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Castro fires back at Reagan

From Chicago Tribune wires

HAVANA—Cuban President Fidel Castro Tuesday called President Reagan "the worst terrorist in the history of mankind" and said his ideas were from "the era of Buffalo Bill."

Replying to Reagan's charge Monday that Cuba was one of five countries that aided international terrorism, Castro told a press conference: "It is Reagan who supports the genocidal army of El Salvador, the rapists of American nuns."

"Reagan ordered the mining of the harbors in Nicaragua. It was Reagan who sent troops to invade little Grenada."

He said a speech in which Reagan charged that Cuba, Nicaragua, Libya, Iran and North Korea made up a confederation of terrorist nations consisted of lies comparable to the Nazi propaganda of Hitler and Goebbels.

Castro did not reply directly to the charges. Instead he poured scorn on Reagan's intelligence and accused him of organizing what he termed "American terrorism."

"He is the biggest liar of all the American presidents . . . The worst terrorist in the history of mankind," said Castro, who earlier labeled Reagan "a madman, an imbecile and a bum."

"How can you take this man seriously?" Castro asked reporters. "Perhaps even he doesn't know what he is talking about. His ideas are from the era of Buffalo Bill, not the nuclear age."

He also said the United States wanted to sabotage the efforts of the Contadora group, consisting of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama, to find a peaceful settlement for Central America.

Meanwhile, Libya and Nicaragua charged that their nations are victims of U.S. terrorism.

Ageli Raini, spokesman at the Libyan People's Bureau, or embassy, in Rome, said: "As we have said before, it is the United States that is committing terrorism, not us."

State-controlled Libyan Radio said the countries Reagan named were merely trying to oppose his own terrorist policy.

"In view of the scale on which these states are confronting the American strategy aimed at swallowing the world, terrorist Reagan is trying, without any argument which even the Americans would find convincing, to link the attitude of these states, which is based on the requirements of sovereignty, with the hijacking operations carried out by individuals and groups for quite different purposes," the broadcast said.

It claimed that most hijackings occur within the United States and were motivated by the hijackers' disgust at their country's "imperialist" policy.

The Nicaraguan embassy in Washington issued a response that said the Sandinista government "condemns any and all forms of terrorism, among other reasons because our people are suffering the scourge of U.S. state terrorism, openly promoted by the [Reagan] administration, and executed through the CIA and the U.S.-created contra groups."

There was no immediate comment from Iran or North Korea.