

Méndez, a moderate liberal, was elected by an impressive majority, defeating two colonels in the 1966 election. Before Méndez' victory was publicly proclaimed eight days afterward, the ruling military junta forced Méndez to make important concessions, later publicly confirmed by his vice president. In return for "allowing" Méndez to take office, the military reserved the right to select its own Defense Minister, exert veto power over major appointments, and control the departmental regimes (all 22 governors appointed by Méndez were colonels).

According to Galeano, the military has also encouraged, supplied, and technically advised rightist terror groups, such as the Nueva Organización Anticomunista (NOA) and the Movimiento Anticomunista Nacionalista Organizado (MANO). These organizations strengthen the position of the military by hamstringing the regime and increasing national insecurity and instability.

Galeano concentrates on this aspect of Guatemalan violence, but it should be added that urban friends of the rural guerrillas also raise the level of terror by abductions for ransom, which are followed in macabre counterpoint by the bombing of left-wing "sympathizers" homes in Guatemala City. Atrocity becomes in this context a relative judgment. Consistent with his ideological perspective, the author decries the right-wing terrorism, but it can be equally deplorable from the other side. The real victim is Guatemala.

Disregarding Galeano's bias and discounting some of his questionable evidence, the book still graphically underscores how precarious and unfortunate is the "balance of terror" in Guatemala, and how substantial a role, if perhaps an involuntary one, the United States is playing in maintaining the reality.

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El Che Guevara. By HUGO GAMBINI. Buenos Aires, 1968. Editorial Paidós. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. 532. Paper. \$2.75.

My Friend Ché. By RICARDO ROJO. Translated by JULIAN CASART. New York, 1968. Dial Press. Illustrations. Pp. 220. \$4.95.

Guerrilla Warfare. By CHE GUEVARA. Preface by I. F. STONE. Translated by J. P. MORRAY. New York, 1968. Vintage Books. Pp. xviii, 133. Paper. \$1.65.

Among the many books dealing with Ernesto "Che" Guevara that have appeared since the guerrillero's death in October 1967 are a

fictionalized biography, the recollections of an old friend, and a new English-language edition of Guevara's *La guerra de guerrillas*.

Hugo Gambini, an Argentine journalist, did some commendable research for his biography, *El Che Guevara*; his bibliography lists more than 200 items, mostly newspaper or magazine articles. The author presents his most valuable contribution to "cheology" early in the book, when he discusses Guevara's family background and youth in Argentina, making good use of information collected from acquaintances of the Guevara family. In these pages facts are documented, and there is none of the invented dialogue that marks much of the remainder of the volume. The account of Che's peregrination from Argentina to Guatemala is drawn largely from Ricardo Rojo's *Mi amigo El Che*; for the Cuban guerrilla war Gambini relies mainly on Guevara's *Pasajes de la guerra revolucionaria*; and the author's treatment of the final Bolivian adventure is based principally on newspaper accounts and *El diario del Che en Bolivia*. The student of Guevara should go directly to these sources.

Ricardo Rojo, an Argentine lawyer, met Ernesto Guevara in Bolivia in 1953 and traveled with him to Guatemala. There Rojo and Guevara parted company in 1954, but met again the following year in Mexico. At that time Rojo decided to return to his native land to assist Arturo Frondizi in his presidential campaign, while Guevara chose to join Fidel Castro in his project to invade Cuba and fight the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. After the overthrow of Batista and the election of Frondizi, Rojo twice visited Guevara in Cuba, in 1961 and 1963, and was with him at Punta del Este in 1961. *My Friend Ché* (the accent is probably wrong) was originally published in Spanish as *Mi amigo El Che*. It is an honest account of the relationship between an Argentine radical politician and an international guerrilla revolutionary. The book does contain some factual errors and unwarranted assumptions, most of which could be attributed to the author's ignorance of Cuban history and politics. For example, on p. 164 he incorrectly states that Fidel Castro "had run for deputy in Prío Socarrás' party."

J. P. Morray's "authorized translation" of Guevara's *La guerra de guerrillas* (Havana, 1960), was first published in the United States a year later. It is now reissued in paperback with a preface by I. F. Stone, who likens the fallen author to "Galahad, not Robespierre" (p. ix). Guevara prepared this handbook on revolutionary warfare in the belief that the Cuban guerrilla triumph could be duplicated in other Latin American countries. He staked his life on this proposition and lost, for in Bolivia he could not obtain what his book holds to

be essential, "the absolute cooperation of the people and a perfect knowledge of the ground" (p. 10).

As a tactical manual Guevara's *Guerrilla Warfare* needs some revision. In Cuba the guerrillas faced an enemy almost incapable of airlifting troops. Guerrilla sieges could be prolonged, and army relief columns were lucrative ambush targets. Now that most governments can dispatch troops by helicopter to the furthest reaches of their national territories, guerrillas must complete their attacks more quickly; greater firepower (mortars, rockets) is necessary. Guevara does not discuss the more powerful weapons that have become available to guerrillas in the 1960s or the extensive use of "air cavalry" by counterinsurgent forces. Nevertheless, these innovations do not seem to have greatly altered the balance between guerrilla and regular forces. Certainly the helicopter has not doomed the guerrilla. In fact, by taking to the air, counterinsurgent troops get a distorted perspective of the land and people, which may give a net advantage for the guerrilla, who, as always, lives and moves on the ground and among the people. Che Guevara's basic ideas are as valid today as they were ten years ago.

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Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966. By ANDRÉS SUÁREZ. Cambridge, 1967. M.I.T. Press. Studies in International Communism. Notes. Index. Pp. xviii, 266. \$7.50.

The irrational mood about Cuba and the Castro Revolution which pervaded the United States in the early 1960s has dissipated enough to allow for publication of serious, careful studies on the transformation taking place on the island today. Certainly Andrés Suárez' *Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966* belongs in the list. Suárez is a Cuban who was active in the struggle against the Batista dictatorship and who then served Premier Fidel Castro's government in the Ministry of the Treasury. He draws from his abilities as a scholar and his active participation in public affairs to produce a readable account of Castro's affiliation with communism.

Suárez shows with extensive documentation that the old established Cuban Communist Party (which after 1944 took the name Partido Socialista Popular, PSP) played a very limited role in Castro's successful revolution. In part, this is explained by the fact that the old party, nominally illegal in pre-Castro times, operated rather openly in Havana and elsewhere as a result of a special indulgence by