

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



Fire This Time!

REVOLUTIONARY VENEZUELA STANDS STRONG!



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REPEAL BILL C-51! SCRAP BILL C-59!



A speech by Thomas Davies organizer with the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51

This speech was given by Thomas Davies at the seminar organized by the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 titled "Four Years in the Fight to Defend Democratic & Human Rights in Canada - Where We Are, Where We Need to Go", April 15, 2019.

Transcript has been edited for brevity and clarity.

The Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 started a little over four years ago, and we started in the context of a federal election. Since then I think it's important to note that in our 212 bi-weekly actions we've handed out over 50,000 brochures, gotten over 5,000 petition signatures, and have had a consistent presence everywhere in the Lower Mainland.

I'm proud that we've been able to keep the campaign consistent. But something I want to emphasize is that we wouldn't have been able to keep a consistent campaign going if every week we didn't see evidence that people were responding to what we were talking about - either people angry about Bill C-51 and C-59's attacks on democratic and human rights or who had a lot of questions.

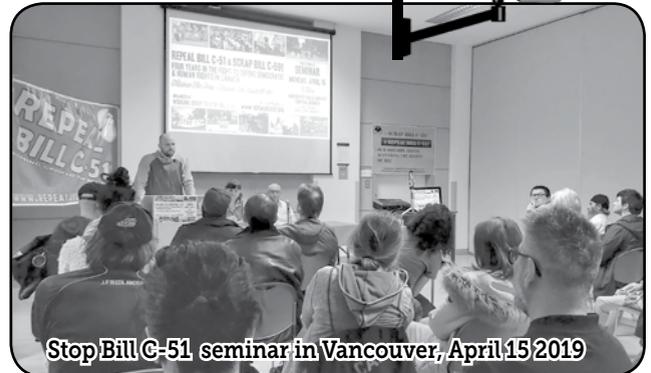
So that was the context that we the Working Group started working in, and that's why we thought it

was important to call this seminar - because we're going into another federal election and people are going to be talking about politics. People are going to be talking about Prime Minister Trudeau's record and we think it's important to point out that he campaigned on the slogan of "Real Change Now" and promised it would be a priority to fix Bill C-51's attacks on democratic and human rights. What we've seen over the last three

years is not a "failure," because I don't think it was accidental that Prime Minister Trudeau has not "fixed" Bill C-51. We've even seen some worse proposals from Trudeau than we saw from Harper.

Crisis and Crackdown

I think it's also important to note that Bill C-51 didn't just come out of thin air. It's not something just happening in Canada. After September 11, 2001 we saw the Patriot Act in the United States and we saw every other advanced capitalist country like England, France and Germany come up with these anti-terrorism laws. In every instance they were using the excuse of protecting people to place huge limitations on democratic and human rights, on privacy, and basically to proportionally lower the



Stop Bill C-51 seminar in Vancouver, April 15 2019

has gotten better?" I think the truth across the world is that life is getting tougher for poor and working people. They said after the 2008 financial crisis there was a "jobless recovery". That was the new term invented because the corporations recovered their profits, but people didn't recover their jobs or if they did they didn't recover their salaries.

So it's in that context of wars and economic crisis, where poor and working people are facing harder and harder lives, that Bill C-51 and Bill C-59 came into being. I don't think anybody here is fooled that it was just because Stephen Harper or Justin Trudeau were really all that concerned about terrorism happening in Canada. These laws were brought in to limit the ability to organize of poor and working people. It's not accidental.

History Repeating Itself

And this isn't the first time these things have happened.

We know that laws limiting freedoms usually start by using racist targeting of immigrants and then move to full scale attacks on

those who are organizing to defend their rights against undemocratic attacks. During World War I, government fear campaigns and targeting of Ukrainians, Austrians, and Germans moved almost immediately to attacks on trade unions and arrests of antiwar organizers. During World War II, racist attacks on Japanese, Italians, and Germans again moved quickly to attacks on working class organizations and silencing



Stop Bill C-51 rally in Vancouver, April 18 2015

accountability requirements of government, police and secret police. Also, since September 11, 2001 we've been in a period of escalating and ongoing wars and occupations, that I call the new era of war and occupation.

Since 2008 we've been in an era of economic crisis, where I think it would be really safe to ask people in this room, "Does anyone feel like their standard of living has improved in the last ten years? That healthcare or education

antiwar voices. Between 30,000 to 35,000 'enemy nationals' and Canadian citizens were interned, including people of German and Japanese background. 20,000 Japanese Canadians were removed from the West Coast of Canada in 1942 alone.

All of these were justified in the name of national security and all of these were used not in the interests of protecting people but, in the interests of protecting the government's domination. And so that its narrative of justifying war and occupation remained unchallenged.

And we're seeing it played out exactly the same way today. When Harper announced Bill C-51 in his press conference he said, "Canadians are targeted by these terrorists for no other reason than that we are Canadians. They want to harm us because they hate our society and the values it represents. Because they hate pluralism, they hate tolerance, and they hate the freedom of others, the freedom we enjoy. Through their deeds, these jihadists have declared war on Canada, and with their words, they urge others to join their campaign of terror against Canadians. Ladies and gentlemen, it would be a grave mistake to ignore their threats." If you look at the report that the Trudeau government released justifying Bill C-59, the same justification is used - manufacturing the threat of foreign terrorists from the Middle East and continuing in a different way this Islamophobic campaign.

Trudeau's Deception

Trudeau ran on a campaign of "Real Change Now" and prioritizing fixing Bill C-51. A lot of people had a lot of faith in what he was going to do. So a lot of the energy from that movement was sucked into the election. People were waiting after he was elected for the "real change" to come and now we're heading into the next federal election and he still has not delivered any change at all.

Trudeau also stalled. He organized a phoney public consultation on national security which was just a questionnaire on a difficult to find website, as well as hearings in five different cities across Canada. In each of these hearings the public had two hours to come and express their opinions. So 10 hours total of open public input for the 35 million people across Canada.

A lot of progressive organizations and people

who had led the movement against Bill C. 51 also saw Trudeau's proposal of Bill C-59 as the lesser of two evils compared to Bill C-51. Saying things like "Bill C-51 was bad, Bill



Passerby signing petition at the Stop Bill C-51 picket in New Westminster, January 8 2019

C-59 is bad...but at least we get this oversight committee at least they've tightened up some of the language. At least...at least...at least."

Human Rights Are Non-Negotiable

The NDP and unfortunately some other civil liberties and press freedom organizations got caught up in the lesser of two evils campaign and they started bargaining and negotiating with human rights. And that's something that I think is fundamental: we can't go into the issue of human rights as if they are up for



Stop Bill C-51 picket in Vancouver, March 1 2016

negotiation.

Your freedom of expression, your right to privacy, your right to assembly, those aren't the things that any government has the right to take away. The recognition of these rights by the government of Canada was because poor and working people fought for that recognition. So we don't bargain with those things.

So many got caught up in trying to "trade horses" with human rights in the Parliament, and they got away from what had made the movement so successful to begin with: people on the streets demanding "Repeal Bill C-51 Now!" A clear demand that everyone was

uniting around. People had been mobilized, and the Harper government had been losing legitimacy - because the people were on the streets showing what their actual feelings were. So, once it was diverted from that effective strategy that was across Canada, they made it a lot more difficult to organize.

Potential Still Exists

In Vancouver we've done a really good job through our consistency and campaigning to keep it going, but it hasn't been a similar story across Canada. There is something I think we need to kind of share our example about. Why I think that this issue is still so important four years later - because we've already seen that organizing about it has potential.

Under Bill C-51 all of these human rights violations are happening in secret. They have zero accountability to tell us exactly what's going on, but inevitably we're going to find out how they're using these secret powers and what kind of abuses that they're actually carrying out.

It's also important to remember that they brought in these laws because they want to use them - because they're anticipating people organizing against the government, they're anticipating people organizing against the fact that we're spending over six hundred thousand dollars a year per person on the military but we can't fund a decent education or healthcare. We live in one of the richest countries in the world, but many people can't afford to live.

We Need to Be There

So they're going to need to use these powers that they're promising they just want to use to protect us from terrorists, and when they use them, and people realize in a greater way what they were actually intended for, we need to be there.

We need to be there exposing what's going on. We need to build that, and at that time we need to have already built a relationship with people. In Vancouver people will know we've organized over 200 bi-weekly actions in four years and we are committed to this fight.

So, we need to be ready when the next flash point of human and democratic rights comes, and we need to be in a position where we can help be part of the leadership of that movement. So when some new Justin Trudeau comes up and says "You don't actually need to organize amongst yourselves if you elect me," we are position to be able to

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Fire This Time Editorial Board Member, Alison Bodine meets with Venezuelan Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carlos Ron in Caracas in April 2019

Calling live from Caracas, Carlos Ron, the Vice Minister for North America, at Venezuela's Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the April 30, 2019, Alliance for Global Justice Venezuela Webinar.

Hello everyone. Like you know we've been in a constant state of coup d'état since January 23rd. I mean this is an ongoing process. This isn't just a one day, one-moment thing, it's something that started when Mr. Guaido from the National Assembly decided, against the Venezuelan constitution, against anything in law, to proclaim himself President. After that obviously, you know we understand this is a process that only comes about because he has serious backing from the current U.S. administration.

Earlier this morning we woke to the information that he was outside one of the military bases in Caracas, the Air Force Base in La Carlota, together with Leopoldo Lopez, who escaped his house arrest, and basically was calling on the Venezuelan armed forces to turn against the government of President Maduro and against the constitution.

What happened afterwards, is that they tried to call for people to gather around this Air Base and tried to ignite another protest. While there was a concentration at the same time here near Miraflores, which is the government palace here in Caracas, where social movements, community organizers and people came out in defense of peace and in defense of democracy, rejecting U.S. interventionism and rejecting this new attempt at a coup.

Right now, I mean there is still information coming in, but we have heard that Leopoldo Lopez, who was leading this concentration was back at the Embassy of Chile. Well, we

Venezuelan Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

Carlos Ron

Speaks on April 30, 2019 after President Maduro & the people of Venezuela defeated another attempted coup by U.S.-backed right-wing forces

presume that he may be requesting asylum or some sort of measure of the sort. But is correct that they had begun coming down to Miraflores, but actually forcing President Maduro to leave or to resign, was not fulfilled.

I wouldn't say it's over because like I said it's an ongoing process since January. So, it is easy to believe that there might be another type of attempt again at taking over the government and forcibly. But, the reality on the ground, and I think that this is important, and which is that people high in the U.S. administration don't understand, is that people are not supporting this coup. People are not supporting violence here in Venezuela. People are not supporting this "regime change" operation. People want to live in peace. People want to settle our differences democratically, as we have always done, but not through these means.

So there's wide popular support for President Maduro and for the constitution to be respected, primarily. We hope that we're not gonna get into violence like we've been the last couple years. I mean you remember, in 2014 and 2017 there were several episodes of violence and unrest in the streets, always supported by outside interference, always supported by U.S. financing. Today's latest pronouncements from John Bolton, Pompeo, Rubio, even Trump at the end of the day were calling for all the Cubans to leave Venezuela immediately, otherwise, they will really hike-up the U.S. embargo [blockade] and measures against Cuba. It really shows a lot of misunderstanding of the Venezuelan reality.

But it shows how committed the U.S. administration is currently towards "regime change" in Venezuela. So we're hoping that, you know, that the truth will prevail, that peace will

prevail and that common sense will prevail because we believe that this is not the way to go to solve Venezuela's problems. But rather, the government has constantly been calling for dialogue, political dialogue, and that's what we really need to move forward.

I used to be charge d'affaires at the Embassy. I was there for four years. And what we sought throughout all that time was to have a respectful relationship with the United States. You know a relationship that was based on respect, on trying to find ways of cooperation and never submitting to Venezuela's sovereignty to the United States or to any country.

We are the largest oil reserves in the world. And I think it's been made clear by many of the key figures in the administration that this is really a key issue for members' interests. John Bolton said not too long ago on TV, in



March against U.S. intervention and attempted coup by Juan Guaidó in Caracas, Venezuela, April 30, 2019

a Fox interview, basically that what would be better for U.S. interests and for U.S. companies was from them to start producing more oil in Venezuela again. I mean there is a clear intent of getting control of Venezuela's oil reserve. So this is not really a concern about the situation in Venezuela, the economic crisis or any other human concern, it's really a thing about interests once again. So, diplomacy, unfortunately, has not been able to succeed. You know they keep saying that "all options are on the table," including a military threat against our country. But the only options that we think need to be on the table are the options of diplomacy or the option of dialogue. We have insisted constantly, not only with the opposition here but with but also in the United States and what we have gotten is a complete refusal. All they want to talk about is how President Maduro is going to leave the office. You know, that's something that's non-negotiable. We cannot negotiate the will of the Venezuelan people, we believe in democracy, we accept the results of the election that elected President Maduro in the first place. So why would that be something that can be discussed?

We can discuss political solutions, we can discuss you know our political dialogue between government and opposition, sure. We can discuss anything within the framework of the constitution as real democracies do.

It's important to keep in mind that we're a people under threat not only from military intervention, but also we are currently suffering a large number of sanctions. And I'm sure there the people that were just here in Venezuela can really speak to what they saw and how those sanctions really do have an effect on the Venezuelan people. And this is not only something that's hurting the

government, or key officials in government, it's something that's hurting the whole country. And again this is just with the purpose of achieving a "regime change" that will make business more bearable for some economic interests. We are out here resisting because we want to defend international law, we want to defend democracy.

Right now we're under threat of our Embassy being taken over by the Venezuelan opposition. We've already lost three of our buildings in violation of the Vienna Convention. They were handed over to the opposition and now they're threatening to take over our Embassy as well.

We're so proud and surprised and admire very much the courage of those activists that are now in the Embassy and around the Embassy

trying to defend it from the Venezuelan right-wing, despite the threats and the aggression that they have received all day. We think it is important that there is some sense and there are some people standing up for more respect for international law and respect for the rights of Venezuelan people, which at the end of the day is what we care about.

We would never ask people to adopt our political model, but we do defend the right to have our own system and then to have our own self-determination and that is what this is all about.

Follow Carlos Ron on Twitter:
@CarlosJRonVE

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette



By Janine Solanki

On April 6, 2019, Venezuelans poured out to the streets of Caracas and other cities throughout the country for the fifth consecutive week of mass mobilizations. Dressed in red, carrying Venezuelan flags, banners and homemade signs, they marched in defense of their democratically elected President Nicolás Maduro, and against the U.S. imperialist actions against their country and their Bolivarian revolution. However these images are not reflected on the nightly news, and these voices are not broadcast on radio stations in Canada and the U.S. Instead, mainstream corporate news networks are working hand in hand with the governments of the U.S. and Canada to spread misinformation, lies and manipulations about the reality in Venezuela, and to promote the imperialist goal of regime change.

The U.S. and their imperialist allies have been trying to turn back the tide on these great advances. The last few years have seen an escalation of the economic war on Venezuela with sanctions by the U.S., Canada and the European Union against Venezuela. On April 25, 2019, the Washington DC-based Center for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) published a report on the effects of U.S. sanctions against Venezuela. The report estimates that sanctions were responsible for 40,000 deaths in 2017-2018 and that there are a further 300,000 people at risk due to lack of access to medicines.

VANCOUVER RALLY DEMANDS:
>> U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!
>> CBC Stop Lying About Venezuela!

In Vancouver, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign has been protesting monthly against the sanctions and intervention by the governments of the U.S. and Canada against Venezuela. On April 19, this action was part of international "Say No to Media Lies on Venezuela!" days of action. The protest started out with a picket action in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. Activists raised their picket signs and voices, and chanted "U.S./Canada, Hands Off Venezuela!" and "No Sanctions, No Coup!"

Following the picket, activists continued the protest in front of the CBC Vancouver news offices, holding a banner reading "CBC Stop Lying about Venezuela!" The well-attended and energetic protest, representing youths and elders from many different backgrounds, was in full view of the CBC offices.

The FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign and defenders of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution are up against the mainstream media acting as a mouthpiece for the imperialist campaign of regime change in Venezuela. However the truth is on the side of the Venezuelan people, and supporters around the world are using their voices and actions to make that truth known.

Find out about upcoming actions in defense of Venezuela at www.firethistime.net or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT_np

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki





“DREAMING IN MIAMI”

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENS ITS CRUEL BLOCKADE ON CUBA



By Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

Introduction by: Tamara Hansen

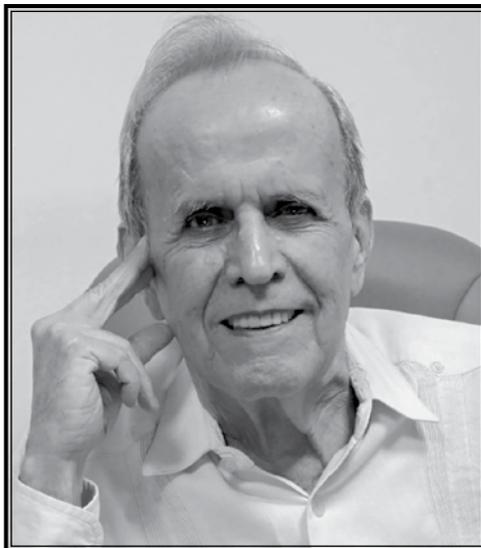
A full trade blockade was announced by Democratic U.S. President John F. Kennedy on February 3, and formally established on February 7, 1962. The U.S. government claims these sanctions were and are meant to punish the revolutionary government of Cuba, not the Cuban people. However, over 57 years under this unjust and cruel U.S. policy has demonstrated that these sanctions are hurting all sectors of Cuban society: cutting access to medicines, school supplies, construction materials, and the list goes on. There is also strong evidence that the blockade hurts people living in the United States: imposing travel restrictions, international legal/financial penalties on U.S. companies, the sale of Cuban medicines to the United States, etc.

In 2014 – when Cuba and the United States formally re-established diplomatic ties under then-Cuban President, Raul Castro and then-U.S. president, Barack Obama – many believed it was only a matter of time until the blockade would end. However, Obama did not have the political will or political power needed to end this unjust U.S. policy.

Now, in 2019, under U.S. President Trump, the U.S. government is strengthening its blockade on Cuba by invoking “Title III” of the Helms-Burton Law of 1996. President Clinton and all preceding U.S. presidents (including Trump until this month), have signed orders not to implement “Title III”, which is one of the more punishing measures within a severe law aimed at crippling the Cuban economy and Cuba’s independence.

Of course, in over 57 years the Cuban people and government have chosen to defend their dignity and sovereignty in face of these unjust and cruel sanctions.

Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada is a well-known Cuban politician. He was Cuba’s Ambassador to the United Nations, as well as, the President of the National Assembly of People’s Power of Cuba for over 20 years. Alarcón has a background in writing and journalism, having graduated with a PhD



Above: Cuban author and politician Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

Below: Political cartoon shows Cuba as a baseball player, using its sovereignty “bat” to hit the Helms-Burton Law “ball” out of the park!

in Philosophy and Literature.

In April 2019, as the U.S. government reinforced its cruel and inhuman blockade on Cuba, Alarcón wrote a thoughtful and educational piece for CubaDebate titled, “Soñando en Miami”. It has been translated and republished widely, including here in Fire This Time. -Tamara Hansen

After three months of threats and threats on carried out on two stages – the State Department in Washington DC and a theater in Miami – the US Administration finally announced what it intends to do to intensify its economic war against Cuba.

On April 17th, at a mid-morning brief ceremony lasting just a few minutes in the Washington DC, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made it known that they will fully implement Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. He did not offer any further explanations, although he said that as of May 2nd, “Cuban-Americans” will be able to file claims before the US courts against those who in any way use the properties that they claim were theirs or their families.

There were no questions and no text was available to answer questions that such a decision may have provoked among those who remember that for twenty-three years – Clinton, W. Bush, Obama and Trump himself – had adopted a position contrary to what is now being announced.

Official statements were immediately made by Spain, Canada, Mexico and the European Union who, in addition to protesting, warned that they will take the necessary measures to neutralize any attempt to harm their legitimate interests and recalled that they are capable of doing so, bearing in mind that there is no shortage of US investments in their countries.

The most notorious spectacle was reserved for Miami and John Bolton, National Security Advisor, who played the main role. His audience was the members of what remains of those who were part of the 2506 Brigade, that is, the remains of the invading group that 58 years ago was defeated by the Cuban people in 66 hours.

Bolton repeated what Pompeo said earlier regarding the lawsuits and also announced the re-imposition of severe restrictions on the travel of Cuban Americans to their country of origin and

on the remittances they send to their families on the island, measures that were previously applied by W. Bush and generated the rejection of the vast majority of that community which has since reflected itself in the Miami-Dade County elections.



The Miami show was as pathetic as it was grotesque.

The old and tired veterans failed when they were young and organized by the CIA, and with the support of the U.S. armed forces they went to Cuba to recover "their" estates, "their" factories and "their" mansions. Now Bolton promises them that the chimera will finally become a reality.

The show was summed up by Nicolás Gutierrez Castaño: "Even in our most feverish dreams we could not conceive that a U.S. government would do it. No one ever did. Forget Reagan. Forget Bush."

Excited, the skillful managing lawyer of Helms-Burton believes the time has come to "recover" the large properties stolen from his great-grandfather.

An unabashed dreamer, Bolton, for his part, invited to make a toast to the Monroe Doctrine that, according to him, is alive and healthy.

I n t o x i c a t e d, "celebrating" his fulminant defeat, the guests at the strange banquet applauded him with delirium.

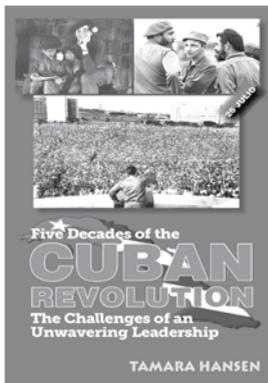
It is time to wake them up.

A CubaNews translation. Edited by Walter Lippmann, further slightly edited by Arnold August. www.walterlippmann.com

Originally in Spanish from: www.cubadebate.ca

Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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OUR HERITAGE

International Workers' Day



**Eleanor Marx Aveling
(1855-1898)**

She was the English-born youngest daughter of Karl Marx. She was herself a revolutionary socialist activist, organizer and a leader who also worked as a literary translator. She organized in support of refugees fleeing France after the defeat of the Paris Commune (Spring 1871) and was a passionate defender of the rights of the working class.

We have not come to do the work of political parties, but we have come here in the cause of labour, in its own defence, to demand its own rights. I can remember when we came in handfuls of a few dozen to Hyde Park to demand an Eight Hours' Bill, but the dozens have grown to hundreds, and the hundreds to thousands, until we have this magnificent demonstration that fills the park today. We are standing face to face with another demonstration, but I am glad to see that the great masses of the people are on our side. Those of us who have gone through all the worry of the Dock Strike, and especially the Gasworkers' Strike, and have seen the men, women and children stand round us, have had enough of strikes, and we are determined to secure an eight hours' day by legal enactment; unless we do so, it will be taken from us at the first opportunity. We will only have ourselves to blame if we do not achieve the victory which this great day could so easily give us. There is in the park this afternoon a man whom Mr. Gladstone once imprisoned— Michael Davitt; but Mr. Gladstone is now on the best of terms with him. What do you suppose is the reason for the change? Why has the Liberal Party been so suddenly converted to Home Rule? Simply because the Irish people sent 80 members to the House of Commons to support the Conservatives; in the same way we must kick these Liberal and Radical members out if they refuse to support our programme. I am speaking this afternoon not only as a Trade Unionist, but as a Socialist. Socialists believe that the eight hours' day is the first and most immediate step to be taken, and we aim at a time when there will no longer be one class supporting two others, but the unemployed both at the top and at the bottom of society will be got rid of. This is not the end but only the beginning of the struggle; it is not enough to come here to demonstrate in favour of an eight hours' day. We must not be like some Christians who sin for six days and go to church on the seventh, but we must speak for the cause daily, and make the men, and especially the women that we meet, come into the ranks to help us.

"Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few."

— Excerpt from the Speech on the First May Day Hyde park, May 1890

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4 AÑOS DE CAOS, DESTRUCCIÓN Y RESISTENCIA

LA GUERRA DE ARABIA SAUDITA APOYADA POR LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS EN YEMEN

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por Azza Rojbi

Mientras las familias en Canadá se preparan para dar la bienvenida a la primavera, los niños y las familias en Yemen continúan perdiendo a sus seres queridos ante las atrocidades de la guerra en su país. El 26 de marzo de 2019 se cumplieron cuatro años desde el inicio de la brutal campaña de bombardeo y guerra contra Yemen, dirigida por Arabia Saudita y con el apoyo total de Estados Unidos. La coalición liderada por Arabia Saudita comenzó su guerra en Yemen bajo el pretexto de defender

la paz y la estabilidad en la región, y con el objetivo de restablecer el poder del ex presidente Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, quien cuenta con muy poco apoyo popular a cause de haber intentado sostenerse en el poder luego de expirado su mandato, hasta que un levantamiento popular lo obligó a renunciar y escapar hacia Arabia Saudita.

Hoy, cuando ya contamos cuatro años de guerra y bombardeos, no hay paz ni estabilidad a la vista para el pueblo yemení. Los aviones de combate saudíes y de los Emiratos Árabes Unidos han bombardeado indiscriminadamente escuelas, hogares, hospitales, universidades, campamentos de refugiados, bodas, funerales, mercados, centros culturales y muchos otros infraestructuras vitales. Además de este bombardeo inhumano, la coalición liderada por Arabia Saudita impuso sobre el pueblo yemení un bloqueo ilegal terreno, aéreo y marítimo que dificulta gravemente el acceso al país de la ayuda humanitaria que tanto se necesita.

Yemen sufre hoy la mayor crisis humanitaria del mundo. Según el "Proyecto de datos

de eventos y eventos de conflicto armado" (ACLED, por sus siglas en inglés), al menos 60.223 personas murieron en Yemen desde enero de 2016. Esta cifra drástica no incluye las muertes causadas por la desnutrición y la enfermedad como consecuencia directa de la guerra. Según las Naciones Unidas, 24 millones de personas en Yemen necesitan urgentemente ayuda humanitaria, más del 80% de la población.

Estos números sombríos pintan una imagen horrible de la realidad del pueblo yemení después de cuatro años de guerra y agresión en su país liderada por los saudíes. Desde el primer día de la guerra, el gobierno de los Estados Unidos ofreció todo su apoyo político, logístico y militar a Arabia Saudita y los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, y continúa vendiéndoles armas y bombas. Varios países de la UE, como Francia y Gran Bretaña, y también Canadá, son cómplices de esta terrible guerra, ya que han ganado miles de millones vendiendo armas a Arabia Saudita.

La guerra en Yemen fue creada y planeada por los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas, e implementada por sus títeres en la región, Arabia Saudita, Emiratos Árabes Unidos y su coalición. Todos son responsables del derramamiento de sangre y de la crisis humanitaria. Oírlos afirmar hoy que se preocupan por el bienestar de los yemeníes y que realmente están buscando un acuerdo de alto el fuego es un insulto a la inteligencia. ¡No se trae paz a un país empobrecido bombardeando sin pausa durante cuatro años! El objetivo real de esta guerra contra Yemen es expandir la hegemonía y el control de imperialista en el Medio Oriente y cambiar el equilibrio de fuerzas en Yemen en su beneficio.



A pesar de la coalición liderada por Arabia Saudita y sus aliados imperialistas, como Francia y Gran Bretaña, todos sus esfuerzos criminales han fracasado en aplastar la resistencia del pueblo digno de Yemen. En un artículo publicado por la revista "In These Times", se pidió a los Yemenis que describieran en una palabra o frase su experiencia de la guerra. Alhassan Alhomani respondió: "Yemen, a pesar de los bombardeos, el hambre y la muerte, seguirá orgulloso, rechazando la humillación y la ruptura de este mundo injusto".

Los defensores de la paz y activistas en contra de la guerra en todo el mundo debemos apoyar a Alhassan y al valiente pueblo yemení en su

resistencia contra la guerra dirigida por los saudíes. Necesitamos organizarnos para protestar y responsabilizar a nuestros respectivos gobiernos por su apoyo y participación en las atrocidades cometidas en Yemen. Debemos seguir exigiendo: que el gobierno de Trudeau cancele sus acuerdos armamentísticos de \$ 15 mil millones con Arabia Saudita; que los EE. UU., Canadá, Arabia Saudita, Francia y Gran Bretaña respeten la autodeterminación de los yemeníes; que Arabia Saudita y Estados Unidos cesen toda intervención en Yemen. Debemos exigir que se detenga el bombardeo y el asesinato de niños y civiles inocentes en Yemen.

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14
First appeared in English in Fire This Time March 2019.



¿Sabías que según Save the Children 85.000 niños murieron de hambre en Yemen?

4 AÑOS DE GUERRA



¿Sabías que en Yemen hay 420.000 familias que se vieron obligadas a abandonar sus hogares?

4 AÑOS DE GUERRA



JUSTIN TRUDEAU, JASON KENNEY & THE TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE:

2 SIDES OF THE SAME COIN



By Thomas Davies

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's April 24 Earth Day statement reached incredible new levels of dishonesty:

"People around the globe are already facing the devastating effects of climate change. And from the IPCC report last fall to the recent Canada's Changing Climate report, the outlook is clear: only with ambitious, concerted action can we safeguard the environment we all depend on, for our generation and the next. Today, we come together as a world to fight for our future."

It looks like his media staff copied and pasted an announcement from one of the hundreds of rallies protesting the Trans Mountain Pipeline and Expansion Project, and then tried to pass it off as Trudeau's own words. The only issue is that they are still trying to build the pipeline, even when the reports they refer to prove they absolutely should not. Trudeau and the Liberal government have become experts in absurd political plagiarism – ripping of slogans like "climate justice" and "fight for our future" directly from the actual

climate justice movement and using them to try and neutralize it or sell it as their own.

Misleadership

Another type of deception comes from United Conservative Party (UCP) new Premier-elect of Alberta, Jason Kenney. He promises Alberta workers he can threaten the Trans Mountain Expansion into existence – and that siding with big oil companies looking to make short term profits with no regard for the long-term prospects is in their interests.

A statement issued by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (for complete statement see page ...) sheds some light on the real cost benefits analysis at play:

"The pipeline is not as profitable as some people want you to believe. Last November Finance Minister Bill Morneau told reporters that "since the acquisition, the Trans Mountain entities have earned \$70 million" if you annualize that figure the pipeline should make around \$200 million a year. However, that figure is before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) and once you include

Left: Protesters at Naniamo, BC townhall with Justin Trudeau. February 2, 2018

Right: Jason Kenney promoting his pipeline agenda

interest payments, based on figures disclosed by Canada Development Investment Corporation (CDEV), which total around \$240 million a year, you will quickly see that the existing pipeline is not a profit maker.

Construction costs have increased by 72% before they have even gotten a shovel in the ground and are likely to still go up. The original cost estimate in Kinder Morgan's application was \$5.4 billion. In 2015, the cost increased to \$6.8 billion; in 2017 it increased to \$7.4 billion, and in 2018 it was \$9.3 billion. An independent analysis estimates the total cost at around \$15 billion."

Wouldn't that money just be better spent guaranteeing livable wages and retraining workers for jobs that are longterm, sustainable and don't involve wrecking the planet? Fifteen billion dollars could do this many times over.

Kenney has promised to spend \$30



Rise for Climate International Day of Action. Vancouver, BC action. September 8, 2018



million to build a “fully staffed rapid response war room” to support the oil and gas industry against what he refers to as the “Green Left”. It’s a convenient bogey-man, but all the pro-oil internet campaigns in the world don’t change the science or the economics facing the Tar Sands right now. They also won’t stop the growing wildfires, rising floods, or other extreme weather events which further jeopardize life and can be directly linked to an increasingly imbalanced climate.

Extinction Rebellion

The urgency more people feel was on full display during the Extinction Rebellion protests in London this month. In an April 26 article in the Globe and Mail, Zoe Cormier summarized a whirlwind week of protest which gained huge international attention, “It started on a busy Monday morning in April. Around 11 a.m., a pink boat emblazoned with TELL THE TRUTH was dragged into the middle of Oxford Circus—the busiest shopping district in all of Europe. It was swiftly followed by dozens of activists who glued themselves to the vessel and thousands more who swarmed around them, bringing the busy intersection to a grinding halt. It ended a week later with more than 1,000 people arrested in one of the biggest public demonstrations in British history.



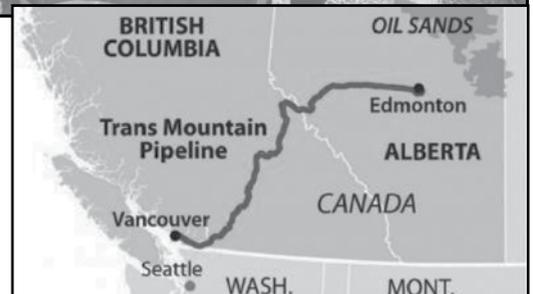
Action at the TransMountain Pipeline Westridge Marine Terminal. 2018

Their demand? That the government take real action on climate change by ‘declaring a climate and ecological emergency.’

A year in the making, the Extinction Rebellion protest set out to bring several of the British capital’s most important traffic hubs – Marble Arch, Oxford Circus, Waterloo Bridge, Piccadilly Circus, Parliament Square and Canary Wharf – to a standstill. If a law-abiding march on clearly demarcated routes doesn’t get the government’s attention, then perhaps bringing transport to a grinding halt in the city’s most commercially crucial areas will.”

“I don’t go to many marches, this isn’t really normal for me, but this one is the most important thing that anyone could ever do,” a woman carrying an infant told CBS News as she marched past Buckingham Palace.

1000 people willing to be arrested in one week with thousands more supporting multiple protest camps is no small feat



and is a huge indication of the level of importance people are starting to feel about the climate crisis.

More Lies

Natural Resources Minister Amarjeet Sohi also just announced the Trudeau government “isn’t satisfied” with its court-ordered consultations with First Nations on the Trans Mountain oil pipeline expansion project, and is

➔ SIGN THE PETITION!

PREMIER FORD AND PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU:

CLEAN UP THE MERCURY THAT'S POISONING GRASSY NARROWS' WATER!

<https://you.leadnow.ca/petitions/clean-up-the-mercury-that-s-poisoning-grassy-narrows-water>



Battle of Ideas Press **By Thomas Davies**
 Available Now
SYSTEM CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE
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 INFO@BATTLEOFIDEASPRESS.COM

Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro-Vancouver.



Indigenous leaders, Coast Salish Water Protectors and climate activists demonstrate against TransMountain pipeline in Burnaby, BC, March 10, 2018

pushing back its deadline from May 18 to June 18. This is after Sohi had also recently publicly stated that the government was “on track” to finish the controversial consultation – which has mostly been closed-door meetings with handpicked “representatives”.

Like everything else they do, it’s just a show. The Liberal government has already repeatedly said they are committed to building the pipeline, and displayed that commitment by spending billions of dollars. Is a 30-day delay really

going to change the rotten process and make the rubber stamp consultations more legitimate?

Moving Forward

Kenney and Trudeau are two sides of the same coin. Both would be more than happy to build the pipeline regardless of the consequences. However, Kenney’s \$30 million and threats or even Trudeau’s \$4.5 billion and empty promises are becoming increasingly irrelevant and absurd to the many people who are seeing the climate crisis unfold

real-time - many in their own lives. The original construction plan had Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline being completed by the end of 2019. They are years behind schedule because of persistent organizing, where Indigenous, poor and working people have stepped up to defend their lives and the planet. We need to scale this up both in the size of the actions, but also the political understanding of the movement. So we can fight against specific projects while also understanding that they are symptoms of the rotten capitalist system which prioritizes corporate profits over the needs of people and the planet. So we can keep our demands clear and not be sidetracked or intimidated. So we can build a better, more just, and sustainable world.

No Trans Mountain Pipeline – Not Now, Not Ever!

Build Our Future – Not a Pipeline!

System Change Not Climate Change!

Follow Thomas on Twitter:
@thomasdavies59

By Thomas Davies

As Jason Kenney, the new Premier-elect of Alberta, continues his campaign of threats and attempted intimidation to force the construction of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, so does Prime Minister Justin Trudeau continue to double down on the false promise that he can build the pipeline and protect the environment at the same time. In response, the Climate Convergence coalition organized a banner drop to bring people together and counter the negative and manipulative messaging.

Over 60 people filled a busy overpass during rush hour with ten huge banners saying things like, “No



CLIMATE ACTION!
PEOPLE POWER WILL STOP THE PIPELINE!

Trudeau Pipeline – Not Now Not Ever!”, “United for People & Planet” and “System

Change Not Climate Change.”

The response of the public was extraordinary – with non-stop honking in support of the action. There was also great support from

members of Extinction Rebellion Vancouver and BROKE (Burnaby Residents Opposing Kinder Morgan Expansion) As the Federal government’s new deadline of June 18 to make an announcement on pipeline construction grows ever closer, the struggle is heating up. Climate Convergence will be on a busy overpass near you soon.



Open Letter from the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs: **INVESTMENT IN THE TMX POSES SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL RISKS FOR FIRST NATIONS**

April 25, 2019

Dear First Nations Leadership:

It has been widely reported that a number of First Nations leaders are involved in talks with the federal government to invest in the Trans Mountain pipeline (TMX). The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) are concerned that the government may not be providing a full and accurate account of the financial future of the project. Before you make the decision to invest or not, here are some crucial and significant points that you should know.

The pipeline is not as profitable as some people want you to believe. Last November Finance Minister Bill Morneau told reporters that “since acquisition, the Trans Mountain entities have earned \$70 million” if you annualize that figure the pipeline should make around \$200 million a year. However, that figure is before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) and once you include interest payments, based on figures disclosed by Canada Development Investment Corporation (CDEV), which total around \$240 million a year, you will quickly see that the existing pipeline is

not a profit maker.

Construction costs have increased by 72% before they have even gotten a shovel in the ground and are likely to still go up. The original cost estimate in Kinder Morgan’s application was \$5.4 billion. In 2015, the cost increased to \$6.8 billion; in 2017 it increased to \$7.4 billion; and in 2018 it was \$9.3 billion. An independent analysis estimates the total cost at around \$15 billion.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer calculated that a 10 per cent increase in construction costs (based on \$9.3B) would reduce the Net Present Value (NPV) of the TMX by \$453 million to \$1,128 million. Similarly, a one-year delay would reduce the NPV of the TMX by \$693 million to \$888 million. Clearly, there is a very real chance that cost overruns and delays will continue to seriously threaten the financial viability of the project.

It is not clear that a market exists in Asia for the oil shipped by the Trans Mountain pipeline. We have been told over and over again that this pipeline is

about getting Canadian oil to Asia where it will get a better price than in the US. If that is true, how is it that little oil from the existing Trans Mountain pipeline has been shipped to Asian markets? Over the five year period between 2013 and early 2018 just 15 tankers left Trans Mountain Westridge dock headed for ports in Asia while 161 tankers left Westridge headed for American ports.

The reason for this could be because the oil produced in the oil sands is heavy crude and there is very limited capacity in Asian refineries for that form of oil. Mexican Mayan Crude, another form of heavy oil, has tidewater access to the Pacific but continues to sell in the US because it can get a higher price than in Asia. Furthermore, most of the demand forecasted in China has been met by other sources of cheaper, lighter crude that are geographically closer and cheaper to transport.

The customers for the pipeline may not be as committed as you have been led to believe. It is true 13 shippers (or customers) have signed take-or-pay contracts for Trans Mountain. However,



Climate Convergence rally to protest the National Energy Board (NEB) ruling on the Transmountain (TMX) Pipeline, Feb 22, 2019.

these shippers will have the opportunity to cancel their contracts after Trans Mountain provides an updated cost estimate within 60 days of the issuing of a certificate of public convenience and necessity, should the project be approved.

In May 2018, Statoil ASA, Nexen Energy and Canadian Oil Sands Ltd. exercised the right to terminate their contracts, and Kinder Morgan replaced them with other shippers. As the cost of construction continues to increase (currently \$9.3B and counting), the cost to use the pipeline also increases, potentially leading some shippers to opt out.

Furthermore, the current contracts are for 15 or 20 years (therefore the tolls are not calculated to pay off the whole pipeline). There is no guarantee that future customers will want to pay the cost of the pipeline.

The economics of oil are changing as governments and corporations wake up to the reality of climate change. Oil economics have fundamentally changed since the project was proposed in 2013, with new regulations and technology squeezing the economic viability of oil sands. We have seen world leaders, including the Canadian government, commit to huge reductions in climate pollution by 2050. In a world where demand for oil has peaked and is declining, the oil sands, which has higher costs and higher carbon emissions than other sources of oil, will be some of the first oil fields to be shut down. That is likely one of the reasons that oil giants like Shell, Conoco-Phillips, and Statoil have sold off their oil sands holdings. All of this means you could become the owners of a stranded asset before it is paid off.

Opposition from other First Nations and lawsuits are almost certain to continue to cause delays and cost overruns. If the Trudeau cabinet reissues federal permits for the pipeline, new legal challenges will likely follow. We would remind you that it would only take opposition from a single Nation to cause significant delays and further cost overruns.

The federal government cannot act as both owner of the pipeline and as the representative of the Crown. This clear conflict of interest casts a long shadow over the consultation process.

This fact is underlined by multiple

statements from government ministers, like the one below from Bill Morneau, that make it clear that a decision to move forward with the pipeline was made before the current round of consultations even began:

"We need to make sure that the Trans Mountain expansion project moves forward in a way that ensures we get the benefits to our economy that we want to get, but we need to do it in consideration of the decision of the court. We need to look at the approach to consulting with indigenous Canadians."
- Finance Minister Bill Morneau Sep 11, 2018

The pipeline and tanker project will affect the lands, rights, and resources of Indigenous Nations that the Canadian government has committed to protect but has so far imperiled instead. Along the proposed route, there are at least 400 unresolved specific claims – a vast number of historical losses yet to be redressed by the federal government. This does not include specific claims that could arise as a direct result of the pipeline expansion. In addition to these specific claims, the entire corridor from B.C. border to Burnaby is comprised of Indigenous Territories.

There are good reasons why Kinder Morgan chose to walk away from this project and you should carefully consider them before investing your Nation's money. You should take a hard look at both the short-term profitability and long-term viability of this project. We believe that the government has clearly overstated both and their decision to invest in this project was clouded by their short-term political needs. We urge you not to make the same mistake and to carefully consider the enormous environmental, social, legal, and political ramifications before committing to this project.

Finally, we will remind you that the members of our Nations are collectively the Proper Title Holders. Decisions of this scale and import are not ours to make alone, we must have consent from our members before making a critical decision on investment.

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS

**Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President**

**Kukpi7 Judy Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer**

From: www.ubcic.bc.ca

MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

Indigenous struggle against colonialism



**Howard Adams (Métis)
1921 - 2001**

Revolutionary Métis Marxist scholar and professor Howard Adams grew up in a Métis community in Saskatchewan. He was a leader in the struggle for Indigenous rights, self-determination, and socialism.

"It was only when I acknowledged to myself my Indian ancestry that I was full satisfied with my national identity. Through my participation in the black people's civil rights struggle I could see myself struggling beside my people back at home for the same freedom. The parallels between the black people of America and the native people of Canada are obvious, since they both live in a white-supremacist society: like the Indians and Metis of Canada, black people face discrimination, economic oppression and political powerlessness. I felt so strongly about their oppression and consequently as colonized natives we understood one another immediately – there was no need to explain our causes to each other.

The more I became involved, the clearer colonialism became. I was very moved when I heard Malcolm X talk to students about black nationalism."

Excerpt from Prison of Grass, Ch. 14 "The Failure of Native Leadership", 1975.



CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVIST GRETA THUNBERG TELLS UK PARLIAMENT: "YOU DON'T LISTEN TO THE SCIENCE BECAUSE YOU ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN SOLUTIONS THAT WILL ENABLE YOU TO CARRY ON LIKE BEFORE."



By Greta Thunberg

Introduction by Thomas Davies

16-year-old Greta Thunberg has emerged as one of the most well-known leaders in the climate justice movement. Her lone "Climate Strike" protest, where she skipped school every Friday to stand in front of Swedish Parliament, has spearheaded a growing international movement led by young people. As we reported in the last issue of *Fire This Time*, on March 15 an estimated 1.6 million students from 123 countries skipped school as part of the global student climate strike. These protests continue every Friday.

At the COP24 United Nations Climate Summit Greta emphasized, "Our civilization is being sacrificed for the opportunity of a very small number of people to continue making enormous amounts of money," and followed that with what is becoming an increasingly



obvious conclusion to many in the climate justice movement, "If solutions within this system are so difficult to find then maybe we should change the system itself."

Below is an edited text of the speech Greta gave at the UK Houses of Parliament, where she continues to call out elected leaders for their criminal inaction, while also emphasizing the human potential to solve the climate crisis if we treat it as one.

My name is Greta Thunberg. I am 16 years old. I come from Sweden. And I speak on behalf of future generations.

I know many of you don't want to listen to us – you say we are just children. But we're only repeating the message of the united climate science.

Many of you appear concerned that we are wasting valuable lesson time, but I assure you we will go back to school the moment you start listening to science and give us a future. Is that really too much to ask?

In the year 2030 I will be 26 years old. My little sister Beata will be 23. Just like many of your own children or



grandchildren. That is a great age, we have been told. When you have all of your life ahead of you. But I am not so sure it will be that great for us.

I was fortunate to be born in a time and place where everyone told us to dream big; I could become whatever I wanted to. I could live wherever I wanted to. People like me had everything we needed and more. Things our grandparents could not even dream of. We had everything we could ever wish for and yet now we may have nothing.

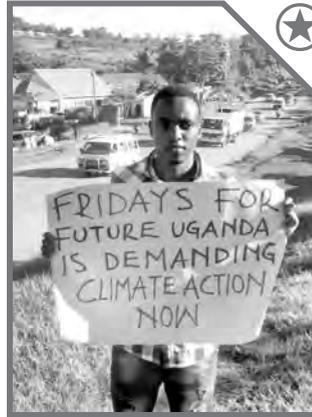
Now we probably don't even have a future any more.

Because that future was sold so that a small number of people could make unimaginable amounts of money. It was stolen from us every time you said that the sky was the limit, and that you only live once.

You lied to us. You gave us false hope. You told us that the future was something to look forward to. And the saddest thing is that most children are not even aware of the fate that awaits us. We will not understand it until it's too late. And yet we are the lucky ones. Those who will be affected the hardest are already suffering the

#ClimateStrike #klimatstrejk #FridaysForFuture - Students and youth take action around the world!

From left to right: Greta Thunberg marks week 36 of her Friday school strike on April 26, 2019; Youth in Mozambique; Youth in Brazil, Youth in England; Youth in Uganda; Youth in Australia.



consequences. But their voices are not heard.

Is my microphone on? Can you hear me?

Around the year 2030, 10 years 252 days and 10 hours away from now, we will be in a position where we set off an irreversible chain reaction beyond human control, that will most likely lead to the end of our civilisation as we know it. That is unless in that time, permanent and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society have taken place, including a reduction of CO2 emissions by at least 50%.

We must also bear in mind that these are just calculations. Estimations. That means that these “points of no return” may occur a bit sooner or later than 2030. No one can know for sure. We can, however, be certain that they will occur approximately in these timeframes, because these calculations are not opinions or wild guesses.

These projections are backed up by scientific facts, concluded by all nations through the IPCC. Nearly every single major national scientific body around the world unreservedly supports the work and findings of the IPCC.

Did you hear what I just said? Is my English OK? Is the microphone on? Because I'm beginning to wonder.

This ongoing irresponsible behaviour will no doubt be remembered in

history as one of the greatest failures of humankind.

Every time we make a decision we should ask ourselves; how will this decision affect that curve? We should no longer measure our wealth and success in the graph that shows economic growth, but in the curve that shows the emissions of greenhouse gases. We should no longer only ask: “Have we got enough money to go through with this?” but also: “Have we got enough of the carbon budget to spare to go through with this?” That should and must become the centre of our new currency.

Many people say that we don't have any solutions to the climate crisis. And they are right. Because how could we? How do you “solve” the greatest crisis that humanity has ever faced? How do you “solve” a war? How do you “solve” going to the moon for the first time? How do you “solve” inventing new inventions?

The climate crisis is both the easiest and the hardest issue we have ever faced. The easiest because we know what we must do. We must stop the emissions of greenhouse gases. The hardest because our current economics are still totally dependent on burning fossil fuels, and thereby destroying ecosystems in order to create everlasting economic growth.

You don't listen to the science because

you are only interested in solutions that will enable you to carry on like before. Like now. And those answers don't exist any more. Because you did not act in time.

Avoiding climate breakdown will require cathedral thinking. We must lay the foundation while we may not know exactly how to build the ceiling.

Sometimes we just simply have to find a way. The moment we decide to fulfil something, we can do anything. And I'm sure that the moment we start behaving as if we were in an emergency, we can avoid climate and ecological catastrophe. Humans are very adaptable: we can still fix this. But the opportunity to do so will not last for long. We must start today. We have no more excuses.

We children are not sacrificing our education and our childhood for you to tell us what you consider is politically possible in the society that you have created. We have not taken to the streets for you to take selfies with us, and tell us that you really admire what we do.

We children are doing this to wake the adults up. We children are doing this for you to put your differences aside and start acting as you would in a crisis. We children are doing this because we want our hopes and dreams back.

I hope my microphone was on. I hope you could all hear me.



WHAT IS CANADA'S GARBAGE DOING IN THE PHILIPPINES?

By Tamara Hansen

Driving home from work this week, I overheard on CBC Radio that the President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, had threatened war against Canada. I kind of chuckled to myself, wondering what had happened that had offended the often-outlandish leader.

It turns out that it is not only the President of the Philippines, but also the Filipino people who are protesting the government of Canada with anger and frustration. They are tired of their country being used as a dumping ground for imperialist Canada's garbage. Since 2013 and 2014 over 100 containers of Canadian garbage have been rotting in the Philippines.

President Duterte earned global attention when he declared, "I will declare war against [Canada]. I will advise Canada that your garbage is on the way. Prepare a grand reception. Eat it if you want to." Within 48 hours the government of Canada held a press conference with Environment Minister Catherine McKenna. While she stated that threats from Duterte don't help the situation, after six years of the government of Canada doing nothing, it seems threats might have been the only way to get this issue into international headlines and to convince Canada to do something.

According to an April 25 Al-Jazeera article by Jillian Kestler-D'Amours, after six years "over 100 containers of household waste and other hazardous materials - more than two thousand tonnes that rights groups

have said were first fraudulently labelled as recycling plastics - remain in and around the Filipino capital." Various news sources outline the kinds of mixed waste Philippine authorities found in these containers: dirty diapers, appliances, electronic waste, food waste, household garbage, as well as potentially hazardous waste.

Canada's Shameful Inaction

In 1992 Canada signed an international treaty known as the Basel Convention. Kestler-D'Amours' Al-Jazeera article further explains, "ratified by 187 parties, including Canada and the Philippines, the convention outlines rules around what constitutes hazardous material, how shipments must be labelled, what documentation is needed, and the informed consent of countries taking in the waste."

Overall the convention was meant to stop so-called "first world" imperialist countries from shipping waste to so-called "third world" oppressed nations. The estimated 2,500 tonnes of waste left to rot in the Philippines over six years show that Canada is in clear violation of its treaty obligations. The treaty rightly places the onus on Canada to deal with the mess within 30 days. Of course, like many international conventions, the Basel Convention has no clear method of enforcement.

Since learning of the Canadian trash stranded in the Philippines back in 2014, the government of Canada has continued to try to justify its lack of action:

- In 2013 and 2014, the garbage was shipped by a private company, "Chronic Inc". That same year the government declared that Canada did not have regulations and laws in place to require the company (which according to various news sources is now out of business) to recover the containers.

- In 2016, Canada amended those rules to



The EcoWaste Coalition rallies in the Philippines to demand the government of Canada take responsibility for the Canadian garbage dumped in the Philippines, April 2019.

create criminal liability for companies and to compel them to take back the waste, but this has not spurred any concrete actions by the government of Canada.

- In 2017, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited the Philippines and was forced to respond for his administration's lack of action. He cited the changes in the law from 2016 and explained that it was "now theoretically possible to get it [the containers of waste] back." At the same time the foot-dragging continued as Trudeau stated, "There's still a number of questions around who would pay for it, where the financial responsibility is. This was, at its origin, a commercial transaction. It did not involve government."

Canada's Imperialist Mentality

According to a YahooNews article titled, "Why has the Philippines threatened 'war' over Canadian garbage?" by journalist Olivia Bowden, part of the reason Canada has done nothing is because they have been putting behind the scenes pressure on the Philippines to deal with it. Bowden writes, "Ottawa has been trying for years to convince the country to dispose of the garbage in the Philippines, to no avail. A Filipino court ruled in 2016 that the trash must be returned to Canada, creating a standoff."

This exposes the government of Canada's imperialist mentality. Canada is exposed once again on the national and international stage as a bully that does not take responsibility for cleaning up its own mess. We know that imperialist countries are some of the world's heaviest polluters per capita. Based on the relatively small size of Canada's population, Canada is the highest emitter of greenhouse emissions on the planet. In fact, according to a November 2018 Globe and Mail Newspaper article, Canada produces three times more greenhouse gas emissions per capita than even the average G20 nation.

On April 25, Prime Minister Trudeau and his Environmental Minister Catherine McKenna both participated in the Nature Champions Summit in Montreal and shared a tweet with a quotation by Trudeau, "We can't afford to ignore climate change. We can't wait for other people to do something about it." What a fool! Can you be a climate leader if you cannot figure out how to dispose of 2,500 tonnes of garbage? Can you be a leader when you buy polluting pipelines with tax payer money? Can you be a climate leader when you cannot provide clean drinking water to every Indigenous



Rallies to demand the government of Canada remove the Canadian garbage dumped in the Philippines.

reservation in Canada, but can sell off thousands of litres to private companies like Nestle?

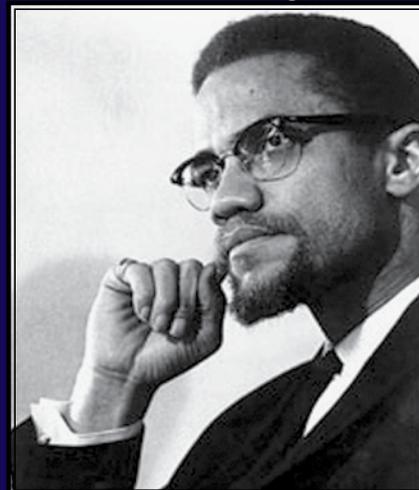
The Government of Canada must act immediately

Of course, the Canadian garbage rotting in the Philippines is a small blip on the radar when compared to the climate crisis we are facing today. However, if the government of Canada cannot resolve this small problem, how can it expect to tackle the larger ones? The people of the Philippines are demanding action, the government of Canada admits it is "now theoretically possible." But where is the will? Where is the leadership?

It is up to working and oppressed people in Canada to hold this government's feet to the fire. We must demand that they take responsibility for past wrongs and injustices, whether it is with Indigenous land rights, the global Climate Crisis, or a mere 2,500 tonnes of Canadian garbage abandoned in the Philippines. The time to do better is now, but it will not come from the government, we need to organize and mobilize against this imperialist injustice. With mass protest we can put pressure on the government of Canada to take decisive action to bring the containers of garbage back to Canada. Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government must take responsibility and apologize to the Filipino people.

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

"All of our people have the same goals, the same objective: freedom, justice, equality. All of us want recognition and respect as human beings..."

Our people have made the mistake of confusing the methods with the objectives. As long as we agree on objectives, we should never fall out with each other just because we believe in different methods or tactics or strategy to reach a common objective.

We have to keep in mind at all times that we aren't fighting for integration, nor are we fighting for separation. We are fighting for recognition as human beings. We are fighting for the right to live as free humans in this society. In fact, we are actually fighting for rights that are even greater than civil rights and that is, human rights. We are fighting for human rights in 1964. This is a shame,"

Excerpts from "The Black Revolution" April 8, 1964



VIVIENDO BAJO EMERGENCIA CLIMÁTICA ¿QUIEN PRESENTA SOLUCIONES REALES?

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por Thomas Davies

Traducción por Macarena Cataldo Hernandez

Un nuevo estudio de Medio Ambiente y Cambio Climático Canadá, encontró que Canadá se está calentando al doble de la velocidad del resto del mundo, y que el norte de Canadá se está calentando casi al triple de la velocidad global.

¿Cuál fue la respuesta de los políticos ante esta urgente noticia? Lo de siempre. El gobierno Liberal se aferro a su anticuado plan climático - dicho plan de acuerdo con las auditorías gubernamentales no tiene ninguna posibilidad de cumplir con los modestos compromisos climáticos adquiridos por Canadá ante ONU. Mientras tanto, en BC, el gobierno provincial del Nuevo Partido Democrático (NDP) anunció otro recorte de impuestos a los productores de gas natural licuefactado (abreviado por sus siglas en inglés como LNG) con el fin de atraer aún más inversiones en materia de energía no renovable a la provincia. Esto después de admitir que su “plan” climático

realmente no tiene en sus planes cumplir plenamente sus objetivos.

Ver a los políticos realizar acrobacias verbales y normativas para justificar su falta de acción podría ser gracioso, pero los bosques se están incendiando, el agua se está envenenando y el número de los animales en extinción continúa aumentando, mientras la gran mayoría de los científicos declara lo mismo: “Estamos corriendo en contra del tiempo”.

Innegable

El informe de Medio Ambiente y Cambio Climático Canadá encontró también, que tres de los últimos cinco años han sido los más calurosos registrados, además de esto, a lo largo de todo el país, los registros muestran que el cambio climático se ha manifestado en calor y frío extremo, rápida disminución de los glaciares y aumento del nivel del mar en las regiones costeras.

Disipando la desesperada narrativa de que estos cambios sin precedentes son de alguna manera posible, parte del ciclo natural de la tierra, Marjorie Shepherd, directora de la división de investigación climática de Environment Canada, concluyó: “Si bien las actividades humanas y las variaciones reales en el clima

contribuyen a este calentamiento observado en Canadá, las actividades humanas representan el factor dominante”.

Nancy Hamzawi, viceministra asistente de la rama de ciencia y tecnología de Medio Ambiente y Cambio Climático Canadá, agregó: “Las emisiones globales de dióxido de carbono de la actividad humana determinarán en gran medida cuánto más calentamiento experimentará Canadá y el mundo en el futuro”.

La perturbadora falta de respuesta gubernamental

La conclusión de la Comisionada de Medio Ambiente, Julie Gelfand, como vigilante

ambiental del país, fue que la acción lenta del gobierno para lidiar con el calentamiento del planeta es lo más “perturbador”. “Durante décadas, sucesivos gobiernos federales no han logrado alcanzar sus objetivos para reducir las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero, y el gobierno no está preparado para adaptarse a un cambio climático. Esto debe cambiar”.

Otro informe gubernamental realizado a través de la colaboración entre los auditores generales de nueve provincias y el comisionado federal para el medio ambiente, enfocado en las “deficiencias comunes” en la forma en que los diferentes niveles de gobierno están reduciendo las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero y preparándose para los efectos del cambio climático, concluye que Canadá está a punto de superar su objetivo de emisiones para 2020 en casi un 20 por ciento y que, sin grandes cambios, definitivamente no cumplirá su objetivo del Acuerdo de París de las Naciones Unidas para 2030.

NDP, BC arriesga más esfuerzos en LNG

Literalmente, solo un par de días después del informe Medio Ambiental de Canadá sobre el record en calentamiento, el gobierno NDP de BC anunció una reducción al impuesto a la renta para los productores de gas fósil del 12 al 9 por ciento, con el fin de atraer aún más industrias de LNG en la provincia, y como un dulce regalo a las corporaciones ya involucradas en la producción.

Después de aprobar el mega proyecto de LNG Canadá de miles de millones de



Huelga estudiantil en Australia, 15 de marzo 2019

dólares, la manera en lo que esto pueda cuadrar con el 25% por debajo de sus objetivos climáticos de “Limpieza de BC” está más allá de lo razonable. El proyecto LNG Canadá también recibió más de \$ 5,350 millones en incentivos monetarios financiados por los contribuyentes del gobierno de BC.

Mientras se intenta vender el LNG como un “combustible de transición limpio”, en la realidad es todo lo contrario. El gas se extrae mediante un proceso en el cual se pulverizan rocas subterráneas portadoras de hidrocarburos con corrientes de agua, arena y productos químicos a alta presión, un proceso denominado “fracturación hidráulica” o “fracking” para abreviar. Andrew Nikiforuk, en el periódico en línea Tyee (theyee.ca), expuso la voluntaria ignorancia del gobierno sobre este destructivo proceso. Citando

“En la revisión científica encargada por el gobierno acerca de fracking en la Columbia Británica, publicada a principios de abril, de unas 232 páginas, la palabra ‘problemas’, en el contexto de ‘problemas de impacto ambiental’, aparece más de 130 veces.

La palabra insuficiente, como en ‘información insuficiente’, aparece en el informe 27 veces, mientras que ‘desconocido’ aparece 17 veces.

Las palabras incierta o incertidumbre, como en “calidad de agua incierta”, aparece casi 50 veces, mientras que las brechas, como en “importantes brechas de conocimiento “; cubre el documento 27 veces “.

Es difícil decir qué es más irresponsable, si aprobar el proyecto masivo de LNG antes de que finalice el informe sobre fracking, o seguir promoviéndolo después mostrar grandes problemas e ignorancia. Un estudio recientemente revisado por la Fundación David Suzuki y la Universidad St. Francis Xavier también encontró que las emisiones de metano de la industria de petróleo y gas de B.C. son dos veces y media más altas que las informadas.

“No va a ser fácil”, dijo el primer ministro Horgan de BC a los reporteros, “la actividad industrial y la reconciliación con los pueblos indígenas son temas difíciles. Cumplir con nuestros objetivos de cambio climático es primordial y fundamental para el enfoque del nuevo gobierno “.

“En lugar de evitar esos problemas, como hizo el gobierno anterior, en lugar de ignorar los temas de reconciliación y acción climática, queremos unir la actividad industrial con esos dos objetivos claves para el gobierno”.

Después de ver la incursión militarizada de RCMP en contra la pacífica gente de la nación de Wet’suwet’en, quienes protegían sus territorios no cedidos del gasoducto Coastal GasLink que serviría al proyecto LNG Canadá, así como de los impactos climáticos de la expansión de la industria de LNG, es seguro decir que el matrimonio que propone el primer ministro Horgan es abusivo.

Lavado de imagen verde

Es difícil perderse los comerciales de la

compañía petrolera con música inspiradora, niños corriendo en campos y promesas de un futuro más brillante y sustentable. Asimismo, imprime anuncios con esquemas de color verde y patrocinio de festivales comunitarios. A medida que las personas entienden el vínculo fundamental entre la producción de combustibles fósiles y nuestra actual crisis climática, un nuevo informe del grupo de expertos británico InfluenceMap nos muestra que “las cinco mayores empresas de petróleo y gas que cotizan en bolsa (ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron, BP y Total) han invertido más de \$ 1 billón de fondos de accionistas en los tres años posteriores al Acuerdo de París, en engaño publicitario y en negociaciones relacionados con el clima “.

“Las grandes petroleras se están proyectando a sí mismas como actores clave en la transición energética mientras presionan para retrasar, debilitar o oponerse a una política climática significativa”, afirmó Edward Collins, autor del nuevo informe, en un comunicado. “Abogan por la implementación gradual de soluciones climáticas tecnológicas y basadas en el mercado, pero el último informe [Panel Intergubernamental de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático] nos deja claro que se necesitan medidas políticas urgentes y limitaciones en el uso de combustibles fósiles para evitar un cambio climático peligroso”.

Crisis y oportunidad

El informe sobre el aumento de la temperatura en Canadá es una mala noticia, pero es importante utilizar esa información al comunicarnos con amigos y colegas escépticos, para ayudarlos a entender que los incendios forestales que vuelven todo gris y destruyen miles de acres cada el verano en BC, empeorarán si no trabajamos juntos para enfrentar la crisis climática. También podemos usar esto como un puente para conectarnos con otros lugares en los que cuales el cambio climático a causado estragos en millones de personas, cuyas vidas ya están en peligro debido a esto.



Arriba: el CEO de LNG Canadá, Andy Calitz; el Primer Ministro Justin Trudeau; y el primer ministro de B.C. John Horgan en la conferencia de prensa de “LNG Canadá” el 2 de octubre 2018

Abajo: los oficiales de RCMP asaltan una barricada establecida para prohibir la entrada a los territorios tradicionales la nación indígena de Wet’uwet’en contra el gasoducto Coastal GasLink, 7 de enero 2019

Vivimos en un mundo extraño, donde los gobiernos encargan informes climáticos para retrasar la acción y luego ignorar los resultados. Donde los contaminadores más sucios del mundo dicen ser las barras más entusiastas en crear un mundo sostenible. Donde el primer ministro liberal, Trudeau, hace campaña sobre el eslogan de “Justicia del clima” después de gastar \$ 4.5 mil millones en un sucio oleoducto Tar Sands y un proyecto de expansión. Si estos gobiernos y corporaciones cumplieran con la mitad de sus promesas y la “declaración de principios corporativos”, no tendríamos que luchar por un mundo mejor, ¡ya estaríamos viviendo allí! Obviamente, existe una desconexión entre lo que dicen y lo que hacen, y obviamente, existe la necesidad de movimientos de masa independientes para detener esta locura insostenible.

Todavía hay tiempo, pero debemos hacerlo en nuestros propios términos y a través de nuestros crecientes movimientos de masa en defensa de la justicia climática y un mundo mejor.

¡Cambio de sistema, no cambio climático!

First appeared in English in Fire This Time April 2019.

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EL VOTO DE LOS Y LAS CUBANAS APRUEBA CON FUERTE APOYO LA NUEVA CONSTITUCIÓN

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por *Tamara Hansen*

Traducción por *Ana Laura Torres*

El 24 de febrero de 2019 más de 7,8 millones de cubanos y cubanas votaron en el referendo constitucional del país. De los y las cubanas que votaron, 86.85% dijeron “SÍ” a la nueva constitución con solo 9% de rechazo a la opción “NO”. Con el uso de procedimientos democráticos que fomentaron un debate enérgico y abierto, fue un avance importante para el proceso de reforma constitucional cubana y para enfrentar los desafíos económicos y políticos de la nación caribeña.

La necesidad de una nueva Constitución

Desde el triunfo de la revolución cubana el 1ro de enero de 1959, Cuba ha estado trabajando en la construcción de un país y un gobierno que reconozca los derechos de todo ser humano a la vivienda, al trabajo, a la salud, a la educación, a la dignidad y a la igualdad. Cuba es diferente a otros proyectos socialistas que surgieron antes y después. No ha seguido una receta específica ni copiado con exactitud los métodos de otros países. Esto implicó desarrollar una visión única y transformar el sistema legal y político desde su misma raíz, la Constitución nacional. Primero, en febrero de 1959, se aprobó lo que Cuba llamó la “Ley Fundamental,” hasta que pudieron escribir y votar formalmente una nueva Constitución el 24 de febrero de 1976. A lo largo del año pasado, el pueblo cubano estuvo discutiendo y debatiendo su nueva Constitución, que se aprobó por referendo el 24 de febrero de 2019.

Proceso popular para aprobar la nueva Constitución

La periodista cubana Vivian Bustamante Molina describe el proceso participativo que se llevó a cabo a lo largo de todo el país camino al Referendo Constitucional: “La aprobación de la nueva Constitución fue antecedida de un proceso de consulta al pueblo que duró tres meses, en lo que es calificada como expresión genuina del carácter democrático y participativo de nuestro sistema socialista”.

Bustamante Molina explica que “el texto [de la nueva Constitución] fue enriquecido con las opiniones vertidas en las 133.681 reuniones realizadas en barrios y centros de trabajo y

estudiantiles de las enseñanzas media y universitaria, al punto de que las intervenciones, debidamente valoradas, originaron cambios en casi un 60 % de los artículos del Proyecto, contentivo, entre otros aspectos relevantes, de los fundamentos políticos y económicos, los derechos y los deberes y la estructura del Estado.”

Respecto al proceso de consulta, Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento, el Secretario General de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC), explicó al Periódico Granma Internacional, que “durante el proceso de consulta popular de la nueva Constitución, los trabajadores [...] hicieron su aporte para garantizar que queden refrendados los derechos de la clase obrera, imprescindible en el quehacer económico y social de la nación”. Este proceso es una de las razones que explica la participación masiva del pueblo cubano en la votación y el alto grado de apoyo con el voto “SÍ”.

¿Qué es lo nuevo de la nueva Constitución?

En términos generales la nueva Constitución incluye, en primer lugar, algunas nuevas aperturas económicas respecto a la propiedad privada y las inversiones extranjeras, a la vez que mantiene el compromiso de Cuba con una economía planificada y el socialismo, junto con el carácter universal y gratuito de los sistemas de salud y educativo. En segundo lugar, incluye algunos cambios políticos respecto de la estructura de los gobiernos nacionales, provinciales y municipales, y la longitud del mandato de los presidentes, a la vez que crea el puesto de Primer Ministro. En tercer lugar, la Constitución introduce cambios legales y sociales, como por ejemplo, la presunción de inocencia, dentro



del sistema legal; la prohibición de la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual o identidad de género; y una provisión que deja abierto para futuras determinaciones el lenguaje específico que redefiniría al matrimonio sin discriminación por orientación sexual o identidad de género.

A lo largo de los tres meses de reuniones populares descritas por Bustamante Molina, mucho de los artículos de la Constitución fueron debatidos y cuestionados. Algunos de los puntos principales mencionados se resumen en la infografía de CubaDebate que republicamos en este artículo.

A continuación, presentamos a modo de ejemplo tres artículos que fueron discutidos con frecuencia en las reuniones populares:

- 1) Artículo 121, sobre la elección del presidente por la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular, 16.176 personas expresaron su opinión, en su mayoría pidiendo que el presidente sea elegido de manera directa por los y las votantes.
- 2) Se compartieron más de 182.000 opiniones sobre el derecho a asistencia jurídica y el ejercicio de la defensa. La propuesta principal fue que el derecho a un abogado o abogada sea explícito desde el momento del arresto.
- 3) Artículo 68, sobre el tema del matrimonio igualitario y la apertura del matrimonio a cualquier pareja, sin importar su género. Se



Cubanos recogiendo ejemplares del Proyecto de Constitución

recibieron 192.408 opiniones, en su mayoría pidiendo que se elimine este artículo o se mantenga la definición de matrimonio de la Constitución de 1975, que especificaba un hombre y una mujer.

Como era de esperarse, el intento de expandir la definición de matrimonio en Cuba tuvo una fuerte oposición de parte de muchas iglesias cubanas e instituciones religiosas internacionales. Organizaron una campaña en Cuba y en redes sociales en contra del derecho al matrimonio de las personas LGBTQ+. Este se convirtió en uno de los artículos más polémicos en la nueva Constitución y amenazó con mover el eje del referendo, convirtiéndolo en un voto a favor o en contra del matrimonio igualitario, en detrimento de todos los demás temas y asuntos.

Aunque Cuba ha avanzado mucho en la promoción de los derechos de lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transexuales, muchos comentarios anecdóticos sugieren que en este tema había una división muy clara entre los ámbitos rurales y urbanos. La versión definitiva de la nueva Constitución que se votó en el referendo omitió toda definición de matrimonio, abriendo así la puerta al matrimonio igualitario en el futuro. Según la Constitución, la definición de matrimonio se discutirá cuando Cuba actualice su Código de Familia en los próximos dos años a través de un “proceso de consulta popular” y “referendo”. Y nuevamente, más allá de toda controversia, son en definitiva los debates y las consultas masivas las que tienen la última palabra en la democracia socialista popular cubana.

Por supuesto, es polémico organizar un referendo nacional sobre un derecho humano fundamental. Por ejemplo, el derecho al voto de las personas negras en Estados Unidos, o de los pueblos indígenas de Canadá, quizás no hubieran sido reconocidos si los respectivos gobiernos los hubieran sujeto a referendos en los años 50 o 60. Lo mismo podría decirse del matrimonio igualitario cuando la ley fue aprobada en Canadá en 2005. Los derechos no deberían ser reconocidos o negados en función de lo que opina la mayoría de la sociedad; son derechos y deberían ser irrevocables. Todos los seres humanos deberían ser reconocidos como iguales por las leyes que gobiernan su

sociedad.

Al mismo tiempo, Cuba está en una situación difícil. El gobierno revolucionario cubano busca un consenso en su impulso hacia su proyecto socialista. Busca la participación activa de todas las personas, en la política y en la sociedad. Hay quienes consideraban que impulsar el reconocimiento al derecho al matrimonio igualitario sin consolidar una conciencia y apoyo más amplio podía socavar el proceso de reforma constitucional. En particular, podría haber abierto un espacio para que los enemigos de la revolución cubana sembraran más divisiones en la sociedad, algo que se vio durante el verano en mensajes dirigidos a Cuba enviados desde iglesias y grupos religiosos anti-LGBTQ+ de EE UU.

En un artículo titulado “Las razones de mi voto”, la presidenta del Consejo Asesor del Ministro de Cultura de Cuba, Graziella Pogolotti se dirige a quienes están en contra del matrimonio igualitario en Cuba. Escribe que la nueva Constitución de Cuba “condena todas las formas de discriminación por motivos de raza, procedencia étnica, origen social, género, discapacidad y orientación sexual”. Pogolotti fundamenta por qué votará “sí” a la nueva constitución: “Actualiza el concepto de familia al reconocer su diversidad de formas y constitución. Legítima con ello una realidad existente ahora mismo con raíces venidas de tiempo atrás y ocultas bajo el manto de la hipocresía, fuente de prejuicios lacerantes heredados de la zona más oscura de nuestra tradición cultural”.

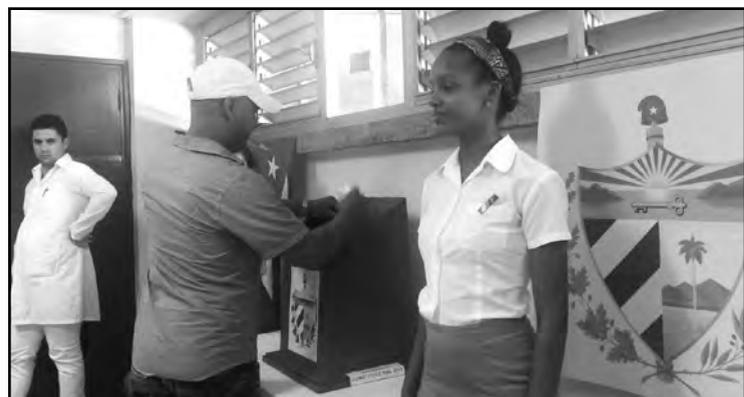
Los resultados del referendo constitucional: una gran victoria

Luego de las 133.681 reuniones comunitarias entre agosto y noviembre de 2018 y cambios a casi el 60% de

Artículos con mayor número de propuestas

<p>ARTÍCULO 68. El matrimonio es la unión voluntariamente concertada entre dos personas con aptitud legal para ello, a fin de hacer vida en común. Descansa en la igualdad de género.</p> <p>192 408 propuestas</p> <p>Destacan las referentes a mantener el artículo vigente o eliminar este artículo.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 121. El Presidente de la República es elegido por la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular de entre sus diputados, por un periodo de cinco años, y le rinde cuenta a esta de su gestión.</p> <p>16 176 propuestas</p> <p>La mayor cantidad propone que el Presidente sea electo directamente por los votantes.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 165. En cada provincia rige un Gobierno Provincial conformado por un Gobernador y un Consejo Provincial.</p> <p>25 650 propuestas</p> <p>Proponen que se cambie el nombre de Gobernado por Presidente.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 82. Se reconoce el derecho de las personas a una vivienda digna.</p> <p>15 398 propuestas</p> <p>Proponen cambiar el término digno, y dudas acerca de qué se considera una vivienda digna.</p>	<p>El Presidente de la República puede ejercer su cargo hasta dos periodos consecutivos, luego de lo cual no puede desempeñarlo nuevamente.</p> <p>88 039 propuestas</p> <p>En general, dirigidas a no limitar los periodos de mandato.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 91. El trabajo es un valor primordial de nuestra sociedad. Constituye un deber, un derecho y un motivo de honor de todas las personas en condiciones de trabajar. Es, además, la fuente principal de ingresos para el individuo.</p> <p>51 414 propuestas</p> <p>Se interesan en establecer el trabajo con carácter obligatorio.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 170. El Gobernador Provincial es designado, a propuesta del Presidente de la República, por la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular, o en su caso por el Consejo de Estado, por el término de cinco años.</p> <p>16 188 propuestas</p> <p>Exponen que el Gobernador sea electo directamente por el pueblo, por las asambleas municipales o por el Consejo Municipal.</p>	<p>Se exige además tener hasta sesenta años de edad para ser elegido en este cargo en un primer periodo.</p> <p>24 035 propuestas</p> <p>Lo que más se manifiesta es no precisar límite de edad.</p> <p>ARTÍCULO 76. El trabajo se remunera en función de la cantidad, complejidad, calidad y resultados obtenidos, expresión del principio de distribución socialista “de cada cual según su capacidad, a cada cual según su trabajo”.</p> <p>Todas las personas reciben el mismo salario por trabajo de igual valor.</p> <p>12 558 propuestas</p> <p>Vinculadas a la correspondencia entre salario y precios, y dudas sobre cómo se va a garantizar el principio de distribución.</p> <p>16 188 propuestas</p> <p>Exponen que el Gobernador sea electo directamente por el pueblo, por las asambleas municipales o por el Consejo Municipal.</p> <p>18 283 propuestas</p> <p>Se solicita que las personas tengan derecho a asistencia jurídica desde el momento de la detención.</p>
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CUBADEBATE
Consejo de Territorio Masbarot



Votación en el hospital Abel Santamaría de Pinar del Río, Cuba.

fue de 68,3%. La participación de una abrumadora mayoría del pueblo cubano en este proceso indica no sólo un deseo de reforma constitucional, sino también un notable grado de confianza en el proceso y sus procedimientos.

El Secretario de Estado de los EE UU ataca los resultados

A pesar de las estadísticas claras y el triunfo del referendo en Cuba, el Secretario de Estado de EEUU, Mike Pompeo, decidió hacer declaraciones difamando la decisión de más de 7,8 millones de cubanos y cubanas.

Pompeo declaró que “el 24 de febrero, el régimen comunista cubano celebró lo que llamaron un ‘referendo nacional’ sobre modificaciones a su Constitución. Nadie debería dejarse engañar por este ejercicio, que logra poco más que perpetuar el pretexto de la dictadura de partido único del régimen. [...] Los Estados Unidos continúan apoyando a los cubanos que han sufrido por 60 años el sistema político fallido y la mala gestión económica de la revolución. Creemos que la historia está del lado del valiente pueblo cubano y que este hemisferio es una región donde la democracia, la libertad y la dignidad humana prevalecerán”.



Debates sobre la reforma constitucional en un barrio de Cuba, Oct 2018.

Mientras el gobierno de EEUU arremete contra el proceso de reforma constitucional en Cuba, acusándolo de antidemocrático, también sigue apoyando al presidente de Honduras Juan Orlando Hernández, quien tomó el poder por medio de un fraude, y al golpe de la derecha en contra del gobierno democráticamente electo de Venezuela. Y mientras declaran tanto supuesto interés por el pueblo cubano, Washington está prácticamente solo en su imposición de un bloqueo criminal a la gente de la isla-nación.

En una entrevista con CubaDebate a la

Dra. Martha Prieto, vicepresidenta de la Sociedad Cubana de Derecho Constitucional y profesora en la Universidad de la Habana, se le preguntó: ¿qué valores distinguiría de la

Constitución que se somete a referendo?”

La Dra. Martha Pietro respondió que “[los valores incluidos] son esenciales. La dignidad humana: se ha reforzado su tratamiento, irradiando a todo el texto, a los derechos y todo el ordenamiento jurídico. La igualdad, también con más amplitud, dentro del reconocimiento de la diversidad. La protección de los intereses personales, con la exigencia de la solidaridad humana como medio de asegurar la existencia de la persona, en lo individual y colectivo, expresado también en la protección de los derechos que son para todos y en el deber de contribuir todos al desarrollo y de respetar los derechos de los demás”.

Mientras Cuba ha sufrido por más de cinco décadas un bloqueo injusto de parte de EEUU, su economía y sociedad también enfrenta desafíos futuros. Es solamente a través de la discusión, el debate y la unidad que continuarán avanzando en las conquistas de la revolución cubana y fortaleciéndose para el camino por delante. Sin embargo, no se realizará todo el potencial de las reformas y del socialismo cubano hasta que Washington cese la guerra económica injusta con la que castiga a la isla hace medio siglo.

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HEY TRUMP HANDS OFF CUBA! NO TO THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA, NO TO TITLE III!

By Janine Solanki

On April 17, 2018, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the U.S. will enforce Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the act which codifies into law much of the inhumane U.S. blockade against Cuba. Title III, which has been suspended since its creation in 1996, threatens Cuba's economy by punishing foreign entities who do business with Cuba. Specifically, it allows U.S. citizens to file lawsuits against companies that operate in Cuba on formerly U.S. properties which were nationalized after the Cuban Revolution. This is despite the fact that the nationalization process was recognized by the Supreme Court of the United States and in done compliance with national and international law, and in fact, invoking Title III violates international law!

This latest action of the Trump administration is along with other measures to tighten the U.S. blockade, in their attempts to strangle Cuba into submission to the U.S. However Cubans, have survived, progressed and advanced almost six decades of the U.S. blockade with their heads held

high and will continue to assert their right to self-determination and sovereignty. Despite the U.S. blockade, Cuba has advanced in many fields of human endeavour, from its exceptional healthcare and education system to its world-class artists, nurtured by the Cuban revolution.

In Vancouver, Canada, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade has been holding monthly protest actions demanding an end to the U.S. blockade and demanding that the U.S. return the illegally occupied territory of Guantanamo back to Cuba. On April 17 this monthly action was even more energetic and determined than usual, coming on the heels of Pompeo's announcement regarding Title III. Activists and supporters picketed in front of the U.S. Consulate, raising protest signs high and chanting loudly for U.S. officials to hear the demands of “lift the blockade on Cuba now!” In between rounds of picketing, protesters gathered to hear from speakers including a voice message of solidarity from Ottawa Cuba Connections and their protest in front



of the U.S. embassy in Ottawa. Alongside Vancouver, coordinated monthly actions are held in Ottawa and Montreal, Canada, and Kiev, Ukraine, making these actions stronger with united voices against this unjust blockade!

The action wrapped up with a customary group photo in front of the doors of the U.S. Consulate, picket signs held up in defiance under the U.S. Consulate building sign. This photo was shared on social media around the world, promoting the solidarity that Vancouverites and people around the world have with Cuba and against the blockade!

For information on upcoming actions visit www.vancubavsbokade.org or follow on Facebook or on Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

"THE BIGGEST BATTLES AGAINST IMPERIALISM ARE BEING PLAYED IN VENEZUELA"

An interview with Manolo de los Santos

Interview by Azza Rojbi & Mike Larson

Manolo de los Santos is the Executive Director of the People's Forum which is a revolutionary centre for educating, organizing and mobilizing for justice located in New York City.

Manolo is also an organizer with the Popular Education Project and has worked for many years coordinating solidarity initiatives, community organizing efforts and popular education projects in Latin America and the United States.

This interview was conducted by Fire This Time organizers Azza and Mike while participating at the North American Regional Meeting of the International Peoples Assembly hosted by the People's Forum in New York City, April 11 - April 12, 2019.

FTT: Last month you participated in the International Peoples Assembly Conference in Venezuela. How did you see the situation in Venezuela and what is your take on the people and government of Venezuela responding to the U.S. imposed crisis, such as sanctions and all kinds of intervention and sabotage against their country?

Manolo: Coming to Venezuela at that particular moment was very eye opening for me but also for many delegates coming from across the United States and definitely those coming from different continents on the planet because we came to Venezuela right at what we would say was probably one of the most intense moments in the full on onslaught by U.S. imperialism and its allies in Western Europe and Canada against the Bolivarian Revolution.

We came right at the end of February when you know the U.S. imperialists are using this deception of a self-proclaimed president that didn't have any legitimacy inside the country. Basically, they are using the ruse of humanitarian aid to



force a possible invasion of the country putting him in a situation where he would have been responsible for the deaths of thousands and possibly millions of Venezuelans at the hands of U.S. imperialism. We would have seen the creation of a new Syria sadly in the continent of Latin America and

The Che Guevara Internationalist Youth Brigade, part of the International Peoples Assembly, in Caracas, Venezuela, February 2019.



with consequences far worse and even unknown to us, because of the gravity of the forces of imperialism but also the technological use of weaponry that would definitely wreak havoc in a country like Venezuela.

Being in Venezuela, particularly at this exact moment in which you had such a high confrontation, was also a lesson to popular movements and organizations across the globe. Seeing how the concepts of the unity of the class, the unity of the Venezuelan people and the weapon of actually organizing themselves to fight back actually turned what could have been a defeat for our movements into an actual victory. It reminded us in many

ways symbolically of Fidel's leadership in the Bay of Pigs, a situation in which a people who are outnumbered and outranked by the highest weapons of imperialist technology were actually capable of defeating the empire. And that's what we perceived in Venezuela. And that is a great example and moral lesson for movements all across the planet. That while the biggest battles against imperialism are being played in Venezuela right now, they're not necessarily a scenario in which we have to assume defeat. We can actually learn about how to stand victoriously against these imperialist forces.

FTT: This regional gathering of the International Peoples Assembly, taking place in New York, I believe is an important step forward after the International Assembly last month in Caracas, Venezuela, which Mike and I also participated in, we found it to be a really great initiative toward bringing everyone in the struggle together. Can you elaborate more how you see the overall goal of the International Peoples Assembly and how you envision its future?

Manolo: Well the first thing is that we always want to clarify is that the International Assembly of Peoples organizations and movements is not a conference gathering space but rather a process by which revolutionaries from across the planet seek to gather, get to know each other and build strategic actions that advance the struggles of the working

class internationally. We emphasized the process part of it because we want to differentiate the Assembly from previous spaces that have existed such as the World Social Forum that were so concentrated on gathering the NGOs or representatives of an NGO'ized working class organization to essentially debate about what it would look like to work together.

We're coming into the assembly process rather to engage on how to move the revolutionary agenda forward, understanding that we may not necessarily have an ideological unity, but we have a platform that is anti-capitalist, that is

Continued on page 31

PEOPLE IN THE U.S.

Interviews by
Alison Bodine

On April 27, 2019 people in Venezuela marched in the streets of the capital city, Caracas, against the continued U.S.-led war on Venezuela. The demonstration in defense of Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination also marked that Venezuela has now left the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS has been a tool for U.S. and imperialist meddling in Venezuela and their "regime change" plot to overthrow the democratically elected government of President Maduro.

Thousands of miles to the north, in Washington, DC, the heroic actions of defense by the Embassy Protection Collective are echoing the voices of the mass majority of Venezuelan people that are mobilizing against U.S. threats, sanctions and war. Since April 12, 2019 a group of activists have been guarding the Venezuelan Embassy, 24 hour a day, 7 days a week from hostile and illegal takeover by the goons of U.S. puppet Juan Guaido.

Although Juan Guaido's attempted coup against President Maduro has failed miserably, the U.S. government continues to promote Guaido, who commands none of Venezuela's state institutions, as the "legitimate" leader of Venezuela. This has included police and U.S. Secret Service facilitating the illegal occupation of Venezuela's military attaché building in Washington DC, and the Venezuelan Consulate in New York City on March 18.

The Embassy Protection Collective has taken up the call to defend the dignity and sovereignty of Venezuela, and their important work should be celebrated and supported by all peace-loving people.

Below are two interviews by Fire This Time with leaders within this vital movement, covering the significance of their struggle, and the next steps that the Embassy Protection Collective will be taking from the frontlines of the fight against war on Venezuela.

Medea Benjamin is the co-founder of the women-led peace group CODEPINK and the co-founder of the human rights group Global Exchange. She has been an advocate for social justice for more than 40 years. She is the author of ten books, including *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control and Kingdom of the Unjust: Behind the U.S.-Saudi Connection*. Her most recent book, *Inside Iran: The Real History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, is part of a campaign to prevent a war with Iran and instead promote normal trade and diplomatic relations. This interview took place when Medea was on a delegation in Colombia.

Margaret Flowers is a pediatrician who practiced medicine for 17 years, first as director of pediatrics at a rural hospital and then in private practice. In 2007, Margaret left practice to advocate full time for National Improved Medicare for All single payer healthcare. She is the Co-director of *Popular Resistance*, co-host of the radio show *Clearing the*



THE DIGNITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF VENEZUELA! 24/7 GUARD OF THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON DC CONTINUES!

Interviews with Medea Benjamin and Margaret Flowers, two courageous leaders and members of the Embassy Protection Collective



Members of the Embassy Protection Collective inside of the Venezuelan Embassy; Margaret Flowers is on the far left, and Medea Benjamin is next to her on the right.

FOG and former candidate for U.S. Senate. The interview took place while Margaret was inside of the Venezuelan Embassy.

For more information, to watch the livestream, and to learn about how you can support this important work visit the Embassy Protection Collective Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/ColectivosporlaPaz/>

INTERVIEW WITH MEDEA BENJAMIN

FTT: Thank you, Medea, for taking the time for this interview with Fire This Time. As one of the leaders that began this important fight in defense of Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination, can you please explain how and when did this important struggle start?

Medea Benjamin: We were at the press conference they held outside the military attaché's office in Washington D.C. when they [the Guaido opposition] announced that

they were taking over that building. And that same day they took over the New York City Venezuelan Consulate and they announced at their press conference that they wanted to take over the D.C. Venezuelan embassy.

Then when the Organization of American States (OAS) took a vote against their own charter, which is supposed to be a two thirds majority but instead, because they couldn't get that, they used a simple majority. They voted to kick Venezuela out. That was a move to then take over the Embassy, because as long as they had Venezuelan diplomats who were part of the Organization of American States working at the Embassy, they would probably not take it over. But

once they had managed to throw Venezuela out of the OAS and the State Department gave the Venezuelan remaining diplomats two weeks to leave, we knew that two weeks later there would be a green light for taking over the Embassy. That's why we then got the okay from the Maduro government to start staying at the





Embassy.

FTT: It's been important and inspiring to us to watch from Vancouver and all around the world. We've been sharing the videos and livestream. We've been sharing the videos and livestream. It's really a heroic defense of a building that right now is representing the call of the country to have their sovereignty respected.

Benjamin: I was just going to say how important it is to see this in this larger historical context, where I don't think it's ever happened before in the history of our country where American citizens have gone into a foreign embassy with the permission of that embassy to protect it from our own government. That's quite extraordinary, because we know that the opposition could never take over any building in the U.S. without the complicity of the U.S. government. They need the backing of the U.S. security forces to be able to do this. And in this case they need the State Department's accreditation to be able to do it. So we are really protecting the embassy from our government.

FTT: What has been the response of the progressive movement in the U.S. to the actions of the Embassy Protection Collective?

Benjamin: Well there's been a growing number of people and groups that have come to join in. It's one of those things that starts to snowball, and we hope we will have enough time to really build it up. We have Code Pink and Popular Resistance, the Answer Coalition, Democratic Socialists of America, members of the Green Party. And then in the evenings where we've had these educational activities we have people come who are associated with lots of different organizations.

Such as the group that works with El Salvador, CISPES, the Honduran Solidarity Network. We've had people from Cuba Solidarity Network. Next



week we're planning a gathering where there will be people who work around the Palestinian Human Rights. We've had people from the D.C. community who are concerned about issues of gentrification and racism. We've had speakers who make the connections between things that are happening in Washington D.C. to the local population and how it connects to the struggle in Venezuela. So it's really been fantastic to have every single night some event that educates people, that brings new people in, and that forms a real community of resistance that we haven't had in Washington D.C. for a long time.

FTT: Is there anything else that you'd like to share about this important struggle with our readers here in Canada and around the world?

Benjamin: I think you better watch out because Canada will be next. So be ready. It would be good to be prepared, to even pre-emptively, get groups on board to say don't let this happen because, believe me, it's in the works. I'm sure the talks have been going on between the Canadian government and the Guaido opposition about just this thing.

FTT: Well thank you for taking time out of what I'm sure it has been a crazy schedule for you between Colombia and the embassy in Washington DC. All of our solidarity.

Benjamin: Wonderful. Thanks so much. Nice talking to you too.

INTERVIEW WITH MARGARET FLOWERS

FTT: Thank you Margaret for doing this interview with Fire This Time. We understand how busy you are and how many things you guys are balancing there from inside Venezuela's Embassy. This is a great and important struggle that you are participating in and leading. The Embassy Protection Collective is really taking an important role in leadership in defending the people of Venezuela against war by the US and their allies and defending their dignity and sovereignty and self-determination.

Can you give us an update as to what has been happening since you arrived and what right now has been the response of the U.S. government and the police? We know that they are keeping a "careful eye" on you all.



Margaret Flowers: Thank you. We started our constant presence at the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington D.C. on April 10th. Prior to that there had been some gatherings here, just kind of a show of solidarity. But then, when the Organization of American States (OAS) changed their rules on April 9th so they could vote to recognize Juan Guaido as the President of Venezuela, the State Department gave the Venezuelan OAS diplomats two weeks instead of 60 days to leave the country. We felt a sense of urgency that needed to be here not knowing how things would that would go down.

For the first week that we were here we kind of organized ourselves: Code Pink, the ANSWER Coalition and Popular Resistance into what we call the Embassy Protection Collective. The Venezuelans are actually calling us the "colectivos por la paz", the peace collective. They're trying to reclaim that sense of collective as a positive thing because the opposition has tried to demonize it.

We spent the first week really focused on legal avenue. Could we get a temporary restraining order against the State Department to prevent them from coming in here because the United Nations still recognizes President Maduro as the President, and he is the president of Venezuela? And then when we consulted with numerous lawyers and realized that there wouldn't be the ability to get that here in the United States, because there's this doctrine of non-judicial ability, that basically judges would say that's a political question and we can't



Embassy portectors face provocation, violence & racist, homophobic, sexist slurs from right-wing Venezuelan thugs. This photo from @RealAlexRubi showing a reactionary counter-protestor outside of the embassy is one example.

decide it, the Executive Office has to decide. So, then we thought, okay, now we just need to get as many people here and as much media here to make it much more of a spotlight on this and less possible for the State Department to send in the Secret Service to take us out.

We are here legally. We have the full support of the Venezuelan government. They didn't ask us to come here, but we asked to be here, and they agreed. And so, we've had support statements from the Vice Foreign Minister, to the Foreign Minister, to President Maduro himself, expressing their support for us being here. Actually, right now we are the ones taking care of the embassy, we have the keys and the responsibility to care for it.

Last week with a really big week. Because the two weeks was up on Thursday, we thought that the Secret Service would come in then and we put out a large call to action and had about 50 to 75 people here on Wednesday night. So, a really strong showing. We had John Kiriakou do a public event where he talked about an inside view inside the CIA view of regime change efforts, which was super interesting. And we were prepared for the Secret Service to come in and to stay here and try to say that you're not supposed to be here and they would have to carry us out. And they didn't come.

The Secret Service has not given us any order. The State Department has not given us any order to leave. And so our position right now is that we are the lawful ones that are here. We're calling ourselves "interim protectors." And I'll explain that in a second, but in that we are actually tenants of this building now and there is an eviction process that's required in Washington D.C. that would require that we have our own participation in that process. So we're hoping that that will keep them out.

The current situation is that the United States has a very large embassy in Caracas. They have made an agreement with Switzerland to be the protectorate for that embassy. The Venezuelan government has to approve that before it can go forward. The Venezuelan government is trying to find a country to be a protectorate for this embassy and they're saying that once they find a protectorate they will then agree to the U.S. and Switzerland's agreement, on the condition that

the U.S. agrees to have their protectorate here. That would be the very best situation. If we can stay here until they make that negotiation and complete it and then leave, turning it over to the other country, then I think that would be great.

But, if they fail to make that negotiation and the U.S. does come in here and take us out and take over the embassy, then Venezuela has been very clear that they will then seize the U.S. Embassy in Caracas. The U.S. will see that as an act of aggression and then who knows how it will escalate from there. So we really feel like we're kind of in this balance between a peaceful resolution of this situation and one that could escalate into serious conflict.

FTT: It is really powerful the way that the embassy been decorated in defense of Venezuela, international law, and respect for sovereignty. The banners are very clear and I'm sure has had an impact on people driving by and arriving to the Embassy. Could you describe what you think the next steps might be as far as within the embassy? What is the Collective planning in the next few days?

Flowers: One is to maintain a very strong physical presence. So, having these events, bringing the public in and having lots of people who are coming and going. There are some people who come and sleep here and then go to work or go to school during the day and come back. There are some people who like me, I just stay here all the time and I do my work here during the day. People who will just come for the events or just come to visit, help with cooking and things like that.

The second is that we must maintain a favorable media image. There has been a lot of media coming in covering this. We know the corporate media is not very friendly to us, and, we would do this anyway, but we just feel a very serious responsibility to take care of this very dignified space. And so, we're keeping the embassy very clean. We have people here that do maintenance work and home remodeling and things like that, so when something breaks down, like the elevator did the other day, they can fix it. Or if a toilet doesn't flush, they can fix it. So, we're maintaining the building, both clean and, also, maintaining the infrastructure within the building.

Then the third thing is being very disciplined in the face of what we can assume from their behavior and their lack of sophistication are

poorly paid disruptors and provocateurs who are coming out in greater numbers. When I say greater numbers, I am talking like four or five. But being more aggressive in their actions towards us. And so that gets the police really edgy, and the Secret Service usually roll up when they're here and we have to be super careful about anything that we do. Because, the Secret Service will jump out and start complaining if there's any appearance of any kind of a conflict.

FTT: From Fire This Time we have been following online and sharing about your struggle. The livestream has been really great for everyone to see and to learn from and be inspired by this really heroic defense.

What do you think people in the U.S. and Canada can do to defend and support this great initiative that you and the Embassy Protection Collective have taken?

Flowers: Well I would say thank you. I would say our first priority is if you are able, or you know someone who is able, to come here and physically be with us, somebody who would be interested in doing that, we need people. We need bodies here and there's all kinds of different tasks, from helping with the cleaning and the cooking, to helping with the media or building maintenance or security. Just sitting in a chair just watching or standing and watching. It's a lot to maintain for the core group that's here. So bodies are needed.

Spreading the word, just letting people know about what's going on and how this is would be a gross violation of Article 22 of the Vienna Convention, which has always been followed even when countries are at war with each other. It requires that the host country protect the embassy, so to turn it over to an imposter, to someone who is participating in a failed coup, would just be a huge violation of international law. We are here, like I said we're here legally. We call ourselves tenants, we call ourselves interim protectorates of the embassy. Those who are trying to come in would be an occupying force. And sadly they are a violent occupying force. So getting that out there. How outrageous this is.

Then people can support materially. Some of the main things that we need are food. We're trying to feed a lot of people who are staying here. Some people have been very generous and have actually ordered food remotely and sent that to us. That's a huge thing for us because, even the cooking, if we didn't have to do as much cooking it would be less of a burden on us and allow us to pay more attention to the other tasks that we have to do.

FTT: Thank you, Margaret, for your time. Like I said, we Fire This Time and our Venezuela Solidarity Campaign definitely send all of our support and love and solidarity to everyone doing this important work. We will continue following very closely and doing whatever we can to support.

Flowers: Thank you so much it's really appreciated.



Victor Salcedo and Alison Bodine in La Guaira, Venezuela

Spread the Message: "The Message of Revolution, the Message of Peace, the Message of Hope, the message of Socialism"

Interview with Young Venezuelan Revolutionary Victor Salcedo



Interview By Alison Bodine

In the beginning of April 2019 Fire This Time sat down with Venezuelan revolutionary youth leader Victor Salcedo in the city of La Guairá, Venezuela. La Guairá is located 30km to the north of Caracas, in the state of Vargas. This beautiful and important city is home to Venezuela's largest port.

Victor Salcedo is a member of the International Relations Commission of the Youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (JPSUV). He is also Historian for the Mayor's Office of the City of La Guairá.

FTT: Thank you, Victor, for taking the time to do this interview today. It has been great to learn more about your city and province, about the gains that you have made in the Bolivarian revolutionary process, and also about the challenges that lie ahead.

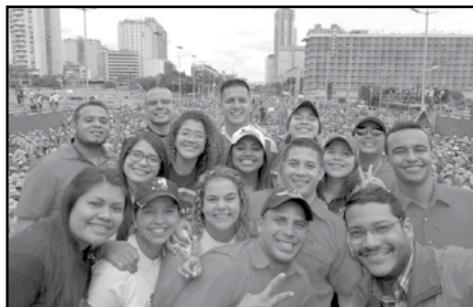
I have had an incredible experience during my short time here in Venezuela with the delegation of the Campaign to End U.S. and Canada Sanctions on Venezuela. During my last week in Venezuela, I have observed the leadership of many young people in the Bolivarian revolutionary process. What do you think is the most important task for revolutionary youth in Venezuela today?

Victor Salcedo: First of all, Alison, thank you for this interview. Thanks to Fire This Time for all your solidarity back in Canada, in Vancouver. We follow you very often. Every day we see your social networks and the different ways that you support Venezuela through rallies and mobilizations, together with the consulate and other political and social organizations.

We appreciate this support because at this time, precisely when the empire is tightening its grip against Venezuela, we need more support from movements of friends abroad to spread the message; the message of the revolution, the message of peace, the message of hope, the message of socialism. Here we decided 20 years ago to build a model for the country, a model of peaceful revolution with a broad democratic base, but with a deep

revolutionary and socialist character. That is why the United States has attacked us since the arrival of the revolution. That is why they have financed coups d'état. That is why they have tried to overthrow President Chávez and now are trying to do the same to President Maduro. Thank you from all my heart.

Well, to answer the question. It is evident that with the arrival of the revolution, youth were



(Above) Members of the Young United Socialist Party of Venezuela (JPSUV) in La Guaira. (Below) Members of the JPSUV at a rally against U.S. imperialism in Caracas February 2, 2019.

given a leading role in the political life of the country, in the construction of this political road. It is no secret that at present there are young ministers, mayors, deputy ministers, and governors. This is in addition to the youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV). This is an achievement that we have been vindicated by during these long years. It has been a difficult struggle, but I think we have managed to have these young people,

these political cadres, take a leading role in this revolutionary process.

I believe that the work of us as youth, as political cadres, should be towards the political and ideological formation of the youth, of the students, of those in secondary school, of university students. In this way, we can awaken the historical memory to raise awareness for these young people and make it such that they are not drawn to the side of the fascist right.

That is why we believe that our main task is precisely to answer the call for the political formation of these young people so that what happened with the *guarimbas* will not happen again. Political education and formation will also make young people aware of the reality of the games of the American empire and the same time allow us to build this revolution, that I repeat is a democratic revolution, a revolution that all Venezuelans can answer the call to build.

FTT: Can you describe some of the impacts of the criminal imperialist sanctions on La Guairá?

Salcedo: Yes, well, yesterday as you know, this delegation had a conversation with the Mayor of La Guairá, and the Mayor was referring precisely to this. The Mayor of the municipality of La Guairá had bought ambulances abroad, in Mexico, the boat was hired and paid for to bring them. As he said, we are not asking for crumbs, we were not asking them to deliver the ambulances for free, we paid for the ambulances and paid for their transportation.

It turned out that the shipping company received a threat that if it docks in Venezuela it will be subject to a boycott from the transnationals, from the big companies that the American empire handles. Because of this, the company decided not to transport those ambulances, ambulances that are for the Venezuelan people, so that the town can attend to any emergency in a timely manner. Now we are looking for another shipping company or another vessel that we can hire to bring the ambulances.

Recently, the same thing has also been

happening to us with the boats that brought food for the CLAP boxes. A CLAP box, as is well known, is a box delivered to Venezuelan people by the government of Venezuela that normally contains food bought from Mexico, Colombia or other parts of Latin America. The companies that are shipping the food for these boxes are increasingly receiving threats from these transnationals, to prevent them from bringing food to Venezuela. The shipping companies are sanctioned or fined for coming to Venezuela and every time it reduces more their ability to come to Venezuela. As a reference, out of eight boats that used to come here, there are now three. There are only three because the other five have withdrawn precisely because of the threat that if you come to Venezuela you will be sanctioned.

FTT: Can you describe some of the ways that the people of La Guairá have been organizing as a community during the difficult times of the electrical blackout?

Salcedo: Yes, look recently from the Mayor's office of La Guairá we have created the "Patriotic Councils of Communal Power," CPPC for short. These are leadership bodies that exist in each community, made up of leaders of social movements, communes, and communal councils. The CPPC can then report and consult with the Mayor's office to create solutions for the problems that exist in daily life: electricity, gas distribution, etcetera.

The CPPC's have existed for six months but have yielded very good results. For example, through these patriotic councils, a structured plan has been designed to distribute meat and chicken to the communities at subsidized prices. The Mayor's office buys the products, and then the distribution happens through the patriotic councils which make sure that the products reach all parties: the popular sectors, even the middle-class sectors, everyone is attended to equally at subsidized prices. These are prices that are incomparable to those on the speculative market that is always increasing the price of products. This has been an interesting experience.

This is an experience that is taking place throughout the country, not only in La Guairá. It's good that in cooperation with popular power we have managed to overcome in some way the blockade of the United States.

In addition to this experience the people are, as Ali Primera says, the people are wise and patient. In the people we find the wisdom, in the people we find resolutions. In talking with people we are able to face and overcome this blockade and the sanctions of the American empire and solve the problems of daily life: transportation, electricity, food consumption.

FTT: What is your message to people in Canada?

Salcedo: My message has to do with what I said at the beginning. First of all, to thank

those compañeros who exercise solidarity with Venezuela in this difficult moment. Those compañeros, students, poor and working people in Canada should come and see Venezuela so that we can share with one another and they can know the reality of this country.

This country is not what the television sells, what the big chains sell, what CNN sells, what Fox sells. Its screens show that Venezuela is destroyed, that there is no food, that there are no solutions for the problems that we face, and that foreign interference is needed for us to solve our problems. That is not the case.

I invite you, Alison, to be a spokesperson for what is happening here and what you have seen, what life is like here, and what you have shared with the Venezuelans. Let them know



(Above) Hector Rodriguez, young Governor of Miranda State at a rally. (Below) Venezuelan youth leaders in the ecology movement.

that here in Venezuela there is a brave people, a people in resistance and a people that are mobilized on the street. Venezuelan people are a happy people, who like to work and to play. We are a cheerful people that show our joy when we are out on the street working and fighting for a better country and a better world.

Also, I want to say that here in Venezuela there is a brave people, a people in resistance, a victorious people, a heroic people. That we are the same people that over 200 years ago became independent of the Spanish empire. At that time, we were fighting against the Spanish empire and we won. Today we are fighting against the North American empire

and we are going to win. That is the message.

FTT: Is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview?

Salcedo: We want to take advantage of your visit, Alison. We want there to be more cooperation between Venezuela and the social and political movements of Canada. We want to visit you soon in Vancouver, in Canada so that we can also do activities together, talks, forums, we are willing to go there to bring the truth of Venezuela to Canada, to other latitudes and other countries so that there is a cultural, political exchange between our social and political movements.

We know that there are movements in Canada that exercise solidarity with Venezuela and for that we are very grateful. We believe that your taking the opportunity to come here means that in the future we can go further and consolidate those bonds of friendship, those political bonds that are consolidated over time.

The people united will never be defeated!

FTT: Venceremos! (We will win!) Thank you, Victor, for this interview, and for your hospitality here in La Guairá.

*Follow Victor on Twitter:
@VictorSalcedo88*

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Battle of Ideas Press

Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela

By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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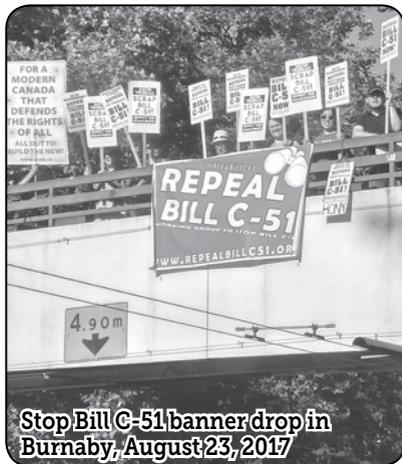
say, “No. Our strength is in our numbers. Our strength is in our organizing, our strength is in the campaigns that we organize independently. So, we need to continue organizing on these things.”

Who “We” Are

When I say “we”, I’m talking about poor and working people. I’m talking about the majority of people in Canada. “We” who have zero interest in a government pursuing war and occupation; who have zero interest in all the backroom deals that you’re seeing exposed by the SNC Lavalin scandal.

Who have zero interest in having our privacy raided; zero interest in CSIS having these new disruption powers. I’m talking about environmental organizers and Indigenous nations who are standing up defending their land who under Bill C-51 and Bill C-59

could easily be unjustifiably targeted. I’m talking about social justice organizers and about labour unions. “We” is the majority of people in Canada, whose lives are not getting any better and who have an interest in defending our rights. “We” who have an interest in creating a government that actually responds to their needs.



So, we have an opportunity in the next five months leading up to the federal election. People in Canada are not always actively engaged in political discussion but leading up to an election they are. As we’ve seen, during elections there is

an opportunity for a movement to be swallowed - or for real issues to get discussed in a real way. I think that’s exactly what we need to use the next five months for. Four years ago, Trudeau ran on a campaign of a lot

of promises he hasn’t fulfilled and he’s not going to fulfill – this time we have his record to point to.

So right now, we’re doing the tough, consistent and important work of laying the foundations for those movements. I want to thank everybody who has been coming to the actions on a weekly basis. A lot of people in this room have held signs, handed out brochures and collected petition signatures.

We don’t have tens of thousands of people at our actions. But even with 15 or 20 people we’ve been able to organize effectively. So, imagine even if that goes to 50 to 60 people every week and that happens in every city across Canada. And that grows. It doesn’t take a lot of people to begin with to make a real impact and to show other people what is possible. When people realize what is possible then there’s real possibility for change. That’s what we hope to continue doing with the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51, and we hope you can all join us in the ongoing campaign. Thank you very much.

Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59



Four Years in the Struggle for Democratic and Human Rights Where We Are, and Where We Need to Go.

By Thomas Davies

The Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 completed its fourth year of consecutive actions and moved into the fifth by making time to analyze the ongoing struggle to “Repeal Bill C-51 & Scrap Bill C-59!” with a well-attended seminar at the Vancouver Public Library.

April 10 saw the Working Group set up a picket and petition drive at the Langara-49th Station, where they were able to engage with Langara College students coming and going from school. Everyone then moved to downtown to the Vancouver Public Library for a seminar titled, “Four Years in the Struggle for Democratic and Human Rights. Where We Are, and Where We Need to Go.”

The seminar featured a video presentation outlining the history of the struggle against Bill C-51 and other attacks on human and democratic rights in Canada. Working

Group organizer and Fire This Time Editorial Board Member Thomas Davies also spoke [see the full speech on the page 2], as well as another longtime Working Group organizer Brian Sproule and CPC-ML member.

Two weeks later, the campaign moved to the fast-growing suburb of Surrey for it’s 212th picket and petition drive. Organizers were incredibly busy from start to finish with non-stop questions and discussions. A news crew from Punjab TV also covered the action, later airing the footage on tv in both Punjabi and English.

As the 2019 Federal Election gets closer, and Prime Minister Trudeau has totally failed in his promise to “fix” Bill C-51, we need to learn the lessons to move forward in the ongoing fight to defend



and extend human and democratic rights in Canada. The Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 will continue to do its part to contribute to this vital struggle.

Repeal Bill C-51 & Scrap Bill C-59!

Justin Trudeau – Respect Our Human Rights!

Our Security Lies in Defending the Rights of All!

The New Era of War & Occupation Vancouverites Demand: U.S. Hands off Venezuela, Yemen & Syria!

By *Janine Solanki*

On April 7, 2019, 14 Yemeni children were killed and many more injured when two schools in the capital Sana'a were targeted by Saudi-led bombing. This is not the first time Saudi bombings have made going to school deadly for Yemeni children. On August 9, 2018, Saudi airstrikes killed 40 children aged six to 11 years-old on a school bus. Eleven adults were also killed, and many more were wounded. The weapon used was a 227kg laser-guided bomb made by Lockheed Martin, supplied to Saudi Arabia by the United States.

These are only two of countless horrendous attacks that the Yemeni people have suffered, as they now enter the fifth year of the U.S.-backed, Saudi-led brutal war on Yemen. In addition to the bombings, Saudi Arabia and their allies have imposed a blockade on Yemen which prevents desperately needed medicine, food and fuel from reaching the Yemeni people. With the support of the U.S. and other imperialist countries like Canada, the Saudi-led war, bombings and blockade have made Yemen the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The U.S. imperialist strategy stretches from the Middle East to Latin America. For



Campaign in London for freedom of Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange

the past four months the U.S. government, together with the government of Canada and other allies, have escalated their dangerous war-mongering campaign against the people of Venezuela. Deadly sanctions and the attempted coup by U.S. puppet Juan Guaido are the key components of the U.S. "regime change" strategy against Venezuela's democratically elected government of President Nicolás Maduro. In the aftermath of the failed U.S.-backed coup, U.S. President



Protesters at the monthly MAWO antiwar rally demanding an end to Canadian arms sales to Saudi Arabia, April 26, 2019.

Trump and his officials have repeatedly declared that "all options are on the table", making the ominous threat of military intervention against Venezuela.

Free Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange

How do we know where the bomb that killed Yemeni children was made, or what kind of covert support the U.S. government gives Venezuelan right-wing forces? This is the important work of journalists and whistleblowers, and those exposing U.S. war crimes are under increasing attack. Chelsea Manning is a former U.S. intelligence analyst and whistleblower, who spent seven years in U.S. prison for leaking documents about U.S. war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. Today she is in jail once again, for refusing to testify in a grand jury investigation against Julian Assange. Julian Assange, the founder of Wikileaks, was also recently arrested in London, England. He is facing extradition to the U.S. where the U.S. government is charging him for his role in publishing documents from Chelsea Manning on the Wikileaks website. The attack on Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange is an attack on all whistleblowers, journalists and activists exposing the truth about imperialist atrocities, and they must be defended!

We Must Campaign

On April 26, 2019, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held a monthly antiwar rally and petition campaign, raising the demands of U.S. Hands off Venezuela, Yemen and Syria, and demanding Free Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange! The action, held in busy downtown Vancouver, attracted passers by with banners reading "Stop the Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia!" and "U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!"

Antiwar organizers had plenty of discussions with people stopping at the information table who picked up antiwar literature and signed petitions. Teams of activists also approached people walking by and gathered signatures on a petition demanding that the government of Canada end its \$15 billion arms deal selling so-called "light" armored vehicles to Saudi Arabia. Most people who stopped to sign the petition were aware of this scandal and outraged that the government of Canada is selling weapons to war-mongering Saudi Arabia.

The rally also included a short program, where MAWO chairperson Alison Bodine spoke against the new era of war and occupation, highlighting the current U.S. targets: Yemen, Syria and Venezuela. Since this new era began with the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, the U.S.-led imperialist war drive has inflicted wars, occupations and sanctions on oppressed nations, especially in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

The rally wrapped up with the commitment to continue organizing, educating and mobilizing through antiwar actions, events and literature, until this new era of war and occupation is ended. MAWO demands an end to all imperialist wars, occupations, military interventions and sanctions, and demands self-determination for all oppressed nations!

For more information on upcoming events and actions, visit www.mawovancouver.org, follow MAWO on Facebook or on Twitter @MAWOVan

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

Continued from page 23

anti-imperialist and anti-patriarchal. A common understanding of the necessity that we cannot advance or we cannot defeat global capital if we do not unite as a working class internationally. So in the space that we gather in we engage, again not in ideological debates but in discussions and dialogues about how to build common work together, common work around what we understand to be important areas such as the battle of ideas and how this has dimensions in the communications work that we lead. How this relates to the political education processes which we organize in our respective countries. And according to the conditions that we all face in each of our own particular terrains. And understanding that in this common space of practical and concrete struggles is where we really get to know each other and build the unity of the international working class.

FTT: Concluding what Azza asked you earlier, what is your message to activists in Canada or better to say overall North America?

Manolo: Well the important message that activists in Canada and particularly in North America need to understand is that we cannot assume in North America a passive role to the revolutionary actions

and changes that are taking place on the planet. We are not asking for a relationship of global north to global south solidarity, we are actually looking for who are the revolutionaries across our planet, including in Canada, that are willing to engage in the daily and concrete struggles to defeat capital, to how we build this unity of our class internationally. And it's important that we engage with organizations in Canada and the US that are willing, out of their experiences rooted in the struggles of the class, to actively think in this new era as internationalists and to think about how we engage in different types of relationships with each other. That are about again building the unity of our class and not necessarily about a unidirectional offering of aid or solidarity.

FTT: Thank you Manolo.

COUP ATTEMPTED IN VENEZUELA

What is known about the coup attempt in Venezuela

- A small group of soldiers have rebelled in conspiracy with the extreme right.
- The Carlota Air Base and all military installations are controlled by the national government.
- The opponents blocked the Altamira highway, an automobile section in the east of the capital.
- The Venezuelan government called on the people to gather at Miraflores Palace (Head Office of the national government).
- Various governments, parties and movements around the world have rejected the violence of the opposition in Venezuela, while governments of the extreme right have encouraged it.

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CUBA & VENEZUELA: WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING?

A Conversation with:



ARNOLD AUGUST

Journalist and author of several books including: "Cuba & Its Neighbours: Democracy in Motion" and "Cuba-U.S. Relations: Obama and Beyond". Since 1997, he has spent extended periods in Cuba pursuing his intensive investigations. He has recently returned from both Cuba and Venezuela.



ALISON BODINE

Author of "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Venezuela". She is coordinator of the Fire This Time - Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, and has just returned from an eye-witness delegation to Venezuela that studied the impacts of U.S. and Canada sanctions.

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1:30PM

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4PM

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2. INFO TABLE & PETITION

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**RESPECT THE SELF DETERMINATION
OF THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!**

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