

Readers disagree, say 'Castro, si'

I couldn't help but be struck by the ironic juxtaposition of your editorial "Cuba Si, Castro No" (a favorite slogan of Reagan's) with the front page story on homicide in the United States in the August 5 Recorder. The editorial (with whose basic conclusion I agree) describes those who fled Cuba over the years as having "found success and material security in a free society." Further down one reads how the people from the rest of the Americas live in "a freer, more prosperous world" than do the Cubans. The piece closes with the hope that "Cubans may take part in that better world" soon.

Turning to the front page we read that our nation's "homicide toll will rise to a record total this year." Yet, friends of mine who have visited Cuba tell me that one can walk the streets of its largest city at any hour without fear — a freedom not available to most citizens in our "free society." In our "prosperous" country everyone must pay for their own health care. In Cuba, it is free. Cubans taking part in our "better world" will find that public education here is severely underfunded compared to what they are used to. They will find stores stocked with goods they hadn't before dreamed of, but outside see homelessness and hunger that they also would have found unimaginable previously.

So just why is it that we in the U.S. find ourselves facing an annual increase in violent crimes? Ask the teen-ager from Holyoke who now has to dodge bullets in the park where he used to play basketball because the city won't pay for a recreation program anymore. Ask the single mother who now lives in the streets with her children because her landlord exercised his "freedom" to evict her and thereby maximize profit on his property investments. Ask the boy who's had to cook for his siblings since he was seven, owing to his mother's drug addiction — the first appreciable expenditure of public funds on his behalf being that used to send him to prison for armed robbery. It has been proposed that one may measure the advancement of a society by how it treats its young and its poor. In this respect, ours ranks among the most uncivilized in the industrialized world.

While the Castro regime certainly has curtailed freedoms for its citizens that most of us would consider essential, it has made meeting basic human needs a priority. Our government has decided that only those already of means need to be provided for. The S&L crisis has simply been one of many cleverly disguised re-distributions of wealth from the working class to the financial elite. In exercising such "freedoms" the latter is insuring that, not long after the collapse of the communist system, the capitalist system will collapse as well.

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