

*Che Guevara:
A False Idol for Revolutionaries*

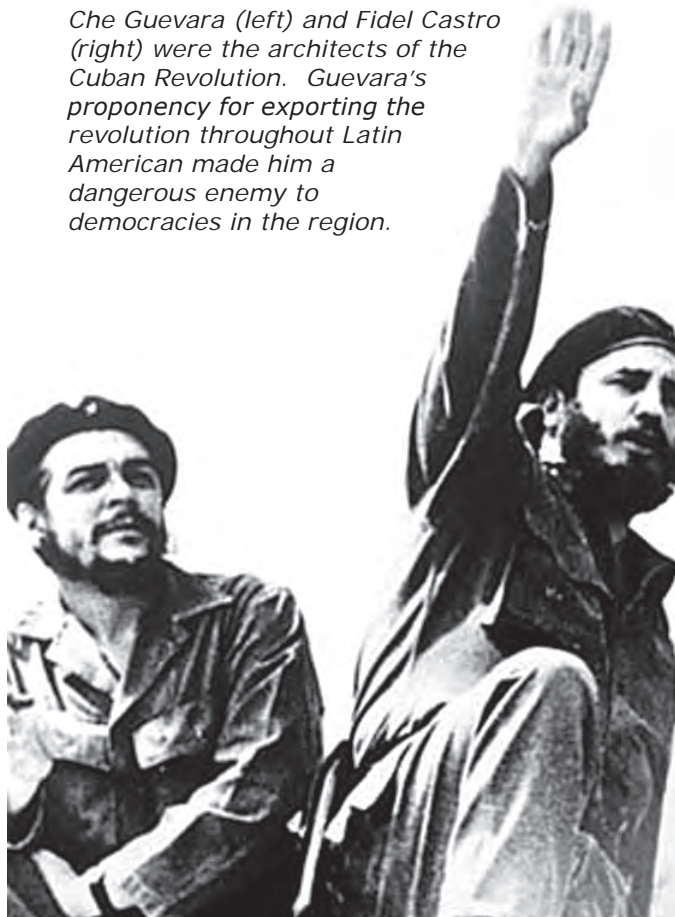
by Troy J. Sacquety

In the mid-1960s, Ernesto “Che” Guevara de la Serna, was a clear threat to American foreign policy in Latin America. His role in Cuba’s Revolution, his outspoken criticism of the United States, and his propensity for armed Communist insurgencies in the Western Hemisphere, made him one of Washington’s top intelligence and military targets. “This asthmatic . . . who never went to military school or owned a brass button had a greater influence on inter-American military policies than any single man since the end of Josef Stalin.”¹ Che’s part in establishing the first Communist government in Latin America was legendary in the region. In essence, the U.S. Government was concerned by, not just Che the man, but what he proselytized on insurgency and instability. He was the Osama Bin Laden of the 1960s.

Che’s image has transcended reality to that of a romantic hero. But ask any Cuban exile in the United States today and they will say that Che was simply a ruthless Communist revolutionary.² Best known for his brutality in Cuba, he was deeply involved in unsuccessful insurgencies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Bolivia. While not a thorough account of his life, this article summarizes Che’s youth, idealism, and the revolutionary path that led him to Bolivia.

Ernesto was born on 14 May 1928 in Rosario, Argentina, to Ernesto Guevara Lynch and Celia de la Serna.³ The first of five children, he was raised in an upper middle class family. His father was related to one of South America’s

Che Guevara (left) and Fidel Castro (right) were the architects of the Cuban Revolution. Guevara’s propensity for exporting the revolution throughout Latin American made him a dangerous enemy to democracies in the region.



most established families. While he squandered an inheritance, his wife, Celia, had her own and an estate that provided a small yearly income. Ernesto’s upbringing was bohemian; as a boy he was free to do as he wished. But he was born with a serious, lingering ailment.

From the age of two Ernesto suffered from severe asthma, forcing the family to live in a dry region. His father complained that “each day we found ourselves more at the mercy of that damned sickness.”⁴ The asthma made the often-bedridden Ernesto a voracious reader. He was also determined to lead an active life.

Ernesto played sports and engaged in daredevil antics to impress his friends. Although of slight build, he was especially good at rugby. His bohemian eccentricities earned him nicknames, the most unflattering being “Chanchito” (pig), because Ernesto did not bathe regularly and wore unwashed clothes for weeks. Despite his nonconformity, Guevara chose to study medicine at the University of Buenos Aires and explore the country.

On his trips Guevara noticed the vast differences in living standards between the rural population and his social class. These forays into the countryside manifested a feeling of pan-Americanism, a desire to help the poor, and reinforced his hatred of the landed aristocracy in South America and the U.S. Despite being bourgeois, he held them responsible for Latin America’s oppressed indigenous population. The adventure that most influenced the 24-year-old Ernesto began in January 1952. Partnered with Alberto Granado, he traveled through Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, and the United States.⁵ After nine months of travel and discovery, Ernesto was infused with a newfound sense of direction. He returned to Buenos Aires and completed his medical studies in April 1953.

The newly minted doctor once again took to the open road. After



From the age of two, Ernesto suffered from severe asthma. He excelled at sports despite this affliction.



Che Guevara’s parents, Celia de la Serna and Ernesto Guevara Lynch, visited him in Havana shortly after the revolution succeeded.

observing firsthand the results of the 1952 Bolivian Revolution in La Paz, he left for Guatemala to support the socialist president, a former Army officer named Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán. There, Ernesto met his future wife, Hilda Gadea and got the nickname, “Che,” from Cuban political exile Antonio “Ñico” López who made fun of him for constantly using the Argentine expression *che* [hey!].⁶ The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) orchestrated overthrow of President Arbenz in 1954 had a profound effect on Che Guevara. Afterwards, he looked back on Guatemala as a revolution that could have succeeded if those in power had been more forceful.

Arbenz’s populism, especially land reform and cooperation with Socialists, attracted international attention. In 1954, two percent of Guatemala’s population owned 72 percent of the arable land. Since only 12 percent of that land was being used annually, Arbenz wanted to redistribute the rest. This did not please the powerful and influential U.S.-based United Fruit Company (UFC), which was Guatemala’s largest landowner. In the midst of a “Red Scare,” Washington responded to the UFC’s pleas for help, in part because America was not keen on a left-leaning government in the Western Hemisphere. Thus, the CIA trained a force in Nicaragua to overthrow Arbenz.

On 18 June 1954, nearly 500 men commanded by Carlos Castillo Armas crossed the border in four groups. Although the CIA-trained rebels were dealt severe blows, the revolt of the Guatemalan Army enabled final success. Arbenz was forced into exile. Those suspected of Socialist sympathies were arrested. Che took refuge inside the Argentine Embassy before fleeing to Mexico City.

Che’s revolutionary colleagues from Guatemala joined him there. Ñico López introduced him to Fidel Castro, whom Che thought was “intelligent, very sure of himself and of extraordinary audacity; I think there is a mutual sympathy between us.”⁷ When Castro invited him to join the 26th of July Movement, Che accepted.

Castro’s movement was the cause Che had been seeking. The group began to covertly train under the tutelage of Spanish Civil War veteran Alberto Bayo. His paramilitary regimen included revolutionary war theory, physical conditioning, hand-to-hand combat, and marksmanship. Castro did not delay his return to Cuba.

On 25 November 1956, 82 guerrillas boarded the *Granma*, an old, leaky, cabin cruiser loaded down with weapons and supplies bound for Cuba. After a rough voyage, the small force landed on 2 December at Playa Las Coloradas.⁸ Their first contact with Batista’s forces on 5 December was disastrous. The Army attacked the guerrillas while they were resting in a sugar cane field. Surprised, the confused group did not put up an organized defense, and many fled through the dense sugar cane. Those who tried to fight were either killed or

Ernesto Guevara’s travels showed him the disparity of the living standards between the urban middle class and the rural poor, fostered his Pan-Americanism.

Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz’s socialist policies caused his ouster. Guevara, who witnessed it firsthand, was greatly influenced by the 1954 coup.



Fulgencio Batista, former Army Chief of Staff and Cuban president, seized power in 1952. His authoritarian regime aroused much discontent and prompted Castro to form an underground movement to remove him from power.



Flag of the 26th of July Movement (Movimiento 26 de Julio)



The Sierra Maestras are the highest mountains in Cuba. The rugged, inaccessible terrain allowed Castro’s 26th of July Movement a secure base from which to build support. This later became key in Che’s theories on guerrilla warfare.

Castro and the Cuban Revolution.

Born 13 August 1926 on a sugar plantation near Birán, Cuba, Fidel Castro, like Che, was from a bourgeois family of “haves.” His father owned or leased thousands of hectares of land. Castro entered the University of Havana in 1945 to study law and became very politically active. By the time he graduated with a Doctor of Laws degree in 1950, Castro was extremely resentful of Washington’s interference in Latin American affairs.

In 1952, General Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar, the former Army Chief of Staff and Cuban President, seized control of the popularly elected Cuban government in a *coup d’état*. Convinced that the coup was unlawful, Castro decided that an armed revolt was necessary. He formed a guerrilla movement to capture the Moncada Barracks to get the necessary weapons for a popular uprising. On 26 July 1953, Castro’s amateur 135-man force was soundly defeated; nearly half of the guerrillas were killed. Survivors fled into the countryside, where they were hunted down. Castro was captured, publicly tried, and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. Less than two years later he was pardoned with family influence. He fled to Mexico in the summer of 1955, to plan, and organize another group to fight against Batista. To

commemorate the failed attack on the Moncada Barracks, Castro named his guerrilla force the *Movimiento 26 de Julio* (26th of July Movement). While some members were Communists, like his brother Raúl, it was not a requirement. The revolutionaries were simply united by their mutual hatred of Batista.

Fidel Castro, seen here with Che Guevara, was a charismatic and powerful orator. He was determined to “free” Cuba from the rule of General Fulgencio Batista.



Conditions in the Sierra Maestra were harsh, but their remoteness allowed the guerrillas to easily detect incursions by government troops. Raúl Castro is kneeling with a telescoped rifle. His brother, Fidel, is standing directly behind him.

captured. Che, Castro, and Castro’s brother Raúl, were among the few that managed to escape.

The twenty-plus survivors congregated in the safety of the Sierra Maestra Mountains.⁹ Reunited, they began recruiting anti-Batista farmers. Once the urban underground cells of the 26th of July Movement discovered that there were *Granma* survivors, arms, supplies, and money trickled into the remote mountain camps. Hit and run attacks on small outlying garrisons garnered more. As the number of successful attacks grew, the group gained sympathy throughout Cuba. Castro capitalized on this by granting an exclusive interview to Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times*.

A sympathetic Matthews greatly exaggerated the number of guerrillas to “thousands.”

“General Batista cannot possibly hope to suppress the Castro revolt.”¹⁰ The interview showed that Havana’s claims that Castro was dead were untrue. Recruits and support poured into the mountain retreats. By surviving and sticking with Castro, the Argentine proved his loyalty and dedication.

Che’s fervent belief in the revolution set him apart and added to his credibility

During the Santa Clara campaign in the last weeks of 1958, Che met Aleida March. They later married (as shown at right). After her husband’s death, she established the Che Guevara Studies Center.



among the Cubans as a *Granma* veteran. Although recruited as a doctor, his leadership and organizational skills prompted Castro to promote him to *Comandante* and give him command of one of the two rebel columns [at that time, Castro was the only other *Comandante*]. Fidel needed his skills in the brutal struggle.

Desperate to save his regime, Batista sent large forces into the mountains. While the rebels rarely killed enlisted soldiers who surrendered, captured insurgents expected little mercy. Castro's men were brutal with deserters. Poor living conditions made that a serious threat. Those caught were summarily tried and executed. The war quickly spread beyond the mountains.

The 26th of July Movement expanded guerrilla operations to assassinating prominent government supporters such as police and military officers. Batista launched "Operation Verano," into the Sierra Maestra in late June 1958 in response. The six-week offensive was a disaster. It was such a large psychological victory that Castro expanded combat operations into the lowlands. He took his column down to build alliances with other resistance groups.

Under pressure from the loosely united guerrilla groups, Batista's forces gave ground in late December 1958. Che's column secured numerous towns and defeated several garrison elements. The insurgency achieved success after capturing Santa Clara. Joined by Camilo Cienfuegos's column, the united guerrillas approached the city. Their 300-350 troops faced 3,500 of Batista's thoroughly demoralized soldiers.

The rebels secured the city after a series of brief engagements. When the Army fled, the way to the capital Havana, was open. Less than twelve hours after the fall of Santa Clara, Batista's government collapsed.

Construction of the La Cabaña fortress began in 1763. At the time of the Cuban Revolution it was being used as a prison. For much of 1959, Che oversaw the trials and executions of "enemies of the revolution" here.

Guevara publicly trashed his enemies. His speeches angered the United States, and later, the Soviet Union.



Sugar was Cuba's main export and source of hard currency. Che set an example by volunteering a large portion of his free time "to the revolution," by cutting sugar cane, or working on the docks.

He escaped to the Dominican Republic on 1 January 1959. The victorious rebels rolled into Havana unopposed and took control of government buildings. Che installed himself in La Cabaña, an 18th Century fortress turned prison where he presided over "revolutionary tribunals" of "war criminals" until June 1959.





Several Latin American countries contributed to the U.S.-led blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis. They realized that their countries were also within range of the Soviet Union's nuclear missiles.

Several thousand people were tried at La Cabaña. They were either sentenced to prison or executed. Former government officials, police, and army personnel who had served Batista were rounded up. Luis O. Rodriguez, a former platoon sergeant that fought in the Sierra Maestra, was arrested at home. Rodriguez described these dreadful times.

*"things were very disorganized . . . every night they would come in with a list . . . if you were called in [late at night/early morning] it would mean that you were going to trial. They would tell you not to carry anything with you. [This was] contrary to if they called your name during the day and would ask you to bring your belongings if you had anything. You knew you would be transferred . . . But if you were called during the night it was a different thing. You knew that your life was almost gone . . . After they called the names for about an hour or so nothing happened. Then, all of a sudden you heard the discharge of several rifles and after a few seconds . . . the single shots [coup de grâce], sometimes one, sometimes two . . . even four. All this time we saw Che . . . calling us criminals . . . he would say 'all you guys will end up the same way. You deserve it.' We were wondering why is this guy here, he was not even a Cuban . . . He was very arrogant and cold."*¹¹



When Havana sided with the Soviet Union, it was supplied with large amounts of Russian equipment, such as this T-34/85 tank. Che was the main architect of the Cuban-Soviet relationship.

The trials shook the militaries of Latin America because large numbers of officers were summarily executed. The Cuban revolutionaries posed a threat to the professional military social class in the region. Bolstered by the success, Che began making bellicose public statements regarding insurgency and revolution.

On 27 January 1959 Che made his *Social Projections of the Rebel Army* speech. It was an ominous view of the future.

*"The revolution is not limited to the Cuban nation because it has touched the conscience of (Latin) America and seriously alerted the enemies of our peoples. The revolution has put the Latin American tyrants on guard because these are the enemies of popular regimes . . . the victory against the dictatorship is not a passing one but becomes the first step to the victory of (Latin) America."*¹²

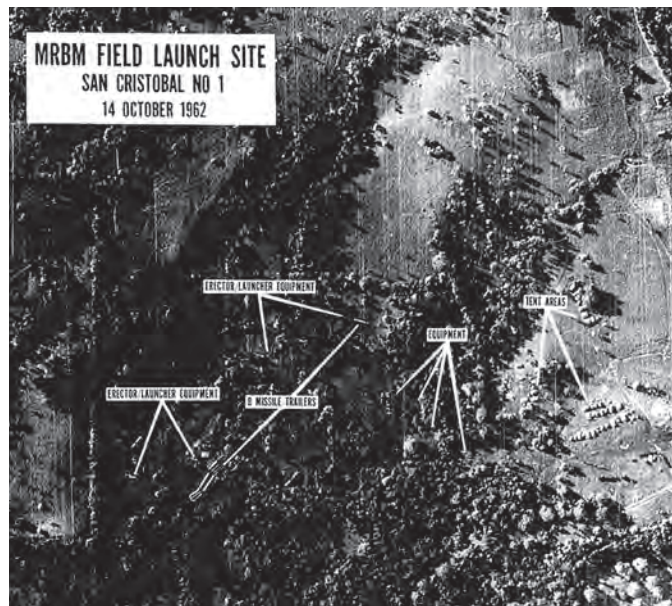
Cuba had already begun to surreptitiously support revolutionary movements in the region, forcing nearby countries to fight internal threats. At the same time, the U.S. pressured Cuba because Castro was moving to nationalize American-owned economic assets.

Domestically, Castro needed to build stability in Cuba. The executions at La Cabaña were stopped because they were attracting too much world attention. Che was sent on a three-month world tour ostensibly to garner support for the new revolutionary government and to promote sugar sales, Cuba's major export. When he returned, Guevara was

kept busy as president of the National bank and manager of nationalized foreign assets. But, Che still managed to find time to broker stronger ties with the Soviet Union.

On 3 January 1961, the United States broke diplomatic ties with Cuba because of its appropriation of U.S.-owned properties without compensation and its turn to Socialism.¹³ The Congressional quota of Cuban sugar purchased by the U.S. was abolished. That was the final impetus for Havana to move into the Soviet sphere. Russian small arms and tanks followed. Che deserved the lion's share of credit for this Soviet Cuban relationship.¹⁴ As Minister of Industries, Che forged Cuba's economic policy—despite lacking a background in business, industry, finance or government. CIA analysts assessed that this forced Castro afterwards to dedicate an inordinate amount of time to “finding remedies for the disastrous effects of the regime's early policies—largely those engineered by Guevara.”¹⁵ Casto's “revolutionary honeymoon” was about to be upset.

With President Dwight D. Eisenhower's approval, the CIA trained hundreds of anti-Castro Cubans to invade the island. The Brigade 2506 launched its disastrous invasion



Photographs taken by an American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft revealed the presence of Soviet nuclear weapons. This prompted the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Foco Theory

Che Guevara, using his experience in the Cuban Revolution, organized “lessons” into a “how-to manual,” *Guerrilla Warfare*, to serve as a primer for other guerrilla movements.¹ His central tenet was that small, mobile, revolutionary cadres would serve as the vanguard or focus (*foco*) for popular discontent. By winning symbolic military victories over government forces, these *focos* inspired public support while they expanded the revolution. There were **three basic premises**: **First**, a guerrilla movement could overthrow an established government backed by regular troops; **Second**, poor economic conditions were not key to revolutionary success (in 1958/59 Cuba was enjoying an economic boom) because combat victories could create the conditions necessary for popular support; **Third**, revolutionary guerrilla movements had to be rurally based to provide a safe haven, where they could hide and build support.² The critical message in *foco* theory was that a small group of dedicated rebels could win a “war of national liberation” and overthrow an established government relatively quickly.³ However, the foundation for Che's theory was difficult to reproduce.

Cuba had been ripe for revolution in 1958. Batista's corrupt, ruthless regime had alienated the middle class and peasants by violating basic individual rights. The army was poorly led and its troops had little fighting spirit. They were perceived as bullies backed by government authority and guns. This enabled Fidel Castro to unite the factions that opposed Batista. Che also forgot how much urban support was provided to the guerrillas in the form of money, intelligence, supplies, and recruits.⁴

Still, many aspects of *foco* were adapted by guerrilla movements in Central America [Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala] and South America [Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, and Venezuela].⁵ Many of the leaders were trained in Cuba. Most importantly, Che Guevara's *foco* theory, which had worked in Cuba, was not exportable. It didn't matter. It captured the imagination of revolutionaries worldwide.

Endnotes

- 1 Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). Several editions of Che's book are in print. For more information, see General Alberto Bayo, *150 Questions for a Guerrilla* (United States: Panther Publications, 1963). Bayo provided the initial training in Mexico to Che and Castro before they launched their invasion of Cuba in 1956.
- 2 Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, 8.
- 3 Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars: The Age of the Professional Soldier, 1900-2001; Volume Two* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc, 2003), 265.
- 4 Sir Robert Thompson, consult. ed., *War in Peace*, (London: Orbis Publishing Limited, 1981), 148-149.
- 5 For the Central American *foco* wars, see William E. Odom, *On Internal War: American and Soviet Approaches to Third World Clients and Insurgents* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1992), 97, 119-120, 122. For the South American *foco* wars, see Scheina, *Latin America's Wars*, 265-277, 293.



Che Guevara's Guerrilla Warfare was intended as a manual to teach revolutionaries the necessary steps for waging an insurgency. It was based on faulty presumptions because it used the Cuban Revolution as an exportable model.

By 1961, Cuba was prepared to deal with a U.S.-backed invasion force, as this period poster declares. The Soviet-supplied and trained military dealt the U.S.-sponsored Brigade 2506 a catastrophic defeat at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961.



Important sites in the Cuban revolution.
Map by D. Telles.



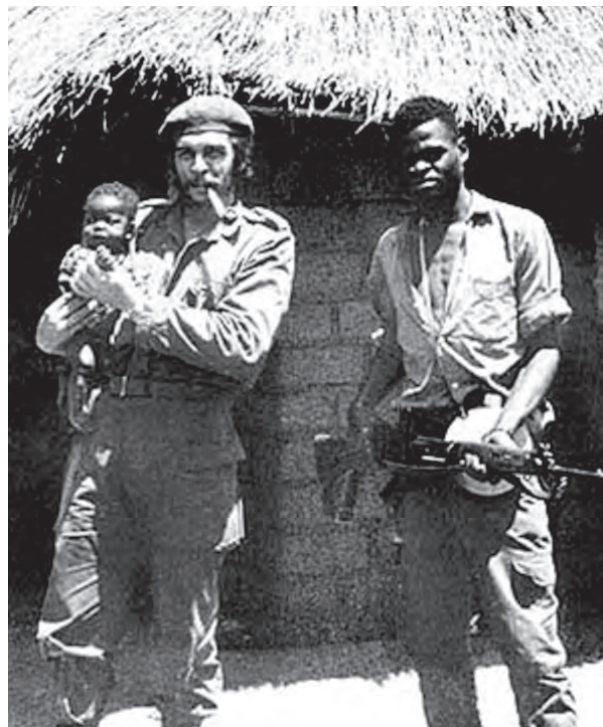
Flag of the United States-trained Brigade 2506

The Bay of Pigs invasion by the Brigade 2506 was over in days. Che did not take part in combating the United States-trained force, but later used the defeat to taunt Washington.

on 17 April 1961 at the Bay of Pigs (*Bahía de Cochinos*). The anticipated popular uprising did not occur. The newly elected president, John F. Kennedy, did not authorize U.S. military intervention and Castro's forces savagely counter-attacked.¹⁶ Four days later, the fighting had ended and more than 1,100 were taken prisoner.¹⁷ As the commander of forces in western Cuba, Che Guevara did not participate, but still taunted the Americans over the episode.

In August, while attending an Organization of American States (OAS) conference in Uruguay, Che requested a meeting with U.S. delegate Richard Goodwin. The diplomat told President Kennedy that Che "wanted to thank us very much for the invasion—that it had been a great political victory . . . and transformed them from an aggrieved little country to an equal."¹⁸

Tensions between Havana and Washington worsened during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962. Although President Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev averted the crisis, Che felt Soviet prestige was weakened.¹⁹ Che revealed how radical he was a few weeks afterwards by telling British journalist Sam Russell that had Cuba controlled the missiles; he would have fired them off.²⁰ The U.S. had no choice but to consider Guevara a grave threat.



Che left Cuba in 1965 and his whereabouts were unknown until he was killed in Bolivia in 1967. From April to November 1965, Guevara tried to coax success from a revolution in the Congo, but failed miserably.

Che continued his ranting on 11 December 1964 in the United Nations, when he lambasted the U.S. for its “imperialist” treatment of Latin America and the inequality shown its own minorities. He said, “How can those who do this consider themselves guardians of freedom?”²¹ Then surprisingly, Che outraged the Soviet Union in Algiers on 25 March 1965 when he called Moscow an accomplice “of imperialist exploitation,” for its trade policies with the developing world.²² After becoming somewhat of an embarrassment to Havana, he privately renounced his rank, positions, and Cuban citizenship to Fidel Castro in order to foment revolution elsewhere.²³ Castro later released the letter. The unveiling insinuated that Guevara should not return to Cuba lest he have proof that his idealism and *foco* revolutionary theory worked. “Che’s whereabouts became the world’s best-kept, most guessed-at secret,” until his death in Bolivia in October 1967.²⁴

He had already tried to sponsor *focos* in Latin America—most notably in Argentina—but the regime had been alerted and the insurgency quelled before it got started. Che then turned to Africa. There, the newly independent Democratic Republic of the Congo (from Belgium) had an ongoing internal rebellion that was receiving support from the Soviet Union and other Communist nations. To Che, the Congo “was one of the most important fields of battle,” and an ideal place to test his *foco* theory.²⁵

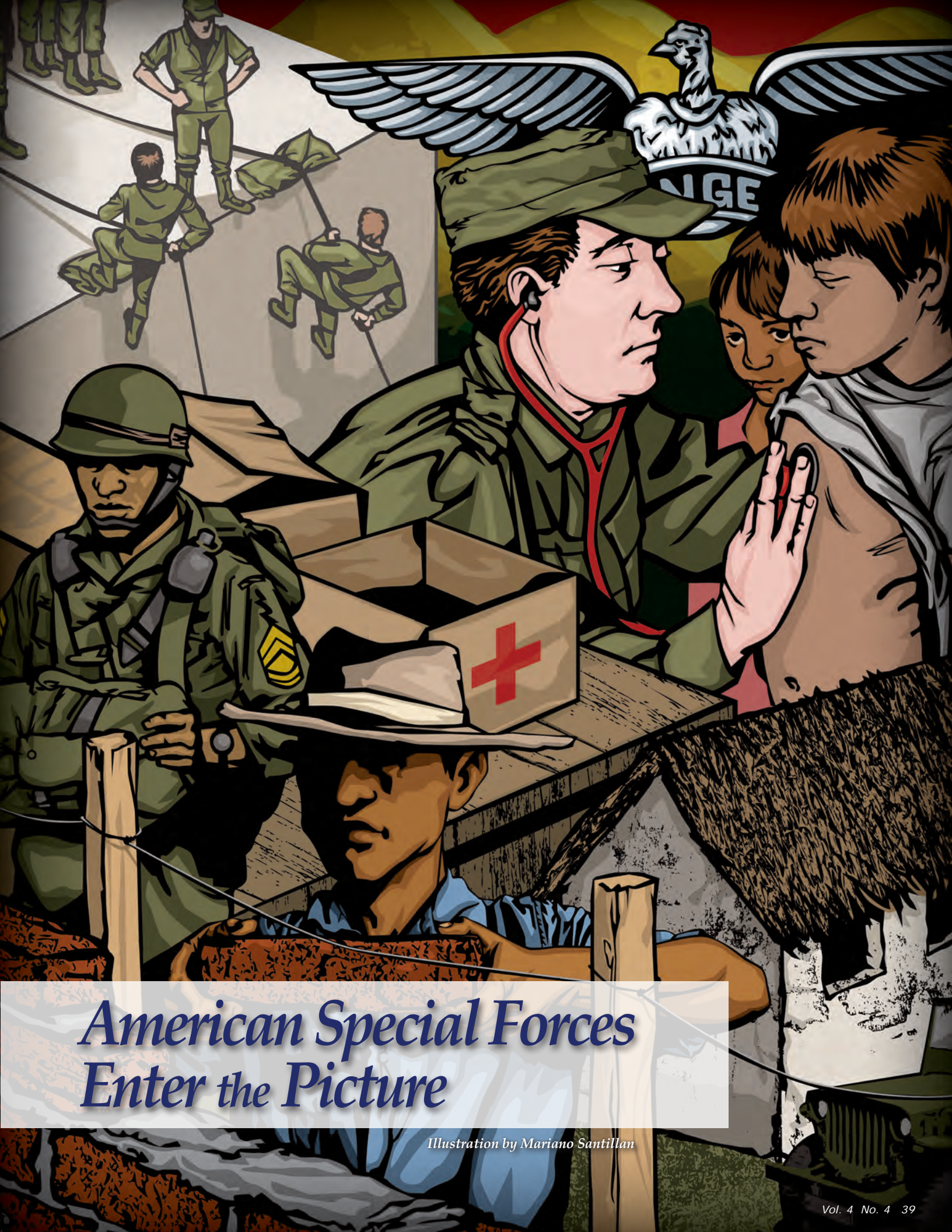
“This is a history of a failure” was the first line that Che wrote in the preface to his Congo diary.²⁶ From April to November 1965, Che pushed his *foco* concepts, but was received indifferently. He blamed his lack of success on the African rebel leaders and troops, describing them as “corrupted by inactivity,” lacking “revolutionary awareness,” and “lazy and undisciplined.” They were “the poorest example of a fighter that I have ever come across.”²⁷ But, he also learned that he had to be totally in charge of his next venture. This predilection proved fatal in Bolivia. Che went into seclusion to prepare for his next, hopefully better, expedition.

Many U.S. intelligence analysts thought that Guevara was dead. Still, because of his stature, his proven support for armed Communist revolution, and connection to Fidel Castro, Washington had to be prepared to deal with him if/when he reappeared. Communist-insurgencies inspired by Che Guevara had to be eliminated. It was finally done in Bolivia. ♣

Troy J. Sacquety earned an MA from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and his PhD in Military History from Texas A&M University. Prior to joining the USASOC History Office staff he worked several years for the Central Intelligence Agency. Current research interests include Army and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) special operations during World War II, and Special Operations Units in Vietnam.

Endnotes

- 1 Andrew St. George, “How the U.S. Got Che,” *True* April 1969, 93.
- 2 Luis Rodriguez, interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 1 December 2008, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **Rodriguez fought with General Fulgencio Batista’s forces against Castro, and with the Brigade 2506 at the Bay of Pigs.**
- 3 John Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), 3. **Che’s mother was three months pregnant when she married. The birth certificate was back-dated to hide her pregnancy.**
- 4 Anderson, *Che Guevara*, 13.
- 5 **This trip was depicted in the 2004 film, *The Motorcycle Diaries*, and was based on the book with the same name.**
- 6 **The two married 18 August 1955 [they divorced in 1959], and their daughter, Hilda Beatriz, was born on 15 February 1956.**
- 7 Anderson, *Che Guevara*, 175.
- 8 Sir Robert Thompson, consult. ed., *War in Peace*, (London: Orbis Publishing Limited, 1981), 146.
- 9 Anderson, *Che Guevara*, 213.
- 10 Herbert Matthews, *New York Times*, 24 February 1957; online at <http://www.cubanlibrariansolidaritygroup.org.uk/articles.asp?ID=447>, accessed 29 September 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/books/matthews/matthews011859.pdf>.
- 11 Rodriguez interview, 1 December 2008.
- 12 Tony Saunio, “Six In Power, Cuba Vs the Gingos,” <http://www.socialistworld.net/pubs/che/six.html>, accessed 15 October 2008.
- 13 U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: Cuba,” found online at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ci/bgn/2886.htm>, accessed 5 December 2008.
- 14 Anderson, *Che Guevara*, 492. **When the U.S. cut diplomatic ties, Havana seized all American-owned property. Thousands of Cubans fled to the U.S. as political refugees.**
- 15 CIA Intelligence Memorandum, “The Fall of Che Guevara and the Changing Face of the Cuban Revolution,” 18 October 1965, found online at the National Security Archive; http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB5/che1_1.htm, accessed 21 November 2008.
- 16 **The invaders had even brought extra weapons with them to arm new recruits. Rodriguez interview, 1 December 2008.**
- 17 **For more on the Bay of Pigs Invasion, see Grayson Lynch, *Decision for Disaster: Betrayal at the Bay of Pigs* (Washington D.C.:Brassey’s, 1998). The survivors were later ransomed and returned to the U.S.**
- 18 Richard Goodwin, Memorandum for the President, “Conversation with the Commandante Ernesto Guevara of Cuba,” 22 August 1961, found online at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/bayofpigs/19610822.pdf>, accessed 20 November 2008.
- 19 Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, “One Hell of a Gamble”: *Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York, New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 327.
- 20 Anderson, *Che Guevara*, 545.
- 21 Che Guevara, “At the United Nations,” 11 December 1964. online at <http://ils.unc.edu/~michm/Che/unations.html>, accessed 1 December 2008.
- 22 Che Guevara, “At the Afro-Asian Conference in Algeria,” found online at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1965/02/24.htm>, accessed 1 December 2008.
- 23 Che Guevara, “Farewell Letter to Fidel Castro,” 1 April 1965, located in Ernesto Che Guevara, *Bolivian Diary* (New York, New York: Pathfinder, 2002), 71-73.
- 24 St. George, “How the U.S. Got Che,” 93.
- 25 Ernesto “Che” Guevara (ed. Daniel James), *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Che Guevara and other Captured Documents* (New York, New York: Stein and Days, 1968), 14.
- 26 Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *The African Dream: The Diaries of the Revolutionary War in the Congo* (New York, New York: Grove Press, 2000), 1.
- 27 Guevara, *African Dream*, 226-227.



*American Special Forces
Enter the Picture*

Illustration by Mariano Santillan