

on Cuba," pressuring them from all sides, and when they are weakened, then move in with "the offer of a big carrot," some sort of relief from the siege—if they agree to split from the Soviets.

In response to these head-on attacks, the Cuban population has overwhelmingly rallied to support the Castro government. Despite the numbers of Cubans fleeing the hardship created internally, most commentators have been forced to acknowledge that the current wave of exiles is hardly the intellectual cream of the island, but precisely the "lumpens" and "social misfits" that Castro has claimed they are.

Cuban insanity

But this is only one side of the Cuban response. The announcement last week by Cuban officials that they are launching an international campaign to pull the developing sector together in support of the psychotic Khomeini regime in Iran, indicates that, on a deeper level, Brzezinski's manipulation is scoring an important victory. Driven into a "fortress mentality," Cuban officials began desperately seeking any and all radical allies for a "united front" against the Carter administration threats.

Castro, when he announced the policy in his May Day speech last week, succinctly summed up their thinking: Cuba must organize its "internationalist friends" to support Iran, Castro told a mass rally gathered that day, a "duty because everything that is happening in Iran reminds us of what happened in our country."

Cuban Foreign minister Isidoro Malmierca also flew to Teheran for talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh over the weekend, emerging from those discussions to announce that Cuba has promised "not only moral but also material support" to Iran "in case of need"—an obvious reference to possible military aid. Malmierca also promised that Cuba would organize support for the Iranian proposal to immediately convene a three-day conference in Teheran of the Nonaligned Movement to discuss joint action in response to the recent U.S. military venture into Iran.

Ironically, Castro's new-found comradeship with the radical Ayatollah has allied him with the very same "Islamic fundamentalism" praised repeatedly by Brzezinski himself, and which he directly installed in power in Iran. Strange bedfellows indeed. Always susceptible to simple-minded radicalism as an answer to complex international politics, Castro's declaration of support for Khomeini goes beyond stupidity into the realm of full-fledged strategic insanity. Cuba now stands aligned with Brzezinski's broader strategy to drive the developing sector into a suicidal confrontation with the industrialized "North," so that no possibility of an alliance for development between the two can emerge.

Solid Shield '80: invasion of Cuba?

by Cynthia Rush

Evidence gathered by the *Executive Intelligence Review* over the past two-week period suggests that a U.S. plan to invade Cuba or Central America may now be fully operative, and could be carried out under cover of the "Solid Shield 80" military maneuvers scheduled to begin in the Caribbean region May 8.

Although the United States regularly stages such maneuvers, the scope and complexity of Solid Shield, together with reports of a number of highly unusual military deployments in the Central American region, indicate that there is a good deal more to this activity than simple military exercises. While as of this writing the Pentagon has announced the cancellation of one of the more provocative aspects of the maneuvers—the landing of 2,000 marines on the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo, Cuba—a number of other destabilizing options remain in place.

Any U.S. military incursion into the Caribbean would at best mean another major foreign policy debacle—if not an incident to spark World War III. Strong "hands off Cuba" warnings issued in *Pravda* last week make clear that the Soviet Union would view any attack on Cuba as a threat to its strategic interests, and respond accordingly. But, such considerations have never stopped President Carter or his national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has vowed to transform the Central American and Caribbean region into an "arc of crisis" to justify U.S. military intervention. In the aftermath of the Iran "rescue" flop, individuals such as Committee for the Present Danger member Richard Pipes are fueling Brzezinski's wild schemes by urging the President to confront the Soviet Union "where they are most vulnerable," in Cuba and the Caribbean.

An invasion is possible

According to a confidential document distributed by the Cuban government and reported on by several Mexican newspapers, exercises of the type planned by Solid Shield have in the past always been carried out off the coast of North Carolina in the Atlantic, never in the Caribbean region. The maneuvers are also unusual in that they include for the first time the U.S. Seventh Fleet, normally stationed in the Pacific, and will occur simul-

taneously with exercises carried out on military bases in the United States and in the Atlantic and Pacific. The maneuvers will include 200,000 men and women, 42 ships, and 350 airplanes.

The Cuban document reports that the Solid Shield maneuvers are "a rehearsal for the invasion of an island in the Caribbean, from which a part of the population supposedly requests U.S. military aid to liberate it from the domination of a foreign power." The landing of the 2,000 U.S. marines on Guantanamo naval base was to have been part of the exercises simulating an evacuation of the civilian population.

Because all operations to overthrow the Castro regime have consisted of a combined strategy of fomenting an internal uprising and an external invasion, the planned marine landing was particularly provocative. Although the Pentagon announced April 30 that the Guantanamo landing would be cancelled, possibly due to pressures from more rational elements within the administration, *EIR* estimates that an actual invasion is still possible. Several wire services reported on April 30 that an army of Cuban exiles is now in training in Florida, preparing to invade and carry out "an insurrection in Cuba." The grouping, which the FBI estimates could be one thousand strong, trains openly in combat gear in Miami, and is drawing recruits from the large Cuban exile community in New Jersey, according to the April 29 *Bergen Record*.

Even if strategists for the Carter administration decide that a direct assault on Cuba carries too many risks, it's clear they view the isolation and destabilization of Cuba as a prerequisite for successful military operations elsewhere in the region.

Central America is a primary target for such operations, as seen in a series of unusual military deployments there over the past ten days. On April 30 the Mexican press covered reports that a mercenary army of Cuban exiles, former members of the Nicaraguan National Guard, and special units of the Guatemalan army is preparing to invade El Salvador shortly with "logistical support from the United States."

On May 1, a military force led by former President Romero, a Somoza-linked general, attempted to carry out a coup in El Salvador but failed. However, the presence in Guatemala of fifty U.S. marines, who arrived on April 24 and have been stationed since then at a Guatemalan army barracks, indicates that another coup attempt, or invasion, could be carried out in El Salvador in the near future.

In neighboring Honduras, all units of the National Police have been replaced by special "tactical anti-guerrilla units," reportedly to free up policy to receive training in the same methods. Salvadorean sources have charged that units of the Honduran army have already attacked Salvadorean towns in the province of Chalatenango.

Cuba on full alert

The Cuban government responded to U.S. military threats around the "Solid Shield '80" military maneuvers by mobilizing the entire population and placing it on full alert along with the country's armed forces. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union has made clear that an attack on Cuba is an attack on them, and they will honor their unwritten agreement that places Cuba under the Soviet's nuclear umbrella.

Pravda, the newspaper of the Soviet Communist Party, editorialized April 29: "Cuba is not alone, Cuba has many friends and allies and the Soviet Union is in the front line. We all declare: Hands off Cuba."

Starting April 19, one day after the U.S. announced that 2,000 marines were going to land in Guantanamo, over one million Cubans demonstrated in the streets of Havana in support of Castro. This

demonstration was followed by a May Day parade that turned into a massive expression of nationalism.

In his May Day speech, Fidel Castro briefed the population on how he expected them to be mobilized. "By May 17," Castro said, "five million people—not one million—will be mobilized...and should be prepared to wage two types of war: a conventional and a popular war." he informed them that he had instructed the Cuban Armed Forces to "organize armed militias that will defend every part of the nation's territory."

Since mid April, the Cuban army, the largest and best trained in Latin America, started its own military exercises, leading up to the "Giron 19" military maneuvers scheduled to coincide with the U.S.'s "Solid Shield '80". The Cuban government canceled the part of the maneuvers around Guantanamo upon receiving word that the U.S. had pulled back from its plan to land 2,000 marines in Guantanamo. Around the same time, the Cuban Joint Chiefs of Staff restricted to barracks all the regular troops, and ordered the Navy to step up military patrols around every Cuban port.