

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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WITHDRAW THE BRITISH FLEET!



British bomb explodes on Port Stanley airfield. Thousands of British troops are now on the Malvinas Islands.

Backed to Hilt by Reagan **Thatcher Escalates War on Argentina**

**Nicaragua Faces Devastating Floods,
Continued Counterrevolutionary Attacks**

Aggression in the Malvinas

By Ernest Harsch

In London and Washington, government officials and editorial writers have been loudly beating the drums against "aggression" in the South Atlantic.

But their condemnations are not directed at the scores of British ships and planes that have invaded Argentine territory, or at the massive U.S. aid to the invading fleet. Far from it. With an arrogance and hypocrisy typical of colonial overlords, they are accusing the victim of aggression — Argentina — of being the aggressor.

"So far as we are concerned," Sir Anthony Parsons, the British representative to the United Nations, declared May 25, "the outrage was committed by Argentina when, out of a clear blue sky, Argentine forces invaded the Falkland Islands at the beginning of April."

The "Falklands" is the British colonial name for Argentina's Malvinas Islands.

Sir Anthony then went on to profess his government's staunch support for "the right to self-determination" of the 1,800 settlers of British ancestry living on the islands.

Imperial hypocrisy

Sir Anthony's declarations, like those of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and other British officials — not to mention their backers in Washington — reek of hypocrisy.

The government in London is not exactly known for its abhorrence of aggression or support for self-determination.

For centuries Britain ruled over a vast colonial empire encompassing hundreds of millions of people, an empire that was seized and defended through armed might. The words "self-determination" were then rarely heard in Westminster. And when Britain's colonial subjects began to utter that phrase, they were met with British bayonets, bullets, and naval cannon.

In the end, military force was not enough. The mass independence movements that began sweeping the colonial world after the Second World War finally forced the British ruling class to relinquish direct political control over most of its colonies.

Sir Anthony, in his UN speech, had the audacity to point to this as proof of his government's support for self-determination. Since the end of 1960, he declared, "we have brought to sovereign independence and membership of this organization no less than 28 States. We are proud of our record and I think we have every right to be."

London has lost most of its direct colonial possessions. But not all. To this day, it maintains thousands of colonial troops in Northern Ireland against the will of the Irish people and in defiance of the Irish struggle for self-deter-

mination and national reunification.

As for Washington, the U.S. rulers have done everything they can to encourage the repeated South African invasions of Angola and the South African occupation of Namibia. Washington has backed to the hilt the Israeli regime's denial of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, and the Zionists' brutal seizure and occupation of Arab territory.

The real aggressor

Is the case of the British in the Malvinas any different?

When Argentina declared its independence from Spain in 1816, it claimed sovereignty over all of its territory and took control of the Malvinas Islands. But in 1833 a British warship took the islands by force and expelled the Argentine settlers. *That* is aggression.

Argentina — which was itself economically dominated by British capital until after the Second World War — protested the 1833 seizure and attempted for a century and a half to recover the Malvinas. The British simply ignored the Argentine demands for decolonization of the islands, even though most countries in the world recognized Argentina's sovereignty over them. In 1965 a resolution was passed in the United Nations calling on London to negotiate, but the British just stalled. They had no intention of returning the Malvinas.

As justification for their continued colonial rule over the islands, the British imperialists hid behind the desire of the islanders to retain their link with Britain.

Our Grenada coverage — it takes money

Hardly an issue of *Intercontinental Press* has appeared this year without an article on the small Caribbean island of Grenada. Pat Kane, a former staff writer for the British weekly newspaper *Socialist Challenge*, spent two months in Grenada on assignment for *IP*. Currently, Baxter Smith is continuing to send in articles from Grenada.

Articles in *IP* have described the policies of the revolutionary government and the progress it has made in housing, education, health care, economic planning, controlling prices, national defense, and the transformation of the trade union movement. Others have dealt with the role of women in the revolution, and the aid provided by revolutionary Cuba. In addition, *IP* has published some of the major speeches by Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

No other magazine in the world has had the kind of regular, in-depth coverage of the Grenada revolution that has appeared in *IP*.

Why is it that we pay such attention to a small country of only 110,000 people?

The reason is that there is a social revolu-

tion unfolding in Grenada. The workers and farmers there have taken governmental power and are in the process of transforming the economic and social relations of that country.

Grenadian revolutionaries, led by the New Jewel Movement, confront the same kind of political problems that face every victorious revolution — military threats and economic sabotage from imperialism, the need to advance the organization and mobilization of the toiling masses, the need to overcome divisions within the working class and to cement a firm alliance between the workers and farmers, and the need to counter the slanderous propaganda in the big-business media.

Grenada, in short, is a laboratory of revolution. Working-class fighters everywhere can learn from the experience of the Grenadians and use the example of their accomplishments in explaining the need for a workers and farmers government in their own countries.

The example of Grenada also has a special importance for countries such as the United

States and Britain, where there are significant numbers of Black workers from the Caribbean region. In addition, the first Black country in the world that has established a workers and farmers government is of special interest to Black workers everywhere.

But like all the other outstanding coverage in *IP*, the special attention that we pay to the Grenada revolution costs money. And like working people all over the world, we are caught in the squeeze of the capitalist economic crisis. To give just one example, we expect our second-class mailing costs in the United States to increase by 79 percent in 1982 over the previous year.

The fact is that the income that we receive from subscriptions and bookstore sales does not cover the cost of putting out *Intercontinental Press*. We operate on a deficit. That is why we are appealing to readers to help us continue providing the kind of coverage that we have been getting from Grenada. Every dollar helps and will be appreciated. Send your contribution to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

But the Falkland islanders are not oppressed by Argentina, nor do they face racial or national discrimination. The fact that they were settled there by the British does not change the colonial nature of the British claims.

The real issue of self-determination is Argentina's right to exercise its sovereignty over the islands.

Moreover, the islanders are themselves victims of British imperialism. The land they live on and the sheep they tend are owned by absentee landlords. The Falkland Islands Co. dominates the islands' economy. The islanders generally have a low standard of living, and what few social services they have access to are provided by — Argentina. Under Britain's new racist immigration law, which is aimed at keeping out people of color from other countries in the British Commonwealth, the children of the islanders do not have the right to move to Britain.

Behind all the British government's professions of concern about the islanders lie very real material and political interests.

The waters around the region are thought to contain rich oil deposits, perhaps rivaling those in the North Sea. The imperialists also consider the islands of strategic value, since they are located near the shipping lanes of the South Atlantic and of potential use as a military base for intervention against revolutionary developments in Latin America.

And with Argentina's action in early April to reclaim what is rightfully Argentine territory, another important consideration for the imperialists has been added as well: They want to send a clear message to the people of Argentina, and the rest of the world, that they will not tolerate any semicolonial country acting to assert its rights, and that they are prepared to use the most massive force necessary to prevent it.

'Colonialism is an act of force'

Speaking at the United Nations just before Sir Anthony, Argentine Foreign Minister Nicanor Costa Méndez forcefully answered many of the imperialists' political arguments about the Malvinas conflict.

Calling Britain "the colonial power par excellence," Costa Méndez explained the history of Britain's occupation of the Malvinas. "Colonialism is an act of force and it is permanent aggression."

"The application of the right of self-determination to the case of the Malvinas Islands is a simple travesty," he said. "It is a travesty because it would mean the self-determination of the colonizers, giving them an opportunity to legitimize their illegitimate settlement in a territory that does not belong to them."

Costa Méndez also pointed to the political thrust behind the British invasion: "Great Britain is sending to our coast two-thirds of its fleet with the intention of teaching a lesson to a nation which has dared to disturb the harmony of the old decadent international order and to exhibit before the world one more anachronis-

tic example of colonial domination."

These words were spoken not by a veteran anti-imperialist fighter, but by a representative of a proimperialist military dictatorship that has detained, killed, and "disappeared" thousands of workers and political activists since it seized power in 1976.

The fact that Costa Méndez has spoken in this way is a reflection of the basic nature of the war over the Malvinas, and of the tremendous political pressures bearing down on the junta from Argentine working people, who have a big stake in driving the imperialists out of the Malvinas — and the rest of Argentina as well.

These pressures have compelled the junta to ease up on its repression and to make diplomatic overtures to the Nonaligned Movement, Moscow, and even revolutionary Cuba — forces that it had so vociferously denounced just a few months ago.

So despite the regime's intentions, the character of the struggle for the Malvinas has driven it onto a collision course with its former allies in London and Washington.

That is because the war is one between the Argentine nation as a whole and the mightiest imperialist powers in the world. In this war, working people everywhere should stand on the side of Argentina. □

IN THIS ISSUE

Closing News Date: May 30, 1982

ARGENTINA	484	Thatcher escalates war — by Fred Murphy
NEW ZEALAND	486	Stop support for U.S.-British war!
IRAN	488	Rout of Iraqis alarms U.S. — by Fred Murphy
NICARAGUA	489	Storms cause massive damage — by Jane Harris
	490	Terrorist bands growing bolder — by Michael Baumann
	491	How decapitalization works — by Michael Baumann
	504	Government seizes landlords' idle holdings — by Jane Harris
GRENADA	492	A British socialist views the revolution
ANGOLA	494	On the front line against imperialism — by Ernest Harsch
CHINA	504	Hong Kong socialist arrested in Canton
DOCUMENTS	498	The basis of Cuba's foreign policy — by Carlos Rafael Rodríguez
NEWS ANALYSIS	482	Aggression in the Malvinas — by Ernest Harsch

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Big stakes in fight over the Malvinas

Thatcher escalates war despite heavy cost

By Fred Murphy

British imperialism's escalating war to restore colonial rule over the Malvinas Islands has become a central issue in world politics. A major confrontation is under way between the imperialist rulers of Western Europe and the United States on the one hand and the masses of Latin America and the rest of the semicolonial world on the other.

Working people everywhere have a big stake in this conflict. Its outcome will greatly affect the relationship of class forces around the world, and above all in Britain, Argentina, and the United States. A defeat for British imperialism would mean the downfall of the reactionary Thatcher government; it would make working people in the United States even more set against getting dragged into counter-revolutionary wars around the world; and it would fill the Argentine workers and farmers and the masses throughout the semicolonial world with new confidence.

But even if British forces succeed in recapturing the Malvinas, many of the political objectives of the imperialists have already been frustrated. And this, in turn, has raised the stakes in the war.

Massive military buildup

More than half the British fleet has now been sent to the South Atlantic, and a full-scale invasion of the Malvinas, involving thousands of troops, has been carried out. In addition to sending additional ships, British officials continue to raise the possibility of air raids against the Argentine mainland. They refuse to deny that the fleet is armed with tactical nuclear weapons. According to the West German weekly *Der Spiegel*, the armada's commander is authorized to use these weapons "in the event of grave circumstances."

London failed to achieve its aim of forcing the Argentine junta to surrender the Malvinas without a military confrontation. Instead, the pressure of the Argentine people for a serious fight to uphold the country's sovereignty has forced the junta to give battle to the British invaders.

The imperialists' goal in this war was to drive home to the peoples of the semicolonial world that it is futile to resist imperialist oppression or to challenge the world's wealthy rulers.

But what Argentina's resistance has already shown — even while the country is saddled with a reactionary dictatorship — is that the imperialists can indeed be challenged. They have already been made to pay a heavy price for attempting to reimpose their domination. Every British warship destroyed, every Harrier jet shot down, raises the morale and confidence

of the oppressed throughout the world.

It is precisely because of this that Thatcher is more determined than ever to crush Argentine resistance to the reimposition of colonial rule in the Malvinas. London's determination to punish Argentina is reflected in its hardening diplomatic stance. The narrow opening Thatcher had left the junta for a retreat during the preinvasion negotiations has now been closed.

"We're not in the business of placating the Argentines any more," a top British official told the *Wall Street Journal* May 23. "There can be no truce," Defense Secretary John Nott told Parliament May 24. "Our objective is to retake the Falklands," said Thatcher herself to the same body May 25.

Reagan's war as well

The Reagan administration is backing its British allies to the hilt. From the moment the conflict began, the U.S. rulers have echoed all of London's propaganda themes against Argentina — the importance of repelling "aggression," of "upholding the rule of law," of "settling territorial disputes without the use of force," of safeguarding the colonial settlers' "self-determination," and so on. Washington's political support for Thatcher's aggression is clear, and it would be so even without the slightest U.S. military involvement. But in fact, the Pentagon is playing a growing role in the war itself.

U.S. Defense Department officials confirmed May 27 that "Britain has requested and gotten hurry-up shipments of the Air Force's AIM9L Sidewinder missile for aerial combat," the May 28 *Washington Post* reported. "The same is true, they said, of Hawk anti-aircraft missiles and steel landing mats for building temporary airstrips on the Falklands."

Other U.S. participation revealed so far includes the use of the U.S. air base on Ascension Island in the mid-Atlantic as Britain's staging and training area; satellite intelligence on weather conditions and Argentine positions; U.S.-piloted KC-135 tanker aircraft flying replacement duty for British planes in NATO operations; and other forms of logistic and matériel support.

Much of the actual U.S. role in the war is undoubtedly still being kept secret. Nonetheless, it is clear that the U.S. rulers intend to do everything possible to help the British imperialists restore their colonial grip on the Malvinas. The *Wall Street Journal* went so far as to say May 25 that "U.S. assistance has become an operational and political necessity" for London. The paper quoted Col. Jonathan

Alford of Britain's International Institute for Strategic Studies saying that U.S. backing "matters more and more as time goes on. We would feel totally isolated without U.S. support."

Haig hypocrisy

In this framework, Secretary of State Alexander Haig's pious appeal on May 25 for the British to be "magnanimous" and not "humiliate" Argentina can be seen for the sucker bait that it is. Such statements are not aimed at pressuring London but at reducing the political costs to Washington of its support for British aggression. They are similar to the U.S. statements urging "restraint by all sides" in the Middle East after particularly savage attacks by Israel on the Arab peoples; such admonitions are usually followed closely by massive new arms shipments to the Zionist state.

As for the British, "We are not being pressured by the U.S. administration about this in any way," a senior official in London told the *Washington Post* May 25. He acknowledged worries in Washington and London "about relations between Western Europe and the U.S. with Latin America," but said U.S. officials who stressed these publicly "do not necessarily reflect the thinking at the top of the Reagan administration."

The reality of the U.S.-British alliance in the war is certainly obvious to Argentines. "No matter how indirect Washington may want people to believe its military support for London is," the *Buenos Aires Herald* said in a mid-May editorial, "Argentine victims of the extensive raids these [U.S. KC-135] tankers will make possible will be just as directly dead as if the U.S. had flown the refuelling missions itself."

OAS breaks with Washington

Anglo-U.S. aggression against Argentina has evoked outrage and protest in many countries, above all in Latin America. Virtually all the continent's governments have had to respond to anti-imperialist sentiment by taking a stand on the side of Argentina. A key indication of this was the sharp diplomatic blow dealt to Washington by the Organization of American States (OAS) on May 29.

Meeting at the request of the Argentine government, the OAS foreign ministers voted overwhelmingly to "condemn most vigorously the unjustified and disproportionate armed attack perpetrated by the United Kingdom." They demanded that Washington order "the immediate lifting of the coercive measures applied against the Argentine Republic." And

they urged OAS member governments to aid Argentina in the conflict.

Only the representatives from Colombia, Chile, and Trinidad and Tobago joined the U.S. delegate in abstaining on this resolution. According to the May 28 *Washington Post*, the meeting was characterized by "some of the most virulently anti-American rhetoric ever heard in the OAS." A speech by Alexander Haig "was greeted with only scattered and perfunctory applause," while Argentine Foreign Minister Nicanor Costa Méndez received a standing ovation when he charged Washington with "turning its back" on Latin America and denounced Britain's "irrational armed aggression."

Three days earlier, Costa Méndez had addressed the Security Council of the United Nations. There, he made Argentina's case in the following terms:

We are witnessing an unprecedented event of regression of history, with no other explanation but the British attempt to hold on to an outdated imperial system and world dominance which, with its grandeur and its misery, belong to the past.

Great Britain is sending to our coast two-thirds of its fleet with the intention of teaching a lesson to a nation which has dared to disturb the harmony of the old decadent international order and to exhibit before the world one more anachronistic example of colonial domination. . . .

The United Kingdom does not want to negotiate. Great Britain wants to restore, by force, a colonial regime on Latin American soil.

The imperialist news media — uncritically echoing the triumphant declarations of London officials — want to create the impression that the British forces on the Malvinas have been piling victory upon victory. Secretary of State Haig joined this effort May 25 with his statement that "The British appear to be in a position militarily to bring the war in the Falklands to an early conclusion."

Even as Haig spoke, Argentine jets were sinking another British destroyer and putting out of action a merchant vessel bearing helicopters and supplies.

The imperialists' victory propaganda is aimed at putting further pressure on the Argentine junta to yield. In fact, "Despite the confidence displayed in public by politicians," *New York Times* military analyst Drew Middleton wrote from London May 25, "no responsible British officer of any service considers the battle won."

After the heavy losses suffered by the fleet in Argentina's May 25 air raids, a BBC reporter complained that some Argentine pilots seemed to have "a kamikaze attitude." According to the May 26 *New York Times*, "Officials in London were disheartened by the continuing punishment inflicted on the British armada."

The British Defense Ministry has claimed repeatedly that the Argentine air force is being decimated by missiles and anti-aircraft fire. "A great deal now depends on whether the British estimates of Argentine air losses are even roughly accurate," the London *Economist* noted skeptically in its May 29 edition. "In past wars such claims have almost always

proved too high. If that were true this time, Argentina would be able to keep up the pounding uncomfortably long."

'It will become our Vietnam'

Another aim of the imperialists' assertions of military success is to counter suspicions among British working people that their rulers might be getting bogged down in an open-ended, Vietnam-style adventure, and among U.S. working people that Washington is preparing to play an ever bigger military role. Neither Thatcher nor Reagan can afford a British defeat, or a lengthy, escalating war. But even if colonial rule is forcibly restored over the islands, they will still have to be defended. This could mean a drawn-out conflict and mounting domestic pressure for withdrawal.

"When British casualties start to outnumber the Falkland Islanders they were sent to save," the London *Guardian* warned in a recent editorial, "how long before the nation begins to ask, 'Is it worth it?'"

Protest demonstrations of up to 8,000 persons have already taken place in Britain, despite the warmongering of the Tory press and the abject refusal of the top Labour Party leaders to challenge Thatcher. Key trade unions such as the coal miners and railway engineers have called for the withdrawal of the fleet. The sentiment of growing numbers of Britons was reported by a *Wall Street Journal* correspondent who spoke with customers "at the Castle Pub in the Holland Park section of London":

Jim O'Dea, an unemployed 34-year-old wallpaperer, points to an oversized vodka bottle at the corner of the bar, half filled with coins. "We put our silver in there to buy the local hospital a kidney machine, and they [the government] spends 25,000 with each bomb it drops. It's a waste of money."

His mood turns resentful when he considers those who have died. "I feel sorry for the poor bastards," he says. "All they can win us is a lot of penguins, and they get either a gold medal or a wreath."

Mr. McGrea, [a] computer programming student, believes, "If too many British lads are killed it will become our Vietnam," a conflict few in Britain would want to continue. [*Wall Street Journal*, May 27]

Imperialists paying high price

The result thus far of London's war against Argentina can only be termed a political defeat for imperialism. The resistance offered by Argentina — the result of intense anti-imperialist pressure from the country's working people — has brought about an abrupt deterioration of Washington's position throughout Latin America, while enhancing that of revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces such as the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments.

Washington's near-total isolation at the OAS foreign ministers' meeting was only one reflection of this. Another indicator was the striking contrast between two exchanges of messages, one involving Argentine President Galtieri and Reagan, the other Galtieri and Fidel Castro.

Reagan cabled Galtieri on Argentine Independence Day, May 25, that "it has never been

more important to reaffirm the common interests and values that unite Argentina and the United States." Galtieri shot back a cable telling the U.S. president that his message was "made incomprehensible by the present circumstances. . . . I could not be more shocked."

But in reply to Fidel Castro's May 10 appeal to the heads of state of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries for urgent steps "to halt the imminent Anglo-U.S. aggression against the Argentine people," Galtieri had this to say:

The Argentine nation . . . has deeply appreciated the clear support this call has meant for the justice of its cause.

I therefore hope that these lines might express that sentiment and that they would also make known the heartfelt recognition of the people of my country for every one of the member states of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, which have demonstrated their solidarity, on various occasions, in face of the grave circumstances that our country now confronts.

It was hardly an accident that the junta made both exchanges public the same day.

The Argentine government has withdrawn from Central America all the military advisers who had been sent to help Washington with its wars against the Nicaraguan revolution and against the liberation fighters in El Salvador and Guatemala. Buenos Aires also made known May 24 that it would pull out the 70 Argentine officers assigned to the Inter-American Defense Board at the board's Washington headquarters and Panama training school. During a UN news conference, Foreign Minister Costa Méndez described this as a further indication "of the deep freeze in our relations with the United States."

Some Argentine officers have begun hinting that they may find it necessary to seek military aid from the Soviet Union.

Withdraw the fleet!

These political setbacks for Washington, combined with the military blows the British fleet has suffered, form part of the growing cost to the imperialist rulers of their adventure in the South Atlantic. The cost will go still higher, but Thatcher and Reagan can ill afford to retreat.

Giving in to Argentina's just demand for sovereignty over the Malvinas would run totally counter to the intervention by Washington and its allies in other areas vital to their global domination — such as the Middle East, Central America, and Southeast Asia. The imperialists must force their own working classes to provide the cannon fodder and accept the massive diversion of resources from social needs to warfare.

Clearly, the workers movement around the world, as well as the movements against nuclear weapons in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan, have an urgent stake in staying the warmakers' hands. Actions demanding the immediate withdrawal of the British fleet, a halt to all U.S. aid to London, and recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Malvinas are on the order of the day. □

Stop support for U.S.-British war!

Muldoon government places armed forces on alert

[The following front-page editorial appeared in the May 21 issue of *Socialist Action*, the weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

New Zealand is part of the wars that the United States and British governments are presently carrying out against the peoples of Central and South America.

The [Prime Minister Robert] Muldoon government openly backs the British war against Argentina. It has not even ruled out sending New Zealand troops there as well. And by welcoming the U.S. nuclear warship *Truxtun* to Wellington this month, Muldoon places New Zealand on the side of the United States in its undeclared war against the peoples of El Salvador and Central America.

New Zealand working people have no interest in supporting the British fleet in the South Atlantic.

The people of Argentina have a long-standing legal and moral claim to the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands, which Britain stole from them 150 years ago. The Argentinians are right behind the move to reclaim their country's islands, and regard it as an important step towards freeing Argentina from domination by the imperialist powers.

Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government, on the other hand, is waging war to protect the profits of the big British companies who have investments the world over, including in Argentina. They are trying, desperately, to hold on to a remnant of Britain's former world empire, and want to serve notice on peoples anywhere else in the colonial and semicolonial world to keep their hands off "British property" . . . or else!

Muldoon jumped in to help protect the colonial possessions of Britain's ruling class as soon as the conflict with Argentina erupted. Diplomatic ties were cut, the Argentine ambassador expelled, and economic sanctions imposed banning any trade with Argentina. The New Zealand armed forces were placed on standby as soon as the British armada set sail. These moves are acts of war as much as the British bombing of the Malvinas.

The British war is also actively supported by the United States government. An American base on Ascension Island in the Atlantic is used by the British Vulcan bombers for their raids on the Malvinas. The United States also makes intelligence information, fuel, and military equipment available.

James Reston, veteran Washington corres-

pondent with the *New York Times*, reported on May 9 that "officials here agree that the United States would have to intervene militarily, if necessary, to avoid the destruction of the British navy."

The U.S. government was never neutral in the conflict, despite its initial claims. From the beginning it looked at the British-Argentine struggle from the standpoint of how best to protect U.S. profits and colonial domination in Argentina and throughout Latin America.

For U.S. business and financial interests, the stakes are high.

While the United States today is the world's central imperialist power, it faces profound challenges from liberation movements around the globe.

And the most pressing challenge to its rule is being made in its very "backyard" — Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Like the British, American business and banking interests have substantial investments in Argentina. Their joint plunder of the country

has brought them huge profits and, in the process, left the Argentine people to suffer the results of a crisis-ridden economy.

But the challenge goes beyond Argentina.

The U.S. is aiding the junta's efforts in El Salvador to try to crush the liberation forces there.

It is also resuming full-scale arms shipments to the dictatorship in Guatemala which also faces an insurgent people.

Today Washington is waging an undeclared war against revolutionary Nicaragua, and making ominous moves against the people of Grenada and Cuba, who dared take their destiny in their own hands.

It's in this context that a challenge by the Argentine people, including a powerful, radicalised working class, poses a new and serious threat to imperialist "stability" in the region.

The New Zealand government is motivated by essentially the same interests. New Zealand's wealthy capitalist rulers, who Muldoon acts for, want to see the world made "safe" for

Unions protest visit of U.S. warship

[The following article appeared in the May 21 issue of *Socialist Action*. The conference of the New Zealand Labour Party that is referred to took place in Wellington May 10-14. It passed two resolutions opposing any participation by New Zealand forces in the British-U.S. war against Argentina.]

* * *

The nuclear warship USS *Truxtun* will be berthed in Wellington Harbour May 25-28.

A meeting of the management committee of the Wellington Trades Council on May 14 discussed the *Truxtun*'s visit and passed a number of recommendations. The Trades Council is calling for a two-hour work stoppage by all affiliated unions on May 25.

A remit supporting this action was also passed at the FOL [Federation of Labour] conference. As well, a number of local port unions have voted to stop work for 24 hours when the *Truxtun* arrives.

The management committee also recommended that leaflets and a petition be distributed to all jobs through delegates' committees and affiliated unions. Job meetings will be held on a number of work sites during the two-hour stoppage to discuss the issue and to present the Trades Council rep-

resentative with the completed petition forms from that workplace.

A leaflet distributed by the Coalition Against Nuclear Warships (Canwar) in Wellington points out that the *Truxtun*'s presence will be a violation of the Wellington City Council's recent decision to declare Wellington a nuclear weapon free zone.

"The USS *Truxtun* is a weapon of war. Nuclear war," the leaflet says. "A protest against the *Truxtun* is a protest against the entire nuclear arms race."

The leaflet goes on to attack the Anzus alliance:

"Anzus is the expression of New Zealand's bondage to American military power. Bondage to an aggressive nation likely to draw New Zealand into hostilities."

This call was also taken up at the Labour Party conference. A remit demanding "that New Zealand withdraw from all military alliances with nuclear weapons powers on a unilateral basis" was passed by a 2-to-1 majority.

Labour leader Bill Rowling received a standing ovation at the conference when he called the *Truxtun*'s visit "military nose-thumbing at the deeply held convictions of a large body of New Zealand people."

— Joan Shields



Two British frigates like this one have already been sunk by Argentine warplanes. Will New Zealand ships join them?

exploitation by the companies that they, and those like them around the world, own.

New Zealand's special domain is the South Pacific. The resources of this region — both material resources and the labour of Pacific workers — has long been a source of profit for New Zealand capitalists. But, small though they may be in comparison to British or U.S. investments, New Zealand capitalists also have interests in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East — in fact anywhere they can make a buck.

World capitalism depends for its very survival on its ability to exploit the countries and peoples of the colonial and semicolonial world. That's why the capitalist rulers cannot allow any of the people they oppress to succeed in challenging their world domination.

Maintaining this exploitation is also what motivates the U.S. rulers to initiate the biggest arms buildup in history on behalf of the imperialist powers. This includes both nuclear and "conventional" — that is, non-nuclear — forces.

Washington's permanent drive to increase its nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union is designed to create a nuclear shield to ensure that Moscow does nothing to respond to Washington's wars of aggression. It is part of imperialism's preparation for using its military might to stop the advance of liberation struggles like that in El Salvador today.

Through membership in Anzus [the military treaty signed by Australia, New Zealand, and the United States] the New Zealand government is an active participant in this escalating arms race. The visit of the *Truxtun* is a demonstration of that support.

The mere existence of this nuclear force — capable of wiping humanity off the face of the earth several times over — is an ever-present danger. But it is the wars imperialism is waging today — and those it plans for tomorrow — that motivate the buildup of this force. And it is precisely during those wars that the nuclear danger emerges most sharply.

In a chilling warning that the South Atlantic war poses an immediate threat to the people of the whole world, prominent American columnist Jack Anderson reported on April 30 that

the British ships off the Malvinas Islands are carrying nuclear weapons. The fleet commander has the authority to use them if faced with "grave circumstances."

British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym was widely quoted in U.S. radio reports as reminding the Argentinians that the British would not rule out dropping a "tactical" nuclear bomb on Buenos Aires if the sea battle turned against them.

At the time of the *Truxtun* visit, and the Labour Party conference decision that New Zealand "withdraw from all alliances with nuclear weapons powers," it is worth remembering that this includes both Anzus and the Five Power Defence Arrangement between Britain, Australia, New Zealand and two of Britain's

former colonies — Singapore and Malaysia. Britain maintains its own nuclear weapons programme as well as being part of the Nato alliance with the United States.

For all opponents of war, and especially for those who understand the horror nuclear war would bring, action against the wars being waged by U.S. and British imperialism, with the active complicity of the New Zealand government, is an urgent necessity.

We should demand:

- Hands off Argentina! Hands off El Salvador!
- Withdraw the British fleet! End the trade embargo against Argentina!
- New Zealand out of Anzus and the Five Power Defence Arrangement!

Vietnam denounces British-U.S. aggression

[The Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam issued the following statement on the Malvinas Islands conflict on May 4. We have taken the text from a May 12 news release by the Vietnamese mission to the United Nations in New York.]

* * *

According to foreign news reports, Britain has since April 30, 1982, sent its air and naval forces to repeatedly attack many points and Argentine forces on the Malvinas Archipelago and tried to land its troops there. This act of military escalation was taken by Britain right after the United States had openly declared its support for and its readiness to give aid to Britain and proclaimed "sanctions" against Argentina.

These are brazen acts of armed aggression against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Argentina, seriously threatening peace and security in the South Atlantic and increasing world tension. These acts of military

adventure have laid bare the colonialist and bellicose nature of the British authorities and their outdated policy of using force to compel Argentina to give up its sovereignty over the Malvinas and to restore the colonial status of the archipelago.

By supporting Britain against Argentina, the Reagan administration has appeared in its true color as an imperialist warmonger who has taken advantage of any opportunity to increase its interference and cause tension, in the interests of the U.S. imperialists, against the independence and sovereignty of other nations and international peace and security.

Together with progressive public opinion in Latin America and the rest of the world, the people and the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam severely condemn the bellicose and aggressive acts of the British authorities and the complicity of the United States against Argentina. We demand that Britain and the United States cease at once those acts and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Argentina.

Rout of Iraqis alarms U.S.

Haig discovers a 'tragic war'

By Fred Murphy

The streets of Tehran were the scene of massive celebrations on May 24 as news spread that Iranian troops had liberated the city of Khorramshahr in Khuzestan province. This was the last major stronghold of the Iraqi forces that had occupied parts of western Iran since September 1980.

At 9 p.m., tens of thousands of Tehran residents went out on their rooftops and chanted "God is great!" According to the May 25 *New York Times*, Tehran radio "said the scene was reminiscent of Feb. 11, 1979, the day the Islamic revolutionary forces of Ayatollah Khomeini seized power from the last Government of Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi."

The celebration was especially big in south Tehran, the working-class area of the capital. Many of the soldiers killed in the war have come from south Tehran. The population there has continually mobilized to send volunteers to the front.

Iranian immigrants in Kuwait "celebrated the Iranian victory at Khurramshahr Monday by demonstrating in the streets," the *Wall Street Journal* reported May 26. "Some demonstrators were arrested, and the Iranian embassy in Kuwait yesterday issued a formal protest to the Kuwaiti government."

Retreat 'did not seem orderly'

According to the May 26 *New York Times*, the Iraqis' retreat from Khorramshahr "did not seem to have been orderly. Iranian television showed piles of captured Iraqi boots and uniforms. The announcer said the clothing belonged to Iraqi soldiers who shed their battle garb to swim across the Shatt al Arab waterway to Iraq."

On May 25 the Iraqi government in Baghdad admitted the loss of Khorramshahr, saying its army had "withdrawn" and was taking up positions at the "international border." The liberation of the port city leaves Baghdad in control of only a few strips of Iranian territory along the border further north around the Iranian towns of Qasr-e-Shirin, Gilan-e-Garb, and Mehran. Heavy fighting was reportedly under way in this area on May 27.

The accelerating military rout of Saddam Hussein's forces has gravely alarmed the imperialist rulers and their local clients in the Persian Gulf region. Within days of the fall of Khorramshahr, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig devoted a major portion of a policy speech on the Middle East to the Iran-Iraq war.

The war, Haig told the Council on Foreign Relations May 26, "has brought the region into great danger, with ominous implications for Western interests." He claimed, however, that "from the beginning of the war" Washington's

position has been one of "neutrality."

This is not quite accurate. From the beginning of the war — which came during the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and five months after President Carter's abortive April 1980 invasion of Iran — Washington has viewed with favor the Hussein regime's efforts to weaken the Iranian revolution. Now that these efforts have so obviously led to disaster, the U.S. rulers fear that Iran's victories will inspire the toilers in Iraq and other Arab countries to rise up against their reactionary rulers.

A phony stance of neutrality is nothing new for U.S. foreign policy. Such claims have often provided a diplomatic cloak for Washington's real position when the imperialists have considered it politically unwise to come out openly on one side in a conflict.

Thus the Carter administration declared itself "neutral" when Pol Pot's terror regime in Kampuchea was carrying on border raids against the Vietnamese revolution; when the Somalian regime sent troops into Ethiopia to attack the revolution there in 1977; and when the Chinese bureaucracy invaded Vietnam in 1979. Before openly providing military support to the current British aggression against Argentina over the Malvinas Islands, the Reagan administration also claimed to be "neutral."

Haig hinted at Washington's real position when he said, "Neutrality, however, does not mean that we are indifferent to the outcome" of the current war. "We have friends and interests that are endangered by the continuation of hostilities. We are committed to defending our vital interests in the area. These interests, and the interests of the world, are served by the territorial integrity and political independence of all countries in the Persian Gulf."

Sudden concern over 'territorial integrity'

So after 20 months of illegal Iraqi occupation of wide swaths of Iranian territory, Haig has suddenly discovered that the "territorial integrity" of Persian Gulf countries may be in danger. His real concern is that the thrones of the kings, princes, and sheiks the imperialists rely on to maintain their domination could begin to totter.

An immediate worry for Washington is the stability of the Baghdad regime. The Iraqi people will no doubt be demanding an accounting. Hussein "has little left to show for the thousands of Iraqi lives and billions of dollars expended on the war," the *New York Times* noted May 26.

"In the weeks ahead," Haig said, "we shall take a more active role with other concerned members of the international community as efforts are intensified to end this tragic war." The war only became "tragic," of course, when

the Iraqi regime's defeat appeared imminent.

For the Iranian people — as well as for the Iraqi masses — Saddam Hussein's aggression has indeed been tragic. "We will continue the war until we are compensated," Iranian parliamentary leader Fakhr el din Highazi told the *Wall Street Journal* just before the fall of Khorramshahr. "We have lost thousands of young men. We have two million refugees from the war zone. Dozens of cities and towns have been destroyed. Our damages are \$50 billion."

Highazi was dubious when asked about the possibilities of a truce. "We have very unhappy memories of the Arab-Israeli truce," he said. "Once you accept a truce, you never get anywhere with negotiations. Therefore, the only way to get what we want from Iraq is to continue the war until we are compensated."

On May 25, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, advised the proimperialist Gulf regimes which support Iraq that "we have no designs on their territory or any other lands, but we will not stop at anything to secure our rights, and our greatest right is Saddam's downfall."

U.S. pushes military presence

Key to the "more active role" Haig said Washington was taking in the Persian Gulf is a stepped-up U.S. military presence. Arms aid to the proimperialist regimes is mounting, and new base agreements are being negotiated. On May 27, an agreement allowing U.S. warplanes to use bases in Morocco was completed.

The Reagan administration has also viewed favorably the growing role of the Egyptian regime in the Persian Gulf. In the May 23 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, correspondent David Hirst summarized Cairo's view of the Iran-Iraq conflict as follows:

"It is vital to end the war. The best way to do that, says Oussama Al-Baz, adviser to President Mubarak, is to help Iraq. The Egyptian and Gulf security is intertwined, and an Arab-financed, American-armed and essentially Egyptian-manned 'joint force' should be set up to preserve it."

Cairo has already been providing substantial amounts of military aid — possibly including pilots and other personnel — to Baghdad. Jordan's King Hussein is doing the same, while the Saudi regime and the smaller monarchies of the Persian Gulf have bankrolled the Iraqi war to the tune of at least \$24 billion.

Meanwhile, the Arab regimes that have been in sharpest conflict with imperialism in recent years have come out more strongly on the side of Iran. The foreign ministers of Syria, Libya, South Yemen, and Algeria — along with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization — issued a joint statement in Algiers on May 24 declaring Iran a "friendly revolution" deserving of support in the war against the Iraqi invaders. The statement also opposed any effort by Arab regimes to restore friendly relations with Cairo so long as the Mu-

barak regime adheres to the Camp David accords with Israel.

The defeat of the Saddam Hussein regime's military attack on the Iranian revolution — due above all to the determined mobilizations behind the war effort by the Iranian toilers — has dealt another blow to imperialist domination in the Middle East. "The implications for the sta-

bility of the region as a whole are extremely serious," the editors of the London *Times* warned May 25. The Arab rulers who backed him "may yet pay dearly for Mr. Husain's vaulting ambition, and the West may suffer for the tacit encouragement it gave to his enterprise at a time when it seemed to offer an easy way out of the Iranian hostage crisis." □

Nicaragua

Storms cause massive damage

Worst disaster since Somoza

By Jane Harris

MANAGUA — Besieged by the worst rainstorms and floods in its recent history, Nicaragua is appealing for emergency international aid to help repair the damage and replace lost food crops.

"The scope of the disaster is the worst the country has been through since the destruction and loss of life in the war of liberation" against ex-dictator Somoza, Sergio Ramírez, a member of the Junta of National Reconstruction, said May 26 in announcing the appeal.

Torrential rains have thrown the country into a state of national emergency. In just six days, beginning May 22, the western half of the country has received almost half the rain it normally receives in a year. Initial estimates indicate that 36,000 people have lost their homes, and flood damage is estimated to be at least \$150 million.

Extent of destruction

Besides the human misery and loss — some 40 known dead as of May 27 — the country's agricultural crops and its entire transportation, communication, and public utility infrastructure were dealt heavy blows by the nonstop rain and high winds.

As of May 27, the following damage had been recorded:

- Agriculture, the mainstay of the country's economy, has been devastated. All work has been paralyzed at the height of the planting season. At least 30 percent of the basic food crops such as rice, beans, and corn have been lost, as well as 5,000 head of cattle. Sugar and cotton, two major export crops, have been hit hard. Several large warehouses in the port of Corinto and in León, the country's second-largest city, have been destroyed. Stores of crops ready for export, as well as major stocks of seed, fertilizer, spare parts, and machinery were lost.

- Thirty-six bridges were totally destroyed, making access to many towns in the north impossible.

- A key railway viaduct north of Managua, on the main line, collapsed into a river.

- A number of cement factories were destroyed.

- Production has dropped because many urban workers could not get to work, and many factories were flooded.

- Telephone and electric power lines were down in many parts of the country.

- Potable water sources in many areas became contaminated.

Somoza's legacy

While no country can completely defend itself from natural disasters, some are better prepared than others. Nicaragua, through no fault of its revolutionary government, stands near the bottom of the list.

Less than three years ago, when the Sandinista revolution triumphed, the new government quickly discovered how precious little Anastasio Somoza had left the Nicaraguan people. Besides a foreign debt of \$1.6 billion, the country's roads, bridges, drainage system, and storage facilities were totally inadequate to its needs. One of the more glaring problems was that 30 percent of the population was left with substandard housing.

Somoza had ruled in the interests of the rich, who monopolized the best lands and built homes there. The poor were forced to scavenge cardboard, plastic, paper bags, and — if they were lucky — wood, to construct their homes. The high price of land caused tens of thousands to build on low-lying land subject to annual flooding.

Each rainy season produced serious problems for those who had no choice but to live in the lowlands. But this year the torrential downpours produced a human disaster. The only real alternative, which the government immediately began to carry out, was permanent evacuation and quick organizational efforts to minimize the loss of life.

Mass organizations mobilize

After two days of heavy rainfall with no end in sight, the Sandinista leadership mobilized the government, unions, and civil defense network to provide food, clothing, and shelter, and to maintain industrial production to the extent that was possible.

The Sandinista army, police, militia units,

defense committees, unions, women's association, health workers, and youth put on their boots, waded through the mud, dug run-offs for the water, and began evacuating and feeding families.

At the Maestro Gabriel Institute, one of the principal centers for Managua's refugees, 29-year-old Mario Norori, a Sandinista police officer, told *Intercontinental Press* of the response to this national disaster and compared it to the 1972 earthquake that destroyed downtown Managua.

"When the earthquake came," Norori recalled, "the government did not help anyone and did not even organize us to help ourselves. Now everything is organized through our Sandinista defense and neighborhood committees."

Norori was not painting up the situation at the institute. Everything was organized. Volunteers worked around the clock to provide three meals a day, medical attention, sanitary facilities, and to keep the children singing, playing, and — most importantly — dry. Two doctors attending to small children also testified that the *compañeros* had things well in hand.

In the last 34 months the revolution's basic focus has been on defending the country from military attacks, raising agricultural production to feed the country, and increasing the literacy rate.

Now the country's efforts to become self-sufficient in basic foods have been seriously set back. And while housing is a pressing need, the government simply does not have the money to purchase the needed construction materials. What it has done is to grant lots of land to those who needed it to build their own homes.

Fifteen hundred lots have been readied initially for flood victims. The lots will be situated so as to allow for water runoff. Unfortunately, the materials used to construct these homes will be what is salvageable from the former housing. Funds simply do not exist for providing wood and stone.

International support urgently needed

But funds do exist throughout the world to help provide emergency food aid and repair the damage. Contributions are urgently needed. Governments, churches, unions, women's groups, and other organizations should be urged to send funds as quickly as possible.

Inside Nicaragua, the Red Cross, the ministries of health, social welfare, and commerce, and the Ecumenical Committee to Aid Development (which was instrumental after the 1972 earthquake) are working together with other groups in a newly established National Emergency Committee.

This committee, and the Nicaraguan people, anxiously await the contributions that are needed to recover from this disaster. Funds can be sent to: Account Number 418-05-1113-2, Emergency Relief Fund, Banco Nacional de Desarrollo, Managua, Nicaragua. □

Terrorist bands growing bolder

Imperialist media silent on U.S.-backed raids

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — "Listen, *compañero*. They came around 9:30 in the morning.

"They began by shouting, 'Give up, or you're going to die!'"

And then the counterrevolutionaries opened fire.

Alberto Reyes was one of the lucky ones. A small farmer and head of the local militia unit in the little town of El Guabo in central Nicaragua, he and his 14-year-old daughter held off the terror squad during a two-hour gun battle May 6. Although he and his family were eventually able to slip out the back way, their house and all their belongings were burned to the ground.

You'll find no word of this in the imperialist newspapers. It has never been reported on U.S., French, or British radio and TV.

But the attack on the home of Alberto Reyes is part of an undeclared war against Nicaragua that is being organized and directed by the White House.

It was never voted on by Congress or approved by the American people. Yet scores of Nicaraguans have been killed, hundreds wounded. One whole section of the country, the area along the northeast border with Honduras where the Miskitu Indians live, has had

to be evacuated because it could not be defended.

Most of these attacks are mounted by forces based in camps located just across the border with Honduras. There, some 4,000 to 5,000 counterrevolutionaries are permanently based.

These opponents of the 1979 revolution that overthrew U.S.-backed dictator Anastasio Somoza are trained, armed, and paid by the U.S. government.

Most are former members of Somoza's hated National Guard. Others have been recruited from military forces throughout Latin America.

In recent months they have been joined by representatives of capitalist political formations based inside Nicaragua. These include businessman Alfonso Robelo, leader of the so-called Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), the main capitalist outfit.

Along with several of his associates, Robelo has now openly gone over to the side of armed counterrevolution. In voluntary "exile" abroad, he has joined forces with ex-Sandinista Edén Pastora, who has publicly called for overturning Nicaragua's government.

More than 60 clashes between counterrevolutionary forces and the Sandinista military have taken place so far this year — that is, since Reagan put into effect his \$19 million CIA program to "destabilize" Nicaragua.

Most attacks have been along the Honduran border, but some have taken place deep inside the country, and at least three along the southern border with Costa Rica, including one May 20 in which a Sandinista border guard was killed.

Adding to tension along the southern border was a military "state of alert" declared by Costa Rica following the most recent clash, based on rumors circulated by associates of Pastora that Nicaraguan troops had crossed the border.

The Costa Rican government later admitted it had "no information" on the supposed incursion, and ordered Pastora deported from the country.

Armed clashes

In Nicaragua, armed confrontations with the counterrevolutionaries just this month have included:

- May 2-3. A gang that had been operating since October, terrorizing the area near the northern port of Corinto, was captured by security forces. Identifying themselves as members of the "Anti-Communist Revolutionary Brigade" (BRAC), they were stocked with leaflets and periodicals published by counterrevolutionaries based in Miami and Honduras.

- May 4-5. On the Atlantic side of the country, in Zelaya province, a unit of 120 counterrevolutionaries attacked the small, isolated town of Alamikamba, killing one soldier and wounding two. Sandinista reinforcements sent in to pursue the band broke it up, killing 20.

- May 6-7. In a two-day clash near Matagalpa, in the center of the country, a recently formed band was broken up by the army. Five counterrevolutionaries were killed in the fighting, eight were captured.

- May 14-15. Three major attacks took place near the Honduran border. In a May 14 ambush on a military convoy a few kilometers south of the boundary line, four were killed. One of them was Andrés Valle Gutiérrez, a journalist heading toward the frontier to film a TV documentary on the border attacks.

That same day, an eight-hour fire fight occurred as some 120 counterrevolutionaries tried to overrun the Playa Hermosa border post. Sixty returned at dawn May 15 in another attempt, but were driven back across the border after a 10-hour battle.

- May 18. In San Marcos, a small town near Matagalpa, a 21-year-old grade school teacher was gunned down as he returned home from a day's volunteer work in the campaign to vaccinate all Nicaraguan children against polio. His roommate, an activist in a local of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG), was also murdered.

'They won't succeed'

The choice of victims in such attacks is not accidental.

Víctor Guevara, a member of the reserves and one of the survivors of the Playa Hermosa raid, pointed out that the counterrevolutionaries "seek out our best people, strike them down, and torture them. They want to sow ter-



Sandinista soldiers at Los Planes border post, near Honduras, clean bullets April 27, the day after counterrevolutionary attack there left four dead.

ror and lower our morale. But they won't succeed."

Vidal Rosales Ramos, a 22-year-old farmer and militia member wounded in the raid on Alamikamba, expressed similar determination from his hospital bed.

"My family and I worked a small piece of land in another area for a while," he said. "But there the counterrevolutionary bands stole our crops, kidnapped peasants, and raped the women. My own father was once kidnapped by them, but managed to escape. We never agreed with them, which is why they hated us. So we came to Alamikamba, where I joined the local militia unit.

"I was wounded," he said, pointing to the bandage across his abdomen. "But I'm going to return to the militia because all of us who

have been victims of the bands have to fight back to win our homes back — although I don't know if ours even exists any longer, because the bands set out to destroy and rob everything."

The raids are clearly growing increasingly bold.

According to Commander Lenin Cerna, head of State Security, this appears to be the result of the CIA decision to seek unification of the various bands, so as to increase their "capacity to strike effectively."

Much bigger raids are expected soon, Cerna said in a recent interview. Foreign pilots — mercenaries recruited by the CIA — have begun appearing in Honduras and Costa Rica, signaling preparations for further escalation of the undeclared war. □

doors, they owed nearly \$600,000. No small amount, in view of the fact that the value of all remaining merchandise was only a little over \$140,000.

They evaded taxes, running up a debt of almost \$100,000 in overdue payments, fines, and penalties.

They simply looted the store. They called it "re-exporting," and it began shortly after the triumph of the revolution in 1979. Sears would simply load up a delivery truck with goods, drive it to Costa Rica, and there sell the whole lot — truck included — and send the proceeds to the United States.

Selected "lucky" customers were sold goods at "sale" prices. Company records purported to show that one customer had purchased five pieces of heavy industrial equipment for \$100 each. The balance of their true value — paid off the record — was obviously pocketed by Sears executives.

To top things off, Sears-Managua arranged a phony loan of \$3 million in Chicago in 1977, allegedly to purchase more stock for the store. But the money in fact was simply transferred to another Sears account in New York, without a penny ever reaching Nicaragua.

After the revolution, Sears sharply stepped up "payment" on this loan, dumping córdobas on the black market to buy dollars to send to the Chicago bank. More than \$1 million was siphoned off in this way.

The result — a bankrupt store. No more Sears in Managua. Mission accomplished. □

How decapitalization works

The Sears, Roebuck example — a case study

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — Sears, Roebuck and Co. — the largest retailing company in the world — is a familiar name to U.S. workers, many of whom shop in its department stores.

Its branch in Managua used to be a popular shopping spot too. But today the building it once occupied is empty and shuttered. Only the outline left by the letters of its name indicates that it was once a bustling department store.

On March 17, Sears shut its doors for good. Management explained the "sad decision" to the store's 38 workers at lunch hour, claiming it could no longer do business in revolutionary Nicaragua.

Red Cross trucks were already backing up to the loading docks, and a crew began emptying the shelves. (As a public-relations ploy, management claimed to be donating what little merchandise remained to Miskitu resettlement camps.)

Sears workers responded immediately, calling in the Sandinista Police and the Ministry of Labor.

Unlike other countries, where you call in the police and the government at your own risk, here the authorities backed up the workers at once.

The trucks were unloaded, the store managers were informed their action was illegal, and all merchandise and financial records were confiscated.

What a story emerged!

Sandinista Police announced May 14, after a two-month investigation, that Sears's own records showed they had sold merchandise outside the country below cost, filed phony tax returns, sold high-cost items at ridiculously low prices, and siphoned off over a million dollars to "repay" a nonexistent debt.

In short, Sears had deliberately bankrupted the store.

In Nicaragua, this is called "decapitalization." It is part of the war that local and multinational big-business companies are carrying out against the Sandinista revolution. It goes on every day.

Here's how Sears did it.

They began by building up their debt to Nicaraguan banks. At the time they shut their

Robelo properties expropriated

MANAGUA — All the holdings of Nicaraguan capitalist opposition leader Alfonso Robelo Callejas have been confiscated by the revolutionary government.

Commander Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction, announced the move on May 24 during a ceremony in the town of El Viejo, near Robelo's cotton plantation, Punta Neta. Applause and chants of "people's power!" interrupted Ortega several times as he read the list of Robelo's properties being taken over by the government. Besides Punta Neta these include the GRACSA vegetable-oil processing plant and Robelo's mansion in Managua. The latter, Ortega announced, will be turned over to the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG) for use as its national headquarters.

Robelo and his organization, the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), played an important role in the capitalist opposition to the Somoza dictatorship. In the latter days of the fight against Somoza, the MDN collaborated with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

After the FSLN-led workers and peasants brought down the dictator, Robelo was part of the five-member Junta of Na-

tional Reconstruction. He resigned that post in April 1980, however, one day after the junta had decided by majority vote to give workers' and peasants' representatives the preponderant role in the country's new legislative body, the Council of State.

From then on, Robelo has been an outspoken opponent of the revolutionary course of the FSLN. Through the MDN he sought to regroup the capitalist opposition to the workers and farmers government.

Robelo currently lives in voluntary "exile" outside Nicaragua. He announced recently that he had decided to continue his struggle against the revolution by "other means."

"The MDN has ceased to be an opposition party inside Nicaragua and has converted itself into an armed counterrevolutionary organization in exile," Vice-Minister of the Interior Lenin Cerna explained in an interview published May 23 in the FSLN daily *Barricada*.

Robelo and other MDN leaders have gone abroad, Cerna said, as part of a plan by the Reagan administration "to try to unify the counterrevolutionary political forces in a decisive way."

A British socialist views the revolution

'Every day there are meetings and rallies'

[Pat Kane is a leading member of the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International. He recently spent five months on the small Caribbean island of Grenada, where a mass uprising on March 13, 1979, swept dictator Eric Gairy out of power and installed a new revolutionary government in office.]

[Kane made two trips to Grenada. His first, at the end of 1981, was as a volunteer electrician to lend his skills to the tasks of economic construction facing the Grenadian people. Following that trip, Kane returned to Grenada as a reporter for *Intercontinental Press*. The following interview on his experiences in Grenada was conducted by Brian Grogan for the British weekly *Socialist Challenge*. It appeared in the April 29 issue.]

* * *

Question. What have been the main social and economic gains of the revolution?

Answer. The most important difference since the revolution has been the transformation of the people of Grenada. You can't measure this in statistics. Everywhere I went, ordinary working people were running the economy and government ministries, and all aspects of life.

The people are very active and enthusiastic about the developments since the revolution.

Social and economic advances in a developing country are very closely linked. Free milk, education, health care, subsidised school uniforms, new sports facilities and the expansion of culture — all products of the revolution — have to be paid for.

Youth and women who have been among the main beneficiaries can see directly the need to increase economic efficiency — not to make more profit for some multinational company but to extend the services that have been provided by the revolution already.

Imperialism was against any development that benefited Grenadians. Under Gairy, they had a negative growth rate. It took the revolution to even develop a fishing fleet to exploit the rich fishing grounds off Grenada. Previously, a majority of fish eaten was imported from Canada!

There are still capitalists. The Grenadians describe this situation as "a mixed economy, where the state sector is dominant."

Q. What do they mean when they talk about a mixed economy?

A. Well it's not the same thing as when Denis Healey [a leader of the Labour Party's right wing] or Tories like Ted Heath talk about a mixed economy in Britain.

There's nothing "mixed" about our economy. The nationalised sector is run by capitalists to provide cheap services for other capitalists. Grenadian capitalists are not like ours. They are mainly confined to the service sector — hotels, shops, food stores, estate owners. Their importance in the economy is decreasing.

It's similar to Nicaragua after their revolution. Once the revolution expropriated Gairy's holdings, they automatically controlled a majority of the arable land and hotels, plus they gained control of Gairy's shares in other sectors.

The state takes all the initiatives in the development of the economy. Last year state investment accounted for 95 percent of all investment, which goes mainly into capital projects like new industrial and agricultural developments.

The overall aim is to rapidly disengage the Grenadian economy from imperialism through development of existing markets and the funding of new ones. At the same time it is important not to disrupt the economy, and thereby the welfare of Grenadian working people, by moving too fast in this field. The U.S. and British governments are looking for any excuse to attack Grenada.

Q. Does this imply that Grenadians are accommodating with capitalism?

A. No, they are trying to control it, and use it to develop the state sector. The last budget introduced a whole range of taxes which will force the private sector to move in the same direction as the government. Bernard Coard, the Finance Minister, called this the carrot-and-stick approach.

Within the economy there is a massive movement towards planning and accountability. Literally thousands of Grenadians participated in the preparations for the budget, and they have just introduced their first one-year plan.

The whole process of economics is demystified, and this attacks one of the fundamental pillars of capital, business secrecy. Every workers' meeting discusses "opening the books" of state and private concerns.

The major difference in Grenada is the government. The Grenadian government rests on the workers and small farmers, and each time there is a conflict of interest, they back the workers.

The government has introduced a whole series of laws to protect workers' rights, introduce maternity leave and equal pay for wom-

en. It has legalised trade unions and the right to strike.

Q. How have the masses been involved in the economy?

A. During December, all the Parish Council and workplace meetings received preliminary reports on the plans for the economy. The government declared 1982 the "Year of Economic Construction." All the mass organisations elected delegates to a conference to discuss the economy. One thousand attended, from a population of only 110,000. There were 27 different workshops.

After the conference, every delegate reported to their organisation. Then, the broader masses were involved through the Parish Councils.

It's estimated that 30,000 people participated, and read the very detailed report. Every suggestion was noted, and integrated into the final budget speech. And the process will continue. Two more huge conferences are being organised this year. The whole island is now full of lay-economists!

One result of the conference was the establishment of a whole series of committees in state workplaces to monitor and control production, and they report to the weekly, and sometimes daily, mass meetings.

The trade unions are actively involved in all aspects of the economy. The Government called on the trade unions to struggle in the private sector to implement the same types of measures. Mass participation and control are the cornerstones of the government's economic strategy.

Q. Grenada is a tiny country. Why are the U.S. and British governments so hostile?

A. Grenada is part of the revolutions of the region — Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador — and it points to a different path for English-speaking Caribbeans than neo-colonialism or reformism. That's why the [imperialists] spend millions of dollars on military and naval exercises which are aimed at all the region's revolutions.

Revolutionaries in Grenada are very conscious of these threats, and they are actively engaged in getting solidarity within the imperialist countries. In the U.S., they have close links with the black organisations, and they encourage Grenadians abroad to become politically active.

They have a militia and an army. The militia is made up of volunteers from all walks of life, and they will fight to defend their country. The youth are particularly active in every aspect of

the revolution, and they are in the front ranks of the militia and army.

The New Jewel Movement talks about the revolution having three, interrelated but separate pillars: mass participation and democracy, the economy, and defence. They take all three very, very seriously.

Q. The imperialist press talks about Grenada developing into a totalitarian state. What is political life like in Grenada?

A. Hectic, that's the only way to describe it. Every day there are meetings and rallies, and the radio is constantly providing information and educational material. The press lies about Grenada, just as they lie about Thatcher being a defender of democracy. In Grenada, there are more elections in a week than there are in Britain in a lifetime. Because there is no parliament, where the capitalists can dominate the country, the press claims there is no democracy.

You should go there and see for yourselves. You'll see the involvement of the Grenadian people from the minute you get off the plane. It's a different type of democracy — a democracy, like the Soviets of early revolutionary Russia, which has grown out of a generation of struggle by the Grenadian people.

The ordinary people are active within the unions, women's and youth organisations, and the geographically based Parish Councils. In a village with a total population of only 900, 200 will regularly attend the Council meetings. Every aspect of running the country is discussed by these different organisations.

Q. How accurate do you think the comparison is with the early Soviet state in Lenin's time?

A. There are huge differences in the contexts of the two revolutions. But what the Grenadian leadership share with Lenin and Trotsky is their orientation to solving problems through the mobilisation and involvement of working people. This is fundamental.

Because of this, the Grenadians have shown that whatever mistakes they might make, they have a tremendous capacity to learn and modify their proposals accordingly. For example, on the second anniversary of the revolution, they were not satisfied with the 10,000 people that attended the celebration rally.

Remember, it was the time of the terrorists' attacks which had begun to intimidate some people. So [the government] expanded the involvement in the militias and took other measures to dramatically expand the mass organisations.

Q. What you describe is very different from the reality of Eastern Europe — like Poland. How would you define the Grenadian leadership politically?

A. There is a world of difference between the NJM [New Jewel Movement] and the Stalinist bureaucrats of Eastern Europe or China. [Polish Prime Minister Wojciech] Jaruzels-



Cuban volunteers working in Grenada take part in May Day demonstration.

Flax Hermes/IP

ki bases his rule on smashing up the mass organisations. The exclusion of the masses from political involvement is a life and death question for the bureaucrats, as the crackdown on Solidarity has shown.

The Grenadians put their confidence in the masses. They encourage the involvement in every conceivable form of mass organisation — organisations with their own elected leaderships and finances. The defence of the revolution is not seen in a retreat to so-called "socialism in one country," but through its extension. They see the defence of the revolution against imperialism by politically mobilising the masses — the Grenadian people are armed through the militias.

How would you define such a leadership which encourages and deepens mass involvement? Which acts as if they had read Trotsky's thesis from the Platform of the Left Opposition to "make the state closer to the worker, the peasant, and the washerwoman"? Which promotes class independence rather than class collaboration? Which sees defence of the revolution through its international extension? Surely, this is our general framework.

You can't lead a revolution through all its twists and turns, maintaining the fundamentals of class independence, without some sort of socialist strategy. It seems to me inadequate to define each of these revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada and so on as "exceptions" — as we defined the Cuban revolution. In my view, the only way to define them is as conscious extensions of the Cuban revolution.

Q. What has been the role of the Cubans?

A. Without revolutionary Cuba, the Grenadian revolution would not exist. Castro has made it clear that any direct attack by imperialism on what he calls the three giants — Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada — will bring forward solidarity action from Cuba. The imperialists hesitate as much for this as the hostility of their

own working class to any military adventures.

The Grenadians have obtained some aid from capitalist countries. But the main aid comes from Cuba. Castro challenged the United States to a campaign of "emulation." He promised that Cuba would send more teachers, more doctors and more unselfish aid than the United States — despite the gargantuan differences in size and economic advance of the two countries. Cuba has won hands down.

Cuba gives aid in every field — and it's freely given.

There's no Cuban banks or factories to exploit profits from the Grenadians. Aid from the imperialists is always used to seek political and economic advantage.

Cuban aid is geared into Grenada's struggle for self-sufficiency. It makes them independent, not dependent. □

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On the front line against imperialism

South African invasions ravage countryside

By Ernest Harsch

Like many towns in Angola's sparsely populated south, Cahama led a relatively quiet existence. Its several thousand inhabitants went about their daily chores, tending their goats or nearby fields. They were aware of the possibility of a South African attack. Yet the border seemed so far away, 75 miles to the south, and in any case there were no military targets near the town.

But on Aug. 23, 1981, the quiet of Cahama was shattered.

South African jets suddenly appeared and dropped a deadly rain of bombs. Buildings

This is the last of three articles on Angola since the 1975-76 war. The first one examined the government's reconstruction efforts and new social programs, and the second dealt with the growth of the mass organizations and their relationship with the government and MPLA leadership.

throughout the built-up part of town collapsed and burned. Helicopter gunships swooped in with steady barrages of machine-gun fire.

Cahama's residents — those who could still run — fled for safety into the heavy bush surrounding the town.

When the attack was over and the South African forces had pulled back to their bases in neighboring Namibia, Cahama no longer existed — except on maps.

Most buildings had been leveled, or were badly damaged, their walls pockmarked with bullet holes. Houses, huts, stores, a makeshift outdoor school, a government building, a pharmacy, all lay in rubble. Bits of clothing and household goods were scattered about. All that remained of the school were two broken desks and two blackboards with arithmetic sums on them.

No one was left in Cahama. The survivors had either fled northward to Lubango, or were still hiding in the bush. The hospital in Lubango was filled with the dead and wounded.

'Undeclared war'

The assault on Cahama was just one episode of an ongoing series of invasions and attacks being carried out by the apartheid regime. In the words of Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos, it is "a deliberate action — the waging of undeclared war — to destabilize our country and other countries in the region and to intimidate the Angolan people."

The attacks have never really ceased since the defeat of the 1975-76 South African invasion. But the fighting over the past two years

has reached a new level of intensity, posing a deadly threat to Angola's independence and to its people.

Incursions or attacks by South African jets, artillery, or ground troops occur virtually every month, and sometimes on a weekly or daily basis. Often they are brief operations, hitting 10 or 20 miles into Angola. Sometimes bombers strike hundreds of miles into the country, and air and ground assaults have lasted several weeks.

One special battalion of the South African army — the 32nd Battalion — spends much of its time terrorizing the villagers of southern Angola. It is composed largely of former troops of the rightist Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA) and is officered by white South Africans and mercenaries.

Trevor Edwards, a deserter from the 32nd Battalion, has described some of the unit's methods: "Sometimes we take the locals for questioning. It's rough. We just beat them, cut them, burn them. As soon as we're finished with them, we kill them. . . . Sometimes you have to do it to the children to make the adults talk."

The efforts of the 32nd Battalion and other South African units are supplemented by those of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which carries out guerrilla actions throughout much of central and southern Angola.

During Angola's civil war, the UNITA could claim hundreds of thousands of followers. But since then it has lost the vast bulk of its popular support, largely as a result of its increasingly close alliance with the apartheid regime. The remnants of the group now operate out of bases in South African-occupied Namibia and rely heavily on South African logistical and material support. The UNITA's central leader, Jonas Savimbi, frequently visits South Africa to confer with top government and military officials.

Thanks to this South African backing and the relative isolation of many of the areas in which it operates, the UNITA terror groups have continued to pose a serious danger to Angolan villagers. UNITA bands regularly attack remote villages. They plant bombs in crowded marketplaces. They kill, rape, kidnap, and plunder. They act as spies and guides for South African raiding parties.

Large-scale invasions

In addition to such constant, day-to-day terror actions, the apartheid regime has also launched several major invasions of Angola.

In June 1980, for instance, several thousand South African troops drove into the provinces

of Kunene and Kuando-Kubango, killing some 370 Angolan villagers.

The attacks rose sharply the following year, reaching nearly 250 air or ground assaults during 1981. The South African regime felt greatly encouraged by the installation of the Reagan administration in Washington, which quickly moved to strengthen its ties with Pretoria and escalated its own threats and pressures against Angola.

In August 1981, the apartheid regime launched "Operation Protea." Involving more than 10,000 South African troops — with tanks, armored cars, artillery, and air support — the invasion was the largest Pretoria had ever mounted, surpassing even the 1975-76 invasion.

For several weeks, the invaders laid waste to much of southern Angola, burning and bombing towns and villages, destroying bridges, and slaughtering villagers. Altogether, some 700 Angolans were killed. At least 160,000 were forced to flee their homes.

Although the main South African force later pulled back into Namibia, others stayed behind to continue the terror. Large areas of southern Angola remain under effective South African control — about 50,000 square kilometers, according to the Angolan government. Angolan troops who try to enter this region are promptly attacked, and Angolan planes — even regular commercial flights — have been shot down.

These massive and constant assaults are aimed not only at terrorizing the local Angolan population or the Namibian refugees and freedom fighters based in southern Angola. They are also aimed at inflicting crippling damage on Angola's economy and undermining the Angolan government.

An August 1980 statement by the Political Bureau of the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) pointed out that the South African aim was "to destabilize the political, social and economic structure" of Angola by "systematically destroying goods and equipment necessary for the process of our country's economic and social reconstruction and repeated massacres and bombardment of defenceless civilian populations."

The Angolan government has estimated that the repeated South African attacks had already caused some \$7 billion in damages by the end of 1980.

Besides the bombings of bridges, roads, factories, and communications lines during the larger South African invasions, Pretoria has also equipped special sabotage teams composed of mercenaries or UNITA guerrillas. These teams regularly attack the key Benguela rail-



South African troops in southern Angola.

way and have bombed oil installations in Lobito and the power line between Lubango and Moçâmedes. In December 1981, a team of white mercenaries attacked the oil refinery in Luanda itself.

In addition, South African troops have driven thousands of head of cattle from Angola into Namibia, and UNITA forces have cut down millions of dollars worth of timber for transport to South Africa.

One Angolan army commander, in a September 1981 interview, stated, "We know that they [the South Africans] are taking everything from farm tractors, bulldozers, civil transport vehicles and cattle into Namibia, in fact all the technical means necessary for the reconstruction of our country."

Peasants in the south are often afraid to work in their fields. The destruction of key roads and bridges has seriously disrupted the country's entire agricultural distribution system.

The devastation of the south, combined with a series of bad harvests in the key agricultural provinces in central Angola, has left Angola seriously short of food. Once a food exporter, Angola now has to import 80 percent of its food needs. This has placed a severe drain on all of Angola's economic development programs, as has the massive diversion of resources into the country's military defense.

A flashpoint of southern Africa

The apartheid regime's constant aggression against Angola is part of its broader efforts to hold back the liberation struggles in southern Africa as a whole.

The defeat of the 1975-76 invasion of Angola was a serious blow to Pretoria, totally shat-

tering the myth of South African invincibility. And the continued survival of an independent, Black-ruled Angola — especially one that is in such sharp conflict with imperialism — has been an inspiration to everyone in the region fighting against colonial rule and neocolonial domination, particularly those living directly under the boot of the apartheid system. Many South African Blacks — and some whites — openly support Angola in its conflict with Pretoria, and have called for the withdrawal of all South African troops from that country.

For the white supremacists in Pretoria, who insist that all Blacks remain subservient to them, the Angolan government's stance has been especially galling. Not only has the MPLA government repeatedly defended the presence of Cuban troops and technicians in Angola, not only has it resisted the continual South African pressures and attacks, but it has provided political and material assistance to South African and Namibian freedom fighters. Both the African National Congress of South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia have offices in Luanda.

For the South African imperialists, much is at stake in the region. South African corporations, either on their own or in collaboration with other imperialist interests, have investments scattered throughout southern Africa, including some in Angola itself (primarily in diamond mining). South African, U.S., and European mining and agricultural concerns in Namibia are eager to tap the extensive river system in southern Angola for hydroelectric power and irrigation.

Above all, Pretoria is concerned about the

impact of events in Angola on the independence struggle in Namibia.

SWAPO has been carrying out a guerrilla struggle against the South African occupation forces in Namibia since the 1960s. But it was not until Angola won its independence in 1975 that the organization was able to win a secure base area directly bordering on Namibia. This has facilitated more direct contact between SWAPO leaders living in exile and activists functioning within the country. And it has also contributed to the increase and greater effectiveness of SWAPO guerrilla operations.

The South African authorities have responded by escalating their reign of terror in Namibia, particularly in the more heavily populated northern regions, along the Angolan border, where SWAPO draws much of its support.

Some 60,000 South African troops have been stationed in Namibia. Tens of thousands of villagers have been uprooted from their homes to create a "no-go" zone along the border. Detentions, torture, and widespread killings have been unleashed, causing thousands of Namibians to flee into Angola for refuge. Many of the younger ones have joined the liberation forces.

To a great extent, the repeated South African attacks into Angola are an extension of this counterinsurgency campaign. Pretoria is seeking to punish Angola for its support to SWAPO, and to strike directly at the Namibian refugee camps and guerrilla bases.

The massive South African attacks on southern Angola, aimed at driving out much of the population from the border region, is designed to create a buffer zone within Angola itself, modeled after Israel's occupation of parts of southern Lebanon.

This goal was openly referred to in a June 1979 article in the *Windhoek Advertiser*, a newspaper published in Namibia's capital that often floats new ideas emanating from Pretoria. The South African forces, it said, should step up their support for UNITA and "move our boundaries north to take occupation of a good part of southern Angola. This has been the Israeli tactic and it has worked well. The net effects would be that the heat will be taken off [Namibia]."

This is the policy that Pretoria is now trying to put into effect.

Washington's anti-Angola drive

The threat to Angola from South Africa is serious enough. But the apartheid regime is not acting alone. At every step in its escalating war against the Angolan people it has received direct backing and encouragement from Washington.

This alliance against Angola has been a continual one, dating back to the 1975-76 war, when both powers sought to overthrow the government in Luanda.

Like Pretoria, the U.S. rulers have been extremely hostile to the MPLA-led regime. They were infuriated by the MPLA's request for military and technical assistance from Cuba,

and fear the continued presence of Cuban troops in Angola. They are opposed to the Angolan government's backing to SWAPO, despite all their hypocritical claims to favor Namibian independence. And they deeply distrust the MPLA's efforts to mobilize mass support.

More than six years after Angola won its independence, Washington still does not recognize the Angolan government. This is tantamount to an open declaration of hostility.

Washington is seeking to wield the denial of diplomatic recognition as a club against Angola, in an effort to extract political concessions. A policy memorandum drawn up in February 1981 by Chester Crocker, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, stated that recognition of the Angolan government "is out unless the Cubans leave and they cut a deal with Savimbi." It then ominously warned that "if they won't play, we have other options."

Some of those other options have already been in the works for some time. The White House has used its influence in various international financial institutions to deny Angola much-needed loans and assistance. U.S. companies seeking to invest in or trade with Angola have met only hostility and obstruction in Washington. As one Reagan administration official said in June 1981, "We're in favor of Americans doing all the business they can overseas, but not when it runs contrary to the national interest," meaning the interests of the U.S. ruling class as a whole.

Shortly after coming into office, the Reagan administration opened a drive to get Congress to repeal the Clark Amendment, which was passed in 1976 and which bars covert CIA or other U.S. assistance to the UNITA.

The administration has repeatedly referred to the terrorist UNITA as a "legitimate force" in Angola. And in 1980, when Reagan was campaigning for the presidency, he blurted out, "I don't see why we shouldn't provide them with . . . weapons."

Thus the drive to repeal the amendment was intended as a direct threat to Angola. It carried the implicit warning that Washington was considering a resumption of the CIA's war to topple the Angolan government.

However, Reagan's bid was defeated in the House of Representatives in December 1981. According to an official of TransAfrica, a Washington-based lobbying group that opposes aspects of U.S. policy in Africa, "The fundamental reason behind the retention of the measure was public pressure."

The existence of the Clark Amendment makes it politically difficult for Washington to back the UNITA terror bands, but not impossible. When the White House and CIA want to accomplish something, the legal niceties are often simply ignored.

Since Reagan became president, numerous meetings have been held between U.S. officials and Savimbi and other UNITA leaders. In fact, just before the House voted to retain the Clark Amendment, Savimbi was in Washington for discussions with Crocker and Underse-

cretary of State Walter Stoessel.

Alongside such direct U.S. threats and pressures against Angola, the Reagan administration has also urged the apartheid regime to escalate its own attacks.

It has done so partly through the increasingly close economic, political, and military ties between Washington and Pretoria. But it has also directly encouraged the South African forces to invade Angola.

On July 28, 1981, Angolan leader Lúcio Lára held a press conference to condemn a major series of NATO military maneuvers that were scheduled to take place in the South Atlantic. He charged that they would only embolden Pretoria to step up its attacks on Angola. "It is very worrying to us," Lára said, "especially since we always feared an extension of the NATO alliance to take in the South Atlantic." Pretoria has long argued for such an extension, and the current British-U.S. war against Argentina in the South Atlantic is a powerful reminder of NATO's interest in the region.

Within two days of Lára's press conference, his prediction came true. Thousands of South African troops poured into Angola.

A month later, when a resolution came before the United Nations Security Council condemning the massive South African invasion, the acting U.S. representative, Charles Lichtenstein, vetoed it. He argued that the resolution placed the blame "solely" on Pretoria!

Rejecting blackmail

In general, the Angolan government has stood up to the attacks and pressures from Pretoria and Washington, and has rejected their blackmail attempts. This is despite the high price Angola has had to pay as a result of the repeated South African invasions.

But the pressures have had an effect on some

occasions. In 1978, for example, the Angolan authorities used their considerable influence to convince SWAPO to accept a UN proposal for a transition to Namibian independence in which elections were to be supervised by UN forces and some 1,500 South African troops were to be allowed to remain in Namibia. The SWAPO leadership initially balked at these conditions.

According to a report in the October 1978 issue of the London monthly *New African* "US officials acknowledge that [the late Angolan President Agostinho] Neto sent at least three personal communications to President Carter, and also say that Neto played 'an instrumental role' in persuading SWAPO to accept the UN proposed settlement."

But this pressure on SWAPO had few lasting results. Pretoria, fearful that the Namibian organization would in any event win such elections, later rejected the UN proposal.

Since then, the Angolan authorities have maintained their support for SWAPO, which is significant. And they have defiantly rejected Washington's demands that the Cuban troops be expelled from Angola as a precondition for a Namibian settlement or for U.S. diplomatic recognition.

In a 1981 interview, Angolan Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge declared that the U.S. demand for the withdrawal of the Cubans "is a clear interference in our affairs."

"Why do the Americans not talk about the French troops in Djibouti?" Jorge asked. "Why do the Americans keep troops in Korea, in Germany and in Cuba, but object to Cubans being here?"

Jorge then spelled out the conditions under which the Cubans would be able to leave. "When Namibia will be independent," he said, "and the aggression against Angola from South Africa finished, then we will say to the Cuban



Angolan soldiers.

comrades, 'Thank you very much, you can go home now.'

Jorge and Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca released a joint statement on Feb. 4, 1982, reiterating this stand and pointing out that the continued presence of Cuban troops in Angola "results from the aggression of the South African racist and fascist troops, in close alliance with the United States of America."

Arming for defense

Within Angola, the Angolan government has responded to the imperialist attacks and threats by carrying out a massive military mobilization.

"Every citizen must be concerned with the defense of the country," then Defense Minister Iko Carreira declared in 1978, "and must be able to and know how to take action in case of war or a serious crisis. For the system called generalized people's defense, a complete interlinking of the militia and the army is indispensable." Both the militia and the army have been greatly expanded since the 1975-76 war. The government has instituted a universal draft, for two years, applicable to all Angolans between the ages of 18 and 35.

The militia — the People's Defense Organization (ODP) — has grown to 1 million members, the overwhelming majority of them workers and peasants who fulfill part-time military duties and help guard factories and fields.

The army itself numbers some 35,000 troops. It is considered one of the best-equipped in Africa, with tanks, armored cars, and sophisticated anti-aircraft weapons. The air force is composed of some two dozen MIG jet fighters, as well as helicopters, bombers, and smaller combat aircraft.

The ODP, army, police, and air force are all part of the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA).

Much of Angola's military equipment has been bought from the Soviet Union. But most of the training has been provided by Cuban instructors, who have helped transform the MPLA's old guerrilla force into a professional and modern army.

Military gains

Thanks to this greater military strength, all of the recent fighting against the invading South African forces had been carried out by the FAPLA alone. The Cuban troops in Angola have been held in reserve, as a backup force. According to Lúcio Lára, "We are trying to avoid a conflict which could spread and take much larger dimensions." He also stressed, however, that if the South Africans tried to take the war deeper into Angola, the Cubans would be asked to participate directly in the defense.

Although the Angolan armed forces are still not strong enough to drive the South African troops out of the border region and keep them out, the FAPLA has nevertheless been able to put up stiff resistance.

It has also had considerable success in fight-

ing off the South African-backed guerrilla bands.

The FNLA, which operated primarily in the north, has been militarily crushed. There have been virtually no reports of FNLA activity within Angola since 1980. Most of its remnants have been absorbed into the South Africans' 32nd Battalion.

While the UNITA still remains a threat, it too has been greatly weakened. In a major government offensive in early 1978, for example, some 600 UNITA guerrillas were killed and 46 bases were destroyed. This enabled the government to establish stable administrative structures in central and southern Angola for the first time. Since then, many more UNITA troops and officers have been killed and captured, and some 1,000 rank-and-file fighters gave themselves up to the authorities in Bié province alone.

UNITA supporters won over

The MPLA's strategy for defeating the UNITA has not been exclusively military. It has combined armed actions with political and social measures to win over the local populations, particularly the Ovimbundu people of the central highlands, among whom the UNITA traditionally found its primary base of support.

Wherever the government has been able to establish its authority, it has taken care to promptly introduce health-care services, build schools, and promote the emergence of local mass organizations, such as the trade unions, women's groups, peasant associations, and militia. Food has been rushed to areas where the fighting has disrupted agricultural production.

Army units, after clearing an area of UNITA bands, have played an important role in getting abandoned factories and farms functioning again, and in the organization of local services.

In this way, the MPLA has been able to demolish the myth — often fostered by the UNITA — that the MPLA would take reprisals against the Ovimbundus or former UNITA supporters.

As a result, the UNITA's political influence over the Ovimbundus has been broken. In 1979 and 1980, some 800,000 villagers in Bié abandoned the UNITA areas in the countryside and returned to their villages. In neighboring Huambo province the figure was 300,000 for 1980. Radio Huambo broadcast appeals for the peasants to welcome the returnees.

Special projects have been launched to provide jobs for these refugees. In Huambo, they have been given jobs on state farms; and the construction of a new town near one farm, for example, is being planned for up to 10,000 people.

Many former UNITA supporters have been integrated into the mass organizations, in particular the peasants' associations and the militia. These new recruits to the ODP have played vital roles in combating the UNITA's continued terrorist and sabotage activities.

The growth of the MPLA's influence throughout Angola has been demonstrated by its ability to hold mass rallies from one corner of the country to the other. Large crowds have turned out in Kassinga, in the south; in Huambo, in the heart of the central highlands; and in the oil-rich northern enclave of Cabinda, where imperialist-backed separatist forces used to be strong.

Solidarity with Angola!

The war being waged against Angola by the apartheid regime — with Washington's full support — has taken a heavy toll. All Angola's 7 million people want is to achieve genuine independence and to improve their lives. They pose no military threat to any other people in the region.

Yet they have been the victims of an unceasing campaign of imperialist intervention that has taken thousands of lives, hampered efforts to better social conditions, and forced the Angolans to devote much of their resources to military defense. These attacks pose the most serious threat to Angola's future.

The Angolan people require the broadest international support in their fight against U.S. and South African intervention. This is important not only for the sake of the Angolans themselves, but for all those in the region — and throughout the world — who are struggling for independence and social progress.

This is something that many Angolans themselves have come to realize. While the hardships of the war and the country's many social and economic difficulties have discouraged and demoralized some, others have been spurred on to an even firmer opposition to all forms of oppression and exploitation — wherever they exist.

They understand in particular that Angola's own future is very much bound up with the Namibian struggle for independence and the fight of South Africa's Black majority for an end to the white ruling class's brutal rule. As long as the powerful apartheid regime survives, no people in southern Africa can feel safe. That is why Angolan solidarity with the struggles in Namibia and South Africa has increased so markedly since the end of the 1975-76 war.

The South African authorities have themselves become well aware of the growing internationalist consciousness of the Angolans. Following one raid into southern Angola, for example, the South African troops brought back a "trophy," a hand-lettered poster. It read:

"To fight the South African enemy means defending not only the Angolan people but all the oppressed peoples of the world." □

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The basis of Cuba's foreign policy

'Cuba will always carry out revolutionary internationalism'

By Carlos Rafael Rodríguez

[The following article is reprinted from volume 1, number 1 (December 1981) of *Cuba Socialista*, a theoretical magazine published in Havana. The author is a member of the Political Bureau and Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. The translation from Spanish and the subheads are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The Cuban state's international policy is based on the Marxist concept that links historical development to the class struggle. This class struggle, in line with the theories we subscribe to, takes place on both the *local* level — within national societies and in the international sphere.

Since 1917, and to an increasing extent as the circle of socialist countries has grown, the class struggle on a world scale is expressed in the basic historical contradiction that marks our epoch, which counterposes capitalism and socialism as antagonistic systems.

Our Marxist concept of history also contains another premise: that the historic march of contemporary societies — i.e. the functioning of capitalism in its imperialist phase and the counterposition between the capitalist and socialist systems — *leads* the world toward socialism.

Not a mechanical view

When we state this, people often fall into the error of confusing this tendency with a preordained, mechanical, and inexorable march. In reality, it is not that the world *must* end up in socialism, no matter what and come what may, as the result of the step-by-step unfolding of history, developing independently of the voluntary actions of men.

This mechanical, straight-line interpretation of history is alien to Marxism. Our materialist theory postulates that imperialist capitalism creates the *objective* conditions that make the passage toward socialism *possible and necessary* as a result of the general crisis of the capitalist system. Furthermore, this crisis itself — operating through the class struggle — in turn creates the *subjective* conditions for the actions of men (classes and social groups) aimed at overthrowing capitalism on a world scale and establishing socialism as the predominant system that will replace capitalism.

For this *potential* to be turned into *reality*, there must be conscious action by the revolutionary social classes, both nationally and on a world scale.¹

This is the starting point for our international positions. The programmatic platform and

the theses on international policy of the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba made it clear that in its international policy the Cuban revolution's basic objective is to contribute to the cause of socialism.

It was categorically stated that in developing our foreign policy we subordinate "the interests of Cuba to the general interests of the struggle for socialism and communism, national liberation, the defeat of imperialism, and the elimination of colonialism, neocolonialism, and all forms of exploitation of and discrimination against people and men . . ."²

Struggle for peace

This commitment requires a simultaneous struggle for peace, which is an objective that is inseparable from the struggle for socialism and communism under present conditions.

Therefore, the fundamental strategic premise of our foreign policy — that history is moving in the direction of socialism, but that those who aspire to socialism must help achieve this direction — presupposes a frontal and permanent struggle against imperialism and the various forms in which it manifests itself.

It must also be stated that this struggle is irreversible. Our Marxist conception of history leads us to conclude that in order to pass from capitalism to socialism a *revolutionary break* must take place.

In recent years, bourgeois thinkers have very enthusiastically put forward the idea — which some "Marxists in retreat" rush to accept — that in the relatively near future there will be some kind of "convergence" between the two systems, as capitalism "becomes more

socialistic" and socialism "becomes more capitalistic."

(It would be unrealistic and antihistorical not to acknowledge that numerous features of capitalist society will pass into the future socialist society. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx acknowledged, with foresight, that this transference would inevitably take place. He pointed out that during the transitional period when capitalism has already disappeared but communism still does not exist in its definitive form — a stage which Marx called socialist — the prevailing system of distribution would still clearly have bourgeois features.

(Furthermore, it is obvious that to the extent that the crisis of capitalism sharpens and the number of socialist countries and their strength grows, it becomes ever more possible to have a peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, a transformation of one into the other.

(But it must be stressed that the *revolutionary break* will have to take place even in the exceptional cases in which socialism is reached by the peaceful road, and even by the parliamentary road. This *break* is expressed in the transformation of individual bourgeois property — which is steadily developing more "collective" forms as trusts, monopolies, or multinationals — into social property, property of the people. This transformation of property is the necessary precondition first for socialist distribution and later for communist distribution.)

The fact that the contradiction between socialism and capitalism is unavoidable does not mean that it must necessarily be resolved through an armed conflict. We Marxist-Leninists have always rejected the idea of a world conflict as the way toward socialism.

Therefore, we Cuban communists feel that any contribution to the victory of socialism is perfectly compatible — and we could even say *necessarily compatible* with peaceful coexistence. That is why, as we pointed out, the very diverse forms of the struggle for peace are an essential element of the strategic objectives of our international policy.

Two views of peaceful coexistence

At the same time, however, we do not view such peaceful coexistence as a conciliatory compromise leading to immobility. Peaceful coexistence between two antagonistic systems entails, *presupposes*, not only the continuation of the ideological struggle, but the maintenance of the class struggle, in the local and worldwide arenas.

The U.S. imperialists claim that we should accept *their* idea of peaceful coexistence between themselves and the Soviet Union. This

1. It is clear that this "conscious action" is, in turn, conditioned by economic and social factors. In this sense, the desire of social classes and their members to exercise this "conscious action" has very little to do with the supposed "free will" that the individualistic philosophers crow about.

As Marx pointed out from his earliest writings, and especially in the prologue to *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, it is not man's social consciousness that determines his social existence, but the reverse. Social existence is what determines his consciousness.

This means that the objective factors in contemporary social existence that favor the trend toward socialism have a positive influence on moving the revolutionary social classes into action to achieve the tasks that will make possible the defeat of imperialism and the rise of socialism on a world scale.

2. *Platforma Programática del Partido Comunista de Cuba*, published by the Revolutionary Orientation Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, Havana, 1976, p. 103.



U.S. troops in Siberia in 1919, during Russian civil war. The new revolutionary government survived because of divisions among imperialist powers.

is totally unacceptable. They view peaceful coexistence as an agreement leading to a division of "spheres of influence" or a commitment obliging the peoples fighting for national independence and for socialism to water down and even end their struggles. Such struggles — in which imperialism is the main enemy — will not only continue, but must continually become more intense.

And this leads us to another strategic premise of the Cuban revolution's foreign policy: internationalism.

Cuba has the duty to carry out, and will always carry out, proletarian, revolutionary internationalism. This is one of the basic ways our revolution contributes to the historic victory of socialism over capitalism. It is not merely an act of identification and sympathy. It is also a duty that is linked to our whole strategic conception.

So, "imperialism" is our historic enemy. But what do we mean by "imperialism"? We are referring, of course, to the system as a whole. We are not talking about beating just the U.S. imperialists, leaving imperialism unscathed in the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, if we are to have an adequate strategic viewpoint, we must be specific about the real enemy that we must defeat.

Imperialist contradictions

And the first thing Leninism teaches us is that although imperialism is a system, this system is not a single, homogeneous whole. Rather it is a mass that is not only heterogeneous, but inherently contradictory.

From the theoretical point of view, the question was defined in a masterful way by Lenin in the days before the October revolution.

Already in 1915, in his prologue to Bukharin's "Imperialism and the World Economy,"

Lenin refuted an idea previously put forward by Kautsky, which was also given credence in Bukharin's work. Kautsky maintained that as a result of the concentration of capital, world economic development could lead to the rise of a "superimperialism" or an "ultraimperialism," in which the interests of the different sectors of imperialism would be united in a single, uniform, and noncontradictory whole.

"If the international integration of national (rather nationally isolated) imperialisms is to be called ultra-imperialism, which 'could' remove the conflicts, such as wars, political upheavals, etc., which the petty bourgeois finds especially unpalatable, disquieting, and alarming," Lenin said, "why not try to escape the acute problems that have been and are being posed by the epoch of imperialism that has dawned for Europe by dreaming up the possibility of it soon passing away and being followed by a relatively 'peaceful' epoch of 'ultra-imperialism' that will not require any 'abrupt' tactics?"³

Lenin rejected the possibility of an "ultraimperialism." "Such a phase can be imagined," he said, "in the abstract." "But in practice this means becoming an opportunist, turning away from the acute problems of the day to dream of the unacute problems of the future."⁴

And he added that "development proceeds in such circumstances, at such a pace, through such contradictions, conflicts and upheavals — not only economic but political, national, etc. — that inevitably imperialism will burst and capitalism will be transformed into its op-

3. V.I. Lenin, "Preface to N. Bukharin's Pamphlet, *Imperialism and the World Economy*," *Collected Works*, vol. 22, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 106.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

posite long before one world trust materialises, before the 'ultra-imperialist,' world-wide amalgamation of national finance capitals takes place."⁵

A few years later, writing his masterly essay *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin returned to this theme.

He pointed to Kautsky's question: "Cannot the present imperialist policy be supplanted by a new, ultra-imperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals?"⁶ "That is all there is," Lenin said, "in Kautsky's 'Marxist' theory."⁷

Lenin made reference to concrete phenomena: the exploitation of India, Indochina, and China by various imperialist powers such as England, France, Japan, the United States, etc. "Let us assume," said Lenin, "that all the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the 'peaceful' division of these parts of Asia; this alliance would be an alliance of 'internationally united finance capital.'"⁸

But Lenin then asked "is it 'conceivable,' assuming that the capitalist system remains intact . . . that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in every possible form?"⁹

Lenin went on to examine the fact that the division of spheres of influence, of interests, colonies, etc., was based on "the strength of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc."¹⁰ And he added that this strength "does not change to an equal degree," because of the uneven development of capitalism.

"Half a century ago," Lenin pointed out, "Germany was a miserable, insignificant country, if her capitalist strength is compared with that of the Britain of that time; Japan compared with Russia in the same way."¹¹ He concluded that in the course of two decades the relationship of forces between the imperialist powers would change and, therefore, "in the realities of the capitalist system . . . 'inter-imperialist' or 'ultra-imperialist' alliances . . . are inevitably nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between wars."¹²

How Lenin used imperialist contradictions

This obviously involves something more than a simple theoretical clarification. For the Soviet Communists, headed by Lenin, this understanding was an essential element in their strategy and tactics to defend their young revo-

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Die Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915, p. 144. Quoted in V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," *CW*, vol. 22, p. 293.

7. V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," *CW*, vol. 22, p. 294.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 295.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

lution. Lenin began to apply it in the very days when the question of signing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty was being debated.

Let us recall the political essence of Lenin's position at that historic moment. He maintained that since it was not then possible to hope for the insurrection of the European proletariat in more advanced countries like Germany — an insurrection to which Lenin had felt that the very destiny of the young Russian revolution would have to be subordinated — the most important thing was to preserve the Russian revolution as the center of the future world revolutionary development.

Lenin said that "our task, since we are alone, is to maintain the revolution, to preserve for it at least a certain bastion of socialism, however weak and moderately sized, until the revolution matures in other countries, until other contingents come up to us."¹³

Lenin felt that the basis for this defense of the weak and damaged revolutionary process that the Bolsheviks were defending lay in both the possibility of minimal armed resistance by its heroic but unprepared armies, and in "the continuing struggle" among the imperialists.¹⁴

To those who accused him of fleeing from the battle, of retreating, and who grabbed hold of abstract slogans related to the "dignity" of the revolution, Lenin replied: "it is the direct duty of the socialists who have conquered in one country (especially a backward one) *not* to accept battle against the giants of imperialism. Their duty is to try to avoid battle, to wait until the conflicts between the imperialists weaken them *even more*, and bring the revolution in other countries even nearer."¹⁵

The idea that you had to use the interimperialist contradictions is present in all of Lenin's works in this period.

In describing the international situation to the Extraordinary Sixth All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks', and Red Army Deputies in November 1918, Lenin stated: "That we were able to survive a year after the October Revolution was due to the split of international imperialism into two predatory groups: Anglo-French-American on the one hand, and German on the other, which were locked in mortal combat, and which had no time for us."¹⁶

Imperialist rivalry after World War I

In November 1919 — one year later — at the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East, Lenin said that the Versailles Peace Treaty had un-



CARLOS RAFAEL RODRÍGUEZ

leashed the struggle among those he called "imperialist predators."

He added: "The internal struggle among these predators is developing so swiftly that we may rejoice in the knowledge that the Treaty of Versailles is only a seeming victory for the jubilant imperialists, and that in reality it signifies the bankruptcy of the entire imperialist world. . . ."¹⁷

Lenin noted that according to the press "in France an unprecedented outburst of hatred toward the Americans is to be observed, because the Americans refuse to ratify the Treaty of Versailles.

"Britain and France are victors, but they are up to their ears in debt to America, who has decided that the French and the British may consider themselves victors as much as they like, but that she is going to skim the cream and exact usurious interest for her assistance during the war."¹⁸

In February 1920, studying the situation in the Far East, Lenin noted how "the rivalry and enmity between Japan and America, nominally allies, are becoming more and more obvious and prevent them from fully developing their onslaught against the Soviet Republic."¹⁹

Soon after that, speaking at the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bol-

shevik), Lenin formulated this sage conclusion:

"If, after all, we give some thought to the reason we were able to win, were bound to win, we shall find that it was only because all our enemies . . . actually turned out to be disunited. Their internal bond in fact disunited them, pitted them against each other. Capitalist property disintegrated them, transformed them from allies into savage beasts."²⁰

We could make an endless list of examples in which Lenin's strategic and tactical mastery was directed at using the inevitable contradictions that develop within the imperialist system to benefit the survival of the new socialist state.

Cuba's policy based on Lenin's foundation

From its very beginnings, the Cuban revolution, under the leadership of comrade Fidel Castro and the group of revolutionaries that came together around him, and later led by a Communist Party with Fidel as principal guide, has based the development of Cuban foreign policy on the same strategic foundations laid out by Lenin.

With the strictest fidelity to principles, and without making concessions that are incompatible with those principles, the Cuban revolution has always been able to distinguish between the positions toward it of the various capitalist great powers and of the various capitalist countries of medium development.

The capitalists are capitalists, and never stop being so. We know that all too well. But the interests and the positions of the different sectors of international capitalism, as Lenin projected six decades ago, are still not identical.

Numerous explanations could be put forward for the fact that [former Spanish dictator Francisco] Franco, whose ideological position was so opposed to that of Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution, always maintained a position of respect toward it — which did not eliminate the ideological distance.

Franco defended the continuance of economic collaboration and diplomatic ties with Cuba despite numerous, intense, and open pressures by U.S. imperialism.

General [Charles] de Gaulle's similar position was much more understandable and was part of his political and economic differences with the U.S. rulers, which had already arisen in the earliest days of the struggle against Nazism and fascism.

We began with this attitude on the part of Spain and France, along with Mexico's political attitude and the opening from Canada, which was also motivated not only by economic contradictions, but by political ones as well. This made it a less insurmountable task for Cuba to convince other, more recalcitrant capitalists from the United Kingdom, West Germany, or Italy to have relations with us. These rela-

20. V.I. Lenin, "Report of the Central Committee, March 29, 1920," delivered at Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik), *CW*, vol. 30, p. 448.

13. V.I. Lenin, "Report on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," *CW*, vol. 27, p. 290.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

15. V.I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," *CW*, vol. 27, p. 327.

16. V.I. Lenin, "Speech on the International Situation, November 8," delivered to the Extraordinary Sixth All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks', and Red Army Deputies, *CW*, vol. 28, p. 154.

17. V.I. Lenin, "Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East, November 22, 1919," *CW*, vol. 30, p. 156.

18. *Ibid.*

19. V.I. Lenin, "Report on the Work of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars delivered at the First Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, Seventh Convocation, February 2, 1920," *CW*, vol. 30, p. 315.

tions, while difficult and frequently interrupted, prevented the U.S. blockade against Cuba from becoming a general blockade by the whole imperialist system, as the United States had hoped.

Clearly the major reason behind the fact that there was this split in the imperialist camp was the fact that the economic collaboration of the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist area fundamentally broke through the isolation the Americans wanted to impose on us.

Having the political realism needed to understand the futility of the Yankee economic offensive, the United States's Western allies did not go along with it. The same was true for Japan, for whom the stable deliveries of sugar at a reasonable price were combined with the possibility of increasing its sales to Cuba to levels never previously dreamed of by Japanese exporters.

All this has taught us that while we fight against "imperialism" as a whole, we need not and have no reason to confront all the imperialists simultaneously, nor treat all the capitalist-type governments the same way.

U.S. imperialism's new anti-Cuba campaign

This basic premise in our strategic arsenal has enormous importance in the current international situation.

Once again our principal enemy, U.S. imperialism, is threatening us on all levels: military, economic, and political.

To succeed with its threats, the United States is trying to convince its allies that they should lend moral, political, and concrete support to the U.S. campaign of annihilation against Cuba.

Reagan makes this point. And every day Haig and other figures like [Vice-president George] Bush, [Reagan adviser Edwin] Meese, and [former national security adviser Richard] Allen reiterate it. Official travelers from the State Department and auxiliary teams visit Europe, Japan, Latin America, or Africa with specific instructions to put this view forward in all countries. They have been given the specific responsibility of "explaining" the aggressive and threatening attitude of Reagan and his government toward Cuba, of justifying it with the most deceitful accusations, an analysis of which is beyond the scope of this article.

If we had a mechanical attitude, we might feel that since the 10 countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the members of the NATO military alliance, and those countries that signed the Rio de Janeiro Treaty all maintain close ties with the United States, they must therefore follow all of Washington's steps against Cuba.

European imperialists have own interests

By thinking in this way, we would forget that the OECD, the European Economic Community, and even the North Atlantic Treaty Organization do not eliminate the continuing contradictions between their members. Far from it. For that very reason, it is possible and nec-

essary to encourage differences in their attitudes, to take advantage of their differences. If we did not do this, we would fall into an adolescent political extremism.

We should not focus solely on the different positions these countries take toward Cuba and Cuban policy. The contradiction runs much broader and deeper.

Reagan's policy of an arms race and nuclear risk-taking, of which his frenetic antagonism toward Cuba is only a part, is not winning over his principal Western allies. The only exception is Mrs. [Margaret] Thatcher, who is ideologically close to the new Yankee president and even goes beyond him in some manifestations of mad neoconservatism.

If we analyze the fundamental problems of our period very closely, we find that almost none of the focuses of Reagan and his group are in complete alignment with the majority of countries in NATO and the OECD.

This is the case with his intention to go ahead with production of the neutron bomb and to place it in Europe. The same is true of his plan to begin installing 572 nuclear missiles in Europe without first having talks with the Soviet Union regarding the possible balance of forces in the European theater. Reagan's call for the NATO countries to considerably increase their war budgets has not been listened to by all of them.

One might suppose that we are seeing a counterposition between European reasonableness and the imprudence of Reagan and his grouping. This is true, but more deepgoing developments lie beneath these circumstances.

Economic interpenetration

It is true that since the end of World War II interimperialist contradictions have not reached the intensity that caused them to split in 1914 and 1939 and wage two world wars.

The extent of multinational corporations is greater today than it was then. After the Second World War it was disclosed that during the war the dominant economic forces in the United States, who had a decisive role in the military conduct of events, used every possible means to avoid damaging — through aerial and land attacks by the European allies — the German production centers in which there was a considerable Yankee participation.

It was also proven that in both Europe and Japan, the local partners of the big U.S. trusts had continued to loyally set aside the profits that accrued to their associated Yankee companies as a result of the economic successes of Germans and Japanese. These profits were obtained most often through huge sales of military equipment to their respective countries, weapons with which Americans and their allies were killed.

This type of multinationalization has increased in the last 40 years. But, as Lenin predicted, that does not prevent the contradictions from continuing and getting wider.

Claude Julien, in his response to Servan-Schreiber,²¹ and many others since him have described U.S. capitalism's penetration into

the most advanced sectors of the European economy. This has given rise in Europe — as well as in Canada — to an economic resistance with an anti-U.S. character, which we can consider "national," however much we doubt the possibility that monopoly capital can express the sentiments and interests of the nation.

Competition over former colonies

Another element in the controversy is the fate of the former colonial possessions and the neocolonial territories. A study of U.S. investments in the period after the Second World War shows how far the United States went in using its temporary technological superiority and the financial capacity provided by the enormous profits made during the war — in which the others were destroyed while the United States sold and charged — to penetrate the Asiatic, African, and Middle Eastern markets. In addition, the United States consolidated its predominance in Latin America, extending it to the regions of the southern cone that had previously been the fundamental bailiwick of its European rivals.

The Yankee economic victory has not been total. The old imperialist powers of Europe, as well as the Japanese, have used their political ties — the Europeans in Africa and the Middle East or Southern Asia, and the Japanese in East and Southeast Asia — to conserve many of their privileged positions and to move out from them to begin the reconquest of their old markets.

It is beyond the scope of this article to minutely analyze these continuous economic clashes, and the article instead takes them as known and proven. The conflict is seen in the area of foreign trade, in finances, and within the capitalist monetary system.

It is well known, for example, that the United States has dropped its calls for "free trade," which it supported at the end of the Second World War because its technological predominance at that time allowed it to export better and cheaper products than its competitors. Now the United States uses various forms of protectionism — and threatens to go further in this regard — to prevent its Japanese "friends" from flooding the market with their automotive and electronic products.

Clash over economic policy

Without going into this in depth, President Reagan's methods of managing the U.S. economic crisis have led to an open, head-on collision with France and West Germany, and to a less public, but no less real, collision with Japan itself.²²

Reagan's policy of limiting the money sup-

21. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, author of *The American Challenge*, Atheneum, New York, 1967. — *JP*

22. Mrs. Thatcher, who is following the same path as Reagan, is not screaming, but the British Labourites and the main producers in the United Kingdom are.

ply and maintaining high interest rates, carried out with the support of the Federal Reserve Bank and the blessings of the "Chicago School," is causing great immediate damage to the economies of France and West Germany.

As we were writing this article, decisions were made in both countries that were an attempt to defend themselves against U.S. economic policy. At the same time, these decisions express two different and counterposed ways of confronting the crisis. We are referring to the 3 percent devaluation of the French franc and the concomitant upward revaluation of the German mark.

When the capitalist summit meeting in Ottawa [July 19-21, 1981] was announced, it was expected that there would be a bitter and sharp controversy between the Europeans and Reagan. Due to an ill-conceived decision about how to handle the situation, the uproar did not surface at the meeting in Canada.

But [French President François] Mitterrand's and [West German Chancellor Helmut] Schmidt's failure to bring Reagan around to more reasonable economic and political policies showed them that trying to mute their contradictions in public does not work.

The monetary measures that these countries have just adopted, and Schmidt's unwillingness to increase arms spending beyond a limit that, while dangerous, is much more modest than what Reagan called for, are expressions of the controversy that is developing below the surface in relations between Europe and the United States. Similar things could be said about Japan.

In the politico-military arena, there is an even greater difference in the situations of the United States and its Western and Asian allies — and therefore in their objectives and methods of seeking a solution.

Preventing 'Euroshima'

In the first place there is the problem of avoiding "Euroshima," the nuclear incineration of Europe. The European leaders see with growing concern that the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" that was supposed to protect the Europeans from "threats" that some of them said stemmed from or might stem from the Soviet Union, is turning into a myth. What is emerging as a threatening reality is the U.S. intention to incinerate Europe in a nuclear confrontation provoked against the USSR, while the United States remains outside the atomic firestorm as a special and privileged spectator.

That is the only purpose of the determination to deploy the atomic missiles on European territory, come what may, and to build the neutron bomb and assign it to the European theater.

And that is why Europe resists being the victim of this sinister game, and calls for holding talks with its Soviet neighbor before taking final steps toward deploying the new nuclear weapons.

The same thing is happening with the Japanese. The experience of the Second World War

has shown the Japanese people, and also their leaders (including some of the most powerful economic sectors), that Japan has nothing to gain and a great deal to lose if it tries to be a militaristic and aggressive power.

In the last 40 years of peace, the Japanese have been able to go to the head of the Western world in industrial organization, technological innovation, and productive efficiency. Therefore, to achieve their economic objectives, they do not need to accompany their products with gunboats and occupation armies, as seemed necessary after the First World War. Instead, they prefer to continue along the road of scoring economic victories.

The U.S. imperialists, on the other hand, are trying to place them once again on the road to militarization and are urging them to take the first steps in this direction. The United States wants the Japanese to accept the role of policing the nearby seas. Ultimately the United States wants Japan to again become a great allied power, serving as a complement and counterweight to the China of the Maoists, whose incorrect — or more precisely, treacherous — international policy Washington values so highly.

The Japanese have little inclination to take on this commitment. This fact was highlighted a short time ago during Prime Minister [Zen-ko] Suzuki's visit to the United States. During that visit the Japanese delegation issued a press communiqué that mentioned the "alliance" with the United States.

The military connotation of the word "alliance" provoked such a public outcry in Japan that the foreign relations minister, [Masayoshi] Ito, had to resign to calm down the storm.

This does not mean that the main European countries and Japan are abandoning their basic alliance with U.S. imperialism or that they are no longer representatives of imperialism. Such a development would be impossible as long as the forces of monopoly finance capital in these countries still have their decisive influence.

But in making our analysis, we must take into account the contradictory conditions under which this basic alliance operates today, and we must utilize these contradictions in developing our strategy.

Social Democrats in power

But that is not all. We would be too mechanical in our use of the correct Marxist theory of the state if we assumed that in and of itself the capitalist nature of a state characterizes all its political permutations. It is too mechanical to say that it makes absolutely no difference which social layers govern at a specific time and which political tendencies hold power.

To adopt such a view would negate the practical, and therefore theoretical, possibility that progressive forces and even representatives of the proletariat, can come to power even though the capitalist character of the state itself still has not changed.

We need only look at the rich and precise way that Karl Marx described various European states of his time, in works such as *The*

Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte or *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850*, to understand how many alternatives there can be to the pure and exclusive rule of the bourgeoisie in a contemporary state.

We cannot ignore, therefore, the presence of Social Democratic governments in some developed imperialist and capitalist countries in Europe. It is true that Marx said that the government of a capitalist state was no more than "executive power delegated by the bourgeoisie." But Marx also analyzed many phenomena that Lenin developed in his analysis of the state.

A Social Democratic presence in a government does not in itself guarantee a policy that abandons the imperialist objectives that persist in the structure of the society. But there is no doubt that the Social Democrats owe their political victories primarily to the working class and to sectors of the petty-bourgeois youth. When they govern, they must continue to take into account the aspirations and views of these classes and social layers.

This fact is shown in West Germany. The Social Democratic government there continually shows the effects of the disputes between the Schmidt and Willy Brandt tendencies, as well as the results of the struggles in the streets and in parliament by the Young Socialists (the "Jusos").

Mitterrand's France

But it is in the France of Mitterrand's government that we can most clearly see the political alternatives possible in the government of a state that is still predominantly bourgeois, in which monopoly capital still has great influence. The Mitterrand government has Communists in it, and although this presence does not define the government, it at least influences its character.

Its domestic economic program has clear elements that are in contradiction with the rule of monopoly capital. Although its program of nationalizations is not sufficiently broad to definitively eliminate the rule of the great monopolies over the French economy, the nationalization law that is being discussed is undoubtedly very different from the "nationalizations" carried out by the British Labourites after the Second World War. The Labourites set out to save English capitalism, by taking off its hands branches of the economy that were unprofitable or could only be made profitable with great difficulty — such as the mines, transport, etc. Through the nationalizations, the state took over the losses in these branches, while facilitating the delivery of these raw materials and services to the remainder of the important surviving capitalists at cheap prices, in order to increase their profitability.

The French nationalizations, on the other hand, are an attempt by the state to assume economic control over production as a whole, in order to lead it toward social transformations. Its limitations do not, however, eliminate the importance of the effort, nor its character as a first step that the French people could

decide to take further in the future by invigorating the alliance of the left and moving in a more profoundly revolutionary sense.

French foreign policy

All these factors are present in international policy. Mitterrand's France cannot and will not take an identical position toward Africa as Giscard's France. It will undoubtedly seek the best situation for French investments and for French exports, whether by state or private companies. We do not doubt that.

But the manner of "carrying out" the policy will be different and we are already beginning to see this in the way they view South Africa and Namibia, in the attitude toward the problem of the Western Sahara, and in many other aspects of international life as it relates to Africa.

The difference is no less obvious in the French and U.S. views toward Central America. While France's silence in the Ottawa discussion of economic problems was a tactical error, the French leaders have been very open in their disagreement with the United States over El Salvador.

The declaration of Mexico and France that recognized the FDR [Revolutionary Democratic Front] and FMLN [Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front] as a representative force is a progressive act in international politics. A government like Giscard's could not have acted in that way.

Cuba's foreign policy

In terms of the development of Cuba's foreign policy, all this confirms the importance of our strategic premise that we should not view as exactly identical all the capitalist governments in states that are still in one way or another an integral part of the imperialist system as a whole, and that we should not begin from a single premise in fighting them.

The careful analysis made in the Central Committee's reports to the First and Second Congress shows that Cuba bases itself on a fluid and differentiated assessment of the various policies of the capitalist states. We start from the irrefutable consideration that Cuba desires normal relations with all countries in the international community, including the United States itself.²³

And based on this general conception, Cuba also works to develop its relations with the developed capitalist countries, in order to utilize all the economic and technological possibilities that these countries can offer us in the bilateral or multilateral sphere. Through this, we help ourselves in the effort to break the Yankee blockade.

Naturally, we try to ensure that these relations are equitable and mutually beneficial. But we understand that there cannot be complete equity and mutual benefit as long as there is still imperialist predominance in international relations.

Cuba and the Soviet Union

Needless to say, from this strategic conception we derive an international policy that is not only independent, but is also *specific to Cuba*. This means that although Cuba is always ready to subordinate its national interests to the interests of socialism as a universal cause, that does not and cannot mean that we subordinate our day-to-day international policy, with its own objectives and interests, to the policy of other socialist states.

The confusion between these two questions, which are similar but nonetheless distinct, is what causes most of our enemies to waste their

23. The bases on which this normal collaboration between the United States and Cuba could exist are well known, and it is not necessary to repeat them here.

time propagating the idea that Cuba imitates and follows the Soviet Union's international projections.

It is true that there is and will continue to be a great concurrence between Soviet and Cuban policy. The same could be said of Cuban foreign policy and Vietnamese, or Bulgarian, or East German. This stems from our common condition as socialist states and from the fact that as a result of that condition we pursue identical historical objectives.

But the dissimilarities between the situations of the USSR and Cuba necessarily mean that both countries have different ways of looking at relations with the countries making up the world capitalist system.

In this respect, the application of a differentiated strategy, like the one Lenin called for, will be a little different for the Soviet Union than for Cuba, although both socialist countries start out from the same theoretical focus and identical motives.

In elaborating and developing Cuban foreign policy, we must never forget these governing strategic conceptions. We start from our essential course toward socialism. We base ourselves on the role that the struggle for peace and for national independence has in relation to this objective. We utilize the permanent and irresolvable contradictions among the main centers of world imperialism. And we understand the evolution of history, which places forces who propose to introduce substantial changes in the society of their countries in the governments of states that have an imperialist character.

In order to carry out a correct foreign policy along the lines that have been laid out for us by the two congresses of the Communist Party of Cuba, the basic and irreducible starting point is to view the international field of action in which we operate with this degree of shading and this historical precision. □

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More land for small farmers

Government seizes landlords' idle holdings

By Jane Harris

MANAGUA — "We will continue to hand over idle lands to working farmers, who will turn that land into bread and the basics of life for the Nicaraguan people," Commander Jaime Wheelock, minister of agricultural development and agrarian reform, told thousands of peasants May 23.

Wheelock was speaking in the small town of Camoapa, about 110 kilometers east of Managua. It was a special day for peasants from 17 agricultural cooperatives in the interior provinces of Boaco and Chontales. These cooperative members were to receive nearly one-tenth of the 100,000 manzanas (1 manzana = 1.73 acres) of idle land expropriated earlier in May.

These latest land confiscations have nearly equaled, at one stroke, all the land turned over to cooperatives in the first 34 months of the revolution. And unlike the earlier confiscations, which primarily affected open supporters of ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza, the latest land seizures have involved idle or abandoned holdings, regardless of the political affiliation of the former owners.

As Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrion explained at the ceremony in Camoapa, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) is continuing to make good on its original promise that no peasant will be left without land.

"The members of the FSLN who ate the same food as the *campesinos* in the mountains and who suffered along with them hunger, thirst, and disease were not fighting in order to get rich or become proprietors. They fought to make a real revolution, which in Nicaragua means agrarian reform. They fought so that every last worker in the countryside would have land to work."

The increasing consolidation of the revolution in the countryside is reflected in the growing number of cooperatives, now some 2,000. This has already led to higher production levels for basic domestic food items. Land titles are now being granted at an accelerated pace.

In early May, for example, *Intercontinental Press* correspondents traveled to Pantasma in the northern province of Jinotega, where more than 8,000 manzanas of land were being handed over to peasants from 21 cooperatives. These grants will benefit landless families totaling some 2,850 people. It was also announced that day that another 18,000 manzanas would be expropriated.

Among those receiving land in Pantasma were the families of two border guards who had been killed when counterrevolutionaries attacked the Los Planes border post only a week before. A big round of applause went up

for the two women receiving these titles.

In addition to the measures carried out by the Sandinista People's Army, the feeling among the cooperative members, especially those in the northern provinces, is that they will fight to defend the revolution with the weapon of increased agricultural production — a key aspect of Nicaragua's survival.

And survival is definitely the right word. In 1981, when Washington cut off credits to Nicaragua for the purchase of U.S. wheat, the aim was to punish through starvation the people who had carried out a revolution. But international solidarity turned that blow aside. Wheat credits poured in from around the world, temporarily taking the food weapon out of Reagan's hands.

Cooperative members and independent farmers are making sure that the nightmare of no food on the table can never occur again. Their work is beginning to pay off. Almost all the beans consumed inside the country are now produced by Nicaraguan farmers, as is 80 percent of the corn. The goal is to become self-sufficient in the three main staples of the diet here — beans, rice, and corn.

This is a big change from the situation before the revolution, when agricultural production was chiefly for export and the problem of hunger was never addressed, despite the vast acreage of idle land.

Hong Kong socialist arrested in China

Lau San-ching, a young Hong Kong socialist and activist in the movement in solidarity with the Chinese fighters for democratic rights, has been arrested by authorities in Canton.

Lau went to Canton December 24 to visit families of activists arrested since the government crackdown on the Chinese democracy movement that began last April.

Although Lau was to return to Hong Kong on December 27, no word has been heard from him. In mid-March, a family member went to the Public Security Bureau in Canton to ask about Lau's whereabouts. There a secret police officer confirmed that he had been arrested. The relative was told that Lau "has violated the law" and is "now undergoing investigation and cannot meet with anyone."

A defense committee has been set up in Hong Kong to press for information about Lau and to demand his release.

Committee members met with representatives of the Peking government at the Hong Kong offices of the New China News Agency. They were told that Lau might be transferred from Canton to another location.

The organization of individual farmers into cooperatives has helped not only the small farmers themselves, but the Nicaraguan people as a whole.

Cooperatives make planning and bank financing easier, both for the farmers and the government. And it is easier for the government's PROCAMPO agency, which gives technical assistance to the farmers, to work with organized groups. PROCAMPO helps to fight agricultural pests, to choose the right crop and fertilizer, and to mesh local production with national needs.

It is also easier to mechanize, build barns, and construct storage silos collectively. Transportation and marketing of crops is easier with better organized harvests. And finally, all of this increased organization and planning will help Nicaragua to better withstand any imperialist attack.

The idea of agricultural cooperatives is not new in Nicaraguan history. In 1927, when Gen. Augusto César Sandino was fighting U.S. Marines, he organized agricultural cooperatives in Wiwilí, in the north, to feed his troops.

At that time Sandino said, "Our army is preparing to take the reins of national power, in order to proceed to organize big cooperatives of workers and peasants to take advantage of our natural wealth to benefit the entire family of Nicaraguans."

Today, the workers and farmers hold the reins of power, under the leadership of the FSLN. As they put into practice the FSLN's revolutionary program of agrarian reform, they are making Sandino's fondest dreams come true. □

The defense committee fears, however, that Lau may already have been secretly tried and sentenced. Under the penal code of the People's Republic of China, a person cannot be held for investigation for more than three months, a period that has long passed in Lau's case.

In addition, when a Hong Kong student group visited Peking in early May and asked that arrested activists be freed, officials replied that these people were being held under a special penal code adopted by the National People's Congress. No details of this code have ever been published.

Supporters of Lau San-ching's release urge that protests against his secret and illegal detention be sent to embassies of the People's Republic of China.

Copies should be sent to the defense committee: P.O. Box 89278, Kowloon City Post Office, Hong Kong. □

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