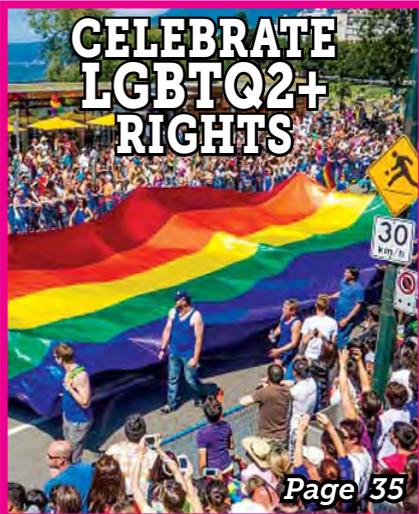


"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che

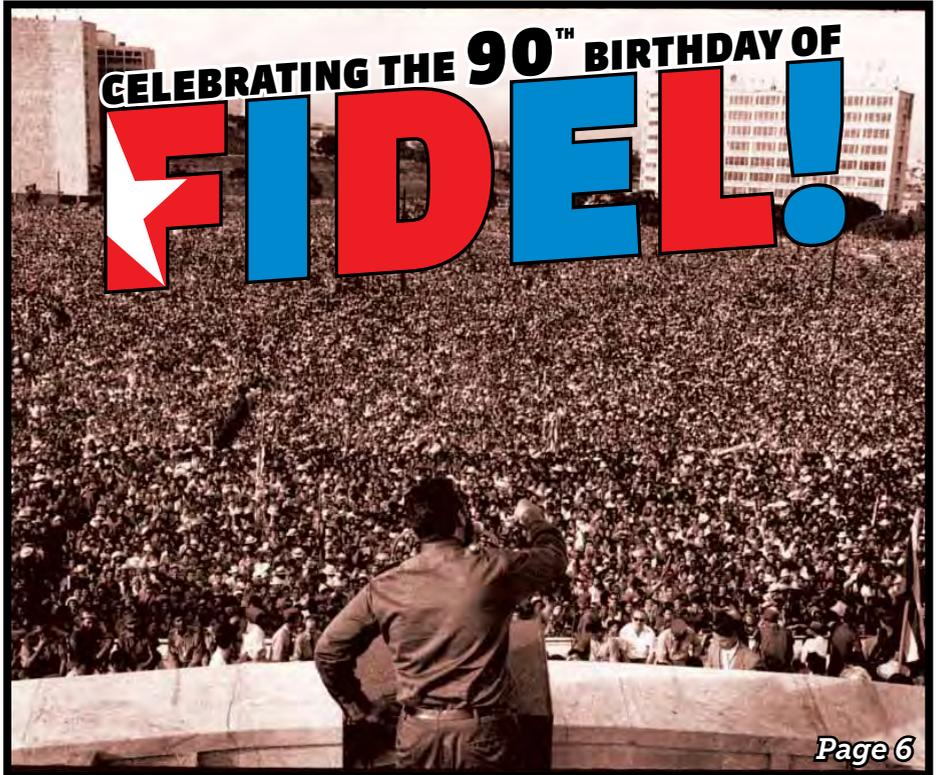


Fire This Time!



**CELEBRATE
LGBTQ2+
RIGHTS**

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**CELEBRATING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF
FIDEL!**

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**Repeal
Bill C-51!**

**NO TO NATO!
NO TO WAR!
CANADA OUT
OF NATO NOW!**

MONEY FOR JOBS,
HEALTHCARE,
EDUCATION, HOUSING,
ENVIRONMENT!

**NOT FOR
WAR!**



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**SAUDI ARABIA/USA:
HANDS OFF
YEMEN!**



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**VENEZUELA:
REVOLUTION
& COUNTER-
REVOLUTION**

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**The U.S. Blockade of Cuba
is an Outdated Policy
& Must End**





By Azza Rojbi

“Saudi planes have bombed the Technical School in our village of Manakha. In Amran, the cemetery has been destroyed and last week, in Sana’a, the oldest textile factory near Bab Al Shub was also hit by bombs. Our country is already so poor, what will be left after this war? What do the Saudis want; that our youth remain unschooled and without work and out of desperation, ready to join the ranks of Daech? [ISIS].”

Those are the words of Fatima Al Kohlani, 78 years old living in Sana’a. She lost friends and family members who died in the war in Yemen. Fatima and her family are far from alone. On May 25, 2016, an air strike carried out by the Saudi led coalition in Southern Yemen hit a family’s house killing 11 members of the family including 4 children. Death, suffering and mourning has been the reality of everyday life for hundreds of families in Yemen since the start of the Saudi led bombing.

The bombing campaign began after rebels opposed to the former President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi began to gain ground across the country including in the capital. Mansour Hadi resigned from being president on January 22, 2015 and later fled Riyadh.

Saudi Arabia was fast to declare war on Yemen arguing for national security and claiming to want to bring peace and stability to Yemen by re-instating Yemen’s ‘legitimate’ president Hadi. Where is the legitimacy of a president who resigns, fled his country and calls on foreign power to destroy, bomb and kill his own people?

The Saudi led coalition, backed by the US, began bombing Yemen and imposing an aerial and naval blockade on the country on 26 March 2015 under the title “Operation Decisive Storm”. The Saudi-led coalition includes United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Senegal and Sudan.

After a month of indiscriminate killings and destruction under international pressure, Saudi Arabia announced the end of “Operation Decisive Storm” and the start of “Operation Renewal of Hope”. This attempt of Saudi Arabia to appear less brutal was a complete farce as Saudi air strikes continued against the Yemeni people less than 6 hours after the announcement.

Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen intensifies

Since the Saudi bombing started, about 10,000 people have been killed, more than 30,000 people have been left injured, about 3 million remain displaced and 21.2 million Yemenis — 82 per cent of the total population — are currently in need of urgent humanitarian assistance according to the UN.

Day after day the situation in Yemen worsened, as air strikes destroyed not only many of Yemen’s ancient and beautiful historical sites, but also hospitals, schools, markets, mosques, housing complexes and other vital infrastructure. The shortage of fuel in the country has caused widespread power outages and forced hospitals to close, leaving those injured without medical care.

According to a report released in January 2016 by the Yemeni Civilian Association the Saudi attack on Yemen have destroyed around

345,722 houses, 262 hospitals, 810 schools and educational centers, 547 food stores, 530 bridges and roads and the list goes on!! Add to this destruction, Saudi Arabia maintained a cruel air and naval blockade of Yemen stopping commercial goods and humanitarian aid from reaching the most needed.

“The humanitarian situation in Yemen is among the world’s worst crises. The scale and intensity of the humanitarian situation here is bleak – and by many measures it’s continuing to get worse,” Jamie McGoldrick, the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, said in a press briefing in Sana’a.

A recent report released by UNICEF estimates that “nearly 2,300 children have been hurt in the most extreme and cruel ways in the past year. On average at least six children have been killed or maimed every day since March, 2015, a sevenfold increase compared with the whole of 2014.”

A U.N. annual report on children and armed conflict said the Saudi led coalition was responsible for 60 percent of child deaths and injuries in Yemen.

Use of Cluster bombs

On May 2015, Human Rights Watch visited the Saada province in the north of Yemen to compile a report on the use of cluster bombs in Yemen. Even after the release of the report and the international condemnation of the use of cluster bombs on civilians, the Saudi led coalition carried on with its inhumane and brutal bombing campaign.

“The coalition’s repeated use of cluster bombs in the middle of a crowded city suggests an intent to harm civilians, which is a war crime,” said Stephen Goose, Human Rights Watch arms director. “These outrageous attacks show that the coalition seems less concerned than ever about sparing civilians from war’s horrors.”

Cluster bombs are very dangerous as they contain hundreds of smaller explosive submunitions that are spread over a wide area and can leave unexploded munitions buried in the ground for decades to come. Civilians and particularly children have been the primary victims of such a weapon.

“These weapons should never be used under any circumstances. Saudi Arabia and other coalition members – and the supplier, the US – are flouting the global standard that rejects cluster munitions because of their long-term threat to civilians,” said Stephen Goose.

Photos and testimonies collected on the ground in Yemen by various human right organizations recorded that the Saudi led coalition used UK and US made cluster bombs against civilians in Yemen.

US hidden war on Yemen

US intervention and criminal track record in Yemen is not new! Since 2002, US have

carried covered drone strikes in Yemen under the pretext of fighting terrorism. According to “The Bureau of Investigative Journalism” in London there were 147 drone strikes in Yemen between 2002 and 2016 with the most recent covert action carried on July 26, 2016. These criminal and illegitimate US drone strikes were responsible of the killing of close to 806 people in Yemen.

On June 2015, a CIA drone killed a 13-year old named Mohammed Tuaiman in al-Zur village in Marib province. Only few months before being killed Mohammed described to the Guardian newspaper in an interview how he lived in constant fear of the “death machines” that killed in 2011 his father and brother as they were out herding the family’s camels. He said in the interview “A lot of the kids in this area wake up from sleeping because of nightmares from them and some now have mental problems. They turned our area into hell and continuous horror, day and night, we even dream of them in our sleep.”



Mohammed’s family tragedy is not an isolated one. The tragedy and loss of Yemeni life has skyrocketed as the US continues its drone strikes and is backing the Saudi led bombing campaign on the country.

On March 25, 2015 the White House posted a statement declaring: “President Obama has authorized the provision of logistical and intelligence support to GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council]-led military operations.”

The Obama administration argued that it is not in war with Yemen and tried to downplay its involvement and confuse and deceive working people.

But we only have to look at the track record of the US government! The same Obama that said, “a decade of war is now ending.” in his 2013 inaugural speech, have since expanded further the new era of war and occupation in the Middle East and North Africa.

The United States is providing aerial refueling for planes flying with the Saudi led coalition, it is also providing targeting intelligence,

as the Wall Street Journal cites “American military planners are using live intelligence feeds from surveillance flights over Yemen to help Saudi Arabia decide what and where to bomb, U.S. officials said.” The US Navy also has several ships nearby, including an assault ship and two destroyers.

On May 6, 2016, the US military has for the first time publicly acknowledged that US troops are operating inside Yemen to help pro-Hadi forces. Defense Department spokesman Navy captain Jeff Davis said that a “very small number” of military personnel has been working with “Arab Coalition”.

The hypocrisy of the US government is more and more clear as they continue to preach human and democratic rights while supporting and participating in the war crimes committed by their Saudi puppet regime against the innocent people of Yemen.

This brutal and inhuman war on Yemen was justified on the basis of stopping terrorism

and restoring stability to Yemen. What the U.S. and the Gulf Cooperation Council are really trying to stop is a popular opposition movement to the US and the Saudi-backed government of Mansour Hadi. This movement has been labeled as so-called “Iranian-backed Houthis” but in fact the popular movement against the government, which began in 2011, was much broader than this.

The US and its puppet regimes in the gulf region don’t have the well being of the Yemeni people in mind. They want to expand their control and hegemony over the region and impose on Yemen a corrupt pro-imperialist government to serve their interest in a desperate move to quell the growing popularity of Iran in the region. Their biggest fear will be the formation of an independent state in Yemen chosen by the people of Yemen.

The people of Yemen will prevail

On March 26, 2016 thousand of Yemenis took to the street of Sanaa in a massive protest marking the one year anniversary of the Saudi led bombing campaign in Yemen.

The crowds included people from all different sects and political affiliations that all opposed the criminal Saudi war on Yemen.

The Middle East Eye, an online news portal, spoke to some protesters at the rally. Hamdi Abubaker, 28, said he was protesting because he lost his job in the tourism industry soon after the war began. “The Houthis took over Sanaa on 21 September 2014, and we continued to work until March 2015, and when the Saudi-led coalition started their campaign against Yemen we lost our jobs,” he said. “Saudi Arabia is our enemy and not the Houthis.” Hamdi stated that he was not a Houthi supporter but was against Hadi and his government, which “destroyed the country”.

Today about a year and a half after the start

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People search for survivors amid the rubble of houses destroyed in a Saudi-led airstrikes.



Locals dig graves for 9 people killed in Saudi-led air strikes in Yemen’s Bani Matar district.

Why Working and Oppressed People Must Oppose Bill C-51



REPEAL BILL C-51!



Bill C-51 Is the Rejection of the Right to Free Speech, the Right to Assembly and the End of Civil Liberties in Canada

By Thomas Davies

After 37 months of imprisonment, on Friday July 29 John Nuttall and Amanda Korody walked free when their terrorism conviction was overturned. The British Columbia Supreme Court found them instead to be victims of police entrapment. The entire RCMP operation which framed them up, the verdict, and the police's action hours after shine a massive and damning light on Canada's "anti-terrorism" strategy and the now one year old so-called "Anti-Terrorism" law Bill C-51.

Who Are We at Risk From?

The couple were found guilty by a jury last year for planting inert pressure cooker bombs on the B.C. legislature grounds in 2013, under the direction of an undercover RCMP officer who acted as their leader and facilitator. Nuttall and Korody were both vulnerable recovering drug addicts living on social assistance when the RCMP moved in on them. The entire operation to entrap them involved over 240 officers who billed almost a million dollars in overtime alone during the 5 month operation.

BC Supreme Court Justice Catherine Bruce issued a scathing 97,000 word decision saying, "This was not a situation in which the police were attempting to disrupt an ongoing criminal enterprise; rather, the offences committed by the defendants were brought about by the police and would not have occurred without their involvement. By any measure, this was a clear case of police-manufactured crime."

Despite the obvious unnecessary suffering caused to two innocent people who spent 3 years in jail (and possible life imprisonment), it's important to ask a broader question:

If we are told we need our rights taken away by laws like Bill C-51 because Canada is under such threat by terrorists, why does the RCMP need to a million dollars of overtime and 240 officers to try and create their own?

Under Bill C-51, the Plot Sickens

After 3 years of suffering Nuttall and Korody went for their first lunch in freedom with his mother following the not guilty verdict. That's when 4 police cruisers roared in front of the restaurant and again took the pair away in handcuffs. "It was horrible, it was so scary - you

should have seen the looks on their faces," said Nuttall's mother. "The cops need to be charged with harassment and causing trauma."

The pair were threatened with further imprisonment if they did not sign a "peace bond" which restricts their freedom for the period of one year, and can be renewed. Under Bill C-51 authorities are able to detain people on the suspicion that they "may" commit a terrorist offence instead of the normal legal evidence-based standard of "will". So the police were able to use this new vague wording to target two people who had just been found not guilty hours earlier! Under Bill C-51 it is becoming standard practise to arrest people with minimal justification and threaten them with further imprisonment if they don't agree to police imposed conditions.

Nuttall and Korody signed the peace bond under obvious duress, while Federal prosecutor Raymond Leong refused to comment on the reasons why this was done.

These forced peace bond proceedings are some of the few times we are able to see parts of how Bill C-51, which was passed over one year ago, is being used by the police, secret police and government agencies. While they all admit to using it, under Bill C-51 they have very little

obligation to provide the public with information about how. This includes when they apply in secret to to pre-authorize the violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, break the law or when 17 government agencies share our personal and private information amongst themselves.

As the Canadian Bar Association, which represents over 37,000 lawyers, judges, notaries, law teachers, and law students from across Canada wrote, "Promising public safety as an exchange for sacrificing individual liberties and democratic safeguards is not, in our view, justifiable or realistic. Both are essential and complementary in a free and democratic society. Safety cannot be won at the expense of Canada's constitutional rights and freedoms."

Failed Promises Lead to Continuing Opposition

Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party campaigned on a promise that Bill C-51 would be "overhauled without delay", but 9 months after being elected all we have is weak promises of an undefined "public consultation" and an unpassed Bill to create a "national security oversight" committee. This committee would not have control over its membership, its chair, all of the information it is able to access, all of the information it is able to release or even when its findings would be released. The final say on all of it would remain with the Prime Minister's office which could censor at will based on undefined "national security" concerns.

While it seemed that many groups and analysts had taken a "wait and see" approach to what the Liberals would do about Bill C-51, after waiting for some time and seeing nothing, they have begun to speak out. The Canadian Journalists for Freedom of Expression and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association are continuing their constitutional charter challenge to Bill C-51, and editorials in major newspapers are once again criticizing Bill C-51 and Liberal stall tactics.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) Public Safety critic Randall Garrison has also recently announced that he will introduce a private members bill to Repeal Bill C-51. Unfortunately, Mr. Garrison is near the bottom of the list for consideration of his Bill in parliament so it will be a long time before it may be introduced. While the stated demand to repeal Bill C-51 by Mr. Garrison is correct and should be supported, unfortunately he went on to take the confusion position that he was "open" to Liberal amendments to Bill C-51, and said he just hopes the announcement of his Bill will, "get the Liberals moving on their promises." So is he for or against repealing Bill C-51?

More Smoke and Mirrors than Magic Wand

While it seems likely a public consultation on Bill C-51 will likely happen at some point, it's important that we don't treat it as some sort of magic wand that will make Bill C-51 disappear. The Liberals have known for a long time already that the majority of people in Canada are against Bill C-51. Public consultations on the environment, housing and many other issues happen all the time – and despite huge public outcry governments

into Bill C-51:

- Is the consultation independent?
- Is the government bound to implement its findings?
- Is there a timeline for government implementation of the findings?

If the answer to these three questions is "No", which it certainly will be, then we cannot treat the public consultation as a genuine or realistic path to repealing Bill C-51. What we can treat it as is another opportunity to publicize the campaign against Bill C-51 and mobilize the many diverse groups and individuals opposed to it to again make public statements and participate in public actions demanding a repeal of the unnecessary and dangerous law.

Towards a Full Repeal

The Liberals are not going to repeal Bill C-51 if they aren't forced. They voted for it and they've purposely kept it since they formed a majority government. This Bill is important for them to scare and intimidate working and oppressed people to organize protests and to form militant opposition. Movement against Bill C-51 was at its strongest when it was consistently mobilizing in coordinated actions across the country. This gave confidence to those who were opposed to the government's assault on our rights and helped inform those who were looking for answers.

The Working Group to Oppose Bill C-51 in Vancouver has maintained some of this dynamism going forward with weekly actions demanding a repeal of Bill C-51. Alternating between pickets and banner drops, after 74 straight weeks the Working Group continues to encounter consistent outrage and disappointment that Bill C-51 continues to be a law. Across Canada we need to learn from the lessons we have already taught ourselves and get back into the streets in the large numbers we are to demand a repeal of Bill C-51. Our lives and our rights are worth it!

Repeal Bill C-51!
 No to All Forms of Terrorism!
 No to Racism! No to Islamophobia!
 Our Security Lies in Defending the Rights of All!

@thomasdavies59



Monthly protests continue in Vancouver BC, to repeal Bill C-51.

still move forward with their original plans.

We need to ask of any public consultation



// CONDEMN ME, IT DOES NOT MATTER. HISTORY WILL ABSOLVE ME. //

VIVA FIDEL!

An unwavering revolutionary leader celebrates his 90th birthday!

By Tamara Hansen

Ten years ago in November 2006 in celebration of Fidel Castro's 80th birthday, Fire This Time Newspaper published an article "A Tribute to Fidel: A True Revolutionary Who Inspires Us to fight for a Better World" by Tamara Hansen. This month ahead of Fidel's 90th birthday on August 13, 2016, we have asked Tamara to revise and update that article to remind all of us of the power of Fidel's leadership, revolutionary spirit and humanity. To us in many ways, Fidel's leadership is what inspired the formation of Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice and its newspaper Fire This Time.

- Fire This Time Editorial Board

"Condemn me. It doesn't matter. History will absolve me."

It was with these words that Fidel Castro, a fiery 26-year-old lawyer, closed his own defense statement in a courtroom in Cuba in 1953.

On July 26, 1953, Fidel and about 150 other young revolutionaries had attacked the Moncada military barracks in an effort to begin an uprising against the dictator Batista. But many factors in this first attempt by Fidel at an insurrection were miscalculated, and many of the 150 fighters were murdered or tortured to death in Batista's prisons afterwards. After giving his now famous

courtroom speech against the brutal rule of Batista, Fidel along with other compañeros were found "guilty" and were each sentenced to between 5 and 15 years. However, because of growing protests and discontent in Cuba, the dictator Batista was pressured to release them only two years later, in 1955.

That same year, Fidel Castro and other revolutionaries came together to form the July 26th Movement. They went to Mexico to regroup and plot their victory against Batista. It was in Mexico that Fidel met Ernesto "Che" Guevara, a young doctor, who agreed to join their group of 81 young revolutionaries planning to return to Cuba aboard the Granma. In the final days of November 1956, 82 men and a heavy supply of weapons loaded on to the small Granma yacht, which was really only meant to hold about 25 people.

They had coordinated the Granma's arrival in Cuba with an uprising by the urban underground movement, led by Frank País, in Santiago de Cuba. However the Granma's trip from Mexico to the eastern part of Cuba was not smooth and they arrived two days late. One of the reasons for their delayed arrival in Cuba was that a member of their team fell overboard. Norberto Collado, the helmsman on the Granma, later told the story of Fidel's response, "the search began. Many believed that because of the state of the waves and the weight of his clothes, he had

drowned. The delay compromised the mission, but Fidel said, 'I won't abandon any of my comrades,' and after a great effort, we found him in the dark. Fidel's humanist position really impressed me. It's the same one he's maintained throughout the revolution." In addition to this near drowning, the Granma had a failed engine, and some miscalculations had been made in relation to the navigation time. This meant that they arrived in Cuba after the uprising in Santiago de Cuba had already been crushed by Batista's forces.

Soon after their arrival, the fighters disembarking from the Granma, which had landed in a swamp in las Coloradas, were ambushed by Batista's army. At the end of this fight, only 12 of those who arrived on the Granma re-grouped in the Sierra Maestra Mountains. Despite this seemingly impossible situation, with the outlook of a truly exceptional leader, Fidel told his small group, "We will win this war...we're just beginning to fight!" And fight they did. This young group of revolutionaries gained support from people throughout Cuba, fought against Batista's malicious forces and formed alliances with revolutionaries, workers and oppressed people across the country and around the world. On December 31, 1959, Batista fled Cuba, eventually for Miami, USA. It had been three years and one month since the Granma landed, and 5 years, 5 months and 5 days since the attack on the Moncada Garrison. Fidel

and the July 26th Movement had won their revolution in favor of the people of Cuba!

The Uphill Battle of the Revolution

The triumph of the Cuban revolution did not mean a full victory for the Cuban people, indeed since 1959 the revolution has been a continuous uphill battle, even with all of its gains and triumphs.

The dreams and plans of Fidel and those other revolutionaries ran very deep. They wanted to flip Cuba upside down. When they came to power in 1959, 90% of Cuban farmland was controlled by U.S. companies and institutions, with the wealth of the country being swept into the pockets of a small minority of Cubans and foreigners. The new revolutionary government planned for the wealth to be redistributed among the poor, with land given to the landless, and fundamental human rights for all, meaning universal education, housing, jobs and healthcare.

In his first speech upon his arrival in Havana on January 9, 1959, Fidel was very honest about these future battles to maintain the revolution. He explained, "The tyranny has been overthrown, but there is still much to be done. Let us not fool ourselves into believing that the future will be easy; perhaps everything will be more difficult in the future."

In 1961, the Bay of Pigs invasion was the largest attempt by the U.S. after the triumph of the revolution at a physical invasion of Cuba. The U.S. backed and trained 1,500 men, to invade Cuba and overthrow Fidel and the Cuban revolution. The idea was that Cubans on the island would join the U.S. trained forces because the U.S. believed Fidel was losing popularity. However, after less than 72 hours, the U.S.-backed invaders were forced to surrender to the revolutionary army of Cuba. José Manuel Gutiérrez, one of the soldiers for the counterrevolutionary forces said, "a jeep passed shooting and saying: 'Surrender, surrender'; a little later, a group of us came out and turned ourselves over. It was Fidel in that jeep, and I said to someone: 'That's why we lost, because Fidel is with them, fighting on the frontline.'" Fidel, the strategist and vanguard fighter, was still on the frontlines working together with the Cuban people to defend his country and people from the imperialist attack. Fidel once

again showed himself to be a visionary leader, who not only talks the talk, but also walks the walk.

Basically a year later, Cuba had continued concerns about the U.S. organizing another invasion against the island. This factor, along with the US officially imposing an economic blockade against Cuba, caused Cuba to look to the Soviet Union for help. During that moment in history now known as "the Cuban Missile Crisis", the Soviet Union moved nuclear weapons into Cuba without the U.S. knowing. This secrecy went against what Cuba had negotiated with the Soviet Union, and when a U.S. spy plane discovered the weapons, the U.S. came very close to retaliating directly against Cuba. During this crisis, Cuba was cut

of UN Resolution 435 and the independence of Namibia." However, Fidel also explained that, "on the other hand, the Soviets, worried about possible U.S. reaction, were putting s t r o n g

Moncada Army Barracks



Fidel Castro and other Moncada rebels released from prison after popular protest, May 1955.

out of the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the U.S. Government. Forty years later in an interview with Barbara Walters, Fidel Castro remarked, "Believe me. We were not interested in becoming part of the whole contention between the two countries. We would not have accepted the missiles if they had said that it was related to the balance of power." This trick by the Soviet Union was truly a lesson for Fidel and other leaders of the Cuban revolution, which would put them in a better position to understand how to work with the Soviet Union in the future.

Fidel's Historical Role in Africa

In 1975, Cuba sent 30,000 soldiers into Angola to help with their fight for independence against colonial powers. After a small victory against the South African apartheid army, Cuba wanted to push forward, and in the words of Fidel, "exact a heavy price from South Africa for its adventure, the application

pressure on us to make a rapid withdrawal. After raising strong objections, we were obliged to accede, at least partially, to the Soviet demands."

Again in 1987, the South African apartheid army hit back at Angola. This time Fidel took matters into his own hands. He explained how the South African army "advanced strongly towards Cuito Cuanavale, an old NATO airbase. Here it prepared to deliver

a mortal blow against Angola. Desperate calls were received from the Angolan government appealing to the Cuban troops for support in fending off presumed disaster; it was unquestionably the biggest threat from a military operation in which we, as on other occasions, had no responsibility whatever." Despite the fact that it was not Cuba's responsibility to defend Angola's sovereignty, Fidel sent 55,000 soldiers to Angola. Remaining in Cuba, Fidel spent days and nights strategizing the battle in Angola. Fidel's plans were victorious, and the victory against the apartheid army in Cuito Cuanavale weakened them severely. Fidel again set an example of courage and leadership that not only awed military strategists, but changed the course of history for South Africans.

What were the people of Africa's reaction to Cuba's involvement under Fidel's leadership? It was not only Angolans who did not felt the

victory in Cuito Cuanavale. The famous anti-colonial leader Amilcar Cabral from Guinea-Bissau also said, "Cuban fighters are ready to lay down their lives for the liberation of our countries, and in exchange for this aid to our freedom and the progress of our people, all they take from us are their comrades who fell fighting for freedom."

The late Nelson Mandela, has said many times, "the defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale has made it possible for me to be here today." On Fidel, Nelson Mandela said in 1995, "I went to Cuba in July 1991, and I drove through the

FIDEL IN THE SIERRA MAESTRA...



streets with Fidel Castro. There were a great deal of cheers. And I also waved back believing that these cheers were for me... But when I reached the square where I had to make some remarks to the crowd, then I realized that these cheers were not meant for me, they were meant for Fidel Castro... Then I realized that here was a man of the masses... Those are the impressions I have about Fidel Castro in Cuba."

As you can see, Fidel's leadership in this battle of ideas has not only been as a military strategist or fighter. Fidel is also a revolutionary internationalist, he believes in struggling for a better world for all human beings, not only those of a particular nationality. As Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "Workers of the world unite!" Many historians have argued that Che Guevara left Cuba for Africa and later to fight in Bolivia because he was somehow dissatisfied with the Cuban revolution or that Fidel was somehow dissatisfied with him. The reality is that both Fidel and Che were revolutionary internationalists who played different roles in the struggle. Che Guevara never would have made it into Bolivia without the support of the Cuban government and Fidel Castro.

The battles Cuba has fought since 1959, both in Cuba and internationally have not been easy. Some were physical battles, such as the battle against bandits in the Escambray Mountains or the Bay of Pigs invasion. However, most

were not battles of physical might, but battles of ideas. In December 1998 at the Union of Young Communists' 7th Congress, Fidel explained this battle, "the struggle we are speaking about will not, in essence, be a war, but rather a battle of ideas. The world's problems shall not be solved through the use of nuclear weapons --this is impossible-- nor through wars. What's more, they shall not be solved through isolated revolutions that, within the order installed by neo-liberal globalization, can be crushed within a matter of days, weeks at the most."

explains that Cuba's rectification period, "called for a reversal of the market-oriented pragmatism that characterized the 1971-85 years, a recentralization in decision making, and the reintroduction of mass-mobilizations and voluntary work as forms of labor organization." This is partly true.

In February 1990, Fidel Castro spoke at an extraordinary session of the National Assembly of the People's Power and explained further. "It was in the report to the third party congress (in February 1986) where the



Cuban revolutionaries Vilma Espin, Raul Castro and Celia Sanchez with Fidel.

The Difference of Two Methods: Soviet Union Down, Cuba Up

In the mid-1980s, the political and economic situation in Cuba began to show challenges ahead for the maintenance

of the revolution. The country was showing signs of stagnation and increased bureaucratic tendencies. It was at this time that Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union and brought forth the economic, social and political policy of Perestroika and Glasnost [Reconstruction and Openness], which was in place from 1985 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Interestingly, in 1988, the news agency Paris AFP asked Fidel Castro why Cuba was not following perestroika. Fidel responded, "problems must also be resolved with honor, morals, and principles." These honors, morals and principals were present in Cuba's economic plan, presented in 1989, as the rectification process.

In his book, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba*, Harvard professor Alejandro de la Fuente

process of rectification began. It began at a time when no party in the socialist arena talked about those things, nor did they talk about restructuring, or anything else. [...] Our rectification started before anyone else's, before any party's rectification. We have followed our path. We have not copied anyone's path. One of the things that rectification consisted of was to sweep away a set of concepts, ideas, or ways of constructing socialism that we had copied. We discovered many peculiarities in what we had. We said, this leads nowhere. We must improve this. So we worked hard. We have worked a lot. [...] Like I told the workers: Yes, we will have change, but it will be revolutionary change to get more revolution, to make the revolution more solid. Do not let anyone dream that we will head toward capitalism, or to anything that looks like private property for production."



whether or not they should be given the death penalty. However, after all of the members of the Council of State (including Fidel) explained their reasons for supporting the death penalty “most people in the country

Fidel on the front lines during the U.S. Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

This battle of ideas, to maintain and deepen socialism, is a debate and discussion in Cuba that continues today. Fidel has also taken a firm position, that while Cuba has to be flexible and reject rigidity, that flexibility will never mean abandoning Cuba’s socialist principals for equality and justice.

Cuban economist Carlos Tablada explained that even in the difficult times between 1985 and 1989, under the leadership of Fidel, the Cuban revolution continued to fight for a better life for people in Cuba. He cited these statistics: “The number of inhabitants per doctor fell from 1832 to 303 over the same period, reaching 274 in 1990 ... Infant mortality stood at 10.2 per thousand births in 1990, against 15 for the developed world, 52 for Latin America and 76 in the underdeveloped world.” Cuba prides itself in the fact that throughout difficult times they have always maintained the social safety net in place for the most vulnerable and continued pushing forward the gains of the revolution in healthcare and education. We know that outside of Cuba, when capitalist countries like the U.S. or Canada face economic challenges these programs are always the first on the chopping block.

Fidel: An Instrument of Revolutionary Change

A new and difficult challenge fell upon Fidel Castro in 1989. This was the case of his former comrade and friend Ochoa, or “Case No. 1 of 1989”. This was when four high-ranking officers in the Cuban military were caught involved in smuggling drugs through Cuba. One of these four was Arnaldo Ochoa, a highly decorated officer who had fought alongside Fidel in the Sierra Maestra. Cubans were outraged and felt a deep sense of betrayal, as these men’s actions left the Cuban government very vulnerable to be attacked by the U.S.

Karen Lee Wald, an American journalist, wrote “Most Cubans believed that all of the accused committed high treason... They tended not to ask whether Castro was guilty, too... but rather, ‘how could they do that to Fidel?!’” Wald continues, saying that Cubans generally flip-flopped during the trial as to



were convinced of the necessity of this action.”

This case was especially offensive to Fidel because Ochoa had been in charge of troops in Angola and they had pulled him out before the battle at Cuito Cuanavale, but had they not, who knows what might have happened. Years later, looking back at this case in 1999,



Fidel stated, “they had taken part in the organization of drug trafficking through our country, an extremely serious offense that jeopardized the prestige and security of the nation. [...] We had found their justification incredible, since they said that they had concocted the plan to help the country... even if drug smugglers

had delivered a billion or five billion dollars, if they had paid Cuba’s foreign debt, the revolution would never accept the passage of even a kilogram of drugs, because our country is worth much more. What it has achieved in health, education and many other fields as a matter of sheer justice with the sacrifice of many lives is worth much more than that amount; the life of just one person is worth much more, and we had had to sacrifice many lives.”

Cuba, Fidel & the Special Period

The dissolution of the Soviet Bloc in the early 1990s meant that Cuba lost its main trading partner, and over 80% of its foreign trade virtually overnight. This loss for Cuba, gave the U.S. government the idea to tighten its imperialist grip around Cuba’s neck. Basically since 1959, but officially from 1962, the U.S. government imposed an economic blockade against Cuba. This limited Cuba’s access to medicine, food, construction materials, etc. The U.S. also stopped importing Cuban sugar, which meant that Cuba had been forced to rely very heavily on the Soviet Bloc for trade. The U.S. government knew this, and after the collapse of Soviet Union, they passed the Torricelli Act in 1992 and the Helms-Burton Bill in 1996 in order to further strangle Cuba’s economy. These two events launched Cuba into what they called the “special period”.

After the triumph revolution, political and social education were popularized in Cuba, so the U.S. did not have an easy task ahead. The Cuban people generally understood how their families as well as their communities, society and nation had gained from the revolution,. Despite the U.S. government’s hopes, the vast majority of Cubans stood beside the



revolution during the special period, despite

delays and overcrowding of public transportation, power blackouts, food shortages, and long line-ups at stores.

Fidel, always the optimist, reminded people in 1996, "After five years of blockade combined with the special period, the people's spirit is stronger, because humankind is brave and gains strength under adversity, under struggles, under difficulties. Human is no meringue topping that fades under a whiff. Humans are children of their own history, and very few countries have a history as beautiful as ours." It is with the belief that the revolution could overcome all obstacles

that the people of Cuba continued despite huge difficulty to defend the revolution and their Comandante en Jefe, Fidel Castro.

In order to pull Cuba out of the immense poverty and hardship of the special period, Cuba opened its doors to tourism. This was basically what some call a "necessary evil", meaning that although it went against the overall goals of creating equality among all Cubans, it was the only solution for the revolutionary government of Cuba if it wanted to maintain the universal health and education system that the revolution had developed. This was a difficult choice for Fidel and the Cuban leadership, but they were willing to make it.

Similar to the rectification process of the 1980s, in the early 2000s Fidel launched another fight against the corruption of the 'new rich' that resulted from tourism. In a speech on November 17, 2005, Fidel declared, "We have a people who have learned to handle weapons. We have an entire nation which, in spite of our errors, holds such a high degree



Tens of thousands of young people sign up to volunteer for the Cuban Literacy Program in 1960 & 1961.

of culture, education, and conscience that it will never allow this country to become their colony again. This country can self-destruct, this revolution can destroy itself, but they can never destroy us. We can destroy ourselves, and it would be our fault." These statements by Fidel opened the idea that another rectification process could be necessary in the near future as the Cuban economy recovers from the special period.

The Gains of the Cuban Revolution

The challenges for Cuba and Fidel's revolutionary leadership to maintain its road forward have been and continue to be numerous. Despite these ongoing challenges, Cuba has not stopped making large strides forward for its people. In 2006, Javier Rodriguez, a writer for Granma International wrote, "Irrespective of the fierce US economic and commercial blockade, Cuba was able to develop education, health and other fields... Cuban experts and technicians joined with nations of the region to jointly work on projects targeting the quality of life of the most

world have praised Cuba, as the country's revolutionary internationalism lead it to sending doctors to West Africa in the fight against Ebola. Headlines reading, "Cuban doctors take leading role in fighting Ebola" (UK Telegraph), "Why Cuba Is So Good at Fighting Ebola" (Time Magazine), and "W.H.O. to Announce End of Ebola in Liberia, Thanks to Cuba" (Telesur) have promoted Cuba's leading role in combating a global crisis.

In October 2014, Fidel Castro expressed in his reflection "Heroes of our time": "May the example of the Cubans heading to Africa also capture the hearts and minds of other doctors around the world, especially those who possess resources, practice a religion or have the deepest conviction to fulfill the duty of human solidarity[...] The personnel heading to Africa are also protecting those who remain here, because the worst that can happen is that this epidemic or other more serious illnesses reach our continent, or the heart of any community in any county in the world, where a child, mother or human being could die. There are enough doctors on the planet to ensure that no one has to die due to lack of medical attention. This is what I wish to express." What we can see from this is that through many of the unforeseeable ups and downs of the revolution, Fidel Castro's consistent revolutionary method in approaching Cuba's challenges has led Cuba to succeed. These battles have been fought and overcome through the pressure and devotion of the Cuban people to their revolution and its gains, but also through the clear foresight of Cuba's revolutionary government led by Fidel Castro.

Fidel Today!

In a short interview with Armando Hart about his lifelong friendship with Fidel, he explained the basic concept that while imperialists attempt to "divide and win" in Latin America, Fidel and Cuba want to "unite and win". Someone who I think would



Fidel addresses hundreds of Cuban doctors ready to volunteer in the U.S. to treat victims of hurricane Katrina. George W. Bush shamefully refused their offer of assistance.

underprivileged of Latin America. Strategies to eliminate illiteracy through Cuba's "Yo Sí Puedo (I Can Do It) system were successful in Venezuela and are being implemented in Bolivia and other countries. Medical assistance to the poorest populations in Latin America is complemented with the training of thousands of doctors."

Most recently, in the last 3 years, headlines around the



The Cuban people celebrating Fidel's 80th Birthday in 2006.



agree with this is Wayne Smith, former head of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana under U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Smith said, "Castro is celebrated as a hero throughout Latin America. It isn't because they all want to be socialist now. No, it's because he's the only one who stood up to us and succeeded." Indeed! Fidel has now watched and outlasted 10 different U.S. presidents (11 when Obama leaves office in January 2017). Along with this, the U.S. government and the CIA have attempted to take Fidel's life over 600 times since 1959.

In August 2006, only a few days before his 80th birthday, Fidel announced that he had had emergency surgery and that Minister of Defence, Raul Castro, would take over his responsibilities in government. This meant that his birthday celebrations were postponed until December 2, 2006 which also marked 50th anniversary of the historic landing of the Granma. Despite his illness, Fidel declared, "In terms of my spirits I am perfectly well. What is important is that everything in the country is running and will continue to run perfectly well... We must fight and work."

Over the past 10 years, since stepping aside from his role as president of Cuba, Fidel has continued his own work in other leadership roles. He continues to meet with foreign leaders and dignitaries, to write educational articles and occasionally give speeches at national and international functions.

In his most recent public speech on April 19, 2016 at the closing of the 7th congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, Fidel Castro addressed many of the concerns of the Cuban people and international community now that the revolution will be handed over to a new generation who were not yet alive during the

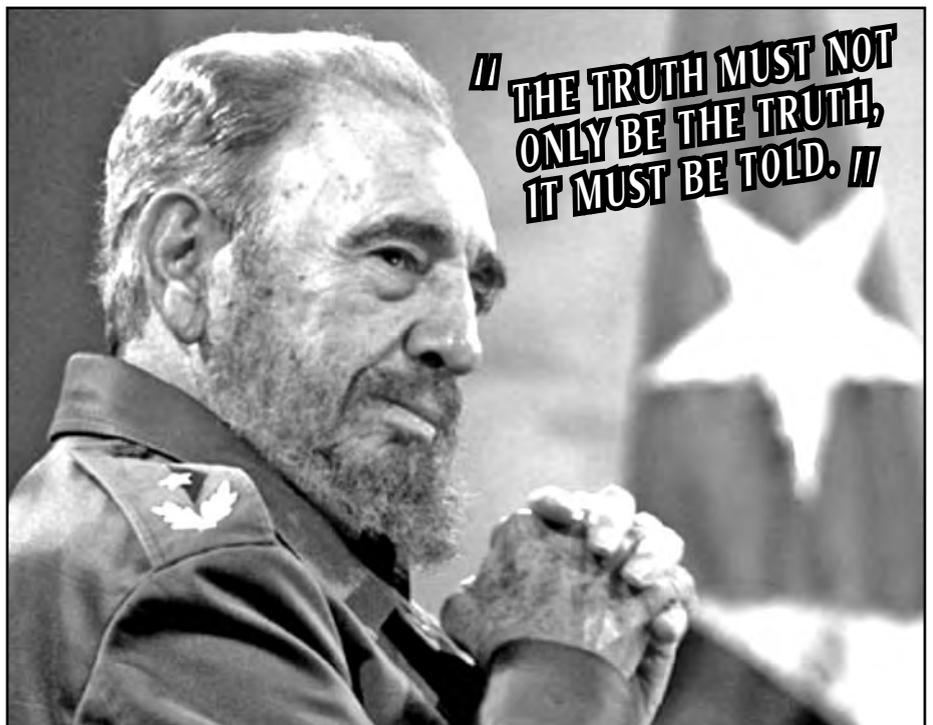
battles in the Sierra Maestra. Fidel said, "I shall soon turn 90, such an idea would never have occurred to me and it was never the result of an effort, it was sheer chance. I will soon be like everyone else. We all reach our turn, but the ideas of the Cuban communists will remain as proof that on this planet, working with fervor and dignity, can produce the material and cultural wealth that humans need, and we must fight relentlessly to obtain these. To our brothers in Latin America and the world we must convey that the Cuban people will overcome." Fidel not only reached out to the Cuban people to encourage them to continue building on the gains of the Cuban socialist revolution. True to his revolutionary socialist internationalist perspective he also spoke out against climate change, imperialism, war, hunger and poverty. To enjoy Fidel's full speech in English and Spanish, please read *Fire This Time* Volume 10 Issue 5.

While many debate and dispute the role

its leadership, their confidence in the fact that Fidel has always been able to criticize himself and the mistakes of the revolution and to push forward always looking for positive and principled solutions. It is because of this aspect of his character that he has maintained his leadership role in Cuba since July 26, 1953 when he led the group of young revolutionaries to attack the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba. While the attack on the Moncada was a huge defeat, those who study history and are fair about the real challenges Cuba has faced, know that Fidel was correct when he pronounced that it did not matter if that courtroom found him guilty of crimes against Batista. As Fidel said, "Condemn me. It doesn't matter. History will absolve me."

¡VIVA FIDEL! ¡Viva La revolución Cubana!
LONG LIVE FIDEL! Long live the Cuban revolution!

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01



By Janine Solanki

“Leading efforts in Latvia was exactly something we saw as an opportunity for Canada to contribute security and stability, defence and deterrence at a time where that’s very much necessary.”

With these words Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada, is promoting Canada’s leading role in the new NATO military buildup close to Russia’s borders in the Baltics. But this new military move has many scratching their heads. Is Russia really such a threat, and how so? We’re not in the Cold War anymore, so what’s the big deal with Russia and NATO?

NATO ON THE RISE

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is not just a Cold War relic as many believe. The organization, formed in 1949 following the end of World War II, once devised all sorts of plans against a Cold War attack that never came. However in it’s recent years, following the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO has become an actual military force and has been behind many bloody imperialist atrocities committed under the auspices of the “international community”. NATO has expanded its membership, with most of it’s 28 members joining following the end of the Cold War, and NATO actively working on expanding its membership further.

NATO’s debut as a military force started in the 1990’s, when NATO intervened in Yugoslavia with numerous military missions which served to help break up former Yugoslavia. NATO’s military missions culminating in a 78-day bombing campaign in 1999. The brutal and indiscriminate bombing by NATO members was condemned by peace-loving people and organizations around the world. Yugoslavia was bombarded by 14,000 bombs, including depleted uranium bombs and cluster munitions which have had long-lasting destructive impacts. This

so-called “humanitarian intervention” resulted in over 2,000 civilians killed, thousands more injured, and over 200,000 people displaced and forced to leave their homes. The airstrikes destroyed more than 300 schools and libraries, over 20 hospitals and at least 40,000 homes were either completely eliminated or damaged. In a June 2000 Amnesty International report, the human rights organization accused NATO of war crimes when it reported that “NATO forces did commit serious violations of the laws of war leading in a number of cases to the unlawful killings of civilians”. As part of NATO, Canada had a role in this deplorable attack on the people of Yugoslavia. The Canadian Air Force deployed 18 CF-18 fighter jets, and was responsible for 10% of all bombs dropped on Yugoslavia.



NATO has more frequently become a tool of imperialist intervention since the start of the new

also held command of ISAF from February 9 to August 12, 2004 under Lieutenant-General Rick Hillier, as well as Canada has commanded regional operations for NATO’s ISAF force. Since 2015, NATO reworked their mission to a vaguely defined “train, advise and assist” mission of 13,200 troops, which is continuously being extended and continues today.

Canada out of NATO Now! NATO, Canada & the New Era of War & Occupation

era of war and occupation, which began with the war and occupation of Afghanistan following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The new era of war and occupation, in which we have seen a heightened and strategic war drive carried out by the United States and their allies, has been possible with NATO enabling a division of labour amongst imperialist countries. That division of labour being, the task of no-fly zones, occupation forces, and bombing campaigns.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, NATO did a lot of the heavy lifting, enabling the United States to focus on their war and occupation of Iraq. NATO’s International Security Assistance

Force (ISAF) made up the bulk of the occupation forces in Afghanistan, from August 2003 to December 2014. ISAF was NATO’s longest mission which at its height commanded more than 130,000 troops from 51 NATO and partner countries. This included a large number of Canadian troops, who at times had the third highest number of troops deployed, after the US and Britain. Canada

Iraq

NATO also holds a role in the war on Iraq. NATO forces held a training mission in Iraq from 2004 to 2011, and have recently started another training mission of Iraqi officers in Jordan. At the recent NATO summit in Warsaw, Poland, Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau announced that Canada will also be a part of this new training mission. While a “training mission” may seem tame enough, take this into consideration. Canada’s current “train, advise and assist” mission includes about 200 special forces soldiers. They are made up of the Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) counter-terrorism unit as well as the Canadian Special Operations Regiment. In 2010 the Globe and Mail described the Joint Task Force 2 as “a shadowy counter-terrorism force about which little concrete can be said” and “Canada’s most elite troops – the faceless soldiers who go to places they won’t name, to complete missions they won’t



talk about.” While training missions are sold to the public as “non-combat” this was proven otherwise on March 6th 2015 when Sgt. Andrew Joseph Doiron from the Canadian Special Operations Regiment was killed in a friendly fire incident near the front lines while on the training mission in northern Iraq. On March 8th, 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s new “non-combat” military strategy authorized Canadian soldiers to shoot first in Iraq as soon as they detect “hostile intent” from Daesh fighters. With about 20% of Canadian Special Forces training time taking place close to or directly at front lines, and authorization to shoot first, how “non-combat” are these training missions?

Libya

Another country destroyed at the hands of NATO forces is Libya. The no-fly zone imposed by NATO from March 19 to October 31, 2011 launched nearly 10,000 sorties against Libya. Canada was a major player in the bombing campaign, and deployed six CF-18 fighter jets and also provided three planes for air-to-air refuelling and two reconnaissance aircrafts. Libya, which before this imperialist intervention had the highest standard of living in Africa, now five years later is in a chaos with no viable government, an economy in shambles and has become a new haven for terrorist organizations such as Daesh (also known as ISIS). NATO is now taking another strike not just against Libya, but against the huge number of refugees, many victims of war and occupation, traveling through Libya in an attempt to reach safer shores in Europe. At the recent NATO summit the decision was made to deploy NATO warships and potentially drones in the Mediterranean sea to stem the flow of refugees leaving the Libyan coast. Human Rights Watch spoke out against this decision, stating that “NATO’s involvement in migration control signals a dangerous shift toward militarisation of a humanitarian crisis.”

NATO SUMMIT 2016 - TARGET ON RUSSIA

The July 8-9, 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw, Poland brought imperialist countries together to set their targets on a bigger fish – Russia. An irrational fear-mongering and demonization campaign has painted Russia as an aggressor. As you have just read above though, it is NATO who has dropped their bombs and planted their troops in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. It is the US government who backed a right-wing coup in Ukraine. Now it is NATO who is building up military forces on the border with Russia. So who is the aggressor?

The NATO summit announced that NATO will rotate four combat battalions of up to 1000 troops each, from Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, in

Poland and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Also decided at the summit is that NATO will take command of and develop a US-built European “missile shield defense system” which also has Russia in its targets. As Justin Trudeau stated at the beginning of this article, Canada is taking a leading role by commanding the battalion in Latvia, sending at least 450 troops to this battalion (bringing Canada’s troops in Eastern Europe to 800) as well as supplying armored vehicles, up to six CF-18 fighter jets, and continuing to send naval frigates to the region, which Canada has had stationed for the past two years. This new military buildup has no end-date and as Canada’s Chief of the Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance has stated, “this is an open-ended commitment.”

The NATO summit was preceded by another provocative move by NATO forces. NATO members conducted “Anaconda 2016”, the largest war games in Eastern Europe since the end of the Cold War. The 10-day military exercise involved 31,000 troops and thousands



of vehicles from 24 countries, including Canada.

Looking at the recent history of NATO and its increasing actions against Russia, we must be able to define what the objectives of this military body are. NATO is a tool of imperialist forces, specifically US allied imperialist forces. In order to maintain and expand US hegemony in today’s world, militarily, politically and economically, the US and their allies must expand their markets, resources and influence, as we have seen them do in this new era of war and occupation, with the help of NATO. They must eliminate sovereign and independent states, as they have done in Libya through NATO, are attempting to do in Syria and are poised to do in Iran. They must also keep at bay other rising and competing economic and political powers such as Russia and China, and prevent them from growing their economies on a global scale. US sanctions against Russia has been one method. Saber-rattling and building up a military force on Russia’s borders is a new and dangerous step that NATO is leading.

NO TO NATO! CANADA OUT OF NATO!

NATO’s actions have not been without opposition, both throughout NATO’s history to today. The NATO summit in July 2016 was met with an international call for demonstrations and actions against NATO. Activists from around the world came together for conferences and a demonstration directly in the face of the NATO summit in Warsaw, Poland. Cities around the world mobilized in coordination with the actions in Warsaw, including in Vancouver, Canada where Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held a rally and petition campaign.

Peace and justice loving people must take Canada’s participation in NATO seriously. We need to stop looking at NATO as a Cold War relic or a body of international cooperation. NATO is the increasingly utilized military force used to launch imperialist interventions, occupations, airstrikes and even to militarize the largest refugee crisis humanity has ever seen.

NATO members are pressured to commit at least 2% of their GDP to military spending, which is now used to build up a military force against the false threat of Russia. Peace-loving people in Canada can think of vastly more important places that money can go to here in Canada, like education, healthcare, housing, jobs and infrastructure just to name the most obvious. Even Canada could be helping to bring in more refugees, fleeing countries that NATO, along with Canada, has made uninhabitable through their wars and occupations!

The Vancouver action was just the beginning of a new campaign initiated by Mobilization Against War and Occupation demanding “No to NATO! Canada Out of NATO!” The campaign includes a petition to the government of Canada demanding that Canada end its alliance with NATO and withdraw Canadian troops and military equipment from Europe and from all NATO missions. This campaign will be moving forward with more literature, materials and educational and protest events and actions, which will be listed on www.mawovancouver.org.

While imperialist countries are joining together to launch wars and occupations on oppressed nations and flex their military muscles, it’s up to peace and justice loving people world wide to also come together, in the pursuit of peace. Together let’s demand:

No to NATO!
Canada Out of NATO!

Dismantle NATO!

World-wide Solidarity is Growing!

By Phil Wilayto

Poland's beautiful capital city of Warsaw was locked down tight for the latest Summit meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as leaders of NATO's 28 member countries gathered July 8 and 9 to make decisions that seriously increase the risk of war with Russia.

Despite the lovely weather, few locals were on the streets, long stretches of which were cordoned off. Uniformed police officers in bright neon-green vests seemed to be everywhere, many with weapons drawn. Helicopters whirred overhead, military vehicles rumbled over cobblestone streets and police sirens sounded as motorcades carried dignitaries to and from the National Stadium by the winding Vistula River where the NATO Summit was held.

Meanwhile, not far away, participants in two anti-NATO conferences joined forces July 9 for a militant march toward the Summit to demand an end to wars, NATO and the U.S.-mandated military spending that is sucking the life out of poor and working-class communities across Europe.

The Summit took place just days after the release of the British Chilcot Report. Seven years in the making, that government report concluded that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair had firmly committed to supporting the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq before such a move had ever been discussed in Parliament and then lied to Parliament and the British people about the justifications for the invasion. Families of the 179 British service members who died in that invasion are now calling for Blair to be criminally prosecuted. If the revelations of the report were discussed at the NATO Summit, it wasn't reported by the media. What is known is that the Summit leaders went on to lay the basis for new wars based on equally false premises.

Background to NATO

Founded in 1949 to counter post-World War II Soviet influence in Europe, NATO's initial members included 10 Western and Northern European countries, plus the United States and Canada. In response - six years later, the Soviet Union and its European allies formed



NATO protest in Warsaw, Poland during NATO Summit, 2016.

the eight-member Warsaw Pact. With the 1991 collapse of the U.S.S.R., the pro-Soviet alliance disbanded. NATO, on the other hand, has grown to include 28 countries,

many of them former European Soviet allies. The result has been a steady NATO expansion to the east - toward Russia.

The main purpose of the 2016 NATO Summit was to greatly accelerate this expansion, with the stationing of more NATO troops in Eastern European countries, larger NATO military exercises in the region and greater combined military spending. At the Summit it also was announced that the Balkans state of Montenegro, formerly part of socialist Yugoslavia, would be joining the military alliance as its 29th member.

NATO ratchets up tensions with Russia

"We're moving forward with the most significant reinforcement of our common defense at any time since the Cold War," U.S. President Barack Obama told reporters.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg was equally enthusiastic: "We have launched a wholesale reinforcement of our collective defense and deterrence."

Those were not idle boasts. Beginning next year, NATO will rotate four combat battalions, from Canada, Germany, the United

Eastern Europe, also on a rotational basis.

Bringing home the very real danger this military buildup represents is the fact that NATO views an attack on any member state as an attack on all members. As Stoltenberg put it, "... an attack against one ally will be met by forces from across the alliance."

It was a similar pledge to respond militarily to any attack on an ally that locked opposing forces into launching World War I.

The seriousness of the NATO build-up was underlined for 10 days in June by a massive military exercise on Polish soil. Ominously dubbed Anaconda-16, the exercise involved more than 20 NATO and partner countries, 30,000 troops and numerous vehicles, aircraft and ships. That mobilization follows last year's 300 exercises involving NATO members and allies.

Also on the Summit agenda was a recommitment to build a European "missile shield defense system." Originally promoted as a counter to a claimed Iranian missile threat, that excuse evaporated with the P5+1 nuclear treaty with Iran, leaving the system's real purpose exposed: developing a first-strike capability against Russia.

Who is the real aggressor?

All this, of course, is explained as defensive moves meant to counter a perceived threat by Russia, a country with a population less than half that of the United States and a military budget less than a tenth of the combined NATO block.

The main U.S./NATO charges against Russia is that it has annexed Crimea, formerly part of Ukraine; is allegedly supporting a separatist movement in Ukraine's Donbass region; and has been conducting aggressive military exercises on its Western border.

What is seldom mentioned is that (1) Crimea





Yugoslavia cities after NATO bombing in 1999

was part of Russia for hundreds of years until 1954, when it was administratively transferred from Soviet Russia to Soviet Ukraine; (2) the annexation of Crimea and the fighting in Donbass both took place after the U.S. engineered a violent coup in Ukraine that installed a right-wing, anti-Russian government that is collaborating with a rising fascist movement; (3) following that coup, Crimea held a referendum and overwhelmingly voted to reunite with Russia; (4) although it is unclear whether the fighting in Donbass is about separation or just more local autonomy, people there are justifiably nervous about being ruled by a reactionary central government hostile to ethnic Russians, who make up a large part of the population; and (5) the Russian military exercises are taking place on Russian soil, while U.S. and NATO troops are now conducting exercises increasingly close to Russia.

U.S. to NATO countries: ‘Money for war, not for people!’

In addition to the military build-up agreed on at the NATO Summit, there’s the U.S. demand that all NATO members spend at least 2 percent of their Gross National Product on their militaries, first raised at the last NATO Summit, held in 2014 in Wales. That’s not 2 percent of the member countries’ national budgets, but of their entire national production of goods and services. Currently, only five of NATO’s 28 member countries - the United States, United Kingdom, Estonia, Greece and Poland - meet that goal. That relatively poor Poland is one of the few countries now meeting this goal may be a reflection of the far-right-wing government’s deep desire to

have NATO troops stationed there.

At this year’s Summit, Obama noted some “progress” had been made on this front. “Over the past two years, most NATO members have halted cuts and begun investing more in defense,” he said. “And this means defense spending across the alliance is now scheduled to increase.”

Coming at a time of deepening economic crisis, especially in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, this is a direct and inhumane attack on the already rapidly declining living standards of the continent’s working class.

NATO & Ukraine

Also prominent on the Summit agenda was Ukraine, with President Barack Obama meeting with that country’s president, Petro Porochenko. Ukraine, which holds “partner” status with NATO, has a 1,282-mile-long land and sea border with Russia and so holds special strategic importance for any conflict between Russia and the U.S./NATO alliance.

(Two days before the NATO Summit, this writer sent a letter to President Obama, suggesting he ask President Poroshenko to finally agree to cooperate with an international investigation into the May 2, 2014, fascist-led massacre of scores of progressives in Odessa, Ukraine; to release the political prisoners still being held, some without charges, more than two years after that massacre; to end federal harassment of the Council of Mothers of May 2 in Odessa, which is seeking an international investigation; and to stop defending and cooperating with the many fascist organizations that are constantly expanding their activities throughout the country. The letter also asked President Obama to oppose the expansion of NATO toward Russia, while noting that that expansion was the actual

purpose of the U.S.-led Summit.)

Opposition to NATO raised in Warsaw itself

Across town from the NATO Summit, the military threats and more were discussed and analysed during the weekend’s two anti-NATO conferences.

The larger of the two was initiated by the No to War, No to NATO coalition, of which the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) is an affiliate. According to the organizers, about 150 people from 14 countries attended the event held July 8 and 10 in downtown Warsaw. Among the countries represented were Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, Spain and the United States, as well as a strong turnout from Poland.

Organizations co-sponsoring the conference were the Alliance in Homage of the Victims of Militarism, Effata Association Poland, Social Justice Movement Poland, Stop the War Initiative Poland, Warsaw Anarchist Federation and Workers Democracy Poland, with support from the Party of the European Left.

The conference opened with a video address by U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee, an African-American and only member of Congress to vote against the authorization of the war against Afghanistan. Her remarks focused on the urgent need to prevent nuclear war and to move for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Wolfgang Gehrcke of Die LINKE (The LEFT) reported on a recent heated debate

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THE NEW NEO-LIBERAL "PLAN CONDOR"

By Manuel Yepe*

Just as in the 1970s and 1980s there was a Plan Condor—which was an operation of criminal coordination and mutual support among dictatorships of the Southern Cone of the American continent, under CIA supervision. Its methods were to murder, spy, monitor, kidnap, torture and illegally exchange persons between countries, regardless of borders, sovereignties or national rights. Today Latin America suffers under a new “Plan Condor” aiming to reinstate neo-liberalism.

That Plan Condor was one of several operations conducted within the scheme of planting military dictatorships in the Southern Cone of the Americas—applying the theory National Security doctrine—and leaving the peoples trapped under state terrorist governments. This was allegedly done to combat the danger of communism.

Participants in that operation or Plan Condor as it was then known, with varying degrees of involvement, were the dictatorial regimes Washington had imposed or embraced in Latin America. The countries involved were Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador with—of course—the United States as gang leader.

“Today, Latin America is living through an non-conventional coup plan against its progressive governments. It’s a new Plan Condor aiming to reinstate neo-liberalism, not by military dictatorships, but through the combined power of the mass media, national entrepreneurs, right-wing political parties and governments of the great powers,” the multinational Latin American TV station TeleSur denounced.

Interviewed by TeleSur, analyst and journalist Miguel Jaimes identified the new operation as low-profile, as compared to Western-sponsored coups in the Middle East—which are characterized by implanting conflicts using the weapons of war. What is being promoted in Latin America are political trials such as the one launched against the president of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, and

the one that is being manufactured against the former president of Argentina, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, and the lingering image of her leadership.

For his part, researcher Adalberto Santana said that what the US seeks, with its current version of Plan Condor, is to dismantle the popular governments and maintain or regain control over the political processes and thereby control the oil, environmental and economic resources it covets in the region.

The aim is to create despair among the population, put an end to the social programs of the popular governments and to destroy the image of revolutionary leaderships in

Funding by Washington—and one or another occasional ally—of opposition parties and NGOs is also important in this non-conventional warfare. By using resources to promote subversion, with specially-designed methods, they have achieved the inclusion of a layer of middle class youth as the spearhead of right-wing protests.

US government organizations such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)—identified as the promoters of the 2002 coup in Venezuela—have been responsible for organizing street violence using young people whom they pay.

Then the media makes sure that acts of street violence are turned into “symptoms of social discontent”, “sign of economic chaos” or “evidence of police repression”.

Certainly, if there is one actor which stands out in this new neo-liberal Plan Condor for Latin America, it is the powerful mass media. Constant information campaigns criminalizing leftist governments and a torrent of high-impact news are intended to influence certain sectors of the population to cause fear, exhaustion, and, finally, to manipulate their political positions.

The mass media today, in the current neo-liberal Plan Condor designed in Washington, play the role that the reactionary military in Latin America played in the 1970s and 80s of the twentieth century.

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A CubaNews translation.
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Protest condemning the murder of Honduran indigenous leader Berta Caceres

the region, employing the media to generate rejection among the citizens.

The basic strategy in this new version of Plan Condor does not exclude armed violence or attacks on leaders to eliminate popular leaderships in social movements and leftist parties. It also aims at sowing demoralization and fear at grass-root levels (such as the murder of indigenous leader Berta Caceres in Honduras and national assembly deputy Robert Serra in Venezuela, for example). The distinctive features of this model are the direct attack on the economy and the productive structures of the targeted countries.

An essential objective of these actions—beyond their terrorist expressions—is to affect the financial sources of social programs that are the basis of the popular support for progressive governments. Consequently, it emphasizes, for example, creating shortages of basic consumer products.

EL NUEVO PLAN CÓNDOR NEOLIBERAL

* EN ESPAÑOL *

Por Manuel Yepe

Así como en las décadas de 1970 y 1980 tuvo lugar un Plan Cóndor -que era una operación de coordinación criminal y apoyo mutuo entre las dictaduras del Cono Sur del continente americano bajo supervisión de la CIA para asesinar, espiar, vigilar, secuestrar, torturar e intercambiar personas ilegalmente entre países, sin tener en cuenta fronteras, soberanías ni derechos nacionales- hoy América Latina sufre un nuevo “Plan Cóndor” para reimplantar el neoliberalismo.

Aquel Plan Cóndor fue una de las diversas operaciones que se realizaron en el marco de la siembra de dictaduras militares en el Cono Sur americano para aplicar la teoría de la Seguridad Nacional de Estados Unidos y dejar a los pueblos atrapados bajo gobiernos terroristas de Estado, presuntamente para combatir el peligro del comunismo.

Participaron en aquella Operación o Plan Cóndor, con mayor o menor grado de involucramiento, los regímenes dictatoriales del Cono Sur de América que Washington había impuesto o aprobado en Chile, Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Perú, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador y, por supuesto, con Estados Unidos como jefe de la banda.

“Hoy América Latina vive un plan golpista no convencional contra los gobiernos progresistas. Un nuevo Plan Cóndor para reimplantar el

neoliberalismo: ya no mediante dictaduras militares, sino a través del poder combinado de los grandes medios, los empresariados nacionales, los partidos de derecha y los gobiernos de las grandes potencias”, según lo ha denunciado la emisora multinacional latinoamericana TeleSur.

Entrevistado por TeleSur, el analista y periodista Miguel Jaimes identificó la nueva operación como de bajo perfil, si se le compara con los golpes de estado promovidos por Occidente en el Medio Oriente -caracterizados por la implantación de conflictos con empleo de armamento bélico propio de las guerras. En América Latina lo que se han estado promoviendo son juicios políticos como el aprobado contra la mandataria de Brasil, Dilma Rousseff, y como el que se intenta imponer a la ex presidenta de Argentina, Cristina Fernández contra el fantasma de su liderazgo.



Protestar condenar el asesinato del líder indígena hondureña Berta Cáceres

Por su parte, el investigador Adalberto Santana dijo que lo que pretende Estados Unidos con su actual versión de Plan Cóndor es desmontar los gobiernos populares, para mantener o recuperar su dominio sobre los procesos políticos para custodiar los recursos petroleros, ambientales y económicos que ambiciona de la región.

Buscan crear desesperanza en la población, frenar los programas sociales de los gobiernos populares y acabar con la imagen de los liderazgos revolucionarios en la región, empleando a los medios de comunicación para generar el rechazo ciudadano.

Aunque la estrategia básica en esta nueva versión de Plan Cóndor no excluye la violencia armada ni los atentados contra dirigentes populares para eliminar liderazgos en los movimientos sociales y partidos de izquierda, y sembrar desmoralización y miedo en las bases (recordar los asesinatos de la líder indígena Berta Cáceres en Honduras y del diputado Robert Serra en Venezuela), las características distintivas de este modelo golpista son el ataque directo a la economía y a los aparatos productivos de los países seleccionados.

Objetivo esencial de estas acciones -más allá de su expresión terrorista- es afectar las fuentes de financiamiento de los programas sociales que son la base del apoyo popular a los gobiernos progresistas. De ahí que pongan énfasis, por ejemplo, en el desabastecimiento de productos básicos de consumo.

El financiamiento por Washington -y algún que otro aliado suyo- de partidos y ONGs opositoras también es importante

en esta guerra no convencional. Mediante el empleo de recursos para promover la subversión con métodos especialmente diseñados han logrado la inclusión de una parte de la juventud de clase media como punta de lanza de las protestas derechistas. Organizaciones no oficiales estadounidenses como la USAID y la NED, señaladas de ser promotoras del golpe de Estado de 2002 en Caracas, han sido las encargadas de organizar la violencia en las calles con el empleo de jóvenes a los que utilizan y pagan.

Los medios, después, se encargan de convertir los actos de violencia de calle en “síntomas del descontento social”, “señal del caos económico” o “prueba de la represión policial”.

Ciertamente, si algún actor sobresale en este nuevo Plan Cóndor neoliberal para América Latina, es el poder mediático. Constantes campañas informativas que criminalizan a los gobiernos de izquierda y un torrente de noticias de alto impacto tienen el propósito de influir en determinados sectores de la población para provocar temor, hastío y, finalmente, su posicionamiento político.

Los medios, hoy, en el actual Plan Cóndor neoliberal diseñado en Washington, juegan el papel de los militares golpistas de Latinoamérica en los años 70 y 80 del siglo XX.

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REVOLUTION & COUNTER REVOLUTION IN VENEZUELA ★★★★★★★★

By Alison Bodine

For 17 years Western mainstream capitalist media has carried out a campaign of lies and deceptions against the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela. This constant campaign of manipulation began at the start of the Bolivarian Revolution, with the election of Comandante Hugo Chavez in December of 1998. It has not only continued, but grown in the depths of its lies and open hostility to the Bolivarian Revolution with each gain made by poor and oppressed people in Venezuela for their sovereignty, self-determination and a more just and equal society.

Especially over the past six months, major media sources like the New York Times, the Washington Post and CNN have all published articles, editorials and reports greatly exaggerating the economic crisis and painting Venezuela as a state on the verge of complete collapse. A Washington Post Editorial on April 12, 2016 even went as far as to declare that "Venezuela is in desperate need of a political intervention."

Perfectly in line with this campaign, on July 26, 2016 the National Post printed a Washington Post article on Venezuela by Latin America Correspondent Nick Miroff with the headline "I've never been hungry like this," taking a quote from the article by a woman returning home to Venezuela after purchasing goods in the Colombian border town of Cucuta. Following this sensationalized headline, the article went on to explain how "Cucuta, long known as a city of contraband goods, has suddenly become a lifeline for desperate shoppers in neighboring Venezuela, and one of the starkest illustrations yet of its panicky, gnawing hunger" and how "Tens of thousands of Venezuelans...have streamed across the border for basic goods in recent weeks as their country's economy collapses under the weight of the world's highest inflation rate and chronic mismanagement, which has produced

shortages of everything from diapers to milk."

Within this deceptive article, Mr. Miroff has repeated all of the buzzwords media uses to describe Venezuela today: hunger, shortages, desperation, chaos, all without bothering to explain how the economic crisis in Venezuela has developed.

Beyond the vague claim of carefully crafted words like "chronic mismanagement," the clearest analysis that the author presents as the cause of the economic crisis in Venezuela comes from a quote by a retired geology professor who is quoted as saying, simply "This government has looted our country... And they're still doing it." This quote is then followed by further commentary and anecdotes suggesting that government subsidies that have given poor and working people in Venezuela access to food and basic goods at a price they can afford are in fact the cause of the shortages. In this backward world illustrated by Mr. Miroff, buying at a low subsidized price and then selling at enormous profit has become an unavoidable and completely natural human trait.

Production and Distribution in Venezuela

The main factor that both this article and Western mainstream media has left out is the role of Venezuela's capitalist class and their allies in the U.S. government in perpetuating the economic crisis and instability in Venezuela. There counter-revolutionary and violent campaign of economic sabotage, hoarding, price gouging and more is what the government of President Nicolas Maduro refers to as an economic war.

When President Hugo Chavez won the 1998 election in Venezuela it marked the beginning of the Bolivarian Revolution that continues on through today. The Venezuelan government became a government representing the interests of the vast majority of people in Venezuela, instead of the select few. Tremendous gains were made for poor,

working and oppressed people, beginning with the adoption of a new constitution ratified by popular vote that enshrines the basic human rights such as the rights to food, water, housing, healthcare and education.

The Venezuelan economy, however, continued to be run by the capitalist class of Venezuela. Although in the last 17 years of the Bolivarian Revolution, the government has nationalized certain industries, such as the petroleum industry, the production of food and basic goods in Venezuela, as well as much of their distribution remains in the hands of a handful of rich Venezuelans and their international partners. Major multinational corporations including Kimberly Clark, Bridgestone, General Mills, and Procter & Gable, McDonalds and many more all continue to have factories and major stakes in Venezuela. With the power of production in their hands, these companies, as well as Venezuelan private industry are doing their best to sabotage the Venezuelan economy, with absolutely no regard to the well-being of the vast majority of the people of Venezuela.

One case of this sabotage occurred at the beginning of July, 2016 when a Kimberly Clark in Aragua, Venezuela, shut-down production and fired over 900 employees, claiming that they did not have the raw materials to make their goods. The Venezuelan government investigated and found the opposite of what the company claimed - the warehouses for this factory were well-stocked. In response, the government of Venezuela turned the factory over to the workers to re-open and continue production. As reported by TeleSUR "The factory can produce, every month, 25 million diapers, 18 million sanitary napkins and 33 million rolls of toilet paper", or about 20% of the national demand for such products in Venezuela.

The Kimberly Clark factory demonstrates the impact that one private company can have on the availability of goods in Venezuela, and the same scenario can be repeated across the food and pharmaceutical industry. As researched by Pasqualina Curcio, a Venezuelan economist

and professor at Simón Bolívar University, “Both the production and distribution of the 10 most difficult foods to purchase, for which there are long queues (corn flour, rice, pasta, milk, oil, margarine, coffee, chicken, beef and chicken eggs) are concentrated in no more than 10 large private companies.” (www.foodfirst.org)

There are many other examples of slowed or stopped production of processed foods and basic goods, as well as instances of hoarding or price gouging reported all over the country. For example, nearly 42,000 medicines and 11 tons of food were seized by government operations in the state of Miranda over a period of about two weeks. These basic goods were confiscated from “bachaqueros” (criminals in Venezuela that sell subsidized goods at incredible profit), or from stores and pharmacies found to be hoarding or breaking price-control laws. (www.Panorama.com.ve)

Another factor that mainstream media articles never mentions is the ongoing U.S. economic sanctions against Venezuela. In March of 2016, U.S. President Barack Obama renewed an Executive Order declaring Venezuela “an extraordinary threat to U.S. national security,” and paving the way for the U.S. to continue imposing criminal sanctions on the country. These sanctions not only have an immediate effect on the person or business they are targeting, they are also an important consideration for foreign banks and Venezuela’s debt-holders. As one consequence of this, on July 11, 2016 Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro announced that Citibank, the bank that Venezuela uses for foreign currency transactions, had given notice that they would close all the accounts of the Venezuelan Central Bank and the Bank of Venezuela. The capitalist class in Venezuela works closely with the U.S. government and their imperialist allies for the same end-goal – to overthrow the government of Nicolas Maduro and with it the Bolivarian Revolution and with it the great gains made for poor, working and oppressed people in Venezuela.

President Nicolas Maduro and the Bolivarian Revolution Fight Back!

In the face of this economic war, waged by the counter-revolutionary opposition, the people of Venezuela, led by President Nicolas

Maduro have launched a number of initiatives in order to fight against the shortages.

This includes various forms of community projects such as the newly announced “micro-missions.” These projects are focused in six areas, seed production, animal protein, balanced food, cleaning and personal hygiene products, as well as the regionalizing of school meal menus and the supply of essential medicines.

There have also been changes introduced by the government of Venezuela in order to stop smuggling of goods into neighboring countries, hoarding and price-gouging. The most recent of these measures is called the Great Mission of Sovereign Supply. This new mission is run by General Vladimir Padrino, Venezuela’s Minister of Defence, and will be able to control the production and distribution of food, medicine and basic household goods.

If Western media and foreign governments were really concerned about the humanitarian situation in Venezuela, wouldn’t they applaud measures by the government of President Nicolas Maduro to cut-down on smuggling or diversify production? Wouldn’t they celebrate the fact that Venezuela continues to fund and support community-based farmers markets and gardens as a way to combat shortages? Instead, they only offer more and more criticism and more and more so-called evidence about how the political system that the people of Venezuela have chosen with the Bolivarian Revolution will never work.

What right does the government of Canada or the United States have to criticize the methods a foreign government is using to build a more just and equal society? One only has to look around Vancouver to see examples of how this political and economic system is failing the people in Canada. In British Columbia, one in five children live in poverty, a statistic that hasn’t changed since 2012. A recent report called Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014 by the University of Toronto research team PROOF found that in 2014, 24 per cent of households in the Northwest Territories and 47% of households in Nunavut experienced a form of food insecurity.

Major Media is a Mouthpiece for Foreign Intervention in Venezuela

There is a video of Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Clinton taken during the December 2015 Parliamentary elections in Venezuela. Upon discovering that the counter-revolutionary opposition in Venezuela going to win a majority of the seats in the Parliament she proudly declares “We’re winning! We’re winning!” to a crowd of supporters.

With these two words, the political support from the U.S. government for the violent counter-revolutionary opposition in Venezuela is laid-bare. Recent leaks of Hillary Clinton’s e-mails from her time as U.S. Secretary of State, have even gone further, revealing covert U.S. operations in Venezuela and Latin America meant to sew unrest and instability in the country. The imperialist interests of the government of the U.S. in Venezuela are the same as the interests of Venezuela’s capitalist class – to overthrow the Bolivarian Revolution.

Politicians like Hillary Clinton leave it up to the military officers and diplomats to explain more clearly the strategy for achieving their goal. On October 10, 2015 the former head of US Southern Command General Jon Kelly, explained to CCN Spanish that that the U.S. would consider intervening in Venezuela to avert a “humanitarian crisis” involving lack of food and water.

In this way, mainstream media has been the perfect mouthpiece for this strategy. With each editorial, article and opinion piece they describe time and time again the “humanitarian crisis” in Venezuela and the lack of any government solutions. Having media like this has also enabled the U.S. government to take a back-seat in an outright campaign against Venezuela. Secretary of State John Kerry can support dialogue in Venezuela out of one side of his mouth while on the other he continues to pressure U.S. allied governments in Latin America to attempt to isolate Venezuela.

Viva Venezuela!

Every day the people of Venezuela are mobilized on the streets in defense of the Bolivarian Revolution. Together with President Nicolas Maduro, the Bolivarian Revolution continues to advance, in the face of a very real economic crisis, a vicious economic war and threats of foreign intervention.

As peace-loving people we must take this moment to intensify our campaign in defense of the people of Venezuela, not only to work to counter the lies and manipulations of capitalist media, but to actively and consistently mobilize in opposition to U.S. and foreign intervention in Venezuela. When the people of Venezuela win a victory against imperialist domination, and maintain their right to sovereignty and self-determination it is a victory for poor and oppressed people around the world.

Let the dogs of the empire bark, that’s their job; ours is to battle to achieve the true liberation of our people. – Hugo Chavez

U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!

No to U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela!

Obama: Revoke the Decree!

Viva Venezuela!



CELEBRATING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF
FIDEL!

CONDEMN ME.
IT DOES
NOT MATTER.
HISTORY WILL
ABSOLVE ME.

the blockade is an outdated policy and must end.



A year after diplomatic relations between the two countries were reestablished on July 20, 2015, Granma International spoke with Josefina Vidal, director general for the United States at the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations, to discuss Cuba-U.S. relations as they stand today

“We have been working for many years for a change in U.S. policy toward Cuba,” stated Josefina Vidal, the main face representing Cuba in diplomatic negotiations with the United States to open a new chapter in bilateral relations between the two nations.

But the Cuban diplomat isn't referring to the quarter of a century she has spent dealing with this issue. “You need to read history and see how Fidel, at different times, expressed Cuba's willingness to discuss and resolve our differences with the United States through negotiations, without renouncing a single one of our principles. And Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, on assuming the leadership of our government, stated that we have always been willing to normalize relations with that country on the basis of equality.

“This process began on December 17, 2014, following more than half a century of resistance by the Cuban people to all kinds of aggression. A few months later, on July 20, 2015, diplomatic relations between the two nations were officially reestablished with the opening of respective embassies in Washington and Havana.”

A year on, Granma International spoke with

Josefina Vidal, director general for the United States at the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations, to discuss Cuba-U.S. relations as they stand today.

What has been achieved?

To give the most complete assessment possible, we must examine a period stretching back more than a year. We must consider the process of negotiations which took place almost six months prior to the reestablishment of diplomatic relations.

So, I

highlight the creation of the Cuba-United States Bilateral Commission providing follow-up to the post-reestablishment of diplomatic relations agenda. To date, three meetings have taken place in alternating venues, while a further two are scheduled to be held.

It was important to have a mechanism of this type to address unresolved issues, cooperation in areas of mutual interest and talks on bilateral and multilateral matters.

In regards to cooperation, 10 agreements have been signed, while others related to drug trafficking; application and adherence to the law; search and rescue; ocean oil-spill response; meteorology; seismic monitoring; and terrestrial protected areas are currently being negotiated. Substantial progress has been made on several topics that could be completed before the end of the year.

To give you an idea of the situation, from January 1, 1959, to December 17, 2014,

Cuba and the United States only signed seven bilateral agreements, including three related to migration, and only five of which have survived to date. If we count the reestablishment of diplomatic relations, then that brings the total of agreements established in the last 19 months to 11.

Are these results irrelevant? No, no I don't think we can say they are, for two countries which have lacked relations for over half a century; nor can we say that sufficient progress has been made, as much remains to be done.

How much progress has been made in the economic-trade sphere?

Preliminary agreements between Cuban and U.S. entities in sectors such



prefer to talk about what has been achieved in the last 19 months. Over this period we have seen results in priority issues for Cuba, in the political-diplomatic sphere, and cooperation and talks on matters of bilateral mutual interest.

Priority aspects for Cuba included the return of our Five Heroes who were serving prison sentences in the U.S., the removal of Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism and renewing the Havana Club trademark registration in the U.S.

In the political-diplomatic sphere I would



Millions of Cubans march in defense of the revolution. May 1st, 2014.

as telecommunications services, hotel administration and cruise-ship operations, exploiting the still limited opportunities made available through measures adopted by the Obama administration to modify certain aspects of the blockade's application, have barely been established. Much more could be done if the blockade were eliminated; however, the policy remains in force. Restrictions on exports from the U.S. in spheres vital to our economy continue; it is virtually impossible to import Cuban products to that country; U.S. investments in Cuba are not authorized under general licenses, except in the case of telecommunications. Thus far it has not been possible to normalize banking relations. All of this could be resolved if President Obama were to fully exploit his executive prerogatives.

The dissuasive and punitive components of the blockade, and its intimidating exterritorial effects, continue to have negative consequences for Cuba. We are still unable to make financial transfers, we are denied services of this kind and payments are withheld, while the U.S. continues to impose fines on banks and foreign financial entities that do businesses with our country.

This is why the lifting of the blockade continues to be a priority issue for Cuba and its elimination will be vital to advancing toward the normalization of relations. The blockade is an outdated policy and must end.

How is it possible that Cuba has still not been able to use the dollar in its international transactions, several months after the Obama administration lifted this restriction?

To date, Cuba has not been able to make cash payments or deposits in U.S. dollars. The 49 sanctions - totaling 14,397,416,827 dollars, a record amount in the history of the application of the blockade against our country - imposed by the Obama administration on U.S. and

foreign entities for their legitimate associations with Cuba; continue to have an intimidating effect on U.S. and international banks.

Thus far, the U.S. government has failed to issue a political statement or legal document explaining to world banks that operations with Cuba are legitimate, and that they won't be sanctioned.

Although attention is always focused on the blockade, Cuba has other important demands on its agenda toward normalization... are they also on the negotiating table?

The blockade, the return of the territory illegally occupied by the Naval Base in Guantánamo, the United States' migratory policy exclusively directed at Cubans, subversive programs, illegal radio and television broadcasts, compensation, and industrial property protection are permanent issues on Cuba's agenda in official talks with the U.S.

There isn't one single path to resolving these issues. For example, Cuba was removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism in a matter of a few months, a priority for us. The decision was in the hands of the executive branch of the U.S. government. But there are issues which will take more time. The solution to some of these also depends on Congress.

The return of the illegally occupied territory in Guantánamo, which is the only case in the world of perpetually and illegally occupying a military base, against the will of the government and people of the country where it is situated, is also important for Cuba. Just like the blockade we have presented this issue in every meeting.

In order to advance in improving relations, other

policies which the U.S. government continues to implement and are detrimental to Cuban sovereignty, must also be removed. These are policies inherited from an earlier period of confrontation and hostility, which affect Cuba, and do not reflect the current bilateral climate.

As it stands an unprecedented process of bilateral relations coexists with the continuation of policies from the past, which reaffirms to us, and as we have previously stated, that the process toward the normalization of relations with the United States will be long and complex. But we will persist just as we have always done.

We often hear that all the changes this year have come from the U.S. side and Cuba hasn't given anything in return. Must we give something in return in order to achieve justice?

You can't call the rectification of erroneous policies by the government of the United States, concessions.

Both countries have taken sovereign measures as part of this process to improve the bilateral climate.

However, relations between Cuba and the U.S. have been asymmetric; therefore it is up to the U.S. to dismantle hostile unilateral policies which gave a confrontational character to relations between the two countries. Cuba doesn't have any comparable policies.

Respect is a word that has been used a great deal since December 17, 2014. Is it simply a formality?

The U.S. government took 56 years to recognize Cuba's legitimate government. However, it is very important to clarify that every time revolutionary Cuba has sat down to negotiate with the U.S., even at sporadic moments in the past, it has always done so on equal terms, and on the basis of respect, reciprocity, without conditions or concessions of any type on matters related to the principles of our domestic and international policy.

One of the most important moments of this past year, and an example of such recognition, was President Barack Obama's



visit to Cuba. Several months later, do you believe his trip contributed to advancing Cuban interests and the process of normalization of relations?

It was an important step in the process to improve relations. It was also an opportunity to convey to him our position on priority issues for the country. It is important to point out that Obama came to revolutionary, socialist, sovereign and independent Cuba to meet with the historic leadership of the Revolution; and not like the only other U.S. President to travel to the island, Calvin Coolidge, who visited neo-colonial Cuba, subject to the Platt Amendment and dictatorship of Gerardo Machado, 88 years ago.

U.S. officials, including Obama, have said that the government is changing its methods toward Cuba but not its objectives. What does this mean for Cuba?

By reestablishing relations, we agreed, on equal terms and a basis of reciprocity, to develop relations of respect and cooperation, based on the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter and International Law.

We have clearly outlined the regulations and will continue to demand their fulfillment.

The United States has a history of failing to adhere to these principles...

Relations with the U.S. have always been a challenge for Cuba. Since the beginning they have been marked by the contradiction between the United States' desire to control the island and the Cuban people's determination to be free and independent, and this is not going to change.

We are not naïve, we are aware of their strategic objective and we will not let down our guard. We will always remain alert.

Meanwhile, the current bilateral process represents opportunities to advance for the first time toward resolving pending issues – not only from the last 56 years, but also centuries ago – and secure benefits for the country and its development, stemming from cooperation on issues of mutual interest, the gradual dismantling and eventual definitive lifting of the blockade, which will enable us to sell and place Cuban products and services in



Seattle & Vancouver activists protest the blockade on Cuba, Seattle WA, July 5, 2016.

the U.S. market.

It's about exploiting opportunities while maintaining clarity and managing the challenges.

Are we prepared?

In the same way we prepare ourselves to deal with a hostile and confrontational policy, we are preparing ourselves for this new period in bilateral relations.

Cuba has many strengths, such as the Cuban people's patriotic sentiment, devotion to our independence and sovereignty, national unity, strong national culture – including cultural policy – solidarity, in addition to many other values which have been cultivated throughout our history and consolidated over almost 60 years of socialist Revolution under the leadership of our Party, who will accompany us in this stage. We can not cease to cultivate our values and continue passing them down from generation to generation.

At the 7th Party Congress, Fidel stated that the Cuban people will triumph, and I believe this is so.

A counter-offensive by right-wing forces is currently underway in Latin America,

at the same time as the change in relations between Washington and Havana is occurring. Some have tried to manipulate the facts. Does pursuing a civilized relationship with Washington mean sacrificing the Revolution's anti-

imperialist aims?

Absolutely not.

Just as Cuba has never been anti-U.S., it is and will continue to be deeply anti-imperialist. The fact that we are trying to build a new type of relationship with the U.S. doesn't mean in the slightest that Cuba is renouncing its foreign policy, committed to the just causes of the world, the defense of the peoples' right to self-determination and support for sister nations, without renouncing a single one of its principles.

A strong debate around Cuba is going on in the U.S. Congress, with legislators both for and against. How has the U.S. Congress reacted over this last year?

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations – given the bilateral activity it is generating and interest it is stimulating within the U.S. – is a step which can contribute to accelerating the process toward resolving pending issues, including the lifting of the blockade. We have seen as such in polls, which show that 60% of U.S. citizens support President Obama's change in policy toward Cuba, and the lifting of travel restrictions to the island and the elimination of the blockade. All of this is creating a growing movement of support which is being reflected in Congress.

There still exist two divergent forces: those opposed to the normalization process are attempting to reverse the advances made to date, and are increasingly isolated and lacking support, although they still have a certain amount of leverage and internal mechanisms; and those in favor of the current policy and the lifting of the blockade, who belong to both parties and have support from the majority of public opinion and broad sectors of U.S. society.



So far various initiatives both for and against normalization of relations have been presented in Congress, all of which were excluded from bills being debated and thus failed to be approved in 2015. Some analysts believe that the same could happen in 2016, an election year in which non-priority matters are usually put to the side.

We are seeing new forces and sectors showing their support for the changes. I believe this trend will prevail, as it reflects the desire of the vast majority of U.S. citizens.

How much more can Obama do before he leaves the Oval Office?

Important matters to Cuba have been included in the package of measures adopted by the U.S. government to modify certain aspects of the application of the blockade, among them the authorization of private credits and use of the dollar and recognition of the Cuban socialist state enterprise in bilateral trade, although its implementation has been affected by blockade regulations.

Cuba has reiterated how important it is for President Obama to use his executive prerogatives to continue introducing changes

to the policy as much as possible, which will help contribute to continuing the current process in the future.

In short, Obama can do a lot more to make the process irreversible looking toward the future.

Where do you think the policy change toward Cuba will figure in the Obama's legacy?

Having led a change in the policy toward Cuba, which was implemented by his 10 predecessors, will undoubtedly go down in history and be part of President Obama's foreign policy legacy.

For this reason and given the resilience of Cuba and its people, and the recognition of the failure of a policy implemented for over five decades, the harm that it has inflicted on the Cuban people and resulting isolation it caused the U.S., especially within Latin America and the Caribbean, December 17, was a highly important moment, both within the U.S. and at a global level. The world recognizes what has been achieved, but it is also conscious of the fact that much more can be done, making its voice heard ever year in the United Nations

General Assembly, as it calls for the lifting of the blockade.

How could the U.S. elections affect relations with Cuba?

We hope the next U.S. President, whoever that might be, act in accordance with the wishes of the vast majority of U.S. public, which overwhelmingly supports the current policy toward Cuba.

What can we hope to see from a "normalization of relations with the United States"? Is this even possible?

In my opinion, even if, one day all the pending issues are resolved, including the blockade and the return of the illegally occupied territory in Guantánamo, essential to normalizing relations with the United States, it would also have to give up its historic ambition to decide and control Cuba's destiny, otherwise, normal relations will not be possible.

In any event, it might be possible to establish a relationship of civilized coexistence, based on respect, and not on differences, which will continue to exist, but rather on the benefits it could provide for both countries and peoples."

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in the German parliament initiated by his party over whether NATO should be dissolved. It was apparently the first such debate for a NATO member.

Former U.S. Army colonel and State Department official Ann Wright charged Washington with being behind the 2014 coup that brought a right-wing government to power in Ukraine.

Other speakers included Joseph Gerson of the American Friends Service Committee; Ewa Groszewska of the Social Forum of Eastern Europe and Cooperation Between East and South; Piotr Ikonowicz of the Movement for Social Justice (Poland); and Maite Mola, vice president of the Party of the European Left.

Participants reconvened on July 10 to discuss strategies for building the peace movement in Europe.

Another conference, held July 8 and sponsored by the 66-year-old World Peace Council, drew about 85 people. The organizers reported there were 32 speakers from 22 countries, including Duarte Alves of Portugal, representing the World Federation of Democratic Youth; Marini Stefanidi of Greece, representing the Women's International Democratic Federation; and Fabio Marcelli of Italy, representing the International Association of Democratic Lawyers.

Also speaking, representing UNAC and the Odessa Solidarity Campaign, was this writer, who addressed the crisis of police murders in the United States, the expansion of NATO toward Russia and UNAC's ongoing work

in support of the anti-fascist movement in Odessa, Ukraine.

Both anti-NATO conferences placed the primary blame for increasing tensions with Russia on the U.S. and NATO. A few speakers at the No to NATO gathering also blamed "Russian aggression."

Taking the anti-NATO message to the streets!

On Saturday, July 9, participants in both conferences joined together to march through the streets of Warsaw, stopping at the U.S. Embassy and finishing with a rally in a park within sight of the National Stadium where the NATO Summit was being held. Although not massive - some 250 to 300 people took part - the militant banners, signs and red flags, plus the extensive poster paste-ups advertising the march, were a defiant challenge both to NATO and to the far-right-wing government now in power in Poland.

Joining the Warsaw march were 15 to 20 black-clad anarchist youth active in Food Not Bombs, an all-volunteer group active in many countries that serves free meals to anyone who needs them. Members wore bandoliers made of small bagels and wielded long loaves of bread like rifles. When the group was stopped by police as it approached the march rallying point, organizers of the Social Forum of Eastern Europe and Cooperation Between East and South ran to their defense. The police eventually relented and the anarchists joined the march, loudly chanting and waving their loaves.

One unfortunate aspect of the march was a slogan on No to NATO's posters and lead banner that read "Moscow has been here - We

do not want NATO," effectively equating the role of the Soviet Red Army in World War II with that of NATO in Europe today.

Anti-NATO solidarity in other countries

According to the media outlet Russia Today, there also were anti-NATO protests in other European cities, including Sofia, Bulgaria, and Athens, Greece.

Meanwhile, protests were taking place in several U.S. cities, including New York City, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Los Angeles and in Vancouver, Canada. Organizations initiating or supporting the protests included the U.S. Peace Council, Vancouver's Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), UNAC and several of its affiliates, including the International Action Center and Women Against Military Madness.

Back in Warsaw, outside the U.S. Embassy, Ann Wright delivered a stirring speech denouncing U.S. foreign policy and declaring her solidarity with those marching in the streets against NATO.

At the final rally, this writer delivered solidarity greetings from those attending the U.S. and Canadian protests and urged the marchers to spread the word of the truth about NATO until not hundreds, but millions would surround a future NATO Summit and force the warmongers to shut down the organization that is bringing the world to the brink of another, far more deadly war.

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VIVA VENEZUELA!

Venezuela sigue en pie contra la intervención de EE.UU.!

Por Alison Bodine

Traducido por
Macarena Cataldo

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El 21 de junio de 2016, afrodescendientes de los 14 estados de Venezuela salieron a las calles de Caracas para mostrar su apoyo al gobierno de Venezuela y protestar en contra la guerra económica y la intervención extranjera. Dos días más tarde, una vez más gente a lo largo de todo Venezuela, se reunió en las diferentes plazas públicas de las principales ciudades para protestar contra la intervención extranjera y defender la soberanía de Venezuela. En el Día Internacional de los Refugiados, los colombianos residentes en Venezuela marcharon en Caracas en apoyo a la Revolución Bolivariana y al gobierno de Venezuela.

Estas multitudinarias manifestaciones son sólo un ejemplo de como el pueblo de Venezuela apoya la Revolución Bolivariana. Los Venezolanos, liderados por el gobierno del presidente Nicolás Maduro se movilizan cada día, en las calles, aulas y centros de trabajo de Venezuela para defender los logros de la Revolución Bolivariana, contra la violenta oposición contra-revolucionaria, la cual trabaja mano a mano con el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Sin embargo, no se sabría nada de esto si solo se leyera las noticias de los medios de

comunicación tradicional. Se encontrarían en cambio con titulares como: "En Venezuela la escasez de alimentos empuja al país al quiebre", "Apagones y revueltas en una Venezuela afectada por la sequía", "Venezolanos saquean tiendas, revueltas en las calles por la crisis alimentaria que afecta al país de América del Sur" o "Venezuela esta en un punto muerto en medio del caos". Todos estos titulares han sido utilizados durante el último mes en artículos del New York Times, el Washington post y prensa canadiense, incluyendo CBC.

Esta campaña mediática en contra de Venezuela utiliza mentiras, engaños

Desde que comenzó la Revolución Bolivariana, con la elección del comandante Hugo Chávez en 1998, el gobierno de EE.UU. ha atacado contantemente al pueblo de Venezuela y su derecho a elegir soberanamente su propio gobierno y el futuro del país. EE.UU. ha brindado apoyo financiero y político a la oposición violenta y contra-revolucionaria de Venezuela, avalando en el 2002 el golpe de Estado en contra el presidente Chávez. Además, recientemente el presidente Obama y el gobierno de EE.UU. ha declarado a Venezuela "amenaza para la seguridad nacional de EE.UU." y ha mantenido las sanciones.



El presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro dirige a una multitud en el estado Yaracuy - February, 2015

y manipulaciones para convertir a Venezuela en un "estado fallido", con un pueblo desesperado, el cual necesita de ayuda e intervención extranjera. Se trata de una narración falsa y exagerada, complementaria a la política actual del gobierno de EE.UU. y sus aliados, en contra de la soberanía y de la autodeterminación del pueblo Venezolano.

Continúa la intervención de EE.UU. en Venezuela

El llamado a intervención extranjera, incluyendo la moción en contra de Venezuela en la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA), ha repercutido en los principales partidos políticos de Canadá, como por ejemplo en el New Democratic Party (Nuevo partido democrático), NDP. En una reciente declaración su representante de asuntos exteriores Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie) sostuvo "Canadá debiera

estar trabajando a través de la Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA) para apoyar las iniciativas diplomáticas multilaterales. El Secretario General de la OEA, Luis Almagro, ha invocado la Carta Democrática Interamericana en relación con Venezuela, y Canadá, como miembro de la OEA, debe apoyar sus esfuerzos. La acción multilateral es la mejor manera de encontrar una solución pacífica y democrática a la crisis en Venezuela".

Entonces ¿Qué esta pasando en la OEA?

Los Estados Unidos y sus aliados han tratado de imponer su voluntad sobre el pueblo de Venezuela a través de la Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA). En mayo, los estados miembros de la OEA (incluyendo Estados Unidos y Canadá) se negaron a aceptar el llamado del Secretario General de la OEA a invocar la "Carta Democrática Interamericana" en contra de Venezuela, lo que podría llevar a la eliminación de Venezuela del organismo regional. Posteriormente, en junio hubo otra reunión de la OEA en el que el Secretario General, Luis Almagro procedió a leer su informe completo sobre Venezuela y las razones por las que debe ser prohibido en la OEA.

El gobierno de Venezuela niega la legitimidad de la Secretaría General, al invocar la Carta y en especial las reuniones de Almagro con la oposición Venezolana, "como si ellos fueran representantes de Venezuela en la OEA". Respecto a esto, Delcy Rodríguez, Canciller de Venezuela ha declarado " Todos los días tenemos evidencia de sesgo del secretario general a favor de los sectores de la oposición que buscan un golpe de estado en Venezuela" y agrega " Ahora veo, esto ha sido ordenado por Washington. Sé que está en la nómina de Washington para entrometerse en los asuntos internos de Venezuela "

Los Estados miembros de la OEA en esta reunión expresaron su apoyo al diálogo entre el gobierno de Venezuela y la oposición, facilitado por la UNASUR. A diferencia de la OEA, esta organización no se basa en Washington DC y no recibe el 59% de sus fondos de los Estados Unidos, la UNASUR es un bloque regional de cooperación en y para América del Sur. Si Estados Unidos y sus aliados de verdad estuvieran preocupados por la paz y la democracia en Venezuela, deberían apoyar

los esfuerzos de los vecinos de Venezuela para establecer el diálogo.

¿Cuáles son las mentiras de los medios y

comprar artículos de primera necesidad en Venezuela. En primer lugar, hay que decir, ¿qué derecho tiene el gobierno de EE.UU. y los medios de comunicación para decir que Venezuela no garantiza una nutrición adecuada? Según el Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos, dentro de los Estados Unidos, el país más rico del mundo, más de 15 millones de niños viven en hogares sin acceso consistente a alimentos nutritivos necesarios para una vida saludable.

A pesar de la evidente hipocresía, los principales medios de comunicación y funcionarios del gobierno de Estados Unidos continúan sus críticas, culpando por la escasez de alimentos y las filas al gobierno de Venezuela. Sin embargo, existen otros factores que han influido en los serios problemas que la economía venezolana enfrenta, como por ejemplo la dramática caída del precio del petróleo, principal producto de exportación Venezolano. No obstante, estos factores no son considerados por los medios de comunicación masivos, quienes prefieren utilizar el espacio para mostrar fotos de tiendas de alimentos vacías.

Otro importante factor a considerar es el problema generado por el acaparamiento, contrabando y reventa de productos básicos para obtener mayores beneficios económicos. Lo cual se ha convertido en una practica frecuente en Venezuela y esta generando una gran escasez de productos. En un extraño artículo sobre el problema de contrabando en Venezuela, la revista Time entrevistó a dos hermanas en Colombia. La revista reporta: "... el local ha comprado cerca de 60 kilos de carne de vacuno en el Mercal, el supermercado subvencionado por el gobierno Venezolano, por el equivalente a tan sólo \$54. Para el final del día la misma cantidad de carne estará



engaños sobre Venezuela?

En el momento en que el gobierno de EE.UU. desmascara su intervención en Venezuela, bajo la demanda de "democracia" y fin a la "crisis humanitaria", los medios de comunicación pusieron en marcha una campaña en contra de Venezuela con el fin de preparar el camino para una nueva intervención. En



El primer vicepresidente del Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV), Diosdado Cabello Rondón, en el estado Zulia en apoyo a la Gran Misión Abastecimiento Soberano - August, 2016

esta campaña, los principales medios de comunicación capitalista, se han empeñado en mostrar que el pueblo de Venezuela enfrenta una gran crisis humanitaria y que el gobierno de Venezuela no está haciendo nada para remediarla.

Esta campaña de manipulación mediática se ha centrado sobre todo en la escasez de alimentos y las largas colas de gente para

en un estante en el mercado de Cúcuta, donde se venderá por más de \$200". A pesar que gran parte de la frontera entre Venezuela y Colombia ha sido cerrada por el presidente Maduro en agosto del 2015, para la evitar el contrabando, práctica criminal, alimentos y artículos de primera necesidad subsidiados por el gobierno Venezolano siguen siendo sacados del país.

"Cada agresión de la oposición contra nuestro Pueblo, debe ser respondida con más Revolución" Diosdado Cabello, Parlamentario Venezolano y ex Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela.

Hoy en día en Venezuela, la mayoría de la producción y distribución de alimentos es controlada por empresas privadas, factor

acuerdo comercial para la alimentación, jabones, detergentes y papel higiénico con Trinidad y Tobago.

Cuando la oposición de derecha obtuvo la mayoría en la Asamblea Nacional en diciembre de 2015, inmediatamente propuso leyes las cuales mostraron sus intenciones de hacer retroceder en los logros alcanzados por el pueblo de Venezuela en la Revolución Bolivariana. A pesar de estos intentos, el pueblo de Venezuela continúa beneficiándose de los servicios ofrecidos por diferentes programas sociales, conocidos como "misiones". Estos programas incluyen vivienda, atención médica y dental, alimentos subsidiados y educación.

"Y se lo digo acá y se lo voy a decir siempre. El pueblo de Venezuela no obedece órdenes de los Estados Unidos"- Delcy Rodríguez Ministra del poder popular para las relaciones exteriores

En un dramático contraste con el caos y la desesperación descrito por los medios de comunicación, y a pesar de la difícil situación económica y política que atraviesa Venezuela, la Revolución Bolivariana sigue avanzando. Mientras los medios de comunicación montan una campaña a base de mentiras y engaños con el fin de mostrar a Venezuela como un estado fallido, el gobierno de Venezuela sigue trabajando para combatir la verdadera crisis económica, una oposición contrarrevolucionaria violenta y constantes amenazas de intervención extranjera.

Hace alrededor de 17 años atrás el pueblo de Venezuela optó por un camino diferente al establecido por el gobierno de EE.UU. y sus aliados en América Latina. Con la democrática elección del Presidente Comandante Hugo Chávez, el pueblo de Venezuela y la Revolución Bolivariana comenzaron el proceso de construcción de una sociedad más equitativa y justa. Desde entonces, se han alcanzado grandes logros en la lucha contra la pobreza, el analfabetismo y falta de viviendas, educación y salud en Venezuela.

Desde ese día, el gobierno de Venezuela y la Revolución Bolivariana vive bajo constante amenaza. Nosotros, la gente en Canadá y los Estados Unidos debemos hacer eco de las demandas del pueblo de Venezuela en contra de la intervención extranjera y exponer la hipocresía del gobierno de EE.UU., en su pretensión de lucha por la "democracia" y los "derechos humanos" en Venezuela.

Siga en Twitter Alison: @alisoncolette



"El pueblo de Venezuela no obedece órdenes de los Estados Unidos"- Delcy Rodríguez, Ministra del Poder Popular para las Relaciones Exteriores de Venezuela

Una muestra de que los medios de comunicación no tienen ningún interés en darnos a conocer la verdad acerca de la situación en Venezuela, es la foto que ha sido republicada decenas de veces en los principales medios durante los últimos años. En esta foto, se ve caminar a una mujer con un carro través de un pasillo de supermercado cuyos estantes están vacíos. Esta foto supuestamente mostraría la severa crisis en Venezuela. Sin embargo, a pesar de que esta foto fue reportada como tomada en Venezuela, se descubrió que era una foto de Nueva York en 2011 antes del huracán Sandy.

Una práctica común en los medios de comunicación masivos ha sido la de informar que la tasa de inflación en Venezuela ha alcanzado el 700%, lo cual es mentira. Este número es sólo una predicción hecha por el FMI (fondo monetario internacional) acerca de la tasa de inflación estimada en Venezuela para el próximo año. El Banco Central de Venezuela en cambio ha informado, que la tasa de inflación es de un 141,5 por ciento.

que los medios prefieren no mencionar cuando discuten la escasez. Estas empresas, entre ellas, la más grande, conocido como Empresas Polar han acumulado, acaparado alimentos, y elevado los precios de los productos básicos. Con el fin de combatir esto, el gobierno de Venezuela ha puesto en marcha medidas de emergencia económica, las cuales permiten introducir mayor control y regulación en la industria. Con la entrada en vigencia del "decreto de emergencia" se han llevado a cabo diferentes acciones para diversificar la economía de Venezuela y al mismo tiempo aumentar la producción en las fábricas cuya producción estaba siendo desperdiciada en la industria privada en Venezuela.

Dentro de la medidas tomadas por el gobierno, se encuentra también la creación de un sistema de distribución de alimentos basado en la comunidad, "Comités Locales de alimentación y producción" conocidos como CLAP. Telesur informo a principios de junio que "los CLAP han facilitado la distribución de 33.000 toneladas de alimentos para alrededor de 6,4 millones de venezolanos". A su vez, el gobierno está trabajando para establecer el crecimiento de la producción de alimentos en Venezuela, con nuevos proyectos tales como; jardines comunitarios y granjas urbanas. Paralelamente, Venezuela esta trabajando activamente para aumentar las importaciones de alimentos fuera del sector privado. Esto incluye un reciente

“WE HAVE A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY & COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE THIS POLITICAL, IDEOLOGICAL & HUMANIST HERITAGE”



**A speech by WILFREDO PÉREZ BIANCO
Consul General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Vancouver**

As I have been emphasizing, in light of recent events in Venezuela and throughout our American region it is imperative to redefine and give a new context to the word Solidarity. It is a matter of stepping out of the “theme” and go to the “actions”, because in addition to speeches we need actions, actual impacts in the material world to prevent the abrupt interruption of the progressive processes that have given so much hope to a large part of the planet and which indicates that “another world” fairer, more equitable, more livable is possible.

Example of this is the cooperation and exchange between Cuba and Venezuela, which has always been based on solidarity, complementarity, cooperation, sustainability economic union, and not in the fierce competition between our countries; these have been foundational precepts and principles of the Bolivarian Alliances for the Peoples of Our America – Treaty of Commerce of the People (ALBA-TCP), which was signed by the Commanders Presidents Fidel Castro Ruz and Hugo Chavez Frias on December 14, 2004 in Havana.

Cuba has always been a model of solidarity, cooperation and integration with the people, who in times of humanitarian crises, disaster or wars in the world, has sent its doctors, technicians, specialists and educators providing hope and unconditional support.

Recently during the month of March this year, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Republic of Cuba reaffirmed again in Havana, once again, their will and commitment to continue strengthening the development of joint projects and strategic alliances of the mutual benefit. [This was done] during the meeting of the Cuba-Venezuela Joint High Level Commission in the framework of the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Bilateral Cooperation in the fight to stop the advance of interference and economic domination, and in order to

move towards the creation of a community of nations, defending the economic, social, cultural, political and environmental interests of the region, promoting and encouraging Latin American and Caribbean integration, mandates that are established in the constitution of Venezuela.

Similarly, the Plan of the Nation, the 2013-2019 Program of the Bolivarian Government, which constitutes the political will of the Eternal Commander Hugo Chavez Frias, has as priority the contribution to the development of a new international geopolitics, where the multicenter and the multipolar world would take shape, would achieve the balance of the universe, and ensure peace on the planet.

During the meeting it was agreed that the fourteen engines of the Bolivarian Economic Agenda be coordinated with the Cuba-Venezuela Cooperation Agenda, in order to get joint results and achievements. Now, the Bolivarian Economic Agenda will count with a motor in the Caribbean that will promote the productive development to transcend the economy based on rent.

As our Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez said, and I quote: “This meeting is refounding of the agenda and the beginning of a new era in bilateral relations towards a 2016-2030 plan 'with the spirit of these two giants, Chavez and Fidel, who sealed this union between Cuba and Venezuela, which transcends the economic cooperation that has given wellbeing to our peoples.”

With the arrival of Hugo Chavez to the presidency in 1999, the Venezuela-Cuba relationship has strengthened. Already on October 30, 2000, Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez signed the Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement between Cuba and Venezuela.

By 2003, the first mission called Barrio Adentro was born, which was an effort led the two countries, created with the aim of bringing healthcare to the most vulnerable sectors.

From that time until today, the Barrio Adentro Mission has 31,000 Cuban doctors and health workers who have attended nearly 500 millions free medical consultations throughout the country, helping in reducing the infant mortality, which in 1998 was 21.4%, and it is currently about 13%, also increasing life expectancy from 71 to 73 years.

Until 2015, the Barrio Adentro Mission (I,II,III,IV) with its presence in 335 municipalities in 24 states, has saved 1.7 million lives, something like 16 lives per hour.

Also, about 26 Cuban State institutions are actively involved in Barrio Adentro social programs, Robinson, Housing and Mercal.

We cannot fail to mention the Robinson Mission, based on the Cuban literacy program “Yes I Can”, which until 2015, has taught 1,790,000 Venezuelans to read and write, with a coverage of 95.2%. As a result, UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] declared Venezuela a Territory Free of Illiteracy in 2005.

Then in 2004, the official protocols were signed that gave birth to the Bolivarian Alternative for the People of Our America – Trade Treaty of the Peoples (ALBA-TCP), a proposal that was made by President Chavez in 2001 and which has currently established itself as a block of cooperation and model of integration, consisting of Cuba, Bolivia, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Ecuador, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Granada and Venezuela.

The ALBA-TCP area is the first in South American and Caribbean regional hub free of illiteracy as certified by UNESCO, which has been possible in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation of the Cuban-Venezuelan alliance.

But also those countries that are not part of ALBA-TCP, have received benefits of solidarity and ties of integration between Venezuela and Cuba, through projects and



Discurso por WILFREDO PÉREZ BIANCO
Consul General de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela en Vancouver

“TENEMOS UNA GRAN RESPONSABILIDAD Y UN COMPROMISO DE CONTINUAR ESTA HERENCIA POLÍTICA, IDEOLÓGICA Y HUMANISTA”

Quisiera comenzar explicando el significado que tiene para los venezolanos uno de los procesos más importantes de nuestra historia: LA INDEPENDENCIA de nuestro país hace 205 años, la cual nos permitió y brindó la libertad de ejercer nuestro derecho a ser lo que somos: VENEZOLANOS, a ser libres, independientes y soberanos.

El 19 de abril de 1810 se Declaró la Independencia, y el 5 de julio de 1811 se firmó el Acta de la Independencia, que sentenció el surgimiento y creación de la República y nuestra irrenunciable decisión de ser un pueblo libre y dueño de nuestro destino, de nuestra propia historia, todo gracias a la grandeza y larga lucha de hombres que estuvieron bajo el liderazgo del padre de la patria Simón Bolívar.

Había nacido Venezuela, como lo expresó el historiador colombiano, Ignacio Sánchez Tirado:

“La historia del nacimiento de una República soberana parecía escrita, pero faltaban aún los capítulos de las cruentas luchas. Faltaba consolidar con sangre la decisión del pueblo. Faltaban los héroes que salieron de las llanuras venezolanas para unirse con los colombianos, con los ecuatorianos, con los peruanos y con los bolivianos. Faltaba Carabobo, Boyacá, Pichincha y Ayacucho y por último faltaban las páginas sublimes del personaje central que lo hizo todo realidad: faltaba para coronar aquella gesta, Simón Bolívar”.

El Libertador, recorrió casi todos los países de América para buscar su independencia y asegurar para nuestros pueblos, incluido Venezuela, un futuro de dignidad, libertad y respeto, donde la solidaridad entre los pueblos fue una herramienta poderosa para lograr la emancipación y avanzar en aquellos tiempos

de lucha.

El Coronel Gentil Almario Vieda, miembro de la Academia Colombiana de la Historia dijo que:

“El camino iba a ser largo, el sacrificio enorme y los padecimientos del pueblo casi inverosímiles. La guerra más larga y más sangrienta por la libertad se libró en su suelo. Con toda razón se ha afirmado que Venezuela fue la cuna de la Libertad de la América española”.

Como dijera el Libertador en 1829:

“No he logrado otro bien que la independencia. Esa fue mi misión. Las naciones que he fundado, luego de prolongada y amarga agonía, sufrirán un eclipse, pero después surgirán como estados de una Gran República: América!”.

Por ello, dentro del proceso Bolivariano actual, siempre se ha insistido en el rescate del pensamiento de nuestro Libertador Simón Bolívar respecto a la integración de los pueblos para la defensa de su soberanía, autodeterminación e independencia, y la no intervención en los asuntos internos.

En Venezuela, la solidaridad con los pueblos del mundo está consagrada en nuestra Constitución Nacional. La misma establece que nuestro país promoverá y favorecerá la integración latinoamericana y caribeña en aras de avanzar hacia la creación de una comunidad de naciones, defendiendo los intereses económicos, sociales, culturales y ambientales de la región, como parte del derecho de estos pueblos a defender su modelo social y político de acuerdo con lo establecido en el Derecho Internacional.

Nuestra política exterior Inspirada en la visión de armonía que caracteriza la formación de nuestros pueblos indígenas originarios, y en

la concepción bolivariana de que la acción política internacional debe tender a conformar el “equilibrio del universo”, ha venido impulsando la conformación de un mundo pluripolar, cuyo fin último es la preservación de una paz fundamentada en el respeto y la soberanía de los pueblos.

La bandera de la paz y la integración, ha desplegado todos sus esfuerzos para “obtener el sistema de garantías que, en paz y guerra, sea el escudo de nuestro nuevo destino”, en un entorno internacional que garantice la Independencia de la Patria para el pleno despliegue de un proyecto nacional soberano.

En este marco, el gobierno bolivariano ha impulsado el ingreso de Venezuela como miembro pleno en el MERCOSUR, ha creado la ALBA-TCP y PETROCARIBE, y ha impulsado la creación de la UNASUR y la CELAC, junto a los pueblos hermanos de América Latina y el Caribe.

Igualmente, nuestra diplomacia de paz logró el 16 de octubre de 2014 para Venezuela, la aprobación de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas para formar parte como miembro no permanente del Consejo de Seguridad, durante 2 años (2015-2016), con 181 votos a favor de los 182 países presentes.

Luego en el año 2015, por primera vez nuestro país ocupó de manera simultánea, un puesto en el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU y la Presidencia Pro Tempore (PPT) del Movimiento de Países No Alineados, convirtiéndose en el tercer país latinoamericano en ejercer la presidencia, después de Cuba y Colombia.

El 9 de marzo de 2015, el presidente de Estados Unidos firmó un Decreto (Orden Ejecutiva) donde señalaba que “la situación en Venezuela representa una amenaza para la seguridad interna” de su país. Los Jefes de Estado de los países miembros del ALBA-TCP, UNASUR, CARICOM y AEC, se pronunciaron en contra del mismo y durante la VII Cumbre de las Américas celebrada en abril de 2015, el presidente Nicolás Maduro entregó más de 11 millones de firmas solicitando su derogación inmediata, llamado que fue acompañado por todos los gobiernos de la región quienes manifestaron su solidaridad y respaldo a Venezuela.

plans for joint cooperation such as Operation Mircale, which aims to eliminate all eye disease that can be prevented and cured throughout Latin America.

The momentum of ALBA has set a precedent in the consolidation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), composed of 12 states, 3 of which, Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia, are also part of the ALBA and opened the path for the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

I cannot conclude this brief presentation without joining you in celebrating the 233rd anniversary of the birth of the Liberator of our America, Simon Bolivar who travelled to almost every American country to seek their independence and ensure for our peoples, including Venezuela, a future of dignity, freedom and respect, where solidarity among the peoples was a powerful tool to achieve the emancipation and progress in those times of struggle.

In less than 20 years he managed the independence of Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Panama.

Bolivar's image continues growing, the study of his thought qualifies him as a giant among the great visionaries of political events, and one of the most brilliant practitioners of the philosophy of the state, as well as one of the most profound knowledgeable people of the realities of the peoples.

In the current Bolivarian process, there has always been an emphasis in the rescue of the thought of our Liberator Simon Bolivar regarding the integration of peoples to defend their sovereignty, self-determination and independence, and non-interference in internal affairs. We advocate human rights among the peoples in the struggle for emancipation and welfare of humanity, which will only be possible if we work together and united for a just and necessary cause.

Chavez taught us to see and feel Bolivar differently and always defend the self-determination of each of our peoples, therefore, we have great responsibility and a commitment to continue this political, ideological and humanist inheritance. As President Nicolas Maduro says, "Today we continue being local on the path of Bolivar, defending our country and forging victories with the legacy of Chavez. I will be the president of peace of this country, there will be no one's blackmail. I believe peace as the only way for prosperity, for life, for socialism, for the development of social guarantees and rights of the people."

Or, as comrade Elias Jaua said in honour of Founding Father Simon Bolivar, "We Venezuelans, who feel in our souls the historical heritage bequeathed to us by Bolivar, are obliged by the glory of our Liberator; glory which was acclaimed in his poems by the great writers of our America, as the Guatemalan Miguel Angel Asturias in his 'Credo':

I believe in freedom, Mother of America,

Creator of sweet seas on earth,

And in Bolivar, her son, our Lord

Who was born in Venezuela."

Long Live Cuba!

Long Live Venezuela!

Long Live Canada!

Long Live Bolivar and Marti

Long live the Great Homeland!

Speech given at celebration for the July 26th Movement & the Gains of the Cuban Revolution as well as the 233rd birthday of Simón Bolívar organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity With Cuba (VCSC)



Ese mismo año, el 28 de octubre de 2015 Venezuela es nuevamente reelegida en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) para el período 2016 – 2018.

El pasado 23 de abril de este año, Venezuela asumió la Presidencia Pro Tempore (PPT) de la UNASUR, con el compromiso de "fortalecer la unidad regional ante los ataques contra las democracias latinoamericanas promovidos por sectores conservadores dentro y fuera del hemisferio sur".

El reciente 14 de junio de 2016, en la ciudad de Nueva York, la República Bolivariana de Venezuela resultó electa como miembro principal del Consejo Económico y Social de Naciones Unidas (ECOSOC) con 177 votos, junto con Colombia y San Vicente y las Granadinas para representar al grupo regional de América Latina y el Caribe.

Por otra parte, el 23 de junio de este año, fue derrotada la Pretensión del Secretario General Luis Almagro de aplicar la Carta Democrática a Venezuela. El Consejo Permanente de la OEA decidió tomar Nota. Ningún delegado solicitó someter lo discutido a votación. Por el contrario, la mayoría de los países miembros se pronunció a favor de continuar con los diálogos solicitados por el presidente Maduro y promovido por la UNASUR, junto a los expresidentes José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (España), Leonel Fernández (República Dominicana) y Martín Torrijos (Panamá) entre el gobierno y la oposición, avalando así la legitimidad del gobierno del presidente Nicolás Maduro e invalidando la supuesta ruptura del orden constitucional.

Para finalizar, quisiera expresar que, Hugo Chávez, nos enseñó a ver y sentir a Bolívar de otra manera y a defender siempre la autodeterminación de cada uno de nuestros pueblos, por ello, tenemos una gran responsabilidad y un compromiso de continuar esta herencia política, ideológica y humanista.

Como dice el presidente Nicolás Maduro:

"hoy seguimos leales por el camino de Bolívar, defendiendo nuestra Patria y forjando victorias con el Legado de Chávez. Yo seré el presidente de la paz de esta Patria, no habrá chantaje de nadie, creo en la paz como el único camino para la prosperidad, para la vida, para el socialismo, para el desarrollo de las garantías y derechos sociales del pueblo".

¡Viva Venezuela!

¡Viva Canadá!

¡Viva la Patria Grande!

¡Viva la Revolución Bolivariana!

¡Muchas gracias!

Discurso pronunciado en la celebración por el Movimiento 26 de Julio y los logros de la revolución cubana, así como el 233 cumpleaños de Simón Bolívar, organizado por Comunidades de Vancouver en Solidaridad con Cuba (VCSC)

Por Thomas Davies
Traducido por Noah Fine

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

El viernes 8 de julio la campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela de Fire This Time, organizó otro piquete mensual en solidaridad con Venezuela frente al consulado EE.UU. en el centro de Vancouver. Los demostraciones son una respuesta enérgica y desafiante a la intensificación de la campaña de la derecha estadounidense respaldados por derrocar al gobierno revolucionario del presidente Nicolás Maduro. La participación del gobierno EE.UU. en la campaña contra Venezuela fue una vez más claro cuando el congreso estadounidense aprobó nuevas sanciones unilaterales dirigidas a funcionarios del gobierno venezolano en el mismo día que el manifestación.

El piquete fue dirigido por el organizador de la campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela Alison Bodine, quien denunció el plan para las nuevas sanciones como innecesaria, provocadora, criminal e hipócrita. Señaló que el gobierno estadounidense había acordado menos de un mes antes de iniciar conversaciones diplomáticas con Venezuela con el objetivo declarado de calmar las tensiones entre los dos países.

Participantes marcharon y cantaron en voz alta frente al consulado de EE.UU., mientras

Los habitantes de Vancouver siguen su apoyo al proceso revolucionario bolivariano de Venezuela!

que la distribución de información a los transeúntes acerca de las razones buenas de la protesta en solidaridad con Venezuela.

A continuación, la manifestación se trasladó a la Galería de Arte de Vancouver, una de las zonas más transitadas de tráfico en Vancouver. Una mesa de exposición pública se estableció y organizadores recogieron firmas en una petición exigiendo presidente Obama derogar el Decreto Ejecutivo contra Venezuela que dice que Venezuela es una "amenaza a la seguridad nacional EE.UU." Este movimiento injustificada es más que otra indicación de la naturaleza extremadamente provocativa y la intromisión del Gobierno de Estados Unidos en los asuntos internos de Venezuela.

Los organizadores habló con mucha gente acerca de los grandes avances logrados por la Revolución Bolivariana en la asistencia sanitaria, la educación, la vivienda y la alfabetización - y cómo el gobierno de los EE.UU. está tratando de revertir este progreso. Este es un trabajo importante ya que

hay una constante campaña de mentiras, calumnias y desinformación contra Venezuela en los principales medios de comunicación de todo el mundo.

A medida que millones de venezolanos continúan movilizándose en defensa de su gobierno y de la Revolución Bolivariana, Fire This Time seguirá organizando estas acciones en solidaridad con su lucha que es tan importante para las personas oprimidas no solo para Latinoamérica pero por el mundo entero:

> ¡OBAMA DEROGUE EL DECRETO YA!

> ¡EE.UU. RESPETE LA SOBERANÍA Y AUTODETERMINACIÓN DEL PUEBLO VENEZOLANO!

> ¡VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN BOLIVARIANA!



By Thomas Davies

On Friday July 8th, the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice – Venezuela Solidarity Campaign organized another monthly solidarity picket in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. The pickets are an energetic and defiant response to the escalation of U.S-backed rightwing campaigning to overthrow the revolutionary government of President Nicolas Maduro. U.S. government involvement in the campaign against Venezuela was once again made clear as the U.S. House of Representatives approved unilateral new sanctions targeting Venezuelan government officials on the same day as the picket.

The picket was led by Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity campaign organizer Alison Bodine, who denounced the plan for new sanctions as unnecessary, provocative, criminal and hypocritical. She pointed out that the U.S government had agreed less than a month before to begin diplomatic talks with Venezuela with the stated objective of calming tensions between the two countries.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) member and long-time social

justice activist and U.S civil rights movement organizer David Whittlesey reminded picketers that this is part of a long established trend of the U.S government targeting independent governments who don't take their orders from Washington, DC.

Pickers marched and chanted loudly in front to the U.S. Consulate, while distributing

information to those passing about the many good reasons for the protest in solidarity with Venezuela.

The demonstration then moved to the Vancouver Art Gallery, one of the busiest foot traffic areas in Vancouver. A public display and information table was set up and organizers collected signatures on the Fire This Time petition demanding U.S. President Obama repeal the Executive Decree he recently renewed which labels Venezuela as a "threat to U.S national security". This

unjustified move is just another indication of the extremely provocative and meddling nature of the U.S Government in the internal affairs of Venezuela.

Organizers spoke with many people about the great gains made by Bolivarian Revolution in healthcare, education, housing and literacy – and how the U.S. government is trying to reverse this progress.

As millions of Venezuelans continue to mobilize in defence of their government and the Bolivarian Revolution, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity campaign will continue to organize actions in solidarity with their struggle which is so important for oppressed people, not only in Latin America but around the entire world:

> U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA

> PRESIDENT OBAMA REPEAL THE DECREE NOW!

> U.S. RESPECT THE SOVEREIGNTY & SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!

Vancouverites Continue Support for Venezuela and the Bolivarian Revolution!

A Busy Month for Friends of Cuba in Vancouver & Seattle! Lift the Blockade on Cuba! Return Guantanamo to Cuba!

By Noah Fine

The month of July was full of vibrant activities celebrating and practising solidarity with the people of Cuba. The following are reports on activities that took place last month in Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA.

Now is the Time! Pastors for Peace Sends Off the 27th Annual Caravan to Cuba!

On Sunday July 3rd, 2016 supporters of Cuba from both sides of the U.S./Canada border gathered at the Peace Arch Park border crossing to help send off the 27th annual Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba. The Caravan has been bringing people and humanitarian aid to Cuba illegally for almost 3 decades in its campaign to end the cruel and inhuman U.S. blockade against Cuba. On this warm sunny day participants shared in on a potluck lunch while listening to live music. Before the group marched down towards the border crossing a number of speakers and presenters from Seattle and Vancouver



addressed the participants. Most notably was the presence of Cuban revolutionary and Queer rights activist, Isel Calzadilla Acosta. Isel spoke to the gathered crowd about the hardships that have been caused to Cuba due to the U.S. Blockade and thanked all of Cuba's friends around the world for their support in fighting against it.

After Isel's inspiring words the group marched down to the border crossing and joined hands while holding signs and banners demanding an end to the U.S. Blockade on Cuba. The annual picnic and rally is organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) in conjunction with Seattle-Cuba Friendship Committee and IFCO Pastors for Peace.

Pastors for Peace Caravan events continued on July 5th as 3 car loads of Cuba solidarity activists from Vancouver joined the Seattle-Cuba Friendship Committee for a protest action demanding an end to the U.S. Blockade in downtown Seattle. Among the speakers at the protest were VCSC organizer Thomas

Davies and IFCO Pastors for Peace Executive Director, Gail Walker.

Vancouver Celebrates the July 26th Movement & the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!

On July 24th, 2016 over 70 supporters of Cuba gathered in East Vancouver's Trout Lake Park for an energetic celebration of the anniversary of the spark that ignited the Cuban Revolution. July 26, 1953 marks the day that Fidel Castro led a group of young revolutionaries to attack one of the U.S. backed dictatorships army barracks in order to take weapons and begin the revolution. The attack led by Fidel was a defeat however the defeat became a point of inspiration for millions of Cubans who later joined Fidel to see the triumph of the revolution.

A delicious BBQ dinner, wonderful live Latin American music, an Indigenous Hip Hop group were all part of the dynamic celebration of Cuba's achievements. Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with



The evening also featured Venezuelan Consul General in Vancouver, Wilfredo Perez Bianco. July 24 marked the 233rd birthday of liberator of Latin America Simon Bolivar. The Venezuelan Consul addressed the crowd speaking about revolutionary hero Bolivar before updating participants on the gains and challenges of the Venezuelan Bolivarian Revolution. Wilfredo's talk was greeted with cheers of "Viva Venezuela!"

Other parts of the events program included poetry, a dance lesson, children's games and much more. The annual celebration was again a success this year with more people joining in to learn about and support the gains of the Cuban Revolution.

Monthly Protests Continue in Vancouver to Demand: Lift the Blockade! Return Guantanamo!

On Tuesday July 19th, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade-Vancouver (FCAB-Van), came together again for their monthly protest in front of the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver. Every month since the announcement of the reestablishment of U.S.-Cuba relations the group has gathered to say loud and clear: Normalization starts with an end to the blockade and the return of Guantanamo to Cuba! In between energetic rounds of picketing the U.S. Consulate, participants gathered to hear from a number of speakers who explained the history and current situation of the cruel and inhuman U.S. blockade on Cuba. Before gathering for a group photo, FCAB co-coordinator Azza Rojbi committed to continuing the monthly campaign as long as the U.S. continues its unjust attacks on Cuba.

To get involved or find out more about Cuba solidarity events in Vancouver please visit:

www.vancubasolidarity.com and www.vancubavblockade.org





By Thomas Davies

A HUGE SUCCESS: 8TH CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA ATTRACTED HUNDREDS OF ACTIVISTS FROM ALL OVER AMERICA



ICAP President Kenia Serrano Puig and ICAP Vice President, Cuban 5 Hero Fernando Gonzalez, address final plenary

8th Continental Gathering in Solidarity with Cuba held in the capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo, drew to a close on a high note with the successful adoption of a Final Declaration and a new united Continental Plan of Action created and agreed upon by the 400 delegates from 30 countries.

The Continental Plan of Action, which was presented to the final plenary by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) organizer Thomas Davies, is especially important. It is the first Continental Plan created since the December 17th, 2014 announcement of the reestablishment of formal diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and the freeing of the remaining Cuban 5 political prisoners held in US jails.

Previously groups internationally had focused on activities for the freedom of the Cuban 5, especially the successful "5th of the Month for the 5" campaign which saw coordinated actions on the 5th of every month. The new plan of action begins by reinforcing the campaign for groups to hold similar activities on the 17th of every month.

These actions focus on the 3 major demands of the international Cuba solidarity campaign:

Lift the immoral and illegal US Blockade of Cuba

The US must return the territory of Guantanamo Bay to Cuba

US Government must stop the creation and financing of "regime change" programs against the Cuban government.

The gathering also focused on some important remaining political prisoner cases in the US, especially the case of Ana Belen Montes. Miriam Montes Mock, her first cousin, explained how Ana Belen, a former US Defence Intelligence Agency agent, was sentenced to 25 years in jail for sharing classified information with Cuba. She never asked for payment, and this information saved hundreds of lives and allowed Cuba to protect itself from aggressive attacks organized and paid for by the US government. For acting on her conscience she has been imprisoned in the US for the past 14 years.

A large delegation of close to 100 people from Puerto Rico also energetically reinforced the need to continue focusing on the case of Oscar Lopez Rivera. The 73 year old Puerto Rican revolutionary and freedom fighter has been imprisoned in the US for 35 years for the accusation of being a member of a Puerto Rican nationalist group. This Continental Meeting was co-organized by the the Puerto Rican Solidarity with Cuba Committee, the Dominican Republic Solidarity with Cuba Campaign and the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

Representing the Canada Delegation, VCSC and Friends of Cuba Against the US Blockade (FCAB), actively participated in all areas of the Continental meeting,

and shared many examples from their ongoing campaigns. FCAB continues to organize monthly protests in front of the US Consulate in Vancouver on the 17th over every month, and VCSC has organized a full 2 day program celebrating the 90th Birthday of Comandante Fidel Castro.

Frei Betto, the famous Brazilian priest and liberation theologian, gave a special presentation where he touched on his time as a political prisoner, his ongoing friendship with Fidel Castro and the current regional political context. He urged groups to return to their home countries to organize in solidarity with Cuba, and also emphasized sharing with young people the revolutionary and human values represented by Fidel and the Cuban Revolution.

ICAP President Kenia Serrano Puig and Vice President Fernando Gonzalez were present for the entire 3 day gathering, and gave closing remarks to the final plenary. Significantly, Fernando pointed out that as one of the "Cuban 5", he was a political prisoner in a US jail cell during the last Continental Meeting. He thanked the solidarity organizations for their hard work and successful campaign for his freedom. He also emphasized that even though there have been some steps forward in US-Cuba relations, the objective of the US government continues to be the destruction of the Cuban Revolution. He urged groups to build on their successes and continue their important Cuba solidarity campaigns.

Fernando's remarks were met with huge applause as the hundreds of delegates began shouting slogans of "Abajo el Bloqueo!" as well as singing and joining hands to close the important continental meeting united, motivated and determined.

Lift the US Blockade on Cuba Now!
Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!
End 'Regime Change' Programs Against Cuba Now!

*Follow Thomas on Twitter:
@thomasdavies59*



Opening ceremony with 400 delegates at 8th Continental Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba

By Alison Bodine

Every summer streets in cities across British Columbia, Canada become a whole lot brighter with rainbow flags flying high in recognition of LGBTQ2+ Pride celebrations. As part of a global movement, Pride in Vancouver and BC is both a celebration of the rights that the LGBTQ2+ community have won, as well as a declaration that the fight for basic human rights for all LGBTQ2+ people is not over. With the participation of thousands of people, it is also a significant opportunity for social justice fighters to join in the celebrations and invite of LGBTQ2+ people and their allies to get involved in pushing the struggle for LGBTQ2+ rights forward. Pride events are an important opportunity to distribute revolutionary literature, to open a dialog on all working class causes and poor and oppressed peoples struggles because the

to declare Viva Cuba! Viva Pride! The lively VCSC contingent also carried with them colourful banners displaying the slogans of Cuba's LGBTQ+ rights movement "Cuba Says: Sexual Diversity is not dangerous! Homophobia and Transphobia are!" and "Cuba Says: LGBTQ+ Rights are Human Rights!"

Once again this year, the Free Chelsea Manning Campaign - Vancouver also joined in the Pride parade in order to bring the campaign for Chelsea's freedom to the queer community and their allies through a bright banner, signs and petitioning. The banner celebrates Chelsea's struggle as a political prisoner, whistle-blower on U.S. war crimes and a trans woman with the demands: "Free Chelsea Manning LGBTQ+

response to their signs and petition demanding clemency for Chelsea Manning.

Following the Trans March there was also the 13th annual Dyke March, which held a strong march on Commercial Drive followed by a cultural festival. Here, the table for Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba was non-stop busy with people curious about the gains that have been made by the LGBTQ+ movement in Cuba and how people in Canada can learn from their organizing.



PRIDE 2016

Vancouver and BC

CELEBRATE LGBTQ2+ RIGHTS!

Thousands March in the Streets!



LGBTQ2+ community is a natural ally of the working class towards liberation.

The largest Pride celebration in BC is held in Vancouver. This year, on Sunday, July 31 hundreds of thousands of people, watched as over 100 parade entries including activists, unions, businesses, NGO and community groups marched by. Among the rainbows, sparkles and bubbles, there were also proudly waving Cuban flags, picket signs and banners including one dedicated to Wiki-leaks Whistle-blower and soldier of humanity Chelsea Manning.

For the 10th consecutive year, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) joined the Vancouver Pride parade

Hero! Soldier of Humanity! Wiki-Leaks Whistle-Blower!"

Although the Vancouver Pride Parade is the largest of the events, it is but one of many important celebrations of LGBTQ+ rights that took place in BC this year. Both Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with

Cuba (VCSC) and the Free Chelsea Manning Campaign - Vancouver participated in a diversity of events in the Lower Mainland. The first of these events was the East Side Pride, held on June 25, in East Vancouver. This was followed by Surrey Pride, which held it's very first Pride festival the next day on June 26.

The days leading up to the Vancouver Pride Parade are also an important time for the Trans and Dyke community and their allies. On Friday, July 29 a Trans March on Commercial Drive was organized as both a protest against Transphobia and discrimination and a celebration of gender diversity. The Free Chelsea Manning Campaign - Vancouver received a great

The first Pride parade was held in Los Angeles in 1970. It was organized in order to mark the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, a series of protests by the gay community in New York City that ignited the queer rights movement. Now, they are held in hundreds of cities and countries around the world. In Vancouver and BC, Pride events are organized from the central downtown core of Vancouver, to Surrey and Abbotsford, and from cities on Vancouver Island such as Nanaimo and Victoria all the way to Kelowna in the interior of BC.

With each event, new communities of LGBTQ2+ people and their allies come out to celebrate rights that have been won through struggle, mobilization and action. As people engaged in the struggle for LGBTQ2+ rights and for all poor, working and oppressed people, we must take this opportunity to once again bring the struggle to the streets, to reach-out to the LGBTQ2+ community and their allies to get involved and show our pride in the LGBTQ2+ fighters and organizers that have come before us!





FREE CHELSEA MANNING!

By Murtaza Hussain*

U.S. Army Whistleblower Chelsea Manning tried to kill herself on July 5 in her cell at Fort Leavenworth military prison. Now, military officials are considering filing charges in connection to the suicide attempt that could make the terms of her imprisonment much more punitive — including indefinite solitary confinement — while possibly denying her any chance of receiving parole.

According to a charge sheet posted by the American Civil Liberties Union, Manning was informed by military officials on Thursday that she is under investigation for “resisting the force cell move team,” “prohibited property,” and “conduct which threatens.” In the weeks following her suicide attempt, she has been active on social media, thanking her followers for their moral support.

Manning’s treatment in prison since her 2010 arrest has repeatedly generated outrage among civil liberties advocates. The punitive tactics that have been employed against her include stripping her naked in her cell on a nightly basis, extended solitary confinement, and denial of medical necessities like

eyeglasses. In 2011, then-State Department spokesperson P.J. Crowley publicly described Manning’s treatment in prison as “ridiculous, counterproductive, and stupid.”

Following a 14-month investigation into Manning’s treatment by the United Nations special rapporteur on torture, the U.N. accused the U.S. government of holding Manning in conditions that constituted “cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment,” particularly with regard to the extended use of pretrial solitary confinement. The harsh measures the military

abusive treatment.

“The government has long been aware of Chelsea’s distress associated with the denial of medical care related to her gender transition and yet delayed and denied the treatment recognized as necessary,” ACLU attorney Chase Strangio said in a statement. “Now, while Chelsea is suffering the darkest depression she has experienced since her arrest, the government is taking actions to punish her for that pain. It is unconscionable and we hope that the investigation is immediately ended and that she is given the health care that she needs to recover.”

In a statement released by Manning after her 2013 guilty plea on espionage charges, she asked for a pardon and said that she had been motivated by moral outrage over details of U.S. military killings and torture of civilians in Iraq. “In our zeal to kill the enemy, we internally debated the definition of torture,” she said. “If you deny my request for a pardon, I will serve my time knowing that

sometimes you have to pay a heavy price to live in a free society.”

Manning is currently six years into serving a 35-year sentence

@mazmhussain

*Reprinted from the Intercept
www.theintercept.com



Supporters of Chelsea Manning protest at the Pentagon - August 18, 2015

has employed during Manning’s detention have led to suspicions that the government is attempting make an example of her over her whistleblowing activities.

The latest threat to charge Manning with offenses related to her own attempted suicide seems to be proceeding in the same spirit of

arrest, the government is taking actions to punish her for that pain. It is unconscionable and we hope that the investigation is immediately ended and that she is given the health care that she needs to recover.”

Since she was first taken into custody in 2010, Chelsea, a transgender woman being forced to serve out her sentence in an all-male prison, has been subjected to long stretches of solitary confinement and denied medical treatment related to her gender dysphoria.

These new charges, which Army employees verbally informed Chelsea were related to the July 5th incident, include, “resisting the force cell move team,” “prohibited property,” and “conduct which threatens.” If convicted, Chelsea could face punishment including indefinite solitary confinement, reclassification into maximum security, and an additional nine years in medium custody. They may negate any chances of parole.

“The U.S. government’s treatment of Chelsea is a travesty. Those in charge should know that the whole world is watching, and we won’t stand idly by while this administration continues to harass and abuse Chelsea Manning,” said Fight for the Future campaign director Evan Greer. The group advocates for civil liberties and free speech and collected more than 100,000 signatures last year when the Army threatened Chelsea with solitary confinement for possession of LGBTQ reading material and an expired tube of toothpaste.

In addition to these new charges, The Army continues to deny Chelsea access to basic health care, including inadequate medical treatment after her suicide attempt.

Chelsea dictated the complete contents of the charge sheet to a supporter over the phone; the transcription can be found at: <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/chelsea-manning-charge-sheet>

More about the case can be found at: <https://www.aclu.org/cases/manning-v-hagel-et-al>

Statement of the American Civil Liberties Association (ACLU)

Leavenworth, Kan. — Imprisoned whistleblower Chelsea Manning received a document from Army officials today informing her that she is being investigated for serious new charges related to her July 5th attempt to take her own life.

If convicted of these “administrative offenses,” she could be placed in indefinite solitary confinement for the remainder of her decades-long sentence.

“It is deeply troubling that Chelsea is now being subjected to an investigation and possible punishment for her attempt to take her life. The government has long been aware of Chelsea’s distress associated with the denial of medical care related to her gender transition and yet delayed and denied the treatment recognized as necessary,” said ACLU Staff Attorney Chase Strangio. “Now, while Chelsea is suffering the darkest depression she has experienced since her

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**INTERNATIONAL
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PEOPLE**

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Sheba for Democracy and Human
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OUR HERITAGE



Rosa Luxemburg

Revolutionary Marxist Leader
1871-1919

Excerpts from Rosa Luxemburg's defense when she was tried on February 20, 1914 for allegedly inciting soldiers to disobedience.

We are of the opinion that wars can be waged only so long as the working class take part in them with enthusiasm, because it regards them as necessary; or at least patiently puts up with them. On the other hand, when the great majority of working people come to the conclusion - and to being them to this conclusion, to arouse this consciousness, is just the task that we social democrats [refers to revolutionary social democrats in Germany at the time] set for ourselves - when the majority of people coming to the conclusion that wars are barbarous, deeply immoral and reactionary phenomenon hostile to the interest of the people, then wars will become impossible - even it, for the moment, soldiers still obey the orders of their superiors.

continued from page 3

of the war on Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the US are continuing their air strikes and drone strikes on the country while claiming to want to find a diplomatic and peaceful solution to the war. They are basically trying to ease the international pressure by creating a climate of reconciliation and of endless peace negotiations while continuing to inflict death and destruction to the country.

The US, Saudi Arabia and their imperialist allies are denying the people of Yemen of their human rights, self-determination and sovereignty. But the people of Yemen have not stopped fighting back for their rights to choose the future of their country without foreign intervention.

Hands Off Yemen!

As peace loving people living in Canada, the United States, and around the world, we must support the struggle of the Yemeni people by demanding an end to the ongoing US drone war and the Saudi led bombing campaign on the country.

Vancouver's peace coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) have been organizing, rallies, petition drives and educational forums to demand an end to the Saudi led bombing campaign against Yemen and the lift of the blockade to allow commercial goods and humanitarian aid to reach people in need.

MAWO will also be participating in the First International Conference in Support of the Yemeni People held in London, UK, August 20th -21st. The conference is sponsored by Stop the War Coalition, Campaign Against Arms Trade, Human Rights for Yemen, Sheba for Democracy and Human Rights and Arabian Rights Watch Association.

This conference is a very important effort to bring together individuals, groups and coalitions against the war on Yemen. It will present a platform for international delegates to discuss the situation in Yemen and join their voices to demand an end to the Saudi led war and aggression on the country. For more information on the conference visit: www.shebarights.org

In Canada, we invite you to join the MAWO Yemen campaign which includes protests, street actions and public forums, to learn more and join us visit: www.mawovancouver.ca

The victory of the Yemeni people in their struggle would not only mean defeat for the US, but a victory for people all around the Middle East and the entire world who are struggling for their sovereignty and democratic and human rights. The US, Saudi and the Saudi led coalition must respect self-determination for people of Yemen and hands off of their internal affair. This vicious, brutal, criminal and immoral bombing and destruction of Yemen must stop immediately.

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Malcolm X
Last Speech,
February 14 1965

But despite the fact that I saw that Islam was a religion of brotherhood, I also had to face reality. And when I got back into this American society, I'm not in a society that practices brotherhood. I'm in a society that might preach it on Sunday, but they don't practice it on no day -- on any day. And so, since I could see that America itself is a society where there is no brotherhood and that this society is controlled primarily by racists and segregationists -- and it is -- who are in Washington, D.C., in positions of power. And from Washington, D.C., they exercise the same forms of brutal oppression against dark-skinned people in South and North Vietnam, or in the Congo, or in Cuba, or in any other place on this earth where they're trying to exploit and oppress. This is a society whose government doesn't hesitate to inflict the most brutal form of punishment and oppression upon dark-skinned people all over the world.

To wit, right now what's going on in and around Saigon and Hanoi and in the Congo and elsewhere. They are violent when their interests are at stake. But all of that violence that they display at the international level, when you and I want just a little bit of freedom, we're supposed to be nonviolent. They're violent. They're violent in Korea, they're violent in Germany, they're violent in the South Pacific, they're violent in Cuba, they're violent wherever they go. But when it comes time for you and me to protect ourselves against lynchings, they tell us to be nonviolent.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation launches "No to NATO! Canada Out of NATO!" campaign at International Day of Action Against NATO

By Janine Solanki

On Saturday July 9th, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) answered an international call to action from European antiwar and anti-NATO groups to organize against the NATO Summit taking place in Warsaw, Poland July 8-9, 2016. MAWO's antiwar rally and petition campaign as part of this International Day of Action against NATO demanded "No to NATO! Canada Out of NATO!"

NATO is an increasingly dangerous tool of imperialist intervention. This is the military body that dropped more than 14,000 bombs on Yugoslavia in 1999, that conducted much of the occupation forces in Afghanistan, and bombed Libya into chaos in 2011. At the NATO summit in Warsaw, NATO's next military action was decided upon. NATO is now stationing four battalions of 1000 troops each on

Russia's borders in Eastern Europe, flexing it's military muscles and saber-rattling against Russia.

It is especially critical that peace-loving people in Canada respond to NATO's actions, as Canada is playing a key role in this latest move by NATO. Canada will be commanding one of the four battalions, and committing at least 450 troops, six CF-18 fighter jets and armored vehicles, as well as will continue to deploy naval frigates which have already been operating in the region for the last two years.

MAWO's antiwar rally and petition campaign launched a new MAWO petition addressed to the Government of Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, which demands that Canada immediately withdraw from NATO and to remove all Canadian troops and military equipment from Europe and all NATO missions. Protesters approached passer-bys and received a strong response from people who were against Canada's participation in NATO and added their signature to this petition.

Protesters and people passing by gathered together to hear from speakers at the rally who spoke out against NATO and the developments taking place at the NATO summit occurring this same weekend. Coast Salish Elder and long time social justice activist Kelly White opened the rally with drumming and chanting, leading the crowd to chant "MAWO for Peace!" Azza Rojbi, MAWO executive committee member then announced the new "Canada Out of NATO" petition and read out the petition, inviting people to add their signature to it. Alison Bodine, MAWO chairperson, spoke on NATO's imperialist atrocities and how Canada has had a large role in NATO military actions both in the past and in the newly announced military buildup on Russia's border. Protesters were able to connect with the action held in New York City as part of this International Day of Action via a phone report. Speaking from the New York City action was Joe Lombardo, Co-chair of the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC), an antiwar and social justice coalition in the United States. Joe spoke about the New York action and the NATO summit in Warsaw, stating that it is "very very clear to many people that what is really happening is the beginning of staging up and



militarizing, and pushing more towards war with Russia.

This MAWO action served not only to participate in this important International Day of Action, but also to launch MAWO's "No to NATO! Canada Out of NATO!" campaign. For updates and to get involved please visit www.mawovancouver.org or follow MAWO on twitter @mawovan

No to NATO!
Canada Out of NATO!

Follow Janine Solanki on Twitter:
[@janinesolanki](https://twitter.com/janinesolanki)

Battle of Ideas Press

WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WAY FORWARD?

WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WAY FORWARD?

BY NITA PALMER

BY NITA PALMER

Nita Palmer is an author and researcher on the war in Afghanistan. She is a member of the editorial board of Vancouver, Canada-based social justice newspaper Fire This Time.

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CANADA OUT OF NATO NOW!

Friday August 26
Vancouver Art Gallery
Robson Street at Howe Street
Downtown Vancouver, Canada

5pm

MONEY FOR JOBS, HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, NOT FOR WAR!

ANTIWAR RALLY & PETITION CAMPAIGN

NO TO NATO! NO TO WAR!

US/UK/CANADA/France/NATO:
NO TO WAR ON SYRIA, IRAQ, Libya AND AFGHANISTAN!
SAUDI ARABIA HANDS OFF YEMEN, SYRIA AND IRAQ!
CANADA OUT OF IRAQ! CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!
TURKEY OUT OF SYRIA AND IRAQ!
NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA!
Israel Hands Off Palestine!
End the Occupation Now!
End the Blockade of Cuba!
Lift All Sanctions Against Iran!
No to War & Occupation!
Yes to Self-Determination!

Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO
www.mawovancouver.org

CELEBRATING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF FIDEL!

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY
AUGUST 12-13 2016**
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VANCOUVER, CANADA

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IT DOES
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HISTORY WILL
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**FRIDAY & SATURDAY
AUGUST 12-13 2016**

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FIDEL ES FIDEL: PUBLIC PHOTO EXHIBITION

Friday August 12 & Saturday August 13 11am-5pm

Featuring beautiful photographic prints & information about Fidel's vibrant life & leadership by Cuban photographer Roberto Chile **Vancouver Public Library (Outside on Robson & Homer St.)**

Friday August 12, 7pm
**COMMUNITY CULTURAL &
POLITICAL NIGHT**

"Condemn me, it does not matter.
History will absolve me"



- Keynote and Featured Guest Speakers!
- Vancouver's premier of the movie "Chavez y Fidel, hasta siempre" by Cuban director Roberto Chile
- Live Music, Poetry!
- Raffle!

Saturday August 13, 7:30pm
AN EVENING WITH FIDEL

We welcome actor, writer and producer,

Tim Perez

in "An Evening With Fidel" a dramatic play taken from Fidel Castro's iconic speeches, interviews and memoirs.



It is about political awakenings, rebellion, childhood and ... a life that moved and shaped world history.

After the play there will be a reception and Q & A session with the actor and producer Tim Perez!

Entrance by donation
(a suggested donation of \$10)