



The Cuban Scenario 25 Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the situation in Cuba after 25 years of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Cuban political system has prevailed despite predictions foresaw its imminent end since the soviet-like socialism crumbled in East Europe and then in the USSR itself. Although the end of the cold war led to profound adjustments in the international system, the Cuban model remained almost unchanged; however, a Cuban repaired communism emerged in the nineties. Dollarization of the economy and permission for foreign investment affected the ideological purity as the main basis of the system persisted untouched. Nevertheless, since Raul Castro took over power from his brother Fidel in 2006 expectations for reform have increased. In fact, in 2011 the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party was held and some reforms have been implemented ever since. The paper focuses on the scope of those reforms as there are still many open questions about the future of the Cuban society.

Keywords: Castro, communism, Cuba, Cuban revolution, PCC, reforms.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In international relations, the Cuban issue has been a constant for over half a century; first, because of its direct incidence in the east-west conflicts during the Cold War and, in the past two decades, because

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of the *sui generis* condition of its political system that has prevailed despite predictions foresaw its imminent expiration since 1989, after the soviet-like socialism crumbled in East Europe and then in the USSR itself. Recently, some scholars have analyzed the reasons for the survival of communist party-states after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Dimitrov et al., 2013). However, in the case of Cuba, many questions remain unanswered. Therefore, this paper examines the situation in Cuba after 25 years of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Basically, the text provides a comparison between the current situation and the circumstances in Cuba in 1989. This research focuses on how Cuban politics has accommodated to the new international realities during the last 25 years and, mainly, the way that the roots of the system have survived with the introduction of some non-structural changes. Since it is a quite current topic, the bibliography that has been chosen includes the most contemporary sources in the academic field and some official documents of the Cuban government.

To understand any society it is revealing to analyze the isolated statements of their leaders. Notwithstanding, for a systematical analysis official documents are much more useful. Therefore, in this paper a portrait of today's Cuba will be made based on a final document redacted at the last Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) in 2011, and, to some possible extent, the real effects of these agreements onto society will be assessed. Twenty-five years ago, the international community had their eyes fixed on Central and West Europe. The focus was on the sequence of events that were naturally playing out as an effect of the *perestroika* and *glasnost* implemented by Mikhail Gorbachev, and on his clear position about the USSR and the Warsaw Pact troops not intervening in the domestic affairs of the countries of the region, unlike the attitude of previous soviet leaders in past attempts to reform the communist societies (Gorbachev, 1987).

Communism had already fallen in Hungary and Poland. In Czechoslovakia, even though the communist party remained in power, the Civic Forum showed signs of being supported by the majority of the population; in Bulgaria it would be a matter of weeks before Todor Zhikov were dismissed from charge; Rumania would have to wait until December to end Ceausescu's regime (the only case in which a communist regime ended up in a violent way) and less than a month after the Yugoslav Communist League would declare the end of its political monopoly. It was clear then that the center of the issue was in Germany, in the same way that it had been the epicenter of the Cold War from the very moment in which the last II World War projectile was launched. Some of the most important answers to the continuity of the bipolar system and hence of the future of communism as a governmental regime would come from the course of the event that took place in the in the so-called German Democratic Republic (GDR).

Although the "iron curtain" concept developed by Winston Churchill at the beginning of that historical period referred to a symbolic but intangible meaning, the division of Berlin had a very tangible steel-and-concrete expression since 1961. That is the reason why none of the events that took place in the communist Europe during 1989 had such a comprehensive significance as the fall of that Wall. More than just the physical collapse, what grants it its incontrovertible historical value is the moral and ideological collapse that meant the withdrawal of the Eastern German security forces from the Wall the 9 of November of that year, with the subsequent massive transit of eastern Berliners to the western side of the city; it was the transit of communism to socialism in a few steps. That event was of such paramount importance that three weeks later, during the Bush-Gorbachev summit in Malta, the end of the Cold War was declared when the reunification of Germany had yet to be concluded and the downfall of the Soviet Union such as it happened two years later was still unimaginable (Savranskaya, Blanton & Zubok, 2010; Zorgbibe, 1997; Graebner, Burns & Siracusa, 2008). The key to the fate of the European communism was, hence, in Germany, and so it was made clear by the events that took place after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The end of the communism in Europe happened, before and after the 9th of November of 1989, like the continuous splitting of a flawed chain.

For decades, the Cuban political structure had rested on its membership to that system and after the demise of the Soviet Union conjectures multiplied about the approaching end of the Cuban regime. The prevailing view among theorists of international relations, the media, the scientists and political

analysts, was that the so-called “domino theory” would inevitably take place² (Kaufman, 1991; Oppenheimer, 1992; Cardoso & Helwege, 1992).

In fact, concerning the collapse of communism in European countries, such theory had indeed shown its applicability. However, the mechanical extension of its corollaries to the Cuban case, proved to be a generalization that did not hold on consistent bases. Theorists who assumed the applicability of this hypothesis to the Cuban case were disregarding several peculiarities that were unfamiliar to the European communist models. On one hand, the Cuban membership to the so-called “world socialist system” was a post-revolutionary historical accident rather than the result of a project gestated before getting political power. The triumph of the Cuban revolution hadn't meant the victory of communist ideals while popular support for the revolutionary leadership had not leant on an ideological identification with Marxism-Leninism. Nor communist was the leadership or the majority of the population which lined up next to the new regime.

On the other hand, unlike the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Cuba's seizure of power by those who instituted the communist system was not done with the weapons of the Red Army, but was the result of a genuine popular-nationalist-democratic movement. Moreover, when the decline of European communism occurred, in none of those societies the highest representative of the regime was the one who had led them to the communist system whereas in Cuba still remained in power the same individual who led the revolutionary process and, therefore, had been the protagonist of establishing communism. The predictions of an imminent collapse of the Cuban regime following the vanishing of the European communism were not fulfilled, despite the fact that enormous economic aid that the Caribbean island received from the former Soviet Union disappeared. During these twenty five years, other predictions about the compelling moment of transition in Cuba have multiplied. It is not possible to object that such transit is to occur. However, the conditions for this to occur have not yet been created.

The peculiarities of the Cuban case, together with other elements of innovation on the fly, have credited the immutability of the regime until today. In 1989, many would have had ensured that Cuba would now have a flourishing market economy under a multiparty political system. Furthermore, this situation would have implied an improvement in relations with the United States. Both the domino theory as well as that of the ripe apple in the nineteenth century left out important factors of the Cuban reality. The domino theory supposed that without the Soviet presence the Cuban system would unavoidably gravitate to the American tutelage. In 1823, John Quincy Adams had predicted something similar regarding to the end of the Spanish colonial presence in Cuba:

“There are laws of political as well as physical gravitation and, if an apple, severed by a tempest from its native tree, cannot chose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain and, incapable of self-support can only gravitate toward the North American Union” (Perez, 1995: 108)

Quincy Adams supported his premonition based on Cuban unnatural connection with Spain. However, there are noticeable western culture features in Cuban society which demonstrate a bigger lack of natural relation with the soviet soul. Gravitation did not occur in either the first time or the second. Nonetheless, both theories contain an error/success relationship.

Regarding the first theory, it would be unwise to think that Cuba took on the rules of the protectorate by natural gravity, as Adams foresaw, because an American military intervention was needed in order to do so. Nonetheless, it did end up on the United States' sphere and an important sector of those that fought against Spain were pleased with the intervention, and even with the Platt Amendment and the protectorate under which the Republic would be born. The “Americanization” of the Cuban national

² The domino theory is the political expression of known "snowball effect". Although this originally refers to geographic proximity, here we talk about political and ideological similarities.

life and the rooting of the American cultural patterns can be seen as points supporting the theory of the ripe fruit, while the non-annexation (since despite the American intervention the nation did manage to be free) and the communist inclination in the last half century demonstrate the mistake in historical terms.

The domino theory, on the other hand, bears its major flaw in that the Cuban communist regime is still in place and resting on the one-party Stalinist system and on the rigidity of the planned economy. However, the urgency for changes and adjustments in the system as a consequence of the soviet collapse can be seen as an upside of the theory. Some of these changes that implicitly addressed the transformation of the model were made immediately while other remained in the field of expectation and design. Thus, the domino theory was right about the abandoning of the communist ideological purity in Cuba since the nineties.

Summarizing, besides this introduction, the structure of the paper considers various sections and subheadings respectively relating to: a) the situation in Cuba in the nineties and early years of this century; b) the importance of the changes in leadership after Fidel Castro retired in 2006; c) the Sixth Congress of the Cuban communists and its effects on Cuban society to the present; d) Conclusions which point out the main results of the investigation and it is not needed a subheading of policy implication because the whole paper precisely discusses policy implications

2.0 CUBA AFTER THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

Even when it was not pleasant for the Cuban authorities, the constitutional reform that took place in 1992 constituted an unavoidable urgency, for the existing text (approved in 1976) explicitly mentioned the alliance and collaboration with the USSR, a State that no longer existed. On the other hand, in the context of the new reality, the constitutional reform introduced the openness to foreign investment, something unconceivable in the rigid Cuban communist model during the past three decades (Rieff, 1996).

However, as it has happened with other important decision of the Cuban political life, the aspects that make evident the decaying of the model's purity did not come from a constitutional reform or a public debate. The decision to dollarize the society and the economy, to create a division of the services in a national currency area and a dollar area, with the subsequent worsening of the social differences, is where the domino theory can best be applied to the Cuban case and, at the same time, the main referent to understand the characteristics of the Cuban society twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The events that took place in 1989 in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are fundamental to understand the dismantling of the Soviet Union communist system. Nevertheless, what was happening in Cuba in 1989 should be taken into account and a comparison with the current situation ought to be made. That year, while some countries on the Soviet sphere were already experiencing the democratic revolutions, Mikhail Gorbachev visited Havana. The visit happened in an environment charged with speculations about the probability of a transformation similar to the *perestroika* and *glasnost* happening in Cuba, but the signals soon pointed to a different direction. Soviet publications were banned in Cuba; the same ones that filled the newsstands before, but since they showed critical positions towards Stalinism they were no longer welcome in the Island. Moreover, to dismiss all doubts about the official opinion about any eventual reform, during Gorbachev's visit, the Cuban leader said:

“In the Soviet Union they are carrying their restructuration process and (...) we are going to carry out what we have named our rectification process, and the essence of the matter is that both countries, both parties, depart from the same principles: the principles of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of each country” (Granma, 1989).

And in the same speech in order to detach himself and emphasize that Cuba would not go along the same path of reform, he added: “the principle of unrestricted respect to the sovereign will of every people and every country is a rule of gold in the Marxism-Leninism principles”. Soon after Gorbachev’s visit to Cuba, a scandalous incident took place that would outset a process known as Causes 1 and 2 in 1989. On the 14th of June of that year, on the same press note the Cuban government announced the arrest of General Arnaldo Ochoa, *Hero of the Cuban Republic* and of Diocles Torralba, Minister of Transport and Vice-president of the government. It would be known afterwards that these were two isolated cases; Torralba’s for misappropriation of funds and Ochoa’s, together with a group of officials from the armed forces and from Home Office, would go to court for drug trafficking.

The sentence to Cause 1, according to which General Arnaldo Ochoa and other three Cuban militaries were executed by a firing squad, as well as the Cause 2, for which the Home Office Minister, General José Abrantes and other high-ranking official were imprisoned, would show a considerable internal division in the high spheres of power.

That was not the first time when leaders of the Revolution would be faced with trials of that sort, nor would it be the last. However, in that occasion, for various reasons that go from the swiftness of the trial and the urgent application of the sentence, the popularity that General Ochoa had among the popular sector for his epic deeds in different military campaigns abroad, and even because of the circumstances that the world socialist system was experiencing, for all these factors and given the lack of expectations of reform of the Cuban model, these judicial processes constitute a traumatic moment of the Cuban political regime. Being the subsequent events what they were, it could be argued that these measures depict a clear before and after in the history of the Cuban model.

While these elements characterized the Cuban domestic politics in 1989, in the international arena the country was putting all efforts in the troops’ withdrawal negotiation process in Angola and in trying to uphold Sandinismo in power.

Where was Cuba then heading to in 1989 and where is it heading to now, twenty-five years after? While the European communist countries were suffering from a weakening of the control of their party system, in Cuba processes were taking place to make that control stronger. Even nowadays the government keeps talking about the need to strengthen control.

3.0 THE CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP: CUBA SINCE 2006

The system that had kept unchanged its structures, the system that throughout History had merely introduced some small changes to the super-structure, not affecting the whole nor the idea that society had of it; this system faced in 2006, a situation alien to it: the withdrawal of Fidel Castro from his official positions (first temporarily and later officially). The new situation, with Raul Castro’s arrival to power, put on the table a series of speculations about the political will of the new ruler to introduce structural changes that would sooth the hard living conditions of the citizens.

Many scholars specialized in the Cuban question identified the new ruler as a pragmatic politician who, always within the one-party political system, would launch an economic reform similar to the Chinese or Vietnamese (Sullivan, 2007; Latell, 2007; Catan, 2008). The first pronouncements of Raul Castro emphasized the need to introduce new approaches to the system’s direction and repeatedly declared “beans are more important that cannons”. The expectations and hopes raised by the celebration of the 6th PCC Congress and the attention on the presumable reforming process that it brought, make it all the most an interesting starting point for understanding today’s Cuba, after 55 years rule of the same group that led the Revolution movement back in time.

In the official Cuban speech, the congress of the PCC is considered the most important political meeting; a great event where guidelines affecting all aspects of the life in the country are dictated. This premise comes from the mid-seventies, when the Cuban society was effectively inserted in the Soviet

model of socialism³. According to this idea, the PCC was to gather every five years so life in the country fitted the five-year plans that characterized this social model.

The first PCC congresses followed this temporal organization, between the years of 1975 to 1997, except for the occasional one-year delay. From then on, it seemed as the Cuban society had backtracked to the past times of institutionalization, all features included: policies made on the go, fruit of improvisation, ruling by decree, lack of long-term projects and the imposing of personal views and wills. It does not mean that these features were absent during the more or less regular celebrations of the congresses. As a matter of fact, a number of the most transcendental decisions made in the past two decades which affect Cuban society to the day came to life outside the doors of the congresses; such as the dollarization of the economy and the following introduction of the monetary duality. In the Cuban model of socialism institutions were always secondary to strikes of inspiration, and improvising on the go was never truly overruled by established procedures.

Nevertheless, after 14 years of having no PCC congresses, in the spring of 2011 the 6th meeting took place. This Sixth Congress, as was the case for the fourth and fifth back in the nineties, was preceded by an internal media campaign of the *Guidelines Project (Proyecto de Lineamientos)* that would be voted at the communist gathering. This document, whose explicit purpose was to determine the path of the social and economic policies of the country, was discussed throughout the territory in people's assemblies created for this purpose alone by the base, neighbors, worker's and student's organizations.

All three million suggestions, doubts, modifications, opinions, concerns and misunderstandings collected at the assemblies in the months previous to the congress were allegedly analyzed and enriched to be incorporated to the document by the delegates of the event. Of course, it was the delegates call to determine which opinions were to be added and which disregarded, so the contributions from the people's discussions were grouped into themes until there were 800 thousand criteria, from which only little above half were kept. This way, after the two-day session of the different commissions created for the congress, on April 18th the final version of the document entitled *Guidelines for Economic and Social Policy for the Party and the Revolution (Lineamientos)* was written.

4.0 THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF THE PCC AND ITS EFFECTS ON CUBAN SOCIETY

The celebration of the PCC Congress after 14 years of absence has a lot to do with the effort to legitimize the new direction of the country. From July 2006 when Fidel Castro announced his temporary separation from all positions he used to hold (except for the First Secretary of the PCC), his brother Raul Castro was left to the challenge of filling that space in the Cuban society. The challenge that Raul Castro has is not only due to the charismatic and leadership skills that Fidel Castro possesses but also to the differences in the way they run the country and the choices made for appointing the men at the highest spheres of power. Bert Hoffman considers Raul Castro has shifted from a charismatic to a bureaucratic socialism (Hoffman, 2011). Nonetheless, the bureaucratization is not an original feature of his leadership, the Cuban socialism was highly bureaucratized from the beginning of the institutionalization process back in the seventies, although the decisions Fidel Castro made were above the bureaucratic sphere and there is no evidence that this has changed with Raul in recent times. The difference is that Fidel Castro thought himself the undeniable legitimate leader and thus he could afford changing the inner circle of collaborators constantly, so much that there were various generations of Cuban leaders in it. However, for Raul Castro the issue of legitimization is strongly linked to loyalty; reason why he has surrounded himself with unconditional collaborators, most of them

³ Erroneously we tend to consider the belonging of Cuba to the Soviet world from the seventies, after the proclamation of the socialist character of the Revolution, and more so, due to the implications of the Missiles Crisis. However, truth is that the Sovietization of the Cuban society began only in the seventies after the country entered the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and the institutionalization process, from which the celebration of the first PCC congress was a key point.

people he has known for fifty years and, therefore, his cabinet has a higher age average than the one his brother had.

The issue is not that Raul Castro dismissed in 2009 a group of prominent people in Cuban politics –none of which belonged to the historical generation that seized the power in 1959–, it's not about that, for this was also a habit of Fidel Castro who throughout the years got rid of close cabinet members and recycled his team. Fidel Castro could dismiss a leader from the younger generations and install in his place someone else, independently from the age he had, while Raul Castro not only has vanished from the higher spheres all younger colleagues his brother had appointed, but also in these eight years he has appointed for the most important positions a group of eighty-years-old people among whom we find some that were removed from power by his brother many years ago. Another difficulty besides the generational clash that the new leader has had to deal with is the more or less active presence of Fidel Castro emitting opinions through the national media. More than once, Raul Castro has made statements or subtle announcements in a public appearance that could be taken as official statements and, two or three days later, his brother has confronted him giving his opinion on the matter at hand, complementing it, explaining it or openly opposing it regardless of what was said by the official Chief of State.

The consequence being that either the announcement made by the president is put off or simply never mentioned again. Even lacking a legal investiture as a ruler since he renounced to his position as the First Secretary of the PCC just before the 6th Congress, Fidel Castro's declaration still have the same weight and this is something the population knows and so does Raul Castro. Of course, the content of the thousands of proposal collected at the people's assemblies that were not accepted for debate at the 6th Congress are not public information. However, it can be inferred that some of them are related to civil rights, access to information and the need for deep reform of the political system. Other social claims that are not as daring as the political transformations but that do have an important weight in the Cuban public opinion were also left out from the *Lineamientos*, despite the fact that in the popular rumors (which continues to be one of the most valuable sources of information that the system has) it was said that they had gained ground during the months previous to the 6th Congress.

One of those touchy topics is related to the migratory policy; before 1959 there was already a growing flux of Cuban migration to the United States (Aja Diaz, 2000); however, since the sixties that flux grew exponentially and diversified towards different regions of the world. In a society in which during the past five decades the tendency from reception to emission of migrants has been inverted notably (Moreira, 2010) and where a high percentage of the families have members living or wanting to live abroad, it is logical that the need for a relaxation in the migratory mechanisms was a concern of its citizens; especially when the bureaucratic obstacles had no fundament and violated the basic rights. No mention is made in the *Lineamientos* for Economic and Social Policy for the Party and the Revolution that suggests the intention of addressing the migratory policy. Nevertheless, during the session period of the National Assembly (Parliament), months after the Congress, Raul Castro included the issue to inform the representatives that soon measures would be taken to regulate the migratory policy and remove certain prohibitions in this area, though he did not clarify what would those changes were going to be.

The fact that the chief executive informed those who are supposed to legislate about the new policies that would be implemented could be seen as an absurd in any other society with a clear separation of powers. However, this is a typical method of the execution of policies in Cuba; furthermore, the series of prohibitions, requirements and regulations that until then had shaped the migratory policy had not been legislated by that parliamentary body in the first place but were old de facto decisions from the sixties. These were established practices rooted in the bureaucratic tradition without a legal backing but with the stamp of the decisions taken at the highest level in the governmental structure. Something similar happened in the nineties when, overnight, cities were filled with state retail shops where first necessity goods were sold in American dollars exclusively, while the bills that received the

workers as wage, the Cuban Peso, still retained the inscription that assured their legal and probative strength facing any obligation carried on within national boundaries.

The *Lineamientos* approved in the 6th PCC Congress, though left unattended many important issues of national interest, pretended to fill in some voids of legal uncertainty and, at the same time, show official political recognition to policies that had already been designed during the first five years of Raul Castro's government. One of the first signs of the intention to shape a line of his own was the emphasis the current Cuban president made since 2006 in the production of food, putting aside some of the campaigns implemented by his predecessor and yet unfinished. To carry forwards that objective, in 2008 the government of Raul Castro took the decision of giving land in usufruct to those who committed themselves to the production of food⁴.

Three years later it was esteemed that around 180 thousand Cubans had requested plots to develop productive activities in the more than a million hectares that had been unexploited (Fernandez, 2011). What the *Lineamientos* did about that was nothing but to put an approving stamp on what had been done already. What neither the *Lineamientos* nor the decisions made beforehand could solve was that people in charge of exploiting that land would actually be able to put food in the tables of Cubans, for the enormous quantity of bureaucratic obstacles, unfavorable conditions in which the producer was and the lack of incentives generated by the obstinate idea of regulating prices and impeding free market, with the preservation of the state monopoly, these producers could hardly be able to change the current panorama in which Cuba imports 80% of the food it consumes.

Apart from the lack of incentive for producers, there are no mechanisms of the market that could contribute to raising the productivity because "the Government assigns a production quota to the usufructuary people (of up to the 70%) for its compulsory sale (stockpiling) to the State at a lower-than-market price. In the *Lineamientos* it was proposed as an innovation that most of the prices were fixed by supply and demand, but the negotiations suppressed that clause and ratified that the State would determine the price of the stockpiling" (Mesa-Lago, 2011, p.5).

In general terms, the *Lineamientos* go back to previously discarded ideas like the tributary policy and the self-managed entrepreneurship that had been pondered during the years of the Soviet economic planning and now are taken up again in the official speech. However, the obstacles are so many and the controls so absurd that they will questionably lead to an effective development policy. The *Lineamientos* document is riddled with ambiguous phrases and headlines so that possible solutions are confined to a limbo of uncertainty. The wording is rich in infinitives like to implement, to promote, to guarantee, to establish, to apply, to satisfy, to foment, to carry out and other magical and vague words that leave open some possibilities but do not constitute in themselves concrete policies that could make the average citizen aware of what is going to happen in the society he lives in.

The rumor that the government would allow to buy and sell houses and automobiles in the nearby future found an echo in the 6th Congress which *Lineamientos* mentioned nothing about the cars but suggested the intention of permitting to buy and sell privately-owned houses among individuals. At the end of the Congress there was not yet a clear idea of when and how would those measures be implemented. However, these regulations have begun already to be effective: Cubans are now allowed to sell and buy their house and a car regardless of the year of its manufacture (before, only automobiles manufactured before 1959 could be sold). In fact, since the beginnings of 2014, a governmental agency has begun to commercialize new and second-hand vehicles in convertible currency; however, the prices are so exorbitantly expensive that they are so far away from the possibilities of the average citizen that the first reactions were of discomfort and frustration. The longed-for right to possess a means of transportation for family needs is still beyond reach, and the unpopularity of the governmental decision was patent when euphoria turned into disappointment (Pulso, 2014; El Universal, 2014).

⁴ Interestingly, in the official language used those lands were named idle land, when it was not the land but its owner, the State, who had been incapable of putting them to good use.

According to the *Lineamientos*, the issue of ending the monetary duality is something to be analyzed, for the matter is a complex one and “it will demand a rigorous preparation and execution, both in the objective and subjective fields”. Additional to the same ambiguous language that can be found throughout the document, it is worth wondering when the subjectivity of the citizens was ever taken into account when the monetary duality was suddenly installed in the nineties.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The expectations awoken among the population and abroad by the adjustment of the official speech in the Cuban government which from 2006 showed a more willing disposition for change were set too high and were not addressed as expected during the 2011 meeting where the redefinition of the country’s direction was to be made. The domains where some change is to be found are not the most relevant and do not match in depth the expectations aroused whereas the socialist central-planning model remains as the basic form of economic organization (Mesa-Lago & Pérez-López, 2013).

In the social conscience, at the public opinion level, there are still questions about sensitive issues affecting daily life and about the real capacities to build a future project of national reconstruction. Topics such as migration policies, access to information, free of expression, nationals claim to invest in truly profitable enterprises -left to foreigners until now- continue to be sensitive issues. The agriculture production still is a high-impact issue in society. Even though the official statistics show there has been growth, none of these improvements have arrived to people’s tables yet. Stuck in the currency duality and the high foreign currencies prices frame of mind, it is becoming impossible to ensure the satisfaction of all basic need and to truly enforce the supremacy of beans over cannons. The military control of different economic spheres might turn out to be positive for the fight against corruption (which is more and more common since the ‘dollarization’ of the economy back in the nineties) and, on the other hand, conspires against individual freedoms at workplaces.

The generational issue remains unresolved. Though denied by the official speech, it is clearly seen in the composition of the cabinet that there is a distinctive inclination to favor loyalty to the leader over professional capacity. Thus, people associated with the current ruler in the past are openly favored. The government knows that the approach towards the future of the country has to change but is not aware of the depths of this need to rebuild the society after decades of physical and emotional fractures. It seems like the government wants to start decompressions but without totally taking the lid off the pot, which is impossible. Some small business have been opened which may permit a sector of the population to make a living, but an economy does not recover opening hairdressing saloons nor development is attained with small coffee shops that are, more often than not, poorly supplied since there is no wholesaler market to supply these small owners, nor the security for the small entrepreneurs that their legal status will change in the future from its current lack of definition. On the other hand, a factor that faces the quick economic policy reform is the fear that it could spur the political change (Sullivan, 2007).

Summarizing, three years after the approval of the 6th PCC Congress agreements and the beginning of their implementation, there are still many open questions about the future of Cuban society.

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