

# Lifting the embargo

*Is the United States justified?  
Columnist Adam Levenstein probes  
into the question.*

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and the other Stalinist countries of Eastern Europe, discussion has once again surfaced regarding the small island known as the Republic of Cuba.

In its 35-years-and-holding embargo, the government of the United States maintains the policy that the embargo will not be lifted until "democracy" is introduced into Cuba. Given that there are 11 million people starving in Cuba due to this policy, it becomes necessary to look at the Cuban Revolution and examine the reasons not only to lift the embargo, but also why the U.S. should normalize relations with Cuba.

In 1953, Fidel Castro Ruiz, his brother Raul, and eighty men and women set out to take Cuba back from the U.S.-backed military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. On July 26, they staged an attack on the barracks at Moncada. This guerrilla attack not only failed, but killed all but a dozen of the revolutionaries. Castro and his comrades were jailed for two years, and then exiled to Mexico.

In Mexico, the group met Ernesto "Che" Guevara, and Argentinean doctor who expressed his displeasure of the ills of society and his belief in Marxism. Although not a Marxist at this point, Castro, Guevara, and the other revolutionaries agreed to return to Cuba. In 1956, they returned aboard the yacht "Granma". By 1959, the movement had grown to several thousand and had taken

over Havana, the capital of Cuba. When the revolutionaries took power, they were horrified at the status of their "patria", their homeland. Forty percent of the population was illiterate. Sixty percent of the Cuban economy was run by United States businessmen.

The Revolutionary Government then undertook the greatest social reform campaign the world has ever seen. Teachers were sent throughout the countryside-the illiteracy was eliminated (not reduced, but eliminated) within the year. Racial and sexual discrimination were illegalized. A national health-care system, now recognized as one of the world's best, was established. The government established a system of People's Power, in which Cuba's representative democracy was established. All major businesses and factories were put in government control, thereby giving control to the workers. The system was examined, and then they thought "Why should we change?" In 1961, then-prime minister Fidel Castro announced his belief in Marxism-Leninism.

The issue of democracy is, of course, a touchy issue. It is a common misconception in the United States that Cuba is a "communist dictatorship" - a concept which is itself a contradiction in terms. In fact, in the last elections a documented 97.1% of the Cuban population voted.

Cuba's political system is one of representation and parti-

cipation. On a municipal level, councils are elected to overlook local affairs. These councils elect delegates to the Provincial Assemblies, which represent each province. They, in turn, elect people to the National Assembly of People's Power, Cuba's parliament of over 500 people. The Assembly then elects the Executive Committee and the President, a post currently held by Fidel Castro.

Although not a system respected by many Americans, the United States has no right to govern the affairs of a sovereign country. There is a claim, made mostly by wealthy right-wing Cubans in Florida, that Cubans do not support the Revolution; however, a recent poll by a Costa Rican agency shows that 60% of the Cuban people still support their government. 63% of the anti-Revolution Cubans still acknowledge that the Revolution has made tremendous social progress.

Cuba's right to advance along its chosen path must be respected. More than once the United Nations has voted to condemn the embargo, with only two nations voting otherwise (U.S. and Israel). It is time that the government of the United States yields international opinion and end the inhuman blockade in which people starve daily. Even if Cuba were a military dictatorship, how does starving people to death make the U.S. feel any better than the dictator?

# Selling Out

*Where is the line drawn?*

*--Ryan Bogart*

Many artists seem to be selling out these days; could that be the answer to making millions of dollars? Settling down and producing just what the general public is looking for is not always the best answer. Whatever happened to good ol' fashioned ORIGINALITY? A lot of artists still comply by that golden rule, but many have not. So, how are we supposed to define what is original and what is selling out? There are many curve balls in identifying these cheesy artists from the original ones.

One way in determining the original artists from the fake ones is if anyone has done something that no one else ever has. Pink Floyd has created a sound that has lasted over the years, and it will be around for a long time. Whether you like the sound or not, you have got to admit that they are original. Another way of identifying an artist's originality is if they have been around for a long time. For instance, Stephen King has written many horror films, and it seems that everything he writes becomes a hit at the box office. But even though he has been around for a while, he has written some "sell out" films. Did you ever see "Sleepwalkers"? This is a poor example of conforming to the cheesy scary films, and I must say that I am very disappointed in this episode of King's career.

Many arguments have been aroused about Pearl Jam selling out. I have heard some good points and bad points about this topic. Instead of forming my own opinion, I will present some of the opinions and let you decide. One point that they have not sold out is that it is their style of grunge, alternative rock that has changed and evolved to resist conformity. This everlasting issue seems to be their main front, maintaining the same image. Eddie Vedder and the group has created a non conformist attitude that makes them rebels. This style has obviously been copied throughout America by millions of teens that grow their hair long and like to mosh.

Pearl Jam has not played in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles in around five years. Stadium playing for them is also very scarce, and it seems that the only place they do play is small, hick towns around America. This fact could be looked at as Pearl Jam's way of being their

own and not selling out. They do not want to conform and have a million or so "poser" fans. Whether they like it or not, Pearl Jam is in the pop culture of America, and they are there to stay. Another point of their resistance is their attempt to work around TicketMaster's inflation of ticket prices.

Nirvana's front man Kurt Cobain's suicide stemmed from deep depression about this same reason. He did not want to be in the American mainstream pop culture. He was happy when he had his loyal original fans. But when millions of teen groupies greeted him when he performed, this ended up being his worst nightmare come true. The former Nirvana is definitely sold out, one major reason being obvious, Cobain's suicide. Now instead of millions screaming his songs live, they are singing them in memory.

Cobain's original intention was not to sell out, and that was the most terrifying experience for him. I think his wife is just the opposite. Courtney Love seems to feed on the very instance of her husband's death. Her songs feed of her husband's suicide. She would otherwise have had no popularity at all.

A blatant case of selling out is the recent Microsoft Windows 95 commercials, in which Microsoft paid the Rolling Stones 10 million dollars to use the song "Start me Up." Every time I turn on the tv, I hear the song. I call this selling out because REM turned down the offer of the 10 million with the very popular song "It's the End of the World as We Know It (and I Feel Fine)". Not taking any originality from the Stones, but I think that one could say they did it for the money. An obvious question that could be raised is "Why wouldn't you sell your song for 10 million?" I would and so would anyone in their right frame of mind. But REM's point of view is that this is the perfect definition of selling out.

Selling out is very hard to define, and everyone has their own version of it. Today, there are sell outs in every aspect of life, but the artists who last are the real pioneers of their art. The lasting musicians and artists of today are the ones who choose their own paths and lead the way for new artists. It is your call on who you like, but remember, try to be original and realize who is selling out.

# Dry spell in Colorado

*--R. Carl Campbell III*

In lieu of recent complaints about the status of Behrend's policies regarding underage drinking, the following situation in Boulder, Colorado seems to fit appropriately. There is an apparent dry spell looming over the fraternities and sororities in the University of Colorado. It seems that the local police have received a grant to help curb the number of underage drinkers on and around the school's campus. The U. of Colorado's Pan-Hellenic and IFC has passed a by-law stating that all fraternity and sorority parties will be dry.

During the first week of school, an unnamed fraternity had been ticketed with serving minors at a party. Over seventy underage drinkers and the executive board of the fraternity were cited.

According to Jack Bac, the Alumni Advisor to the Delta Chi chapter in Boulder, "There is a major change in the atmosphere in Boulder. The city is really pushing the issue on underage drinking. Boulder has some problems with student's but nothing any different than any

other campus."

"About two or three weeks ago," continued Bac. "The police entered our house and began walking up and down the halls. It really drove the point home."

Nick Ginsberg, member of Lambda Chi Alpha, said "We were basically forced to make parties dry because the police have enough funds to send the troops out after hours."

Ginsberg also added that the dry spell has not affected fall rush. "We didn't do too well, but other chapters had large numbers."

A chapter can lose its charter

