Cuba became a communist country in 1961. Communism means the government controls all the land and the economy. Their economy is a command economy, which is when the government controls what is produced.

The Cuban Constitution of 1976 created the National Assembly of People's Power, but only meets 2 times a year for a few days at a time. When the National Assembly of People's Power doesn't meet, the Council of State is in control. These two bodies hold the legislative and executive powers.

Raul Castro is the President of the Council of State, and is the dictator of Cuba (he replaced his brother Fidel Castro in 2008).

The People's Supreme Court is the highest judicial body, but it is specifically subject to the National Assembly and to the Council of State's approval.

The government limits individual freedoms (like speech and press). The government controls all forms of media, like newspapers, radio and television. The government limits access to the internet.

Criticism of national leaders can lead to imprisonment. Authorities have used surveillance, short-term detentions, and state-organized mobs to interfere with public demonstrations and meetings

they did not authorize. Authorities also interfere with privacy, and monitor private communications, including private mail and phone conversations.

In 1960, the United States imposed a trade embargo on Cuba. This means American businesses are limited in trading with Cuba and its businesses.

A trade embargo ensures the Cuban economy will not make money from

U.S. products and Cuba will lose money since the United States will not buy from them. However, many experts say the embargo has caused food shortages and for prices of medicine to go up, causing many health problems for the Cuban people.