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Editorial, May 29, 1967.

*"Granma", official organ of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of Cuba*

OUR POSITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

THE present Middle East crisis —the most serious since the 1956 aggression against the United Arab Republic— is today one of the critical points in the international tensions brought on by the aggressive strategy of United States imperialism. The eyes of the entire world turn with growing concern toward the situation created there, which poses a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab peoples of the Middle East. Moreover, this is a dangerous situation conducive to open war which could well constitute a threat to other peoples or, deliberately, sidetrack attention from imperialist aggression afoot in other parts of the world.

This latest chapter in the drama unfolding in that strategic part of the world derives, as always, from the sinister maneuvers of the imperialists, bent on full exploitation of the riches of the Arab nations —especially exploitation of oil reserves. And it derives from the imperialists' periodic attempts to destroy the Arab peoples' freedom, illustrated in recent months by their efforts to bring down the progressive government which now leads the people of Syria. The history of the Middle East has revolved around the boundless ambitions of the powerful

international monopolies and their lack of respect for the most elementary rights of the countries which have fallen victim to their exploitation. The peoples of that area have been forced to live in misery and in a constant atmosphere of violent tension.

The Middle East as a whole has been continually overshadowed by a policy of pressure and intervention by imperialism —and United States imperialism in particular, during recent decades. Main points of this policy have been the maintenance of reactionary regimes in power, using them to crush the Arab peoples' aspirations for freedom; a continuous conspiracy to besiege and attempt to overthrow the progressive and popular governments that have arisen in the Middle East; and the use of Israel as a convenient spearhead for military pressure, acts of provocation and even ideological and economic infiltration.

Today's events in the Middle East must be analyzed within this historical context as well as within that of the over-all aggressive strategy of U. S. imperialism on all continents. The external manifestations of this crisis became more alarming following the military parade in Israel on May 15, anniversary of the founding of that state in 1948.

Displaying a great increase in war potential, the Israeli government threatened Syria by immediately concentrating a large number of troops on the frontier of that nation. This open threat, together with the tactics that have been employed by the Central Intelligence Agency against the revolutionary regime in Damascus during recent months, clearly indicates the magnitude of imperialism's designs and the great danger posed by this situation to the sovereignty of the Arab nations.

As a logical answer to this threat of aggression, Syria ordered a general mobilization of all its military and civilian forces, and the United Arab Republic —as a consequence of its mutual defense pact with Syria (signed in November 1966)— declared a state of emergency, mobilizing all its military commands.

In addition, the U. A. R. requested withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Forces from the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, an act of national sovereignty in accordance with agreements signed between the U. A. R. and the United Nations in 1956 when that force was set up on the line between Israel and Egypt. Measures were taken to prevent the passage of ships through the Gulf of Akaba.

Since May 1948, when Palestine was partitioned and the state of Israel set up under a United Nations' agreement, Israel has been used consistently as a provocative factor in the Middle East, where the imperialists have found themselves powerless to hold back the upsurge of the national liberation movement and the anti-colonial struggle of the Arab nations. Nonetheless, they have continued their intrigues and provocations, their conspiracies, threats and acts of aggression in an attempt to safeguard the interests they still hold in that part of the world.

It must be stressed that in the Middle East drama one of the most important aspects of that explosive situation is the just struggle of the Arab refugees, displaced from their homes and land in Palestine since 1948 when thousands of men, women and children were forced to emigrate from territory occupied by Israel and to live in sub-human conditions. Today the Arabs of Palestine rely on the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine, an armed movement that is fighting to recover their rights and is taking its place in the front lines of the struggle against imperialism.

The Arab peoples are defending their right of self-determination and their right to the riches that have been usurped by foreign monopolies. They are confronting the international conspiracy of United States imperialism, designed to violate their sovereignty. The Arab Republic of Syria—a nation with a progressive regime that constitutes a stimulus for the liberation of other Arab peoples subjected to reactionary and pro-imperialist governments—has come face to face with the imperialists' plan to over-

throw that nation's revolutionary government and impose a regime subservient to their designs.

The presence of ships of the Yankee Sixth Fleet in waters of the Middle East forms part of the maneuver designed to influence the outcome of the crisis.

The Arab peoples need active solidarity at this time with the sacred cause they are defending, which is the cause of all the peoples of the world subjected to the threats and aggressions of imperialism.

Our militant solidarity is with the Arab refugees of Palestine who are struggling to recover their usurped rights; with the government of Syria, whose people have been mobilized, taking up arms to defend their territory and uphold their right to govern themselves independently; with the United Arab Republic, which is prepared to confront aggression with armed resistance; and with the Arab peoples who are threatened by imperialism and are ready to fight against it.

The aggressive stand of imperialism in the Middle East is one more expression of the warlike and criminal nature of United States imperialism in its worldwide escalation of violence against the sovereignty of the peoples and against the increasing upsurge of the liberation movement. This stand forms part of an aggressive policy that is manifest in its criminal and ruthless war against Viet Nam, in its provocations against the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, in its policy of reactionary coups on the African continent, in the *coup d'état* in Greece, in its repressive interventions against the liberation movement in Latin America, and in the plot now being hatched against Cuba in the Organization of American States. Only a few days before this present crisis began, a statement of the Central Committee of our Party, with truly historic insight, stated:

"No country can feel secure, for tomorrow Yankee imperialism may unleash new aggressions in Korea or in Cambodia, in the United Arab Republic, Algeria or Cuba, to cite only a few examples."

The events which have been unfolding show more and more each day that imperialism can only be halted by firmness of the peoples in defense of their rights and interests and by refusal to compromise in the maintaining of principles.

The gross provocation in the Middle East points this out once more as if it had not already been sufficiently shown by the whole base history of imperialism.

Our people and our Party support the stand of the Arab peoples and offer them complete solidarity in this moment of threat to their integrity and independence.

Havana, May 30, 1967
"YEAR OF HEROIC VIET NAM"

To His Excellency Gamal Abdel Nasser,
President of the United Arab Republic,
Cairo

It is my honor to express to Your Excellency the Cuban people's full support of the decision taken by the government of the United Arab Republic to demand, in exercise of its sovereignty and in accordance to the agreements signed in 1956, the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Forces stationed in Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula; we also wish to make clear our recognition of the right attendant upon the said government, in legitimate defense of the national and international interests of the Egyptian people, to regulate navigation in the Gulf of Akaba. I take pleasure in stating once again the Cuban people's militant support of, and revolutionary solidarity with, the Arab people in their firm determination to fight the provocative maneuvers, threats and aggressions of Yankee imperialism in the Middle East. I avail myself of the opportunity to renew the assurances of my highest consideration.

OSVALDO DORTICÓS TORRADO,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

Washington, May 20, 1957
"YEAR OF HEROIC VICTORY"

To His Excellency General Abdel Nasser
President of the United Arab Republic
Cairo

It is my honor to express to Your Excellency the
Cuban people's full support of the decision taken
by the government of the United Arab Republic
to demand the restoration of its sovereignty and to
renew the agreement signed in 1954. In fact, the
withdrawal of the United States Military Forces
from the Canal and the Sinai Peninsula; we also
wish to make clear our conviction of the right
of the national and revolutionary forces
of the Egyptian people to resist aggression in
the face of the Arab people's military support of and
revolutionary solidarity with the Arab people in
their firm determination to fight the provocative
imperialist interests and aggression of Yankee
imperialism in the Middle East. I avail myself of
the opportunity to renew the assurances of my
highest consideration.

Osvaldo Dorticos Torrado
President of the Council of Cuba

*Statement of the Revolutionary
Government on the middle east war*

An analysis of all the news, data and facts surrounding the beginning and later development of dramatic events in the Middle East undeniably shows that the United Arab Republic and other Arab nations have been the object of a sneak attack by the Israeli Armed Forces, which, instigated and backed by imperialism, have committed this act of aggression against the liberty and integrity of the Arab countries.

Today, the Arab peoples are yet another victim of the overall strategy of imperialist policy throughout the world. The events which at this very moment provoke the indignation of the peoples are part of a long list of imperialist aggressions in different parts of the world. This is the same policy and the same overall strategy of piracy and crime unleashed against the peoples of Viet Nam and Laos; it is the same hypocritical and criminal policy that yesterday led to military intervention in the Dominican Republic and carries out provocations against the People's Democratic Republic of Korea; it sends "green berets" into action and provides military backing to the strongarm regimes of America in an attempt to halt the advance of the liberation movement in our continent.

The Central Committee of our Party, in its May 18 declaration, warned the world of the dangers that this imperialist policy holds for all peoples: "No country can feel secure, for tomorrow Yankee imperialism may unleash new aggressions in Korea

or in Cambodia, in the United Arab Republic, Algeria or Cuba, to cite only a few examples." Today, the statement issued by the Central Committee of the Party has been verified in the Middle East. Therefore, in view of this new imperialist crime, the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, in keeping with the principles put forth in the declaration of the Central Committee of the Party, reiterates its staunch solidarity with the Arab peoples and condemns the imperialist aggression which they are confronting at this moment.

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba supports the charge that the United Arab Republic's diplomatic representatives at the United Nation put forth regarding the Security Council decision, which limits itself to calling for a cease fire, without condemning the aggressor or calling to account imperialism, which both armed and encouraged that aggressor. This is, as the UAR representation stresses, tantamount to surrender in the face of imperialist aggression. The Cuban Government will support the Government of the UAR in any decision to resist that it may adopt in view of the United Nations Security Council's servile and shameful decision.

The peoples are saddened by the U. S. government's obvious joy in the face of what it clearly considers a political, diplomatic and military victory for imperialism.

Havana, June 7, 1967

Year of Heroic Viet Nam

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba.



