

International VIEWPOINT

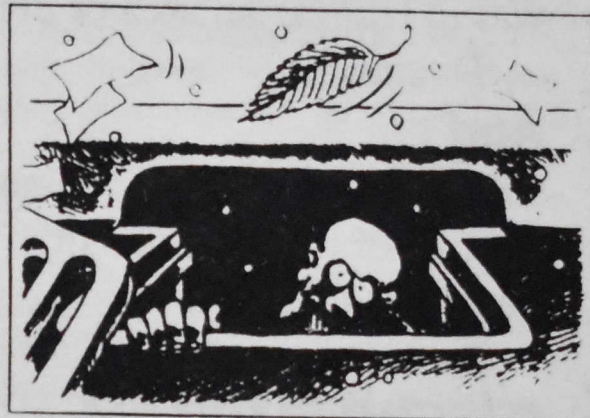
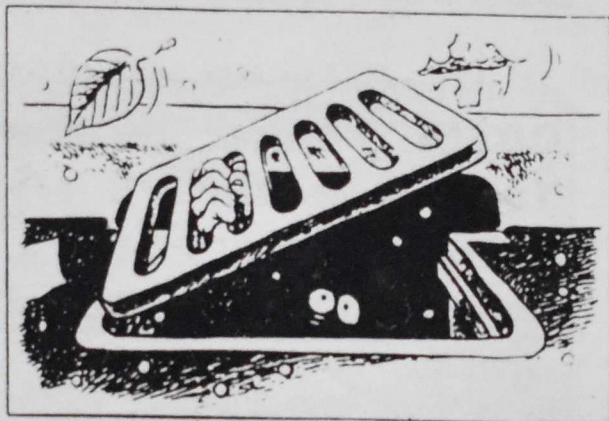
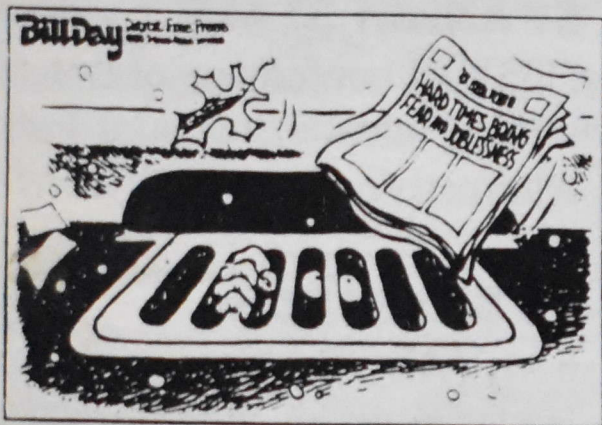
EDWIN MADUNAGU

Issue 218

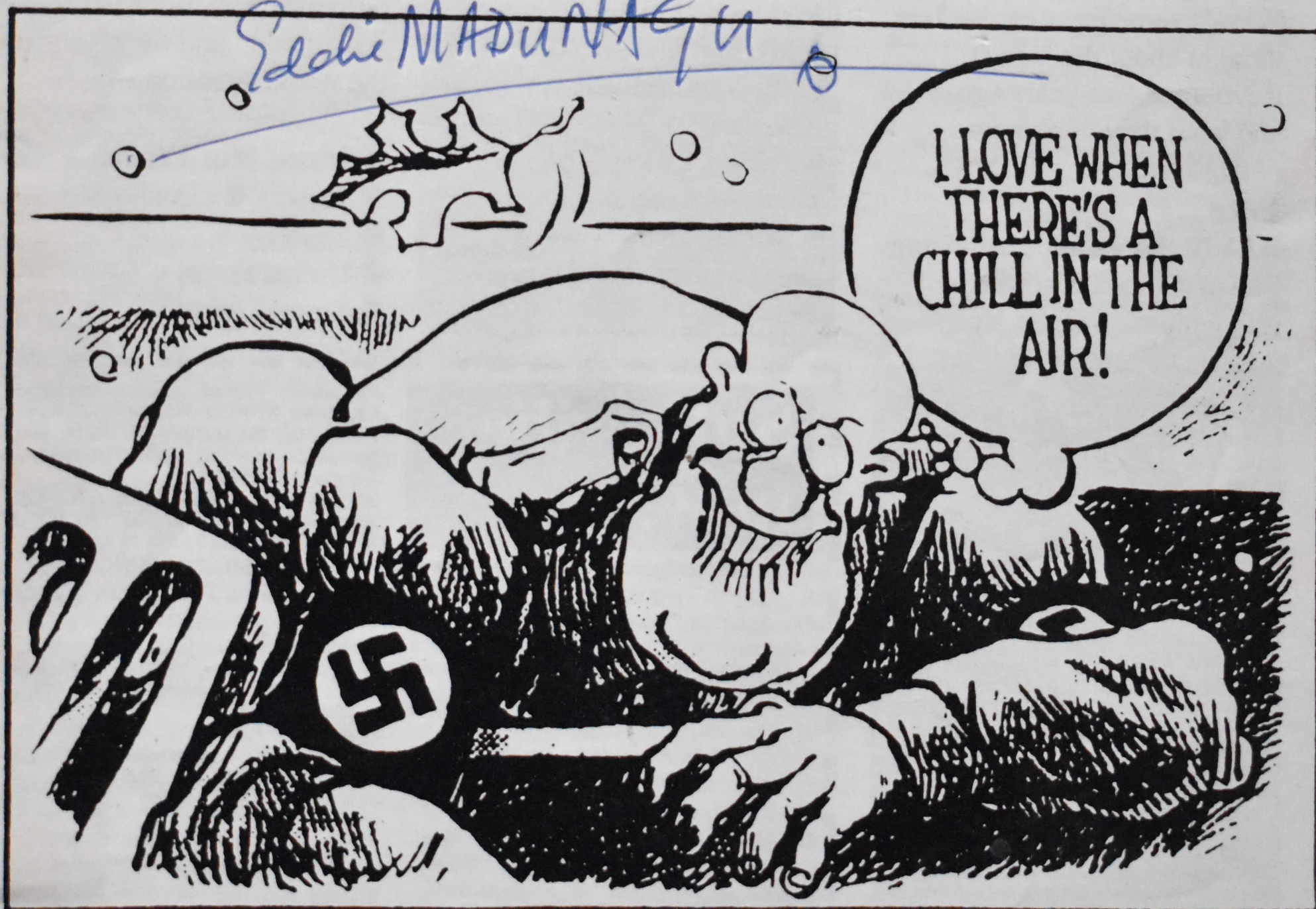
December 9, 1991

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Europe: the spectre of fascism



Edwin Madunagu



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and for which I have been imprisoned seven times".

He has also challenged Alfredo César, currently President of the National Assembly, to renounce his parliamentary immunity so he can face accusations that his electoral campaign was financed by the CIA. ★

UNITED STATES

"War on drugs" questioned

A RECENT report from the Inter-American Commission on Drug Policy — a private group of experts from Canada, Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and the United States — has called for a radical shift in Western drug policies. The report, released in June of this year, concludes that US drug programmes which concentrate on suppressing the supply of cocaine, marijuana and heroin have actually exacerbated the problem.

The increased role of the military in drug enforcement in Colombia and Peru, for example, has led to human rights violations that have weakened popular support for anti-drug programmes. Stepping up police activity has not reduced the number of addicts, but has increased the risk factor for pedlars, causing prices to rise. The growing number of addicts, in turn, have

ben driven to crime to pay for what they consume.

The experts charge that the US has been wasting billions of dollars on a largely meaningless and sometimes counter-productive "war on drugs" rather than attacking the actual problem: US domestic consumption of narcotics. While 70% of the US\$11.6 billion federal anti-drug budget for the fiscal year 1992 is earmarked for law enforcement, international activities and border interdiction, only 30% is set aside for education and treatment (information compiled from *Far Eastern Economic Review*). ★

SOVIET UNION

October Revolution celebrated

ON November 7, 1991, for the first time since 1917, the Soviet Union did not celebrate the victory of the October Revolution. However, in the capital, in response to the call of the Moscow Union of Workers (a trade union of a conservative orientation) 6-8,000 people demonstrated their continuing attachment to the popular revolution of 1917.

The mayor of Moscow, Gavril Popov, had forbidden any rally, under the pretext of avoiding confrontations with the inevitable "counter-demonstrators"; the latter

ultimately amounted to no more than 200, which illustrates graphically the difficulties the liberals face in mobilizing, and the disorientation of their supporters. However, at around 9 a.m., a lively crowd gathered on one of the boulevards around the centre of Moscow.

While around half of the demonstrators seemed to be over 40, young people, and adolescents in particular, were also numerous. The tone of the rally was fraternal and the slogans and banners were, for the most part, not demanding a return to the Stalinist past, being mainly directed against the anti-socialist changes imposed by Yeltsin and his team.

The demonstrators then headed off in the direction of Red Square in a spirited atmosphere of defiance. After negotiations with the police who were guarding the bridge giving access to the Kremlin, the stewards of the demonstration diverted it so that it entered Red Square from a side street.

Many of the participants were opposed to this detour, arguing that the centre of the city still belonged to them and that not everything had yet been sold to the foreigners. Young people participating in the demonstration sold the first issue of *Inter-vzglyad*, the Russian language sister publication of *International Viewpoint* (see ad on previous page!). ★

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