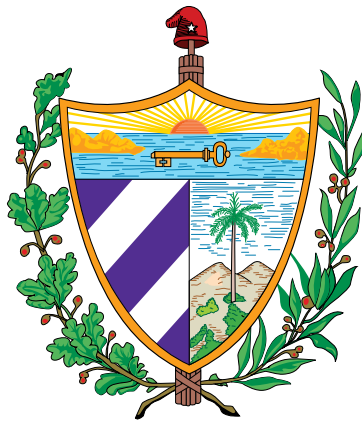




# Cuba Libre

## Castro's Insurgency

COIN Series, Volume II



# PLAY BOOK

by Jeff Grossman and Volko Ruhnke

2nd Printing

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## Cuba Libre Tutorial

Loosely based on the *Andean Abyss* Tutorial by Joel Toppen

### Players new to the COIN Series—start here!

Welcome to COIN Series Volume II—*CUBA LIBRE*! Because this game series employs some innovative mechanics, we thought it would be easiest to learn if we included a tutorial in each to teach new players how to play with a minimum of fuss. In this tutorial we will guide you through setting up and starting to play a game—complete with commentary by experienced players from each faction’s point of view as the action unfolds! Occasionally we will ask you to read parts of the rulebook before continuing. As we go, we’ll spend less time on rules and more on following the game play.

The first thing you will need to do if you haven’t already is unfold the game’s mapboard. Place it on a clean surface, making sure to have ample space around the perimeter of the board so as to have room for game pieces and cards. (Five inches or so should suffice nicely.)

Next, punch out all the game’s cardboard pieces (“markers” or “counters”) and sort them by type. Set aside the 12 “Deception” counters: they are for an optional rule that we will not use in this tutorial. Place the rest within easy reach because we’re going to set up the game shortly.

Sort the wooden pieces by color and shape. Place them in piles near the mapboard. We’ll put them on the mapboard shortly.

Finally, unwrap the game’s playing cards. There are basically two different types of cards in the game: Event Cards (the vast majority) and Propaganda Cards (there are four of these). Put the four Propaganda Cards in one pile, and all the Event Cards in another pile. We will construct the game’s deck in just a moment.

**STOP.** Please pause a moment and read section 1.3 of the rulebook, about the game’s map, and return here once you reach 1.4.

All done? Great! Let’s begin setting up the game. The set is listed on the back of the Rules of Play booklet:

- Place the “Aid” counter on the “15” space of the Edge Track that runs far around the perimeter of the gameboard.
- Place Government and Syndicate Resources cylinders (large blue and green cylinders, respectively) on the “15” space, a 26July Resources cylinder (red) on “10”, and a Directorio cylinder (yellow) on “5”.
- Place the “Total Support” counter on the “16” space, the “Opposition+Bases” counter on the “7” space, “Open Casinos” at “3”, and “DR Pop+Bases” at “1”.
- Place the “US Alliance” counter in the “Firm” box of the “US Alliance” display on the map.
- Place 4 round green Cash markers into the circle spaces of the green “Cash” box (any other Cash markers are spares not used in the game, set them aside).
- Place the remaining four large cylinders (Eligibility cylinders) into the “Eligible” box on the “Sequence of Play” display.
- Place “Active Support” counters into the “Neutral” boxes with a dark blue symbol, “Passive Support” in those with light blue, “Passive Opposition” with pink, and “Active Opposition” with red.



Available Syndicate Forces and Cash holding boxes on the gameboard.

Ok, we’re off to a great start! Now we need to put the forces of the four factions onto the map.

**STOP.** Please pause just a moment and read section 1.4 through section 1.4.5 of the rulebook. When you’re finished we’ll continue setting up the game.

Now that you’ve read about the different forces available to the players, we can begin putting those pieces on the map. But first, do an inventory of the wooden pieces you sorted earlier. Your game should have all the forces pieces shown on the “Available Forces” chart on the back of the Rulebook:

- Put the 15 dark blue and 15 light blue cubes (Troops and Police, respectively) into the blue “Available Government Force” box on the gameboard.
- Put the 2 blue discs (Bases) into the numbered circles in the same blue box.
- Put the 15 yellow octagonal cylinders (Guerrillas) into the yellow “Available Directorio Forces” box and the 4 yellow discs into the number Bases circles there.
- Do the same for the red pieces into the “Available 26July Forces” box.
- Finally, do the same for the green pieces into the “Available Syndicate Forces” box, 6 cylinders (more Guerrillas—in this case representing Mob gunmen) and 10 embossed green discs (Casinos).

Now let’s deploy forces onto the island of Cuba! The setup is listed on the back of the Rulebook and also shown with icons in the map spaces:

- Take 6 dark blue cubes and 4 light blue cubes from the blue “Available” box and put them in Havana City: As shown by the blue cube icons in the Havana space, these are the forces that the Government starts with in the capital, 6 Troops and 4 Police units.
- Follow down the list on the back of the rulebook and place Government pieces in the other spaces listed, double-checking the icons in the spaces involved to make sure the right forces have been positioned.
- Now do the same for 26July (red), Directorio (yellow), and Syndicate (green). Note that all Guerrillas start embossed side down (“Underground”), but Casinos—the green discs—start embossed side up (open for business!). Always take available discs from the

upper left and work right then down, so that the number showing is the number of Bases out on the map.

Finally, let's mark Control: if any Faction has more pieces in a City or Province than all other Factions combined, it Controls the space. Mark Control with the appropriate counter in the "Uncontrolled" box for that space. Right now, mark the 3 Cities and Las Villas Province with Govt Control, Pinar del Río with Syndicate Control, Camagüey Province with Directorio, and Sierra Maestra with 26July.



La Habana Province and its holding boxes for Control and Support/Opposition markers.

**Important:** Deck construction instructions are found in the rulebook. For the purposes of this tutorial, however, we will be creating a special, stacked deck.



Well done! The map is set up. One last thing needs to be done: we need to construct the deck. Place 3 Propaganda Cards face down in a row from left to right and set the 4th aside.

Now remove the following Event cards and set them aside: #3 *Eulogio Cantillo*, #5 *Rolando Masferrer*, #8 *General Strike*, #13 *El Che*, #20 *The Twelve*, #24 *Vilma Espín*, #27 *Echeverría*, #29 *Fauré Chomón*, #39 *Turismo*, #40 *Ambassador Smith*, #44 *Rebel Air Force*, and #46 *Sinatra*.

Next, shuffle the remaining 36 Event cards together. Deal 12 Event Cards on top of each of the 3 facedown Propaganda cards so that three stacks of 13 cards are created. Shuffle each stack separately, then place each stack on top of one another, creating a single deck.

Now place the cards we set aside earlier face down on top of the deck. Place them in this EXACT order (from bottom to top): #44 *Rebel Air Force*, #24 *Vilma Espín*, #8 *General Strike*, #3 *Eulogio Cantillo*, #40 *Ambassador Smith*, #39 *Turismo*, #20 *The Twelve*, #29 *Fauré Chomón*, the remaining *Propaganda!*, #5 *Rolando Masferrer*, #46 *Sinatra*, #27 *Echeverría*, #13 *El Che*, (top-most card).

**STOP.** Please pause just a moment and read section 1.5 through section 1.8 of the rulebook, introducing the four Factions and some of the markers we have been setting up. We'll start playing when you're done!

**Tip:** For your first competitive game, we recommend you only reveal the card being resolved. Being able to see one card into the future may produce "analysis paralysis" in new players and slow gameplay down.

One thing that makes the COIN Series unique is the role that cards play in the game. Cards will be played from the deck created at game start. Players do not maintain a "hand" of cards as in other card-driven games. Instead, cards are played from the top of the deck. Ordinarily, two cards are always visible to the players: the card being resolved, and the next card to be resolved. In other words, players get to look one card into the future.



1st played card  
(card to resolve)

On deck  
(next card)

Now draw the topmost card from the deck: #13, *El Che*. Place it face up to start a "played cards" pile next to the deck. Then reveal the top card on the deck but leave it on top of the deck face up: #27 *Echeverría*.

Each Event Card has four symbols across the top, one for each faction in the game. The order of these symbols dictates which faction has initiative on that card.

In order to be eligible to execute an Operation or carry out the card's Event, a Faction must have its Eligibility cylinder in the "Eligible" box on the Sequence of Play display. Eligible factions may either play or pass. At this time, all four factions are eligible.

To determine who gets to choose first, look at the order of the Eligibility symbols. The Faction with the leftmost symbol gets to choose what to do first and becomes the 1st Eligible Faction. In the case of *El Che*, the 26July player is the 1st Eligible Faction.

Glance over at the Sequence of Play display on the gameboard as you read these next few paragraphs....

The 1st Eligible Faction—26July in this case—may do one of four things: (1) it may execute the card's event; OR (2) it may conduct a single type of Operation without any supplemental Special Activity; OR (3) it may conduct a single type of Operation with a single Special Activity; OR (4) it may pass.

If the 1st Eligible Faction chooses to Pass, it remains eligible to play on the next card; if it does anything other than pass, it becomes ineligible to play on the next card. The corollary of this is that a faction usually may only play on every other card.

If the 1st Eligible Faction chooses to pass, then the faction whose

symbol is to the immediate right of its symbol on the card being resolved becomes the 1st Eligible Faction. In the case of *El Che*, if 26July passes, the Government would become 1st Eligible.

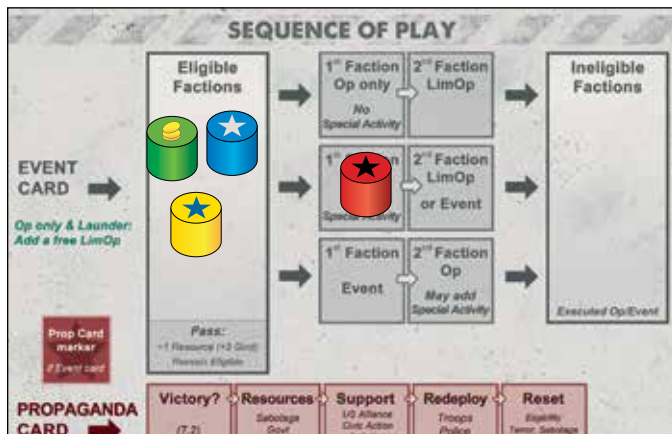
Here, however, the 26July Movement decides to act. Let's get the game going and hear from the 26July player, Steve....

**Steve (26July):** *An interesting card to start the game—a good starting card to immediately show the difficult choices that this game presents to the players. I am faced with the difficult choice of either taking a very good event—which will be beneficial to me for the entire game!—OR conducting operations. I am going to make the painful choice of passing up the event in order to conduct operations.*

*I need to “strike while the iron is hot.” I have the opportunity to terrorize Santiago & La Habana right now. If I were to take the Event, the Government would then have the chance to Sweep and Activate those Guerrillas and the Terror opportunity would be lost.*



26July launches revolution with a wave of terror in country and city.



26July (red) will be using the option it has as 1st Eligible to execute Operations (Terror) and a Special Activity (Kidnap), so the red Eligibility cylinder on the Sequence of Play is moved into the “Op with Special Activity” box.

When a Faction decides to execute Operations, it gets to select one type of Operation from a menu. Find one of the four copies of the Faction foldout in your game, and look at the side that says just “26 July” and then “Insurgent Operations” and “Special Activities” across the top. It has eight text boxes that serve as this “Chinese menu” of Operations and accompanying Special Activities, plus a box at lower right that summarizes all Factions’ victory objectives.

**STOP.** Please read rules section 3.1 about Operations in general, then skip forward and read sections 3.3 through 3.3.5 about the various Insurgent Operations.

OK, 26July in our game has decided to kick off with Operations and a Special Activity, and the Operation selected is Terror, the bottom left box on the 26 July Faction sheet.

Operations can occur in multiple spaces in a single go, you just have to pay for each space. In this case, 26July executes Terror in La Habana Province and Santiago de Cuba City. As summarized in the Terror box on the Faction sheet, 1 Resource must be paid per City or Province where Terror occurs. Slide the 26July’s red Resource cylinder on the edge track down 2 for the 2 spaces, from “10” to “8”.

Then, an Underground 26July Guerrilla must go Active in each Terror space: go ahead and flip the red Guerrillas in those two spaces so that their embossed end is up.

Next, the Terror box tells us to add a Terror marker and shift Support toward Active Opposition. So each of the two Terror spaces receives a Terror marker that can affect future efforts to shift Opposition or Support there. Find two black Terror markers and put one in each, La Habana and Santiago.

As you read in the rules earlier, spaces with population show one of five levels of Support for or Opposition to the Government, from Active Support to Active Opposition—this popular sympathy is key not only to Government but also to 26July victory. In our game, the Terror shift La Habana from Passive Support to Neutral and Santiago from Neutral to Passive Opposition. Remove the light blue “Passive Support” from La Habana: that space is now Neutral. Then find and place a light red “Passive Opposition” marker in Santiago’s Neutral holding box.

Because these shifts in popular sentiment affect victory, we need to keep track of them with the victory markers that you read about and have already placed on the edge track. Blue Total Support—the measure of how well the Government is doing—just took a hit of -1 in La Habana, so slide that marker down by 1 to “15”. Similarly, slide the red “Opposition+Bases” marker up by 1 (for the new Passive Opposition in Santiago) to “8”.

You’ll notice that the edge track has threshold reminders of the levels of victory needed to end the game early. 26July needs to get the Opposition+Bases marker above “15”. These victory levels are shown in that Victory box on the Faction foldout, so that you can keep track of what you and everyone else is trying to do.

OK, let’s here again directly from 26July (or “M26” for short)....

**Steve (26July):** *So, Terror in Santiago and La Habana for a cost of 2 Resources. This has hurt the Government by removing support from La Habana and has helped my cause by adding opposition to Santiago. I will add a Kidnap Special Activity in Habana. I can do this without having to worry about the Government taking an event which could hurt me. I have found that resources often become scarce for M26, so I need to take the opportunity to steal some from the Syndicate!*

*Kidnap roll = 1. Typical of my luck! One Resource from Syndicate (now 14) to 26July (now 9). On to Government as 2nd Eligible.*

If you glanced over at the “Kidnap” box of the Faction sheet to see what 26July was just talking about, you’re catching on fast! The

“Terror” box has a reminder in the upper right that this Operation can be accompanied by a Kidnap when 26July is executing Operations (or “Ops”) and Special Activity. The player decided to Kidnap in La Habana to take Resources from the Syndicate Faction’s Casino there.

The Kidnapping also closes the Casino. Flip the green disc in La Habana embossed side down (closed) and slide the green “Open Casinos” marker on the edge track down to “2”, and green Resources to “14”, red to “9”.

That wraps up 26July’s move for this card, so look back at the active card—*El Che*—and the Sequence of Play display on the gameboard. You’ll see that the Government (blue) is the next up on the card, has its cylinder in the “Eligible” box, and so may now make a move.

Here’s what’s happening on the edge track:



You can also see from the arrows in the Sequence display that when the 1st Eligible Faction executes Ops + Special Activity, as 26July did, the 2nd Eligible Faction has a choice between the Event or a “Limited Operation” (or “LimOp”). A Limited Operation is a normal Operation but in only one space, and without any Special Activity.

Often, having the option to play the Event can be very powerful. Most events are “Dual Use”: they have an unshaded version and a shaded version, often benefitting opposing sides, so that there often is something to help you or hurt your enemies.

**Hint:** Events in the unshaded portion of the card typically are favorable to the rebels; events in the shaded portion are typically favorable to the Government.

But this particular Event, *El Che*, is unusual in that, as a benefit to the 26July from Ernesto “Che” Guevara’s talents as a revolutionary, no other Faction really benefits at all from this Event’s effects.

Let’s hear what the Government player, Colleen, makes of this situation....

**Colleen (Government):** 26July left me with the option to take a Limited Op or pass. If I pass, the next event card looks good for me,



The Government plans to stay in Las Villas.

*but I feel certain that the Directorio will use the event for himself and I will not have the opportunity to take it. So, I will take the limited op now. I could sweep in Havana and expose the Directorio guerrillas, but instead I will place a base in Las Villas to strengthen my position for future turns.*

**STOP.** Please read rules section 3.2 and 3.2.1 and have a look at the Government sheet that says “COIN Operations” near the top, to get a better understanding of what Colleen just did.

So the Government executed a LimOp to Train in one space, Las Villas Province. Training is the main way that the Government builds its forces, and sometimes it can use it to build Support too, by spending Resources on something called “Civic Action.” In this case, the Government used Training to replace two of its Troops units with a new Base. If you’d like to find out more about why Government Bases are important, you can read about them in the “Guide to COIN Operations” section starting on page 15 of this Playbook.

Let’s mark that Government is taking a turn: Put the blue Eligibility cylinder on the Sequence of Play into the “2nd Faction LimOp or Event” box.

Then let’s get Colleen that Base: Take two dark blue cubes from Las Villas and return them to “Available Government Forces.” Then take the lefthand blue disc from there and place it in Las Villas. The exposed “1” in the disc space is a reminder that the Government now has one Base on the map.

Unlike Insurgent Operations that generally cost only 1 Resource per space, the Government’s COIN (“Counterinsurgent”) Operations cost more. How much more depends on United States backing via the “US Alliance” track. The marker there is in the “Firm” box, showing that each Ops space costs 2 Resources. Go ahead and slide the blue Government Resources cylinder on the edge track from “15” down to “13” to pay for that nice new Base.

To finish up play of the *El Che* card, we have a last bit of house-keeping: We need to mark the two Factions who did something as Ineligible to do anything on the next card. Slide the red and blue Eligibility cylinders into the “Ineligible Factions” box to show that they just executed either an Op or Event.

Splendid. So we just happen to have a designer on hand observing. Let’s hear what he has to say about our combatants’ opening moves....

**Jeff:** Both the Government and July 26 Players with good beginning moves. Steve (July 26) is an excellent COIN Series player because he thinks not only about the move he will make, but also about what options he leaves his opponent. Colleen (Government) decides to build a base in Las Villas before the insurgents can contest the area. With the Limited Op available, Colleen could only operate in a single area. She could not perform Civic Action in Las Villas (to build Support) because there are no police there, but with the Base she will be able to place Police there next time she Trains.



Played card

On deck

Alright, let's move on to the next card and give the other players a chance. Place the *Echeverria* card over on top of *El Che*, *Echeverria* is the card we will play now. Flip over the next card on the deck to see what's coming up: it will be *Sinatra*.

The Directorio player is 1st Eligible on *Echeverria*, so let's see what he has to say....

**Karl (Directorio):** At this point in the game taking the event is a no brainer. I get two more guerrillas on the map and go back to the eligible list for the next card. I'm hoping the Syndicate passes now for the event next card so that I get a full Op + Special Activity. These guerrillas will hopefully turn into a base by my 3rd or 4th play. This event also dings the Government a bit, so I hope I will be able to reinforce my position in the east while the Government deals with Havana and what the 26July player is doing.

Per the event, Havana becomes Neutral, costing the Government 12 support (6 population times TWO for Active Support that the Government had previously). Government Support plummets from "15" to "3". Sympathies of the populous capital are critical to the war!

By taking Control of the large Province of Oriente with his new Guerrillas, the Directorio also adds to its victory by 2: slide "DR Pop+Bases" to "3".



DR's presence felt!

Note also that the unshaded Event text that the Directorio executed breaks the usual rule of executing an Op or Event making that Faction Ineligible on the next card. The DR may get two turns in a row!

But first, our fourth player is up....

**Jeff (as the Syndicate):** A very tough choice here as it probably isn't worth passing to take the Sinatra Event even though I would gain an open casino for free! I also have to be a little bit careful about helping the Government too much, as any Cash marker would let the Government player Sweep and Assault in one area (Havana) in a single turn. So I'll go ahead and play Ops and a Special Activity here and hope to build casinos later.

Syndicate Rallies to place a Guerrilla each in Havana, La Habana, and Pinar del Río (slide its Resources to 11), then Profits to add Cash markers to Guerrillas in Pinar and Havana.



Send guns, men, and money!

**STOP.** Please read rules sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 to find out where Jeff's gunmen got those stacks of Cash.

**Important:** Insurgents operate differently from one another; for example, the Syndicate and other Insurgents Rally a bit differently. Be sure to check your Faction's side of the foldout.

Pinar is a bit of a gangster haven at the moment, because neither 26July nor Directorio can Rally where there is Active Support for the Government, but the Syndicate can.

Let's adjust the Eligibility: Government and 26July become Eligible again for the next card, so slide their cylinders back over to "Eligible" on the left. Because of the Event, Directorio is also there, leaving only the Syndicate's green cylinder in the Ineligible box.



DR field forces build in the Cuban heartland.



Played card

On deck

You know the routine now with playing the next card, *Sinatra*; on deck is that scoundrel, *Rolando Masferrer*. Even though the Syndicate is leftmost on *Sinatra*, it is Ineligible, so the next Faction to the right—the Directorio is 1st Eligible (again!).

**Karl (Directorio):** *Since the Syndicate played a 2nd Faction Op and is not Eligible, I am not worried about these events firing and can take a full Op plus Special Activity. I think I want to spend the next couple of turns Rallying, which should get a Base on the board for me. Unfortunately I don't have as many Resources as the other players, so I feel the need to take advantage of the opportunity to Subvert when I can.*

**STOP.** Please read rules section 4.4.1 to find out what Karl's rebel movement was up to there in Oriente.

So Directorio spent 3 Resources Rallying (go ahead and place yellow Guerrillas as shown). But it then earned 2 Resources back by Subverting Oriente as its Special Activity—it met the Subvert requirement of DR Control there. As a bonus, Directorio dampened

local enthusiasm for 26July-led opposition: remove the Passive Opposition from Oriente (now Neutral) and slide Opposition+Bases down 2 on the edge track from “8” to “6”. Finally, set the yellow Eligibility cylinder in the “1st Faction Ops + Special Activity” box of the Sequence of Play.

The Government is up as 2nd Eligible, but passes. Slide the blue cylinder down into the “Pass” area. When the Government passes, it doesn't do anything, but it reaps earnings of 3 Resources (“13” to “16” on the edge track).

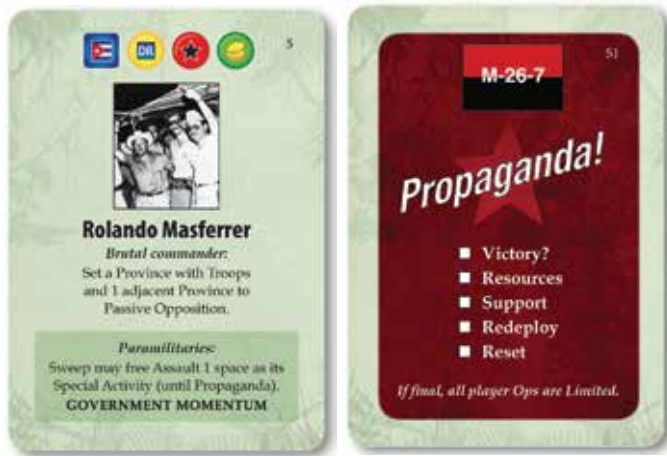
Because the Government passed, 26July becomes 2nd Eligible. It too passes! Insurgents earn just 1 Resource when they pass, so 26July Resources slide up to “10”.

Why on earth would both these players decide to pass when they could have taken a move?...

**Jeff (designer):** *With Rolando Masferrer upcoming, the Government passes, presumably to execute it, a powerful lingering “Government Momentum” Event; and with the expectation of the Government taking the event, the M26 passes to take advantage of the full Operation and Special Activity that it would then receive. Unfortunately, the fates are against both as the next card revealed is Propaganda!, which would quickly end the Government's Momentum.*

**STOP.** Read rules 5.3 and 5.4 about Events with effects that last beyond that card play.

Now go ahead and shift the Eligibility cylinders and cards:



Played card

On deck

The Government player is now 1st Eligible....

**Colleen (Government):** The Propaganda card always comes up within the first 13 cards. The odds were not great that it would come up so soon, but such is my luck. The event Rolando Masferrer only lasts until the Propaganda Round, so there is no sense in taking it now. After the Propaganda Round, all factions are reset to Eligible, so there is no sense in passing either.

I need all the help I can get, so I will take the 1st Faction Op with Special Activity. I need to get more forces on the board. If I Sweep, it will have no effect because the guerrillas will go back underground in the Propaganda Round. The best choice is Train.

I can Transport now as a Special Activity. I will use it to move Troops into Pinar del Río so that I can take Control and Skim some money from the Syndicate.

**STOP.** Since the Government is wisely looking ahead, let's do the same. Please read the entire rules section 6 about the upcoming Propaganda Round.

Great, now that you know what the Government is already planning for, here's what it does (please place and move the forces and adjust Resource and Eligibility cylinders as we go). Government Trains in Havana to add 4 Police, Las Villas for 4 Troops, and Santiago for 3 Police and 1 Troop, spending a total of 6 Resources (3 areas at 2 Resources each for the US Alliance at Firm) down to 10. Government then Transports 3 troops from Havana to Pinar del Río, switching that Province from Syndicate to Govt Control. Blue Eligibility cylinder to "Ops with Special Activity."



Is this counterinsurgency, or just corruption?

DR is Ineligible, so 26July becomes 2nd Eligible on Rolando....

**Steve (26July):** While the Government's Special Activity set up the possibility of Skimming during the Propaganda Round, it also made it possible for me to take the Event! The brutality of those troops that moved into Pinar del Río leads to opposition in both Pinar and La Habana.

La Habana and Pinar del Río are set to Passive Opposition, Opposition+Bases rises to "8", and Total Support drops from "3" to an abysmal "1". Red Eligibility cylinder to "2nd Faction LimOp or Event."

**Jeff:** Colleen could have placed police in Las Villas with her Train Operation, which would have enabled her to do Civic Action during the Propaganda card, but perhaps she decided that she already had enough to do with Havana at Neutral and Support crashing down to 1. The Troops in Las Villas will make it difficult for either of the insurgent Factions to take control there. Nice job by Steve to capitalize on the unshaded version of the Event to pick up additional opposition in Pinar and La Habana.

Ok, as always after resolving one card, shift the new card over and flip another.



Played card

On deck

Now pull out the Sequence of Play sheet and look at the bottom half, listing the Propaganda Round steps. On the game board, go ahead and shift the "Prop Card" marker into the first box on the Propaganda Round track, "Victory?" As we proceed, you can move that marker along, so you'll know where we left off if you take a break.

**Victory?** The victory conditions, which you are already familiar with from the Faction sheets' lower righthand corner box, are detailed in rules section 7. At this early stage, none of the players are very close—as the various victory markers' positions compared to the colored victory thresholds along the edge track show—so let's move on.

**Resources.** Government gets 8 Resources for its unSabotaged Economic Centers, plus 15 from Aid, for total of 23 resources, added to its 10 Resources for 33 total. 26July gets 1 Resource from its Base and now has 11. The Directorio gets 4 Resources because it has pieces in 4 spaces, bringing its total to 8.

The Syndicate gets 4 Resources for 2 open Casinos, but the Government then Skims 2 of those Resources from Syndicate for the open Casino in Havana and another 2 Resources for the open Casino in Pinar del Río—both spaces that the Govt Controls. So all the Round's



regular Casino profits just went to Batista! Blue Resources to 37.

Fortunately for the Syndicate, it had also piled up some profits in Cash, 2 markers that it must now deposit, deciding to do so for 6 Resources each. (Jeff could have used the markers to place new Casinos instead, as there was stacking room in the spaces with the Cash).

In sum, Resources are now: Government 37, 26July 11, Directorio 8, and Syndicate 23.

The US Alliance is now checked. As the Government has not kept Support above 18, the US now becomes “Reluctant.” The Government will now have to play 3 Resources for each space it operates in, and loses 10 Aid (Aid down to 5).

**Colleen (Government):** *I can now raise the Support in Cities or Provinces where I have both Troops and Police. The cost is 4 Resources for each Terror marker and then 4 for each increase towards Active Support. It's important to leave Resources for the following turn. The Government cannot do anything without money. I will raise Support in the major cities.*

**Support.** The Government buys Civic Action in Havana—2 levels to Active Support—and Camagüey (City)—1 level to Active Support. Civic Action costs 4 Resources per Terror marker removed or Support level shifted: a total of 3 Civic Actions for 12 Resources, so Government Resources go from 37 to 25. Total Support recovers to 14.

As 26July has no spaces that he Controls and where Opposition could increase, we move on to Expatriate Backing: the DR automatically gets one free Rally as part of the Round.

**Karl (Directorio):** *I was planning to Rally soon to get a Base in Oriente, so I will do that now. I'd like to have more than one Guerrilla in there to protect the Base, but I will have to wait. The next Event is also seemingly too good to pass up. This may be a little risky, but we will see how it goes.*

A Directorio Base is added to Oriente and 2 Directorio Guerrillas are removed. DR Pop+Bases to “4”.

**Colleen (Government):** *Now I have to Redeploy Troops that are not in Cities or that are in spaces without Bases. Everything in Pinar must go. I will move some Police to Las Villas so I can use Civic Action there in the future.*

**Redeploy.** The 3 Troops in Pinar del Río move back to Havana, and 2 Police move to Las Villas (1 from Santiago de Cuba and 1 from Havana). Additionally, the Government chooses to Redeploy 1 Troop from Santiago to Camagüey City.

**Reset.** It is the end of the Propaganda Round, so slide all Eligibility cylinders back over to the “Eligible” box. Remove all Terror markers (and any Sabotage, but we have none). If we had any “Government Momentum” Events in effect, we would discard them back to the played cards pile. Set all Guerrillas to Underground (embossed end down), open all closed Casinos, and adjust the “Open Casinos” marker on the edge track from “2” to “3” for the reopened La Habana Casino. Back to Events!

**Hint:** As you finish a Propaganda Round, set the Propaganda card to one side of the played cards pile to show how many have passed.



Played card

On deck

Directorio is 1st Eligible....

**Karl (Directorio):** *I'm taking the Event, even though this could set me up to be the victim of The Twelve. If it comes down to that, I'm willing to bribe the Syndicate not to let the Government have the option to play that Event.*

*Since it will be a long time before the next Propaganda card, I'm looking to consolidate my position between Las Villas and Oriente. That's 5 population, which is over half of what I need for victory. It seems like it's worth fighting for.*

Add 2 yellow Guerrillas and a yellow Base to Las Villas for the Directorio's execution of the Unshaded *Fauré Chomón* Event.



Cuban students become Escambray guerrillas!

26July is 2nd Eligible on the card....

**Steve (26July):** *Once again, I will use the opportunity to Terrorize and Kidnap before it is lost. Terror in La Habana and Santiago de Cuba and Kidnap from the Syndicate in La Habana.*



26July terror silences local pro-government adversaries and enables opposition to flourish. Opposition+Bases rises to "10".

The Kidnap roll this time is a "5", so transfer 5 Resources from green to red. 26July now has 14 Resources (started with 11, spent 2 for Terror, and gained 5 from Kidnapping) and the Syndicate 18.



Played card

On deck

On to *The Twelve*, with both rebel groups Ineligible....

**Jeff (Syndicate):** *I failed in negotiating a juicy enough deal with the Directorio, so since the Government has offered to clear out the insurgents around my casinos, I'll not worry about keeping the Directorio happy. I was hoping I could get the Directorio or the Government to play the next Event for me, but "Turismo" just isn't worth waiting on for 3 Resources at the moment. Instead I'll expand my empire by building Casinos in Havana and Pinar, and Profit in both places.*

Syndicate chooses Construct for their Op (an Operation type that is unique to this Faction) and Profit for a Special Activity, paying 10 Resources for 2 new but still closed Casinos. Only Control matters for Construct: the Syndicate can ignore the popular Opposition.

Place a green disc (embossing down) each in Pinar and Havana, and a Cash marker below a green Guerrilla in each. Syndicate Resources from 18 to 8.

Government is 2nd Eligible....

**Colleen (Government):** *Looking ahead, the "Turismo" event is very nice for me, but also helps Syndicate, who appears to be doing well right now. The "Ugly American" side actually hurts 26July as well as me, so I am not too concerned about it being played against me. So I will play this turn. Because it costs a little more for me to get rid of Guerrillas in the mountains, I will take the current Event and*



Hyman Roth would approve.

*kill off two of the Directorio Guerrillas in Las Villas per the shaded text of "The Twelve."*

**Jeff:** *It's always nice when you can use Events to do your work for you. In this case Colleen is able to threaten the DR without spending Resources, forcing the Directorio to Rally on its next turn.*



Played card

On deck

Speaking of which....

**Karl (Directorio):** *With the loss of those Guerrillas I feel I should reinforce my position with more Guerrillas. The Government is going to run out of Resources eventually, so I better make sure I am in a position to kill Bases if necessary. Long term I'm just trying to grow out the area the DR influences. I feel like if I have a lot of targets where other players can knock me back that I'll seem like less of a threat and losing a Base here, or Control of a space there, won't actually knock me back too much.*

The Directorio Rallies in Matanzas, Las Villas, Camagüey Province, and Oriente, adding pieces equal to Bases plus Population in each



Rural rebel forces swell.

(or 1 if no Base). Its Special Activity is to Subvert in Oriente to get 2 Resources back. As Oriente is already neutral, there is no change in Support/Opposition. Directorio resources slide to 6 (started at 8, spent 4 to rally in four spaces, then regained 2 by Subverting in Oriente, which has 2 population).

**Steve (26July):** Well, as Colleen pointed out, the Ugly American Event hurts me as well as her. So I think I'll settle for a Limited Op to Rally in Pinar del Río.

26July is up and adds a Guerrilla in Pinar del Río. Red Resources from 14 to 13.

The yellow Eligibility cylinder, on "1st Faction Op with Special Activity", and the red, on "2nd Faction LimOp or Event" slide to "Ineligible."



Played card

On deck

Syndicate is 1st Eligible....

**Jeff (Syndicate):** The decision of whether to play Ops or Event is a pretty simple one here. If the Government was in position to win the game, I could block Ambassador Smith. Since it will be very tough for Colleen to get an auto-win on the next Propaganda card (requiring not only more Total Support but getting all 3 Cities to Active Support), I'm safe to use the card for Ops and Special Activity.

Now... what combination to choose? I have some nice Casino-building options available in Camagüey or possibly Las Villas, but with my low Resources thanks to 26July Kidnapping and my building binge I can't be too ambitious.

Unfortunately the 26July Rallying of a Guerrilla unit in Pinar is a serious problem. I could Construct and use the Special Activity to Muscle in some Troops to protect my Casinos from Attack, but that won't stop Steve from Terrorizing and Kidnapping, or even Ambushing my Guerrilla and taking my Cash. The safest route then is to hurt the M26 via Bribe to remove his Guerrilla in Pinar.

For my Operation, I will March my Guerrilla with its Cash in Havana to the relative safety of La Habana. I could also March the Guerrilla with the other Cash marker from Pinar del Río to La Habana for free (because the destination would already be paid for), but I prefer to not tempt other players too much by locating all my Cash together.

Syndicate Resources drop from 8 to 4 (3 Resources to Bribe—the only Special Activity that costs Resources—and 1 to March to one area).

**Colleen (Government):** I am very torn as to what to do in this situation. My primary goal is to Sweep and Assault all Guerrillas in spaces where I am. But, I would only have a Limited Op. The Event is very nice for me and could make it much less expensive to take actions this turn, and it helps the Syndicate. I will take the Event since it promotes a longer game strategy and I don't see myself winning this turn.



Gangster paradise Pinar defended.

Steve (26July): This is the opportunity to maximize my forces!



M26 joins Las Villas fray.

26July adds 4 Guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra (its Rally places TWICE Bases plus Population if it has Bases present!), 1 in Oriente, 1 in Camagüey Province, 1 in Las Villas, 1 in Matanzas, 1 in Habana, and 1 in Pinar del Río. That's Rally in 7 spaces at 1 Resource each, so 26July Resources drop from 13 to 6.

Doing further damage, Steve Infiltrates Police forces in Las Villas! Remove 1 Police there to Government Available and place 1 red Guerrilla there in its place.

Karl (Directorio): Limited Op doesn't do much for me here. I think the next Event will be tempting for the Government to move the last City from Active Opposition to Active Support. So I'm banking on getting a full Op + Special Activity next turn.

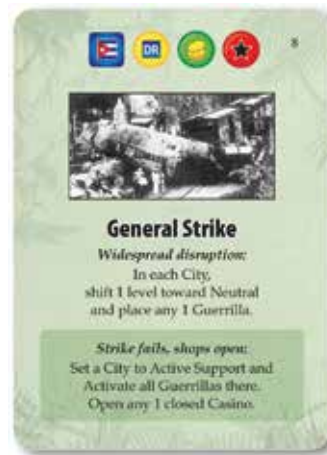
Directorio, 2nd Eligible, passes and receives +1 Resource. Slide the yellow Eligibility cylinder down into the "Pass" section, showing that DR will be Eligible again next card. Directorio Resources to 7. With both Government and Syndicate Ineligible, play on this card ends.



The Government has a line to Washington.

Government execution of shaded Ambassador Smith Event shifts the US Alliance from "Reluctant" back up to "Firm", Aid from 5 to 14, and Syndicate Resources from 4 to 11 (adding the lesser of +9 or half of Aid, rounded down).

26July and Directorio cylinders are slid back to "Eligible"....



Played card



On deck



Played card



On deck

Colleen (Government): It seems like a waste of time to take the event only to have M26 undo it with the next event, but it appears to be the best play for me here.

Government plays the Event: The rebels' scheme for a general strike fails and Santiago de Cuba shifts to Active Support. The Government player confers with her Syndicate ally and agrees also to allow the closed Casino in Pinar del Río to open. Slide Total Support to "16", Opposition+Bases to "8", and Open Casinos to "3".

Directorio—still Eligible after passing on Eulogio Cantillo—is now 2nd Eligible. Since the 1st Eligible Government executed the Event, DR now has full Operations and a Special Activity available....

**Karl (Directorio):** *I feel like M26 and Syndicate are doing very well in this game. I'll beat down on M26 a bit this turn so we don't see a lot of Terror turning spaces into Opposition. I can only remove Opposition (or Support) via special activities or Terror, which won't help me win the game. So I'll Attack in Camagüey, Oriente, Matanzas and Las Villas, using Ambush in Matanzas.*



Rival rebels clash for control!

The Ambush in Matanzas removes the red Guerrilla there and adds an Underground Directorio Guerrilla and, thereby, DR Control (DR Pop + Bases to “6”).

Karl now rolls for his attacks. In Las Villas he needs a 4 or less (the number of his Guerrillas), but rolls a 6. In Camagüey, he needs a 3 or less, but rolls another 6. In Oriente he again needs to roll a 4 or less, and this time rolls a 4, killing the M26 Guerrilla there. All of the Directorio Guerrillas that Attacked are turned to their Active sides. Directorio Resources slide from 7 to 3.

**Jeff:** *Interesting that Karl chose to try to slow 26July down at this point. The danger is that with the majority of his Guerrillas now Active, the Government can step in and mop things up in Las Villas.*



Played card

On deck

**Steve (26July):** *The “Espín” Event presents an interesting choice for me. Oriente would give me 2 more Opposition points than Santiago and would temporarily prevent DR from building another Base there. But if I leave Santiago at Active Support, the Government is within 3 points of winning and can get there with Civic Action in Las Villas, if it can gain Control. I'm glad DR failed his Attack, because success would have given Govt Control there. At least now it must fight for it. So, I'll change Santiago. With the Terror marker there, it will be expensive for the Government to bring it back to Active Support.*

26July cylinder to “1st Faction Event.” Santiago de Cuba to Active Opposition. Total Support to “14”. Opposition+Bases to “10”.

Syndicate is now 2nd Eligible for Ops with Special Activity....

**Jeff (Syndicate):** *The Syndicate has some interesting options here. As Steve mentions the Government was closing in on an auto-win, but he effectively ended that threat. Both Karl and Steve are now the biggest threats. Steve can add four more Opposition through Terror, so I want to hurt him and deny him access to my Cash. Alternatively, I could make a deal with the 26July to leave my Casino open in exchange for one of my Cash markers.*

*So what is the best play for the Syndicate here? Assuming we can't make a deal with Fidel, can we keep both cash markers out of danger? And what about “Rebel Air Force”?*

Over to you! Let's thank Karl, Colleen, and Steve for explaining their strategies. We hope this tutorial has been a helpful and enjoyable introduction to CUBA LIBRE. Continue on from here if you like, or set up a new game to rewrite this history!



Western Cuba, late 1957....

## CHANGES FROM ANDEAN ABYSS

### Andean Abyss players—start here!

*Cuba Libre* features many small changes from COIN Series Volume 1, *Andean Abyss*, so be sure to consult the Rules of Play. This section summarizes the main changes to get you playing quickly.

### Government



Instead of *El Presidente*, the Cuban Government is subject to a **US Alliance** track that determines how many Resources its Operations cost per space, Aid levels, and whether Air Strikes are available (6.3.1).

**Civic Action** is more expensive, 4 Resources per Terror marker or shift (6.3.2).

**Economic Centers** (1.3.4) replace Lines of Communication; the Government defends them with Patrol-like **Garrison** Operations (3.2.2).

A less flexible **Transport** Special Activity (4.2.1) replaces Air Lift, and Government-style Terror called **Reprisal** (4.2.3) replaces Eradicate.

The Cuban Government does not benefit from lasting Capabilities improvements but has temporary **Momentum** Events available (5.4).

Government **Victory** during a Propaganda Round requires not only total Support but also all Cities at Active Support (7.2).

### 26July



The 26July Movement (also called “M26”) has Operations, Special Activities, and Victory objectives akin to the FARC’s in *Andean Abyss*.

Where it has established Bases, it can **Rally** fighters for its cause even more quickly (3.3.1).

Instead of Extorting Resources from the people, it can **Infiltrate** Cuba’s shaky Government forces to take them over from within (4.3.1).

Instead of Insurgent Momentum, 26July and the other Insurgent Factions have lasting **Capabilities** (5.3), much as the Government does in *Andean Abyss*.

### Directorio



The Directorio Revolucionario (or “DR”) operates similarly to the AUC in *Andean Abyss*, but with a different **Victory** goal: it must build Bases and **Control** Population (7.2-.3). Track all Faction’s Control throughout play (1.7).

The Directorio also differs in aiming for the center of the political spectrum, able to **Rally** not only in Neutral but either Passive Support or Passive Opposition spaces (3.3.1).

Also, populations in Opposition and rival Guerrillas will not Activate DR Guerrillas that **March** into their area (3.3.2).

In rural areas (“Provinces” in Cuba rather than Departments), the Directorio instead of Extorting Resources can **Subvert** local populations that it Controls to both provide Resources and eliminate either Support for the Government or M26-leaning Opposition (4.4.1).

### Syndicate



The Syndicate Faction pursues some similar activities and victory conditions to those of *Andean Abyss*’s Cartels, but with major differences.

The Syndicate’s Bases are **Casinos** that cannot be removed by other Factions’ actions (1.4.4-.5). However, they can be Closed and must be Opened to count for Control, Rally, Income, and Victory.

Syndicate **Rally** places only single Guerrillas (3.3.1). The Syndicate does not Rally new Casinos but must **Construct** them—a unique Syndicate Operation that replaces Attack and is never free (3.3.5, 3.1.2).

Other Factions’ Control of Casinos will enable them to **Skim** Syndicate Resource earnings (6.2.3).

The Syndicate has an additional source of income, however: sufficient presence in Cities and at **Economic Centers** (6.2.2, 1.3.4).

The Syndicate **Profit** Special Activity places **Cash** markers, much as Process places Cartels Shipments in *Andean Abyss*, with the twist that the corrupt Government can hold Cash as can the Insurgents (4.5.1-2, 6.2.4).

Casinos are much harder to expand than coca production, so no Cultivate activity. Instead, the Syndicate can **Muscle** corrupt Government forces into position to protect Casinos (4.5.3).

### Non-Players

Rules Section 8.0 has many important changes and should be reviewed fully if Non-player Factions are used. Unlike in *Andean Abyss*, all 4 Factions have Non-player flowcharts, so that a solitary player can act as either Government or Insurgent, 3 players can let the game system handle any 1 of the 4 Factions, and so on.

## ROLE SUMMARIES

### Government



**Situation.** The Government of Cuba under dictator Fulgencio Batista has presided over an increasingly wealthy country, but the benefits of that economic boom has only been visited upon a few wealthy Cubans and cronies of the President. The cozy relationship between Batista and the American Syndicate has netted the Dictator large amounts of cash and helped fund Batista’s secret police. Keeping the President in power, the United States government is starting to question its investment and has been pressuring Batista to step aside.

**Goal.** Take advantage of its strong initial position and knock out the insurgents before they establish themselves. Keep control of the cities and look to gain support in a few selected provinces.

**Tools.** Your troops are the strongest forces in the game, but your capabilities will decline throughout the game. Choose your momentum cards carefully (activating a momentum card right before a Propaganda Card is a waste) and maximize their use. Your forces are not well suited to Civic Action, so think carefully before spending resources on it. Take any opportunity to keep the US Alliance high.

**Deals.** The Syndicate can provide you with one of the most valuable tools in your arsenal, Cash. This will let you Sweep and then Assault in a single space.

**Tip.** Temporary alliances with the 26July or Directorio insurgents can be valuable later in the game even when your chances of victory look bleak.

## 26July



**Situation.** Movement of 26July guerrillas have landed near the eastern tip of Cuba, and after several narrow escapes have established a base in the Sierra Maestra. They also draw support from groups outside of Havana and in the city of Santiago de Cuba. Initially, Castro's men must consolidate their forces and train their army while disrupting the Government forces. Generally, the 26July faction will need to ally with the disparate forces of the Directorio to keep the Government from winning an early victory.

**Goal.** Cultivate as much opposition to the Batista regime as possible, while taking every opportunity to make things difficult for rival factions as well.

**Tools.** You have two big advantages. First, you can rally a larger number of guerrillas than other insurgent factions. Second, Terror will increase opposition to the Government even to the point of active opposition. Especially when combined with special activities such as Infiltrate and Kidnap, the 26July can move closer to victory and hurt its opponents at the same time.

**Deals.** Initially, try to work with the Directorio to knock the Government down below its victory margin. Later, when it is every faction for itself, an alliance with the Syndicate can provide access to valuable cash in exchange for leaving the mob's properties alone.

**Tip.** An early capability can open up many options later in the game, but grabbing multiple capabilities can waste valuable operations.

## Directorio



**Situation.** The Directorio Revolucionario—a rebel student group founded by José Antonio Echevarría—also is fighting Batista but differs with 26July in tactics and goals. The Directorio is extremely vulnerable at the beginning. While it does start with urban guerrillas in Havana, these are often early targets for the Government. Sometimes, early events can lead to the development of your position, but other times you may have to carefully carve out a base in central Cuba.

**Goal.** Control a significant portion of Cuba while building a strong army.

**Tools.** The Directorio only needs a small shift in Support or Opposition to rally guerrillas (rallies in Passive Support to Passive Opposition), so your guerrillas can quickly contest areas that become vulnerable due to events or enemy activity. If you can gain control of an space, you can quickly consolidate your gains with a Subvert special activity.

**Deals.** You will have to work with the 26July faction early in the game, but be open for cooperation with any faction later on. If Castro grows too strong, you may find a deal with the devil Batista necessary.

**Tip.** Your weak position can be used to your advantage, husbanding your resources and attacking when the opportunity arises. In rural areas you control, your Subvert activity can be very powerful in countering either 26July or Government objectives with the populace.

## Syndicate



**Situation.** The American Mob had been looking for a refuge from the United States Justice system for decades and found what they thought was the perfect place in Cuba. The Cuban President was a friend willing to turn a blind eye to organized crime in exchange for a generous cut. Even their fellow insurgents were looked upon as money-making opportunities, as the revolution gave them the opportunity to sell weapons to the rebels and keep Batista reliant on the cash from skimmed casino profits.

**Goal.** Expand your casino empire while accumulating as many resources as possible.

**Tools.** Cash from casino profits are the single most important tool in the Syndicate arsenal. Cash can help build new casinos, add to resources if kept until the Propaganda Phase, or used to buy an additional Limited Operation. Passing cash on to another player can help keep relations friendly.

**Deals.** Help the Government just enough early on, but not enough to give them an early win. Offer the Government cash in exchange for cleaning out the rebels in the same space as your casinos. Later on, the Directorio or 26July can help keep your casinos open, so find your allies wherever you can.

**Tip.** Be active diplomatically. Point out every “good deed” that you do for other players and distribute cash to win favors. Be careful about taking a lead too early as the Syndicate can be an easy target for kidnapping and assassination.

## GUIDE TO COIN OPERATIONS

### Strategy Notes for the Government

by Joel Toppen, adapted from *Andean Abyss*

Here is an introduction to the forces and key actions available to the Government Faction.

### Troops



Troops are your workhorses. They're going to do all the heavy lifting for you. Essentially, Troops are your pieces that can be moved into spaces to search (Sweep) and destroy (Assault) Insurgent Guerrillas and Bases.

Troops are brought into the game through the Train Operation. Troops can move via:

- **Sweep Operation**—into an adjacent City or Province to find (Activate) Insurgent Guerrillas.
- **Garrison Operation**—onto Economic Centers (ECs) to find (Activate) Insurgent Guerrillas (and perhaps kill them in one such space) and also to reinforce Cities.
- **Transport Special Activity**—any 3 troops move from a City or Base to any space on the board. Do not underestimate the importance of this Special Activity! The Cuban army could plan operations reaching all areas of the island. (Unfortunately, once the troops became bogged down fighting in remote areas, that flexibility would be lost.)
- **Muscle Special Activity**—any 2 troops move from anywhere to a Province with an open Casino or an EC. Sounds easy, but the big hitch is that the Syndicate, not you, moves your forces using this action!

Troops kill Insurgent Guerrillas via the Assault Operation, but only Active guerrillas.

Guerrillas must be Activated by a Sweep (or some action they themselves undertook) before Government Troops can eliminate them.

Also, through their presence, Troops can take Govt Control of a space. But, and this is important, by themselves, Troops cannot alter Support/Opposition status in an area. They need Police support to effect that. In the Redeploy Phase, Troops at an EC or in a Province space without a Government Base must deploy out of that area (even if that space is Govt Controlled). Thus their staying power outside a City is limited.

Also, Troops, by blocking enemy control of a space, can inhibit the ability of the Directorio to make use of the Subvert Special Activity and of 26July Agitating to build Opposition. Lastly, when positioned at an EC, Troops can spot (Activate) marching Guerrillas.

## Police



Police are very, very important Government pieces. While much, much less mobile than Troops, Police give the Government player crucial positional staying power.

Here's what Police do for you:

- Police cannot move with Troops on a Sweep (unless the S.I.M. Government Momentum is in play). But they can, if already positioned in the space, assist the Troops in the space being swept. Police cubes count when factoring the effect of a Sweep.
- Police inhibit the ability of 26July to use the Kidnap Special Activity and of the Directorio to Assassinate. Like Troops, Police at ECs or in spaces with Support can spot (Activate) marching Guerrillas (very important to protect the Cities), and inhibit the Directorio from Subverting in a space.
- Police can be used to Garrison ECs to activate Guerrillas there, and even conduct an Assault on a EC as part of the action.
- In Cities, Police can participate in Assault.
- Police, like Troops, can protect a Government Base from Attack (cubes must be removed before a Base is removed).

So far they probably don't sound terribly useful to the player. There is, however, one crucial role Police have that makes them indispensable: Police enable the Government player to conduct Civic Actions during a Propaganda card, and also as part of a Train Operation.

Civic Action is the means by which the Government player degrades Opposition and/or adds/improves Support – necessary to fulfill the Government victory conditions. At least 1 Police cube is required to conduct Civic Action in a Propaganda Phase or as a postscript to a Train Operation.

Police cannot move by Transport or (usually) Sweep. They can only be moved to ECs during a Garrison and/or to Cities via Garrison or the Syndicate's Muscle activity. But getting Police into Provinces is not quite as simple and requires some planning. So how do you get Police to where you need them without using a Patrol Operation?

### There are two methods principally:

**Training**— You can get Police into a space where they are needed by simply undertaking the Train Operation and Training Police in that space. For Cities, this is not a problem as you can Train in any City. Training in a Province, however, requires a bit of planning.

In order to place cubes by Training in a Province, you must have a Base there. In order to get a Base into that Province, you must first have two cubes in that Province. OK, so how do you get cubes into

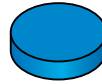
a Province so you can place a Base? Typically, you will undertake a Sweep Operation to move Troops into a Province. You could also use the Transport Special Activity to ship an additional 3 Troops there. Then, in a subsequent turn, you undertake a Train Operation in that Province, only you don't place cubes; instead, you remove 2 cubes and place a Base.

Once you have a Base, in a future turn, you can Train and place Police into that Province. If you have Troops and Police and more Government pieces than any other Faction in that Province, you may also pay for Civic Action in order to improve Support (even without a Base).

**Redeploy**— During the Redeploy Phase of a Propaganda card, the Government player can reposition any and all of his Police to any ECs or any space with Govt Control. This is a very powerful opportunity to move otherwise less-mobile Police around the board. You must plan very carefully here lest you be forced to waste Resources and Operational tempo later.

And so, in short, the Government player may reposition Police preemptively and for free during the Redeploy Phase. The Government player may place new Police reactively and for a considerable cost in Resources when undertaking a Train Operation during an event card play. Police enable the Government to gain precious support necessary to fulfilling its victory conditions. This then, will likely free up Troops to deploy elsewhere against Insurgents. Police give the Government staying power.

## Bases



Bases are crucial to Government success in that they provide the only means by which the Government player can maintain a constant Troop presence in the countryside. The Government has only two Bases it can establish. Don't waste them!

**Where do you need Bases?** You need them in Provinces. You do not need them in Cities. Why? Cities are de facto Bases. Bases enable the player to Train Troops and/or Police in that space. Since you can already do that in a City, you do not need to give up two cubes and use one of your two Base pieces there! The only good a Base will do the Government in a City is deny to one of the rebel Factions the ability to place a second Base in that City. But since the Government only has two Bases with which to work, this seems to be a wasted use of a Base.

**Why do you need Bases?** You need Bases in order to Train Police and Troops in a Province. In order to decrease Opposition and increase Support for the Government, the Government player must undertake Civic Actions either in conjunction with a Train Operation or during a Propaganda card. In order to undertake a Civic Action, one or more Police must be in that space. In order to get Police into a Province where there are presently no Police, they must usually be Trained there. To be Trained there, you need a Base.

Bases also allow Troops to remain in a Province during the Redeploy Phase of a Propaganda card. And so if the Government player is still fighting to wrest control of a Province from an Insurgent faction when a Propaganda card is resolved, the presence of a Base in that Province allows the Government player to keep his Troops in the field.

So there you have it! Bases are one more important cog in the Government's machinery.



## 1-PLAYER EXAMPLE OF PLAY

By Örjan Ariander

Once you have gone over the tutorial starting on page 2, try out this step-by-step run through of part of a solitaire game: it will help you learn how the Non-player Factions work for 2- or 3-player games as well. Follow along, referring to the illustrations, or set up the game board and conduct the moves described. You can fish out each card as it is named, or preset the deck with the card order provided below. A numbered paragraph begins each new card played. Italicized shaded text adds comment.

### Preparing the Deck for This Example

*If you want to set up the game to follow along with this example, prepare the deck as follows:*

*Stack the following cards face down, in order from top to bottom.*

- Escapade
- Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo
- Anastasia
- Ambassador Smith
- Sierra Maestra Manifesto
- Larrazábal
- **Propaganda!**
- Pact of Caracas
- Sánchez Mosquera
- MAP
- Operation Fisherman
- Batista Flees
- Santo Trafficante, Jr
- Coup
- El Che
- Vilma Espín
- **Propaganda!**

*Divide the remaining Event cards into 3 roughly equal piles and shuffle a Propaganda card into 2 of the piles. Stack the 3 piles face down under the above cards, with the Propaganda cards in the bottom 2 piles.*

In *CUBA LIBRE*, the solo player can play either the Batista regime trying to stay in power or the 26July revolutionaries attempting to topple it while keeping the Mafia and rival Directorio at bay, or one of the other Factions. In either case, the Non-player rules (section 8) run the other 3 factions. This player decides to play 26July using no optional rules and sets up the board and deck.

1) The player flips the first card to be played and reveals the next: they are *Escapade* followed by *Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo*. The Directorio is 1st Eligible for *Escapade*. Rule 8.1 states that a 1st Eligible Non-player Faction will play the Event unless it has no effect or the special Event Instructions (8.4.1) say otherwise. If the event is Dual-Use (5.2), the Directorio will use the unshaded text (8.4.2), again unless the special Event Instructions say otherwise. (The Government and Syndicate Non-player Factions would both use the shaded text instead.) The Directorio has no special Event Instructions, so it will play the unshaded version of the Event.

*Escapade* places a DR Guerrilla and Base in either Camagüey Province or Oriente. Spaces for Events are selected to ensure that as many Bases then other pieces as possible are placed (8.4.4, 3rd bullet), but there is room for a Base in either Province, so the choice is made

randomly (8.2). Since there are only 2 spaces to choose between, the player makes an equal-chance die roll: 1-3 Camagüey Province, 4-6 Oriente. (The player could have used the Random Spaces table instead; that would have taken slightly longer.) The roll is a “5”, so the Non-player Directorio places a Guerrilla and a Base in Oriente. This gives it Control of Oriente, so its Victory Marker (DR Population + Bases) is moved to 4 (3 Population, 1 Base).

The Government Non-player Faction is 2nd Eligible. Because the 1st Eligible Faction (DR) executed the Event, the Government as 2nd Eligible may only execute Ops and, if possible, a Special Activity. The player consults the Non-Player Government aid (8.8). The first question on the flowchart is whether any City or Government Base lacks Govt Control or Troops or Police. There are no Government Bases on the map and all Cities are under Govt Control and have both Troops and Police, so the answer is “No”. The next question asks if 26July Guerrillas at the ECs are either Underground or exceed the cubes there (allowing them to Sabotage and/or Kidnap), but there are no 26July Guerrillas at any ECs so again the answer is “No”. The third question asks if an Assault would add Govt Control or remove a Base or 3+ Guerrillas. The Government can only Assault Active Guerrillas and Bases with no Underground Guerrillas to protect, them so the answer is yet again “No”. Following the “No” arrow from the last question shows that the Government will Sweep.

Non-player Government Ops are limited to a maximum of 9 Resources (8.8.2, 8.8.4, 8.8.5), and the cost of an Op depends on the level of the US Alliance (6.3.1). At the start of the game the US Alliance is still Firm so each space costs 2 Resources; the Government can therefore Sweep up to 4 spaces for a total cost of 8 Resources before reaching the 9-Resource limit.

Per the Sweep priorities box on the Non-Player Government aid (8.8.4), the Non-player Government Sweeps to Activate Underground 26July or DR Guerrillas, first at Support, then in Havana City, then elsewhere. Within those priorities it will first Sweep where it already has cubes. There are two spaces at Support with Underground 26July or DR Guerrillas: Havana City and La Habana Province. Of these, Havana City already has cubes so it becomes the first space selected. The player notes the selection with a white pawn at Havana (3.3.1)

It would take 1 Troop to Activate the single Guerrilla in La Habana Province, and 3 Troops to establish Govt Control there, so in order for La Habana Province to be eligible for a Sweep the Government must be able to move in at least 1 Troop cube there. There are 6 Troop cubes in adjacent Havana City, all of which could leave without losing Govt Control there (2nd priority bullet in the Sweep



*Government sweeps within the contested cities and into La Habana and Camagüey Provinces, supported by an air strike in La Habana.*

box), so the Government selects La Habana Province as the second Sweep space (placing a pawn there to help remember) and moves 3 Troop cubes there from Havana City.

The next Sweep priority after Support spaces is Havana City, regardless of its Support or Opposition level, but it has already been selected. The last Sweep priority is “elsewhere”, first where cubes. There is one more space with both an Underground 26July Guerrilla and cubes: Santiago de Cuba, which is duly selected and marked as the third Sweep space.

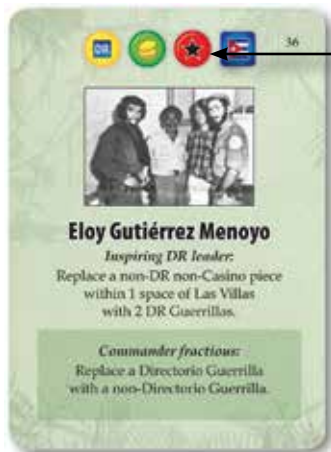
There is still one Sweep space to select, the fourth. There are Underground 26July and DR Guerrillas adjacent to spaces with Troops in Camagüey Province and Sierra Maestra. (The 2 Troops in Santiago de Cuba are available to Sweep into Sierra Maestra because the 2 Police also present there are sufficient to both Sweep the single 26July Guerrilla and maintain Govt Control if the Troops leave.) An equal-chance die roll selects Camagüey Province as the fourth Sweep space. This is a Forest Province, so it will take 2 Troop cubes to Activate the single Guerrilla there (3.2.3). Those Troops could either both come from Las Villas, or one each from Las Villas and Camagüey City. Another equal-chance roll selects Las Villas as the first and thus sole origin space and moves two of the cubes there to Camagüey Province.

With all Sweep spaces selected and all necessary Troop movements executed, the Sweep Activates all Guerrillas in the four spaces and Govt Control markers are placed in La Habana and Camagüey Provinces (removing the DR Control marker in Camagüey Province). Government Resources drop from 15 to 7, and the DR Population + Bases marker moves from 4 to 3.

After the Sweep Operation is finished, the flowchart’s “then” arrow takes us to the Air Strike box for the Non-player Government’s Special Activity. The first priority is to remove a 26July Base, and, failing that, a DR Base, but both rebel Bases on the map are protected by Guerrillas. The next priority is to remove a 26July Guerrilla in a space with cubes, and there is one in La Habana Province; it is promptly struck and removed from the map and placed in the 26July Available box. The player also removes the pawns that marked the Sweep spaces.

*The Government has quickly gotten about the business of hunting down hidden guerrilla cells.*

2) Now *Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo* is played, and the next card is revealed to be *Anastasia*. The Syndicate is 1st Eligible, and there is a halo around the Syndicate symbol on the card, indicating that there is a special Event Instruction (8.4.1). The instruction says that



*The gray halo tells the player to check the special instructions (8.4.1) on this Non-player’s aid sheet before the Non-player Faction executes the Event.*

Non-player Syndicate will play this Event if it has any Syndicate Guerrilla available, which it does, so it plays the Event. Rolling on the Random Spaces table (8.2): the green die rolls a “3”, the yellow a “4”: Matanzas. There is no DR Guerrilla in Matanzas, so the player follows the arrows to Camagüey Province where the DR Guerrilla is replaced with a Syndicate Guerrilla.

Note that, in this case, the Non-player Syndicate would have done exactly the same without the Event Instruction: the 1st bullet of 8.4.4 ensures that Non-player Factions will only select themselves or other Non-player Factions to benefit from Events that place pieces. With 26July played by the player, the only non-Directorío Non-player Guerrillas the Syndicate could place are its own. (This particular Event Instruction is needed for Government solitaire games.)

Only the 26July remains Eligible; it can do Ops with a Special Activity. The player chooses to Rally in Sierra Maestra (placing 4 Guerrillas), Las Villas, Santiago de Cuba, and Matanzas (1 Guerrilla in each). This costs 4 Resources, one per space, so 26July Resources drop from 10 to 6. The only 26July Special Activity possible with a Rally Op is Infiltrate, so the player Infiltrates one of the Police cubes in Santiago de Cuba and replaces it with a 26July Guerrilla. Finally, space Control is adjusted: the Govt Control markers in Las Villas and Santiago de Cuba are removed, and a 26July Control marker is placed in Matanzas.



*The Syndicate exploits the DR’s internal divisions in Camagüey Province, while M26 infiltrates the Santiago police force.*

3) The next played card is *Anastasia*, and after that comes *Ambassador Smith*. The DR is 1st Eligible, but the Event Instructions make it ignore this event. Looking at the Non-player Directorío flowchart, the first question is if DR can do Terror in an Active (Support or Opposition) space or Assassinate a Government Base. Neither of these are possible: there are no Government Bases on the map, and the only DR Guerrillas in an Active Support or Opposition space (Havana City) were Activated by the Government’s Sweep on the first card, so they can’t do Terror.

Looking at the next question: DR has 6+ Guerrillas available, so it will Rally per the following priorities:

- First, flipping Active DR Guerrillas Underground in spaces with cubes and a DR Base. That is nowhere: the only Active DR Guerrillas are in Havana City which has no DR Base.

- Next, placing Bases wherever there are 3+ DR Guerrillas and room. That too is nowhere.
- Finally, placing DR Guerrillas first at DR Bases (adds 3 Guerrillas at the Base in Oriente), then with DR Guerrillas (Havana City, but it is at Active Support so no DR Rally is possible there), and finally 1 random space. This time there are many possible spaces, so the player rolls on the Random Space table (8.2): a “2” and a “5” gives Las Villas, so 1 DR Guerrilla is placed there. Finally DR Resources go 5 to 3.

The DR Special Activity that goes with Rally is to Subvert. Since 26July is not at Victory (1st bullet in the Subvert box), meaning that the 26July Victory marker is not at 16 or higher (the 26July Victory condition, 7.1), DR would Subvert a Province at Support if it Controlled any (2nd bullet). Failing that, it would Subvert a Neutral Province if possible (3rd bullet). But the only Province it Controls is Oriente, which is at Passive Opposition. DR therefore Subverts Oriente, gaining 2 Resources (DR Resources go up to 5 again) and removing the Opposition marker in Oriente. Oriente has 2 Population, so the 26July Victory marker is moved down from 7 to 5.

The Government is 2nd Eligible, and it too has an Event Instruction telling it to ignore the *Anastasia* Event. If it had been a player Faction it would have been restricted to playing the Event or a LimOp, but Non-player Factions get to do normal Operations and (usually) a Special Activity instead of LimOps! (See 8.1, 5th bullet.) This time there is a City that lacks Govt Control (Santiago de Cuba), so the Government will Train for up to 9 Resources (but it only has 7 left, limiting it to Training in at most 3 spaces):

- First, while it has 4+ cubes available, at Cities or Govt Bases with no Govt Control, then at those with no Police, then those with no Troops. Santiago de Cuba has no Govt Control, so the Government Trains there to place 4 cubes (2 Police and 2 Troops, as per 8.1.2 1st bullet). The other two Cities still have all of Govt Control, Police, and Troops, though, and there are no Government Bases on the map; so the Government will not Train to place cubes in any further spaces even though it still has 4+ cubes available.
- Then to build a Base in a Province with 2+ cubes, no Government Base, and room for one. Government has 3 Troop cubes in La Habana Province and 2 in Camagüey Province. An equal-chance die roll selects Camagüey Province, so the 2 Troops there are replaced with a Govt Base. The Govt Control marker is removed, since the Base does not outnumber the Syndicate Guerrilla present in the space.
- Since a Base was built, no Civic Action would be allowed even if the Government had had sufficient Resources for it.

These Ops cost a total of 4 Resources (2 per space), reducing Government Resources from 7 to 3.

*The Government invests in an expanded military presence in the countryside.*

The “then” arrow from the Train box leads to the Transport Special Activity. Havana and Santiago each have 3 Troops beyond the number of pieces needed to maintain Govt Control (to use the formulation on the flowchart, they are “above Control”). An equal-chance roll selects Santiago. The first “To” priority is a Province with Police but no Troops (there is none), then a space with more Active Guerrillas than Troops (also none), and finally any space where the Transported Troops would remove another Faction’s Control. Pinar del Río and Matanzas meet the last condition: a random roll selects Pinar del Río. Three Troop cubes move the entire length of

the island from Santiago to Pinar, replacing the Syndicate Control there with Govt Control.



*The Government transports newly trained troops from one end of the island to the other.*

4) *Ambassador Smith* is played; the *Sierra Maestra Manifesto* is next. The Syndicate is 1st Eligible and plays the Event. US Alliance is already Firm and can’t go any higher, but Aid and Syndicate Resources both increase from 15 to 24.

*The Syndicate has helped itself but also its Non-player friend the Government.*

26July is now 2nd Eligible. The player chooses to Rally again, this time placing Bases in Sierra Maestra and Santiago (removing 2 Guerrillas from each space) and placing a second Guerrilla in Las Villas. The player then Infiltrates the last Troop cube from Las Villas, placing a third Guerrilla there and taking Control of the space. The new Bases increase the Opposition + Bases count from 5 to 7. The Operations cost 3 Resources, reducing the 26July Resources from 6 to 3.

5) The next card up is the *Sierra Maestra Manifesto* (revealing *Larrazábal*). DR plays the Event (but remains Eligible according to the Event text). In the card’s Faction order, each Faction places 2 non-Casino pieces in a space where they already have pieces:

26July is first out. The player only has one Base available, and places it along with a Guerrilla in Las Villas. (This is a bit risky since the DR Guerrilla there might attempt to Assassinate the Base if the DR turns to Terror, but until then it gives the 26July a very strong forward base.) Since a Base was placed, Opposition + Bases increases to 8.

Next in card Faction order is the Directorio. The 3rd bullet of 8.4.4 in the Non-player rules says that Non-player Factions select spaces for Event execution first to place as many Bases as possible. Since DR has three Bases available, it must try to place two of them if possible. Two of the three spaces with DR pieces already have a non-Casino Base in them (Oriente and Las Villas), preventing stacking of 2 DR Bases there. So the two DR Bases are placed in the other space, Havana City, and the DR Pop + Bases score increases to 5.

The Syndicate comes third. All of its Bases are Casinos, so it can only place Guerrillas. Rolling on the Random Space table selects Camagüey City, where there are no Syndicate pieces yet, so the player follows the arrows on the chart around to Havana City and places two Syndicate Guerrillas there. There are now 7 Government Cubes (3 Troops, 4 Police), 4 DR pieces (2 Bases, 2 Guerrillas) and 3 Syndicate pieces (1 Casino, 2 Guerrillas) in Havana City, so Govt Control of the City is removed.

The Government is last. It has a Base available and will attempt to place it as per 8.4.4, but it is also guided by the first bullet of 8.1.2, which says that Non-player Government only places 1 Base per

Province and none in Cities. (After all, Cities are in effect indestructible Government Bases already!) The player therefore looks for Provinces with cubes but no Government Base and finds two: Pinar del Río and La Habana. An equal-chance roll selects La Habana, so the new Government Base is placed there. The second Government piece placed there is a Police cube per the second bullet of 8.1.2.

The Event is over and the Government now does Ops. This time neither Havana nor the Base in Camagüey Province has Govt Control, so it will Train again. Its 3 remaining Resources are only sufficient for one space. Since the two candidate spaces have equal priority (both lack Govt Control), an equal-chance roll is used and selects Camagüey Province. Two Police and 2 Troop cubes are placed there, and Government Resources drop from 3 to 1.

The Special Activity is Transport again. Havana City has 3 Troop cubes but is Uncontrolled. Camagüey City and Santiago de Cuba each have 1 Troop cube with enough Police cubes also present to maintain Govt Control by themselves: each City has 1 Troop above Control. An equal-chance die roll selects Camagüey as the “From” City. Looking at the “To” priorities, there are no Provinces with Police and no Troops, nor any where Active Guerrillas exceed the Troops present; but 26July Control of Matanzas could be broken by a single Troop cube. The Troop in Camagüey City is therefore Transported to Matanzas, and the 26July Control marker in Matanzas is removed.

6) *Larrazábal* is played, and the next card will be the first *Propaganda!* 26July has no Bases available so can’t benefit from the Event, but the shaded text would both remove a 26July Base and hurt its Resources. The player decides to play Ops only, forcing the 2nd Eligible Syndicate to do Ops as well. 26July Rallies in Santiago de Cuba to place 4 Guerrillas, and in Matanzas to place 1 Guerrilla. Santiago and Matanzas both fall under 26July Control, and 26July Resources drop to 1.

The Syndicate is 2nd Eligible, and finally gets to do its first Operations! It has both Guerrillas available and Casinos without Guerrillas guarding them, so it Rallies a Guerrilla in each of Pinar del Río and La Habana Province for a total cost of 2 Resources (Syndicate Resources go from 24 to 22). There are no Active Syndicate Guerrillas that need to be flipped Underground. Following the flowchart, Syndicate then does a Profit Special Activity. All 3 Casino spaces have open Casinos, Syndicate Guerrillas and enemies, and none of them have Cash yet, so they all have equal priority. The player decides to save time by using an equal-chance roll to determine the space that will NOT get a Cash marker: the roll points to Pinar del Río, so one Cash marker is placed with Syndicate Guerrillas in each of La Habana and Havana City.

7) *Propaganda!* (next is *Pact of Caracas*). The first Propaganda Phase proceeds as follows:

**Victory.** No Faction has met its Victory Conditions. Even if the 26July had, the game would continue, since the player in a 1-player game can only win at the end of the final Propaganda Phase (8.9).

**Resources.** Government Resources go to 37, 26July to 5, DR to 8, and the Syndicate to 24. Almost all the Mob’s income was Skimmed! Per 8.1.2 1st bullet, the Syndicate then uses its Cash markers to place new (open) Casinos in La Habana and Havana City.

**Support.** First the US Alliance is adjusted. Total Support is 16, which is “18 or less”, so the US Alliance goes down from “Firm” to “Reluctant” and Aid drops from 24 to 14.

Non-player Government then buys Civic Action per 8.8.6. It can afford to buy 7 Civic Actions without dropping below 9 Resources, but the other requirements—Control, Police, and Troops—are met only in La Habana Province (at Passive Support) and Camagüey Province (Passive Opposition). The Government buys 4 Civic Actions for 16 Resources and shifts both of these spaces to Active Support. Total Support increases to 19, Government Resources fall to 21, and 26July’s Opposition + Bases drops to 7.

26July can Agitate in Matanzas, Las Villas, and Santiago, but shifting all of them to Active Opposition would spend all its Resources. In addition, the player plans to do some Terror and Kidnapping in Santiago (now that the Guerrillas there comfortably outnumber the Police), which will also cause shifts. 26July spends 3 Resources to shift Matanzas and Las Villas to Active Opposition, leaving Santiago de Cuba Neutral. 26July Resources go from 5 to 2, and Opposition + Bases to 12.

Shifting Las Villas to Active Opposition would normally be a bad idea since it would cause the DR Guerrilla there to Terrorize and Assassinate the 26July Base, but the player sees Pact of Caracas ahead and plans to use it to prevent such DR action against 26July’s interest.

The only candidate space for the Directorio’s Expat Backing (6.3.4, 8.6.2) is Oriente, as all other spaces are either at Active Support or Active Opposition or Controlled by some other Faction. The free Rally places a Base in Oriente, removing 2 of the 4 DR Guerrillas there and moving the DR Population + Bases Victory marker from 5 to 6.

**Redeploy.** Per 6.4 and 8.8.7, Non-player Government must Redeploy Troops from all Provinces that lack a Government Base. One such Province is Pinar del Río, with 3 Troop cubes. In order to keep Govt Control after the Reset, it needs to move in 3 Police cubes to replace the Troops. Per 8.8.7, it will take each Police from the space with the most Police at the time, without losing any Control or removing the last Police from any space. Havana City has 4 Police, Santiago has 3, and the two Camagüeys have 2 each; so two of the three Police going to Pinar del Río are taken from Havana City and the third from Santiago. When the Police redeployments are all done, there are 3 Police in Pinar del Río, 2 each in Havana City, Santiago, and the Camagüeys, and 1 in La Habana Province.

The next step would be to Redeploy 1 Police to each City or Govt Base that doesn’t have any, but there is no such space.

Finally Troops all around the map are Redeployed as evenly as possible among Government-Controlled Govt Bases and Cities. There are 3 Troops in Pinar del Río and 1 in Matanzas that have to relocate; and they need to be distributed as evenly as possible among La Habana Province (now with 3 Troops), Camagüey Province (2 Troops), and Camagüey City (none). Moving the Troop in Matanzas to Camagüey Province and the 3 Troops in Pinar del Río to Camagüey City leaves all three Govt-Controlled spaces with 3 Troops each.

(Remember that 6.4 allows Redeployment of cubes FROM but not TO spaces that lack Govt Control!)

**Reset.** All Factions are marked Eligible, all Active Guerrillas are flipped Underground, and any closed Casinos would open.

*The Government and 26July have both made progress in the short Campaign. DR Bases in Havana have great potential but are under regime threat. The Syndicate is lagging but has funds and new Casinos.*



Government forces redeploy, seeking to maintain control of the whole island.

8) Now the *Pact of Caracas* is up! This Event prevents 26July and the Directorio from doing any Operations or Special Activities that remove the other Faction's pieces or reduces Opposition, but they can still harm one another via Events. It is possible to cancel the *Pact* however, and Non-player Directorio will do so if player 26July is too successful (8.6.5). The next card is also revealed: *Sánchez Mosquera*.

26July plays the Event, and the corresponding chit is placed in the Insurgent Capability box on the map. Per the Event, 26July will stay Eligible.

The Directorio is 2nd Eligible, and since the Event was played, it will do Ops. It has Underground Guerrillas in two spaces at Active something (either Support or Opposition): two in Havana City (at Active Support), and one in Las Villas (at Active Opposition). Due to the *Pact of Caracas*, it can't execute Terror in Las Villas, since that would affect the Opposition marker there, but it can do so in Havana. By the flowchart, the DR will therefore do a Terror Op with Assassinate as the Special Activity.

Looking at the Terror priorities, the first target space for the Terror is Havana City, since it is at Active Support (first bullet in the Terror box); the second bullet cannot apply because the *Pact of Caracas* Insurgent Capability bans DR Terror where there is Opposition. The player then looks for Assassination targets as per the third bullet: first a Govt Base (there's none with any DR Guerrilla); then any player's Base (not possible due to the *Pact*—otherwise the 26July Base in Las Villas would be a prime target!); finally any other target. There are open Casinos in Havana City, but there are too many Police in the City.

The DR therefore does Terror in Havana City only and no Special Activity: one DR Guerrilla is Activated, a Terror marker placed and the Support marker flipped to its Passive side (reducing Total Support from 19 to 13). The Terror costs the DR 1 Resource, leaving 7.



DR urban terror!

9) *Sánchez Mosquera* is played, and the next Event will be *MAP*. The Government plays the Event; being a Momentum Event, it has no immediate effect, but it will modify the Government's Ops decisions per 8.8.1 and also make it ignore any further Events until the next Propaganda (8.1, 3rd bullet). The card is placed off the northwest corner of the gameboard as a reminder.



The 26July can follow up with Ops and Special Activity. Being very low on Resources, the player decides to do a Terror plus Kidnap combination just in Santiago, where the Police have been infiltrated sufficiently to no longer stand in the way. The Terror Op flips a 26July Guerrilla, places a Terror marker, and shifts the City to Passive Opposition (Opposition + Bases increases to 13). This costs 1 Resource (down to 1). A generous Kidnap die roll of “5” then transfers 5 Resources from the Government (down to 16) to the 26July (up to 6).

**10)** The Syndicate is 1st Eligible to play *MAP*, but the Event Instructions tell it to do Ops & Special Activity instead. There are already Syndicate Guerrillas in all Casino spaces, so it won't Rally. But it can March to empty ECs: the Guerrilla in Camagüey Province Marches to the Factory EC, and a Guerrilla from either La Habana Province or Pinar del Río will March to the Cigar EC (an equal-chance roll selects Pinar as the origin space for this move). Marching to ECs costs 0, so Syndicate Resources remain at 24. All the Cash markers are available, so the Special Activity is Profit. As there is no Guerrilla left in Pinar del Río, that space is not a candidate, so the Profit activity places one Cash marker in each of Havana and La Habana.

The Directorio is 2nd Eligible. Per the 2nd bullet of 8.1, it always chooses Ops & Special Activity over the Event when it is 2nd Eligible and 26July is a player. There are 6 or more DR Guerrillas available, so it will Rally. The first bullet in the Rally box doesn't apply (only one of the two DR Guerrillas in Havana City is Active), and it can't place a Base, so it places Guerrillas at its Bases. An equal-chance die roll selects Oriente first, so 4 Guerrillas are placed there; then the remaining 6 are placed in Havana City. The Rally costs 2 Resources (down to 5), but DR then Subverts Oriente restoring its Resources to 7.



*The Mob makes a grab for the tobacco industry and stacks its gambling profits, while the DR builds for decisive control of Havana.*

The burgeoning urban guerrilla force gives DR Control of the capital and increases DR Population + Bases to 12—that's a DR Victory if it can keep this Control until the next Propaganda, meaning defeat for the M26 player as DR steals the Revolution!

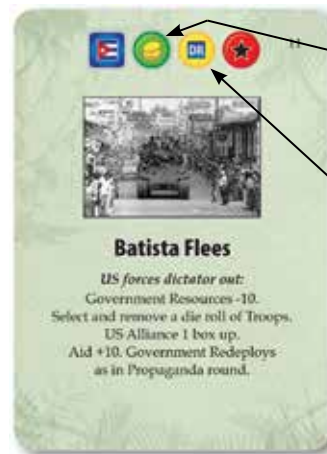
**11)** The next event is *Operation Fisherman*, to be followed by *Batista Flees*. 26July is 1st Eligible, and the player decides to play the

Event to break into the Government-supportive western Provinces. Although no M26 pieces are available, a player Faction executing Ops or Events may remove his own pieces from the map to available (1.4.1, 2nd bullet; note that Non-player Factions do not do this). The player removes the Base and one Guerrilla from Las Villas to the 26July Available box, and then plays the Event to place them in Pinar del Río instead (removing the Govt Control).

The Government is up. Havana and Santiago both lack Govt Control, so the Government will Train. A random roll selects Santiago as the first Train space, and 4 cubes (2 Troops, 2 Police) are placed there: enough to regain Control. Only 1 cube remains available, so no further Training is possible.

Training in 1 space costs 3 Resources, leaving 13, so Govt could buy 1 Civic Action in Santiago before dropping below 9 Resources. But 1 Civic Action would only remove the Terror marker, not shift the Opposition, so the Ops ends without any Civic Action (8.8.2). The Government then executes a Transport Special Activity. Camagüey City has the most Troops above Control, and the Pinar del Río has Police but no Troops, so the 3 Troop cubes in Camagüey City are Transported to Pinar del Río (incidentally also restoring Govt Control there).

**12)** *Batista Flees* is played, revealing *Santo Trafficante Jr* as the next card. Again, Non-player Event Instructions tell the 1st Eligible Syndicate to do Ops & Special Activity. The Casinos in Pinar del Río have no Syndicate Guerrilla to protect them, so the Syndicate Rallies its last available Guerrilla there (reducing Syndicate Resources to 23). It then executes a Profit Special Activity, first placing a Cash marker in Pinar del Río where there is no Cash already and then randomly selecting La Habana Province to receive the last Cash marker. The Syndicate Guerrilla in La Habana Province now holds 2 Cash markers.



Syndicate special instruction:  
Ops & Special Activity (8.4.1)

DR 2nd Eligible and 26July a player:  
Ops & Special Activity (8.1)

The Directorio is 2nd Eligible, and, since 26July is a player, it too ignores the Event for Ops & Special Activity.

*Despite the threat welling up in Havana, Batista will not flee!*

Following the flowchart, Directorio can neither do Terror in an Active space nor Assassinate a Govt Base, it has no pieces Available, and it can't gain Control of any space by Attacking the Government or Syndicate; so it will March.

DR's first March priority (bullet) is to take Control of the highest Population space possible without losing Control anywhere (4th bullet), but this is impossible: the spaces adjacent to DR Guerrillas all have too many pieces from other Factions. The second priority

is to move “from 1 space with the most DR yet to move, to a space closer to Havana.” The largest group of DR Guerrillas that hasn’t moved yet is already IN Havana City and can’t move any closer, so DR will instead March the next biggest group: 5 Guerrillas from Oriente to Camagüey Province (leaving 1 Guerrilla in Oriente per the 4th March bullet). Camagüey Province is at Support and has 3+ cubes, so the Marching Guerrillas all Activate. (Had there been fewer than 3 cubes in Camagüey Province, Non-player DR would only March with as many Guerrillas it could slip in without Activating, per the last bullet 8.1.2.)

Marching into 1 non-EC space costs 1 Resource, but DR once again Subverts in Oriente for 2 Resources, so the DR Resources increase to 8.



Directorio forces converge on the capital.

13) The *Santo Trafficante Jr* Event is up, and the next card is turned over: *Coup*. The player chooses to do an Attack Ops with an Ambush Special Activity to remove 2 Police cubes in Pinar del Río (removing Govt Control again). The Ambush Special Activity allows the Faction to place a Guerrilla in the space, but there are no 26July Guerrillas available, so the player once again removes one from Las Villas in order to place it in Pinar del Río instead. This costs 1 Resource, reducing 26July Resources to 5.

The Government is 2nd Eligible. Although the Event is still available, it will execute Ops & Special Activity, both because of the Momentum Event played earlier in the campaign and because the Event Instructions tell it to (an Event making it harder to Skim is NOT in the Government’s best interests!). The *Sánchez Mosquera* Momentum instructions (8.8.1) say “Always Assault if it would be possible to remove a 26July Base or any 4 or more Guerrillas from Mountain.” Since this is not possible, the player instead uses the flowchart as usual to determine what Ops the Government will do.

Note that the 8.8.1 Momentum summaries on the Non-Player Government play aid are abbreviated to fit. If there is any doubt as to their implementation, please always refer to the full text in the Rules of Play as well!

There are Cities that lack Govt Control (Havana) or Troops (Camagüey), so the Government attempts to Train. However, there are only 3 cubes and no Bases left, so it can’t meet any of the Train priorities. Following the flowchart’s “if none” arrow from the Train box leads to the Garrison box.

In a Non-player Garrison Op (8.8.3), each moving cube is taken



The regime garrisons Cuba’s cities and economic centers.

from the space that has the most of that type at the time, first Police and then Troops, without removing the last Police from any space, but allowing loss of Control in the Provinces (and temporarily in Cities as well).

Per the first Garrison bullet, the Government first moves Police to equal Guerrillas at all ECs: one Syndicate Guerrilla at the Cigar EC, and one at the Factory EC. Santiago begins the Op with 4 Police, while no other space has more than 2, so both of the Police cubes going to ECs are taken from Santiago (giving 26July temporary Control of the City). Both Guerrillas on the ECs are Activated.

Once the ECs are covered, the Government attempts to restore Govt Control to all Cities and make sure that there is at least 1 Police and 1 Troop in each. Camagüey City is under Govt Control but has no Troops, Santiago is two cubes short of Govt Control since the Police left for the ECs, and Havana City is a massive 10 cubes short of Control. The Provinces have 9 Troops and 1 Police that are able to move, and Camagüey City can give up a Police.

This is 2 cubes short of everything needed, so the player makes a random roll to determine which City will be short-changed: Santiago. One Police from each of the two Camagüeys move to Havana (leaving 1 Police cube in each); then 2 Troops from each of Pinar del Río and La Habana and Camagüey Provinces follow them (leaving 1 Río cube in each). Finally, random rolls send the last Troop cubes needed to Havana from Pinar del Río, and La Habana and 1 Troop from Camagüey Province to Camagüey City. La Habana Province reverts to Syndicate Control.

All these Troop and Police movements cost the Government a mere 3 Resources (to 10). The DR's Population + Bases score plummet from 12 to a more normal 7 (losing Control of Havana City, but gaining Control of Camagüey Province). By its flowchart, the Non-player Government then executes an Air Strike: since the rebel Bases are all protected, it takes out the Active 26July Guerrilla in Pinar del Río.

*After using police to block Syndicate earnings from economic centers, the Government reacts to the growing DR threat, pulling back forces from the provinces to protect the capital.*



**14)** Now the Syndicate plays the shaded version of Coup, revealing *El Che* as the next card. All DR pieces in Cities with cubes (that is to say, the 8 DR Guerrillas and 2 Bases Havana City) are Activated and the Government gets a free Assault against them. Thanks to the Garrison Ops last card, there are enough cubes in Havana City to remove all 10 DR pieces. The US Alliance marker is moved one box down to “Embargoed”, and the DR Population + Bases score falls to 5.

*Government forces—informed by the Mob— preempt a coup against Batista by Havana's Directorio forces; they crush the rebels ruthlessly but at a high cost in foreign political support!*

The Directorio has the next move. It can't do any Terror: the Guerrillas in Camagüey Province (which has both Active Support and a Government Base ripe for Assassination) are all Active, and the

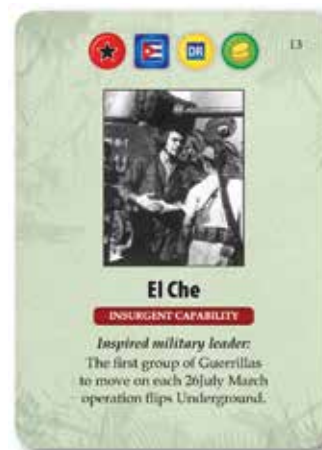
Underground Guerrilla in Active Opposition Las Villas isn't allowed to Terrorize due to the *Pact of Caracas*.

After the disaster in Havana, however, the DR does have plenty of pieces available, so it Rallies. It can't build any Base (the only space with 3+ DR Guerrillas and room for another Base is Camagüey Province, where Active Support blocks DR Rally). So it adds 4 Guerrillas at its Bases in Oriente. The other spaces where it has Guerrillas are Active Support or Opposition, so it can't Rally there either, so the lowest Rally priority—any random space—selects Havana City, placing a single Guerrilla there. Rallying in 2 spaces costs 2 Resources (down to 6). DR then Subverts, and this time it can remove Support by doing the Special Activity in Camagüey Province (DR Resources to 7, Total Support to 11).



*The Directorio rebuilds in the aftermath of the failed coup.*

**15)** 26July and Government are now Eligible. The player is eager to play *El Che*, but the next Event is *Vilma Espín*. Curses! *El Che* is one of the best 26July Capabilities, but if the player takes the *El Che* Event, the Syndicate will play shaded *Vilma*, which will wipe out all the 26July forces in Santiago—a blow nearly as disastrous as the one that just hit the Directorio, not least because it would leave the Government in Control of all the Cities, placing it closer to its Victory conditions and leaving it free to Sweep the countryside again. No thanks!



*Played card*



*On deck*

On the other hand, the Government won't play *El Che* due to the Momentum (and Event Instructions, too), so it is safe for 26July to pass (26July Resources to 6), which makes the Government 1st Eligible instead.

The first question on Non-player Government flowchart still leads to the Train box, but there still aren't enough cubes available for that. So once again it ends up at Garrison. The ECs are already covered,



but Santiago is 2 cubes short of Govt Control, so the Government moves 2 Police from Havana City to Santiago for a cost of 4 Resources (down to 6) to restore Santiago to Govt Control.

The “then” arrow leads to the Airstrike box, but — since the Government is now under US Embargo — this Special Activity isn’t allowed. Instead we continue along the arrows to the Reprisal box. The only Opposition space under Govt Control is Santiago, so that City is shifted from Passive Opposition to Neutral, and one Underground 26July Guerrilla is relocated to Sierra Maestra. The Reprisals also place a second Terror marker in Santiago, and Opposition + Bases goes down to 12.



Government Reprisals in Santiago.

**16) Vilma Espín** is up: an Event any *CUBA LIBRE* solo player has reason to fear, regardless of which side he or she plays. And after her, the 2nd *Propaganda!* is showing. The player would like to play the Event, but using it on Santiago would be rather pointless because the Government would most likely do further Reprisals there to remove any new Opposition. And using *Vilma* to shift Oriente to Active Opposition would be almost suicidal, since it would raise 26July to Victory (Bases + Opposition >15) and push the Directorio per 8.6.5 into cancelling the Pact by removing two of its Bases! The latter would put 26July Opposition and Bases at risk from DR Terror and Subversion; and removing the last two DR Bases would put the DR out of the fight for a long time, leaving the 26July to face the Government and Syndicate alone.

Instead the player blocks the event by executing Ops without any Special Activity. In preparation for a Terror strike after the *Propaganda!*, 26July Marches one Guerrilla from Matanzas to La Habana Province (staying Underground, since there are not enough cubes in La Habana to Activate it), two from Sierra Maestra to Oriente, and one from Sierra Maestra to the Sugar Cane EC. This costs 2 Resources (down to 4), and the 26July Eligibility cylinder is placed in the “Ops only” box on the Sequence of Play chart.

The Syndicate can only do Ops and Special Activity. All Casinos have Guerrillas to protect them and there aren’t any empty ECs within reach (or at all, for that matter), so it will Construct. The first Construct bullet doesn’t apply (the upcoming *Propaganda!* card is not the final one), so per the second bullet it places a new (closed) Casino. It would prefer to build in Pinar del Río alongside that Casino, but that Province is uncontrolled; a random roll between Camagüey City and Santiago de Cuba selects Santiago as the Construction site.

Syndicate then continues to the Special Activity: all Cash markers are already on the map, and no Casino is in a space Controlled by the 26July or DR, so it won’t Muscle; therefore it will Bribe, paying another 3 Resources (15 left). The top priority for Bribes is to take

back Cash if possible (it isn’t); then to remove 26July from a space with an open Casino. Per 8.1.2, 4th bullet, the Syndicate removes the 26July Base from Pinar del Río (Opposition + Bases to 11).



*The Mob continues construction apace, hoping that bribery will hold the Revolution at bay.*

**17) The second *Propaganda!* card proceeds:**

**Victory.** No Faction has met its condition.

**Resources.** The 26July Guerrilla at the Sugar Cane EC Sabotages it, since there’s no Police around to prevent it. The Factions then get their Resources: Government Resources increase to 28, 26July to 7, DR to 11 and the Syndicate to 41. (This time, the Syndicate could use its Cash marker in Pinar de Río to build a new Casino — taking Syndicate Control of Pinar and raising Open Casinos to 6 — and used the rest for Resources).

**Support.** The US Alliance is already Embargoed, but Total Support is 18 or less so the Aid is cut from 14 to 4.

With 28 Resources, the Government can buy 4 Civic Actions before dropping below the 9-Resource limit. The greatest shift it can achieve (its goal per 8.8.6) is by 2 Civic Actions in Havana City, removing the Terror marker and shifting the space to Active Support, and then buy the third in Camagüey City, shifting it too to Active Support. The 4th Civic Action could only remove Terror in Santiago and is ignored. Total Support increases to 18, and Government Resources fall to 16.

26July cannot Agitate anywhere: all spaces it Controls are already at Active Opposition.

With Camagüey Province now Neutral, the Directorio’s Expat Backing can place a Base there in exchange for 2 Guerrillas, raising DR Pop + Bases to 6.

**Redeployment.** All Troops are in Cities, but unevenly distributed: 11 in Havana, 1 in Camagüey and 3 in Santiago. The Government therefore (by the 2nd bullet of 8.8.7) moves 2 Troops from Havana to Santiago and 4 Troops from Havana to Camagüey City — in what looks like a preparation for a rescue expedition to its beleaguered Camagüey Base!

**Reset.** All Factions are marked as Eligible, the Terror markers removed from the map, and Sánchez Mosquera is discarded to the played cards pile. All Active Guerrillas are flipped Underground and closed Casinos are opened. The latter increases Open Casinos to 7.

*The Government has survived a major crisis with both its forces and popular support intact. The DR has been driven to the east, and the 26July is spread thin. But the regime's finances are poor, its US ally has virtually abandoned it, and the 26July and DR remain poised to terrorize the country—their Pact still in effect. And the Syndicate is finally developing into a power of its own, with coffers filled almost to the brim and new construction on the way.*

That puts the 26July last. The Non-player Government's margin would be 4 above the player 26July's: the Revolution would have failed badly, and Batista would have clung to the reins of power (8.9).

Fortunately for the player, this was not the final round. Nevertheless, our Example of Play ends here, having sought to demonstrate or discuss most of the routines and rules used in solitary CUBA LIBRE. You can flip the next card to continue from here, or start a new game on your own. Best of luck!

Had this been the final Propaganda Round, the Victory Margins would have been as follows:

- Government 0.
- Syndicate 0.
- Directorio -3.
- 26July -4.



Cuba, early 1958: The game board just before Reset of the 2nd Propaganda Round.

## THE MYTH OF FOCO

By Jeff Grossman

Myths are fundamental to human beings. They help us explain things that are difficult to grasp and can teach us valuable lessons about our culture and place in the world. There have been many myths created about the Cuban Revolution, often created by the main characters themselves. Unfortunately, in many instances these myths prevent historians and casual readers from understanding what happened during and after the Revolution.

During the Revolution, Fidel Castro gave several estimates of the number of guerrillas under his command and variously reported ranges from 2,000 to 8,000. After the Revolution, the number became 300. Many historians have accepted the latter number, despite it being contradicted by a number of other contemporary sources. Fidel was creating his own myth, one that had room only for his close associates or dead rivals (José Antonio Echeverría and Frank País). His exclusion of many in his movement was calculated to exclude those “outsiders” from power in the new government.

The low number was also helpful for another group, the exile community in the United States, centered on Miami. They could claim that the 26 July Movement had been only a small part of the insurgency that overthrew Fulgencio Batista, and that Fidel had stolen their victory. It is a myth that holds strong today, fueling the resentment that the exile community harbors toward the Castro regime. It also keeps many from understanding the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion, and that the majority of Cubans did support Fidel, at least initially.

The myth of the 300 men also impacted the thinking of another close to Fidel, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, an Argentinian who had fought with him. Che’s view of the Revolution was that of a soldier on the ground, and he dismissed the importance of anyone in the Revolution other than his small group of guerrillas.

In an article for *Strategy and Tactics* (#166, February 1994), Brian Train summarized how Che was caught up in this myth. Guevara was looking for a way to export the Cuban Revolution to the rest of Latin America. Based on a selective understanding of what had happened in Cuba, Guevara and his friend Regis Debray, a French philosopher then working at the University of Havana, worked on a model of revolutionary warfare that would export easily. They made three basic assumptions:

- That popular forces can always defeat a regular army in a guerrilla war;
- That the main arena of action will be the countryside; and
- That it is not necessary that all conditions for making a successful revolution exist. The professional revolutionary cadre group can either create these conditions itself or simply do without them.

Debray, in his book *Revolution in the Revolution?* (1967), proposed that, by staying in the mountains and doing a good job of fighting, small groups of professional guerrillas could evade the government, inspire the people to a general revolt, and create the military power that would deliver power into the hands of the people. Revolution could be built from the top down rather than from the bottom up.

Small cells or *focos* of professional revolutionary cadres, placed in the countryside, would act as seeds or nuclei of future revolt. They could strike at will to defeat the government forces in detail and yet be small and mobile enough to avoid their counterstrikes, recruit more and more peasants to their cause as their notoriety and



Photo: Yex

*Let me tell you a story...*

perceived potency spread, and widen the area of struggle eventually to include the cities prior to the ultimate seizure of power.

Debray also stated that the only struggle with any meaning would take place outside the cities. He had a romantic view of life in the hills, asserting that “the mountain proletarianizes the bourgeois and peasant elements, and the city can only bourgeoisify the proletarians,” and a fascination with violence often found in frustrated intellectuals.

Of course, Che’s attempts to follow this blueprint led to his death in 1967 in Bolivia, a year after his arrival there. Tragically, the foco strategy did not die with him, but evolved into urban insurgencies in the late 1960s and 1970s, the Tupamaros of Uruguay being perhaps the most well-known.

Why did the Cuban Revolution succeed?

- The infrastructure to resupply the guerrillas was well-established and functioned efficiently even if shipments were lost or captured.
- The conditions for revolution were fulfilled as all but the highest classes of Cuban society were alienated from Batista, and ready to accept a radical new government.
- There was close cooperation between the guerrillas in the mountains and urban guerrillas.
- Fidel’s leadership was constant and firm from the beginning. He was the center of both the political and military decision-making and made few, if any, poor decisions.
- Finally, with support from the United States failing, the Batista Government was simply not committed to an all-out struggle. After his first significant military defeat, at Santa Clara, Batista packed up and left, leaving only confusion and defeat behind. It’s hard to know if the timing and nature of his departure was his way of giving the middle finger to his allies, or if he simply didn’t care.

Of course, the greatest myth was that created by the United States itself, as successive administrations continued to believe that the only possible interpretation of the “Cuban Problem” was that Fidel was a madman who could not understand the many benefits of a friendly relationship with the USA. The difficulty, of course, was that Fidel understood his opponent far better than it understood him, continuing to manipulate US policy toward Cuba as an overmatched, but experienced, boxer would manipulate a younger, stronger opponent. As anti-Castro members of Congress urged harsher and more punitive measures against Cuba, Castro became more secure, tightened his grip on power, and became a persuasive voice for nonaligned

nations. In that light, perhaps the US can be thankful that its most canny, resourceful opponent was primarily defensive in nature and the harm he caused was primarily inflicted on his own people.

## DESIGN NOTES

### Jeff Grossman:

**Note on 2nd Printing:** All design work and commentary in *Cuba Libre* were finished before the dramatic thaw in relations between Cuba and the United States beginning in December 2014. I hope this new phase of relations will foster increased scholarship on the Cuban Revolution, which may prove or disprove some of the models contained within this simulation.

### History

**Cuba and the United States.** Most Americans, if they know anything at all about the Cuban Revolution, will believe that it began with a small group of guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra. In reality, Cuba had been in a continuous, often low-level, insurgency since shortly after the Spanish-American War ended.

The early years of Cuban independence after the Spanish American War (1898) planted the seeds of the resentment that Cubans would feel toward the United States through the 20th Century. While making efforts to improve Cuban infrastructure, little was done to insure that the economic benefits of the new relationship would benefit Cubans. The Platt Amendment of 1901 seemed to make clear the nature of the relationship.

#### Platt Amendment—

*III. That the government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the treaty of Paris on the United States, now to be assumed and undertaken by the government of Cuba.*

The Republic of Cuba was from its infancy rife with “graft, corruption, maladministration, fiscal irresponsibility, and social insensitivity—especially toward Afro-Cubans.” (*Britannica*) By 1958, 75% of arable land was foreign owned, and the majority of the populace saw little benefit from the booming tourism which began in the prohibition era and also flourished in the post-war boom.

Cubans had little faith in any promised reform, and one of the only avenues of social mobility was the Army. Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar was just such an individual, enlisting in the Army as a stenographer when he was 20. In 1933, at age 32, he led the “sergeant’s revolt” resulting in Batista becoming the dominant force in Cuban politics for the next 25 years. He enjoyed a fairly popular term as President from 1940-44, then left Cuba, living for a time in Miami where he invested heavily in real estate. Returning to Cuba in a bloodless coup in 1952, Batista’s policies featured tight control of the media, expansion of the secret police, and personal enrichment. Batista’s support was limited almost entirely to the political elite and the army. As the insurgent forces began making gains and the United States government began distancing itself from him, Batista began making plans to “cash in his chips” and leave.

**Insurrection in Cuba.** When the Castro brothers (Fidel and Raúl) along with Argentine Ernesto (Che) Guevara, and Camilo Cien-

fuegos arrived in Cuba, it seemed just another wrinkle in a long-running insurrection. For years there had been uprisings, protests, coup attempts, and groups of rebels holding up in remote areas.

Why did this insurrection succeed where so many others had either failed or flickered out?

**Moncada.** The attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba in 1953 should have given Batista or others in the Cuban Government pause. Instead of the typical random act of desperation so common in insurrections, the attack was well-planned and executed, failing largely due to bad luck and a few alert sentries. Probably because Fidel was from a middle-class family, he was tried in public court and his public defense was a propaganda coup. His “History Will Absolve Me” was a product of a keen public-relations talent and a Jesuit education.

**Mexico.** After an amnesty for political prisoners in 1955, Castro went to Mexico to train and organize. While there he built the organization that was so effective in the Revolution. He made useful contacts including the young doctor Che, who would prove a talented guerrilla and commander, and Alberto Bayo, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War. Less known are the important contacts he established in the United States and throughout Cuba.

**26 July Movement.** Contrary to the popular myth (one created in part by Guevara and Fidel) the Movement of 26 July was not restricted to a small group of guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra. Instead, the “M26” operated throughout Cuba, Mexico, and the United States. It included organized recruitment, fundraising, and media relations groups, and organized regular shipments of weapons to the guerrillas. Without this organization, the guerrillas would have likely shared the fate of many guerrilla bands before and since, isolated and starving until they either gave up or died pointlessly.

**Urban guerrillas.** The M26 was also quite active in the major cities of Cuba. Frank País and Vilma Espín were able to keep a steady stream of equipment and manpower flowing from Santiago to the guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra. Havana was also the scene of frequent guerrilla attacks and other operations, which kept the Government from moving more troops against insurgents in Las Villas and Oriente. Additionally, the reprisals by the Government worked to the insurgents’ advantage as the middle class grew more disaffected with Batista. Combined with the activities of other groups opposing Batista, including the Directorio, the urban guerrillas contributed greatly to the success of the 26 July Movement.

**Leadership of the Directorio.** A number of individuals contended for leadership of the centrist insurgents in Cuba, but none possessed the keen political savvy or talent for developing skilled military leaders that were so abundant in the 26 July Movement. Instead the divergent groups turned to what was at hand: a dynamic student leader and idealist in José Antonio Echeverría, the determined but abrasive Fauré Chomón, the highly talented but insubordinant Eloy Gutiérrez-Menoyo, and the ardent Yanqui, William Alexander Morgan.

The only leader in the group likely to match Fidel in charisma was Echeverría, who died in the failed attempt to assassinate Batista in 1957. One possible leader was former President Carlos Prío Socarrás who had the best claim to be the legitimate President, seeing as he was the last Cuban leader to be elected in relatively honest elections. Unfortunately, Prío seemed to believe that he could best influence events from the safety of Miami, taking no active role in the Revolution other than dispensing money to the diverse insurgent groups.

One intriguing alternative exists as a small footnote in history.

The Cuban elections of 1958 are generally regarded as a complete fraud, but the likely winner of the elections would have been Carlos Márquez-Sterling y Guiral, an attorney and professor at the University of Havana. No mere academic, Márquez-Sterling was a skilled politician and political opponent of Batista. If the Directorio would have backed Márquez-Sterling as the legitimate President instead of backing Fidel's sabotage of the election itself, then Márquez-Sterling and the Directorio might not have been the historical footnotes that they remain.

Thus the Directorio turned for leadership to Fidel and hoped for the best. Once Batista was gone, they reasoned, they could press for the civil rights and liberal reforms that they wanted. At the time there was no way for them to realize how badly they had miscalculated both their faith in Fidel and the importance of their own achievements.

**The Other Insurrection: the Syndicate in Cuba.** Cuba had been familiar to organized crime for many years prior to Salvatore Lucania, aka Charles "Lucky" Luciano, moving to Havana in 1946. The mob had used Cuba as a major hub to import contraband (drugs and alcohol) into the US at least since the days of Prohibition. Luciano made a deal with the US Office of Naval Intelligence to secure his release from prison in exchange for the smooth operation of the New York waterfront during World War II, and was deported to Italy. He intended to run his mob empire from Havana, and brought the major crime families together at the famous Havana Conference. Unfortunately for Luciano, the US government discovered Luciano's plans and pressured the Cuban government into sending him back to Italy where he remained until his death.

Luciano ally Meyer Lansky was quick to see the possibility of Cuba as a destination for gambling, but he understood that the Cuban Government would have to be the silent partner, and President Carlos Prío Socarrás was not Lansky's choice for his partnership. Whether or not Batista's 1952 coup was arranged by the Mob, it was an ideal relationship for them. Batista was happy to change laws enabling the Mob to make bigger investments in Cuba (with bigger cuts going to Batista and his family) and protect them from the US Government. The price of course was that the fate of the Mob in Cuba was tied directly to Batista's fate, but Batista didn't seem to tell his partners that he was ready to make a run for the back door.

Lansky's elaborate financial system probably saved many of the big Syndicate investors in Cuba from ruin. He moved large amounts of cash quickly through shell corporations into Swiss bank accounts. Even though bosses like Santo Trafficante, Jr. disagreed with Lansky on occasion, the initial success of the casino business in Cuba and the profits generated were remarkable. What isn't known is the extent of organized crime's involvement in other businesses, such as prostitution, protection, and narcotics. While some sources insist it existed, others insist that Lansky demanded the Mob stay out of all businesses other than legitimate tourism.

**The United States Alliance.** The Cuban Revolution existed not only on the island of Cuba, but also within the United States government, especially the State Department. While Ambassador Earl Smith was supporter of Batista, William Wieland (Office of Middle American Affairs) advocated for the US to step in as a mediator guaranteeing free elections. Others in the government supported the 26 July movement or other insurgent groups.

In this case as well, Fidel adeptly managed the situation, manipulating American journalists, denying the presence of communists in the movement while actively recruiting them, and criticizing Batista for his anti-democratic actions at the same time his faction was sabotag-

ing elections and civic institutions. Thus Fidel was able to harvest the anti-Americanism in Cuba, while simultaneously undermining Batista's relations with the United States.

## Winning the Cuban Revolution

How could the various factions have won the historical context, and how does that translate into victory conditions in the game?

The 26 July needed not only to convince the Cuban population that it could fulfill not only the promises that previous revolutionaries had failed to deliver, but deliver the fruits of the improved economy to the entire population -- winning not only the hearts and minds of the peasants, but the growing middle class as well.

The Directorio needed to control territory and maintain a strong military presence to establish the kind of government they desired -- a liberal democracy -- and make themselves a major player in that government. Historically, the achievements of the various centrist insurgencies were modest enough that Fidel was able to effectively marginalize them after the war ended.

The Syndicate needed to continue their investment in Cuba by expanding casinos and other gambling enterprises. Short-term profits mattered far less than long-term development, and thus the Syndicate must look to winning the long game. A Syndicate faction in a winning position would have built enough of a tourist industry that whatever government formed after the war would have needed to keep their casino partnership alive.

The Government is in a strong position to begin the game, but is likely to face a rapidly growing insurgency with declining resources. Like Batista, the Government player will need to win either a quick, decisive war, or hope the rival insurgencies are divided enough to negotiate a truce keeping its traditional supporters (wealthy landowners and businessmen with American connections) still in power with their influence undiminished.

## Interpreting Faction Victory in the Game

**Government.** Although threatened by the insurgency, the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations restore backing to the traditional powers. Cuban society continues to be divided into rich and poor. The government remains unstable and frequent coups occur.

**Directorio.** With the ouster of Batista, democratic elections are held, and many reforms are attempted, but progress is limited by financial difficulties. Cubans enjoy their new civil rights, but are disaffected by the lack of agricultural reforms and the poor economy. Many Cubans emigrate to the United States in search of economic opportunities. The government experiences a number of coup attempts and changes in government. Fidel and Raúl Castro remain prominent politicians and serve terms as President.

**Syndicate.** The Syndicate wields enormous influence in Cuba and rules through a series of puppet governments, angering both the Cuban people and the American government. Little changes for the people as the fabulous wealth generated by the "Monaco of the Caribbean" winds up in the pockets of the powerful Mob families.

**26 July (Historical Outcome).** As Fidel's guerrillas seize power, he immediately embarks on a number of reforms which are modestly successful. Under the influence of his brother Raúl and Che Guevara, he adopts more aggressive (Marxist) reforms and becomes an ally of the Soviet Union. The Cuban people enjoy greatly improved education and health care, but have few civil rights. The Mob operates the Casinos for a short time, but Fidel decides that the modest

revenues they produce are not worth the trouble and closes them. Castro continues to manipulate the United States, using threats of an American invasion to excuse his iron grip on power.

## Cuba and Me

My first contact with the Cuban Revolution came when I rode with a friend's dad on a trip to Chicago. We went with him down a narrow alley, then parked the car and walked two flights up a fire escape. Two taps on the door, a short conversation in Spanish, and we were invited quickly into what must have been the largest stockpile of Cuban cigars in the city. I was sworn to secrecy, and was told that the cigar supplier had to leave his country, but was sure he'd be able to return soon. I never learned anything more about the man and very much doubt that he was able to return, but I seem to always be encountering new stories about Cuba and the Revolution.

I've been designing games for over 40 years now (for an audience often limited to a few close friends), and I've tinkered with and abandoned a large number of games on Cuba. I thought the chances of ever publishing a game on the topic impossibly remote. However, a few years ago I quickly signed up for a playtest of Volko's newest game design, *Andean Abyss*. I'd been testing the system for a few months when I came up with the idea of fusing the system with my Cuba designs. From there the game essentially designed itself. My involvement since then has been to occasionally kick things back into historical perspective.

I'd like to comment on a few of the design ideas in *Cuba Libre*:

**The “Numbers Game” or “How many guerrillas are in a cylinder?”** The first thing you should know about the COIN system is that raw numbers of troops or guerrillas is an almost meaningless figure. What mattered in Cuba was how many effective formations were present to carry out operations. Although the number of guerrillas in Cuba probably never exceeded 8,000, and the number of government forces was as high as 50,000, the vast majority of the Cuban army and police were ineffective counterinsurgents. Likewise, in the game, removing a block or cylinder doesn't always represent body count. An Ambush that removes two blocks might have only killed a few men, but made the commander unwilling to engage the guerrillas, rendering the government forces ineffective. Similarly, an Assault that removes five cylinders could represent the capture of vital supply cache or simply a military defeat that would make the guerrillas have to rearm and reequip their men.

**US Alliance.** While both pro-Castro and anti-Castro historians have generally viewed the alliance between Batista and the United States as unchanging, a cursory examination of government documents and secondary reports from US officials will make it clear that it was nothing of the sort. US disenchantment with Batista was endemic within the Eisenhower Administration, especially the State Department, where seemingly everyone save Ambassador Earl Smith thought Batista was a liability. The flow of military supplies to Batista and the corresponding interdiction of supplies to the insurgents track very closely to Cuban military success.

**The Directorio.** In the early 1980s, I had a co-worker with whom I did not get along well for our first few months. We were both young, arrogant, and convinced of our own infallibility. It was only after we began telling our family histories that we became friends. I told him of my Irish relatives who fought in the Irish Revolution, but soon came to America to escape poverty and persecution. He had learned of the Cuban Revolution from his father, a member of the Revolutionary Directorate, or El Directorio Revolucionario. His father had

met many of the famous figures of the Revolution, including Che Guevara, whom he detested. In his son's voice, I could feel the pain of someone who had helped win his war, but within a few years still became an exile. In *Cuba Libre*, the Directorio represents many of the divergent groups who fought against Batista and might easily have decided to fight against Fidel Castro as well. The story of the Directorio has been mostly ignored by historians and game designers. I hope that this game can at least sketch generally the reasons for its failure when compared to the 26 July Movement.

**Kidnapping.** The 26 July Movement did not use kidnapping as a funding tool to the extent of the later FARC in Colombia, but the mechanism for kidnapping in *Andean Abyss* works extremely well to represent the efforts that 26 July made to draw resources from Santiago de Cuba and Havana. The cities were not a prime area for guerrilla operations, but they were a vital supply link.

**Economic Centers.** Players of *Andean Abyss* may be shocked by the low value of the ECs in *Cuba Libre*, delivering such a small number of resources. Historically, the Cuban Government had great difficulty collecting enough revenue to operate the limited social services it provided. The army was funded through aid from the United States and the secret police were funded through the enormous payments Batista received from the Syndicate. The ECs in *Cuba Libre* therefore represent a small slice of Government income, potentially important at key points in the game, but perhaps a lesser initial worry for a Government player than the Lines of Communication in *Andean Abyss*.

**Civic Action.** Winning the hearts and minds of the people is more difficult and expensive for the Government in *Cuba Libre* than in *Andean Abyss*. Batista's tools, the army and police, were far more effective at crushing dissent than inspiring support. While the Cuban Army did win battles against the insurgents, it did not manage to turn those victories into the support for the Government that would have won the war. Indeed, players of *Cuba Libre*'s Government faction might have an easier time doing so than did their historical counterpart.

I've tried to keep as much of my personal bias from the design as possible. In the course of my research I've talked to many Cubans with a variety of opinions about the politics of modern Cuba. As a “post-Castro” Cuba draws closer, my greatest wish is that all those fine people may enjoy the peace and reconciliation that they richly deserve.

## Volko Ruhnke:

As you've just read, Jeff Grossman has both deep knowledge of and infectious passion for the stories and personalities of the Cuban Revolution. Jeff had worked with me playtesting *LABYRINTH: The War on Terror* and then *Andean Abyss*, and—many months before *Andean Abyss* was published—he approached me with the thought that the system introduced in that game could tell the story of Cuba. Despite the eminence of that revolution in inspiring both theory and practice of 20th Century leftist insurgency, Cuba had not before entered my mind as a topic for the COIN Series. I had my sights at the time not on another Latin American topic but on something or another in Africa. But the idea and the opportunity were too good to pass up: I challenged Jeff to design it, and so he did.

It would be critical for COIN Volume II that the design be just different enough from *Andean Abyss*. Too different, and there would be little merit to calling the games a “series” — if players had already struggled to get comfortable with the mechanics of *Andean Abyss*,

they would have a right to expect payoff in the ease of rolling into *Cuba Libre*. But too samey, and there would be little merit to playing a separate game – *Cuba Libre* must not come off as simply *Andean Abyss* on an island. To my delight, Jeff’s first draft design hit this zone perfectly. The four Cuban factions seemed hauntingly familiar. Yet each played quite differently than their ostensible Colombian counterparts; and, in particular, the relationships among them that players would pursue and exploit were entirely new and deliciously ambiguous. I knew at once that the rest of the project with Jeff would be mere details.

Well, somewhat more than that, naturally. Jeff introduced the new and far from peripheral mechanics of the US Alliance influencing Government operations costs, permanent open or closed Syndicate Casinos, population Control affecting Directorio victory, Economic Centers, reversed Government and Insurgent options for permanent Capabilities and lapsing Momentum, and a smaller event deck with the same number of Propaganda cards for a quicker beat to the campaigns. And his half-size map had only a handful of spaces on that skinny little island of Cuba. How would it all work together? Plenty of testing and development lay ahead, and Jeff and I are grateful to the talented corps of volunteer testers who sat down and rolled up their sleeves and worked on this little engine until it hummed. I think that you will be surprised how much high-octane play is packed into that little map!

And then there was the question of the solitaire game. My first inclination was to cut down time to production by skipping the solitaire system. But Jeff and GMT’s Gene Billingsley called on me not only for a non-player system to follow on to that of *Andean Abyss*, but to go beyond it and design not only insurgent bots but also a Government counterinsurgent bot. The thinking was that players would expect to be able to solo as Fidel, the historical victor. I really was not sure if we could pull off a non-player algorithm that would Train, Garrison, Sweep, and Assault effectively; but I knew that all the rebels could be done, as they were in Volume I, so there was left no reason not to provide all 4 factions as non-players. If you can play Castro solo, so can you play Batista if you prefer. And with this volume, any one player of a multiplayer session can drop out, and a bot can take over.

Fine. But getting bots to behave as their factions and present a varied and challenging experience if the player is always the counterinsurgent, as in *Andean Abyss*, is one thing; doing so regardless of whether the player will be the Government or the rebel is quite something else. Here we faced a development challenge, and out of nowhere the World delivered us Örjan Ariander. Örjan volunteered as a solitaire tester, immediately demonstrated an intimate grasp of *Andean Abyss*’s non-player systems, and dedicated himself to making that of *Cuba Libre* at least as challenging. Örjan has an amazing knack for not only diagnosing an algorithm’s weaknesses but providing solutions, testing them in action, then improving the solutions that

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he provided. He took the solitaire systems in some directions that I at first did not want to go. But he is ever persuasive, and a great deal of what you will enjoy in the *Cuba Libre* solitaire game is his.

So now join me, as Jeff, Örjan, and the whole development team transport us to the Sierra Maestra, the Escambray, and the Havana nights of 1957. I had a blast on this project—and as a bonus discovered Son cubano along the way. I hope you'll enjoy this turbulent little paradise that we have dubbed *Cuba Libre* just as much. Hasta siempre!

Volko Ruhnke  
Vienna, Virginia, March, 2013

## EVENT TEXT AND BACKGROUND

This section reproduces the full text of each event card, along with historical background.

### 1. Armored Cars **GMDS**

*In rebel service:* 26July or DR free Marches into a space and free Ambushes there (even if Active).

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*Delivered:* Until Propaganda, before Assault, move Troops to Assault spaces from other spaces.

The Batista regime was desperate to obtain all types of heavy weapons, including armored cars, which the US was reluctant to send. Many other weapons found their way into the hands of the rebels.

### 2. Guantánamo Bay **GMDS** INSURGENT CAPABILITY

*Base personnel targeted:* 26July may Kidnap in Sierra Maestra as if City.

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*US airfield:* Until Propaganda, Air Strike removes 2 pieces and allowed even if Embargoed.

The American base was a benefit both to the Batista government as a source of air assets and intelligence and to the 26 July Movement as a source of hostages (for ransom and political leverage).

### 3. Eulogio Cantillo **GMDS**

*General seals truce:* Select a space with Troops. A Faction free Marches all its Guerrillas out, then flips them Underground.

*Dictator backs general's offensive:* Select a Province or City with Troops. They free Sweep in place, then free Assault.

Cantillo was one of Batista's most able commanders, but on one memorable occasion allowed Castro's trapped forces to escape. Cantillo's motives for this have been a source of speculation for historians.

### 4. S.I.M. **GMDS**

*Word of torture:* Remove Support from a space with no Police.

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*Military intelligence gleans leads:* Until next Propaganda, Police Sweep and Assault as if Troops.

Batista's secret police were effective agents of counterinsurgency, but were also known for torture and political murders. Insurgents' worst fear was being handed over to the S.I.M..

### 5. Rolando Masferrer **GDMS**

*Brutal commander:* Set a Province with Troops and 1 adjacent Province to Passive Opposition.

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*Paramilitaries:* Sweep may free Assault 1 space as its Special Activity (until Propaganda).

A former communist who fought in the Spanish Civil War, Masferrer commanded Los Tigres, a paramilitary army supporting Batista. His troops and tactics were feared by Castro and Guevara. After the revolution, he fled to Miami, where he was assassinated in 1975.

### 6. Sánchez Mosquera **GDMS**

*Popular colonel wounded:* Remove all Troops from a Mountain space (to available).

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*Effective army commander:* Until next Propaganda, Assault treats Mountain as City.

A regular army officer who had some success with counterinsurgency tactics against the 26July in the Sierra Maestra.

### 7. Election **GDSM**

*Postponed! Rebel ranks grow:* Place 1 Guerrilla in each City.

*Scheduled! Batista bows to US pressure:* Set a City to Neutral. Aid +10

Batista had long resisted the US call for elections, and the overdue election finally took place in November 1958 with Batista's hand-picked successor Andrés Rivero Agüero declared (fraudulently) the winner. The election was essentially meaningless as Castro had declared a boycott and Batista was not prepared to hand over power.

### 8. General Strike **GDSM**

*Widespread disruption:* In each City, shift 1 level toward Neutral and place any 1 Guerrilla.

*Strike fails, shops open:* Set a City to Active Support and Activate all Guerrillas there. Open any 1 closed Casino.

Fidel's biggest blunder was undoubtedly the General Strike of April 1958. Poorly planned and thwarted by Batista's trade union allies, the strike led the 26July leadership to distrust the leaders of their urban movement (llano).

### 9. Coup **GSMD**

*Batista ousted!:* Shift all Govt Control spaces 1 level toward Neutral. US Alliance up 1 box.

*US-backed plot discovered:* Activate and free Assault all DR pieces in Cities with cubes. US Alliance down 1 box.

The US Government had the ability to trigger a coup in Cuba, but no documents have emerged to indicate that one was ever planned, so this entire event is a bit of alternative history.

### 10. MAP **GSMD**

*Arms shipment stolen:* Replace a cube with any 2 Guerrillas.

#### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*US training:* Until Propaganda, Govt may accompany LimOps with a free Special Activity.

The MAP, Military Assistance Program, was a key element of US aid and many of the best Cuban troops were trained by the United States. Many of those troops were kept close to Havana, however, so few troops or heavy weapons were committed to the insurgent campaign.

### 11. Batista Flees **GSDM**

*US forces dictator out:* Government Resources -10. Select and remove a die roll of Troops. US Alliance 1 box up. Aid +10. Government Redeploys as in Propaganda round.

Batista's sudden departure on January 1, 1959 took almost everyone, including many close to the dictator, by surprise. As it transpired, its effect on the Cuban military was devastating, and resistance crumbled almost immediately.

### 12. BRAC **GSDM**

*Anti-subversion agency:* Remove any 2 Guerrillas.

*CIA trains political police:* Place 1 Police anywhere. Add lesser of +6 or Aid to Government Resources.



BRAC, Buró de Represión de las Actividades Comunistas, was a force supposedly dedicated to fighting Communism, but the facade fooled no one, including the US State Department. Batista failed almost completely in his attempts to convince the US that the insurgents were communists.

### 13. El Che **MGDS** INSURGENT CAPABILITY

*Inspired military leader:* The first group of Guerrillas to move on each 26July March operation flips Underground

Despite Guevara's failures as a leader of later insurgencies in the Congo and Bolivia, his talent for inspired leadership during the Cuban Revolution cannot be questioned. He was a fearless soldier, talented tactician, and outstanding instructor who turned often illiterate recruits into hardened guerrillas.

### 14. Operation Fisherman **MGDS**

*2nd invasion:* Place a 26July Base and Guerrilla in Pinar del Río.

*Locals resent being drawn in:* Shift Pinar del Río 2 levels toward Active Support.

Operation Fisherman was an M26 plan to open another front in the guerrilla war with a landing at the far end of the island, in Pinar del Río. A few historians believe that it may have been only a ruse to keep Government forces pinned down, but the 26 July did have the resources to make such an operation work.

### 15. Come Comrades! **MGSD**

*Communist recruits:* Place 3 26July Guerrillas anywhere.

*Soviet influence suspected:* Add lesser of Aid or +10 to Government Resources. Then Aid +5.

Fidel insisted that the Movement of 26 July did not accept communists, but in reality many of the guerrillas had been members of the communist party and were actively recruited.

### 16. Larrazábal **MGSD**

*Venezuelan junta supplies arms:* Place a 26July Base where there is a 26July piece.

*Caracas cuts off shipments:* Remove one 26July Base. 26July Resources -3.

Wolfgang Larrazábal, Interim President of Venezuela in 1958, provided vital arms, including M-1 Garand rifles, Browning Automatic Rifles, and hand grenades to the guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra. He died in 2003 at 91.

### 17. Alberto Bayo **MDGS**

*Vet trains guerrillas:* 26July or DR free Rallies in each space it has a Base (as if spaces Neutral).

*Mexico blocks training by Cuban expat:* All 26July Guerrillas Active. 26July Ineligible through next card.

Alberto Bayo was a Cuban who had served with the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and had settled in Mexico, where he met Fidel, Raúl, and Che. He helped trained the core of the M26 guerrillas who would embark on the Granma.

### 18. Pact of Caracas **MDGS** INSURGENT CAPABILITY

No 26July or DR Ops or Special Activities that remove the other's pieces or affect placed Opposition. If same player, mutual transfers allowed. If either removes 2 of its Bases at once, cancel Capability. Executing Faction stays Eligible for next card.

The 1958 Pact of Caracas was an important agreement that united all insurgents fighting against Batista, setting aside their differences in order to work together toward the overthrow of the dictator. The Pact essentially papered over fundamental differences in visions for the future of Cuba.

### 19. Sierra Maestra Manifesto **MDSG**

*Fidel disdains elections or compromise:* In card Faction order, each Faction may place 2 non-Casino pieces in a space where they already have a piece. Executing Faction stays Eligible.

The Manifesto rejected any political compromise and committed the insurgents the overthrow of the government. Essentially an escalation of the conflict, it may have also been Fidel's best piece of rhetoric.

### 20. The Twelve **MDSG**

*Tale of survivors inspires movement:* A Faction free Marches then free Rallies at a March destination.

*Granma travail presages supply challenge:* Remove 1/2 rounded up of any Guerrillas from the space with the most Guerrillas.

Myth-making was an important tool for the 26 July Movement. Borrowing religious imagery to appeal to the poor and illiterate, the story of the tiny band of guerrillas triumphing against a powerful foe connected with the most disaffected Cubans.

### 21. Fangio **MSGD**

*26July seizes racer:* Shift a City 1 level toward Active Opposition, 2 levels if a 26July piece is there.

*Famous driver popularizes Cuba:* In 2 spaces with any Casinos, open a closed Casino or place 1 Cash with a Guerrilla or cube.

Juan Manuel Fangio was perhaps the greatest Formula One driver in history. Kidnapped by insurgents before a race, Fangio was well-treated and praised his captors upon his release. The incident was a major embarrassment for Batista.

### 22. Raúl **MSGD** INSURGENT CAPABILITY

*Younger Castro an ace:* 26July may reroll each Attack or Kidnap.

### GOVERNMENT MOMENTUM

*US hostage-taking backfires:* Until Propaganda, add to Aid twice any Resources from Kidnap.

A committed communist, the younger Castro influenced both 26July strategy and his brother's politics. His kidnapping campaign gave the movement vital leverage with the United States.

### 23. Radio Rebelde **MSDG**

*Clandestine radio reaches masses:* Shift 2 Provinces each 1 level toward Active Opposition.

*Transmitter pinpointed:* Remove a 26July Base from a Province.

The use of radio propaganda was an important tool for the insurgents, who articulated their vision better than the Government could manage.

### 24. Vilma Espín **MSDG**

*Revolutionary interlocutor:* Set Sierra Maestra or an adjacent space to Active Opposition.

*Raúl's fiancé betrays urban guerrilla:* Remove all 26July pieces from a City other than Havana.

Raúl's fiancé Vilma Espín Guillois was a talented organizer and recruiter. There is circumstantial evidence that she was involved in the death of 26July organizer (and Castro rival) Frank País.

### 25. Escapade **DGMS**

*Yacht brings fighters:* Place a DR Guerrilla and Base in either Camagüey Province or Oriente

*Resupply yacht intercepted:* Remove a Directorio Base.

Most of the arms received by the Directorio came by boat from Miami, periodically interdicted by the US and Cuban governments. The most famous shipment came aboard the yacht Escapade.

**26. Rodríguez Loeches** **DGMS**

*DR Leader:* DR places 1 Guerrilla anywhere and free Marches to, Rallies, or Ambushes there.

*Inefficient administrator:* Remove 1 DR Guerrilla. DR Resources -5

Rodríguez Loeches, an important leader in the Directorio, was not comfortable in the mountains of the Escambray, but preferred the life of an urban guerrilla.

**27. Echeverría** **DGSM**

*Near-miss attempt on dictator's life:* Place 2 DR Guerrillas anywhere. Havana to Neutral. DR to Eligible.

*Popular revolutionary dies in his "hit at the top":* Remove the 2 DR pieces closest to Havana. DR Resources -3.

José Antonio Echeverría was the inspirational leader of the Federation of University Students and founding member of the Revolutionary Directorate. He died on March 13, 1957 during the failed attempt to assassinate Batista, topple the Government, and seize power. Without Echeverría, the Directorio lacked direction and the inspirational leadership that Fidel Castro brought to the 26 July movement.

**28. Morgan** **DGSM**  
**INSURGENT CAPABILITY**

*US Comandante:* DR Guerrillas may March 2 adjacent spaces.

*Backlash against Yanqui adventurer:* Set a space with a DR Guerrilla to Active Support

A remarkable personality, William Alexander Morgan was drawn into the Cuban Revolution and was instrumental in the success of the rebels in the Escambray mountains of Las Villas. Executed by Castro in 1961 for spying (probably false) and plotting against him (probably true).

**29. Fauré Chomón** **DMGS**

*Students take to the field:* DR or 26July places a Base and 2 Guerrillas in Las Villas.

*Student loyalties shift:* Remove a DR piece or replace it with its 26July counterpart.

Fauré Chomón became the leader of the Revolutionary Directorate after the death of Echeverría. Chomón was successful in keeping the organization active, and the threat it posed probably kept many troops out of the battles in the Sierra Maestra. Chomón brought many recruits into the Escambray, but his split with Gutiérrez-Menoyo cost the DR one of its best leaders and many of its most seasoned guerrillas. He was also a signatory of the Pact of Miami.

**30. The Guerrilla Life** **DMGS**  
**INSURGENT CAPABILITY**

*Hardships harden 26July fighters:* All 26July Rallies flip Guerrillas Underground, even if placing.

*Hardships harden student revolutionaries:* Flip all DR Guerrillas Underground. Place 1 DR Guerrilla in a City.

The guerrillas of the 26 July and other factions suffered many deprivations, whether they were starving in the mountains or being hunted by secret police in the cities. Those who adapted to the life were nearly impossible for the Government to overcome, despite the seemingly overwhelming advantage in men and material committed against the insurgents.

**31. Escopeteros** **DMSG**

*Locals start their own revolution:* Place any non-Casino Base and any 1 Guerrilla into a Mountain.

*Traditionalist countryside rejects rebellion:* Shift a Mountain space 1 level toward Active Support.

Many local peasants wanted to join the insurgents, but both the Directorio and the 26 July were wary of taking them into their ranks. The Government often attempted to infiltrate the guerrilla camps with these new recruits, but even if they weren't informers the peasants often were more of a burden to the insurgents than a benefit. Still, the supply of recruits used to hard work and familiar with local terrain were of great benefit.

**32. Resistencia Cívica** **DMSG**

*Urban movement backs Castro:* In a City, replace all Directorio pieces with 26July counterparts.

*Movement splits with Castro:* In a City, replace all 26July pieces with Directorio counterparts.

El Movimiento de Resistencia Cívica was an important group opposing Batista, particularly in Havana. Its support for the rural insurgents wavered over the course of the war, but its goals were more in line with the moderate Directorio.

**33. Carlos Prío** **DGSM**

*Ex-president funnels funds:* +5 DR or +5 26July Resources.

*Return from exile:* Select a space without Govt Control. Place a DR Base there and set it to Neutral.

Carlos Prío Socarrás was President of Cuba from 1948-52 (when he was ousted in a coup by Batista). Prío supported insurgent groups including the 26 July. He was urged

to return to Cuba during the Revolution, but preferred to keep supporting the insurgents from a distance.

**34. US Speaking Tour** **DGSM**

*Expatriates invest:* An Insurgent Faction adds a die roll in Resources. Each other adds +2.

*An embarrassment:* Add the lesser of +8 or Aid to Government Resources. Then Aid +8.

The proximity of Cuba to the exile communities in Miami and New York created opportunities for insurgent groups to raise funds and tell their stories directly to the people. Fidel made visits to the US just prior to the Revolution as well as shortly afterward.

**35. Defections** **DSMG**

*Disillusioned fighters:* In a space already occupied by your pieces and those of an enemy, replace 2 of the enemy's Guerrillas or cubes with your Guerrillas or cubes.

Every faction in the conflict suffered from defections, including the Syndicate, which lost employees to the insurgency and to the Government. More valuable than the manpower was the intelligence gained from these defections.

**36. Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo** **DSMG**

*Inspiring DR leader:* Replace a non-DR non-Casino piece within 1 space of Las Villas with 2 DR Guerrillas.

*Commander fractious:* Replace a Directorio Guerrilla with a non-Directorio Guerrilla.

Eloy Gutiérrez-Menoyo led the Segundo Frente Nacional del Escambray after he broke with Chomón over leadership of the Revolutionary Directorate in the Escambray. Imprisoned for 22 years after the Revolution, he was embraced by the exile community, then vilified when he returned to Cuba. He died in 2012.

**37. Herbert Matthews** **SGMD**

*NYTimes refutes Fidel's death:* 26July Resources +5. Aid -6.

*Fidel's survival spurs support to counterweights:* Aid +10. Directorio Resources +3. Syndicate Resources +5.

Herbert Matthews, a New York Times reporter, interviewed Fidel Castro in early 1957 only a few weeks after Batista had claimed that Castro had been killed in battle. The interview was a massive publicity coup for the 26 July Movement and an equal public relations nightmare for Batista and his supporters in the US Government.

**38. Meyer Lansky SGM D**

*Wheeler dealer:* Within a space, transfer any Cash among any Guerrillas or cubes.

*Master mobster:* Syndicate relocates any Casinos anywhere (within stacking). All Casinos open.

Meyer Lansky, a Polish Jew, became one of the most remarkable figures in the American Mafia. Because of his ethnicity, he could not rise in the ranks of the Syndicate, but his talents as a businessman and expert in the business of casino gambling made him a natural to run the Mob's operation in Cuba. Lansky was a major supporter of Batista, and much of the skim from the casinos found its way into Batista's pockets and funded counterinsurgency efforts.

**39. Turismo S G D M**

*"Ugly American":* Support 1 level toward Neutral each Casino space.

*Police "protection" for tourists:* Govt and Syndicate each add +3 Resources per space with open Casino and Police

The strong current of Anti-Americanism in Cuba was fueled by the number of American tourists who flocked to Cuba. The tourists' appetite for liquor, gambling, wild entertainment, and prostitutes offended the conservative population. Elaborate giveaways to the Cuban population did little to win their support.

**40. Ambassador Smith S G D M**

*Havana advocate ignored in US:* Shift US Alliance 1 box down (leave Aid the same).

*Blindly backing dictator:* Shift US Alliance 1 box up. Aid +9. Then add lesser of +9 or half Aid (round down) to Syndicate Resources.

Earl Smith was a businessman with investments in Cuba who became the US Ambassador in 1957 even though he did not speak Spanish. Smith pushed constantly for increased military aid to Batista and believed that the 26 July Movement was a Communist insurgency. He came to believe that those who opposed him in the State Department were friendly to Communism.

**41. Fat Butcher S M G D**

*Casino-man Nicholas di Costanzo draws US heat:* Close 1 Casino or reduce Aid -8.

*Mob enforcer:* Syndicate free Ambushes with 1 of its Underground Guerrillas and opens 1 closed Casino.

Nicholas di Costanzo was one a group of mobsters brought in to run the Syndicate's operations in Cuba. He was noted as an intimidating figure who kept rigid order at the Capri.

**42. Llano S M G D**

*Slums to arms:* Place a 26July Base and any Guerrilla in a City.

*Urban poor indifferent, eager for work:* Select a City. Remove any Opposition there and place an open Casino

The Llano (literally "a plain or flat space") was a term for the Cuban urban underground. While the popular myth of the Cuban Revolution emphasized the victory of Fidel's guerrillas in the mountains, recent scholarship has emphasized the importance of the urban revolution in Cuba. The poor and middle class provided both urban guerrillas and material aid to the insurgent groups in rural areas.

**43. Mafia Offensive S M D G**

*Mob helps rebels:* 26July or DR executes a free LimOp, treating 1 Syndicate piece as that Faction's piece.

**INSURGENT CAPABILITY**

*Hitmen:* Syndicate may Assassinate as if DR, but regardless of Police.

The Syndicate never took an active role militarily in the Cuban Revolution, but there are stories of confrontations between mobsters and guerrillas that ended short of violence. The Syndicate actively recruited servicemen from both the Korean War and World War Two, so would have had a reserve of trained men.

**44. Rebel Air Force S M D G**

*Captured aircraft shocks troops:* A 26July or DR Guerrilla (Active or not) free Ambushes Government forces. Remove Bases first.

*Rebels purchase but cannot operate aircraft:* Select 26July or DR and transfer 1 die roll of their Resources to Syndicate.

The resourcefulness of the 26 July Movement is well demonstrated by the acquisition of a number of aircraft which were used by the insurgents in support of ground operations and to harass the Cuban Army Air Force.

**45. Anastasia S D G M**

*Rival muscles into Cuba:* Close all Casinos in Havana. Syndicate Resources -5.

*Lansky rival whacked in New York:* Syndicate Resources +10.

The infamous head of Murder, Inc. was unhappy with his cut of the Cuban operation. Other members of the Syndicate in Cuba wanted no part of the volatile Albert Anastasia, and were quite happy with Lansky's low key management of the casino operation. Whether any members of the group participated in or ordered the hit on Anastasia in the

barbershop of the Park Sheraton Hotel is not known, but Anastasia's death meant operations in Cuba would continue smoothly.

**46. Sinatra S D G M**

*Over-priced star:* Syndicate Resources -6.

*Frankie's show:* Place an open Casino in Havana regardless of stacking. Place 1 Cash with Police there.

Sinatra loved booze, women, and mobsters and there was no shortage of any of those in Havana. He enjoyed Havana so much that he considered making it his permanent home, at one point planning a live television program from a casino in Havana.

**47. Pact of Miami S D M G**

*Surprise for dictator and rebels:* Remove 2 Guerrillas. Govt Ineligible through next card.

*Agreement causes confusion:* 26July and Directorio each lose -3 Resources and are Ineligible through next card.

The Pact of Miami probably surprised everyone from the Cuban Government to Fidel Castro (although several members of the 26 July Movement were signatories). While apparently ceding leadership of the insurrection to Castro, it also confused matters by forcing him into an alliance with the Autenticos and Ortodoxos political parties. In the end, it was generally ignored as the realities of the war dictated the future leadership of Cuba.

**48. Santo Trafficante, Jr S D M G**

*Feud with Lansky:* Syndicate Resources -10. All Syndicate Guerrillas to Active.

**INSURGENT CAPABILITY**

*Old-time mobster:* Any Underground Syndicate Guerrillas block Skim (6.2.3).

Trafficante despite being the subject of multiple biographies and the focus of many FBI investigations, remains something of a mystery. Trafficante's expertise in gambling (his family made its name in Tampa running the bolita, a lottery popular with Cuban exiles) made him an important figure in the Havana Mafia. Trafficante became disillusioned with Batista and tried to work with Castro even after the Revolution had ended. Although imprisoned by Castro, he continued to hope that he would be allowed to continue his casino operations. He was charged with narcotics trafficking (which is coincidentally the meaning of his name) and later deported. Rumors of Trafficante's involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy persisted (occasionally encouraged by Trafficante himself). He died in 1987.

## CARD LIST

### GMDS

1. Armored Cars
2. Guantánamo Bay

### GMSD

3. Eulogio Cantillo
4. S.I.M.

### GDMS

5. Rolando Masferrer
6. Sánchez Mosquera

### GDSM

7. Election
8. General Strike

### GSMD

9. Coup
10. MAP

### GSDM

11. Batista Flees
12. BRAC

### MGDS

13. El Che
14. Operation Fisherman

### MGSD

15. Come Comrades!
16. Larrazábal

### MDGS

17. Alberto Bayo
18. Pact of Caracas

### MDSG

19. Sierra Maestra Manifesto
20. The Twelve

### MSGD

21. Fangio
22. Raúl

### MSDG

23. Radio Rebelde
24. Vilma Espín

### DGMS

25. Escapade
26. Rodríguez Loeches

### DGSM

27. Echeverría
28. Morgan

### DMGS

29. Fauré Chomón
30. The Guerrilla Life

### DMSG

31. Escopeteros
32. Resistencia Cívica

### DSGM

33. Carlos Prío
34. US Speaking Tour

### DSMG

35. Defections
36. Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo

### SGMD

37. Herbert Matthews
38. Meyer Lansky

### SGDM

39. Turismo
40. Ambassador Smith

### SMGD

41. Fat Butcher
42. Llano

### SMDG

43. Mafia Offensive
44. Rebel Air Force

### SDGM

45. Anastasia
46. Sinatra

### SDMG

47. Pact of Miami
48. Santo Trafficante Jr
- 49-52. *Propaganda!*

## SPACES LIST

### Cities . . . . . Pop

Havana . . . . .	6
Camagüey . . . . .	1
Santiago de Cuba . . . . .	1
<b>Total Population:</b> . . . . .	<b>8</b>

### Provinces . . . . . Type . . . . . Pop

Pinar del Río . . . . .	Forest	1
La Habana . . . . .	Grass	1
Matanzas . . . . .	Grass	1
Las Villas . . . . .	Mtn	2
Camagüey . . . . .	Forest	1
Oriente . . . . .	Forest	2
Sierra Maestra Mtn . . . . .		1
<b>Total Population:</b> . . . . .		<b>9</b>

### Economic Centers . . . . . Econ

Pinar del Río – La Habana . . . . .	3 (Cigars)
Las Villas – Camagüey . . . . .	3 (Factory)
Oriente – Sierra Maestra . . . . .	2 (Sugar Cane)
<b>Total Economic Value:</b> . . . . .	<b>8</b>

## CREDITS

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