

"... and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

JOURNAL OF THE VETERANS OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

Vol. XX, No. 4

Fall-Winter 1998

Historic breakthrough in Seattle

by Peter Carroll

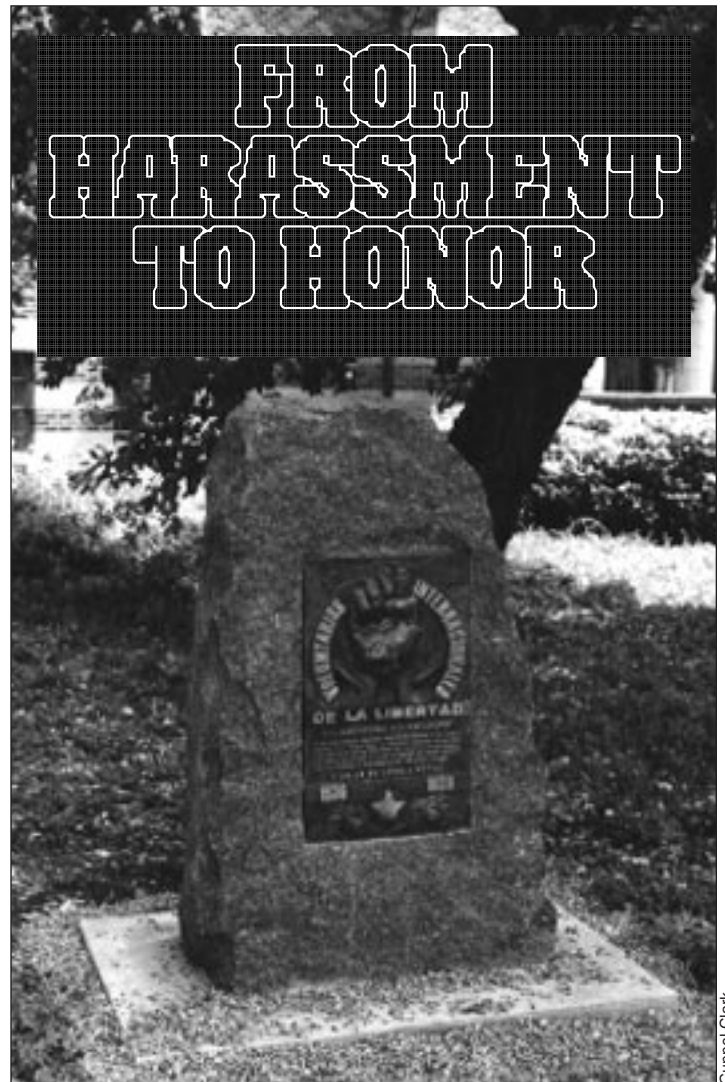
There was pride and honor — and a bittersweet sadness — as the symbolic torch of history was passed from the over-80 generation of Lincoln vets to the enthusiastic high school kids and middle-aged friends, who, on a drizzly mid-week afternoon, filled an auditorium at the University of Washington in Seattle on October 14. In an emotional moment of mutual respect, old and young came together to dedicate this country's first outdoor monument to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

The memorial is planted outside the University's huge student union, known as the HUB, a spot that is passed by thousands of people each day. The granite and bronze monument was designed by David Ryan, a young Oakland, California, bronze worker. And the surrounding stone benches provide a quiet place to sit and contemplate the monument's message.

"You are history. You are legend." The words of Dolores Ibarruri are inscribed on the monument, and all day they echoed a literal truth. As a parade of speakers paid tribute to the 3,000 men and women who, in Pasionaria's words, "gave up everything" to fight for Spanish democracy, the 500-plus crowd burst into a mixture of tears and applause. Now at last the Lincolns were earning formal recognition from the younger generations for the deeds of their youth.

Seattle has a long tradition of radicalism dating to the Wobblies and the General Strike of 1919. During the 1930s the labor movement — seamen and longshoremen, lumberjacks, farm workers and miners — gave generously to the International Brigades in Spain. The local Red and Black bookstore still gives away matchbooks that pronounce:

Chair of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA), Peter Carroll is the author of The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (Stanford University Press, 1994).



The monument on the campus of the University of Washington.

"Capitalism is Organized Crime." A younger generation, born and bred in the Pacific northwest, shares that dissenting tradition.

University of Washington Dean Michael Halleran, who championed the placement of the monument on campus, opened the ceremonies by reading formal greetings from the state's Governor, from Seattle's mayor and from the

Continued on page 3

From harassment to honor

by Bill Susman

This issue of *The Volunteer* is the first special edition in the 60-year life of our magazine. It is entirely devoted to the dedication in Seattle of a monument honoring the memory of the Abraham Lincoln Brigaders and other International volunteers. All the 550 people present agreed: "It was awesome."

The organizers of the October 14 dedication got the word out. Newspapers all over the country, and news services abroad, carried the story. Both *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* sent crack staff writers to Seattle, and their articles honoring the volunteers who went to Spain were widely reprinted. This extraordinary press coverage — samples of which appear on pages 4-5 of this issue of *The Volunteer* — represents something of a breakthrough in American journalism, as hostile Cold War prejudices were nowhere in evidence, and we, the surviving Lincoln Brigaders, finally achieved a measure of positive recognition in our own country. We regret that those who are no longer with us could not savor this long-delayed vindication.

Lincoln vet Bill Susman is a member of the VALB staff, a founder of ALBA, vice-chair of ALBA's Board of Governors and an editor of The Volunteer.

An example from a new generation



Jose Moreno

"I am a Quaker. My parents and my entire family are Quakers. We are all opposed to war.

"But if there was ever a war I could accept it would be the war of the Spanish Republic against Franco and his Nazi and fascist allies, in which the American volunteers of the Lincoln Brigade fought."

Ethan Sorrelgreen
Seattle High School student
who heard Abe Osheroff speak
several times

The Seattle dedication came about through the hard work and dedication of one professor, Tony Geist, and two Lincoln Brigade veterans, Abe Osheroff and Bob Reed (all three ALBA Board members), who created an event that resonated far beyond the hundreds who gathered in Seattle; through the media it literally reached an audience of millions. It really began with ALBA's *Shouts From the Wall* exhibit, brought to the University of Washington in 1996 by the Geist-Osheroff-Reed trio, which greatly stimulated interest in the anti-fascist struggles of the Spanish Civil War era on campus and in the wider Seattle community — especially among youth. A bridge was built to students in the Seattle area, and it all paid off by their enthusiastic participation in the October 14 dedication.

Seattle points the way. ALBA's two travelling exhibits — the posters in *Shouts from the Wall*, and the photographs in *The Aura of the Cause* — amplified by lectures, musical programs and films, can and do tap into deep springs of idealism among young people. The exhibits will continue to tour the country, and although exhibits are scheduled through the year 2000, there are still very few openings. Contact ALBA if you are interested in bringing them to your community.

We look forward to replicating Seattle's shining example. Now that the first Lincoln Brigade monument has been erected there it will be easier and less expensive to do it elsewhere. Contact us, keep the ball rolling.

Please direct inquiries on how to begin the process of erecting a Lincoln Brigade monument in your locality to

ALBA, 799 Broadway, Room 227,
New York, NY 10003; Tel: 212-674-5552.

The Volunteer

Journal of the
Veterans of the
Abraham Lincoln Brigade
an ALBA publication

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Submission of Manuscripts

Please send manuscripts typewritten and double-spaced, if possible. If you wish your manuscripts returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Material for *The Volunteer* may also be sent via E-mail at: mgettlem@duke.poly.edu

Historic breakthrough in Seattle

Continued from page 1

Congressional representative. [Facsimiles of these messages appear on page 4.] Hand-blistering applause followed every remark.

Tony Geist, ALBA Board member, Spanish professor and a driving force behind the monument, spoke forcefully about the importance of the day. He reminded the audience of the heroism and idealism that had prompted those young men and women to sail for Spain in a crusade against fascism, only to be treated later by their own government as “premature anti-fascists” and placed on red-baiting blacklists. There was more than a little vindication, Geist suggested, in at last giving credit and a touch of immortality to those who stepped outside of conventional politics to take a stand against Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco.

Two of Seattle’s popular vets, Abe Osheroff and Bob Reed, shared a spotlight, soaking in a thunderous ovation of gratitude from their families and friends, and each took pains to summon the memories of their comrades who deserved no less thanks for their commitment and sacrifice. A dozen other vets — from California, Oregon, Michigan and New York — who appeared at the Seattle ceremonies received similar enthusiastic thanks as people spontaneously cheered, applauded or just clambered around to get a closer look at these elder heroes. Even the many reporters and photographers, including Sam Howe Verhovek of *The New York Times* and Kim Murphy of the *Los Angeles*



Northwest High School students, left to right, Stephanie Jones, Danielle Toner and Annaliese Liabraaten, at the dedication ceremony.

Peter Leinonen

Times, acknowledged the tremendous emotional impact of the experience.

The University of Washington sent 11 volunteers to Spain. Asked to speak about one of them, I told the ironic story of Thane Summers, a Huskie undergraduate who experienced his political awakening on the Seattle campus. Disillusioned by his family’s conservatism, he had defied his father to go to Spain, where he won a reputation for courage and leadership. After Thane was killed near Gandesa in 1938, the aggrieved father publicly criticized his son’s professors for misguiding the youth. Ten years later, during the McCarthy era, the father spearheaded a state investigation that resulted in their dismissal from the University faculty. The granite monument, I remarked, should also commemorate the struggle to preserve academic freedom, reminding today’s undergraduates of the importance of keeping the university as an arena for free ideas. The volunteers who went to Spain fought and died for those principles — free thought, free speech, free people.

The day’s emotional high point

came with the stage appearance of nearly a dozen students, part of a contingent of 50 from Seattle’s Northwest High School. Over the years Abe Osheroff has spoken to classes there and cultivated a loyal following. Today these young people gave Abe something in return as each read a short statement of thanks and expressed a desire to continue a life of activism for social justice.

A spectator could easily read the pleasure on the faces of the veterans and widows who attended these dramatic ceremonies. Two local duets of singers — one female group, “Rebel Voices,” the other, Joe Martin and Joe Page — added a bit of frolic to the festivities. None could doubt that this was a day to party and celebrate the first public monument to the Lincolns.

But just as obvious was the omnipresent sense of history shouldering aside the past. The limping veterans were no longer the “boys” who jumped on ships to go to war; and all too many of their comrades were gone forever.

Strong men like Osheroff and Reed were alive and kicking and it seemed that they had dragged the stone monument onto the campus to affirm their unyielding presence. But the day’s news also heralded the rising generation who would not only honor their past deeds and memories, but carry on the good fight.



José Moreno

David Ryan, designer of the memorial plaque.

JIM McDERMOTT
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515

Congress of the United States
 House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

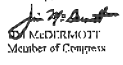
October 14, 1998

Dear Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and Friends,

As most of the world averted its eyes six decades ago, a small group of Americans set out to defend the Spanish Republic against the forces of fascism, and started into history as the first of millions who would enlist in the cause that became World War II. These volunteers, armed with International Principles from 53 other countries, chose to name theirs after Abraham Lincoln, a leader recognized for his vigorous defense of democratic ideals. They recognized the evil of fascist regimes that were ascendant in the 1930s, and like Lincoln determined to resist them with bold and just moral authority.

The vigilance of their senseless sacrifice was enough to keep our own republic true to the principles upon which it was founded—liberty and justice for all. Their first major national honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, was bestowed upon them in 1968. Their university campus is a fitting tribute to these heroes who in their youth put their vision to the test. As a movement abated, it will inspire future generations. As a monument should, it will remind us all that each of us must defend our cherished ideals against the fresh outrages perpetuated by purveyors of ancient hatreds in our own time.

We owe these veterans much, and I am privileged to add this note of tribute to help mark this auspicious occasion.

Sincerely,

 JIM McDERMOTT
 Member of Congress

Local and state officials gave a clear sign as to where they stood when it came to honoring the Lincoln vets in the state of Washington.

Los Angeles Times America's Conscientious Warriors

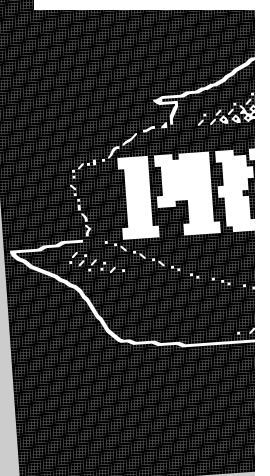
Los Angeles Times staff writer Kim Murphy speculated that maybe in 1936 "it was easier to know what the right thing was," and in 1936 "when a little known general [Franco] moved against Spain's democratically elected government. . . it didn't seem like somebody else's fight" to the 3,000 Americans and the volunteers from other countries who joined the fight against fascism, especially after Nazi and fascist forces entered Spain on Franco's side. These anti-fascist volunteers knew they were taking a dangerous step; "Half of us got killed," Lou Gordon recalled, but as one of his fellow volunteers said, it was a "good way to live" in a period when people acted on their ideals, "looked out for themselves, but not only for themselves. . ."

"A little over sixty years ago," Murphy wrote, these angry American men and women "boarded ships for France (their U.S. passports not valid for travel to Spain), then traveled by boat or foot to Spain and moved out onto the battlefields, carrying guns, driving ambulances, nursing the wounded."

In the intervening decades the Lincoln Brigaders "have gone unnoticed or [were] even dismissed as 'un-American,'" but that had changed by the time the Seattle monument was erected. "Perhaps that was why 83-year-old veteran Abe Osheroff was wiping back tears when he stood to accept the dedication of the nation's first monument* to the Spanish Civil War volunteers, why the cheering was so loud and so long for a dozen elderly veterans who stood blinking under the footlights of a university stage." Lincoln vet Nate Thornton declared, "I'm still glad that I went. It helped wake up the world to the fact that Franco, [Hitler and] Mussolini needed fighting against."

Portland All Anti-Fascists

The Portland *Alliance* counted "Oregonians" among American volunteer Spanish Civil War returnees "were 'premature anti-fascists' who were subject to harsh treatment in the United States and volunteered in droves against Hitler." Civil War, a "pre-emptive bloodier" war was "unique in that it captured the hearts and minds of an entire generation of intellectuals."



Above is the greeting from Rep. Jim McDermott. On the right is the one from Governor Gary Locke.

GARY LOCKE
 GOVERNOR

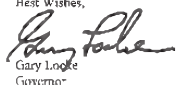
STATE OF WASHINGTON
 OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
 P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 753-6700 • TTY/TDD (360) 753-6466

Greetings from the Governor
 October 14, 1998

As Governor of the state of Washington, I send my congratulations and best wishes as you gather to celebrate the unveiling of this commemorative monument honoring American volunteers who fought for freedom and democracy in the Spanish Civil War.

The 3,000 members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, including 11 students from the University of Washington, volunteered to fight fascism and preserve the Republic of Spain. Nearly half of them paid with their lives. This monument stands as a symbol to their sacrifices and their struggles to protect life and liberty.

Congratulations to the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and Friends in Washington. With the dedication of this monument, you ensure that the efforts of all members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade shall never be forgotten.

Best Wishes,

 Gary Locke
 Governor


Metropolitan King County Council
RECOGNITION

WHEREAS the Metropolitan King County Council wishes to recognize the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade on the day of the dedication of their Seattle monument; and

WHEREAS the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was formed to help defend the legally elected government in Spain against the growing threat of fascism in Europe; and

WHEREAS Brigade members came from all walks of life, and all regions of the country to assist the first expedition and provide emergency military aid in 1936, and the first to be led by an African American commander; and

WHEREAS, as men of a United States who represents a just, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade fought bravely against the Axis powers abroad and helped strengthen our nation's position at home in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Brigade returned home as heroes of the unbridled cause they entered no official recognition of their deed;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Commissioner Cynthia Shelton, on behalf of the Metropolitan King County Council, wish to recognize

On the left is a resolution of "Recognition" by the Metropolitan King County Council. Below is the proclamation by Seattle Mayor Paul Schell.

CITY OF SEATTLE • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle recognizes the basic rights of all people to liberty and freedom; and

WHEREAS, five years before World War II, 3,000 American citizens volunteered to fight for democracy and against the forces of fascism in the Spanish Civil War; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans of the American Lincoln Brigade have donated a unique and significant monument to the first major monument on the United States dedicated to American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War; and


WHEREAS, this monument, located near the University of Washington's Hewitt-Dunn Building, is dedicated to those 3,000 members of what later became known as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade; and

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, October 14, 1998, Seattle, America's monument and the community will join together to rededicate the monument dedicated to the American Lincoln Brigade and honor the people who volunteered to fight fascism on the battlefields of Spain;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PAUL SCHELL, Mayor of the City of Seattle, do hereby proclaim October 14, 1998 to be

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE DAY

to denote and encourage all citizens to join me in honoring the spirit and leadership of all veterans who fought in the Spanish Civil War


 Paul Schell
 Mayor

Seattle Weekl Homage, At La

James Bush wrote *Weekly*: "Three years of columns swept into years before the U.S. War II, thousands around the world to a fascist takeover. In reason, the United States has been sadly lacking [these] . . . Spanish fighters." The Washington monument awarded Abe Osheroff their Lincoln Brigade long overdue homage

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Seattle Times

More Than Money and Power

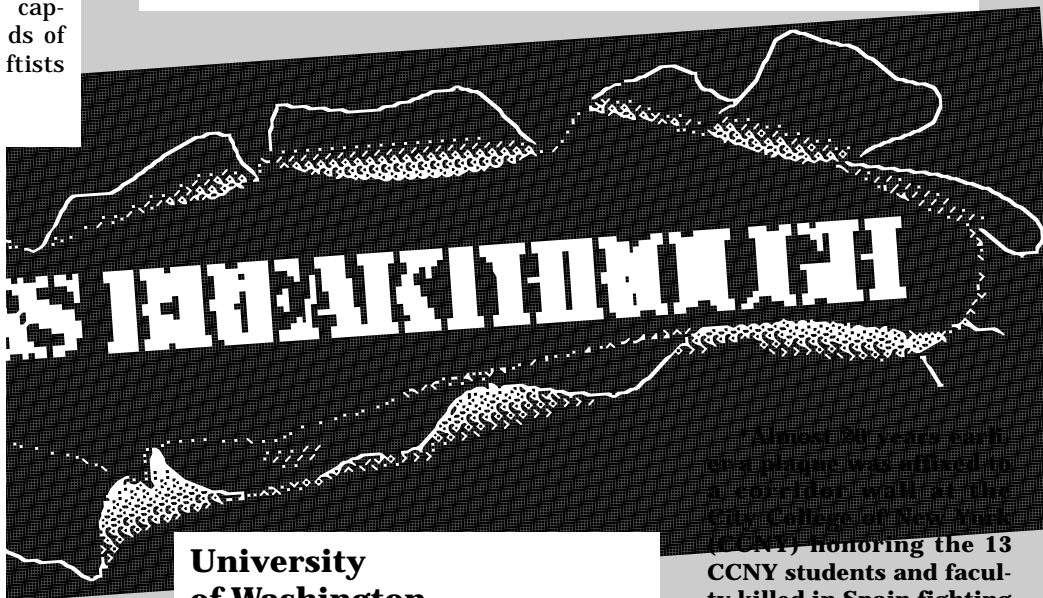
Seattle Times staff columnist Jerry Large wrote that vets Bob Reed and Abe Osheroff wanted young people to know what they were doing 60 years ago, when they were in their early 20s, which was “fighting as members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in a war to stop Gen. Francisco Franco from taking over Spain.” Reed conceded that most will pass by and think “Oh, that’s nice, but it was way back then,” but some “already thinking in a progressive way” will be encouraged. Osheroff added that the important thing is to live a “life of social commitment, and not as a sacrifice, but as a way to live” — a better way than to seek money and power. Throwing yourselves into the social struggles of your day on the side of justice, Osheroff said, makes you “not just a product of history but a participant.”

New York Times

From Harassment to Honor

Writing about the Seattle Dedication in the October 16th *New York Times*, correspondent Sam Howe Verhovek’s article appeared under the apt headline “From Harassment to Honor” when it went into the October 17-18 issue of *The International Herald Tribune*, and thus came to the attention of all Europe. Verhovek observed that “More than 60 years after they took up arms against the fascists in Spain, for which Hemingway romanticized them and the F.B.I. files blacklisted them, members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade have finally been given an official monument in this country.”

Vet Lou Gordon, 83, a retired union organizer, who came from New York to participate, said: “I feel we’re finally being recognized for something we did, something we deeply believe was right.” Julia Newman, who is making a documentary on American women who served in the anti-fascist movement in Spain, said that “The ogre is dead,” the end of the Soviet Union “had helped cast the brigade in a different light.” ALBA Chair Peter Carroll told Verhovek that now the Lincoln vets are being seen “not as communists but as anti-fascists, which is something they just could never do” in the Cold War years.



University of Washington Daily News

Civil War Memorial

University of Washington Daily News writer Nathan Isaacs noted that half the volunteers from the University of Washington “never made it home” after the Spanish Civil War. The Dedication of the Lincoln Brigade monument on campus was “the culmination of a struggle by Brigade veterans and supporters to gain recognition in the United States for their contribution to the Spanish Republic.”

The attendance of young people at this event meant to Abe Osheroff that his efforts had paid off, “that these kids have been imbued with idealism [and] . . . the commitment to making the world a little better place to live in,” as were the Lincoln vets six decades earlier.

Almost 20 years each one plaque was affixed to a gold dot scale at the CCNY honoring the 13 CCNY students and faculty killed in Spain fighting against fascism. The Abraham Lincoln Brigade is not mentioned on that plaque. — Editors

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Seattle University Herald

Memorial Dedicated

In the *Seattle University Herald*, University of Washington journalist Joshua Springer noted that “the Spanish Civil War tends to get stuck in the footnotes and margins of history textbooks,” and hence the campus monument was a reversal of decades of neglect and disparagement. The Lincoln Brigaders, and the other volunteers who came to Spain, intended to head off Hitler there and thus prevent what would become World War II. It didn’t happen that way, but the Seattle monument was erected so that future generations and young people at the Dedication, in Bob Reed’s words, would “think when something needs to be done and go [do it] with conscience.”

October 14 — Another Homenaje

Lincoln vet, ALBA Board member, carpenter, film maker, political and civil rights supporter, **Abe Osheroff** lives in Seattle. His political activism included stints in Mississippi, where he built a cultural center, and Nicaragua, where he constructed houses. The Homenaje of 1996, when the Spanish government paid homage by inviting surviving members of the International Brigades to return to Spain and accept Spanish citizenship, is described in the 1996 and 1997 issues of *The Volunteer*.

by **Abe Osheroff**

Two years ago, after our *Homenaje*, I left Spain feeling that I had experienced such great joy from bathing in the love and respect of so many Spaniards as could happen only once in a lifetime. I was wrong, for on October 14, at the university of Washington, I was once again overwhelmed by such feeling, and this time it was even more personal, more intimate.

The “door” to the university’s campus was pushed open by our friend (and ALBA Board member), Prof. Tony Geist. Then Bob Reed and I went into high gear: Bob’s job was to reach a broad network of friends and supporters, the result of his quarter-century of political activism in the Pacific northwest; mine was to see that news of the October 14 dedication reached the widest possible audience.

We succeeded beyond our wildest expectations. The monument is there in place, and despite the legendary Seattle weather, 550 people came to the dedication. The moment when the Lincoln vets came up on stage and were joined by the young students whom they inspired was chaotic, but it was beautiful, the symbolic closing of a 70-year gap. It was a long-delayed recognition for the Lincoln Brigaders. Press coverage, discussed elsewhere in this issue of *The Volunteer*, was also phenomenal. *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* sent special correspondents, and the story was carried regionally



Richard Berman

THE TRIUMPHANT TRIO — Left to right, Bob Reed, Tony Geist and Abe Osheroff.

and nationally, and was picked up internationally. We reached an audience of at least three to five million!

October 14 had great personal emotional impact on me, and the other Lincoln vets. But two special moments stand out: one was the beautifully intoned reading of La Pasionaria’s great 1938 farewell speech to the International Brigades

by my former student, Rachel Barnett. After that reading there wasn’t a dry eye in the whole hall.

But for me the most touching thing of all was the presence and active participation of 50 students from Seattle’s Northwest High School where I had taught. These young peo-

Continued on page 8

Why here? Why me?

ALBA Board member Tony Geist is on leave this year from his position as Professor of Spanish at the University of Washington. This article is a condensation of Geist’s speech at the Dedication of the Lincoln Brigade Monument on October 14, held at an indoor site because of rain. In his remarks Geist singles out farsighted University of Washington administrators Dean Michael Halleran, David Wu and Denis Martynovich for special thanks.

by **Tony Geist**

Although the International Brigades have been celebrated throughout the world (there are over 50 monuments to them in England alone), here in the United States the Lincoln Brigade has had to wait 60 years for proper recognition. In 1996 the Spanish government granted citizenship to the surviving members. Yet here in the United States, both

the Lincoln Brigade and VALB (Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade) were placed on the official government list of “Subversive” organizations. During the McCarthy period the government labeled these true American heroes “premature anti-fascists,” which in many cases cost them their jobs, their passports, their homes and their families. Today at last they have their recognition — in that chest-high stone monument that looms large in their hearts.

Why here? Why Seattle? Let us remember the region’s long history of progressive activism: the general strike of 1934 up through the anti-war protests of the ’60s, anti-racist efforts, Central American solidarity work and opposition to the Gulf War in the ’90s. In 1937 and 1938 some 90 volunteers went to Spain from the Pacific northwest — lumberjacks, fisherman, millwrights, sailors and longshoremen — and among them the 11 University of Washington students

Continued on page 8

Credit for October 14

*Lincoln vet and ALBA Board member **Bob Reed** lives in Seattle. This article is drawn from Reed's October 25, 1998, letter to his fellow Lincoln vet Bill Susman.*

by **Bob Reed**

Yes, Bill, I suppose I deserve some credit for keeping alive the memory of the Lincoln Brigade over the years in Seattle and the northwest. These activities began in the seventies after I graduated from the University of Washington, when we supported ex-prisoners from Franco's jails and protested arrests of Spanish trade unionists. In this work we often used Abe Osheroff's film, *Dreams and Nightmares*, to good effect. Later, in the 1980s, we raised money for ambulances to be sent to Nicaragua. Our Committees for a Democratic Spain were visible then.

And yes, the monument on the UW campus would never have happened were it not for Abe, Tony and myself. There were others on campus who supported us — Dr. Mike Predmore in Spanish, and Dr. Joan Ullman in History, who helped in our research on volunteers from the northwest and collecting material now in the ALBA Archives and at the University of Washington. Ullman taught courses on Spanish history that, as I remember it, were not quite as popular as Abe Osheroff's University of Washington courses in the 1990s.

I wish you could have been here on October 14, even though you and ALBA helped the event take place. Hopefully our joint efforts will bring about the establishment of many more such memorials throughout the United States.

Hang in there!

Bob

Edgar O'Hara teaches Spanish at the University of Washington. His poem, printed here in its original Spanish, has been translated into English by Martin Espada, whose own poem, The Carpenter Swam to Spain, appeared in the Fall 1998 issue of The Volunteer.

Recuperación de un Sueño (Brigada Abraham Lincoln, Seattle, 1998)

by **Edgar O'Hara**

Perdida ya la guerra, no conocieron
sin embargo
la derota. De todos las cenizas
y el humo con que la palma
de la Historia prodiga a sus victimas
una honra y un orgullo distintos
conocieron.

Y en su tierra de origen, en su lengua
de origen, otra clase
de ceniza y humo epeso
conocieron.

Ahora sin embargo
dan cuenta de la calidad del cielo
que habian visto. Y ahora
en la misma redondez del polvo
otros dedos se acordaron
de preservar esa luz.

La luz que gracias a ellos
conocimos.

Recovery of a Dream

The war already lost, nevertheless
they did not know
defeat. Out of the ashes
and smoke which the palm
of history lavishes on its victims
a different honor and pride
they knew.

And in the land of origin, in their tongue
of origin, another kind
of ash and thick smoke
they knew.

Now, nevertheless,
they realize the quality of the sky
they had seen. And now
in the same roundness of dust
other fingers remembered
to preserve that light.

The light which, thanks to them,
we know.

Wonderful! Wonderful!

by **David Smith**

WONDERFUL! WONDERFUL! There it was — the memorial to us, the members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, surrounded by the magnificent campus and imposing buildings of the University of Washington. Overwhelmed by the tributes from the Governor, Mayor and Congressman, I will never forget the enthusiasm generated by the many young students who participated in this happy event.

Thanks, Bob, Abe, Tony and their many helpers who brought this wonderful event to fruition.



David Smith

Richard Bermack

*Lincoln vet **David Smith** is commander of the Bay Area (California) Post, Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and Associates.*

Yes, I wish to become an ALBA Associate, and I enclose a check for \$25 made out to ALBA. Please send me *The Volunteer*.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please mail to: ALBA, 799 Broadway, Rm. 227, New York, NY 10003

Homenaje II

Continued from page 6

ple told of how the Spanish Civil War reached their hearts and minds, and they vowed that in their own lives they would continue the good fight. I know that they will make a difference, that they will be heard from. I thought to myself: how rich I am! The rewards of a life of social activism cannot be measured in money or power. Bill Gates will never see what I saw in those bright, shining faces. What greater reward can a teacher

have than to know he or she has touched eternity?

What is to be done next? We must strive to replicate this experience, and soon (while some of us old codgers are still around). Likely places are UCLA, Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara and San Diego, Illinois, the University of Pennsylvania, Florida, New York University, Dartmouth, Mount Holyoke, Brandeis — and others. Some creative thinking and organizing, some hard work, and PRESTO — a monument. This is also a great time to bring out a major film on the Lincoln Brigade, while there are pro-

ducers, directors and actors who know, love and honor us.

Our small victory in Seattle came at an important moment. When revisionist “historians” and renegades from our own ranks challenge the commitment and achievements of the “premature anti-fascists,” we were able to reach millions with our truth. VIVA LA BRIGADA LINCOLN!

After Abe Osheroff spoke, and the ceremony concluded, the students descending from the stage all kissed him and the other Lincoln vets.

Why here?

Continued from page 6

to whom this monument is especially dedicated.

Erecting this monument has been the culmination of the hard work and dedication of two Seattle Lincoln vets. For the past 25 years Bob Reed has kept this chapter of the VALB alive and kicking, active in all the important social struggles of our time. The inimitable Abe Osheroff has also been a decisive force in the accomplishment commemorated here. Between them they raised the necessary funds, and organized today's affairs. It would be hard to find two more able organizers than Bob and Abe. And, as a number of you have had occasion to find out, it is difficult to say no to them.

It also took somebody on the inside, pushing to make this dream come true, and that was me.

Why me? After all, I'm too young to have fought in Spain, and a little too old to be only starry-eyed about those who did. Through my teaching Spanish literature and culture here at the University of Washington, I have a professional interest in the literature of the Spanish Civil War era, and its aftermath. But that, in turn, grew out of my upbringing. Raised in California by parents involved in the struggles for social justice in the '30s, I first knew Lincoln vets as family friends. For me, they stood for the best America has to offer. With all their failings (and believe me, they have them — which makes them all the more human and real). They exemplified to me a burning commitment to freedom, and the willingness

to sacrifice their lives for it, an unparalleled commitment to international solidarity, and the knowledge of how to act on these beliefs, when to act and why they were acting. These have been the guiding principles in my own life.

One of the difficult things about growing up with such examples was the doubts that I and my generation were equal to the tasks. After many years I have finally answered this question for myself, and the answer lies in the monument standing outside that door. More than elegy, it is a celebration; more than simply commemorating the past, it is a monument to the future. That hunk of granite and bronze symbolizes the true spirit of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. It is the torch they pass on to future generations who will find their own “good fight,” just as mine did.

The Volunteer

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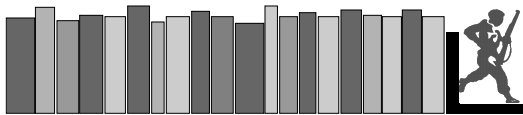
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