

## Editorial Notes

# HANDS OFF CUBA!

*I have never known any statesman act with the magnanimity and greatness that you have shown over Cuba, and I wish you to be quite clear that every sincere and honest human being pays you homage for your courage.*

—Bertrand Russell: Cable to Nikita Khrushchov,  
28th October, 1962.

We are writing these notes in South Africa at the end of November—such are the difficulties of maintaining a commentary on current affairs under such grim conditions as are forced upon us by the Verwoerd dictatorship—and the crisis provoked by United States imperialism over Cuba is still fresh in our minds. The whole world trembled on the verge of frightful nuclear destruction a month ago; if we were saved from that unimaginable horror it was thanks, and thanks only, to the restraint, firmness and wisdom of the Soviet Government and the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, backed up by the will to survival of the overwhelming majority of mankind. Relief at this reprieve, however, must be tempered by the thought that the conditions which brought the world to the brink of disaster still remain: above all, the arrogant, reckless policy of those militarists and imperialists in the United States of America, who yesterday were prepared to gamble on world war in order to blockade and invade Cuba, and who tomorrow may mount the saddle again to launch another insane adventure of the same sort in Europe, in Asia, in Africa or any part of the world.

The real complaint of the American millionaires against Cuba is not that—in the face of innumerable acts of aggression, including an ill-fated invasion attempt, launched against her from United

States territory—she sought and obtained military aid from the socialist camp, including weapons which the Americans regard as offensive—as if little Cuba could constitute a real military threat to the mighty U.S.A.! The real complaint of the Yankee imperialists is that Cuba has dared to send the wealthy U.S. parasites and their Cuban hangers-on packing and raise the banner of true independence, freedom and socialism within 90 miles of the holy stronghold of world capitalism.

It is true that, as a result of the brilliant handling of the situation by the Soviet leaders, which disregarded brazen American provocations and forced the aggressors to retreat, the United States was compelled to undertake not to invade Cuba and to call off the naval blockade, in return for the Soviet removal of “offensive weapons”. But no one should be deceived that United States imperialism really means to call off its cold war against Cuba. It is not merely Soviet missiles and bombers they wish removed from the island, they wish to remove the Castro government which they see as a threat to colonialism and capitalism throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. They wish to destroy independent Cuba, people’s Cuba, socialist Cuba.

They want to make war on Cuba.

The Soviet peace initiative at the end of October deprived them of the pretext of “a threat to the United States” with which they sought to cover up this ghastly crime. It made it certain that should the U.S. warmongers nevertheless plunge into what certainly would not only be an act of wanton aggression but also the beginning of a nuclear world war, they would brand themselves as enemies of humanity without a friend or a well-wisher anywhere. Faced with this grim prospect the saner forces in the United States prevailed, and the October crisis was resolved. It was an outstanding illustration of the fact that, in our time, the forces of peace have grown strong enough to prevent war.

But we should not deceive ourselves that the forces of aggressive imperialism will accept this setback as decisive. They will continue to seek new pretexts for acts of aggression against Cuba. They will continue as long as they can with the arms race, with stockpiling nuclear and other weapons of frightfulness; with acts of provocation and aggression in Berlin, in Asia, in Africa, in every sensitive area of the world which can serve to maintain tension and the cold war.

Those who stand for peace—and that means the overwhelming majority of the world’s people, not least we of Africa—must not relax our vigilance in this crucial period. We must redouble our

efforts to see that disputes are settled by reason and discussion, not by war; that nuclear weapons and nuclear tests are ended as a first step to general and complete disarmament.

A particular duty rests on the peoples of Latin America, Africa and Asia in regard to our brothers in Cuba, who were but a few years ago, like ourselves, under the heel of colonialism. We must raise our hundreds of millions of voices as one, in a mighty shout loud enough to be heard in Washington and New York: **HANDS OFF CUBA!**

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## **China and India**

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The freedom-loving people of South Africa, like all other African and Asian peoples, are deeply disturbed at the fighting that has taken place over the border between China and India.

There is no well-defined borderline between these two countries. The so-called MacMahon line was merely drawn on a map by the British imperialists, during their occupation of India, without consulting either the Indian or the Chinese people.

It is clear that the only sane way to arrive at a fair boundary is by means of friendly discussion and agreement between the leaders of these two great countries, in terms of the Five Principles of peaceful co-existence announced by Nehru and Chou En-Lai before the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference. Similar discussions and agreements have already been reached between China, on the one hand, and Burma and Nepal respectively.

To attempt to solve this problem by means of an armed clash can only benefit the enemies of both the Chinese and Indian people. It is a serious setback to the cause of Afro-Asian unity and to the freedom and independence of our people.

Already the American and British imperialists are joyfully seizing upon this rift between two Asian peoples with age-old ties of brotherhood, pouring arms into India, and doing their utmost to widen and extend the dispute and to fish in troubled waters.

We do not believe that the leaders of the People's Republic of China have any aggressive designs against India. Aggression and conquest are opposed to their principles as Communists. Striking proof of the sincerity of these principles is the dramatic decision of the Chinese Government to stop fighting—at a time when their forces had completely routed the Indian troops—and withdraw