurrecting the traditional strike strategy utilized on the Key since 1875, the leaders called on workers to depart the city in mass, a policy immediately opposed by the patriot leadership who feared it would lead to the disintegration of the rebel community. Predictably, El Yara counseled compromise, urging Gato and the strike leaders to begin negotiations, but neither side was in the mood for discussion. Gato characterized the strike leaders as "some forty or fifty restless creatures, never satisfied even if they were in Paradise, and they have fomented discord. To please these unhappy spirits is impossible." The strike leaders proved equally intransigent.

Moreover, the strikers' sympathizers condemned the patriot leaders, especially Poyo, for their neutral attitude. Morua Delgado's La Nueva Era expressed absolute support for the strikers, declaring "La patria la llevamos en el alma donde quiera que nos lleve la suerte, pero nos vamos." The editor returned to Habana in solidarity with the union's call to depart. El Productor attacked El Yara for "sacando a relucir el patriotismo, y la dignidad cubana, y el baluarte inexpugnable, y todas esas frases que tan bien ha servido para echarnos tierra en los ojos y mantenernos en la miseria." "Huid, companeros," was the call from the Habana anarchists, and indeed, during the first week of the work stoppage 90 workers departed for Tampa and some 385 returned to Habana. By mid-November, over 2000 workers had arrived in Cuba from Key West, and

to the irritation of the Key's local officials, manufacturers, and patriot leaders alike, the Spanish government and the Alianza Obrera sent ships to transport the workers back to their homeland. The Spanish were clearly taking advantage of the situation to undermine the Key West cigar industry and revolutionary party. This apparent cooperation between Spanish authorities and Habana anarchists further convinced the patriot leaders that the anarchists were fundamentally pro-Spanish. El Yara declared that all who left the isle on a Spanish vessel were, in effect, Spanish sympathizers.

During the second week of the strike, the tactics utilized by the manufacturers, chamber of commerce, and city officials against the strike leaders undermined any moderating influence the patriot leaders might have had over the workers. The strikers' determination not to compromise was strengthened. Prior to the general strike, city officials threatened the local activist, Sorondo, forcing him to depart for Tampa, a tactic they again used now against Messonier. According to El Productor, on October 27 local officials presented the strike leader with a steamer ticket, indicating he should leave the locale as they could not be responsible for his safety. The newspaper noted that the individual delivering the message to Messonier was Peter Knight, who "esta reputado aqui como el capitan de los linchadores." Refusing to comply, Messonier was then escorted to the docks by the local militia and placed on a vessel for Tampa. Shortly, the remaining strike leaders, including

Segura, Pajarin, Izaguirre, and Palomino, received similar threats. El Productor's columnist expressed special indignation that the deportation order included Carlos Recio's signature. A member of the city council and prominent in rebel circles, Recio's action destroyed the credibility of the patriot community among the Key's workers.³¹

After almost three months, the strike continued in full force, convincing the Key's business community, which suffered the economic effects of the dispute, that the workers had no intention of surrendering. Finally, Gato was forced to submit. During the first week in January one of the most divisive strikes in Key West history came to an end, with Messonier returning to the isle a hero and the patriot leadership seemingly discredited among the mass of the workers. As various Key West residents later remembered, "La armonia entre los cubanos emigrados estaba herida profundamente: la version echada a la masa popular 'la patria del obrero es el mundo' habia echado una linea infranqueable entre los que solo querian por patria, ese pequeno bucaro de odoriferas flores . . . que se llama Cuba." The patriot community, they noted, had been undermined: "el patriotismo un sello de desprecio; cada patriota, un ladron, un estafador, un vividor o pretensioso; cuando menos un loco, un aturrido o visionario."³²

For many in the Cuban communities in Florida this ideological conflict between the patriot and labor leaders seemed

irreconcilable. Revolutionary morale was at an all-time low, and the rebel clubs had relatively few members. Within two years, however, a vigorous new rebel movement emerged in Key West, incorporating not only the traditional leadership, but the bulk of the labor radicals as well. This transformation will be considered in the next chapter, but it was foreshadowed in the observations made by Jose Marti in New York about the conflicts during 1889.

Marti quietly observed and analyzed the growing complexity in the relationships between the nationalist and socialist movements in Florida. He quickly recognized that to retain the traditional support of the Florida tobacco workers for the independence movement, the patriot leaders would have to become infinitely more sophisticated in matters of socioeconomic concern. Marti knew the tobacco workers to be essentially nationalistic by tradition, but he also recognized that they had lost confidence in the ideological assumptions of the rebel movement, a concern he viewed as legitimate. In a letter to Serafin Bello in Key West during the height of the general strike, Marti noted: "lo social esta ya en lo politico en nuestra tierra, como en todas partes: yo no le tengo miedo, porque la justicia y el peso de las cosas son remedios que no fallan." The workers' social grievances would have to be addressed by the patriot leadership. In addition, while Marti like El Yara, opposed the workers' departure for Habana during the strike, he considered it a temporary malady. "Al viaje del Jorge Juan no le

doy importancia politica:" he observed, but "social lo tiene, porque indican como se transforman, por los intereses comunes, los elementos de la poblacion de nuestro pais, y lo que parece desercion patriotica, acaso sea la prueba de que parece lucha bien entendida por la libertad." Marti believed that, if handled correctly and incorporated into the rebel cause, the workers' heightened militancy could be of great benefit to the independence movement. He also noted that "la huelga ha de terminar, no sin ensenanzas, y sin provecho de los obreros, aun cuando la pierdan." Marti thus foreshadowed the increased sensitivity rebel leaders would acquire toward workers' concerns during the next several years. Indeed, Marti would be in the forefront of ensuring that the ideology of the independence movement would speak to the concerns of the Florida tobacco workers.³³ The workers had made their point; now it was up to the rebel leadership to regain their confidence and support.

While the bitter debates and strikes raged in the south Florida centers, another issue of equal concern to the exiled Cubans reemerged to take a prominent place in the political debates of the late 1880s: annexationism. Although the ideal had been thoroughly discredited during the Ten Years War, old and new proponents of this solution to the Cuban dilemma raised their voices in an effort to resurrect it in the emigre communities. Composed of long-time committed annexationists and others now willing to consider it because they no longer viewed armed insurrection as a viable option,

the pro-annexation group had its greatest strength among middle-class professionals in such northern communities as New York and Washington, D.C. They were clearly a minority in the emigre centers, but their professional status and political contacts gave them influence far greater than their numbers warranted. The most prominent included journalists, lawyers, physicians, merchants, and even one Cuban Florida state legislator.

Although annexationists maintained a low profile during the early 1880s, recognizing their views represented a minority within the reactivated separatist movement, they were definitely present. In 1880 backers of annexation apparently controlled a Cuban political organization in New York supporting the Democratic presidential ticket. Their newspaper, El Ciudadano, reproduced the famous pro-annexationist tract, Probable y definitivo porvenir de Cuba, originally published in 1870.³⁴ During the rebel reorganization of 1883, patriots in Key West believed the New York rebel clubs were influenced by annexationists. In fact, Rubiera's El Separatista barely avoided a divisive polemic with those in the movement still dedicated to Cuba's annexation to the United States.³⁵

Like the annexationists of the seventies and before, those backing, or at least tolerating, the idea of incorporating Cuba into the United States used a variety of arguments. Some emigres continued to see the annexation option as a safety valve, in case developments on the island did not suit their specific interests.

During the 1850s fear of slave uprisings legitimized annexation, while concern for the consequences of a destructive war made it an attractive option for some during the Revolucion de Yara. Now, in the 1880s, others suggested that only annexation could prevent ambitious military veterans dedicated to armed insurrection from establishing a dictatorship on the island. Writing to the expeditionary leader Carlos Aguero during early 1884, the former President of the Cuban Republic, Salvador Cisneros, revealed his suspicions of the military element:

Vd sabe cuan enemigo debo ser de [Vicente] Garcia pues bien ellos me tendran a su lado cuando quieran, no con ellos, sino con Cuba y asi deseo que sean todos los cubanos y entonces seriamos verdaderos republicanos y liberales--y podiamos ser independientes y no necesitar de aspirar a una anexion por la felicidad de Cuba . . . pero mientras haya ambiciones y pretensiones . . . tendra razon de haber un partido anexionista para los verdaderos republicanos que no quieren solo cambiar de opresores.³⁶

The fear expressed since the 1850s that an independent Cuba might follow her sister republics' 19th century militarist experience continued to trouble many in the separatist movement, in their view requiring the existence of the annexationist party. On the other hand, some supporters of the veteran element did not rule out an eventual annexation either. In an interview with the New York Herald, the head of the New York rebel junta in 1885, Parraga, noted, "As for the much mooted question of annexation . . . that will come perhaps when the last Spanish soldier has left the island. Texas was not immediately incorporated into the United States when

Sam Houston and the 'Lone Star' triumphed over the descendents of Cortez. And so it will be with Cuba. Men must govern themselves before they can be governed, and the same truism holds good of states."³⁷ According to Parraga, apparently annexationism was still a legitimate and patriotic option.

Others turned annexationist when they concluded that armed insurrection was no longer a viable alternative. With the failure of the Gomez-Maceo initiative, some exiles embraced a peaceful "evolutionary" solution to the Cuban question; a view argued by a New York merchant, Fidel Pierra, in the pages of El Avisador Hispano-Americano during 1888. Two years later, Pierra took an openly annexationist position in his newspaper, El Cubano, which managed to publish only six issues.³⁸ Another prominent rebel figure, Juan Bellido de Luna, also lost confidence in the rebel movement. He believed Cubans no longer supported armed insurrection, leaving annexation through an international treaty between the United States and Spain as the only remaining solution. Moreover, Bellido offered economic and political reasons for annexation. The former rebel militant now argued that only by becoming a state of the North American confederation could Cuba's long-term economic prosperity be assured. Since the 1870s, noted the publicist, Cuba had become an economic dependency of the United States. The vast majority of the island's sugar and tobacco exports now went to Cuba's neighbor to the north; a market that could be

guaranteed in the future only through statehood. Increasing international competition and a growing sugar industry within the United States threatened Cuba's North American market. Bellido noted:

Aceptando el axioma de que la existencia de Cuba depende en lo absoluto del azucar y el tabaco; una vez anexada Cuba . . . ambos frutos asegurarían este gran mercado . . . ; y bajo la protección del gobierno, las leyes y las instituciones de esta República, la producción del azúcar y del tabaco en Cuba se multiplicara de una manera admirable . . . ; los ingenios o fincas azucareras serían fuentes abundantes de riqueza: las vegas de tabaco en toda la isla no darían suficiente abasto a las manufacturas . . . reviviendo esta industria de una manera próspera.

He concluded that far from being a disadvantage, Cuban annexation "sería en todos conceptos . . . de la más alta conveniencia a los intereses políticos, sociales y económicos de la Isla." Bellido's political argument was based on the traditional admiration many Cuban liberals felt for North American constitutional rule and a skepticism regarding the island's ability to function as an independent democratic republic. Bellido wrote:

Pues bien: a esta nación, la más grande y civilizada del planeta, es a la que deseamos anexar, incorporar, identificar, y amalgamar a nuestro pueblo, desgraciado y inerme; para que adoptando y adoptándose a su sistema de gobierno republicano democrático, a su constitución, fundada en los principios del 'self government,' del gobierno del pueblo, por el pueblo y para el pueblo, se purifique el nuestro, se eduque en estos principios, se limpie y se cure de la lepra hereditaria contraída, a su pesar, durante cuatro siglos de servidumbre colonial.³⁹

During most of the eighties, annexationists remained silent, but with the election of President Benjamin Harrison in late 1888 and his appointment of James G. Blaine as Secretary of State,

backers of annexation believed they now had committed allies in the White House. Not only was Blaine known for his expansionist ideas and his interest in Latin America, but his call for the first Pan-American Conference since 1826 heartened some annexationists who believed such a meeting could be used to their advantage. Although it is not clear what prompted the debate, the press in Cuba and the United States initiated a discussion of the issue, bringing it to public attention.

Within the emigre centers, Cuban annexationists began to express their ideas publicly for the first time in decades. Bellido led the way by inciting a lengthy polemic with Enrique Trujillo in the columns of El Avisador Hispano Americano and El Porvenir during 1889 and 1890. Moreover, a Cuban Florida legislator, Dr. Manuel Moreno, introduced what was considered an annexationist resolution in the state legislature. And in conjunction with Jose A. Gonzalez, another Cuban of some prominence because of his close association with Narciso Lopez during the late 1840s, they convinced Florida Senator Wilkinson Call to introduce a similar resolution in the United State Congress. At the Pan American Conference, Cuban annexationists Gonzalez and Jose I. Rodriguez, a prominent Washington attorney, apparently made efforts to convince the Latin American delegates that most Cubans desired a peaceful solution to the Cuban question based on the island's incorporation to the United States.⁴⁰

These activities caused grave concern among independen-
tistas who continued to believe that only armed insurrection and
revolutionary self-reliance would lead to the establishment of a
sovereign republic. Marti considered that the annexationists' at-
tempt to use the Pan American conference as a forum for the discus-
sion of the Cuban question was a direct effort to undermine the
independence ideal. In a letter to Gonzalo de Quesada, a friend
acting as the secretary to the Argentine delegation, Marti noted:
"Por mi propia inclinacion, y por el recelo--a mi juicio justi-
ficado--con que veo el Congreso, y cuanto tienda a acercar o identi-
ficar en lo politico a este pais y los nuestros, nunca hubiera
pensado yo en sentar el precedente de poner a debate nuestra for-
tuna, en un cuerpo donde, por su influjo de pueblo mayor, y por el
aire del pais, han de tener los Estados Unidos parte principal."
Writing to Serafin Bello in Key West a short time later, Marti
continued his warnings about the conference: "de que a Cuba le ha
de venir algun bien de un Congreso de naciones americanas donde, por
grande e increíble desventura, son tal vez mas las que se disponen a
ayudar al gobierno de los E. Unidos a apoderarse de Cuba, que las
que comprendan que lea va su tranquilidad y acaso lo real de su
independencia, en consentir que se quede la llave de la otra America
en estas manos extranas." He added: "Del Cayo quiero ver surgir
una admirable protesta . . . es preciso que Cuba sepa quienes y para
que, quieren aqui la anexion . . . La corriente es mucha, y nunca

han estado tan al converger los anexionistas ciegos de la Isla, y los anexionistas yanquis."⁴¹

Marti knew he could count on the solidly independentista Cubans in Key West to condemn roundly the annexationist maneuvers. Since the 1870s, absolute independence had been held up by the Key's Cubans as the only acceptable political solution for their homeland. During the early eighties, the patriot leadership in south Florida had expressed concern about the New York center's willingness to keep the annexationist option open on the back burner. When, in an 1883 manifesto, Cisneros had implied that annexationism was still a legitimate alternative, Dr. Manuel Moreno explained to him that the manifesto had not been well received in Key West: "han creido que tanto V. como los dignos hermanos que componen el comite trabajan en pro de la anexion a los Estados Unidos . . . Acogen con gusto la idea independiente pero ven muy mal la de anexion." El Yara reaffirmed this in late 1885: "justo, logico, conveniente y patriotico es buscar el remedio donde unicamente puede hallarse: en la soberania de la isla, desligada completamente de su metropoli o de cualquier otro pais estrano, regida por sus propias leyes, formando . . . un pueblo independiente y libre . . . Tales son las aspiraciones del partido revolucionario independiente, a cuya cabeza se halla el inclito General Maximo Gomez."⁴²

When Moreno presented his pro-annexation resolution in the Florida legislature and Bellido commenced his journalistic campaign,

Florida's emigre press reacted instantly. Key West's El Cubano condemned Moreno's action, and El Yara and La Revista de Florida did not allow Bellido's assertions to go unchallenged. Moreover, Monroe County's other representative in the Florida legislature, Manuel P. Delgado, made his own speech to the governing body, making it clear to all that few Cubans in south Florida could be counted on to support anything less than absolute freedom for their homeland.⁴³

In New York, the independentistas did not remain silent either. Trujillo consistently challenged Bellido's propaganda throughout 1889 and 1890, rejecting his assertions that the majority of Cubans desired annexation and had forsaken armed insurrection. Moreover, he rejected the contention that the island's economic dependence on the United States made political independence impossible. Trujillo argued that United States markets needed Cuban sugar and that the island's incorporation into the North American republic certainly was not a requirement for keeping the market in the future. El Porvenir also published anti-annexationist articles and statements by prominent separatists such as Villaverde, Betances, Estrada Palma, and Figueredo.⁴⁴

It was Marti, however, who most eloquently battled the annexationist challenge. Implicitly when not explicitly, Marti's writings and oratory contained the same sense of nationalist fervor characteristic of the radical independentistas of the 1870s. To Cubans in exile, the rebel orator became the highest exponent of

Cuban nationalism in his verbal battles against all political solutions that did not recognize the inherent right of the island to exist as a completely sovereign state. As far as Marti was concerned, annexation would annihilate Cuban identity. "Para mi, seria morir, y para nuestra patria," he wrote. "No es mi pasion lo que me dara fuerzas para luchar, solo, en la verdad de las cosas; sino mi certidumbre de que de semejante fin solo esperan a nuestra tierra las desdichas y el exodo de Texas, y que el predominio norteamericano que se intenta en el continente haria el mismo exodo, en las cercanias sumidas al menos, odioso e inseguro."⁴⁵ Marti strongly resented the assertions by many that only the United States could ensure Cuba's separation from Spain and provide the structure for a prosperous and peaceful democratic society. He noted:

Luego veremos, con el hecho de habernos levantado en armas . . . y de haber triunfado si esta prueba plena de capacidad nacional no altera las unicas bases firmes de la idea anexionista; la creencia honrada de muchos cubanos en la ineptitud de Cuba para su propia rendicion, y la opinion de ruindad constitucional e irredimible incompetencia en que nos tiene el pueblo de los Estados Unidos, por ignorancia y preocupacion, por la propaganda maligna de los politicos ambiciosos y por el justo desden del hombre libre al esclavo.⁴⁶

But Marti did not reject Cuba's annexation to the United States only because of what he considered its unnatural implications for Cuban national identity. He also did not share Bellido's glowing assessments of North American life. A man of high ideals, the Cuban publicist could not be satisfied with what the United States could offer the Cuban people. His vision of Cuba's future--

"para todos y para bien de todos"--could never hope to be achieved as part of what he considered to be an increasingly decadent North American society. Marti recognized that Cubans "admiran esta nacion, la mas grande de cuantas erigio jamas la libertad," but he noted, "desconfian de los elementos funestos que, como gusanos en la sangre, han comenzado en esta Republica portentosa su obra de destruccion." He continued:

no pueden creer honradamente que el individualismo excesivo, la adoracion de la riqueza, y el jubilo prolongado de una victoria terrible, esten preparando a los Estados Unidos para ser la nacion tipica de la libertad, donde no ha de haber opinion honrada en el apetito inmoderado de poder, ni adquisicion o triunfos contrarios a la bondad y la justicia. Amamos a la patria de Lincoln, tanto como tememos a la patria de Cutting.⁴⁷

During his many years in the United States, Marti had had the opportunity to observe it in all its dimensions, and by the late 1880s he had come to the conclusion that many of its negative characteristics were emerging to dominate its future.

While Marti did not fear the Cuban annexationists, believing they were a dying political force doomed to impotence, he did consider North American annexationists to be a serious threat to the independence cause. The age of imperialism had arrived, and the Cuban patriot knew there were many economic interests intent on securing North American control over the island. Until his death in 1895, he consistently warned his compatriots of this danger. During 1889 and 1890, moreover, the annexationist threat convinced Marti of the urgency of launching a new rebel movement before it was too

late. As he noted, "Llego ciertamente para este pais, apurado por el proteccionismo, la hora de sacar plaza su agresion latente, y como ni sobre Mexico ni sobre Canada se atreve poner los ojos, los pone sobre las Islas del Pacifico y sobre las Antillas, sobre nosotros ."48

Notes

¹For a useful discussion of the prevailing ideological currents within the United States labor movement during these years see Gerald N. Grob, Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement, 1865-1900 (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1961).

²Cigar Makers' Official Journal (New York), February 10, 1880, March 1889, January 1890. Leopoldo Horrego Estuch, Martin Morua Delgado: Vida y mensaje (Habana: Editorial Sanchez, 1957), 80. Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June 1958), 23-24.

³Knights of Labor of America. Proceedings of the General Assembly. 12th regular session, Indianapolis, Indiana, November 13 to 27, 1888, 2-3. Cigar Makers' Official Journal, January, March, November 1889, June 1890.

⁴Jefferson B. Browne, Key West: The Old and the New (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 142-143. See issues of La Propaganda (Key West), November 1887, in Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Asuntos Politicos (hereafter, ANC, Asuntos), Legajo 293, numero 14 and El Productor (Habana), November 21, 1889 for references regarding the attitudes of Pendleton's newspaper. Also, see letter, C. B. Pendleton to T.V. Powderly, September 26, 1886, Catholic University, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Terrance V. Powderly Papers and Melton A. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), 48-49, 63, 78, 81-82, 110. McLaurin's study overemphasizes the influence of the Knights among Cubans in Key West.

⁵McLaurin, The Knights of Labor, 52-59.

⁶General studies on the development of the Cuban labor movement during the 19th century include: Jose Rivero Muniz, "Esquema del movimiento obrero," in Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, et al., eds. Historia de la nacion cubana, 10 vols. (Habana: Editorial historia de la nacion cubana, 1952), VII, 246-300; Ariel Hidalgo, Origenes del movimiento obrero y del pensamiento socialista en Cuba (Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura, 1976); Charles A Page, "The Development of Organized Labor in Cuba," University of California, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1952, 1-33; Instituto de Historia del Movimiento Comunista y la Revolucion Socialista de Cuba, El movimiento obrero cubano: Documentos y articulos: Tomo I, 1865-1925 (Habana:

Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975); Aleida Plasencia, ed., Enrique Roig San Martin: Articulos publicados en el periodico El Productor (Habana: Consejo Nacional de Cultura, 1967); Jose Antonio Portuondo, La Aurora y los comienzos de la prensa y de la organizacion obrera en Cuba (Habana: Imprenta Nacional de Cuba, 1961).

⁷El Republicano (Key West), October 31, 1874. Aleida Plasencia, ed., Bibliografia de la Guerra de los Diez Anos (Habana: biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 1968), 190.

⁸El Productor, (Habana), 1888-1889.

⁹El Productor, December 5, 1889.

¹⁰El Productor, July 28, 1889; Martin Morua Delgado, Obras completas 4 vols. (Habana: Comision Nacional del Centenario de Don Martin Morua Delgado, 1957), III, 131.

¹¹Comite Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba, Carlos Balino: Documentos y articulos (Habana: Instituto de Historia del Movimiento Comunista, 1976), 39-44.

¹²El Productor, November 22, 1888.

¹³Habana, El Productor, July 26, May 12, 1889. See Olga Cabrera's discussion in "Enrique Creci: Un patriota obrero," Santiago, 36 (December 1979), 131-139, where she argues the Habana anarchists had always sympathized with the independence ideal, but for strategic reasons aimed at unifying the Spanish and Cuban workers, had editorialized against political movements.

¹⁴El Productor, June 8, 1890.

¹⁵El Productor, April 13, 1890.

¹⁶El Productor, June 2, 1889.

¹⁷El Productor, December 12, 1888.

¹⁸El Yara (Key West), December 18, 1888.

¹⁹El Productor, September 17, October 25, 1888.

²⁰La Propaganda (Key West), November 24, 1887.

²¹El Productor, November 22, December 12, 1888.

²²El Productor, December 27, 1888, January 20, 1889. For an idea of the relationship between the Habana and Key West labor movements see Francisco Segura's article in El Productor, November 3, 1889. In part Segura wrote, "deciamos . . . a la burguesia de Key West, Tampa y Jacksonville que aquellos obreros no estaban solos, que tras de ellos se hallaban 'La Alianza Obrera' y la formidable 'Junta Central de Obreros de la Habana'; esto no obstante, lanzaron el reto a los obreros; bueno, ahora veran que nuestras afirmaciones no fueron frases de efecto . . . sino simplemente una verdad que existe en las leyes de la cohesion y la solidaridad."

²³Antonio Diaz Carrasco, "Bosquejo historico del gremio de escogedores," Revista de Cayo Hueso, June 26, 1898, 22-24; La Propaganda, November 23, 1887; Jose Rogelio Castillo, Autobiografia del General Jose Rogelio Castillo (Habana: Instituto Cubanos del Libro, 1973); Juan J. E. Casasus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 200.

²⁴El Productor, December 5, 1889.

²⁵El Productor, October 20, 1889.

²⁶El Productor, February 16, 1890, December 19, 1889.

²⁷Comite Central, Carlos Balino, 27-30. See also El Productor, February 7, 1889.

²⁸El Productor, July 28, 1889.

²⁹Rivero Muniz, "Esquema del movimiento obrero," 278; El Yara, September 13, 1889.

³⁰Tobacco Leaf (New York), February 18, 27, March 3, October 7, 1889.

³¹For accounts of the strike see El Productor, October 1889-January 1890, Cigar Makers' Official Journal, November 1889-January 1890, Tobacco Leaf, October 1889-January 1890, and articles from El Espanol (Habana) in ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 260, numeros 2 al 6.

³²Rasgos patrioticos de los emigrados cubanos en Key West (Florida), (Habana: Establecimiento tipografico El Arte, 1902).

³³Jose Marti, Obras completas, 28 vols. (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1963-973), I, 253-256. The Jorge Juan was the first steamer sent by Spanish authorities to Key West to transport strikers back to Habana. These workers settled in an area of Habana that became known as Barrio Cayo Hueso.

³⁴El Ciudadano (New York), October 30, 1880.

³⁵Letter, Manuel R. Moreno to Salvador Cisneros, January 6, 1883, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Academia de la Historia (hereafter, ANC, Academia, Legajo 481, numero 331; Rufino Perez Landa, Vida publica de Martin Morua Delgado (Habana: Carlos Romero, 1957), 68.

³⁶Letter, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt to Carlos Agüero, February 24, 1884, ANC, Academia, Legajo 459, numero 11.

³⁷New York Herald, August 29, 1885.

³⁸Enrique Trujillo, Apuntes historicos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895 (New York: El Porvenir, 1896), 32, 43.

³⁹Juan Bellido de Luna and Enrique Trujillo, eds. La anexion de Cuba a los Estados Unidos: Articulos publicados en El Porvenir (New York: El Porvenir, 1892), 2-4, 98-106.

⁴⁰Jose Ignacio Rodriguez, Estudio historico sobre el origen, desenvolvimiento y manifestaciones practicas de la idea de la anexion de la isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos de America (Habana: La Propaganda Literaria, 1900), 249-264; El Cubano (Key West), May 23, 1889 in ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 292, numero 29; Marti, Obras completas, I, 247-256.

⁴¹Marti, Obras completas, I, 249, 255.

⁴²A copy of the manifesto is included in Juan Arnao, Paginas para la historia de la isla de Cuba (Habana: Imprenta La Nueva, 1900), 286-288; letter, Manuel R. Moreno to Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, January 6, 1883, ANC, Academia, Legajo 481, numero 331; El Yara, September 22, 1885.

⁴³El Avisador Cubano (New York), June 27, 1888. La Revista de Florida (Tampa), December 16, 23, 1888 in ANC, Asuntos, Legajo 302, numero 12. Regarding Delgado's speech in the Florida legislature see Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones, Legajo 287, numero 11.

⁴⁴Bellido de Luna and Trujillo, La anexión de Cuba, 5, 9-13, 23-27, 84-93.

⁴⁵Martí, Obras completas, I, 256.

⁴⁶Martí, Obras completas, II, 48.

⁴⁷Martí, Obras completas, I, 237.

⁴⁸Martí, Obras completas, I, 255, II, 48-49.

CHAPTER 8

FORGING POLITICAL UNITY IN THE EMIGRE COMMUNITIES, 1890-1895: EL PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO CUBANO

By 1890 Cuba had entered a period of economic, political, and social crisis that convinced many emigre activists that the island was slowly, but inevitably moving toward the long expected conflagration that would eventually evict Spain from their homeland. Commercially, Cuba had become a virtual dependency of the United States during the latter half of the century. By 1890, 80% of Cuba's sugar exports were shipped north, making that market a critical element for the island's prosperity. This economic reality came into conflict with Spain's tariff policies during the latter half of the eighties, causing a rift between Cuban exporters and the metropolis. Intent on protecting Spanish producers, Spain maintained high tariffs on imports, prompting the United States to retaliate with the McKinley Tariff of 1890. Throughout the 1880s beet sugar producers in the United States had pressured their government for protection and they received it under the newly enacted tariff.

Recognizing that the tariff action by the United States had been enacted essentially in retaliation to Spanish policies, Cuban exporters protested vigorously to Spain. A united effort by

the island's exporting interests of all political persuasions--known as the Movimiento Economico--forced Spanish authorities to conclude a special treaty with the United States for a mutual reduction of tariffs. However, the affair demonstrated vividly to Cubans that their interests could only be guaranteed through a decentralized political system which they could influence effectively. Although some conservative planters called for annexation to the United States to ensure their market, most of the island's elite interested in reform demanded the implementation of the long sought autonomist system promised by Spain at Zanjón.

The autonomists had made little progress politically since the enactment of the electoral law of 1879. The law had granted Cuba representation in the Spanish Cortes, but suffrage was severely restricted and resulted in the election of conservatives primarily who opposed additional reformist concessions by Spain. Many conservatives believed that autonomy was merely a first step toward independence, which they opposed. Moreover, although a system of provincial and municipal government existed, ultimate authority remained in the hands of the Captain General who continued to be appointed in Spain. The group of autonomists elected to the Cortes consistently demanded a new, broader electoral law throughout the eighties, but to no avail. Despite the extension of political reforms in Spain, culminating in the enactment of universal male suffrage in 1890, Cuba's electoral system remained limited to ensure

domination by the island's conservative interests. Disgusted, the Cuban autonomists in the Cortes withdrew. To many this action was a signal that revolution in Cuba was imminent.

In addition to these economic and political developments, problems of a social nature contributed to the perception of crisis on the island. The restructuring of the sugar industry during the decade had displaced many from their traditional economic pursuits. During the decade after 1885 a process of concentration took place in the sugar industry, reducing the number of mills in operation from 1,400 to 400. Not only was the island's creole elite becoming increasingly disenchanted with their economic situation, but so were Cuba's rural and urban workers. Banditry increased significantly in the rural areas, and, as already noted, labor activism under the influence of anarchists became widespread.¹ Cubans in the United States sensed a rapidly growing dissatisfaction among the island's inhabitants and concluded that the time had arrived to again organize their communities for the inevitable insurrection. Some organized with the idea of supporting the rebellion when it erupted, while others intended to take a more active part in its preparation.

During May 1888, Lamadriz, Poyo, Figueredo, and others called together Key West's rebel activists for a mass meeting at San Carlos, where they agreed to begin the construction of new rebel institutions.² The following month in New York, forty Cubans, including Marti, Crombet, Trujillo, Juan Fraga, Rafael Serra, and

Benjamin Guerra, established the Club Los Independientes. The club brought together most of the city's rebel personalities to discuss the Cuban question and begin the collection of funds for the projected insurrection.³

In the midst of the devastating social conflicts, a little over a year later the Key West center founded its new rebel organization, the Convencion Cubana. A secret organization limited to twenty-five members, the Convencion was more activist and militant than its New York counterpart. Publicly the organization met as the Club Luz de Yara, but the Convencion was designed as a highly secretive and disciplined revolutionary cell. As article two of its regulation noted, "Es estrictamente secreto y, por consiguiente, ninguno de sus miembros podra proclamar que pertenece a ella, ni nada de lo que se diga o haga en sus sesiones." Its members were encouraged to organize separate political clubs in the community, but "procuraran que aquellas sigan las inspiraciones de esta." Ideally, each member would organize a rebel club that would recognize the leadership of the Convencion. Article 17 of its charter outlined its primary task:

Hasta que la Revolucion surja, la CONVENCION llevara a cabo, a nombre de la Patria Cubana, cuantos actos tiendan a preparar, fomentar y auxiliar la guerra contra el Gobierno espanol, en Cuba principalmente. Practicara del mismo modo, con la prudencia debida, pero con toda la resolucion necesaria, las obligaciones indispensables para conseguir elementos materiales para la lucha.

Significantly, the Convencion's regulations also revealed an important change in the strategy adopted by the Key West leaders since the failure of the Gomez-Maceo Plan. No longer was their goal to import the revolution through the launching of military expeditions. Like the New Yorkers, they had come to the conclusion that the revolt had to be ignited domestically. "En ningun tiempo ni por concepto alguno," noted article 26, "instara, ni insinuara la CONVENCION a sus correligionarios del interior de la Isla el levantamiento, limitandose sobre ese particular, a secundarlos y auxiliarlos cuando ellos crean oportuno hacerlo." This was an important alteration in the Key's rebel strategy that would make it possible to come to an understanding with Marti and his followers in New York.⁴

The Convencion's elected officers were Lamadriz, President; Poyo, Vice-President; Emilio Aymerich, Treasurer; and Figueredo, Secretary. In addition several comisiones were established to carry out the conspiratorial activities: Guerra, Hacienda, Propaganda and Correspondencia. Within a short time funds were being raised and contacts were established in Cuba. The correspondence committee, headed by Poyo, Juan Calderon and Serafin Sanchez, communicated with rebels across the island, including such prominent figures as Cisneros Betancourt and Emilio Luaces in Camaguey, Federico Zayas in Las Villas, Julio Sanguily in Habana, Bartolome Maso and Guillermo Moncada in Oriente, and Gomez, Maceo and Crombet

in exile. In charge of Hacienda, or the treasury, were the prominent entrepreneurs Gato, Recio and Soria, and heading the propaganda committee were Poyo, Manuel P. Delgado and Gerardo Castellanos. Finally, the war committee--presumably in charge of preparing strategies for aiding the rebels once the revolt began--was placed in the hands of military veterans: Figueredo, Castillo, and Sanchez.⁵

Since the organization was of a conspiratorial nature, a great deal of power was placed in the hands of a three member executive committee elected by a majority that coordinated and oversaw these secret activities. According to article 19 of the regulation, this committee would control "Los actos exclusivamente revolucionarios que no estan en oposicion o contradiccion con los acuerdos de la CONVENCION, ni con este Reglamento." In fact, these revolutionary activities did not have to be submitted for approval to the membership, although all other activities were subject to such approval.⁶ Within a year after its establishment the Convention was spearheading the organizing and conspiratorial activities taking place in Cuba.

The last of the major emigre centers to reorganize was Tampa. Led by labor activists such as Rivero and Carbonell, Tampa organized only subsequent to the divisive strikes of 1889. Now convinced of the necessity of refocusing on the patriot cause, Rivero established the Liga Patriotica Cubana during December 1890,

while Carbonell founded the Club Ignacio Agramonte in May of the following year.⁷

These various patriot organizations formed independently of each other, and by mid-1891 they had still not made any effort to coordinate their activities. The conflicts of the 1880s had created divisions and distrust between, as well as within, the various emigre centers. The leadership of the Convencion Cubana still resented Marti and the New York Cubans for their withdrawn attitude during 1884-1885. The Cayo Hueseros considered the New Yorkers fine orators and propagandists, but did not view them as appropriate leaders for an armed insurrection. Moreover, a certain class resentment existed. Gomez had expressed this as early as 1884:

la revolucion presenta hoy dos faces, una aristocratica y otra democratica; con la primera hoy no hay que contar por ahora. La clase pobre, el pueblo, i siempre el pueblo! Ese es el que me va a dar a mi y a mis companeros polvora y balas para lanzarnos al campo; a ese me voy a dirigir y si es necesario me ire al taller, porque el artesano no se le puede dirigir carticas, no hay que hablarle en secreto, ni a escondidas, pues sus intereses no tienen ligamientos con otros intereses, sino con la patria.⁸

Many in the Florida communities believed that the essentially middle class patriot activists in New York gave lip service to the revolution, but did little to encourage it materially. Moreover, they were viewed as socially conservative, especially since Marti's political program and social ideals were not yet widely known among the tobacco workers. New York's primary Cuban newspaper, El Porvenir, consistently criticized the socialist ideals so popular among the tobacco workers in Florida.

Divisions also existed between the Key West and Ybor City emigre centers. Tampa's socialist leadership had led the attack on the patriot leadership in Key West during 1888 and 1889. Furthermore, a basic economic rivalry divided the two communities because of the stiff competition in the cigar industry; a phenomenon that the patriot leadership on the Key considered a threat to the "baluarte cubana," the only rebel center not "infected" with a considerable Spanish presence.

Despite the lack of unity, by late 1891 all the Cuban emigre centers were organized, and patriot sentiment was on the upswing as a result of the constant propaganda in the exile press. Especially effective in this regard was El Porvenir, founded in New York during May 1890, through which Jose Marti established his reputation in the Florida communities as the most effective emigre publicist. By that year Marti had become convinced that political and economic conditions in Cuba were deteriorating so rapidly that a revolutionary situation could soon develop. Since the early 1880s Marti had argued that only when dissatisfaction had become widespread and cut across class lines could the emigre communities hope to precipitate a revolutionary movement. He believed that this moment was quickly approaching and that the exile centers had to prepare. In a letter to Emilio Nunez in May 1980, Marti noted:

Los sucesos de Cuba se van precipitando de una manera que los cubanos que residimos libremente en el extranjero seriamos con justicia tachados de culpables si no hiciésemos a tiempo cuanto debemos y podemos hacer para tener dispuesta nuestra parte de la obra.⁹

At the traditional October 10 events during 1890 and 1891, all the primary political figures of New York gathered to incite Cubans to organize and unite behind their common ideal: an independent Cuba. "Venimos a caballo como el año pasado," declared Martí in his 1891 speech, "a anunciar que el caballo le ha ido bien; . . . que con las orejas caídas y los belfos al pesebre no se fundan pueblos; que no es la hora todavía de soltarle el freno a la cabalgadura, pero que la cincha se la hemos puesto ya, y la venda se la hemos quitado ya, y la silla se la vamos a poner, y los jinetes . . . A caballo venimos este año, lo mismo que el pasado, solo que esta caballería anda por donde se vence, y por donde no la oye andar el enemigo!"¹⁰

Meanwhile, in the Florida centers rebel activists also kept up a constant propaganda campaign in the local press. In November 1891 the Club Ignacio Agramonte in Tampa organized a patriotic event and invited Martí to be the featured speaker. The New Yorker had never been in the Florida communities, but his reception surpassed all expectations. His personal charisma and facile words captured the imagination of Tampa's political community. Martí's call for unity was greeted with enthusiasm and many who saw him believed he was the one man capable of achieving this traditionally unattainable goal.¹¹

Martí's first visit to Tampa resulted in a series of resolutions applauded by the emigre centers that recognized the

urgency of uniting "en accion comun republicana y libre, todos los elementos revolucionarios honrados." Informed in detail of the proceedings by Francisco Maria Gonzalez, a stenographer who went to Ybor City from the Key to record Marti's speech, Poyo published a supplement to El Yara describing and praising the patriotic event. Seeing the moment was ripe to carry his message to Key West, Marti wrote El Yara's editor, thanking him for the words of support and adding:

como dejare sin decir la viveza con que anhelo una ocasion respetuosa de poner lo que me queda de corazon junto al del Cayo, de levantarlo ante los necios de este mundo como prueba de lo que por si, sin mano ajena y sin tirania, puede ser y habra de ser nuestra Republica, de decir sin miedo que la obra politica que para el bien de todos se ha de fundar, ha de fundarse con todos? Ardo en deseos de ver el Cayo con mis ojos, y de respetarle las formas y metodos que se ha ido dando con lo real y necesario de la localidad, y de enseñar con mi presencia como estan junto, no ya en la aspiracion retorica, sino en la obra sagaz y urgente, en la obra de prevision y ordenamiento, de juicio amplio y accion cordial, todos los que tienen un pecho con que arremeter, y mente para ver de lejos, y manos con que ejecutar. Y sin recelos y sin exclusiones. Y sin antipatias tenaces. Es la hora de los hornos, en que no se ha de ver mas que la luz.¹²

Marti was calling for a new beginning: let bygones be bygones. All patriots supporting the armed struggle should put aside their differences to organize the necessary and inevitable war. The Key's response would be crucial. Should the animosities of the past prevail, the long-sought unity would fail to materialize, and the independence movement would be left to wallow in its traditional impotence.

Poyo published Marti's letter, and immediately a committee of tobacco workers formally invited the rebel organizer to visit the Key. Included on the committee were Marti's long-time supporter, Serafin Bello, and his ardent new adherent, the stenographer Gonzalez. Whether the invitation represented a calculated political decision by the isle's rebel leadership or a spontaneous action by a group of workers is not clear, but it is evident that the patriot community recognized that an effective leader had to be found for the reemerging movement. Moreover, the Convencion's stated duty according to article 24 of its charter was to "asociarse cordialmente a cuantos elementos del interior, o del exterior de las islas, aspiren a la independencia, sobre la base de una nueva Republica en el mar de las Antillas." The Key's leaders were well aware of the necessity of unified action by the emigre centers.

Tampa's reaction to Marti obviously caused considerable curiosity among the Key West leadership. Not since Gomez and Maceo had visited the Florida communities in the mid-1880s had so much enthusiasm been elicited from the emigre workers. The time had arrived to give Marti his opportunity. As Gomez wrote Figueredo in November 1890, Cuba's destiny "esta llamado a resolverse con las armas, pero eso tiene que organizarse por hombres nuevos y no por el elemento militar, a mi juicio, bastante gastado ya."¹³ Among the traditional bosses on the Key, Poyo, at least, was ready to recognize Marti's leadership. The New York publicist began courting

Poyo's support as early as 1887, but the wounds of the Marti-Gomez conflicts were still too fresh to make headway in Florida. Now, however, Marti would rely on Poyo, his friend Bello, Gonzalez, and an enthusiastic group of young tobacco workers alienated from the traditional rebel leadership, to gain a political foothold in the all-important Key West community.¹⁴

Marti arrived on the south Florida isle on December 25, 1891, receiving a welcome in the best traditions of the revolutionary community. After several days of conversations with the rebel leaders in which he outlined his program, Marti submitted the Bases del Partido Revolucionario Cubano to the Convencion Cubana's executive officers, Lamadriz, Poyo, and Figueredo, for their review. They accepted his proposals in principle and called a meeting of twenty-six community leaders to establish the Partido Revolucionario Cubano (PRC).¹⁵ Including Marti, twenty-seven Cubans gathered to establish the Party with Gonzales presiding. Marti represented New York, three delegates were from Tampa's rebel clubs, ten represented clubs in Key West, and the rest were invited delegates or individuals who did not represent specific local clubs. Of the thirteen invited members, eleven belonged to the Convencion which was not officially represented since it was a secret association. The remaining two delegates received their invitations because of their established reputations in the community.¹⁶ Dominated by the traditional leadership, the delegation from the Convencion could make or

break the PRC. Although the Convencion's Vice-President, Poyo, supported Marti, others, such as Lamadriz, Figueredo, and Castellanos, were still not convinced the New Yorker should be designated as the new movement's leader. As one activist later noted, "Algunos veteranos de la epopeya de los diez anos, admiraban en Marti, al eminente orador, pero no lo consideraban como el elegido para llevar a los cubanos al capitolio de los libres."¹⁷ The PRC was founded, but the extent to which it would serve as the primary revolutionary mechanism was still to be seen.

The PRC's basic goal, according to its first and fourth articles, was to unite all those Cubans who hoped to attain "la independencia absoluta de la Isla de Cuba, y fomentar y auxiliar la de Puerto Rico" in order to found "en el ejercicio franco y cordial de las capacidades legitimas del hombre, un pueblo nuevo y de sincera democracia, capaz de vencer, por el orden del trabajo real y el equilibrio en las fuerzae sociales, los peligros de la libertad repentina en una sociedad compuesta para la esclavitud." For this purpose, Marti constructed a rebel organization containing the democratic and pluralistic structure considered essential by some, while including the concept of centralized authority and immediate revolutionary action called for by others. Although these goals were seemingly contradictory, Marti successfully created a two-tiered party structure that allowed for broad-based, grass-roots participation at the local level, while concentrating power at the national

level in the hands of one individual charged with organizing the conspiracy against the Spanish rulers in Cuba.¹⁸

The grass-roots institutions of the PRC were the local clubs and associations in the various emigre centers that had existed in one form or another since the Cubans first arrived in the United States. They were democratic by tradition. Historically, when a local club was to be organized an announcement to that effect was published in the local newspaper. A mass meeting was then called and those attending organized the new association, specifying membership requirements and electing officers. In most cases officers were elected annually.

While the political clubs in the various exile centers were democratic by tradition, the emigre-wide rebel organizations that periodically attempted to unite the centers were not. During the Ten Years War, for example, the government-in-arms appointed the exile leadership with little regard for emigre opinion. The Guerra Chiquita was organized in New York by Calixto Garcia, under the authority of that city's Comite Revolucionario Cubano. Key West, Jacksonville, New Orleans, and other centers were not consulted in Garcia's selection as emigre leader, and the rebel committee's bylaws declared all the other centers subservient to the New Yorkers. Moreover, when Gomez and Maceo arrived in the United States, they followed a similar pattern. This lack of broad

participation in the selection of the emigre leaders led to divisions in each case that proved detrimental to the rebel movement.

In structuring the new revolutionary organization, Marti had this experience in mind. Accordingly, the PRC gave the local organizations of the various centers the power to select the Party's national leadership. The statutes noted: "El Partido Revolucionario Cubano se compone de las asociaciones organizadas de cubanos independientes que aceptan su programa y cumplen con los deberes impuestos en el." In each emigre center the Presidents of the various clubs approving the PRC charter sat on the local Cuerpo de Consejo, the party's highest authority in each community. In turn, the Cuerpos de Consejo together voted for the national officers of the PRC and then acted as advisory bodies to those elected officials. For the first time, then, a mechanism had been established whereby the local associations of the emigre centers elected their emigre-wide leaders. The structure encouraged participation since a seat on the local Consejo was assured to any group who organized a club with at least twenty members willing to accept the PRC charter. In Key West, the eight clubs represented at the founding meeting grew to 62 by early 1895. Tampa's two clubs became fifteen, and the number of clubs in New York grew from seven to thirteen during the same period. Moreover, twenty-two other clubs formed in cities across the United States, including Philadelphia (6), Ocala (6), New Orleans (3), and one each in seven additional

cities. Finally, seventeen clubs formed in Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, and Santo Domingo. Indeed, by 1895 there was broad participation by emigres in the PRC.

Local participation in decision-making at the national level, however, was not the case in the PRC. While the selection of the Party's highest officer, the Delegado, was made democratically by the Consejos, once elected, this officer enjoyed almost absolute authority over the direction of the Party. The Delegado could be removed at the annual election or prior to that by unanimous agreement of the Consejos, in practice very difficult. Moreover, he was required to report his activities to the Consejos only once a year, at least a month prior to the annual election. During the rest of the year he had only to communicate to the Consejos "cuantas noticias o encargos se requieran a su juicio para la eficacia de su cooperacion en la obra general." In theory the Delegado could operate the Party virtually on his own, seeking advice from the Consejos only when he chose and coordinating his activities with the Treasurer and Secretary of the PRC. In practice, however, organizing activities were carried out in conjunction with the political leaders in Florida and a group of military veterans.¹⁹

This centralized executive structure, of course, was in the tradition of the emigre rebel movements. The military veterans in the Florida communities had always been adamant about placing ample authority in the hands of the primary rebel figures, as we

have seen, but the PRC was even more centralized than their own Convencion. In the Key West organization the four committees and the executive body directed the activities while in the PRC only the Delegado made the decisions. Nevertheless, most rebel activists seemed to agree that the PRC's structure was proper for the task at hand.

On his return to New York after the founding of the Party in Key West, Marti stopped in Tampa where the two local clubs immediately approved the PRC. On January 24 in New York, Los Independientes met and likewise approved the statutes with only one of thirteen members present dissenting. Efforts were then initiated in New York to rally the activist community around the newly established Party. During February four new clubs were organized: Club Jose Marti; Pinos Nuevos; Borinquen, organized by Puerto Rican activists; and Mercedes Varona, a women's club. And on March 13, the five clubs met and ratified the PRC. By the end of the month two additional rebel associations formed: Independientes de Cubanacan and Las Dos Antillas. They too ratified the Partido.²⁰

Meanwhile, in Key West progress toward ratifying the Partido was slow. It is clear that the Key's traditional leaders firmly approved the Party's structure, but their failure to formally ratify the organization during January, February, and most of March indicates that certain elements within the community were still not entirely convinced Marti should be given the leadership of the

movement. By early 1892, the Convencion Cubana's secret activities in Cuba were well advanced, and a portion of the Key's veteran element led by Figueredo, Castellanos, Castillo and others were apparently still reluctant to reveal them to the not yet fully organized Partido.²¹ Marti had not yet won their confidence. Nevertheless, just as in New York, many in the community began organizing clubs in support of the PRC. Between January and April six new clubs were founded.

From New York, Marti remained in constant correspondence with Poyo, Bello, Gonzalez, and other supporters. In a letter to Gonzalez, he explained the need for Key West to act formally to establish the Party, noting, "Estimo . . . que no habra habido demora innecesaria, y que no seran los cubanos del Cayo, proclamadores entusiastas de la union cubana en una visita reciente, los que demoren o entorpezcan la union de los cubanos."²² Also, during March, Marti founded Patria, a newsweekly in which he continued to urge unity of action among the emigres. In its first issue, the organizer declared:

El que no ayuda hoy a preparar la guerra, ayuda a disolver el pais. La simple creencia en la probabilidad de la guerra es ya una obligacion, en quien se tenga por honrado y juicioso, de coadyuvar a que se purifique, o impedir que se malee, la guerra probable. Los fuertes, preven; los hombres de segunda mano esperan la tormenta con los brazos en cruz . . . Nace este periodico, a la hora del peligro, para velar por la libertad, para contribuir que sus fuerzas sean invencibles por la union, y para evitar que el enemigo nos vuelva a vencer por nuestro desorden.²³

Moreover, Marti did not leave the courting of the military element solely to his backers on the Key. He frequently wrote Figueredo, probably the most skeptical of his veteran opposition.²⁴ Although the veterans in Key West were slowly convinced of Marti's political capabilities their definitive adherence to the PRC probably came only after they were assured Maximo Gomez would be given a prominent role in the military aspects of the movement. Marti's announcement that the veteran general would be the Party's highest military authority came subsequent to the formal establishment of the organization, although it is likely this was agreed to earlier.

Finally, on March 25, the Presidents of the twelve clubs in Key West met and ratified the PRC. On April 1, Marti received a telegram to that effect and the way was now open for Party elections to choose the Delegado and Treasurer. On April 8 twenty-four clubs in New York, Key West and Tampa unanimously voted Marti to be the Delegado of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano. Benjamin Guerra of the Club Los Independientes became Treasurer. Simultaneously, the Cuerpos de Consejo were formally established in each locale. In New York, Juan Fraga and Sotero Figueroa were elected President and Secretary of the Consejo, respectively. Poyo and Ramon Socorro achieved the same positions in Key West, while in Tampa Nestor Carbonell and Andres Iznaga were elected to head that city's Consejo. The PRC was duly established and ready to initiate its campaign against Spanish colonialism.²⁵

Despite the military elements' initial skepticism of Marti, they never formed a public opposition to him or the Party, which they very much supported. However, to Marti's dismay, it was in New York that voices were raised against the new rebel organization and his leadership. There the dissidents were headed by the editor of El Porvenir, Enrique Trujillo. As we have seen, Trujillo had been Marti's political ally throughout the 1880s, and it was through El Porvenir that Marti became known to the Florida communities. Some have suggested Trujillo's opposition represented an individual grievance, since the two men had broken over a personal incident during 1891, but more likely El Porvenir's systematic opposition to the PRC and Marti reflected the ideological concerns of a sector of the Cuban community, primarily in New York. Had Trujillo represented positions unacceptable to the entire Cuban community in the United States, it is not likely that his newspaper would have survived, especially after the PRC condemned its editor and prohibited the reading of the organ in the Florida cigar factories. The newspaper, however, remained in active opposition to the Party until the outbreak of the rebellion and Marti's death in 1895.²⁶

Trujillo's opposition to the Partido Revolucionario Cubano was based on several concerns--political and social--that he first raised in the meeting of Los Independientes soon after Marti's return from Florida. He was the lone dissenting vote against the

Partido. First of all, the New York journalist challenged the Party's revolutionary orientation. Although he claimed to believe that Cubans would eventually have to resort to armed struggle to achieve independence, he did not think conditions in Cuba would be ripe for such a solution for many years. "Los elementos cubanos que se agitan en los Estados Unidos," he wrote, "parece como que parten de un principio, que al sustentarlo es falso. Y es que aparentan . . . la creencia de que la guerra en Cuba va a estallar de un momento a otro, que el caballo esta ya ensillado en espera del jinete, y que a todo trapo hay que organizarse, porque llega el momento y nos coje desprevenidos. Repetimos que si se mantiene esa suposicion, es completamente errada." Trujillo argued that economic discontent on the island would eventually convince even the Spanish residents of the benefits of breaking with Spain. "Cuando esto resulte, se volveran a reproducir actos y hechos iguales a la epoca en que Espana perdio sus otras posesiones de America. El periodo es, pues, de incubacion." This being the case, Trujillo argued, the emigres' revolutionary strategy was not only useless, but counter-productive in that it would alienate those very groups necessary to launch the rebellion. The New York editor had joined Marti in the mid-1880s in opposing the military expeditions proposed by Gomez and Maceo and backed by the Florida communities. He now believed that Marti had joined forces with the Key West and Tampa militants to force an unwanted rebellion on the island.

Trujillo suggested that instead of attempting to foment rebellion the proper role of the emigre communities was to "propagar, buscar proseliticos, acumular recursos, observar con cautela." Revolutionary action, he believed, should be left to those on the island. Accordingly, even the name of the organization was unacceptable: "A nuestro modesto juicio, la organizacion debe responder a las necesidades actuales, y bastaria que se llamara Partido Separatista, para que asi dilatara mas su esfera de propaganda, atrayendo a su seno a elementos que hoy pudieran rechazar una accion de fuerza." In effect, Trujillo believed that the exiles' role should be passive, but organized and ready to support a rebellion which he claimed would inevitably erupt domestically on its own initiative.

Secondly, Trujillo opposed what he considered to be the PRC's "personalistic and dictatorial" structure. Since the journalist rejected the creation of an emigre organization dedicated to fomenting rebellion in Cuba, he was accordingly critical of the highly centralized structure at the level of the Delegado. Trujillo noted that in the PRC "no hay junta directiva, sino un Delegado que asume los poderes y que constituye por tanto una dictadura civil." He continued: "Es cierto que los Cuerpos de Consejo de cada localidad son de consulta, pero el Delegado es a quien le es potestativo el consultarlos, y si los Consejos quisieran enjuiciarlo, para declararlo culpable, necesitarian estar unanimes."²⁷ Trujillo was

also concerned about Marti's ability to attract almost complete loyalty from his followers. As one conspirator later wrote, "Marti se multiplica, a todas partes acude y su palabra facil gana secretarios y voluntades que le obedecian ciegamente, y sin preguntar el uso de los fondos ni la indole de los trabajos. El hombre personificaba la empresa, y la confianza en el puesta por la emigracion era ilimitada."²⁸ Trujillo deemed this "personalismo" dangerous to democratic procedure, but, indeed, it was probably this tireless energy and ability to inspire and mobilize the emigres that made it possible to unite the historically factious communities behind one united revolutionary effort.

A third concern raised by Trujillo was a resentment regarding the procedures by which the PRC was formed and that it had emerged from the primarily working-class communities of Florida. Trujillo described the meeting where Marti presented the PRC to the club Los Independientes on his return from Key West: "El Dr. Jose Marti, en representacion hablada por las emigraciones de cubanos de Tampa y Cayo Hueso, presento un proyecto de organizacion . . . , manifestandose que ya habian sido discutidos y aprobados sus Bases y Estatutos por aquellos Centros, y que al no darle su sancion el Club a quien se dirigia, quedaria fuera del Partido." Accordingly, "el partido . . . no representa, por lo que a la emigracion cubana de New York respecta, ni sus opiniones, ni su voluntad. Y el error . . . esta en que surgio violento, y no se congrego a sus elementos para

tratar ni discutir su forma, ni sus tendencias, ni los medios y recursos que podia poner en juego."²⁹ Moreover, he noted, the PRC's affiliate clubs were organized subsequent to the writing of the statutes and were, he argued, formed to ratify them, not to discuss them. Trujillo believed that the New York community's political opinions had been disregarded and circumvented.³⁰

Trujillo was no doubt correct. Perfectly aware of the more conservative nature of the New York community, Marti knew that the new revolutionary organization had to be organized among the militants in Florida. Not only because the Floridians had traditionally supported armed movements, but because the military would be an essential element of the "necessary war." Those initially supporting the PRC in New York were but a small group in harmony with the idea of organizing a revolutionary organization. The New York community had always considered itself the primary emigre center, as much for social reasons as for political tradition, and it is not surprising that a portion of it resented the militant and socialist tendencies of the Florida communities. As Marti noted in a letter to Bello in Key West, Trujillo "anda hablando de que el Cayo se quiere imponer a New York."³¹

The reaction within the PRC to Trujillo's criticisms was sharp. On April 29, the New York Cuerpo de Consejo approved a resolution "desautorizando publicamente" El Porvenir. In effect, Trujillo was ejected from the organization.³² In Key West, El Yara

suggested that Trujillo should have taken his grievances to the clubs and sought reforms through the structure: "Entonces puede que le secundemos en alguna de sus pretenciones." El Yara was known to support a Codigo Uniforme for the local clubs, "que no pusiera barreras en las relaciones sociales de unos con otros." The newspaper noted that among clubs "los hay constituidos de tal manera, que por sus restricciones reglamentarias permanecen aislados colectiva e individualmente sus miembros del resto de la comunidad patriotica, y esto lo consideramos un mal grave para el fin que todos se proponen. Nada es mas conveniente para los que estan identificados en una idea que estrechar distancias, comunicarse impresiones, no vivir, en fin, aislados en el vacio." Nevertheless, El Yara argued that all reforms had to be initiated within the clubs and elevated to the Cuerpos de Consejo for discussion and implementation. Whether this issue was pursued in the Key West Consejo is not clear.³³

El Yara also declared that should another name be considered for the PRC, only Partido Nacionalista Cubano was acceptable:

Este lleva no solo inhibita la idea de la revolucion por la separacion de Espana, sino que fijaria de manera clara y precisa la aspiracion de los cubanos al goce de su nacionalidad propia, y alejaria de las Republicas Sur-Americanas de nuestro origen, la errada creencia de que tenemos los cubanos marcada simpatia por la anexion de nuestra patria al coloso absorbente del Norte, cuando en realidad no es asi . . . Y si bien la ultima denominacion de nuestro Partido es la de Revolucionario Cubano, porque tal es el medio en que se mueve, no por eso debe olvidarse que por su indole y por la misma logica de las cosas, su verdadero nombre es el Partido Nacionalista Cubano.³⁴

For the emigres in Florida the term Partido Separatista connoted a tolerance of all advocates of separation from Spain, including annexationists. Annexationists were clearly not welcome within the new revolutionary movement.

Finally, Patria and El Yara denied Trujillo's charges that the PRC had adopted the filibustering tradition of the Florida communities of the mid-1880s. Both newspapers insisted that the revolt had to be initiated on the island before expeditionary forces would be dispatched with rebel soldiers. They acknowledged, however, that the PRC would aid in organizing the insurrection and, indeed, purchase arms and smuggle them into Cuba to make the revolt possible. This had been the Convencion's position in 1889, and as El Yara noted in September 1892, "Los tiempos mudan y por eso los emigrados, que alguna vez sonamos con sublevar la Isla con grupos pequenos de heroicos invasores, tocamos la realidad y comprendemos que solo nos toca ayudar a la Revolucion. Pensar otra cosa seria erroneo."³⁵

Trujillo's efforts to gain support in the emigre communities failed miserably. Although he clearly had backers in New York, they did not form a public opposition in any organized way. They simply remained aloof from the PRC. In Florida El Porvenir's propaganda was even less successful. The only prominent figure to express sympathy for its views was one of the founding members of the PRC, Juan Calderon, but he had little effect.³⁶

Virtually from the moment of the PRC's ratification, Marti initiated the task of raising funds, winning the confidence of the still skeptical military element, and extending the network of contacts in Cuba. During July, Marti made his second visit to the Florida centers. He arrived in Tampa on July 5, where he was received with enthusiasm. Significantly, Marti met with a prominent veteran of the Ten Years War, Carlos Roloff, who had just arrived from Honduras to make contact with the new revolutionary party. They then travelled to Key West and met with another group of veterans including Serafin Sanchez, Rafael Rodriguez, Francisco Lifriu, Jose Rogelio Castillo, Jose Lamar, and various others. On July 14, satisfied in their conversations with Marti, the veterans issued a manifesto proclaiming their confidence in the PRC. Marti, Roloff, Rodriguez, Sanchez, Figueredo, and Poyo were then invited by the Tampa community to participate in another patriotic event. After an enthusiastic reception and visits to the tobacco factories where funds were raised, the PRC delegation travelled to Ocala, Jacksonville, and St. Augustine prior to Marti's return to New York.³⁷

This was an important trip for Marti. He not only received the uncompromising support of the veterans, but he again demonstrated his ability to mobilize the emigre communities in support of the Party. In late December, subsequent to another visit by Marti to Florida, Fernando Figueredo wrote Maximo Gomez: "Marti acaba de marcharse, dejando un rastro de concordia, de armonia y

patriotismo al abandonarnos. Que hombre amigo . . . Cada visita le pone alguna reja al edificio que ya parece termina de una manera satisfactoria."³⁸ This reveals that even the most skeptical of the Florida veterans had become convinced of Marti's extraordinary political capabilities.

With Marti's leadership confirmed by the military veterans, the Convencion Cubana, or Club Luz de Yara, revealed to him the full extent of their conspiratorial activities in Cuba. They were then further developed by the Partido. The Delegado designated Gerardo Castellanos and another individual whose identity is unknown to travel to the island, establish broader contacts with potential revolutionaries, and explain to them the activities of the PRC. In addition, Marti named Juan Gualberto Gomez, a fellow conspirator during the Guerra Chiquita, as his agent in Habana.

The revolutionary edifice now lacked only one final element: the support of Maximo Gomez and Antonio Maceo, the two most prestigious military figures in exile. In September Marti set out for the Dominican Republic, where he met with his old rival, Gomez. The two approached each other with caution and tolerance, aware that their meeting would be crucial to the rebel movement. At that meeting Gomez extended his support in principle, and the following June he was officially named Commander in Chief of the war effort. That same June, Marti visited with Maceo in Costa Rica and obtained his support. The exile communities were now indeed united and

dedicated to a common enterprise for the first time in their history. The rebel structure was consolidated, the primary military figures were committed, and conspiratorial seeds had been sown on the island. During 1894 Marti dedicated himself to the task of raising funds, purchasing arms and watching closely political and economic developments in Cuba.³⁹

Notes

¹Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States, 2 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1963), II, 289-300; Ramiro Guerra y Sanchez, et al., eds., Historia de la nacion cubana, 10 vols. (Habana: Editorial Historia de la Nacion Cubana, S.A., 1952), VI, 24-44; Luis Estevez Romero, Desde Zanjon hasta Baire, 2 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975), I, 202-333, II, 1-63; Calixto C. Maso, Historia de Cuba (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1976), 294-316; Manuel Moreno Fragnals, El ingenio, 3 vols. (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1978), III, 77; Julio Le Riverend, Historia economica de Cuba (Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educacion, 1974), 507-522.

²Juan J. E. Casasus, La emigracion cubana y la independencia de la patria (Habana: Editorial Lex, 1953), 200.

³For additional information on the club Los Independientes, see Juan Carlos Mirabal, "Acerca del club Los Independientes," Anuario del Centro de Estudios Martianos, 4 (1981), 257-278.

⁴The Convencion Cubana's charter is included in Raoul Alpizar Poyo, Cayo Hueso y Jose Dolores Poyo: Dos simbolos patrios (Habana: Imprenta P. Fernandez, 1947), 74-78.

⁵"Convencion Cubana," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo 699, numero 11. The original charter included only two committees: Hacienda y Guerra and Correspondencia.

⁶Alpizar Poyo, Cayo Hueso y Jose Dolores Poyo, 76-77.

⁷Information on these organizing activities in Florida is available in the following sources: Manuel Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro. La emigracion. Notas historicas (Cienfuegos, Cuba: Imprenta de M. Mestre, 1904), 87-93; Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935), 165-167; Casasus, La emigracion cubana, 200-203; Fanny Azcuy Alon, Al Partido Revolucionario y la independencia de Cuba (Habana: Molina y Cia., 1930), 47-55; Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June, 1958), 29-30, 43-50.

⁸Letter, Maximo Gomez to Juan Arnao, December 29, 1884, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Archivo Maximo Gomez (hereafter, ANC, Gomez), Legajo 81, numero 8.

⁹Jose Marti, Obras completas, 28 vols. (Habana: Institute Cubano del Libro, Cuba, 1963-1973), I, 245-246.

¹⁰Marti, Obras completas, IV, 259.

¹¹Accounts of Marti's visit to Tampa are included in the sources cited in footnote 7.

¹²Marti, Obras completas, I, 271-272.

¹³Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro, 73-75; letter, Maximo Gomez to Fernando Figueredo, November 8, 1890, ANC, Gomez, Legajo 4, numero 193.

¹⁴Marti, Obras completas, I, 210-213. Bello had been associated with Marti's faction in the New York revolutionary committee and had been forced to resign as treasurer. He subsequently moved to Key West, but remained in frequent correspondence with Marti. Editor of La Voz del Pueblo in Sagua la Grande, Gonzalez arrived in Key West during 1888 or 1889 and worked as a lector. Not closely identified with the veteran faction of the Convencion Cubana, he was attracted immediately to Marti. La Republica (New York), June 20, 1885; Marti, Obras completas, 207-208, 253-256; Casaus, La emigracion cubana, 412-413.

¹⁵Accounts of Marti's visit to Key West are also contained in the sources cited in footnote 7. Also, see Angel Pelaez, Primera jornada de Jose Marti en Cayo Hueso (New York, 1896) and Ibrahim Hidalgo Paz, "Resena de los clubes fundadores del Partido Revolucionario Cubano," Anuario del Centro de Estudios Martianos, 4 (1981), 214-218.

¹⁶"Acta de la constitucion del Partido Revolucionario Cubano en Cayo Hueso, 5 de Enero de 1892," Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo fuera de caja 150, numero 7; Hidalgo Paz, "Resena de los clubes fundadores del Partido Revolucionario Cubano," 217.

Delegates to the meeting:

Tampa Clubs	- Esteban Candau, Liga Patriotica Cubano, Tampa
	Arturo Gonzalez, Liga Patriotica Cubana, Tampa
	Eligio Carbonell, Club Ignacio Agramonte, No. 1

Key West Clubs - Carlos Borrego, Club Juan Miyares
 Jose Leiva, Club Juan Miyares
 Serafin Bello, Club Patria y Libertad
 Angel Barrios, Club Patria y Libertad
 Francisco Camellon, Liga Patriotica Cubana,
 Key West
 Francisco M. Gonzalez, Liga Patriotica Cubana
 Antonio M. Castillo, Club San Carlos
 Jose D. Hernandez, Club Ignacio Agramonte, No. 2
 Benigno Benitez, Club Union y Libertad
 Gerardo Castellanos, Club Jose Gonzalez Guerra
 (also a member of the Convencion Cubana)

Invited Delegates - Members of the Convencion Cubana:

Jose F. Lamadriz
 Jose D. Poyo
 Fernando Figueredo
 Cayetano Soria
 Teodoro Perez
 Cecilio Enriquez
 Eduardo Gato
 Nicolas C. Salinas
 Juan A. Calderon
 Martin Herrera
 Jose Rogelio Castillo

Invited Delegates - Independents:

Carlos Balino
 Rosendo Garcia

¹⁷Gerardo Castellanos Garcia, Mision a Cuba: Cayo Hueso y Marti (Habana: Alfa, 1944), 119-120; Deulofeu, Heroes del destierro, 73-75; Jorge Ibarra, Jose Marti: Dirigente politico e ideologo revolucionario (Habana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1980), 106-107. Further evidence of tensions between the Convencion Cubana's leadership and Marti's early supporters on the Key is reflected in two articles written during 1898 and published in La Revista de Cayo Hueso that argue over who was responsible for organizing the emigre communities. Written by Figueredo, the first article gives the credit to the Convencion. He noted that the Convencion, "quizas un ano antes de la organizacion del Partido Revolucionario Cubano, ya era una organizacion perfecta" and that it was in the vanguard of emigre organizing. In response, Angel Pelaez, one of the tobacco workers who formally invited Marti to Key West, wrote an article entitled "La verdad en su lugar. Al buen amigo Fernando Figueredo." Pelaez declared: "Cayo Hueso conspiraba

todos los dias; se creia el solo capaz de llevar la revolucion a Cuba. Tampa conspiraba, por su parte, creia con el mismo derecho. New York y las demas emigraciones en las mismas circunstancias. Donde estaba, pues, la organizacion? . . . No era esa una organizacion a donde el pueblo, cansado de intencionas y fracasos, pusiera su confianza para el ideal de su vida. Asi, y nada mas que asi, encontro Marti a Tampa y Coyo Hueso." Deuloteu, Heroes del desierto, 89-93; Revista de Cayo Hueso (Key West), No. 23, June 26, 1898, pp. 6, 8.

¹⁸Marti, Obras completas, I, 279-284. See Ibarra's discussion of the PRC as an organization based on the principle of "Democratic Centralism," in Jose Marti, 107-116, and Diana Abad, "El Partido Revolucionario Cubano: Organizacion, funcionamiento y democracia," Anuario del Centro de Estudios Martianos, 4 (1981), 231-256.

¹⁹Enrique Collazo, Cuba independiente (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 1981), 20-55. In this memoir Collazo criticizes Marti for not delegating sufficient authority to others. "Marti lo era todo, y ese fue su error, pues por mas que se multiplicaba era imposible que lo hiciera todo el solo." On the other hand, Collazo notes that the organizing activities were carried out with the cooperation of numerous military veterans. Clearly, Marti did not operate by himself, as Collazo suggests, although he coordinated closely the various activities.

²⁰Diana Abad, "El Partido Revolucionario Cubano: organizacion, funcionamiento y democracia," 236-237.

²¹Marti, Obras completas, I, 296-311. Marti's efforts to win the confidence of the veteran element caused controversy when he became involved in a bitter polemic with several veterans of the Ten Years War residing in Habana. In his enthusiasm to convince the veterans in Florida of his revolutionary fervor, Marti attacked a prominent veteran in Habana who published a book of his experiences during the past war, depicting it in all its hardships. Marti considered the book to be counterproductive to the cause of initiating another rebellion. Although ultimately the conflict was resolved through the intervention of Florida's leadership, the incident demonstrated the depth of animosity existing between Marti and some veterans. See Ibarra's interesting discussion of the incident where he characterizes Marti's attitude as a strategic mistake. Ibarra, Jose Marti, 116-123.

²²Marti, Obras completas, I, 345-348.

²³Marti, Obras completas, I, 315-322.

²⁴Marti, Obras completas, I, 294-296, 301-304.

²⁵Marti, Obras completas, I, 361, 379, 387-391; Abad, "El Partido Revolucionari Cubano: Organizacion, funcionamiento y democracia," 242-243.

²⁶Enrique Trujillo, Apuntes historicos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895 (New York: El Porvenir, 1896), 137-143; El Porvenir, February 14, 1894. Another prominent exile opposed to Marti and the Partido was Joae I. Rodriguez who wrote, "Todos creyeron que aquel movimiento improvisado, en que no figuraban sino algunos emigrados cubanos, los mas de ellos de la clase obrera, blancos y negros . . . que aparentemente no contaban, ni con dinero, ni con los demas elementos que para empresa de esta clase se han creido siempre indispensables, estaba destinado a fracasar . . . Y el elemento personalisimo, dictatorial y intolerante, que se revelo en el desde el principio, le enageno simpatias aun entre muchos de los mas antiguos y bien probados revolucionarios cubanos." Rodriguez, Estudio historico sobre el origen, desenvolvimiento y manifestaciones practicas de la idea de la anexion de la isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos de America (Habana: La Propaganda Literaria, 1900), 279. It is also noteworthy that Bellido de Luna did not back the PRC. It is apparent that although most militant rebels of the various emigre centers united under a single organization, by no means were all exiled Cubans in the United States supporters of the Party.

²⁷Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 127-132. See also, Enrique Trujillo, El Partido Revolucionario Cubano y El Porvenir, Articulos publicados en El Provenir (New York: El Porvenir, 1892).

²⁸Collazo, Cuba independiente, 22.

²⁹El Porvenir, June 8, 1892, supplement to no. 118.

³⁰Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 130-131.

³¹Marti, Obras completas, I, 308.

³²Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 137-142.

³³Enrique Trujillo, Proyecto de una convencion cubana en el extranjero. Articulos publicados en El Porvenir (New York: El Porvenir, 1892), 12.

³⁴El Porvenir, October 19, 1892.

³⁵Martí, Obras completas, I, 475-481, II, 93-96; El Porvenir, September 21, 1892.

³⁶Letter, Fernando Figueredo to Maximo Gomez, December 21, 1892, ANC, Gomez, Legajo 5, numero 39; Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 86-87.

³⁷Patria, (New York), July 23, 30, 1892; Trujillo, Apuntes historicos, 151-153.

³⁸Letter, Fernando Figueredo to Maximo Gomez, December 21, 1892, ANC, Gomez, Legajo 5, numero 39.

³⁹For information on organizing activities between 1893 and the outbreak of the insurrection see Felix Lizaso, "Martí y El Partido Revolucionario Cubano," in Guerra y Sanchez, et al., eds., Historia de la nacion cubana, VI, 148-180; Collazo, Cuba independiente, 20-55.

CHAPTER 9

WORKERS, BLACKS, AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT, 1890-1895

The task of organizing the PRC was accomplished by the traditional political leaders who in early 1892 represented only a small group in the various communities. In New York, for example, only 173 individuals voted in the elections for Delegado, while in Florida a large portion of the tobacco workers were no doubt still skeptical of the patriot leadership as a result of the social conflicts of the late 1880s. The coalescing of the various political factions and the three primary emigre centers was a masterful accomplishment, but this work would have been of little value had the PRC not garnered the backing of a significant portion of the Cubans in the exile centers. For, indeed, it was the tobacco workers that ultimately gave the PRC its political legitimacy and financial base. Although during 1889 El Yara and the patriot leadership had been condemned by labor activists for placing patriotic matters above labor struggles, by 1895 these same labor militants were in the forefront of the independence movement, working side-by-side with the veteran political leaders to evict the Spanish from Cuba. This chapter traces this transformation and seeks to explain the factors that drew the workers back into the nationalist cause.

After the termination of the divisive strike of late 1889, the rebel leadership in Key West initiated the task of convincing the workers of the necessity of reinvigorating the patriot movement as called for by the newly established Convencion Cubana. Although most of the workers had enthusiastically supported the labor militants during the previous two years, most also sympathized with the ideal of an independent homeland. In fact, during late January 1890, labor activists Messonier, Izaguirre, Corbett, and Palomino reluctantly admitted that independence sentiment among the Key's workers was too entrenched to combat effectively.¹ Nevertheless, anarchist influence remained strong in the emigre centers, prompting the rebel leaders to initiate an aggressive campaign against what they considered to be the anarchists' anti-nationalist positions. The campaign involved two basic elements: combatting the growing immigration of Spanish workers to the Florida communities and initiating a vocal propaganda effort against anarchist doctrines in the exile press. Although there were a significant number of Cuban anarchists in the Florida emigre centers, the rebel leadership considered the Spaniards the primary importers of "anti-nationalist" ideals. As one rebel sympathizer in Cuba observed: "Hay . . . cinco mil tabaqueros asturianos; casi todos son socialistas; sin embargo, casi todos llevan en el sombrero la escarapela de voluntarios y en hombro el fusil destinado a ser descargado sobre el cubano, que ansioso suspira y suena con el grandioso ideal de la

dignidad patria."² Accordingly, the growing presence of Spanish workers in Florida, especially Tampa, concerned the patriot leadership, who feared they would dilute the intensity of separatist feelings among Cubans. Indeed, during 1889, El Yara's correspondent in Ybor City had reported that the lector in the Lozano Pendas factory refused to read separatist propaganda, not wanting to offend the Spanish workers.³ As far as the patriot leaders were concerned, anarchist doctrines and increasing Spanish immigration into south Florida were grave threats to the independence cause.

In line with this thinking, at a mass meeting in Key West during mid-January 1890 the patriot community passed a resolution supporting efforts to pressure the Key's manufacturers not to hire Spaniards. Moreover, a secret society, Partida la Tranca, was formed to intimidate Spanish workers attempting to disembark on the Key, an activity firmly denounced by Cuban anarchist leaders, especially Creci in El Productor and his local newspaper, El Bunuelo. As Creci noted in the Habana anarchist organ after four Spanish workers were evicted from Key West:

El socialista ve un hermano en cada hombre que trabaja, y la cualidad de ruzo, asiatico, o negro, no es una diferencia que se aprecia entre los que militan en las filas del socialismo. Sin abjurar para nada de sus principios de cubanos independientes, los socialistas hubieran dejado compartir las faenas del trabajo a esos companeros, y sin dejar tampoco de reconocer la justicia que tienen los pueblos para emanciparse de injuriosas tuteladas, hubieran sentado a su lado a esos cuatro companeros, que al fin y al cabo no eran otra cosa que cuatro hombres que buscaban trabajo, y que al ir a un pueblo donde estan los defensores de la libertad, no se figuraron nunca que se les coartara la libertad del trabajo.

Despite the opposition of Creci and other Cuban anarchists, the rebel community in Key West continued its policy of not allowing Spanish workers to work on the isle. In fact, during mid-January Creci himself was forced to flee after being threatened by the secret society.⁴

This policy of keeping Spanish workers out of Key West was not new, however, having been defended throughout the 1880s by the patriot press. As early as 1880, the Union de Tabaqueros on the Key instituted a policy of not allowing Spaniards into the organization, arguing that a large influx of peninsular workers would dilute the patriotic nature of the community and endanger the independence movement. As El Yara observed in 1889, "La patriótica organizacion de los emigrados cubanos de Cayo Hueso habria carecido de solidez si desde los primeros momentos no hubiera tratado por todos los medios que estuvieron a su alcance de contrariar la inmigracion de espanoles procedentes de Cuba." El Yara continued, asking:

Seria Cayo Hueso lo que es hoy--el unico refugio del obrero cubano--si se hubieran amalgamado con los eternos enemigos de su patria, de su libertad y de su honra? No: correrian la misma suerte de los que estan en la Habana, en New York, en Mejico, donde quiera que se han visto supeditados por aquellos. Esos mismos cubanos que diciendose partidarios del socialismo con los espanoles han tenido que salir de Cuba agobiados por la miseria. Hubieran hallado aqui prontamente hospitalidad y trabajo de que librar la subsistencia si no fuera este Centro eminentemente Cubano? Es seguro que no.⁵

Another political newspaper, La Propaganda, founded in Key West during 1884 by a veteran of the Ten Years War, Jose R. Estrada, also denounced Cuban labor radicals who saw no threat from the growing

Spanish presence on the island. As early as November 1887, La Propaganda raised the issue, noting, "La conservacion de nuestra existencia en Cayo Hueso esta amenazada . . . Y no se invoque, por contradecirnos, el gastado recurso del principio obrero, que los obreros de Cayo Hueso, Cubanos en su mayoria, no son considerados en Cuba como obreros, sino como Cubanos enemigos, cosa que puede probar cualquier tabaquero relegado a obra inferior en las fabricas espanolas de la Habana y otros centros fabriles de tabaco."⁶

These aggressive measures against Spanish workers and anarchists were supported by the Cuban workers, but not only for political reasons. Throughout the seventies and eighties, Cuban workers suffered discrimination in their homeland at the hands of Spanish manufacturers who apparently preferred to hire their compatriots over the local workers, while in Florida Cubans felt threatened by the overabundance of labor caused in part by the influx of Spanish workers. Moreover, the participation of Spaniards in strikebreaking activities in Key West and Tampa was another grievance of the Cuban workers. On establishing his factory in Tampa in 1886, Martinez Ybor announced a policy of hiring only Cuban workers; partly because the Cubans requested it, but also because he believed the Cubans, as long-time emigres with families, were more stable and less receptive to the radical ideas being brought to Florida by the Spanish anarchists. Once the Cubans organized, however, the Spanish cigar capitalist discarded the policy of hiring

Cubans exclusively, and during the first strike in early 1887 he utilized Spanish strikebreakers.⁷ In late 1889 one North American worker in Tampa complained about the strikebearing tactics of the factory owners, declaring, "Whenever a manufactory is in need of workmen and cannot secure them here, he will go to Cuba, and engage a shipload in violation of the contract labor law. If this importation could be stamped out, it would help a great deal."⁸

While associated with the internationalist anarchist doctrines, Spanish tobacco workers were obviously not above taking the jobs of Cuban strikers, especially since work was often scarce and controlled to a large extent by Cuban unions with well defined apprenticeship systems and methods for determining who would fill available positions in the cigar factories they represented.⁹ As a result, a natural animosity developed between the Cuban and Spanish working communities in the Florida labor markets, heightening nationalist sentiment among Cubans who resented not only being displaced by Spaniards in the Habana factories, but now in the Florida manufactories as well.

This situation was already evident before 1890, but it was aggravated during the next several years when a large number of Spanish workers entered Florida as a result of the harmful effects of the McKinley Tariff on the Habana cigar industry.¹⁰ The strike-breaking tactics of the tobacco manufacturers were repeated in Tampa during 1891 and in Key West during 1893, incidents denounced in both

cases by the rebel leadership in the two locales.¹¹ The conflict during late 1893 on the Key arose when Seidenberg & Co. contracted with thirteen Spanish foremen and workers from Habana to work on the isle, prompting the factory's predominantly Cuban labor force to strike. When a quick agreement could not be reached, Seidenburg announced his intention to transfer his manufactory to Tampa, causing consternation among the Key's Anglo population and city officials, who over the previous five years had seen a mass exodus of factories up the coast to Tampa. A less organized, more cosmopolitan labor force with a significant Spanish and Italian presence made Tampa's cigar manufacturers immune to the political pressures exerted by the Cuban revolutionary community which insisted that Spaniards not be employed in the Florida industry. The greater freedom enjoyed by Tampa's manufacturers in hiring and wage-setting was an advantage the Key's factory owners could not ignore, prompting many to move their operations north.

The impending departure of one of Key West's largest factories convinced city officials the moment had arrived to challenge the Cuban refusal to allow Spanish workers to disembark on the isle. They assured Seidenburg that henceforth workers from Habana would be given greater access to Key West. A commission including city, county, and state officials travelled to Habana and contracted with three hundred workers to replace the striking Cubans in the Seidenburg manufactory. Because the importation of contract labor

violated United States federal statutes, the Cuban community, backed by the Partido Revolucionario Cubano, immediately petitioned the United States treasury department to halt the influx of contract laborers, ultimately winning the case and blocking more Spanish workers from taking jobs in Key West. Soon thereafter, Seidenburg removed his operations in Tampa, and a large portion of the Cuban colony, considering they had been betrayed by the Key West Anglo community, departed for Tampa as well.¹² Anti-Spanish sentiment then reached even greater heights among the Cubans in Florida, creating a deeper determination to support the rebel cause and eject the Spanish from their homeland. As Marti wrote in Patria, "Never the cry 'To Cuba' sprung from the Cuban heart so anguished and forlorn as today after the events of Key West, after the sad spectacle of a town built by its adoptive sons leaving its territory and breaking its laws, to bring from an alien land the enemies of those who built the town." But, he declared, "We are the stronger for this lesson. There is no help but our own. We are adrift again, with the house to our back, with our dead behind us, with the bitterness of friendship deceived. We have, Cubans, no country but the one we must fight for."¹³

In New York, El Porvenir criticized the PRC's aggressive politics in Key West, suggesting it would be more reasonable to remove political matters from the factories so as to avoid these kinds of disturbances that it believed would in the long run destroy

the Cuban community on the south Florida isle. Many of the non-Cuban manufacturers, noted El Porvenir, resented the PRC's involvement in their establishments, creating ill-will in the Anglo colony and destroying the city's traditional sympathy for the Cuban cause. "Sabes," observed the New York journal, "que se ha exigido en varios talleres del Cayo, la condicion precisa, ineludible, de ser miembro de un club adicto a ese Partido, para obtener trabajo? Sabes . . . que a los que trabajan de antano, que no cumplan ese requisito, se les amenazaba con rebajarlos del taller? Sabes . . . que alli se han celebrado consejos de guerra, y que el taller era una tribuna politica?" Given this interference by the rebel leaders in the internal operations of the factories, argued Trujillo, it is not surprising that the workers challenged Seidenburg's attempt to introduce Spanish foremen and workers. He implied that the Cuban workers were acting under the coercion of the Partido and called on them to accept Spanish cigar workers in the factories. "Obreros del Cayo," declared El Porvenir, "Si trabajas al lado del espanol, decide que como cubanos sois defensores de la independenciam de vuestra patria. Y tu opinion, que es justa, sera respetada." The newspaper continued: "Contribuye con lo que puedas, para acumular recursos para cuando estalla la guerra en Cuba; y no cedas a la compulsion, ni a la violencia, y trata de fundar, en union de los cubanos todos que sientan palpitar el ideal de la independenciam, el gran Partido Nacionalista donde no quepan mas que los intereses

generales, . . . y no esas fracciones en que pulsitan los dictadores y los visionarios, que por sus intemperancias y violencias, privan al obrero de su derecho al santo trabajo que le da el sustento." This effort by Trujillo to discredit the PRC in Key West was to no avail, however. In early February, El Yara published a letter of protest from the workers in the Gato factory condemning El Porvenir's attacks on the Party and Marti. The New York newspaper's effort to undermine the traditional rebel policy of keeping Spanish influence out of Key West made little headway in the increasingly nationalist communities in Florida, where the workers' support for the PRC proved solid.¹⁴

Not only did the Florida emigre centers condemn El Porvenir for taking what was considered an anti-Cuban policy, but during May workers in another Key West factory called a strike when the management announced a new rule prohibiting rebel leaders from entering the premises to collect funds. Interested in defusing the tense situation on the isle, Marti wrote the strike leaders thanking them for their support, but requesting the work stoppage be ended so as not to further divide the Cuban and Anglo communities.¹⁵ Further evidence of the solidarity of the Cuban community on the Key behind the rebel leadership was the Cubans' withdrawal from the Republican and Democratic parties, both represented in the commission to Habana. After a series of gatherings, El Yara announced the creation of the Partido Independiente del Condado de Monroe, in effect, an ethnic political organization dedicated to defending the

interests of the Cuban community.¹⁶ Not since the early 1870s had the Cubans in Key West united as an ethnic group to defend their nationalist interests in United States politics, further indicating that the independence movement had reemerged as the community's prime political concern.

Similar divisions between the Cuban and Spanish communities emerged in Tampa as well consolidating the Cuban workers there behind the rebel cause. During a May Day parade in 1891 organized by Spanish anarchists, shouts of "Viva Espana" were heard, resulting in counter-demonstrations by Cuban patriots and the organization of the Club Ignacio Agramonte some ten days later. Confrontations between Cubans and Spaniards increased during the next few months prompting the Liga Patriotica Cubana to resolve that the community lend "todo el apoyo posible a los cubanos comprometidos, y que se trabajara con teson y hasta el final para sacar a salvo a la colectividad cubana, de la mancha que sobre ella quieran lanzar los componentes del elemento espanol en Tampa." The club also resolved that members of its organization could not belong to a newly established international workers' organization, El Cosmopolita, presumably controlled by the anarchists.¹⁷

As a result of these diverse economic and political factors, then, the Cuban workers in Florida slowly discarded the political formulations of the anarchists in favor of the nationalist movement led by the PRC and Jose Marti. Cuban anarchist leaders did

the same, though some more quickly than others. Messonier and Creci, for example, returned during 1890 to Habana, where they continued their activity as labor leaders until it finally became clear to them that the socioeconomic transformation they desired could never be attained under the tightly controlled Spanish colonial system. During 1890 and 1891 labor agitation increased dramatically in Habana, but the Spanish government also increased its efforts to uncover and repress anarchist activity, resulting, for example, in Messonier's arrest in late 1890. However, probably the decisive event convincing the remaining Cuban anarchist leaders sympathetic to a free Cuba that they should support the PRC in launching the rebellion was the closing of the workers' congress of 1892 by Spanish authorities, after it passed a resolution that no inherent contradiction existed between revolutionary socialism and the aspiration by Cuban workers for an independent homeland.¹⁸ It became obvious to many labor activists attending the congress that their socioeconomic militancy would have to give way to independentista activism.

Simultaneously with the unfolding of these events during the first half of the 1890s, the patriot exile press kept up a constant criticism of anarchist doctrines, for although many of the Cuban labor activists, such as Rivero and Balino, had already joined the independentista organizing activities by 1892, Spanish and Italian anarchists in Florida continued to be an influential force, distracting the Cuban workers from political concerns.

Writing in El Porvenir, the Tampa patriot leader Nestor Carbonell declared, "Nosotros somos socialistas . . . aceptamos al socialismo en principio, por creerlo una hermosa doctrina que tiende a robustecer los intereses de la sociedad y a hacer frente al desheredado de la fortuna por medio de la solidaridad universal." But this was not to be at the expense of political action, for that would constitute "el suicidio moral con eterno baldon para el pueblo que supo luchar por espacio de diez anos y derramar como agua su sangre generosa en pro de su ideal, para conquistar su personalidad politica, y presentarla triunfante en el concierto de los pueblos libres." In concluding, Carbonell declared, "cuando se nos convenza que los elementos peninsulares hoy, no son el mismo que contiene el avance de nuestras libertades . . . entonces seremos abiertamente socialistas, mientras tanto, somos Criollos."¹⁹ New York-based pro-independence propagandists joined the debate in mid-1891 and not only condemned the political positions of the anarchists but called into question their socialist economic assumptions. "Por mi parte," wrote Rafael de C. Palomino in El Porvenir, "opino que no existe entre el capital y el trabajo, ni puede existir, el antagonismo que se pretende, porque ambos son necesarios a la produccion y tienden a unirse y no a separarse." Referring to the labor situation in Key West, he added, "siempre ha existido entre los duenos de las manufacturas de tabacos de Cayo Hueso y sus operarios . . . la unidad de aspiraciones . . . en que todos han tenido una sola mira: la

libertad de la patria." The anti-anarchist propagandists in Florida did not attack socialism as such, but simply the political positions of the anarchists, because they recognized the popularity of socialism among the workers. In New York, the primarily middle-class professional community leaders openly rejected socialist ideas. As Trujillo wrote during early 1892, "No somos simpatizadores de las tendencias socialistas, y mucho menos anarquistas por considerarlas faltas de toda razon para ser practicas."²⁰

With the foundation of Patria in March 1892 an even more influential voice was raised against the anarchist doctrines so prevalent in the Florida emigre communities. In its second issue, Patria called on the exiled workers to recognize the necessity of political action, arguing that all movements had a political character. "La aristocracia es una politica, y la democracia otra. El zarismo es politica, y es politica la anarquia,--la anarquia, que en mucho corazon ferviente es el titulo de moda de la aspiracion santa y confusa a la justicia, y en manos del gobierno espanol, que echa anarquistas por todas partes, es un habilisimo instrumento." Marti also suggested that men intrested in improving the condition of humanity should not be tolerant of repressive systems, when political action offers concrete alternatives. The Cuban political leader noted:

Los hombres que desean sinceramente una condicion superior para el linaje humano no pueden ser complices de la politica que anda predicando el desden de la politica; el deber de procurar el bien mayor de un grupo de hijos del pais, no puede ser superior al deber de procurar el bien de todos los hijos del pais; y si la guerra triste viene a ser el modo unico de conquistarlo, ningun hombre bueno negara su apoyo a una guerra inspirada en el deseo vehemente de obtener, por los metodos amplios de un gobierno propio, justicia para todos.²¹

This article demonstrated Marti's recognition, expressed in 1889, that it was not sufficient simply to reject anarchist positions--a concrete ideological alternative had to be offered to the socially conscious and sophisticated tobacco workers in the Florida communities. "Justicia para todos" would be Marti's major theme in drawing the working class to his movement; a vision enthusiastically embraced by those who believed the independence movement should offer more than just a change in political authority on the island. For Marti, however, the formulation of an ideology workers could identify with was not simply a political calculation. It was with great sincerity and commitment that he offered the Cuban tobacco workers a prominent role in the development and implementation of the revolutionary program that successfully launched the final challenge to the Spanish colonial system in Cuba.

Marti's vision of a revolutionary program, and later a republic founded on social justice, first emerged in the text of the program developed in 1887. Article four declared the necessity of ensuring "que las simpatias revolucionarias en Cuba no se tuerzan y esclavicen por ningun interes de grupo, para la preponderancia de

una clase social." The Tampa Resolutions of 1891, written among the workers themselves, expressed similar sentiments, with article three declaring:

La organizacion revolucionaria no ha de desconocer las necesidades practicas derivadas de la constitucion e historia del pais, ni ha de trabajar directamente por el predominio actual o venidero de clase alguna; sino por la agrupacion conforme a metodos democraticos . . . y por la creacion de una Republica justa y abierta, una en el territorio, en el derecho, en el trabajo y en la cordialidad, levantada con todos para bien de todos.²²

In his first speech to the Tampa community in November 1891, Marti expanded on this theme:

En el presidio de la vida es necesario poner, para que aprendan justicia, a los jueces de la vida. El que juzgue de todo, que lo conozca todo. No juzgue de prisa el de arriba, ni por un lado: no juzgue el de abajo por un lado ni de prisa. No censure al celoso el bienestar que envidia en secreto. No desconozca el pudiente el poema conmovedor, y el sacrificio cruento, del que se tiene que cavar el pan que come; de su sufrida companera, coronada de corona que el injusto no ve; de los hijos que no tienen lo que tienen los hijos de los otros por el mundo! Viera mas que no se desplegara esa bandera de su mastil, si no hubiera de amparar por igual a todas las cabezas!²³

Finally, article four of the Estatutos of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano reaffirmed Marti's vision:

El Partido Revolucionario Cubano no se propone . . . sino fundar en el ejercicio franco y cordial de las capacidades legitimas del hombre, un pueblo nuevo y de sincera democracia, capaz de vencer por el orden del trabajo real y el equilibrio de las fuerzas sociales, los peligros de la libertad repentina en una sociedad compuesta para la esclavitud.²⁴

During the next three years Marti further developed and presented his views to the Cuban workers, demonstrating an understanding and sympathy for their condition, criticizing the

socioeconomic forces that constantly threatened their security, and consistently declaring the new republic would be based on principles advantageous to all: "No queremos redimirnos de una tirania para entrar en otra. No queremos salir de una hipocresia para caer en otra. Amamos a la libertad, porque en ella vemos la verdad. Moriremos por la libertad verdadera; no por la libertad que sirve de pretexto para mantener a unos hombres en el goce excesivo, y otros en el dolor innecesario."²⁵ The Cuban workers had never heard the patriot leadership express itself on social issues with such sympathy. The only question of social concern in the traditional rebel ideology of the 1870s was the abolition of slavery, somewhat anachronistic in the late 1880s, but an effort was now begun to incorporate the social issues of a new age into the ideological construct of the Cuban nationalist movement.

Just as the workers viewed the rebel leadership's exclusive attention to the political question as unresponsive to their interests, the rebel leaders perceived the workers' tendency to focus their energies into industrial struggles during the latter part of the eighties as a negation of the independence ideal. It required a new generation of Cuban activists, personified by Marti, more aware of the socioeconomic complexities of the final fifteen years of the 19th century to successfully combine the varied and often contradictory concerns of the emigre Cubans into a united movement based on nationalist principles. More importantly,

however, this unity required the presence of an individual with the extraordinary analytical and communicative skills of Jose Marti, who acted as the catalyst for bringing together socially progressive middle-class professionals, tobacco capitalists, labor leaders, and anarchist activists under one political organization that they all considered would ultimately serve their interests.

Although Marti's writings served as inspiration, the practical application of the ideology of unity in the emigre communities was a sensitive chore in the hands of the local patriot leaders and press, especially in the Florida communities where the unstable economic conditions of the early 1890s constantly threatened to tear apart what they had so delicately created. In reality this was not a new role for El Yara in Key West, because it had always counseled compromise and balance between Cuban capital and labor, but the newspaper's harsh attacks on Cuban anarchist leaders in the late 1880s had obviously been understood by some as a generally anti-labor attitude. Now, in the context of Marti's leadership, El Yara's call for compromise and unity was understood as the even-handedness necessary for the revolution's consolidation.

If El Yara had possibly erred on the side of not demonstrating sufficient sympathy for the concerns of workers during the late 1880s, Ramon Rivero's newspapers in Tampa exacerbated class antagonisms in his vigorous support of anarchist activities during the same years. However, also embracing the principles outlined by

Marti, Rivero instituted an editorial policy calling for moderation and compromise between capital and labor. He condemned radical labor movements espousing anarchist doctrines but supported actions aimed at alleviating specific grievances. During a strike in May 1894, Rivero's new patriot weekly, Cuba, declared, "No deseamos huelgas, ni disturbios; pero cuando se trata de defender el pan de la familia y matar los abusos, nos colocamos al lado de la justicia, y esta asiste a los huelgistas. Creemos que los obreros de todos los talleres apoyaran en sus pretensiones a sus companeros a huelga." On the other hand, after what it considered an ill-advised strike led by anarchists threatening "dinamita, punales, bombas y petroleo," the patriot newspaper launched a sharp attack with the warning, "mientras mas se denigre en periodicos y discursos a los que hacen politica, a los que levantan la bandera de la patria, y se les quiere directa o indirectamente borrar del corazon la idea de la independenciam de su tierra, mayor sera la alejacion de estos, de toda solidaridad con los que sostienen cierta clase de ideales."²⁶

Another requirement for unity in the Florida communities was to attract the radical labor leaders into the Partido Revolucionario Cubano, a policy openly pursued by the local rebel leadership. As we have seen, this was accomplished to a great extent by the Spanish authorities in Cuba, but the Partido's democratic structure gave labor activists access to influential positions within the organization, something previously lacking in the make-up of the

revolutionary organizations. Although labor leaders had always been active in rebel clubs in Key West prior to 1885, the top leadership positions usually fell to the traditional rebel bosses like Lamadriz, Figueredo, and Poyo, who focused almost exclusively on patriot issues. As a result, many radicals chose not to participate in the clubs, and the Convencion Cubana, for example, failed to attract the labor militants as members. On the other hand, the PRC relied a great deal on the labor activists.²⁷

In the initial formulation of the ideals and statutes that were to serve as the basis for the Party, Marti consulted with Rivero and the Garcia Ramirez brothers in Tampa, prominent defenders of the workers since 1887. Moreover, at the organizational meeting of the Partido in Key West, among the invited delegates was Carlos Balino, one of the most popular labor militants in Florida.²⁸ This was a clear message to the radical community that their support was needed and wanted. As the new rebel organization began to take form, socialist labor leaders emerged to assume prominent positions within its structure, including Rivero as President of the Consejo in Tampa, Sorondo, heading the same body in Marti City and later in Port West Tampa, and Messonier and Ramon Rivera, who worked closely with Poyo, President of the Consejo in Key West. Since the positions were elective, it is apparent that these labor activists were popular among the mass of workers. Segura, Palomino, Corbett, and Creci also became active in patriot activities, contributing

articles to the emigre press that backed the Partido. Labor militants in Florida even formed their own rebel affiliates to the Party. The clubs Enrique Roig and Enrique Creci were established to honor the anarchist activists subsequent to their respective deaths.²⁹ Indeed, there is no case more symbolic of this transition of socialist leaders from outright anarchism, or at least flirtation with it in some cases, to a full commitment to the independence ideals reflected in the PRC, than Creci. As we have seen, during March 1890 he was forced to depart the Key for his intransigence in the face of the patriot community's sometimes violent assault on anarchist doctrines, but by 1893 he had joined the independence cause. So influential was he among the radical elements in exile that during September 1895 Cuba published a supplement which included Creci's ardent defense of the patriot movement. Two years later the labor activist died on the battlefields of Cuba.³⁰

The incorporation of the labor radicals in Florida into the Partido was further reason for El Porvenir's hostile attitude. During the early 1890s, the New York newspaper had combatted the growth of socialist ideals in the Florida centers, but in 1894, with the increase in social unrest in the United States as a result of the difficult economic situation, El Porvenir took an even more critical position. Trujillo decried the constant confrontations taking place between capital and labor, blaming many of them on what he considered to be tyrannical labor unions and the immigration of

Europe's disgruntled labor radicals and anarchists. "La tirania, lo es, de cualquier modo que se haga sentir: lo mismo de arriba que de abajo," he suggested, adding, "El gremio es un tirano del obrero." In the very next article of the same July 18 issue, "El anarquismo y los obreros cubanos," El Porvenir launched a harsh attack on Cuban anarchists and challenged the Partido's newspapers, Patria, El Yara, and Cuba, to take a similar position. Although these newspapers had consistently condemned the anarchists' political views they never attacked their socialism. The Party's leadership wanted to attract the labor activists to their cause, not alienate them, especially since they enjoyed a popular following among the mass of the emigres in Florida. Cuba's treatment of the matter was typical:

Los cubanos de la emigracion, sin precipitaciones y sin prejuicios temerarios, vamos a la Revolucion politica por la independencia. En nuestros trabajos tendentes a ese patriotico objetivo, no se mezcla ningun oculto ideal. Si otros elementos, de buena voluntad quieren, espontaneos, ayudarnos, corteses y carinosos aceptaremos el auxilio; pero, conste que jamas solicitaremos compromisos que impliquen para el provenir obligaciones que no somos nosotros los llamados a contraer, pues a los pueblos libres e ilustrados no se les engana y se les lleva por senderos indirectos a soluciones insostenibles y ruinosos por lo extemporaneas. Y basta, por hoy, sobre este asunto escabrosisimo.

As far as El Porvenir was concerned, however, Cuba's diplomatic discussion of the anarchist question was not sufficient: "No vemos tal escabrosidad para tratar cuestion tan vital, en epoca en que el mundo vive preocupada con los desmanes de una plaga social . . . Al pan, hay que llamarse pan; y el vino, vino." Specifically, El Porvenir objected to the Partido's policy of courting the anarchist

leaders. "Toda dadiva, crea un compromiso," argued Trujillo. "Si el Partido Revolucionario recibe, como dicen que ha recibido, dinero del grupo anarquista, se siente comprometido hacia ese grupo," noted Trujillo, maliciously adding, "No en balde ha causado tanta extrañeza que un periodico, Patria, nada menos que el organo de un Partido que se llama serio y de principios, no haya tenido una palabra siquiera para condenar el asesinato del bueno y honrado Carnot. Eso puede dar lugar a deducciones sobre compromises contraidos con el grupo anarquista."³¹

Trujillos' concern that the Partido Revolucionario Cubano had fallen under the influence of the emigre communities' most radical elements was not an isolated perception. Writing several years later, the annexationist Jose I. Rodriguez revealed that he too had considered Marti a social radical, responsible for introducing class hatreds into the patriot cause. In describing Marti, Rodriguez noted:

Su actividad era incansable . . . A los cubanos que tenia cerca de si, especialmente a los pobres y mas ignoratnes, los ayudaba en sus necesidades . . . y les predicaba el odio a Espana, el odio a los cubanos autonomistas . . . el odio al hombre rico, cultivado y conservador, introduciendo asi en el problema de Cuba un elemento que hasta entonces habia sido desconocido, pues todos los movimientos del pais habian partido siempre de las clases altas y acomodadas: y el odio a los Estados Unidos, a quienes miraba como tipo de una raza insolente, con quien la que dominaba en los demas paises de la America continental, tenia que luchar sin descanso.

When he labeled Marti's thinking "eminente socialista y anarquico," Rodriguez was probably reflecting the attitude of many of

the Cubans in New York who remained apart from the PRC.³² For all its propagandizing, however, El Porvenir was never able to effectively discredit Marti, the Partido, or the newspapers associated with it, for not taking a hard stand against the social radicals in the emigre communities. Most patriot activists had accepted Marti's call for unity and the launching of a new rebellion in their homeland.

The other major social challenge confronting the patriot leaders in the early 1890s was that of attracting the mass of exiled black workers into the Party. The social and racial tensions of the previous two decades had alienated an important section of the black leadership in the Florida communities. In Key West, Sorondo, Segura, and Morua Delgado withdrew from the movement in the late eighties after fifteen years of pro-independence activism. Moreover, the Convencion Cubana in 1889 even failed to incorporate the more conservative Negro leaders like Borrego and Camellon. In this regard, Marti's influence among his black compatriots was critical.

Not only did Marti defend the working classes in his writings, but he consistently suggested that racism was one of the central problems facing the independence movement. Although, after Zanjon, blacks such as Maceo, Crombet, and Morua Delgado gained prominence within the movement, Marti noted an undercurrent of racial prejudice that he considered detrimental to the cause. While Marti's sympathies for workers' concerns did not become fully

apparent until the late eighties, his outrage over racism was revealed to the emigre communities in his first speech as a rebel activist in New York in 1880. The young orator reprimanded those Cubans who had succumbed to the Spanish government's constant dire warnings that blacks would ultimately gain control of the rebel movement and wreak havoc throughout Cuba. Reproduced in pamphlet form, his speech was no doubt read in all the Florida cigar factories, as was the custom, introducing the workers to the only rebel figure who challenged the passive attitude of the rebel movement toward the racial problems within its own ranks. Martí called on his countrymen to put aside racial animosities in order to work for the common cause: an independent Cuba free of injustices and prejudices. Racism was one of Martí's constant preoccupations. "El hombre no tiene ningún derecho especial porque pertenezca a una raza u otra: digase hombre, y ya se dicen todos los derechos," he noted, adding, "Todo lo que divide a los hombres, todo lo que los especifica, aparta o acorrjala, es un pecado contra la humanidad." In the midst of the labor confrontations in Key West during 1889, Martí also spoke of racial concerns: "A los elementos sociales es a lo que hay atender, y a satisfacer sus justas demandas, si se quiere estudiar en lo verdadero el problema de Cuba, y ponerle condiciones reales. El hombre de color tiene derecho a ser tratado por sus cualidades de hombre, sin referencia alguna a su color; y si algún criterio ha de haber, ha de ser el de excusarle las faltas a que lo hemos preparado, y a que lo

convidamos por nuestro deaden injusto."³³ Marti knew that in order to obtain the support of black Cubans for the independence movement, they would have to be included as equal partners. This was stated in the revolutionary program of 1887. Not only should the rebel movement not be dominted by one class--that is, the traditional established class--but also, not by one race.³⁴

Marti's credibility among blacks stemmed not only from his rhetoric, however. During the late 1880s, he joined with Rafael Serra, Sotero Figueroa, Juan and Geronimo Bonilla, and other Negro leaders of the Cuban and Puerto Rican communities in New York in founding La Liga, an educational society for the city's Hispanic working-class community.³⁵ Marti quickly became the moving force behind the organization, as well as its ideological inspiration. As Serra wrote after Marti's death, "Procedemos de la escuela de Marti. En ella se templo nuestra alma y se formo nuestro caracter . . . Nos enseno el ilustre Marti, que un pueblo compuesto de distintos elementos vivos y maniatados por un mismo yugo, deben estar sinceramente unidos, y representados por igual en todas las capacidades contributivas a la creacion del pais: porque los que como cubanos servimos para entrar en la comparticion del sacrificio, como cubanos hemos de entrar tambien en la comparticion del beneficio."³⁶ Marti's sincere concern for the rights of his Negro compatriots won him their respect and admiration.

The reaction of Florida blacks to the patriot leader was the same. Word of his ideals reached them through his printed speeches and, no doubt, by word of mouth. Members of the Key West community in the 1870s, the Bonillas had family and friends in south Florida with whom they likely corresponded, informing them of Marti's activities. On arriving in Tampa in late 1891, the rebel organizer received the immediate backing of important black leaders such as Manuel and Joaquin Granados, Bruno Roig, and Cornelio Brito, and during later visits to that emigre center he stayed in the home of Ruperto and Paulina Pedroso, a black couple of modest means. Also, at Marti's suggestion, Brito and others established La Liga de Instruccion in late 1892, similar in purpose and social composition to the New York Liga.³⁷

In Key West, Marti also gained the support of the Negro leadership. Among those attending the organizing meeting of the Partido were Borrego and Camellon, accomplishing in a few days what the Convencion Cubana had been unable to do since 1889. Even the black activists who had abandoned the isle during 1889, such as Sorondo, Segura, and Morua Delgado, were slowly drawn back into the patriot cause. Writing in Cuba during 1894, Segura urged his Negro compatriots to join the new movement, noting "la union debe ser nuestra divisa, y esperando arma al brazo la hora de nuestras reivindicaciones, estrechemonos cada vez mas, y miremos con desden

el que trate de sembrar entre nosotros la semilla de la discordia."³⁸

The black community's perception of Marti was probably most eloquently expressed by the Negro journalist, Juan Gualberto Gomez, who had known Marti since 1879 when they conspired together in Habana during the Guerra Chiquita. In his Habana newspaper, La Igualdad, Gomez summed up how blacks viewed the Delegado of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano:

Pero el Marti que recoge los sufragios unanimes de los lectores de La Igualdad, cualesquiera que sean sus opiniones, es el Marti amigo de los negros; el celoso de la libertad, del decoro, de la cultura y de la dignificacion del cubano de color . . . A su voz, una pleyade de jovenes de color ha levantado la frente al cielo y se ha enamorado de las estrellas que en el lucen y han leído conmovidos las palabras sagradas: Patria, Saber, y Virtud. Los Serra, los Bonilla, los Gonzalez, y toda esa legion de hombres de color que se distinguen en la metropoli americana, discipulos directos son de Marti, que les infunde su nobilísimo sentimiento y que les enseña a conciliar el amor a su raza con el amor a su país; y que ademas los pone en contacto con todas las ideas del progreso que han de asegurar el porvenir de Cuba y la felicidad de sus hijos.³⁹

Moreover, subsequent to Marti's death in 1895, it was the black community that took the initiative to ensure that his ideals continued to be disseminated in the emigre communities.

Without Marti at the head of the Partido in New York, or as editor of Patria, Negro and working-class Cubans feared his ideals would be abandoned by the revolutionary movement, flooded as it was with new adherents subsequent to the outbreak of the revolt. Indeed, after Marti's departure Patria no longer served as a source of revolutionary doctrine such as he had no doubt intended it to be.

This prompted Serra to found La Doctrina de Marti in 1896, in collaboration with the Puerto Rican Negro activist, Figueroa, Marti's redactor of Patria. Its task was to continue Marti's call for unity and equality in the rebel movement. La Doctrina declared: "Nuestra mision es de unir. Pero unir de veras. No con la union desventajosa y desigual . . . Desde la extrema izquierda del Partido Separatista, y en conformidad con los preceptos aceptados por todos, hemos de dirigir nuestros esfuerzos para le triunfo de la Independencia de la patria, y para que sean reales y no vaga ficcion los derechos del pueblo."⁴⁰ During the next two years, La Doctrina combatted what it believed to be efforts by the traditional established sectors of Cuban society, now committed to the rebellion, to manipulate the movement to their advantage. It constantly reminded the emigre communities of Marti's political and social ideology. Serra's newspaper received enthusiastic support in the Florida communities, and when it encountered almost immediate financial difficulties, public fund-raising activities ensured its continued existence--further evidence of the impact of Marti's ideals on the working class and black communities in exile.⁴¹

The forging of a united revolutionary movment in the emigre communities during the first half of the 1890s was a complex process that undoubtedly would not have occurred without the leadership of Marti, who understood thoroughly the political and social factors dividing his compatriots in exile. By the late 1880s, the

rebel movement seemed to be on the verge of disintegration, and Marti himself was viewed with suspicion in the Florida centers. His disputes with Gomez had created a great deal of animosity toward him, especially in Key West. In addition, Marti's call for a broad-based political movement based on democratic principles had been interpreted as revolutionary timidity; a perception sustained and deepened in the minds of the veterans and tobacco workers in Florida as he became the de facto leader of the essentially middle-class emigre community in New York. As far as many in Florida were concerned, Marti's political ideas were similar to those held by the legislative chamber during the Ten Years War. Talk of delaying the insurrection while political groundwork was laid in Cuba seemed not only to compromise the rebellion, but to reveal a lack of revolutionary fervor.

Accordingly, one goal of Marti's first visit to Florida in late 1891 was to destroy the idea that he was adverse to armed action and open to political compromise. In Tampa he made clear his belief in the necessity and, indeed, the inevitability of an armed revolt in Cuba. Marti's forceful speeches and personal charisma left no doubt of his sincerity and commitment to revolution. The patriot organizer from New York also recognized the importance of involving the leadership of the Florida communities in the design and implementation of the new rebel strategy. He knew that a program dictated from New York--as in 1887--would not mobilize his

compatriots in the south. Indeed, the Tampa Resolutions were written in conjunction with the local patriot bosses, and the Statutes of the Partido Revolucionario were submitted for criticism and approval to a broad representation of the Tampa and Key West patriot leadership. In structuring the PRC Marti took into consideration the veterans' traditional demands for a highly centralized organization, which he fused with his own concern for democratic structures. Although he sacrificed support in New York, Marti knew that without the traditional veteran leaders the movement would not progress.

Besides these political factors, Marti was cognizant of the importance of socioeconomic issues in the Florida communities. As early as 1889, he realized that only by broadening the traditional ideology of the independence movement could the increasingly disgruntled tobacco workers be reincorporated into the political movement. While Marti battled the anarchist doctrines so popular among many of the workers, he offered a populist alternative based on strong nationalist sentiments and never very well defined socialist concepts. His vision of an absolutely sovereign Cuban republic based on social justice and racial harmony was all that was needed to attract the traditionally patriotic but socially aware tobacco workers. The workers had finally found a leader who effectively addressed their basic political and social concerns. Moreover, it was this ability to mobilize and attract the workers into the rebel cause that convinced the war veterans that Marti was the appropriate leader for the Partido Revolucionario Cubano.

Notes

- ¹El Productor (Habana), January 12, February 13, 1890.
- ²El Porvenir, April 2, 1890.
- ³El Yara (Key West), September 13, 1889.
- ⁴El Productor, March 13, 16, 20, April 13, 20, 1890.
- ⁵El Yara, December 11, 1880, September 13, 1889.
- ⁶La Propaganda (Key West), November 16, 1887 in Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Asuntos Politicos (hereafter, ANC, Asuntos), Legajo 293, numero 14.
- ⁷El Porvenir, December 17, 1890; Jose Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 74 (January-June, 1958), 20-21.
- ⁸Cigar Makers' Official Journal (New York), November 1889.
- ⁹For an example of the apprenticeship system in the selectors trade see Jose Rogelio Castillo, Autobiografia del General Jose Rogelio Castillo (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1973), 85-87.
- ¹⁰Paul Estrade, "Las huelgas de 1890 en Cuba," Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, 3rd series (January/April 1979), 31, 34; Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Panorama historico: Ensayo de cronologia cubana (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1934), 991-992.
- ¹¹For information on the 1891 strike at the Martinez Ybor factory see, Cuba (Tampa), February 17, 1894.
- ¹²Accounts of the strike are included in the following sources: Horatio S. Reubens, Liberty: The Story of Cuba (New York: Warren and Putnam, Inc., 1932), chapters 1 and 3; Jefferson B. Browne, Key West: The Old and the New (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 126-128; Gerardo Castellanos y Garcia, Motivos de Cayo Hueso (Habana: UCAR, Garcia y Cia., 1935), 285-307; El Porvenir, January 17, 24, 1894; The Tobacco Leaf (New York), February 14, March 7, 14, 21, 28, 1894.
- ¹³Marti, Obras completas, III, 54-62.

¹⁴El Porvenir, January 24, February 14, 24, 28, March 14, 21, 28, 1984. The solidity of Cuban unity in Florida is evidenced in a letter from Serafin Sanchez to Gerardo Castellanos. He notes, "Solo un cubano, uno solo, entre blancos y negros, no ha protestado, uno solo . . . Carlos Recio y, otro, son dos, Fernando Valdez. Dos miserables, dos mojonos que le hieden a todos los cubanos," Castellanos, Motivos de Cayo Hueso, 293.

¹⁵Marti, Obras completas, III, 177-180.

¹⁶El Porvenir, February 21, 1894.

¹⁷Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," pp. 47-49; "Libro de Actas. Liga Patriotica Cubana, Tampa," July 26 and August 18, 1891, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Donativos y Remisiones (hereafter, ANC, Donativos), Legajo fuera de caja 139, numero 3.

¹⁸Estrade, "Las huelgas de 1890 en Cuba," p. 38; Olga Cabrera, "Enrique Creci: Un patriota obrero," Santiago, 36 (December 1979), 145-146; Ariel Hidalgo, Origenes del movimiento obrero y del pensamiento socialista en Cuba (Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura, 1976), 32-37.

¹⁹El Porvenir, April 2, 1890.

²⁰El Porvenir, July 8, 22, August 12, 1891, February 3, 1892.

²¹Marti, Obras completas, I, 335-337.

²²Marti, Obras completas, I, 271-272.

²³Marti, Obras completas, IV, 269-279.

²⁴Marti, Obras completas, I, 279-280.

²⁵Marti, Obras completas, II, 255. For interesting discussions of Marti's attitude regarding socioeconomic matters see Jose Canton Navarro, Algunas ideas de Jose Marti en relacion con la clase obrera y el socialismo (Habana: Editora Politica, 1981), especially chapters 3 and 6. See also chapter 2 of Hidalgo's Origenes del movimiento obrero. More general studies of Marti include Ibarra's Jose Marti, Jorge Manach's, Marti: Apostle of Freedom, trans. by Coley Taylor (New York: The Devon-Adair Co., 1950) and Felix Lizaso, Marti: Martyr of Cuban Independence, trans.

by Ethere Elise Shuler (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1953). For an interesting although outdated review of Marti historiography see Richard B. Gray, Jose Marti: Cuban Patriot (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962), 1-59.

²⁶See El Yara, November 12, 22, 1897, for an example of its attitude toward labor disputes. Also, see Cuba, October 27, 1894, November 7, 1896.

²⁷Although the Convencion Cubana did have working-class members, they did not include any of the prominent labor activists. During 1892 its membership included eight tobacco workers (two of whom were veterans), five cigar manufacturers, five merchants and shopkeepers, three teachers, one lector, one journalist, and one lawyer. "La Convencion Cubana," ANC, Donativos, Legajo 699, numero 11.

²⁸According to Manuel Garcia Ramirez, a prominent leader in Tampa, Marti wrote the statutes for the PRC in Tampa during a meeting with him, his brothers Juan and Jose, and Ramon Rivero on the evening of November 25, 1891. ANC, Donativos, Legajo 519, numero 3.

²⁹Ramon Rivera Monteresi acted as secretary of the Consejo de Cayo Hueso from April 1894 through January 1899. Although there is little information regarding Rivera during these years, Hidalgo's Origenes del movimiento obrero, 140, asserts he was a Marxist in the late 1890s.

³⁰Marti, Obras completas, II, 198-199; Cabrera, "Enrique Creci: Un patriota obrero," pp. 146-150. El Yara, December 4, 1897 mentions the "Club Enrique Creci."

³¹El Porvenir, July 4, 18, August 15, September 19, 1884. Regarding Marti's attitude toward the anarchists, see Canton Navarro's Algunas ideas de Jose Marti, chapters 4 and 5.

³²Rodriguez, Apuntes historicos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios Cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895 (New York: El Porvenir, 1896), 281-282, 284. It is apparent that many Cubans of the established classes in New York believed that the Partido--especially in Florida--was controlled by social radicals. Accordingly, it may be necessary to reassess the traditional view that the revolutionary movement was dominated by the middle classes, at least for the period 1892-1895. Ibarra's study of Marti (p. 142) suggests that the ideology of class harmony is evidence of its middle-class bias. It should be noted,

however, that Marti's ideological formulations after 1891 were directed at his political constituency, the tobacco workers. Also, much of the PRC's leadership in Florida was of working-class extraction. The fact that the working class in Florida accepted a compromise solution on their socioeconomic concerns to support the nationalist cause does not mean they abandoned socialist ideals.

³³Marti, Obras completas, IV, 202-203, II, 298, I, 254.

³⁴Marti, Obras completas, I, 219.

³⁵Pedro Deschamps Chapeaux, Rafael Serra y Montalvo: Obrero incansable de nuestra independencia (Habana: Union de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba, 1975), 50-59.

³⁶La Doctrina de Marti (New York), July 25, 1896.

³⁷Deschamps Chapeaux, Rafael Serra, 63; Rivero Muniz, "Los cubanos en Tampa," pp. 62-63.

³⁸Cuba, February 17, 1894.

³⁹Jose L. Franco, "Jose Marti y Juan Gualberto Gomez," Anuario del Centro de Estudios Martianos, 4 (1981), 281-282.

⁴⁰La Doctrina de Marti, July 25, 1896.

⁴¹La Doctrina de Marti, August 22, 1896, February 15, March 31, 1897.

CONCLUSION

By early 1893 the conspiratorial activities of the PRC had begun to bear fruit in Cuba as scattered groups organized for the rebellion. It was not until the end of the following year, however, that it became clear that a broad-based revolt was imminent. Marti had always argued that Cuba could never be revolutionized until the movement received the support of an important cross section of Cuban society. Many were ready for revolt by 1894, but it was not until another reformist defeat during that year that it became obvious to a significant number of Cubans that the only solution to their dilemma was armed insurrection. During 1892, subsequent to the autonomists' withdrawal from the Cortes, Spanish liberals made a final desperate effort to implement reforms in Spain's colonial policies. The Ministro de Ultramar, Antonio Maura, presented a reform law to the Cortes that would have provided Cuba and Puerto Rico with a measure of self-government. The proposed reforms gained the backing of the Cuban autonomists, but by the end of 1894 the plan was dead, destroying all possibility of an immediate peaceful solution to the Cubans' grievances. To the emigres' satisfaction reform no longer threatened to undermine their activities, and even El Porvenir declared in late 1894 that the island was finally ready for revolution.¹

Meanwhile, Marti and his associates had been busily purchasing arms and munitions to be landed in Cuba. Unfortunately for the rebels, however, just as three vessels were to depart Fernandina, Florida, carrying the arms purchased with funds raised in the Florida communities, the cache was discovered and confiscated by North American authorities. The loss of the arms represented a harsh setback for the insurgents, but news of the shipment created great enthusiasm in Cuba. As one conspirator noted later, "La sorpresa producida en Cuba, por las noticias de Fernandina, produjo un resultado favorable. Se creyo los revolucionarios mas fuertes de lo que realmente eran, y, sobre todo, mas ricos; lo que en vez de abatir el espiritu de los simpatizadores, lo exalto mas aun."²

Finally, on January 29, 1895, responding to urgent calls from conspiratorial groups in Cuba, Marti and Gomez issued the official order to launch the war of independence. Within a month armed insurgents across the island were skirmishing with the Spanish army and on April 11, Marti and Gomez landed in Oriente province to take charge of the revolution. Building on forty-five years of revolutionary experience, the emigre centers had finally organized and ignited the long-sought revolt against Spanish domination in their homeland. The PRC's nationalist and popular ideology had captured the imagination of a significant portion of the Cuban people who quickly joined the insurgent forces.

Between mid-century and 1895, the Cuban separatist movement underwent a radical political and social transformation. While Cubans rejected Narciso Lopez in 1850, they enthusiastically greeted Marti, Gomez, and Maceo in 1895. And while the two eras had little in common ideologically, the later movement built on the revolutionary traditions of the earlier. During the late 1840s and 1850s, Cuban separatism was dominated by an "aristocratic" annexationist ideology that served primarily the interests of the island's slaveholders and liberal socioeconomic elite. Those leading the separatist movement wanted either to preserve slavery or ignore the issue, hoping that as part of the United States, Cuba eventually would eliminate the institution peacefully. Not surprisingly, then, Lopez' invasions had little popular appeal in Cuba and were met with apathy by some and alarm by others. Few rallied to the invaders' support.

Subsequent to Lopez' death, a portion of the separatist community in the United States recognized that only an openly progressive movement backed by the mass of the Cuban people could hope to revolutionize their homeland. A new political program emerged in the exile centers of the United States during the 1850s and mid-1860s that called for the immediate abolition of slavery and legitimized the idea that Cuba could exist as a fully sovereign republic. Moreover, the exiles called for a self-reliant rebel movement that did not depend on foreign powers for their nation's redemption. The

experiences of the 1850s gave birth to a militant nationalism that changed the very nature of the separatist crusade. Although these ideas were verbalized in the exile press, there is no doubt that such feelings existed on the island as well.

On October 10, 1868, the Grito de Yara initiated the long hoped for domestic revolution. While the movement attracted a mass following, the primary leaders were members of the island's liberal elite who had finally broken politically with the conservative slaveholders after it became clear that political and economic reforms would never be attained under Spanish colonialism. The Revolucion de Yara was abolitionist, but it quickly became apparent that many rebels had not yet discarded the annexationist tradition of Cuban separatism. The Cuban republic's annexationist proclamations during 1869 provoked nationalist militants among the rebellion's liberal leadership, leading to bitter disputes and deep divisions over the question of Cuba's future political status. The nationalists demanded the establishment of an absolutely free republic through a self-reliant insurrectionary movement, while others worked for a North American intervention--military or diplomatic--that would virtually guarantee the island's incorporation into the United States. Dissent raged in the exile colonies as well as in Cuba, leading to the weakening of the military effort against the Spanish. In early 1878 the rebels put down their arms and signed the Zanjón Pact. Many of the former liberal insurgents now turned their energies to making an autonomist system work in Cuba.

However, just as the 1850s transformed the separatist movement, so did the bitter conflicts of the seventies. The struggle against the Spanish forced the rebels to define further Cuban separatism. During the 1860s the separatist cause declared itself uncompromisingly abolitionist, and in the 1870s it became exclusively independentista. Annexationists were no longer welcome as partners in the struggle against Spain. Moreover, a new leadership emerged to direct the movement. In the 1850s the slaveholders abandoned separatism, leaving the island's liberal socioeconomic elite to control the rebel cause. Now, at the termination of the Ten Years War, members of this liberal elite either retired from political activism or dedicated their energies to the reformed system granted by the Spanish rulers. Cubans of middle-class and working-class origins who had established their revolutionary credentials during the war emerged to fill the leadership void left by the departing liberal elite. The decade-long conflict had given less socially prominent individuals an opportunity to demonstrate their leadership capabilities. On the battlefields of Cuba, Maximo Gomez and Antonio Maceo gained reputations as effective military leaders, while in exile middle-class entrepreneurs, professionals, and workers represented the heart of the emigre activist community. Moreover, many of these new leaders were of color, a new phenomenon for the separatist movement. Cubans not of the traditional established classes now assumed the top leadership positions in the

independence movement, and for the first time reflected the racial and class composition of the Cuban population.

If the bitter disputes among separatists of the seventies were primarily political in nature, those of the eighties had a decidedly social flavor. The movement's political ideal had finally been defined, but its social ideology had not. Separatism in the 1870s was essentially abolitionist and enjoyed effective support among the Cuban people, but the increasingly activist working-class rebel sympathizers of the next decade questioned the movement's silence on issues of socioeconomic concern. Slavery had become a non-issue as it neared extinction. The leaders of the Revolucion de Yara had taken for granted that the future republic would be modeled after the classic 19th century liberal republic, the United States, and saw no need for an explicit socioeconomic program. However, the movement's primary constituency during the following decade--the tobacco workers in Florida--quickly became dissatisfied with the strictly nationalist definition of the rebel cause.

The overtly political differences between Gomez, backed by the working-class and veteran communities in the United States, and Marti, who received broad support among middle-class exiles in New York and Philadelphia, included undercurrents of class antagonism. The debates and disputes of the mid-1880s did not focus on issues of social concern, but most veterans of the Ten Years War and the workers, particularly in Florida, backed Gomez' highly centralized,

militarist rebel program. In New York, middle-class Cubans feared the military element and accordingly backed Marti's call for a broad-based movement constructed on democratic principles. Marti's views on social matters were not yet widely known, either in New York or Key West.

With the demise of the Gomez-Maceo Plan in 1886, class tensions gave birth to a radical labor movement in the Florida communities that openly challenged the traditional, exclusively political conception of the independence cause. No longer was nationalism sufficient for the labor militants in Key West and Tampa. Workers demanded social justice, and Negroes sought an end to racial discrimination and prejudice within the movement. Influenced by anarchist activists in Habana, labor organizers and publicists called on workers to direct their attention to socio-economic concerns. Socialism, they argued, not the nationalist movement controlled by the bourgeoisie, would redeem the workers. Some of the socialist leaders rejected political activism outright, but most continued to sympathize with the ideal of Cuban independence. These leaders, however, did not believe the emigre colonies were capable of launching a rebellion on the island; thus they asked workers to focus their energies on defending their class interests.

The emigre communities were further polarized during the late eighties when a sector of the middle class, primarily in the northern Cuban centers, abandoned revolutionary separatism in order

to resurrect the idea of annexation based on an international treaty between the United States and Spain. Although supporters of annexation were a distinct minority, their propaganda evoked a strong response from Cuban nationalists led by Marti, who feared it might encourage North American interests intent on wresting control of Cuba from the Spanish.

Marti recognized that those sympathetic to armed insurrection in Cuba would have to act quickly to head off the annexationist threat, but by the end of the eighties the independence movement seemed on the verge of disintegration. Conflicts between nationalism and socialism seemed irreconcilable. For many, the efforts to sustain a movement favoring armed revolt in Cuba had lost credibility. They seemed to believe that the political and social complexities of the late 1880s had made the insurrectionary approach to Cuban independence an anachronism. If Gomez and Maceo could not ignite the revolt, most believed that no one else could either.

Despite the bitter political and social conflicts, groups of rebels in New York, Tampa and Key West reorganized the Cuban centers and established patriot clubs. There was little communication or coordination between the various centers, however, and the clubs did not attract significant support in the communities. Only Jose Marti understood what was required to unite and spark the emigres into revolutionary activism: a broader independence ideology that spoke to the concerns of the workers and a locally democratic, though nationally highly centralized, rebel organization

that would attract the New York patriot activists and Florida's war veterans who looked to Maximo Gomez as the rebellion's natural leader. Marti's program excluded only the annexationists and those with an obsessive fear of socioeconomic reform.

Marti's populist and nationalist movement, embodied in the Partido Revolucionario Cubano, was by no means appealing to all Cubans, especially those of the established classes, but the party was enthusiastically embraced by a significant sector of the emigre centers. Moreover, the rebel organization gained sufficient support on the island to organize and launch the definitive uprising against Spanish colonialism. After the outbreak of the war, the independence movement attracted the further support of segments of Cuban society that before 1895 were skeptical of the emigre's revolutionary plans, thus affecting the composition of the rebellion's leadership and ideological tendencies. This was predictable, as it was logical. Cuba's destiny could no longer be effectively influenced by the emigres in the United States. The goal of revolutionizing their homeland had been accomplished. It was now out of their hands.

Notes

¹Calixto C. Maso, Historia de Cuba (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1976), 315-316, 332-335; Enrique Trujillo, Apuntes historicos: Propaganda y movimientos revolucionarios cubanos en los Estados Unidos desde enero de 1880 hasta febrero de 1895 (New York: El Porvenir, 1896), 212-215.

²Enrique Collazo, Cuba independiente (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 1981), 49.

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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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August, 1983

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