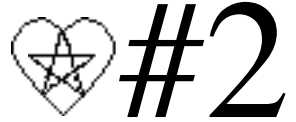


Correo Dos de Parte uno Canadiense de Cuba



Thms might call this the *Debbie Downer Times*

I prefer - *Thinking Times for Patriotic Canadians*. Septiembre, 13, 2006

Those who do not defend their country, their people and their homes from tyranny are traitors. LR **Habana, CUBA**

My apartment is on the second floor up a narrow metre wide staircase. Most furniture is moved into the buildings using an outside hoist, similar to Amsterdam. The electricity is 110 volt... but I have not used the hot water feature in the shower due to the fact electrocution is more common in Cuba than Canada.



They just don't have the equipment here to do things properly. I have seen the above electrical, at point, shower warming head before in Europe, but well grounded. I'm not using it here. Cool showers are just fine. I rinse off briefly whenever I return from away and just prior to going to bed. It's mucho dusty, exhausty.

My day starts of at 6:30, with a much needed shower, more like rinsing under a slow trickle, then a five block walk to the University where I stop outside for a fruit juice, or Jugo Fruta, a "scone" and a small shot of the strong sweet fresh squeezed coffee (not my general habit but when in Rome...)



Quite grand of course but very run down!

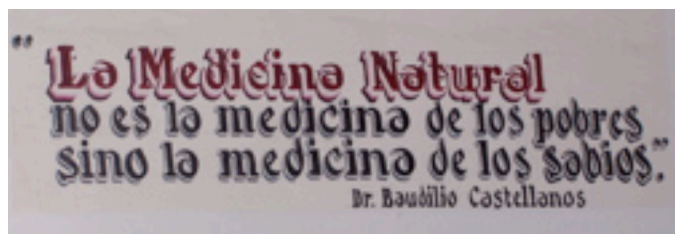
I use Nacionales or Cubanitos as they are called whenever I can so the basics are quite cheap. For example - a coffee costs a tourist about 1 CUC peso or app. Can\$1.25. If I stop at a local shop I buy it for app. 30¢. A sweet bun, like a scone for me is 25¢ A

can of beer costs about Can \$1.25 but in a local bar a larger draft is about 50¢centavos (not a true staple but cheaper non-the-less) Of course rum is very very cheap but Yo no mucho gusto ron.

Off to Spanish class at Habana-U . Lately I've been going for a short walk in the neighbourhood before it gets too hot, returning to the University to study in the Edificio Verona where my class is. Most building are two story with a large airy courtyard centro for ventilation. The actual buildings are mostly stone unlike brick and masonry used in many buildings. Thank goodness for this as it keeps the classrooms cooler. The class at the moment consists of Swede Josefina 25, Norge Ana 23, Hamburg Thomas 22, Croat Vanja 27, Austrians Gunther 26 y Bernadette 25, Iranian Hassan 30, Chino Jane 20, Japanese Akanji 24, Jiro 26, y Yamata 28 and London Jonas 19 but the class has changed a bit since the first week. Our teacher Maria, 57 is quite demanding, a little funny and somewhat organized. She can only say basic words in English, though she speaks German and teaches Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian. Classes start first Monday of ever month and people generally move up together unless they are 54, even though their pronunciation is excellent and they find the language quite complex compared to French. We'll see how it goes. •



No one there probably needs a translation of the following, Grandpa Read is there if you do. "pobres" = "poor" and "sabios" related to savvy, means of course "wise or prudent".



* Oxford Dictionary: autocracy = despotism = tyranny

Che Guevara Brigade Documentary

Work progresses slowly on the official Brigade video, after all this is Cuba. The cameraman Victor Dennis took mucho footage. They're still in the process of reviewing, culling and sorting it. They use an editor called Avid on PC... which of course really is clunkier than Final Cut Pro digital on Mac. The equipment they have is fairly good, but the editing room has no dehumidifier and the tape machine is a little older so it has eaten a few feet of tape in the process of digital transfer... something I recall happening occasionally in the "olden days" editing VHS at the School District resources office.

>>> Patting My Own Back I Guess <<<

E-mail received from several of the younger Brigadistas:

Compañero Lance,

You have told us all we are far beyond your years when you were our age, in intelligence and conviction. Somehow we find that a little hard to fathom.

You have also told us that you felt you had poured your heart and soul into work and volunteerism in Canada but somehow she went in a direction you could no longer understand, follow or live with. We are very much with you on this one. Her attachment at the hip to the US government is completely reflected by Canadians and our governments continued ignorance of what is really happening with the Environment, the Five, Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo and the US attempts to control the world's economy to their advantage as resources decline, which many of your posted articles speak to.

Everything you write so well makes us urge you to join us in the fight. The fight that must come. The fight to bring our Canada back on course, before it really is too late. You say you are not a front man, more a speech writer. We are willing to front the fight if you would write.

We know that the fight to free Los Cinco Heroes will not last much longer. For many of us it has been four years of what seems much of the time like getting nowhere. We believe the current news media coverage of the US plight with terrorist Carriles is now turning a light on the hypocrisy which must end this all for them and us.

None of us or anyone we know has the ability to express our revolutionary thoughts the way you have and do. The way you re-crafted so quickly the sound-bite Noah gave to the TV was simple, brilliant and moving. We need your help in this next stage of Canada's history. We need your long standing understanding and wisdom of Canada and where she went and is going wrong.

Jane, Noah, Michelle, Parrisa, Sarah and Tamara on behalf of the Brigade and so many young Canadians who ARE paying attention to what is happening to our once great country.

My response:

Dear slightly younger Canadians you little suck-ups all !

I am here in Cuba for you. If you need political writing or editing, if you need another point of view, if you need a shoulder to cry on, I am here for you. For now I study Spanish in the hopes of reading much of the great revolutionary material like Marti's and Fidel's and Che's- once again, in the original language.

You all have my posting website - "Journalism" at www.geocities.com/magickall_cuba. You all have my e-mail, I am close-by at the speed of light. LR - HLVSiempra •

I've finished editing and burning a DVD of Israel

for my own archives and to free up space on my computer. Not much interest to anyone back home, other than **Cath** who might like to have another look at the Kibbutz Ginegar, Afula and Jerusalem. **Heath** may also be interested in these as well as her old Kibbutz **Sasa** takes part. I will mail it as soon as I can get over to the parcel post office, a separate Correo not too near my place, over by the Plaza De La Revolution.

Because the net is so comparatively slow and expensive here, admin Tom in Winnipeg Canada has managed to collect up a lot of photos from Brigadistas posted to remote photo servers like Flickr. He burned an assortment to CD and sent on for use in work here.

What We Ended up With For National TV

The Ernesto Che Guevara Brigade presently in Cuba in support of the Cuban people and their noble struggle for sovereignty and freedom consists of fifty one Canadians of diverse backgrounds and interests.

Our lives have been changed and our actions have been inspired by Cuba's struggle of the past fifty years.

On August 9th 2005, a three judge panel of the US 11th Circuit Court of Appeal in Atlanta, unanimously granted a change of venue and retrial for the Five Cuban Heroes. Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labañino, Fernando Gonzalez, Rene Gonzalez and Antonio Guerrero.

This represented a great victory for people in Cuba... supporters... and fighters for social justice world wide.

Yesterday, exactly one year later this victory was overturned by a twelve judge panel, thereby denying a new trial.

We strongly condemn this ruling by the United States Supreme Court and demand the immediate release of the Five Cuban Heroes. This latest injustice assures that work will continue in defence of Los Cinco,... Heroes of Cuba and all of humanity. •

Grandpa Read may have heard this before but, apparently some Spanish nobleman of great renown had quite a speech impediment. His pronunciation became popular to imitate as posh, thus Venezuela is Benethuela, Sabado becomes more like Thabado, Che Guevera becomes more like Che Gubara. Many Cubans and perhaps other Thpanish country thpeakers in general have a thort of lithp when they thpeak. Apparently we are also learning a kind of Quebecois/ Parisian mixed version of Spanish here in Cuba. •

REPORT from Habana Cuba

Here in Havana we have been getting hot sunny weather punctuated by torrential ten minute to occasional half hour long localized thunder and lightning rain storms. Many sidewalks, especially in my neighbourhood, are covered with the first floor of the buildings, held up by high arched curb side columns. They are great in sun and rain.

When the clouds burst, people just pause and chat. I stood with an old fellow who pulled me further into a doorway and chatted broken Spanglish... this way I begin to learn new words and phrases. This time it was "torrentas localis". When he saw my t-shirt and made a questioning gesture, I said "Che Guevara Brigadista - Canadiense". Dad can correct my spelling... at this point I am just happy to be able to Spanglish my way through things. (Bill Gates once said his one regret is that he never learned another language. My regret is that I did not learn as many as I could when I was younger). I myself never had an real poetic ear for anything other than English. I learned enough French to graduate and get by to this day when needed and learned enough Olde and Middle English to get through an English degree, though I concentrated on Shakespeare and Linguistics as set out by Noam Chomsky. My Ivrite is okay my Russian sucks. I am determined to learn Spanish and am attending classes as well as working with the young kid at my lodgings for a few hours help a week. Best of all is just striking up an attempt at a conversations with locals. Back to old doorway guy. He said in Spanish, "Si! Si! I saw you on television many times this past few weeks! Well he certainly did not see me, other than perhaps in the background. The only people who were in front of the camera were our Spanish speakers, **Bob, Sabrina**, and a few others student activists in reaction to media questions about things in the news about Fidel. I did get quoted in the local Bayamo newspaper while working in the school fields on Brigade. It was a comment about my observation on 'compassionism', having seen the Castro Biran farm and community and the medical clinic of Celia Sanchez's father, her work there and her contribution to the revolution and army of Fidel. Interesting, that a small group of young Canadians, with a smattering of elders, can actually make the national TV news or that the country wants to make a documentary about these kinds of Friendships brigades using Canadians as the subject. The old guy has 2 amigos in Vancouver.

Why is it important for me to learn Spanish. Stuart et al? Well, I hope to stay alive as long as Fidel does or perhaps longer. I want to be around to witness what might be the Unified Americas that finally "shake the Beast from their back" to see exactly how they do it, because the United States like some loco Texas bronc is going to go down kicking. I am very encouraged by **Hugo Chavez** of Venezuela and **Evo Morales** of Bolivia. Of course the USA has allocated millions of dollars to try to disrupt these governments. As more and more previously banana republics join the Union and weaken the grip of the USA in this sphere... I am hoping Canada will see the immorality of the yoke they are coupled to the US with. In the end I hope Canada will dissolve NAFTA and return to the day when Canadians were smarter- as grandpa Bill reminded me, using the slogan "No Truck Nor Trade with the Yankees". . I long to see Canadians realize and accept that it will mean huge economic sacrifices... but that in the end of it all, it will mean a break once and for all with the rabid and environmentally destructive Madison Avenue consumer economy

that is sucking up energy and oil faster than a Texan can piss weak American beer. If we don't, mother Gaia is finito todo with us. **That is my desire for my kid's kid's world.**

In Other News - International political observers report that Mexico's election was hijacked to the right with the assistance of the United States in a very similar way that GW's brother Jeb orchestrated the ballot box "win" in Florida. The US must be seriously concerned with leftist's who promote a new system of social inclusion and a fresh look at NAFTA and the fact it has brought very little economic change to the masses and in fact has basically turned Mexico into a source of destitute, cheap labour and an industrial dumping ground by both Canada and the USA.

I am hoping but very doubtful, that Canadians will finally make a break from pouring so much of their efforts into the consumption of needless consumer crap. Perhaps if we expended most of that production energy into alternate energy source development and sciences to save the planet we might drastically slow down the end of humanity as we know it. If we allocated equal resources into educating doctors, we too could offer an excess of life saving medical personal to the world the way Cuba has been. They just graduated 2500 foreign doctors as well. Must be a no brainer for **Chaves** et al to make the choice between the USA's offer to exchange cash, crap, and consumer junk for oil and the Cuban government's ability to send thousands of doctors into their mountain villages in exchange for Oro Negro.

The US seems to be getting very antsy about what is going on in Venezuela and other countries now under the influence of Cuba. I see that John **Negroponte**, the new tzar of the US Intelligence is betting on CIA veteran Patrick **Maher**, the new "mission manager" for Cuba and Venezuela, for the task of co-ordinating espionage efforts against the two countries. The CIA is of course financially and operationally responsible for the escape of **Carlos Ortega** and three other operatives from Venezuelan jail. This American led operation was identical to the one which helped international terrorist **Luis Possada Carriles**, the man convicted of the sabotage of a Cubana Aviation plane carrying 73 passengers to Carracas, which was blown up over Barbados.

Carriles who then entered the US illegally from Mexico is being held by US authorities. Canada, Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama, so far have refused a United States request to receive him. I'd imagine Libya will.

One good thing in all this is that the case of Los Cinco Heroes, being held in maximum security unconstitutionally for 8 years by the US is now getting more news coverage. •

Please remember my dear family and others... September 26th is a world wide day of protest. The Vancouver **Free the Five** will be in front of the US embassy. **Only YOU can change this world. I'd be there, but I am here.**

Which reminds me of this huge concrete planter on the way to class, that is carved with huge lettering and a big arrow reading

Aqui estoy yo... !
simply hilarious



Polar Bears Are Gone Now

Polar bears are gone now
all that's left are bones,
Scattered widely 'cross the land
that used to be their home.

These bears can paddle sixty miles
that's always been their way,
But more than that is far too much
their lives they had to pay.

The ice broke up quite suddenly
as they chased along for seal,
Polar bears they went extinct
just trying to get a meal.

The polar bears all left you know
just up and went away,
First dinosaurs and now the bears
Are tigers next you say?

LR.01.09.2006.Cuba

Based on Stuart's recital of:

Dinosaurs Are Gone Now

Millions of years ago
before the time of man,
The earth was ruled by dinosaurs
of every shape and span.

Dinosaurs were born from eggs
they couldn't stand the cold,
The lived in grass and swamp lands
around the world of old.

Some were gentle plant eaters
that walked upon four feet,
others just had two legs
and killed to get their meat.

I'm glad I didn't live then
it wasn't the place to be,
It would have been so scary
for people like you and me.

Dinosaurs are gone now
all that's left are bones,
Buried deep beneath the ground
petrified to stone.

If you take the pieces
and fit them carefully
I skeleton of a dinosaur
will stand for you and me.

Anonymous

recited by Stuart - DVD 6 1989-99



Oh Canada, my home and Native's land
Why did you never develop a brave sustainable plan?
Why was corporate avarice allowed to take control
of what was once a democracy so bright and strong and bold?
What ever happened Oh dear Canada
to our patriot love so true,
Where from far and wide each one did stand
on sacred guard for thee?
We are here again believe me do
to help to set you free.

← **The Maple Leaf Forever** →

Did I ever tell you Flag how I raised you and stood on guard for thee.? The Pope was dead, he's not our king or head of state he was a religious leader. He saved a few Jews it's true, but millions of lives he spent, because he refused to allow the condom for birth control you see. As brilliant as he was, what did he not understand about the African Aids Epidemic? He was no friend to women either. •

10,000 homes destroyed, Many thousands dead !

Having been there myself in the past year, a colleague asked me in an e-mail: "Who's at fault in the Middle East? The Israelis? The Palestinians? The Lebanese? What do you think?" I responded quite honestly, "None of them! All of us! We in the West are all to blame. We, all of the US controlled , capitalist consumer society. Israel is just a tiny pawn in the corporate controlled United States' deadly game of consumer power chess. The Lebanon/ Palestinian/ Israel end game serves the United States needs perfectly. It distracts the world's attention away from what is going on in Iraq. Even the attention of the American people themselves is refocused away from the daily death of young soldiers and the stream of body-bags returning from Vietnam 2. The United States on behalf of all people who follow her consumer lifestyle, is defending us against the cultural backlash they label religion based terrorism." • **LR Cuba**

Havana is a run down dirty ciudad viejo which reminds me mucho of downtown East-side Vancouver.

There are no individual garbage cans for homes or apartments in Cuba. All garbage must be carried to the nearest block bin- a sturdy container approximately W- 1.5m x D- 1m x H- 1.5m. These are picked up twice weekly by a lift truck. Imagine how much fuel could be saved not having to cover the tens of thousands of kilometres of back lanes and hundreds of hours of stop and go idling picking up our individual Vancouver containers. People tend to not have too much garbage to have to carry the block or two here. Recycling has a long way to go however and one of Fidel's personal projects, Ministry of the Environment will start with cleaning up Habana harbour this fall. Venezuela is funding the refurbishing of the leaky old oil refinery dribbling into the harbour. •

Canada's Most Deadly Habit

All Canadians who are even unconsciously aware of what is going on with global "warming" are acting like teenage boys. Even when many young men see the carnage of horrendous automobile accidents, they continue the same dangerous driving behaviour, because nature endows or perhaps more accurately, handicaps them with a testosterone based "knowledge" that they can survive risky behaviour because they are the invincible ones. Is it no wonder that we have always used this age group as cannon fodder in our wars.

Canadians who continue to be addicted to wanton conspicuous consumer habits are like reckless teens who know that smoking kills many but not all, thus teens of both genders start the habit because they have a built in mindset of invincibility which convinces them THEY will be the one who will not get cancer. So it is with our consumer habits. Somehow, we ignore our own environmentally destructive behaviour trusting that scientists will find a solution.

So it is also with the current attitude of Canadian's towards global frying. "Science will find new ways to keep us safe". "Technology will find a magick bullet to solve our problems". "Alternate energy sources will solve the deadly issues.". We excuse and continue our behaviour fooling ourselves that a solution will be found by the powers that be, when in actuality the only thing that can save us is a near complete discontinuation of our frivolous consumer lifestyle, the most deadly habit we have today.

At the moment nothing other than nuclear energy will work. The energy required to produce solar cells is a net carbon loser; it is cleaner local energy in the end of course, but the per unit carbon manufacturing costs are enormous. Solar cells are a grand idea,

but manufacturing costs to the environment and their wimpy output per unit means households would need dozens of square metres in sunny climates to be useful. Worse yet, the massive amounts of energy that go into building wind turbines means years must pass per unit before a net carbon saving is realized. The gigantic environment costs involved in manufacturing the concrete, metal and perhaps composite fibre structures for tidal generation facilities will take many many decades to break even in the carbon output to savings ratio. Every kilogram of cement created from burnt clay and lime requires the energy equivalent of up to three times the weight of the cement in wood (or an equivalent Joule source) and the resulting carbon gases released into the atmosphere are huge. Those gases are killing us.

The only way to stop the cycle of carbon production is to reduce or eliminate all activities unnecessary for survival - right now.

The environmental heat inducing carbon costs in manufacturing what we need to replace our global frying energy systems will slow but not eliminate our problems. Retrofitting massive transport ships with rigid sails will help... but what will almost eliminate the problem is not having to transport most of what we need in the first place. Hundreds of COSTCO, Canadian Tire and Wallmart containers a day arrive in Vancouver and Seattle from China to feed our gluttonous consumer habits. These goods are produced with very environmentally harmful cheaper soft coal energy that spews huge amounts of global warming carbon based gases into our very thin shell of an atmosphere, the thickness of which has been likened to the standard rubber skin of a 20 cm or 8 inch diameter balloon.

Only kicking this most dangerous of human habits, cold turkey, has a snowball's chance in hell of saving us. The time to do it is today, tomorrow is already to late. •

Lance Read - A Canadian in Cuba

At 1630 every day in the summer until the first day of school, there were trashy "B" movies in English with Spanish subtitles. Movies I would probably never watch, like the new Charlie's Angels. All of them had one thing in common besides being bad, they had very simple scripts, which was good because I could actually study the Spanish and compare what I know to what was being said. This distracted from how crappy the movie was while I learned to read the Spanish. I found out they are on during the summer holidays for students - oh well I'm back to school now anyway, only this time I'm on the other side of the desk. •

Crystal Ball Gazing - 2040 CE

"Safer, cleaner" - Nuclear electrical energy has become widespread. Cleaner, types of energy production- wind, solar and hydro power never able to meet the growing energy demands of the human population, are only supplements to the more common nuclear.

Scientists once again announced in Japan that the other kind of fission fusion thing no one can ever remember, you know the one where a glass of water will produce enough energy for a city-year, no waste, will be available within decades or perhaps centuries.

To obtain enough food to survive, the island country of the United Kingdom relies on importation of food from mainland Europe on electric trains running full time through the Chunnel, which is now unavailable for tourist traffic.

Fresh water production necessary planet wide is a product everywhere of desalination plants run on nuclear electricity.

Most Canadian abodes require little or no winter heating now, but must adjust to winter living-quarter temperatures of twelve degrees maximum as energy costs are enormous. Huge amounts of nuclear electrical energy are used to cool abodes in the summer, not just in Canada but planet-wide, otherwise- mass deaths like those in France 2003 and California 2006, occur regularly.

Holiday travel has ceased to exist. The environmental and fuel costs of air-travel preclude annual Hawaiian, Mexican or Caribbean air-travel vacation for Vancouverites. Once in a lifetime rigid sail ocean liner holidays to Hawaii require weeks at sea as in the early days of transoceanic sailing and must be booked years in advance.

The greatest challenges facing humans is the handling of manufacturing by-product waste, therefore all industrial production is reserved for basic survival needs, clothing and housing necessities. The age of consumerism has passed.

Massive drought, disease, starvation, drowning and general natural weather destruction has reduced the population peak of 11 billion in 2025 to a stable 4 billion. The decision to reprocess human protein into the only edible protein available, may help in survival. •

**Jesus loves me this I know...
but we're not all Saints!**

St. Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Sienna, Mahatma Ghandi, Mother Teresa, Che Guevara, Gotama the Buddha, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King and even **Jesus of Nazareth**- we know their names. We honour their teachings. We pretend to think about trying to occasionally sort of emulate their lives in some small token way. But even that lame commitment is usually, for most of us, just Sunday lip service. Their lives were all about a full time sense of duty to others. It was about what's right and what is wrong in our dealings with fellow humans.

Instead we take care of numero uno. Ourselves for the most part. We are weak and insecure as the world around us erupts into conflict. We believe "we can win the war on terrorism". But this war is one manufactured by the USA who needed an enemy after the fall of the Soviet Union. An evil empire is needed in order to keep the industrial military complex firing on all twelve cylinders, the behemoth that it is.

U.S. imperialist aggression is all about oil, oil to keep our rampant consumer Western society "healthy". And it is anything but healthy. It is extremely sick. First of all, oil is needed to keep the war machine running. On that point I wouldn't even want to imagine how much energy and pollution just one US Aircraft carrier is responsible for- perhaps equivalent to that of a small city like Kelowna, BC?!

Imperialism is a spectrum extending from passive- more like Canada's to hyperactive- as in that of the USA. The US is the most active protector of this most backward and inhuman of social structures that still exist in the world today.

The aggressive imperialism of England, Spain, Portugal, France, the Dutch, and the American Colonies carried out, through colonialism throughout the old world, based on lock and chain slavery is rightfully gone, but Imperialism exists to this day. We in the consumer society with our closets full of Nike, Reebok and Adidas... our cheap consumer goods are keeping a host of countries economically enslaved. Our Starbucks Mocha is made from unfair trade coffee and cocoa which is tended and gathered by mothers with pesticide blinded babes packed on backs because there is no day-care provided by Mr. Big coffee in third world countries. We justify our actions with the self serving excuse - "but without us they'd have even less in their backward country". **con't >>>>>>**

Imperialism will exist as long as Canadians (and Americans) enjoy a far superior level of cheap labour based living. It will flourish as long as we keep hundreds of millions living at a level far below ours. We live on the backs of slave labour as much as any Roman citizen, King, Tzar or Maharaja did. We control their standard of living as long as we control the international banks and the IMF. We subjugated, raped and economically drained these countries of riches and resources over centuries for trillions and they have never recovered. Today, we claim they are in debt to us for billions and it is an excuse to keep them enslaved.

This is hardly at all what our Saints and Greats - Sts. Frank, Catherine, Ghandi, et al were emulating and we all know it... we're just too weak to help ourselves change. God bless Canada, eh! Mr. Harper • **Lance Read - A Canadian in Cuba**



The "golden age" - 1950 'til today is a sham.

We worship the golden calf of consumerism but it destroys our own sacred temple. It desecrates our own holy cathedral - Gaia Earth. The false worship of consumer goods and that lifestyle must pass because it was never environmentally sustainable. Consider the simple example of the golfer who every year or two buys an entire new set of "titanium" / carbon fibre clubs because he thinks that will improve his game. The environmental costs of manufacturing each set is enormous. Thousands of BTU hours in carbon dioxide production are released into the atmosphere permanently to perhaps shave a few strokes from his game, though usually not. And this game is just a silly way of filling empty hours without even getting some exercise as many a duffer no longer even walks the course but carts around instead. • **LR - Cuba**

CCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCC

Carbon is one of the blackest materials humans deal with... will it be any wonder that the coming period of time in human history spent dealing with excess carbon might be known to future history as the Dark Ages II.

OLYMPIC Qualifying Baseball

As you may know, in the United States, several Acts since the early 1960's, known as the embargo or blockade, have excluded any American company or subsidiary thereof from selling goods to Cuba. As well, several Acts make present further difficulties for foreign companies who trade with Cuba and whom want to trade with the USA as well.

The recent Helmes-Burton Act has also forced the last foreign bank operating in Cuba, Canada's own Bank of Nova Scotia to stop any service here. How the USA did this was to refuse access to dealing in US dollars, (each one of which they "own" and have ultimate control over, by the way). Of course no bank can function internationally without access to US dollars. All foreigners can now only access funds through a costly VISA advance.

The sports company Adidas is currently completely supplying the Cuban baseball team with uniforms and equipment as donations, notable by the three white stripes on the arms and the Adidas symbol on the neck collar. Of course the Cuban team having won the last Olympics and favoured to win in China is a great advertisement for Adidas. Anyone have mixed feelings about capitalist consumerism here. Oh well, at the moment perhaps anything to fuc& with international BULLYING by the US eh!

USA tied Cuba 6-1 in standings but came 1st in the final. Both qualified for this last appearance of baseball in the Olympics.

Russia & China - the Socialism that NeVeR WaS

In my first newsletter, I mentioned that **Uncle Stephan** had said "Socialism does not work. Just look at Russia and China." I said I would "address that later within". I realize now that I didn't really do so. Here goes.

China is a very special fuc&ed up case. So we'll do that second.

Russia is a difficult one as well, but for anyone who would care to get a pretty good summary of the history of this warlord megalomaniac chieftain driven country without being bored, try Rutherford's *Ruska*. The history of this part of the world is a pretty complicated one, but one thing is for sure- it has always been and remains a land of peasant farmers controlled by whomever wields the biggest club.

Russian government

Just as in Mediaeval Britain, there have always been clan leaders in *Ruska* who worked to control larger and larger areas of land. Whether they be called Kings and Lords or Tzars and whatever, they controlled land and held their own and their close kin's vested interest paramount over that of the "lower" classes.

When the time was ripe to off the Tzar, Lenin et al, may have started off with good intentions* but then just replaced the aristocracy with themselves including limos, caviar, and whores off to the Dacha holiday cabins. They surrounded themselves with psychopathic thugs, called them KGB and continued to screw the country, though during the Russian high period of Tretiak and Gagarin, they actually did get things better organized than the Tzar. *Never much of a fan of his and having read the most recent book about Lenin titled *Lenin* (200?) I am not a fan of the man nor his claims at being a socialist/ communist. I believe in the end, like Stalin, he was just a sick psychopath.

When Perestroika came, it was just a different group of oligarchs who stole power and wealth from the people. No matter what the USA or the USSR labelled the system in Russia it was never Communism or even close to Socialism. Wikipedia either terms and compare to what you know about Russia.

China - so NOT socialist

China left the Middle Ages somewhere around the turn of the Century. Psychopathic power brokers built armies and fought each other incessantly until Chang Ki Shek and Mao Tsi Tung fought it out. Mao seemed to have the best interests of the people at heart in the beginning and he was heading towards a socialist type of system until he went all paranoid and crazy, and started killing off all the brain power during the cultural revolution. Then he gave control to crazy students who blamed their elders for the situation, and it was a total mess... but there was never socialism in China. Nor really any kind of communism. There is not to this day. There was just a little tiny bit better sharing of resources but little caring for the masses of rice farmers. The discrepancy in wealth widens to this day. There are a group of all powerful old "emperors" driving around in Gucci shoes, limos, eating caviar with whores running their own giant fiefdoms.

Other than the hippy type farms like those in the Slokan that failed, the closest thing I can think of to communism ever existing in the world would be the Israeli Kibbutz system. During it's heyday, 3.5% of the population lived in these socialist farming/ manufacturing communities. They lived a far more efficient way of life and produced approximately 70% of the GNP for decades. Not

sure anything will be there, but perhaps Wikipedia *Kibbutz* if you are not sure how they were structured. Suffice to say, that motivation was based on pride and social status. Each member received a certain status based on how hard they worked and how much they contributed - however, every member shared everything equally regardless of how much they were able to or did contribute. Cathy and I understood this as we learned we had very high status when we lived on Ginegar. We consumed no more perhaps less than some of the lazier volunteers, but we were afforded more social invitations and privileges. We also felt really good about our contributions which I think is more to the point in any social system, socialism and communism included.

Russia and China and pretty much any other country that has claimed to be Communist never were, therefore we cannot ever say, "Socialism doesn't work!" It's never been tried much. Communist socialism as practiced on the Kibbutz worked incredibly well so therefore we can say that socialism can work. The real trick is getting it to. Cuba as a country seems to have found a way so far even through the 40 year US Blockade.

Anyone can claim to be something they are not:

Adolph Hitler claimed and GW Bush claims to be Christian. I am hard pressed to figure out which teachings of the Christ they ever followed. At one time I liked to call myself an athlete, until I realized I wasn't fooling anyone. And finally, the Vancouver Canucks have always claimed to be an NHL hockey team, We all know how true that has been.

Does Cuba follow many of the principals of Communism as outlined by Karl Marx or socialism as prescribed by Engles... so far it would seem so. Only time will tell. Fidel Castro has pretty much stayed close to his 'preachings'. For those who never read his final speech at his trial prior to being exiled, read *History Will Absolve Me*. He has wavered hardly at all from what he said in the document. **Lance Read- A Canadian in Cuba**

First Day For Cuban School

The first day of school, September 4th, one of the high ranking officials who greeted the Canadian Brigade in Bayamo a month ago, followed a young grade 12 student in a national TV broadcast recognizing the day. After each had spoken, the students stood and chanted inspirationally followed by a very hearty and proud singing of the national anthem. I wonder what the real reason, Canadians and youth there never sing so robustly and seldom anywhere but sporting events? Is it because secretly Canadians are not proud of their country? If so, why? Do they know deep down inside their way of life is so far from sustainable that it is something they are ashamed of? Here, the majority of students, "Young Commies" love to get back into school for three days the week before and clean up the schoolyard and rooms. It was wonderful as a teacher to see this. Boys country wide wear uniform shorts or pants to school. Girls wear culottes with cotton shoulder straps with matching cotton "bar" across the chest, kind of like 'lederhosen'. Primary K-6 are coloured burgundy, 7 to 10 are deep yellow/gold, 11&12 are deeper tan. Everyone wears a long or short sleeve white light cotton shirts. Because kids don't have to spend time worrying about what to wear and parent's budgets are hurt less - "uniforms" are a great idea for public schools anywhere. • **LR in Cuba**

If We Won't Save Ourselves Nothing Can

Why is it we never ask ourselves why
humanity is even worth saving.

For millennium we have fought wars,
maimed and killed for land,
possessions, and power over others.
We still murder to this day, this hour,
this second. Every one of us
Canadians is responsible for the death
of a mother, child or innocent father
through our very lifestyle.

Our society engages in gluttony more
than any society in human history, the
Romans included. More than any
other time in the history of the human
race do so few create so much
pollution through such conspicuous,
gratuitous, wasteful consumption.

And most of all we still visit all of
these sins upon our very own
children.

Mother nature is in the process of
preparing to liquidate huge numbers
of us through disease, starvation,
drowning and general destruction.
She is doing so not out of spite but as
a result of our overburden to her own
sacred body- to her atmosphere, her
oceans, lakes and rivers; her forests,
bogs and swamps. Her valleys, plains
and mountains majestic. In the end we
did not heed our own ancient advise
that we do not inherit the living earth
from our parents, we hold it in trust
for our grandchildren. We did not
keep this hallowed covenant with her.
She has taken us to court and we have
been convicted of breach of contract.

When most of you, my dearest peers,
lay down for your last breath, your
last thought will doubtless be, "My
god, mon dieu, holy Christ, Mother
Gaia, Allah - whatever!. What have I
done to my children's children's
world?" And that my friend will be
your very last thought, a kind of
symbolic emotional ticket to an
eternity of hell.

Is there any hope... anything you can
do today about this? Yes! Remember
the old hiker's saying, "Take nothing
but memories and photos, leave
nothing but footprints!" Start living
your life as much as possible,
monkishly austere as of yesterday.

Lance Read - A Canadian in Cuba

Depression Medication - a Real Killer

Legally prescribed depression medications are of
course an invented product of the pharmaceutical
industry and a misguided branch of "medicine" and
the doctors who prescribe them.

Of course there are some more extreme cases of
mental disease and illness such as true bipolar
syndrome that can be helped by very very carefully
applied and monitored drug treatment but the success
rate is still quite low as many go off their meds and
commit suicide anyway. However, though these
people are usually able to function better on treatment,
they are seldom fully functioning humans.

One has to ponder why depression is so prevalent in
the developed world and even more so in a few of the
G8 countries while completely missing in third world
countries. And why has depression grown per capita
by leaps and bounds since the second world war. Why
weren't the same percentages of people depressed
during the depression years. Perhaps for the same
reason depression does not occur in third world
countries, When people are preoccupied with daily
survival they do not have time to get depressed and if
they do give in to despair, death follows. They use their
energies to fight to survive instead.

Canada has one of the highest rates of medicated
depression in the developed world. Is it possible
depression goes hand in hand with consumerism.
Perhaps it works something like this- We work to
earn. Earn to spend. Spend to fill a void. When the
sense of gratification does not last. We repeat the
cycle. As well, we fill our lives with partying, and
frivolous activities like celebrity and sports watching.
After a period of time we feel guilty about our
gratuitous, basically useless way of life. We label it
depression and then medicate ourselves numb.

Those who judge others for abusing alcohol,
marijuana or other illegal drugs to numb, mask and
hide from these feelings are surely hypocritical.

The ONLY thing that can ease or eliminate depression
and substance abuse (including prescribed drugs) is a
huge change in lifestyle and of course jumping off the
consumer treadmill as well as avoiding commercial
TV and media advertizing.

Lance Read - A Canadian in Cuba



back to school Saturday parades!

Fidel Castro

"Fidel is not an easy figure to
define: rather he is exceedingly
complex. First of all, it must be
said that he is not just a genius;
rather he is many geniuses. He
was first known as a genius in
guerrilla fighting. Then he also
revealed himself as a genius
statesman of his time, standing
out over all of them for having
governed for so many years with
great ability or if you like great
success facing down the largest
power in the world under such
unequal conditions. It must be
added also that he is a genius
orator- perhaps one of the great
orators of his time and perhaps all
of history. It is astonishing to see
how he captivates his audiences
at home and abroad for hours at a
time, without having written
speeches and at times without
even preparing them; completely
improvised. Unlike U.S.
Presidents, who Gore Vidal said
cannot write their own speeches if
they do not have somebody write
them for them, and who
sometimes like GW Bush can't
even read them.

"He is also a genius for his great
volume of knowledge. He has
extensive knowledge of issues of
agriculture, medicine, economy
(perhaps greatest expert in the
world on foreign debt),
electronics, energy resources and
many other things. He is notably
brilliant for his memory and for
his faculty for retaining numbers
and making constant accurate
mental mathematical calculations.

"He is known by all to be
affectionate, soft spoken,
courteous and tender. He is
renowned for becoming familiar
with anybody from the first
moment. He is witty, clever and
he always makes people laugh.

"When Fidel eventually does pass
on it will be a huge loss for Cuba
but also for humanity in general."

**Noam Chomsky -
American Author
& Anarchist**

Country-
wide

Traitorous Ignorance Must Be Banished

I dedicated a huge chunk of my life to teaching. I thought I gave it my all. Everything I had. I believed I could make a difference, now that is perhaps questionable. I still believe I have something important to do, just not in Canada right now. I still believe if I dedicate what's left of my life to something, anything I truly believe in I can help make a difference.

If and when I do come back to Canada, I hope to take and perhaps retake some more political science and related courses, even at the college level, for that I believe is where the true minds lie. Something has to be done about what has happened to Canada, and there are too few who see it or who have any revolutionary spirit at all. They cocoon with head in sand or perhaps up arse, blind to it all hoping if they ignore our planetary problems and those in the street, life will go on peachy keen.

Conservative and Liberals alike do not offer democracy at the National or Provincial level. Those who are for the status quo of our current governments support those who induce terrorism, degradation of the environment and destruction of the only living planet we know of. They support corporately and right wing media who control Canada. Those, the majority who follow along and do not question the status quo in Canada are truly traitors to all she ever stood for. They are traitors to the democracy she was founded upon. Those who are not prepared to live and die to re-establish democracy in Canada are traitors. Those who are not prepared to abolish the current corporate controlled government, a non-democratic one follow in the steps of the Bush dynasty and are traitors.

These are strong, carefully thought of and chosen words. I would hope any true Canadians whom are left- hear, heed and act upon them. The revolution must come. The revolution will come. Let us try to do it in the spirit of Canada with our hearts and minds and not bloodshed. The revolution must come. • **Lance Read - A Canadian in Cuba**

Today I met a young Seattleite or is that Seattletonian

He saw my UBC shirt and said are you actually from Vancouver. He is married to a Peruvian. They are in their third year of six years of medical school here. He had to have high academics, show financial need and speak excellent Spanish. Cuba just graduated over 2500 foreign doctors along with their own zillions this year. For the full free ride, the only catch is they have to volunteer overseas for three years. He was on the Peace Corp. in Peru where he met his wife so he's bent that way anyway. Both are currently learning in a clinic in Habana here which alone is treating 120 cases of Dengue fever. He is totally aware that American backed terrorists from Miami introduced it into Cuba several years ago. I said we wouldn't hold it against him because he was from Seattle in a blue State. He said he is so ashamed of his country

his government "but what can you do? The government isn't even elected anymore, it's bought and paid for by the corporations and arms industry!" I said, perhaps it's time for a student lead revolt. The US broke away from the repressive yoke of an Imperialist England in the beginning. The three of us had a long talk about NAFTA and how bad it has been for the poorer Mexican and Canadians. We spoke of



Edificio de Entrada - Habana University ▲

▼ **Symbol of a bloody revolt - Habana-U**



▼ **Edificio de Lenguas da mia aula #13 ▼**



We did not inherit the land from our forefathers, we are only here for a while to hold it in trust for our grandchildren's children.

? to 'paraphrase' - Chief Seattle perhaps ?