
Ibero-American Debt

Communists: 'IMF works for us'

In its May 1, 1985 issue, the weekly magazine *Jeune Afrique*, published the following brief item: "Fidel Castro no longer wishes to export revolution in other Latin American countries, according to the Financial Times. He no longer even believes in the virtues of Marxism-Leninism. Moreover, the Cuban leader recently confided to one of his visitors: 'The International Monetary Fund alone still inspires confidence in me. It is the IMF that will realize all my plans.'"

The "visitor" in whom Castro was confiding his estimation that the IMF itself will export revolution throughout Latin America, it turns out, was not just one person, but several officials of various Latin American governments passing through Havana in the course of their duties, since mid-March of this year. During that period, the Soviet government initially, and afterwards the Soviet Academy's Latin American Institute, started aiming their propagandistic arrows against the International Monetary Fund's policies in Latin America. Subsequent to this Soviet initiative, Fidel Castro himself joined in this pious condemnation of IMF policies. Later in April, he gave a long, rambling interview in which, among his sundry condemnations of the IMF's debt collection policies, he also made certain apparently reasonable proposals for debt reorganization.

According to the Mexico City newspaper *Excelsior* of May 11, when the communist parties of Ibero-America gathered in Moscow as part of the Russian celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Hitler's Nazism, they met to discuss the question of foreign debt.

Athos Fava, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Argentina, reported that those present were in general agreement with Fidel Castro. "We are in favor of achieving a moratorium for 10 years at least," he is reported to have said, "due to the fact that our peoples need a breathing space which will permit them to conceive a way out of the galloping crisis, which is at the point of bringing down a catastrophe south of the Rio Bravo [Rio Grande]."

But the Communist Party leaders were doing more than echo Fidel Castro. Fava said he was told personally by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, that the Soviets will back all kinds of initiatives coming from Latin America which tend toward a debt moratorium on the foreign debt.

Why have the Soviet Union and Fidel Castro decided to

launch an anti-IMF campaign in spring 1985? Why not in 1945, or in 1971, or in 1979, or in 1982, all remarkable years of imperialist policy initiatives by the IMF? Very simple: Moscow, and Fidel Castro in his own way, started the simulated attacks against the IMF only after they were assured that the financial coup d'état of Donald Regan and James Baker had succeeded in Washington, and only after they became reasonably reassured that President Reagan, for the time being at least, is locked into going along with the IMF's genocidal policies. The turning point was the April 16 IMF interim committee meeting, where Treasury Secretary James Baker announced that U.S. budget is now "under IMF surveillance."

It was in his May 9 anniversary speech that Gorbachov announced that the Soviet Union has become the world's leading economic power.

Back in December of 1984, at a Soviet Communist Party ideological conference, Gorbachov asserted that world hegemony in the next millennium would fall to the Soviet Union. He said that over the next years, the Soviet Union would become the world's number-one economic power. In the last months, this triumphalism has been echoed by Marshal Ogarkov, the commander in chief of the western Soviet military front. And also by Georgii Arbatov, the KGB official responsible for North America, who, during his latest visit to these shores, told U.S. congressmen, that the United States was no longer in a position to dictate anything to anyone. He bluntly asserted that the economic collapse of the United States has rendered it a second-rate power.

The pious communist polemics against IMF policies are a fraud: Moscow is carrying out, in Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Afghanistan, systematic policies of genocide which rival those of the IMF in ruthlessness and intensity. If the communists were against the IMF's genocide in the Third World, they would have offered at least a sample of alternative policy somewhere. Moscow's only dispute with the IMF is that Moscow wishes the genocide to be administered by political cliques friendly to Moscow.

It just so happens that the IMF's policies of economic mass murder invariably create chaotic political destabilizations in their wake, which make pro-communist political takeovers all the easier. That is why Moscow waited until the IMF policies were well entrenched before launching its "anti-IMF" propaganda. The Soviets' public anti-IMF protestations are invariably accompanied by smug private comments, such as Fidel Castro's above, to the effect that "the IMF is exporting revolution" for them.

Their claim is not without merit. Evidence is accumulating that the IMF and World Bank bureaucracy is deliberately inviting communist political advances with its policies of "conditionalities."

For example, for what other reason should the IMF have imposed on the United States, the "conditionality" of severely cutting the U.S. defense budget—an IMF policy not yet protested by either Moscow or Fidel Castro?