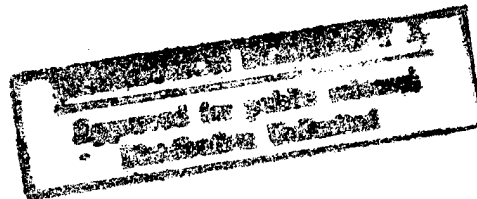


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No. 1312

LATINSKAYA AMERIKA SPECIAL ISSUE ON
CENTRAL AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS



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27 September 1982

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LATINSKAYA AMERIKA Special Issue on
Central American Revolutionary Process

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CENTRAL AMERICA: A 'HOT SPOT' ON THE PLANET

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 5-7

[Editorial]

[Text] This issue of the journal is devoted to contemporary political processes in Central America.

Of course, Central America is more of a geographic concept than a political one. Although the countries located here are neighbors, they have retained significant distinctions, some of which affect the political sphere.

Nevertheless, this is a unified region because the countries here have certain related characteristics that permit the use of analogies and reveal some features that are common to at least the majority of these countries.

First of all, their economic development has been determined to a considerable degree by natural geographic features. Besides this, the sociopolitical history of these countries in the last century and a half bears the imprint of the strongest influence of North American expansion. It was with good reason that the term "banana republics" was born here. The small dimensions of these countries and their weak economy, wholly dependent on exports (mainly to the United States) of two or three agricultural products created opportunities to turn precisely these countries into the most dependent and most submissive states, politically as well as economically, and into imperialism's "backyard."

Apparently, it was no coincidence that the most conservative circles of the old oligarchy, ruling through dictatorial, repressive regimes, felt more carefree in Central America than anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere.

This was the situation in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Belize remained directly under the colonial command of Great Britain until 1981. Only in Costa Rica was a bourgeois democratic state able to develop.

Central America's closest neighbor to the south is Panama, which is not formally a part of Central America because it was part of Colombia until 1903. After the separation it was a "pseudorepublic" for a long time, and all of its subsequent history was determined by the opening of the Panama Canal for inter-oceanic

shipping in 1914. The Canal Zone, a colonial enclave and military base of the United States, became the "fifth border" and a "pistol" pointed at the heart of the nation.

It was not until 1979, as a result of the "Torrijos-Carter agreement," which represented the culminating point of the Panamanian people's selfless struggle, that the country was able to regain the rights to this zone, although the "pistol" has not been completely unloaded as yet.

Just yesterday, therefore, Central America was the backwoods of the hemisphere. Today it never leaves the front pages of the world press. Although the region has "lost out" to the Middle East in terms of explosive potential, it has "surpassed" all other regions in terms of the intensity of internal political struggle and the tragic statistics of this struggle's victims. Today this region, which was considered to be hopelessly backward not long ago, is marked by an amazingly high degree of mass political awareness, high level of mass revolutionary organization, progressive forms of struggle, the skillful combination of these forms to fit the particular situation and the maturity of the political programs of this struggle.

The region is explosive, and not only from the standpoint of the internal situation. Suddenly, literally within the last few years, it became apparent that the development of this conflict situation was leading to the increasing involvement of various forces of global dimensions in this situation.

On the one hand, the revolutionary struggle of the Central American people has evoked the solidarity of all progressive, democratic forces in the developing world (to which this region belongs) and in the developed capitalist countries. Among the latter, the influential, complex and largely contradictory force of the Socialist International deserves special mention. The revolutionary struggle has naturally enjoyed consistent and undeviating moral and political support from the socialist countries.

On the other hand, it is precisely here that reactionary and imperialist forces feel most able to suppress the national liberation movement.

Besides this, they are particularly disturbed by the maturity of the revolutionaries' political programs. At the same time, they are reassured by the small dimensions of these countries and the presence of frenzied, repressive military regimes which will stop at nothing, even the genocide of their own people if these people do not want to continue living in the old way. The start of the new U.S. Administration in January 1981 exacerbated the situation even more, because Washington policy has assigned priority to the military "resolution" of the socio-economic and political crises in Central America.

The people's revolution in Nicaragua triumphed in 1979. This revolution was widely supported by the democratic public in Latin America and the rest of the world. Washington, however, reacted with anger and hostility. In addition to committing subversive acts against the new regime, Washington tried to form an anti-Nicaraguan counterrevolutionary front on the continent, relying not only on openly reactionary forces, but also pressuring centrist political circles,

particularly the Christian Democrats. The latter experienced a split when some supported the U.S.-engineered interventionist front while the left wing took an active part in the democratic and anti-imperialist movement.

The Anglo-Argentine conflict over the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, became a new factor in the international situation connected with the liberation movement in Central America. The military actions in the South Atlantic, the United States' support of Great Britain and the repressive actions committed by them against Argentina were events whose significance and consequences were obviously underestimated in the United States. Virtually all of the Latin American countries interpreted the behavior of their North American neighbor as a betrayal of its junior partners in the "Rio de Janeiro Pact." This was a betrayal of the interests of the people of the Western Hemisphere and of the interests of ruling regimes, no matter how close they might be to the Reagan Administration in the ideological sense.

This dealt such a severe blow to pan-Americanism that it will probably never recover. The "Monroe Doctrine," which had already been shattered by the national liberation movement, has now been consigned to oblivion even by the United States itself. The entire system of inter-American relations, according to Latin American observers, can now be divided into periods in a new way: "Before the Malvinas" and "after the Malvinas."

As far as Central America is concerned, all of this means that the United States, which has spent the last few months in a painstaking search for someone to remove its chestnuts from the fire (in other words, to suppress the revolutionary movement in El Salvador by force or to commit aggressive acts against Nicaragua), will most likely be unable to carry out these plans. Ample evidence of this can be seen in just the following example: The Argentine military advisers who participated just recently in the punitive operations of the Salvadoran junta's troops, have already been recalled.

In any case, it is clear that the future status and direction of the liberation movement in Central America will not be determined by the international situation. Just as in any other revolution, they will depend primarily on the will of the people, the people's determination to win a victory in a hard, bloody and unequal struggle against well-equipped and trained armies, the mass nature and organization of the people's political struggle, the correct choice of slogans and forms of struggle and the expansion of the revolutionary vanguard's social base.

The specific course of events in Central America is impossible to predict. Besides this, the events discussed in a monthly journal cannot occur close to the time when the reader opens the journal. For this reason, the purpose of this issue is to provide the reader with an understanding of the peculiarities of the processes distinguishing the current stage of the political struggle in this region.

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LATIN AMERICA: MORE INTENSE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND OLIGARCHY AND FOR
DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 8-22

[Article by M. F. Gornov]

[Text] The beginning of the 1980's marked the beginning of a qualitatively new stage in the development of the Latin American people's struggle against imperialism and oligarchy. This was connected, first of all, with the stronger political independence and economic self-sufficiency of these countries and the growth of their influence in the international arena and, secondly, with the development of the popular movement and the consolidation of the working class and its political parties, which have consistently opposed foreign monopolies and their stooges and have advocated socioeconomic reforms. Finally, the present stage of more intense anti-imperialist struggle is a result of the continuous exacerbation of conflicts between the Latin American countries and the United States over the aggressive militaristic policy of the Reagan Administration, a policy of blackmail, threats and overt political and even military pressure, aimed at the preservation of the United States' dominant position in this region in any way possible. "Adventurism and the willingness to gamble the vital interests of mankind for the sake of their own selfish goals," the report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 26th Party Congress says, "are vividly reflected in the policy of the most aggressive imperialist circles. Displaying total contempt for the rights and desires of peoples, they are trying to portray the liberation struggle of the popular masses as a form of 'terrorism.' They have truly resolved to attain the unattainable--to erect a barrier to block progressive changes in the world and to resume deciding the fate of peoples."¹

The adventuristic policy of U.S. ruling circles is contrary to the vital interests of the people of Latin America and the rest of the world and is arousing discontent, protests and, finally, public demonstrations on the continent by the broadest segments of the population with demands for radical changes in domestic and foreign policy and thorough socioeconomic reform so that imperialism and oligarchy will lose their dominant position. At present, reforms of this kind are being demanded not only by the working class in conjunction with the peasantry, but also by other population strata in the struggle against imperialism and oligarchy, for independent economic development and for a stronger role for the state in the resolution of national problems. Of course, it is always important to remember

V. I. Lenin's statement that "only the proletariat can consistently fight for democracy. Its fight for democracy can only be victorious if it is joined by the peasant masses in its revolutionary struggle. If the proletariat is not strong enough for this, the bourgeoisie will lead the democratic revolution and will give it an inconsistent and selfish character."²

The Latin American proletariat now numbers more than 50 million and this number is constantly rising. It is constantly growing more organized. Its best representatives constitute the nucleus of the communist parties operating in all of the Latin American countries. In their policy-planning documents, they stress that the main objective of the present stage of revolution is the cessation of the dominance of U.S. imperialism and the local oligarchy--the grand commercial bourgeoisie and latifundists--as well as the institution of radical democratic revolutionary reforms which will pave the way to socialism. The experience of the Cuban revolution, the victory of popular forces in Nicaragua and the reforms in a number of Caribbean countries prove that any extensive socioeconomic reorganization in the Latin American countries inevitably turns into a struggle against American imperialism and local oligarchy, a struggle for democratic freedoms. These are precisely the main directions of the present struggle of anti-imperialist, democratic and progressive forces in Latin America. The communist parties are approaching the attainment of immediate revolutionary objectives with a view to the uneven economic and political development of the Latin American countries and the balance of class forces in them, which causes the conditions for the development of the revolutionary process to mature at different times.

One distinctive feature of the present stage of revolution is the emphasis placed on socialist prospects in almost all revolutionary policy documents. This does not mean that the revolutionary process is being forced and it has nothing in common with the allegations of Latin American "revolutionaries" from the ultra-leftist camp that the accomplishment of a socialist revolution is supposedly already on today's agenda in Latin America. It must be said, however, that the continuous reinforcement of the world socialist system, the growing influence of the communist parties, the development of the workers and national liberation movement, the particular balance of class forces within each country and the augmented role of the working class and its vanguard--the Marxist-Leninist parties--have created the possibility of a rapid transition from one stage of revolution to the next, from the first to the second, from the lowest to the highest. The experience of the Cuban revolution was vivid proof of this. Without the prospect of advancement toward socialism, the anti-imperialist liberation movement is forced to mark time and eventually can be defeated.

The communist parties want to unite all national anti-imperialist forces in a single front to attain the current objectives of the anti-imperialist, agrarian, democratic revolution. Socialists, Christian Democrats and radicals have joined the communists in the movement to create this front. The communist parties of the Latin American countries realize the need for concerted action with these forces and the need for their inclusion in active revolutionary struggle.

When a communist party is truly in favor of broad-scale unity with other revolutionary anti-imperialist parties, currents and groups, it seeks forms and methods of unification and puts forth the kind of program and slogans that promote real united efforts and lead to united action.

This is why many communist parties in the Latin American countries are now concerned mainly with the creation of unified anti-imperialist, antidictatorial, democratic fronts for the purpose of uniting all anti-fascist, patriotic and democratic forces to gain power and form a government capable of putting an end to the crimes of imperialism and oligarchy and accomplishing the cardinal tasks of the liberation movement. "The forms of sociopolitical development in the Latin American countries are just as diverse as the degrees of participation by various strata of the popular masses in the direct institution of political and social reforms," the Declaration of the Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Communist Parties states. "The class content of this development also varies. Nevertheless, it testifies in all cases to the birth of a new set of circumstances on our continent, affording broader opportunities for the creation of democratic governments opposed to imperialism and pursuing a progressive policy in the social sphere."³

The diversity of the political forces making up the united front means that communists have to take a differentiated approach to their allies in the liberation struggle and consider their opinions and demands. Significant changes have taken place recently in various leftist organizations representing petty bourgeois strata and student youth. They are acting or can act in conjunction with communists within the framework of a front against imperialism and reaction. A struggle is being waged in several countries with fascist dictatorship for the broadest possible anti-fascist, anti-dictatorial front which includes the bourgeoisie, certain religious groups, progressive nationalist elements in the army and other strata. In other countries, where bourgeois freedoms have been maintained, communists are opposing the anti-people policy of the government on the basis of democratic unity and broad-scale mass action and are striving to isolate the most reactionary elements, whose associations with imperialism have discredited them, and to pave the way for the further development of the revolutionary process.

Consequently, it is not only the communists, but also fairly broad leftist groups, united in various political parties, movements and organizations and representing part of the laboring public, the petty and middle bourgeoisie and student youth, that are opposing imperialist domination and fighting for stronger national sovereignty, complete economic independence, profound social reforms, the observance of democratic rights and the satisfaction of the vital interests of the popular masses. With a view to the fact that the social base of the liberation movement in Latin America has become much broader in recent years and now includes more of the middle strata, the communist parties are working more with these population groups to overcome their hesitation and inconsistency. The communist parties have stressed the need for a strong alliance with the middle strata both during the stage of anti-imperialist and democratic reforms and during the socialist stage of the revolution.

The experience of the revolutionary movement on the continent has proved that revolutionary forces can win the middle strata over to their side if careful thought is given to the sequence and scheduling of social reforms, which should not restrict the economic interests of these forces but, on the contrary, should encourage them to join the struggle against imperialism, local big capital and oligarchy. If this condition is not met, the middle strata could become the

social base of the grand bourgeoisie, which would slow down the revolutionary process considerably and change the balance of forces in favor of reaction and imperialism. "On the one hand," Soviet researcher Yu. A. Krasin correctly notes, "the communist parties are expected to initiate the creation and reinforcement of broad alliances in the struggle against a common enemy but, on the other, the Marxist-Leninist parties must be able to preserve their own revolutionary image and uphold the main objectives for which communists fight--the objectives of socialist transformation."⁴

Other patriotic forces can and do play the leading, guiding role in the liberation struggle, as the experience of the Nicaraguan revolution and the armed struggle in El Salvador and in several other countries have demonstrated, and in the unification of anti-imperialist forces and the creation of fronts. The vanguard role is not assumed automatically. "It is not enough to simply call ourselves the 'vanguard' or advance detachment," V. I. Lenin stressed, "we must also act in such a way that all other detachments realize and admit that we are taking the lead."⁵ This must not be forgotten today, now that various forces have joined the anti-imperialist movement. The vanguard role is won as a result of the proposal of the correct program, political actions and slogans and, finally, the timely creation of the necessary circumstances and correct combination of forms and methods of struggle. This is why the Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Communist Parties stressed that "the revolutionary struggle in Latin America is a hard and complex battle in which all forces opposing American imperialism have their own place, and in which the revolutionary movement must employ the most diverse forms and methods of struggle and make correct decisions as to the place and time of their implementation in accordance with the unique conditions of each country."⁶

In the struggle to create united fronts, the communist parties have encountered two dangers: On one side, the extremists whose supporters consider the communist party line to be "opportunistic," and "conciliatory," implying a departure from class principles and Marxism-Leninism, and who allege that the working class must concern itself only with the immediate acquisition of the power to build socialism because any alliance with other social classes and strata diverts it from this goal; on the other, signs of bourgeois reformism, the representatives of which give the concept of the united front such a broad interpretation that they essentially divest it of its principled content. This is why the communist parties are resolutely opposed to the rightwing opportunist line of extreme reform and to subjectivist attempts to "skip" some of the necessary stages of revolution. At the same time, the communist parties stress that the struggle for democracy is not a tactical goal in itself, but part of the struggle for the social liberation of the laboring public, for the thorough transformation of Latin American society and against imperialism and various kinds of dictatorships. The declaration of the Havana Conference of Communist Parties spokesmen notes that "we communists will always work with all supporters of democracy and with all persons opposing fascist atrocities.... The path of revolutionary reform in Latin America presupposes coordinated and constant struggle, in which the battle against fascism, imperialism and oligarchy and in defense of democracy and active participation by the people in political life represents a single process."⁷

As far as the forms and methods of struggle for revolutionary reforms are concerned, this matter is no longer as debatable as it was, for example, in the 1960's. The very practice of revolutionary struggle in several Latin American countries corroborated the accuracy of Marxist-Leninist premises. General Secretary L. I. Brezhnev of the CPSU Central Committee described the situation on the continent in the following manner: "Not one of the lessons of the past is in vain. In particular, there is no question that the experience of the Popular Unity Party in Chile will be used by fighters for freedom and national independence."⁸

The victory of the people's democratic revolution in Nicaragua has been a colossal triumph for the popular movement in Latin America in the 1980's. The Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) in an alliance with other parties served as the political vanguard of the Nicaraguan revolution and is now the ruling party and is consistently pursuing a program of profound socioeconomic reforms. The revolution has already drawn broad public strata into politics. Mass labor organizations have been formed: the Sandinist Central Labor Union, the Rural Labor Association, the Sandinist Youth, the Association of Nicaraguan Women and the Sandinist Defense Committee. All of these organizations act under the FSLN banner to protect and promote the revolution in the interest of the majority of the Nicaraguan population.

One of the characteristic features of the Nicaraguan revolution is profound economic reform, which is supposed to end domination by foreign monopolies and lay a strong economic foundation for a new society. The property of Somoza and his stooges, amounting to 50 percent of all industrial enterprises and 30 percent of the farmland, was nationalized in the very first year of the revolution. This property now serves as the foundation of the state sector, which is called the sector of public ownership in Nicaragua. Private banks, foreign trade operations, the mining industry, pricing policy and the activities of foreign capital are now under state control. The former rural holdings of Somoza and his supporters have now become a large sector of public ownership--plantations of export crops (coffee, cotton, sugar), animal husbandry farms, agricultural complexes, etc. All of them are managed by the Institute for Agrarian Reform. Agricultural co-operatives have been organized. Consequently, fundamental reforms have been instituted in the economy. In addition to this, the leadership of the FSLN and government are encouraging the private sector to take part in the resolution of economic problems. The Nicaraguan Government has announced its plans to develop a mixed economy and has called upon private capital to contribute to the cause of national reconstruction. Private enterprises have been offered credit and a chance to acquire equipment and sell their products.

The revolution in Nicaragua is still developing in depth, as a genuinely popular democratic revolution. Its complete triumph will benefit not only the Nicaraguan people but also all of the people in Latin America and the rest of the world. This is why the movement for international solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution has become so broad. When F. Castro spoke of the victory of the revolution in Nicaragua, he said that "those who believe that Nicaragua could become a new Cuba received a wonderful response from the Nicaraguans: 'No, Nicaragua will become a new Nicaragua.' No two revolutions are alike. We have much in common in terms of fighting spirit and heroism. But our problems are not identical to

the problems they face. The conditions under which our revolution took place are not the same as the conditions of the Nicaraguan revolution. For one thing, we did not have this kind of broad international support."⁹

The new Nicaragua's democratic position and its creation of an economy that is not dependent on monopolistic capital presuppose the development of new foreign economic and political ties with all countries, including the socialist states. An important milestone was reached in May 1982, when the Soviet Union was visited by a state delegation from the Republic of Nicaragua, headed by Daniel Ortega Saavedra, commandant of the revolution, member of the FSLN national leadership and coordinator of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction. Talks with leaders of the CPSU and Soviet State revealed the two countries' common views and similar positions on an entire group of major issues of the present day. Both sides expressed serious worries about the continuous growth of tension in the world and the dangerous situation that has taken shape in some regions primarily as a result of the attempts of U.S. imperialist circles to disrupt the existing balance of world forces with the aim of achieving military superiority, undermining the positions of world socialism and striking a blow at the conquests of the national liberation movement. The Soviet Union supported Nicaragua's proposals aimed at the normalization of the situation in Central America, where Washington has launched a hostile campaign against several states.

The United States is still thinking in terms of the imperial categories of American colonialism. One of the main targets of U.S. provocations and attacks has become Nicaragua, which knows from its own experience what the Latin American people receive from the United States. The USSR and Nicaragua resolutely condemned the U.S. threats leveled at Cuba, Nicaragua and other Latin American peoples and U.S. intervention in the affairs of El Salvador and announced their solidarity with patriotic and democratic forces in Latin America. At a luncheon honoring the state delegation from the Republic of Nicaragua, L. I. Brezhnev said: "Peoples and countries are brought closer together by politics than by geography, and distance is not an obstacle to mutual understanding and friendship.... A small state in Central America is making every effort to protect its independence and live in peace.... In accordance with the will of the people, it has begun to rebuild social relations on the basis of democracy and social progress and under the leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front.

"Nicaragua conducts a policy of non-alignment in international affairs and is contributing as much as it can to the improvement of the international situation."¹⁰

The Washington Administration's aggressive policy is forcing people to choose between remaining in the world capitalist system and, consequently, giving up their independence and consenting to submit completely to imperialism's wishes or seeking new and equal relations and taking an anti-imperialist stand--that is, the stand of struggle for peace and social justice.

The development and intensification of the revolutionary process have been accompanied by increasing resistance on the part of the revolution's enemies both within various countries and in the international arena. In this connection, looking back to the lessons of the Chilean revolution, it is important to underscore V. I. Lenin's statement that revolution is only worthwhile if it can be defended.

The present stage of the anti-imperialist struggle in Latin America has some distinctive features. If it is viewed within the context of the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism, it is obviously the next logical step after events such as the Cuban revolution, the revolutionary wave of the mid-1960's, the formation of the revolutionary democratic governments of Peru, Bolivia and Panama in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the Chilean revolution of 1970-1973 and the revolutionary outbursts of the early 1970's in Uruguay and the mid-1970's in Argentina. They have now culminated in the victory of the Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua, which simultaneously marks the beginning of a new stage in the continent's revolutionary struggle. During those same years, there were several upsurges of the national liberation, anticolonial movement, which gave a number of Caribbean states their political independence. The completion of the decolonialization process in the last territories under imperialist domination in America is extremely important, but it is also obvious that decolonialization is connected with acute problems in the entire international situation, resulting from the policy of the U.S. Administration.

It is no coincidence that the problem of the Falkland (Malvina) Islands is being exacerbated precisely at this time, now that the United States is interfering more and more in the affairs of the Central American peoples. The U.S.-encouraged aggression of the British Tories created tension in this region. The Thatcher Government's aims are understandable: To find support within the country, mobilize the "silent majority" on the wave of militaristic chauvinism and, by joining in the American maneuvers, retain some "share" of control over the Falkland (Malvina) Islands. In fact, the United States is already raising the question of its own participation in this control, amazing even its experienced OAS partners with its cynicism. But the White House has not given up its dream of creating a South Atlantic Treaty Organization (SATO) either and has exerted strong pressure on Argentina with the hope of attaining certain concessions. The United States needs this new bloc for military and strategic purposes and for the suppression of the liberation movement in the southern half of Latin America.

The results of the Anglo-American adventure on the Falkland (Malvina) Islands are far from clear-cut. There is no question that this has put the United States in a difficult position in the international arena and on the continent and has caused it to suffer major political losses. Nevertheless, the present masters of the White House apparently hope to settle their affairs as well as possible and attain political successes precisely under the conditions of conflicts, tension, military clashes or confrontations. This is how they are acting in the Middle East and this is how they try to act in the South Atlantic. On the other hand, the overtly colonialist sympathies and policy line of the United States and the obvious preference it showed for its North Atlantic partner over its Latin American partner have intensified anti-American feelings in broad segments of the Latin American public and have stimulated a search for regional forms of unification without U.S. participation. The governments of many countries in this region have pointedly criticized the position of the American Administration and have declared support for Argentina. In particular, Peruvian President Belaunde Terry said that the U.S. position in the Anglo-Argentine conflict signaled the "end of the 'Monroe Doctrine.'"¹¹ There has been more criticism of the Organization of American States (OAS), which faithfully serves U.S. interests and can easily be used by the United States for its own selfish purposes. But as soon as the need first arose

to use the mechanism of the OAS and the "Rio de Janeiro Pact" to defend the sovereign rights of one of the Latin American countries, the United States turned out to be on the other side of the front line.

The widespread aggression of imperialist powers has strengthened the democratic and anti-imperialist movement in Argentina. Argentine labor organizations and political parties expressing the wishes of the broad popular masses are defending the national interests and independence of Argentina in spite of imperialist pressure and are fighting for the democratization of social life and the restoration of Argentine sovereignty over the Falkland (Malvina) Islands.

The hostilities England launched in the conflict zone and the threat of their spread to the Argentine coastline have been harshly condemned in Latin America. Officials and broad segments of the public have advocated the quickest possible settlement of the conflict by peaceful means, with the aid of negotiations and with a view to the UN resolutions on decolonialization.¹² The Thatcher Government's imperial manner and lapses into colonialism are contrary to the main stream of contemporary development and pose a real threat to peace and security.

The Soviet stand on the conflict over the Falkland (Malvina) Islands and solidarity with the firm resolve the Latin American people to put an end to remnants of colonialism in the Western Hemisphere and block the path of neocolonialism are highly appreciated in Latin America.

The Latin Americans' unanimous condemnation of the U.S. position in the Anglo-Argentine conflict has forced Washington to avoid taking sides, seek alternatives and try to divide the Latin American countries by taking advantage of local peculiarities for certain nuances in the official position of governments. This was the purpose of the letter Reagan sent to the presidents of several Central American countries in the beginning of May, which was reported by the president of Panama.

The start of the new administration in the United States increased worries in large segments of the Latin American public--from governments to political parties, trade unions and religious groups--about the future of this part of the world. Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo announced on the next day after the visit of General Walters, the American President's emissary, that the Mexicans have a special affection for the people of Cuba. He expressed deep regret that this region had been put in the "undesirable category of a strategic boundary." The present stage in the exacerbation of conflicts between these countries and the United States and the upsurge of popular demonstrations against imperialism are due to more than objective factors; they are also directly related to Washington's policy on the continent and in other parts of the world.

The current American administration is trying to portray the revolutionary, liberation struggle of the Latin American people as part of the global conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, whose interests are expressed on the continent by socialist Cuba. According to U.S. representative to the United Nations J. Kirkpatrick, the Carter Administration's rejection of the "ideological approach" (that is, anti-Soviet) kept it from pursuing the correct policy in this

region.¹³ It cannot be said, however, that the Reagan Administration has worked out a new approach to the Latin American countries. Furthermore, Reagan and his team have openly declared plans for military and political pressure and have quite frankly returned to the "big stick policy" which was fashionable in the by-gone days when capitalism was just entering its latest stage, the stage of imperialism. This policy of flagrant violence and intervention is set forth in the so-called "Santa Fe Document," prepared in 1980 with the participation of R. Fontaine--the U.S. National Security Council's adviser on Latin American affairs.

The "Santa Fe Document" is written in a belligerent tone and even contains an appeal for a "liberation war" against Cuba. It blames Cuba and the Soviet Union for the instability in Central America and the Caribbean and stresses the need to revive the postulates of the Monroe and Truman "doctrines" and the "Alliance for Progress" program. It underscores the common cultural history and political ideology of the two Americas, which should supposedly serve as a basis for the reinforcement and development of capitalist socioeconomic and political structures in the region. Officially, however, the main purpose of Washington's Latin American policy is the protection of U.S. national security, and it is on this pretext that the United States intervenes in various parts of the world and pursues a dictatorial policy.

Of course, even here the United States cannot get along without intimidating references to the "Soviet threat" and appeals for a "struggle against communism." The document stresses that the fight against communism is the main thing, and not human rights. In Haig's words, "the most flagrant violation of human rights is international terrorism"--that is, communism and the liberation movement. It was therefore no coincidence that one of the new administration's first and most ostentatious moves was the cancellation of the sanctions imposed by President Carter on Chile after former Popular Unity Minister O. Letelier was assassinated in Washington by Chilean secret service agents. American-Chilean relations have become much more lively, especially in the military sphere. There have been exchange visits of top-level representatives of the navy, air force and ground forces, a visit by the commander of the U.S. Southern Military District to Chile, the invitation of Chilean naval forces to take part in the "Unitas" maneuvers and a U.S. visit by Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Reagan Administration has also taken steps to establish more active contacts with the most odious dictatorships in other Latin American countries.

After proclaiming Central America a sphere of its own "vital interests," the United States has used every means at its disposal to retain political, economic and military control over this region. At the basis of the Reagan Administration's policy toward this region lies a strategic plan which includes the suppression of the national liberation struggle in El Salvador and Guatemala, the destabilization of the situation in Nicaragua and the institution of other measures of a preventive nature to keep the liberation movement from developing in depth and breadth.

In order to undermine the Nicaraguan revolution, the United States is striving for the political and diplomatic isolation and an economic blockade of this country. On the pretext of "Nicaragua's inclination toward communism" and its "intervention in Salvadoran affairs," the United States is urging reactionary forces within the country to take antigovernmental actions, stimulating subversive activity against

the revolution by former Somozists and provoking new conflicts between Honduras and Nicaragua without any consideration for the standards of intergovernmental relations and the principles of international law. As the OAS session in St. Lucia on 3-11 December 1981 proved, however, the U.S. attempts to encourage collective actions against Nicaragua were resisted by the majority of Latin American countries.

Tension has built up over the situation in El Salvador. In an attempt to put out the flame of people's war, the United States has openly interfered in the internal affairs of this country by giving military, economic and financial aid to U.S.-trained military contingents, equipped with the latest technology, and sending these contingents to fight against the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

The Reagan Administration's policy has been sharply criticized by several Latin American and European countries. Furthermore, even people in the United States, both Republicans and Democrats, have advocated the political settlement of the crisis in El Salvador by means of negotiations. An all-encompassing political settlement of the crisis in El Salvador is supported by the Socialist International, the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties and the International Forum of Solidarity with the Salvadoran People, which is made up of 80 solidarity committees in various countries.

The United States is striving to settle the political crisis in El Salvador by military means and has simultaneously done everything within its power to promote "elections" in El Salvador. In an attempt to win "international approval" of the election farce, the United States pushed a resolution in support of the "elections" through the OAS.

According to Washington's plans, the "elections" to the Salvadoran constituent assembly at the end of March 1982 were supposed to establish the necessary conditions for the formation of a "legal" government of Christian Democrats as an alternative to the political settlement of the crisis by means of negotiations with the participation of the Farabundo Marti front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front. The Reagan Administration's attempt failed, however.

The election was won by a bloc of parties on the extreme right, and not by the Christian Democrats headed by N. Duarte, the leader of the junta supported by the United States, the Christian Social government of Venezuela and the Christian Democrats of Latin America and Western Europe. The extreme right managed to "win" 60 percent of the vote.

At a session of the constituent assembly in May 1982, d'Aubusson, the leader of the fascist "Nationalist Republican Alliance" (ARENA), was elected chairman of the assembly and all nine of the remaining seats on the "administrative council," deputy chairman and chairmen of various committees were occupied by members of ARENA and the National Conciliation Party (PCN) that had governed the country for two decades until 1979, when Gen Romero was overthrown in a military coup.

Therefore, the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) and its leaders were defeated. The government was taken over by fascist elements on the extreme right. The banker Magana, also a representative of circles on the extreme right, was elected provisional president. In the new government, ARENA will hold 4 (of the total 14)

offices, the PCN will hold 3, so-called "independents" will hold 3, the armed forces will hold 1 and the PDC will hold 3.¹⁴

The new rulers' first action was an organized repressive expedition against Morazan Province, which had been under the control of revolutionary forces for around 2 years. This operation, called the "Torola operation" was participated in by around 4,000 soldiers from special battalions who arrived the day before the operation from American bases, where specialists from the "Green Berets" had taught them the techniques of antipartisan warfare. The beginning of the operation was given thorough coverage in the bourgeois press, which asserted that Morazan would be "purged" of subversive elements" within 2 weeks and reported that the operation would involve artillery, military helicopters and aircraft. After a week of battle, however, the punitive crack troops had abandoned the battlefield in confusion after taking vengeance by destroying a few civilian villages and rural communities.¹⁵

The election of d'Aubusson and his followers has virtually excluded the possibility of negotiations with representatives of the Farabundo Marti Front and Revolutionary Democratic Front for a political settlement of the crisis in the country. We can assume that the new rulers will heighten the level of terror in the country because d'Aubusson said just before the election that he would "use napalm to put an end to partisan movements" if he should win the election.

Although the victory of the fascist element did not fit into the United States' plans, Washington's policy of intervention in Salvadoran affairs has not undergone any changes. American aid, including military and economic assistance, will be offered to the reactionary regime whenever the need arises to put down rebellions and disarm rebels.

The revolutionary organizations of El Salvador have condemned the election farce and have announced that they will continue the armed struggle. Much of the territory of the country is controlled by rebels, and rebel forces enjoy public support. The rebels' objections to the election farce and their proposals for the peaceful settlement of the crisis in El Salvador by means of negotiations have been widely supported by the international public, particularly the Socialist International, which harshly condemned the ridiculous elections, refused to acknowledge their results and is now appealing for negotiations.

The wave of anti-imperialist struggle in Central America and the Caribbean is still growing. There have been battles in Guatemala, where the reactionary dictatorship is still pursuing a policy of genocide against its own people.

The United States proposed the so-called "Caribbean initiative" to imply its sincere interest in the development of the region. The plan has aroused skeptical feelings in all of the capitals of the region, however, because its neocolonial essence can be seen clearly behind its veil of demagogic statements. In recent months the Latin American public has been increasingly alarmed by the U.S. treatment of the young Central American State of Grenada, the government of which has embarked on the path of progressive reforms and democratic development.

The Reagan Administration has shown a distinct preference for military solutions to problems in its relations with countries where tension is growing. Its plans naturally include the creation of blocs of reactionary regimes, the training of their armies to suppress the liberation movement and, finally, the combat training of various renegades and traitors.

Efforts have simultaneously been made to divide international forces supporting the liberation movement. Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Panama and other Latin American countries have become the targets of intense American pressure.

Nevertheless, the revolutionary events on the continent and the development and intensification of the struggle against imperialism and oligarchy and for democracy and social progress clearly testify that the Reagan Administration's aggressive plans will fail. This struggle is constantly acquiring broader dimensions and more public support and is backed up by tremendous international solidarity. It is developing at a time when the influence and authority of the Soviet Union, all countries of the socialist community and forces for peace and progress are growing in the international arena.

There is no need to even mention that this revolutionary process tends to ebb and flow and is marked by successes and temporary defeats, but in the beginning of the 1980's--and this is extremely important--there was a clear and distinct tendency toward the intensification of the popular struggle against imperialism, and there is no question that Latin America will be in the forefront of the revolutionary struggle. "For an understanding of all the complexity of the situation in Latin America today," First Secretary R. Arismendi of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uruguay has pointed out, "and an understanding of its characteristic tendencies and dialectical contradictions, it must be borne in mind that this continent is experiencing a revolutionary boom. Although progressive forces have suffered partial defeats and fascism has taken the offensive in some countries, the continent as a whole is standing firmly on the great highway of national and social liberation."¹⁶

FOOTNOTES

1. "Materialy XXVI s'yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, 1981, pp 20-21.
2. V. I. Lenin, "Poln. sobr. soch." [Complete Collected Works], Vol 11, p 49.
3. "Latinskaya Amerika v bor'be protiv imperializma, za natsional'nuyu nezavisimost', demokratiyu, narodnoye blagosostoyaniye, mir i sotsializm" [Latin America in the Struggle Against Imperialism and for National Independence, Democracy, Public Prosperity, Peace and Socialism], Moscow, 1976, p 21.
4. Yu. A. Krasin, "Revolutsionnyy protsess sovremennosti" [The Contemporary Revolutionary Process], Moscow, 1981, pp 129-130.
5. V. I. Lenin, Op. cit., Vol 6, pp 83-84.

6. "Latinskaya Amerika v bor'be...", p 50.
7. Ibid., p 47.
8. L. I. Brezhnev, "Leninskim kursom" [Following in Lenin's Footsteps], Vol 4, Moscow, 1974, p 406.
9. IZVESTIYA, 28 July 1979.
10. PRAVDA, 5 May 1982.
11. LA PRENSA, Managua, 9 May 1982.
12. BARRICADA, Managua, 9 May 1982.
13. COMMENTARY, New York, 1981, Vol 71, No 1, p 33.
14. LA PRENSA, 6 May 1982.
15. EL NUEVO DIARIO, Managua, 7 May 1982.
16. R. Arismendi, "Leninism--The Banner of World Revolutionary Reform," Moscow, 1979, p 200.

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REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS OF EL SALVADOR AND THE POPULAR MOVEMENT

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 23-36

[Article by T. Ye. Vorozheykina]

[Text] The development of the revolution and civil war in El Salvador has again, just as in the case of Nicaragua, focused attention on the unity of leftist forces as an essential condition for the victory of the revolution. Almost 3 years have gone by since fall 1979, the time when the country entered a directly revolutionary situation, and these years have clearly demonstrated that both the successes of the Salvadoran revolution and its temporary failures and setbacks have depended directly and primarily on the progress achieved in the unification of revolutionary forces.

The Salvadoran revolutionary process has raised urgent questions about the participants, nature, level and purpose of unity and has pointed out some of the important elements of the answers to these questions. Above all, there is the communists' strategic alliance with leftist radical military-political movements; with those who were just recently likely to be described by some desk-bound researchers as part of the motley group of "ultra-leftist, Trotskyists and Maoists" (a description which confuses genuine revolutionaries with organizations and groups having no connection with revolution); with those who were often assigned most of the blame for the serious failures of the revolutionary movement in Latin America by scholars located, as someone put it "at a safe distance from the battlefield"; with those who were excluded from this movement "in principle and forever" and who were not even regarded as allies of revolutionary forces. Despite all of their numerous political and, in particular, tactical errors, however, leftist radical organizations in several Latin American countries have fought heroically against reactionary and fascist forces.

The victory of the Nicaraguan revolution forced many people to give up earlier approaches and stereotypes and thoroughly reconsider their attitude toward these movements, their theoretical views and their strategies and methods. Leftist radical movements in Latin America had to be assessed from a different vantage point after the examples set by the FSLN's activity and its contribution to the resolution of the main problems connected with the Latin American revolution--the problems of authority, the nature of the revolution, the correlation of armed and peaceful means, the revolutionary vanguard, unity and hierarchy on different levels, etc.

Furthermore, the Central American communist parties believe that the future of the revolutionary process in many countries of the subregion will depend to a considerable extent on the unity of leftist forces--that is, precisely on the communist alliance with leftist radical military-political organizations. The Nicaraguan experience proved that the unification, strength and lasting unity of the revolutionary nucleus of the movement largely determined the scales of the anti-imperialist and democratic front and the position occupied in this front by truly revolutionary forces. This kind of unity is equally important to leftist radicals and to communists.² The regrettable experience of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party clearly demonstrated that a party which does not unite with other leftist forces faces the real danger of being left on the sidelines of the revolutionary struggle. One of the reasons is the new interpretation of the revolutionary vanguard. Whereas some of the Central American communist parties once believed that they would be assigned the vanguard role "by definition," in the 1980's all of them feel that the problem of creating a unified Marxist-Leninist vanguard must be solved during the process by which all revolutionary organizations are gradually unified.

The present range of opinions and, what is most important, the very nature of the situation in Central America have made it absolutely necessary to discuss all of these problems that should have been settled some time ago. What is the actual role and place of leftist radical movements in the revolutionary process? What is the reason for the organizational heterogeneity of the revolutionary vanguard in Central American countries and in many other parts of the developing world? What are the sources of the present strength and stability of the revolutionary organizations which, without officially joining the international communist movement, nevertheless proclaim Marxism-Leninism their ideology, and the construction of socialism their goal?

An analysis of the state of the Salvadoran revolutionary movement in the last decade is, in our opinion, a necessary part of the discussion of these problems. It must be said that the Communist Party of El Salvador has already analyzed the situation to some extent. According to its leaders, the example of their country testifies that the birth of organizations taking positions "to the left of communism" under the conditions of dependent capitalist development does not merely attest to the weakness and ideological immaturity of the communist movement or even represent some kind of "punishment" for its "opportunistic errors," to use Lenin's famous phrase. Several times in Latin American history the most influential and effectively operating leftist radical organizations sprang up precisely in countries with communist parties which were strong, creative and had even embarked on the path of armed struggle. In spite of the fact that the Communist Party of El Salvador was illegal throughout the 1970's, it was a tangible and influential factor in political life. Furthermore, the "multiple nature" of the revolutionary vanguard is not a result of the rightist opportunist errors committed by the leadership of the PCDS in the late 1960's and early 1970's, which actually did lead to a split in the party and the birth of new revolutionary organizations.

The most popular explanation in the leftist radical camp is that the communist party pursued the correct political line for 40 years and there was consequently no "political room" for anyone at all to the left of it. At the end of the 1960's its line ceased to conform to reality, and this led to the birth of the "new left" in El Salvador. According to communists, in spite of the importance of reformist

tendencies, whose latent development the party itself had to take note of in the 1960's and 1970's, were a subjective factor. They simply aided in the disclosure of deeper trends in social development, characteristic of semideveloped dependent capitalism.³

Secretary General Shafik Jorge Handal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of El Salvador believes that the main objective factor giving rise to the birth of not one, but several organizations, which make up the vanguard of the revolutionary movement, is the peculiar heterogeneity of the social structure of Latin American states.⁴ In contrast to countries distinguished by the "independent development" of capitalism, this structure includes qualitatively diverse categories of hired labor (corresponding to different phases of capitalist development) with no common historical experience and with deep-seated sociopsychological differences. For example, the process of dependent industrialization which began in El Salvador at the end of the 1950's and the beginning of the 1960's led to the "sudden appearance and accelerated growth of marginal and contemporary middle urban strata, and their growth rate far exceeded the growth rate of the industrial proletariat."⁵ The old semi-craftsman working class was joined by contemporary and more highly skilled strata, but these were considerably below the traditional proletariat in terms of their level of class awareness. The number of students increased more than 10-fold and, "in a certain sense, these are also marginal because the overwhelming majority cannot be absorbed in the course of industrial development."⁶ The process of dependent industrialization also had a significant effect on agriculture, leading to the mass-scale and quick proletarianization and marginalization of the peasantry.

Therefore, the development of dependent capitalism led to the appearance of new social conflicts, constituting the social basis which gave rise to various revolutionary organizations other than the communist parties. In the opinion of the communists of El Salvador, the existence of "new left" organizations with a stable and developing social base is a permanent and deep-seated factor. This is why the arguments between communist parties and other revolutionary organizations which do not belong to the international communist movement "cannot be regarded as part of the struggle between Marxist-Leninist ideas and ultra-leftist ideas," Salvadoran communists believe. "From the standpoint of their theoretical content, these arguments are almost identical to those that took place in Europe in the 1920's, but the classic petty bourgeoisie is not a social base of the left (in Latin America--T. V.)."⁷ In El Salvador these organizations are backed up by much of the working class, particularly its newest segments.

The "new left" in countries of dependent capitalism, such as El Salvador, is not the same as the European ultra-left, which V. I. Lenin described as a "childhood disease" of the communist movement. In the developed and semideveloped countries of Europe, the ultra-left did not have a large enough socioeconomic base and could not keep up with the communist and workers parties in its growth and development. If the same thing had happened in the countries of dependent capitalism, "the 'new left' organizations would never have gone beyond the bounds of a limited segment of the intelligentsia.... However, many of them have not disappeared from the political scene in various Latin American countries and have even grown and marshaled large segments of the population, turning into a strong revolutionary force."⁸ Even when they are disintegrated and annihilated, they regenerate their

structures and create even larger organizations. These movements spring up and will continue to spring up independent of the strength and influence of the communist party and regardless of whether the communist party commits or does not commit errors. "Over the last 40 years," Mandal writes, "our party has suffered more from the disease of reformism than the ultra-left...but new revolutionary organizations have only been able to make their appearance when the development of dependent capitalism has made significant changes in the social panorama and created a new class structure."⁹

Most of the leftist radical organizations in El Salvador are connected in one way or another with the communist party. In April 1970 several of its former activists, headed by Secretary General S. Cayetano Carpio, formed the Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces (FPL). In 1979, when the unification process began, the FPL was the strongest and most influential military-political organization in El Salvador. A second organization, which was later named the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), was formed in 1971 by radical student groups. In contrast to other leftist parties and movements, the ERP was founded on a fairly heterogeneous ideological basis: It was joined by members of leftist Catholic currents, former Trotskyists, various representatives of the ultra-left, supporters of the "nidus theory" and several members of the communist party. In 1975, after a series of splits in the ERP, the "politicians," who were in opposition to the supporters of "pragmatic militarism," created their own organization--National Resistance (RN). At the end of the 1970's a fourth military-political organization joined the armed struggle against the dictatorship--the Central American Revolutionary Labor Party (or, more precisely, its Salvadoran branch).

All of these organizations regard themselves as Marxist-Leninist entities and belong to the revolutionary socialist current of the "Latin American left." From the time of their inception, they have promoted--as an immediate objective--armed struggle against the dictatorial regime for the purpose of destroying its military repressive system and concentrating all political power in the hands of revolutionary forces. The plan to win power as quickly as possible was one of the distinctions between leftist radical and communist party views in the first half of the 1970's and was the basis of the common theoretical and policy-planning tenets of these organizations. All of them believe that the revolution in El Salvador will eventually be of a socialist nature and that the attainment of democratic and anti-imperialist objectives can only be accomplished along the path toward socialism.

In the first half of the 1970's, however, the ways in which this strategy was manifested in the political and tactical lines of Salvadoran leftist radical organizations did not always correspond to the balance of political forces in the country or the peculiarities and developmental level of the mass consciousness. Quite often, after correct theoretical premises had been transformed into slogans of political struggle, they became the sources of serious errors and miscalculations in the activities of these organizations and the reason for a dogmatic and sectarian attitude toward potential allies.

This applies, in particular, to the problem of coordinating the objective content of the revolution with the program and slogans of the struggle for power. In contrast to the communist party, for which the socialist nature of the revolutionary

process stems from the crisis of existing socioeconomic structures, especially the nature of the new government, some leftist radicals, especially the members of the FPL, believe that the socialist nature of the revolution stems directly from the sphere of production and the social antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In their opinion, the remnants of pre-capitalist relations that lie at the basis of capitalist deformation are disappearing quickly (and are governed by the development of the capitalist system). Under these conditions, the accelerated growth of the working class results in the total exacerbation of the social conflict: The proletariat is directly opposed to the bourgeois class as a whole, and not simply one of its segments--the bourgeois landowning oligarchy. Only the proletariat can lead the revolution to victory--the assumption of power and the construction of socialism--"because it suffers most directly from exploitation: The wealth it creates falls into the hands of the bourgeoisie. Besides this, during the course of capitalism's historical evolution, only two classes (the bourgeoisie and the proletariat--T. V.) develop, while all the rest gradually disappear."¹⁰

This conclusion also accords with beliefs about the driving forces of revolution, at the basis of which lies the worker-peasant alliance, in the opinion of the FPL. The peasantry is the proletariat's main strategic ally because it is also a victim of capitalist exploitation--after all, the proletarianization of the peasantry is a natural tendency in the development of capitalism. Other organizations, particularly the RN and ERP, do not reduce the popular coalition only to an alliance between the proletariat and peasantry, believing that marginal and middle strata must also take part in it. As for the bourgeoisie, however, these organizations feel that not one of its segments can be a driving force in the revolution even during its democratic stage.¹¹

The FPL believed that it was possible and necessary to address the people with slogans of a primarily socialist nature: The destruction of the bourgeois state, the dissolution of the army, the annihilation of the bourgeoisie and landowners as a class, etc.¹² The realization of the objectively socialist nature of revolution, however, does not presuppose the immediate advancement of socialist programs and slogans, which reflect the final goals of an extremely lengthy process. On the contrary, as the experience of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions and later even the Salvadoran revolution proved, the most appropriate slogans for the revolutionary vanguard's struggle for power, the ones which mobilize and unite the masses to the maximum, are democratic (antidictatorial and antifascist) and anti-imperialist slogans, which meet the needs of the moment. As for the necessary destruction of the army and the entire military repressive apparatus of the dictatorship, this is more properly an objective goal of the struggle, and the advancement of slogans of this type depends on specific circumstances.

In the second place, the emphasis on taking power by force of arms during this stage of struggle, in isolation from specific political circumstances, could lead to militaristic tendencies. This was particularly evident in the practices of the ERP. The insistence on a quick victory at the beginning of the 1970's "engendered purely military concepts of all types of activity and military solutions to all problems. This insistence reflected the underestimation and disparagement of the revolutionary movement of the Salvadoran popular masses, who were employing various methods, forms and means of struggle."¹³ The militaristic

tendencies, in turn, isolated the ERP from the mass movement and from politics in general. In the belief that class conflicts would flare up within the immediate future, the organization concentrated exclusively on the creation of a military apparatus.

This line led, as mentioned above, to the split of the ERP and the creation of the RN. At the end of the 1970's, after the first congress of the Salvadoran Revolutionary Party, representing the political wing of the ERP, the latter also revised some of its aims. An analysis of the intraparty struggle of the mid-1970's and the state of isolation in which the organization found itself led the ERP to the conclusion that revolutionary violence is a secondary element of political struggle and that the party should always be prepared for the military organization of the masses.¹⁴

Under the specific conditions of El Salvador, isolation from the real popular movement meant inevitable and imminent defeat: Only the partisan movement's organic connection with the mass movement allowed it to survive. This is why Salvadoran leftist radical movements, in contrast to many similar organizations and parties in other Latin American countries with larger unpopulated areas, more suitable for struggle by isolated partisan groups, had to employ political methods as well from the very beginning--in other words, they had to become political as well as military organizations. As a result, despite their sectarian attitude toward other leftist and democratic forces and toward one another, and despite their tactical and political errors, they were able to win much of the population over to their side. From the very beginning the partisan movement in El Salvador operated at the center of the laboring masses, and this was its main distinctive feature.¹⁵

In 1975, the Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BPR) was created under the guidance of the FPL. It was joined by part of the workers and most of the peasants, teachers, students and inhabitants of urban ghettos. At first, the BPR had the strongest influence among peasants, particularly in regions where the peasantry was undergoing accelerated marginalization and proletarianization. The radicalization of Christian organizations of the Catholic type was interconnected with similar processes within the church. The regime's policy of systematic mass terror in rural regions led many parish priests into the camp of revolutionary democratic organizations, especially the BPR. At the end of 1974 the Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants, the largest and most influential in the country, escaped the political control of the Christian Democratic Party and gradually took militant revolutionary positions. At the beginning of 1975 a rural labor union was created under the direct leadership of the FPL. In 1976 the two organizations united and have since constituted the backbone of the BPR.¹⁶ At the end of the 1970's the Front for United Popular Action, controlled by the RN, became an influential political force. Its members included, in particular, one of the country's largest central labor organizations--the National Federation of Salvadoran Laborers, uniting workers in modern branches of industry. The "28 February popular leagues" (mass ERP organizations) are backed up primarily by urban marginal strata.

Rebel organizations and their political associations have had much more influence with the masses since spring 1977, after the latest election farce, which evoked a political strike and uprising in San Salvador. In this atmosphere of political

crisis, the BPR has had a much stronger position in the cities, particularly among students, teachers and ghetto inhabitants. The strikes of October-November 1977 and the seizure of the labor ministry¹⁷ were the milestones in this process. In February-March 1979 a massive strike movement was launched at enterprises in the capital and several other cities. When the worker-occupied factories were surrounded by troops on General Romero's orders, BPR led the people onto the streets. In May of the same year, the BPR headed a mass revolutionary movement for the liberation of its secretary general, Facundo Guardado, and five other leaders. On 8 and 22 May, the army opened fire on two mass demonstrations, leaving dozens killed and wounded on the steps of a cathedral and the Venezuelan Embassy.

These events dramatically heightened the political prestige of the FPL and all other leftist radical organizations. In comparison to other forces in the revolutionary democratic camp, they were able to make better use of the evolution of the immediate revolutionary situation: It was these forces that assumed the political leadership of the mass movement in 1977-1978. An entire group of factors contributed to this.

First of all, by the end of the 1970's the leftist radical organizations had partially changed their program, strengthening its democratic and anti-imperialistic content and removing many of the slogans of a directly socialist nature (at the same time, we must not ignore the fact that the FLP became the strongest and most influential force in 1979, both in the military and in the political sense).

Secondly, their earlier sectarian attitude toward other forces with some influence in the mass movement, primarily the Catholic Church and its leaders, was modified considerably.

Thirdly (and this is now acknowledged by the majority of organizations making up the FMLN), the conditions favoring the development of armed struggle and the reinforcement of the partisan movement--the politicization and radicalization of the masses, the sharp polarization of political forces in the country, etc.--were largely a result of the communist party's 11 years of participation in elections.¹⁸ The basis of the rapid growth of leftist radical influence, however, and this deserves special emphasis, was the armed struggle against the regime, because it gave the population its only real opportunity to oppose rightwing terror. The dramatic growth of the popular movement, the intensified armed struggle and the mounting "crisis at the top" made the continuing atmosphere of discord in the Salvadoran revolutionary movement particularly intolerable in 1979. Throughout the 1970's the communist party had made repeated attempts to unite leftist forces. For a long time, this appeal remained unanswered largely due to the sectorial attitudes of leftist radicals toward the communist party. The main obstacle, however, was "the fact that the communist party was for armed struggle in theory and by definition, but was not actually taking part in it."¹⁹

The Salvadoran Communist Party's ability to take a critical view of its own actions and ideas and its decision to take part in the armed struggle in summer 1979 allowed it to make a realistic assessment of the role of leftist radical organizations in the revolutionary struggle and analyze their strong and weak points. The documents of the seventh party congress reaffirmed the fundamental policy line of achieving the strategic unity of leftist forces. Disagreements with leftist

radical organizations "should be firm and unyielding only in fundamental matters, profound in content, comradely in form, flexible in everything unconnected with principles and self-critical with regard to the party's own errors and weaknesses."²⁰ Furthermore, communists must not proceed from the assumption "that communist parties are right 'by definition,' that their relations with other organizations in an atmosphere of united action are similar to teacher-student relations and that the disagreements involve truth and falsity...because the communist parties are being influenced by the same social environment that sometimes engenders dogmatism and the mechanical application of theoretical concepts."²¹

One factor which did much to promote unity in El Salvador was the merger of the three FSLN currents and the victory of the revolution in Nicaragua. Under the influence of these events, the unity of Salvadoran revolutionary organizations was no longer only the desire of the leadership but was also the unanimous wish of the popular masses.²² S. J. Handal has stressed that the split in the revolutionary movement was already an "unbearable evil" for the broad popular masses by the time the first agreement on unity was concluded, a "burden" which could only be borne because the members of each organization were so disciplined.²³

The main stages of the unification process of Salvadoran revolutionary organizations were: the agreement on united action by three organizations (the FPL, RN and Communist Party) in December 1979; the creation of the unified revolutionary leadership, which also included the ERP, in May 1980; the formation of the FMLN in October 1980, which was then joined by the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers. Although this has been discussed numerous times in our literature,²⁴ some significant aspects of the process deserve attention.

First of all, the collective platform of the revolutionary organizations was based on a democratic program (which meant that the earlier tactical aims and slogans of the FPL and RN had to be changed in part). The announced purpose of this struggle was the seizure of power by means of revolutionary people's war, "the destruction of the machine of bloody military tyranny and the creation of a revolutionary-democratic, anti-imperialist government based on people's power."²⁵ The revolutionary program of some military-political organizations served as the basis for the unification of the overwhelming majority of democratic forces around these organizations. Secondly, the unified revolutionary vanguard in El Salvador was made possible, just as the communist party had presumed, not by the discussion of debatable theoretical and practical matters, but by the best possible means in the given situation: the attainment of common strategic goals through concerted armed action.

In El Salvador this process was closely related to the difficult task of maintaining a high level of mass enthusiasm. The revolutionary popular movement--primarily in the cities--was undergoing a dramatic upsurge in the beginning of 1980 and responded directly to each new move in the unification of military-political organizations. For example, the people responded to the conclusion of the first agreement on unity and the creation of a coordinating body for revolutionary mass organizations by staging a 200,000-person demonstration on 22 January 1980--the largest in the country's history. That summer the masses were ready for a general uprising after the creation of the unified revolutionary leadership. This

leadership, however, had to take time to prepare for the uprising and not give rightwing forces an opportunity to provoke a premature demonstration. In this situation, the danger increased that the regime could diminish the intensity of the struggle by taking advantage of the monstrous escalation of terror and the gradually mounting fatigue of the masses.

The loss of rhythm in the unification process of the revolutionary organizations, which became apparent in fall 1980, was having the same effect. The urban laborers who had gone out on strike several times during the year, had staged demonstrations and had been subjected to uninterrupted repression, ceased to sense the vanguard's will and ability to quickly make the next move in the struggle for power. These and several other processes reduced the activity of urban laborers at the end of 1980 and the beginning of 1981, particularly in the locations where their struggle received no direct armed support from revolutionary organizations. In rural areas--the main partisan strongholds--the situation has always been different (although conditions have also differed here in various departments).

The difficulties that arose at that time within the FMLN proved that the creation of a common leadership was an important but nonetheless intermediate stage in the development of the actual unification process, which turned out to be much more complex. From the very beginning it was clear that the unification process would be quite painful for the Salvadoran revolutionary organizations. Since they had existed independently for a long time (in contrast, for example, to the three currents in the SFLN), they did not have much in common in the way of history, traditions, etc. Each organization had its own, extremely distinctive psychological features.

Although the Salvadoran revolutionaries want to overcome all of their various disagreements as much as possible, they nevertheless believe that their existence is natural under the conditions of a united front made up of different organizations, that they therefore should not be overdramatized and that they will be completely overcome during the course of joint struggle and the further development of the unification process.

All of the successes in this area since summer 1981--the formation of a united military leadership on the national scale and on many fronts, the current level of combat coordination, the initial steps toward a single command and the formation of democratic bodies in liberated regions--are directly related to the main problem facing revolutionary forces: the problem of authority. It is obvious that the intensive achievement of constantly rising levels of organizational unification cannot be an end in itself. On each of these levels it must correspond as much as possible to the objectives and actual course of the struggle for power.

This is the basis of the Salvadoran Communist Party line. Recent successes have mainly been due to its consistent position on this matter, which is certainly not aimed at securing a leading role in the FMLN and adherence to its own political line at any cost, regardless of how accurate it might be. The communist party's role in the correction of difficulties in the unification process must be underscored. The political courage displayed by the party has made it the main cohesive force in the front. It turned out to be best prepared to perform this complex function. The main reasons were the depth and breadth of the party's

experience, its historical age and the diversified training of its personnel. All of this has aided the communist party in choosing the particular line that corresponds most to the requirements of the struggle. The collective armed struggle is "smelting" everything that once divided the Salvadoran revolutionaries.

FOOTNOTES

1. LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1980, Nos 2, 3.
2. PROBLEMY MIRA I SOTSIALIZMA, 1982, No 3, p 26.
3. FUNDAMENTOS Y PERSPECTIVAS, San Salvador, 1982, No 4, pp 30-38.
4. JUVENTUD REBELDE, Havana, 20 March 1980.
5. "VII Congreso. Informe del Comité Central. Partido Comunista de El Salvador, Primera Parte," S.l., S.A., p 62.
6. JUVENTUD REBELDE, 20 March 1980.
7. "America Latina: Proletariado y sus Aliados. Materiales de la Conferencia de La Habana," Prague, 1981, p 188; FUNDAMENTOS Y PERSPECTIVAS, 1982, No 4, p 39.
8. "America Latina: Proletariado...", p 187.
9. FUNDAMENTOS Y PERSPECTIVAS, 1982, No 4, pp 40-41.
10. B. Juarez, "Perspectiva Historica de la Clase Obrera en El Salvador," S1, 1979, pp 14-15, 53.
11. "El Salvador: Un Volcan Social," S.l., S.A., p 72.
12. "Que Son Las FPL, 'Farabundo Marti'?" S1, 1980, No 1, p 10.
13. JUVENTUD REBELDE, 13 March 1980.
14. "El Salvador: Un Volcan Social," p 78.
15. LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1980, No 7, p 82.
16. "Perspectiva Historica del Movimiento Campesino Revolucionario en El Salvador," S1, 1979, pp 31-36.
17. "El Salvador: Mayo Heroico," 1979, S.l., S.A., pp 36-37.
18. FUNDAMENTOS Y PERSPECTIVAS, 1982, No 4, p 33.

19. "Intervencion de Shafik Jorge Handal, Secretario General del Partido Comunista de El Salvador Ante los Representantes de los Partidos Comunistas de Centro America en la Reunion Internacional de Esta Area en Octubre de 1980," S.l., 1980, p 44.
20. "Fundamentos y Tesis de la Linea General de PCS. Partido Comunista de El Salvador. VII Congreso, 1979, Segunda Parte," p 108.
21. "America Latina: Proletariado...", p 187.
22. HABLAN LOS COMUNISTAS, Santo Domingo, 1980, No 110, p 3.
23. JUVENTUD REBELDE, 18 March 1980.
24. LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1981, No 8, p 12; No 12, pp 7-8.
25. TRICONTINENTAL, Havana, 1980, No 69-70, p 44.

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GUATEMALA'S WORRIES AND HOPES

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82), pp 37-51

[Article by N. S. Leonov]

[Text] There is not much doubt that Guatemala is on the brink of massive social upheavals.

This country, the largest, richest and most densely populated in Central America, was responsible for the commencement of an entire stage of the national liberation movement in 1944. Between 1944 and 1954 an amazing experiment with democratic reforms, unique for that time and scale, was conducted in Guatemala. The government of President J. Arbenz launched an agrarian reform movement to confiscate the fallow lands owned by the omnipotent United Fruit Company. Labor organizations were granted extensive powers and the arbitrary practices of foreign monopolies were restricted.

In June 1954, however, the United States took genuine reprisals against the Guatemalan democracy with the aid of the OAS and its obedient puppets in Central America. The CIA formed a mercenary "army" made up of greedy adventurers to invade Guatemala and overthrow the Arbenz Government by taking advantage of the treachery of the top regular army officers. Honduras offered the use of its territory for this operation, and this is where the "army" of mercenaries was formed. Diplomatic and political talks were held in El Salvador between representatives of the United States and the individuals who were betraying the Guatemalan people by planning an attack on their own motherland. Somoza taught Guatemala's future executioners their trade in Nicaragua, equipped them with weapons and gave them financial assistance. According to the U.S. State Department, the export of counterrevolution was not only a legal policy, but the only possible policy in relations with Guatemala. The suppression of the Guatemalan bourgeois democratic revolution stopped all of Central America's social development for a quarter of a century.

Now Guatemala is once again being viewed as a serious potential seat of national liberation struggle in the region. Furthermore, there is ample reason to believe that the social unrest in this country might be incomparably more intense and have a much more profound impact than the events in Nicaragua and El Salvador. After all, when foreign political correspondents speak of the events in El Salvador, they

invariably mention the broad spectrum of political forces in this country: Numerous intermediate political groups with leanings to the right still exist between the extreme poles of the reactionary fascist military establishment and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front. They are "moderate" or conservative to varying degrees and the United States is relying on them to conceal the existence of a veritable military-police dictatorship. Metaphorically speaking, the political picture in El Salvador is a sketch in shades of gray. In Guatemala, on the other hand, the entire panorama of domestic political life has been painted in only two colors: black and white, with nothing in between.

This is the result of the "new order" imposed on the country by the Americans in 1954. The extreme rightwing forces that took power at that time--latifundists and the grand bourgeoisie, closely connected with the military establishment and backed up by it--have been exterminating dissidents on an unprecedented scale for almost three decades. It is probable that no other people in Latin America have ever been the victims of this kind of coldbloodedly calculated and planned genocide for so long. Between 1954 and the present, 83,500 people were killed in the country. In 1981 alone, the number of victims of repressive actions reached the horrifying figure of 13,500. The "liquidations" are committed primarily by terrorist gangs acting with the knowledge of the police and army command and on their orders. This was known even before from indirect data. Recently, however, all of the secrets came out. In May 1981 E. Barahona y Barahona, President L. Garcia's former press secretary, escaped to Panama and told journalists that a binder containing the papers of the "secret anticommunist army" was stored in the office of the minister of the interior and that the sinister "black lists" of this organization were compiled by the army chief of staff in a wing of the presidential palace.¹

The terrorist gangs have been given different names. The ones with the worst reputation are the "mano blanca" and "death squadron," and just recently the "secret anticommunist army." We can assume, however, that these different names are simply alternate labels for the same criminal anti-people syndicate, operating as a "parallel" branch of army units trained by specialists from the United States.

Of course, the main victims of the policy of annihilation are communists and, in general, all people who believe that the world should be rebuilt on a socialist basis. In 1966 V. Manuel Gutierrez, a communist and the most popular labor union activist in the country, and L. Castillo Flores, leader of the peasant movement, were seized and brutally tortured. In 1972 the head of the Guatemalan communists, Secretary General B. Alvarado Monzon of the Central Committee of the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT), was killed, and his successor, U. Alvarado Arellano, died only 2 years later. In the 1970's more than 90 percent of the party's leading cadres fell in battle or were tortured in the dictatorial regime's torture-chambers.

Repressive actions were also taken against those who used any media to advocate a change in the status quo and those who might pose the slightest threat to the ruling elite. One of the distinctive features of Guatemalan life is that the victims of terror are now the broadest segments of the population, some of them far removed from the ideas of socialism: priests, labor union personnel, teachers, journalists, students, social democrats, Christian democrats and liberals.

In March 1979, in a conversation with a correspondent from the American NATION magazine, the mayor of Guatemala City, one of the most popular political leaders of the legal opposition of that time, M. Colon Argueta (the former leader of the

United Revolutionary Front--a social reformist party--who has often been called "the Kennedy of Latin America"), said: "If you look back into the past, you will see that each murder victim was a prominent individual. These people did not have the same ideological views; they simply belonged to a particular movement or social stratum and had the ability to unite people around a common cause." A few days later Colon Argueta's car was overtaken in the city by rightwing terrorists armed with machine guns, who killed two of his guards and wounded him. The mayor was able to step on the gas and escape the siege, but within minutes two motorcyclists caught up with him and shot him point blank.

In the last year and a half, 12 priests, 190 missionaries and 76 Christian Democratic Party activists have been killed in Guatemala. This has divided the Catholic clergy, the leadership of which is considered to be one of the most conservative and cohesive on the continent. According to Western journalists, most of the priests are inclined to condemn the dictatorial regime in spite of the support it gives to the top church hierarchy, headed by Archbishop M. Casariego.

The ultra-rightwing terrorists do not feel bound by any kind of restrictions. Even American journalists do not feel safe in the "paradise" created by the United States. The names of those who dare to criticize the situation in Guatemala are entered on the "black lists" of people to be killed. All of the members of the so-called "social groups" sent to Guatemala by the Church World Services or charitable organizations to help the population after the catastrophic earthquake of 1976 received anonymous letters advising them to leave immediately unless they wanted to die.

It could be said that the rulers of Guatemala have been driven insane by their anticommunism. They have announced, for example, that the Jesuit order has been "seized by Marxists." They have sometimes labeled even official representatives of the U.S. Administration "moderate Marxists."

To break the spirit of the population, the government resorts to particularly excruciating forms of revenge against the dissidents who fall into its hands. It is no longer rare for people to be buried alive, have their skull or ribcage burned through by blow-torches, be suffocated by having rubber bags placed on their heads, etc. American Democratic Congressman R. Drinan's trip to Guatemala to investigate the scandalous rumors about brutal torture turned out to be unsuccessful: He was unable to learn anything about it from the secretary of the interior or the president of the republic. When he returned to Washington he announced: "All power in Guatemala has been seized by the mafia, and political assassinations have become a national sport for its government."²

All of these facts testify to the unconcealed hypocrisy of the Guatemalan system of bourgeois "representative democracy." After all, there has not been a single coup d'etat, from the legal standpoint, in Guatemala since the Arbenz Government was overthrown. Presidents have succeeded one another regularly, once every 4 years, for almost three decades. Gen E. Guevara, the former defense minister, was declared the victor of the last election on 7 March 1982. Obviously, the elections here have nothing to do with democracy. Their results are always programmed in advance by ruling circles and nothing can change their outcome.³

There is presently so much tension in the country that the United States began to doubt that the next falsification of election results would have the anticipated impact. Washington had to seek other means, and since the choice of political methods used by the United States in Central America is extremely limited, it decided to return to the method of the coup d'etat. On 23 March 1982 the army leadership led military units out of the barracks, surrounded the presidential palace and arrested their former chief, "newly elected" President E. Guevara. This was followed by the creation of a military junta, headed by Gen Efraim Rios Montt. The new authority announced that the results of the last election would be disregarded on the pretext that violations had been committed and dismissed the Congress.

Judging by all indications, this is an attempt to create a new administration which might disassociate itself to some degree from the policy of genocide and restriction of democracy conducted in the country since 1954. People are needed to make up the kind of gray substratum the State Department requires to cover up the anti-people character of the regime. The United States obviously believes that immediate steps must be taken to prevent the rapid growth of the rebel movement in the country.

The choice of Rios Montt was no coincidence. In the beginning of the 1970's he had a reputation as a moderate military man who opposed repression and supported the program of the Christian Democratic Party, which nominated him for the presidency in the 1974 election. There is considerable evidence that Rios Montt won the majority of the vote at that time. The extreme right wing of the army leadership, however, did not see the threat to its positions as yet, still believed in the invariable effectiveness of the policy of brutality and put up its own candidate, Gen K. Laugerud Garcia, whose political views were more to the army's liking. He was then declared the winner. Rios Montt retreated to the sidelines. He was not suppressed because he was never a serious opponent of the existing system in Guatemala. The general was put in reserve, both literally and figuratively. Now, judging by all indications, he is needed.

It would be naive to expect the new military junta to even come close to solving Guatemala's problems. The creation of the junta is nothing other than the result of internal struggle in the excessively large military upper echelon (235 of the 900 Guatemalan Army officers are generals and colonels) and the CIA's attempts to set up a government more "suitable" to the times. At his first press conference, Rios Montt said that his junta would turn to the United States for help as soon as it had determined its needs. He addressed the following words to all dissatisfied persons: "Put down your weapons or we will take them from you. We will destroy anyone who goes against the law."⁴ With some irony, the NEW YORK TIMES remarked that Rios Montt filled his speech with references to God to conceal the nature of his future policy. "I believe in God," he said, "my lord and master who will guide me, because only he can give power or take it away.... The junta will be responsible to the people of Guatemala and to God, who will be our judge."⁵ Rios Montt is most likely fated to play the same role as Salvadoran quisling Napoleon Duarte-- a figleaf for a bloody military policy dictatorship. (It is significant that in January of this year the declaration of Guatemalan leftist forces already envisaged such "moves" by the State Department and its accomplices within the country and mapped out a line of action in case this should happen. The document stated that

"the coup d'etat supported by the Reagan Administration could become another futile attempt by reactionary circles to overcome the present crisis of reactionary authority.")

Guatemalan ruling circles and the reactionary military establishment, which have merged into a single entity for the protection of their class and caste interests, are still blocking every channel for democratic reforms in the country. As early as last year, the French journal LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE stressed the following in its analysis of the situation in Guatemala: "The caricature of democracy practiced here--with the blessing of Western democracies--for almost 20 years has turned people away from traditional forms of political struggle."⁶

It is known that the choice between peaceful and armed methods of struggle was a sore point for Guatemalan leftist forces for many years. The battles over this question led to considerable difficulties and divisions, and even now the echoes of these battles are apparent in the peculiar positions taken by certain groups and currents. Reality itself proved, however, that the Guatemalan people had no other choice but armed struggle for their freedom and rights, that there was no alternative to exercising their legal right to rebel against an anti-people government.

Everyone remembers the regrettable experience of 1966, when the belief in the possibility of peaceful political struggle caused many leaders of leftist forces to advise their followers to stop all armed actions and vote for the civilian candidate for the presidency, attorney J. C. Mendez Montenegro, whose campaign platform was built on promises to stop the terror and democratize domestic political life. They did not pay enough attention to the fact that the second in command in the Montenegro Government was Gen C. Arana Osorio, who became the real head of the administration. Immediately after the election, Arana Osorio broke all of the promises and guarantees and took brutal reprisals against all of the patriots who had believed these promises enough to make use of the announced amnesty. A network of secret terrorist organizations began operating, and the army soon took the offensive against partisan groups, catching them unawares.

The political support given to the traitor by leftist forces was a serious error with exceptionally severe consequences. The entire rebel movement, which had been going on in the country since the beginning of the 1960's with no interruption, was disintegrated. In 1966, L. Turcios Lima, a prominent leader of the revolutionary forces, died in an automobile accident that was obviously engineered by the right wing. In 1970 the brave and persistent partisan leader M. A. Yon Sosa had to flee to Mexican territory with a group of fighters and was killed there in a skirmish with subunits of the Mexican Army. Most of the organized detachments broke up. The partisan movement virtually ceased to exist.

The political and military experience of the struggle in the 1960's gave Guatemalan democrats a tremendous amount of material for analysis, from which they drew two main conclusions: Guatemala's national problems could only be solved by means of revolutionary people's war; political work would have to be performed among urban and rural laborers to broaden the mass base of the revolutionary movement, combining it with military actions and not setting one form of revolutionary struggle in opposition to another.

New revolutionary organizations, which began to call themselves military-political groups, sprang up after the beginning of the 1970's as a direct result of these conclusions. They matured and gained ideological and organizational strength. The four largest united in the "Quadripartita" bloc and made up the vanguard of the Guatemalan revolution.

In chronological order, the first of these organizations is the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), founded in 1963 by a joint decision of the Political Commission of the Central Committee of the Guatemalan Labor Party and the national leadership of the 13 of November Revolutionary Movement, which then united patriotic military men who advocated, under the influence of the Cuban revolution, direct military action against the government (Turcios Lima and Yon Sosa belonged to this movement). The FAR went through several stages in its development, each of which was marked by the conclusion of the struggle against the latest deviation (from Trotskyists to right-wing opportunists). Relations between the FAR and the PGT leadership were not always smooth, particularly after the party supported the candidacy of Montenegro, who turned out to be a political weasel. Now the FAR is a militant detachment of the revolutionary democratic movement, operating primarily in the north of the country, particularly Peten Department, and has occupied huge forested areas.

Profound changes took place in the political creed of the FAR in the 1970's. Whereas most of the fighters had once come from urban strata--students, white-collar workers and officers--now most of the work focuses on the involvement of the broad masses, including the Indian population, in armed and political struggle. The previous concept of the "center" has been condemned and is largely disregarded. The FAR is also quite active in cities and has had increasing influence in labor unions once under the control of the Christian Democrats.

The commander in chief of the Rebel Armed Forces is P. Monsanto, one of Turcios Lima's comrades-in-arms who has been active in the partisan movement from the age of 16. The FAR leaders agree that all revolutionary organizations must be united, and they do not interpret this union as a simple arithmetical sum, but as a consolidation of all mass political and military strength on the basis of a single program, military strategy and leadership.

Another element of the revolutionary democratic coalition is the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), founded in January 1972 by former fighters from the Rebel Armed Forces and Guatemalan Labor Party (the commander in chief is Rolando Moran). It conducted its first operations in 1975, after making the necessary political preparations. It was formed in Mexico, where many partisans of the 1960's had to emigrate after the collapse of the rebel movement. From there, fighting units from the EGP moved into Guatemala and established bases in densely populated regions, mostly Indian, on the Pacific coastline and in the center of the country.

The emphasis on work among the Indians is probably one of the distinctive features of the EGP. Its leaders have carefully analyzed the ethnic composition of the population (around half of the country's inhabitants belong to aboriginal ethnic groups which have been subjected to the most brutal ethnic oppression in addition to class exploitation). The history of the Central American countries testifies that, with the exception of the 1833 rebellion led by A. Aquino in El Salvador,

their Indian population has not launched any broad independent demonstrations. The inferior status, illiteracy and alienation of the Indians has made them the prey of many political opportunists, who have often used false promises to involve them in civil wars to further the selfish ambitions of a particular politician or general. For this reason, the Indians lost faith in all types of promises and, with few exceptions, remained aloof from the rebels, seeing them primarily as interlopers, throughout the 1960's.

Whereas the attitude toward the Indians in the past was paternal, even on the part of revolutionaries, now Guatemalan military-political organizations, particularly the EGP, see the Indians as their natural class allies, whose hopes must finally be fulfilled after the victory of the revolution. The awakening consciousness of the Indian population in Guatemala and its involvement in the revolutionary struggle represent a new and exceptionally important factor in the total domestic political situation.

A third influential military-political organization is the Armed Popular Organization (ORPA). Its foundations were laid in the beginning of the 1970's by a splinter group of the FAR. Its sphere of activity is the northwestern part of the country, primarily rural, although in recent years it has also had some influence in urban areas. It did not conduct its first combat operation until the end of 1979. It is the only one of the partisan organizations which does not call itself Marxist-Leninist. Its fighters call themselves simply "Guatemalan revolutionaries." The organization's leaders believe that the people of Guatemala are most likely to turn to religion and to weapons in search of social justice. Most of the fighters are Catholic. As an essentially peasant organization, the ORPA defends small landowners but nevertheless is firmly in support of the expropriation of large estates. The ORPA is not trying to become the leader of the revolutionary process, is striving to say little about the vanguard role and believes that the present situation in the country and the level of maturity of revolutionary organizations dictate the need for unification.

The ORPA's position with regard to the army distinguishes it somewhat from other organizations. It believes that it would be wrong to blame the country's armed forces as a whole for actions taken in pursuit of the policy of repression, and that blows should be struck only against the specific individuals who organize and perform criminal actions against the people. The organization's leaders believe that there is a process of differentiation within the armed forces and that junior officers and some soldiers are themselves the targets of counter-intelligence repression. In other words, they believe that part of the army could become a reserve of the revolutionary forces under the proper circumstances.

A fourth important element of the front of progressive organizations is the Guatemalan Labor Party. Party documents indicate the PGT's constant line of developing the armed movement as the main means of Guatemalan revolution. The decisions of the third party congress, held in 1960, spoke of the party's willingness "to use any forms of struggle in line with the specific situation." A resolution adopted by the PGT Central Committee the next year defined armed struggle as the major way of developing the Guatemalan revolution. The same definition was thoroughly substantiated by the fourth congress in 1969. Although the armed method of revolution was unanimously recognized by party members, they

continued to debate questions connected with the relationship between peaceful and non-peaceful forms and methods of struggle and this created certain difficulties in intra-party life.

All four organizations conduct coordinated combat operations. It is not possible as yet to determine the number of armed fighters battling for freedom and democracy in Guatemala. The statistics employed by American journalists come mainly from the data of Guatemalan Army headquarters, the Pentagon and the U.S. Secret Service and therefore requires a discerning approach. According to these statistics, the number of partisans ranges from 2,000 to 5,000. The first figure is generally cited when the "insignificance" of partisan forces is to be underscored, and the second is cited when the publication is meant to frighten other governments in Latin America with the "specter of communism" in Guatemala. The leaders of the partisan groups are understandably reluctant to divulge any information about the numerical strength of their forces.

The quality of their combat and moral training can be judged merely from the fact that the Guatemalan regular army, which now numbers over 15,000 and is reinforced by police subdivisions and paramilitary groups numbering up to 25,000, cannot "put things in order." Armed conflicts are constantly going on in 15 of the 22 departments. Virtually the entire country has been encompassed by the rebel movement. The general headquarters planned to increase the size of the army to 50,000 men, but even this will not guarantee military successes in the struggle against the partisan movement.

In January 1982 the "Quadripartita" bloc issued a joint declaration addressed to the Guatemalan people and the world public.⁷ This extremely important document contains an assessment of the economic and political situation, defines the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggle and proclaims the program of the future patriotic, popular and democratic government. All four organizations declared that their unity is based on the strategy of revolutionary people's war. As their chief enemy, they name: "the nouveau riche group, which includes high-placed military men, greedy entrepreneurs and mercenary bureaucrats who have grown rich by controlling the armed forces and the government and have thereby become part of the ruling repressive class.... It is these people who are now governing the country, ignoring even the interests of the rest of the exploitative elite."

The goal of people's revolutionary war has been declared as the assumption of power and the creation of a revolutionary, patriotic, popular and democratic government. The program of revolutionary reforms envisages the following basic points. Anti-people repressive actions must be stopped, and the rights of the people to a peaceful and secure life must be guaranteed. The necessary conditions must be established for the satisfaction of the primary needs of the overwhelming majority of people and for the liquidation of the economic and political power of local and foreign oligarchy. The property of members of the ruling elite who are implicated in the performance of repressive actions will be confiscated. The declaration guarantees that agrarian reforms will be carried out in the interests of those who cultivate the land. The owners of small and medium-size holdings will keep their land, and the confiscated lands of latifundists will be turned over to farmers on an individual, collective or cooperative basis. The revolution will take steps to create and develop national industry and will give petty and

middle merchants the necessary guarantees. Price controls will be established along with reasonable profit levels which will not inflict damages on the majority of laborers.

The social section of the program proclaims the complete equality of Indians and mestizos and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. Participation by the Indian population in the exercise of political authority will help to solve the current problems of the aboriginal population.

The declaration says that all patriotic, popular and democratic groups will be represented in the new government. It notes: "All citizens who contribute their labor, knowledge or capital to help Guatemala emerge from its state of poverty, underdevelopment and dependence will have a place in the new society. Patriotic entrepreneurs who are willing to assist in the attainment of this great goal will be given all necessary guarantees solely on the condition that they respect the interests of the laboring public. The revolution will guarantee the freedom to create political organizations, freedom of speech and freedom of religion in order to allow all citizens to take part in building the new society." All patriotic officers and soldiers who have not soiled themselves with the blood of the people will have a place in the future revolutionary army. The Christian church will be one of the pillars of the new society, because it supports the cause of Guatemalan liberation.

The foreign policy section of the program proclaims Guatemala's membership in the movement for non-alignment. "International cooperation," the document says, "is possible, despite ideological and political differences, on the condition that the free will of each nation be respected." The same section of the declaration defines the position of the future revolutionary democratic government with regard to foreign capital investments. In particular, it says: "The 'poor' countries need foreign capital investments, but they must be offered with respect for the national sovereignty of each country, with a view to the needs of poor nations and with a reasonable profit level for foreign investors."

An analysis of the main provisions of the declaration testifies that it includes all of the urgent, vitally important demands of the Guatemalan people. The document is calculated to appeal to broad social segments of the population. The reforms it proposes are in the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, from the presently underprivileged Indian peasants to the owners of medium-size holdings and patriotic segments of the national bourgeoisie. The declaration denies a place in the future democratic state only to large landowners and the military-bureaucratic clan that turned governmental authority into a source of privileges and wealth. This segment of the population does not exceed 1 percent of all Guatemalans and stained its reputation with crime long ago by placing its caste interests above the public interests. The exclusion of this negligible group of people from positions of authority and the eradication of its economic and public worth will pave the way for the rapid and free development of the Guatemalan economy. Strictly speaking, the declaration does not go beyond the framework of bourgeois democratic reforms and its demands will not seem extraordinary to public opinion in the Western European countries. Under the conditions of Central America, however, where the United States and local oligarchy

have established an ultra-conservative order and have maintained it with the aid of military-police dictatorships, this document can only be regarded as a truly revolutionary one (in official circles it is naturally described as "pro-communist").

A significant feature of the declaration is its emphasis on patriotic aims. After all, the present ruling elite is selling national wealth at bargain prices to win the support of imperialist forces, especially the United States, in its struggle against its own people. The future revolutionary democratic government plans to govern the country with the backing of the overwhelming majority of the population. It will not need to keep an eye on the reactions of external forces and intends to stop the unsupervised transfer of national wealth to foreign monopolies and change the lopsided character of economic relations.

The declaration of the "Quadripartita" bloc represents a qualitative advance in the development of the national liberation struggle and the social struggle of the Guatemalan people. After many years, marked by many sacrifices and severe defeats, after sharp disagreements over the strategy and tactics of struggle, leftist forces have come together and have consolidated their ranks in a struggle against a common and distinct enemy. The single program of action, single strategy and tactics and single will are the invaluable political achievement of the Guatemalan democratic forces. What has occurred is precisely what is most frightening to the United States and its stooges in Latin America--the merger of all revolutionary democratic organizations.

It is significant that Guatemalan ruling circles have viewed the political struggle in the United States as one of their own concerns in recent years, because the well-being of the fascist clique in Guatemala depends on the occupant of the White House. When J. Carter began to waive the "human rights" flag too vigorously, the Guatemalan oligarchy and military establishment were "offended" and ostentatiously refused the offer of American military assistance in 1977 (although military orders continued to be submitted through "third countries," such as Israel, for example). After Reagan took office, however, Guatemala immediately began to receive military assistance.

The Beijing hegemonists are also supporting Guatemalan reaction. Since 1978 China has been the largest buyer of Guatemalan cotton. A third of all the cotton produced in the country is bought and paid for by China. High-placed members of the Guatemalan regime often visit Beijing, negotiate new deals and frequently discuss the "development of friendly relations and cooperation."

When we assess the present situation in Guatemala, it is not difficult to predict the coming of a new and, in all probability, decisive reversal in the country's internal political development. This reversal will probably be marked by the increasing isolation of the oligarchic and military-bureaucratic elite inside and outside Guatemala.

The main U.S. thesis that essentially says that events in Central America are only a product of some kind of "export of revolution" and a reflection of the "struggle between East and West" will reveal its groundlessness more and more, because the instability in the subregion, and in Guatemala in particular, is based on a deep-seated structural and political crisis.

There is every reason to believe that the armed struggle against the forces of tyranny will acquire new dimensions. The political maturity of leftist leaders indicates that their adversary will not be able to deceive them with any kind of tactical maneuvers like the coup d'etat of 23 March 1982.

The changes in Guatemala represent an integral part of the overall growth of the national liberation and social struggle of the people of Central America and the Caribbean. Each new victory of the revolutionary democratic forces enriches patriots in other countries, adding to their experience, reinforcing their belief in the possibility of a total triumph and leading to the constant improvement of strategy and tactics. All recent history presents incontrovertible proof that the days of the fossilized political monsters like Somoza, Batista, Trujillo and Castillo Armas are over forever and that the pro-American, repressive military-police dictatorships they established will collapse.

FOOTNOTES

1. THE NEW YORK TIMES, 3 May 1981.
2. SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, Munich, 24 March 1980.
3. See LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1982, No 5, pp 5-14 (Editor's note).
4. L'HUMANITE, Paris, 25 March 1982.
5. THE NEW YORK TIMES, 23 March 1982.
6. LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE, Paris, 1981, No 325, p 6.
7. "Proclama Unitaria de las Organizaciones Revolucionarias EGP, FAR, ORPA y PGT al Pueblo de Guatemala," Guatemala, January 1982.

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POLITICAL SITUATION IN HONDURAS

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 52-60

[Article by A. V. Kuz'mishchev]

[Text] The peculiarity of Honduras' socioeconomic position against the overall background of Central America stems primarily from its second-lowest rank on the continent (after Haiti) in terms of developmental levels. In 1979 the per capita income here was only 280 dollars¹ (while the Latin American average was 857 dollars that same year).²

This low level of development is due to various factors, including the fact that the country was once the scene of continuous political upheavals. In the 161 years of its history, Honduras has experienced 262 civil wars and has had 156 governments and 13 different constitutions.³ Recent years, however, have been marked by a more stable domestic political situation in Honduras than in neighboring countries. This is a result of the abatement of class struggle and is connected, according to scholar and political activist J. Arturo Reyna, with the following temporary factors: the partial reorganization of agrarian relations under liberal President R. Villeda Morales (1957-1963); the liberation of large land holdings after the expulsion of the Salvadorans from Honduras as a result of the so-called "soccer war" (1969); the institution of agrarian reform, however limited, under Gen O. Lopez Arellano; the relative moderacy of the military regimes of the last 9 years (1972-1981); the popular masses' faith in the effectiveness of the constitutional electoral system, which acquired appeal during the years of military rule as a possible democratic alternative to totalitarianism.⁴

In this way, Honduras entered a period of temporary social "calm" stemming from the present phase in its development. Even this calm is relative, however, and--what is most important--the present situation in the country is being influenced by foreign political factors as well as domestic ones.

At the turn of the decade Honduras, which had traditionally been viewed as a remote outlying region of U.S. imperialism's Central American periphery, became involved in the whirlpool of events in the subregion. The attitudes of the masses have been influenced more and more by events in neighboring countries--Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. Sympathetic and antipathetic feelings for various forces in these countries are polarizing the Honduran public. At the same time,

the country's strategic location in the very heart of Central America is the reason for its special place in Washington's geopolitical plans and the role the Reagan Administration has assigned Tegucigalpa in its Central American strategy.

According to prominent American columnist Jack Anderson, Washington is trying to turn Honduras into an "anticommunist bunker."⁵ To carry out this plan, the United States is attaching ruling circles in the country (primarily the military elite) to its own policies. In 1981 alone, for example, Washington offered the Honduran Government military aid amounting to 50 million dollars--that is, more than in the last 20 years. In 1981 the American Navy organized joint maneuvers with Honduran armed forces. Tegucigalpa is now being visited by high-ranking officers, including General Nutting, the Commander of the U.S. Southern Military District (with its headquarters in the Panama Canal Zone). In the same year of 1981, Washington diplomats used the OAS to obtain a final settlement of the territorial dispute between Honduras and El Salvador.

All of this activity coincided with the transfer of authority in Honduras from the military government to civilian individuals, a gradual process which took more than a year and a half and ended with the general presidential and parliamentary elections of 29 November 1981. With a view to the specific features of the domestic situation in the country and the actual balance of political forces, Washington supported the civilian constitutional government formed by the Liberal Party, the victor in the elections. This was the end of almost 10 years of domination by the military elite.

Between 1972 and 1978 the military government pursued a policy of reformism which envisaged agrarian reforms and the nationalization of natural resources. According to the plans of the military reformists, this was supposed to provide the necessary funds for the process of industrialization. When these plans were being carried out, however, the generals in power, O. Lopez Arellano (1972-1975) and A. Castro Melgar (1975-1978), encountered the fierce resistance of the National Council of Entrepreneurs (COEP) and the pro-oligarchic National Party (PN). These forces, in an alliance with the army's reactionary wing, were able to unseat Lopez Arellano and Castro Melgar. The military junta which replaced them, and the later dictatorship of Gen E. Paz Garcia decided not to take any further action on these reforms.

The failure of the agrarian reform, the central link of the military reformists' program, was largely predestined by the inconsistency of their policy in 1975-1977. For example, around 117,000 hectares of the planned 150,000 were distributed to peasants with small holdings in 1975, in 1976 the figure fell to only 27,000 of the planned 150,000 hectares, and in 1977 only 16,000 of the planned 125,000 hectares were distributed. Obviously, the 5-year (1975-1979) plan for the distribution of 600,000 hectares of land to 120,000 peasant families was not fulfilled.⁶ Only 11 percent of the families received land. Therefore, agrarian reform, which is particularly important in Honduras, where agriculture accounts for 75 percent of all export revenues, will be one of the most urgent objectives of the new liberal government.

The first stage in the transfer of government authority was the election of 20 April 1980 to the National Constituent Assembly, which then determined the procedure for the creation of new civilian government agencies. General

presidential and parliamentary elections were held on 29 November 1981 and resulted in the transfer of power to the Liberal Party. On 27 January 1982 its candidate, Dr R. Suazo Cordova, took office as president.

Active public participation (more than 80 percent of the voters) was indisputable evidence of the Honduran people's desire to put an end to the rightwing authoritarian military regime. But the election process was under the control of the military. Only the leaders of the country's two largest parties, representing the landowning and bourgeois strata of Honduran society, could become candidates for the presidency.

The leading role among political groups had traditionally been played by the PN, the extreme rightwing party expressing the interests of latifundists and closely associated with U.S. banana companies. It is headed by R. Zuniga Agustinus and R. Bardeles Buezo. There have been reports that the PN leadership supports the activity of the "mancha brava" ultra-right wing terrorist group and cooperates with the COEP, which unites the most prominent capitalists in Honduras. Finally, the PN has much closer connections than the liberals with the top army officers. Its representatives have always been part of the military governments of recent years (1979-1981), during which time the reactionary circles dominating the army refused to institute reforms.

Another political force which possesses considerable influence and is the PN traditional rival is the now ruling Liberal Party. It represents the bourgeois circles that have opposed latifundism and have advocated agrarian reform from the moderate reformist standpoint.

The liberals are not united, however. Their party is separated into two currents: orthodox liberalism and the stronger wing, the Rodist movement, named after one of the most prominent spokesmen of Honduran liberalism, recently deceased Dr Rodas. It is headed by Velasquez Diaz and the country's current President Suazo Cordova.

The liberal left wing is represented by the Liberal Popular Alliance (ALIPO). It unites the petty and middle bourgeoisie and the progressive intelligentsia and advocates the immediate institution of agrarian reforms, the nationalization of natural resources and the industrialization of the country. This program largely coincides with the ideas of the military reformists. Both the leftist liberals and the military governments of 1972-1978 proceeded from the desarollist recipes of SEPAL. The alliance is headed by the former chancellor of the state national autonomous university, J. Arturo Reyna. Another leader of the leftist liberals is R. Villeda Morales, who was president of Honduras in 1957-1963.⁷ The leaders of the alliance have recently been trying to turn it into an independent political organization.

ALIPO is connected with the European social democrats. In August 1981 it held a conference in Tegucigalpa with the aid of the Ebert Foundation on the crisis in Central America. A declaration adopted at that time stresses that the dangerous situation in the region is not a result of "subversive activity" by leftist forces, but of attempts to preserve obsolete traditional systems of authority and the dependent nature of economic development.⁸ Leftist circles in ALIPO have expressed solidarity with the struggle of the Salvadoran patriots.

The bourgeois Unity Innovation Party (PINU) has been a noticeable political force in recent years. Its growing strength reflects the growing influence of the country's industrial bourgeoisie. The party is headed by prominent businessman and industrialist M. Andojne Fernandez.

Another independent political force which emerged in Honduras in 1979 is the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), whose founding was connected largely with the development of progressive tendencies in the Honduran clergy. Just recently the Catholic hierarchy was backed up by the PN, which was considered to be the spokesman for their political views. Now, however, many prominent religious figures are more likely to support the demands of the laboring masses and have therefore turned away from the PN.

It is interesting that the majority of analysts were predicting a victory for the PN just before the election. It seemed that its close contacts with top army circles would guarantee its victory. To prevent this, various progressive political organizations formed a general democratic organization on 20 April 1980, just before the election, with the active participation of the communist party--the Honduran Patriotic Front (FPH). The front declared the unity of all revolutionary, democratic, patriotic and progressive forces in defense of national sovereignty, human rights and democratic freedoms.⁹ Its immediate objective was struggle against election fraud in favor of the PN. During this stage, the PDC also joined the front, and this was consistent with the position of the church, which had warned that reactionary forces might resort to tricks in the tabulation of votes.

To keep the unification process in the camp of progressive, anti-oligarchic forces from becoming more pronounced, the military government had to renounce any direct intervention in the tabulation procedure. As a result, the Liberal Party received 35 deputationary mandates, while the PN received 33 and the PINU received 3. In the general election on 29 November 1981, the liberals were again the victors, this time with an even more impressive lead because the nationalists had almost 80,000 votes less than in 1980--a perceptible loss if we consider the fact that just over 1 million Hondurans voted.

The election defeat of the PN and the military clique behind it was made possible by the activity of the popular masses. At the same time, the change of government was not simply sanctioned by Washington and its allies in Honduras: These forces expect to make use of the fact that the liberals were in opposition to the PN and the majority of military regimes for a long time. They are fully aware that the change of administration cannot be regarded as a complete break with the past.

It is not simply a matter of the individuals in power, although this is significant. For example, R. Suazo Cordova is one of the 10 richest Hondurans and is closely associated with big business. The president's closest adviser is Economic Secretary M. Alfaro, who represents the interests of the COEP and wants more foreign capital investments in the country. C. Flores Facusse is considered to be the main figure in the new administration. He is also connected with the COEP through his close relative M. Facusse, one of Honduras' most prominent industrialists.¹⁰

The creation of a civilian government does not mean, however, that the military men have returned to their barracks and have left the political arena. The army's actual influence is still colossal. It is more than just an instrument of repression in the hands of the country's oligarchy. According to Secretary General R. Padilla Rush of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Honduras (PCH), the top army officers are something like stockholders in the society of the rich, using the income of the dominant classes.¹¹

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to regard the entire Honduran Army as the oligarchy's ally. Between 1972 and 1978 the reformist wing of the armed forces, the so-called "young officers'" movement, tried to institute progressive reforms in spite of the resistance of the army's reactionary wing. There is no question that this movement in the Honduran armed forces was influenced by events in Peru, Panama and Ecuador, where the military regimes decided to institute anti-imperialist and bourgeois democratic reforms at approximately the same time--that is, in the late 1960's and early 1970's. To some degree, the development of progressive tendencies in the army was promoted by the conclusion drawn by some officers from the defeat in the war of 1969 against El Salvador, which clearly demonstrated the country's backwardness and the scandalous contradiction between the interests of the sluggish and undistinguished oligarchy and the national interests of Honduras.

The struggle between reformist officers and army circles adhering to openly reactionary views filled the decade of the 1970's. By the end of this period, there was an obvious prevalence of reactionary officers in the army. This is attested to by the appointment of Gen G. Alvarez Martinez, once the chief of the police and security forces, as commander in chief.¹² He is a member of the group of right-wing army officers, the so-called "magnificent seven," who protected Somoza's forces in Honduras. He is believed to be responsible for operation "sandwich,"¹³ conducted by the Honduran and Salvadoran armies against 70,000 refugees from El Salvador, concentrated in the Honduran territories of Ocotepeque, Lempira and Intibuca,¹⁴ and for the mass assassinations on the Sumpul River in May 1980. The appointment of a military man with such clearly expressed reactionary views to this kind of responsible position means that the oligarchy does not fully trust the Liberal Government. It is disturbed by the left wing of the government party, which does not have any direct channels of influence but is nonetheless exerting strong pressure on the party leadership from below. The oligarchy needs a "tough" person at the head of the army in case government policy should undergo a shift to the left.

To ensure a pro-American foreign policy line, reactionary ruling circles decided to join the "Central American Democratic Community" (CADC), a military-political alliance created in February 1982 to stop the spread of the revolutionary movement.

Communists are in the vanguard of the forces fighting against the intrigues of local oligarchs and their U.S. patrons. Under the conditions of the present relative democratization in the country, the communists have a semilegal status. At the February party plenum (1980), important decisions were made on the means and forms of revolutionary development. The communists believe that peaceful and armed means of struggle are now possible in Honduras. The party is not calling

for an uprising, however, because it does not feel that the conditions are right for a victory. The PCH has criticized its own erroneous decision not to take part in the general election of 1981, because it lost an opportunity to use the election as a rostrum to publicize party ideas.¹⁵ The PCH is striving to make broader use of existing legal ways of increasing its influence with the masses. This is the main reason for its participation in the Honduran patriotic front. The Socialist Party is also part of this front.

The external calm of the political situation in Honduras is deceptive. Reports of assassinations and kidnappings organized by rightwing terrorists are being heard with increasing frequency. For example, not long before the general election, socialist leader M. Virgilio Carias and prominent university Professor R. Martinez Reyna were kidnaped. Several student leaders also "disappeared." This was also the fate of individuals involved in the investigation of corruption among the country's military leaders. The "mancha brava" rightwing terrorist organization has threatened to take reprisals against progressive activists by announcing that it will stop the leftist offensive in the country by "eliminating dozens of people like Reyna."¹⁶

In response to the extremism of Honduran reactionary forces, several leftist radical military-political organizations have been formed for armed resistance of the terror of the oligarchy and military establishment.

They include the Morazanist Liberation Front of Honduras (FLM), the Popular Liberation Movement ("cinchoneros"), the People's Revolutionary Commandos (CRP) and the Popular Unity Movement (MUP). The Morazanist Front has put forth a minimum program with demands for a higher standard of living for the poorest population strata, the democratization of national politics and the institution of anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic reforms. This organization was responsible for a number of actions during the campaign in Tegucigalpa but it has refrained from large-scale combat operations.

The "cinchoneros" believe that Honduras can now choose between two possible avenues of future development: reformist and revolutionary. The first, under the present conditions of the restoration of bourgeois democratic freedoms and the expansion of the pro-imperialist regime's base (the legalization of the PINU and PDC has allowed the social groups supporting these parties to take part in the division of government posts), could weaken the popular movement in the country, according to the "cinchoneros." This is why revolutionary war is now on the agenda. To this end, just in the past year the "cinchoneros" organized the seizure of the National Agrarian Institute by peasants, led skirmishes with the police in Cholula, set up barricades in Puerto Cortez, hijacked a cargo plane and exchanged it for leftist Hondurans and Salvadorans in prison.

The two other military-political organizations, the PRC and PUM, are not as well known but they often take the credit for antigovernmental subversive actions.¹⁷

On the whole, the situation in Honduras has been marked by certain successes by leftist and democratic forces in this country in the struggle against reaction. The very fact that the rightwing military group controlling the armed forces had to give up its direct leadership of the country and take a secondary position

testifies to the strength of the popular antimilitaristic and antioligarchic movement. Although the Liberal Party is largely continuing the policies of previous military governments, the presence of its influential left wing is improving the political climate in the country. The Honduran patriotic front is also gaining strength. The presence of an active labor movement, however fragmented it might seem, is also a positive factor in Honduras.

It will take some time before more definite conclusions can be drawn from the events taking place in Honduras, where a process of partial democratization and the transfer of power to civilian politicians are going on against the background of a growing revolutionary movement in Central America. On the one hand, these changes would not have taken place without the consent of Washington, which is striving to erect a democratic facade for a regime in which the military will exercise "parallel" authority.

On the other hand, the democratic changes in Honduras are being made under the pressure of the mounting dissatisfaction of the popular masses and the leftist and democratic forces that are launching broader opposition to the use of this country as imperialism's bridgehead for the suppression of liberation movements in other states of the subregion. Progressive organizations feel that their main objective at present is the effective frustration of the plans to turn Honduras into the stronghold of a crusade against democracy in Central America. The lasting unity of all leftist and democratic forces is an essential condition for the attainment of this crucial objective.

FOOTNOTES

1. NUEVA SOCIEDAD, San Jose, 1981, No 52, p 38.
2. "Economic Survey of Latin America. 1979. United Nations," Santiago, 1981, p 21.
3. BOHEMIA, Havana, 1981, No 4, p 56.
4. NUEVA SOCIEDAD, 1981, No 52, p 46.
5. BOHEMIA, 1981, No 4, p 59.
6. ALAI, Montreal, 1981, No 3, p 38.
7. WASHINGTON POST, 17 December 1981.
8. NUEVA SOCIEDAD, 1981, No 55, pp 151-154.
9. ALAI, 1981, No 18, pp 213-215.
10. LATIN AMERICAN WEEKLY REPORT, London, 1982, No 6.
11. LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1981, No 12, p 53.

12. LATIN AMERICAN WEEKLY REPORT, 1982, No 5, p 2.
13. ALAI, 1981, No 8, p 88.
14. LATIN AMERICAN WEEKLY REPORT, 1981, No 47, p 9.
15. LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1981, No 12, pp 54-55.
16. NUEVA SOCIEDAD, 1981, No 52, p 47.
17. ALAI, 1980, No 34, p 390.

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CRISIS OF TRADITIONAL STRUCTURES IN COSTA RICA

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pp 61-68

[Article by T. Yu. Ryutova]

[Text] In light of recent events in Central America, the political processes taking place in Costa Rica are of considerable interest. This is a state which, unlike its neighbors, has had a traditionally stable bourgeois democratic order. The political institutions of "representative democracy" in Costa Rica, which were established in the end of the 1940's, have ensured the relatively calm development of the country until recently.

One of the peculiarities of the functioning of Costa Rica's party politics in the postwar period was the constitutionally limited confrontation between the most influential national reformist party, the National Liberation Party (PLN), and the opposition, uniting a diversified conglomerate of bourgeois political organizations.

The National Liberation Party has played the decisive role in the formation and reinforcement of the existing regime of "representative democracy." Just as the Venezuelan Democratic Action Party, a high level of institutionalization has allowed it, from the very first years of its existence, to become more firmly entrenched in national politics than similar organizations in other states of the continent. It is therefore not surprising that it has won numerous elections.

The PLN is the only permanently operating bourgeois party in the country with a clearly defined organizational structure. Its diversified system of administrative agencies, which govern its work on the national scale, rests on a highly qualified bureaucratic apparatus, typical for the contemporary bourgeois party. The tendency of a small group of leaders to monopolize influence and the struggle for power within the party elite, however, often lead to splits. The PLN is the only bourgeois party with a comprehensive theoretical and political program, which essentially calls for the accelerated development of the country according to the capitalist model and based on a mixed economy, in which the state will be responsible for many administrative functions. The ideological basis of the party is social reformism. In the 1970's there was a pronounced tendency toward social democracy in the party.

The rest of the bourgeois parties are clearly personalized organizations, most of them grouped around their leaders. For a long time, they did not pay much attention to the elaboration of their own political platforms and ideological principles. Although the social doctrine of the Catholic Church has been proclaimed the conceptual basis of the opposition, Costa Rica is one of the countries in which the Christian democrats have not represented a large and independent political force. In the 1960, 1970 and 1974 elections, these parties, expressing the interests of big capital and the oligarchy, formed a coalition and operated as a united front.

In the beginning of the 1970's it appeared that Costa Rican national reformists had enough opportunity to continue their policies successfully. There were discussions of the probability of the Costa Rican party system's development in three directions: the consolidation of opposition forces and the creation of a stable two-party system of "political swings" like the one in Venezuela; a transfer to a functional multi-party system; the undivided concentration of power within the hands of a single party, as in Mexico. Each of these possibilities seemed to depend on the degree of the opposition's unity and on the ability of PLN leaders to resolve intra-party disagreements and concepts.¹

Subsequent events, however, modified the predictions made at the beginning of the decade. By the middle of the 1970's a severe structural crisis, which had previously had a more serious effect on the economy, spread to the sphere of class relations in Costa Rica and resulted in the sharp exacerbation of social conflicts. In the political sphere it essentially took the form of a crisis in political parties, especially the PLN.

In addition to this, the Costa Rican economy continued to experience the difficulties characteristic of small countries, primarily the domestic market limitations stemming from reliance on foreign economic contacts. In spite of the efforts of PLN reformist governments to diversify the economic structure and reduce the country's dependence on coffee exports, they were unable to overcome the barrier of underdevelopment by means of industrialization or to modernize the national economy to any significant degree. This process was accompanied by the broad-scale penetration of industry by foreign monopolies, which increased the country's dependence.² Therefore, the model of development proposed for the country by the National Liberation Party 30 years ago has not alleviated or eliminated class conflicts but has, on the contrary, exacerbated them by revealing social reformism's inability to solve the problems of underdevelopment and dependence.

Under these conditions, some segments of the dominant classes made an attempt to create a system of "swings" like the one in Venezuela by setting up a Christian democratic party in opposition to the national reformist party with social democratic leanings. More precisely, they tried to "color the conservative pro-imperialist parties with the green shade of Christian democracy and thereby give them a reformist luster and broaden their mass base."³ One such attempt was made after the crushing defeat suffered by the PLN in the 1978 election. The winner was the "Unidad Opositora" bloc of opposition political parties, made up of the Democratic Renovation Party, the Calderonist Republic Party, the Popular Union and the Christian Democratic Party.

The new government, headed by R. Carazo, took steps to institutionalize Christian democracy. Soon after the election victory, the creation of a national political committee of the "Unidad" coalition, was announced, and a year later the charter of this organization, with the social Christian doctrine as its declared ideology, was ratified. In accordance with this doctrine, the main purpose of the coalition's political activity was to be the development of the individual through a system of free enterprise and the protection of private property.⁴

The process of forming a single, permanently operating political party of the Christian democratic type has not been completed as yet, however, and has been quite complex due to the heterogeneous composition of the "Unidad" coalition.

When the Carazo Government took power, it began to promote the "Chicago school" model of "economic neoliberalism," emphasizing the development of capitalist private enterprise, the liberalization of foreign trade and the attraction of foreign private capital investments on a broader scale. The country's former president and leader of the PLN D. Oduber pointed out the inapplicability of the "new economic model" to a small country dependent on conditions in the world capitalist economy and noted that "the presence of monopolies and oligopolies in Central America excludes the possibility of free competition."⁵ The policy that was being pursued resulted in production decline, the issuance of too much currency and greater dependence on foreign sources of financing, which led to the excessive growth of the state budget deficit. The situation was also complicated by the insufficient diversification of exports, sharp fluctuations in foreign trade revenues, the fall in world prices of Costa Rica's main export goods--coffee and sugar--and the higher price of oil in the world market.

For some time, the Costa Rican Government was able to cover the constantly growing deficit in the balance of payments with new foreign loans. After the Carazo Government took power, the Legislative Assembly approved the receipt of credit from various international organizations and banks totaling 521.58 million dollars, 124.72 million bolivars, 2.5 billion yen and 10 million marks.⁶ It is therefore not surprising that Costa Rica was unable to pay the interest on these loans or receive any new credit when interest rates rose dramatically in 1981. The country is now undergoing the most severe economic crisis of the postwar period. In January 1982 its foreign debt totaled 2.6 billion dollars. Inflation reached an unprecedented level. The rate was over 40 percent in 1981 and, according to some data, approached 60 percent at the end of the year.⁷ Inflationary processes have been accompanied by increased speculation, which considerably reduces the purchasing power of the laboring public and reduces real wages. Unemployment has become one of the most pressing problems in Costa Rica.

The continuous state of economic crisis, intense inflation and the rising prices of vital necessities, public utilities and transportation led to the noticeable deterioration of the economic conditions of the laboring public in the past decade, injuring not only hired workers, but also poor and middle-income peasants, small businessmen and urban entrepreneurs of average means. The severe economic crisis has been reflected in heightened political tension, the polarization of social forces and the exacerbation of social conflicts, particularly after the Carazo Government refused to expand social programs and instituted a policy of "restraining economic needs."

The natural response of the working class to this policy, which was intended to resolve the crisis by cutting social expenditures and reducing wages, was a series of mass demonstrations with demands for price controls on goods and services, wage increases and better working conditions. In addition to voicing economic demands during the course of the growing strike movement, the working class has put forth a broad program of national liberation and agrarian reform. Laborers have resorted to various political methods of struggle--demonstrations, rallies and marches. A movement of solidarity with the strikers has acquired broad dimensions.

The communist party newspaper in Costa Rica, LIBERTAD, noted the following in its analysis of the strikes: "The value of a strike lies in its manifestation of the high level of political awareness attained by our working class. Without this, it would be impossible to organize large militant solidarity strikes in spite of repressive actions by employers and the police.... Strikes also prove that the broad democratic, non-proletarian forces in the country...are willing to act in conjunction with the working class for campaign purposes and to oppose imperialist monopolies and defend social justice and the democratic regime."⁸

The Carazo Government responded to the growing strike struggle by launching an anti-communist and antiunion campaign. Disturbed by the successes of the revolutionary movement in Central America, it took stronger repressive actions against popular organizations, especially workers' groups, and began to encourage the activities of pro-fascist militarized groups. As a result, traditional bourgeois democratic freedoms are being violated with increasing frequency. Distinct militaristic tendencies have appeared in the policy of ruling classes.⁹ Tension is growing, terrorist actions are being committed and the propagandistic anti-democratic campaign in the press is being reinforced. Businessmen's organizations have also become more active. They are headed by the so-called National Committee for the Defense of Democracy and the Costa Rican Private Enterprise Institute. It appears that reactionary forces are trying to put an end to the democratic freedoms that have traditionally existed in Costa Rica and are enjoying the energetic support of U.S. imperialism in this activity.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the Carazo Government has, on the one hand, relied on the support of European Christian democrats and, on the other, tended to rely more on the United States. This was reflected in the attendance of a conference in Washington in May 1980 by Costa Rican representatives. This "conference on the Christian democratic and centrist parties of Latin America and the Caribbean" was organized with the aid of the West German Conrad Adenauer Fund and the American Business Association. Conference conclusions stress the need to strengthen the influence of Christian democrats by contrasting their successes to those of social democrats and to use the experience of the Socialist International in Latin America. Total support for the junta in El Salvador was expressed at the conference.¹⁰ The Costa Rican Government has been performing more and more of the functions of an ally of U.S. ruling circles. Its latest step in this direction was its decision to join the "Central American democratic community."

After the defeat in the 1978 election, the PLN underwent a period of fierce intra-party struggle. The groundlessness of the theory about the "third path of development," which had been clearly demonstrated during this party's term in office in

1970-1978, the inability of the party leadership to pursue a policy in the interests of the broad masses and the party elite's isolation from the rank-and-file membership engendered dissatisfaction in the party ranks. The radical currents in the PLN, especially its youngest members, suggested the need for the modernization of fundamental party principles and doctrine, the expansion of its social base through the inclusion of the working class and semiproletarian strata and the democratization of administrative bodies. The PLN leadership's policy was sharply criticized at a meeting of intermediate- and low-level party administrators in October 1978.¹¹ This resulted in certain changes: In 1979 a new party charter was adopted, and in 1981 its second congress was convened and a new program was approved.

By means of numerous compromises, the party leadership was able to prevent a split and to nominate a single candidate for the presidency in the 1982 election. This strengthened the position of the PLN right wing, however, which particularly opposes the social democratization of the party. There was a definite rightward shift in the party's evolution in response to processes within the country (the radicalization of the popular masses under the influence of the socioeconomic crisis and the increasing strength of the general democratic and workers movement) and external factors, the most important of which was the development of the revolutionary process in Central America.

Nevertheless, the Carazo Government had discredited itself to such a degree that there were no doubts about the success of the PLN in the 1982 election. The party won an impressive victory: Its candidate for the presidency, L. Alberto Monge, won 58 percent of the vote. The party also acquired an absolute majority in parliament (33 of the 57 seats), which will be extremely important in view of the considerable influence wielded by the legislative branch in the political decision making process in Costa Rica. Although the "Unidad" coalition dissociated itself from the government's policies, its representative, R. A. Calderon Fournier, received only 33.7 percent of the vote. The number of seats held by representatives of "Unidad" in the Legislative Assembly also decreased considerably (from 27 to 18). In spite of the broad propaganda campaign launched against the "Pueblo Unido" coalition of leftist parties, four of its representatives were elected to parliament. Forces on the extreme right, united in the National Unification Party, suffered a crushing defeat, winning only one seat in the parliament. The exacerbation of the structural crisis in the country and the loss of faith by broad popular masses in the policy of the ruling elite led to a sharp increase in the number of citizens not choosing to vote, reaching 24 percent--the highest figure since the beginning of the 1960's.¹²

The PLN campaigned with "back to the land" slogans. In other words, it promised better conditions in agriculture in order to reduce the country's dependence on high-priced imports. After the election victory, one of the new president's spokesmen set forth the strategy of the future government. Its main objective will be the stabilization of the country's financial position, particularly by means of a new contract with the IMF, the stimulation of production by encouraging activity by small and intermediate producers and the intensification of agriculture.

Many different statements were made on foreign policy matters, including some which held out the hope of a return to the policy of supporting international detente, peaceful coexistence by states with differing social structures and disarmament.¹³

Judging by the statements of the new administration's spokesmen, it plans to return to its previous neutral position and will not become involved in conflicts. In particular, it will stop supporting U.S. policy aimed at a "military solution" to the Salvadoran problem. The future will show us the actual form taken by the campaign promises of the PLN leaders. This will depend largely on the activity of the laboring masses and the leftist parties expressing their interests.

At a time when reactionary and imperialist forces take the offensive, concerted action by democratic, anti-imperialist forces acquires special significance, especially the stronger unity of leftist parties. These forces were institutionalized in the 1970's. This was made possible by the full-scale involvement of the working class and new social groups--part of the urban middle strata, student youth, the intelligentsia and marginal and semiproletarian strata--in political processes. Although communist party activity was banned by the Constitution of 1949, persistent struggle by democratic forces resulted in the participation of the Socialist Action Party in the 1970 election. This party represents a bloc of progressive organizations. One of these was the party of the Costa Rican communists, the Popular Vanguard Party (PVP). We could say, therefore, that activities by leftist forces, including the communist party, have actually been legal since that time.

The beginning of the 1970's was also the time when new leftist parties appeared on the political scene--the Costa Rican Socialist Party (PSC) and Revolutionary Popular Movement (MRP). The increased activity of leftist forces and their stronger influence led to the repeal of antidemocratic constitutional provisions in 1975 and to an important step in the consolidation of leftist unity in 1977--the creation of the "Pueblo Unido" coalition, made up of the PVP, PSC and MRP, registered in the election as the Labor Party. The coalition proposed a precise program of struggle for the protection and expansion of the Costa Rican people's democratic rights. Three of its candidates were elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1978, and their resolute position influenced the decision making process in parliament and promoted the use of the parliamentary rostrum for the repulsion of reactionary forces. In the 1982 election, as mentioned above, the "Pueblo Unido" coalition won four seats in parliament.

Costa Rican democrats still have many difficulties to overcome, however, on the road to complete unity. There are disagreements within the ranks of the coalition over strategic matters, connected with the nature of the Costa Rican revolution, its motives and stages, and tactical matters, reflecting different approaches to current issues. For several years the PVP and MRP have debated basic aspects of theory. Whereas communists and socialists regard the "Pueblo Unido" coalition as a strategic entity and view the parties in this coalition as strategic allies, the MRP believes that the coalition should pursue only tactical goals at this stage. Sharp disagreements between leftist parties have also been engendered by differing approaches to cooperation in the labor union movement. The labor unions headed by the MRP and unions in which this movement has a great deal of influence did not join the recently established central Costa Rican labor organization, uniting progressive unions, and this is impeding the eradication of disagreements and the consolidation of unity in the labor movement.

As Costa Rican communists have pointed out, a new situation is taking shape in the country, in which the dominant classes and the oligarchy are losing control over large segments of the middle strata. Furthermore, the present atmosphere bears the

imprint of national historical features and the traditions of the Costa Rican people. In spite of the wave of struggle by the popular masses, another extremely important factor of the revolutionary situation has not yet manifested itself in full--the inability of the lower strata to continue their old way of life. This is why, as the communists point out, leftist parties must improve their strategy and tactics and, in particular, determine the correct policy of alliances for the total triumph of the Costa Rican people.¹⁴

The severe crisis that has seized the Central American countries is also affecting Costa Rican society, which is undergoing its most severe socioeconomic and political crisis after three decades of relatively calm capitalist development. Ruling parties have been unable to solve the country's urgent problems. The political situation is marked by the increased polarization of social forces. The very regime of "representative democracy" is changing and is displaying signs of authoritarianism. Existing bourgeois democratic institutions in Costa Rica could be threatened by promoters of rightwing authoritarian tendencies--the traditional oligarchy, the new industrial bourgeoisie connected with foreign capital, and certain segments of the technocracy--with the active support of imperialism. This danger can only be counteracted successfully through concerted efforts by all progressive forces in the country.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Latin America Legislatures: Their Role and Influence (Analyses for Nine Countries)," New York, 1971, p 104.
2. "Latinskaya Amerika. Valyutno-finansovoye polozheniye v 70-kh godakh" [Latin America. Currency and Financial Conditions in the 1970's], Moscow, 1978, pp 155-157; "La Pequena Empresa en el Desarrollo de America Latina," Caracas, 1979, p 156.
3. S. I. Semenov, "The Pertinence of an Issue. Christian Democrats in the Political System of the Latin American Countries," LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1982, No 1, p 48.
4. NACION, San Jose, 8 July 1978; 16 September 1979.
5. D. Oduber, "El Nuevo Modelo Economico y Costa Rica," NUEVA SOCIEDAD, San Jose, 1980, No 48, p 8.
6. REPUBLICA, San Jose, 13 August 1981.
7. THE NEW YORK TIMES, 1 February 1982.
8. LIBERTAD, San Jose, 18-24 January 1980.
9. M. Prieto Jimenez, "Militarismo y Democracia en Costa Rica," NUEVA SOCIEDAD, 1979, No 42, pp 119-130.
10. CUADERNOS DEL TERCER MUNDO, Mexico, 1980, No 38, pp 21-23.

11. NUEVA SOCIEDAD, 1979, No 40, pp 144-145.
12. LA PRENSA, Managua, 10 February 1982.
13. EL NUEVO DIARIO, Managua, 13 February 1982.
14. PROBLEMY MIRA I SOTSIALIZMA, 1981, No 9, pp 79-83.

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BELIZE: CONCERNS OF A YOUNG STATE

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 69-71

[Article by P. V. Griбанov]

[Text] Belize, a former British colony in Central America, became independent on 21 September 1981. In terms of population (around 160,000), it is the smallest state in this part of the Western Hemisphere.

At first, Belize appears to be isolated from the stormy events taking place in Central America. In contrast, for example, to its neighbor Guatemala, where the flame of partisan war is spreading, Belize is a place where the political struggle is waged primarily within the framework of the system of "representative democracy" inherited from the colonial period. The country's government, absorbed with the concerns of building a new state, is striving to avoid anything that might involve it in acute sociopolitical conflicts. According to an AFRIQUE-ASIE correspondent, the person who crosses the Guatemalan-Belizean boundary finds himself in a peaceful country, where there was no army at all until recently and where the atmosphere of violence and fear which reigns in neighboring "dictator republics" is completely unknown.¹

The idea of this state as some kind of "pocket of calm" in the most conflict-ridden part of the Western Hemisphere, however, is largely deceptive. Many political, socioeconomic and even ethnodemographic factors have led to Belize's involvement, however indirect it might be at present, in the processes occurring in Central America.

In general, the socioeconomic situation in Belize is typical for Central America.² It is a backward agrarian country which supplies the world capitalist market with sugar, citrus fruit and timber. Industry is just now being established and is represented by small food and wood-working enterprises. Agricultural laborers and small agricultural producers constitute the majority of the economically active population. The dominion of foreign companies is considerably facilitated by the absence of a grand national bourgeoisie. Unlike other countries in the subregion, Belize has no latifundists, who are the support base of extreme reaction everywhere in Central America. The "comprador" segment of the population in the liberated colony consists of the former bureaucrats of the colonial administration, who make up a police-bureaucratic elite.

Social programs in Belize are closely connected with ethnic problems. The composition of the country's population is extremely heterogeneous, and in this respect Belize is unparalleled in Central America. The Afro-Belizeans, or creoles, are primarily urban inhabitants who work at industrial enterprises and in seasonal agricultural and logging operations. The mestizos, or "Spaniards"--that is, Spanish-speaking inhabitants of primarily Indian origins--are small agricultural producers and seasonal laborers. The number of "Spaniards" is constantly being augmented by the influx of refugees from the partisan war-ravaged areas of Guatemala and El Salvador.

The nationwide struggle for self-determination began in Belize in the late 1940's and early 1950's. It was headed by the People's United Party (PUP), founded in 1950 and in power since 1955. Party leader George Price has headed all successive governments. The PUP program envisages the nationalization of the real estate holdings of foreign companies (more than 80,000 hectares of cultivated land was redistributed in Belize in the 1970's), the establishment of peasant farm cooperatives and the institution of several measures to raise the laboring public's standard of living (price controls, the encouragement of labor union activity and the development of public health care and education).

The domestic policy line of the PUP Government has not acquired a completely distinct outlines as yet. The party's influential left wing is insisting on radical socioeconomic reforms like those instituted in Jamaica by the Manley Government. The leading labor unions in Belize are demanding the same kind of reforms.³ This policy is being opposed not only by the right wing United Democratic Party (UDP), the main opposition force in the country, but also by the PUP right wing. It is indicative that the struggle within the ruling party has recently become perceptibly more intense. In fall 1981 the PUP right wing established contacts with the UDP leadership in an attempt to work out a common line with regard to the PUP left wing and its leader A. Shoman.⁴

The development of domestic politics in Belize has been strongly influenced by external factors. For example, the Guatemalan military establishment has long laid claim to Belize,⁵ is dissatisfied with the progressive views of its leadership, has an interest in the destabilization of the situation in Belize and is giving increasing support to its reactionary forces. The governor of El Peten, the Guatemalan department bordering on Belize, turned 30,000 dollars over to the UDP fund.⁶ Guatemalan ruling circles also supported the creation of the so-called Toledo Progressive Party in Belize, which was supposed to operate in their interest in the young state.

The granting of independence to Belize was preceded by the conclusion of an agreement by Great Britain and the United States, which hopes to take the place of its former mother country. The Anglo-American policy line is essentially a gamble on Guatemalan-Belizean conflicts. The protection of Belizean sovereignty against Guatemalan encroachment is being made conditional upon its government's renunciation of an independent policy line. The assumption is that Guatemala will otherwise be given a free hand in Belize by the United States and Great Britain. This kind of pressure is forcing the Price Government to refrain from instituting progressive reforms and to even give in completely to the wishes of the United States and international capital in some areas.

From the very first days after the declaration of Belize's independence, the United States and Great Britain have kept an eye on its foreign policy. The new American Administration expressed open disapproval of the Price Government's attempts to pursue a policy of non-alignment and develop friendly relations with such countries as Nicaragua, Grenada, Panama, Guyana and Mexico. Under the pressure of this administration, the Price Government has refrained so far from broader contacts with countries disliked by Washington. In January 1982 an American-Belizean military agreement was concluded, in accordance with which officers from the United States will assist in the training of the Belizean Army.⁷ According to White House plans, this should be the first step in putting Belize within the orbit of U.S. military-political influence. This is being done to allow American troops to take the place of the English in Belize and to turn Belize into a base for struggle against a leftist Guatemalan regime (in the event of a revolutionary victory in Guatemala) and into a showcase of the achievements of "free enterprise" in Central America.

The growing partisan struggle in Guatemala in recent years has given its ruling elite an excuse to make the demagogical statement that revolutionaries "can set up a base in Belize" and operate from there against Guatemalan troops. Washington, in turn, has demanded that the Price Government dissociate itself from the revolutionary movement in the subregion and join the struggle against it. Price has refrained, however, from making any unequivocal statements about the revolutionary processes in Central America. He feels that "the problems of others are not Belize's concern."

Although the Price Government is trying to avoid the deterioration of relations with the Reagan Administration, it is also striving to reduce its dependence on London and Washington by obtaining maximum support from states in Latin America. Strong guarantees of Belize's independence are provided by Mexico's position: This country has renounced its territorial claims and has condemned Guatemala's annexation plans.⁸ The consent of the seven English-speaking Caribbean countries to guarantee Belize's sovereignty and territorial integrity was a great diplomatic victory for Belize.

The complex international situation and state of domestic politics in the country have necessitated constant maneuvers by the PUP Government. Even Price admitted this when he stressed his desire to "take the middle road."⁹ At the same time, the PUP left wing and even the country's leadership have suggested that Belize should develop in accordance with the winds of change blowing in Central America.

FOOTNOTES

1. See AFRIQUE-ASIE, Paris, 1981, No 250, p 37.
2. For a more detailed discussion, see LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1982, No 1, pp 10-19 (Editor's note).
3. LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL REPORT, London, 1980, No 1, p 7.

4. Ibid., 1981, No. 9, p 4.
5. For a more detailed discussion, see LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1980, No 8, pp 136-144.
6. CUADERNOS DEL TERCER MUNDO, Mexico, 1979, No 29, p 46.
7. LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORT, 1982, No 2, p 4.
8. SIEMPRE, Mexico, 1981, No 1475, p 16.
9. LATIN AMERICA WEEKLY REPORT, London, 1981, No 38.

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NICARAGUA: POLICY LINE OF INDEPENDENCE, NON-ALIGNMENT AND COOPERATION

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 72-85

[Article by M. L. Chumakova]

[Text] In the 3 years since the victory of the Sandinist people's revolution, profound changes have taken place in Nicaraguan society: A revolutionary democratic state has been created, the foundations have been laid for a new political system and important socioeconomic reforms have been instituted. In a complex domestic political atmosphere and at a time of increasing intrigues by counterrevolutionary forces, which are impeding the completion of the program for national reconstruction and are striving to reverse the tide of revolution, and of increasing pressure from the United States, accompanied by the threat of intervention, the Government of National Reconstruction is paying special attention to the country's foreign policy, which is aimed at the defense of national sovereignty and the establishment of the necessary conditions for the successful completion of the program of revolutionary reforms.

Goals and Principles

The basic principles of the Nicaraguan State's new foreign policy were set forth in the FSLN program in 1969, 10 years before the victory of the revolution. "The people's Sandinist revolution," this document said, "will put an end to the foreign policy subordinate to Yankee imperialism and will proclaim a patriotic policy aimed at the achievement of complete national independence in the interest of a general and genuine peace" (Article IX). The program envisaged the curtailment of American intervention in Nicaraguan affairs, the withdrawal of American military missions from the country and the renunciation of treaties with foreign powers which could injure state sovereignty. An important element of the program was the statement about the possibility of the new Nicaragua's acceptance of economic and technical aid without any kind of political conditions. The program stressed the need for unity with fraternal Central American peoples for the purpose of "coordinated efforts to further the cause of national liberation and establish a new social system without imperialist domination" (Article X). The section on international solidarity proclaimed active support for the struggle of the Asian, African and Latin American people against "a common enemy--American imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism" (Article XI).¹

Special mention should be made of the fact that the FSLN leadership regarded membership and active participation in the non-aligned movement to be the main guideline of the country's foreign policy after the victory over the Somoza regime. By doing this, the Sandinists obligated themselves not to join any other military-political blocs in the future (in this respect, the very existence of the movement for non-alignment is of the greatest appeal for Nicaraguan patriots, and it is not surprising that anti-imperialist forces in El Salvador and Guatemala have displayed the same tendency).

The program of the administrative council of the Government of National Reconstruction, published not long before the victory of the revolution, stressed that foreign policy would be aimed at "establishing contact with all states respecting the right to self-determination and to fair and mutually beneficial economic relations."²

After the revolutionary victory, the Government of National Reconstruction and the FSLN national leadership began to determine foreign policy goals with a view to the immediate need for economic construction and the reinforcement of the people's democratic state. Minister of the Interior and member of the FSLN national leadership Tomas Borge stressed that the government would "conduct a flexible foreign policy."³

The sharp exacerbation of the international situation in the beginning of the 1980's as a result of Washington's aggressive policy line required not only flexibility from the Sandinists, but also quick reactions and initiative in the resolution of foreign policy problems.

Since the middle of 1980 Nicaragua's domestic political and international situation has become more complex: Internal reaction has staged more frequent demonstrations with support from abroad, counterrevolutionary emigre organizations have been more active and U.S. ruling circles have been more critical of the Nicaraguan Government's foreign policy line and have expressed worries about the reinforcement of Nicaraguan-Cuban ties. Under these conditions, Nicaragua's foreign policy has been subordinated to the imperative of defending the people's revolution and ensuring the nation's defensive capability. The mounting external threat has made Sandinist diplomacy assign priority to the repulsion of all forms of interventionism and the prevention of aggression. When the Sandinist leadership determined its foreign policy goals and priorities, it took the balance of power within the country and in the international arena into account, as well as the current requirements of Nicaragua's economic development and the new interventionist ambitions in U.S. Latin American policy.

The basic guidelines of Nicaraguan foreign policy took shape gradually: The development of relations with leading capitalist states (the United States and West Western Europe), with developing countries (primarily neighboring Central American and South American republics) and with the states of the socialist community, as well as active participation in international organizations (the United Nations, the non-aligned movement, the OAS and others). When the Nicaraguan Government takes international action in these areas, it is guided by the principles of strong national sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states and it is pursuing a line of rapprochement with progressive regimes in the developing world which conduct an anti-imperialist policy.

The foreign policy guidelines listed above are closely interrelated. Nicaragua's independent and principled position in international organizations is strengthening its authority and broadening its contacts with the developing countries as a whole, and its stronger ties with progressive regimes and the countries of the socialist community are influencing the dynamics of U.S.-Nicaraguan relations and Nicaragua's entire foreign policy line. At the same time, its broader contacts with Western Europe are having a restraining effect on Washington and are helping to reinforce Nicaragua's international position.

The Repulsion of Interventionism

Relations with the United States have been the most difficult and complicated area of Nicaraguan Government activity, particularly since the beginning of the 1980's. Nicaragua tried to establish normal bilateral ties with the United States, based on the unconditional observance of the principles of self-determination and non-intervention and the offer of aid without making it conditional upon any kind of political or ideological terms. In spite of the Sandinist leadership's intentions, however, relations with the United States began to grow tense in the middle of 1980 as a result of Washington's gradual but growing interference in Nicaraguan internal affairs for the purpose of destabilizing its economy and political situation.

In the last month of the Carter Administration, U.S. policy displayed a distinct shift toward the escalation of international tension (particularly in relations with Cuba and with the countries of Central America and the Caribbean in general). There was growing opposition in the U.S. Congress to a bill on economic aid to Nicaragua, and this country was more frequently accused of becoming a "Marxist State."⁴ During the debates over the extension of credit to Nicaragua, the House of Representatives held two closed sessions to discuss the problem of "Cuban influence" in Nicaragua. The Pentagon, the U.S. intelligence community and conservative congressmen insisted that Washington pursue a tougher line in Latin America.

During the campaign in the United States, conflicts in ruling circles over policy toward Nicaragua became even more acute. Ronald Reagan referred to the "seizure of power by the Sandinist Marxists" in his campaign speeches and remarked that he was "against aid to Nicaragua." The documents on Washington's Latin American policy that were prepared by Reagan's advisers recommended a tough line in relations with the Nicaraguan Government. In August 1980 the American press reported that the Pentagon was trying to stop aid to Nicaragua in the expectation of a Reagan victory.⁵

When the Republican Administration took office, the supporters of a tough approach had the prevailing influence in U.S. ruling circles and this led to a sharp rightward shift in Washington's Latin American policy. One of Reagan's first foreign policy actions was the cancellation of Nicaraguan credit. A broad anti-Nicaraguan campaign was launched in the American press, portraying the Sandinists as "terrorists" who were giving the Farabundo Marti front in El Salvador "all-round assistance." Washington's policy toward Nicaragua became part of its new strategy in the Caribbean.

The further development of American-Nicaraguan relations was affected by Washington's desire to destabilize the Government of National Reconstruction. This was predicted as early as October 1979 by former CIA employee Philip Agee. In an article entitled "The CIA's Plan for Nicaragua," he wrote: "In the next few months the CIA will draw up plans for secret intervention, which will be submitted to the National Security Council for approval...and it will begin making use of the destabilization programs employed in the 1970's in Chile, Angola, Portugal and Jamaica." Among the possible methods of destabilization, Agee mentioned the dramatic augmentation of U.S. aid to reactionary regimes in neighboring countries, the instigation of border incidents, the demand for "free elections" and "freedom for the labor movement" and the manipulation of the mass media.⁶

In the beginning of 1981 the destabilization campaign began to be organized in all areas, including economic pressure, political blackmail, psychological warfare, attempts to isolate Nicaragua, military preparations in neighboring countries and the encouragement of the United States' Western European and Latin American allies to support the Republicans' tough line in Central America.

American public opinion began to be influenced when reports were published in January 1981 about the "partisan invasion forces" that were supposedly attacking El Salvador from Nicaraguan territory. The State Department's so-called "white paper" on El Salvador, containing the "news" that weapons were being shipped to rebels through Nicaragua, was published in February 1981.⁷ In this way, Nicaragua found itself at the center of a massive offensive by the State Department, the National Security Council and the U.S. mass media. The tone of the anti-Nicaraguan statements of Secretary of State A. Haig and R. Reagan, which were imbued with the spirit of "struggle against international terrorism," became increasingly belligerent. Haig threatened reprisals and sent an emissary, Lawrence Eagleburger, to Western Europe on a special mission. He was supposed to inform the Western European allies about the "participation" of Cuba and Nicaragua in the Salvadoran conflict and to encourage them to support Washington's line in Central America.

The Sandinist Government disclosed the actual reason for the Reagan Administration's campaign. As Moises Hassan pointed out, "all of these shouts and accusations against the Sandinist popular revolution have a dual purpose: To whitewash American intervention in El Salvador and to prepare the soil for the justification of intervention in Nicaragua."⁸ Minister of Foreign Affairs Miguel D'Escoto called Haig's statement about his country's "involvement" in arms shipment to El Salvador an irresponsible and aggressive remark.

Soon afterward the United States moved from diplomatic demarches and political pressure to acts of economic aggression. On 13 February 1981 the Reagan Administration imposed a ban on the shipment of 10,000 tons of wheat purchased by Nicaragua, and on 2 April the State Department announced the curtailment of financial aid by freezing 50 million dollars of the 75 million previously sanctioned by Congress.⁹

Statesmen in Managua pointed out the fact that Washington's behavior could not contribute to the establishment of stable and normal relations between the two countries. In response to the frenzied campaign in the American press, the

Nicaraguan foreign minister sent the State Department a note in March 1981, demanding an investigation of the rumors about the special camps set up in the United States to train Somoza's forces for an invasion of Nicaragua. This note, as well as D'Escoto's trip to Western Europe, represented part of the Sandinists' diplomatic counteroffensive against the attempts to isolate Nicaragua.

Nicaraguan-American relations have grown more tense as U.S. ruling circles have given increasing support to the upper echelon of the Nicaraguan private sector and bourgeois political parties criticizing the policies of the Sandinist Government, as well as in connection with the CIA's participation in the organization of anti-governmental demonstrations and conspiracies. Special radio programs have been broadcasted to destabilize the situation on the country's Atlantic coastline, provoking separatist demonstrations by ethnic minorities in this region and complicating domestic political affairs. As Commandant G. William Ramirez remarked, "American imperialism is using the Indian problem as an ideological weapon to destabilize the revolutionary process."¹⁰

Using various means of pressure, the United States has tried to reverse the process of revolutionary reforms and divest the FSLN foreign policy line of its anti-imperialist purpose. When U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders visited Managua in August 1981, he stipulated a number of conditions for the resumption of American aid. Commenting on this visit, the American press mentioned Washington's desire to "get Nicaragua back."¹¹ No specific agreements were reached as a result of the talks, however, because the conditions put forth by Enders were contrary to the FSLN's principled position on aid, and his proposals regarding changes in the country's foreign policy aims were naturally unacceptable to the Sandinist leadership. The very fact that direct negotiations were conducted with a representative of the American Administration, however, was viewed positively by the Nicaraguan side.

A month later Gen D. McNery, chairman of the Pan American Defense Council, went to Managua for 4 days. During the course of these talks, the Nicaraguan leaders expressed worries about the conduct of naval maneuvers near the Honduran coast and warned the Washington emissary that this could have a serious effect on Nicaraguan-American negotiations.¹²

The exacerbation of bilateral relations entered a new phase at the end of October 1981, when the Government of National Reconstruction took steps to improve the country's economy in accordance with the law on the extraordinary economic and social situation. This became a "pretext" for a new anti-Nicaraguan campaign in the United States and for increasingly threatening statements by Haig, Enders and Vice President G. Bush.

The Reagan Administration exerted strong pressure on international financial organizations in an attempt to block the extension of loans and credit to Nicaragua: The United States objected to the IBRD's extension of a 16 million dollar loan, and in the Mexican Development Bank it exercised its veto right to block loans extended by the fund for special operations and prevented the allocation of 500,000 dollars to small agricultural producers in Nicaragua.¹³ The hostile actions in the economic sphere were combined with the encouragement of

the activities of counterrevolutionary emigre organizations undergoing military training in the United States. As Sergio Ramirez, member of the administrative council of the Government of National Reconstruction, stressed, "the economic blockade and the decisive support of counterrevolutionary gangs will not improve relations between the two countries."¹⁴

In an attempt to accomplish the political isolation of the Sandinist Government on the continent, U.S. ruling circles have manipulated information about the buildup of Nicaraguan military potential. When Haig spoke at the 11th session of the OAS General Assembly, he tried to portray this country as a source of instability and a threat to peace in Central America.¹⁵ In an atmosphere of increasing hostility on the part of the United States, M. D'Escoto sent a note to the UN Security Council on 16 November 1981, refuting the aggressive and threatening declarations of high-placed American Administration spokesmen that Nicaragua is supposedly "supplying Salvadoran rebels, has thousands of Cuban advisers within its territory, received 1,000 (!) airplanes and helicopters from Vietnam" and that all of this is "part of a vast Cuban-Soviet conspiracy to rule Central America."¹⁶ The note concluded with a demand that the Nicaraguan people's right to decide their own fate be respected.

Advocating the development of equal and friendly relations with Washington, the Nicaraguan statesmen have repeatedly said that "the basis for normal relations with the United States is respect for our revolution."¹⁷ "We are striving for peace and good relations with the United States," M. D'Escoto said, "but this does not mean that the United States can tell us what to do. We have the right to decide our own fate."¹⁸

In an attempt to accomplish the political isolation of Nicaragua, spokesmen of the Washington Administration have constantly reiterated that the country is slipping "into totalitarianism" and "Marxist-Leninist dictatorship" and have accused the Government of National Reconstruction of "violating human rights" and refusing to hold "free elections." At the 11th session of the OAS General Assembly, A. Haig insisted that the militarization of Nicaragua, and not the increase of U.S. military intervention, supposedly represented the "prelude to broader-scale warfare in Central America."¹⁹ These kinds of "arguments" served as the pretext for the exclusion of Nicaragua from the Caribbean aid program adopted by Reagan and were voiced once again in the American President's speech in the OAS on 24 February 1982.

Judging by accounts in the American press, Reagan's new program envisages political and militarized operations against Nicaragua and a secret plan of operations for the gathering of intelligence by the CIA, for which 19 million dollars will be allocated.²⁰ The danger of military intervention grew even more acute after these plans were adopted.

Under these conditions the Sandinists made new efforts to preserve the peace in Central America and expose the intrigues of imperialist circles. The Government of National Reconstruction's inexorable determination to conduct an independent foreign policy line and not submit to U.S. diktat was clearly demonstrated in February 1982, during the debates between Miguel D'Escoto and Jeane Kirkpatrick on American television. D'Escoto pointed out the groundlessness of Kirkpatrick's

statements about Nicaragua's involvement in the Salvadoran conflict. In reference to the purported evidence that weapons had been shipped through Nicaraguan territory, he said: "The very appearance of these documents is suspicious and dubious because the entire world knows that when the intelligence services of any country want to compromise someone else, they can easily forge signatures, seals, papers and so forth."²¹

Under the conditions of Washington's increasing hostility and the military provocations of Somoza's forces based in Honduras, the Nicaraguan Government had to declare a state of martial law on 15 March 1982. The Government of National Reconstruction also requested the UN secretary general to hold an emergency session of the Security Council in connection with the continuous and constantly increasing aggressive actions of the United States and several other countries against the independent and sovereign Nicaraguan State. At this session, D. Ortega exposed Washington's conspiracy against his country, including the secret CIA plan approved by Reagan, in accordance with which terrorist saboteurs would be sent to Nicaragua.

Defending the sovereignty of the country and its right to self-determination, the Sandinist leadership has refused to give in to the pressure of U.S. imperialist circles attempting to divest the process of reform in Nicaragua of its revolutionary content and accomplish the economic suffocation and political isolation of the revolutionary state.

Developing Cooperation with Western European Countries

In the atmosphere of international friction, the expansion of relations with Western European states has become particularly important to Nicaragua; under Somoza, the country's relations were essentially confined to the Western Hemisphere.

The financial and economic aid offered to Nicaragua by Western Europe soon after the Socialist International's decision on the assistance of Nicaragua without any preliminary conditions has promoted national reconstruction. When U.S. imperialist circles became more aggressive, it was particularly important for Nicaragua to retain the support of Western European governments because it was trying to diversify its foreign political and foreign economic ties.

In March 1981 M. D'Escoto traveled to a number of Western European countries to refute Alexander Haig's assertions that Nicaragua had delivered weapons to the Salvadoran rebels and to simultaneously explain his government's position with regard to events in the subregion. One result of D'Escoto's trip was the reserved response of the Western European governments to the American "proof" of Nicaragua's involvement in the Salvadoran conflict and their refusal to agree that the events in El Salvador are a confrontation within the framework of East-West relations.

Besides this, when the Nicaraguan minister of foreign affairs spoke with representatives of the French, Spanish and West German governments, they concluded agreements on the continuation of cooperation on the bilateral level. A protocol was signed on 75 million francs in French aid, an agreement was concluded in Madrid on the deferred payment of loans, and assurances of continued economic assistance were obtained in the FRG. Sweden and The Netherlands also displayed interest in the development of economic cooperation in Nicaragua.

Cooperation with France was also reinforced by the Nicaraguan trip of French Minister of External Relations C. Cheysson and the visit to Paris by Bayardo Arce, coordinator of the FSLN national leadership's political commission, and Agricultural Minister Jaime Wheelock, as a result of which several new agreements were signed in 1981, envisaging French financial assistance in the Nicaraguan textile industry, the extension of credit for development projects and the delivery of 10,000 tons of wheat.²² In December 1981 a French commercial delegation visited Nicaragua, and new agreements were also signed as a result of this visit. France decided to supply Nicaragua with defense technology and military equipment valued at 18.8 million dollars, including two patrol cutters, two helicopters and several dozen trucks, mortars and granade throwers.²³ France's decision to send arms to Nicaragua was made when the United States was launching one phase of the anti-Nicaraguan campaign, which did not exclude the possibility of a "military alternative," and evoked a decidedly negative response from the White House. Pentagon spokesmen called this agreement "a slap in Washington's face."²⁴ Commenting on the shipments of French military equipment, S. Ramirez stressed Nicaragua's sovereign right "to develop relations with all countries and the right to receive material support, including military shipments, from any state, as an essential condition of relations with the United States and with any other country."²⁵

Cooperation with Sweden also developed productively. In September 1981 B. Arce visited Stockholm, where he attended the Social Democratic Labor Party congress. He announced Nicaragua's desire for deeper political relations and broader economic ties. In November 1981 an agreement was signed on Swedish technical assistance in the mining industry, and an agreement on 8.32 million dollars in aid was signed in December. That same month, Nicaragua received 10,000 tons of wheat as a gift from the government and people of Sweden. Between the middle of 1979 and the end of 1981 Sweden gave Nicaragua aid totaling 21.5 million dollars.²⁶

When Jaime Wheelock met with representatives of the West German Government in Bonn, they announced this government's intention to work with Nicaragua on development projects. The Government of National Reconstruction is also receiving economic and political support from Spain, which has provided it with 12.2 million dollars in nonrefundable aid.²⁷

Therefore, many countries are giving Nicaragua considerable assistance in the reconstruction of its war-ravaged economy.

At a time of escalated military preparations by the United States in Central America and the Caribbean, the support given to Nicaragua by the Socialist International has been of particular significance, as well as the activities of its international committee for the defense of the Nicaraguan revolution, formed in November 1980 at the 15th Socialist International Congress in Madrid. The chairman of this committee was F. Mitterrand, and after he was elected president of France the committee was headed by Felipe Gonzalez, secretary general of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party. In June 1981 a working session of this committee was held in Managua and was attended by prominent representatives of the international social democrats. After analyzing the internal and international aspects of the situation in Nicaragua, the committee expressed worries about the U.S. Administration's decision to curtail economic aid and reaffirmed its "solidarity

with the politically democratic and pluralistic project of the administrative council of the Government of National Reconstruction and the entire Nicaraguan population,"²⁸ In addition, the committee noted the serious worries about the threat hanging over Nicaragua. When Secretary General B. Karlsson of the Socialist International addressed the Nicaraguan State Council, he condemned all types of foreign pressure on Nicaragua. He unequivocally opposed Reagan's interventionist line and the campaign of misinformation launched against the Government of National Reconstruction. "We are amazed," Karlsson said, "that some people in the United States are expressing so much interest in the problem of human rights in Nicaragua after completely ignoring this problem for the last 50 years."²⁹

When F. Gonzalez visited Managua in December 1981, he assured the Sandinist leadership that the Socialist International would not change its policy of assisting the Nicaraguan revolution. The support of the Western European social democrats and the development of bilateral economic ties with several Western European countries have become an important factor in the consolidation of Nicaragua's international influence and are helping to diversify its foreign political ties and strengthen its defense potential.

Nicaragua and Latin America

After the Sandinist leadership resolved to develop relations with the countries of the continent, it assigned priority to the countries of Central America, Mexico, Venezuela and progressive regimes in the Caribbean states.

The United States' aggressive line and exertion of pressure on its southern neighbors, however, have noticeably complicated Nicaragua's relations with some Central American and Caribbean states. The governments of Costa Rica, Colombia and Venezuela have been displaying more reluctance to develop contacts with Nicaragua. There has been increased hostility in the policy line of the Central American military regimes that have been frightened by the wave of rebellion in the sub-region and have threatened to break off diplomatic relations with Nicaragua and intensify their anti-Nicaraguan military preparations. Once again, just as during the preparations for the armed intervention in Guatemala in 1954, Honduras is the location of a training camp for counterrevolutionaries preparing to invade Nicaragua.

The Sandinist leaders have repeatedly exposed Honduras' provocative actions and concentration of troops in the border zone; numerous notes of protest have been sent to this country's ministry of foreign affairs. In May 1981 a collection of documents was published in Nicaragua, containing a detailed list of the aggressive actions committed from Honduran territory, notes of protest and maps of the locations of border incidents.³⁰

In an attempt to establish good relations with its neighbor Honduras, the Nicaraguan Government took several steps to prevent conflict situations. In May 1981 D. Ortega visited Honduras and spoke with Gen Policarpo Paz Garcia about problems in bilateral relations, proposing the creation of joint Nicaraguan-Honduran forces to patrol the border and prevent new military confrontations. The proposal was not accepted by Honduras, however, because of the increased pressure exerted by the United States and the Guatemalan and Salvadoran regimes, which are trying to make Honduras a member of the anti-Nicaraguan bloc.

In fall 1981 there were reports of a plan to create a so-called "northern triangle" (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) aimed against Nicaragua. There was a simultaneous increase in armed confrontations and incidents of infiltration by counter-revolutionary gangs from Honduras. In November 1981 D. Ortega sent a letter to Paz Garcia, asking him to put an end to the activities of Somoza's gangs and the acts of aggression against Nicaragua. The Central American reactionary forces backed up by Washington, however, did not stop their hostile intrigues: In January 1982 a new triangle was formed--the "Central American Democratic Community" (CADC), made up of Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica. Guatemala joined the community later. The Nicaraguan Government condemned the creation of the CADC, interpreting this as imperialism's latest attempt to isolate Nicaragua.

A new link in the chain of hostile actions by Central American countries was formed when representatives of their military circles participated in the organization of the antigovernmental conspiracy discovered by Nicaraguan security agencies in the beginning of January 1982. It is indicative that a military intelligence agent from Venezuela and one of the officers from Argentina's general headquarters were involved in the organization of this coup along with members of the Honduran and Salvadoran secret services. What is more, the Argentine armed forces allocated 50,000 dollars for subversive activity by counterrevolutionary emigre organizations.³¹

While the Sandinist leadership took steps to stop counterrevolutionary actions committed with outside support, it continued its efforts to keep the peace in Central America, resolutely denying the accusations that the people's revolution in Nicaragua was the reason for the destabilization of the situation in the subregion. D. Ortega stressed that "free Nicaragua did not start the war in El Salvador: The Salvadoran people's struggle has been going on for many years" and stems from the backward socioeconomic structure.³² From the UN rostrum he exposed numerous incidents of American intervention in the affairs of Central American countries and read a message from Salvadoran revolutionary organizations to the world community, proposing specific ways of accomplishing the political settlement of the Salvadoran conflict.³³ Sandinist diplomatic efforts in Latin America are aimed at the creation of a Latin American front to protect the subregion against foreign intervention. For this purpose, D'Escoto, Ramirez, Borge and Ortega visited a number of Latin American countries in 1981 and spoke with representatives of the governments of Costa Rica, Venezuela, Mexico, Belize, Brazil, Peru, Panama, Ecuador, Guyana and Grenada on problems in bilateral relations and the situation in Central America.

The Nicaraguan Government is relying on Mexico's firm support in its defense of national sovereignty and the principles of non-intervention and self-determination. Mexico's economic assistance and political support have been an important factor in the consolidation of Nicaragua's international influence and in the prevention of its isolation.

Mexico has already extended 200 million dollars in credit,³⁴ is rendering assistance in various branches of the economy and is helping to strengthen the educational system and public health service. Along with Venezuela, Mexico is supplying Nicaragua with oil in accordance with the Mexican-Venezuelan agreement on the shipment of oil to the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. Scientific

and technical cooperation is also taking on broader dimensions. In May 1981 new agreements were signed as a result of D. Ortega's talks with representatives of the Mexican Government.

The consolidation of comprehensive and friendly relations between Nicaragua and Mexico is based on the common views of the two countries on cardinal international issues and their belief in the principles of non-intervention and self-determination. The Nicaraguan Government approved of the Franco-Mexican declaration and the proposals put forth by President Lopez Portillo with regard to the preservation of peace in Central America. It was with good reason that these proposals were put forth in the Nicaraguan capital, where the Mexican President was being awarded Nicaragua's highest honor--the Order of Augusto Cesar Sandino.

One important contributing factor in the consolidation of Nicaragua's international prestige and preventing its isolation on the continent was the support it received from the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties. This support was recently displayed when a session of this organization, held in Managua in February 1982, exposed the "U.S. threats and preparations for military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean" and reaffirmed its "solidarity with the Nicaraguan people and faith that their innovative experiment in political democracy and social justice will surmount the obstacles of imperialism and reaction."³⁵

The interventionist plans of the United States and reactionary military regimes are also being exposed by a new international forum--the Central American Anti-Imperialist Tribunal (CAT), established in Managua in September 1981. According to Luis Carrion, member of the FSLN national leadership, CAT activities are aimed at achieving the unity of the Latin American peoples and "creating the great anti-imperialist front spoken of by Sandino."³⁶

Line of International Solidarity

The attainment of popular revolutionary objectives and the consolidation of Nicaragua's positions in the international arena are being promoted by the efforts to expand relations with progressive regimes in the developing states and the countries of the socialist community on the basis of the principles of international solidarity. Favorable conditions for the establishment of equal and friendly relations, particularly with progressive regimes in the Arab countries, were created when Nicaragua joined the movement for non-alignment in 1979.

The development of Nicaraguan-Libyan relations has been quick and successful. In spring 1981, after several U.S. acts of economic aggression against the Government of National Reconstruction, Libya expressed its willingness to guarantee oil deliveries and extend a loan of 100 million dollars to Nicaragua.³⁷ Contacts between the two countries were strengthened throughout 1981, especially when Nicaraguan statesmen visited Libya.

The ideals of international solidarity and anti-imperialism lie at the basis of Nicaraguan-Cuban relations. Intergovernmental relations have been supplemented with inter-party contacts, and the cooperation with Cuba has encompassed the spheres of culture, education, public health, industry, agriculture and road construction.

Relations with the Soviet Union are developing successfully. When a party and governmental delegation from Nicaragua visited the USSR in November 1980, the consolidation of bilateral relations in the political, economic, scientific, technical and cultural spheres was discussed; it was stressed that "the further reinforcement of Soviet-Nicaraguan cooperation will be in the interests of both countries."³⁸ The balanced and mutually beneficial nature of bilateral relations was noted in a joint Soviet-Nicaraguan statement on the results of Miguel D'Escoto's official visit to the USSR in December 1981. An important milestone in the development of Soviet-Nicaraguan relations was the official visit to the USSR of a state delegation from the Republic of Nicaragua, headed by D. Ortega, member of the national leadership of the FSLN and coordinator of the administrative council of the Government of National Reconstruction. During talks with Soviet leaders, problems in bilateral relations and current international issues were discussed. Speaking at a luncheon honoring the Nicaraguan delegation, L. I. Brezhnev said: "Your visit to Moscow and our productive talks have clearly underscored what we believe to be one of the most important natural tendencies in contemporary world development. Peoples and nations are brought closer together by politics than by geography, and long distances are not an obstacle to mutual understanding and friendship. The development of relations between our countries proves this."³⁹ During the talks, an intergovernmental agreement was signed on the further development of economic and technical cooperation, as well as protocols envisaging deliveries of Soviet machinery and equipment to Nicaragua and Soviet assistance in the development of hydraulic engineering, the mining industry, agriculture, communications and other branches of the Nicaraguan economy.

Nicaragua's relations with the socialist states of Eastern Europe are developing productively. Trips to Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia by a delegation from the Patriotic Revolutionary Front resulted in a series of agreements on technical and economic assistance. The organization of commercial and economic cooperation with the countries of the socialist community will help in carrying out the national reconstruction program and in consolidating Nicaragua's international positions.

In an atmosphere of international friendship, Nicaraguan foreign policy is becoming a "forward line of revolutionary defense." Adherence to principles and consistency in combination with the flexibility and dynamism of the FSLN foreign policy line are increasing the number of Nicaragua's economic partners and political allies and allowing it to strengthen its positions in spite of U.S. attempts at intervention and counterrevolutionary intrigues. "The small Sandinist David can and will defend himself," wrote progressive Mexican researcher F. Carmona and J. Carrion. "On the basis of a sober assessment of the international balance of power and, in particular, of inter-imperialist conflicts, a policy of non-alignment, the internationalist support of the socialist system and the world public, the consistent implementation of the theory of national and international alliances, adherence to principle and revolutionary determination, the Nicaraguan people, led by the FSLN, will put an end to direct or indirect imperialist intervention and will not allow themselves to be smothered economically."⁴⁰

FOOTNOTES

1. "El Programa Historico del FSLN," Managua, 1981.
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3. T. Borge, "Estamos Creando Una Nueva Sociedad," Managua, 1981, p 70.
4. THE WASHINGTON POST, 21 May 1980.
5. Ibid., 8 August 1980.
6. CUADERNOS DEL TERCER MUNDO, Mexico, 1979-1980, No 35, p 52.
7. DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, Washington, 1981, Vol 81, No 2048, p 4.
8. PATRIA LIBRE, Managua, 1981, No 11, p 47.
9. DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, 1981, Vol 81, No 2050, p 71.
10. BARRICADA, Managua, 18 December 1981.
11. THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Paris, 17 August 1981.
12. BARRICADA, 2 October 1981.
13. Ibid., 15, 19, 20 January 1982.
14. Ibid., 11 February 1982.
15. Ibid., 18 November; 5-6 December 1981.
16. "Ministerio del Exterior. Managua. Ano de la Defensa y la Produccion. Texto de Nota al Consejo de Seguridad," Managua, S.A. p 2.
17. GRANMA, Havana, 25 January 1982.
18. BARRICADA, 18 December 1981.
19. Ibid.
20. THE WASHINGTON POST, 15 February 1982.
21. EL NUEVO DIARIO, Managua, 9 February 1982. The State Department "white paper" was put together with so many errors in the spelling of Spanish words, in chronology and so forth that one former CIA employee could not keep silent and remarked: "When I was in the CIA, our 'white papers' were much better"--THE NATION, New York, 1981, Vol 233, No 5, p 133.
22. BARRICADA, 30 September; 18 December 1981.

23. Ibid., 8 January 1982.
24. Ibid.
25. GRANMA, 25 January 1982.
26. BARRICADA, 18 November, 13 December 1981.
27. Ibid., 17 November 1981.
28. BARRICADA INTERNACIONAL, Managua, No 1, 1981.
29. GRANMA, 25 June 1981.
30. "Nicaragua Denuncia Agresiones que Sufre desde el Territorio de Honduras. 1980-1981," Managua, 1981.
31. BARRICADA, 13 January 1982.
32. Ibid., 20 November 1981.
33. "Queremos la Paz, pero no a Costa de la Libertad. Discurso Pronunciado por el Comandante de la Revolucion y Coordinador de la Junta del Gobierno de Reconstruccion Nacional, Daniel Ortega, en el 36 Periodo de Sesiones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, el 7 de Octubre de 1981. Edicion Especial de la Barricada," pp 13-14.
34. LATIN AMERICAN INDEX, Washington, 1981, No 8, p 33.
35. GRANMA, 22 February 1982.
36. L. Carrion, "Las Luchas Anti-imperialistas en Centro America y el Caribe," Managua, 1981, p 46.
37. THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 3 June 1981; GRANMA, 10 April 1981.
38. PRAVDA, 1 December 1980.
39. Ibid., 5 May 1982.
40. ESTRATEGIA, Mexico, 1981, NO 39, p 56.

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FOREIGN POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 86-105

[Article by M. A. Oborotova]

[Text] The liberation movement experienced a new upsurge in Latin America in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Its center moved to Central America, a region bordering directly on the United States. Considering the geographic location of the subregion and the presence of U.S. armed forces in Panama and on military bases in the Caribbean, it would seem that the prospects for the revolutionary process in Central America states should be minimal. Nevertheless, the liberation movement is rapidly gaining strength in these countries. In 1979 the people's revolution in Nicaragua won a victory, the revolutionary movement in El Salvador grew and the bloc of revolutionary forces in Guatemala became larger and more active.

Two Approaches in U.S. Policy

The events in Central America pose difficult but far from new questions for the United States. How can the revolutionary wave that threatens to overcome the subregion be stopped? Which methods will be most effective in the struggle against the liberation movement? Who can be relied upon at a time when the United States' traditional allies, rightwing forces and reactionary dictatorships, are being attacked, and when moderate, centrist elements are either taking the side of leftist forces, as in El Salvador, have been terrorized or destroyed, as in Guatemala, or are weak, as in Nicaragua? What policy should be conducted in relations with a state where popular democratic forces have already taken hold of the government? These are just some of the questions that are so "painful" for the United States. Many of them are still being debated and disputed within the U.S. ruling class.

In the last 5 years, just as during the rest of the postwar period, the United States has taken two approaches to this group of problems, which can be described as liberal and conservative in the most general terms. The liberal approach was most clearly demonstrated during the first years of the Carter Administration (from 1977 to the middle of 1979). Later, largely as a result of the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution, it underwent significant changes. The main one was the decision to launch a hysterical anti-Cuban campaign and to emphasize military

methods of struggle,¹ which were previously verbally rejected by the Democratic Administration but were actually still present in the diplomatic arsenal.

The changes in some important elements of Carter's policy line created a kind of link between the activity of the Democratic Administration and the subsequent policy of the Republican Administration. This served as a pretext for equating the Carter and Reagan approaches to Central America issues. In particular, the view that the Reagan Administration was simply carrying on Carter's policy in the subregion became popular.² This view, however, does not seem completely accurate. In spite of the similarity of some important aspects of the policies of the Democratic Administration at the end of 1979 and 1980 and the Republicans, the main elements of the liberal approach were always present in Carter's line--the emphasis on reformism, alliances with moderate forces, the condemnation of the extreme right and other elements that were not at all characteristic of Reagan's policy. The Republican Administration has proposed and is pursuing another policy in Central America, just as in the rest of Latin America and the developing world as a whole--a policy which corresponds to the extreme right even within the framework of the conservative approach.

In essence, Washington's two policy lines are not antagonistic. Their main purpose is the reproduction of capitalism on the periphery and, in a narrower sense, the reinstatement of the United States as the leader in the international arena through the reinforcement of shaky positions in the developing world. They are also distinguished by an entire spectrum of differences, however, connected with questions of a strategic and tactical nature.

Above all, there was a difference in the "worldview" of the Carter and Reagan administrations. When the Democratic Administration made subregional policy, at least in its first years, it proceeded in general from the assumption that detente had replaced cold war in the international arena, and particularly in East-West relations. Whereas the issue of the "export of communism" to the Western Hemisphere lay at the center of U.S.-Latin American relations until the middle of the 1970's, the economic concerns of these countries later became the main consideration: their need to overcome underdevelopment, establish equal relations, etc. Furthermore, this was characteristic of the entire developing world, and not just Latin America. This is why the United States had to pay more attention to North-South relations.³

On the basis of this premise, Washington officials worked out a strategy of economic globalism, envisaging the offer of aid to developing countries regardless of their geographic location. Within the framework of this strategy, Latin America was regarded primarily as a part of the developing world, and the United States' main objective in this region included cooperation with the countries of the continent in the resolution of an entire group of world economic problems.

Therefore, questions connected with the defense of traditional strategic interests and national security were not among the Carter Administration's highest priorities in the developing world. Regional and local conflicts in this zone were not regarded within the context of East-West relations. According to the Reagan camp's ideologists, it was precisely these aspects of Carter's strategy, which they have labeled "utopian globalism," that represented one of the main reasons for the Democratic Administration's failures in Central America.⁴

The policy of the Reagan Administration had a different point of departure: The main factor in the international arena is the confrontation between the United States and USSR, which plays a decisive role in relations with developing countries as well as in East-West contacts. For this reason, the Reagan Administration rejected the strategy of economic globalism and simultaneously rejected economic regionalism. North-South relations were relegated to a position of secondary importance and priority was assigned to preventing the "spread of communism" in any part of the world, including Central America.⁵ This is how strategic and geopolitical globalism replaced economic globalism.

The varying philosophies of the administrations gave them different attitudes toward the revolutionary process. The two lines diverged most on the questions of the causes of this process and the means and methods of its prevention. The Democratic Administration was not reluctant to acknowledge that socioeconomic factors were the main cause of the increasing activity of revolutionary forces on the continent.⁶ According to liberal ideologists, these factors are of an objective nature and there is therefore no point in trying to preserve the status quo by means of force, which would lead to the further polarization of forces. The United States had to channel ongoing processes of change into peaceful evolutionary directions without injuring the foundations of capitalism. In this connection, Secretary of State C. Vance made the following remarks: "We must not be deluded by the myth that if we support change or cooperate with forces advocating change, we are thereby supporting radicalism. The fact is that we are no longer capable of preventing change.... Our strength and our principles can help us to promote peaceful change and the kind of reforms that will strengthen ties between the government and the people. When these ties are dissolved and the people no longer recognize the legality of the government, no kind of foreign intervention can guarantee its prolonged existence. Therefore, in our own national interest we must support change before these ties are dissolved and the alternative of radicalism and repression cancels out the possibility of moderate solutions."⁷

According to the Republican Administration, social and economic factors are not the decisive causes of the escalation of instability and the intensification of revolutionary processes in Central American countries. The main role, it believes, is played by the "communist intervention" of Cuba, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Consequently, emphasis should not be placed on reforms, but on military opposition by foreign forces and by the foreign-supported rebel movement. In this connection, Ronald Reagan announced: "As far as El Salvador is concerned...it is impossible to fight a civil war and institute reforms at the same time. The war will have to be ended before the reforms can continue."⁸

Any revolution, according to the Reagan Administration, can be suppressed if enough weapons are used against it. The example of Vietnam, in its opinion, proved only that more decisive action must be taken and military assistance and military presence must be increased, and not decreased. Adhering to this principle, the Reagan Administration has proclaimed armed intervention an effective and, what is more, morally valid instrument of U.S. policy, just as in the 1950's.

This line has actually led to the dramatic deterioration of relations with Cuba and plans for a naval blockade of the island of freedom. It has led to the offer of military and economic aid to the regimes in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala

and has taken the forms of a moratorium on economic aid to the Sandinist Government and the training of counterrevolutionary gangs of mercenaries for an invasion of Nicaragua. Besides this, there is still the real probability of direct U.S. intervention, especially in El Salvador.

The choice of allies was another point on which the Carter and Reagan administrations differed. Both administrations encountered the dilemma of deciding how to deal with antidemocratic, despotic regimes in the developing world. The decision to openly take their side, a choice dictated by class instincts and fear of the spread of "Soviet influence," would have alienated large segments of the international public that condemned the policy of terrorist, antidemocratic cliques, and would also alienate the middle strata that support a moderate, reformist line. On the other hand, the line of creating governments which would conduct bourgeois democratic reforms would weaken the most firmly committed and irreconcilable anti-communists, Washington's most "reliable" allies, and posed the threat of the kind of "uncontrollable" situation in which a country would move more and more to the left. There was also the possibility of choosing a line midway between the other two. It was this that the Carter Administration tried to do. It tried to help a bankrupt dictatorship while dissociating itself from the most odious aspects of its activity and urging the despotic regime to institute cosmetic reforms to "let off some steam." But the examples of Iran and Nicaragua illustrated the ineffectiveness of this line, necessitating its modification, and the Reagan Administration, viewing the developing world only as a field of confrontation with the Soviet Union, returned to the first of these policy lines described above, which was completely consistent with its philosophy.⁹

Now the main criteria in the choice of allies are not their viability, their popularity in their own country or their ability to guarantee long-term stability, as during the Carter Administration, but anticommunism, loyalty to Washington and the support of the global American strategy. It is not surprising that one of the United States' "new" allies in Central America is Guatemala, where the regime ranks highest on the continent in terms of the systematic pursuit of a repressive policy and the institutionalization of murder. The Reagan Administration has willingly closed its eyes to all of this, not wishing to lose an important ally in the struggle against leftist forces in the subregion over what it regards as "insignificant" matters.

Therefore, American policy experienced a turnabout with the start of the Reagan Administration. This entailed the reestablishment of the cold war philosophy as the dominant outlook, a return to the unequivocal line of confrontation with the USSR, a new counteroffensive against leftist and leftist-centrist forces on the continent, including the use of armed intervention, the refusal to support reforms and the reassignment of priority to alliances with rightwing reactionary forces.

El Salvador was chosen as the touchstone of Reagan's "new" policy. According to the American Administration's original plan, it was precisely in the developing countries, in "regions of secondary importance," that the global offensive of American imperialism was to be instituted within the framework of confrontation with the Soviet Union and "international communism."

It was no coincidence that a Latin American state was chosen. Latin America, which is located in a zone of strong American influence, has traditionally served as a testing ground for Washington policy. It costs less here than in other parts of the world because the United States has more freedom to act here. Besides this, El Salvador is one of the smallest and economically weakest states in Latin America. Considering the fact that revolutionary forces could not overcome the junta's troops in the January 1981 offensive, Washington expected a quick victory in El Salvador, which would have a "demonstrative impact" on the developing countries and the rest of the world. As we know, however, the Reagan Administration's plans were unsuccessful.

The Failure of the Original U.S. Plan

One of the distinctive features of the Reagan Administration's program in Central America was its presumption that the complex problems of the subregion could be solved simply and quickly. The events of 1981 proved, however, that this was an unrealistic aim. The deadline set by the administration for the institution of order on its "third" border was up long ago but the anticipated results were not attained; the revolutionary wave in the subregion could not be stopped.

In spite of large financial contributions from the United States and a sharp increase in military aid and military advisers, the junta of Napoleon Duarte could not rout rebel forces and could not even gain the edge over them. The dynamic balance between the troops of the junta and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, established after the January 1981 offensive of revolutionary forces, was maintained throughout 1981 and the first months of 1982.

As for Nicaragua, the cessation of American economic assistance and the attempts to destabilize the Government of National Reconstruction did not undermine Sandinist influence inside or outside the country. What is more, the noisy propaganda campaign launched against Nicaragua and the training of counterrevolutionary gangs made up of Somoza's inveterate supporters and Cuban rabble had the opposite effect. The foreign threat did not lead to the further division of the forces responsible for the revolution, but to their consolidation and, consequently, the reinforcement of the government's position during this stage of the country's development.

The revolutionary process in Guatemala continued its rise. The zone of partisan activity has been expanding since 1981 (it now takes in more than half of the country's territory) and the nature of the rebel movement, which has now taken the offensive, is undergoing a gradual change.

Last but not least, the plan to carry out the White House's threat to get to the "bottom of the revolutionary movement" and set up a naval blockade of Cuba has been vigorously opposed in the United States and in the European and Latin American countries. All of this testifies that the Reagan Administration's original plan for Central America "did not work." Why not?

When the Republican Administration made its "new" policy, it assumed that Carter's mistakes were the main reason for U.S. failures in the region. Absolutely all aspects of the Democrats' subregional policy were criticized.¹⁰ Therefore, the Republican policy line was based on a rejection of the previous line.

The possibility of continuing the liberal approach was completely and irrevocably excluded. This immediately began to "work" against Reagan. For example, the abrupt reversal toward alliances with rightist and rightist-centrist elements led to a situation in which moderates had no real U.S. support and were inclined to join the leftist camp. In other words, the further polarization of social forces took place and, as a result, the social base of U.S. policy in the subregion was diminished. This not only limited the Republican Administration's freedom of movement in Central America at first, but also complicated the plans for elections in El Salvador and Guatemala later.

The principal weakness of Reagan's plan for Central America was probably the administration's onesided approach to the resolution of problems in the subregion. When Central American policy was being planned, U.S. interests were given priority without any serious consideration, and in most cases with complete contempt, for the interests and positions of other countries, especially some Latin American states and Western Europe; Latin America's distinctive features and the realities of international life today were ignored. This reflected the kind of imperial approach that is traditional in general in American foreign policy. It was less apparent in Carter's time (because his policy was influenced by the activity of the Trilateral Commission, which was striving to work out a common strategy for the three centers of world imperialism), but has been totally reinstated by the Reagan Administration. The great-power approach in the 1980's has unavoidably conflicted with the realities of the "multipolar" world, in which more and more countries are refusing to follow in the wake of Washington's policy.

Reagan's policy has not only failed to win the support the administration had expected as a matter of course, but has even been opposed by many states and influential political parties in Western Europe. Of the United States' allies in Europe, only the government of Margaret Thatcher, which is ideologically close to the Reagan Administration, supported the U.S. line in Central America. The Thatcher Government did not limit itself to expressions of political support but also aided in financing Washington's policy in Central America through international financial organizations¹¹ and supplied the armies of Guatemala and Honduras with weapons. As the conflict in the subregion escalated, however, Great Britain gradually departed from this policy and took a position similar to that of the majority of Western European states and political organizations, especially the social democratic parties making up the Socialist International.¹²

Many Western European countries have objected to the tactic of turning Central America into an arena of East-West confrontation, have condemned the Reagan Administration's military methods and the escalation of violence and bloodshed in the subregion, which can only be ended by means of a political settlement, have opposed the blockade of Cuba and the isolation of Nicaragua and have advocated broader cooperation with the Sandinist Government.

The diverging views of the United States and Western Europe are not antagonistic in essence but reflect the different approaches of the two centers of world imperialism to the question of settling conflicts in the developing world.¹³ The peculiarities of the Western European position stem from an entire group of factors, primarily their geographic location, economic and political potential,

psychology and ideology, which have all been affected by the historical experience of the countries of this region.

The geopolitical globalism of the Reagan Administration, which views all events in all parts of the world primarily through the prism of the strategic confrontation of the two systems in the world arena, is not characteristic of Western Europe. It has different frames of reference. The Western European states, which are located on a continent where a world war could start, are much more worried about the future of peace. Their policy does not emphasize confrontation, but the prevention of confrontation.

On the other hand, the Western European states have a greater interest than Washington in commercial and economic contacts with the developing countries. A policy of confrontation and a "tough" line will evoke only objections from these countries, and this will inhibit the expansion of cooperation and weaken imperialism's political position on the periphery.

Finally, Western Europe takes a different view of the revolutionary process in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This view is similar in many ways to the approach of the Carter Administration. In particular, the Western European states believe that socioeconomic factors, and not "communist intervention," lie at the basis of Central American events. For this reason, emphasis on military regulation and alliances with the right can only promote radicalization, cause the center to "slide" to the left and escalate conflicts. Emphasis on reforms, cooperation, the consolidation of moderate elements and political regulation is necessary in the subregion. As for the countries where the left is already in power, such as Nicaragua, for example, the only thing that can keep them in the world capitalist system is the maintenance of ties and contacts with capitalist states, and not their artificial isolation.

In addition to the FRG, France, where one of the most radical parties of the Socialist International recently took power, is now playing a particularly active role in Central America. France's policy in the subregion is influenced by the factors listed above and by the element of "smoldering anti-Americanism," which has been reinforced by Reagan's oversimplified approach.¹⁴

Within its first year, the Mitterrand Government took two major foreign policy actions that conflicted with Reagan's policy in Central America. On 28 August 1981 France and Mexico signed a statement in which they said that the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front constitute a representative political force and that their participation in "the negotiations needed for the political settlement of the crisis" should therefore be regarded as legal.¹⁵ The joint statement was published at the time when the United States decided to hold elections in El Salvador while isolating and annihilating leftist forces in the country.

On 15 December 1981 the Mitterrand Government signed an agreement on the sale of weapons to Nicaragua for a sum of several million dollars.¹⁶ Despite the fact that the agreement was for the sale of a small group of defensive weapons and the contract contained an article prohibiting their re-export by Nicaragua, this action was in sharp contrast to the American policy of stopping economic assistance,

trying to destabilize the Government of National Reconstruction and discussing plans for intervention in this Central American country.

It is completely obvious that the policy of France, the social democratic parties and the majority of Western European governments is now an important deterring factor which is complicating the realization of the more aggressive elements of Reagan's policy in the subregion.

Western Europe's approach is more calm and sober than that of the United States. If Reagan's policy in Central America should fail completely, the European alternative for the settlement of the Central American crisis will most probably have a much greater chance of success.

Whereas opposition in Europe to Reagan's line in Central America constantly grew in the beginning of the 1980's, the situation was much more complicated in Latin America. After the victory of the revolution in Nicaragua, a new balance of power began to take shape on the continent. The antidictatorial, anti-American struggle in Nicaragua was widely supported in Latin America, but there were radically different views on the revolution in El Salvador, which was taking place under different circumstances. Several Latin American states, especially Venezuela and Costa Rica, which supported anti-Somoza forces in Nicaragua, gave their support to the Salvadoran junta (in Venezuela, just as in Costa Rica, it is true that there was a change of political leadership, and this also affected the position of these countries with regard to the events in Central America). Rightwing regimes on the continent, with Argentina playing a particularly active role, gave considerable assistance to reactionary regimes in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.¹⁷ Their main motive was the fear that the "revolutionary infection" would spread to the South American subregion.

One sign of the polarization of forces in Latin America over the revolution in El Salvador was the support given by several countries of this continent to the anti-Cuban campaign launched by the Reagan Administration.

In this way, elements of the policy of some Latin American countries, including states with regimes of "representative democracy," coincided with Reagan's line in the subregion. Of course, they were not absolutely identical. For example, the Venezuelan Government of L. Herrera Campins has criticized the United States' "tacit support" of forces in El Salvador which occupy a position to the right of former junta leader Napoleon Duarte.

There have been many more disagreements between Washington and Latin America over Nicaragua. In contrast to Washington's official line, the belief of the governments of Venezuela and some other states is that Nicaragua should not be regarded as a hostile state as long as the possibility of the preservation of a multi-party system and various economic structures exists in this country. On the contrary, all of the factors contributing to the development of pluralism should be reinforced and, in particular, economic and political cooperation should be broadened.

Reagan's policy in Central America has been opposed by several states in the region--Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, Mexico, Panama and Ecuador. Mexico has played a particularly active role. Relations between Mexico and the United States have been

complicated, on the one hand, by the desire of each state to consolidate its influence in the region and, on the other, by disagreements over the causes of unrest and revolutionary demonstrations and the methods of stabilizing the political situation. Mexico has criticized the present American Administration's line in Latin America and believes that the United States, which is not a Latin American country, should not play a dominant role in political affairs in the region. The initiative here should be taken by the states of Latin America, including Mexico. The United States and Mexico have common strategic goals, such as the guarantee of the capitalist alternative of development in the region. There are fundamental disagreements, however, over the best methods of accomplishing this and the most reliable agent of this kind of development.

Mexico is in favor of the political, and not the military, settlement of social conflicts and of the democratic development of states and rejects violent methods of "stabilization," whether they take the form of intervention or rightwing military coups. This policy is based on the conviction that regional bourgeois stability can only be guaranteed over the long range if the deep-seated causes of unrest and revolutionary demonstrations are eliminated--and these causes stem from social injustice, and not from "communist intervention." The Mexicans realize from their own revolutionary traditions that changes do not always transpire peacefully.

Mexico is developing friendly relations with Cuba, is cooperating in the political and economic spheres with the Sandinist Government of Nicaragua and supports the FMLN and FRD in El Salvador.

Despite the disagreements in Latin America over El Salvador, many countries of the continent nevertheless have one feature in common. They do not approve of the plans for armed intervention, direct or indirect, in El Salvador and Nicaragua, and even in Cuba, because of their reluctance to set a dangerous precedent for the future and also because even Reagan's most loyal allies feel insecure in this matter and have to consider the possible effects this kind of support will have on their own countries.

Reagan's Central American policy line has encountered increasing opposition in the international arena and even in the United States. The plans for armed intervention have been opposed by the American pacifist public (the Vietnam syndrome is still quite strong in the country). Around 250 committees for solidarity with the struggle of the Salvadoran people are operating in the United States and have launched a broad propaganda campaign throughout the country. Reagan's line has been opposed by traditional liberals from the Democratic and Republican parties and by the religious organizations supporting their approach. It is true that the liberal line has not prevailed in the country's legislative branch since 1978, when Congress took a rightward shift. As a result, the supporters of the conservative approach, who hold the majority in the Congress, have been able to provide Reagan's Central American policy with the necessary backing. For example, in spite of heated debates, the Congress approved of the offer of military and economic assistance to El Salvador in an amount unprecedented for Central America. The opposition was able, however, to make this assistance contingent upon several political demands. These conditions are not an insurmountable obstacle in the way of U.S. interventionist policy and the escalation of military shipments, but they reflect the mounting difficulties encountered by the Reagan Administration. As

the Reagan Administration continues its futile involvement in the Central American conflict, the opponents of the official line will increase in number and gain more influence.

Disagreements among Reagan's rightwing supporters over political methods in Central America were a new development in U.S. domestic politics. The Haig line (State Department) was contrary to the Weinberger line (Pentagon), and this reflected one of the contradictions inherent in the very concept of "geopolitical globalism." The U.S. secretary of defense objected to the organization of intervention in Central America and to the blockade of Cuba, proposed by the secretary of state, and advocated maximum caution in the assumption of any kind of obligations to deploy American troops. According to the Pentagon, U.S. military actions in Central America would do the country more harm than good. The use of U.S. troops in the Caribbean will weaken American military potential in other, more important regions, will have a negative effect on U.S. initiatives in Europe and will require huge financial expenditures, which are needed for the main goal of deploying new weapon systems and achieving military superiority over the Soviet Union.¹⁸

Dynamics of Reagan's Policy Line

After the failure of the attempts to organize a crusade against communism in Central America, the White House made certain changes in its policy. However, it rejected the idea of political settlement by means of talks between rebel forces and the United States, which was proposed by the FRD and FMLN of El Salvador and was supported by several states and political organizations--Mexico, Venezuela and the Socialist International, which offered their services as mediators. In response to this proposal, Washington put forth its own plan, placing emphasis on the election scheduled for 28 March 1982 in El Salvador. In essence, "political settlement" was postponed for an entire year, during which the Reagan Administration hoped to put an end to all revolutionary demonstrations in El Salvador, and later in the rest of Central America. Washington decided to offer Central American antidemocratic regimes even more military and economic assistance, send military advisers to El Salvador and employ more threats and blackmail in relations with Cuba and Nicaragua.

By fall 1981, however, this policy began to "hit the skids." The FMLN's successes in the second rebel offensive in July-August proved that the American line in relations with El Salvador was ineffective and simultaneously gained more support for Salvadoran leftist forces in the international arena. The Franco-Mexican statement was praised by many countries and political organizations, including some in the West--Panama, Peru, Austria, Norway, Holland, Ireland, the Socialist International and others. The number of international initiatives aimed at the political settlement of the conflict also rose.

On 7 October 1981, at the 36th session of the UN General Assembly, Daniel Ortega, junta coordinator of the Nicaraguan Government of National Reconstruction, set forth, at the request of the Salvadoran FMLN and FRD, the proposal of revolutionary forces to start negotiations with the junta without any preliminary conditions. The United States and El Salvador, however, rejected the proposal. In December 1981 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution by a majority vote, supporting the plan for political settlement by means of talks by all representatives of

Salvadoran political forces for the purpose of creating a democratically elected government in an atmosphere free of intimidation and terror.

In this way, in fall 1981 the Reagan Administration found itself in a situation which clearly indicated that a "military solution," at least in the forms and dimensions of its implementation, would be impossible: The bloc of leftist organizations was still strong, and the further development of the conflict in El Salvador could destroy the regime supported by the United States. The situation was complicated by the United States' loss of the initiative on the diplomatic level and by the mounting threat of the isolation of White House Central American policy in the international arena. This forced Washington to work out alternative policies in the subregion. In this connection, Alexander Haig said: "The situation has essentially reached an impasse. This impasse might eventually prove fatal because El Salvador is experiencing serious economic difficulties.... For this reason, the situation must be reassessed, and this is precisely what is being done now."¹⁹

Therefore, the Reagan Administration found itself at a crossroads--it had to choose between two distinct alternatives. The first would mean an even greater increase in military aid to the junta, the intensification of military actions in El Salvador and the organization of a stronger campaign against Nicaragua and Cuba. This alternative, however, could result in colossal material, moral and political losses within the country and in the international arena. The second alternative was the support of the plan for a political settlement by means of talks by all interested parties. This alternative is supported by the majority of European countries, several Latin American states, many non-aligned countries and some American organizations and politicians. From the standpoint of political realism, this prospect is the optimal one, but not for the present American Administration.

A peaceful settlement will be possible only if leftist forces are recognized. This would necessitate a complete reversal in the Republican Administration's policy line and a departure from the basic convictions and inveterate anticommunist ideology of Reaganism. Naturally, this move verges on the impossible for the White House. It is therefore not surprising that the administration chose the first alternative in November 1981 (in other words, it will continue to follow its old path, but with even more emphasis on force).

At Haig's suggestion, concrete military actions are being organized much more energetically in El Salvador and against Cuba and Nicaragua, including subversive activity, large-scale U.S. naval and air force maneuvers in the Caribbean, a naval blockade and direct intervention. All of this has been accompanied by the escalation of the propaganda campaign against Cuba and Nicaragua. Disagreements in U.S. ruling circles over the cost of military operations, the situation in the international arena and the absence of a pretext for the commencement of military actions, however, led to a situation in which the plan for the "radical" resolution of the Central American crisis was "hanging in mid-air" by the middle of December 1981.

Under the influence of the growing international support for the projected political settlement, the Reagan Administration took more vigorous steps to organize elections in several Central American countries. Washington's expectations are

essentially the following. The very fact that elections are held and civilians take power will create at least the semblance of the legality of the government and its "public support" in the eyes of the world public. In fact, these elections were to be another case of fraud. Under these conditions, only pro-American forces could take power (by "winning" the elections) and, consequently, the United States was not taking any great risk. On the other hand, this would give the United States a legal "cover" for the augmentation of military and economic aid to these countries and the devastation of leftist forces.

The Reagan Administration was able to win support for its position at the 11th session of the OAS General Assembly in December 1981. The majority of Latin American states, with the exception of Mexico, Nicaragua and Grenada, which voted against, and Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Surinam and St. Lucia, which abstained, supported "general elections" in El Salvador in 1982 instead of negotiations. The Nicaraguan delegation's proposal that the resolution include points calling for dialogue with leftist forces and prohibiting any kind of military assistance from abroad, including U.S. aid to the Salvadoran junta, was rejected.

The first country where elections were held was Honduras. On 29 November 1981 Roberto Suazo Cordova, the candidate of the rightwing centrist Liberal Party, won a victory. The Reagan Administration's motives for supporting the elections in Honduras and the transition from a military government to a civilian one included tactical considerations. In Honduras, where the class struggle has not reached as high a pitch as in El Salvador and Guatemala, the danger of the disruption of elections was minimal. Their "success" therefore provided the United States with the necessary "guarantee" for the March 1982 elections in Guatemala and El Salvador.

The support of the elections was accompanied by attempts at the further reinforcement of the armies in the Central American countries, on which the Reagan Administration continued to rely most heavily in the struggle against leftist organizations. In fiscal year 1981 U.S. military aid to El Salvador totaled 35.4 million dollars (10.4 million extended by the Carter Administration and 25 million by the Reagan Administration). In addition, El Salvador was leased 10 transport helicopters.²⁰ The administration planned to give El Salvador 26 million dollars in 1982 in the form of aid for security purposes,²¹ but the junta had already been allocated an additional 55 million dollars by February 1982 in response to successful partisan actions. El Salvador now receives more American military aid than any other country in Latin America. The third place (after Colombia) is occupied by Honduras, whose military aid is supposed to be doubled in 1982 and will total 10 million dollars.

Guatemala was the only Central American regime "friendly" to the United States that was declared "ineligible" for military aid in 1977. In May 1981 the State Department used the failure of Carter's policy in relations with this state and the growth of the partisan movement in Guatemala as an excuse to resume giving military aid to the regime of General Lucas Garcia. In July 1981 Guatemala was provided with spare parts for helicopters, which are being actively used in fights against partisans, and for 50 military trucks and 100 jeeps. These shipments were labeled equipment other than military weapons and therefore did not require congressional approval. According to the act on military aid, however, shipments of weapons to countries where human rights are regularly violated are prohibited.

The escalation of political violence and repression in Guatemala created considerable difficulties for the Reagan Administration in the legal sanctioning of aid to this regime. From Washington's standpoint, this created an even more urgent need for elections in the country, which could provide the necessary formal pretext for the resumption of American aid.

The development of events in Central America in the first half of 1982 did not fit in with U.S. plans. The rebel movement became much more active in the subregion. The Reagan Administration had to face the real danger of losing control over the development of events in the subregion.

The White House openly announced preparations for armed actions in El Salvador and against Cuba and Nicaragua. Addressing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Alexander Haig declared that Washington would do "everything necessary" to defeat the partisans in El Salvador.²²

In this context, according to the plans of American strategists, after the elections the "democratically elected" government of El Salvador could turn to the OAS or directly to the White House with a request to send armed forces to the country. The same goal--the creation of a "political cover" for intervention--is to be served by the "Central American Democratic Community" founded in January 1982.

On 24 February 1982 Ronald Reagan spoke to the OAS about U.S. policy in Central America and the Caribbean. The first part of his speech described the long-promised plan for "economic aid" to countries in this region. It envisages the cancellation of restrictions on the products exported by Central American and Caribbean states to the United States, with the exception of textiles and ready-to-wear clothing, the intensification of American private capital investments in the economies of countries of the subregion and the offer of direct economic aid to governments, primarily in the private sector, in the amount of 350 million dollars in 1982. The main purpose of the speech, however, was an appeal for a "fight against communism" in Central America. Cuba, Grenada and Nicaragua were fiercely attacked and were again accused of undermining "economic and social progress and political democracy." An analysis of the situation in the subregion ended with a warning about the "ominous" consequences of the uncontrolled development of events. Reagan said: "If we do not take quick and decisive action in defense of freedom, new Cubas will rise from the ruins of today's conflicts."²³ In line with this premise, the American President called upon the Central American and Caribbean states to create a "collective front for struggle against communism" and asked Congress to approve an increase in aid for security purposes to "friendly" countries in the subregion.

Even before the Guatemalan elections, the Reagan Administration listed this state, along with Argentina and Chile, among the recipients of American aid in fiscal 1983. The program submitted by the U.S. Administration to Congress in March 1982 also envisaged a significant increase--up to 166 million dollars--in military aid to El Salvador, which was categorized, along with Israel, Egypt, Pakistan and Turkey, as a "key" country in relation to the United States.

The increased aggressiveness of U.S. policy and, what is most important, the danger of the "internationalization" of the conflict have resulted in the quick growth of the protest movement in the international arena and in the United States.

Mexican President J. Lopez Portillo's proposal regarding peaceful means of settling the Central American crisis has won widespread international recognition.

Explaining the position of the Soviet Union with regard to the situation in Central America and the Caribbean, L. I. Brezhnev stressed: "We resolutely condemn the threats addressed to Cuba and Nicaragua, which are coming, as always, from Washington. We regard the U.S. intervention in Salvadoran affairs on the side of the bloody dictatorship of the military junta that is trying to suppress patriotic, freedom-loving forces in this country, as a senseless action and one that is extremely dangerous for the cause of peace.

"I am firmly convinced that the road to peace and security here will not be reached through the imposition of one state's wishes on others, but through genuine respect for the right of all people to build their own life according to their own needs. In our opinion, these are precisely the goals that will be served by the peaceful constructive proposals recently put forth by the Nicaraguan Government.

"Some of the ideas expressed by the president of Mexico, who displayed concern about the present situation in this region, will serve the same purpose."²⁴

The "elections" in Guatemala were held in an atmosphere of intense terror and repression on 7 March 1982. They were followed, however, by a military coup which canceled out their results.

On 28 March 1982 "elections" to the Constituent Assembly were held in El Salvador. It is indicative that the majority of states in Latin America and Western Europe did not send their own correspondents to cover the elections. This farce brought victory to parties on the extreme right, among the leaders of which the most prominent figure is D'Aubusson--an ultra-conservative, the chief organizer and instigator of the covert terrorism that has evolved into genocide and a man who described even Napoleon Duarte as a "spineless liberal." The results of this election have pointed up the blind alley into which the United States' "Salvadoran policy" has led it. Washington's attempt to combine the incompatible--to put the most militant anticommunist groups, capable of mercilessly suppressing revolutionaries, in positions of power while simultaneously giving this kind of "reliable" regime some semblance of democracy by including supposedly moderate politicians within the regime, creating an "image" which may not be very attractive but is more or less acceptable to world and American public opinion--was an utter failure. The election of President Alvaro Magana, who has been portrayed as a "moderate rightist," after long and varied maneuvers, does not change the matter and will not fool anyone. If U.S. ruling circles persist, even under these circumstances, in rejecting the political solution that the Salvadoran democrats have consistently proposed and decide to support the extreme rightwing regime, this will be tantamount to throwing off their last masks. The United States will be seen, even by those who still cherish some illusions, as the master, instigator and patron of the repressive juntas in El Salvador and Guatemala, which have coldbloodedly tortured the population of their own countries in the interests of miniscule (regardless of the percentage of votes they won in the elections), historically doomed but, precisely for this reason, particularly savage exploitative cliques.

FOOTNOTES

1. In September 1979 the creation of a tactical rapid deployment force for the Caribbean was announced. Military aid to El Salvador was increased and the nature of this aid changed: Shipments of "non-lethal" weapons were supplemented by "lethal" arms in the last weeks of Carter's term in office. The modernization of the Honduran and Guatemalan armies began at the same time.
2. See, for example, W. Scott Thompson, "Choosing to Win," FOREIGN POLICY, Washington, 1981, No 43, p 78; S. Castor, "La Política de Reagan y el Caribe," EL CARIBE CONTEMPORANEO, Mexico, 1980, No 3-4, pp 3-28.
3. This concept was worked out in its most general form by the "Linowitz Commission," whose report considerably influenced the policy of the Carter Administration--"The Americas in a Changing World," New York, 1975; "The United States and Latin America: Next Steps," New York, 1976; also see Z. Brzezinski, "Between Two Ages. America's Role in the Technotronic Era," Harmondsworth, 1978.
4. J. Kirkpatrick, "U.S. Security and Latin America," COMMENTARY, New York, 1981, Vol 71, No 1, pp 29-41.
5. For a more detailed discussion, see H. Smith, A. Clyner, L. Silk, R. Lindsey and R. Burt, "Reagan the Man, the President," New York, 1981; "1980 Republican Platform Text," THE CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY WEEKLY REPORT, Washington, 1980, Vol 38, No 29, pp 2030-2054; M. Harrison, "Reagan's World," FOREIGN POLICY, 1981, No 43, pp 3-16.
6. See, in particular, the text of the statement made by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs V. Vaky in the House Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs on 11 September 1979--DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, Washington, 1980, Vol 80, No 2034, pp 58-65.
7. DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, 1979, Vol 79, No 2030, p 8.
8. TIME, New York, 1981, Vol 117, No 1, p 23.
9. Theoretical grounds for the need for alliances with rightwing dictatorships in Central America are cited in articles by Jeane Kirkpatrick, one of the Reagan Administration's leading ideologists. In her opinion, the majority of Latin American countries are still "not mature enough" for democracy, and the dictatorships, which she calls "moderate autocracies," are the "unavoidable form of government" during the present stage in the development of the Latin American societies. For this reason, no one should refuse to form alliances with them, particularly since the only alternative, according to Kirkpatrick, is not democracy, but a "communist" society--COMMENTARY, 1979, Vol 68, No 5, pp 34-35; 1981, Vol 71, No 1, pp 29-41.
10. See, in particular, the analysis of the "Santa Fe Committee" report on "new inter-American policy for the 1980's"--LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1982, No 3, pp 5-21; also see the abovementioned works by Kirkpatrick.

11. NEW STATESMEN, London, 1981, Vol 102, No 2635, pp 10-13.
12. The positions of the majority of Western European countries exist on two levels--governmental and party (social democratic). It is extremely difficult to draw a distinct line between the two because the social democratic parties are in power in some countries and can influence government policy considerably in other countries where they are in the opposition. In some cases these two levels merge and in others they are closely interwoven and can only be distinguished by means of certain nuances. Government policy is generally more reserved, while party policy is usually more radical.
13. This discussion refers primarily to differences from Reagan's policy. Carter's approach coincided in several respects with the position of the Western European states.
14. D. Moisi, "Mitterrand's Foreign Policy: The Limits of Continuity," FOREIGN AFFAIRS, New York, 1981-82, Vol 60, No 2, p 351.
15. LE MONDE, Paris, 31 August 1981.
16. Ibid., 9, 30 January 1982.
17. In the beginning of 1982 there were more than 100 Argentine military advisers in El Salvador, according to reports in the press. They were recalled in connection with the conflict in the South Atlantic.
18. BUSINESS WEEK, New York, 1981, No 2718, p 91.
19. NEWSWEEK, New York, Vol XCVIII, 1981, No 19, p 17.
20. DEPARTMENT OF STATE BULLETIN, 1981, Vol 81, No 2052, p 56.
21. THE NEW YORK TIMES, 13 January 1982.
22. Ibid., 7 February 1982.
23. Quoted in GRANMA, 3 March 1982.
24. PRAVDA, 10 March 1982.

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BEIJING'S 'FLEXIBLE APPROACH'

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 106-111

[Article by A. V. Ol'gin]

[Text] Chinese policy has recently displayed--in addition to the "general line" which is based on overt attempts to provoke the more belligerent segment of U.S. ruling circles to take military actions against Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada and thereby accomplish the even closer coordination of Chinese foreign policy efforts with the efforts of the Washington Administration and terrorist dictatorships (especially in Chile) on an anti-Soviet and anti-Cuban platform--several new features reflecting the Chinese leadership's inclination to resort to political maneuvers. When maneuvers of this kind are attempted in matters affecting the interests of the developing countries, they are supposed to camouflage support for imperialism's aggressive line, China's real hegemonistic goals and its policy of forming alliances with the most reactionary forces. These are just a few of the characteristic features of Beijing's present behavior in the international arena.

Although it is still adhering to its strategic line of convergence with imperialism and is hoping for the further deterioration of international affairs, the Chinese leadership has decided, judging by all indications, to adjust its policy somewhat to make it seem less odious to the developing countries. Assurances of "loyalty" and of "invariable" support for the developing countries have recently been voiced with increasing frequency by Beijing. In an obvious attempt at rationalization, the Chinese press has reiterated: "China's decision to wage a joint struggle with some Western countries against hegemonism does not mean that China has stopped supporting the struggle of the Third World people and does not care anymore about the interests of oppressed nations"; "The PRC's development of relations with the United States does not mean that China supports its mistaken policy with regard to some Third World countries."

The propaganda campaign in the press has been reinforced by official statements by Chinese leaders. In particular, as Premier Zhao Ziyang of the PRC State Council said in an interview on Mexican television just before the conference on international economic cooperation began in Cancun, "China, as a developing socialist country, breathes the same air and faces the same destiny as other developing countries."¹ At the conference, the Chinese delegation took a "critical stance"

on the "U.S. approach to problems in the developing countries" in an attempt to express the views prevailing among representatives of the developing world.

In Central America and the Caribbean, Beijing, which once stressed the need to repulse "Soviet and Cuban intervention and infiltration" and justified the United States' interventionist ambitions in the region, has begun to display a "peace-making" approach and to stage "principled" condemnations of "any form of aggression." In response to Mexican correspondents' questions about the events in El Salvador, Zhao Ziyang said that "China has always wanted the internal affairs of each country to be decided only by the people of this country. We are against all types of outside intervention, regardless of the source."² A BEIJING REVIEW editorial with the meaningful title "Does China Support the National Liberation Movement in Central America and the Caribbean?" said: "We...want the internal struggle and disagreements in the Central American and Caribbean countries to be settled by their own people and we believe that disagreements between any two countries should be settled by means of peaceful consultations."³

Chinese officials and the press have made an entire series of statements which can be interpreted in principle as Beijing's recognition of the objective nature of the liberation struggle in this region. In a speech at the 36th session of the UN General Assembly on 23 September 1981, PRC Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Wenjin acknowledged the indisputable fact that the people of the Caribbean live in an atmosphere of "imperialist exploitation and oppression" and that it is their "inalienable right" to "defend their national independence and state sovereignty, develop their national economy and carry out democratic reforms."⁴

Indirect criticism of U.S. Caribbean policy was one element of this campaign. According to the Chinese press, Washington is supporting the "current Salvadoran Government" and is sending more economic and military aid against "rebel forces and peoples" in order to defend and preserve a region of its own "traditional influence" and interests. This aim is "unavoidably intensifying the internal struggle in El Salvador and aggravating unrest throughout the region."⁵

The adjustment of Beijing's approach to Central American problems was not motivated at all by its leadership's sudden recognition of reality. After witnessing the widespread international opposition to the U.S. interventionist line, which raised objections even in some of the leading Western European countries, several Latin American states and influential political circles in the United States itself, and after seeing the obvious failure of the Salvadoran junta's antipartisan "blitzkrieg" and the widely publicized "democratic election" of 28 March 1982, Beijing felt the need to display "objectivity" and slightly modify its total support for Washington's aggressive line. Nevertheless, the Chinese leadership's real feelings were always completely apparent even during its latest set of political maneuvers.

The hypocritical nature of Beijing's "peace-making" policy in relations with the countries of Central America and the Caribbean has been most fully demonstrated in specific remarks and statements by Chinese leaders about the events taking place here and, what is most important, in their actual policy and diplomatic moves. The liberation forces and the repressive regimes opposing them are only

chess pieces in the Maoist theory of "struggle between superpowers." According to this theory, the situation in this region has not been aggravated by the frenzied opposition of U.S. imperialism to any kind of progressive changes in Central America and the Caribbean, but by the struggle between the "two superpowers." "The clash between the two superpowers has made the situation in this region even more complex than before, and it will certainly become even more acute in the near future," Beijing propagandists predict.⁶

Beijing has called the Soviet Union the main "disturber of the peace." Behaving supposedly like an "active expansionist power," the USSR, according to Beijing's line of reasoning, is trying to make use of the liberation struggle of the Central American and Caribbean people "for its own hegemonistic purposes" and to "set a trap" for the United States in its own "courtyard." The Chinese leaders are persistently trying to impose this stupid set of beliefs on the Latin American countries. They were frankly set forth in Zhang Wenjin's speech at the 36th session of the UN General Assembly.

For the sake of "balance," the Chinese leadership criticizes the United States from time to time for its "nearsighted" and "foolish" habit of supporting many "pro-American and anticommunist regimes" for the sake of "its own unjust interests." This kind of policy, the Beijing wisemen say, is contrary to Washington's own "long-range and strategic interests." Even this reserved criticism, however, loses all meaning when it is accompanied by PRC acknowledgments of the U.S. role as the "main deterring force" standing in the way of "Soviet expansion." After all, in precisely the same way as the most belligerent theories of American imperialism, Beijing has declared that the cessation of imperialist support for dictatorial regimes would be the "equivalent" of opening the door to "Soviet expansion" and creating a "serious danger" for the Latin American states and "the United States itself, as well as the strategic links connecting North and South America, including the Panama Canal and the Strait of Magellan--these two strategic canals connecting two oceans."⁷

In spite of the obvious incidents of flagrant U.S. pressure on countries in the region, massive efforts to destabilize the situation in Nicaragua and Grenada and the campaign of threats against socialist Cuba, the Beijing ideologists have essentially ascribed a "stabilizing role" to Washington in the development of regional affairs. Reports in the Chinese press about the elections in Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador are indicative in this respect. After remarking that their results "will have a considerable effect on this region in the near future," the authors of the report invariably mention the negative effect of "increasing Soviet and Cuban infiltration." As for the position taken by the United States, it, according to these authors, "is not that bad" because Washington supported the elections in order to "stabilize the situation and defend its own considerable interests in the subregion." "The United States also hopes that the elections will ease tension to such a degree that they will not allow the Soviet Union to take advantage of the present chaos for its own purposes in the future."⁸

Beijing's growing interest in rapprochement with reactionary dictatorships in the region is understandable in light of the Chinese propagandists' efforts to whitewash the American policy of "stabilization," which were even more vigorous after Reagan's so-called "new Caribbean initiative" was made public. These dictatorships

are the personification of the Maoist ideals of "uncompromising anti-Sovietism" and represent an important arena of alliance with U.S. imperialism. Beijing's attitude toward the military regime in Guatemala is indicative in this connection. Guatemala's positive balance in trade with the PRC exceeded, according to estimates in the foreign press, 107 million dollars just in 1980.⁹ In October 1981, when V. Solorzano, then the Guatemalan junta's minister of economy, visited the PRC, he signed an agreement on the sale of 4,000 tons of cotton to the PRC. At the end of the visit, the head of the Guatemalan delegation announced the great significance of this agreement and stressed the fact that the PRC does not usually import cotton. He also stressed that he had "begun to understand Chinese economic policy."¹⁰

The Chinese leadership, which has verbally advocated the "peaceful settlement of conflicts," has actually tried to maintain tension in the Caribbean, one of the new sensitive "sore spots" which now determine the state of world affairs. The Chinese leaders' attempts to practice global "political needling" in this region are certainly not intended to improve the situation. This line has been reflected most clearly in PRC relations with the leaders of the ruling Christian Social Party (COPEI) in Venezuela. President L. Herrera's official visit to Beijing, made last October after an entire series of bilateral meetings between various PRC and Venezuelan delegations, including some on the party level, was filled with anti-Soviet and anti-Cuban attacks. As Deng Xiaoping said at a banquet honoring Herrera, the factors contributing to unrest and anxiety in today's international situation emanate "primarily from the Soviet Union." Deng suggested that "disagreements be overcome" and that China, the "Third World" countries, the United States, Japan and Western Europe unite for a "struggle against hegemonism."¹¹ This approach did not evoke any protests from the leaders of Venezuela. The Chinese leaders tried to impose the same views, although unsuccessfully, on Mexico when Premier Zhao Ziyang of the PRC State Council visited this country in October 1981.

Chinese propaganda has also intensified its anti-Cuban campaign and is still obtaining most of its "arguments" from dubious CIA sources. In reference to the position of the PRC and U.S. leaders on the situation in Central America and the Caribbean, Cuba's GRANMA newspaper stressed that statements in the Chinese press "coincide with the escalation of threatening propaganda against Cuba by American Government officials."¹² For example, the Chinese press repeated, almost word for word, the entire list of lies Reagan told about the "Cuban threat" when he addressed the OAS this February and has displayed remarkable diligence in quoting the anti-Cuban statements of other U.S. leaders, filled with slander and threats leveled at this sovereign state, particularly the statements made by Vice President G. Bush during his trip to Colombia, Brazil and the Dominican Republic and statements by Secretary of State A. Haig.

The Chinese leadership has not only justified psychological warfare against Cuba but has even decided to join in. Slandorous lies about its "militarization" and the "mounting military threat" and attempts to denigrate Soviet-Cuban relations have become an essential element of the propaganda activity of the NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY, Chinese radio and printed materials sent to the Latin American countries.

Beijing's anti-Cuban campaign has consisted of more than mere accusations. It has also included attempts to urge the Reagan Administration to take more reckless, adventurist actions against Cuba, Nicaragua and other countries in the region.

As early as the beginning of 1979, just before China's aggressive action against Vietnam, Deng Xiaoping, who was in the United States on an official visit, insisted that the Carter Administration should "teach Cuba a lesson." Now that the international situation has been severely aggravated, Beijing has used an approving tone in its comments about the White House's threats to impose a naval blockade on the island of freedom. The Chinese leadership has resumed making dangerous statements about the "similarities" in the Caribbean and Southeast Asian situations and about "regional" or "small-scale" hegemonism. With a view to China's own experience in great-power militaristic provocations and pressure against Vietnam and other socialist countries in Indochina, Deng Xiaoping made a meaningful remark in April 1981 when he met with COPEI Chairman R. Caldera: "We must fight not only against hegemonism, but also against a common enemy--small-scale hegemonism." You have to deal with Cuba, but we also have 'our own Cuba.'"13

Therefore, Beijing's present maneuvers in its approach to the Central American and Caribbean countries, taken within the framework of its general "flexible" line, have not changed the essence of Beijing policy. They have nothing to do with Beijing's pretense of conducting a peaceful line in the interest of the developing countries and the national liberation movements. Although imperialist circles in the United States have had an opportunity to judge the actual policy of their Chinese partner by actions rather than by words, they are not at all embarrassed, as statements by their leaders testify, by Beijing's present maneuvers in the developing countries and "criticism" of Washington. Imperialism still regards the PRC as a great help in the struggle against world socialism.

No maneuvers will help the Chinese leadership conceal the pro-imperialist aims of its policy, which is contrary to the interests of the liberation movement in the Caribbean and in the international arena in general.

FOOTNOTES

1. BEIJING REVIEW, 1981, No 43, pp 11-12.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 1982, No 7, p 3.
4. Ibid., 1981, No 40, p 29.
5. Ibid., 1982, No 7, p 3.
6. Ibid., 1982, No 8, p 12.
7. Ibid., 1974, No 22, p 22.
8. Ibid., 1982, No 9, p 14.
9. CHINA ECONOMIC NEWS, Hong Kong, 9 November 1981.
10. Ibid.

11. BEIJING REVIEW, 1981, No 45, p 9.

12. GRANMA, Havana, 4 August 1981.

13. RENMIN RIBAO, Beijing, 7 April 1981.

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'CENTRAL AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY'

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 112-117

[Article by M. L. Mishina]

[Text] On 19 January 1982 Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador signed an agreement on the formation of a "Central American Democratic Community" (CADC). The creation of this organization was preceded by repeated attempts by reactionary regimes, with U.S. support, to quell the mounting wave of revolutionary action in the subregion, strengthen their own political domination and prevent the possibility of a leftist victory in El Salvador and Guatemala.

In the three decades since the founding of the Organization of Central American States (ODECA), which marked the beginning of the political, economic and military integration of countries in this region, the situation in Central America has changed considerably. The failure of reformist plans for integration and the intensification of centrifugal tendencies in ODECA and in the Central American Common Market (CACM), established in 1960, were particularly apparent at the end of the 1960's, when the armed conflict between El Salvador and Honduras broke out. The 1970's were marked by an increase of economic, political and military conflicts.

When the Sandinist National Liberation Front was fighting against Somoza's tyranny, reactionary Central American regimes attempted the coordinated suppression of the rebel movement, employing the mechanism of the Central American Defense Council (CADC), whose most active member was the Somoza dictatorship. This kind of coordinated action did not take place, largely due to ongoing conflicts between El Salvador and Honduras. When Somoza fell, the CADC was weakened considerably. Its membership actually dwindled to only El Salvador and Guatemala.

After the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution, when the revolutionary movement in El Salvador and Guatemala began to grow, dictatorial regimes tried to suppress the armed struggle by the FMLN and the Guatemalan rebels at any cost. With the support of the American Administration, they began military preparations against the Sandinist popular revolution.

To attain their own goals, the Central American counterrevolutionary forces began to use the mechanism of military political integration, just as they had during the period of armed intervention against Guatemala in 1954. Just as in 1953-1954,

when the ODECA countries held a conference without including Guatemala and entered into a conspiracy against the government of J. Arbenz by offering the use of their territory as a bridgehead for aggression, reactionary Central American regimes have been active in the White House's anti-Nicaraguan campaign since the beginning of the 1980's. In the fear that the revolutionary wave will spread throughout Central America, the dictatorships have temporarily forgotten about the conflicts in their bilateral relations. In October 1980 Washington mediated the conclusion of a Salvadoran-Honduran peace treaty and thereby established the prerequisites for a military alliance of the Guatemalan, Honduran and Salvadoran regimes.

Since the beginning of the 1980's, under the conditions of an increasingly severe socioeconomic and political crisis, ruling circles in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica have tried to stabilize the economy by enlisting the financial aid of the United States and the more developed Latin American countries and have attempted to revive the process of economic integration. In March 1980 the "San Jose declaration" was signed at a conference of Central American foreign ministers, setting the procedure of consultations and coordinated actions by the CACM countries. The provisions of this declaration were reaffirmed at a conference in August 1981 in Honduras, at which time the "Tegucigalpa declaration" was adopted. It stressed the need to maintain the unity of countries in the subregion for the resolution of serious socioeconomic problems.

Further steps were taken at the conference in San Jose in September 1981 to coordinate efforts, create a new Central American organization and begin a dialogue with the "Nassau Group" (United States, Mexico, Venezuela and Canada).. All of these conferences were attended by representatives from Nicaragua, confirming this country's willingness to participate in economic cooperation and to mediate the political settlement of the Salvadoran conflict.

In spite of the Nicaraguan Government's desire to help in solving common economic problems and its participation in the abovementioned conferences on economic integration, official declarations by representatives of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras have gradually displayed a clearer anti-Nicaraguan purpose, armed conflicts are more frequent on the Nicaraguan-Honduran border and these countries have become the scene of more vigorous activity by counterrevolutionary emigre organizations, uniting former members of Somoza's national guard and other representatives of Nicaraguan reaction.

By fall 1981 the increasingly hostile behavior of military regimes toward Nicaragua was accompanied by reports in the press about the creation of a so-called "northern triangle," consisting of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.¹ The author of the plan for the "northern" or "iron triangle" is supposed to be Guatemalan Gen A. Guevara,² an official candidate for the presidency in the March 1982 Guatemalan elections.

Soon after the 14th conference of army commanders of American states, to which Nicaraguan representatives were not invited, was held in Washington, Col J. Guillermo Garcia, the Salvadoran junta's defense minister, announced that El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras had already formed a military alliance "to fight against communism in Central America."³

The plans for the military integration of the three countries and for joint operations against the Salvadoran rebels were made with the participation of Argentine military specialists, who, according to reports in the press, numbered several dozen in Central America by the beginning of 1982. American diplomats began to realize that the Salvadoran junta could not win a victory without soldiers from some other country.⁴

When the OAS passed a resolution in December 1981 in support of the fraudulent election in El Salvador (it was co-authored by representatives of the Salvadoran junta, Costa Rica and Honduras), Central American reaction actually received the blessing of Washington and the majority of countries on the continent to continue the policy of governmental terrorism and mass repression.

The three countries which had submitted the draft resolution on El Salvador were also the founders of the CADC. The agreement on its formation was signed by the foreign ministers of El Salvador, Costa Rica and Honduras soon after Under Secretary of State J. Buckley's visit to San Jose, without any preliminary consultations or conferences on the subregional level. The extraordinary haste with which the document was signed becomes understandable after it has been read carefully and compared to statements by American officials about the situation in Central America.

After making the usual statements about "common destiny" and the need for "stronger solidarity," the preamble makes references to the resolution of the 11th OAS General Assembly of 7 December 1981, which represents, according to the text of the document, "concrete expression of the wishes" of countries in the subregion (Article V). In this way, the founders of the organization declared support for the "elections" in El Salvador to be a point of departure for the creation of the "democratic community." The founders of the CADC intended to strengthen the shaky political foundations of the Salvadoran junta in the hope of presenting N. Duarte's regime to world public opinion as "the defender of the ideals of representative democracy."

The section on "political aspects" lists the goals of the CADC, which is supposed to promote a climate of "security, stability and trust," establish "democratic values," "respect and defend human rights" and support "election processes in the countries of this region" (Articles 1-5, 7). Article 6 in this section condemns "all forms of foreign intervention." Of course, the authors of the document were not referring to the escalation of American interventionism and the unprecedented increase in U.S. military aid to El Salvador. At the same time, the Central American dictatorships criticized the Franco-Mexican declaration which recognized Salvadoran opposition organizations as a representative political force and was permeated with the desire for a political settlement of the conflict.

The actual aims of the new organization are set forth in Articles 9-11. Article 9 condemns "terrorism and subversive activity" (signifying the liberation and rebel movements), and Article 10 speaks of "mutual political solidarity," extending to situations in which "any member of the community is subjected to aggression or foreign pressure." In such cases, concerted action is envisaged in accordance with the principles and standards of the inter-American system--in other words, the use

of the 1947 "Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance." To clear up any doubts about these principles and standards, Article 11 establishes the "individual right of each country to resort to collective security measures within the framework of the appropriate treaties."

Articles 10 and 11, which actually pertain to the military-political aspects of community activity, repeat Articles 21 and 22 of the ODECA Charter of 1962 on the defense council and Article 3 of the "Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance." According to the latter, in the event of an armed invasion of one American state, each signatory is obliged to assist in the repulsion of aggression, exercising the inalienable right of individual and collective defense.⁵

In the section on "economic aspects," the founding governments of the CADC acknowledge the insufficient development of domestic markets, the presence of unemployment and low public income and the negative effect of "national, regional and international market fluctuation" on the economic growth of countries in the subregion. To overcome these difficulties, the authors of the document propose the creation of an economic community, based on the "integral and balanced" development of its members (Article 1).

Besides this, the document envisages coordinated action by governments to promote the growth of the private sector and find incentives for production and capital investments (Article 4). The treaty does not include any provisions about the organizational structure of the community and its interrelations with Central American economic integration bodies. The document does contain a list of measures, however, which will be instituted without delay by CADC members to solve economic and social problems.

These measures include the reinforcement of the financial position of CADC members (Articles 1-2) and the attainment of better access for traditional and non-traditional export products to the markets of countries with "more resources." The countries "with more resources" are mentioned in four of the six articles discussing immediate economic measures. The founders of the community are relying on their political support in the signing of a "goodwill" agreement, which is supposed to stimulate the influx of private bank capital (p 4), as well as agreement to promote foreign capital investments in the subregion. Special mention is made of the fact that these agreements will be regarded as guarantees in the event of expropriation (Article 5).

Evaluating the economic aspects of the treaty, the Mexican press summed them up in brief as "foreign investments in exchange for total and absolute control."⁶ The founders of the CADC are also counting on countries with resources to render assistance in the areas of public health, education and housing construction.

A comparison of the economic section of the treaty to the provisions of Reagan's "Caribbean initiative," which he described in detail on 24 February 1982 in the OAS, points up significant similarities: the same emphasis on private investments, the maximum promotion of these investments and the extension of preferential terms to exports from countries of this zone. Besides this, around half of the 350 million dollars promised by Reagan as direct U.S. financial aid⁷ has been earmarked for the Salvadoran junta. This is one of the main reasons for Salvadoran reaction's energetic participation in the creation of the CADC.

The treaty names the Salvadoran Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the coordinator of the regular conferences of foreign ministers stipulated in Article 1 of the "institutional aspects of the agreement." It will also be the depository for community documents. The concluding part of the treaty invites all of the Central American and Caribbean countries agreeing with the community's principles to join the CADC (Article 6). An invitation to "cooperate," as the document stresses, will also be addressed by the conference of foreign ministers to countries with "more resources" (Article 7).

The authors of the document mentioned the most acute socioeconomic problems only in passing and completely ignore the mass murders, reprisals against helpless civilians, torture and terrorism. The CADC founders' main concerns are the struggle against "subversive activity" and the acquisition of economic assistance.

Of course, the signing of this document, which was inspired largely by Washington, was interpreted in different ways in the foreign press. The number of positive reactions was negligible and it is not difficult to guess their source. State Department spokesman A. Romberg called it a "positive step" toward the "resolution of serious problems" in the subregion and expressed the hope that the Latin American countries would support it.⁸ The United States was the first country to promise the CADC assistance. A State Department memo was published at the end of January 1982, stating that the purpose of the community was to "defend and preserve democracy in Central America" and its creation reflected an approach to regional problems from the standpoint of the "guaranteed collective security" proposed by A. Haig at the 11th session of the OAS General Assembly. Resolute support for the CADC was also voiced by the American President when he addressed the OAS. The actual aims of the new organization were revealed more clearly when Guatemala joined the CADC on 27 February 1982.⁹

Most of the reports in the Latin American press on the formation of the CADC stress that it was apparently the result of pressure exerted by the Reagan Administration. Analyzing the text of the document, Costa Rican attorney A. Fernandez Silva concluded that it contained phrases and Anglo-Saxon terms that were not characteristic of the Spanish language and remarked that the "document was obviously edited by a higher authority."¹⁰

Several observers and representatives of Central American governments expressed amazement over the extremely limited group of community members, which does not include Belize, Nicaragua or Panama. Doubts about the legal power to sign the agreement of governments whose term in office would soon expire (Honduras' in January and Costa Rica's in May 1982) were expressed by former Costa Rican Foreign Minister G. Facio.

The formation of the CADC evoked a negative response from the Sandinist Government, which justifiably interpreted this as a move against the Nicaraguan revolution. In a message to the chairman of the movement for non-alignment, F. Castro, Daniel Ortega expressed worries about the creation of the CADC, which is intended primarily to isolate Nicaragua.¹¹ The patriotic revolutionary front and the second Sandinist assembly criticized the formation of the community as an action which would divide countries in the subregion and escalate crisis. A letter sent by Nicaraguan Minister of Foreign Affairs M. D'Escoto to UN Secretary General

J. Perez de Cuellar stressed that the creation of the CADC fit in with the escalation of U.S. intervention in El Salvador and the new series of military threats against Nicaragua. The letter also noted that the Reagan Administration was striving to use the mechanism of the inter-American system to justify its own interventionist policy.¹²

The creation of the CADC was criticized by the Central American anti-imperialist tribunal and representatives of the artistic intelligentsia in the Latin American countries. In reference to the new treaty, Mexico's EL FINANCIERO newspaper reported that "Sandinism is the common target of El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica."¹³

At the end of January 1982 representatives of the CADC countries met in the capital of Honduras, just in time for the inauguration of the new President Suazo Cordova. The foreign ministers of the three countries expressed the hope that the United States, Venezuela and Colombia (judging by all indications, precisely the countries with "more resources") would take part in carrying out CADC plans. The document adopted in Tegucigalpa made special mention of the fact that the United States, Venezuela and Colombia commended the joint efforts of Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica to "strengthen democracy and achieve socioeconomic progress." The declaration on solidarity could not, however, conceal existing conflicts between the members of the new association. The existence of such conflicts became apparent as soon as the agreement had been signed. By 21 January 1982 the Salvadoran-Honduran talks on trade had been broken off. As the press reported, "the good intentions of El Salvador and Honduras did not last any longer than 48 hours."¹⁴

After winning the presidential election in Costa Rica, A. Monge announced that his government would reconsider the country's position with regard to the CADC. The coordinator of the National Unification Party commission responsible for drafting the new government's foreign policy platform, F. Volio, said that the country's foreign policy would be conducted with a view to its neutral position and its reluctance to become involved in a military conflict. The discrepancy between the actual goals and purported democratic principles of the CADC was also pointed out by A. Monge, who stressed that his government would not take part in military conflicts. The new Costa Rican Government became more worried about the possibility of armed conflict in the subregion as the reactionary regimes of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras intensified their military preparations with maximum support from the Reagan Administration. The Honduran coordinating agency for solidarity with the Salvadoran people reported that the Pentagon had proposed that Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay and Paraguay create an army of 20,000 men for use against Salvadoran and Guatemalan rebels. Special counterinsurgency units are being trained with the aid of American officers in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, the number of armed incidents between Honduran troops and Nicaraguan border units is increasing and the threat of foreign military intervention for the purpose of stifling the Sandinist popular revolution is growing stronger. Furthermore, it is possible that Articles 10 and 11 of the CADC Charter might be used as the "legal grounds" for the creation of a multinational interventionist force.

The CADC has become a new link in the chain of anti-Nicaraguan actions by Washington, which is striving to subdue the revolutionary wave in Central America, reverse the course of history and prevent the victory of democratic forces in El Salvador and Guatemala.

FOOTNOTES

1. EL DIA, Mexico, 13 October 1981; 23 November 1981; 13 January 1982.
2. GRANMA, Havana, 9 March 1982.
3. EL DIA, 9 November 1981.
4. BARRICADA, Managua, 6 February 1982; THE NEW YORK TIMES, 20 February 1982.
5. "Mezhdunarodnoye pravo v izbrannykh dokumentakh" [Selected Documents of International Law], Vol 2, Moscow, 1957, pp 195-196.
6. EL FINANCIERO, Mexico, 22 January 1982.
7. According to expert estimates, the Central American countries will need 20 billion dollars to solve their most pressing economic problems.
8. EL FINANCIERO, 22 January 1982.
9. The ruling clique in Guatemala can best be characterized by a remark made by M. Sandoval Alarcon, a former candidate for the presidency, who said that he could not accept the epithet "fascist, because it is connected with some form of socialism, even if it is only the nationalist variety"--LE MONDE, Paris, 24-25 January 1982.
10. GRANMA, 26 January 1982.
11. BARRICADA, 6 February 1982.
12. GRANMA, 5 March 1982.
13. EL FINANCIERO, 22 January 1982.
14. Ibid.

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'WE WILL FIGHT AND WIN'

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 118-131

[Interview with FMLN spokesman Ruben Sanchez by correspondent in February 1982,
place of interview not specified]

[Text] In February 1982 our correspondent interviewed Ruben Sanchez, spokesman for the FMLN leadership. During the talk he discussed the main stages of the partisan struggle between January 1981 and February 1982 and described the situation in the country prior to the election in March of that year.

Question: The events in El Salvador have been discussed in detail in our magazine.* Have there been any recent developments in the struggle?

Answer: As you know, we began a nationwide offensive in January 1981. We had no other choice but an armed struggle to overthrow the existing illegal and bloody regime. We then moved from isolated local conflicts with junta forces to a struggle throughout El Salvador and to coordinated armed actions on all four of our fronts. After 14 January we ceased our active offensive efforts, and no military operations like the January ones were conducted in subsequent months. We retreated to our bases and began to strengthen our rear, conducting this part of our operations successfully.

With the intention of causing our military defeat, the enemy began to carry out a "pacification" program, aimed essentially at liquidating revolutionary forces in El Salvador and solving the national crisis by military means. The junta made thorough preparations for this. North American imperialism increased military aid to the dictatorship by millions of dollars' worth of weapons, equipment and food. In fact, the combat soldiers in El Salvador received rations from the United States, each costing a dollar, packaged in tin and containing everything necessary, including tranquilizers to keep the soldiers from getting nervous in battle.

The U.S. Government has supplied the junta's army with more and more weapons, including ones prohibited by international law. For example, the weapons used against our camps include white phosphorus bombs, napalm and toxic substances which

* See, for example, LATINSKAYA AMERIKA, 1981, No 8, pp 5-22; No 12, pp 5-20 (Editor's note).

make people nauseous, dizzy and faint. The junta is receiving a great deal of military equipment intended for the rapid transport of troops. We now have irrefutable evidence that U.S. officers have been directly involved in military actions against rebel forces.

It is no secret that a special group of American military experts was formed to lead these operations. One of their aims was the training of a special battalion of "rapid response" counterinsurgency forces with the use of the appropriate equipment and the Vietnam experience of the "Green Berets." This unit has been called the "Atlatl" battalion. Atlatl is our national hero, an Indian who fought against the Spanish colonizers who were trying to enslave the population of Cuscatlan. In a betrayal of patriotic traditions, the army upper echelon used this name to "inspire" the junta's soldiers to fight for an unjust cause. Ruling circles assumed that they could overpower us with the aid of this battalion and other forces. The number of army personnel was increased to more than 30,000 soldiers.

In addition to the armed forces, ruling circles also have the so-called territorial service, which is made up of militarized formations and provincial patrols which monitor primarily rural regions. They do not consist of professional soldiers, but of the inhabitants of certain populated points, although they are under army jurisdiction. These militarized formations consist of several thousand people. Therefore, the junta's troops actually number more than 50,000. In other words, considering the fact that El Salvador covers around 21,000 square kilometers, the enemy has two fighters for each kilometer. There is no question that this gives the enemy great opportunities for military control and, consequently, for political control as well.

After strengthening its troops, the junta began to attack our partisan bases. After the January battles, we confined our actions to the defense of each of these bases, and since our operations became much less active, the Christian Democratic junta and Reagan Administration launched a widespread campaign of allegations that the Salvadoran partisan forces had been routed. In essence, all of this propaganda was supposed to convey the impression, both within the country and in the international arena, that the Salvadoran problem was being solved successfully and that the junta had the situation completely under control. The implication was that only small groups of partisans remained and were involved in robberies, assassinations and raids, but would soon be liquidated.

The junta's "pacification" plan envisaged the defeat of our forces by July or August, so that a "postwar" period of at least 6 months could then be used to restore lost influence, after which the junta would consolidate its military-political status and hold elections by March 1982.

It was obvious that if we did not seize the initiative from the enemy, if the situation remained unchanged and if we did not take decisive steps to frustrate the junta's plans, we would encounter serious difficulties in the future. We had to move toward military actions on a higher level and find new forms of struggle. Above all, we had to coordinate our actions. This was particularly important because our bases had previously employed temporizing tactics when the enemy approached another base. As a result, the enemy had a chance to concentrate forces--2,000 or 3,000 soldiers--in one area.

Since the junta had scheduled the final defeat of our forces for July or August of last year, it was in these months that we decided to mount a campaign with both political and military aims. First of all, we had to wreck the partisan annihilation plan worked out by the dictatorship and North American imperialism. Secondly, we had to show the Salvadoran people and the entire world that our forces had not been routed and that there could be no political solution to the current crisis without the participation of the people and revolutionary democratic organizations. This is why one of the objectives we set during the July-August campaign was the seizure of the military initiative.

Prior to this, between February and July, army units had launched offensive attacks against our bases, and they were the ones who chose the time and place of the attacks. It must be said, however, that the junta's actions against our camps were unsuccessfully even under these conditions and that all of them ended in complete failure. We did not fall into the traps set by the enemy because we did not confine our actions to the purely territorial defense of our bases. In other words, we were not simply defending our territory, but were resisting regular army units and then retreating to the center of our zone. This tactic was possible because we control around one-fifth of the nation's territory and could evade enemy attacks. We have nine strategic groups of revolutionary armed forces operating throughout the country.

After the decision was made to take the military initiative away from the enemy, we began to act in two directions. First of all, we disrupted the economy. We concentrated mainly on hydroelectric power stations--the main source of energy in the country (liquid fuel is used for transport). We began to dismantle electric power lines.

Our other important aim was the disruption of communication lines to complicate movements of junta troops throughout the country. It must be said that El Salvador has good roads. It is possible to cross the entire country, from the border of Guatemala to the border of Honduras and Nicaragua, within 4 hours on the two main transport routes--the Pan-American and coast highways. The enemy was therefore able to quickly concentrate forces in any part of the state. Last July, in addition to our economic sabotage, we began sending partisan groups to the two main highways to ambush patrols. Within 10 or 15 days the mobility of army units was diminished and their transfer from the center to the east was complicated.

When we had attained this goal, we began to carry out a plan for the destruction of small operational and tactical subunits of the junta's army.

In the first days of August we decided to conduct these actions in two or three locations and chose the rural communities of Perquin in Morazan Department and San Jose Guayabal in Cabanas. The operation in Perquin came first. Several hundred enemy soldiers were stationed there, half of them army men and the rest in militarized formations. We started to fight and defeated the militarized detachments within a day. Then we continued the fight against the army subunits and, although it was more difficult, we had the situation under control in less than 2 days and the enemy troops surrendered. During the operation in San Jose Guayabal we also won a victory after destroying enemy operational-tactical subunits. This military success had important political results: It proved that we

were capable of moving to a higher level of struggle, not only to stop the enemy offensive, but also to frustrate enemy military and political plans to destroy military revolutionary organizations. Since that time the military initiative has most often been under our control.

Question: What were the political results of these operations?

Answer: The enemy suffered serious difficulties immediately after the beginning of our July-August campaign. Various political circles in the country--part of the bourgeoisie, army and so forth--realized that the junta had been lying when it said that the partisan movement was finished. This resulted in sharp conflicts within the camp of ruling forces. The internal struggle grew more intense and it was precisely after June, after the beginning of our new campaign, that conflicts in the enemy camp continued to grow and have remained unresolved. The political separation of rightwing forces supporting the regime began, accompanied by their fragmentation and their formation of various political organizations. This led to the revival of old political groups supporting the dictatorship and to the appearance of new political parties.

Question: Which organizations were these?

Answer: There are six of these parties. Two of them have been traditionally connected with the regime. These are the National Conciliation Party and Salvadoran Popular Party. The new groups include the Popular Orientation Party, headed by General Medrano, one of the Salvadoran people's chief executioners, once the head of the national guard and a CIA agent in El Salvador. The Nationalist Republican Union is headed by Major Roberto D'Aubusson, an inveterate fascist and the leader of the "death squads." Rightwing intellectuals and technocrats with fairly close connections with ruling circles formed their own party--the Democratic Action Party. It is more moderate than the others. Finally, of course, there is the Christian Democratic Party. But it has split, and only its smaller half, the right wing, is still on the side of the regime. This group is headed by Napoleon Duarte and Morales Ehrlich.

Question: What about the other Christian Democrats? Who is their leader?

Answer: Their leaders include Ruben Zamora. When the PDC split, a powerful group defending the public interest withdrew from the party. It formed the Christian Social Popular Movement (MSPC), which later joined the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FRD). Ruben Zamora, the leader of the MSPC, was one of the national leaders of the Salvadoran Christian Democrats, but after the treacherous actions of Duarte and the Christian Democratic right wing, Zamora and his followers made a break with the party and refused to be implicated in Duarte's intrigues.

Question: What was the international response to the July-August campaign? In particular, what do you think of the Franco-Mexican declaration recognizing the FMLN as a representative political force?

Answer: On the international level, our most important achievement was the mistrust expressed by the governments of many states, particularly in Western Europe, with regard to U.S. foreign policy and the Reagan Administration's line in

relations with El Salvador. After all, he promised his allies that the Salvadoran problem would be solved quickly. It turned out, however, that he could not solve it, and we emerged from the July-August campaign with even more power, having seized the initiative from the forces of the military Christian Democratic junta. All of this created a situation in the international community which was fundamentally different from the previous one and was more beneficial in many ways for the Salvadoran revolution.

It was at this time that the Franco-Mexican declaration was adopted. In the international arena it represents a position contrary to the one adhered to by the Reagan Administration. The line of North American imperialism and the Christian Democrats' military junta has essentially consisted in allegations that the events in El Salvador have been caused by Cuba and the USSR. They never tire of repeating that El Salvador has a military-civilian government supported by people who want to revive democracy and freedom in the country, and that it is supposedly being opposed by small subversive groups, which follow the instructions of "international communism" and want to overthrow the government.

The Franco-Mexican declaration clearly testifies that there has been no Soviet-Cuban intervention in Salvadoran affairs. Although the declaration does not state this directly, it does note that the problems facing the country stem from the failure to satisfy the elementary economic, political and social needs and interests of the people. Furthermore, conditions have recently grown worse and terrorism and repression have become more pronounced.

The Franco-Mexican declaration was followed by other expressions of widespread solidarity with our struggle. For example, the conference of the interparliamentary union, held last fall in Havana, passed a resolution in support of the Franco-Mexican declaration and rejected the position occupied by North American imperialism with regard to El Salvador.

The campaign of solidarity with our people underwent a radical change in content within a year: Whereas it previously consisted in demonstrations in defense of human rights in El Salvador, now it is aimed at promoting the political settlement of the conflict with a view to the economic and political needs of the population and with the participation of revolutionary democratic forces in the settlement. Solidarity with our struggle unites the most diverse political, religious, social and cultural groups. In some countries, especially the United States, this campaign has acquired massive dimensions: More than 200 solidarity committees are now operating in the United States, collecting contributions and informing the public of our struggle. Although the Reagan Administration has taken every opportunity to prevent expressions of the will of our people, it has failed. Furthermore, the President's Salvadoran policy is now being opposed even in U.S. Government bodies, such as the Congress, where criticism of the President and appeals for the reduction of military aid to the junta are now heard more frequently.

The solidarity campaign is also of a massive nature in Europe and Latin America. Permanent official FMLN and FRD missions have been opened in many states. We decided to open these missions for political-diplomatic work and for struggle on the international level in support of the Salvadoran revolution. Political

relations have already been established with 30 countries in Europe and Latin America. The revolution in El Salvador has won international recognition at many international forums. One of them is of worldwide significance: On 16 December 1981 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in support of the FMLN and FRD proposals regarding the political settlement of the Salvadoran problem and a peaceful solution to the crisis which would put an end to war. A Latin American event which testified to the wishes of our peoples and not those of governments obedient to North American imperialism took place in January 1982 when a conference "for peace, human rights and the self-determination of the Salvadoran people" was held in Lima. It passed a resolution on the need to give the FMLN and FRD all-round international support by pressuring the Reagan Administration and the Christian Democratic military junta to resolve the Salvadoran conflict according to the terms set by the international community.

Question: What were the FMLN and FRD proposals for the regulation of Salvadoran affairs?

Answer: We want to stop the war, which has already caused colossal destruction and material losses and has taken the lives of many innocent people--35,000 people have fallen victim to it. The FMLN and FRD have persistently sought a political solution to the conflict. We believe that it should be decided by the fighting sides--that is, by revolutionary democratic forces and the Christian Democratic military junta. The cessation of war must be the main topic of the negotiations. We have repeatedly announced that we have already worked out basic proposals and will submit them during the negotiating process.

We know that the U.S. Administration bears much of the responsibility for what is happening now, and we have therefore sent an open letter to President Reagan, expressing our wish for negotiations and our hope that the U.S. President will demonstrate his goodwill in this matter concerning the just resolution of the Salvadoran conflict, will refrain from military intervention and will support our proposals.

Question: Where there any military developments after the events of summer 1981?

Answer: After the July-August campaign we took the military initiative away from the enemy and have held on to it since that time. Last fall and winter we conducted more than 1,000 military operations, an average of 6 a day. The enemy lost around 2,200 people and more than 100 pieces of military equipment.

The most significant operations of that time included the explosion which blew up the bridge over the River Lempa. This action demonstrated the increased combat capabilities of our forces, the FMLN's higher level of combat coordination and the weakness of the junta. The strategic significance of the bridge stemmed from the fact that it was part of the Pan-American Highway connecting El Salvador with Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The bridge was extremely important in junta troop movements. When the bridge was blown up, the government suffered a severe political blow as well as a military injury. The action was conducted on the night of 14 October, just when ruling circles were preparing to celebrate the second anniversary of their assumption of power. Various undertakings were planned and were supposed to prove that the junta had the situation in the country

under control and enjoyed the full support of the people. Just a few hours prior to the official ceremonies, the bridge was blown up, in spite of the fact that it was heavily guarded. We created a diversion, starting a fight with the guards, while our field engineers approached the bridge from the river, put a powerful charge in place and blew up the bridge. The junta was so ashamed that it tried to denigrate the importance of this action by resorting to lies and saying that 600 Cuban took part in the operation.

One of our most successful operations was conducted at the end of January against the enemy's main air force base in Ilopango. A special FMLN team destroyed up to 30 military planes and helicopters and a runway.

Our seizure of the initiative was made possible primarily by the better coordination of our actions. I have already said that in the past, when junta troops attacked one of our bases, the others did not participate in combat operations. Now, on the other hand, when one of our camps is attacked, armed actions against enemy forces are immediately launched from bases located in other parts of the country. We have accumulated a great deal of experience and have started to strike powerful blows. On 7 December, for example, junta troops launched an offensive against our base in Morazan to destroy RADIO VENCEREMOS, which was broadcasting from this department, and to "purge" the zone of our supporters. They sent a large force there: more than 4,000 men, planes, helicopters and heavy artillery. The battle went on for around 10 days. When the enemy began the operation in Morazan, partisans from other bases engaged in combat: Our units attacked army subunits in the zone closest to the base--the departments of Usulután, San Miguel and La Unión. The battles took on greater dimensions and we struck, so to speak, the enemy's rear. The enemy felt weak and had to retreat, breaking up the encirclement. Because they were unable to destroy our base, junta troops took revenge against the civilian population of the department: Around a thousand people were killed; men, women, children and old people were killed, all indiscriminately. Employing terrorist tactics and the techniques the "Green Berets" used in Vietnam, they tried to force the population to stop supporting us.

Question: What can you say about the election planned for March of this year?

Answer: The March election is a political maneuver, a trick intended to deceive international public opinion. I have already said that the political forces supporting the regime have disintegrated.

The reactionary circles ruling El Salvador are incapable, even with U.S. support, of winning a political victory, and this is why they believe that the only way to stifle the revolution is to broaden the scales of military actions and continue the war. They want to hold an election so that they can use the results, obtained in an atmosphere of terror and intimidation, later to justify the intervention they are planning now.

The same purpose, according to our enemies' plans, will be served by the hackneyed statements about Soviet, Cuban and Nicaraguan intervention in Salvadoran affairs. Statements made in Washington indicate that, in order to preserve its dominion in Central America, the United States not only intends to stifle the Salvadoran

revolution at any cost (this is only its immediate objective), but will also try, after "pacifying" our country, to destroy revolutionary forces in Guatemala and other Central American countries, organize a counterrevolution in Nicaragua and take aggressive actions against Cuba. In other words, it wants to consolidate the rightwing pro-oligarchic and military forces loyal to imperialism. This is its strategic plan, and the March election in El Salvador is only one part of it.

The whole world knows that there are no real opportunities in our country for the free expression of the people's will. The basic rights and civil freedoms of speech, organization, demonstration and assembly have not been observed for 2 years; the state of martial law, instituted more than a year ago, has allowed reactionary forces to commit butchery, kidnappings and the murder of many innocent people in the streets with complete impunity. Terror has become commonplace in El Salvador. It is obvious that, under these conditions, only the fear of death will make people vote, and the free expression of the will of the masses is unthinkable in this kind of atmosphere.

We have declared our willingness to settle the conflict by means of negotiations. If the dictatorship and U.S. imperialism continue their terror and violence and expand the scales of military actions, however, we will not put down our arms and will fight against the existing illegal and bloody government before, during and after the election. And if the United States organizes intervention, we will fight the intervention troops to the death and, with the backing of international solidarity, expressed in all of its forms by the most diverse political, religious, social and cultural organizations, we will eventually win.

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SALVADORAN COMMUNISTS AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 120-129

[Article by G. A. Rzheshhevskiy]

[Text] The Communist Party of El Salvador was founded in the beginning of 1930, at the height of the worldwide economic crisis. At that time, according to the Communists, "El Salvador was drawn into the whirlpool of a revolutionary situation focusing attention on the issue of authority." Under these conditions, the Communist Party "was able to perform the most important function of any revolutionary organization: to head and lead the popular masses in an armed struggle for power."¹ This was the massive peasant uprising of 1932, the first large Communist-headed armed demonstration in Latin America. Its bloody suppression and the annihilation of the majority of party cadres debilitated the party and the entire popular movement for a long time.

Since the 1940's the party has been reviving gradually and the democratic and revolutionary movement has been gaining strength. In 1961, at the time of the powerful upsurge in the popular movement in response to the victory of the Cuban revolution, Communists decided to prepare for a struggle to divest the oligarchy of its power. They encountered several obstacles, however.

Although the accelerated industrialization of the country in connection with the creation of the Central American Common Market (CACM) in the beginning of the 1960's took a distorted, dependent form, it temporarily strengthened the position of the regime. The electoral reform instituted at that time by the ruling elite fostered reformist illusions in some segments of the popular masses. Although the Communists realized that elections would not solve the problem of authority in El Salvador, they nevertheless believed that the people should learn this from their own experience. In the second half of the 1960's the Communist Party began to take an active part in election campaigns, regarding them as a major means of mass mobilization.

Changes in policy, however, heightened centrifugal tendencies in the party. Several activists left the party in the beginning of 1970 and formed a new military-political organization--the Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces. Three other leftist revolutionary organizations were founded in subsequent years and also chose the course of armed struggle.

The Communist Party of El Salvador concentrated on the creation and consolidation of a united front of democratic forces and on its participation in election campaigns. Recognizing the need for the armed conquest of authority in principle, the Communist Party believed that armed struggle was not an effective means of training the masses during the pre-revolutionary period in El Salvador (due to high population density, the prevalence of small cities and the absence of forests). It was precisely on this matter--and on the matter of elections--that the Communists disagreed most with other leftist forces.

As Communist Party documents point out, the party line as a whole produced important political results in 1971-1977. The main ones were the mobilization of the masses, the isolation of the regime and the decisive weakening of the official party, as well as the creation of an alliance of revolutionary and leftist reformist forces. After uniting in a broad voting bloc, the National Opposition Union, on the basis of a democratic program, these forces were victorious in the presidential elections of 1972 and 1977. Each time, however, ruling circles repealed their results and declared their own candidate the winner.

In February 1977 the Communist Party summed up the results of a decade of struggle and arrived at two important conclusions. The first was that election campaign opportunities had been utilized thoroughly in a variety of ways in El Salvador; nevertheless, elections, including those won by democratic forces, did not bring them any closer to authority. The second conclusion was that the popular masses had learned from their own experience that peaceful struggle is not a promising way of bringing about radical changes unless the nature of the regime is also changed.²

By this time, the Communist Party was no longer the only leader of the revolutionary movement. The influence of leftist radical military-political organizations had grown dramatically. Nevertheless, the rise of the mass movement was still only in its initial stage. In April 1977 the Communist Party leadership assessed the new situation and resolved to promote an armed struggle against the regime. This resolution, however, was not implemented immediately.

In April 1979, at the seventh congress, which became a turning point for the party, the Communists of El Salvador not only acknowledged their errors but also analyzed their fundamental causes. They were able to find the complex objective processes lying behind what seemed to be tactical errors. They noted that although the Communist Party had long been recognized as the vanguard of revolutionary forces and had declared its willingness to take part in all forms of struggle, at the decisive moment--that is, at the moment when the revolution was imminent--the party was unprepared to wage effective political struggle in its highest forms. For this reason, it temporarily ceded the initiative to other leftist organizations, whose armed struggle against the regime was more in line with the requirements of that time.

This created a situation in which the actual role of the Communist Party in the development of the revolutionary process was inconsistent with its historic mission as the vanguard of the working class and the leader of the social and anti-imperialist revolution. Deep-seated internal causes lay at the basis of this inconsistency, affecting all of the main spheres of party activity: theoretical, political and organizational. On the level of theory, certain defects were revealed

in the approach to three major issues: the nature of revolution, authority and the means of revolution.

The Salvadoran Communists had traditionally divided the revolutionary process into two stages. The first of these, determining the nature of party activity, was interpreted as antioligarchic and anti-imperialist (and prior to the 1960's, anti-feudal), and imperialism was regarded primarily as an external adversary. The second and final stage of the revolutionary process was described as socialist. The assumption of the democratic (anti-imperialist) nature of the first stage of revolution led to the conclusion that real authority should pass into the hands of a broad (democratic and anti-imperialist) front of sociopolitical forces (from the working class to the "national" or "patriotic" bourgeoisie) supporting differing methods of future social development.

The decision made on the issue of authority and allies actually determined the choice of revolutionary means--election victories rather than armed struggle envisaging the destruction of the military repressive system. On the one hand, the bourgeoisie was hardly likely to take part in any other type of process; on the other, its active role in the democratic revolution seemed to afford the possibility of peaceful development (giving certain guarantees to the United States, its "own" army, etc.). In one way or another, the issue of revolutionary authority was not given the necessary attention by the Communist Party, and this, in the opinion of party leaders, was the chief, deciding flaw in its activity.

In the political sphere this was reflected primarily in the choice of allies. The Communist Party had always tried to conduct a flexible policy of broad alliances with democratic, leftist-centrist and centrist forces. Coalitions of this kind, however, did not pave the way for the overthrow of undemocratic regimes under the conditions established in this part of the continent after the victory of the revolution in Cuba. For a number of reasons, unity with allies on the left was not possible for a long time, and what is more, as Communists have pointed out, this was not always due to reluctance on the part of leftist radical organizations. The Communist Party's oversimplified approach to the issue of leftist unity also played a part.

The Salvadoran Communists have noted the connection between their theoretical and political errors and the party organization's structural weaknesses. They have conducted a discerning analysis of party cadres, organization and the traditions that inhibited the quick implementation of the decision to launch an armed struggle. "When the time came to use other forms of struggle (other than mass work, agitation, propaganda, the conclusion of broad alliances, etc.--G. R.), the party turned out to be unprepared for this."³

Another reason was the incorrect interpretation of the thesis regarding the need to be prepared for any form of struggle. It was used to justify the actual refusal to employ other than peaceful means (the need for some degree of preparedness for armed struggle in the event that absolutely no opportunities would be afforded for other methods was recognized).

According to the Communist Party, these were the main negative factors contributing to deviations from the line of winning authority under the conditions of a revolutionary crisis. Their momentum predetermined a delay in the transition to armed

struggle and, consequently, led to the Communist Party's temporary loss of its role as the actual vanguard of revolution.

The Salvadoran Communists planned subsequent activity, including the elaboration of several new theoretical premises (late 1978 and early 1979), followed by a move "from new words to new deeds" (spring-summer 1979).

The documents of the seventh congress pointed out the maturity of Latin American dependent capitalism, which has been developing for a century as the dominant form of production and has superseded, although not completely, all other forms. The party also concluded that the Salvadoran revolution was basically socialist in character. The level of mass awareness, however, dictates the unavailability of a democratic stage of revolution, during the course of which the mobilization of the people and their struggle are accompanied by democratic and anti-imperialist slogans. The documents also stress, however, that the democratic program cannot be carried out without a revolutionary struggle for authority; neither the moderate character of the program nor the breadth of the democratic front will prevent repressive action and armed terror on the part of the powers that be. Only revolutionary violence that destroys the military repressive system can break through this resistance. This can only be accomplished by consistently revolutionary forces, and the overthrow of the dictatorship should signify the transfer of authority to these forces.

Therefore, the problem of winning authority and then defending it was recognized as the main revolutionary issue. The congress resolved to "organically combine economic, ideological and political struggle on the condition that political struggle be given priority."

In the matter of revolutionary means, the party distinguishes between the stage of maturation--prior to the creation of the overtly revolutionary situation--and the "course of revolution" proper. During the first stage various forms of struggle can be employed--both armed and unarmed means. The "course of revolution," on the other hand, is described as the following: "Considering the forms of dominion employed by the oligarchy and imperialism in our country, and considering the nature of the state, which has been a rightwing authoritarian military dictatorship for almost half a century, has always responded to labor demonstrations with bloody repression and has ultimately closed off all channels for elections and other types of democratic struggle in any form, our party believes that the most probable course of revolution in our country will be the conquest of authority by means of an armed struggle by the proletariat and its allies."⁴

The involvement of the Communist Party in the armed struggle, which was already being waged by three military-political organizations by summer 1979, happened quickly but according to plan. "Not a military commission, but a military party"--this was the essence of the Salvadoran Communists' new outlook. All party members began to undergo different forms of military training. Within a year the armed liberation forces (this is what the Communists' military organization is called now) had taken their place among other revolutionary organizations. In spite of its delay in joining the armed struggle, the Communist Party was actively involved in combat operations even before the beginning of the crucial stage of the revolutionary war in El Salvador in 1980.

In brief and according to the Communists' own analysis, this is how the Communist Party of El Salvador has responded to the complex and changing conditions of its country by adapting its policy line with a view to specific developments in this country.

FOOTNOTES

1. FUNDAMENTOS Y PERSPECTIVAS, San Salvador, 1982, No 4, pp 10, 11.
2. "VII Congreso. Informe del Comité Central. Partido Comunista de El Salvador, primera parte," S.l., s.a.
3. "Intervención de Shafik Jorge Handal, Secretario General del Partido Comunista de El Salvador ante los representantes de los Partidos Comunistas de Centro-america en la reunión internacional de este area en octubre de 1980," S.l., 1980, pp 47, 46.
4. "VII Congreso. Fundamentos y tesis. Partido Comunista de El Salvador, segunda parte," S.l., s.a., pp 42-43.

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UNDER THE SANDINIST BANNER

Moscow LATINSKAYA AMERIKA in Russian No 7, Jul 82 (signed to press 15 Jun 82)
pp 153-156

[Review by E. S. Dabagyan of book "Bajo la bandera del sandinismo (Textos politicos)" by Carlos Fonseca, Managua, Editorial Nueva Nicaragua, 1981, 376 pages]

[Text] The book being reviewed is a collection of works by one of the founders of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN), Nicaraguan national hero Carlos Fonseca, about whom FSLN leader Luis Carrion said: "He studied the experience and example of Sandino, combined them with revolutionary theory and scientific doctrine and showed the entire Nicaraguan population the road leading to victory."*

The works included in the anthology were written between 1958 and 1976 (the last is dated 8 October 1976, a month before C. Fonseca died in battle). The chronological order of the works shows the evolution of the author's views under the influence of his own experience in struggle and as a result of his theoretical understanding and creative application of the experience of the world revolutionary movement. An index gives the chronology of the major stages of Fonseca's life and work and the most important sociopolitical events of those years.

The anthology was compiled and published by the Institute for the Study of Sandinism. Its publication was timed to coincide with the second anniversary of the revolutionary victory and the 20th anniversary of the FSLN. In a foreword, coordinator Umberto Ortega of the FSLN History Council stresses that the works in this book, some of which are being published for the first time, represent only part of Fonseca's artistic and journalistic heritage, and it will take much more work to find and publish as yet unknown papers (pp 7-8).

The works and activity of Carlos Fonseca demonstrate the links connecting different generations of Nicaraguan revolutionaries. His works about A. C. Sandino are distinguished by historical accuracy and strictly documented scientific analysis combined with political zeal and a belief in the cause for which he fought. In an article entitled "Nicaragua Zero Hour," Fonseca presents a brilliant and dialectically accurate description of the national liberation movement, based on an analysis of the specific realities of the 1920's and 1930's. "The Sandinist resistance,

* "Habla la direccion de la vanguardia," Managua, 1981, p 176.

which evolved into the heroic vanguard of the people," he wrote, "consisted almost totally of peasants, and this was the main reason for the glory and tragedy...of the revolutionary movement" (p 181). A strict scientific analysis naturally leads Fonseca to the conclusion that the Sandinist movement of the 1920's and 1930's was historically doomed. This, however, as the author repeatedly points out, does not detract in any way from the glory of the people who fought for the honor and dignity of their motherland in those bygone years.

The book testifies that Fonseca embarked on the path of struggle early in life. His entire short life (1936-1976) was devoted to revolution, and it is therefore completely understandable that his works focus primarily on questions of revolutionary strategy and tactics.

From a thorough and comprehensive study of sociopolitical conditions and the balance of class and political forces, Fonseca concludes that all of the objective and part of the subjective prerequisites for the revolutionary movement were present in Nicaragua by the mid-1950's. Sociopolitical circumstances dictated the creation of a revolutionary vanguard to channel the struggle of the popular masses in the right direction. Fonseca thoroughly substantiates the masses' vital need for a political organization expressing their class interests. All of the parties of that time were unable for various reasons to perform this function. Furthermore, many of them essentially extinguished popular initiative. "National experience proves that the revolutionary movement must have its own organization, its own tactics and its own program" (p 143).

The Sandinist National Liberation Front, which was organized in 1961 with the most direct participation by C. Fonseca, became a genuine popular vanguard. The very name of the new revolutionary organization suggested the link between generations and loyalty to Sandino's ideals, which Fonseca always defended in his own works.

Fonseca stressed that the FSLN "conducts parallel operations of a political and a military nature" and is therefore a military-political organization (p 191). The example of the Sandinist movement of the 1920's and 1930's, Fonseca wrote, substantiated the need to create this kind of organization and proved that the ability to turn military victories into political ones is essential. If this fact is ignored, he stressed, defeat will be unavoidable (p 331). The Nicaraguan experience, the author went on to say, confirms the illusory nature of the hope of destroying the dictatorial regime only by political means.

In reference to the nature of the FSLN, Fonseca wrote in his work "A Message to the Nicaraguan People" that the front is the "vanguard of the particular population strata that identify themselves with the working class and are guided by the philosophy of scientific socialism" (pp 198-199).

An analysis of the works included in this book definitely indicates that Fonseca and his comrades-in-arms were distinguished by a clear understanding of the purpose and goals of struggle. "The revolutionary movement has a double purpose. On the one hand, it must defeat the criminal and treacherous high-level bureaucrats who have usurped power for many years, and on the other, it must keep capitalist opposition forces obedient to American imperialism...from gaining power" (p 192).

The creation of the front raised the issue of forms and methods of struggle. The main idea expressed by Fonseca in this connection is the following. The revolutionary vanguard does not invent forms of struggle. Its duty consists in generalizing the experience of the popular masses and sensing their mood and their willingness for specific actions. In line with this, the Sandinists concluded that armed struggle in urban and rural regions would be the accelerator of the revolutionary process in Nicaragua. (p 187).

Although he supported partisan warfare as the main form of revolutionary struggle under present conditions, Fonseca did not, in contrast to some "guerrilla" ideologists, contrast rural communities to cities. On the contrary, he stressed the importance and value of revolutionary activity in the cities--the centers of concentration of the working class, student youth, craftsmen and other social groups with their own role to play in the revolution. In 1960, not long before the founding of the FSLN, he analyzed the activities of the internal resistance front and noted that urban struggle could take on the characteristics of a general political strike, and this would certainly contribute to the victory of the revolution (p 95). Fonseca constantly mentions the need for the flexible combination of various forms and methods of struggle and the ability to change them quickly.

The main condition and prerequisite for the success of the revolutionary movement is the broad participation of the popular masses in this movement, Fonseca wrote. "Within the framework of our strategy, popular masses without weapons are destined to fail, just as weapons without masses are destined to fail. The road to victory lies through the parallel reinforcement of mass struggle and armed struggle" (p 147).

Fonseca's comments about the driving forces of the Nicaraguan revolution are quite interesting. The key to an understanding of this matter can be found, in his opinion, in the well-known statement by Sandino: "Only workers and peasants will fight to the end, and only their organized strength will win a victory" (p 274). Sandino understood this intuitively, because, as the abovementioned L. Carrion points out, he could not have read it in a book.*

Fonseca realized that the industrial proletariat in Nicaragua, due to the socio-historical peculiarities of national development, was still too young, too poorly organized in the occupational sense and insufficiently involved in political struggle as a result of inadequate work by the forces that should have promoted the growth of its class and political awareness. Under these conditions, Fonseca said, a vanguard has to involve the working class in revolutionary struggle and prepare it to perform its historic mission. Students have an important role to play in this process. "Revolutionary students, students with a proletarian consciousness, must establish strong ties with the working class and peasantry," he wrote (p 137).

Fonseca repeatedly noted that questions of unity (the vanguard, the main driving forces of the revolution and all patriotic forces) acquire particular significance during the course of the revolutionary struggle. "One matter which deserves special emphasis is that unity is extremely important for the success of an uprising" (p 100). The policy of broad social alliances was one of the distinctive features of the Sandinist revolutionary strategy. In his works, Fonseca constantly

* Ibid., pp 175-176.

raised the question of enlisting the help of all truly patriotic forces, including the bourgeois opposition, in the revolutionary struggle.

The desire to study the experience of people struggling in other countries is an essential characteristic of the true revolutionary, Fonseca said. "To win a revolutionary victory," he wrote in 1968, "the popular struggle in Nicaragua must consider the experience of today's liberation movement. It is particularly productive with regard to the leading role that the proletariat will have to assume as the struggle develops" (p 145). Fonseca invariably referred to the experience of Russia, Cuba, Vietnam, China, Guatemala, Portugal, Peru, Chile, Panama and many other countries in his works. He was resolutely against the superficial vulgarization of international experience, against its dilution, unthinking emulation and mechanical application to other specific situations. "The Sandinist front," he wrote in one of his last works in 1975, "has always tried to find its own style of guiding the masses in the struggle for revolutionary changes. It is important not to simply recite the remarks of great revolutionaries, but to implement their teachings creatively" (p 302).

A prominent place in the anthology is occupied by "A Nicaraguan in Moscow," a work written and published immediately upon Fonseca's return from the Soviet Union, where he attended the World Youth and Student Festival in 1957. This work is permeated by great affection and love for the Nation of Soviets, which was the first to begin building a new society.

In conclusion, we would like to stress our belief that the book should be translated into Russian. This would give broad segments of the Soviet reading public a chance to learn about the political creativity and activity of a renowned Nicaraguan revolutionary.

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