

## CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor:

Would you allow your readers to read the other side to a one-sided review?

In the May issue, Martin Torodash reviewed my book *The Man Who Led Columbus To America*. After an introduction to Brendan (the man), his analysis begins with "... the only land near enough (to Ireland) to have been visited in an open Irish curragh is Rockall Island... 150 miles northwest..."

Is Torodash unaware of the Vikings who sailed this ocean in open boats for several centuries? Or of the Polynesians who sailed another ocean for tens of thousands of miles in open canoes?

The Pilots Charts of the North Atlantic do not show any peculiar characteristic for the Ireland to Rockall stretch of ocean which would make it navigable to an open boat whereas other stretches of the same ocean would not be.

Torodash says the citation of authorities is of a selective nature and used as an example my quotation of Morison from *Admiral of Ocean Seas*: "It was merely his (Columbus') good fortune that the same wind carried his fleet all the way to America." He stated that it neglects Morison's previous statement that Columbus "must have observed on his (prior) African voyage that a westward course would enjoy a fair wind..." Torodash quotes—out of context—only one of the statements which led Morison to his conclusions; I quoted the conclusion.

Torodash goes on to state "Therein lies Columbus' so called 'secret.'" Now the Canaries lie off the coast of Africa. If there is some way to determine that the prevailing winds here would carry a square rigged ship to America and back, then this man should enlighten the sciences of navigation and oceanography.

The reviewer states that my qualifications are "not overly impressive" and he is correct in stating that I hold no graduate degrees; that I am simply a student of history and a navigator.

Torodash consigns me "to the ranks of the 'credulous fiction mongers.'" *The Man Who Led Columbus To America* is a book of 202 pages of fact. I challenge him to cite a single statement which is not correct.

Atlanta, Georgia

PAUL H. CHAPMAN

*Professor Torodash exercised his option not to respond to Mr. Chapman's letter to the editor.*

To the Editor:

I was very disappointed to learn of Marysa Navarro's purported review of my book, *Uruguay's Tupamaros: The Urban Guerrilla*, in the May 1975 issue of *HAHR*. Consider the following:

1) Her "review" fails to evaluate the contents of my book. Indeed, the first two paragraphs provide a background on the Tupamaros and on recent events in Uruguay; the third (very brief) paragraph summarizes the book's table of contents; and the fourth (and last) paragraph raises a number of questions with

which Ms. Navarro feels I should have concerned myself. Should not a book review deal primarily with the book and its contents rather than with background material and alternative issues?

2) In her third paragraph Ms. Navarro charges that the book "is based on sources already available and [offers] no new insight." While it is not up to me to challenge the latter allegation, I can comment on the former one. My book's two chapters on the ideology of the Tupamaros purposely examine Tupamaro documents which have been made public and have been picked up by the local press or appear in Spanish-language anthologies. This was necessary in order to allow for alternative interpretations of the material by other scholars. Nevertheless, the analysis remains original and is very unique in the sense that, up to now, there are no other scholarly studies of the Tupamaros' ideology. The chapter on membership and internal organization is definitely not, for the most part, based on previous sources. For example, the analysis of Tupamaro membership by occupation, age, sex, and nationality is based on a survey I conducted in Uruguay. The chapter on tactics is also not based on anyone else's writings but, rather, is an analysis of the kinds of actions undertaken by the Tupamaros during their decade of activity.

3) In the "review's" last paragraph, Ms. Navarro claims that I do not address myself to such issues as why and how the Tupamaros could achieve success for a number of years, what was their impact on Uruguayan politics, what factors explain their defeat, and whether their experience can be repeated elsewhere. This is also not true. The growth of the Tupamaros is explained throughout the book as a function of the appeal of their ideological objectives, the nature of their internal organization, the broadness of their membership, their evolving, sophisticated strategic scheme, their ingenious tactics, etc. The impact of the Tupamaros on Uruguay's political life is examined throughout the book's fifth chapter as well as in the epilogue, where I point out how the challenge posed by the Tupamaros was met by increasing repression as well as how democracy and individual freedom became the victims in this struggle for political power. The factors that explain the defeat of the Tupamaros are dealt with in various places but particularly in pp. 68-70: the intervention of the armed forces and their systematic use of torture, the Tupamaros' loss of numerous hideouts in the countryside and smaller towns, the betrayal of a top Tupamaro leader, etc. With regard to whether the Tupamaros' experience can be repeated elsewhere, I mention in the introduction and the epilogue how the Tupamaros have shown that guerrilla activity can become an urban phenomenon. However, I explain that the Tupamaros did not wish to be taken as a model and that theirs is a lesson of how far a social movement can go when it successfully adapts to the society within which it is operating.

I am saddened that, in a field of study where emotion and ideological positions have hindered the conduct of scholarly research, my attempt to provide a first balanced and serious analysis of urban guerrilla warfare has been so carelessly reviewed.

University of Pittsburgh

PROFESSOR ARTURO C. PORZECANSKI

*Professor Navarro exercised her option not to respond to Professor Porzecanski's letter to the Editor.*