



VENCEREMOS!

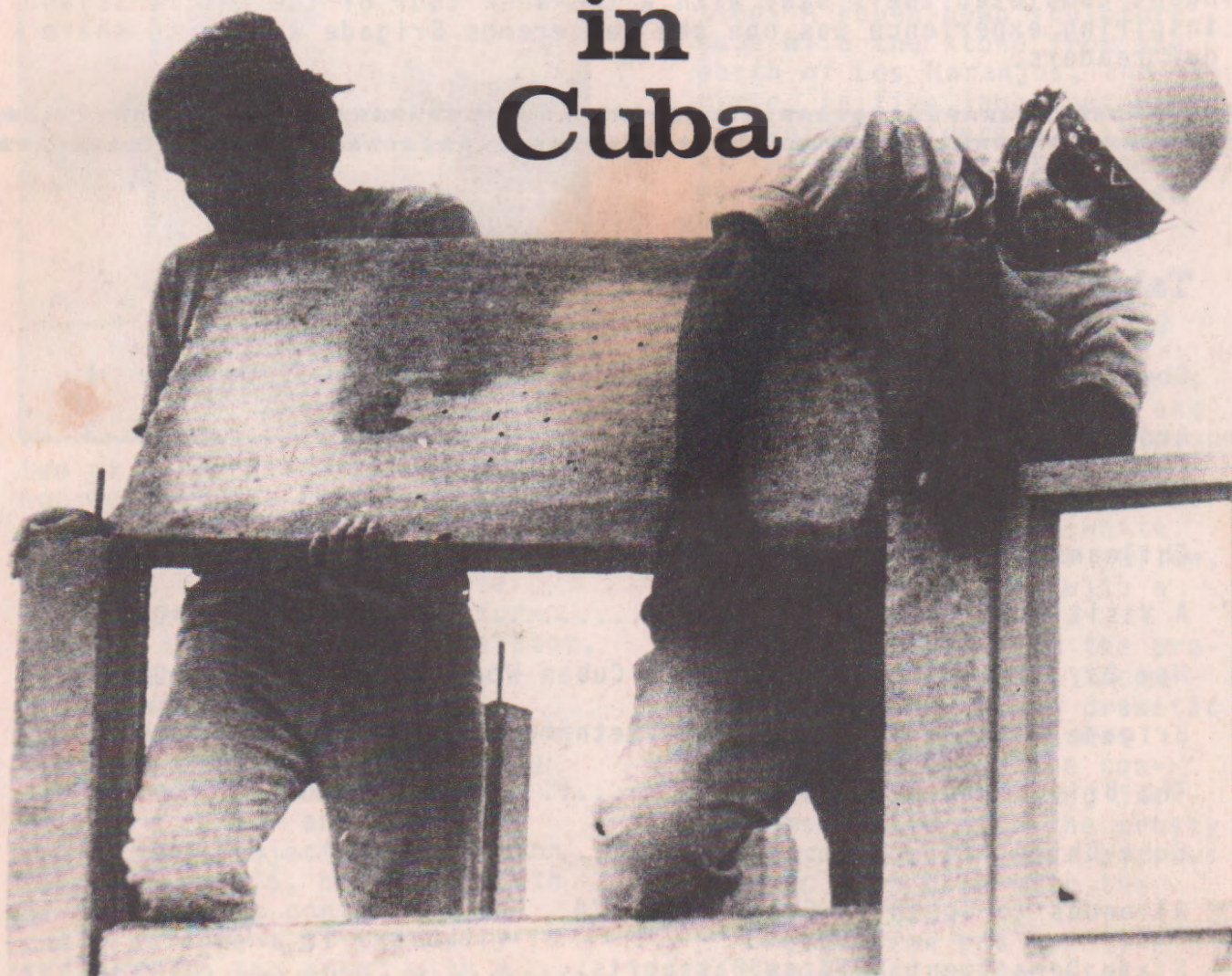
A publication of the Venceremos Brigade

#5

May-June 1974

Special Double Issue

The Seventh Brigade in Cuba



THE 7TH BRIGADE IN CUBA

This special double issue is primarily devoted to the activities of the 7th contingent of the Venceremos Brigade. Breaking the US-imposed blockade, 128 progressive North Americans from 15 areas of the US travelled to Cuba this spring to do productive work in solidarity with the Cuban people who are daily building a new society. Members of this group, composed of Black, white, Chicano and Puerto Rican men and women, contributed to the elaboration of this, our 5th issue. They wrote many of the articles in Cuba, from firsthand experiences.

During the 6 weeks that the Brigade participated in constructing "Los Naranjos" town for dairy workers outside Havana, they lived at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp with Cuban workers and students. Here they had the opportunity to see socialist Cuba with their own eyes. The contingent completed their stay with a two-week tour of the entire island. This inspiring experience was one the Venceremos Brigade wished to share with our readers.

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labor donated

"Here I work hard because I want to"

CONSTRUCTION AT LOS NARANJOS

For its third consecutive year, the Venceremos Brigade expressed its solidarity with the Cuban people by helping to build the town of Los Naranjos, 30 miles southwest of Havana.

The town is being constructed for the workers and their families in the surrounding genetic plants. It contains 300 housing units for a capacity of up to 2,000, including five apartment buildings with five stories each,



two or three 2-story apartment houses, and the rest one-story single-family houses. The bright and spacious houses are provided to the workers free of charge, along with new furniture, including a refrigerator, television and other necessities. When finished, the town will contain a central shopping area, a semi-boarding school for 500 children, a day-care center and a medical facility. Projected completion is set for 1975, but the growth of the town is contingent on the development of the dairy industry in the area, with a probable second stage expansion to include 200 more living units.

Los Naranjos is not just another housing project. Known as an "international town," much of its construction has been done by international brigades from all over the world. Beginning in 1972 with the Fifth Contingent of the Venceremos Brigade, a series of brigades from Scandinavia, France, Europe, Japan, Peru, and the 6th and 7th Contingents of the North-american Venceremos Brigade has participated in its construction. From its birth, this young town knew the meaning of international solidarity, a fundamental principle of the Cuban Revolution. A rough-hewn sculpture, made with the stone from the earth of Los Naranjos, and engraved in five languages with the word "solidarity," stands at the entrance to the town, a monument to the bond between Cuba and the peoples of the world.

As you enter the housing project, you see children playing baseball, green lawns planted with bougainvillea and cacti, and young orange blossom trees run along paved sidewalks and between houses. The houses are of painted white concrete, trimmed with yellow, green and blue, each with a garden and porch.

Going further into the project, you come to the incomplete section, and a dramatic shift in atmosphere takes place as you enter the construction site. Ringing jackhammers battle with the crusty white rock, while wheelbarrows race to keep pace with the cement mixer.

One hundred and twenty-eight Northamerican Brigadistas, working side-by-side with 29 Cuban fellow-Brigadistas and

workers from DESA (Development of Social and Agricultural Buildings) put in a five-and-a-half day week as Los Naranjos took on its distinctive form and shape. The Brigadistas were divided into seven work groups, or sub-brigades; two worked on excavation, with jackhammer, pick and shovel, two on the actual construction of the buildings, one on landscaping and sidewalks, one in the "steel plant," making the iron grid reinforcements for the pre-fabricated elements, and one in pre-fabrication, making the concrete elements themselves.



Each work group had three or four Cuban Brigadistas, all students at the University of Havana, who performed as "responsables" in their sub-brigades. We gave our sub-brigades names, such as Brigada Puerto Rica Libre, Brigada Juan de la Cruz, and Brigada Luis Corvalan.

The work began at 7:00 am, just as the sun was rising, and

ended at 5:30, when we boarded the buses for the 15-minute ride back to the camp. There was a 2-hour lunch break at the camp, and two 15-minute breaks during the day, for a "merienda,"--or snack--and a brief, but welcome rest.

On Saturdays, the morning was devoted to work at the site, and in the afternoon each sub-brigade met at the camp for a production meeting, where we reviewed our production level for the past week, considered ideas for improving our work, and discussed any problems we may have had at the site or elsewhere.

By the end of our 6 weeks of work, we had completed our goal of 6% of the total construction plan, fulfilling 104% of our work quota. Much remained to be done, but our work was very much visible, and we could look with pride at the foundations dug for new houses, walls built, roofs and floors laid, and the beautiful school taking form.

The importance of construction is well understood by the Cubans and learned by the Northamericans, but in the words of Antonio Canet, the overall responsible for the work at the site, "the most important thing about the project for us is that the Venceremos



Brigade can come here to Cuba and develop a close relationship with our people, and that we too can reach out and have a close friendship with the progressive people of the U.S., so that we can share our struggles and our triumphs."

Around the clock with the 7th Brigade

Our first glimpse of the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp came at dawn, as our buses pulled in the drive from Havana's Jose Marti Airport. Our plane had landed at 4:30 AM. The airport, far from being deserted at that hour, was filled with the sounds of "Guantanamera" sung to the music of guitars as 50 young Cubans energetically welcomed us. We were members of the Venceremos Brigade--the 7th Contingent to break the U.S. blockade by coming to Cuba.



As the sun came up an hour and a half later, we stepped off the buses, and were immediately struck by the expansive camp grounds. These sturdy wooden buildings surrounded by gardens and recreation areas would be "home" for the next six weeks.

After some rest, we spent the first day getting acquainted among ourselves, with the Cuban brigade members, and exploring the camp's facilities, which were explained at a brief

presentation. Among the many conveniences available to us was a post office, library, barber shop, hospital and polyclinic and basketball and volleyball courts. The first day we also visited the work-site at Los Naranjos town, and met with the director of the project, who explained our work plan and the Brigade's construction goals.

For the following weeks, we spent the majority of our time at Los Naranjos--building houses.

The free time in the evenings and on weekends was quickly filled up with countless activities, visits, films, sports--and by getting to know the most we could about Cuba from the best source possible, the Cuban workers and students with us in camp.



Informative presentations about the history of Cuba, its trade union and student movements and the development of the economy highlighted the after-work hours. They were punctuated with profound insight and firsthand experiences by people who had spent

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AROUND THE CLOCK...

years hard at work as trade union and student leaders, economists and scholars--people who were themselves part of Cuba's dynamic history.

The visits by delegations from Chile, Vietnam and Puerto Rico not only gave brigadistas a deeper understanding of our international responsibility but also gave us an unprecedented opportunity to directly express our solidarity and admiration to people fighting for the freedom of their homelands. For the first time, delegates from the Embassy of South Yemen in Cuba addressed the Brigade, giving us the important perspective of the only socialist country in the Middle East.

The North Americans rounded off the series of presentations with a summary of progressive movements in the U.S.--such as community organizing, the trade union and rank and file movements among working people, the fight against political repression, and solidarity activities with liberation struggles around the world. A special section was devoted to trends in Third World communities in the United States. These innovative presentations included songs, poetry readings, skits and slide shows.

Saturday night brigadistas

danced to some of the best bands in Cuba. The cultural shows reflected the spectrum of Cuban popular culture, with its African, Criollos and Spanish heritage.

On Sundays, the Brigade visited a wide variety of such places as the Cuban Film Institute, the Association of Small Farmers and the People's Courts. Before and after visits, we explored Havana, talking to families outside their homes, visiting museums, and enjoying Cuba's famous ice cream at "Copelia" ice cream bars. Many brigadistas also joined thousands of Cubans pouring into the Latin American Stadium for the National All-Star Games.

Back at the camp, Sunday nights, prize-winning Cuban films attracted Brigade members to the outdoor movie theater. LUCIA, THE NEW SCHOOL, THE SKY WAS TAKEN BY ASSAULT (about Prime Minister Fidel Castro's trip to Africa and the socialist countries) and Chilean documentaries were among them.

Almost any day was a good time for personal conversations with fellow Cuban brigadistas, and spare moments were spent engrossed in discussion about what it is like to grow up in Cuba, as part of the revolution.



A VISIT TO ANAP

Harvest of the Revolution

One Sunday, members of the Venceremos Brigade spent the entire day at a farm which is the Havana headquarters of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP), the mass organization of Cuba's small farmers. Brigadistas shared a picnic lunch with people living in the area and young Pioneers (the grade school children's organization). There was music, beer, dancing--"it was like going to a family gathering--there was a feeling of real togetherness," said one brigadista.



There was a presentation by a member of ANAP describing the struggle of the peasants before the Revolution and the role of ANAP in Cuba society today.

In the period of U.S. domination, poverty and neglect were the way of life for most Cubans. "The distribution of land was ridiculous. Capitalists owned 50% of the best land for cane cultivation which created monopolies. The peas-

ants ended up with very little, and so they got together and began to organize..." By 1941 the peasants had organized nationally to defend themselves from the landowners, to demand better prices for their crops, schools for their children and ultimately, their land.

The situation worsened under the Batista dictatorship. Parliament was dissolved and worker and peasant organizations were declared illegal. But the peasant groups continued to struggle valiantly and played a key role in the revolutionary period.

Out of these peasant organizations, ANAP was formed after the triumph of the Revolution. Today, it represents 200,000 families, who carry out 70% of the nation's coffee production, 40% of the production of vegetables and 20% of sugar.

Along with the National Institute of Agrarian Reform and the Central Planning Board, ANAP plays the role of coordination for national plans in agricultural development. Prices are guaranteed by the government, which is the sole buyer and distributor in Cuba. Farmers purchase seed for their crops on credit and if cultivation is successful, they then pay for the seed used. If a crop is ruined, they do not pay and, in fact, are still guaranteed an income. In addition to dealing with issues of prices and credit, ANAP helps to further mechanize production and teaches the methods for use of new machinery. The association also participates in education, public health and cultural campaigns being carried out in the development of Cuba's new society.

¡LOS CHILENOS VENCERAN!

CHILEANS VISIT BRIGADISTAS



One of the most inspirational and rewarding events for this year's Venceremos Brigade was the visit we received from the Chilean delegation in Cuba.

Chile still boils in the minds of progressive people the world over, and the coup symbolizes the lengths to which reactionary forces will go to maintain their control over the masses of exploited people.

Chile represented for us a unique situation. The September 11th coup was the first such overthrow of a democratically elected government which many of us could remember in our adult lives. We wished to express our support for the Chilean people as deeply as we felt it. All of our activities in preparation for the Chileans' visit expressed our love and respect for them, and the seriousness with which we viewed their struggle.

Many of the brigadistas participated in the painting of a mural, 25 feet x 9½ feet, on the backboard of the stage in the camp courtyard. The mural depicted Allende, defending the Moneda with Fidel's rifle in hand, flanked on one side by the faces of heroic Latin American leaders throughout history, and on the other, the people rising up to defeat fascism. Below it was inscribed the slogan, "Los Chilenos Venceran." The project took 3 weeks to complete and was a dramatic tribute to the struggles of the Chilean people.

Before the arrival of the Chilean delegation, we formed work teams to decorate the camp, and rehearsed chants to greet the delegation. Posters and banners were painted to be presented as gifts from the 7th contingent. The largest banner contained a quote of

Allende's last words: "Workers of my homeland, I have faith in Chile and its future. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seems to dominate. You must never forget that, sooner rather than later, the grand avenues will be opened where free men will march on to build a better society..."

When the five Chileans arrived, we began chanting and formed an escort line leading up to the stage and mural. There the brigadistas presented a solidarity statement, condemning the role of U.S. corporations, the CIA, and the government in the overthrow of Chile's constitutional government, and pledging our increasing efforts to gather support in the U.S. for the Chilean people's struggle.

Beatriz Allende, on behalf of the delegation, each a representative from one of the groups in the United Left, thanked the Brigade for our support and stressed the extraordinary importance of international solidarity to the Chilean people. This solidarity causes the growing isolation of the junta while it lifts the spirit of the people. The U.S. progressive movement has sent letters of solidarity and material support that have helped tremendously, particularly in aiding political prisoners. "International solidarity aids the struggle greatly," she said, "but the fulfillment of the destruction of the junta will be carried out by the Chilean people."

The Chilean comrades described for us the current situation in Chile, and the present state of the resistance. Since the fascist coup, about 60,000 people have been in the prisons, and about 15,000 are still in concentration camps. Many schools and universities have

been closed, and 70,000 students expelled. There is not a single family which does not have a member who has been either killed, imprisoned or forced into exile by the junta. Furthermore, the massive lay-off of workers sympathetic to the UP and the 110% inflation rate has left many families hungry and desperate.

However, they reported, the parties of the UP have reorganized underground, and have led strikes and sabotage throughout Chile, recruiting many workers who were not previously with the UP.

Our visitors then suggested the tasks of the U.S. support movement:

1. Maintain and widely disseminate information on the real situation in Chile;
2. Condemn the aid given to the fascist junta by the U.S. government, institutions and corporations;
3. Demonstrate constant and extreme opposition to junta representatives visiting the U.S.;
4. Send letters and telegrams to political prisoners, which very much helps their morale;
5. Collect funds;
6. Sabotage trade with the junta through boycotts, picket lines, strikes, etc.

The visit greatly increased our determination to work in the U.S. to organize a mass movement to support the struggle of the Chilean people.

VIVA LOS PUEBLOS CHILENOS!

LOS CHILENOS VENCERAN!

"A Political Animal"

***** A VISIT WITH SANTIAGO ALVAREZ

"For us, a revolutionary people in a revolutionary process, the value of cultural and artistic creations is determined by their usefulness for the people... Our standards are political. There cannot be aesthetic value without human content or in opposition to man, justice, welfare, liberation, and the happiness of man."

Fidel Castro

One or two evenings a week the brigadistas sat in the camp's outdoor movie area and viewed some of the most innovative documentary films we have ever had the chance to see. Most were made in Cuba by ICAIC, the internationally acclaimed Cuban Institute of Art and Film Industry. Subjects varied, but the films were selected to supplement information we received through lectures, visitors, or trips. This close coordination, plus the quality of the films themselves, made the programs enjoyable as well as instructive.

Our Cuban hosts arranged a visit to the headquarters of ICAIC so we could get a better understanding of how and why ICAIC films were made. We met with Santiago Alvarez, a founder of ICAIC and one of Cuba's best film directors. Alvarez is a lively and imaginative person, who describes himself as "a political animal--I start talking about the weather and end up talking about politics." The truth of this description was amply proven during our fascinating talk with him.

It was clearly reflected in Alvarez's explanation of his ideas about filmmaking. "When I make a film, I think how it can be useful to my country. A film is no less artistic or cultural for being political. To make a film like NOW (a collage of images and music evoking the

brutality of racism in the U.S. and the struggle for Black liberation)--a film against racism --is at once a political and a cultural act. It uses artistic means to make a political statement."

Films in Cuba are a didactic tool, to inform the people of their history, their revolutionary traditions, and their present





society. About 40 documentaries and 8 feature films are made each year, dealing with scientific subjects--including health and hygiene--industry, agriculture, education and culture. Also, the intense Cuban spirit of internationalism is reflected in their films on Vietnam, Latin America, Africa and other places and struggles.

ICAIC was founded in 1959, right after the revolution. Most of the people involved at that point had no experience in filmmaking, but understood how important the medium was as an educational tool. Alvarez assured us that "anyone can be a filmmaker--one must only have correct ideas. Fidel in the Sierras had no military training, but he led a victorious struggle over Batista's highly trained army." The film workers were very excited about

using the film equipment inherited by the revolution ("they were like toys, like a fairy story") and quickly developed the expertise and unique artistry that has given Cuba the greatest variety of films of any country in the world.

Alvarez was delighted to speak to us, as representatives of the progressive youth of the United States, particularly since he lived in the U.S. for a number of years before the revolution, in his "first stage of youth" (he is presently in his "second stage"). It was in the U.S. that he had his first contact with the ideology of Marxism, and where he learned some enduring lessons about racism, which he has incorporated into his filmmaking. He told us, "This meeting enriches me. I am learning from you--every question you ask makes me think, because it reflects what North American youth think. Youth must always doubt, must always be non-conformists, must seek new ways with an affirmative approach. But you must not only doubt; you must also find the answers to your doubts. If you cry tears of anguish on your pillow at night, then you must also use that pillow as a trench for the struggle the following day."

Support the Venceremitos!

Help send North American kids to a summer of international friendship in Cuba.

Make checks payable to:

Los Venceremitos
c/o Venceremos Brigade
GPU Box 3169
New York, N.Y. 10001

MAY DAY: Brigadistas March with Cuban Workers

HAVANA, May 1 --With red banners flying throughout Jose Marti Revolutionary Plaza, members of the Venceremos Brigade marched in Havana's May Day celebration attended by over one million Cuban workers and students.

Attending May Day in Cuba was of special significance to the North Americans because it is a celebration in honor of workers' protest which took place in the U.S. in 1886. On May 1st and 2nd of that year a demonstration in Chicago to press for the 8-hour work day was brutally attacked by Chicago police. As they tried to defend themselves, many workers were killed, and several police as well. Since 1890, May 1st has been recognized internationally as a workers holiday, dedicated to the solidarity of working people the world over.

May Day in Cuba is both a time for solidarity, and to honor exemplary Cuban workers.

People flooding the Plaza on May Day were addressed by Roberto Veiga, General Secretary of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions (CTC), and by Ramiro Valdes, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Part of Cuba.

This year's May Day activities were dedicated to the memory of Lazaro Pena, General Secretary of the CTC until his death last March. Pena, who had been a sugar worker and an active trade union leader for 35 years, led a strike of Cuban sugar workers in pre-revolutionary days to prevent sugar shipments to the United States while U.S. workers were on strike.

Ramiro Valdes said in his keynote May Day speech, "Here today, Lazaro, your presence is in the hearts of all our people. We are able to tell Fidel with absolute conviction that tomorrow is ours, that we have forged this bright future with our hardworking hands."



Delegates from 23 trade unions marched past colorful building-size murals of revolutionary heroes. A contingent of Chileans carried a banner demanding "End the Massacre of Chilean Workers" by Chile's military junta. Waiting to march, Venceremos Brigade members responded with a chant, "Como en Cuba y Vietnam, los Chilenos Venceran!" (Like in Cuba and Vietnam, the Chileans Will Win!)

The Northamerican Brigade, representing 15 cities in the U.S., was honored as the third group to march in the three hour procession, following contingents of work heroes and Young Pioneers, the organization of grade-school children. As they passed the reviewing stand, brigadistas saluted Prime Minister Fidel Castro and other government leaders with a wave of their hardhats.

We asked one of the brigadistas for his impressions of the parade, "The spirit of this parade showed me what the internationalist consciousness of the people of Cuba is like. You begin to feel what internationalism is when you see banners and brigades here from the many liberation movements and countries all over the world. As North Americans, we are proud and deeply honored to be here today."

Brigade Honored by Visit from Vietnamese



On April 26, 1974, Ha Van Lau, the Ambassador to Cuba from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Tran Kim from the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam were greeted at the camp by 128 brigadistas singing the National Anthem of South Vietnam and the Ballad of Ho Chi Minh.

Ambassador Ha expressed his thanks for the warm welcome and his joy for the opportunity to speak to part of the progressive movement in the U.S. In his brief remarks, he also pointed out the strong ties between Cuba and North Vietnam. Cuba was the first country in the world to send voluntary reconstruction brigades to North Vietnam. Ambassador Ha emphasized the fact that all of Vietnam is one although "temporarily, we are divided by U.S. imperialism and are forced to live under two regimes". The Vietnamese liberation struggle attained a new victory with the signing of the Paris Accords in 1973,

which eliminated direct U.S. military presence in Vietnam. The main objectives after the Accords, he said, were: 1) to continue the construction of a socialist society in North Vietnam, and 2) to achieve true independence for South Vietnam, with the goal of eventual peaceful reunification of the two Vietnams.

LIFE IN NORTH VIETNAM

The destruction involving North and South Vietnam was unimaginable and the consequences unforgettable. All the work begun since 1954 until Nixon's Christmas bombings in 1973 was completely destroyed... 1000 bridges, 100 factories, 1000 schools, hospitals, clinics, countryside facilities, etc., leaving over 26,000,000 bomb craters!

The people have concentrated now on restoring and developing the economy. After one year of intensive work, almost all communications lines have been

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From Pinar del THE BRIGADE

After 6 weeks of work, the 7th Contingent left for a memorable 2-week tour of Cuba, visiting schools, factories, historic monuments, housing and genetic plans, as well as talking with farmers, workers and students throughout the island.

Our previous visits and activities while in camp had heightened our enthusiasm for Cuba, and we eagerly awaited the beginning of the tour. As we pulled out from the camp, in an impressive caravan of 6 large buses, several cars and motorcycles, brigadistas began clapping, singing rounds of "Cuba, Que Linda Es Cuba". We were on our way to the mountains of Pinar del Rio!

The ride through Pinar Del Rio offered us a view of some of the most beautiful scenery in Cuba. This included the world famous Vinales Valley, which is covered with natural rock formations, similar to small mountains erupting out of the earth. Our destination was the Forest Technical Institute which is the center of a forest husbandry plan in the Los Organos Mountains.

When we arrived, the students were waiting for us, and lined on both sides of the walkway, warmly applauded as we alked into the conference hall. As we discovered, this was a traditional greeting for visiting delegations, and we were honored by this special sign of friendship.

Once we were seated, a general overview was given about the school. We, in turn, thanked the students and directors of the school for welcoming us so warmly, and several of us exchanged Brigade buttons with the students.

The Institute trains forest technicians and environmental specialists, and one of the students explained, "We, the young people of today, are studying to preserve the resources of our country for its future generations".

We spent several days in Pinar Del Rio, where we visited other agricultural plans, towns, and secondary schools. Everywhere, we exchanged buttons and cheers with the Young Pioneers.

Part of the Brigade also went to the Isle of Pines, where they visited the house of Jose Marti, and saw the prison where Fidel Castro was held after the attack on the Moncada Garrison. 18 new secondary schools in the countryside had been completed there in the last 3 years, part of the island's overall plan of 82 schools, each with a capacity of 500 students.

Returning to Havana from Pinar Del Rio, we stopped for lunch at Soroa, an inland tourist center. Some of us swam in the olympic-sized pool, while others hiked up the mountainside to enjoy the view of the waterfall.

The visit to Soroa was not unique. Every day we ate lunch in restaurants or resort areas, and several afternoons a week, we were able to rest at beach resorts or sports centers. In fact, in the province of Matanzas our lodgings were the famous Varadero Beach -- legendary for its crystal clear water and white beaches, and former home of the DuPont family.

Prior to the Revolution, these areas would have been barred to the majority of Cuban people because they were reserved for the rich white Americans and their rich Cuban friends. Now, these resorts belong to the Cuban working people.

The high point of Matanzas, however, was not the stay at Varadero, but the conference on "people's power", which is now set up on an experimental basis in the province. "People's power" will give the Cuban people direct decision-making power on administration at many levels--

Rio to Oriente

TOURS CUBA

in the neighborhoods, in the cities and in the countryside.

When we left the presentation and continued on tour for Las Villas, we enthusiastically discussed the principles of people's power. It made us realize what real democracy represents, and it served to further open our eyes to the accomplishments of the Cuban Revolution.

These accomplishments were made even clearer when we visited La Yaya Town in the Escambray region of Las Villas. The peasants are encouraged to incorporate their land into the overall state plan, and then move into the new towns. We visited several families who had recently moved to La Yaya. They expressed deep satisfaction with their new homes. For now they had electricity, running water, a fully furnished apartment (rent free), stores, schools, hospitals and recreation areas. They no longer had to worry if their children would go hungry, because bad weather had ruined the season's crop.

Thus far, each day, we had seen the results of the struggle that Cuba was waging to break out of underdevelopment. And in Camaguey we saw the tremendous growth and development of the industrial zone of Nuevitas. When completed, one industry alone will represent an 11.28% jump in the growth of the economy. This is the cement plant with a production of over 600 thousand tons of cement a year!

When we arrived in Oriente Province, "the cradle of the Revolution", members of the local and provincial leadership welcomed us.

One of the most moving visits was to the Siboney Farm, the 26th of July School City (formerly Moncada Garrison), and to the

grave site of Jose Marti, apostle of the Cuban Revolution. Nearby was the new monument to Che Guevara, and other fallen patriots of Latin America. In these monuments were embodied the spirit of Cuba's history of struggle, tributes to the many who selflessly gave their lives so that future generations would no longer have to suffer under tyranny.

In the day care center of the Jose Marti district in Santiago we saw the wishes of those Cuban patriots fulfilled in the happy, smiling faces of the children.



Born after the triumph of the Revolution, they will never have to experience the poverty or hunger of the children who came before them. Here, in Cuba, the present is dedicated to the young, who are the ones responsible for the future, as the leaders of a new society.

Cuba-Chile '74

We are confronted today with the growing reality of fascism in our hemisphere.

The well-documented attacks committed daily against Chile's trade unionists, students, journalists, doctors, and teachers are leading a wave of right-wing reaction in Latin America. In Chile, the parliament, the trade unions, all political parties, and the free press have been decreed out of existence. Teachers are replaced with military men. The military junta has blacklisted thousands of trade unionists at a time when Chileans face the highest inflation rate in the world.

Thousands have been jailed, tortured, and killed in a witch-hunt that has spread to Chileans of all classes and occupations. Today they are asking us to help them halt the junta's brutal assault on their most elemental democratic and human rights.

This is why CUBA-CHILE '74 is being carried out as the theme of nation-wide activities this July 26th. While these activities are part of the growing Chile support effort in the United States and have been endorsed by the newly-formed National Coordinating Committee in Solidarity with Chile, they are also designed to commemorate the independence fight of a Latin American people very close to the Chileans--the people of Cuba.

21 years ago the Cuban people also faced a brutal U.S.-sponsored tyranny, the Batista dictatorship. Each year they celebrate July 26th as the date when the fight against the tyranny began. Today, under different circumstances, the Chilean people have begun their fight against those who follow in

Batista's footsteps-- a military junta which has staged the bloodiest, most brutal coup in the history of the Latin American continent.

Cuba and Chile have more in common than their history. What unites them above and beyond all else is their common enemy--the interference of the U.S. government, which has tried, unsuccessfully, every means possible including military invasion to thwart the Cuban people's right to build their country as they see fit, and now, in Chile, has politically, economically, and militarily supported the destruction of democracy in Chile.

The Cuban people, on the other hand, have always been among the staunchest supporters of the democratically-elected Allende government in Chile. Now they have opened their country and their homes to Chilean refugees and are supporting the Chilean people in their fight to restore democracy in Chile.

This July 26th, we stand beside the Cuban people and progressive people everywhere in support of Chile's fight to restore democracy and freedom. Now, more than ever, do the American people need to know what is being carried out throughout Latin America in their name!

In this spirit we ask you to join us for "CUBA-CHILE 1974: Two Faces of Latin America". Preparations are under way for activities in 13 cities in the United States, initiated by the Venceremos Brigade, with the main events planned for New York and Chicago. Chicago will feature the first showing

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ALLENDES TO SPEAK AT CUBA CHILE '74

VISA FIGHT EXPECTED



Beatriz and Isabel Allende will be guest speakers at CUBA CHILE '74 events in Chicago and New York City, the Committee for July 26th announced.

Both are daughters of the slain Chilean President Salvador Allende, and each has been a leading figure in the solidarity movement with the fight to restore democratic rights in Chile.

Beatriz Allende talked with members of the 7th Venceremos Brigade during their recent stay in Cuba.

Recalling the visa restrictions placed on Mrs. Hortensia Bussi de Allende when she visited the U.S. last winter, Committee organizers are especially concerned that the visa applications by Beatriz and Isabel Allende receive a prompt

and full stamp of approval from the U.S. State Department. Many people were frankly outraged that the State Department forbid Mrs. Allende to speak publicly in New York when she came to the United Nations to report on the status of human rights in Chile. Many have pointed out that she was one of the few people ever invited to address the United Nations who was not an official government representative or head of state.

Yet, she was not allowed to speak to the U.S. people--a fact made all the more alarming when military junta spokesmen from Chile were allowed "free reign" in the US some months later.

It is clear that progressive people must speak out to ensure the U.S. public's right to hear the side of democracy in Chile. Readers should write their Congressmen and U.S. State Department Office of Visa Applications, urging speedy approval of the Allendes' visas.

CUBA-CHILE '74...

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of historic photos from Chile, and the largest photographic exhibit on Cuba ever shown in the U.S. The opening night reception and program July 27 at the Midland Hotel will be followed by a day of award-winning Cuban films and silk-screen art.

A festival of music, film, and cultural performances dedicated to Victor Jara and Pablo Neruda will bring "CUBA-CHILE 1974" to New York's Lincoln

Center. Beatriz and Isabel Allende have accepted invitations to speak at both events. Proceeds from all July 26th activities will go to aid the Chilean people.

For more information, write:

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State Department Returns Passports

Terms Harrassment "Big Mistake"

The following is a statement issued by the Venceremos Brigade June 15th.

Flustered State Department officials termed the whole thing a "big mistake," as they returned the passports of 67 Barbados-New York airline passengers June 7th. The passengers, most of them members of the Venceremos Brigade, had been ordered to hand over their passports to Immigration and Naturalization Service authorities at JFK International Airport as they stepped off the plane June 5th. No reason was given for the illegal seizure.

The 7th Congingent Brigade members were flying home via Barbados from a two-month stay in Cuba--an "historic first" made possible by the newly re-established diplomatic and trade relations between Cuba and Barbados. The renewed ties add another forceful stand by a Latin American government against the U.S. blockade of socialist Cuba.

Despite official claims of the "BIG MISTAKE," it is clear that the June 5th seizure of passports was an attempt to serve the dual purposes of compiling information on citizens who travel to Cuba, a new "enemies list", and to threaten the right to travel of future visitors to Cuba. The actions, which violated a 1967 Supreme Court decision affirming the U.S. citizen's right to travel to any country, takes place in an atmosphere of general government lawlessness and must be condemned.

Questioned by the Venceremos Brigade lawyer at the airport, I.N.S. Supervisor Moroni declared that it was "illegal" to travel to Cuba and that the confiscation was ordered by the State Depart-

ment. Mrs. Sebert of the Department of State Operations stated, when reached in Washington, "Passports are the property of the U.S. government and can be taken away for any reason at all."



However, on June 6th, another State Department official, Mr. Lindsay, called the Venceremos Brigade lawyer, confessing that "a big mistake" had been made, and giving assurances that "passports are the property of the citizen and cannot be taken away for any reason whatsoever." Lindsay ordered the documents returned immediately, and pledged no further harrassment.

Clearly, there had been an attempt to smooth over the illegal affair. Yet, the completely arbitrary action was compounded by the confiscation of passports of other passengers who had absolutely no connection with the Brigade!

In the face of this flagrant violation of constitutional rights, the Venceremos Brigade reconfirms its determination to exercise and defend our right to travel to Cuba and express our friendship with the Cuban people. Consistent with the sentiment of a clear majority of the American public, the Venceremos Brigade will continue to demand an end to the aggressive and unjust economic blockade of Cuba. And equally important, the Venceremos Brigade will continue to bring the truth about life in Cuba to the American people by breaking through the information blockade and distortions that are conscious products of U.S. policy.

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restored. Some big and small factories have been reinitiated for work. They have restored all electric factories and surpassed the pre-war output. Also, the schools and hospitals in the countryside have resumed functioning. And, the first crops of 1973 were successful, although they have since been plagued by bad weather.

LIFE IN SOUTH VIETNAM

The main point, and first point, one must always remember is "that a peace treaty was signed, but the imperialist aggression has not ended," Ambassador Tran Kim Lee stressed, beginning his remarks. The Thieu regime and the U.S. have carried out systematic violations of the agreement. \$75 billion was requested by Nixon for foreign aid to Thieu, twice the previous amount. This gesture of monetary aid has continued in the "spirit" of the Paris Agreement.

Tran said that the CIA has two plans for destroying the Vietnamese people. One is to recover as much territory as possible. In order to carry this out, Saigon has mobilized 60% of all available forces, and all the air force. They avoid the reality that there are two administrations in South Vietnam (the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the national liberation forces and the puppet regime of Thieu), and they attempt to eliminate the gains of the Vietnamese people.

The other plan is the "pacification" program. There is an attempt to herd the people into concentration camps (resettlement camps) and use barbarous methods to hold them there. There have been 350,000 so-called "pacification" operations carried out since the 1973 accords. Also, attacks have been made on areas controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG).

VIETNAM WILL WIN

Even under barbarous conditions, such as the use of toxic gases, the people continue to carry out a successful struggle, to preserve liberty, retain peace, and defend their homes. All U.S. troops are out of South Vietnam. Almost all of the territory held by Saigon before the signing of the agreement has been recovered. 300,000 Thieu troops have been put out of action. Additionally, the puppet troops have been riddled by internal conflicts. Over 150,000 Saigon troops have either participated in anti-war campaigns or deserted.

The focus now is the advancement of the people, in construction, health care, education facilities, culture and military forces (people's militia). The consolidation of the liberated areas is key in the development of all the Vietnamese people. "It is easy to see that the Saigon paperdoll is being chopped to pieces by the scissors of the Vietnamese people," Tran concluded.

He ended by stating that the conditions are very favorable for liberating the South. There are no reactionary forces that could turn the trends in South Vietnam, and, although the struggle remains difficult and intensive, the people of South Vietnam have total confidence that with the support of the world's progressive forces, the Vietnamese will win.

After the presentation, singing, clapping and shouts of "VIVA VIETNAM" filled the conference hall. When the room quieted, gifts were exchanged between the Vietnamese delegates and representatives of the Brigade. The Brigadistas pledged their efforts towards pressuring the U.S. government to respect the Paris Accords, and their continued and determined support for the Vietnamese people.

African Liberation Day In Camaguey

The 7th Contingent of the Venceremos Brigade celebrated African Liberation Day May 25th in a truly international spirit at their campsite in Camaguey Province. African Liberation Day is one of the days of solidarity commemorated as part of our work, to express firm support for the African peoples fighting for freedom.

Saturday, May 25, was chosen for the Brigade's celebration since it was the same date that thousands of Black North Americans rallied in Washington, D.C. As part of the program, we read communiques sent to representatives in Havana of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde); MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola); FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front); and to the U.S. organizers of the Washington demonstration, the African Liberation Support Committee.

The short history of African Liberation Day that followed expressed the close bonds between the African peoples' movements and the Black liberation movement in the U.S.

Then began the cultural presentation. A chorus of brigadistas sang a series of African chants, followed with a moving reading of Langston Hughes' poem, "Good Morning Revolution" by one brigade member.

Finally, dressed in brightly printed skirts, 9 women from the Brigade interpreted a traditional African dance to the beat of bongos played by Cuban and North American drummers. After 2 standing ovations, the program finished with the reading of an original poem, this time accompanied by the strains of a saxophone and an improvised dance.

As brigadistas left the hall, it resounded with their enthusiastic singing, in solidarity with the fighters for African liberation.

**Solidarity
with the
African Peoples**



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