

# Don't celebrate bloody revolutionary

It's been 40 years since Che Guevara's death, and we seem to have forgotten the brutal man that he was in favour of an over-romanticized symbol of rebellion



LUIS FELIPE JARAMILLO

Posters announcing events around Campus are constantly changing, and I seldom pay attention to them, but last week, I came across one that caught my attention. It read: "Resistance and Revolution: Che Guevara 40-year Commemoration." This event will take place from 11–13 October, and is composed of several events, the last of which is shocking: it's called "Celebrating Che," and is apparently a big party that includes a DJ.

How can people celebrate, have fun, and rejoice while commemorating a criminal? I couldn't stop asking myself: what are they celebrating? All the people he murdered? Che Guevara executed hundreds of people without trial because they didn't agree with him. He committed countless war crimes and left behind him a legacy of left-wing guerrillas that have slaughtered thousands of people.

I came from Colombia not too many years ago, and for a while, my family and I were victims of these guerrillas that also "celebrate" Che—guerrillas that preach his legacy. Many people don't understand that in Latin America, for the most part, he's been more than a nice face on a

T-shirt—he's been a motive to kill. Guevara's followers should think twice about whether giving cult status to a murderer who didn't believe in diversity of ideas is a good way to promote democratic values. Democracy can't be promoted by idolizing a man who believed that turning himself into a "cold-blooded killing machine" was the perfect way to conduct a revolution.

**Celebrating the death of a man responsible for war crimes and hundreds of executions without trial is not a matter of being left- or right-wing—it's a matter of right and wrong.**

Most people either ignore or are ignorant of the brutal individual that was hidden underneath the striking images seen in the film *The Motorcycle Diaries*. Beneath that young dreamer, there was a killing machine who failed at everything he attempted.

Che failed as a doctor, as an economist, as a politician, as a guerrilla fighter, and it could be argued that he failed in his attempt to end capitalism, as it's the very capitalism that he

wanted to destroy that's now making millions out of his image, selling t-shirts, mugs, bumper stickers, flags, hats, key chains, and anything else you can stamp his face on.

Due to that capitalist hunger that he now indirectly promotes, it's normal in wealthier nations to see both the youth as well as old hippies sporting Che T-shirts as a sign of revolution, anti-imperialism, and as a general way of showing disagreement with the status quo.

Mike Tyson has a Che tattoo on his abdomen; Diego Maradona has one in his arm; Thierry Henry, too, occasionally wears a Che T-shirt. This is the image that these people and many others have of the revolutionary. All they see or care to view him as is nothing more than an innocent image of rebellion.

But people need to know where to draw the line. Celebrating the death of a man responsible for war crimes and hundreds of executions without trial is not a matter of being left- or right-wing—it's a matter of right and wrong.

So keep wearing your T-shirts and fashionably protesting the status quo—but don't throw a party for someone who's responsible for numerous atrocities in several countries. If we continue to misinterpret history in this fashion, ten years from now, we'll be celebrating the great freedom fighter Osama Bin Laden, and passing out T-shirts with his face on them in Quad.

# Time for us to admit to our oil addictions



BRIAN GOULD

For something as important as energy royalties, the debate has been incredibly limited and myopic. Sure, there have been enough columns, letters to editors, and full-page advertisements to rival the royalty review panel's 104-page report. However, there hasn't been much talk of the social and environmental problems caused by the oil industry and how we could apply this 20 per cent increase in royalties to help solve these problems at the same time.

It's only fitting that a debate about oil and money should focus solely on squeezing out every last drop. On one side is the middle-class taxpayer, eyes wide and sparkling with the prospect of tapping into the oil industry's huge profit margins. On the other is "Big Oil," clutching its profits tightly and threatening to take its money elsewhere, collapsing the economy on their way out.

In the end, the government will settle on whatever rate they think will get the highest immediate returns, and we'll go back to mindlessly consuming. Economists will tout this as a triumph of capitalism over intervention, but it really just illustrates the shortcomings of the greedy invisible hand. However, we the consumers aren't free of blame: an old adage states that you vote with your money, and if that's the case, the election's rigged, and every litre we buy is a vote for the oilsands.

**"Big Oil isn't just some shady board of villains, it's you and me—the addicted users. Right now, by placing our hopes in biofuels as a solution, we're reflecting what we're telling the oil companies: 'protect the environment if you can, but protect my wallet first, and don't make me give up my car.'"**

Turnout's in the high 90s, and it's a landslide every time.

In the end, you get what you pay for. The oil companies don't actually make the oil, but be assured your money does get spent. What you see is gasoline, but what you pay for is strip mining, polluting refineries, and a kaleidoscope of emissions.

There's also no such thing as gouging at the pumps. High prices over long weekends are a simple case of supply and demand. Don't like it? Don't buy it. Lower prices trade our future for a few bucks today, just like our current breakneck pace will only hurt us in the long run. Put yourself in the shoes of the oil executive with the end of the free ride potentially only 30 years off and the realities of the market to deal with.

Big Oil isn't just some shady board of villains, it's you and me—the addicted users. Right now, by placing our hopes in biofuels as a solution, we're reflecting what we're telling the oil companies: "protect the environment if you can, but protect my wallet first, and don't make me give up my car." We're only pretending to care about the environment, and the oil companies are playing along, feeding us lies about how biofuels will solve all our problems and how they're working on it right now.

Now is the time to force the oil companies and addicts to feel the cost of their choices. The report recommends

breaking royalties down into wet, dry, sweet, sour, heavy, light, shallow, deep, high-volume, low-volume, and more to try to squeeze every last cent out. Each has an environmental impact, so logically, the board should recommend that any fees be applied to this area.

Unfortunately, this is a process driven by greed and not logic, so the recommendation is a flat fee of ten cents per barrel equivalent. Not only is this a minuscule amount, but it implies that oil and natural gas create the same emissions, that strip mining is the same as drilling, and that all refining processes are created equal. This is blatantly false, and ignoring the data we already have makes no sense—unless, of course, you're blinded by the glittering dollar signs.

Since the board lumped agriculture, mining, and forestry in with energy, we now know how much they're telling the government the environment is worth: \$75 million. This is nothing compared to the royalty money which will only serve to propagate our existing oil-dependent society. This pittance is then to be spent on "proactive, multi-stakeholder managed research and innovation programs directed to promote a well-thought-out future."

So while they're planning on thinking about a more secure future, we'll continue guzzling oil, and nothing changes. I feel better already.

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