



LEADING MEN AND WOMEN OF THE REVOLUTION

HAVANA, 1959 — Here are Fidel and Che with Raúl Castro (center) in a spur-of-the-moment meeting. They were the biggest names of the Revolution. Raúl is Fidel's brother, but he earned his way in the Revolution. He was in the Moncada barracks attack, in prison with Fidel on the Isle of Pines, and on board the *Granma* for the 1956 invasion of the island. He fought alongside Fidel and Che and Camilo throughout the Revolution. Women fought

too. Celia Sánchez is seen in the photo at left, resting on a jeep and talking to the head of a female security force (wearing beret and sidearm). The female combat group during the war against Batista was called the Mariana Grajales Platoon (named after a black woman combatant in Cuba's first war of independence). They took some casualties in the fighting. Celia was with the Revolution from the time she met Fidel in 1957. There's no ques-

tion that she was the most powerful woman in Cuba. After the triumph of the Revolution, Celia was Fidel's secretary and took care of big things and little things. I remember when Fidel was in Chile on official business, Celia talked to him every day on the phone for two, two and a half hours. One evening he was hoarse. She told him to be sure to take some aspirin and gargle with salt water. But she would just as likely discuss matters of state.