

FIRE THIS TIME



The Newspaper of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice

We are realists...
We dream the impossible - Che

Issue 24 - July 2005

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FREE



Iraq



Indigenous Nations
in Canada



Palestine



Afghanistan



Haiti

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR OPPRESSED NATIONS!

END THE OCCUPATIONS!

Catch 22: Is There Any Way Out for the US in Iraq?



Vietnam Syndrome Then, Iraq Syndrome Now!

By Shannon Bundock

After over 2 years, after over 1,700 US soldiers dead, after over 150,000 Iraqis murdered, after over \$300Billion US spent, Iraq remains a hot and rising centre of imperialist aggression and anti-imperialist struggle in the world. Today, the era of war and occupation, which was launched into action after September 11th 2001, continues

to expand primarily across the Middle East and Latin America. But despite the hopeful projections of the US ruling class, that they can secure Iraq and move on to bigger targets, their goals are going unfulfilled. Why and how is the US occupation failing today? From mounting pressure at home, to steady and unconquered resistance in Iraq, a number of factors are at play. Recently these factors have

aided in quickening the American military's slip into quagmire and shown that warning calls of "crisis" are too little, too late.

Cracks Within the Occupying Ruling Class

"President Bush's portrayal of a wilting insurgency in Iraq at a time of escalating violence and insecurity throughout the country

Continued on page 3

Also Inside

No to Attacks by Telus! Yes to Fair Wages and Worker's Rights!

Fire This Time interview with Bruce Bell, President of the Telecommunications Workers Union to discuss the past four years, the current stage of this battle and the struggle that the TWU is leading in defense of Telus workers.

- pg 5 -

TELUS:
Another
Wrong
Number



Container Truck Drivers' Strike in Vancouver



On the afternoon of Friday June 24th a thousand independent owner-operator container truck drivers went on strike. Organized under the Vancouver Container Truck Association (VCTA), the drivers effectively froze transport out of every port in Greater Vancouver.

- pg 6 -

Soldiers Love for Humanity

The defense of American War Resisters, soldiers who refuse to fight in Iraq and come to Canada demanding refugee status, is an important struggle for the anti-war movement and for poor and working people all over the world.

- pg 7 -



A Time To Break Silence

Excerpt of speech delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1967, at a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned at Riverside Church in New York City

- pg 8 -



Socialism: the only "Better World"

Caracas is once again the queen of the world's left. At the Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Humanity, hundreds of the world's best representatives of progressive ideas welcomed December together...

- pg 14 -



Who is anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles?

Responsible for organizing and carrying out many terrorist plots Luis Posada Carriles is a well-known anti-Cuban terrorist.

- pg 19 -



Defending the Cuban Five in US Jails

The campaign to free five anti-terrorist Cubans held in United States jails took important steps forward in recent months.

- pg 19 -



Solidarity from Cuba to Cheam Nation

A visit of solidarity between Cuban doctor Tayseth Fuentes, and indigenous activist June Quipp.

- pg 20 -



International Indigenous Youth
2005

- pg 22 -

Western Shoshone Struggle
Against American Colonialism

- pg 20 -

Che Guevara's Legacy:
A Revolutionary Path for the 21st Century

- pg 21 -

World Peace Forum 2006:

- pg 22 -

Revolutionary Poetry From the
Cuban 5

- pg 23 -

An Appeal to Our Readers



FTT issue # 1 February 2003.

The Fire This Time newspaper was born out of political necessity. If it appeared later also as an intellectual necessity for poor and working fighters, it was just a natural and organic development beyond our early vision. But why this paper? Really, it is that we are a number of political activists who found the current progressive newspapers and magazines in Canada -regardless of their many good or useful aspects- not truly and entirely representing working class and oppressed people's present condition and their struggles. Out of these objective and subjective factors, the Fire This Time newspaper came into existence. We saw no option but to publish a newspaper that not only objectively analyzes current politics locally, nationally, and globally -of course from the point of view of working class interests (Yes we are biased!)- but a newspaper for working and oppressed people that shares their issues and struggles. In other words, a newspaper with news and analysis and more importantly a newspaper that is able to create a network of people who are potentially political or are in struggle. Basically, we see our newspaper as a political organizer.

The first issue of Fire This Time came out in February 2003, just one month before the US imperialist assault began against the people of Iraq. Our first humble issue was just 4 pages. In the next months, out of political necessity, Fire

This Time grew to 8 and then 12 and after a couple of months our September issue was a 20-page newspaper! Our last issue grew, out of necessity again, to 36 pages, with many reports, analytical and cultural sections. For us, the publisher, it has always been a big challenge to publish a political newspaper with busy activists who are involved in different activities everyday. It was about reflecting struggle and at the same time drawing lessons for further political advancement. And we did it truly, entirely based on our income as a working people and also with the generous financial help of many of you.

Fire This Time editorial board members are all activists, students, and workers; two thirds of which are members of different unions. Fire This Time, in the last 23 issues has consistently analyzed and advocated against imperialist war and occupation. We have developed valuable political strategies that have been instrumental in building a movement against imperialist war and occupation. We are consistently explaining and developing the concept of self-determination for oppressed nations, from Indigenous nations in Canada to Haiti, Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. In the span of these two long years we have been encouraged and helped by many of you with your validation and support of our work in Fire This Time.

Financially we have really made the newspaper with the last cents in our pockets. However, what happened three months ago caused us such

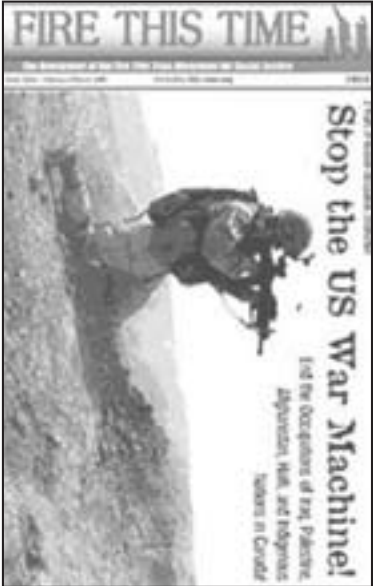
large damage that we were unable to publish Fire This Time. In the middle of preparation for the newspaper our small office was broken into. We lost our new iMac computer, which we had bought a week before. We also lost our main computer that had all of our files and folders, with issues of Fire This Time since February 2003, the date of our first issue. We had to start all over again basically from scratch.

In the last three months, we have been able to restore almost 75 percent of the entire file system and have created a new website for the Fire This Time newspaper (www.firethistime.net). However, in order to be able to continue to publish the newspaper regularly (monthly) we need to buy 2 new computers, as well as a professional scanner and printer. What we would like to ask you, is to help us in this effort.

We need five thousand dollars in order to restore our modest professional equipment. If you like this paper and you find it to be a useful instrument for poor people and working class struggle, then we ask that you consider donating what you can to help us publish this newspaper regularly in the future.

You can make your cheques payable to Shannon Bundock or Brennan Luchsinger. Our next publishing date is August first. We appreciate any and all of your help in this human and revolutionary effort.

Editor



FTT issue # 22/23 March 2005.

Editorial Board:

Shannon Bundock, Ali Yerevani,
Ivan Drury, Tamara Hansen,
Brennan Luchsinger, Aaron
Mercredi

Editor - Ali Yerevani

Layout & Design - Brennan
Luchsinger

Layout Assistants - Ian Beech-
ing, Nicole Burton, Shannon
Bundock

Copy Editor - Tamara Hansen

Spanish Language Editor

- Carlos Lopez

Publicity & Distribution

Coordinator - Brennan
Luchsinger

Contact

Phone/Fax - (604) 322-1764

Email - info@firethistime.net

Mail -

PO Box 21607

Vancouver, BC

V5L 5G3

For a one year subscription out-
side the lower mainland, make
cheques payable to
"Brennan Luchsinger" or
"Shannon Bundock"
(Canada \$15 , USA \$20, Interna-
tional \$30)

Distribution

For Fire This Time in your
area across BC, Canada, and
Internationally contact
Publicity and Distribution
Coordinator
Brennan Luchsinger
Phone : (604) 338-9006
Email :
distro@firethistime.org

Submissions:

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have been possible without
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from our supporters.

Iraq Syndrome

From page 2

is reviving the debate over the
administration's Iraq strategy
and the accuracy of its upbeat
claims." - Washington Post,
June 5th 2005

On June 28th 2005, one year
since the US claimed to have
"handed over power" in Iraq,
George Bush spoke to America
from Fort Bragg, North
Carolina. He spoke confidently
making bold statements about
how the US is dealing with the
"insurgency" in Iraq and the
opponents to America's presence
there. Despite the assurance that
he portrayed in his half-hour
address, Bush was unable to
fully convince his government
and supporters that the plan they
have been pursuing is correct
and effective. Both before and
after the Presidential address,
criticism, doubt and uncertainty
remain.

Throughout the speech, Bush
glossed over, or failed to mention
the main points of weakness and
crisis for the occupation forces.
He bolstered the contributions
of countries pledging funds to
Iraq. He didn't mention that
\$23Billion of the \$34Billion



Iraqi women run towards Yarmouk hospital in Baghdad, following a clash between US soldiers and resistance fighters. July 2nd 2005.

occupiers in Iraq. As the disaster
becomes clearer to various
levels of the US Administration
and the US ruling class, faith is
being lost in the leadership that

resolution to lay plans for a US
withdrawal from Iraq. One of the
members of the bi-partisan group
opening the discussion was
Republican Rep. Walter Jones.

President Bush to, "develop a
plan as soon as practicable to
withdraw American troops from
Iraq." Through their votes and
their comments it was clear that
confidence is waning among
a significant portion of the US
congress.

Amidst this, support continues
to decline significantly with
53% of American's polled in
June disapproving of Bush's
overall job in Iraq. According to
the pollster, Gallup, this is: "the
worst negative to positive ratio
in Bush's presidency."

The Downing St. Memo is
another point of controversy
that arose in recent months and
is driving wedges into ruling
class unity for the war drive. The
memo contains the minutes from
a meeting held eight months
prior to the Iraq war between
UK and US top officials.
According to a letter sent by 122
congressional Democrats, the
memo raises many questions for
them about US Administration's
pre-planning the war in summer
2002. The letter targets top
officials for misleading congress
about the reasons for invading
Iraq and starting the 2003 war.

What is significant is not what
the memo contains. The people
of Iraq, and millions of their
supporters in the global anti-war
movement have known that the
official White House reasons for

Continued on page 4



Demonstration against US occupation. Ramadi, Iraq. May 12th 2005.

pledged is coming from
America. He did not mention
that several of the "Coalition
Allies" are planning to leave or
considering doing so. And he did
not touch on the crisis of Iraq's
economy which remains at pre-
war levels.

These points are only
illustrations of the thin veil that is
covering the crisis for imperialist

sent America to war. As a result
a number of differences and
disputes are emerging within the
halls of government on how the
US can survive in Iraq and how
they can proceed.

Debating the Exit Strategy

Only days before the June
28th address, the US Congress
was met by a number of house
members who had drafted a

"After 1,700 deaths, over 12,000
wounded and \$200Billion spent,
we believe it is time to have this
debate and this discussion on
this resolution," said Jones, who
is a member of the House Armed
Services Committee.

Building up to this, on May
25th, the US Congress defeated
an amendment to the Defense
Authorization bill that asked



Iraq Syndrome

From page 3

invading Iraq were false from the get go and the war was illegal. The past 2 ½ years have proven that there are no weapons of mass destruction, that Saddam had no links to Al-Qaeda and that the US can not in any way bring freedom and “democracy” to Iraq.

What this controversy over the Downing St Memo shows is that the pressure of over half of the recently-pollled American population who don’t support the war, along with the pressure of a failing strategy in Iraq and the increasing number of body-bags is weighing heavily on the US ruling class. Divisions are opening and the points of weak unity are surfacing and giving way.

“Insurgency” Vs. Resistance

Despite this increase in internal criticism, the problems that the US faces at home are quite minor when compared with the problems faced in Iraq. On June 28th, Bush identified armed resistance in Iraq as a major obstacle to ending the occupation. He claimed that a major portion of these fighters are from outside Iraq. Anthony Cordesman of the Washington Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS – a US-based rightwing think tank), in a critique of the Bush speech, pointed out that, *“He [Bush] totally failed to mention the thousands of native Iraqis that make up the core of the insurgency, the fact we have only some 600 foreign detainees out of a total of 14,000, the fact most intelligence estimates put foreign fighters at around 5% of the total...”*

He also failed to mention that it is not only “insurgency” and armed resistance that is a problem for the US. It is the mass opposition to occupation, and from that the mass resistance of Iraqi people, that is truly beating back the occupation forces. In its criticism of the US President’s address, CSIS pointed out, *“the fact that Iraq’s per capita income and services remain well under pre-war levels, and that the lack of jobs and security feeds the insurgency.”* As well, according to CSIS, on May 20th 2005 *“Thousands of Shiites stomped on American flags painted on roads outside mosques in a show of anger over the US presence in Iraq...”*

On April 9th 2005, less than a month prior, the China Daily reported that thousands of Shia and Sunni Iraqis protested in Baghdad, *“Chanting ‘No! No to terrorism!’ and ‘No! No to America,’ thousands of supporters ... called Saturday for American forces to withdraw from Iraq.”*

As months push on, the US and occupation forces are not gaining popularity in Iraq. On June 30th a joint marine and soldier operation – Operation Sword – engaged in mass house raids throughout towns along the Euphrates river. Hundreds were harassed, beaten, and arrested. The operation was primarily centered in the city of Hit. According to the US Department of Defense, Hit now joins a number of other cities that will continue to have a long term presence of occupation forces. Operation Muthana Strike, which was carried out over the 4th of July weekend, also contained a strategy of random “knock-and-search” house raids and arrests, this time the targets were neighborhoods west of Baghdad.

Despite the heavy presence of US troops in the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah, Mosul, and other Iraqi cities and towns, organized resistance continues. While laws prohibiting labour organizing still exist in Iraq, unions and workers continue to organize. A conference was held in Iraq on May 25th and 26th by the 23,000-member-strong General Union of Oil Employees (GUOE). In a press release for the conference they identify the GUOE as *“a union resolutely opposed to the Occupation ... and current plans to privatize Iraq’s oil industry.”*

In Bush’s June 28th speech, he focused solely on the role of armed resistance in Iraq. Through reports on the US Department of Defense website their main operations being launched are targeting broad sectors of the Iraqi population. Operations

Sword and Muthana Strike, were focused on civilian regions and targeted, at random, civilian homes. Without stating it outright, the military strategy shows that the US knows they are not fighting an isolated group of foreign “insurgents” who are threatening the occupation forces. Any Iraqi could be involved in resistance to occupation – and in fact most are.

It is this broad and sweeping character that has forced the US to misrepresent the resistance as isolated pockets of armed extremists. A sensational and demonizing characterization of Iraqis fighting for their sovereignty is the only way for the US to build up opposition at home to the resistance movement in Iraq. If American people are able to identify with the Iraqis fight against unemployment, against lack of infrastructure, against constant harassment by foreign troops, then the case for occupation is weakened. So the rallies are ignored, the prison riots are covered up, the self-determination demands of union organizers are kept quiet. The *only* resistance that exists - according to America - is the resistance of car bombs, mortar shells and rapid fire attacks. And the term “insurgent” today is the new synonym for “terrorist”, which people in the US and internationally are taught to fear above all else.

New Words that Now Seem Old: Quagmire, Quagmire, Quagmire

In March 2003 the US invaded Iraq, overthrew the Saddam government and expected they were on the way to easy victory. But the celebrations and wild claims that Iraq is free and sovereign have become an outlandish joke and after 2 ½ years 160,000 troops remain stationed in the country.

How long can the occupation forces continue? Well, according to Bush on June 28th, the US cannot set a date for withdrawal. *“Some contend that we should set a deadline for withdrawing US forces. Let me explain why that would be a serious mistake. Setting an artificial timetable would send the wrong message to the Iraqis, who need to know that America will not leave before the job is done. It would send the wrong message to our troops, who need to know that we are serious about completing the mission they are risking their lives to achieve. And it would send the wrong message to the enemy, who would know that all they have to do is to wait us out.”*

What Bush doesn’t say is that with or without an exit strategy, the US will, at one point have to exit Iraq.

Today the US has to deal with military recruitment quotas coming up short month after month. Official numbers state that over 5,500 US soldiers have deserted and, according to the Pentagon, over a hundred have fled to Canada to avoid serving. With a tired and demoralized military on the ground in Iraq; the breakdown is weighing heavily on the US war drive.

The US has even recently admitted to attempts to meet with and to negotiate

Continued on page 11



No to Attacks by Telus! Yes to Fair Wages and Worker's Rights!

Fire This Time Interviews TWU President Bruce Bell

By Shannon Bundock

The Telecommunication Workers' Union (TWU) is the union that represents Telus workers across Canada. TWU workers have gone without a contract for four and a half years. Today, TWU is in the midst of a mounting fight for contract negotiations, basic labour rights and job security for Telus workers. Currently, this heated labour battle has led to attacks by Telus and job action by the union. This fight comes at a time when working people, unionists and labour unions are being attacked across the country. It is an important time for all working and poor people in Canada. Supporting working class battles like Telus workers is vital as we fight the growing neo-liberal agenda of the provincial and federal governments and further political shift of Paul Martin and Gordon Campbell to the right.

Fire This Time sat down with Bruce Bell, President of the TWU to discuss the past four years, the current stage in this battle and the struggle that the TWU is leading in defense of Telus workers.

Fire This Time: For the past four and a half years, TWU workers have been without a contract. How could this be possible? What are the reasons?

Bruce Bell: When Telus of Alberta and BC Tel merged together the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) said that the existing contracts would remain in place. At that time there were five and now there are eight different contracts as the company has gone eastward. So we have stayed under those contracts and tried to bargain what we call a revised, respectful contract.

We took the TWU collective agreement from British Columbia and BC Tel. What we have done is try to take it and amend it if you like, to cover the rest of Canada. It's such a good contract and it has good clauses in it. The company has been opposed to that and they want to go with a brand new collective agreement starting from square one.

We say that that's just not right, because we are not a brand new union, this isn't a brand new certification. It's been around for 55 years in BC and over 100 years in Alberta and it has been unionized. We say we should be starting from where we're at and bargaining from there. We're willing to bargain and willing to make changes but not everything. That's really what's taken the bulk of the four and a half years.

The other problem is that as the company has merged and gone eastward they have been in denial. What the company is hoping to do is make most of Telus non-union. We have had to apply to the labour board and they have made some decisions. They've taken a long time in making those decisions with many of them being appealed by the company. That has taken the other half of the four and a half years.

We have been fairly successful with some of those decisions but they have taken a long length of time and the company has been appealing them. In fact we had the 6.6 Billion dollar purchase of Clearnet, which brought in Clearnet workers Canada wide. Those workers were brought in to the union. The company appealed that to the CIRB, they appealed that to the Federal court and now they have gone to the Supreme Court. We just found out on Thursday some good news, that the court denied them the appeal.

It's over now and the company can get on to letting us represent some 3,000 former Clearnet folks who have no collective agreement and should be brought into the agreement that we negotiated. The company has been in denial and probably are still in denial, but it appears that they've exhausted



TWU President Bruce Bell.

their legal avenue and they will have to sit down and negotiate with us.

FTT: Last year the CIRB (Canadian Industrial Relations Board) ruled for binding arbitration, which was successfully fought against by Telus. In April of this year Telus took action against its workers through a 'soft-lockout'. Can you tell us a bit about what the main issues are and how Telus has been attacking?

Bruce Bell: Well, with the 'soft-lockout' the company's strategy was to impose some sanctions on the union and the union membership. In their view these sanctions would get us to bargain. But the company never bargained from day one, they came in with issues and objectives, they didn't come in with concrete proposals.

It took us about two years of complaining to the labour board. They never bargained across the table quid pro quo 'tradesies' - 'you give me this, I'll give you that'. They've never tried to build a collective agreement together that was a good deal. Those are the best agreements, agreements which you both build and you both feel you get something out of them. You might both feel you lost something out of them, but that's what makes it a deal.

The company wanted to impose an agreement right from the start. That gets back to the first question; they wanted to impose a brand new agreement. They're saying 'Here you'll take this because it's good for you and it's good for our shareholders, and it's good for our company'. Unfortunately it's missing the job security and it's missing equity amongst our membership across Canada.

The company was trying to impose this agreement, and they crossed the line in this four and a half year run. They started to deal with our membership directly, interfering with the operation of the trade union.

We complained again to the labour board about that. The labour board felt that they were actually an insidious employer. That they had undermined the union bargaining committee to the point that there is no trust left that could conclude a collective agreement. That's what the labour board said; therefore they are ordering the company, Telus, to offer binding arbitration.

That was about a year ago. We decided after much deliberation that we would accept that. We believed it would get us out of this realm of bargaining. We believed that it would leave us on a level playing field across Canada, with the membership on one agreement. Now they are on eight different agreements. We believed that we could go on and

do another round of bargaining down the road.

Well the company agreed right away, they were very happy about it. They put out press releases. Their shares went up. Fourteen days later, they made an about turn and they put in for reconsideration by the board and for a judicial review. It took over a year, and on February 2nd of this year, the Canada board came down, reversed their decision and took the binding away.

We went back to bargaining and the company came with a final offer. They have since amended this 'final offer' -and we say when is a 'final offer' a 'final offer'? We say that the offer is no good and that it hasn't been bargained. We say that it's the same thing and that they were trying to impose. We want to bargain so we're not accepting it. We're not even taking it out for a vote; it doesn't pass the scrutiny of even our bargaining committee. We're not recommending it.

We've had over the past few years two strike votes, in '84 and '86. We have the solidarity of the membership and the membership has accepted that. We have had very little complaints about not taking it out for a vote. We have it on our website, so the membership can see it. We also did a counter proposal and that's on our website. So

the members have access to both.

Now we're in job action. The company, on April 25th about two months ago, started their job action on us. This was what we call a 'soft-lockout'. They didn't lock the doors, they said 'come to work', but they started taking things out of the collective agreement. They took out wage service credits. Just like what you and I talked about - if you start at fourteen dollars an hour you'll eventually move up over time. They've taken away wage service credits, they've taken away first day paid sick, they've taken away scheduling of some hours, scheduling of some holidays. They've also quit collecting union dues and submitting them to the union. The list goes on. There are fourteen different items and every few weeks they keep adding more.

In response we started an overtime ban a few weeks ago and a ban on relieving management. Now we've asked all our members who take company vehicles home to bring them back to Telus. They take vehicles home so they can go to their first job in the morning right from home and they go from their last job home - so it's a productivity gain for the company. We've asked all the

vehicles to go back to the company.

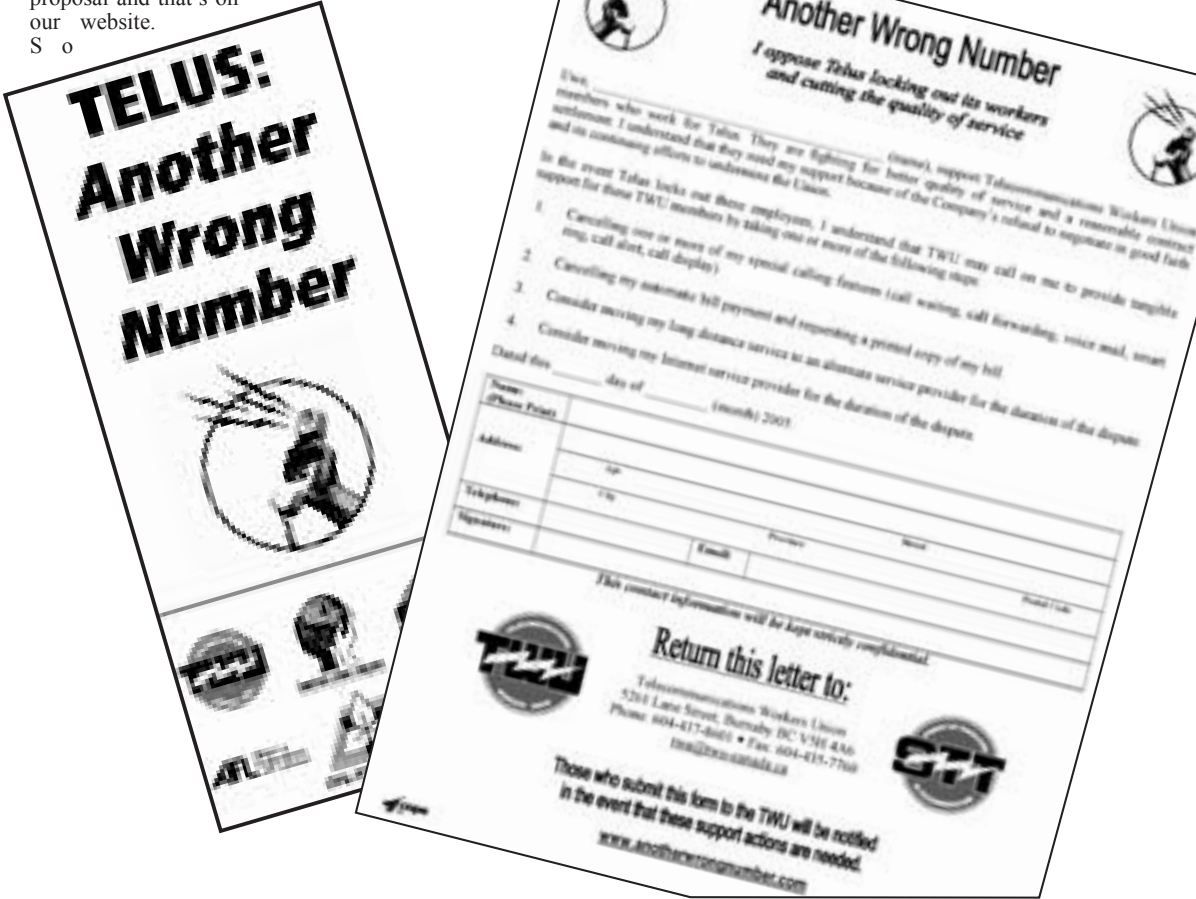
We're looking at some other job actions as time goes by. The company's idea is to put pressure on us. We say we'll put pressure on the company, and we say let's get back to the bargaining table and negotiate. You're up to speed on where we're at right now. It's pretty tense; the pressure is mounting on both sides.

FTT: Since beginning negotiations this year, what has Telus offered TWU workers and what are the main problems with this offer?

Bruce Bell: The main problems with the offer are really what we call collective agreement language. What we're after is job security. We're a union and what a union goes after are things like contracting out. The contract we have and the contract we want to keep to cover everyone in Canada is that if the work is normally and regularly performed, then the work cannot be contracted out, without the agreement of the union. If the union doesn't agree then we have a third party who will make the decisions.

We'll sit down with this person, he's on the committee. The committee is four from the company, four from the union and this neutral person, who is an

Continued on page 6



Container Truck Drivers' Strike in Vancouver:

Workers fight for conditions against capitalist deregulation. An interview with Sukdev Lehl, Truck driver, striker and independent owner-operator



Truck drivers bring their message to work.

By Ivan Drury

On the afternoon of Friday June 24th a thousand independent owner-operator container truck drivers went on strike. Organized under the Vancouver Container Truck Association (VCTA), the drivers effectively froze transport out of every port in Greater Vancouver.

The strike comes amidst a string of strikes and job actions by truck drivers against wages lowered by rising costs dumped upon them by the bosses. In April, drivers in the Lower Mainland formed a 16 km long protest of trucks that froze traffic and in June, a two week

strike of more than 1,200 gravel truck drivers shook business in the Lower Mainland. The gravel truck drivers strike ended in a 12% concession from the companies and gave a sign to other truckers that strike action was necessary to combat attacks on workers by bosses seeking raising profits in a sinking economy.

Twenty years ago trucking was generally considered well paid work. With the economic crisis of the beginning of the 1990's, the trucking bosses began to move actively on "cutting costs". In order to lay an effective assault upon the workers, the capitalist bosses along with the government,

began a deregulation drive to flood the industry with workers and break unions. Deregulation of the trucking industry began with the re-writing

of the Motor Vehicle Transport Act of 1987 when regulations for inter-province trucking were reduced to only licensing and insurance and

was continued through the last 20 years on an international

Continued on page 7

No to Attacks by Telus!

From page 5

arbitrator, a lawyer. The neutral person gets to make the decision.

So the company can come in and say, 'We want to contract out welding'. We would say, 'Well, we have welders. So if you contract out welding, then how will we get that protection?' We ask, 'Why do you want to contract out, for how long and when?' The company, if they put together a good case, well, maybe we'll let it be contracted out. Maybe it's one job and it's stainless steel welding. So the committee works on it based on the specific case. If the company says, 'We want to contract out all of our line people, who put cable in the air and in the ground.' We'll say, 'No, that's not going to be contracted out.' It then goes to the arbitrator and the arbitrator decides.

It's about work that is normally and regularly ours. If it's some specialized cabinetwork, then there is a chance it gets contracted out, because it's not our normally performed work.

We have a number of items that are pre-agreed to; it's not that the company can't contract out at all. We have protected the main telephone work: the operators, the serve reps, and the craft. That's why we've still got 15,000 members. That's our number one: contracting out.

Number two is work jurisdiction. Work that is done inside the union as opposed to work that is done outside the union. The company always brings in managers and consultants that steal your work. You don't lose your job, but they steal a portion of your work. And *steal* is the right word. It happens especially with computers. You might have been a serve rep, or a clerical person who did a lot of a job that the computer has now taken away. It's hidden in the technology, and that's one of the problems with work jurisdiction. We also have an umpire who sits down and deals with that. That's another committee.

We really like having a committee on work jurisdiction. The company doesn't like that because we have a say and it slows them down. They can't just do whatever they want to do.

The third big item is that we want wage parity. Every single job in BC is higher paid than everywhere else in Canada, for the same work and for the same company. So guess what, if you were the company, where would you move the work? You'd move it out of BC, because you can get it cheaper in Alberta, you can get it cheaper in Ontario. We want them to have the same wages, so that there is no advantage for the company to move work.

We understand that the company can

do the work wherever they want but we don't want them to have a financial gain if they move the work out of BC or any province, it could be vice-versa. Of course they're going to have all their serve reps in Alberta, where it's 25% cheaper. We want wage parity and we think that all workers deserve that. So wage parity is a big one. The company wants to give wage parity, but not until 2009. So they want to get a few extra years of having the cheaper wages.

FTT: What was the reaction of Telus to TWU's counter offer?

Bruce Bell: We knew when we put the

doing that. Yes, we had some language in there to protect us. We're willing to bargain, but we want something back.

So we made big moves, and their view was they were 'disappointed'. They said 'Why don't you vote on our offer?'

We are not voting on their offer. It was not negotiated with us, and their offer is no good. Once you vote on the offer, when do you stop voting on it?

FTT: You mentioned earlier the Supreme Court ruling that the employees which Telus gained through the purchasing Clearnet

future with this dispute? Where are we going from here?

Bruce Bell: Well geez, that's a great question. It's very tense right now. The company has imposed sanctions on the members. We are pushing back. So where is it going to go? Well, I think it's going to heat up. It looks like the company doesn't want to lock us out, because so far they haven't. It looks like the union doesn't want to go on strike, because so far they haven't. We've had two strike votes, and we are prepared to go on strike at any time. I guess you could buy a lotto ticket if you feel

needs to do is pick up the phone and say 'Let's get back to the table, we want to talk.' That's something that *could* happen, whether it happens, I don't know.

Usually telecommunications labour disputes are quite long. This has been four and a half years leading up. We could go back the table this afternoon, or we could be on the street. It's a festering situation.

FTT: Finally, I want to ask the most important question - how can working people and unionists support Telus workers and help their sisters and brothers in this fight?

Bruce Bell: We have this campaign here. We call it 'Another Wrong Number'. We're asking people to sign up to it with their name and address and phone number and it will be kept confidential. We want people to be willing, willing to cancel one or more of their special calling features. We want people to be willing to cancel their automatic billing, to go to regular billing. The automatic billing is just guaranteed for the company. You know, 80% of the billing just comes in automatically and it's not labour intensive. If you change your billing, wow, that's just huge! It causes the company nothing but problems. They just about can't handle it; it just about shuts them down.

Also, for long distance, consider changing your carrier there, and your internet, go with somebody else. I want to stress that this is just in case we're on the street. We want people to be willing to consider it now. If we *do* end up being in a full-blown lockout or strike, we would contact you and say, ok, now is a good time, now that we're on the street. We're trying to get folks to do this.

While we're busy doing that we have also gone to a lot of the unions, the conventions, we've gone to the labour councils. We're also going to the city councils. Vancouver, Burnaby, and North Vancouver have all put through motions of support. Telus is not everybody's favourite company out there.

Telus is doing well financially, and we hope they want to continue doing that. This is just one of those black flies that get on the big moose and irritate it. Telus is the big moose and it takes a lot of black flies to make him realize that he should just deal with the union.

I would stress that we're not asking for the world. We're just asking for a revised, respectful collective agreement with regards to job security and contracting out and protection for the workers.

FTT: Thank you so much for your time Bruce and good luck in the fight!



George Doubt of the Telecommunication Workers Union (TWU) speaks at Vancouver's May 1st Rally.

offer in that it wasn't going to be enough for them. The idea of the offer was to show them that we're willing to bargain. We included a lot of subject matter that they wanted, but that we did not want. Such as variable pay, flexible work hours, averaging of overtime hours. Of course they said it didn't go far enough. Well, we knew that, we knew we could have done the whole enchilada and they would have said, 'Well, it didn't go far enough.'

We put it on the table to show our membership that this company is not willing to bargain. It was just a show of

were now covered under TWU. What was your reaction to this decision?

Bruce Bell: I was happy. It was a nice Thursday. It was the long weekend and it was great, fabulous! I'm very happy about that. Now we can get on with trying to deal with those members.

With those workers the company of course had a captured audience in the workplace. They were saying that they were appealing it. Now we can move on, and they can't hide behind that last legal hurdle. Let's get on with dealing with it.

FTT: What do you see in the near

lucky!

It's just going to heat up and we'll see what this brings. It's a bad situation and we would rather negotiate with them. We are hoping that the company will see that as we take job action. We are hoping they'll see as it affects the customer service, which we don't aim to do. But what would we be doing if we were on the street? That would be an all-out. We're trying to say, 'Look can't some cooler heads prevail? Can't we get into some negotiating?'

We've got a proposal, all the company

Truck Drivers' Strike

From page 6

level. The effect of deregulation was that unemployment amongst truckers rose by 20% in three years following the deregulation, and then, in 1996, after employment numbers began to climb again, wages continued to fall. Today the average wage of a truck driver is less than \$15 an hour.

Independent owner-operators have fared the worst in the attacks by the bosses. As individual drivers contracted out by "middle-men" contractors, independent owner-operators have a much harder time in the fight for wages and conditions than union truckers. Independent owner-operators have borne the brunt of the attacks from capitalists seeking to profit off of economic crisis, and their conditions have been made worse by rising costs that the contractors have also stuck them with managing without reflecting these costs in raising wages. The result has been that their real wages have fallen so low that many of them lose money by going to work.

Independent owner-operators have organized themselves into the VCTA and have frozen transport out of the Vancouver Ports, demanding recognition of their association by the ports, improved

right now we are below the set standards.

The basic demands are around healthcare and safety issues. Our trucks are not in good condition because we are not being paid enough, we are being paid no money. We are the lowest paid in this industry and right now we cannot even break even. If you can't break even and you can't make a living then it's better to park your truck and ask for your rights. We are fighting for our rights here and we are asking for more money plus a fuel charge on top.

FTT: How is the strike going?

SL: So far so good. We're keeping going as we planned. We're not shutting anything off; we're informing the truckers that come through. We convince the drivers... if the driver is mad then we hold him first and then talk to him. If he's uninformed then we talk to him and tell him the whole thing, how we're underpaid, how nobody is behind our backs and how everybody else in the industry makes money but not the truckers.

Nobody else cries; the shipping line don't cry, the ports don't cry, the trucking company doesn't cry, why the owner-operators cry is not because the money is not there, the money is there, but someone else is



Container truck drivers on strike.

wages and improved conditions. In an important development, on Thursday June 30th a labour mediator was appointed to resolve the strike. The truckers strike serves as a lesson to all workers in BC; although they are exploited by capitalist contractors, these same contractors and the companies behind them depend on the exploited labour of the truckers to make money. The government and media cry about \$30 Million lost every day that the truckers strike, but these same bosses have been forced to negotiate with the VCTA because the truckers have organized and fought back.

Fire This Time encourages all working and poor people to stand with the VCTA truckers for victory in their struggle and against the capitalist deregulation of the rights of all workers.

On June 29th Fire This Time went down to the Vancouver Ports and visited the VCTA strike. We interviewed Sukdev Lehl, an independent owner-operator and organizer, to find out what conditions lie behind this strike and what the truckers are fighting for.

Fire This Time: Can you explain to me why you are on strike?

SL: We can't maintain our trucks, you know... we are working 10 to 12 hours a day and we're hardly breaking even. How long can you do that? You know? We have families at home and we have other needs also. In a country like Canada there are standards set and



Truck drivers on strike at the port of Vancouver. June 28th 2005.

Soldiers' Love for Humanity Canada Must Embrace US War Resisters

By Alison Bodine

The defense of American War Resisters, soldiers who refuse to fight in Iraq and come to Canada demanding refugee status, is an important struggle for the anti-war movement and for poor and working people all over the world. When Jeremy Hinzman became the first US soldier to cross the border he immediately became a part of the anti-war movement. He spoke at rallies and forums and made his claim public, highlighting the violation of his rights as a soldier and the gross reality of the US' war and occupation of Iraq.

Most importantly, Hinzman did not stand alone for long, many others have joined him. In February the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) denied Hinzman refugee status, but this has not

intercepted the flow of US War Resisters into Canada. Since the War on Iraq began the Pentagon admits that 6,000 soldiers have gone AWOL (Absent Without Leave). Countless numbers of these soldiers are underground in cities all across Canada or waiting around the border. It is important that soldiers who refuse to fight in Iraq be given the space to speak out against the war and to not be persecuted for their conscientious objection to the war.

US War Resisters in Canada are not silent, but virulent opponents to the war in Iraq. As US soldiers, they have a perspective and voice that no one else can provide; many have fought on the ground in Iraq, seen destruction, death and the everyday life of people living under an occupation. These soldiers words are deeply human and they come directly from poor and working

people in the US, people who face intensifying recruitment tactics and monetary incentives as the Army struggles to meet enlistment quotas. Their words come amidst the quagmire in Iraq; as people who were forced to join the military as the only means to an education and a viable future.

Darrell Anderson, a soldier who spent seven months in Iraq before returning home on a short leave and seeking refuge in Canada, has participated in numerous anti-war events all over Eastern Canada. "The First steps you take in Baghdad, you realize that there's death and destruction all over the place. No weapons of mass destruction in sight. We're fighting people that we're supposed to help, but in fact they hate you and every time you walk down the street they

Continued on page 22



Jeremy Hinzman speaking at an emergency demonstration in support of war resisters. March 25th 2005.

A Time to Br

“I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world rev

In the last issue of Fire This Time we said that in each issue of the paper we will be printing a part of our important working class revolutionary heritage in order to perceive the future better and more transparently. Disconnection from the history of the development of human’s social, political, economical, and cultural activities is part of the alienation imposed on us by capitalism and imperialism. This alienation serves the purpose of creating and transforming human beings into cold, senseless and indifferent entities, like machines. No past, no present, and therefore no future, like a machine. By studying and understanding the best elements of pioneers for the liberation of human kind, we sharpen our vision and deepen our conviction for a fundamental change, a true change, the ultimate freedom, a world without oppression and suppression.

Martin Luther King Jr. is one of those rare uncompromising pioneers who dedicated his ultimate treasure, his life, for a world with dignity and respect. The speech below was given on April 4th 1967, precisely one year before Dr. King’s assassination on April 4th 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee.

In this important speech Dr. King portrays the latest development of his political vision and gives a comprehensive analysis of US imperialist war drive in Indochina, specifically in Vietnam. Dr. King also relates and connects the war the imperialist ruling class were conducting in Vietnam and their war against oppressed people in the United States itself, like the restriction of democratic rights, poverty and racism, to name of a few.

We are certain that this inspiring speech can give all of us a stronger determination to fight for the elimination of this rotten imperialist world.

-Editor

Excerpt of speech delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1967, at a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned at Riverside Church in New York City

I come to this magnificent house of worship tonight because my conscience leaves me no other choice. I join with you in this meeting because I am in deepest agreement with the aims and work of the organization which has brought us together: Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam. The recent statement of your executive committee are the sentiments of my own heart and I found myself in full accord when I read its opening lines: “A time comes when silence is betrayal.” That time has come for us in relation to Vietnam.

The truth of these words is beyond doubt but the mission to which they call us is a most difficult one. Even when pressed by the demands of inner truth, men do not easily assume the task of opposing their government’s policy, especially in time of war. Nor does the human spirit move without great difficulty against all the apathy of conformist thought within one’s own bosom and in the surrounding world. Moreover when the issues at hand seem as perplexed as they often do in the case of this dreadful conflict we are always on the verge of being mesmerized by uncertainty; but we must move on.

Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak. And we must rejoice as well, for surely this is the first time in our nation’s history that a

significant number of its religious leaders have chosen to move beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm dissent based upon the mandates of conscience and the reading of history. Perhaps a new spirit is rising among us. If it is, let us trace its movement well and pray that our own inner being may be sensitive to its guidance, for we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us.

Over the past two years, as I have moved to break the betrayal of my own silences and to speak from the burnings of my own heart, as I have called for radical departures from the destruction of Vietnam, many persons have questioned me about the wisdom of my path. At the heart of their concerns this query has often loomed large and loud: Why are you speaking about war, Dr. King? Why are you joining the voices of dissent? Peace and civil rights don’t mix, they say. Aren’t you hurting the cause of your people, they ask? And when I hear them, though I often understand the source of their concern, I am nevertheless greatly saddened, for such questions mean that the inquirers have not really known me, my commitment or my calling. Indeed, their questions suggest that they do not know the world in which they live.

The Importance of Vietnam

Since I am a preacher by trade, I suppose it is not surprising that I have seven major reasons for bringing Vietnam into the field of my moral vision. There is at the outset a very obvious and almost facile connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle I, and others, have been waging in America. A few years ago there was a shining moment in that struggle. It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor -- both black and white -- through the poverty program. There were experiments, hopes, new beginnings. Then came the buildup in Vietnam and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such.

Perhaps the more tragic recognition of reality took place when it became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and to die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population. We were taking

the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem. So we have been repeatedly faced with the cruel irony of watching Negro and white boys on TV screens as they kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools. So we watch them in brutal solidarity burning the huts of a poor village, but we realize that they would never live on the same block in Detroit. I could not be silent in the face of such cruel manipulation of the poor.

My third reason moves to an even deeper level of awareness, for it grows out of my experience in the ghettos of the North over the last three years -- especially the last three summers. As I have walked among the desperate, rejected and angry young men I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining my conviction that social change comes most meaningfully through nonviolent action. But they asked -- and rightly so -- what about Vietnam? They asked if our own nation wasn’t using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted. Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today -- my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.

For those who ask the question, “Aren’t you a civil rights leader?” and thereby mean to exclude me from the movement for peace, I have this further answer. In 1957 when a

group of us formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, we chose as our motto: “To save the soul of America.” We were convinced that we could not limit our vision to certain rights for black people, but instead affirmed the conviction that America would never be free or saved from itself unless the descendants of its slaves were loosed completely from the shackles they still wear.

Now, it should be incandescently clear that no one who has any concern for the integrity and life of America today can ignore the present war. If America’s soul becomes totally poisoned, part of the autopsy must read Vietnam. It can never be saved so long as it destroys the deepest hopes of men the world over. So it is that those of us who are yet determined that America will be are led down the path of protest and dissent, working for the health of our land.

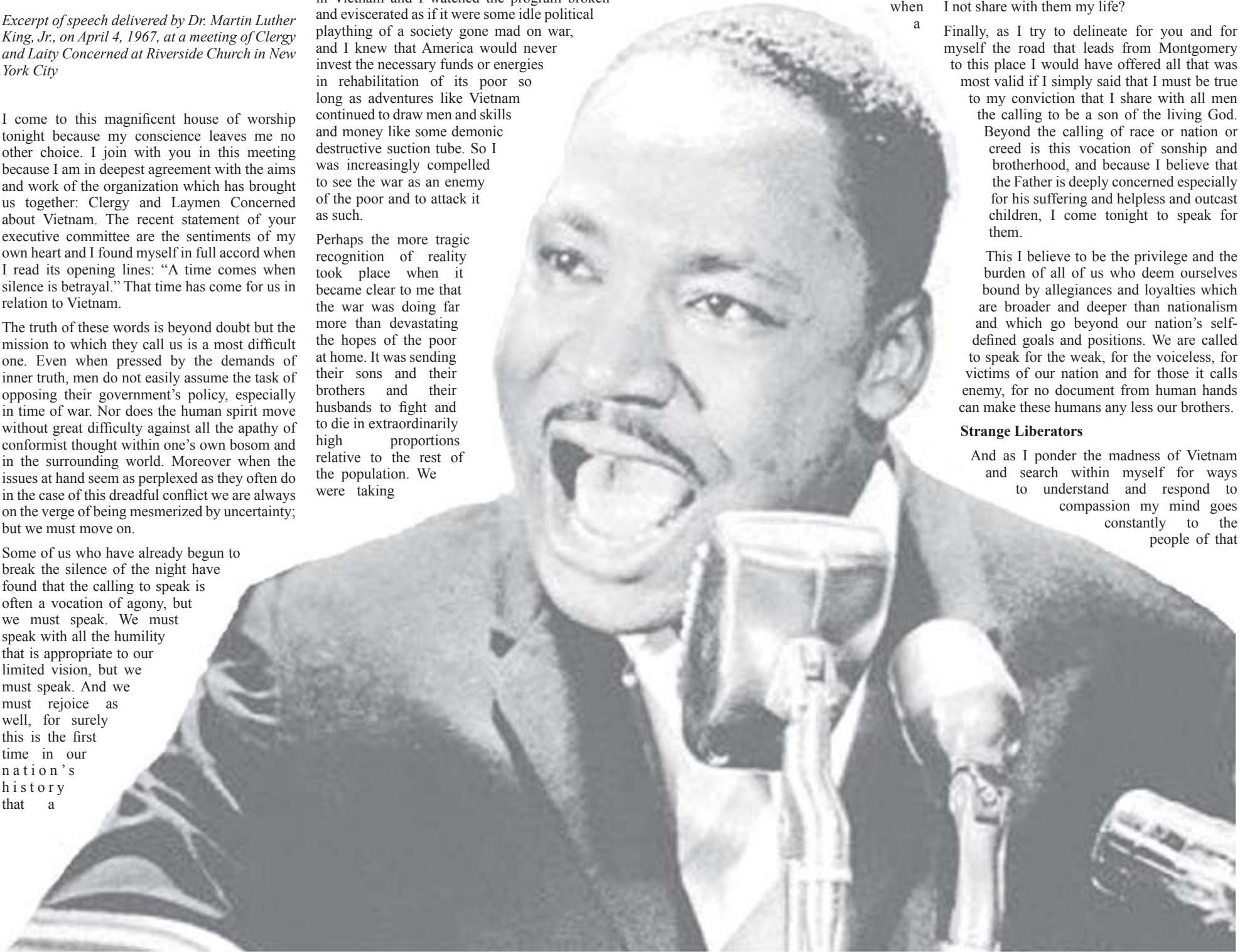
As if the weight of such a commitment to the life and health of America were not enough, another burden of responsibility was placed upon me in 1964; and I cannot forget that the Nobel Prize for Peace was also a commission -- a commission to work harder than I had ever worked before for “the brotherhood of man.” This is a calling that takes me beyond national allegiances, but even if it were not present I would yet have to live with the meaning of my commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ. To me the relationship of this ministry to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I am speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the good news was meant for all men -- for Communist and capitalist, for their children and ours, for black and for white, for revolutionary and conservative? Have they forgotten that my ministry is in obedience to the one who loved his enemies so fully that he died for them? What then can I say to the “Vietcong” or to Castro or to Mao as a faithful minister of this one? Can I threaten them with death or must I not share with them my life?

Finally, as I try to delineate for you and for myself the road that leads from Montgomery to this place I would have offered all that was most valid if I simply said that I must be true to my conviction that I share with all men the calling to be a son of the living God. Beyond the calling of race or nation or creed is this vocation of sonship and brotherhood, and because I believe that the Father is deeply concerned especially for his suffering and helpless and outcast children, I come tonight to speak for them.

This I believe to be the privilege and the burden of all of us who deem ourselves bound by allegiances and loyalties which are broader and deeper than nationalism and which go beyond our nation’s self-defined goals and positions. We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for victims of our nation and for those it calls enemy, for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers.

Strange Liberators

And as I ponder the madness of Vietnam and search within myself for ways to understand and respond to compassion my mind goes constantly to the people of that



Weak Silence

revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values.”

peninsula. I speak now not of the soldiers of each side, not of the junta in Saigon, but simply of the people who have been living under the curse of war for almost three continuous decades now. I think of them too because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution there until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries.

They must see Americans as strange liberators. The Vietnamese people proclaimed their own independence in 1945 after a combined French



Martin Luther King speaking at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

and Japanese occupation, and before the Communist revolution in China. They were led by Ho Chi Minh. Even though they quoted the American Declaration of Independence in their own document of freedom, we refused to recognize them. Instead, we decided to support France in its reconquest of her former colony.

Our government felt then that the Vietnamese people were not “ready” for independence, and we again fell victim to the deadly Western arrogance that has poisoned the international atmosphere for so long. With that tragic decision we rejected a revolutionary government seeking self-determination, and a government that had been established not by China (for whom the Vietnamese have no great love) but by clearly indigenous forces that included some Communists. For the peasants this new government meant real land reform, one of the most important needs in their lives.

For nine years following 1945 we denied the people of Vietnam the right of independence. For nine years we vigorously supported the French in their abortive effort to recolonize Vietnam.

Before the end of the war we were meeting eighty percent of the French war costs. Even before the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, they began to despair of the reckless action, but we did not. We encouraged them with our huge financial and military supplies to continue the war even after they had lost the will. Soon we would be paying almost the full costs of this tragic attempt at recolonization.

The only change came from America as we increased our troop commitments in support of governments which were singularly corrupt, inept and without popular

support. All the while the people read our leaflets and received regular promises of peace and democracy -- and land reform. Now they languish under our bombs and consider us -- not their fellow Vietnamese --the real enemy. They move sadly and apathetically as we herd them off the land of their fathers into concentration camps where minimal social needs are rarely met. They know they must move or be destroyed by our bombs. So they go -- primarily women and children and the aged.

may well wonder if we plan to build our new Vietnam on such grounds as these? Could we blame them for such thoughts? We must speak for them and raise the questions they cannot raise. These too are our brothers.

Perhaps the more difficult but no less necessary task is to speak for those who have been designated as our enemies. What of the National Liberation Front -- that strangely anonymous group we call VC or Communists? What must they think of us in America when they realize that we permitted the

compassion and nonviolence when it helps us to see the enemy’s point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.

So, too, with Hanoi. In the north, where our bombs now pummel the land, and our mines endanger the waterways, we are met by a deep but understandable mistrust. To speak for them is to explain this lack of confidence in Western words, and especially their distrust of American intentions now. In Hanoi are the men who led the nation to independence against the Japanese and the French, the men who sought membership in the French commonwealth and were betrayed by the weakness of Paris and the willfulness of the colonial armies. It was they who led a second struggle against French domination at tremendous costs, and then were persuaded to give up the land they controlled between the thirteenth and seventeenth parallel as a temporary measure at Geneva. After 1954 they watched us conspire with Diem to prevent elections which would have surely brought Ho Chi Minh to power over a united Vietnam, and they realized they had been betrayed again.

Hanoi remembers how our leaders refused to tell us the truth about the earlier North Vietnamese overtures for peace, how the president claimed that none existed when they had clearly been made. Ho Chi Minh has watched as America has spoken of peace and built up its forces, and now he has surely heard of the increasing international rumors of American plans for an invasion of the north. He knows the bombing and shelling and mining we are doing are part of traditional pre-invasion strategy. Perhaps only his sense of humor and of irony can save him when he hears the most powerful nation of the world speaking of aggression as it drops

thousands of bombs on a poor weak nation more than eight thousand miles away from its shores.

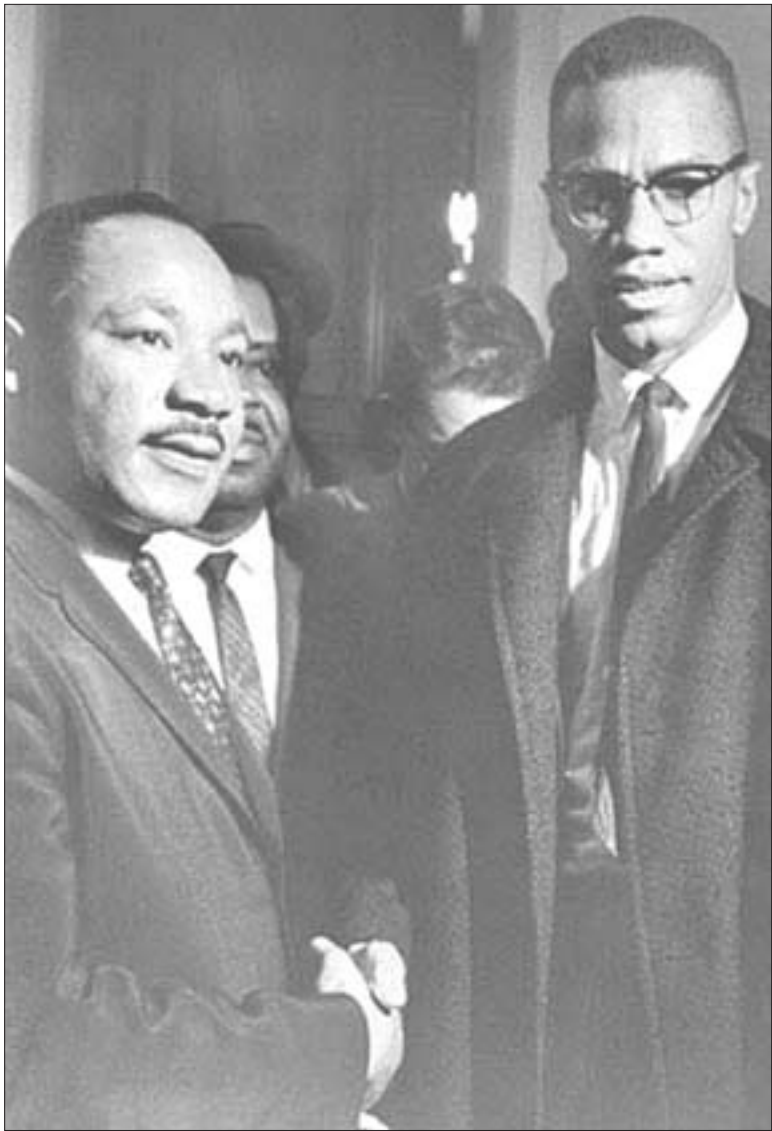
At this point I should make it clear that while I have tried in these last few minutes to give a voice to the voiceless on Vietnam and to understand the arguments of those who are called enemy, I am as deeply concerned about our troops there as anything else. For it occurs to me that what we are submitting them to in Vietnam is not simply the brutalizing process that goes on in any war where armies face each other and seek to destroy. We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for they must know after a short period there that none of the things we claim to be fighting for are really involved. Before long they must know that their government has sent them into a struggle among Vietnamese, and the more sophisticated surely realize that we are on the side of the wealthy and the secure while we create hell for the poor.

This Madness Must Cease

Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. I speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours.

If we continue, there will be no doubt in my mind and in the mind of the world that we have no honorable intentions in Vietnam. It will become clear that our minimal expectation is to occupy it as an American colony and men will not refrain from thinking that our maximum hope is to goad

Continued on page 10



Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

A Time to Break Silence

From page 9

China into a war so that we may bomb her nuclear installations. If we do not stop our war against the people of Vietnam immediately the world will be left with no other alternative than to see this as some horribly clumsy and deadly game we have decided to play.

The world now demands a maturity of America that we may not be able to achieve. It demands that we admit that we have been wrong from the beginning of our adventure in Vietnam, that we have been detrimental to the life of the Vietnamese people. The situation is one in which we must be ready to turn sharply from our present ways.

In order to atone for our sins and errors in Vietnam, we should take the initiative in bringing a halt to this tragic war.

Protesting The War

Meanwhile we in the churches and synagogues have a continuing task while we urge our government to disengage itself from a disgraceful commitment. We must continue to raise our voices if our nation persists in its perverse ways in Vietnam. We must be prepared to match actions with words by seeking out every creative means of protest possible.

As we counsel young men concerning military service we must clarify for them our nation's role in Vietnam and challenge them with the alternative of conscientious objection. I am pleased to say that this is the path now being chosen by more than seventy students at my own alma mater, Morehouse College, and I recommend it to all who find the American course in Vietnam a dishonorable and unjust one. Moreover I would encourage all ministers of draft age to give up their ministerial exemptions and seek status as conscientious objectors. These are the times for real choices and not false ones. We are at the moment when our lives must be placed on the line if our nation



against the war in Vietnam. I say we must enter the struggle, but I wish to go on now to say something even more disturbing. The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality we will find ourselves organizing clergy- and laymen-concerned committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala and Peru. They will be concerned about Thailand and Cambodia. They will be concerned

In 1957 a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that our nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which now has justified the presence of U.S. military "advisors" in Venezuela. This need to maintain social stability for our investments accounts for the counter-revolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrillas in Colombia and why American napalm and green beret forces have already been active against rebels in Peru.

Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken -- the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investment.

I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say: "This is not just." It will look at our alliance with the landed gentry of Latin America and say: "This is not just." The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just. A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into veins of people normally humane, of

sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

The People Are Important

These are revolutionary times. All over the globe men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression and out of the wombs of a frail world new systems of justice and equality are being born. The shirtless and barefoot people of the land are rising up as never before. "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light." We in the West must support these revolutions. It is a sad fact that, because of comfort, complacency, a morbid fear of communism, and our proneness to adjust to injustice, the Western nations that initiated so much of the revolutionary spirit of the modern world have now become the arch anti-revolutionaries. This has driven many to feel that only Marxism has the revolutionary spirit. Therefore, communism is a judgement against our failure to make democracy real and follow through on the revolutions we initiated. Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism. With this powerful commitment we shall boldly challenge the status quo and unjust mores and thereby speed the day when "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain."

A genuine revolution of values means in the final analysis that our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies.

This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men. This oft misunderstood and misinterpreted concept -- so readily dismissed by the Nietzsches of the world as a weak and cowardly force -- has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love I am not speaking of some sentimental and weak response.

Let us hope that this spirit will become the order of the day. We can no longer

afford to worship the god of hate or bow before the altar of retaliation. The oceans of history are made turbulent by the ever-rising tides of hate. History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations and individuals that pursued this self-defeating path of hate. As Arnold Toynbee says : "Love is the ultimate force that makes for the saving choice of life and good against the damning choice of death and evil. Therefore the first hope in our inventory must be the hope that love is going to have the last word."

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked and dejected with a lost opportunity. The "tide in the affairs of men" does not remain at the flood; it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residue of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words: "Too late." There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. "The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on..." We still have a choice today; nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation.

We must move past indecision to action. We must find new ways to speak for peace in Vietnam and justice throughout the developing world -- a world that borders on our doors. If we do not act we shall surely be dragged down the long dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.

Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter -- but beautiful -- struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the sons of God, and our brothers wait eagerly for our response. Shall we say the odds are too great? Shall we tell them the struggle is too hard? Will our message be that the forces of American life militate against their arrival as full men, and we send our deepest regrets? Or will there be another message, of longing, of hope, of solidarity with their yearnings, of commitment to their cause, whatever the cost? The choice is ours, and though we might prefer it otherwise we must choose in this crucial moment of human history.



is to survive its own folly. Every man of humane convictions must decide on the protest that best suits his convictions, but we must all protest.

There is something seductively tempting about stopping there and sending us all off on what in some circles has become a popular crusade

about Mozambique and South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy. Such thoughts take us beyond Vietnam, but not beyond our calling as sons of the living God.

Iraq Syndrome

From page 4

with their sworn enemies – the “insurgents”. Far from their policy that they “will not negotiate with terrorists”, the US has been forced to recognize that their strategy is failing and has been forced to try methods that they once condemned.

According to the Washington Post on June 27th 2005, “Rumsfeld acknowledged that there is no military solution to ending the insurgency and that the talks with Iraqi insurgents were part of a search for a political solution to the war. ‘I mean, foreign troops are not going to beat the insurgency,’ he said. ... He also pointed out, on Fox News that, ‘insurgencies tend to go on five, six, eight, 10, 12 years.’”

This crisis that is increasing on every level for the occupation forces shows no signs of slowing. Why the US is not pulling out despite this crisis, however is clear. Iraq is not an isolated mission. Iraq is part of the imperialist era of war and occupation that was opened following the September 11th 2001 attacks.

Along with the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, along with the US/Canada/France occupation of Haiti and along with threats, against Iran, Syria, Venezuela and Cuba, this war is one pole of a global strategy of permanent war and occupation. Losing in Iraq is not an option for US imperialists. Defeat in Iraq would have grave historical and international impacts on the world’s “superpower” as well as inflicting deep damage to imperialism in the battle against oppressed countries globally.

The objectives of the US and other imperialist countries are to gain control and hegemony in the most strategic regions, to plunder the resources and feed off the wealth of oppressed countries. As unemployment and market crisis increase at



Student protest against Iraqi Government. May 2005.

home, imperialist economies move to shakier ground. These powerful imperialist countries have no choice but to secure their position in the Middle East, in Latin America and throughout the world, in order to maintain the balance of forces and their position as global powers.

Iraqi Resistance: The Only Hope for the Future

As the rhetoric from the White House becomes fierier, the truth on the ground is that the occupation forces are weakening, “at a time of escalating violence and insecurity” in Iraq. But the people of Iraq are in a different position than the US forces. They are not fighting because they signed up to the military and were sent on a mission. They are fighting for their families, their

communities, their lives. The Iraqi people are fighting against imperialist occupation and for self-determination, because they see it as the only way to secure the future of their country.

According to a June 2005 entry in the online journal of a young woman in Iraq called Riverbendblog, “...this isn’t about Sunnis and Shia or Arabs and Kurds. It’s about an occupation

and about people feeling that they do not have real representation. We have a government that needs to hide behind kilometers of barbed wire and meters and meters of concrete- and it’s not because they are Shia or Kurdish or Sunni Arab- it’s because they blatantly supported, and continue to support, an occupation that has led to death and chaos.”

For Iraq to progress at the most basic levels, they must have the space to do so. Tens of thousands of foreign troops are choking the Iraqi people and preventing any reconstruction and natural political development that is necessary for a country to advance.

US imperialism has descended on Iraq and made it the primary axis of struggle in the opening years of the era of war and occupation. The fight for self-determination in Iraq is the same fight for self-determination in Afghanistan, Palestine, Haiti and Indigenous Nations across the US and Canada.

As Iraqi people carry on, we too must continue with support, solidarity and echoes of the demands against occupation and for self-determination. In this decisive battle there will be a winner and there will be a loser. No body has forgotten Vietnam yet. Vietnam Syndrome then, Iraq Syndrome now. It is not only a fight in Iraq, but one of oppressed people of the world vs. the imperialist war drive. As the Iraqi resistance gains strength, the impact will reverberate globally.

END THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ NOW!

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR



Working People in Motion...



April 23rd 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) Demonstration.



March 19th 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation rallies on the international day of action on the 2nd anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.



March 19th 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation rallies on the international day of action.



April 23rd



Mobilization Against War & Occupation Forum, May 21st, Hands off Syria and Iran!

Mobilization Against War & Occupation April 6th, Operation: Canada Out! Petition stop at



Sons of Zadok perform at Mobilization Against War and Occupation "4 the People" Fundraiser April 2nd 2005, at the Lick Club.



March 20th 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) Conference.



April 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) Demonstration.



Mayday 2005 Rally. 1,000 working people take the streets of Vancouver.



Cuban Doctor Luis Armando Dominguez speaks at Vancouver's May 1st Rally.



Mayday 2005, Rally at the Vancouver Art Gallery.



George Doubt of the Telecommunication Workers Union (TWU) speaks at Vancouver's May 1st Rally.



UBC AMS Coalition Against War on the People of Iraq and Internationally (CAWOPII) and Haiti Solidarity BC (HSBC) forum with Laura Flynn (middle). Roger Annis of HSBC (left), Alison Bodine of CAWOPII (right). April 1st 2005.



Vancouver communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) forum, "US Imperialism, Cuban Resistance, and the Era of War and Occupation". April 9th 2005.



Local Hip Hop talent Pablucci performing at a Mobilization Against War & Occupation demonstration. May 28th 2005.

Socialism: The only “better world”

By Celia Hart

Celia Hart is a militant of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC). Holding a PhD in physics, Celia currently works in the Museo Santamaria. She has been writing extensively on the Cuban Revolution and international working class struggles.

Caracas is once again the queen of the world’s left. At the Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Humanity, hundreds of the world’s best representatives of progressive ideas welcomed December together. Representatives of countless tendencies were there, trying to agree on the ethical future of the world. We need them to figure out if, once and for all, we can point the compass in the right direction. I am full of expectations, combined with chronic skepticism. There is so much rhetoric in world summits, conferences and meetings that it has ended my trust in these methods. Perhaps this time it will not remain as mere words denouncing the world’s calamities, human and divine laws, and the cruelty of the enemy. Now is the time to figure out how to implement our struggle, to know which methods offer a categorical end to the intentions of imperialism. If we cannot find specific answers, leaving once and for all the academic ivory tower, our descendants will consider this generation of thinkers a bunch of useless contemplators.

James Petras said, in the Third International Seminar of Teaching recently held in Peru, “Initially, social forums were positive events for meeting, discussing, forming networks, passing resolutions, but they have become almost a kind of ritual, a kind of social affair, where people meet, invite some important figures, have a march, and then everyone goes home. I think they have lost that edge of rebellion and criticism. Looking back, they have not had any results.”

I agree. And among other things, there is a banner that was absent from the world’s leftist conferences, which was not talked about out of fear and is limited to closed discussions within political parties. I mean Socialism. Many comrades are honestly claiming the end of the “isms.” Pathetic. Fascism, militarism, imperialism, are in our lives from dawn to dusk. These tendencies, which are like a “leftist Fukuyama-ism, are openly claiming the tragedy of the current left. The enemy is the owner of the “isms,” and political parties. We will have to limit ourselves to prayers, descriptions and proclamations. I confess that the motto “A better world is possible” sounds to me like resignation. Of course a better world is possible! But so is a worse world. Mottos limit our possibilities. It sounds as



Cuban soldiers at a rally in Havana.

the psychoanalysts of the world to try to free ourselves from this curse. I hope we do not spend another seventy years doing that. While we are going to therapy, the enemy builds many more perverse walls, and covers us with apocalyptic words such as “preventive war”, “axis of evil” and other idiocies. And if that were not enough, that same enemy gets the majority vote in the United States of America.

And I wonder, what banner would be more relevant than the banner of socialism? Now that globalization forces us to treat the world as a single entity, what would be better than going back to Socialist principles, squeezing them, combining them, groping them, offering the enemy in exchange for capitalism, a true “International”?

“With all and for the good of all,” but really as Jose Marti stated, with everybody

if only for them, in homage to them.

Julio Antonio Mella brought Marti back to life because he adopted him courageously, based on the new scientific experiments of Karl Marx. And somehow, he made Marti into the founder of the first Communist Party in Cuba. Mella said that “in order to make a revolution in this century a new factor will have to be considered, Socialist ideas, that in one form or another, take root in all the corners of the world.”

Fidel Castro and his comrades again saved Jose Marti from the enemy, because they made him the de facto intellectual author of a Socialist revolution. Enough of romantic songs! That’s why Marti still lives, because if he could have talked with Karl Marx, not only would they have agreed from the beginning, but also because Marti would have taught Marx a few things about

win the hearts of the people with the only banner, which will make our world and our children’s world a better place.

It is true that the enemy is in crisis. But if we do not become quickly aware, we will be irreversibly swept away with them.

And how is socialism’s health? I dare to propose a very simplified “measuring” stick.

The revolution is a process. Nature’s processes are measured with variable temporary magnitudes (with the increase or the decrease of some concrete measure in time). In mathematics they call it partial derivatives in respect to time. Let’s try to measure a social process like that.

Let’s do it like this: Let’s call SOC a magnitude, measuring the socialism of a revolution in a determinate time. Let’s take three examples.

First, Cuba’s socialist revolution has shown its permanence in spite of imperialism’s harassment. It proved its strength in the 90s, persisting after the fall of European socialism, and when it had to face the hardening of the U.S. blockade. This concrete fact attests to the health of our socialist revolution. SOC increases considerably.

There is no doubt that the legalization of the dollar, the establishment of trade in that currency, the rapid increase of tourism and joint ventures, which function with capitalist parameters, have been a very bitter step for the revolution. Much more than the so-called special period. Some Cubans started to think with a capitalist mentality. Even though I am not trying to compare it to the NEP that Lenin had to impose in the young Soviet state, his motivations could have been very similar. But this measure decreases our variable. As it happened in the USSR, the magnitude of the SOC variable here decreases.

Then, let’s study the so-called battle of ideas, which started with the campaign to bring Elian Gonzalez back to our homeland. At that time, Fidel started developing an impressive revolution within the first one, the establishment of social workers, emerging teachers, paramedic personnel, the unpublished revolution of education, where in a couple of years the number of students per teacher were reduced to twenty. Not only the quality of education improved but also more important, tens of thousands of students became involved in the revolutionary process, students which had been idle until then. Even many who had been thinking only about dollars, or about emigrating, as a direct result of the legalization of that currency?

I understand that it is a convulsive process and of course not everyone would be with the revolution. The ideological battle has become a revolution as well. Daily roundtables, weekly open forums, university education for all, where even coincidentally you can hear about the history of philosophy, ballet or sciences, the formation of two education channels, which contrast and

compete with the traditional channels, and where programming is selected according to cultural, instead of commercial criteria. Fidel’s constant appearances on television, speaking to the people, etc., have contributed to the political level, the culture of debate, and the level of public discourse has been raised, even though we may sometimes fall into unnecessary repetitions or the abuse of slogans, But anyway, this is indeed a decisive increase in the magnitude of SOC.

Fidel and the Cuban revolutionaries cannot build socialism. This is simply because socialism in only one country is impossible. What they can do is to increase the magnitude of SOC within the socialist revolution. That is, to guarantee the necessary forces to counteract possible tendencies toward restoring capitalism, a sickness we knowingly contracted to survive the 1994 legalization of the dollar.

These are two opposing forces within the same revolution.... Fidel gives most of his time and all his efforts to this battle. This new revolution developed from specific projects, where the most revolutionary social strata becomes involved. From the campaign against the mosquito carrier of yellow fever, for example, a new political campaign was built, where high school students had the main role.

Even with the low value of our national currency, there are no layoffs. Sugar workers who were left without work are paid the same salary for studying. Our economic “poverty” has not prevented Cuba from having health, education and sports rates of a developed nation.

We should recall the expression on the face of Fidel Castro the day he won a small battle against the forces restoring capitalism, when the dollar stopped circulating and the peso started again. Although it was only one paper instead of another, the symbolism of the green currency not “touching” young Cuban hands gave him an indelible smile, even with everything going on, including his accident.

And internationalism? Tens of thousands of compatriots are doctors, teachers of technicians in the countries of Latin America. When tragedy hit poor Haiti, international organizations were surprised, because for every doctor of a developed country, there were a hundred Cuban doctors. Those youngsters take (besides their conscience) an exported piece of the Cuban Revolution. Do not think that it is free, either. The amount of personnel helping Venezuela comes from those taking care of the Cuban population. Internationalism “costs,” as it should. We are not giving away what we do not need; we are giving what we love the most.

In the same vein, the Conference of Intellectuals and Artists in Caracas was

Continued on page 16



Mayday rally in Havana.

if an extraterrestrial had coined the phrase, or worse yet, as if there exists the slight possibility that these tender words might move the enemies in a summer morning, while they are drinking their orange juice. Chavez said it, “It is possible to have a better world.... if we make it possible.” In fact, it seemed ironic that facing this horrific scene of wars, lies and poverty, we could be talking about a better world.

Over a decade ago the Berlin Wall fell, and we have not been able to heal from the psychological trauma caused by “Real Socialism.” We will have to convene all

who can add firewood to the fire and who sincerely aspires not only for a better world, but a qualitatively different world.

There is only one alternative to barbarism. Frederick Engels said it: socialism. Yes, the very socialism that, in the words of Rosa Luxemburg “is not precisely a knife and fork problem, but a cultural movement, a powerful and great conception of the world.”

Any banner is welcomed, if it is real. Bolivar, Hidalgo, San Martin, Jose Marti and the rest are the proud part of human history in the different continents. We must be consistent,

America. Marti would have had a better understanding of the events in Chicago, and he certainly would have warned Marx about the emergence of imperialism, because he had lived in the belly of the beast. Only with a vision of socialism and class struggle, creatively and heroically adapted for these times and places, as Jose Carlos Mariategui would say, will we be able to assure that Bolivar and so many predecessors have not labored in vain. We have an enormous responsibility. We will not be able to blame Stalin and “real socialism” anymore, for our failures and our prejudices. It is time to draw the sword and the pen, to conquer and

El socialismo: Ese único mundo mejor

Por Celia Hart

Volvió Caracas a ser reina de la izquierda mundial. El Encuentro de Intelectuales con centenas de los mejores representantes de las ideas “progre” del mundo le dieron juntos bienvenida a Diciembre. Allí estuvieron los representantes de mil y una tendencias tratando de llegar a un acuerdo en relación al porvenir ético del mundo. Los necesitamos; para ver si de una buena vez dirigimos la brújula hacia el lugar preciso. Ando llena de expectativas que se mezclan con un escepticismo crónico. Tanta retórica de cumbres, congresos y asambleas mundiales han apagado mi fe en el uso de esos métodos. Quizás esta vez no nos quedaremos en el verso de la denuncia de las calamidades del mundo; de la violación de las leyes humanas y divinas; y de la perversidad del enemigo. Se trata ahora de buscar cómo implementar nuestra lucha, de saber cuáles son los resortes que ofrecen un contraste rotundo a las intenciones del imperialismo. Si no logramos encontrar repuestas específicas y acabar de una vez de salir del paraguas de la academia, nuestros descendientes calificarán esta generación de pensadores como un grupo de contempladores inútiles.

Dijo James Petras en el Tercer Seminario Internacional de Pedagogía celebrado recientemente en Perú. “En primera instancia los foros sociales eran positivos, reunir, discutir, encontrarse, formar redes, aprobar alguna declaración, pero han pasado a ser casi rituales, como un encuentro social, donde la gente se junta, invita a algunos personajes, realizan una marcha y todos “van a la casa”. Creo que ya perdieron este filo de rebelión, de crítica. Analizando de manera retrospectiva, no ha tenido ningún efecto.

Estoy de acuerdo. Y como muchas otras cosas hay una bandera que parecía ausente en las convenciones mundiales de izquierda, de la cual se ha temido hablar y se le clausura en restringidos partidos políticos. Me refiero al socialismo. Muchos compañeros con honestidad proclaman el fin de los “ismos”. Patético. Pues el fascismo, el militarismo, el imperialismo están en nuestras vidas desde el alba hasta el ocaso. Estas tendencias que vienen siendo como un “fukujamaismo de izquierda” declaran a calzón quitado la tragedia de la izquierda actual. El enemigo es el dueño de los “ismos” y los partidos políticos. Nosotros deberemos conformarnos con rezos, descripciones y proclamas. Confieso que el lemita “Un mundo mejor es posible” me sabe a resignación. ¡Claro que es posible un mundo mejor!...Pero también uno peor. El lema nos limita a la posibilidad. Suena como si algún extraterrestre fuese a venir a fabricarlo, o peor aun: como si existiese la mínima probabilidad de que estas tiernas palabras conmoviesen a los enemigos en una mañana de verano, mientras engullen su zumo de naranjas.

Chávez lo dijo: “Un mundo mejor es posible...si nosotros lo hacemos posible” Al fin: Pues ya me parecería irónico que frente a este escenario dantesco de guerra, mentiras, y miserias, estuviésemos hablando de un mundo mejor.

Hace más de una década que se cayó el muro de Berlín y no logramos curarnos de los trastornos psíquicos que nos ha causado el “socialismo real”. Tendremos que convocar a todos los analistas del mundo a ver si nos libramos de esta maldición. Espero que no gastemos en esto otros setenta años. Mientras vamos al analista el enemigo erige montones de muros más perversos y caen sobre nosotros los términos apocalípticos como guerra preventiva, eje del mal y otras idioteces. Y por si no bastase el mismo enemigo alcanza la mayoría de los votos en Estados Unidos de América.

Y me pregunto: ¿qué otra bandera puede ser más pertinente que la bandera del socialismo? Ahora que la globalización nos impone redondear el mundo definitivamente, ¿qué mejor que retomar las ideas socialistas, estrujarlas, combinarlas, manosearlas y brindarle al enemigo a cambio de la globalización capitalista, una verdadera Internacional? “Con todos y para el bien de todos”, pero como lo dijera José Martí realmente, con todos aquellos con los que sea posible sumar leña a la caldera Y que sinceramente aspiren a un mundo, que tiene que ser no sólo mejor, sino cualitativamente distinto.

Hay una sola alternativa a la barbarie. Lo dijo Federico Engels: el socialismo. Sí, ese socialismo que a decir de Rosa de Luxemburgo “no es, precisamente, un problema de cuchillo y tenedor, sino un movimiento de cultura, una grande y poderosa concepción del mundo”

Sea bienvenida cualquier bandera, siempre

que sea auténtica. Bolívar, Hidalgo, San Martín, José Martí y todos aquellos de los que se enorgullece la historia del hombre en los distintos continentes. Tan sólo y por respeto a ellos mismos, debemos ser consecuentes.



Rally Against US Embargo, Havana.

Julio Antonio Mella hizo vivir a Martí porque lo asumió con valentía a partir de los nuevos descubrimientos científicos de Carlos Marx. Y de alguna manera convirtió a Martí en fundador del primer partido comunista de Cuba Dijo Mella: que “para realizar la revolución en este siglo habrá que contar con un nuevo factor: las ideas del socialismo, que con un matiz u otro, se arraigan en todos los rincones del globo.”

Fidel Castro y sus compañeros volvieron a salvar a José Martí del enemigo porque lo convirtieron de facto en el autor intelectual de una revolución socialista. ¡Basta ya de romanzas! Por eso vive Martí, porque de haber hablado con Carlos Marx, no sólo se hubiese puesto de acuerdo en la primera taza de café, sino porque le hubiese señalado algunas pautas en relación a América; hubiese Martí comprendido mucho mejor los “sucesos de Chicago” y de seguro hubiera alertado a Marx sobre el surgimiento del Imperialismo, por haber vivido en sus entrañas. Sólo con una visión socialista y de lucha clases con una adaptación creadora y heroica para estos tiempos y lugares como solicitaba José Carlos Mariategui, podremos lograr que Bolívar y tantos antepasados no vuelvan a arar en el mar. Nuestra responsabilidad es enorme. Ya no podremos culpar a Stalin y al socialismo real de nuestros fracasos y nuestros prejuicios. Es hora de desenvainar la espada y la pluma, volver a conquistar y a enamorar a los pueblos con los únicas banderas que harán mejor nuestro mundo y el de nuestros hijos.

Es cierto que el enemigo está en crisis. Pero si no tomamos conciencia rápido estaremos siendo arrastrados con él irreversiblemente

¿Y cuál es la salud actual del socialismo? Me atrevo a proponer una “medición” bien simplificada. La revolución es un proceso. Los procesos en la naturaleza se miden por magnitudes variables temporales (A través de un incremento o un decremento de alguna magnitud concreta en el transcurso del tiempo). En Matemáticas se llama derivadas parciales con respecto al tiempo Intentemos medir de igual manera un proceso social.

Hagámoslo de la siguiente forma: Llamemos SOC a una magnitud, que mide cuán socialista es una revolución determinada en un instante de tiempo dado: . Tomemos tres ejemplos.

Primero: La revolución socialista de Cuba ha demostrado su permanencia frente al hostigamiento del imperialismo. Demostró su fortaleza en la década de los noventa al persistir después de derrumbarse el socialismo europeo, y cuando tuvo que enfrentar el recrudecimiento del bloqueo yankee. Este hecho concreto habla de la salud de nuestra revolución socialista. El término SOC es incrementado considerablemente. .

Sin dudas que el proceso de despenalización de la tenencia de divisa; el establecimiento de comercio en esta moneda; el incremento acelerado del turismo y empresas mixtas

que se desenvuelven internamente con parámetros capitalistas, ha sido un trago muy amargo para la revolución. Mucho más que el llamado período especial. Parte de los cubanos comienzan a pensar necesariamente con mentalidad capitalista. Sin que pretenda compararla con la NEP

revolución dentro de la otra: la formación de trabajadores sociales, maestros emergentes, personal paramédico, la revolución inédita en la enseñanza, en la cual en un par de años se redujo el número de alumnos a veinte por maestro No sólo se ha mejorado la calidad de la enseñanza

todos, donde aunque sea de pasada usted escucha hablar de historia de la filosofía, ballet, o ciencias, el establecimiento de dos canales educativos, los cuales contrastan, y compiten con los canales tradicionales y donde la programación es escogida por criterios culturales y no comerciales; las constantes apariciones de Fidel en la televisión hablando con el pueblo; etc. ha contribuido a que el nivel político, la cultura del debate, y el discurso público haya elevado su nivel amén de que a veces caemos en repeticiones innecesarias o abuso del slogan. Pero como quiera esto es un decisivo incremento de la variable SOC. Sí. A Fidel y a los revolucionarios cubanos no les está dado construir el socialismo. Sencillamente porque el socialismo en un solo país es imposible. Lo que sí les es posible es aumentar la magnitud SOC en la revolución socialista. O sea garantizado las fuerzas necesarias para contrarrestar las posibles tendencias restauradoras del capitalismo, enfermedad que contrajimos concientemente para poder sobrevivir en 1994 con la despenalización del dólar. Son dos fuerzas en pugna dentro de la misma revolución... A esta batalla le dedica Fidel la mayor cantidad de su tiempo y todos sus esfuerzos. Esta nueva revolución se desarrolla a partir de proyectos específicos, donde se involucran las capas sociales más revolucionarias. De la campaña contra el mosquito trasmisor de la fiebre amarilla, por ejemplo, se construyó una campaña política, donde los estudiantes de la secundaria llevaban el papel protagónico.

Con todo el escaso valor que pueda tener nuestra moneda nacional, los despidos no existen. Los obreros azucareros que quedaron excedentes cobran el mismo sueldo por superarse. Nuestra “pobreza” económica no ha impedido que Cuba ostente los índices de salud , educación y deporte de una nación desarrollada. Habría que verle el rostro a Fidel Castro el día que le ganó una pequeñísima batalla a las fuerzas restauradoras del capitalismo. Cuando dejó de circular el dólar y comenzó el peso convertible. Aunque era sólo un papel por otro, el simbolismo de que la moneda verde no “rozara” las manos de los jóvenes cubanos le pintaron una indeleble sonrisa, con todo y su lamentable

Continued on page 17



Celia Hart.

Socialism: The only “better world”

From page 14

held in Havana during the VIII Congress of the Union of Communist Youth (UJC). The UJC has been a leader in the battle of ideas, together with Fidel.

The last day of the Conference, Fidel comes out... walking in his traditional green uniform. We could breath in his words, the word Revolution, made with action. The battle of ideas cost the country less than 2% of its income in five years. It gave, however, hundreds of thousands of new comrades. An unprecedented revolutionary efficiency.

In his concluding words, Fidel continues inviting us to the struggle. I invite those who criticize the Cuban regime as bureaucratic, to just once hear a President of any country talking about the electricity expense of televisions, about a million of them in Cuban homes, or about school lunches, or about mothers of disabled people, who will have a salary for taking care of their children. No, no one else talks like this, trying to change everything. Of course, with the blessed exception of companero Hugo Chavez.

That is another proof that we are in revolution. Which we will not renounce regardless of how damaged the world becomes. We have prisoners of war. Our five comrades imprisoned in the United States are internationalist fighters, jailed for defending the revolution against imperialism and its scourges in Miami. That is another example of the permanency of our socialist revolution; we have political prisoners precisely in U.S. prisons. Fidel concludes repeating, “Socialism forever!” And at the rhythm of “Arise, ye wretched of the earth!” ... of the International, sung in Cuba, thousands of youngsters raised their hands, attesting to that eternal continuity.

The second example is legendary China, where according to my SOC criteria, exactly the opposite is taking place. The Communist Party of China says it is building Socialism. Socialism in one country? No, and no again! Chinese private property continues increasing, instead of decreasing. As I have read, China is currently the favorite destination of big capitalists: the country has become a tremendous exporting machine. China’s total exports grew eight fold - to over 380 billion dollars between 1990 and 2003. Five hundred of the biggest multinational corporations of the planet have businesses and investments in that country. Besides,

in order to mitigate the tension created recently by the massive layoffs by state corporations, 45 million workers in the last five years, Beijing has allowed foreigners to add 450 billion dollars to its economy. Is the socialist market economy a temporary NEP? I dont think so. If the economic power is so strong, how come 58,000 workers launched a strike and they are illegal? Why is it estimated that unemployment affects 23% of the Chinese workforce, about 170 million people affected by privatization, adjustments by State corporations because of their low productivity and population growth? Why is it that the World Health Organization states that seven out of ten of the most polluted cities in the planet are in the People’s Republic of China? Could it be that the means became the end? Do Chinese social indices correspond to its economic power?

And if the 1989 protests in Tiananmen Square happen again, whom should we support? China’s Communist Party, just because it is called Communist?

I can understand that these are manifestations of the current economic situation. I have already explained that Cuba is doing it, to some degree. But where is China’s antidote? How many Chinese are teaching schools or taking care of the sick on the Asian continent? Where is their anti-imperialist position? That is how my country is different. In Cuba, these two tendencies are struggling against each other, with socialism clearly in the front. In China, the Communist Party invites business executives to become members of the Party.

China must be recognized, though, for being the most efficient capitalist power in the world. I do not feel like applauding that achievement, though. In China you do not live in a socialist revolution. This is beside the point that it maintains fair relations with developing countries (Or underdeveloped, as they should be called.) But they still are trade relations. I trust that history will not repeat itself in China. Karl Marx would say that events would happen first as tragedy, (we learned that ourselves), and later, as farce.

My third example is Venezuela. Has a socialist revolution triumphed in Venezuela? We will know more in a few years, when the revolutionary process has consolidated. But we must ask the following. Have the positions of the government of Venezuela have become radicalized with time? Yes. Does the government struggle with the scourges of

bourgeois society, looking for other types of solutions? Yes. Does the Bolivarian revolution get stronger in its conflicts with Imperialism? Yes. Then, is the Venezuelan revolution a socialist one? We cannot know that, yet. There has not been enough time, and it has yet to overcome many obstacles. All of us will have our yearnings, our hopes, and our doubts, when it comes to this question. What is important is that up to now, every moment is more radical and less capitalist than the one preceding.

In Cuba it was an avalanche, an abrupt change that had been taking form for a long time. We lived in different decades. A lot of things have happened since the miraculous decade of the 60s. Chavez and his process must endure the bad taste of the disappearance of real socialism.

Of course, they have compensations. As a paradigm, only the Cuban socialist revolution emerges, instead of the Stalinist USSR. Also, Bolivar’s precedent is very timely. Bolivar had a hard time because he had the emerging national bourgeoisie working against him. Today, they are the open allies of the Empire. As soon as Hugo Chavez tries to work with the tools the Liberator left him, the process automatically becomes more radical.

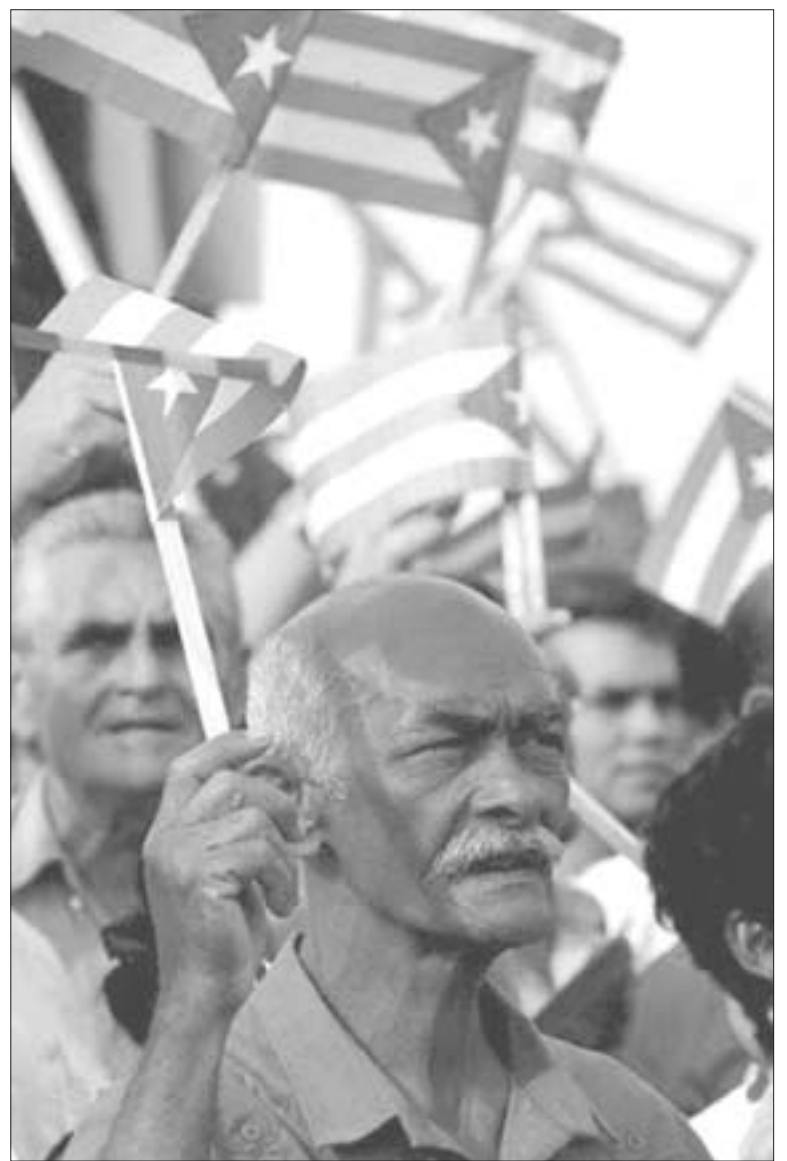
The same thing happened in Cuba with Jose Marti. To keep on being Bolivarian to the end, Chavez will not be able to skip Lenin, Trotsky, Che and Fidel’s teachings. He will not be able to make a bridge from the 19th to the 21st centuries without finding their ideas.

If this man truly intends to carry out a Christian task, he will not have any choice, but to increase daily what we call SOC in the Bolivarian Revolution. In this way, some day, as Che said once, “without realizing it,” we will be seeing an authentic socialist international revolution.

On the other hand, the revolution, was designed through many missions, (Robinson, Barrio Adentro, and many more), which gives it a special similarity to the revolution in my country.

The open struggle against landowners shown in the October 31st electoral campaign, added to the open war against bureaucracy, gives SOC, as we previously defined it, a highly technical value.

So then, there is good news. We have two revolutions taking root in Latin America and opening new hopes. We need many more. Two proven revolutionaries head two of them. It is time to call things as they are. We are afraid of a radical vocabulary.



Those referring to isms and ists do not say whether socialism or socialist revolution or communist parties are included in their censorship.

Chavez stated in his speech in the Caracas meeting, “You perceive the resurgence of a growing force, every day, everywhere. A human, moral and political resurgence. In Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Libya, Moscow, Iran, things are happening.... They speak Russian, Persian, Spanish, Portuguese, but it has the same luster, the same force....”

What force is Commander Chavez referring to? What is the only force in the world that could be introduced as the common denominator of the poor? The ghost of the Communist Manifesto, that ghost which went throughout Europe in the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, taking flight in this century as the only alternative to the misfortunes humanity is undergoing. President Chavez stated that, with this reality, “it is the duty of all the revolutionaries in the world to form a movement of international offensive, and to create a network of social and political organizations.”

On the other hand, he reflected, “There are no national solutions. They are trying to impose upon us the most savage form of globalization, which is neo-liberalism. It is a world problem, and the solution transcends the borders of a country.”

And he proposed, on that road to the offensive to save humanity, “to organize a network of thinkers and thoughts forming a critical force, creative, transforming, who will raise their torches lighting the new type of ideas that humanity needs.”

Three things! End national borders to understanding the struggle; cohesiveness and maturity of forces on the left (political parties and social movements), and an offensive of radical thought. Enough of the enemy’s ancient phraseology (terrorism, human rights, democracy). In our terminology the words of revolution, socialism... and class struggle must appear with renewed strength. I sincerely dream with the word International. In facing global imperialism only a word of this strength can help us.

Hugo Chavez just launched a historical project in the meeting of Intellectuals. He is inviting us to the American dream, but the real one. In contrast to Bush, who is proposing that the U.S. become a country of owners, Chavez is calling for the formation of the Latin American homeland. A Latin American homeland, which will be the homeland of all the workers of the world. And for today, to start working today. The true goals are those we intend to accomplish, even if we do not achieve them. The Patria (homeland) of Simon Bolivar, the America Nuestra [Our America] of Jose Marti... I tremble when I think of the motto, “the third time is the charm...”

Chavez said, “In this century the truth is with us, in this century we will have a fatherland, and the fatherland is Caribbean Latin America, our America. It is time to think and to do, the battle is today, not tomorrow, let’s not waste time, and let’s use the time well. We have been called



Fidel Castro at a Mayday rally in Havana.

Continued on page 18

El socialismo: Ese único mundo mejor

From page 15

accidente.

¿Y el internacionalismo?: Decena de miles de compatriotas están de médicos, maestros o técnicos en general en los países de América Latina. Cunado la tragedia del pobre Haití las organizaciones internacionales se asombraron que por cada médico de los países desarrollados, había una centena de cubanos. En esos jóvenes va (independientemente de sus conciencias) un pedazo exportado de la revolución cubana. No crea tampoco que es gratis. La cantidad de personal que ayuda a Venezuela sale de los que tienen que atender a la población de Cuba. El internacionalismo “nos cuesta” como debe ser. No damos lo que nos sobra, damos lo que más queremos.

Paralelamente al Encuentro de Intelectuales y Artistas de Caracas se celebró en La Habana el VIII Congreso de la Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas. La UJC ha sido la líder en la batalla de ideas junto a Fidel. El día de la clausura del congreso aparece Fidel...caminando con su tradicional uniforme verde. En sus palabras pudimos respirar la palabra revolución hecha en la práctica. La batalla de ideas le ha costado al país menos del 2% de los ingresos en cinco años. Le ha proporcionado, sin embargo centenas de miles nuevos camaradas. Una eficiencia revolucionaria sin precedentes.

En las palabras finales sigue Fidel invitándonos a la lucha. A los que critican al régimen cubano de burócrata, le invito a que escuche tan solo una vez a un Presidente de cualquier país hablando del gasto eléctrico de un televisor, de esos que en la cifra de un millón forman parte de los hogares cubanos, o de la merienda en la escuela, o que las madres de los discapacitados cobrarán su salario tan sólo por cuidar de sus hijos. No, nadie habla tratando de cambiarlo todo. Claro con la bendita excepción del compañero Hugo Chávez.

Es una prueba más que estamos en revolución. A la que no renunciaremos por más dañado que esté el mundo. Tenemos prisioneros de combate. Nuestros cinco compañeros detenidos en Estados Unidos son luchadores internacionalistas por defender la revolución contra el Imperialismo y sus lacayos de Miami. Es ése otro ejemplo de la permanencia de nuestra revolución socialista, tenemos presos políticos precisamente en cárceles norteamericanas. Termina Fidel sus palabras repitiendo: ¡Viva por siempre el Socialismo! y al ritmo de “Arriba los pobres del mundo”...de la Internacional que se canta en Cuba, miles de jóvenes levantaban las manos y daban fe de esta eterna continuidad.

El segundo ejemplo es la legendaria China, donde según mi criterio ocurre exactamente el contrario. El Partido ¿Comunista? de China dice que está construyendo el socialismo. ¿Socialismo en un solo país? ¡No, de nuevo no! En lugar de disminuir la propiedad privada de los chinos se aumenta continuamente. Según he leído China es actualmente el destino favorito de los grandes capitalistas: El país se ha convertido en una tremenda máquina exportadora: las exportaciones totales de China crecieron ocho veces —a más de 380,000 millones de dólares— entre 1990 y 2003; 500 de las multinacionales más importantes del planeta mantienen negocios e inversiones en este país. Además a fin de mitigar la tensión causada recientemente por los despidos masivos en las empresas estatales —45 millones de trabajadores en los últimos cinco años—, Beijing ha permitido que extranjeros coloquen 450,000 millones de dólares en su economía ¿Es la Economía Socialista de Mercado una transitoria NEP? No me lo parece.

Si es tanto el poder económico ¿por qué razón 58 000 obreros se lanzaron a una huelga con todo y que son ilegales? ¿Por qué se estima que el desempleo afecta a 23 por ciento de la fuerza de trabajo china, unos 170 millones de personas que han sido afectadas por las políticas de privatización, los ajustes en las empresas estatales por su baja productividad y las tendencias del incremento poblacional? ¿Por qué asegura la Organización Mundial de la Salud que siete de las diez ciudades más contaminadas del planeta se encuentran en la República Popular China?. ¿Será que el medio se convirtió en fin? ¿Se corresponden los índices sociales de China con su poderío económico? Y si vuelven a manifestarse las protestas de la Plaza Tiananmen de 1989 ¿A quién apoyaremos? ¿Al Partido Comunista de China, por el sofisma de llamarse Comunista? Puedo entender que coyunturalmente se encuentran resortes de eficiencia económica, de hecho ya explique que Cuba lo está haciendo

en algún sentido. Pero ¿dónde está el antídoto de China? ¿Cuántos chinos están dando clases o curando enfermos en el continente asiático? ¿Cuál es su posición antiimperialista? Esta es la diferencia con mi país. En Cuba están en pugna estas dos tendencias con amplísima ventaja para el Socialismo. En China el Partido Comunista invita a los empresarios a ser miembros del mismo. Lo que habrá que reconocerle a China es que se haya convertido en la potencia capitalista mundial más eficiente del planeta. Mas eso es un logro que no me apetece aplaudir. En China no se vive una revolución socialista.

Esto es independientemente que mantenga relaciones justas con países en desarrollo (o subdesarrollados como debiera decirse). Siguen siendo relaciones comerciales. Tengo fe que la historia no se repita con China. Decía Carlos Marx que la primera vez los acontecimientos se presentan como tragedia (ya lo supimos) y la segunda como farsa. No estamos en condiciones para soportar una farsa Mi tercer ejemplo es el de Venezuela. ¿Ha triunfado en Venezuela una revolución socialista? Esto lo sabremos en varios años, cuando el proceso de la revolución se vaya consolidando. Pero la pregunta que debemos hacer es la siguiente ¿Se han radicalizado las posiciones del gobierno de Venezuela en el de cursar del tiempo? Sí. ¿Lucha ese gobierno contra los males de la sociedad burguesa, buscando soluciones de otro carácter? Sí. ¿Se verticaliza la revolución bolivariana en los conflictos con el Imperialismo? Sí. Entonces ¿es socialista la revolución en Venezuela? Todavía no lo podemos saber. No ha transcurrido el tiempo necesario, y tiene todavía que saldar muchos obstáculos. Cada uno de nosotros tendrá sus anhelos, esperanzas y dudas en relación a esta pregunta. Lo que importa es que hasta el momento cada intervalo de tiempo que transcurre en Venezuela es más radical y menos capitalista que el instante anterior.

En Cuba fue una avalancha. Fue un tránsito abrupto que venía perfilándose desde mucho antes. Vivimos en otras décadas , mucho ha llovido desde la milagrosa década del 60. Chávez y su proceso deben cargar con el mal sabor del fallecimiento del socialismo real.

Tienen compensaciones por supuesto. Como paradigma en el mundo emerge solamente la revolución socialista cubana y no la URSS estalinista. Además el antecedente de Bolívar es más que oportuno. Bolívar aró en el mar por tener en su contra las nacientes burguesías nacionales. Hoy son éstas aliadas abiertas del Imperio. Basta que Hugo Chávez aspire a arar la tierra que dejó el libertador y automáticamente se radicaliza el proceso... Lo mismo que sucedió en Cuba con José

Martí. Para ser bolivariano hasta sus últimas consecuencias, Chávez no podrá pasar por alto las enseñanzas de Lenin, Trosky, el Che y Fidel. No le será posible trazar un puente del siglo XIX al XXI sin toparse con este pensamiento.

Si es cierto que este hombre se propone realizar una obra cristiana, no le quedará alternativa posible que aumentar cada día más la magnitud que definiéramos como SOC dentro de la revolución bolivariana. De esta forma algún día como dijera el Che una vez “sin darnos cuenta” estaremos observando una auténtica revolución socialista con un marcado carácter internacional.

Por otra parte la revolución diseñada a través de las múltiples misiones (Robinson, Barrio Adentro, y muchas más) confieren una especial semejanza con la batalla de Ideas desarrollada en mi país. La lucha abierta contra el latifundio que fue desplegada durante la campaña electoral

del 31 de Octubre sumada a la guerra abierta contar la burocracia le confiere un alto valor al término SOC que definiéramos previamente.

Entonces, hay buenas noticias. Contamos con dos revoluciones que se profundizan en América Latina y abren nuevas esperanzas. Necesitamos muchas más. Dos revolucionarios probados están a la cabeza de ellas. Entonces es hora de volver a decir las cosas por sus nombres. Le tememos al vocabulario radical. Los que apelan al fin de los ismos e istas...no dicen si socialismo o revolución socialista o partido comunista están incluidos en la censura.

Por su parte Chávez dijo precisamente en su intervención en el encuentro de Caracas: “Uno percibe el resurgimiento de una fuerza creciente cada día, en todas partes. Un resurgimiento moral, humano y político (...) En Argentina, Brasil, España, Libia, Moscú, Irán están ocurriendo cosas (...) hablan ruso, persa, español, portugués, pero

pero al verdadero. En contrate con el de Bush que propone que Norteamérica se convierta en un territorio de propietarios, Chávez nos convoca a la creación de la Patria Latinoamericana. Una patria latinoamericana que será patria de todos los trabajadores del mundo. Y para hoy, para empezar a trabajar hoy. Las verdaderas metas son aquellas que nos proponemos ver cumplidas, aunque no lo logremos La Patria de Simón Bolívar, la América nuestra de José Martí... Tiemblo al pensar en el proverbio que reza “A la tercera va la vencida”.

Dijo Chávez: “Este siglo es el de la verdad para nosotros, en este siglo tendremos patria y la patria es la América Latino caribeña; nuestra América. Es tiempo de pensar y de hacer, la batalla es hoy y no mañana, no perdamos tiempo, aprovechemos el tiempo. Nosotros estamos llamados a inventarla, a crearla libre, a liberarla definitivamente para bien de nuestros pueblos”.



es el mismo brillo, es la misma fuerza”...

¿De qué fuerza habla el Comandante Chávez? ¿Cuál es la única fuerza en el mundo que puede presentarse como común denominador por los humildes? El fantasma del Manifiesto Comunista, ese fantasma que recorrió Europa en el siglo XIX y principios del XX, retoma vuelo en este siglo como única alternativa a las desgracias por las que atraviesa la humanidad.

Precisó el Presidente Chávez que, ante esta realidad, “es deber de todos los revolucionarios del mundo darle cohesión a un movimiento de ofensiva internacional y crear una red de organizaciones sociales y políticas”

Por otro lado reflexionó: “No hay soluciones nacionales. Nos están tratando de imponer la fórmula de la globalización en su concepto o fase más salvaje, que es el neoliberalismo, el problema es mundial y la solución trasciende las fronteras de un país”.

Y propuso, en ese camino de la ofensiva para salvar la humanidad, “organizar una red de pensadores y de pensamientos que vayan conformando una fuerza crítica, creadora, transformadora, que levanten las antorchas que iluminen el nuevo tipo de pensamiento que requiere la humanidad”.

¡Tres cosas! Fin de las fronteras nacionales para entender la lucha; cohesión y madurez de las fuerzas de izquierda (partidos políticos y movimientos sociales), y ofensiva del pensamiento radical. Basta ya de la fraseología anquilosada del enemigo (terrorismo, derechos humanos, democracia) En nuestro discurso debe aparecer con nuevas fuerzas las palabras de revolución, socialismo...y lucha de clases. Para ser sincera sueño con la palabra Internacional. Frente a la globalización imperial solamente una palabra con esta fuerza puede ayudarnos.

Hugo Chávez acaba de lanzar un proyecto histórico en la reunión de Intelectuales, nos está invitando al sueño americano,

Para este empeño no bastará aprender la historia americana y encontrar los resortes para la movilización de nuestros pueblos. Necesitamos mucho más. Más bien un ejército de pensadores y luchadores. En primer lugar debemos convocar la herencia del pensamiento socialista. Y como suele repetir Armando Hart hasta la saciedad “En beneficio de Inventario” Porque ellos también erraban, tienen esa licencia. Pero la herencia positiva de estos hombres le dará la mano a “nuestro nuevo presidente” en la batalla final americana.

Entonces solamente por hoy y tomando como referencia un reciente artículo de Carlos Alberto Montaner, me permito destacar en este tribunal de pensadores revolucionarios a León Trosky.

Trotsky ostenta el record Gines del revolucionario más difamado de la historia. En relación a su persona muchos, incluso comunistas, sostienen sin querer una estrecha colaboración con el enemigo. Trosky ha sido acusado de todo absolutamente: fascista, imperialista, asesino, de frenar la revolución, de sectario... En el mejor de los casos al pensamiento trotskista se le considera innecesario, pues “es cosas de viejos”. Y entonces ahora hay que soportar que Carlos Alberto Montaner connotado enemigo de la revolución cubana, lo acuse nada más y nada menos que de haberse arrepentido en sus últimos días de la revolución y del socialismo, y haber abrazado la bandera del mercado y la democracia representativa. ¡Es el colmo! Pero tenemos la culpa por restringir su figura a los llamados partidos “trotskistas”, como si no formara parte del elenco de actores de la Revolución, como si no fuese el pensador marxista que más nos haya alertado sobre el fin de la URSS. Mas que ningún otro, Trosky estudió los resortes que pueden llevar a liquidar una revolución con todo y un partido comunista en el poder.

El derrumbe del socialismo real es

Continued on page 18

Socialism: The only “Better World”

From page 16

to invent it, to create it freely, to finally liberate it for the welfare of our peoples.”

For this enterprise it will not be enough to read American history and to find the ways to mobilize our peoples. We need much more. We need an army of thinkers and fighters. First, we must call upon the [intellectual] heritage of socialist thought. And like Armando Hart has said repeatedly, “Learn from our mistake [En beneficio de Inventario]. Because they also made mistakes, they have the right to say this. But the positive legacy of these men will shake hands with our new president” in the final battle of the Americas.

Then, just for today, and quoting a recent article by Carlos Alberto Montaner, permit me to bring up revolutionaries such as Leon Trotsky in this tribunal of thinkers.

Trotsky is in the Guinness Book of World Record as the most defamed revolutionary in history. Many, including Communists, involuntarily state a close relationship with the enemy. Trotsky has been charged with absolutely everything: being a fascist, an imperialist, an assassin, with stopping the revolution, sectarianism..... In the best of cases, Trotsky’s ideas are considered unnecessary, because they are “old.” And now we have to endure Carlos Alberto Montaner, a well-known enemy of the Cuban revolution, accusing him of nothing less than repenting revolution and socialism, in his final days, embracing the market and representative democracy. It is terrible! But it is our fault, for restricting him to the so-called “Trotskyist parties,” as if he were no part of those who made the revolution, as if he was not the Marxist thinker who did the most to alert us to the end of the USSR. More than any other, Trotsky analyzed the mechanisms that can end a revolution and a communist party in power. The fall of real socialism cannot be analyzed and understood without reading Leon Trotsky. And that analysis is not old-fashioned. It is very contemporary. He experienced in his own flesh the excesses of the bureaucracy of a socialist state in power, he designed one of the most vital concepts for revolutionary thought: the permanent revolution. It is not only unfair to hold him apart from the best communists, but it also is a lack in our revolutionary practice.



Celebration of the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.

Internationalism, permanent revolution, and the non-viability of socialism in one country are key aspects of the revolution... Besides, he can be accused of many things, but not with being a revisionist of Marxism. If he is guilty of anything, it is exactly the opposite of being a revisionist. Che and Fidel have followed his steps, even though they did not know it. The slogan “create two, three, many Vietnams” is the materialization in Latin America of the Permanent Revolution and Internationalism.

To consider Trotsky a part of revolutionary thought is a duty of communists, not only Trotskyists. When communism is mentioned, Trotsky must be included. Trotskyism is not a particular branch of Marxism. James Cannon, one of the leaders of the Communist Party in the U.S. said in 1942, “Trotskyism is not a new movement, a new doctrine, but the restoration, the rebirth of authentic Marxism, as it was practiced in the Russian Revolution and the first days of the Communist International.”

Montaner states, “In his last days in Mexico, before he was murdered by the son of a crazy Cuban named Ramon Mercader, Trotsky was starting to reject the idea of tyranny and discovering the value of economic and political freedom and the importance of formal democracy.”

And Trotsky had stated in 1932, “Only a powerful growth of the productive forces and a just, planned organization, that is, socialist, of production and distribution, can assure men - all men - a dignified lifestyle, giving them at the same time the indescribable feeling of freedom within their own economy.”

Yes! This is the freedom Montaner refers to.... Trotsky considered its relevance long before. Because of that he organized the Red Army, he worked side by side with Lenin, and in the last analysis, in the name of that liberty, he gave his best years and his entire life.

But we know that, no, what he [Montaner] meant, was the freedom and impunity the

exploiters enjoy. How far have we gone in our unfair judgments of Leon Trotsky that one of the worst enemies of socialism can talk in those terms! If this continues, we will be giving the true deathblow to this revolutionary thinker, a worse blow than Mercader’s in 1940. And a blow of this type to Trotsky is an irreversible blow to socialist ideas.

Luckily, Hugo Chavez cheered us with the other side of the coin. In the closing session of the Caracas conference, he said the following, referring to a book by Trotsky he bought in Madrid, “The Permanent Revolution,” in which the Bolshevik revolutionary states that the problems in every country do not have national solutions, but include all the peoples,” a thesis he totally supports.

It is said that lies live a hundred years, and truth can catch up in a day. This shows that when the road is honestly sought.... All the roads lead to.... socialism. A permanent anti-globalization office will open in Caracas. Perhaps this will be the office of the

permanent revolution.

Lastly, I must refer to the new article by Carlos Alberto Montaner, because his article completely misses the point. The man also complains because I called him a terrorist. And perhaps he is right. If imperialism calls my Palestinian brothers terrorists as they struggle for their people’s self-determination, if the Iraqi fighters in Fallujah are terrorists, because they courageously face the strongest and most cowardly army in the world, then, Montaner is not a terrorist. If Cuban revolutionaries opposed a criminal, pro-US dictatorship, and in less than seven years achieved power and established an authentic socialist revolution, and are called terrorists, then, Montaner is not that. But this man is an enemy of the Cuban people. He expects that after four decades of knowing what dignity is all about, we’ll go backwards. After we learned the ways of freedom it is impossible for the Cuban people to “peacefully” become a corrupt country, loyal to imperialism. His expectations for my country to go backwards half a century to become again the casino of the U.S. are almost infantile. Fidel has more or less said that a socialist revolution will triumph in the U.S. before there is a counterrevolution in Cuba.

And about myself and my “revisionism,” I’ll tell him the following: I hope that never will that type of formal democracy come to Cuba, as corrupt and vicious as he proposes. But if that were to happen, if for some reason the Cuban revolution should fail, if those regressive forces we mentioned above should triumph over the revolutionary battle of ideas, then all I will have to do is check the bullets in my magazine and the barrel of my rifle, and the only current that we, Cuban and world communists will have, will be the current of air blowing again in Sierra Maestra. And I can assure Mr. Montaner that by my side, besides Fidel, Che, Marx and Lenin, will be the First Soldier, Leon Trotsky.

I very proudly will enter Montaner’s ranks of “terrorists.”

*Translated by Maria Montelibre from: Rebellion web site in Spain

<http://www.rebellion.org/noticia.php?id=8669>

Source: <http://www.walterlippmann.com/>

El socialismo: Ese único mundo mejor

From page 17

imposible de analizar y de entender si no se lee a León Trosky. Y ese análisis no está pasado de moda. Está a la orden del día. Vivió en carne propia los desmanes de la burocracia de un estado socialista en el poder, fue el que diseñó teóricamente uno de los conceptos más vitales para el pensamiento revolucionario. La revolución permanente. No sólo es injusto no colocarlo al lado de los mejores comunistas, sino que esto constituye una ausencia sensible en nuestra práctica revolucionaria. El internacionalismo, la revolución permanente, y la inviabilidad del socialismo en un solo país, son aspectos claves para la revolución... Pero además, de muchas cosas puede acusársele, no de revisionista del marxismo. Si pecó de algo es exactamente de lo contrario. El Che y Fidel han seguido sus pasos, aunque ellos no lo hayan sabido. La consigna “de crear dos, tres... muchos Vietnam” es la concreción en la práctica latinoamericana de la Revolución Permanente y el Internacionalismo.

Considerar a Trotsky en el pensamiento revolucionario es un deber de los comunistas, y no tan solo de los trotskistas. Dígase comunista y ya deberá estar León Trosky incluido. El trotskismo no es una corriente particular del marxismo. James Cannon, uno de los dirigentes fundadores del movimiento comunista de Estados Unidos dijo en 1942 “El trotskismo no es un nuevo movimiento, una nueva doctrina, sino la restauración el renacimiento del marxismo genuino, tal como se expuso y se practicó en la Revolución Rusa y en los primeros días de la Internacional Comunista”

Dice Montaner: “en sus últimos tiempos en México, antes de que Ramón Mercader, hijo de una enloquecida cubana lo asesinará, Trotsky comenzaba a rechazar la idea de la tiranía y descubría el valor de la libertad económica y política y la importancia de la democracia formal”.

Y Trotsky había dicho, en 1932 : “Sólo un poderoso aumento de las fuerzas

productivas y una organización justa, planificada , es decir socialista , de producción y distribución puede asegurar a los hombres –a todos los hombres-un nivel de vida digno y confíarles al mismo tiempo el sentimiento inefable de la libertad frente a su propia economía”

¡Oh si! Si es esta libertad a la que se refiere Montaner... Trotsky le dio importancia mucho antes. En nombre de ella organizó el ejército rojo, trabajó al lado de Lenin, y a última instancia en nombre de esta libertad entregó sus mejores años y su vida entera.

Pero sabemos que no, que se refiere a la libertad e impunidad que gozan los explotadores. ¡A dónde habremos llegado en la injusticia con León Trosky para que uno de los mayores enemigos del socialismo pueda hablar en estos términos! Si permitimos que esto siga ocurriendo le estaremos acertando el verdadero golpe de muerte al pensador revolucionario Un golpe peor que el que le proporcionara Mercader en 1940. Y un golpe de esta naturaleza a Trosky es un golpe irreparable a las ideas del socialismo.

Por suerte Hugo Chávez nos regocijó con la otra cara de la moneda. En la sesión de clausura del Evento de Caracas pronunció las siguientes e históricas palabras, al referirse a un libro de León Trosky que compró en Madrid: “La revolución permanente”, donde el revolucionario bolchevique plantea que los problemas de cada país no tienen soluciones nacionales, sino que incluyen al resto de los pueblos” tesis que dijo compartir plenamente.

Dicen que la mentira corre cien años y la verdad la alcanza en un día. Esto demuestra que cuando se busca el camino con honestidad.....Todos esos caminos conducen....al socialismo. Se establecerá en Caracas una oficina permanente anti-globalización. Quizás sea esta la primera oficina de la permanente revolución

Por último debo referirme de nuevo al artículo de Carlos Alberto Montaner, pues creo que de nuevo agarra los rábanos por las hojas. El señor protesta además porque le llamé terrorista. Y puede que tenga razón. Si el imperialismo llama terroristas

a mis hermanos palestinos que luchan por la autodeterminación de su pueblo en contra del sionismo; él no es terrorista, si los luchadores iraquíes en Faluya son terroristas por enfrentarse valientemente al ejercito mas fuerte y mas cobarde del mundo; entonces él no es terrorista, si los revolucionarios cubanos que se opusieron a un dictadura criminal y pro yankee, y en menos de siete años conquistaron el poder y establecieron un autentica revolución socialista eran terroristas; entonces él no lo es. Pero este señor es enemigo del pueblo de Cuba. Pretende que después de cuatro décadas conociendo cual es la dignidad volvamos atrás. Después de que aprendimos a conocer el decoro de ser libres es imposible que el pueblo de

Cuba se convierta “pacíficamente” en una república corrupta fiel al imperialismo. Sus pretensiones de que mi patria se regrese medio siglo atrás y vuelva a ser el casino de los Estados Unidos son casi infantiles. Fidel dijo más o menos que primero triunfará una revolución socialista en los Estados Unidos, que una contrarrevolución en Cuba.

Y en cuanto a mi persona y mi “revisionismo” le digo lo siguiente: Tengo la esperanza de que en Cuba no se instaurará jamás aquella democracia formal, tan viciada y corrompida que él propone. Pero si así fuese, si por alguna razón la revolución cubana fracasase, si aquellas fuerzas restauradoras de las

que hablábamos arriba aventajasen a la impronta revolucionaria de nuestra batalla de ideas, entonces no se me ocurrirá revisar otra cosa que no sean el número de balas de mi cargador y el cañón de mi fusil, y la única corriente que tendremos los comunistas de Cuba y del mundo será la corriente de aire que sople nuevamente en la Sierra Maestra Y le aseguro al señor Montaner que junto a mí además de Fidel, el Che, Marx y Lenin estará como el primer soldado de fila León Trotsky.

Ingresaré con mucho orgullo las filas de los “terroristas” de Montaner.

* <http://www.rebellion.org/noticia.php?id=8669>



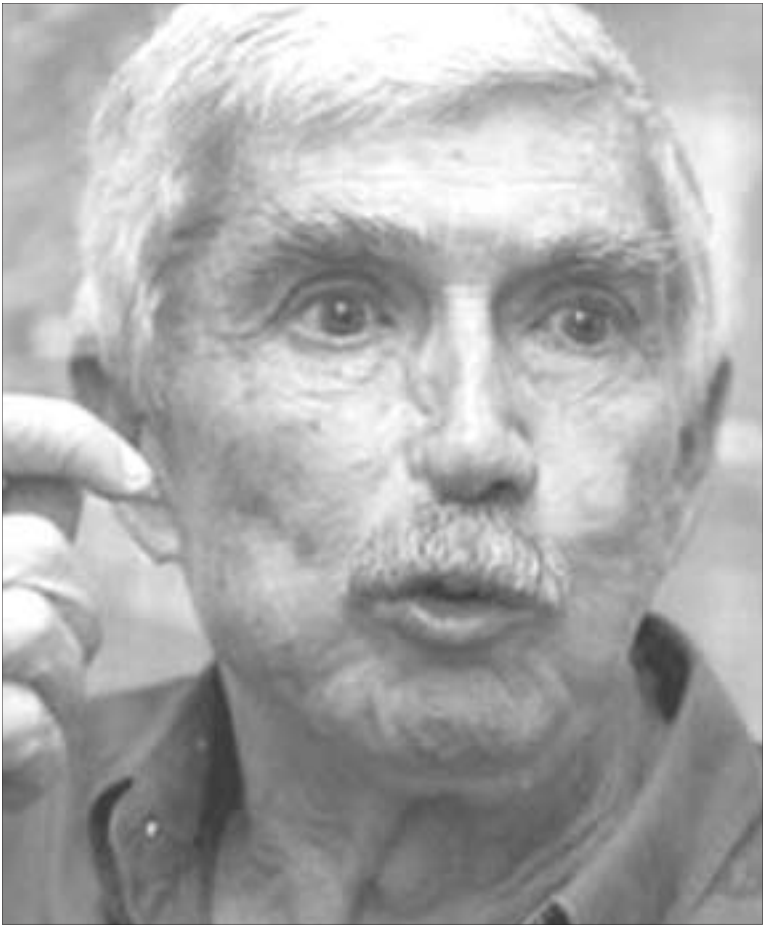
Cuban youth cheer during a protest against the US embargo in Manzanillo.

Who is Anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles?

By Tamara Hansen

Responsible for organizing and carrying out many terrorist plots Luis Posada Carriles is a well-known anti-Cuban terrorist. Posada's terrorist resume includes: spending time jailed in Panama for attempting to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro; boasting to a New York Times journalist that he was responsible for organizing a string of bombings at tourist locations throughout Cuba in 1997; and finally the most condemning evidence against Posada- the CIA documents that link Posada to the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner which killed 73 people.

Posada was charged in Venezuela with the 1976 airliner bombing but escaped from prison in 1985 and became an international fugitive. On April 13th 2005 after entering the US on a shrimp boat, Posada filed a request for asylum in the US. Soon after, Venezuela filed an extradition request for Posada in order to charge him with planning the 1976 bombing. The US denied this request citing a lack of evidence against Posada, despite the fact that they



Luis Posada Carriles.

have declassified CIA documents, which implicate him in the planning.

On May 17th Posada was detained by the US Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement for entering the United States illegally. Despite being arrested the US continues to refuse to extradite Posada to Venezuela. With their refusal, the US is proving what many already know, which is that the United-States supposed "war on terror" is a farce to be used only when it is in their own interests.

Since Posada submitted his application for asylum in the US there have been rallies, press conferences, and petitions sent out across Canada, the United-States, Venezuela, Cuba and the world, demanding: 'No Asylum for Luis Posada Carriles!' and 'Extradite Posada to Venezuela!'

On May 14th 2005, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) launched a petition campaign demanding that the US honour its extradition treaty with Venezuela and refuse Posada asylum. Since starting the campaign less than two months ago, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)

has collected over 320 signatures. The positive response to the campaign reflects the understanding of people across the lower mainland of the importance of this campaign in standing up for justice, in defending Cuba against injustice, and in further exposing the lies and deceit of the US administration.

It is together with the people of Venezuela, Cuba and across the globe that we continue to demand the extradition of Posada to Venezuela. We also call on the government of Canada to end its silence on this case and to put pressure on the United-States to uphold international law and extradite Posada.

August 29th 2005 is Posada's next trial date. We are aiming to send a strong message to the US administration for this day by collecting over 700 signatures for our petition campaign. Please join us in our call and get involved in this important emergency campaign.

The petition is available at: www.vancubasolidarity.com

More Important Than Ever: Defending The Cuban Five in US Jails

By Thomas Davies

The campaign to free five anti-terrorist Cubans held in United States jails took important steps forward in recent months. As the US administration further exposed the hypocrisy of its "War on Terror" through its protection of renowned and admitted anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles. The US government did this while continuing to imprison the "Cuban Five" for providing information on terrorist activities originating in and supported by the US itself and reactionary anti-Cuba terrorist groups in Miami. In Vancouver the campaign to "Free the Five!" continues with organizers escalating their activity amidst a surge of international solidarity.

Who is the Terrorist?

The whole world watched as US administrators first denied that Luis Posada Carriles was in the US, despite the fact that he was openly enjoying life in Miami. The world continued to watch as Posada was finally arrested for a charge completely unrelated to his terrorist activities.

The Cuban Five played an instrumental role in exposing Carriles through evidence they collected, which was presented to the FBI in 1998. This included facts about Posada's terrorist activities as well as taped conversations and his

location, all of which were completely ignored. Instead, the Cuban Five were arrested soon after the evidence was presented to the FBI.

When the Cuban Five were arrested in September of 1998, they were held without bail for 33 months, and in isolation for 17 months. As well, the US continues to deny visas to Olga Salaneuva and Adriana Perez, wives of two of the five – René Gonzalez and Gerardo Hernandez. Ivette Gonzalez, René's 6-year-old daughter, is completely shut off from her father. Posada, on the other hand, has his own private cell, water supply, and exercise area, special meals, and little to no restrictions on either telephone calls or personal visits from family, friends, and media.

Recent Breakthrough

New evidence has also surfaced to bolster the case of the Cuban Five. Almost seven years after the trial, Héctor Pesquera, the former chief of the Miami branch of the FBI and the man centrally responsible for the arrest of the five Cubans, confessed that the Cuban Five did not have access to any intelligence information. When asked on a recent radio interview in Miami, "Do you believe that the security of the United States was in danger at any point, or did they have access to any intelligence information that could be valuable to the enemies of the United States?"

Pesquera answered "No," and explained, "For example, in the case of [Antonio] Guerrero, there was a retrospective study of the information he had obtained and the investigation did not indicate that it could have been so."

Yet the Five are still imprisoned with sentences ranging from 15 years to double life sentences. This was explained by president of the Cuban National Assembly Ricardo Alarcon, "The story is very simple, that the US administration acted against those five Cubans in order to protect those that are very closely linked to the US Administration. They are part and parcel of the anti-Cuba policy of the US"

Solidarity and Action Around the World

Others around the world see it the same way, with the parliament of Equatorial Guinea recently calling for the release of the Five. Salomon Nguema, president of the House addressed the mothers of the five anti-terrorist Cubans, stating, "As friends, as brothers and sisters, and as human beings, we share your sorrow because we know that they fought for a fair cause." Recent support actions in US, France, Peru, Ireland, UK, Nicaragua, Belgium and many other countries around the world have all demanded their release as well.

In Canada, the support of the Cuban Five is growing and has become even more important in exposing the hypocrisy of US foreign policy, and is symbolic of Cuba's fight for self-determination against imperialist Yankees. The Cuban Five figured heavily in the June 13th demonstration for the extradition of Posada in Vancouver, with members of Free the Cuban Five Committees in Vancouver and Courtenay both addressing the crowd. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) also recently recommended the passing of a motion to their executive to "condemn the imprisonment of Cubans Rene Gonzalez, Ramon Labanino, Gerardo Hernandez, Fernando Gonzalez, and Antonio Guerrero in Florida and call for their immediate release from prison."

The Free the Cuban Five Committee – Vancouver continues its petition demanding their immediate release, with well over 2,000 signatures collected thus far. The Committee calls on all progressive individuals and organizations to join in the international campaign to "Free the Five!" To get involved in the committee



Rally in Havana, Cuba 2005.

Solidarity from Cuba to Cheam Nation

By Shannon Bundock

Sunday May 29th was a cool and quiet spring day. Tayseth Fuentes had been in Vancouver for nearly three months, studying at UBC and working towards her PhD. As a Cuban doctor, visiting Vancouver for the first time, Tayseth was constantly balancing her university work with exploring life in an imperialist country and learning about the political and solidarity work being undertaken in Vancouver.

One central area of struggle that

doctor was able to swiftly push aside the shroud of secrecy held up by the government of Canada to uncover a common interest and close alliance with Indigenous nations.

Along with a delegation from the Vancouver-based social justice group, Youth 3rd World Alliance (Y3WA), Tayseth Fuentes made a historic visit to the Cheam nation on that cool spring day in May. The purpose of the visit was to meet with community leader and fighter June Quipp. June is an elder and former elected Chief of the Cheam Nation. She has been

the government of Canada through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). After an exchange of gifts, the delegation headed back to Vancouver, only 3 days before Tayseth boarded a plane back to Cuba.

The significance of this visit goes beyond the meeting of two remarkable fighters for justice. The meeting represented the unity that exists between oppressed people across the globe. June and Tayseth speak different languages, but share similar histories, similar struggles and the same objectives.



Tayseth Fuentes and June Quipp hold a Cuban flag during a visit of solidarity.

Tayseth was particularly interested in was the fight of Indigenous nations for self-determination in Canada. Cuba itself has waged historic and heroic battles against foreign influence and intervention in their country for decades. It has been 56 years since the Cuban people kicked out the dictator Batista and removed US influence from their soil. Despite the time however, with US imperialism 90 miles from their shores threats against their sovereignty still remain.

Many people coming from other countries are unaware of the history of Canada. Such as the fact that this country was built on stolen native land or such as the fact that Canada was established through the genocide of millions of Indigenous people. With an internationalist spirit, this Cuban

leader in countless fights against illegal development and logging on Cheam land, along with the outright theft of Cheam land and attacks on Indigenous rights.

The group arrived in early afternoon to a meal of local salmon, caught only hours earlier. June explained the significance of this, as the government of Canada has repeatedly blocked the Cheam nation of their traditional fishing rights. Even cooking a simple meal is political in Cheam.

Throughout the visit both Tayseth and June shared stories of their people's histories and struggles. The 4,500 kilometers that separate Cheam from Cuba were dissolving as the day went on.

The visit closed with a trip down to the Fraser River, where June told stories of the attacks on Cheam by

The fight against colonialism in Canada connects Cheam to the millions of oppressed people in Iraq, Palestine, Haiti, and Afghanistan who die everyday in the struggle against occupation and for self-determination. The internationalism and warm spirit of the Cuban revolution, which Tayseth brought to Cheam on May 29th, reflected the unity of 11.5 million Cubans with tens of thousands of Indigenous people across Canada. For the people of Cheam and the Cuban people it is this spirit of internationalism which connects them in their common fight for a better world.

Self-Determination for Indigenous Nations!

Defend Cuba Against US Imperialist Attacks!

Western Shoshone Struggle Against American Colonialism

By Aaron Mercredi

"I was indigenous and in one single evening they made me indigent. If you think the Indian wars are over, then think again."

- Carrie Dann on October 31st 2002

On April 27th 2005, over 60 people packed in to the KAYA office in the basement of the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre to learn about and discuss the struggle of the Western Shoshone Nation for self-determination. The event, "Resisting Colonialism in North America: The Western Shoshone Struggle

Program, spoke and gave more of a legal perspective to the case. Discussion went well in to the evening, as many participants wanted to learn more about the case and what people can do to support the Western Shoshone. Members of the International Indigenous Youth Conference Secretariat welcomed the Western Shoshone to Coast Salish territory, and Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth Advocates gave recognition and solidarity to the guests.

Members of the WSDP and Western Shoshone Nation were in town to protest against the expansion of the Cortez Gold Mines on to more of their traditional territory, which



MAWO hosts Western Shoshone Forum at Aboriginal Friendship Centre.

for Sovereignty," was organized by Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), to host guests from the Western Shoshone Defense Project (WSDP) and the Western Shoshone Nation.

The evening began with a screening of "Broken Treaty II: To Protect Mother Earth," a documentary outlining the struggle of the Western Shoshone people to gain recognition of rights to Newe Sogobia, which is approximately sixty million acres of land, secured under the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley. The film was followed by a moment of silence to honour the life of Mary Dann, one of the Dann sisters who led the fight of the Western Shoshone people against the colonial attacks by the US government and passed away only days before the event.

Chris Sewall, coordinator of the WSDP's Mining and Environment program, began by giving an update on what has happened since documentary was released, outlining the gains and losses they have experienced. Te-Moak Tribal Chairman Hugh Stevens spoke next and provided a synopsis of the long colonial war that the US has been waging against Western Shoshone people since first contact. Darla Lazona, Elko Band Te-Moak Council member, spoke next and spoke passionately about their rights as indigenous people and how they will never give up their struggle for dignity against the US government. Finally, Julie Fishel, coordinator of WSDP's Land Recognition

makes up most of Nevada and part of California. Placer Dome, the world's fifth largest gold company whose headquarters is in Vancouver is involved in this project, which aims to steal Western Shoshone resources from right under their feet. The areas currently under threat of development are Mount Tenabo and Horse Canyon, two important places for the Western Shoshone people. It is home to their creation stories, contains ancient burial sites, ceremonial areas, food and medicinal plants. Since the idea of mining exploration was proposed, Western Shoshone people have protested against it. Visiting Vancouver was another step in the battle for their rights to their own land and resources.

The Western Shoshone Defense Project formed in 1991 to affirm Newe (Western Shoshone) jurisdiction over Newe Sogobia, the Western Shoshone homelands in Nevada. Currently, the US claims federal ownership over this territory, despite the fact that it formally recognized Western Shoshone territory under the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley. The US' justification for its theft of this area is that it argues that the Western Shoshone lost their rights to the land in 1872 as a result of encroachment by non-native Americans, despite the fact that Western Shoshone people continue to live on and use the land, and the majority of the area had not settled by anyone except

Continued on page 23

Che Guevara's Legacy:

A Revolutionary Path for the 21st Century

By Ali Yerevani

It was a warm spring evening on the 14th of May 2005, seventy-seven years after the birth of Ernesto Che Guevara. On this day Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) brought over 150 people together for a hot Havana night at Britannia Community Centre to celebrate Che's life with a forum entitled, "Che Guevara's Legacy: A Revolutionary Path for the 21st Century".

Che was an internationalist and a revolutionary fighter. The panel of speakers reflected this, with Tim Louis, Vancouver City Councillor; Dr. Luis Dominguez-Nieto, Cuban doctor and union organizer; Dr. Tayseth Fuentes, Cuban doctor and

The presentations brought forth the life of Che, his impact on the revolutionary process in Cuba and his role in Latin America as both a symbol of resistance and teacher of struggle and humanity. Tim Louis opened the event discussing the long lasting impact of Che's ideas. He said, "The CIA thought they'd finished Che off in 1967 when they murdered him. But in fact Che lives on today in the hearts and minds of every Cuban child, Cuba which has the highest infant morality rate of any nation in Latin America. That's a result of Che's inspiration."

Tim Louis was followed by Dr. Luis Dominguez-Nieto who gave a short biography on Che and talked especially well about Che's impact on the work of doctors in Cuba.

explained Ivan Drury, who spoke following Carlos. "He represents the future because he represents the interests of oppressed people around the world against imperialism and against capitalism." Ivan went on to explain the changes that need to be made here in Canada in fighting against both imperialism and capitalism and how the ideas of Che are relevant to that struggle.

The forum was attended by a diverse crowd with many young people, people of colour, women, students, immigrants and refugees coming to learn more about the ideas of this popular icon. Through the presentations on Che's experiences people learned more about the Cuban revolution and the fight for social justice and human dignity being fought for today in Cuba.

While wrapping up the speakers Tamara Hansen co-ordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) introduced the group's newest campaign, a petition against Luis Posada Carriles an anti-Cuban terrorist. The petition was read out loud and through clapping and cheering the forum passed a resolution demanding: No asylum for Luis Posada Carriles in the US! Defend Cuba against terrorist attacks! Honour the extradition demand of Venezuela! (*For more information see the "Who is anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles?" article in this issue of Fire This Time.*)

After the speakers spoke there was only time for one question which was, "What will happen in Cuba after Fidel Castro dies?" Cuban doctor Tayseth Fuentes responded saying that people around the world seem to be very concerned about this question, but most Cubans are not. She said, "After Fidel dies the Cuban revolution and the people of Cuba will continue on, much like after the death of Che, with Fidel's legacy in their minds and hearts."

Venceremos!

Hasta la Victoria Siempre!



Cuban Doctors Luis Dominguez and Tayseth Fuentes speaking at the Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) Forum, May 14th 2005.

member of the Partido Comunista de Cuba (PCC); Carlos Lopez, member of La Surda Latin American Collective, organizer with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and Mexican political and social justice activist; and Ivan Drury, from the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and an organizer of Youth-Third World Alliance (Y3WA). Translation was provided by Nino Pagliccia a well-known and long-time pro-Cuba activist.

After Luis, Dr. Tayseth Fuentes gave a slide show and talk about Che's ideas and the implementation of his revolutionary ideas into his life.

Carlos Lopez followed Tayseth opening with statistics on the poverty and misery faced by the people of Latin America today in the face of neo-liberal globalization and imperialism. Carlos outlined how Che inspires people to struggle and fight for change in all Latin American countries.

"Che represents the future,"



Che Guevara's Legacy: A Revolutionary Path for the 21st Century, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) forum, May 14th 2005.

World Peace Forum 2006:

The World Still Says ‘No’ to War!

Vancouver Initiates and Promotes Peace Around the World!

“In the face of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, global anti-war movements have rallied together on a scale previously unseen--more and more people are daily seeking alternatives to mainstream sources of information, and peace networks are growing around the world.”

– From the ‘working vision’ for the World Peace Forum, released in November 2004.

In less than one year, anti-war and peace activists will descend upon the city of Vancouver for the 2006 World Peace Forum. The forum is an initiative of the Peace and Justice Committee of the Vancouver City Council and was met with approval by council earlier this year. This forum is a major initiative which will run for one week and include participants and presentations from leading anti-war activists across the globe.

The World Peace Forum will be held on June 21st - 28th 2006, in Vancouver. Over the week, the forum organizers are seeking to meet a number of objectives. These include increasing awareness and education on issues of peace and war and connecting activists across the world through a network of community organizations. The forum will include a number of core plenary sessions as

well as concurrent workshops and seminars touching on various themes related to war and peace. While the program has not yet been released, the organizing committee has posted almost two dozen themes that will be explored in June 2006. Themes include: Youth Against War, Women Against Wars & Wars Against Women, Impunity and International Law, Labour and Peace, and Indigenous Peoples and Peace.

This event is an important step forward for the Vancouver movement against war and for peace and justice. An event with the size and scope of the World Peace Forum will undoubtedly impact the anti-war movement in a significant way through raising awareness and increasing the involvement of many people.

Action at all levels from grassroots, to municipal government, to labour unions cross Canada is important in maintaining energy and motion against the wars and occupations that are destroying our world. It is a feeling of joy and pride to see the Vancouver City Council Peace and Justice Committee leading the way in this important initiative. Fire This Time will follow this event closely and will have a special section in every issue of the newspaper regarding the build up to the World Peace Forum.

We encourage readers to go to www.worldpeaceforum.ca for more information and how to get involved.



Vancouver City Councilor Ellen Woodsworth Speaking at a World Peace Forum rally at City Hall.

Soldiers’ Love for Humanity

From page 7

shoot at you because you occupy their country. You’re asked to get in their houses, in their businesses, block the roads, but you’re an occupying power, you’re messing up their daily life. You’re not a liberator. “

Ivan Brobeck, a US Marine who served in Iraq, contributes in one

short statement the essence of the US occupation of Iraq. “In Iraq, I found myself being the problem instead of the solution.”

Jeremy Hinzman is continuing his fight in the appeals process with the government of Canada. Brandon Hughey, a young soldier who enlisted before even graduating from high school, was the second soldier

to apply for refugee status in Canada. On June 3rd he had his hearing. It is extremely important that people in Canada continue to defend War Resisters and continue the fight to end the occupation of Iraq.

American War Resisters in Canada not only weaken the occupation forces in Iraq by refusing to fight, but also provide a strong and necessary

International Indigenous Youth Conference 2005

Rejects Militarization and Demands Self-determination

By Aaron Mercredi

From June 17th - June 21st 2005, over 200 Indigenous youth from across the world gathered on Coast Salish territory at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre for the 2nd International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC). The theme of the conference, organized by the IIYC secretariat in Vancouver was, “*Strengthening Solidarity Among Indigenous Youth in Asserting Indigenous People’s Rights Amidst Globalization.*”

Over four days, Indigenous delegates from Guatemala, Colombia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Turtle Island, Samiland, Africa, Philippines, Japan, Nagaland, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Manipur, Australia and New Zealand met and discussed common issues young people face through colonization. A series of panel discussions by delegates were followed by eight workshops

over two days that tackled issues Indigenous youth face today. Issues discussed were the development of urbanization and assimilation of Indigenous youth in to cities; the effects of colonization on Indigenous culture and traditional knowledge; the impacts of



colonization on education and health; militarization and human rights violations; Indigenous rights amidst resource exploitation; the exploitation and victimization of Indigenous women; governance under a colonial state; and state-imposed definitions of identifying Indigenous people. Here, the youth were able to discuss these common

problems and analyze ways of overcoming them.

The convergence of Indigenous youth was an important step in the struggle for self-determination and justice. Despite the fact that delegates came from different backgrounds and geographical areas, they were bound by a common oppression: Colonization. This requires a common struggle against colonialism, and being able to build networks and campaigns is essential to build that international unity among Indigenous people. Of the many resolutions that were passed at this year’s conference that act to further the interest of young Indigenous people, the one that covered the sentiment among all in attendance was: “*We call for the respect of Indigenous Peoples’ inherent right to self-determination and in this regard we call for an end to the militarization and occupation of our lands.*”



Emergency demonstration in support of war resisters. March 25th 2005.

voice to the anti-war movement. Youth and students, poor and working people in Canada must demand refugee status for War Resisters!

Refugee Status for US War Resisters in Canada Now!

Support and Defend War Resisters!

End the Occupation of Iraq!

Mobilization Against War and

Occupation (MAWO), a Vancouver anti-war coalition, has a War Resisters Support Campaign that regularly petitions and organizes in the defense of War Resisters. Please visit www.mawovancouver.org to sign the petition or e-mail warresister@mawovancouver.org for more information on how to get involved.

Western Shoshone Struggle Against American Colonialism

From page 20

generations of Shoshone people.

Western Shoshone sisters, Carrie and Mary Dann, inspired Indigenous people throughout the world with their leadership in the WSDP and taking on every colonial battle the US hurled at them. For decades, they fought against nuclear testing and nuclear waste dumps on their lands and for their rights to graze cattle on their own lands. Carrie Dann has also linked the struggle of Western Shoshone against American colonialism to the struggles of people who are fighting against American imperialism abroad by speaking out against the war in Iraq and discouraging young Indigenous people in the US from joining the

American military.

The visit with the delegates from the Western Shoshone Nation and the WSDP opened up space to learn about the persistence and dedication of indigenous fighters and the gains they have made in face of a colonial power. It is important for people in Canada, living within a colonialist nation that was built on the backs and with the blood of Indigenous people, to relate to the struggles of Indigenous people across borders. In order to find most effective methods and strategies for moving forward, Indigenous Nations and non-Indigenous people must work together to support Indigenous people in reclaiming their land, resources and self-determination.



Corbin Harney, Western Shoshone leader, at a protest against proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository on Western Shoshone Land.

Fire This Time Basis of Unity

Humanity today is threatened by war, economic crises, starvation, poverty and crime: all created by the drive of capitalists to maximise their profits at the expense of the people of the world. To oppose each of these crimes against humanity, we must focus all our work and action to build a foundation for and advance the interest of an overall struggle against international capital, its tools of working class division and its local institutions. The fundamental principle of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice is the unity and active solidarity of all poor and working people, locally and internationally. We must recognize that this principle is meaningless without active struggle because the pursuit of this principle goes sharply against the interest of the ruling class and they will use whatever means they have at their disposal to keep us divided and hostile amongst ourselves.

Fire This Time is a politically based action organization committed to building the social and political power of poor and working people in BC. We believe the only way to effectively challenge and threaten the government and their corporate agenda is through the organization of masses of people in motion in workplaces and in the streets. We are dedicated to mobilizing and unifying poor and working people against the Liberal Government and their anti-poor, anti-working people legislations

and policies. We are committed to organizing with working and poor people from the most attacked and exploited communities in the lower mainland and beyond: communities of colour, immigrants, refugees, “illegals”, low-wage workers, disabled people, queer people, indigenous communities, unemployed people and low-income families. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation: from sexism to racism, from homophobia to colonialism and all other institutions, thought, beliefs, actions and behaviours that humiliate and demean people to bring hostility and division amongst us.

The goal of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice is to build a broad based movement to defeat the BC Liberal Government. Our work is to provide the tools necessary to unify and activate the working class in BC to build a strong and effective broad-based movement to oppose the BC Liberals and their attacks on poor and working people. This movement must be integrated in the wider revolutionary context of international struggle against capitalism and imperialism; although we are mainly engaged in local politics, in essence the scope of our work is internationalist. Supporting the struggles of oppressed people abroad weakens the hegemony and power of the capitalist class in other lands and consequently weakens their rule at

home, therefore aiding the battles of oppressed people in Canada. In addition, the practice of international solidarity solidifies the co-operation essential in building a world movement for social justice. The Liberal Government's agenda is part of a global restructuring program known as “neo-liberalism”. To fight the BC Liberals is to fight neo-liberalism and global capitalism. We must expand on this both implicitly and explicitly to make the connections relevant to peoples daily domestic struggle, to overcome geographic division, and to make it clear that when we engage in struggle we do not struggle alone but alongside millions of working and poor people around the world. Within capitalist and imperialist globalisation there is no local struggle that does not have an international character. Every international is local and every local is international.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice will support and engage with other progressive movements and struggles whether for immediate or long-term demands, locally, nationally and internationally. Our main goal is to end poverty and injustice through education, participation and direct action. We seek to reach a collective level of consciousness that allows oppressed people to think socially and act politically to achieve social justice by any means necessary.

Revolutionary Poetry From the Cuban 5

I WILL RETURN

By Antonio Guerrero

*I will return and say to life
I have come back to be your confidant.
From north to south I will deliver to the people
the part of my love hidden within me.
I will sprinkle the immeasurable happiness
of one who knows to laugh unpretentiously.
From east to west I will raise my countenance
with goodness forever promised.
For where the wind has whipped, harsh and
strong,
I will go looking for the leaves on the path.
I will unite their dreams of such fortune
they cannot fly away in a whirlwind.
I will sing my songs to destiny
and with my voice, make death tremble.*

June 24, 1999



Antonio Guerrero studying in Kiev, 1986.

REGRESARÉ

Por Antonio Guerrero

*Regresaré y le diré a la vida
he vuelto para ser tu confidente.
De norte a sur le entregaré a la gente
la parte del amor en mí escondida.
Regaré la alegría desmedida
de quien sabe reír humildemente.
De este a oeste levantaré la frente
con la bondad de siempre prometida.
Por donde pasó el viento, crudo y fuerte,
iré a buscar las hojas del camino
y agruparé sus sueños de tal suerte
que no puedan volar en torbellino.
Cantaré mis canciones al destino
y con mi voz haré temblar la muerte.*

24 de junio de 1999

Celebration of the July 26th Movement & the Gains of the Cuban Revolution

Music, Speakers & Dancing
**Tuesday
July 26th
6:30pm**
**Trout Lake
Community Centre
3350 Victoria Dr.
(Victoria Dr. & 16th Ave.)**
Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)
778-882-5223 | cubacommunities@yahoo.ca
www.vancubasolidarity.com

BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!
**CANADA OUT OF
AFGHANISTAN AND HAITI!**

**SELF-DETERMINATION FOR
OPPRESSED NATIONS!**

**NO TO ATTACKS ON IRAN AND
SYRIA!**

**END THE OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ, PALESTINE,
AFGHANISTAN, HAITI AND INDIGENOUS
NATIONS IN CANADA!**

**MARCH & RALLY
SATURDAY
JULY 16th
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY
(Robson St & Hornby St)
3PM**

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO)

ACTION IN VANCOUVER

Vancouver Socialist Education Conference

July 8 - 9th at Langara College 100 W. 49th
Rebellion in Latin America: Cuba,
Venezuela, and the fight for socialism
Friday July 8, 7:00 PM
Anti-Imperialism From 1920 to Today,
Saturday July 9, 1:00 PM
Contact: 778-858-5179
E-mail: IS_langara@yahoo.ca or
socialistvoice@simpatico.ca

4 More Years, Hell No!

Anti-Liberal Demonstration!
Saturday July 9th, 2pm
Victory Square (Cambie and Hastings)
Organized by: the Anti-Poverty Committee

The State of Politics, Working Class Struggle & Crisis of the Left in Vancouver and Beyond Building a Revolutionary Movement in Canada

Presentation by:
Ali Yerevani - Political Editor of Fire This
Time Newspaper
Facilitation and Introduction by:
Shannon Bundock - Coordinator of Fire This
Time Movement for Social Justice
FORUM
Sunday, July 10 at 6:30PM
5288 Joyce St, Vancouver BC (2 Blocks South
of Joyce Skytrain Stn)
Organized by: Fire This Time Movement for
Social Justice
www.firethistime.net | info@firethistime.net
Endorsed by: Youth 3rd World Alliance

Bolivian Rebellion Info Night

Bolivian Guest Speaker Adriana Paz
(Community Activist and Alternative Media
Journalist)
& Multimedia Show
July 14, 6:30 pm
SFU - HARBOUR CENTER
West Hastings, Room # 1600
Vancouver
Organized by La Surda Latin-American
Collective

FILM SCREENING

The Palestinian Human Rights
Committee presents...
"Palestine is Still the Issue"
DOCUMENTARY & DISCUSSION
Join us for a FREE viewing and discussion of
John Pilger's "Palestine is Still the Issue"
Thursday July 14 at 4pm
Images Theatre (SFU)
Organized by the SFU Palestinian Human
Rights Committee (Contact: srahemtu@sfu.ca)

Meeting for the Latin American Regional Forum

An Invitation to form the Latin American
Regional Forum of the World Peace Forum,
scheduled in Vancouver in June of 2006.
Tuesday July 19 at 5:30 pm.
BCTF building 550 West 6th Avenue,
Vancouver (Prier Room)
For more information:
Phone: 604 687 3223 / Fax: 604 687 3277

UNDER THE VOLCANO Festival of Art and Social Change

50 Artists | 5 Stages | Rain or Shine
Sunday, August 7th
Cates Park
North Vancouver
For more information:
volcano@resist.ca
604-682-3269 Box 8471

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

US/UK Out of Iraq!
Self-Determination for Iraq, Palestine,
Afghanistan, Haiti and Indigenous Nations
in Canada!
No Invasion! US/EU Hands Off Iran and
Syria!
Bring All Troops Home Now! Stop the War at
Home and Abroad!
March & Rally
3pm Saturday September 24th
Vancouver Art Gallery
(Georgia St. @ Howe St.)
Organized by Mobilization Against War and
Occupation

ACTION IN TORONTO

The Crisis in American Labour: An Evening with Bill Fletcher Jr.

Wednesday, 13 July 2005
(7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.)
Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street
Toronto ON

Contact: Herman Rosenfeld
Socialist Project
(416) 718-8463 or (416) 466-
4915, hermanro@caw.ca

Fallujah - The Truth At Last: How the U.S. murdered a city

Friday, 15 July 2005
(7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.)

Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street (1 block south of
College, 1.5 blocks east of Spadina)

Contact: James Clark
Toronto Coalition to Stop the
War
tel: 416-795-5863
fax: 416-588-5556

Distribute Revolutionary Change in Your Area!

For distribution of Fire This Time
in your area, across BC, and
internationally, please contact:

Brennan Luchsinger
Publicity and Distribution
Coordinator
Phone: (604) 338-9006
Email: distro@firethistime.net