

# HERE'S ONE NEW BERNIAN'S OPINION OF RECENT CASTRO VIOLENCE IN CUBA

It is doubtful that anyone in North Carolina, or the South, can better evaluate the Latin viewpoint than Karl Snow, who terminated his travelling in 1942 to become a New Bernian by choice.

While living in a Latin country, he visited various countries, saw countless uprisings and revolutions in the South American area, and learned firsthand why folks below the border react the way they do.

Many of the leaders he knew personally, among them Sandino, whose exploits in Nicaragua sent United States Marines scurrying there a generation ago. Sandino's wife, an officer in the army, was moved to Honduras after being wounded twice with shrapnel, and Snow recalls bouncing her young son on his knee.

A peace-loving man, Karl would probably be the last person in the world to start a revolution himself. However, in his genuine love for people he looks at both sides of everything.

That's why The Mirror is happy today to present this exclusive look at the doings of Fidel Castro in Cuba, taken by a man who knows whereof he speaks. You may not agree with your fellow New Bernian—a lot of folks won't—but because his is an honest opinion and he doesn't hesitate to express it, we pass it along to you.

"Castro is being severely criticized," says Snow, "about his heavy-handed dealing with his political enemies. Most of the criticism comes from people who do not know the inner workings of Latin politics.

"Having lived for over 20 years among them, and being intimately acquainted with all classes from the Indian in his mountain shack, to presidents who were elected, and presidents who became president by force of arms and set themselves up as dictators, I learned many things.

"On one occasion I was invited to spend a weekend at the ranch of a president who was later classed as a dictator. As we were about to start the trip, he noticed that I was the only one in the party without a rifle or sub-gun. He told his secretary to go back and bring a rifle for me, as it would make him feel better.

"The Latin has a different way of doing things. If he doesn't like the way things have gone, his first thought is his knife and his gun. It makes no difference whether it is against his own brother. It is common to see brothers leading opposing forces.

"One day I was visiting a certain president. He was handed a telegram from his son, who had been court-martialed in connection with a revolutionary plot, and sentenced to be executed. The son was appealing to his father for help. The old man read the telegram and said that his son was 21, knew what he was doing, and that there would be no intervention.

"In another case, a weak president had served under the dictates of a shrewd wife and unscrupulous family. They pocketed every cent of money they could lay hands on,

and were thrown out by a savage revolution.

"I was taking pictures as they marched on the palace, so I was there. When the new government took over after months of fighting, the national treasury had a balance of 14 cents. Someone must have slipped, or that too would have been gone.

"Naturally, the leaders were hot under the collar, and quite a number who weren't lucky enough to escape were taken down to the river for water, and never seen again.

"By nature the Latin likes to see gore. From childhood they see cockfights in the streets, and bull fights. The boys start out carrying any kind of knife under their belts, and later a machete or gun. Due to the wild country where they live, knives really are a necessity for self-protection in many cases.

"When a patriotic man comes along who has undergone days and months, and even years, living like an animal, fighting inch by inch, trying desperately for an opportunity to throw out the money changers, a real hate builds up to a white heat.

"He is ready to do anything to the ones he feels to blame for the crooked things he has fought so hard to overthrow. Naturally, in these cases many innocents pay the supreme penalty due to association.

"There is one point that we

should not overlook. The leaders in charge of this clean-up work do it knowing full well that they will become marked men. Once their reign is overthrown by the friends and relatives of the victims that they have ordered executed, they too, if caught, will pay the same price their victims paid. Leaders must have real intestinal fortitude.

"Naturally, it is hard for us to understand their way of doing things. Here, in our beloved America, we can get all "het" up and throw mud, and yell our heads off before an election. But, if we lose, we go back home and drop the matter, while making-up our minds to throw more mud and yell louder next time.

"Then too, it was not so many

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years ago that some of our mountain folks did a lot of this same kind of fighting and feuding. You know, it isn't a very healthy business for an outsider to mix in family feuding.


"Sometimes things get mighty rough, but in time they too will wonder why they did it."

That's the way a New Bernian who certainly ought to know—Karl Snow—views Fidel Castro and events in Cuba now making headlines. You may feel that Karl's at-

titude toward Castro is inclined to be too charitable. This, however, all of us will agree on. Imagining yourself in the other fellow's shoes does make quite a difference.

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