

## [A Meeting with Michelle Bachelet, the President of Chile](#)

It doesn't matter what I say about the friendly meeting, some news agencies and papers will take the information and will print that the old man, convalescing after a serious illness or some other descriptor directed towards reducing the modest value of whatever I expressed to my prestigious interlocutor.

Michelle has the merit of having been elected president of Chile by the majority vote which was bestowed upon the Socialist Party that nominated her. For the first time in recent years in Latin America, a leftist organization had won such a victory, without the backing of money, weapons and the Yankee publicity apparatus.

And especially since this honour had to do with the Socialist Party of Salvador Allende, who died under the wily direct air attack on La Moneda where he was occupying his position as the constitutional president of Chile. He neither asked for nor granted any truce. He was determined to die at his post, just as he had promised.

There were no precedents for the sinister treason committed by the head of the Chilean army who pretended and duped everyone right up to the end.

Even the house, at Tomas Moro, where his family resided, was also attacked and destroyed.

During very difficult moments in that period, after thousands of people had been tortured, murdered and disappeared, a very young woman named Gladys Marin was leading the Communist Party of Chile, built up throughout decades of effort and sacrifice by the Chilean working class that had taken her to that responsibility.

Gladys Marin and her party made no mistake; they gave all their support to Michelle Bachelet, thus determining the end of the influence of Augusto Pinochet. It was inadmissible that the tyrant who had been designed and led to power by the empire would once again rule the destiny of Chile.

World opinion loathed his conduct.

In spite of that, it has not been nor is it still, easy to undo the legal intricacies that the vengeful and fascist oligarchy, with Yankee help, bound up the Chilean nation, deserving of a better fate.

More than one hundred years ago, in a war begun in 1879, that same oligarchy robbed Bolivia of the maritime coastline that gave it ample access to the Pacific Ocean.

Bolivia suffered an extraordinary historical humiliation in that struggle. Not only was its maritime coastline and access to the ocean stolen away from them, but extensive territories were taken away from that country, authentically American in origin, especially the Aymara and Quechua peoples; territories rich in copper that constituted the greatest reserves in the world, which had been exploited for 130 years and today, its production is up to 5,364 million tons per year, bringing approximately 18,452 million dollars per year to the Chilean economy. One cannot conceive of modern society without the copper metal whose prices have a tendency to rise.

Other extremely valuable minerals and natural products, some of them already exhausted and other new ones commanding very high prices, have appeared. One doesn't know which of them were Chilean and which were Bolivian.

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The president of Bolivia today, Evo Morales, holds no grudge because of that; on the contrary, he offered his territory for a wide, modern highway over which the products of the efficient Chilean industries, at the top of their form in their growth and with their laborious and productive workers, could be sent to many world markets.

Chile is also particularly efficient in the production of nutritional food and high quality woods, in its agricultural lands, its mountains and its exceptional climate.

There is no other country that surpasses it in the efficiency of its ocean produce and high-demand products like salmon and the other cultivated and natural species that abound in its rich maritime and inland waters.

Today we are very close to February 15th, the day for the referendum on the constitutional amendment in our sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

José Martí was Cuba's most profound revolutionary thinker and our national hero. Before the granite effigy of that thinker, Michelle Bachelet laid a floral tribute on behalf of her people, and we are very grateful.

He said about Bolívar, 115 years ago: "What he hasn't accomplished, is still unaccomplished today; because Bolívar still has things to do in America."

"Bolívar awakens every one hundred years", proclaimed the great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

At the point of celebrating the second century of his rebellion against the Spanish metropolis Bolívar awakens once again in Chavez' revolutionary action. If the new leader who is leading his combative people will not attain his goal, it is difficult to imagine that any other leader would be able to achieve it. The media resources of the oligarchy and the empire would not be able to be surpassed.

What should we do then so that this planet does not become like Dante's inferno, where the sign at its entranceway exhorts us to abandon all hope?

Nevertheless, I harbour the certainty that the Revolution will be victorious in Venezuela, and that in Chile the ideal of socialism for which Salvador Allende struggled and gave his life will finally triumph.

I spoke about those matters with Michelle Bachelet who did me the honour of listening to me with interest, chatting warmly and extensively expressing her ideas.

I shall always be satisfied with her friendly visit.

**Fidel Castro Ruz**

**February 12, 2009**

**5 : 12 p.m.**

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