

# TRICONTINENTAL



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# TO THE READER

*In this second issue of Tricontinental for 1981, we present a wide range of articles on problems concerning the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America.*

*In line with our decision to introduce gradual changes in the magazine, the contents have been arranged by continent.*

*The first section, on Asia, includes an interview with Sultan Ali Kishmand, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Afghanistan, who offers "Facts against Lies" to refute imperialism's propaganda campaign against his country.*

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## TRICONTINENTAL

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Theoretical organ of the Executive Secretariat of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

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*"Recognition of the People's Republic of Kampuchea," by Cuban journalist Virgilio Calvo, brings out the paucity of the legal arguments used to oppose the seating of the delegates of the government led by the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea in international organizations.*

*The problems facing the peoples of AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST are discussed in four articles dealing with the economic, political and cultural life of these peoples.*

*Of special interest is "The Blood of the Defeated," by Cuban writer Fernando Nápoles Tapia, whose work appears for the first time in our pages. Here, he analyzes speeches, statements and press reports showing the tremendous development of the Western Saharan people's struggle for national liberation and the demoralization of the occupying Moroccan Army.*

*The battle of Playa Girón, in which the Cuban people dealt US imperialism a resounding defeat, is recounted in the section LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN and is reflected on our cover, as well.*

*In TRICONTINENTAL ON THE MARCH, which closes this issue, we publish the speeches given by Melba Hernández, General Secretary of OSPAAAL, and Jesús Montané Oropesa, alternate member of the Political Bureau and head of the General Department of Foreign Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, at the main meeting celebrating the 15th anniversary of OSPAAAL's founding.*

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**FACTS AGAINST  
LIES**



SULTAN ALI KISHTMAND

**A**

strong, smiling man was answering our questions for *Tricontinental*:

"Yes, I've heard of OSPAAAL and *Tricontinental*, and I'll be glad to talk with you about the so-called Afghanistan problem.

"Really, there isn't any such problem — except the one our enemies have created.

"For a long time now, the imperialists, led by US imperialism, have been waging an undeclared war on the Afghan people and our revolution."

His voice grew harsh, and he frowned, choosing his words carefully.

"Naturally, the Chinese hegemonists are in it, too, along with all the reactionaries from this area; the Chinese use Pakistan as a tool for their aggression.

"First they launched a smear campaign — propaganda full of lies — to hide their criminal goal of interfering in our country. The bourgeois machinery in imperialist circles spread a whole lot of lies about Afghanistan and the Soviet Union.

"Right now, there are more than 80 military camps in Pakistan, including one at Sien Kieng, where bandits, terrorists and mercenaries are trained to infiltrate our country from Pakistan and carry out acts of sabotage — burning schools and hospitals and murdering civilians....

"They are armed with US and Chinese weapons. We know, because we've captured hundreds of thousands of them, and we've seized the documents and other propaganda they planned to distribute among the people.

"With the aim of setting up new bases and aggravating tensions throughout the world, they also commit other crimes as part of the preparations for wars of aggression, especially in the Persian Gulf, near Afghanistan, and in the Indian Ocean.

"This is only some of the proof we have. We know that, in addition to mercenaries who sell out for US dollars, there are also US, Pakistani,

Egyptian and other agents who want to interrupt the normal life of the people and destroy our revolution and our achievements."

When we asked him what kind of actions the mercenaries had taken part in, his face mirrored his indignation.

"They infiltrate our country in small groups. They don't dare to attack our army — instead, they descend on isolated caravans and burn the crops. They wreak what havoc they can and then run away. There once were a large number of bandits and counter-revolutionary bands, but now there are only a few small groups left that act against our people, and we are sure that they won't last long. Those bandits and terrorists that still remain will be wiped out. As you know, any real socialist revolution, that benefits the masses and is both progressive and democratic, has to stand firm against everything the imperialists and the other reactionary powers throw against it."

Confidently, his smile flashed forth once more.

"Patiently yet firmly, we are cleaning out the bandits and terrorists. The people's government, true to the Democratic People's Party of Afghanistan, the vanguard of the working class, is growing stronger throughout the country. A hard-fought battle is being waged, but I am sure that we will win; victory will come. We are not alone in our struggle, for all progressive mankind and the countries of the socialist community — especially the Soviet Union — are on our side. All the progressive forces in the world give us their solidarity and support."

"How do the workers and other people react to the criminals?"

"This second stage of our revolution — which triumphed under the leadership of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the Party and President and Prime Minister of our country — began nearly a year ago. During this period, the Party and people have become

ever more closely united. The people trust the Party's patriotic, progressive approach. Their forces are ready to carry out any kind of operation to help the government, the Party and the Party's organizations to wipe out the groups of bandits and counter-revolutionaries that send in troops from Pakistan and other countries."

"We understand that you have economic responsibilities in your country. Could you tell us about its economic construction?"

"In general, we are working to carry out a realistic program for the construction of a new society. This is our goal. We seek to build a socialist society, but, in this stage, our revolution has a national democratic character.

"Our country is quite backward economically, and the revolution took place in conditions of feudal and semi-feudal relations of production. First of all, therefore, we must do away with all hangovers of feudalism and the results of the imperialists' activities in





Sultan Ali Kishtmand

our country — both social and economic. We must do this before we start advancing toward socialism, so we can finally build a socialist society.

"This is sure to happen in our country, because political power is concentrated solely in the hands of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, our working class party. A Democratic Front of the Homeland has been set up, including all the democratic forces and all the social strata in the country, to mobilize and organize all our efforts toward building a new society.

"We are going to apply the general laws of the construction of a socialist society in the specific conditions of our country. Of course, we will study the experiences of other socialist countries, including Cuba, whose revolution also took place in conditions of relative backwardness.

"Before concluding, I would like to go back to two elements that, though mentioned in passing, were not emphasized: the help and solidarity given to our revolution. Ever since the victory of the great October Revolution, the people of the Soviet Union have supported the Afghan people. All that we now have, we owe to the tremendous help the Soviet Union gave us in all fields, and also to the multifaceted cooperation and international solidarity of all the other progressive forces in the world — especially the socialist countries."

We asked him to tell us just what positions he held. He answered with some timidity, even bashfulness.



"I have the undeserved honor to be a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Forgive me if it seems too much, but skilled cadres are being trained in my country to handle the tasks of the economy.

"I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you the truth about my homeland. The imperialist powers use their influence over the mass media to provide only slanted propaganda. It is a worthy task to counter those lies and tell the people the truth. This is a struggle of facts against lies, and, in the end, the truth will prevail." ■

# RECOGNITION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA

VIRGILIO CALVO



While the People's Revolutionary Council has been improving living conditions in the People's Republic of Kampuchea and making significant advances toward national reconstruction, Imperialism's and its Beijing allies' continuous aggression against that country has been stepped up.

The country is being stabilized as the economic recovery program goes into effect, and the people are gradually and systematically returning to their homes and taking up their former work. Therefore, it is very difficult for the enemy to make much headway against the consolidation of the new people's government.

This is why the aggression has been more apparent and far-reaching in the area of international political relations — especially concerning the international community's controversial recognition of the People's Revolutionary Council and its consequent representation in such international bodies as the United Nations and its specialized organizations.

This facet of imperialism's and the Chinese hegemonists' aggressive policy against the People's Republic of Kampuchea had a serious setback during the 6th Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana in September 1979, for the Summit Conference approved a resolution leaving Kampuchea's seat vacant until an ad hoc committee analyzed the situation in the country and made its recommendations to the Movement's Conference of Foreign Ministers, to be held in New Delhi in early February 1981.

The 35th UN General Assembly, however, reaffirmed its previous year's decision to continue recognizing the delegates of the deposed genocidal Pol Pot regime as Kampuchea's representatives to that international body.

This decision, a product of the pressure exerted by imperialism and other equally reactionary forces, was based on highly questionable arguments and alleged aspects of the procedural legal order followed in the United Nations and was a basic violation of the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter and in international law.

In international political relations, the government that, in fact, holds sovereign power in a given country is usually considered to be that state's representative, and a government should always be recognized if it holds effective authority over a national territory and its inhabitants and is capable of meeting the country's international obligations, making other commitments and respecting the duties established by international law.

The effectiveness of a new government is the most important factor to be considered for recognizing it, because that is usually understood to mean its possession of real state power. The new government must show vitality and really exercise power with complete independence.

On examining these common denominators for recognizing a new government, we see that the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea meets all the requisites for being accepted by the international community.

Not even the worst critics of People's Kampuchea can deny that the Phnom Penh government is the only one that, in fact, exercises power with full sovereignty all over the country. Its ability to meet its treaty obligations, agreements and other commitments is unquestionable.

What, then, is the basis for the denial of recognition and of the rights inherent in its investiture?

The answer is simply the mammoth anticommunist propaganda campaign of lies, confusion and tricks that brings all kinds of pressure to bear on many members of the international community.



One of the "arguments" that is advanced most frequently against the Kampuchean government is that it is a puppet regime of the communist government of Hanoi and that the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea in order to impose a government that would follow Soviet interests.

Nothing could be more absurd.

The international press — both socialist and capitalist — has published endless reports on what took place in Kampuchea under the genocidal regime of Pol Pot and his Chinese advisers, and all agree that three million people were brutally killed.

In a legitimate and essential action, the people of Kampuchea rebelled against their exterminators. The Vietnamese people gave them their internationalist aid — as a socialist country that has successfully fought a long war for its independence is duty-bound to do. There was nothing underhanded, twisted or illegal in providing that aid to the suffering Kampuchean people.

Why, then, have the facts been distorted and the international community been pressured to keep it from acknowledging the true representatives of the Kampuchean nation?



Imperialism, the Chinese hegemonists, certain capitalist powers and other equally reactionary forces are using the controversial question of Kampuchea in general and its representation in particular in order to obstruct the work of the Non-Aligned Movement, divide the international community within the United Nations, diminish the prestige of the heroic Vietnamese people, create conflicts among the underdeveloped countries, divert attention from really serious problems and set a precedent for similar cases that may arise in other countries and continents.

There are no valid legal impediments to the delegates of Heng Samrin's government's representing Kampuchea — unless, of course, you want to fall back on the archaic Tobar Doctrine, according to which any government that reaches power through civil war or revolution is to be denied recognition.

Many books and treaties provide that those seeking recognition can be granted it only when their appearance in the international arena does not contravene basic principles of international law.

Moreover, the refusal to recognize the People's Republic of Kampuchea could be classified as an illegitimate act in light of paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the United Nations Charter, which includes among the organization's purposes and principles: "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace."

It is clear that a web has been woven around the question of recognizing the people's government of Kampuchea in an effort to prevent it from being completely clarified. This is a maneuver involving imperialist political goals that can never be sustained on the basis of internationally recognized juridical norms, no matter how the facts are twisted.

Take, for example, the much-touted "reports" on the existence of an alleged "Kampuchean government in exile," spread to confuse world public opinion and make it possible to apply the United Nations principle that "A government operating abroad because of a war (a government in exile) continues to be considered the legal government of the occupied country."



Since Kampuchea is not occupied by an enemy army, though, the principle that applies in the present situation in that country is the one that states, "The arbitrary recognition of governments in exile for political ends constitutes an act of intervention in internal affairs."

If we take into account that "The recognition of a new government following an abnormal change may be *de jure* or *de facto*" and that the United States, China and other countries have given — and continue to give — material aid to the Kampuchean counterrevolutionary bands based in Thailand that are led by the genocidal Pol Pot and his associate Ieng Sary (thus granting practical recognition to the alleged clandestine government of nonexistent Democratic Kampuchea), then the United States, China and other countries are flagrantly violating the sovereignty of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and shamelessly intervening in its internal affairs.

This is what is really happening.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea is a legal entity; it exists and has a territory and a recognized population.

The nonexistent Democratic Kampuchea cannot show that it possesses either territory or population. Its representatives have Chinese passports and are accompanied by Chinese diplomatic officials, and their trips are financed by imperialism and the Beijing hegemonists.

The truth is coming out — slowly but surely. The representatives of a regime that murdered three million people, employing the most barbarous and brutal methods, have no place in the international legal order.

Supported by international law, the international community should purge its ranks of the group that, serving the base interests of imperialism and its Chinese allies, is violating the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. ■

# COLONIALISM AND NEOCOLONIALISM: HISTORIC FORMS OF IMPERIALIST DOMINATION

FERNANDO NAPOLES TAPIA

(II)



In this issue, *Tricontinental* presents the second half of its article on colonialism and neocolonialism as historic forms of imperialist domination. The first part appeared in the preceding issue of our magazine.

(Summary of Part I)

As the world revolutionary movement advances and contradictions within the imperialist system increase, imperialism is trying to renew its neocolonialist relations with the other countries in the world capitalist system.

Colonialism and neocolonialism have a history of coexistence and interrelationships: colonialism was used to establish imperialism's domination by force in many areas, while neocolonialism established the basic relationships for capitalist world integration in the imperialist phase of development.

Neocolonialism has gone through three phases:

1. the apparent rejection of neocolonialism as shown by the growth of imperialist colonialism in Africa and Asia; however, neocolonialist ties between Latin America, and the United States and Great Britain are strengthened.

2. the apparent affirmation of colonialism in Africa and Asia and of US neocolonialism in Latin America, the world capitalist crisis and World War II; and

3. an open process of general "decolonization," beginning in 1947, and the nearly total preponderance of neocolonialism wherever national liberation was not attained.

The formation of the socialist community and the upsurge of the revolutionary liberation movement, along with US predominance in all aspects of imperialism and the capitalist system as a whole, substantially minimized European capitalism's influence throughout the world and in Europe itself.

Between 1947 — when Great Britain pulled out of India — and the '70s — when the Portuguese colonies won their freedom — colonial empires disappeared and the struggle for "economic territories" replaced the old colonialism, leading, within a relatively brief period, to the prevalence of neocolonialism, the form of international domination that necessarily fits the parasitic, monopolistic stage of capitalism.

Africa's current relations with the countries of the European Economic Community can serve as an illustration of European neocolonialism.

The Lomé Convention, signed in 1975 by the EEC and 46 (now 57) underdeveloped countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (the ACP countries), is a step toward perfecting the neo-colonialist system in order to guarantee capitalist Europe's access to the raw materials it so desperately needs; it is also an exercise in collective neocolonialism — which doesn't prevent neocolonial bilateral extortion from being used as a weapon in the interimperialist battle and the international division of imperialist labor.

Capitalist Europe's best economic relations in Africa are with South Africa, which can't really be considered a neocolony, since, to varying degrees, it controls other neighboring underdeveloped countries that were once its own or British colonies. The top South African bourgeoisie shares profits with 630 British, 949 US, 132 West German and 85 French transnationals.

In short, although South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth colonial-neocolonial bloc in 1961, and although its regime has been denounced by the international community time and again, its role in the imperialist world system has actually been strengthened by the volume and importance of its corporate relations and by the growing internationalization of the imperialist presence there.

The underdeveloped countries' relations with capitalist Europe depend primarily on their ability to satisfy Europe's tremendous demand for raw materials and energy, since it is much weaker than the United States or Canada in this regard. Western Europe's policy toward Africa is determined by its need to guarantee an uninterrupted, increasing flow of raw materials and oil; organize future supplies; and, of course, earn profits.

In the interimperialist world struggle for raw materials — as in so many other fields — the big transnationals have the last word. Prospecting and mining operations and the marketing of processed minerals are highly monopolized by a few transnationals — that also, of course, reap most of the profits. In spite of the nationalization efforts, more than half the capitalist world production of these minerals is controlled by a handful of transnationals.

Only Algeria has managed to nationalize all its resources and their marketing. Libya, which has developed more recently, controls 70 percent of its oil production and is using these profits in a plan for national development.

## Direct investments in Africa

**F**oreign investments in the most underdeveloped of the three colonized continents continue to be predominantly direct, with a high percentage in mining, although other more advanced forms of neocolonial investments are now evident. International investment statistics have almost unavoidable pitfalls: national differences that make comparisons difficult, failure to include reinvestments and a variety of specious factors. Thus, the data that follow are only approximate:

*Direct investments in Africa, 1967-75  
(in millions of dollars)*

	1967		1975	
	Value	%	Value	%
Great Britain	1 977	38.5	2 625	32.9
France	1 728	33.7	2 564	32.1
Holland	324	6.3	620	7.7
Belgium	481	9.4	593	7.4
FRG	138	2.7	540	6.8
Italy	247	4.8	493	6.2
Switzerland	59	1.1	350	4.4
Sweden	80	1.6	167	2.1
Others	96	1.9	31	0.4
Regional total	5 130	100.0	7 983	100.0
<i>By regions</i>				
Capitalist Europe	5 130	75.9	7 983	73.3
United States	1 611	23.8	2 414	22.2
Japan	19	0.3	501	4.5
Totals	6 760		10 898	

Source: Y. Yudanov, "El capital euroccidental en Africa" (Western European Capital in Africa), *Economía Mundial y Relaciones Internacionales*, no. 10, IEMRI, Moscow, 1978 (EECO translation). Value established on the basis of numerous statistics.

Investments in underdeveloped areas serve a complex of imperialist relations and needs: they guarantee markets, raw materials, oil, a cheap work force and other advantages deriving from dependent industrialization, the low level of the infrastructure's development and the country's productive potential — including such factors as finishing capacities for merchandise from the metropolis, environmental protection in the home country and zones of underdeveloped "integration." The essential point is how these factors form a complex of economic operations interconnected with such extra-economic activities as interimperialist coordination and rivalry.

The most important point is not the volume of investments in the "Third World" (the FRG accounts for only 21 percent), but the role they play in each imperialist country's efforts to gain more power — in addition to the immediate profits, of course.

A country's priorities are determined by these factors. The Federal Republic of Germany, a major investor in industrial sectors, has 33.55 percent of its "Third World" investments in Brazil and 11 percent in Argentina and México; in 1977, it signed a huge financial contract with Iran to provide that country with a nuclear industry. Eighty percent of Japan's African investments are in Zaire, Nigeria and Liberia. France and Great Britain, which are firmly entrenched almost everywhere in the continent, nevertheless earmark the bulk of their efforts for a small group of African countries — meanwhile seeking ties with Saudi Arabia, Iran and various Asian and Latin-American countries.

In spite of the spread of US capital and beginning investments by Japan, capitalist Europe continues to hold sway in Africa. The Western European powers have been able to set up huge industrial-commercial monopolies capable of transferring the bulk of their investments from one branch to another; they have used state and semi-state Western European companies for productive investments, as a form of direct state support for the monopolies. This provides an opportunity to reap huge profits as well as a cover of international commitment for supplies of the most strategic raw materials and fuel. They have also urged enormous imperialist international corporations to engage in large-scale mining projects and are now beginning to do the same thing in manufacturing; they have entered the "terrain" of African nationalization policy, forming mixed private-state companies that, in addition to producing profits, forestall more radical actions and benefit from African programs for economic development.

Up to 1975, Great Britain was the main European investor in Africa, even though it was losing ground in trade and clout throughout the imperialist world. British and French investments in Africa totalled 65 percent — 72.4 percent including Belgium — thus affirming their principal role in the continent. Since then, both Belgium and France have experienced a relative

decline, while the FRG, Switzerland and (to a lesser degree) Italy have increased their investments.

British capital has been concentrated in four countries outside South Africa: Nigeria — the most important country in sub-Saharan Africa in the immediate future — Zimbabwe, Kenya and Ghana.

British-Shell Petroleum, a joint operation of two of the world's major transnationals, dominates foreign oil exploitation in Africa with its presence in Nigerian refining, liquid gas and



marketing; its exploration for and extraction of oil and gas in many other countries; and its control of a continental distribution system. In mining, the Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) and its subsidiaries constitute the biggest group. United Africa (Nigeria and Ghana) and Lonro (mainly Kenya and Zimbabwe) are big industrial producers. B. Leyland, Dunlop, Guinness and other British monopolies are increasingly active in Africa. The British operate not only in their former colonies — although we've seen that they aren't the only ones there — but also in Zaire, Gabon, Senegal, the Ivory Coast and other countries.

Generally speaking, France is the most active imperialist power in Africa. Y. Yudanov estimates that, including both actual control and reinvestments, real French investments total \$5 billion. French capital is dominant or very important in around 20 African countries. It is now essential to finish sketching the French role in Africa, which clearly corresponds to its intermediate position among the imperialist powers.

The new stage of French economic expansion from 1950 to 1960 — which put that country in fourth place in the capitalist world in terms of its Gross National Product and foreign trade volume — entailed a "modernization" of economic structures that strengthened the bourgeois sector linked to Yankee interests. The developed countries replaced the so-called franc zone in French trade:

*France's trade with the franc zone and the EEC, in % of its total trade*

	1952		1960		1970	
	FZ		FZ	EEC	FZ	EEC
Exports	42		30	30	10	50
Imports	28		23	17	9	49

*Source: "La política africana de Francia" (French African Policy), p. 7, EECO, Havana.*

The European Economic Community thus satisfied the great need that existed among the developed European capitalist countries to exchange industrial products.

In the case of France, the corresponding readjustment clearly revealed a "hierarchy of development" that is not exclusive to that country: France was massively penetrated by US capital, and its former colonial zones were again invaded, this time by neocolonial capital. It is the clearest case of a phenomenon that has become generalized in the imperialist camp: the most highly developed countries impose their scientific-technological-financial superiority and transnationalization on a broad scale,

and the intermediaries do the same to the rest, in a general hierarchy that implies an ever greater interrelationship but is also marked by pitched battles among the three main imperialist "centers" — to the degree that European integration constitutes a "center" — through the erosion that the FRG's development may manage to produce in the inter-European pact, the association of "centers" in the face of the demands made by the underdeveloped countries and by the emergence of a "preferred" or more developed subgroup that, in 1960-75, showed an average annual growth of 4.3 percent in its GNP, as compared to 1.5 percent for the rest, according to the World Bank.

The 1974-75 crisis shook capitalist Europe (except for the FRG, in many aspects) much more than the United States and Japan, accelerating the community's move from relative "internal exchange" to a more diversified participation in world trade.

It is obvious, however, that the relative Western European weakness is compensated for in much of the "Third World" by the fact that its former colonial occupation better equips it to "discover" new and advantageous associations with the former colonies — a factor that should not be underestimated. France, which has had to confront the United States, the FRG and Japan in world competition, is the only imperialist power that has attacked underdeveloped industry and markets by making most of its direct foreign investments in Africa: some 40 percent of the total, compared to 35 percent ten years ago, at least a third of which represents reinvestments. The geographic distribution of these investments was brusquely altered by Algerian and Libyan nationalizations: a decade ago, 83 percent of French investments were in North Africa (as compared to 40 percent today), in Gabon, Senegal and the Ivory Coast. France's former colonies in tropical Africa — plus Nigeria and Zaire — are now the center of its efforts. More than half of French investments are in services and industry, due to the structure of branches that predominate in the French transnationals and to France's advantages as the former colonizer, with a basic understanding of local customs — which is much more necessary in these branches than, for example, in mining.

France is stepping up its trade and devoting a good share of its export credit to products that go to that region, so it continues to be the main trading partner of the 17 states that were once its colonies (plus two former Portuguese colonies). Half the trade of 13 of those states is with the EEC, and 85.3 percent of that is with France. Nearly 70 percent of French "aid" to underdeveloped countries goes to Africa.

This is the basis for France's vigorous African policy, decked out in that marvelous neocolonial linguistic device known as the Agency of Cultural and Technical Cooperation and a network of exchanges and activities of all kinds. France has turned Gabon, the Ivory Coast, Senegal and the Central African Republic into satellites by stationing troops in them (and in Chad), participating in or leading military attacks so persistently that there can be no doubt concerning its intention to protect



the imperialists and the African neocolonized bourgeoisie — although they are a costly and perishable merchandise in today's world, which is where France hopes to strengthen its positions. Nothing sums up this French contribution to collective neocolonialism better than the reason given for sending French parachute troops — on a Yankee airlift — to crush the uprising in that great mine known as Shaba, in May 1978: to defend "the second largest (by population) French-speaking country in the world."

In 1978, during a visit to the Ivory Coast, President Giscard said that "A big African market is a necessity for both continents if they don't want to deteriorate gradually, one from old age and the other from underdevelopment, which lays them open to expansionist pressures." Perhaps he was thinking of growing US interests in the Ivory Coast or of this figure provided by his own Ministry of Industry: foreign companies operating in France exported 12 percent more turn-key industries to Africa and sold 29 percent more goods in Africa in 1976 than in 1972. French imperialism today is the epitome of an intermediary "key in hand."

The FRG's investments are mainly in industry, oil and iron. Libya (oil), Liberia (iron) and Egypt (lead and zinc) are the countries in which it has made most of its mining investments. In Nigeria, Liberia, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco, it has investments in industry, textiles and food processing. In Nigeria, Volkswagen (receiving some of the component parts from its Brazilian factories and operating with 49-percent Nigerian capital) is already turning out 50 000 cars a year for the regional African market, while Daimler-Benz has manufactured 8 000 trucks and buses since 1978. Siemens and other West German monopolies control a number of mixed companies in industrial production.

It is clear that Nigeria, along with Zaire, is another preferred country. The two account for 45 percent of the capital invested in the region. Nigeria produces 4 percent of the world's oil (as of January 1979); it is the seventh most important world producer and the fifth most important seller in the EEC market, with oil accounting for 90 percent of its income from exports. Nigeria produces natural gas and tin. It also has columbium, gold, silver, zinc and tungsten. Its 80 million people — the most densely populated country in Africa — are a tremendous resource, but local agriculture cannot feed them. It has little light industry — which is being expanded — and a limited domestic market.

As with Zaire, Nigeria attracts capital from all the imperialist countries — which are struggling bitterly among themselves. Its state is much more protective of its rights than is Zaire's, and its foreign policy has many positive aspects. Total foreign investments there are estimated at \$3 billion: one billion from Great Britain (27 percent of that country's total investments in Africa), \$600 million from France, \$500 million from the United States and \$200 million each from Japan and others.

A second group of countries in which investments have been made includes Gabon, Cameroon and Mauritania, known for their oil, bauxite and phosphates. Generally speaking, these are small countries with low levels of development, with foreign companies controlling most of the investments.

A third group, composed of Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Senegal and the Ivory Coast, has attained an intermediate level of development in certain fields, with infrastructures, cadres and some industrial production for export.

A higher proportion of the investments in these countries is in industrial processes.

Let us now move on briefly to the question of industries. The need to determine industrialization on the basis of the social purpose it serves is well known, since imperialist domination does not exclude industrialization but, rather, encourages it, participates in it and guides it toward the development of an economic system — one in which an industrial sector is distrib-



uted among specific countries, with firm neocolonial control, in order to increase imperialist profits and modify the structural-geographic correlation of capitalist foreign trade so it neutralizes the peoples' liberation struggles and allows each power to strengthen its competitive economic position with regard to the others while all of them reinforce and coordinate

their positions in a new world division that is more subtle, "modern" and collective, in line with the basic characteristics of the current phase of imperialist development.

In general terms, the conditions for industrialization in Africa are worse than in the rest of the underdeveloped world. In the two decades immediately preceding decolonization (1937-59), the value of African manufactured goods (including South Africa's) was multiplied 5.6 times over, but that progress was relative compared to that of other regions (values in billions of dollars at 1955 prices):

	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia (except Japan)</i>	<i>Latin America</i>	<i>Western Europe</i>
1937	0.5	4.1	4.2	50.2
1959	2.8	11.2	13.9	105.8

*Source:* A. Maizels, "Growth and Trade," NIESR Stud. Ed., 1970, p. 22. Reprinted in Bill Warren's "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization," *New Left Review*, p. 5, London, no. 81, 1973.

Since then, the industrial advance in the underdeveloped countries of Africa has been limited mainly to relatively simple industries for finishing basic products (canning and bottling plants, textile factories, etc.) and, to a much lesser degree, metallurgical, fertilizer, chemical and power plants; oil refineries; and the plastics industry. In 1970, between 60 and 90 percent of the working population in those countries still earned a living from agriculture.

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### **Characteristics of industrial development in Africa**

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Africa has very few skilled workers and supervisors, a small domestic market, little capitalization, few means of production, limited national economic integration and weak complementary relationships among economic branches. Moreover, the struggle for industrialization that a certain number of African countries have waged since their liberation has been marked by a dependency on imperialism that is less widespread than in Latin America and Asia but has the same general characteristics that exist throughout the underdeveloped world.

Imperialism's "industrialization efforts" in Africa include industries that require an intensive work force, which is cheaper

in Africa; less advanced productive processes than those in the developed countries, that do not include key sectors in which the monopoly deals exclusively; production that can conveniently be transferred from one underdeveloped country to another and will provide facilities or exports for developed countries; high-pollution industries; high-cost industries; and those that have been popularly or legally banned in the imperialist countries.

Some of the industries already mentioned in this article fit this description. Other examples include Michelin, which produces tires in Egypt for Africa and the Middle East; the FRG's transfer of less advanced textile production to Morocco in order to cut costs; FIAT's factory in Nigeria; and the lament by the ANSA news agency that, because of the lack of communications among African countries, "Most refineries are built near the coast" — as if this meant that Africa needed less oil and oil derivatives.

On the basis of these industries, the Lomé Convention was signed to provide "cooperation," "facilities" and "aid" to the most underdeveloped countries. In a number of general statements, Title III provides for industrial cooperation and sets up a joint committee to promote industrial cooperation and encourage the enterprises of the community "to participate in the industrial development of the states of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), provided those states so desire and in line with their social and economic aims." At the beginning of the ACP-EEC discussions preceding the signing of a second agreement in 1980, the ACP countries reaffirmed their demand that some advancement be made in this area, while the EEC countries proposed that greater legal guarantees be granted investors (although the Convention contains no restriction on transnational activity in the region) so they are protected against new taxes and hidden nationalizations — and, in short, that the investors outside the community be discriminated against and kept at a distance. It may be that this amendment will be submitted during the proposed negotiations on a UN-backed international "code of conduct" for the transnationals.

"Aid" is tied to the promotion of economic activities that suit the aims of those that grant it. Because of its commitment in Africa and the nature of its investments, France provided half the 1976 financing, although all commentators agreed that the total "aid" granted through Lomé wasn't a bit higher and might even have been lower than that granted through previous agreements, indicating no qualitative change whatsoever. In this sense, miserliness rather than the protection of imperialist perspectives prevailed.

Ever since the first Convention of "association" (Yaundé I, 1963), the ACP countries have been unsuccessfully requesting joint administration for this "aid."

Sub-Saharan Africa (excepting South Africa) has played a very modest but growing role in world trade: some 0.1 percent in 1895, 3 percent in 1928 and 4 percent in the '50s. Between 1960 and 1970, its trade rose from \$11.5 billion to \$23.2 billion

— in relative terms 42 and 53 percent respectively of the area's GNP, representing an increasingly high level of foreign trade dependency. The high geographic concentration of this trade (67.9 percent with capitalist Europe) and the importance of basic products in exports (77.4 percent in 1969), combined with the importance of manufactured goods in imports (75.6 percent in 1969), tell us everything we need to know about the complementary role the new republics continue to play in relation to the former metropolises and "make us see the high correlation that exists between Africa's underdevelopment and the relative importance of its basic products."<sup>1</sup>

*Developing countries: structure of nonfuel exports, 1975 (%)*

	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	<i>Asian countries with low incomes</i>	<i>Underdevel- oped countries as a whole</i>
Food and beverages	52	32	36
Nonfood agri- cultural products	13	17	9
Metals and minerals	26	9	12
Manufactured goods	9	42	43
Totals	100	100	100

*Source: Report on World Development, World Bank, Washington, D.C., August 1978.*

Africa is still a region that exports basic agricultural products — though its own food problems are extremely serious. Industrialization, in the prevailing capitalist economy, is just beginning.

Comparative trade indices for 28 basic products from the underdeveloped countries (not including oil) and industrial products from the developed countries show the degree of neo-colonial exploitation that has taken place over a 20-year period.

<sup>1</sup> Silvio Baró, "El neocolonialismo económico en Africa" (Economic Neocolonialism in Africa), *Africa*, 6 volumes, numerous authors, selection and prologue by Armando Entralgo, Social Sciences Publishers, Havana, 1979. A valuable work on this subject.

Indices of unit values (1963 = 100) for:	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972
basic products	118	108	100	106	113
manufactured products	94	97	100	107	134
Trade terms for basic products	126	111	100	99	84

Source: UNCTAD, 1953-72 annual series (years selected by author). From Fedrederic-F. Clairmonte, "Detérioration des termes d'échange et désaccumulation du capital," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, p. 6, Paris, September 1975.

This comparison omits 1950-52, boom years for raw materials related to the war in Korea, which would simply reinforce the level of deterioration. The indices show that trade terms for comparable merchandise deteriorated at an average annual rate of some 2.2 percent between 1953 and 1972. Only four products (copper, tin, zinc and bauxite) out of the 28 selected showed positive changes in their average trade terms during this period.

What has happened since then — in spite of the much-touted 1973-75 boom — is well known. "Sugar, bauxite, copper and other solid minerals; peanuts, copra, sisal, tea, cashews and agricultural products in general are terribly underpriced on the world market."<sup>2</sup> The inflationary trend in the price of the machinery, equipment and industrial and semifinished products sold by the developed capitalist countries, which remained constant in the previous period, has now increased sharply, along with restrictions due to the energy crisis. The devaluations of the dollar, the imposition of protective tariffs (on sugar, for example), the growing indebtedness to pay for imports — a diabolical device that helps sustain the imperialists' exports with foreign debt servicing that now amounts to more than 20 percent of the value of exports from the underdeveloped countries — are all part of the general picture of current trade between the two sections of the world capitalist system.

Price instability for most basic products is another factor in this generally unfavorable and often dismal panoramic view of the underdeveloped economies. In view of Africa's general struc-

<sup>2</sup> Fidel Castro, opening speech at the 6th Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Havana, September 3, 1979.



tural characteristics and foreign trade, it is easy to see that this continent has the most disadvantageous situation.

Sub-Saharan Africa provides more than 50 percent of the underdeveloped countries' total exports of three of the six products whose prices fluctuate the most — cacao, copper and sisal — and more than 25 percent of the other three — zinc, copra and fishmeal. When one of these products constitutes a considerable portion of a country's exports, its economy may well be at the mercy of the ups and downs and the maneuvers of a market controlled by purchasers. This is the case with the copper of Zambia and Zaire, which accounts for 90 and 69 percent of their respective total exports (1973-75), and with cacao in Ghana (60 percent of its exports) and in Cameroon, the Ivory Coast and Togo (20 percent each).

This highly dependent and extremely significant trade deeply affects life in the African countries, determining the direction in which their production is oriented, the years of poverty that may follow — along with natural catastrophes such as drought — or the small advances that can be made when national income rises and governments are so disposed. Bauxite, phosphates or timber could expand production, for they are needed by capitalist Europe; other products have increased only at the expense of other markets: Africa's coffee exports jumped from 19 to 27 percent of the world total between 1961 and 1976, but Brazil's fell from 38 to 26 percent; tea from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda rose from 6 percent of world exports in 1961-63 to 15 percent in 1972-74, but India and Sri Lanka's share of the market dropped from 73 to 52 percent.

These statistics reflect the EEC's trade with African countries, but they are also typical of the general trade relations between Western Europe and Africa, since the EEC countries as a whole are Africa's main trading partner. A look at EEC-ACP statistics reveals similar basic relations, since the African countries account for most of ACP trade: the top 10 countries in ACP-EEC trade are African, and they account for 73.3 percent of imports to and 71.1 percent of exports from the EEC. Of the 13 countries that follow, only four importing countries and one exporting country are not African. Thus, 19 African countries account for 85 percent of all ACP imports from the EEC, and 22 African countries account for 89.1 percent of all ACP exports to the EEC.<sup>3</sup>

Approximately half of EEC trade is within the community, though the 1973-77 period showed a slightly greater move (2 percent more in exports and imports) outside the community.

*Proportion of trade outside the community, 1972-78*

(Trade outside the community = 100)

<i>Imports:</i>	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978*
from the underdeveloped countries as a whole	37.3	37.9	46.9	43.6	43.8	43.8	40.2
from the ACP	7.4	7.3	8.0	6.9	6.6	7.3	6.8
<i>Exports</i>							
to the underdeveloped countries as a whole	29.0	28.4	30.8	36.4	36.1	37.6	38.5
to the ACP	6.1	5.5	5.3	6.7	7.0	7.6	7.5

\* January-September 1978

Sources: *Le Courier*, *ibid.*, pp. 52 and 55, and *Eurostat*, no. 1, 1979. Reprinted in *La Convención de Lomé*.

<sup>3</sup> Luis René Fernández Tabío, *La Convención de Lomé* (The Lomé Convention), pp. 61-62, thesis in economics, Havana, 1979, reprinted from *Le Courier*, EEC-ACP, EEC Commission, no. 52, p. 80, November-December 1978.



Certainly, the trade dynamics of the EEC — the total value of trade outside the community was multiplied 2.55 times over in the 1972-77 period — are such that they determine the increase in imports from the ACP countries and the comparative drop in their exports. In the trade offensive that is so vital for capitalist Europe (which now accounts for 25 percent of world trade), the "Third World" acquires greater significance: its exports have risen sharply, to 38.5 percent, while its imports have tended to return to the level that prevailed before oil prices forced them up. Even so, Africa has benefited very little from this change.

The Lomé Convention can be justly criticized for having failed to meet the hopes theoretically based on "free access" to the community's markets. Trade between the EEC and the underdeveloped countries as a whole is more dynamic than that between the EEC and the ACP countries. Moreover, each underdeveloped country's trade with the community has increased or decreased through bilateral relations that have nothing to do with ACP participation. Any serious analysis of EEC-ACP trade, according to one British professor, "would certainly show that the main beneficiaries of the trade provisions of the Lomé Convention are the most important exporting companies of the EEC."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Retranslated from Carol C. Twitchett, "Hacia otra Convención de los ACP y la CEE" (Toward another EEC-ACP Convention), *The World Today*, December 1978, reprinted by the EECO.

*EEC trade with certain African countries, 1973-77*  
(in millions of EECUs)

		1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Nigeria	Imports	1491	3828	2840	3229	3475
	Exports	771	1148	2405	3320	4603
Libya	Imports	1586	4651	2628	4033	3851
	Exports	901	1625	1970	2136	2576
Algeria	Imports	1071	2126	2048	2153	2098
	Exports	1239	2057	2824	2759	3673
Morocco	Imports	582	912	808	840	833
	Exports	504	788	1 047	1 317	1 528
Ivory Coast	Imports	554	740	694	1011	1471
	Exports	359	446	485	656	850
Zaire	Imports	806	1136	694	910	1080
	Exports	354	510	475	406	445
Tunisia	Imports	192	423	357	412	559
	Exports	344	550	711	837	977
Liberia	Imports	270	319	268	338	364
	Exports	360	337	607	661	792
Cameroon	Imports	218	352	298	368	526
	Exports	174	238	286	330	427
Kenya	Imports	159	201	178	271	520
	Exports	222	327	273	311	448

*Source: Eurostat, EEC Monthly Bulletin of Foreign Trade (Special 1958-77 issue), Brussels, June 1978.*

It is clear that Libya and the countries of Northwest Africa represented a total market of 16.095 billion European Exchange Units in 1977, or 64.6 percent of the EEC's total trade with the ACP group — in which Nigeria and the Ivory Coast accounted for 29.7 percent of ACP imports from and 43.6 percent of exports to the EEC. The four ACP countries that have the highest level of trade (in both directions) with the EEC account for 52.6 percent of the imports and 53.7 percent of the exports, and the ten main traders account for nearly three fourths of that trade.

The great concentration of EEC-ACP trade, as well as other areas of economic relations we have examined, brings out the truth about Lomé: relations with a small group of countries are covered by "multilateral cooperation" with more than 50, a weak "integrationist" effort that in no way covers ACP heterogeneity and lack of organic unity. The ACP is just one of the groups associated with the EEC, and, within the political framework of that reality, European imperialism seeks to separate the ACP from the remaining underdeveloped countries and their means of expression and international struggle, using "preferential" treatment and its discriminatory counterpart — trade with only some of the underdeveloped states.

Thus, an obligatory set of relations that suits the imperialists is turned into a divisive confrontation of interests among the underdeveloped countries.

What products do these two groups of countries trade? In 1977, the six major products, in terms of value, that the ACP countries sold to the EEC were:

Product	Value in thousands of EEU's	%	Accumulated %
1. oil	3 499 278	28.08	28.08
2. coffee	2 006 474	16.1	44.18
3. cacao	1 268 733	10.18	54.36
4. copper	952 769	7.64	62
5. timber	623 806	5	67
6. sugar	382 220	3.06	70

Source: *Le Courrier, ibid.*

These and the 14 products that follow (in diminishing value), which account for 84.8 percent of ACP exports, are basic agri-

cultural or mineral products. Their limited variety and weakness in capitalist markets need no comment.

The "fat cows" of oil — and, to a lesser degree, coffee and cacao — continue on their course. Although certain Western European strategic considerations enter into the question of oil, because of that region's weakness in comparison to the United States and the situation in the Middle East, it is evident in the listing of trade values by country that the EEC has reestablished its trade balance with Nigeria, which exports 27.9 percent of all ACP oil. The imperialists' economic clout enables them to underwrite their oil purchases by applying unequal trade terms in sales of their manufactured products (not to mention the open secret that the oil transnationals pocket huge profits). In 1978, the FRG closed its trade balance with the OPEC countries with a surplus of 5.144 billion deutsche marks.

At the beginning of 1977, the ACP-EEC trade balance ceased to be favorable; in 1978 it became frankly unfavorable (running up a deficit of 673 million EECUs between January and September, according to EEC statistics). It was only a question of time before the imperialists quashed the boom in raw materials and oil. Except for 1974, however, most of the ACP countries have had negative trade balances with the EEC every year, and even the renowned Lomé Stabex hasn't helped. This was a system of limited loans provided by the EEC with the alleged aim of alleviating the situation created in the ACP countries by drops in the prices of their products, but it failed to cover a number of the principal basic export products that were in short supply and kept completely aloof from product indexing.

The structure of EEC exports to the ACP in January-September 1978 was as follows: manufactured goods, 83.29 percent; basic products, 16.71 percent (10.89 percent of these in food, beverages and tobacco).

"Trade preferences" actually turn out to be agents for perpetuating the subordinate-complementary function of neocolonialism in Africa. It might be said that, while Lomé is much too miserly, to a certain extent it recognizes the current level of the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa and has become a tool for the imperialists' political and ideological struggle.

It is impossible to deal here with all the neocolonial mechanisms that operate in the commercial, financial-monetary and economic fields in Africa as a whole. Before ending this article, however, I would like to touch on some questions of coordination and interimperialist rivalry and the economic-political correlation in the African situation.

The worldwide strategic implication of the imperialist countries' operations in Africa must be analyzed, for Africa serves as a testing ground for current interimperialist rivalries and their limitations.

The neocolonial relations of each Western European country are inscribed within the Lomé framework, but old lines also have a definite influence on these relations. The table showing major trade levels between the EEC and the ACP is interesting:

Total EEC-ACP trade = 100	EEC Imports		Differ- ence	EEC Exports		Differ- ence
	1972	1977		1972	1977	
France	24.8	26.3	+ 1.5	28.0	29.7	+ 1.7
Great Britain	26.7	18.1	- 8.6	30.9	25.6	- 5.3
Federal Republic of Germany	18.5	22.1	+ 3.6	14.3	10.2	+ 5.9
Totals	70.0	66.5		73.2	75.5	

Source: *Le Courrier*, no. 52, taken from L. R. Fernández Tabío, *La Convención de Lomé*.

Of the three dominant countries in the community, Great Britain is steadily falling behind, overtaken by France in both directions of trade, while the FRG shows the strongest advance. Unlike France, Great Britain no longer dominates trade with its former colonies, such as Nigeria. Meanwhile, the FRG now holds first place in trade with seven African ACP countries and appears to be in a strong position everywhere. West German investments have increased, and that country's presence is particularly evident in the search for areas of relative development, with greater emphasis in the industrial sector.

All this indicates a probable split: the FRG is more prepared than France or Great Britain to take advantage of neocolonialist "modernization." Within the framework of the community — and outside it, as well — West Germany is using its economic weapons to gain ground in Africa, partially or wholly replacing the older relations that the other European powers had established there. Although world coordination has a limiting effect on West German political action, it is obvious that 1978's foremost world exporter can encourage free trade, support the inclusion of copper in the Lomé Stabex (starting with Zaire) and refuse to have anything to do with France's gendarme policy on the grounds that "The economic strengthening of Africa is the best contribution to its political stability" (H. Schmidt, Foreign Minister of the FRG, May 1978).

It might be an oversimplification to say, regarding French policy in Africa, that, the less competition there is, the greater the recourse to extra-economic means. Great Britain, home of some of the major transnationals in the world, a great financial center and the country that formerly had the greatest capitalist economic investment in Africa, seeks to stave off its decline and maintain its interests through an extensive imperialist bloc operating in Africa. The Western European states with interests in Africa are not really aligned with two rival neocolonialist

models — one along the lines of the FRG, which Switzerland has the means to adopt, and the other represented by France — because their needs (in raw materials, markets for their manufactured goods, counterrevolutionary unity and joint efforts against the United States and Japan), their coinciding interests on a world scale and their limited and risky position in Africa and throughout the world bring them closer together — without, of course, eliminating their contradictions.

While US economic interests in Africa are not as great as those of Western Europe, they are growing steadily as the general power and leadership of the United States within the imperialist camp makes its role there more significant. That country's development and imperialist potential would facilitate highly profitable operations in preferred countries, leaving to the Western Europeans the "dirty work" of aggression, open pressure and post-colonial intervention. Certain US currents, therefore, favor this option. However, the level of the revolutionary struggle in Africa, changes in the correlation of world forces in favor of socialism and the influence of international organizations and pressure groups tie the United States to the "free play of economic forces," as shown by its imperialist interventions in Zaire (even sending troops, as it did in 1964) and by its political, financial and logistical participation in the aggression against Angola.

Collective neocolonialism is gaining ground. We have touched, in part, on the internal reasons for the current process of the internationalization of big capital and those that arise from the African situation — both of which favor the upsurge of collective neocolonialism. The formation of economic groups that manage huge transnationals in a number of countries provides foreknowledge of possible risks and losses; eliminates agreements that would allow the neocolonized countries a margin of choice; and blurs the image of colonizing countries' maintaining their control (which is rejected all over the continent) in a corporate economic anonymity that, nevertheless, allows imperialist state mechanisms to function on behalf of their monopolies wherever and however this may be necessary.

Coordinated policies openly defend and support the South African regime and are applied, with certain minor differences, to the rest of the Southern Cone from Shaba to the Cape — a vital region for capitalist Europe and one in which almost all the imperialist countries have tremendous interests, and also an area of great strategic significance for all Africa and the Indian Ocean.

One or another imperialist state — usually France — may be particularly active in a specific country, but this does not imply total autonomy: economic interrelationships are expressed in terms of interstate coordination which may be organic, as with the EEC, or loose. Yankee predominance seeks expression in an African policy that coordinates penetration with financial blackmail, political pressure with "aid" and aggression with right-wing "nationalism" at a level that surpasses what the

Western European countries have already attained and integrates them in a subordinate manner.

Imperialist strategy in Africa today, viewed as a whole, is no longer limited to exploiting those countries, dividing them and pitting them against one another, using bribery, pressure and occasionally parachute troops. It is equally important for imperialism to promote a dependent, capitalist, deformed, neocolonized form of development for these countries that blocks independent progress and isolates them from the socialist world. This means encouraging the emergence of dominant-dominated bourgeois groups that will effectively guarantee imperialist hegemony in these countries and their own influence in the region — groups that can serve imperialism, speed up the "Africanization" of counterrevolutionary wars and provide an alternative for the model of the national liberation revolution.

This is one of the demands of the most modern precepts of neocolonialism, an international policy that seeks to take increasing advantage of imperialism's financial and technological-scientific power and the positions it holds in underdeveloped economies and societies. Since social realities never completely coincide with the theoretical model, this monstrous view of a neocolonized world, in which capitalism has exacerbated all the contradictions of its contradictory system to the hilt, is much less likely to become a reality.

Africa sets the limits for neocolonial evolution in the three continents, because it was the area which capitalism developed least in its earlier periods. Will it be a reserve, a field for extending "economic space" in the next stage of imperialism's development?

In the third of a century that has passed since the defeat of European fascism, Africa has made great strides by establishing independent states, even though some of them are incomplete in one aspect or another. Now a new stage is beginning there, in which the anti-imperialist character of the national liberation struggle is becoming more and more apparent. Certain countries, such as Angola and Ethiopia, are already laying the bases for building a socialist society. The African people's unselfish struggle has been bolstered by the new conditions that have emerged as a result of the existence of the socialist countries. The experience of the independent states of Africa is the starting point for a new phase of struggle that, in the immediate future, will include problems of Africa's independent development.

"Some governments placed in power by the people's revolutionary struggle suddenly find themselves faced with horrifying conditions of poverty, indebtedness and underdevelopment that prevent them from responding to even the most modest hopes of their peoples," Fidel Castro has commented.<sup>5</sup> This awful dilemma serves to point out that the countries that are struggling for real economic independence will have to fight to limit the monopolies' operations inside their territories and to control their own natural resources; they will have to reduce their

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*

economic and financial dependency on the former metropolises and achieve development by their own independent means.

The strength and growing power of the community of socialist countries, the victories won by the national liberation movements and the mounting class struggle in the developed-capitalist countries are factors that provide Africa with new possibilities for setting liberation goals that go beyond a mechanical consideration of the status of their productive forces. In short, the internationalization of the class struggle allows Africa to plan actions designed to defeat the system created by the neo-colonialist internationalization of capitalism.

Of course, the situation there is alarming — and imperialism will use this as blackmail to impose its conditions — but the broad range of progressive and even anti-imperialist positions held by a number of African and underdeveloped states in general shows that these forces can be strengthened by coordinating ideals and interests in order to pressure and influence international debates, forums and organizations as part of the anti-imperialist struggle. By denouncing imperialism's economic oppression and exploitation and consistently opposing it, the African and underdeveloped states can make a genuine contribution to international relations, which are governed by the present correlation of socialist and capitalist forces. To be effective, they must understand the need for unity in the political struggle against imperialism (their enemy) and for an alliance with the socialist community (a friend and a determining factor in that struggle). ■

# "WALK AMONG THE MULTITUDES"

ALEX LA GUMA



For the people of Africa, whose oppression under colonialism, white supremacy and racism has lasted beyond the memory of our youth, the expression of their pain, fear, hopes and determination through music, poetry, dance and literature has always been important, a feature of their daily lives. With the harsh hand of colonialism preventing advancement in many fields, culture has been a steady vehicle of struggle accessible to the people.

I introduce colonialism because it is obviously impossible to talk about any aspect of African life without mentioning this horrendous phenomenon which for generations smothered the continent in a stifling blanket of ignorance, poverty and stagnation. Moreover, it is difficult to mention literature in Africa without this reference.

Certainly African literature existed long before colonialists shot their way onto our soil and seized and ravaged our continent. The language and writing, folktales and religious scriptures of ancient Africa have been studied for centuries. The myths and legends of ancient Egypt are known all over. Evidence demonstrates that an indigenous alphabet of Semitic origin was in use in Axum or ancient Ethiopia as early as the 4th century AD. The Arab language and culture had a profound influence on the northern, northeastern and northwestern peoples. Below the Sahara, the literary manifestations of the tropical African people were, in the main, of the oral tradition, tracing the origins of the people far back into the mists of ancestry.

With the coming of the colonialists into black Africa especially, the development of the people and their social and economic life — and, consequently, their cultural life — was drastically interrupted.

Franz Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, says the black man has not only been oppressed by the white colonizers, but he has also been murdered culturally.

That great leader, statesman and writer Amilcar Cabral pointed out that if under colonialism many Africans became alienated from their cultural background, even if they were so uprooted that many could not assert it, this background did not die completely. He said, "The exercise of imperialist domination demands cultural oppression, but the people are able to create and develop a liberation movement because they keep culture alive



Amilcar Cabral

in the teeth of organized repression of cultural life — other resistance being destroyed, they continue to resist culturally. The colonial power cannot impose a complete cultural occupation. The majority of the people retain their identity and are the one entity really able to preserve and create it — that is, they can make history."

Of course the study of culture involves all aspects of a people's character, such as music, dance, architecture, painting, sculpture, cuisine, philosophy and religion. One should also preferably be competent in these fields, but, since the concept of culture is such a broad one, we can only devote ourselves to some remarks about African writing.

The cultural resistance of the African people to colonialism has inspired the best of her writers and indeed gave rise to the fame of these artists, brought to the world knowledge of their great talent. The African writer — indeed, any worthy writer — is always inspired by the dynamic character of the masses.

In the field of writing, perhaps the best example of this inspiration is found in the poetry of the former Portuguese colonies. One can actually trace the various stages of the colonial presence and its effects on the life and attitudes of the people. Here we find the concrete identification of the writer with social life. Similarly, writers of the Caribbean, black

America and southern Africa give expression to their peoples' struggles to overthrow oppression.

As José Martí himself learned, there exists a need for the artist to integrate his life with his compatriots', so Martí's own consciousness was filled with the agony of his people. As Martí said, "Poetry is durable when it is the work of all. Those who understand it are as much the authors as those who make it. To thrill all hearts by the vibrations of your

own, you must have the germs and inspirations of humanity."

All that is worthy in African literature engages, in one way or another, in resistance to colonialism, past and present. With the physical retreat of colonialism from Africa, new tasks faced African writers. Where independence had been gained, the examination of this independence holds the attention of many writers. Such authors as Achebe, Ngugi, Beti, Oyono and Sembene are concerned with the



José Martí

new African man emerging from the colonial darkness. Naturally, not all writers are satisfied with independence as they find it; they pose themselves against various aspects of their society, question many things and attack many, as well.

The debate over Africa's future and her association with the past involves various stances and interpretations. In terms of Francophone and Anglophone, the former produced Negritude and the latter, the African personality. According to the Kenyan scholar Christopher Wanjala, those who, such as Padmore and Nkrumah, represented the African personality wrote political articles against their colonizers — unlike the followers of Negritude, who used verse to romanticize the African image, determined to impress on all that Africans have their own history and culture.

From serving as a rallying cry for African nationalism, Negritude attempted to become a philosophy, but philosophy implies a world outlook and cannot be confined within the narrow limits of nationalism.

Nevertheless, African writers continue to wrestle with the problems of their societies, identifying with the problems of their peoples. Chinua Achebe stated at a conference on British Commonwealth literature in 1964 that part of his business as a novelist was to teach, to re-educate his society out of its acceptance of racial inferiority, "to help my society regain its belief in itself and put away the complexes of denigration and self-denigration."

Though each may interpret African reality according to his individual viewpoint, African writers have one common task. That is to help remove the debris of colonialism and to bring forth the African past from where its progress was halted and relate it to the present, with the view of creating for the future, using in-

novation, technique and modern technology, all for the purpose of reaching the hearts of the African masses on the progressive road to a new life.

Like his fellow man the ordinary member of society, the African writer is of course faced with all the problems of postcolonial, underdeveloped society, illiteracy, multi-ethnic societies, language, printing and publishing — all these considerations face and affect the African writer. These problems obviously cannot be solved by the writer alone. They involve profound political and socioeconomic changes which must take place in Africa.

The imperialist presence still exists, hoping that Africa is not entirely lost to it. Some African states are working to shed the imperialist burden once and for all; others remain in its clutches in one form or another.

The Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiongo says, "It was capitalism and its external manifestations, imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism, that had disfigured the African past. Capitalism even at its most efficient has failed to create equality and balanced human relationships in Europe and America. Why do we think it can work in Africa?"

Africa, its culture and its literature cannot be viewed in isolation from the total human course of events. Africa will change with the world. Already the dynamic revolutionary struggles of Ethiopia, the former Portuguese colonies, the Congo and Algeria have had a profound effect on the peoples of other countries. This effect will be revealed more and more in the literature of Africa in the future, and a start has already been made.

In the final analysis, the writer, whether African or not, belongs with the majority of the people. He should, as José Martí also said, "walk among the multitudes who suffer, with love in [his] heart." ■



# THE BLOOD THE DEFEATED

FERNANDO NAPOLES TAPIA

**N**OW, when the fifth anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Arab Saharawi Republic is fast approaching, the tremendous development achieved by the Western Saharan people's national liberation struggle during the last year of fighting has become much more evident.

Barely a month after Mauritania's declaration renouncing its claims to the territory it had occupied in the former Spanish Sahara under the Moroccan-Spanish agreement based on the Madrid Tripartite Agreement of November 1975 and the later occupation of that territory by Morocco, the Saharawi People's Liberation Army (ELPS) considerably increased its actions in southern Morocco.

The blockade of the Royal Armed Forces of Morocco's (FARM's) important military base at Zag and the capture of the garrison at Lebouirate consolidated the ELPS' positions in the region between Oued Dra and the foothills of the Atlas Mountains, north of the Western Saharan border.

The August 24, 1979, surrender of the Lebouirate garrison,<sup>1</sup> in which around 1500 men defended an area of 20 square kilometers, fortified with casemates and small forts linked by an extensive network of communication ditches and well equipped with artillery and armored vehicles — including T-52s that had been turned over to Rabat by Anuar el-Sadat's government<sup>2</sup> — endangered both the security of southern Morocco and the steady flow of supplies to the occupation forces farther south, in Western Sahara — especially the important fortified garrison at Zag.

Hassan II's General Staff's new plans for prying the ELPS guerrilla forces out of their positions in the south led FARM into one of its worst debacles of the war, at the battle of Ouarkziz.

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### **Rabat's stratagems**

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The general plan of operations for sweeping through southern Morocco was drawn up by the FARM General Staff between September 1979 and February 1980. Approved by Ahmed Dlimi, now a General, this plan called for mop-up actions along the Tighzert Valley, in the N'Gueb, Zag, Lebouirate and Lemsied region, an area with guerrilla units that seriously threaten the military base at Zag — which has been completely cut off except for airlifts — and the regions around Bouzakran and Tan Tan.

<sup>1</sup> The spelling of geographic names has been unified throughout.

<sup>2</sup> POLISARIO Front, *Sahara Occidental. La batalla de Ouarkziz* (Western Sahara. The Battle of Ouarkziz), press bulletin, s.f., taken from M.S., "The Moroccan Dynasty's Dream of a Great Morocco Now Seems Illusory in the Extreme." *Paris-Match*, March 1980.



The top secret plan of operations which the Saharawi guerrillas captured from the mobile command post of the head of one of the Moroccan units that took part in Operation Imann (faith) not only recognized the presence (generally denied) of the ELPS but also clearly set forth the danger it posed for the success of FARM's operations in Western Sahara.

"The enemy activities noted during the last few months in the military areas bordering on El Ouarkziz and the Tighzert Valley, characterized by permanent contact with the southern plains people of Bani and by harassment, indicate the presence of an important rebel group in the N'Gueb-Zag-Lebouirate-Lemsied area.

"This group constitutes a permanent threat for the Zag, Bouzakran and Tan Tan areas.

"... The enemy may leave his bases in Tighzert and carry out large-scale attacks on any of the centers in the Zag, Tan Tan and Bouzakran areas.

"...The immobilization of most of the Armed Forces' potential for defending the populated areas and important tactical points leaves the enemy in full control of the Tighzert area."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from "Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz' Press Conference in the Heart of Southern Morocco," *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980.

The plan of action for Operation Imann, issued by General Dlimi in Tan Tan on February 22, 1980, called for mobilizing the following units:

**Composition of FARM Force F, for carrying out Operation Imann**

**Force F**, commanded by Colonel Harmou Arzaz, with its command post at Lemsied. Total strength: 7000 men.

**Force F-1 (Ouhoud)**, commanded by Lt. Col. Harchi:

- 4 commandos of 400 men each
- 1 company of VAP armored vehicles
- 1 squad of AML-90 armored vehicles
- 2 platoons of 120-mm. mortars
- 1 regional armed security group
- 1 section of engineering troops
- 1 maintenance team

**Force F-2 (Zellaga)**, commanded by battalion chief Mohattana:

- 3 Green March commandos
- 2 squads of AML-90 armored vehicles
- 1 regional armed security group
- 1 section of engineering troops
- 1 maintenance team

**Force F-3 (3rd Regiment at Zag)**, commanded by battalion chief Said Miloudi:

- 3 detachments of rapid strike troops (130 men in each)
- 1 squad of SK 155-mm. vehicles
- 1 platoon of 105-mm. mortars

**Air support** from the Royal Air Force

**Sources:** POLISARIO Front, *Sahara Occidental. La batalla de Quarkziz* (Western Sahara. The Battle of Quarkziz), press bulletin, sf., taken from Agence France Presse, "On a 120-Kilometer-Long Front after 11 Days of Combat," *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980, and Algérie Press Service, "Lamentable End of 'Ouhoud' and 'Zellaga,'" *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980.

**Chronogram of the main operations assigned to Force F during Operation Imann**

Aerial reconnaissance	February 23
Concentration of Forces F-1 and F-2 in the Lemsied region	February 26
Initiation of operations	February 27
Initiation of operations	February 27

**Source:** POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from "Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz' Press Conference in the Heart of Southern Morocco," *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980.

To achieve the operation's objectives, the FARM General Staff outlined the following missions:

1. Mop up the Tighzert Valley and supply Zag, the last Moroccan base in the south, near the Algerian border.
2. Dislodge the enemy.
  - a. After digging in on the heights southeast of Lemsied and beefing up the Lemsied-Tassamint axis, reach Rag Labied (0.1).
  - b. Engage in mop-up operations toward Rag Labied, Oued Lezel and Ametti (0.2).
  - c. Mop up Oued Tighzert high as Air Smeira (0.3).
3. Have the capacity to supply the Zag area.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

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### **The battle of Ouarkiz. First stage: the fighting at Ametti**

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Just as the FARM General Staff had planned, the aerial reconnaissance scheduled to precede J-Day, the code name for the initiation of operations, began on February 23. From the 23rd to the 27th, observers in the Royal Air Force of Morocco — equipped with French (Renault-Savien) VAB helicopters and planes, (SNIA) Pumas and US-made Huey Cobras and CU-10 Broncos — carried out several exploration missions over the area of operations.

At dawn on February 27 — J-Day — the F-1 and F-2 units left their point of concentration in Lemsied, where they had grouped the day before, and set out to mop up the ELPS guerrilla groups in southern Morocco.

The 27th and 28th passed without incident for Force F. On the 29th, Forces F-1 (Ouhoud) and F-2 (Zellaga) were in the Ametti area, 60 kilometers from the Operation's command post at Lemsied.

On the 1st, following the operational plan, the F-2 group advanced toward Lebouirate, occupied by ELPS forces in August 1979 and a guerrilla stronghold ever since, to wipe out the forces there. Within a matter of hours, the Force F 2 (Zellaga) column was ambushed and, hard pressed by the Saharawi guerrillas, fled in disarray, rolling back the elements of Force F-1 (Ouhoud) that were to have supported them. With units of the People's Front for the Liberation of Saguia El Hamra and Río de Oro (the POLISARIO Front) hot on their heels, the Moroccan detachments retreated to Ametti, where the guerrillas continued to harass them. Reinforcements sent from the command post at Lemsied were also thrown back by the guerrillas, who intercepted them 40 kilometers from their base and 20 kilometers from Ametti. This force, composed of regional armed security groups and detachments of rapid strike troops, left Langab on the 3rd under the command of Major Tobaji but had to retreat, with heavy losses, on the 6th.

On the 7th, in view of the defeat inflicted on the F-1 and F-2 column in its attempt to reach Lebouirate, the Moroccan high command ordered the preparation of an advance operation on Zag, reinforcing Force F with a regional armed security group battalion and mobile units from Assa, Acca and Um Lahsen, re-equipped and reinforced with plenty of weapons.

Not far from Ametti, where the ELPS guerrilla forces had routed the F-1 and F-2 forces' troops and their would-be saviors, other guerrilla detachments attacked the F-3 units, composed of the beefed-up 3rd Regiment from Zag. These units had left their base at Zag on February 27 and set out for Lebouirate, hoping to join the F-1 and F-2 forces there, but they were blocked near the N'Gueb pass, in the Ouarkiz Mountains, at the dry riverbed of the Oued Dra.



From March 1 through 6, the POLISARIO Front guerrillas pounded away at the F-1 and F-2 detachments and forced the Moroccan high command to order them back to N'Gueb on the 7th, where they were to concentrate. The guerrilla action against the F-3 force left the garrison at Zag seriously depleted, for an infantry regiment, the artillery and a large part of its armored vehicles had been sent off to take part in Operation Imann. It became absolutely necessary to regroup Force F and bring it back up to strength with reserves in order to support the units stationed at Zag.

Meanwhile, back at the scene of the fighting, the ELPS forces made a rapid review of the Moroccan losses:

Men	1357
AML and VAP armored vehicles	27
Transport vehicles	134
106- and 105-mm. artillery	10
120-mm. mortars	9
21-, 12.7- and 14.5-mm. machine guns	29

**Sources:** POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from the Democratic Arab Saharawi Republic, Ministry of Defense, "Communiqué," *Free Sahara*, s.f., and Prensa Latina dispatch dated March 9, 1980.

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#### **The battle of Ouarkiz. Second stage: the fighting at Tighzert**

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On the 9th (after the disaster dealt the troops of Forces F-1 and F-2 at Ametti, the routing of the reinforcements sent by the command post at Lemsied and the halting of the 3rd Regiment from Zag and after General Dlimi had reviewed the situation and his forces), the Moroccan high command — composed of General Dlimi; Major Colonel Abrouk; Colonel Arzas, commanding Force F; and Lieutenant Colonels Kadri, Harchi and Bouendar — ordered that what was left of Force F, which was concentrated in the N'Gueb area, should go to Zag to break the encirclement that was threatening to strangle the garrison. From the 9th to the 11th, a new attack by the POLISARIO Front forces decimated the already scanty Moroccan ranks near the spurs of the Ouarkiz. The new Moroccan plan of operations, which ordered the troops to advance toward Zag and carry out the third phase of Operation **Imann** — that is, send a convoy of supplies through to the besieged

garrison — failed just as spectacularly as the mop-up operation had. In spite of the support provided by the reinforcements hastily organized in Oulimine, Tan Tan and Assa and by the Air Force — which was pretty ineffectual, to be sure — the ELPS guerrillas captured another important cache of arms and inflicted many new losses on the enemy.<sup>5</sup>

**Moroccan losses in the fighting at Tighzert,  
during Operations Imann**

Killed or wounded	659
Captured	108
Transport vehicles	47
VAP and AML-90 armored vehicles	14
160-mm. artillery	4
RDC and 14.5- and 12.7-mm. machine guns	28
Bazookas	6
Kalachnikov automatic rifles	340
Transmission equipment	20

**Sources:** POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from the Democratic Arab Saharawi Republic, Ministry of Defense, "Communiqué," **Free Sahara**, s.f., and Prensa Latina dispatches dated March 13, 1980.

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**The blood of the defeated**

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For the more than 2000 dead, wounded and captured of Force F, the war had a very different ending than they had been promised by their leaders in Rabat. Deceived; poorly trained (except for the so-called elite units); and led by incompetent, corrupt officers who abandoned them in the thick of the fighting, they risked their lives in vain, serving the interests of an expansionist monarchy that opposed the people.

<sup>5</sup> POLISARIO Front., *op. cit.*, taken from "On a 120-Kilometer-Long Front after 11 Days of Combat," *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980, and "Lamentable End of 'Ouhoud' and 'Zellaga,'" *El Moudjahid*, March 16, 1980. Also "Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz' Press Conference...," *loc. cit.* M. S., "The War in the Sahara..." *loc. cit.*, and several March 1980 Prensa Latina dispatches.

Within hours of the battle of Ouarkziz, a group of journalists and correspondents representing the international press visited the battlefield. This is how they described that scene of death and destruction:

"The day after this battle, that had been waged from March 1 through 11, and in the course of which the Ouhoud and Zellaga Moroccan mobile groups were beaten back, a small group of journalists from the international press visited a part of the 120-kilometer-long battlefield for more than 48 hours. The sites of the various clashes were strewn with the bodies of scores of Moroccan soldiers and the burnt-out hulks of armored vehicles and troop transport carriers containing the charred remains of their occupants, testifying to the violence of the fighting." (AFP)

"Nevertheless, in the course of the mop-up operation, the F-1 and F-2 forces were attacked and pushed back toward the Ouarkziz djebel by the ALPS [ELPS] guerrillas, leaving dozens of dead.

"The bodies of the Moroccan soldiers are still in the riverbed of an oued, where they fell during the Battle of Ametti. The journalists found them unburied, baked dry by the sun and ravaged by vultures and wild animals." (APS)

"Charred bodies, pulverized armored vehicles, burnt-out hulks, caps, helmets, howitzers and rockets now cover the riverbed of the oueds in





the thickets and stony plains that extend to the shadows of the black rock peaks." (Reuters, retranslated from the Spanish.)

For those men, the bodies strewn on the stony desert of southern Morocco were proof positive of the failure of Hassan's war. Those taken prisoner and the wounded, however, had to face up to something even more shameful than defeat: the fact that they had been deceived. The same press sources that printed the results of their correspondents' visit to the battlefield in the Ouarkiz area published interviews with prisoners. Their testimony, taken firsthand by the journalists, shows the level of demoralization they reached after seeing for themselves the tragic truth of the war of annexation into which they had been thrown to die.

One of the Moroccan officers captured in Lebouirate in August 1979 also told of his experiences: "At school, we were taught that Western Sahara was a Moroccan province. In the Army, we were told that, in the desert, we would fight against all of Morocco's enemies — from Russia to Cuba — but not against the Saharawis, who, in any case, were Moroccan. It didn't take us long to realize that we were fighting

against the POLISARIO Front, Saharawis, our Moslem brothers. You can imagine the effect that discovery had on our morale."<sup>6</sup>

Even more than their officers, the rank-and-file soldiers are the victims of this absurd war which the King of Morocco's expansionist greed has imposed on his people. Many of them were forced to enlist in FARM to escape from hunger, poverty and unemployment, and they constitute a hungry host easily misled by the unscrupulous propagandists of annexation.

"These simple soldiers used to be **fellahs** in the Marrakesh region and unemployed workers from Rabat who were promised double wages if they enlisted. Some hadn't been paid for a year. Many hadn't had permits for all that time. And the waiting, the unbearable waiting for months on end. The enemy didn't come. The enemy, 'a nomad in a **djellaba** and **cheich**, armed with an old blunderbuss,' as he was described during their training, 'a band of freebooters' — but, when the enemy really appeared, he blasted the garrisons to bits with mortars. Many surrendered without firing a shot."<sup>7</sup>

Poorly trained in basic courses lasting less than three months, most of the recruits were thrown straight into the war — a war for which they were not prepared, either morally or militarily.

"The decimated column commanded by Colonel Abrouk was composed almost exclusively of recruits who hadn't yet received their baptism of fire and who, not knowing how to use their campaign radios with discretion, sent all their messages clearly, so POLISARIO knew all about the movements that Colonel Abrouk's column was going to make and caught it in a veritable rattrap."<sup>8</sup>

The Sahara has been turned into a huge sandtrap in which ambushes, encirclements, attacks and cannonades claim more and more victims among the garrisons, mobile columns, regiments and elite units that, like the Zellaga, Ouhoud and Larak units, operate in southern Morocco and Western Sahara.

The panorama of war is now extending farther and farther north, though important actions are still taking place in the disputed area. The POLISARIO Front's victories in 1980 took place in this immense battlefield with almost monotonous regularity: Hagounia, Gueltz-Zemour,

<sup>6</sup> POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from Caroline Tisdal, "A Change in the War: Failure of Hassan II's Strategy," *The Guardian*, February 12, 1980. (Retranslated from the Spanish.)

<sup>7</sup> M.S., *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from "After the Disaster... Discontent in the Moroccan Army," *V.S.D.*, March 1980, and Manuel Ostos, "Testimonios de prisioneros marroquíes ponen de relieve la desmoralización del ejército real," *El País*, March 19, 1980.

Lemeiga Laguirat, Acca, Boujdour, Rous El Ouj, Rous El Sabti, Mezriga, Smara, Zag, Abetih, Ouenat El Haifa, Tan Tan, Ras Khanfra, Noudibú, La Agüera, Touezgui, Daoura, Dhaliat, Lemhela, Sebkehet Amseykir. . . .

Emboldened by the growing shipments of US arms for his Army, Hassan seems more and more ready to send his soldiers off on new military adventures like the two expeditions to Shaba, in Zaire. His new pledge to imperialism seems directed toward giving a favorable reply to Washington's maneuvers for creating a new aggressive military bloc in which Morocco would pledge its forces to defend the interests of its new partners: Egypt, Israel, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Somalia and Pakistan — the elite of the reaction.

Meanwhile, however, in the Sahara, the guerrillas are adjusting their strategy and tactics to fit the terrain and FARM's new weapons.

The tactic the POLISARIO front forces use for baiting their rattraps was described as follows:

"...The Saharawis have a natural advantage: the former nomads' intimate knowledge of the desert. Their stratagems fit their surroundings. Thus, for example, they often lure the Moroccans out after them, keeping just out of reach, early in the morning, while the sand is still cool, drawing their pursuers far from the beaten track and miring them down when the sun warms the sand and makes it impassible for vehicles. Moreover, the Moroccans adapt poorly to the climatic conditions. Many of them fall victim to desert illnesses — especially eye infections, from the glare of the sand — within a few weeks of their arrival."<sup>9</sup>

The Saharawi guerrillas make full use of their enemies' clumsiness and the difficult desert conditions in developing their fighting tactics. In addition, there is the Moroccan high command's obvious inability to solve the operational problems posed by this war. Accused of being cowardly and venal by their subordinates, the FARM officers waste their men uselessly, and, since the endless conspiracies against Hassan in the Armed Forces have deprived the Army of a veteran command, the highest positions are held by novices faithful to the throne, such as General Dlimi, main strategist of the genocidal war against the Saharawi people, who has proved his loyalty by committing every kind of political crime, such as the assassinations and repression ordered by General Oufkir (the murderer of Ben Barka and Dlimi's former chief).

Fearful of the frequent military conspiracies that threaten his reign, Hassan has decimated FARM with purges. Having no confidence in his commanding officers, he has taken over control of its operations and replaced capable but outspoken officers with corrupt but lickspittle chiefs.

<sup>9</sup> M.S., *op. cit.*

Referring to this situation, one press source reported, "He has dismissed his General Staff and taken the control of operations into his own hands. To obtain a fighter plane or helicopter, his columns are forced to call Rabat, Fez or Marrakesh." Frequently, the response is "We can't bother His Majesty right now." One of the Moroccan military chiefs complained, "We need cadres who can fight, and we have too many drawing-room officers whose only interest is the black market in whiskey and cigarettes and who refuse to go out on night patrols or sleep in a tent." The soldiers themselves frequently lose their morale. More than 8000 of them have gone AWOL.<sup>10</sup>

In conclusion, we will cite some statements made by Otelho de Carvalho, a Portuguese officer and an outstanding figure in the "Carnation Revolution" who, commenting on the enormous amounts of arms the POLISARIO Front guerrillas had captured from the Moroccan Army, said, "I am an artillery officer. In my opinion, the impressive booty we have just seen shows a mortal laxity in the body of Moroccan officers. All armies in the world are taught to destroy matériel in case of retreat. Such impressive amounts should never fall into the hands of the enemy."<sup>11</sup>

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#### Hassan's "message"

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On the evening of Saturday, March 15, four days after the debacle of Ouarkziz, Maati Bouabid, Prime Minister and Minister of Justice of Morocco, gave a reception in Hassan's honor in Marrakesh, at the end of a publicity tour the King had made of Dakhla, in occupied Western Sahara. At the reception, Hassan II, who was obviously shaken by the results of Operation Imann, stated, "We hope that the 20 million Moroccans will always remain servants of their homeland, voluntarily renouncing their freedom for the ideal of serving their flag and honoring their pledge, throwing themselves body and soul into the defense of their country's territorial integrity.

"Your love of the Sahara and for your fellow citizens in this area demands that all of you, civilians and soldiers alike, sacrifice yourselves for the Sahara. You have the duty to renounce your freedom and devote yourselves to your country's cause. These duties should be expressed in ceaseless actions in the Sahara, by the Sahara and for its future.

"Never forget the Sahara. This is our advice and our testament to all of you, whether older or younger than we. In fact, the Sahara

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from "The Rabat Authorities in a Political Bind," *Demain l'Afrique*, February-March 1980.

has always occupied an important place in the life of this country, for good or for ill."<sup>12</sup>

The freedom that Hassan II required his subjects to voluntarily renounce so he could pursue his colonial war in the Sahara had, in fact, already been taken away long before by the regime of exploitation and repression imposed on the Moroccan people by the monarchy.

Two sectors of the social services clearly bring out the poverty and exploitation to which the 20 million Moroccans are subjected — the same 20 million whom Hassan is now calling on to make the supreme sacrifice so he can achieve his expansionist aims.

In Morocco, less than 30 percent of the children of school age go to school, and only 1.8 percent of those who do reach the university. Seventy percent of those who enter elementary school don't complete it, and 93 percent of those who enter junior high school don't reach the university.

In the field of medicine, the large foreign pharmaceutical companies control the market and prices so much that poor families find it very difficult to buy even a box of aspirin — for it sells for the same price as half a pound of meat. In a country in which the general manager of a company is paid 10 000 dirhams a month, a street cleaner is paid only 290. Family welfare payments, which come to only 24 dirhams, have to stretch to meet a rocketing cost of living in which a pediatrician charges 40 dirhams, a general practitioner charges from 25 to 35, a schoolbook costs 24 and a child's pair of slacks costs 30.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, Hassan's call was echoed by his followers and the tolerated and tolerant opposition. The "nationalist" daily *L'Opinion*; the "pro-governmental" *Al Anbaa*; *Al Bavane*, organ of the Progress and Socialism Party; *Special Maroc*; the "liberal" *Al Magrib*; and *Al Alam*, of the Istiqlal Party, rushed to deliberately hide the truth about the situation in the southern part of the country from the Moroccan people. All wrote articles and published reports in which they referred

<sup>12</sup> "Réception en l'honneur de Sa Majesté le Roi, offerte par le premier ministre et ministre de la justice, à l'occasion du voyage triomphal de Sa Majesté à la ville marocaine de Dakhla," mimeographed bulletin in French issued by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Havana, no. 12/B/80, March 19, 1980.

<sup>13</sup> The data were taken from various Moroccan newspapers. At the beginning of this year, inflation was more than 15 percent in Morocco. The trade deficit rose to \$1.217 billion. The military budget approved by the Legislature rose to \$375 million, or double the budget for agricultural development and 2.8 times as much as was earmarked for education. Hassan II himself, clearly fudging the figures, stated that the war was costing Morocco an average of \$250 000 a day. (*Prensa Latina*, January 7, 1980.)



to victories for FARM in Ouarkiz, following the same tone as an official communiqué issued by Maroc Press under the title "Algiers Describes Catastrophic Defeat Dealt Mercenaries as 'Great Victory'":

"During the last few days, the Royal Armed Forces have engaged in combing and mop-up operations in the Oued Tighzert region, toward N'Gueb and Zag, to destroy the mercenaries' hiding places.

"In the course of the operations, our Royal Armed Forces have inflicted considerable losses on the enemy, in terms of both men and matériel.

"The Royal Air Force has participated in the combats, destroying dozens of enemy vehicles and other matériel.

"The combing and mop-up operations are still going on, relentlessly pursuing the survivors, who are in full flight back to their bases.

"Foreigners have been noted among the mercenaries, who used modern, sophisticated weapons."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> "Communiqué relatif à la situation dans le sud marocain," mimeographed bulletin in, French issued by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Havana, no. 2/C/80 March 19, 1980.

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## Whose mercenaries?

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Ever since Morocco first attacked Western Sahara in 1975, one of the main accusations the Rabat government has directed against the POLISARIO Front and its guerrillas has been the spurious claim that they are "mercenaries from Algiers" at the service of Algeria — which, according to Rabat's line, is opposed to Morocco's reintegration of its former Saharan provinces.

These accusations have been supplemented in recent times with reports that there are fighters in the ranks of POLISARIO who don't have the ethnic characteristics of the people of the region. Morocco has therefore accused the Saharawi national liberation organization of internationalizing the conflict by bringing in mercenaries.

In fact, the ones who have internationalized the conflict right from the start — by bringing in French and US advisers and instructors — have been the Rabat government and its Western allies. During the battle of Ouarkziz, several South African ARV-MK-6 armored vehicles were captured. These are French AML-90s produced in Pretoria under another name.

Moreover, ever since mid-1979, the presence of Egyptian instructors and pilots at the battle sites has been noted and denounced. Their presence shows what a conciliating position the Moroccan government has assumed regarding Sadat's betrayal of the Arab and Palestinian cause.

Gradually, in its efforts to obtain support for its expansionist adventure in the Sahara, Hassan's government has aligned itself with the worst, most reactionary causes in the Arab world and Africa. Hassan II was one of the first few leaders in the region who applauded Sadat's "peace initiative" at Camp David. In spite of his frequent allusions to his own Africanism, Hassan II used South African arms in waging his war of aggression against the Saharawi people. Following the POLISARIO Front's recent actions in southern Morocco, the guerrillas announced that they had captured South African mercenaries who were fighting for FARM.

These facts contrast sharply with Moroccan Prime Minister Maati Bouabid's statements at the 6th Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, where he declared, "The policy of **apartheid**, of racial segregation, practiced by the minority regimes of Pretoria and Salisbury can never be condemned enough."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Government of the Republic of Cuba, *Addresses Delivered at the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries*, Social Sciences Publishers, Havana, 1980, p. 500.

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## Prospects for the future

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During the international press' visit to the combat area in the Ouarkiz region, Mohamed Abdelaziz, General Secretary of the POLISARIO Front and Chairman of the Command Council of the Saharawi Revolution, met with the correspondents for a press conference, at which he clearly set forth the POLISARIO Front's position on future actions in southern Morocco: "Our presence here doesn't mean that we like war or wish to be in other people's territory. This is an operation of self-defense, to seek respect for our people's sovereignty in their national territory. If the King persists in his intransigent efforts to occupy our national territory, he will find us farther north, in Morocco."<sup>16</sup>

In 1980, despite Morocco's efforts to dislodge the ELPS units from southern Morocco, the Saharawi guerrillas held on to their positions, posing a permanent threat to the security of the Moroccan rearguard and endangering large-scale military operations in Western Sahara.

During the fighting in the Ras El Khanfra region, in which the forces of the 6th, 8th and 10th Regiments of FARM and the Special Al Rak Group of infantry and armored vehicles were defeated in much the same way as the units of Force F were in Operation Imann, the ELPS' capacity for carrying out its leader's promises was demonstrated.

King Hassan's Saharan war prospects don't look very promising for his people, who are ever more impoverished by the economic crisis aggravated by the war and are forced to serve as cannon fodder in the war in the desert. After the defeat at Ouarkiz, the Moroccan King called on his people to renounce their freedom and to serve the cause of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. This boils down to the "voluntary" renunciation of a nonexistent freedom and can only mean certain death for the soldiers in the stony south and even worse poverty for their widows and children, for whom the monarchy won't lift a finger.

Two weeks after the disaster, Hassan II went to Paris to talk with Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the French President, whom the King described on another occasion as a "perfect comrade".<sup>17</sup> When asked about

<sup>16</sup> POLISARIO Front, *op. cit.*, taken from "Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz' Press Conference..." *loc. cit.*; Agencia de Prensa Española EFE, "EL POLISARIO desplaza su campo de operaciones hacia el norte del Sahara: la guerra, en Marruecos," *Pueblo*, March 18, 1980; and "Dos mil hombres habría perdido el ejército de Hassan en la batalla de Ametti," *El País*, March 18, 1980.

<sup>17</sup> "Discours de S.M. Hassan II" and "Annexe XI.— Discours prononcée le 6 mai 1975 à Rabat, au cours du déjeuner offert par le président Valéry Giscard d'Estaing a S.M. Hassan II," *Hassan II: Le défi*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1976, p. 280.



his troops' defeat in southern Morocco, Hassan declared, "It's all a lie, a big lie. It is harder to report what is true than to grind out propaganda. Morocco is a state, and it issues information. What you have here is subversive agitation — subversion, not information. Now, to set things straight, I challenge any one of you to present an incorrect figure that has appeared in an official [Moroccan] communiqué. We can't say the same for the other side."<sup>18</sup>

It seems that his style for governing his kingdom and running the Army is simply to deny the truth and lie through his teeth. The truth, however, will always out, and King Hassan and his propagandists' lies and fabrications will be shown up for what they are. It may well be that the time is not far off when his own people will mobilize their immense forces, which have been lulled by false leaders, and will have the last word in this absurd and bloody war that pits them against their brothers in Western Sahara. ■

<sup>18</sup> "Déclaration de Sa Majesté Hassan II," mimeographed bulletin in French issued by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Havana, no. 16/B/80, March 25, 1980.

# EGYPT: 10 YEARS AFTER NASSER

E. GOMEZ



## INTRODUCTION

**O**N July 23, 1952, the Egyptian people ushered in a new era. On that day, the Egyptian Revolution, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, overthrew King Farouk's corrupt regime, and the bases for the country's independent development were laid — development which would have tremendous international repercussions, especially in the other Arab countries.

"The Revolution of Free Officers" took measures to benefit the people, defended the country's natural resources, planned and began its economic development, put an end to dependency and reduced the influence of the Western powers that had had things more or less their own way. Egypt stood up against imperialist threats and attacks; adopted a positive policy of non-alignment; was one of the most prestigious founders of the Non-Aligned Movement; and gave a boost to aid for the national liberation movements, becoming a champion of the peoples' struggles for independence and a firm ally of democratic, progressive forces throughout the world.

The Egyptian Revolution supported the Palestinian and Arab peoples attacked by Zionism.

Here, however, we do not intend to review the Egyptian and other Arab peoples' achievements during Nasser's era. We have only mentioned them in passing so the reader may have this background to contrast with what has happened in the ten years since his death.



Gamal Abdel Nasser

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### **Sadat, or the silence of the sepulchres**

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More than 150 000 people live in Cairo's cemetery, either inside the tombs or next to them, using them as walls and columns for their hovels. This is no exaggeration; in fact, it is a conservative estimate.

When Sadat marshalled his demagogic arguments for trying to give his traitorous attitude some basis, he kept insisting that peace with Israel would mean a new era of economic well-being for the Egyptian people, since the resources that were being used for military purposes would be spent to raise the people's standard of living.

Ten years after Nasser, the macabre scene of Cairo's cemetery is a clear illustration of where the Egyptian people have been led by Anuar el-Sadat's capitulationist policy.

Another basic slogan of Sadat's is that, since the United States holds more than 90 percent of the cards in the Middle East, it is the only one that can pressure Israel into withdrawing from the occupied territories so the Arab-Israeli conflict can be "solved."

With this argument, Sadat is trying to deny the historic reality of the Palestinian people's struggle; the Egyptian people's own struggle, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser; the Arab peoples' efforts and sacrifices; the position of firm solidarity maintained by the democratic and revolutionary forces; and the support provided by the socialist countries — especially the USSR — for the Arab countries' confrontation of the imperialist-Zionist aggression.

Obviously, Sadat was trying to fool Egyptian public opinion with this spurious reasoning, attempting to cover up the political about-face which he had been planning ever since Nasser's time, when he accepted expensive presents from reactionary Arab leaders who, it is said, placed him in contact with top CIA agents.

For US imperialism, that had been trying for some time to forge an alliance that would enable it to conciliate the reactionary countries in the area with the Zionist state, Sadat's fortuitous coming to power was a golden opportunity. Henry Kissinger's trips and interviews were all to convince one who was already convinced and who was just looking for the best way to betray his people.

First of all, Egypt's political, economic and social structure had to be changed, wiping out the bases laid by Gamal Abdel Nasser's regime. Second, Egypt had to be enmeshed in every

possible way in US economic, political and military strategy. To promote these aims, Sadat launched a series of new slogans that consolidated the betrayal step by step:

"We must establish special relations with the United States to offset its position on the Arab-Israeli conflict. We must win its confidence."

"We must limit the international polarization and take the Arab-Israeli conflict out of the context of a worldwide confrontation so it can be solved."

"We must adopt a policy of 'orthodox non-alignment' and take a similar position toward both the United States and the Soviet Union."

"We must develop an open-door policy to promote foreign investment, which is needed for our economic growth."

In general terms, these were the pillars of Sadat's great demagogic campaign, with which he proceeded to turn the country over to US interests; weakened and destroyed Egypt's relations with its historic allies, especially the USSR; tried to remove the liberating, anti-imperialist content from the policy of non-alignment; and presented such a distorted view of the international situation that the Middle East conflict was made to appear as a product of the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Along with these slogans and propaganda, Sadat also launched a nationwide purge of all pro-Nasser political elements. Many officials and leaders of political and social organizations and of administrative and educational agencies were fired, and some were imprisoned.

The Egyptian President hurriedly took a number of decisive steps prior to the October 1973 war. His purpose was to show clearly that, in spite of the confrontation with Israel, he was determined to set his country on a new, pro-imperialist course.

On May 14, 1971, he accused his main opponents in the government — pro-Nasser, democratic, progressive figures with great prestige — of plotting to seize power. Ali Sabri, Vice President of the Republic, and Ministers Charaoui Gomaa and Sami Sharaf were imprisoned for life. General Fawzi, Minister of War, was given a 15-year sentence.

During this period, the General Secretary of the Arab Socialist Union, the President of the People's Assembly and several other Ministers were also arrested.

In 1972, the Soviet military advisers were expelled from Egypt, and another purge of the Armed Forces took place. In October 1972, ten more Generals were dismissed.

Similar changes were made in the cultural institutions, the press and other mass media.

All these changes in the superstructure, plus the reactionaries' takeover of posts in public, economic and cultural institutions, were aimed at effecting deep structural changes and strengthening the economic base of the upper bourgeoisie as the main support for the regime. The financial and commercial bourgeoisie and blatantly parasitic businessmen have been pushing out the agrarian, bureaucratic bourgeoisie ever since that bitter struggle took place.

Also starting in 1971, the first steps of what was later called the "liberalization of the economy" were taken, using special laws to open up the country to petrodollars from the Gulf countries linked to the monopolies and transnationals.

Laws were passed to stimulate foreign capital investments, granting a number of incentives to investment and commercial banks and insurance companies (the right to export profits, tax exemption, etc.).

Labor legislation was also changed substantially with the passage of a law on "social peace," giving owners and managers the right to fire workers and setting harsh penalties for participation in strikes.

Saudi Arabia played a special role at this stage by supporting Sadat's policies and encouraging Egypt to take ever more reactionary position of greater conciliation with imperialism. Aid from Saudi Arabia staved off the imminent economic collapse to which the country was exposed by the adoption of its "open-door" policy.

Contacts with representatives of the United States were also increased. As Muhamad Kassanien Heikal, an Egyptian journalist and politician, said in his book **The Way of Ramadan**, close contact was maintained in 1972 and 1973 through two channels: one official, or diplomatic, and the other secret, through the CIA.

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### **The 1973 war**

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In spite of the Saudi Arabian aid and the Egyptian ringleaders' demagogy, the situation grew extremely difficult for Sadat in 1973. Discontent spread within the Army and among the people, the "neither war nor peace" state of affairs couldn't be prolonged and the country's economy couldn't withstand its military expenditures.

Pressured by this situation, Sadat launched the Yom Kippur War — more for political than for military reasons, as shown by the Egyptians' leadership of the war, which began with the



successful crossing of the Canal and then bogged down in indecisiveness, tactical errors and lack of initiative.

Clearly, Sadat's attitude was influenced by the promises he had made and by his desire to come to an understanding with Israel, even at the expense of Syria, the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab liberation and revolutionary movement.

General Chazli, former Chief of Staff, referred to this in his memoirs as follows: "We could have won much more in the October war if we had fought it according to our plans rather than those imposed by the enemy."



Following the October 1973 war — in which, in spite of the attitude taken by Sadat's regime, the USSR gave the Egyptian people and their Armed Forces decisive support — Sadat openly espoused conciliation with US imperialism, adopting a plan for solving the Middle East problem that basically promoted Washington's interests.

This plan called for establishing a new alliance of forces in the area, in which the reactionary Arab countries and Israel would defend imperialist interests. It also called for excluding the Soviet Union; the Palestinian resistance; and the independent, progressive Arab countries from participation in the search for a solution to the Middle East conflict.

In fact, the United States was defending its own interests in the area, which is rich in energy resources and an important geographic and communications center. It sought to extend its military presence in furtherance of its 'strategy of world domination and to repress the national liberation movements and other revolutionary forces.

Yet, this imperialist power — that had played an active part in creating the Zionist creature and had given it decisive support in its expansionist struggle against the Arab peoples — became a "mediator" or "arbiter," thanks to Anwar el-Sadat.

But this wasn't all. The Egyptian President had even greater ambitions in his sell-out policy. He offered himself to the United States as its gendarme in the Arab world, basing his offer on the claim that he would be more acceptable than the Zionists and could, therefore, do a better job of it.

On the basis of these ideas, Egypt and Israel signed the so-called separation of forces accords. Since this was done bilaterally, against the interests of the other Arab countries, those countries denounced them roundly. Continuing along the same tack, Egypt's and Israel's next move was to sign the Camp David Agreements and the so-called peace treaty.

In its attempt to create an economic, political and social base for its plans and also in response to US imperialism's demands, Sadat's regime increased its activity during the years following the 1973 war, freeing those who had been imprisoned for political reasons during Nasser's government and reinstating rightist political leaders, imposing greater press censorship, denationalizing important sectors of the economy, establishing the Joint Cooperation Commission with the United States, giving a number of US banks and other financial institutions the right to open branches in Egypt, decreeing laws that restricted the right to political association, launching a new wave of repression against journalists opposed to the regime, carrying out periodic

purges in the Armed Forces and using bribery and corruption as means for buying men and neutralizing potential enemies in all spheres of public administration.

The visits to Egypt by various US dignitaries, including Presidents Nixon in 1974 and Carter in 1978, and several visits to the United States by Sadat led to new agreements and pledges on the international plane that complemented the domestic measures taken during that period.

Thus Egyptian policy was transformed by means of a series of concessions to US demands and Zionist intransigence. Sadat stated that any Palestinian state that might be created should be institutionally linked to Jordan, renouncing the Palestinian people's historic goal of creating an independent state. He further recognized the State of Israel and, in November 1977, paid a visit to Jerusalem. Later on, diplomatic relations were established and steps taken to further collaboration (military included) between the two countries.

The agreements that Sadat signed with Israel gave the Zionists greater security and military strength, while Egypt lost all its possibilities for defense. Israel was freed to concentrate its attacks against Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian resistance. The last two are being subjected even now to particularly heavy criminal attacks in southern Lebanon — while Egyptian leaders look on impassively.

As a result of Sadat's sellout, the Zionists have become even more ambitious and inflexible. They have continued to set up new Jewish settlements or colonies in the occupied Arab territories, stepped up their repression of the Palestinian population, declared Jerusalem to be the historic and indivisible capital of the State of Israel and threatened to contest the status of the Golan Heights and incorporate them in their territory.

After the regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi was overthrown in Iran, it became more imperative than ever for the United States to firm up an agreement in the Middle East that, while pretending to be a search for peace, would really constitute a new military alliance. The establishment of US military bases in Israel and the control or supervision of the Sinai and the other facilities granted by Egypt form part of the agreements that are complemented with other military installations in the Red Sea, the Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

In line with the so-called peace treaty, Egypt has not only withdrawn from the confrontation with Israel but has also begun to participate along with it in imperialist plans. In this situation, the Egyptian Armed Forces will be the center of attention for



Sadat, Carter and Begin at the signing of the Camp David Agreements

Sadat's regime, the Zionists and imperialism, even though their interests do not coincide in all respects.

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### **The Egyptian Army**

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In an attempt to justify his attitude toward Israel, Sadat has told the Armed Forces that peace with Israel will not detract from the prestige of Egyptian military men and that the Army that won the October war will not be weakened by the peace.

Nevertheless, in spite of constant demagogic campaigns, the facts show that the Egyptian Army has never been weaker or more demoralized. The Zionist leaders are pleased by this situation, for they have nothing to fear along their frontier with Egypt.

The Egyptian soldiers' morale is even lower than at the time of their 1967 defeat. At that time, the officers and soldiers knew who their enemies and who their friends were. They knew they were fighting alongside the other Arab peoples for the same historic cause. They knew who supported them and who opposed that cause.

Now, however, the Egyptian Army cannot answer these questions. Those who supported them in the struggle against the Zionist aggressor are now portrayed as their enemies. US imperialism, which has been the main bulwark for their enemies and gave the Zionist state the financial and military resources it needed to wage its expansionist wars against the Arab peoples, is now presented as not only a friend but an ally. And all this while Israel still occupies Egyptian territory; while the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan Heights are still occupied; and while the Palestinian people, struggling for their legitimate right to return to their land and establish their own independent state, are constantly attacked.

The arms that the Egyptian military command wants to buy and is purchasing in the United States will not be used against Israel. President Sadat stated this clearly in an interview published in the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Ahranot* last April. He made similar promises during the Camp David negotiations and to US leaders.

The Egyptian privates and many NCOs who are not involved in the corruption that has corroded the higher levels of the Armed Forces are more confused than ever. Why are they told to oppose Libya, their historic ally? Why are they being trained to take part in conflicts with African countries that traditionally supported Egypt in its confrontation with Israel?

Something similar is occurring as regards their arms and technical and combat readiness. Even though the regime's press proclaims that the United States is going to sell Egypt billions of dollars' worth of arms, none have arrived. Never before has their fighting capacity been lower, and never before have Egypt's arsenals been so empty. And, even when the promised arms begin to arrive, the fighting-capacity of the Armed Forces will still remain near zero for a long time, because it will take at least five years to assimilate the new technology.

Moreover, the constant changes the regime has made at the intermediate and higher command levels of the Armed Forces have created an even more critical situation. The government gives many officers sinecures to assure their allegiance. Incompetence and indolence abound. Morale has never been so low.

Symptoms of discontent are beginning to appear among the (still limited) sectors of the Armed Forces that do not support Sadat's policy, conciliation with Israel and the handing over of the country to US interests. The Yankee advisers show their scorn for the Egyptians, scoff at their military unreadiness and discriminate against them. At the same time, the Egyptians resist and reject the advisers, for they do not take easily to changing the methods and organization they had already mastered. This situation is of concern to the regime's security apparatus within the Armed Forces.

Proclamations signed by an organization called **The New Free Officers** have circulated in the military camps. Even though such opposition is still weak and can't be considered very important as yet, its explosive potential should not be underestimated, in view of the country's terrible socioeconomic problems.

The US government is well aware of this and is not entirely complacent about Egypt. This is why, in spite of Sadat's sell-out attitude, its penetration in the country has been very cautious and lack of confidence in the regime has led it to try to obtain control over the country by withholding food shipments.

Egypt needs an estimated 5.894 billion tons of cereals each year, which constitute the mainstay of the people's diet. Around 67 percent must be imported, and the United States provides an appreciable amount by means of credits that make Egypt dependent on it, since the country's food reserves will only last five weeks. All it takes is a delay in a few shipments of cereals to bring Sadat to his knees.

In recent years, Egypt's food imports from the United States have risen to more than \$1.5 billion worth, according to **Arab Report and Memo**.

The United States is afraid of a new, Arabic Iran. It is afraid of making Egypt a powerful gendarme, because it knows that the giant has feet of clay. Because of this, imperialism has also been working on a special military model for the Egyptian Armed Forces, structuring the Egyptian Army in a number of mobile units that can be used as shock troops in rapid strikes in any conservative Arab country that is threatened by a revolutionary change. The Egyptian Army doesn't need large amounts of weapons — or even the most modern, advanced military technology — to play this role, since it would only complement the US forces stationed in the area and the forces of the Zionists, who have very powerful, sophisticated weapons. Recently, the Pentagon sent the first detachment of 1400 men as part of

the rapid strike forces, to participate in exercises along with the Egyptian Army.

The United States sent A-7 fighter planes and F-111 bombers from its bases in Europe as the first deployment of rapid strike forces outside the United States — showing not only the growing military ties between Washington and Cairo but also how imperialism intends to use the Egyptian Army.

By limiting Egypt's military development, the US government also assuages Israeli fears and suspicions of Egypt, not so much as an enemy but rather as a potentially cheaper, more useful gendarme for the United States. The Egyptian regime knows this and is working along this line, making one offer and concession after another to the United States to show its loyalty and similarity of interests. This is why Egypt has troops in the Sudan, Oman and Somalia; has attacked Libya and constantly threatens it; and has provided Zaire and Morocco with military collaboration and support. And, when the US government was faced with the problem of where to send former Shah Reza Pahlavi, the Egyptian President stepped into the breach.

Egypt has offered to let the United States set up a series of air bases in its territory. General Lew Allen, Chief of Staff of the US Air Force, visited Egypt in April 1980. William Creech, commander of the tactical air force, has inspected the Egyptian air bases. Other US military missions have toured Egypt to examine the facilities offered for their operations in the area, especially against Iran and the African countries. These and other visits wound up with the signing of an agreement on cooperation which contemplates the United States' use of Egyptian air bases.

Not long ago, **The Washington Post** reported that the Ras Banas Base, on the Red Sea, was being remodeled at a cost of \$400 million so a US division could be stationed there and it could be turned into one of the support points for US strategy in the area, along with the bases obtained in Somalia, Kenya and Oman and the other facilities offered by Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Boeing 707 AWACS (airborne warning and control system) planes with electronic detection and radar equipment have been stationed at the Qena base, near Aswan, and have been operating in and around Egypt since December 1979.

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### **The new alliance**

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Now, after ten years of Sadat's rule, a basis for tactical and strategic cooperation among the Armed Forces of Egypt, Israel

and the United States has been created. US Senator Henry Jackson has openly proposed something that has been in the minds of US politicians and Pentagon and CIA strategists for some time: the creation of a regional defense pact to "protect the Middle East area," its members to consist of Egypt, Israel, other reactionary countries in the area and the United States.

In fact, military intelligence and counterintelligence activities are already coordinated. Major General Labib Sharab, head of the Egyptian Military Intelligence Service, and General Yehoshua Sagg, Director of Israeli Military Intelligence, meet regularly. (For example, they met in Tel Aviv and Cairo in February and March 1980.)

In April 1980, General Abraham Tamir, Israeli Deputy Minister of Defense for National Security, participated in talks in Cairo. That same month, Admiral Zew Almog, chief of the Zionist Navy, visited the port of Alexandria at the head of a military flotilla. Through the intensive contacts between the high-ranking Egyptian and Israeli military chiefs, Sadat has shown his determination to make the Egyptian Army a trustworthy friend of his Israeli colleagues.

Recently, during Israeli President Isaac Navon's visit to Egypt, new measures were announced for bringing the two governments even closer together. The possibility of building railroads and





highways linking the two countries through the Sinai was discussed, and it was decided to open the El Arish border pass to trade, increase the number of the Israeli airline's flights and provide more facilities for Israeli tourists in Egypt. A so-called General Peace Garrison was created, to study how to go about developing and deepening the rapprochement between the two countries.

The alliance is clearly advantageous for Israel, which seeks to take advantage of its partner's weakness so as to penetrate its markets and use cheap Egyptian labor. The Jewish plan is much more ambitious than just this, though, for it includes using Egypt as a toehold for getting at other Arab and African countries that may provide it with a way out of its growing economic problems. At base, the alliance constitutes a plan for the total domination and exploitation of Egypt and its later use for achieving similar objectives in the area — to benefit Zionism and imperialism.

Throughout the ten years he has held power and practiced this policy of conciliation with the enemy, selling out the interests and resources of his people and betraying them, Sadat has ignored and scorned the real feelings of the Egyptian people. Nevertheless, history has shown that it is impossible to subjugate and despise an entire people forever.

Egypt is like a smouldering volcano. The uprisings in January 1977 were a partial eruption. The millions of voices that were raised on that occasion denouncing the counterrevolutionary policy of Sadat's regime and defending the achievements of Nasser's Revolution indicate the explosive potential.

The subjective conditions for correctly analyzing this potential are being developed. Nothing can hold back the Egyptian people's struggle to rescue their country from the rule of imperialism, Zionism and the reaction. New officers and leaders will emerge from the people to restore their dignity and obtain final victory.

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## **CHRONOLOGY OF BETRAYAL**

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**October 15, 1970**

Anuar el-Sadat became President of the Republic.

**May 14, 1971**

Sadat launched his first great counterrevolutionary offensive to remove from power the main pro-Nasser, democratic and progressive forces that opposed his sell-out, traitorous policy. He accused his opponents of having engaged in a plot and began a series of trials in which Ali Sabri, Vice President of the Republic, and Ministers Charaoui Gomaa and Sami Sharaf were condemned to death. (Their sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment.)

General Fawzi, Minister of War, was given a 15-year sentence.

The removal, trial and sentencing of these leaders was carried out in the midst of a process of changes and firings in the administrative and political bodies. The General Secretary of the Arab Socialist Union, the President of the People's Assembly and several Ministers resigned and were arrested. The purge continued during the following months.

**July 18, 1972**

Sadat announced the expulsion of Soviet military advisers and technicians.

**October 26, 1972**

After several incidents and demonstrations within the Armed Forces, General Mohamed Sadik, Minister of War, was removed. A vast purge was effected among the military. Ten Generals were dismissed.

**October 16, 1973**

Sadat announced that, if Israel agreed to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, he would agree to try to convince the Palestinians to take part in a conference at which peace terms would be discussed.

**December 12, 1973**

General Saadeddine Chazli, Chief of Staff, and the heads of the 2nd and 3rd Armies were relieved of their duties.

### **January 18, 1974**

The first separation of forces accord between Egypt and Israel was signed. The Palestinian resistance denounced this step, pointing out that it constituted a partial, bilateral solution.

### **January 30, 1974**

As part of his so-called political and economic liberalization measures, Sadat freed several individuals who had been imprisoned by Nasser. Several reactionary political figures were reinstated, press censorship was tightened and 250 movie theaters that had been nationalized were returned to their former owners. Similar measures were taken in the construction and transportation sectors.

### **May 31, 1974**

Egypt and the United States signed an agreement setting up a joint commission to promote cooperation in the economic, scientific and cultural spheres. The signing of the document was preceded by speeches by Anwar el-Sadat in which he paid homage to the US position, stating that its attitude in the Arab-Israeli conflict had changed radically.

### **June 9, 1974**

The Egyptian People's Assembly passed Law 43, which opened Egypt up to foreign capital.

In the months that followed, several agreements were signed with both governmental and private US agencies. Cautiously but greedily, the transnationals moved in on the Egyptian economy. The United States insisted that its investments be financed by Arab capital, with the United States providing the technology and Egypt, the cheap work force. The handing over of Egypt's economy did not, however, produce the hoped-for results.

### **June 12, 1974**

Sadat welcomed US President Richard M. Nixon in Cairo. The United States pledged to give Egypt economic aid, while Egypt agreed to open its doors to Yankee investments.

### **January 1975**

A wave of arrests sent hundreds of students and workers to prison for expressing their disagreement with the regime's political and economic line. The government claimed that the incidents had been premeditated and blamed the Communists.

### **June 1-2, 1975**

President Sadat met with US President Ford in Salzburg. The United States made new promises of economic aid as a reward for the signing of the second separation of forces accord and for new concessions by Egypt.

### **September 1, 1975**

The second separation of forces accord was signed with Israel. Sadat expressed his desire for peace. The progressive Arab countries accused him of betraying the Arab cause. As soon as the accord was signed, Washington announced that Egypt would receive \$1.5-2.5 million in economic aid. The PLO denounced the accord, saying it was both military and political, since it swept the Palestinian question under the rug. Sadat's government banned further broadcasting of the Cairo radio program **The Voice of Palestine**.

### **October 26, 1975**

In response to an invitation extended by President Ford, Sadat visited the United States at the head of a large delegation.

### **March 15, 1976**

Sadat renounced the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation which Egypt had signed with the Soviet Union on May 27, 1971. At the same time, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger announced the United States' first sale of military transport planes to Egypt.

### **December 30, 1976**

Sadat declared that any Palestinian state that might be created should be institutionally linked to Jordan. Up until then, Egypt had called for the creation of an independent Palestinian state. A few days later, he let it be known that he was ready to sign a peace treaty that would recognize the State of Israel.

### **January 18-19, 1977**

Egypt was swept by a wave of demonstrations. A massive price hike triggered these actions, and, with unusual violence, the masses took to the streets in Cairo and other cities to express their rejection of the Sadat regime's reactionary policy. These events, comparable only to those of 1952, left a toll of 79 dead, 800 wounded and 1200 arrested. The government blamed the leftist organizations — especially the Communists — for the demonstrations and stepped up its repressive measures.

### **April 3-6, 1977**

Sadat visited the United States. In his talks with President Carter, he asked for US weapons to fight against "Soviet penetration in Africa." They exchanged views on a so-called peace treaty for the Middle East.

### **July 1977**

Sadat launched a military attack against Libya.

### **November 19-21, 1977**

Sadat visited Jerusalem, adding yet another insult to his betrayal of the Arab peoples — especially the Palestinians. A wave of protest swept through the Middle East.

### **November 26, 1977**

Five days after his return from Jerusalem, President Sadat hurriedly announced his readiness to welcome to Cairo all parties to the conflict, to discuss his "peace initiative." The conference opened on December 14 with the participation of only Egypt, Israel and US observers. Not one of the Arab countries would touch it.

### **December 25, 1977**

Anwar el-Sadat and Menachem Begin met again in Ismailia, Egypt.

### **January 4, 1978**

US President James Carter met with President Sadat in Aswan, Egypt.

### **May 15, 1978**

The US Senate approved the sale of 50 F-5E fighter planes to Egypt.

### **May 1978**

As part of his "process of liberalization," Sadat restricted party freedoms and launched a new wave of repressive measures against journalists who dared to oppose him.

### **September 17, 1978**

Under US auspices, Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David Agreements. Presidents Sadat and Carter and Prime Minister

Menachem Begin signed the basic document for the so-called peace treaty.

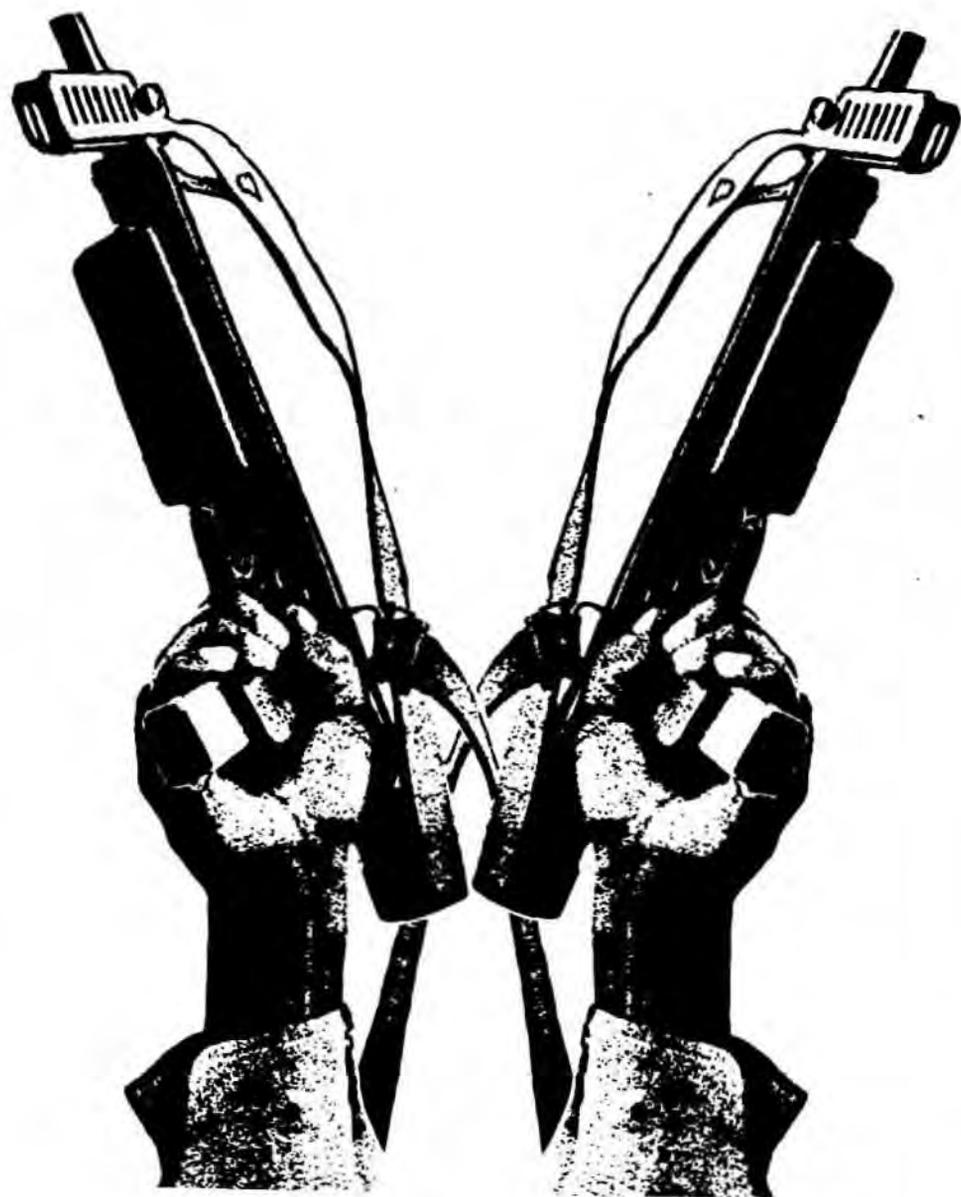
**March 26, 1979**

The peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was signed, paving the way for the normalization of relations between the two countries.

**January 26, 1980**

Diplomatic relations were established between Egypt and Israel. On February 18, the Israeli flag was officially raised in Cairo.

In the months that followed, public telecommunications were established between the two countries, an Israeli merchant vessel and two warships traversed the Canal for the first time, trade contacts were established and regular flights were initiated between Cairo and Tel Aviv. A cultural exchange agreement was signed by the two countries. ■



ON THE DOUBLE:  
THE BATTLE OF  
**GIRON**

H. ZUMBADO

Cuban writer H. Zumbado and Arnaldo Tacoronte, who fought at Playa Girón, are co-authors of the book *¡Compañía, Atención!* (Company, Attention!), which won the 26th of July Contest sponsored by the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces in 1975.

Zumbado has selected some excerpts from the book, which we publish here in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the historic battle of Playa Girón.



**T**HE battle began in the early morning of Monday, April 17, 1961, when the Second Infantry Battalion of mercenary troops landed at Playa Larga, on the Bay of Pigs, and at Playa Girón, some 35 miles to the east, in accord with the plan for Operation Pluto, drawn up by the CIA and the Pentagon.

The plan, of course, didn't take into account the fact that a battalion of militiamen was operating in the zone: Battalion 339, from Cienfuegos, armed only with .R-2 rifles and submachine guns, but determined to fight the enemy.

The paratroopers of the mercenary First Battalion were dropped a bit farther north, near Pálpite and Soplillar. Caught between the two enemy forces, Battalion 339 defended itself heroically as it was hit from both sides.

Some 30 kilometers north of Playa Larga, at the Australia Sugar Mill, from 200 to 300 men assembled and asked for arms. The seven available guns were given to a people's patrol, headed by the sugar mill's administrator, which went out to check on the two farmers' cooperatives in the area, where paratroopers were said to have landed. The patrol returned quickly, reporting the singular fact that it had been attacked along the road by a B-26 bomber bearing Cuban insignia — though Havana confirmed that no Cuban B-26s were in the air.

At 8 a.m., acting on orders from Fidel, Captain Fernández — "the Gallego" — head of the Matanzas School for Militia Chiefs, arrived at the Australia Sugar Mill with part of a battalion from the school.

Fidel arrived soon afterwards and, as Commander in Chief of the Cuban Revolution, immediately set up General Staff headquarters in the Australia Sugar Mill.

The rest of the battalion arrived from the Matanzas School for Militia



**Chiefs** — six companies and two mortar batteries — making a total of some 700 men. Pálpite and Soplillar had to be captured, at once, to establish a firm base.

At the same time, the old, patched-up planes of the Revolutionary Air Force — which weren't included in the plan for Operation Pluto, either — took off from the San Antonio de los Baños Air Base.

The ancient Sea Furies, T-33s and B-26s began flying over the Bay of Pigs. Below were the landing craft and the mercenary ship *Aguja* — the former *Houston* — armed with anti-aircraft guns. In the air, there were enemy B-26s. A rocket hit the García Line's *Aguja*, and the ship went down, tossing members of the Fifth Infantry Battalion into the sea, where some drowned and others managed to swim to shore.

Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Air Force and Cuban anti-aircraft units — all of which Operation Pluto had ignored — shot down one, two, three, four, five enemy B-26s.

Cuban planes made 17 flights that day, losing a B-26 piloted by Luis Silva Tablada and a fighter plane flown by Lieutenant Carlos Ulloa, a Nicaraguan pilot who fought along with the Cuban Revolutionary Air Force.

At midday on April 17, Pálpite and Soplillar were captured, and the march toward Playa Larga began. At 1 p.m., B-26s bearing Cuban insignia greeted the advancing Battalion of Militia Chiefs. It was a trap: the planes then turned and strafed the battalion with .50-caliber machine guns, also using rockets, bombs and napalm. The houses in Pálpite were set on fire.

At 4:30 p.m., Fidel set up the Pálpite Command Post, from which the attack on Playa Larga was to be launched that night.

Darkness fell.

On that first day of the battle of Girón, a well-trained, well-armed mercenary brigade of 1500 men, wearing arm bands with a white cross on a blue



and green background bearing the number 2506, invaded the southern part of what was then Las Villas Province, seizing Playa Larga and Playa Girón.

The advance paratroopers dropped near Pálpite and Soplillar were forced back, but the invaders dug in at Playa Larga, with the revolutionary troops holding firm in the Zapata Swamp, just opposite.

Other revolutionary troops were advancing toward Girón: from the north, past the Covadonga Sugar Mill; from the northeast, via Horquita; and from the east, all along the coast. The situation was tightening up.

Then came the great surprise. The planes that weren't there, according to Operation Pluto, turned out to be very much in evidence, doing plenty of damage.

By nightfall on April 17, the first day of battle, the enemy had lost five planes and five ships (more than half

its total fleet), but it remained entrenched at Playa Larga throughout that night.

The Second Infantry Battalion, which had landed with the backing of two squadrons from the Heavy Weapons Battalion — one armed with .50-caliber machine guns and the other with recoilless rifles — was joined by the remnants of the Fifth Battalion, which had been dumped into the sea by the *Aguja*, and a motorized company from the Fourth Battalion — two M-41 Walker Bulldog tanks and a 106.7-mm. mortar platoon from Playa Girón.

All this reinforced the enemy's position at Playa Larga.

The enemy found a triangular open space with a mound of earth where its guns could be placed and tanks hidden — a narrow strip of land no more than 200 meters long on which it emplaced all its mortars, machine guns, recoilless rifles, tanks and infantry troops.

Ahead lay the road to Pálpite — so straight that the enemy could adjust the fire of its .50-caliber guns to cover



the road for three or four kilometers, making it extremely difficult for the revolutionary troops to advance.

But they did: the Battalion of Militia Chiefs and the Special Combat Column of the Rebel Army advanced on Playa Larga with tanks, 122-mm. howitzers, 37- and 85-mm. guns and mortars.

The attack, which was launched at about 1 a.m., turned the sky red. The enemy loosed a powerful barrage of thundering tank guns and bursting mortars. At the Granma base, four revolutionary artillerymen — all under 20 years old — were killed when a projectile fell on their anti-aircraft gun.

Tracers from the .50-caliber guns were clearly visible at the Pálpite Command Post, where Fidel was directing operations.

The advance on the enemy was led by four tanks, with the Third, Fourth and Fifth Companies of infantry troops from the School for Militia Chiefs, under the command of Lieutenant Díaz, marching alongside. The First and Sixth Companies moved toward Bue-

naventura, in the west, to attack the enemy flank.

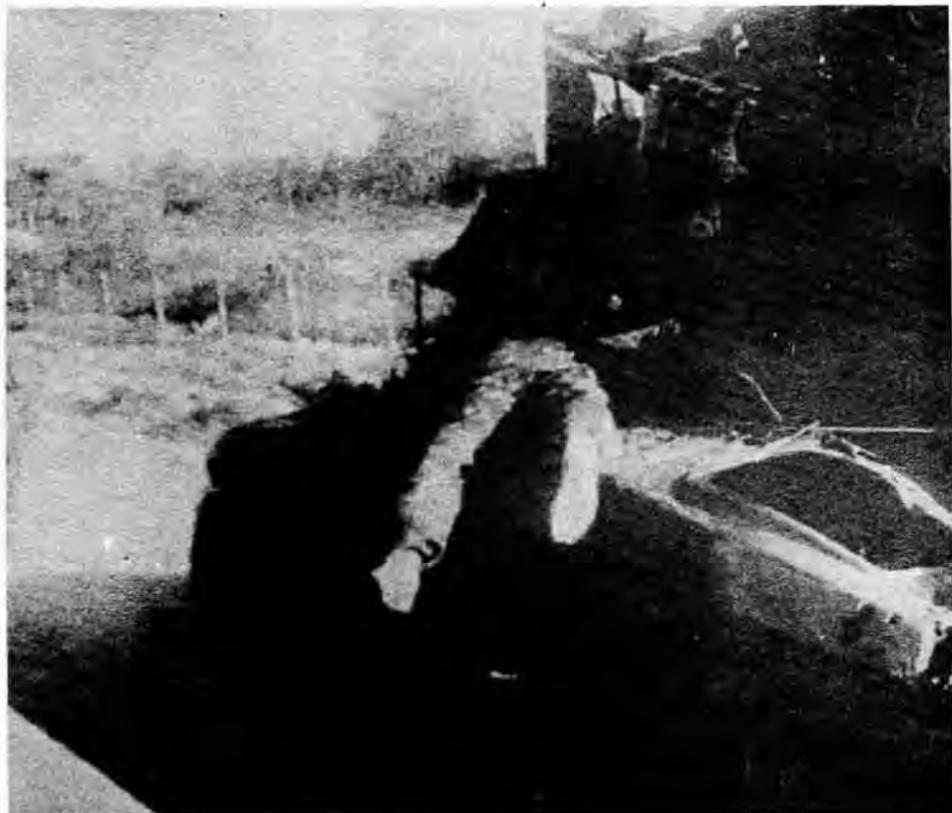
Column One of the Rebel Army and a bazooka company brought up the rear.

The bitterly-fought battle went on and on. The only way to force the well-armed and extremely well-entrenched mercenary forces out was to continue advancing.

As the militiamen in the Third Company and the soldiers in Column One reached the Playa Larga triangle, Lieutenant Díaz and several other militiamen were shot down while rushing the mercenaries' trenches. Meanwhile, a tank got stuck while entering the one-and-a-half-meter-lower area.

The battle continued. The order was given for all forces to open fire on the enemy's positions for ten minutes.

Battalions 180 and 144 arrived at dawn on April 18. Battalion 144 was sent through Soplillar to Caletón del Rosario, and Battalion 180 advanced



with the tanks along the highway to Playa Larga.

Civilians ran out waving white flags as they entered Playa Larga. The enemy was nowhere in sight. The Second Battalion of mercenaries, reinforced by the Heavy Weapons Battalion, the Fifth Battalion and the motorized Fourth Battalion, had retreated toward Girón.

Playa Larga was taken in the early morning of Tuesday, April 18.

At about 3 p.m. that day, the revolutionary troops advanced toward Playa Girón in jeeps, buses, trucks and any other available means of transportation.

At the same time, Battalion 111 was advancing along the road from Soplillar to Cayo Ramona. Northeast of Girón, around San Blas, troops, artillery and tanks were moving up, while, farther to the northeast, around Yaguarama and Horquita, three battalions and a tank company were closing the gap. To the east, two more battalions

were advancing along the coast.

By the night of Tuesday, April 18, forty hours after the mercenary landing, Brigade 2506 had lost one position after another and was continuing to give ground under fire — until it finally holed up at the last available place: Playa Girón.

There it remained well entrenched, with the tank companies along all three fronts, armed with M-41 Walker Bulldogs, two-ton trucks, medium-range .50-caliber artillery pieces, 106.7- and 81-mm. mortars, 75- and 57-mm. recoilless rifles, .50- and .30-caliber machine guns, 88.9-mm. rocket launchers, M-1 guns, Browning automatic rifles, M-3 machine guns and PRC-10 radio units. In the air, the enemy had only seven B-26s left, since two more had been shot down during the second day of battle, April 18.

Above all, however, it still had the tremendous advantage of holding a defensive position on favorable terrain — similar to the situation at Playa Larga the night before, but with all its arms and men in one place.



In swampy areas, the fighting is necessarily confined to a very narrow space, and attacks are made along the roads. There is almost no room for maneuvering, and numerical superiority is of very little or no help, since there's no way to bring up troops to attack along such a narrow front. Contrary to all the rules of warfare, tanks have to move toward the enemy in a column, and only one or two can fire.

The only way to destroy the enemy rapidly and totally, to protect the survival of the nation and the Revolution, was to continue advancing without letup, exposing the fighters to the full force of enemy fire as they attacked rapidly, unhesitatingly and bravely, moving up on the double and pretending that the shots directed at them didn't really matter.

The final offensive to dislodge mercenary Brigade 2506 from Playa Girón began at dawn on Wednesday, April 19. The Cuban people's revolutionary troops, soldiers and militiamen advanced from every direction: from the west, along the highway paralleling the coast from Playa Larga to Playa Girón; from the

northwest, along the route from Cayo Ramona; from the north, along Cayo Ramona; from the north, along the embankment leading from the Covandonga Sugar Mill to San Blas; from the northeast, along the road linking Horquita and San Blas; from the east, all along the coast; and in the air, with the old, patched-up planes flown by the recently trained pilots of the Revolutionary Air Force, who filled the skies with glory during those three days.

The constant artillery fire could be heard for miles.

Nothing could stop the advance. Hard-fought battles were waged all day along the Girón front, with intense fire from machine guns, mortars and howitzers and bombs. The revolutionary troops pressed on, breaking through the enemy's defenses and crushing him. At 5:30 p.m. on April 19, 1961, the last mercenaries surrendered. US imperialism had been dealt its first military defeat in America, by a people determined to advance its Revolution. ■

**MAY 25**

**AFRICAN WORLD SOLIDARITY DAY**



# THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Cuban report at the Scientific Anti-Imperialist Conference



**T**HE triumph of the Cuban Revolution and the consolidation of socialism in that country ushered in a new era in the history of Latin America and the Caribbean, one in which the people's revolutionary movement has gained tremendous strength while imperialism and its allies have taken emergency political, military, economic and ideological measures to meet these new realities in the class struggle south of the Rio Grande and block the triumph of other national and social liberation revolutions.

Following the defeat of the counterrevolutionary invasion at Playa Girón, Washington adopted a new hemispheric policy — without, however, abandoning its efforts to destroy the Cuban revolutionary process.

The so-called Alliance for Progress, conceived as an aid program that would alleviate the serious material problems facing the region, was applied to the rest of Latin America, while Cuba was subjected to a brutal economic blockade, diplomatic isolation and various types of military attacks aimed at blocking socialist development and neutralizing its influence and example in the western hemisphere.

Nevertheless, as Comrade Fidel Castro noted in his report to the 1st Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, "The time is long past when the Latin-American bourgeoisie believed the so-called Alliance for Progress and its illusory US aid offered them a way of avoiding the upheaval that took place with the Cuban Revolution. The alleged revolution in freedom that the United States proposed with Frei in Chile to offset Cuba's building of socialism failed."

The Cuban Revolution denounced these and other imperialist plans for counterrevolution and for deceiving and exploiting the Latin-American peoples at the time they were launched.

Nothing — not the Alliance for Progress nor any other reformist mirage, reactionary coups d'état, counterinsurgency military aid programs, the Peace Corps, other forms of ideological and cultural penetration, the Marine invasion of the Dominican Republic, the destabilization of progressive governments, the indiscriminate murder and repression of people's leaders and the myriad resources and formulas the United States has tried for more than 20 years — has managed to turn back the course of history in Latin America.

Cuba was accused of promoting the upsurge in people's struggles and of exporting revolution; the United States thought that, by isolating the Cuban Revolution, it could keep other revolutions from coming to power in the hemisphere.

In 1962, the 2nd Declaration of Havana clearly set forth Cuba's Marxist-Leninist positions concerning the origin, development and historical inevitability of modern revolutions, which cannot be bought and sold or exported and imported like merchandise but are, rather, the result of objective laws that govern the development of societies.

Thus, during the '70s, the social and political processes in many Latin-American countries began to move toward national liberation as the people's demands became radicalized and the polarization of political forces more clearly revealed the nature of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary positions.

Many actions by the people and their vanguard groups checkmated reactionary governments and helped expose the sham of reformist alternatives.

The masses, Communist Parties and left-wing organizations had their victories and setbacks in the class struggle during the '60s. Perhaps never before in the history of their struggles did the forces of the revolutionary movement gain so many and such varied experiences through heroic and steadfast efforts, in the finest traditions of Our America.

It was the beginning of a continental process that had the same roots and aims and was marked by a shared struggle against imperialist and capitalist domination. This people's revolutionary action continued to develop and expand socially and geographically, attaining heretofore unknown levels. The hemispheric social revolution that had begun in 1959 was nurtured with the blood and sacrifice of the masses and the fighting members of many revolutionary organizations and parties. The people's consciousness was raised so that the alternative between true independence and imperialist domination was more clearly and specifically defined.

The most important factor in these heroic and necessary battles was the tremendous contribution they made to the development of an anti-imperialist awareness among our peoples. The way was opened for several modern revolutionary processes — those in Nicaragua and Grenada, for example — to attain victory.

The peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean entered the '70s with more mature possibilities of achieving new revolutionary triumphs and advancing their struggles quickly.

On the one hand, the Cuban Revolution was fully consolidated, successfully pursuing its socialist course. On the other, new progressive, nationalist, anti-imperialist forces were beginning to operate in other parts of the continent, and the mass struggle was growing. The triumph of the people's government in Chile was an encouraging step toward laying the bases for a constitutional approach to building socialism.

This was also the period in which a number of governments in the Caribbean set out to recover their natural resources and follow a more independent and democratic political course.

All these factors and situations contributed to the deepening crisis of imperialist domination in the area in the early '70s.

The imperialists soon launched their counteroffensive: on September 11, 1973, the brutal fascist coup d'état in which heroic President Salvador Allende was assassinated unleashed the most savage repression the Chilean people had ever known and turned the national economy over to imperialist capital; in Bolivia, a reactionary coup toppled the progressive government of Juan José Torres; in Uruguay, the military took power; and pressures on other nationalist governments in the area increased.

Clearly, the purpose of the direct and brutal action by US specialized agencies was to wipe out the Chilean revolutionary process and halt the development of other progressive governments and processes in order to contain the upsurge of the Latin-American people's movement and show that the United States was prepared to go to any extreme to maintain its hemispheric control.

However, the fascist coup in Chile and imperialism's other reactionary actions brought forth a huge wave of continental and world solidarity that helped revitalize and radicalize the democratic, anti-imperialist forces in the region.

The bourgeois, anti-imperialist nationalist forces reached a high point in 1974-75, as the United States experienced domestic crisis (Watergate) and foreign debacle (Vietnam), along with the economic crisis that gripped the world capitalist system as a whole and made its impact felt not only on US imperialism but, to an even greater extent, on the countries of Latin America whose interests clashed sharply with the economic policy of the Yankee government and its monopolies.

Throughout 1976, the United States increased its pressure on progressive governments and forces in the area, launching destabilization activities in Jamaica, for example. The fascist military dictatorships of the Southern Cone acted jointly in repressing and superexploiting the masses, adopting economic models that served the interests of imperialist financial groups and the upper bourgeoisie.

At the end of 1977, the people's revolutionary movement, which had been hard hit by imperialism in the preceding years, showed signs of recovery. Mass struggle and revolutionary action became stronger and more visible in Central America and the Caribbean and in some of the countries further south, especially Bolivia, Peru and Colombia. In Nicaragua, Grenada and El Salvador, the movement passed from the defensive to an all-out general offensive, while, in other countries, it pushed bourgeois power into crisis and created a revolutionary situation or advanced in terms of mass demands, sometimes in combination with significant political-military actions by vanguard groups and sometimes through democratic electoral processes, strikes and other demonstrations of different levels and strengths. The defensive continued in some countries, but with indications that the mass move-



## Nicaragua

ment and its Marxist-Leninist organizations were beginning to recover.

The class struggle has grown sharper throughout the continent, advancing unevenly but in a generally positive overall direction and with a dynamism and development that is particularly significant.

As parties and organizations have begun to recover, the mass movement has also advanced: trade union struggles by the organized working class are on the rise, some with national political content and all tending to advance and clarify class positions that are more and more in agreement with those held by left-wing parties and organizations. Strikes have increased in number and effectiveness and have expressed political as well as economic demands. Trade unions have attained greater national unity and have begun to discuss programs and coordinate efforts on a continental scale.

The peasant movement has also grown, and its struggles have become so radicalized that peasants have played an active role in the revolutionary process in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, seizing land, holding strikes and marching for better living conditions. The peasants' progressive, revolutionary demands are similar to those of the workers, and they have advanced in terms of national and continental unity as they join in their peoples' liberation struggles.

Young people — mainly young workers and students — continue to be a vital force in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in the peoples' revolutionary struggles in Nicaragua, Grenada and El Salvador, and Maoist and Social Democratic ideologists have failed to destroy their organizations. Latin-American and Caribbean women have also given recent evidence of their revolutionary capability and awareness of their double exploitation, in spite of imperialism's and the bourgeoisie's attempts to distort the meaning of women's struggles. Women played an outstanding role in the victorious revolutionary struggle in Nicaragua and Grenada and have made their presence felt in El Salvador — eloquent evidence of women's vanguard position in the continent.

It is especially important that more and more Christian leaders and groups are joining the people's revolutionary struggles and that some are now calling not only for a strategic alliance but for real unity with Marxist-Leninists.

The development of national and social liberation movements and the upsurge in the mass struggle in Latin America and the Caribbean are indications of the crisis facing the imperialist, bourgeois system of economic and political domination in the region and of the maturity and strength with which workers, peasants, women, young people and their vanguard organizations are meeting that crisis.

Of course, this combative action by the masses and revolutionary parties doesn't encompass the whole continent. Moreover, its scope and guiding concepts differ from place to place. Actions are sometimes spontaneous, and the left sometimes fails to link its efforts to the people's movement.

Nevertheless, the unity attained by the vanguard in some countries and the advances made in this direction in others have proved decisive for the triumph and development of Latin-American revolutionary movements for social and national liberation. The solidarity and combative unity that a number of Communist Parties and other revolutionary detachments showed with the people's struggle in Nicaragua is an outstanding example of this.

The revolutionary triumphs in Nicaragua and Grenada are the most important events that have occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean since 1959. They mark a turning point in the counterrevolutionary offensive launched by US imperialism. The overthrow of dictatorships is now on the continental agenda, as evidenced by the generally sustained advance of the mass movement.

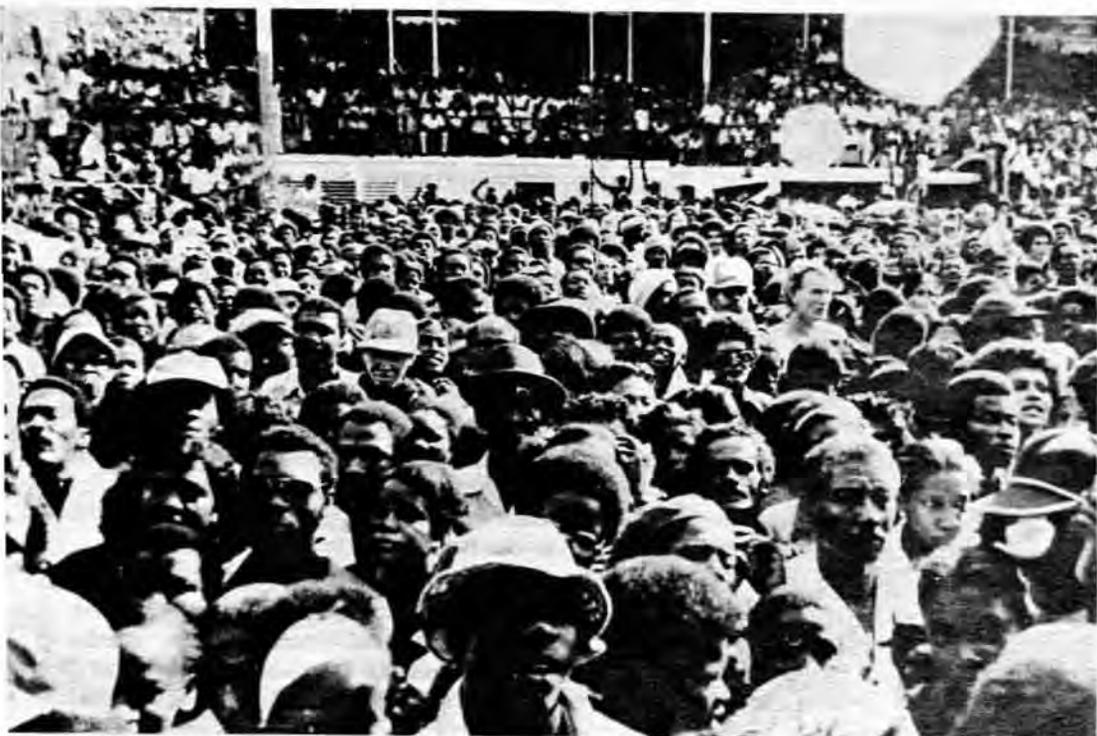
Nicaragua and Grenada are high points in the historic period of the people's revolutionary movement that began with the victory of the Cuban Revolution, a period characterized by the development of multifaceted struggles waged by the Latin-American and Caribbean peoples

to attain definitive national and social liberation. The victories in those two countries were won because of the combat experience and traditions of the masses and their vanguards, especially that gained during the 20 years since the revolutionary triumph in Cuba.

They reaffirm the need for and historic possibility of overcoming imperialist domination in this hemisphere, smashing the myth that the United States could prevent the triumph of other revolutions in the area.

What happened in Nicaragua showed very clearly that the United States cannot successfully impose fascist or reformist solutions on a mass-based revolution that has arms and unity, and that imperialist domination is vulnerable when the revolutionary movement has attained a high level of development and capability.

Is it even harder now than it was in 1959 for the enemy to convince anyone that these victories in Caribbean and Central American countries are isolated exceptions and that the situation in Grenada and Nicaragua doesn't reflect the basic problems our peoples must solve in order to achieve true liberation.



Grenada

The imperialists would like to make people think that Nicaragua and Grenada are different from other places in the continent where the struggle continues and that the victories in those two countries were due to weaknesses of the dictatorships in power, futilely attempting to ignore the domination that has been imposed on most of our countries and to minimize the political and military lessons which these revolutions — especially the Sandinista one — teach us.

As the Sandinista leaders have so clearly stated, the July 19, 1979, victory can't be explained without understanding the broad, mass-based social force that was created there under the political leadership of the Sandinista Front — not the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary victory was not only a political but also — and this was decisive — a military triumph for the people's forces. Other factors that contributed to it include the fact that the reactionary and imperialist sectors were neutralized on the international plane by the formation of a broad front of democratic forces opposed to intervention. In short, the victory was won because the masses fought; their strategy of struggle was correct; a trained military force defeated the National Guard; and all anti-dictatorial sectors, from the grass-roots on up through the vanguard leadership, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, were united.

Nicaragua's revolutionary triumph revived the efficacy and viability of armed struggle as a decisive means for seizing power when all other ways are closed off and it is organized and led in a consistent, creative manner, based on the masses and on firm unity. Both Nicaragua and Grenada also showed that the only guarantee for the development of a program of anti-imperialist change lies in the destruction of the bourgeois state machinery and the creation of a new, people's army.

Finally, another point that has been made by the Latin-American left is that economic and political crises or even an objective revolutionary situation aren't enough by themselves; there must also be bold, creative, unified and scientific leadership by a military-political vanguard in order to turn the revolutionary possibility into practical reality.

Although the revolutionary movements differ from country to country in terms of their levels of development and mass composition, all are involved in the same general process of anti-imperialist national liberation that makes Latin America a continent in revolution.

Changes in the international correlation of forces in favor of socialism, social progress and peace and the uncontrollable development of the Latin-American peoples' revolutionary movement have made it more and more difficult for US imperialism to control and subject this area — which used to be known as its back yard — to its political decisions.

Imperialism has no structural solution — even on a short-term basis — for the socioeconomic crisis of Latin-American underdevelopment. This means that the differences between US interests and those of a broad range of governments are becoming so heightened that the United States is no longer able to manipulate its puppets at will.

The historic defeat of US imperialism by the Cuban Revolution, the consolidation of that revolution and its ever broader hemispheric relations and political-ideological influence are important factors in this new reality.

The United States has shown that it is prepared to use whatever resources and methods may be necessary to try to maintain its hegemonic control over the region. In those countries in which it can't keep reactionary regimes in power, it does everything possible to distort the most advanced ideas and positions of the people's revolutionary movements, working to divide their forces, negotiate reformist alternatives and corrupt the sectors that are least committed to their people's cause.

The political, economic and strategic military value the United States places on controlling Latin America and the Caribbean is a challenge that the national and social liberation movement in the region has met with determination and heroism. Revolutionaries in our continent know that the struggle against imperialism won't be any easier in the years to come. Latin America and the Caribbean will be the scene of a decisive confrontation in the peoples' worldwide struggle against the imperialist system and for peace and social progress. An example of this is the heroic battle that the Salvadoran people are waging for a democratic, anti-imperialist and revolutionary victory. Every week, hundreds of Salvadorans are murdered. Imperialism has escalated its partial intervention and is making plans for a possible direct intervention. All progressive, revolutionary forces must unite in firm opposition to this move and express their vigorous solidarity with the cause of the Salvadoran people, whose triumph will also help the other peoples of America and the world.

Regional factors — the most important consideration in each country — show that the strategy and tactical concepts of the Latin-American revolutionary processes are guided, first and foremost, by opposition to and destruction of this enemy. This was the thinking expressed in the declaration of the conference of the area's Communist Parties that was held in 1975, and it is shared by the whole revolutionary movement.

Until we defeat US imperialism's oppression of each of our countries — which means toppling its representatives and allies from power — we cannot make any of the socioeconomic changes needed by our societies, for only this prerequisite will allow us to advance along the road to socialism.



## El Salvador

Unity and solidarity among the continent's anti-imperialist forces are the only firm bases for keeping the enemy from using factionalism to isolate the revolutionary processes, strike at them separately and thereby exact an even higher price for the liberation that is inevitable.

Experience shows that proclamations of the need for anti-imperialist unity don't automatically bring it about. Rather, solid unity within the vanguard forces — especially unity in action — is required. This is another lesson we have learned from the processes in Cuba and Nicaragua.

At the same time, as the Declaration of the Conference of the Communist Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean noted, "The incorporation of forces and organizations representative of such sectors of the bourgeoisie in the broad front of anti-imperialist and antioligarchic struggle is very important, but it will never take place at the expense of the essential alliance of workers, peasants and middle strata or of the class independence of the proletariat for the benefit of conjunctural compromises."

The present stage of confrontation with imperialism is one of sharp and complex ideological struggle. Ever since 1959, the caricatures of anticommunist myths have been losing their effectiveness in our continent.

With the victory of the Cuban revolutionary process, the imperialist propaganda experts realized that actions by the continent's revolutionary parties and people's movements were motivated by the highest ideological and political concepts. Therefore, they began to direct their efforts toward discrediting socialism as the only alternative for our people's liberation and economic development, promoting division and discord among the people's revolutionary forces.

The enemy's many-faceted propaganda has been either crude and grotesque or subtle and veiled, as the case warranted, but its main objective has always been to distort the people's struggle, disavow or hide the successes of the socialist camp and cast aspersions on its social system, seeking to keep the revolutionary movement apart from the socialist camp and confuse the peoples by distorting the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and other leading Communists.

Latin-American revolutionaries have been vigilant in the face of the bankrupt Maoist groups that, though small in number, have sometimes engaged in harmful acts of provocation that favor imperialism's interests.

These groups talk a lot about the theory of revolution but never manage to find the right place or time to really confront the enemy. Always isolated from the masses, they try to impose ideas that are alien to our countries' sociopolitical reality, taking positions that run counter to the interests of the revolution.

At the same time, certain Christian Democratic leaders who hold openly pro-imperialist positions seek to make this tendency an enemy of the revolutionary movement. Many individual Christian Democrats, however, have spoken out honestly for positions other than those held by their party and are working to expose and isolate the reactionary attitudes of their leaders.

The present international situation is characterized by the economic, political and social advances of the USSR and other socialist countries, the national liberation movement and the international workers' struggles; the crisis of imperialism; the growing importance of subjective factors; and the development of people's actions that are increasingly related not only to the class correlation of forces but also to the revolutionary ability of vanguard groups to follow correct strategies and tactics and choose the methods best suited to the struggle.

The distinctive, predominant characteristic of the peoples' struggles in Latin America and the Caribbean is their patriotic, anti-imperialist insistence on real national independence.

Class and national struggles are joined in the area with a unique combination of democratic and socialist tasks and of anti-imperialist liberation tasks linked to workers' and farmers' actions against capitalist domination. This mixture is what gives the Latin-American revolutionary struggle its special flavor, as reflected in the strategy

and tactics of struggle used by many parties and leftist organizations.

Each of our peoples will attain socialism by developing its own national Latin-American or Caribbean history, for socialism is the only system that can provide solutions for our societies' complex structural problems of underdevelopment. The processes will be different, and each will have its own characteristics and make its own contribution to the world revolution, for the national liberation struggle and the building of socialism in the Americas require flexible guidelines. At the same time, as the Marxist-Leninist Parties of the region have pointed out, history has shown that the triumph of every real revolution and the subsequent development of socialism follow universal scientific laws. History has effectively demonstrated that it isn't enough to call on the working class and the people to overthrow bourgeois power; the political line that the revolutionary vanguards follow cannot be determined by subjective desires and opinions; the idea that the vanguard can replace the masses only leads to setbacks and difficulties once the revolution comes to power. Lenin taught that propaganda and agitation are not enough to make the people understand the need for the liberation struggle and that the basic law governing all great revolutions is that the masses must gain their own political experience.

One of the most significant characteristics of the current Latin-American people's movement is the link between the revolutionary struggle and the struggle for democratic rights. Objectively speaking, the workers and other sectors of the population are coming into direct confrontation with bourgeois power in their striving for better living conditions and basic political freedoms and are becoming ever more aware that this bourgeois power is the chief obstacle to be overcome. This is why revolutionaries understand the need to stimulate and lead democratic struggles, for they help advance the revolution — the only way to guarantee people's democracy.

Experience shows that anti-imperialist liberation and democratic change are linked to the triumph of socialism.

The struggle for national liberation and greater democracy in Latin-American political life, for economic change that favors the masses, for respect for life and human dignity and against the dictatorial regimes opens up possibilities for working in alliance with other democratic forces — without this implying any letup in the ideological battle, of course.

In those Latin-American countries that are governed by extreme right-wing forces — usually fascist military dictatorships — the revolutionary vanguard proclaims its right and duty to encourage the use of the most resolute forms of struggle that can speed the defeat of those forces of domination which imperialism has placed in power not only to neutralize the development of the class struggle but also

to provide a new model for accumulating capital and dividing capitalist labor — a model drawn up by the big international financial groups and designed to confine the underdeveloped countries of the area to an even more subordinate role, subject their work force to even greater economic exploitation and burden their economies with a more accentuated centralization and concentration of capital.

At times, a false distinction has been made between armed struggle and other forms of struggle, but the fact that a struggle is legal or seeks to broaden democratic rights does not necessarily mean that it is reformist, any more than all armed struggle is necessarily revolutionary. The revolutionary content of any form of struggle is determined by its goals and by whether it helps move the masses toward or away from their main objective. In the final analysis, experience in our own continent has shown that the revolutionary vanguard's leadership ability is determined by its skill and preparation in moving from one form of struggle to another, without losing its perspective in the course of the various turns that the dynamics of a class battle entail.

Weapons are a must for the triumph of any revolution — weapons and the masses. Neither weapons without the masses nor the masses without weapons. Both are indispensable in one way or another, at one point or another in the struggle.

This past 26th of July, Comrade Fidel Castro, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, said, "The fundamental thing in a revolution, the fundamental thing to be able to speak of a revolution, a people's revolution, is to have the people and the weapons."

Our experience shows that the separation of military and political operations harms both. Only an overall political-military concept makes it possible to move from one main form of struggle to another, as required by the stages and circumstances of each process.

Another important factor is the role of progressive military men.

Although the military has a long history of service to the reaction and the imperialist monopolies, it would be both unfair and incorrect to consider that every man who wears a uniform serves those interests unconditionally.

Naturally, every revolutionary vanguard has to evaluate the role that progressive sectors of the Armed Forces can play in the anti-imperialist liberation process in its country. Each country's Armed Forces should be analyzed in terms of its historic context and class conflict. History also shows that this revolutionary scientific analysis must be based on specific realities rather than generalities and on basic Marxist-Leninist principles concerning the state and the laws that govern all revolutions. The Latin-American experience teaches us that the people have had to confront and defeat military power in order to attain the real power needed for setting up a new kind of state.

Now, in the early '80s, new political, economic and social circumstances are appearing in this continent-in-revolution so closely and constantly watched by US imperialism, which is bogged down in a general crisis that makes it more interested than ever in continental domination.

New revolutionary possibilities are opening up. The revolution is maturing in country after country of Our America. The revolutionary vanguards are aware of this and are working and preparing themselves to help speed this process, in whatever way can best help the people to achieve their true and definitive freedom.

Meanwhile, imperialism and the bourgeoisie are bolstering the defense of their positions. Direct confrontation is apparent at all levels and in all countries in the near or more distant future, presenting the alternative of victory or defeat for the peoples.

Thousands of men and women have died in revolutionary battle in this historic effort: Simón Bolívar, José Martí, Augusto César Sandino, Salvador Allende and other heroes of our American homeland, who inspire us to struggle with renewed energy. The lasting example of the sacrifices and revolutionary internationalism of Major Ernesto Che Guevara, the Heroic Guerrilla, symbolizes the historic continuity of the independence struggle begun in the last century — a struggle that is now moving toward our peoples' second, true independence: toward those "broad avenues" of social change that will bring material and spiritual happiness to the peoples of Our America. ■



## **Dominican Republic 1965:**

**a people's dignity  
vs. Yankee guns**





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**Speech given by Meiba Hernández, General Secretary of OSPAAAL,  
at the organization's 15th anniversary meeting**

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Dear Comrades:

As we recall the founding of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America 15 years ago, our thoughts turn, first of all, to the fighters — men and women — who have given their lives to make the peoples' hopes for independence and freedom a reality. The names of Amílcar Cabral, Ho Chi Minh and Ernesto Che Guevara symbolize that tricontinental solidarity and determination to struggle. In their memory and that of all the anonymous dead whom they represent, I ask you to observe a minute of silence.

Thank you.

Now, 15 years after the first Tricontinental Conference, we reflect on the significance of that event.

That Conference and the institutions to which it gave birth — especially OSPAAAL — are fruits of the upsurge in the peoples' liberation movement; the collapse of colonialism; and the triumph of new revolutions in various parts of the world, including the Cuban Revolution in this hemisphere. These advances, often won through heroic armed struggle by the

people, were also closely linked to the new world correlation of forces and to socialism's historic victories following World War II.

The imperialists then stepped up their interventionist, counterrevolutionary actions in all continents. The war of aggression and destruction against the glorious people of Vietnam was a lesson and an example for the whole world.

It became clear to all revolutionaries, patriots, anti-imperialists and progressives in Africa, Asia and Latin America that the only possible course was to struggle for freedom, no matter what the cost; to defend the gains won by the peoples that had already attained their independence; and to adopt a revolutionary strategy of alliance and solidarity among the peoples of these three continents and between them and the forces of socialism and social progress throughout the world, in order to confront the imperialist strategy of a worldwide reactionary alliance.

This was the deeply just, combative and revolutionary concept that inspired the call to the Tricontinental Conference.

Many others have understood and supported these ideas, especially Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, a standard-bearer of solidarity among the peoples in their confrontation with imperialism and the reaction. Today, I would like to mention another figure who distinguished himself in this regard and of whom I speak with the deepest respect and admiration: El Mehdi Ben Barka — outstanding Moroccan; tireless fighter against colonialism and the oppressors of his country; a man whose political clarity, determination and experience made him one of the outstanding leaders of the African and Asian peoples. As Chairman of the International Preparatory Committee, Ben Barka made a decisive contribution to the work that preceded the Tricontinental Conference. He devoted all his energies to the Conference but did not live to see its successful culmination, because he was kidnapped and assassinated by agents of his country's reactionary government, in conspiracy with the CIA and imperialism, just two months before the meeting was held.

Fifteen years after that event, it is impressive to note how many distinguished revolutionary leaders who attended it later died heroically in the struggle, thus reaffirming the ideas they had proclaimed in Havana. Even more impressive is the fact that the deaths of those leaders did not halt the tremendous advances that have been made during these years in furthering the peoples' liberation.

Ben Barka and Amílcar Cabral were killed, but nothing could prevent Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe from winning their independence. Nothing could keep the Vietnamese from crushing the Yankees or frustrate the revolution in Ethiopia and the people's victory in Zimbabwe — just as nothing can hold back the growing struggle in Namibia and South Africa, which will eventually defeat the infamous and brutally racist South African regime.

Turcios Lima, Salvador Allende and Carlos Fonseca Amador were killed. Che was killed in the mountains of Bolivia — where fascist boots now trample upon and bloody the land — after sending his historic message to the peoples of the world through *Tricontinental*. We all remember that ringing call for solidarity with Vietnam, that battle cry for the unity

of all peoples against mankind's common enemy, those words: "And, if we could unite to make our blows stronger and infallible and so increase the effectiveness of all kinds of support given to the struggling people — how great and close that future would be!"

Fifteen years have passed. We've been dealt blows, bitter setbacks and even miserable betrayals — by the Chinese ruling clique — but the victorious revolution of the Sandinista people of Nicaragua is a herald of the future in this continent. The revolution in Grenada, a little giant, stands as a beacon for the peoples of the Caribbean. The tremendously heroic struggle waged by the people of El Salvador can't be stopped, for they are determined to win their freedom once and for all. The battle in Guatemala is on the rise, as are the resistance, unity and organization of other Latin-American peoples that are victims of neofascist tyranny.

Che saw Vietnam as the focal point of his action. The Tricontinental Conference declared its full solidarity with the fighting people of that country. Today, we can once again salute the great victory of the Vietnamese nation and note, with renewed joy, that this victory includes the defeat not only of Yankee imperialism and its puppets but also of their new allies, the Beijing hegemonists. Moreover, it includes Vietnam's reunification; its advance toward socialism; its solidarity with Kampuchea in ridding that country of the genocidal regime that had devastated it;



and its fraternal support for Lao and for the united march of the Indo-Chinese peoples along the path of independence, friendship and well-being.

The Tricontinental Conference proclaimed the people's right to attain their political and socioeconomic independence by any means necessary, including armed struggle. It proclaimed their right to independent development, control of their resources and freedom from imperialist neo-colonialism. Today, we see that the Iranian masses have overthrown the Shah's repressive regime; the people of Afghanistan have toppled a semi-feudal monarchy; the heroic Palestinian people, headed by the Palestine Liberation Organization, their legitimate vanguard, are tirelessly pursuing their battle against the Zionist oppressor; and the progressive Arab forces are united in rejecting betrayal and imperialist settlements in the Middle East.

These 15 years haven't been all victories — nor will the future be. The struggle has been and will continue to be a hard one, but history shows that the course charted at the Tricontinental Conference was the correct one: that struggle, unity and solidarity are required for victory.

We in OSPAAAL will continue to follow this course with optimism and determination. We will continue to work to promote solidarity with the peoples in struggle. We will continue to denounce imperialism's maneuvers and crimes wherever they take place. We will continue to promote the tricontinental unity of the revolutionary forces, the working class, the national liberation movements, socialism and all other international democratic and progressive organization and movements.

The balance sheet for these 15 years reaffirms our convictions and renews our energy and enthusiasm for moving ahead.

The dangers don't frighten us. The future holds freedom, independence, unity and dignity for the peoples.

**With Che, we say, "Ever onward to victory!"**

**Long live the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America!**

**Long live the anti-imperialist, fighting, revolutionary unity of the peoples!**

**Long live revolutionary internationalism!**

**Patria o Muerte!**

**Venceremos!**



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**Speech given by Jesús Montané Oropesa, alternate member of the Political Bureau, at the meeting he'd on the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL)**

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Dear Comrades:

Today we are celebrating a date with great revolutionary and internationalist meaning: the 15th anniversary of the Tricontinental Conference and of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, which it created.

Revolutionaries are not motivated by a desire for historic laurels. Rather, what we do is done in fulfillment of duty, to advance our cause. Now, 15 years after the Tricontinental Conference, however, we are sure that history will reflect the importance of that effort to promote tricontinental struggle, unity and solidarity.

The worth of that Conference goes beyond the fact that, in it, representatives of the most prestigious revolutionary, anti-imperialist and anticolonialist forces from 82 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and from 21 progressive international and regional organiza-

tions met for the first time. This in itself was an impressive achievement, but there was also the deeply revolutionary, advanced political content of its resolutions and especially the fact that its protagonists represented the peoples of the underdeveloped world — subjected to colonialist plunder for centuries and still suffering under neocolonialism and imperialist exploitation, many of whom had only just thrown off the yoke of the European metropolises, while others were still struggling heroically with guns in hand to win their independence — peoples, in short, whose exploiters sought to deny them the right to create their own political life and write their own history.

The Tricontinental Conference was proof of the great upsurge in the struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism in the vast areas of the world that, before the triumph of the great socialist October Revolution, had been considered only as a periphery providing markets and raw materials and that, as Lenin had foreseen, became one of the main links in the struggle to transform the world in a revolutionary way.

The very fact that the meeting was held in Cuba — blockaded and harassed by imperialism but standing firm against all threats and attacks, in a part of the world which the United States had always looked on as its neocolonial backyard — gave the Conference added meaning.

The most important aspect of the Conference, however, was the fact that it demonstrated our people's ability; political maturity; and determination to struggle, come what may, for real liberation that went beyond the formality of a national anthem and a flag to include the transformation of our economic structures, the recovery of our natural resources and the achievement of real independent development based on progress and social justice. That Conference brought out something of tremendous importance: our awareness that the destinies of all the countries oppressed and exploited by imperialism were closely interrelated, that the victory of one people was a victory for all and that a setback for any people meant a regression for all. These deeply-held convictions, so essential in all who seek to be revolutionaries in today's world, determined the main purpose of that international meeting: to promote the widest, most decisive and firmest solidarity among all the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the forces for independence, democracy, peace and social progress throughout the world.

It is important to recall the circumstances surrounding the revolutionary national liberation movement at that time, in the mid-'60s.

The Tricontinental Conference constituted a worthy, timely reply by the peoples to imperialist aggression and arrogance. With blatant insolence, US imperialism was insisting on acting as reactionary gendarme throughout the world. The Yankee intervention in Vietnam, begun while French colonialism was still in the saddle, was stepped up with the landing of hundreds of thousands of US soldiers in the southern part of the country and with the initiation of a brutal airborne war of destruction against the north. Perfectly correctly, the Tricontinental Conference centered its attention on providing worldwide support for Vietnam and developing a revolutionary people's strategy in solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese. Many of the revolutionaries who inspired

the Conference — including Ernesto Che Guevara, the Heroic Guerrilla, and his comrades in the struggle in Bolivia — dedicated their ideas and actions to this purpose.

Vietnam was not imperialism's only concern, however. In Africa, after its intervention in the Congo and the murder of Patrice Lumumba, a reactionary offensive was launched to place the shackles of neocolonialism on the recently liberated peoples. Counterrevolutionary coups were pulled in several progressive countries. Supported by the United States and other NATO allies, the fascist Portuguese regime unleashed a cruel wave of repression against the peoples and liberation forces of Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique. The racist regimes in the Southern Cone of Africa — which the imperialists also supported — used terror to entrench apartheid.

In Latin America, US imperialism intensified its policy of intervention and aggression against the peoples. Yankee advisers, weapons, training programs and resources of all kinds were placed at the service of the oligarchies, to repress the revolutionary movement. The CIA operated with impunity in many countries in the area. With the blood of the Panamanians shot down by US soldiers in the Canal Zone still on its hands, the US sent 40 000 US Marines into Santo Domingo to crush that fraternal people's struggle for independence, led by Francisco Caamaño. New maneuvers were applied against Puerto Rico to strengthen the United States' colonial stranglehold over that country, and Cuba was subjected to an escalation of pirate attacks and acts of subversion, which the CIA openly promoted from US territory.

This was the world panorama when the Tricontinental Conference was held.

The results were immediate. The fact that such important leaders as Amílcar Cabral, Salvador Allende and Luis Augusto Turcios Lima met in Havana with our Commander in Chief, Fidel Castro, helped everyone to acquire a much deeper understanding of the problems, struggles and difficulties of the peoples in each continent in their battle against colonialism, imperialism and the reaction. The exchanges of opinions and discussions gave us a much more complete, real and extensive vision of the international revolutionary movement. The essence of the strategy of anti-imperialist struggle and solidarity that emerged from that meeting, based on the peoples' experience in struggle, remains valid today. The Conference revealed to the world the oppression and repression by which many peoples were victimized — peoples whose suffering was systematically silenced, ignored or distorted by the imperialist news monopolies.

But this wasn't all. The Tricontinental Conference also created a number of important institutions — chief among which was the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Cuba, whose representative was elected General Secretary of the organization and which was chosen as the site of its Executive Secretariat, recognizes the positive role that this organization has played and continues to play in support of the peoples fighting for their liberation.

OSPAAAL has provided consistent backing for the Vietnamese people's just cause of national salvation — the first front of the Yankee imperialist attack and now a front of incessant threats and attacks by the reactionary, traitorous ruling clique in China — and for the struggles waged by the peoples of Kampuchea and Lao. It has denounced the crimes committed by the Shah's repressive regime in Iran and expressed its solidarity with the Iranian masses. It has backed the Afghan people and their progressive, antifeudal revolution. Throughout the past 15 years, OSPAAAL has never wavered in providing political and moral support for the Palestinian people; the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole legitimate representative; and the other Arab countries that have been attacked, whose land has been seized and whose people have been decimated by the genocide committed by the Zionist aggressors, imperialism's tools and allies par excellence in the Middle East. Most recently, OSPAAAL denounced the Egyptian regime's despicable betrayal of the Arab cause, acting as a servile pawn of US imperialism's maneuvers to divide and crush all the progressive governments and forces in the area.

In Africa, OSPAAAL has contributed its solidarity to all the decisive changes that have made this continent a source of hope for the world revolutionary movement. It has supported Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tomé and Príncipe and expressed its backing



Palestinian fighters

for the thoroughgoing people's revolution in Ethiopia in no uncertain terms. The front-line countries have benefited from OSPAAAL's constant denunciations of the attacks and other crimes that the racists perpetrate against them. To new Zimbabwe, now victorious and independent, OSPAAAL has extended a strong hand of friendship, and it has done the same for the oppressed African peoples of Namibia and South Africa, led by SWAPO and the African National Congress in waging a struggle that cannot now be stopped until victory is achieved over the hateful system of apartheid imposed by the exploiting white minority. OSPAAAL has also given its energetic solidarity to the courageous Saharawi people, who are tirelessly struggling for self-determination and independence in northern Africa.

OSPAAAL has steadfastly backed the just cause of the peaceful reunification of Korea and has vigorously denounced the crimes committed by the fascist dictatorship that rules the southern part of that country.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, it has firmly supported all the truly democratic, patriotic, anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces in the area: the peoples' struggles for liberation that are now bearing fruit with the revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada, the sure and invincible advance of the heroic people of El Salvador, the adoption of people's armed struggle in Guatemala and the upsurge or reanimation of the people's mass movements in several other countries. OSPAAAL has continually denounced the reactionary regimes that oppress the Chilean, Uruguayan, Paraguayan, Bolivian, Haitian and other peoples in Our America and has spoken out for respect for the Argentine people's democratic rights. It has given its all-out backing to the Panamanian people in their struggle to achieve full sovereignty over the Canal Zone, to the Puerto Rican people in their struggle to win national independence, to the people of Belize in their striving for independence and full control of their territory, to the other Caribbean peoples that seek to throw off colonial rule and obtain self-determination, to Cuba's cause — in short, to all the governments and political forces in the area in their striving for sovereignty, defense of their legitimate national interests and struggles for more just and equitable economic relations.

This necessarily brief summary of OSPAAAL's work would not be complete without mention of *Tricontinental* magazine. Its pages include articles by prestigious figures in the international revolutionary movement, and it has served as a means for promoting the campaigns of solidarity sponsored by the organization. Above all, it has done a noteworthy job of spreading revolutionary ideas; presenting the aims and political programs of many outstanding people's movements; and providing information about the peoples that are fighting against tyrannies, racism, Zionism, colonialism, neocolonialism and exploitation in all its forms — a role recognized by the Unified Revolutionary Leadership of El Salvador in a message sent to OSPAAAL in salute to its 15th anniversary.

OSPAAAL's graphic materials have also been outstanding. Its political posters, which have been distributed by the millions, have constituted yet another weapon of struggle for the peoples of the world.

OSPAAAL has international relations with a growing number of national, regional and international organizations — relations which have been strengthened in recent months. It has participated in countless international events, raising its voice of solidarity and encouragement for the peoples that are fighting for their liberation, sovereignty and national independence.

Our country, whose staunch internationalist policy is well known, supports this worthy work for tricontinental solidarity. Along with the other members of OSPAAAL, all democratic forces that are struggling for peace and national independence and the world progressive and revolutionary movement, we will continue to give it our full support.

Now, 15 years after OSPAAAL's founding, we can see in practice how useful and correct this effort has been, adding to the impressive changes that the advances of socialism, the workers' movement and the peoples' struggles for liberation have made throughout the world. Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean today are a far cry from what they were in 1966. The maps of freedom and revolution have been extended enormously, and great strides have been taken in promoting the unity of all the anti-imperialist forces. The influence of international solidarity has grown tremendously. Imperialism is still aggressive and dangerous, as it will be to its dying day; it is still powerful; but its domination and its options for using blackmail, intimidation and intervention in the peoples' struggles are steadily shrinking.

These are times of uncertainty and danger — difficult times. The warlike, reactionary policy of the imperialists seriously threatens peace. The US politicians who are about to take over the government of that country are proposing programs of alliance with the fascist tyrannies, pushing the arms race, threatening to use force at various key points throughout the world and promoting a cynical plan of support for the repressive regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean and of aggression



against the people's revolutionary movement. In these circumstances, the mobilization of international solidarity can and should play a more important role than ever. The peoples will not let themselves be blackmailed. Revolutionaries will not surrender to the imperialists' reactionary goal of carving up the world in spheres of influence or of halting the process of change. The great challenge facing us is to preserve peace while carrying out the transformations which the peoples demand. We are sure that OSPAAAL will play an outstanding role in meeting this challenge. Solidarity can and should win many new battles in the future, for it is a decisive weapon and a guarantee of the victories we seek: victories of peace, justice, freedom and revolution.

On this 15th anniversary of the founding of OSPAAAL, we extend a warm greeting to all the comrades on its Executive Secretariat and to all the other comrades who contribute to the success of this organization.

Let us advance, confident that the future will be one of independence, unity and fraternity among the peoples.

**Long live OSPAAAL!**

**Long live the peoples' struggles for liberation!**

**Long live the unity and solidarity of all the forces of the world revolutionary movement!**

**Patria o Muerte!**

**Venceremos!**



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### The Indian Ocean: zone of peace

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The World Peace Council is sponsoring an international conference in which the imperialist presence in the Indian Ocean will be analyzed and that area will be declared a zone of peace. Fully supporting this important event, QSPAAAL participated in its preparatory meeting, which was held February 10 and 11 in India. The OSPAAAL delegation was composed of Doan Dinh Ca, member of the Executive Secretariat, and Juan Pardo, official of our Organization.

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### Against apartheid

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A delegation headed by Amadou Lamarana, member of the Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL, took part in the International Investigating Commission on the crimes committed by the racist, apartheid regime in Southern Africa. Individuals and representatives of organizations from 28 African, Asian and Latin-American countries attended the second session, held in Luanda, the People's Republic of Angola, January 30-February 3, 1981. In its next issue, Tricontinental will reproduce the full text of the final document issued by the International Commission. ■

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