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TRANSLATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA
(FOUO 2/79)



LATIN



AMERICA



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ARGENTINA

NOTED COLUMNISTS FOCUS ON RIVER PLATE BASIN

Effects On Foreign Relations

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 4 Dec 78 p 8

[Article by Estela Araujo]

[Text] At a dinner organized by the Colegio de Escribanos in the city of La Plata, Adm Emilio Eduardo Massera announced a few goals in our foreign policy:

"We will not obtain that wealth if we do not act in a systematic, rational way, united by common interest. We will have no common interest as long as we refuse to accept that production is a tool of geopolitics."

The geopolitical vision of Argentina could become triangular (as in the plan adopted by Gustavo Cirigliano); it could be based on a north-south axis including the River Plate Basin; it could be based on southern sovereignty; or it could be centered in Cordoba-Tucuman. Whatever the priority region, it should be based on a model in which geopolitical decisions take precedence over economic decisions. The subordination of one to the other establishes the proper nexus that will stimulate our nation to achieve greater heights. The economy can never be the key to the fate of a country, just as the economic well-being of a family cannot have priority over the moral destiny and unity of that family.

The River Plate Basin is, from the geopolitical point of view, one of the key areas in international relations. Argentina's representation there marks the difference between a country that can only look on from within its borders, and a country that is open to the free play of alliances and common interests that began with independence.

The fluvial policy of the Basin is the undeniable nexus among the five countries. Brazil, tacitly, wants to cut it off. The Brazilian newspapers themselves recognize this when they say, as did the JORNAL DO BRASIL (11/10/78) in the article entitled "Itaipu And Navigation": "Will they commit the enormous error of cutting off navigation in the Parana River, as has already been done in other cases, on other rivers? Will we always remain blind to the future, seeing things only through the prism of present reality? Itaipu will be raised

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as a great barrier to impede the continuous flow of cargo, with the tremendous problems that are inherent in any transshipment."

It seems, finally, that Argentina has decided to recall the old geopolitical plans of the 1880's and use the navigability of the Parana to transform it into a point of union--as Sarmiento said--that will connect us with Paraguay, Uruguay and Upper Peru.

The present goal is no longer that of operating in favor of a single port (Buenos Aires), as it was in 1880, but to utilize the vertebrae of a river system that begins in Zanja del Tigre, on the border with Bolivia, and goes through the Canal of the Bermejo River, the Santiago del Estero Canal, and the Ibera Lake system, with its outlet through the Corrientes River to the Parana, to create a navigable complex enclosed in three triangles.

The first would be formed by the Middle Parana to Yacyreta, and the outlet of Ibera Lake into the Corrientes River, to the Parana.

The second would consist of the Bermejo Canal, the Santiago Canal and the Middle Parana.

The third would be formed by the Uruguay River, the Ibera system--Corrientes River--Mirinay and the Lower Parana.

Brazil can close it off above the Parana and block off Itaipu instead of making it a vein of communication. But the barriers that could prevent the circulation of wealth will not be easily accepted by the trade that usually finds a way to overcome obstacles.

According to Nicolas Boscovich in LA OPINION (9/30/78), "The countries with common borders are not isolated compartments, nor can the influence of great projects and of the plans to order the physical space in other countries be ignored. Federiro Ratzel, precursor of geopolitics, said that the history of a country is always part of the history of its neighbors. Argentina should draw up and carry out plans for its basic infrastructure, bearing in mind the transnational realities that will inevitably create a distortion in the internal space if the necessary projects to maximize the use of its water basins are not implemented. With efficient transportation methods at low cost and with unlimited capacity, abundant energy at a low cost, guaranteed supply of fresh water for human consumption, the use of factories and settlements, it will be possible to fill the vast interior vacuums with industrial, mining, forestry and livestock activity, and to integrate these backward regions not just economically but also socially."

The navigability of the Parana as a system to circulate wealth requires the implementation of the following projects:

a) The Middle Parana. On 20 November in Moscow, an agreement with the Soviet organization Technopromexport was signed in order to study the executive project for the multiple utilization of the Parana River in its middle stretch.

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The cost of the project has been estimated at about \$2.4 billion.

The Middle Parana project goes from Paso de la Patria (in the province of Corrientes) to the subfluvial tunnel that joins Santa Fe with Parana. Two complementary frontal and lateral dams will provide hydroelectric energy; the northern one with various alternate locations, and the southern one to be located on the island of Chapeton. Both plants will have a capacity of 5,600 megawatts, which will put the Middle Parana System in sixth place in the world.

Navigation locks are planned, to allow the ascent and descent of foreign vessels of a draft of up to 21 feet, so that they may enter Corrientes.

Santa Fe could accommodate vessels of a draft of up to 30 feet, and the sea-going ships could go in as far as 1,000 kilometers from Buenos Aires.

b) Master Plan for the exploitation of the Bermejo River. In the city of Oran (Salta), Argentine and Bolivian representatives signed an agreement in mid November to draw up the energy and irrigation plan for the navigation of the Bermejo.

The approximate location of the future Zanja del Tigre dam was also established. The lateral canal of the Bermejo could be complemented with the Santiago del Estero Canal. They will empty into the river at Resistencia and Santa Fe, respectively.

c) The Argentine-Paraguayan binational entity of Yacireta. It is estimated that this project will generate as much as 2.7 million kilowatts, but it was designed to have a total potential capacity of 4 million kilowatts. In addition to financing problems, the feasibility of achieving a greater utilization of the navigation of this part of the Upper Parana is being discussed.

d) The mathematical model of the hydric balance of the Ibera system. This project dates back to 1970; it was designed by the Undersecretariat of Hydric Resources. It presents various alternatives for the regulation of the Parana by means of the Ibera Lake, with three basic variations: an outlet to the Parana through the Corrientes River in Argentine territory exclusively, and two outlets to the Uruguay River, one in Argentine-Brazilian territory (Aguapey River) and another in Argentine-Uruguayan territory (Mirinay River), almost on the Brazilian border.

The joint navigation and energy projects that propose a revitalizing geopolitics of the Sacramento vein must necessarily be complemented by a system of superports which surpass the port of Buenos Aires, enriching the Argentine part of the Basin. The superport of Punta Medanos will expand the maritime coast of the Basin, as will the project for the Uruguayan superport of Rocho. The superport of Rio Grande, on the other hand, will detract from the importance of the great river by means of transversal canals (the Ibicuy-Yacuy) and horizontal routes.

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But the fluvial policy will not be complemented just by ports and navigable waterways. The transformation will emerge as a result of new forms of river transportation. If the superports go hand in hand with large ships (super-tankers for grains and petroleum) and superports for imports and exports, the new river ports and navigable waterways have found an intermediate system which will reduce the cost of transporting large cargoes, just as the superports do. The lash ships, container ships and ro-ro system will soon be seen on the river.

The container ships are normal sized vessels that have been adapted to transport containers (which hold goods and are designed for repeated use in transportation). These containers carry the products from the exporter to the importer, from door to door, using either land or water transport.

The lash ships first arrived in the port of Buenos Aires in 1973. Their fundamental characteristic is a steam turbine that can tow as many as 74 barges carrying up to 150 containers each, for a total of 40,000 tons. It is a veritable river railway, in which a vessel with a draft of 8 feet serves as a locomotive or tugboat, the barges being railroad cars.

The floating route, or ro-ro system (roll-on/roll-off) is complemented with highway routes. The ships that transport railway cars act as bridges or connections between the two routes.

The ports that have been built and shall be built to complement the hydroelectric projects on the Parana and the Uruguay, as well as the great fluvial complex of the River Plate Basin, seem to be a geopolitical dream. The goods produced by the low-cost energy and the convenient means of communication will ensure that the wealth will flow through the magnificent Parana, recognized axis of the River Plate Basin.

Need For Cooperation Stressed

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 5 Dec 78 p 1

[Article by Rodolfo Pandolfi]

[Text] The Tenth Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the River Plate Basin began yesterday. As dusk fell on Punta del Este, the two main commissions in which the five ministers have divided their functions (National Resources and Infrastructure, and Economic and Social Issues) began work.

At that time the behind the scenes work in the corridors of the Hotel San Rafael gave the first indications. In a conversation with the LA OPINION correspondent, the Bolivian foreign minister indicated that the Southern Cone "was experiencing a very special moment" and that this had accentuated the urgency of a division of labor in his country between the political and military teams. "The institutionalization plan," he remarked, "is now more than ever linked to Bolivia's national defense needs." The foreign minister of that nation repeated that Bolivia is in full solidarity with Argentina concerning the southern conflict, indicating that there were some who wanted to cut off Argentina's feet so that they could not rest on Antarctica. Later the following dialog ensued:

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[Question] What is your point of view with regard to the work that is being done by the Upper Bermejo River Basin Commission?

[Answer] The studies are progressing satisfactorily. I focus on the problem through one of its aspects: our access to the Atlantic. For that reason, I stressed the need to make the waters of the Paraguay River between Forumba and Puerto Busch navigable.

[Question] What are the most important priorities established by Bolivia?

[Answer] The first commission is studying the plan for the Sucre-Villazon highway project, at Bolivia's request. I can also say that there is an agreement with Argentina even on some aspects that cannot yet be revealed to the public.

Earlier, the foreign minister of Uruguay, Dr Adolfo Folle Martinez, had spoken. He emphasized the importance of the multilateral function of the system. The Brazilian foreign minister, Antonio Azeredo da Silveira, on the other hand, in accordance with his well-known opinion, stressed the right to undertake bilateral treaties within the multilateral context. From the theoretical point of view, Azeredo's observation was obvious.

Azeredo emphasized that he personally went to all the meetings of foreign ministers after the signing of the treaty. Referring to the Itaipu projects, he said that he was convinced that the future would prove that the governments were wise to decide to maintain the spirit of the commitments made.

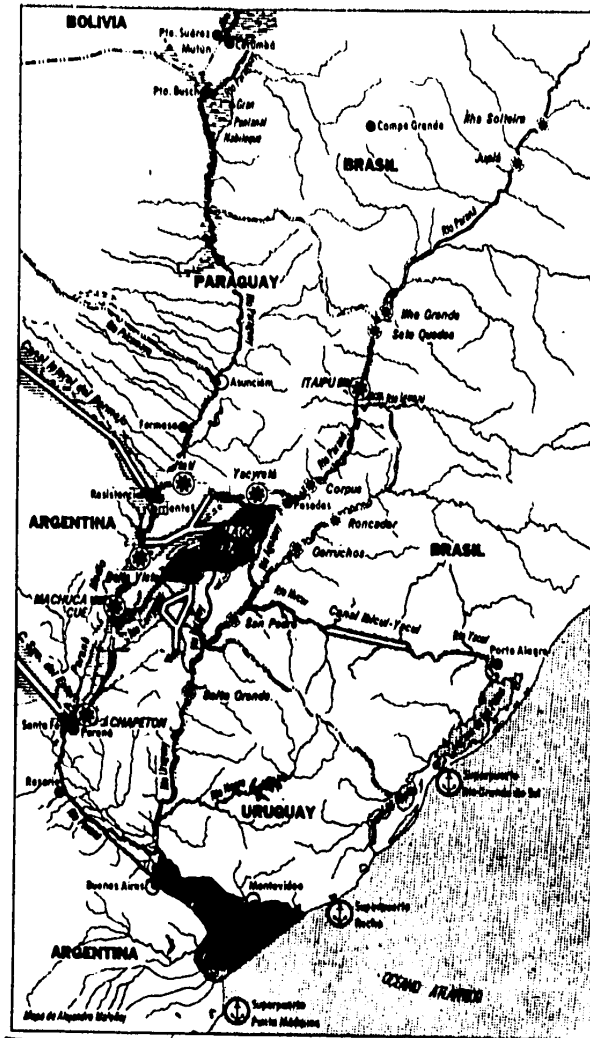
The Argentine foreign minister, Carlos Washington Pastor, recalled that the Itaipu projects as well as the Corpus ones were undertaken in border regions, which gave them a special significance. He strongly advocated that Bolivia's land-locked status be ended, and stressed the need for dynamic cooperation in the Basin.

Paraguayan Foreign Minister Alberto Nogues, in his speech, concentrated on the need to ensure that all actions in the River Plate Basin be undertaken within the framework of the increasing interrelation with the Amazon Basin.

The real topic of discussion in the corridors was undoubtedly Itaipu-Corpus. Apparently the foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay had talked informally, outside of the sessions, but it seems that no solution was reached. Someone asked if that conversation was a mini-trilateral conference. The answer was that there could be no talk of a trilateral conference nor of any type of trilateral negotiations, since no negotiations had taken place.

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CUBA

FRENCH WRITERS DISCUSS POLITICAL PRISONS

Milan L'EUROPEO in Italian 10 Nov 78 pp 72-76

[Article by Gian Franco Vene: "In Fidel's Prisons"]

[Text] For the 20th anniversary of the revolution, Castro has promised to free the political prisoners. Here is the testimony of a French reporter imprisoned in Havana without knowing why.

In Havana a few months ago, I was with some non-Cuban friends in the home of a young man, somewhat of a hippy, who wanted to read aloud some of his unpublished poems. The young man was very angry because he had not managed to get these poems published. He said that they differed too much from the styles of official Cuban literature. He had very hard words--which in other circumstances would certainly have been foolhardy--against the "cultural line" of the Cuban Communist Party.

On other occasions also, I was in the homes of aspiring directors, aspiring actors, aspiring painters: all unknown, and probably destined to remain so.

The talk was the usual kind: against the discrimination by the party, by the government, by the Ministry of Culture.

The easiest question--provocative, but also stupid--which one feels like asking in certain circumstances is: "Gentlemen, are you really sure about the quality of your talents and your products?"

I kept to myself this embarrassing insinuation which has had and is having so many victims among intellectuals not only in the socialist or dictatorial countries but also in the liberal ones, where the unappealable judgment of a manuscript is the job of the private publisher.

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Instead, I asked those malcontents whether the cause of the lack of attention by the Cuban party and government might not be (among other things) the absolute necessity to save paper and to administer carefully the country's cultural expenditures, which are very high. (Paper is among the most "difficult" products in Cuba; the policy of instruction for literacy and of Marxist education is an absolutely top-priority decision.) The Cubans I spoke with replied wearily: "Then one cannot speak of freedom of expression in Cuba."

Why do I relate all this? For two reasons. The first; among some young Cuban intellectuals, it is normal to encounter discontent, frustration, and to hear talk of "repression." But this view is damaged by the far more striking spectacle of the lines outside bookstores, by the crowded theaters, by the very high quality of the cinema. The second reason: for a foreigner with even the mildest curiosity, it is very easy--taken for granted, I would say--to meet Cuban people who, without any fear, without looking over their shoulders, state their own cases of discontent or dissent. And this does not happen in any other socialist country. One could say mischievously that the government itself has "organized dissent" to demonstrate that there is freedom in Cuba--there is no Gulag.

But here we have the French photographer Pierre Golendorf, formerly a Communist Party member, recounting, in a book which is coming out in Italy also (Sugar-Co editions), his own hard experiences as a communist morally martyred "in Fidel Castro's prisons." Golendorf went to Cuba in 1967 with the announced intention of establishing himself there as a photographer; he married, had a daughter, but was tremendously disappointed by the illiberality and "repression" of Fidel Castro's regime. He asked to emigrate; instead, he was arrested, and convicted of "having injured the integrity and security of the nation" and of having declared himself, in a note probably facetious or prompted by fantasy, to be an "agent of the CIA."

Golendorf naturally denies all. The material which accuses him is the notes for a projected book--a critical book doubtlessly. And Golendorf, after 3 years in prison, expelled from Cuba, did write the book: "Un comunista nelle prigioni di Fidel Castro" (A Communist in Fidel Castro's Prisons).

It is a book which, as a contemporary chronicle, cannot be ignored. No one has the right to close his eyes to an individual testimony which deliberately aims to overturn the excessively optimistic impression of a "different" Cuban socialism. As a political chronicle, Golendorf's book has been overtaken by events: between 1971 and today, Cuba has actually provided itself with a Constitution, it has held the First Congress of the Cuban CP, and it has established a capillary system of control from the bottom, neighborhood by neighborhood, district by district, city by city, greatly resembling "direct democracy."

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It is true also that Cuba lives more firmly than ever within the orbit of the USSR and that no criticism of the USSR is tolerated, and least of all, criticism of Soviet cultural repression. For Cuba, the Soviet writers of dissent, like anyone who dissents from the policy line of the USSR, are traitors, agents of imperialism, and so on, abusively. In reading Golendorf's book, if one wants to read it honestly, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between the author's painful personal experience, which there is no reason to disbelieve, and the wealth of impressions, of judgments on Cuba's situation and civil life.

We have to learn that truth as seen from a laager or from a prison is an essential component in understanding contemporary history. Nevertheless it seems that Golendorf had prepared, predisposed himself to going in search of truth in prison. It emerges clearly from the book that Golendorf's negative judgment on Cuba, on Fidel, on Cuban socialism, preexisted as a longing at the moment of his arrest.

Now it is that preexisting judgment in Golendorf which is to be compared with reality: not only with reality as it was in the "dark years" of Cuban history (specifically, those of the second half of the 1960's, when the aged Revolution finally died in Bolivia and "Institutionalization" was still in the incubator), but with the reality of now, in which the closest bonds ever with the USSR are interspersed with spasmodic attempts to make Havana the socialist capital of the Third World.

The excerpt which we publish below from "A Communist in Fidel Castro's Prisons" can lend itself to discussion precisely because it urges comparison between Cuba as seen from the outside and the view which one has of it from prison.

And Debray Was Silent

Every 2 weeks, thanks to the story which Felina gives me, I can live with my wife and my daughter and follow their ups and downs, the troubles which they have because of Security.

From her also, who had it by chance from a boy, I learn that some cablegrams had arrived from Paris, signed by friends and strangers asking the reasons why I was in prison and protesting against this imprisonment. Felina could not obtain the exact text, but the cablegrams were numerous. More than 200, the boy had said. Was a solidarity movement starting there? I was not alone, I was not forgotten. Nevertheless, not everyone had taken this position. A friend of mine from whom Regis Debray had requested a painting to support the guerilla warfare in Latin America asked him for news of me, whether he had intervened with Fidel Castro and what outcome his action had had. According to this friend, Debray, during a visit to Cuba, had noted the certitude of the state security officials, who said they had proof that I belonged to the CIA.

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"Those who know him know that it is not true."

"In any case, I told him that he is surely a third-rank agent. He should not get more than 3 years."

Astonishing for a former political prisoner, isn't it? I know well that I am in a Cuban prison and that this influences people. But did he ask to see the proof? Did they give him any? If so, was he satisfied with it? The delicacy of "third-rank agent" is really precious--a kind of tacit compromise which makes it possible to file the truth away somewhere and leave the poor wretch in his cell. Which permits the authority to do or not do as he likes. Because the problem is not to know whether I am an agent of the first or third category. The problem is: am I an agent or not? Have I committed a crime or not?

A disturbing concomitant incident: Alain Jouffroy is said to have received from the Ministry of Interior in Paris confirmation that I am an agent of the CIA. The Cuban painter Wilfredo Lam, for his part, is said to have urged silence, on the pretext that for me, it would be the most useful move. Now if for Debray I am an unknown (which justifies nothing), it is not the same for Lam and Jouffroy, with whom I have friends in common. But they too seem to have been in favor of the tactic of silence recommended by Lam. All the more so (isn't it true?) because there was the AFP dispatch of 2 September 1971 which announces my sentence to 10 years in prison "for espionage against Cuba for the CIA," quoted from PRENSA LATINA, with the added report, still according to PRENSA LATINA, that I had pleaded guilty to all the charges listed by the prosecutor, etcetera.

Five Lines for the CIA

Thus the Cuban lie is sufficiently peremptory to become an obvious truth in anyone's eyes.

The bigger the lie.... But Debray, Lam and Jouffroy could at least have gone to the Ministry of Foreign Relations to ask to see a copy of the sentence. They could have apprised themselves of the value of such a document and made a basic judgment. They could have been astonished that a total of only five lines were devoted to my membership in the CIA. That is rather a small amount for people in possession of proof and confessions. It is rather a small amount in relation to the sentence to 10 years in prison. But here they are: "The accused was so aware of the object of his activities and of the nature of the interests which he served that among the documents seized in his apartment was found the one which was to be the preface of his book and in which he named himself as an agent of the American secret services, known by the initials CIA." Hence in the preface of a book which is, in a word, the result of my activities as an agent, I intended to present myself as an agent of the CIA. Just two

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questions: at first sight, but also after thinking about it, doesn't it appear strange that a spy should do espionage work, indicating his function in the preface? Doesn't one ask what kind of CIA agent a person could be who keeps among his documents a text written in his own hand in which he names himself as an agent?

Jesus tells me about the affair of the writer Padilla; he tells me that he was present at the famous self-criticism session, and that he was impressed by it. At the beginning, the writer had in front of him a few sheets which he was glancing at; then, meticulously, he folded them up and, imperturbable, continued the text, which he knew by heart.

"What could Padilla have done?"

It is obvious that he had no alternative. Rotting in a cell does not represent an alternative for anyone. As for international solidarity, he is not so stupid as to expect anything. The intellectuals represent a force in the world, but this force is dissipated by their refusal to organize. The behavior of the intellectuals at the end of this century is totally outdated. They still have in their heads the old idea of the outstanding personality, of the weight of a name: Mrs So-and-So, Mr Such-and-Such, the great writer, the great painter, the great philosopher, the great scholar, with medals and titles, if there are any. They have this cult. They defend individualism even though there are a great many of them in the world and it has been known for several decades that unity begets strength. For a long time now, there should have been national associations grouped in an international organism which would not only defend intellectuals persecuted illegally or abusively but would also conduct an ongoing campaign to demand, as a minimal program, the observance of legality by all governments, so that pressure would be exerted on governments not spasmodically, on the occasion of some specific episode, but methodically, so that an end could be put once and for all to the use of torture, summary executions by the parallel police forces, psychiatric hospitals, closed-door sentences, imprisonment without trial.

"But did you see? Among those who had signed the protest in Padilla's favor, Nono retracted and Cortazar murmured a poem of self-criticism."

"I didn't know this. Are you sure?"

"It was published."

A prisoner approaches and gets into the conversation.

"Your Nono, he is a Retamar. Cortazar was afraid. As for the others who have not retracted, within a few months they will let it drop. What does Cuba matter to them? What do they know about Cuba? Like all the invited guests who are treated sumptuously at the Hotel Nacional or at Havana

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Libre: receptions, cocktail parties, interviews; they have been feted, courted, they have spent a dozen pleasant days, they see nothing and go back enthusiastic. Abroad, people know about Cuba only what the propaganda says."

"You pose the problem of information. It is a big mess. The image which you form of French society is as imprecise as the one of Cuba which we form in France. You know us only through the publicity in those few magazines which you get hold of. As for us, information about you is scarce, generally partial, approximate, fragmentary; in brief, the reality escapes us. The current image is that of the spontaneous, musical revolution, the cha-cha-cha, of a pragmatic policy from which one gathers theoretical percepts which pre-suppose that the people push the revolution, the non-existence of bureaucracy and the machine, Fidel the good bearded one who, between dialogs with the throng, scores a basket or plays ping-pong, absence of the cult of personality: a series of cliches which form the conventional image. Returning to the Latin American intellectuals, it must be said that their position is difficult. To clash with the Cuban leaders is no small matter. The Cuban revolution exists, and it is up to the people to acquire the means to direct it. What they could be reproached with is abdicating, if they did so, from all critical thinking, including thinking about the Cuban government. But undeniably, their first task is to struggle against fascism, as it is the task for the Spanish and Portuguese intellectuals. For us, the problem is different; we have solidarity with the anti-fascist struggle where it exists, but at present we do not have to defend ourselves against fascism. We are not on the defensive but on the offensive, for a new society."

One among 20,000

I have tried to establish the number of political prisoners. I have put the question to a large number of prisoners returning from the fields or from the "open fronts," and to those who came from other prisons. It is impossible to present an exact figure. I do not believe the old prisoners who declare that there are at least 80,000 political prisoners, and others who even talk of 200,000. In my opinion, the number must be around 20,000, including 8,000 or 9,000 for the province of Havana alone. Anyway, it is a great many. Such a figure gives an idea of the regime's repression and shows the amplitude of its political, ideological and economic failure.

For Jesus, it is not a question of failure but only of errors. I find in him the reasoning of some young people who are free and who at the time of the fighting in the Sierra were barely 15 years old. The epoch marked them, and it is understandable. But the interesting thing is to see the extent to which their ideological knowledge of the thought of Marx and of Marti is based on theoretical and practical ignorance of the concept of democracy. Almost naturally, they give them a dogmatic content which, in favor of the end, cancels out the problem of the means. They base them-

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selves on the specific nature of the Cuban character, on Cuba's belonging to the Latin American continent and at the same time, on the nearness of the "empire;" and these arguments end up as an overall justification.

"Do not forget that the unity of the Revolution is the decisive element in the continuity of the process and that in the present historical conditions there is no substitute solution."

I am certainly familiar with this argument!

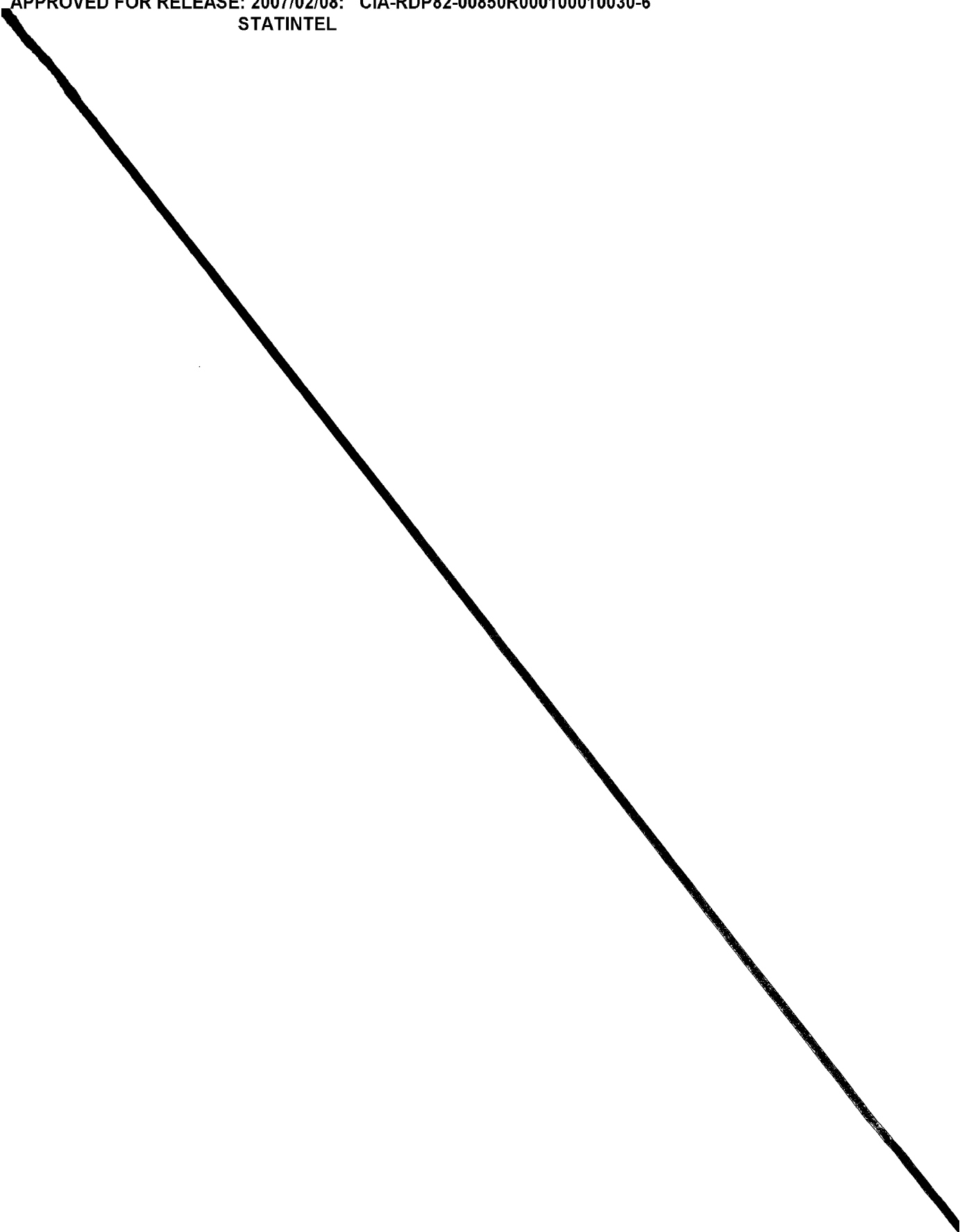
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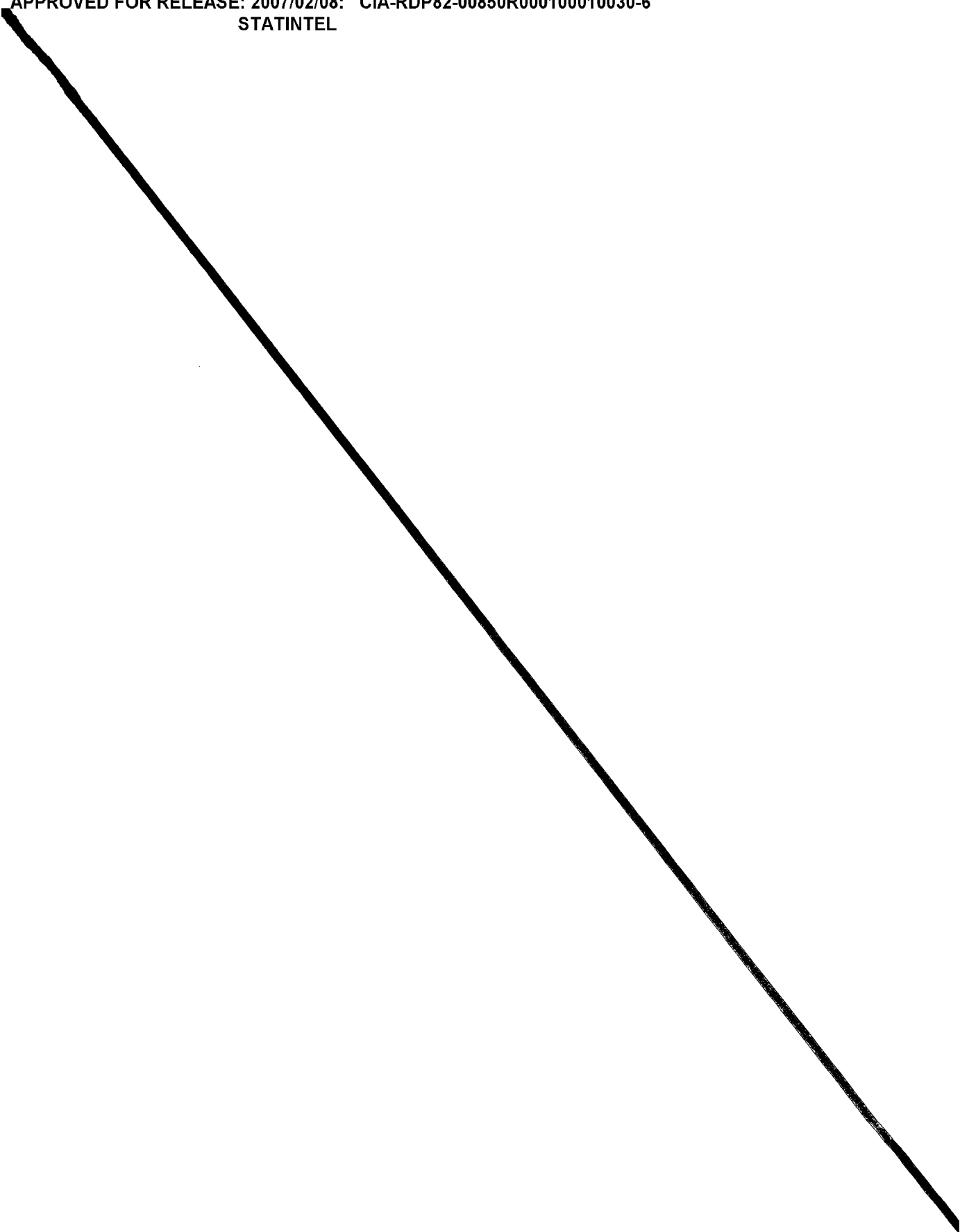
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BRIEFS

ENGINES FOR TANKS--The Spanish enterprise Pegaso will install new engines in 100 AMX-30 tanks bought from France by the Republic of Venezuela. The Spanish enterprise is specializing in producing replacements for this type of tank. Spain has bought an important consignment of these tanks from France. [Text] [Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 17 Dec 78 p 7]

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END

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