

# Cuban Army Goose-steps

The State Marches On

Fifth Estate Collective

1977



When a reader sent us this page from the December '76 issue of *Granma* (the official organ of the Cuban Communist party) pictured at the right, we thought the goose-stepping troops must have been from the army of Argentina or Chile. The pictured style of marching has always been identified with fascist armies and represents the extreme to which the male body at the service of the state can be distorted. Any leader knows that once troops have been submitted to the sort of discipline necessary to create a well-oiled military machine, the individual components lose any uniqueness and become a faceless, headless mass willing to follow any order that comes from above.

However, a quick further reading showed the troops in question were not from a right-wing country at all, but those of the "Revolutionary Armed Forces" of Cuba and a full-page text printed below the photo describes "the necessary identification of military hierarchy." The ranks designated begin at the "Commander-in-Chief" and spiral down through 21 different categories, with over a hundred different ranks, finally hitting the bottom of the heap, which is, of course, like any other army in the world, the lowly private.

The difference between "the people in arms" and the "People's Army" is vast and more than just words. The former is self-motivated and fights for its own—liberation and defends its own interests, while the latter is indistinguishable from the army of any nation, and operates at the behest of leaders and politicians for their interests.

In Cuba, the Army not only serves the purpose of protecting the rulers in power (Castro and Co.), but now has expanded its role to aiding pro-capitalist outfits like the MPLA in Angola achieve power and begin exploiting workers there. Armies serve only rulers.

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