

Racial tension 'on rise in Cuba'

by MICHELLE SPRINGER

AN EXILED CUBAN political activist has warned that racial tension in his homeland was mounting and if not addressed, would lead to a civil war.

Academic Dr. Carlos Moore said "a very dramatic and profound shift will soon come to Cuba, probably in the next five years, and we're hoping it won't be too violent."

He was guest lecturer of the fifth lecture series hosted by the Cultural Studies Programme of the University of the West Indies on Wednesday night at the **Errol Barrow Centre For Creative Imagination**.

During his one-hour presentation entitled **Race In Cuba: 50 Years After The Revolution**, Moore spoke of "many racist 'ills' that functioned under the Fidel Castro-led regime.

He said there were black Cubans on hunger strike resisting racist discrimination in that country.

"It's a disability to be black in my country. But it was an even greater disability to be black and be born of parents from

the Caribbean," he said, adding Cuba's allegiance, along with the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, tended more towards Latin America than the Caribbean.

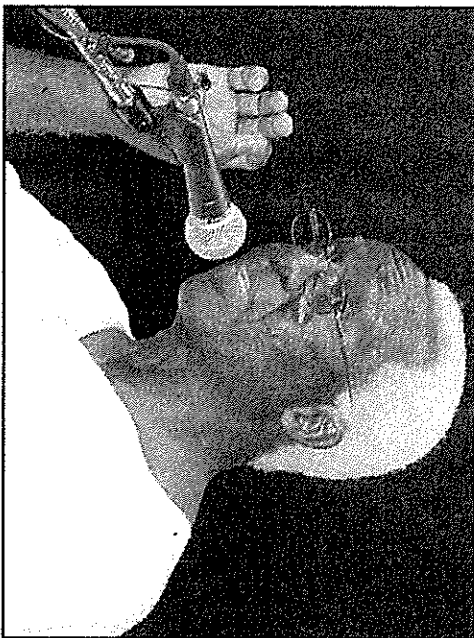
There was standing room only in the packed auditorium as Moore gave startling statistics published by the Raoul Castro administration on racial marginalisation in Cuba ranging from unemployment, land ownership, education, military reserves, religion and cultural practices.

Daily realities

He also added many people romanticised the Castro-led revolution because of their anti-American sentiments without knowing the daily realities of racial conflicts in the country.

Moore, who has lived in exile for 34 years for having spoken out against ills in Cuba, said that "the voice of black Cubans has not been heard", pointing out the silencing of academics and activists by a totalitarian leader.

The lecture opened with a five-minute video of Moore's activism in his homeland. It took the form of a photo album with snapshots of the



DR CARLOS MOORE speaking of racial discrimination in Cuba. (GW)

professor at different stages of his political career mixed with noted black activists around the world.

He adamantly defended his love for the socialist ideology behind the revolution which he details in the book.

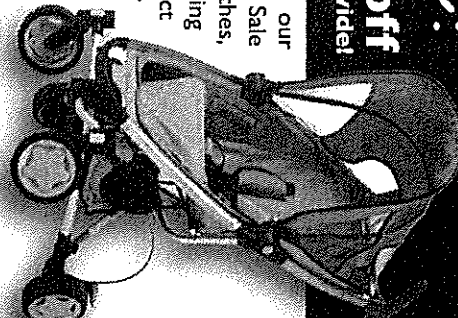
"I am someone who wholeheartedly supported the revolution since the age of 17 and I had to come into conflict with a regime, the system and the leadership that I believed in," he said.

His lecture was followed by a passionate and emotional question-and-answer session.

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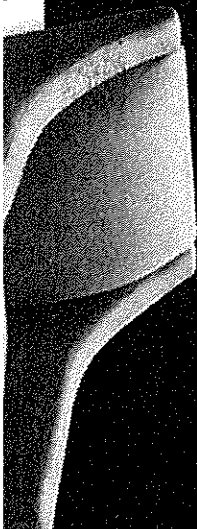


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