

# imperialism: also a policy of the soviet union

IMPERIALISM: POLICY OF EXTENDING THE RULE OR AUTHORITY OF NATION OVER FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND OF ACQUIRING AND HOLDING DEPENDENCIES AND COLONIES FOR POLITICAL CONTROL AND RESOURCE USURPATION

(The following offers some commentary made by Martin Nicolaus, a spokesperson for the international line of the October League and contradictions that can be raised about that line.)

In the immediate past, the US has been given all credit for threatening the freedom and independence of foreign nationalists through imperialist aggression, and rightly so. With the defeat in Vietnam though, the US now represents a "mass murderer on his deathbed,"--the only allowances remaining are those for a continued decline. As the world power structure of the Soviet Union increases, that nation continues to act out its part in the historical scenario of struggle among imperialist entities around the ever-present threat of World War. The Soviet situation is analogous to that of Nazi Germany. Just as Germany was devoid of colonies, possessions and dependences after WWI, the USSR has remained the imperialist underdog due to the fact that the third world had already been "divided up" by the

West when the Soviets began their rise in foreign "influence". Moscow initiated its quest for world domination in a weak movement--one of appeasement toward those in control--but has increased its economic and military leverage sufficiently to counter obstacles in its path. The USSR now has the most to gain and can afford to risk global conflict; despite peace talks, military budgets still go up.

The Angolan civil war provides a prime example of recent Soviet intervention driven by imperialist motives. The liberation movement against Portugal began during the late 50's with the formation of three resistance fronts; the FNLA in northern Angola, the MPLA in the central belt and UNITA in the south. The three organizations did not form a united resistance because of political differences, but for cultural-geographical ones. All were recognized by the OAU (Organization for African Unity), all recognized each other as legitimate and all had the support of the people in their respective regions. As independence from Portugal approached, the three liberation fronts consolidated and formed a coalition government. After formally cutting off aid to Angolan liberation movements, the USSR suddenly funneled vast quantities of munitions never before seen in that part of the world, 1000 "advisors" and 10,000 Cuban troops into the MPLA.

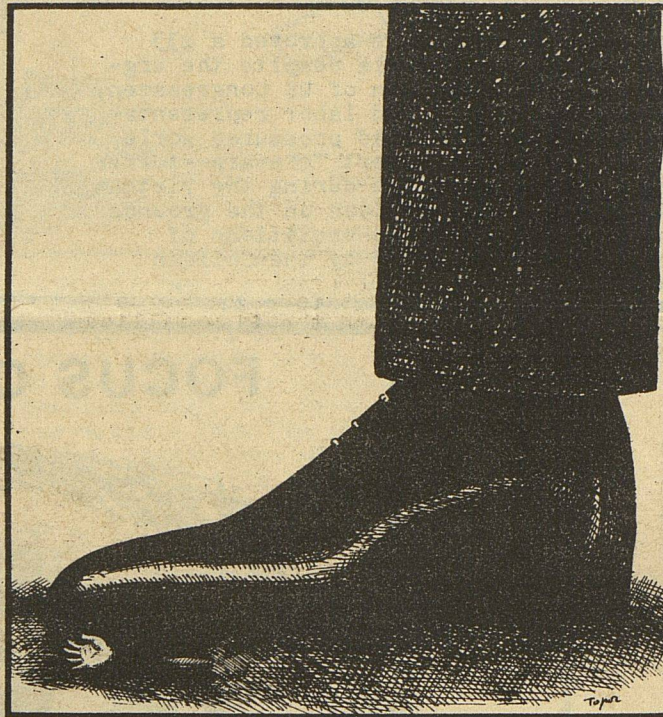
Just as Korean and Phillipino forces were used as a "tool" of the US in Vietnam, the same is true for the Cubans in Angola with dependency on the Soviets--(A \$5 billion foreign debt)--a classic example of dependencies being used to meet the ends of a supporting imperialist super-power.

Even though the civil war ended with a military victory for the MPLA and recognition by the OAU as the "de facto" government, internal conflicts generated by outside intervention have not been solved and guerilla warfare can be expected to continue. Unfortunately the civil war left Angola with more scars than all of the years of struggle against Portugal produced as well as a crippling foreign debt to the Soviets which the newly independent nation will have to deal with for decades

to come. It is interesting to note that the Peoples Republic of China exhibited the most prudent policy by supporting all three liberation fronts until the civil war broke out.

The reason given was the supposed threat from South Africa, but this seems an impossibility when one looks at the potential resistance of the three united fronts. This led directly contributed to a "material" imbalance among the fronts and the strife of an unnecessary civil war.

Other events have shown Soviet intentions equally as well. The invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was necessary to enforce Moscow's policy of "limited sovrenity" (that is, national individualism must be checked when it threatens the interests of the "whole", but actually the interests of the Soviets.) for nations in the socialist sphere and to discourage any more dissent within the eastern bloc. The PRC is continually pressed and tested in border conflicts. Egypt, left with a sizeable foreign debt after the wars with Israel, and now trying to rebuild and solve domestic problems, has been hounded for pay-



ment after the Soviets lost influence there. An even more tragic situation involves famine-ridden India, who compiled an intolerable dependency on the USSR for its support in the Bangladesh war, not to mention the Bangladesh themselves. On the economic scene, the Soviets have instituted "joint-ownership" programs, as in Mongolian mining interests, for example. Like US oil companies, raw materials are extracted and used for benefit elsewhere without due compensation, under the guise of industrial improvements.

While making valid observations, as above, the October League is adamant about certain international and historical viewpoints, which seem as contradictory and self-defeating as their inability to accept criticism of the nuclear family and refusal to recognize

gay oppression as a major issue in revolutionary change. A policy that suggests that one should support Third World governments, i.e. the Shah of Iran, when they oppose the superpowers (no matter how corrupt and repressive a Third World government is, it exists on a "higher moral plane" than any of the superpowers) might tend to overshadow the oppression of the peasant and working classes and compromise their resistance movements. When the Shah argues with the U.S. concerns over oil prices, it can be termed a "disagreement among friends" (over greed for more profits) and gold reserves are simply moved from one holding of the "few" to another. Oppressed peoples seldom receive benefit from these transactions, and when more revenues are gained they are used to reinforce and tighten the hold on those peoples through military build-ups, making revolutionary struggle even more difficult. One has a much better chance of overthrowing a poor regime (Selassie's Ethiopia) than a moneyed one (Saudi Arabia or Iran). Isolated in their resistance, the oppressed Third Worlders must be given direct support, so they gain control of the resources that are depleted by the dependent regimes for use by the "promoters".

Also, the notion that Soviet imperialism came with the "revisionism" of Khrushchev is a denial that the seeds were planted by Stalin, who is held in great esteem and rarely criticized by those (i.e. the October League) who follow his administrative policies as a correct line in the extended application of Marxist theory and Leninist practice. Stalin provided most of the outside aid during the Spanish Civil War (1936-9) for the Popular Front to oppose Franco's fascist backlash. The assistance was distributed by the Moscow controlled Communist Party (a minority in the Popular Front coalition) who unfortunately used its position as a material power broker to systematically deny arms and supplies to others fighting Franco, such as independent trade unions, syndicates, anarchist collectives, and Basque nationalists. This quest for political control contributed to internal division within the Popular Front (leaving the attempt to defeat fascism a secondary issue) and eventual victory for Franco. Stalin's measures proved counter-productive and support was withdrawn at a crucial moment, allowing the fascists to close the door on a return of basic freedoms in Spain. In the years that followed, during World War II, Stalin bargained with Churchill and Roosevelt at the Yalta Conference when the superpowers finalized the division of the

post-war world, where the Soviets occupied Eastern Europe as planned. Why did Stalin remain neutral to Japan until the last few days of the war, except to take possession of the Sakhalin and Kuril Islands north of the defeated Japanese mainland?

We must stay aware of the pressure from U.S. imperialism, while becoming more informed about the threat from the USSR. The two superpowers will continue to wrestle for control by reinforcing old dependencies and creating new ones, but hopefully we will be able to find the "black rose" in our lifetime.

*A. Snyder*

## URGENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be an important meeting of the UNION OF GRADUATE STUDENT WORKERS, Thursday, at 8:00 PM in Jester 215. Discussion and action will take place on the constitution, platform, and dues structure of the union. All graduate students are encouraged to attend.

LESBIAN MOTHERS and Gay People interested in childcare; there is a gay child-care co-op. We provide both regular and emergency childcare, & can give some

financial help with custody cases. Call Lesbian Mothers Support Group at Womenspace. 472-3053 7-10 PM Mon-Fri

The PEOPLE'S FREE CLINIC, Inc., the folks who brought you the People's Community Clinic, will be electing 4 new board members on Sunday, February 29. Two directors will be elected to represent the volunteers who work at the clinic, and two will represent the

community the clinic serves. Directors will be elected to one year terms. The clinic board meets monthly, and establishes policy for the clinic. The board is a working board and members are expected to participate in clinic activities. Orientation and in-service training are available for board members.

Interested persons may apply by attending the election meeting, or by letter to the board.

The meeting will be at 7:30 PM at the clinic.