

"Perestroika" and freedom of information in the west

(Uruguayan coverage of a speech by Fidel Castro)

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RESUMO

O autor analisa o destaque e as interpretações dadas por jornais uruguaios a um discurso de Fidel Castro.

ABSTRACT

The author analyses the interpretations and the space that Uruguayans newspapers devote to a Fidel Castro's speech.

In several academic areas we can already witness the impact of the **perestroika**, as a means of ideological renewal involving the final destination of mankind. This is the reason why the speech of Fidel Castro on July 26, 1988, celebrating the assault to Moncada is assigned particular importance, for he included several observations on some economic and political aspects of the **perestroika**.

An empirical observation pointed to several deficiencies and deformations in the information published by the Uruguayan press. This was our motivation to

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engage in this systematic research and analytical paper destined to clarifying which was the information released and how many people did really receive a reasonably accurate information on such an important speech.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE CONTENTS OF THE SPEECH

To the effects of this analysis, the speech pronounced by Fidel Castro on July 26, having over 20,000 words, may be divided into three parts:

1) The first part is devoted to the activities of the Revolution in the province of Santiago de Cuba, where the speech was delivered. It includes a high amount of information on facts, and starts on the population, the growth of labor sources, and the increasing share of women in labor forces, which rose from 8,000 before the Revolution, to over 120,000 at present, this figure being even higher than the total number of workers existing in the country thirty years ago. As usual in his speeches, he associated these facts to new problems faced by the province, as the ill-distribution of labor because of shortage and excess sectors. He said:

"Everywhere, and even aware that we are only in the beginning, we may witness the first results of the policies destined to rectifying errors and negative trends", and he added:

"Everywhere, and also in our country, due to an excess of paternalism and paying homage to old ideas and conflicts between workers and employers, socialism incurred in a handful of weak regulations and concessions which became real hindrances to the development of productive forces."

This first part of the speech, which includes some 9,500 words and lasts one and a half hour, is very hard to summarize, because it includes a high amount of figures comparing the situation before the revolution and the current situation in many different fields: health, education, dwellings, power sources, etc. Yet, it is worth emphasizing a full information silence on this part of the speech is a way to fight against a likely favorable image of the Revolution.

2) The second part, some 7,000 words, is devoted to ideological socialism problems, including international relations problems inside the socialist world and in its relationship with capitalism. It starts with a short mention of the wish to achieve an individual improvement which is not in line with collective interests and quotes, as an example, the exports of lobsters, which are not consumed in Cuba. "I have heard *petit-bourgeois* saying ... they want to have a university, a hospital, a school, a career, a job, transportation, entertainment, art, culture, all!, and they say: "It is hard to be in our own country and not being able to stay at such hotel" ... And we might add 'It is a shame we may not eat all the lobsters we produce' ... Yet, with the proceeds of the sale of one ton of lobsters in world markets, we may import 20 tons of powder milk, and prepare 200,000 liters of milk (...) and many kids are fed milk, who otherwise would not have had any milk."

After referring to foreign trade and tourism, he starts his analysis of the process destined to the rectification of errors: "Since the Third Congress ... this rectification process started, somehow simultaneously to the processes in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries, without there having been a prior agreement to those ends."

"Some people think that we must do straightforwardly what others are doing in other countries; there are people who have no mind of their own, who do not rely themselves and do not trust their country ... who immediately start saying we

must copy others. And this is not a correct attitude ... because no two revolutionary processes are alike ..."

"Let me tell you one thing: this Revolution was precisely featured by its unique non-copy nature; it was a creative revolution ... Theories used to state no revolution was possible here; that is what theories used to state."

The speech refers, then, to two ideologies: Marxism-Leninism, and Martí's thoughts, and he adds:

"Our Revolution ... has been preserved by a very powerful ideological strength, because we are here, who could ever defend us? If imperialism attacks us, who will defend our island? Nobody will come from abroad to defend our island: we are the only ones who will ever defend our island. And I am not saying that nobody will wish to defend us, the fact is that nobody can, because our socialism revolution is not a few miles away from the Soviet Union; this socialist revolution is 10,000 km away from the Soviet Union".

"We do not pretend to be better than anybody, it is rather because we are only 90 miles away from the most powerful empire in the world and 10,000 km away from the socialist world ... that is why the Revolution must firmly stick to the purest principles of Marxism-Leninism and of Martí's thoughts, stick to them rather than playing or flirting with capitalism."

Reference to the "perestroika"

"That is why based on its own history, based on its concrete experience, each country must prepare its own forms; and we shall be respectful of the forms to be prepared by each country; we are fully respectful of them. We are pleased by the efforts made by socialist countries to overcome their difficulties ... but theirs are not our problems; we have different problems; our problems are different; and this is precisely because we did not copy, because we created our own way, rather than copying."

Trust in socialism

"Sometimes I have even criticized our own zeal in the application of our own interpretations; I have considered that in our efforts to be our own, we failed to take advantage of the positive experiences of socialist countries; but sometimes we did also copy negative experiences of socialist countries. This is the truth. Now, we shall continue looking for our own way, our own forms; we shall be open to anything useful in any socialist country, and we shall still be reluctant to act in a servile way, and to copy the recipes prepared for illnesses we have not suffered. And obviously, we do not only wish but also need socialist countries to be successful in their efforts to overcome their difficulties, which we trust they will."

"We believe socialism achieved wonderful things: the success of the Soviet Union remains unmatched in history" and he described the difficulties of the Soviet Union and its successful achievements. "... We shall never deny or allow anybody to deny the tremendous achievements of socialism. And I am saying this because imperialists, based on the self-criticism of socialist countries and the Soviet Union, are now trying to deny all the achievements of socialism, to deprive it of its historical success, to break down the morale of socialism."

Rejection of capitalism and enhancement of the Party

"... Cuba will never adopt capitalistic methods, ways or philosophies or a capitalistic spirit."

After this assertion, some 1,000 words are used to describe the need to reinforce the ideological strength of the Party and to reject any idea of a multi-party nature.

The speech makes note of Popular Power devices, where candidates are not suggested by the Party. "We do not have anything to rectify in this sense; ours is a very democratic system; our democracy is far better than that of bourgeois systems..."

A) Economic Aspects	B) Political Aspects	C) Ideological Definitions
1st Part Revolutionary achievements: – supply of drinking water – self-supply of food – other productive problems – unhealthy dwellings – insufficient work (absenteeism, lack of devotion) – lack and excess of labor	Application of gauges Special brigades, beyond plans Appeal to revolutionary spirit	References to "error rectification" process
2nd Part	– We are 90 miles away from Miami and 10,000 km away from Odessa – Praises to the USSR "Weapons are Soviet" – Popular Power	– Not copying – Theory said Revolution was impossible – Marxist-Leninist and Mar-ti's thoughts – Ideological purity of the Revolution – Allusion to "perestroika" – Rejection of capitalism – Planning. Role of the State and the Party
3rd Part	– Military and political situation of Angola – Likelihood of an agreement and removal of Cuban army	

Planning and role of the State and the Party

Finally, in a few words, he rounds up this second part of his speech with the following thoughts:

"Another essential issue in our rectification process is that we shall not weaken the role of plans, or the role of development programs..."

"... the State cannot engage in fully political and ideological activities as the organization and mobilization of people or the conduction of mass organizations. These tasks are inherent to the Party."

3) The **third part** of the speech refers to Angola, and extensively explains the military and political situation, and he announced, for the first time in the world, that it is likely that an agreement will be concluded in the near future, which will imply the removal of the Cuban army. This part is comprised of over 4,000 words.

In summary, the following chart shows the primary layout of the speech:

II. CO-OCCURRENCE ANALYSIS

We may state, in the first place, that the impact of this speech on the Uruguayan press was extremely poor, that in most cases its contents were deformed and that, as a general rule, there was a voluntary or neglectful distortion which was in some cases also due to ideological subordination.

The results we are discussing below explain why our analysis of the speech does not cover its full contents.

In fact, although from a theoretical standpoint it would be advisable to subject the whole speech to a detailed analysis which would allow us to witness concealed intents – which would, in turn, allow us later to gauge more precisely the significance of silences, distortion and information handling as prevailing in our press –, the material restrictions of all research activities forced us to engage in a less ambitious option.

In line with the above, only the following aspects were considered:

- a) relationships with the URSS;
- b) relationships with capitalism; and
- c) ideological options. And all three aspects were subject to a co-occurrence analysis.

Relationships with the URSS

In this speech, Castro mentions the URSS seven times, and makes some more references to Soviet aid. The first time he refers to this idea, it is in association to the idea that an "errors revision" process has started in Cuba, which undoubtedly makes the author shift to "somehow simultaneously to the processes in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries, without there having been a prior agreement to those ends."

And he is then forced to immediately criticize those who believe "we must copy others."

His second reference to the URSS does also look as if it appeared in his mind associated to another idea: the risk of an attack by imperialism forced and forces the revolution to achieve an "ideological strength" because it is "10.000 km away from the URSS". All remaining references are undoubtedly voluntary and organized.

He is not reluctant in this field, but rather assigns specific emphasis to the solidarity existing between Cuba and the URSS. After carefully describing technological Soviet aid, he adds, as an anti-imperialism challenge: "And our weapons are Soviet weapons, the weapons with which we have defended our country."

Relationships with capitalism

All throughout his speech, there are references to the capitalistic past of Cuba, comparisons with rich capitalistic societies, warnings against the attack of capitalism or imperialism to the Revolution, which seem all to derive from his conscious line of reasoning.

But they do appear as an "explosion" caused by other subjects, which fact does allow us to draw different conclusions. For instance, when he refers to the "historical feat" of having "built socialism here", he adds: "This is why we must take due care of the ideological pureness of our Revolution ... we may not use devices ... smelling of capitalism ... The Revolution must firmly stick to the purest principles of Marxism-Leninism and of Marti's thoughts, stick to them rather than playing or flirting with capitalism."

"Smelling of capitalism"? Has anybody suggested anything "smelling of capitalism"? "Playing or flirting with capitalism." Don't these expressions lead us to think of McDonald's shops in Moscow, of the American publicity agreements subscribed with the URSS?

Rounding up a reference to Soviet reformation, he says "I trust socialist countries will try to rectify any errors they may make in this process, for they will certainly incur in many errors in this process" and then he adds, with a particular emphasis: "Yet I am in a position to inform all imperialists, all imperialistic theoreticians that Cuba will never adopt capitalistic methods, ways or philosophies or a capitalistic spirit. I can certainly make such a statement. Capitalism has had several technological achievements, several achievements in terms of organization, there are several technological or organizational experiences which may be used, but that is all! Socialism and capitalism are two fully opposite things, in their definition and in their very nature".

Ideological options

References are generally explicit and conscious: "We already have a highly democratic system. We do not have anything to rectify in this sense; we have nothing to learn." Doesn't this evoke in us a specific statement of Gorbachov, "We must learn democracy"?

"We have nothing to learn, and we will not shift an inch from our way, where power stays with the people" he adds, after briefly recalling the Cuban Popular Power system.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE SPEECH BY DAILY NEWSPAPERS

1) Headlines of Montevideo newspapers when reporting the speech

El Dia -	"Castroika" in Cuba; no room for the reformation winds blowing in Moscow
El Diario -	Fidel Castro demands a peace agreement in Angola
La Hora -	Celebration of Moncada Anniversary - Fidel outlined progress and changes
La Manana -	Demand for Peace Agreement - Castro offered to remove cuban soldiers from Angola
El Pais -	"More hard work and less dreams", requested the cuban President
La Republica -	There are no headlines. There is only a telepicture of the speaker and four lines below.
Ultimas Noticias -	No information on July 27 or in subsequent days.

2) Importance assigned to the information

	SIZE (WORDS)	RELATIVE LOCATION	HEADLINES SIZE	PLACE IN THE PAGE (*)
El Dia	640	6th place in Page 4	6 columns x 3 cm in 2 lines	8
El Diario	230	2nd place in Page 2	3 columns x 3 cm in 2 lines	2
La Hora	280	1st place in Page 15	3 columns x 12 cm in 3 lines	1
La Manana	160	1st place in Page 6	3 columns x 5 cm in 3 lines	1
El País	320	3rd place in Page 3	2 columns x 3 cm in 3 lines	6
La Republica	80+	1st place in Page 28 telephoto in Page 28 lines	No headlines	1

(*) This number was obtained by counting headlines from left to right and from top to bottom

This choice of the present Cuban system applied to the government by the State and his renewed emphasis on a single party as the tool fit to mobilize society and the State is developed and grounded.

The role of planning is summarized as follows: "There is an essential issue in our rectification process: we shall not weaken the role of planning or the role of development programs."

We assume the analysis of this speech may be enhanced through the above comments. Based on intuition, on the accumulation of professional experience or on the application of the same observation and analytical methods, news correspondent could have submitted coincident reports, at least regarding some of the issues dealt with. In fact, all versions are quite simple and have not been thoroughly prepared. This is another point readers may make when learning the press releases that were published.

IV. IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INFORMATION RELEASED BY INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES

The URSS is a communist country and Cuba is also a communist country. Which is the most interesting aspect for a western agency correspondent forced to summarize the core of a 20,000 word speech in a 300/600-word press release? Under a careful professional attitude based on his referents - namely, first: his readers, second: his boss, and third: maybe himself (otherwise, he would not certainly be a correspondent in the Agency) - he may choose the conclusion drawn by Reuter: Any signs of discrepancies between Cuba and the URSS is an interesting news, because this is a benefit for the "free world". Cuba will not copy the perestroika? "This is a good piece of news." And he pays no attention to the fact that the speech itself places emphasis on the achievement of unity and understanding with the URSS.

Obviously, correspondents will not be eager to inform on the breath-taking economic and social advancements described in the speech. Even if there are highly trustworthy evidences of these facts. Educational progress has been acknowledged by UNESCO; health progress has been acknowledged by the WHO; yet, these news are considered to be "publicity for the System" and are even considered to lack any interest because they are not "spectacular", as required by the "news" concept accepted by existing market devices.

Even the piece of information involving the announcement of the likelihood of a future agreement in Angola - which was fully omitted by Reuter's correspondent - would have allowed the public to understand that there was no such disagreement between Cuba and the URSS, as it headlined almost in defiance "CASTRO-ILKA" IN CUBA..., for the withdrawal from Angola falls within the scope of the "new mind" promoted by Gorbachov regarding international relations.

The reaction of Associated Press correspondents, based on similar referents, was different, but it confirms our assertions. AP correspondents chose the first part of the speech and devoted 80% of their release to the part dealing with the evolution of the Revolution in the province. From his "lead" he states: "President Fidel Castro requested Cubans to work harder and have less dreams..."

And he insists: "... requested Cubans to work hard and to forget their dreams of luxury, as, for instance, a working day of only eight hours", and further below, he adds: "in the coming needy years to which Castro referred." He only makes one mention of favorable advancements, that "Before 1959, he said, there were only

180 medical doctors in Santiago, the second town in the country. Now, there are 2,470."

Yet, the truth is quite different. The speech reads: "Maybe one of the worst tragedies of Third World countries is that they dream with the consumption of developed capitalistic societies, who only work seven, six, or five hours. This is only a dream, an illusion."

And he then refers to Japan "the capitalistic country which has achieved the highest development in the recent past" but where workers have in average only a 6-day vacation per year.

"I am not saying that Cubans must have six vacation days, I am only saying that we must work hard in our working days ... we have evidence that in fact we are not working eight hours, or seven and a half, or seven hours. We are working less. And it would be demagogical... for anybody to say ... that a country may develop ... working inefficiently ... or working little."

Regarding the "coming needy years to which Castro referred" the statement made by the correspondent from Associated Press is also false.

When summarizing the achievements of the province, he adds: "I consider our country has very important possibilities, which we are already witnessing in this province." Anybody listening to such a detailed "inventory" of achievements submitted to an audience of 300.000 witnesses of his words should have understood that this was the most logical conclusion.

Later, when dealing with **foreign trade**, there are references to the lack of convertible foreign currency derived from the fall of international prices, and the need to increase tourism, for instance, in order to cope with the lack of foreign convertible currency. This is the framework for the example of lobsters and milk. And within this framework, he specifically said: "These years, 1987, 1988 and maybe a couple of years ahead, will be the most difficult years for the Revolution, in terms of convertible foreign currency."

The correspondent of Associated Press does also distort the news when, after saying that "he stated that the young generations born in Santiago are more enthusiastic and revolutionary than all preceding generations" he adds that "This enthusiasm may be essential in the coming needy years to which Castro referred, because of the poor prospects for an improvement of the situation in terms of foreign currency exchange". There was no mention of any future "needy" situation.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE WORDING OF ASSOCIATED PRESS AND REUTER PRESS RELEASES AND COMMENTS ON THE INFORMATION DISPATCHED BY PRENSA LATINA

The release of Associated Press published by El Pais is comprised of 320 words, one typewritten page. This short text includes the following as its most important referents:

- work more and have less dreams
- difficult times ahead
- work hard
- abandon luxury dreams of 8-hour work
- armies ... to incorporate to the battle for development
- essential in coming needy years
- Only two years ago, he referred to laziness, absenteeism and inefficiency.

It is also worth adding that as "background", he included a paragraph devoted to the removal of Batista, and another to the Cuban army fighting in Angola, which reduces the space where these assertions were included, all of which have a negative connotation.

His untidy newspaper work, his incontinent or his voluntary will forced him further to state that he was dealing with a "3-hour long speech that had been televised" and to omit that it had been delivered before 300,000 people although it was also televised. The information omitted implies several connotations: 1) the presence of witnesses who might have compared Castro's words with their own day-to-day experience; 2) cooperation interest (underlined by Castro as a feature of the revolutionary nature); and 3) the fact that it was not read, but rather said.

In summary

This is a speech whose structure may be described as follows: 50% is devoted to the achievements of the Revolution and includes a high amount of details of information, and it shows a highly critical spirit although under a generally positive appraisal; 30% is devoted to the relationships existing in the socialist world and to ideological standpoints, and 20% to Angola.

Yet, Associated Press shows the speech under the following structure: 90% devoted to the achievements of the Revolution which only includes one single set of figures (medical doctors) and a fully negative summary (based even on false information, as that referring to "the luxury of 8 hours"; 0% to relationships with the socialist world and ideological standpoints; and 10% to the withdrawal from Angola.

The information released by Reuter

It was published by *El Dia* and is comprised of 640 words.

Contrary to drafting techniques used in all agencies, the story incurs in flagrant deviations from the "objectiveness" recommended by liberal theories on market information: namely stick to the events, and in this case, to the text of the speech that was summarized.

This deviation is mainly evidenced by an extremely high number of references to "diplomatic sources", a usual device used by newspapermen when trying to introduce an opinion which would not be accepted by their bosses. In this case:

- diplomatic analysts, form the "lead". And later,
- "Castroika is the rule" stated a western diplomatic
- But diplomatic sources added ...
- ... according to diplomatic sources, hardening the spirit...
- Some diplomats said ...
- ... stated a European diplomatic

Thus, many paragraphs are associated to those unknown "sources" who interpret the sense of the speech.

Finally, there is a false quotation: "You can't even dream of reducing the working hours. In order to get the material wealth we desire, we must work harder" he said.

This is a false quotation, and it is further ideologically wrong. When analyzing the work of Associated Press, I have already explained, that the subject of working days was dealt with in terms of what economists know as "labor productivity". In other parts of the speech, attention is paid to the subsequent problems created in a typical full-employment socialist society, derived from lacks and excesses of labor, and enhancing the analysis of a thesis whereby the redistribution of labor will not be achieved through the removal of workers, even with a pay, because that would be detrimental to their own dignity. Consequently, the problems mentioned were clearly the following: **redistribution** (known by Cubans as "narrow profile" and "wide profile") and **productivity** (absenteeism, poor devotion, inefficiency, etc.) both having an impact on development, on the harmonious development of material and cultural, educational and health needs. When the correspondent says "get the material wealth we desire", he is speaking from his capitalistic mind.

Its ideological falsification, its handling are, maybe at this stage, innocent and unintentional.

The Information released by Prensa Latina

In principle, the Cuban Agency is less subject to the criteria prevailing in market information. On the other hand, the subject matter of the speech fully coincides with the very purposes of the Agency, and it was the only agency to release the full speech, which was published in a weekly paper, **La Juventud** (which is the speaker of a pro-Cuban group).

However, the article published by **La Hora** is extremely short. It only deals with the "error rectification" process which started two years ago and its favorable outcome. They add a criticism to the excessive paternalistic situation "prevailing in the recent past" (in Cuba) and do not clarify that the text reads: "Everywhere, and also in our country, due to an excessive paternalism ... socialism incurred in a handful of weak regulations."

It is almost a fact that immediately after the speech, Prensa Latina sent a short release on each of the aspects of the speech, and some time, later, also, an overall article covering the speech as a whole. This is the usual way to handle such a situation.

Then, why did **La Hora** publish only this release? It is worth recalling that this newspaper is closely linked to the Communist Party, and that this Party has a weekly publication, **El Popular**, which would be sold a few days after the speech. The version of the speech published by **El Popular** is far more complete and balanced, and has been freed from some of the harsh aspects which might have been considered to be a criticism to the URSS. This allows us to consider the hypothesis that the night when **La Hora** was being prepared, the decision was made to publish whatever was ready and caused no problems, there resulting a very incomplete information. Not a single word on the 30% of the speech devoted to the relationships existing with the socialist area and to ideological problems; not a single word on the 20% devoted to Angola; and regarding the 50% devoted to the achievements of the Revolution and current problems, the lack of information is really amazing although the sympathetic *a priori* opinion may be observed in and is evidenced by the size of headlines.

VI - SPREADING

Potential comparative spreading of the speech in daily newspapers

	PAPERS (000)	WORDS IN THE SPEECH	REVOLUTION	REL. W/ USSR AND IDEOL.	ANGOLA
El Dia	15	640	70%	30%	0%
El Diario	8	230	0%	0%	100%
La Hora	6	280	100%	0%	0%
La Manana	5	160	0%	0%	100%
El Pais	20	320	80%	0%	20%
La Republica	?	80			0%
Ult. Noticias	10				

Total: 64,000 papers (7 every 1,000 inhabitants)

The scope of spreading of daily newspapers is a commercial secret zealously kept by Uruguayan newspaper companies. But as this concealed information has a very high economic value for advertisers, they (at least those incurring in high publicity expenses) and also the publicity agencies who prepare the campaigns of their customers, are perfectly aware of the share of each newspaper.

Some time is the past, in order to meet the needs of a different study and based on reliable witnesses, it was possible to determine that the total volume of newspapers published in Montevideo amounted to some 450,000 per day. At the time, there was not, as at present, a high variation in sales from one day to the other.

At present, as a result of economic difficulties and of the influence of the TV, from Monday to Friday (the speech was published within these days), the same sources used in the above mentioned study, estimate that some 64,000 newspapers are sold per day, a seventh of the figures corresponding to 1959, as a result of economic difficulties of the influence of the TV.

Within such a reduced overall volume, the attempt has been made to compare in a graphic way the potential spreading of the speech as follows:

In summary :

- From a quantitative standpoint, and considering 3 readers per paper, we have:
- 1) The maximum number of readers who may have read something about the

speech amounts to 192,000 (10% of the population of the country).

2) The maximum number of readers who may have read **something** about the first part of the speech (achievements of the Revolution), amounts to 135,000 (6.8% of the population of the country).

3) The maximum number of readers who may have read **something** about the second part of the speech (relationships with the USSR and ideological options), amounts to 45,000 (2.3% of the population of the country).

4) The maximum number of readers who may have read **something** about the third part of the speech (Angola) amounts to 105,000 (5.3% of the population of the country).

5) There were readers who did not even know that a speech was delivered because their newspaper did not publish a single word: 30,000 (1.5% of the population). It is worth nothing that this 1.5% which seems to be negligible, amounts to 15% of the **total number of newspaper readers in the country**. Therefore 15% of readers were subject to a full silence as a means to handle their opinion.

6) There were three newspapers who only dealt with one of the three subjects of the speech; other two papers only dealt with **two** subjects; and there was a newspaper who only published a picture and a few lines. Consequently, **no reader was able to learn that there were three main subjects in the speech**.

VII - TWO COMPARISONS WITH FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS

La Nacion (Buenos Aires) published the information in a length similar to that of **El Dia** - some 320 words - and added a picture of AP which allows to infer that the release corresponds to this agency. The headlines used were "Castro and the 'Perestroika'".

Only the second main subject of the speech is dealt with: relationships with the USSR and ideological options. No mention is made of the achievements of the Revolution or of the likely conclusion of a peace agreement in Angola.

The "pro-West" option is evidenced by the wording used: it reads "Russia's satellite countries" instead of "the socialist countries who are allies to the USSR".

Anyway, the information submitted by **La Nacion** is somehow better than the one published by **El Dia**, the only pro-Capitalism Uruguayan paper which mentioned the relationships with the USSR.

El Pais (Madrid) covered the information with its own correspondent. It published on top of its first page some 200 words meant as a very balanced summary although there is no mention of the first subject. Inside the paper, and also in the upper part, there is an article of some 1,000 words and one picture, which as a whole make a very accurate presentation, with many adequate quotations and only a few opinions of the correspondent. No mention is made either, in this second article, of the part of the speech devoted to the achievements of the Revolution.

The headlines used inside the paper, "**The statesman is hopeful that an agreement in the near future will allow the removal of Cuban forces from Angola**" and "**CASTRO STATES THAT 'PERESTROIKA' DOES NOT FIT CUBA**" contribute to inform the public with a certain degree of objectiveness. In general terms, the Spanish paper is, as expected, much better than the Uruguayan press as a whole, in terms of its informative quality.

Conclusions

According to analysts, the quality of information or, in other words, the lack of spontaneous or wilful handling, depends mainly on two elements: a) on the supplying source (news agencies) and b) on the attitude of each newspaper when setting priorities on the allocation of space, relative location and headlines. Over this process, the ideological devices described in Section IV have a second impact on local newspapermen.

The releases sent by Associated Press and Reuter showed harsh handling practices. When compared to those of France-Presse (who nobody published) it is easier to evidence their deviation from deontology. AFP is also an agency which represents commercial information. However, its information was very balanced; it was comprised of some 800 words, and by itself it is far better than all the articles published by Montevideo papers and even by weekly publications, **Brecha** (independent leftists) and **El Popular**, who devoted longer time to the preparation of their information.

Regarding the decisions of each paper on the space, priority and headlines of this information, there is the highest degree of discretionality, derived from an open handling of ideological sympathetic and unfriendly feelings. There are no efforts to offer accurate, objective and precise headlines.

One of the papers, which represents a very conservative tendency, **Ultimas Noticias** (owned by the Moon Sect), did not inform at all.

Regarding political weeklies – which amazingly amount to 18 –, only 3 dealt with the speech. **Busqueda** the conservative political weekly publication which offers the best national information, fully ignored the speech, and surprisingly, so did **Mate Amargo**, a quarterly publication of the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros). Obviously these omissions derive from different motivations: **Busqueda** is a solid journalistic company which pretends to be objective while **Mate Amargo** is an ideological publicity spokesman.

And let me end saying that although this study was limited to one single piece of foreign news, a precise text whose significance could be anticipated, essential for the socialist ideology and deeply interesting for all, this situation forces us to adopt a pessimistic attitude regarding the quality of the remaining international information we daily read in our newspaper.