

III. THE ~~WHAT~~ HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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New Cuban Attacks on US

1997

The Castro government has urgently demanded from the American Embassy an explanation of the alleged intrusion by a US destroyer into Cuban territorial waters off the north coast of Matanzas Province on 11 May. A Cuban Coast Guard ship reporting the incident claimed the destroyer did not answer its attempts to establish contact. The destroyer's commander has reported that his closest approach to Cuban territory was five miles, and that there was contact with the Cuban patrol ship both by searchlight signals and by voice. Cuba's position on the width of territorial waters has fluctuated. ~~_____~~

~~_____~~ have referred to alleged violations of jurisdictional waters by US surface ships and submarines, and Castro is apparently worried about the possibility of an invasion. In addition to continuous coast guard patrols, Cuban military planes are making frequent reconnaissance flights, and on 9 May Cuban Air Force planes flew over the British island of Cayo Sal, which lies between Florida and Cuba. ~~_____~~

On 10 May the Castro daily, Revolucion, headlines new charges that the United States is planning "an aggression" against Cuba. Government-controlled student and labor organizations led anti-US demonstrations on 11 and 12 May against "US invasion plans" and against supporters and publishers of two of the three newspapers the government does not yet control. Cuba's oldest and largest daily, the anti-Communist Diario de la Marina, was taken over on 11 May by unions of its workers, who accused its publisher of taking orders from the US Embassy. He has taken asylum in the Peruvian Embassy.

The illegal flight to Cuba on 12 May by an American pilot, as well as publication of the destroyer incident, may touch off even more violent anti-American demonstrations. ~~_____~~