

# FIDEL CASTRO

2 x 60



International

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In the United States, Latin America, Europe and in far corners of the globe, people from all walks of life either despise Fidel Castro as a ruthless dictator or lionize him as a champion of social justice. Nearly five decades after he assumed power, he remains a living legend, a touchstone for revolutionaries the world over and a symbol of resistance to American dominance.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE *Fidel Castro*, is a new documentary about the controversial, charismatic dictator who has confounded American presidents from Eisenhower to Bush while surviving a CIA-backed invasion, countless assassination plots, an economic embargo—even the collapse of his benefactor, the Soviet Union.

For the leader of a small Caribbean nation, Castro's impact on the latter half of the 20th century has been inordinate. Castro sent his soldiers to the farthest reaches of the world and roused his people to accomplish heroic feats, in the name of justice and the promise of a brilliant future. But he also drove two million Cubans into exile and silenced those who dared challenge his rule.

"To make this film," says producer/director/writer Adriana Bosch, "I had to reach deeper into my heart than I ever have before to attempt to answer the questions, Why Fidel Castro? And what really happened in Cuba under him?"

To craft this documentary, Bosch and her production team interviewed exiles and defectors, foreign policy experts, journalists, scholars, former members of Castro's government—even his daughter, Alina Fernández, and former brother-in-law, Rafael Díaz-Balart. The first-hand accounts of people who lived through the revolution—either participating in it, battling against it or fleeing from it—are interwoven with the observations of Cuba experts.

Unflinching in its approach, *Fidel Castro* does not shy away from controversy, while acknowledging both Castro's accomplishments and his failures. "Castro has managed to remain in power longer than almost any other leader in the last 100 or 200 years," comments Brian Latell, who spent 25 years studying him for the CIA. "It's a remarkable tenure—a testament to his political skills, to his ability to play as a grand master at chess, always two, three moves ahead."

"There is a great chasm between the promise of the revolution and its results," notes Alcibíades Hidalgo Raúl, Castro's former chief of staff, who defected in the mid-1990s. "Cuba is, pure and simple, a dictatorship each day more devoid of the attributes that once made it attractive."

"Ultimately, the film is a cautionary tale," says Bosch. "It is the tragic story of a nation who saw a messiah in just a man."

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## AMERICAN EXPERIENCE™

CREDITS

*Executive Producer:* Mark Samels

*Series Producer:* Sharon Grimberg

*Producer, Director, and Writer:* Adriana Bosch

*Co-Producer:* Patricia Alvarado Núñez

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