

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



Fire This Time!

CUBAN AMBASSADOR TO CANADA JOSEFINA VIDAL IN VANCOUVER



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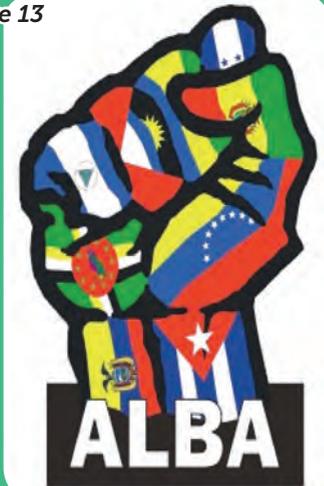


REPEAL BILL C-51 & SCRAP BILL C-59



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TRUMP HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

TRUMP UNBLOCK VENEZUELA

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#Unblock Cuba

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By Thomas Davies

“For too long the people in power have gotten away with basically not doing anything to stop the climate and ecological breakdown. They have gotten away with stealing our future and selling it for profit. But we young people are waking up and we promise we will not let you get away with it anymore.” - Greta Thunberg, Austrian World Summit, May 28, 2019

We live in unusual, exciting and interesting times. 15 year old Swedish climate justice activist Greta Thunberg started her own one person weekly climate strike protest nine months ago – and now she is a regularly invited guest at the largest meetings of government and corporate leaders, who all know she will admonish them for creating and maintaining the climate crisis. They hope her presence neutralizes criticism against them, while she has used the opportunities for popular education and agitation which has lead to more than 1.6 million people participating in the May 24 Global Climate Strike in more than 1600 towns and cities in over 125 countries.

While Greta herself is exceptional in her ability to condense the arguments and urgency of the climate crisis to promote increasing action, the fact that her climate strikes have exploded across the world is also very much due to the explosive situation

we are currently living in. Students, young people, professionals, working class, middle class, professionals and everyone in between are getting

involved in the climate justice movement in large numbers around the world.

But it hasn't yet been enough. D a m i a n C a r r i n g t o n ' s January 25, 2019, Guardian newspaper article titled, “Worrying rise in global CO2 forecast for 2019” summarized that “Levels of the greenhouse gas have not been as high as today for 3-5million years when the global temperature was 2-3C warmer and the sea level was 10-20 metres higher. Climate action must be increased fivefold to limit warming to the 1.5C rise

above pre-industrial levels that scientists advise, according to the UN. But the past four years have been the hottest on record and global emissions are rising again after a brief pause.”

So while Greta and many others have been able to convince hundreds of thousands of people to take action, the capitalist politicians at the big international gatherings have obviously not changed. We urgently need to find a way to put all the growing dynamism

of many different strains of the climate justice movement together to be truly effective at saving the planet.



CLIMATE RISK OPPORTUNITY

What Are We Working With?

The ongoing climate crisis has created a huge organizing opportunity for us because it attacks everyone indiscriminately. Poor, working and oppressed people are the most vulnerable and feel the effects most drastically, but the

growing wildfires don't care about the median income of the neighbourhoods they torch, neither do rising sea levels disappearing coasts. This crisis touches more than the traditional base of social justice movements.

The movement has also shown itself to be necessarily internationalist in character. The struggles of people against massive resource extraction projects are startlingly similar between places like Standing Rock, North Dakota and the Amazon Rain Forest in Brazil. No one country, an no one group, will be able to solve the climate crisis by itself - by its nature, the struggle for a sustainable world requires international cooperation, solidarity and more importantly unity across borders in order to become a powerful and effective force.

In Canada, the United States, and other colonized countries, defending the environment has also meant defending the rights of Indigenous Nations to self-determination. Indigenous Nations defending their traditional territories often form the frontlines and focal points of the movement. Standing Rock in North Dakota was a crucial example of the potential for resistance when Indigenous Nations begin to be supported by non-Indigenous movements as well. It challenges the very foundation of these capitalist countries at home and abroad, as well as the economic system they use to exploit people and the land.

We Need to Meet People Where They're At

Given the obvious urgency and potential of the climate justice movement, it's understandable that groups and individuals will want to demand radical political demands and tactics be used immediately and exclusively. Mass rallies have a powerful effect on peoples understanding of

power and unity and more importantly to develop their own leadership, and also of undermining the legitimacy of governments and corporations which claim they are acting in the people's interests. These are often specific to opposing a particular project, not the entire capitalist system. However, even relatively low-key public organizing against absurd projects like the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion invariably ends up exposing the limitations of capitalist democracy. People learn through the struggle – we need to make sure they have an opportunity to make an initial connection.

The Long Haul

Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, won the last Federal election campaign on a slogan of “Real Change Now” and by making a point of emphasizing combating climate change as a top priority. In the end, he has kept former Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s climate target of a 30% reduction in emissions by 2030 – and isn’t

even close to meeting them. The United Nations IPCC report warns that CO2 emissions must decline by about 45% between 2010 and 2030 and hit net zero in 2050 to avoid catastrophic and likely irreversible consequences.

The upcoming October Federal Election is a great opportunity to point out Prime Minister Trudeau’s failings, and also emphasize the urgency of the climate crisis. Politicians will be out in public, and politics will be on the agenda far more than usual. We must take advantage of the opening.

However, we cannot build a movement based around an election campaign or any of the current mainstream political parties. A committed mass movement with its own independent action program is ultimately the only alternative to win.

It’s an important sign that federal political parties in Canada are currently

trying to outbid each other on who has the most ambitious climate plan, but the corporate interests at stake for maintaining the current economic and climate status quo are too strong and entrenched to be solved by one election. If we aren’t clear that we are building a long term mass movement, then we are headed for demobilization and demoralization at a time we cannot afford it.

We Need to Keep Pushing

“We can’t solve a crisis without treating it as a crisis. We need to keep fossil fuels in the ground, and we need to focus



Student Climate Strike in Vancouver, May 24, 2019

on equity. And if solutions within the system are so impossible to find, maybe we should change the system itself.” - Greta Thunberg, COP 24 United Nations Climate Conference, December 2018

If a 15 year old is now able to get up on one of the biggest stages in the world and call into question the legitimacy of the capitalist economic system we have always been told is inevitable, then something important is happening. Our ideas and issues are getting a more positive and broader response from people of all walks of life. There’s a strong case to be made that we can’t create a sustainable world by chasing after each new project, but by confronting the structures which create a situation when corporate profits are prioritized above people and planet – regardless of the obviously drastic consequences. We need to continue making it!

Working People Can Play a Decisive Role

Finally, it’s important to recognize the important role workers, especially those involved in fossil fuel industries, can and should play in the overall climate justice movement. Imagine the public impact it would have if these workers were protesting or on strike – demanding that their employers transition to renewable energy and guarantee long term and sustainable employment? If they refused to build the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion? They are already in constant confrontation with employers over safety, wages, and working conditions – and have no reason to see oil corporations as being “on their side”. It will take patience and persistence to convince workers that they have a lot more in common with climate activists than they do with oil company executives – but the strategic importance is worth the continued effort.

It might sound contradictory to on one hand push for prioritizing united mass actions on common climate demands, while with the other pushing to elevate the political consciousness of the movement as a whole. To acknowledge the important leadership of students and young people in the climate justice movement, to understand its deep impact on most sectors of society, and to promote the importance of appealing to directly to workers. It’s not about trying to find some “happy medium” in between everything, it’s about being objective about where the movement is, where it needs to go, and the strategy and tactics we need to get it there. Our challenge is immense, but we are growing on all sides, and we have a whole world to win!

Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasd Davies59

Introduction & Interview by
Alison Bodine

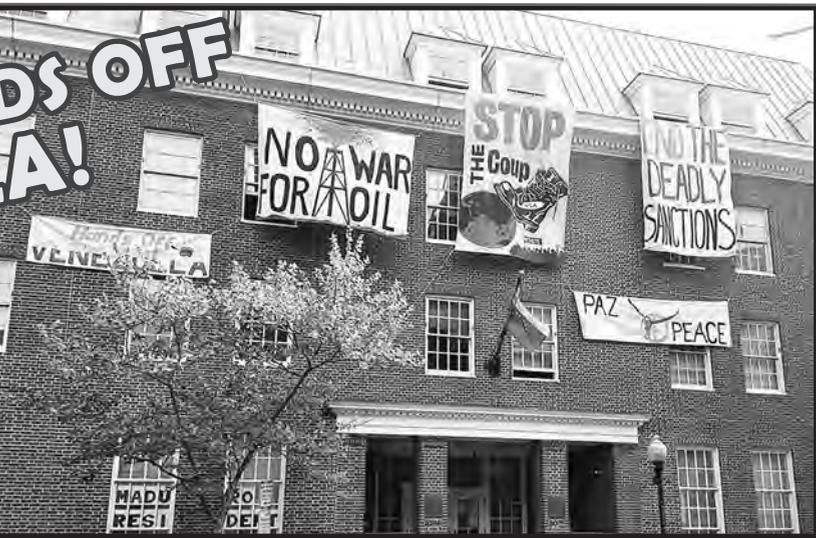
TRUMP HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

Movement Grows in the United States: The Embassy Protection Collective Continues to Defend Venezuela's Sovereignty and Independence against U.S.-led war, sanctions and threats!

Interview with Kevin Zeese and Margaret Flowers of Popular Resistance

It has now been four months since the U.S. government appointed Juan Guaido "interim President" of Venezuela. Mr. Guaido and his pro-U.S., pro-war, coup conspirators have failed in their attempt to overthrow the democratically elected government of Nicolas Maduro; despite the full backing of the United States and other allied countries, including the government of Canada. In their desperation, they have revealed just how far they are willing to go to remove President Maduro from office and reverse the gains made for poor, working and oppressed people in Venezuela in the last 20 years of the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

Not only have they met with U.S. military forces, right-wing U.S. politicians and officials, including Elliot Abrams, a war-criminal that President Trump has appointed as special envoy to Venezuela, but Mr. Guaido has openly stated



that he would support U.S. military intervention in Venezuela. As he told the La Stampa newspaper in Italy on May 9, "If the Americans were to propose a military intervention I would probably accept it."

In addition to supporting what would be a bloodbath for the people of Venezuela if U.S. troops or mercenaries did invade, Mr. Guaido has also publicly called for increasing sanctions against Venezuela. "[European countries] should strengthen financial sanctions against the regime. The international community must prevent Venezuelan money from being misused to kill opponents of the regime and indigenous peoples," he told Der Spiegel, a German newspaper, in March. As reported by the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), brutal U.S./Canada/EU sanctions against Venezuela killed an estimated 40,000 people from 2015-2018 through denying Venezuela access to food, medicine and other necessities.

It is no surprise, then, that on May 13, 2019, the U.S.-backed so-called "Ambassador" to the United States from Venezuela, Carlos Vecchio, sent a letter to the Chief Admiral of the United States Southern Command asking him for a meeting to discuss cooperation between the U.S.-backed Guaido gang and the U.S. military. Mr. Vecchio sent this letter at the request of U.S. puppet "interim President" Juan Guaido.

As Mr. Guaido and his stooges were advocating to escalate U.S.-led war against the people of Venezuela, they were also waging another attack in Washington, DC. For over a month, U.S. activists and supporters of Venezuela's sovereignty and independence had been protecting the Venezuelan Embassy against an illegal takeover by Mr. Vecchio's pro-coup, pro-war right-wing Venezuelans.

Known as the Embassy Protection Collective, these brave activists were organizing within the Embassy and outside of it in the face of unrelenting and violent assault by a mob of coup

supporters. For 37 days, from April 10 – May 16 they held their ground in defense of the Vienna Convention, International law which governs the treatment of embassies and diplomatic missions. At times there were as many as 50 people inside of the Embassy, and hundreds more outside, as violent pro-war violent right-wing Venezuelans attempted to intimidate them into leaving using strobe lights, bull horns, sirens and a whole range of vile, racist, sexist and homophobic insults.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government and police merely looked on or even perpetrated the assaults on peaceful activists who were attempting to deliver food or water to Embassy Protectors. This included the assault of Gerry Condon, President of Veterans for Peace, who was violently arrested by the U.S. Secret Service after attempting to deliver cucumbers into Embassy Protectors.

As the Embassy Protection Collective has stated: "Their coups failed in Venezuela so they are trying one here."

Before continuing on to the below interview with founders of the Embassy Protection Collective Dr. Margaret Flowers and Kevin Zeese, it is helpful to establish a brief timeline of the important events and actions that took place during the period the Embassy was protected.

March 18, 2019 – Pro-war Venezuelans illegally take over the three buildings of the Venezuelan government, the military attaché offices in Washington, DC and a consular building in New York City. Carlos Vecchio declares that "the group expected to take control of Venezuela's embassy in Washington "in the days to come," as reported by Reuters.

April 10, 2019 – The heroic protection of the Venezuelan Embassy from right-wing takeover begins. For weeks there are social justice and solidarity events inside of the Embassy, until assaults and violence of the pro-coup mobs increases and begins to prevent people, food and basic supplies from entering the Embassy. There are multiple arrests of peaceful demonstrators.

May 13, 2019 – An "eviction notice" is posted on the door of the Embassy, although it has no letterhead or signature. Later in the day, Secret



Service breaks the chains on the doors and illegally enters the Embassy. They came in with the intention of arresting the Embassy Protectors, but after speaking with them, they left without making any arrests.

May 16, 2019 – The “final four” Embassy protectors, Adrienne Pine, Margaret Flowers, David Paul, Kevin Zeese were violently arrested.

May 24, 2019 – The U.S. government allows the so-called Ambassador Carlos Vecchio into the building, even though the government of Venezuela has secured a protecting power agreement with Turkey, wherein, pending approval of the U.S. government Turkey will agree to protect the Venezuelan Embassy. As of the end of May, the U.S. government has still refused to approve this agreement.

►► INTERVIEW

At the end of May, Fire This Time interviewed two of the “final four” Embassy Protectors in order to reflect on this critical struggle, and what are the next steps in building a more united and stronger Venezuela solidarity movement in the United States and internationally.

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 FOG and former Green Party candidate for U.S. Senate.

Kevin Zeese is a U.S. lawyer and political activist who has worked on a wide range of issues beginning with ending the war on drugs and mass incarceration, including helping to organize the 2011 Occupy encampment in Washington, DC at Freedom Plaza. He is a former candidate for U.S. Senate (Green Party) and currently serves as co-director of Popular Resistance.

To follow the ongoing work of the Embassy Protection Collective, including updates on their legal defense campaign and how to support join the struggle to drop all charges against the Embassy Protection Collective visit:



Top: Protester arrested outside Venezuelan Embassy. May 2, 2019

Middle: Secret Service blocking food from reaching activists inside Venezuelan Embassy.

Bottom: Gerry Condon, National Board President of Veterans For Peace, tossed cucumbers to activists in the embassy and was violently tackled to the ground and arrested by a half dozen Secret Service police. May 8, 2019

by the United States to conduct regime change in Venezuela. They failed in Venezuela. The coup has fallen flat on its face, multiple times they’ve tried and they can’t get the people, the military, other government officials, really any support of any significance, so

they now have to go to outside of Venezuela strategy, which is attacks on Venezuelan embassies.

The embassy that we were at in Washington DC was important because they’d already seized the military attache building in Washington DC, they had already stolen diplomatic offices in New York City. And so we went into embassy knowing that that was a threat. That this really was the gold jewel of the Venezuelan embassy system, the Washington D.C. Embassy in Georgetown. So we went in to protect it from a coup.

I think it’s a unique event. Never before have U.S. citizens gone into a foreign embassy to protect it from the United States attacking it and handing it over to a fake coup government. So that’s why we did it. I think we delayed it. I wish we had stayed longer.

Margaret: It was interesting because we had a lot of meetings both to coordinate the activities in the embassy; like protecting ourselves, cleaning, writing, food, making sure people had a place to sleep and all of that. But we also had meetings where we talked about what was going on because at times it was stressful.

For a couple of weeks we had people outside of the embassy who were trying to break in who were harassing us, and threatening us, and shining strobe lights at us and at the building during the night and things like that. Then we had, of course, our electricity turned off and our access to food was diminished. People had to really struggle to get supplies into us and then we lost our access to water.

So at times it was stressful because of that, but when we would meet and sit and talk about it and then think about how people living in Venezuela are experiencing the same tactics at the hands of the U.S. government, as are people in other countries around the world, it really deepened our resolve and deepened our feeling of solidarity with people in Venezuela and in other countries who experience this situation and experience it on a

<https://www.facebook.com/ColectivosporlaPaz/>

FTT: Thank you, Kevin and Margaret, for taking the time for this interview with Fire This Time. The defense of the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC has been a significant struggle for the movement in defense of Venezuela and in defense of the right of oppressed nations to sovereignty and self-determination.

For 37 days, from April 10 through May 16 you both were inside protecting the Embassy. Can you tell us about the feelings and thoughts of

the protectors inside the Embassy? What do you think was the focus of the Embassy Protection Collective?

Kevin: The main goal, of course, was to protect the embassy from a U.S. coup. It’s evident that attacks on embassies, including the Washington D.C. embassy, are part of an overall strategy

Activists rally in front of the Venezuelan embassy in Washington, DC in March, 2019



much longer term basis. We felt like wow if they can face this and with dignity and cope with it, then we had a responsibility to do the same thing.

It really had the impact of the kind of bringing us closer together and deepening our resolve. We kind of joked about the fact that we were an unintentional community. It wasn't planned it was going to be there, it was just the people who showed up and were willing to be there, but it really worked out very well in terms of people cooperating together, doing the work that needed to get done. Really, I think our collective wisdom really added to what was going on.

FTT: Especially towards the final days that you were inside of the Embassy the U.S. government and their police escalated their assault against the Embassy Protectors, water and electricity were both cut-off, and police continued to allow the pro-war, pro-coup mobs outside to block the delivery of food and necessities to the Embassy, as well as stand by as peaceful supporters of Venezuela were verbally and physically assaulted. There were also instances where the Embassy was vandalized and even broken into by the violent right-wing counter-protestors.

What kept you and others determined to stand your ground and continue protecting the Embassy despite these attacks?

Kevin: Well we all know what the impact of US regime change is. We have people in the embassy among the final four who were involved in Honduras and have seen the U.S. coups impact there - destroying people's lives, killing people, mass incarceration torture, all sorts of horrors.

Venezuela is even bigger and has a much deeper commitment to its independence. The people are really well-trained and educated on anti-imperialism, they know the U.S. tactics. So we knew that any kind of U.S. effort to pursue regime change would become violent and cause mass death. We knew that the Venezuelan would win, the people would win, they are well-prepared. It's bigger than Iraq, it's mountainous, it's woody, they have air defense missiles, and a mass civilian militia of more than two million people as well as armed forces and national guard police, plus alliances with Russia and China. It would have been a terrible disaster.

As they escalated their tactics, we escalated our resolve. And even now that we are out of the embassy, we are continuing our efforts to try to resolve this peacefully. On popularresistance.org there is a slider at the top of the page on a protecting power agreement that could resolve this under international



News conference outside the Venezuelan Embassy. April 25, 2019

law. But, we are planning a nation-wide and international protest as well as a major day of protest this September 21st in New York City at the United Nations when the General Assembly meets because we're going to stop this coup. This coup is not going to happen. We are going to



make it so that no one running for office in the 2020 election cycle can support this coup openly. They are going to have to oppose it because the people are going to demand an end to this kind of regime change activity by the United States.

Action in solidarity with the Embassy Protection Collective in Caracas, Venezuela. May, 2019



FTT: As two of the four Embassy Protectors arrested on May 16, you are now charged with "interference with certain protective functions." Can you explain this charge, and how people can support your case moving forward?

Margaret: Sure. Thank you. I also recognize that there were embassy protesters outside who were arrested and charged with assault even though they were assaulted. Or they were charged with hurling missiles at a building, which were like cucumber and bread. So we don't want to forget them as well.

But the United States government had to be extremely creative to figure out what to charge us with because we were in the embassy with the permission of the elected government. We were given the keys. We were not trespassing. We did not break in. The U.S. government was the one that had to break in. So they dug up this charge which is a federal misdemeanor, "interfering with protective functions," and basically saying that since they served us an eviction notice on Monday, May 13th, which really was printed on plain paper, with no letterhead, no signature, no agency taking responsibility for it. We saw it as an invalid eviction notice, but in their mind, because we didn't leave the building when they told us we were evicted, although they're required to tell us who is evicting us, that for those three days between then and when they broke in with a battering ram and military style, like 100 law enforcement agents in military gear, that we were interfering with their ability to protect the building.

We go to court on Friday, May 31 and that's just a status hearing. We're still in the midst of a kind of getting our legal team together and our legal strategy as we move forward. We'll definitely want help with publicizing the case and we're going to have to start a legal fund. Some of us qualified for court appointed lawyers but some didn't. Or in the case of Kevin, he qualified, but he's looking for an attorney that will be a better fit for our team. So we'll have a legal defense fund as well. And we're going to be also sharing information about the others who were arrested and how their court cases are proceeding.

FTT: Although all the Embassy protectors, including yourselves, were illegally and violently removed from the Embassy by the Secret Service, the united mobilization of people in Washington DC and beyond from many different organizations and walks-of-life both inside and outside of the Embassy was a great step forward for building a united movement against



The final four of the Embassy Protection Collective - Adrienne Pine, Margaret Flowers, David Paul, Kevin Zeese, two days before their arrest. May 14, 2019

U.S. war, sanctions and intervention in Venezuela.

What do you see as the next steps towards defending the sovereignty and self-determination of Venezuela and, more importantly, building a stronger and more united movement against U.S. war and sanctions?

Kevin: That's exactly right. We already saw from the response to the embassy protection collective organizations working together that don't often work together. People put aside divisions to come together around protecting the embassy. These organizations also all opposed the U.S. coup attempt in Venezuela. So our intention is to escalate our actions and build on the embassy protection collective activity and continue to unite the movement.

We want to see this day, when we all get together in New York City on September 21st for the General Assembly, as a day of unity for the peace movement. We've been seeing the peace movement growing over the last year and a half. We were able to come together to stop the Trump military parade. We went on to form a Peace Congress of various peace organizations, the No Bases Coalition, which had its first meeting in

Baltimore where we are, brought together many groups to focus on ending U.S. bases around the world and then they held a meeting in Ireland.

So, it's not just an embassy protection collective effort, we are building on the efforts of many organizations that have been trying to build the peace movement. I think there's tremendous opportunity to do it. The military budget, already out of control, is continuing to escalate and take way too much of the limited federal budget. More than 60 percent of federal discretionary spending now goes to the military. There are lots of reasons that peace and justice movement connects to everything from climate change to racism and militarism at home and militarism abroad.

Issue after issue is connected to this. If we want to have a budget that works for people and protects the planet, we've got to face up to the wasteful spending of the U.S. military and the unnecessary wars that the United States keeps fighting.

FTT: We have recently learned about the People's Mobilization Against the War Machine coming up this September. Can you elaborate on this important action?



Secret Service police break into the Venezuelan Embassy. May 13, 2019

Margaret:

Yeah, it's still in its early phases of planning but there are some really good ideas on the table. We're looking at actually making it a whole weekend of events. The United Nations General Assembly will be meeting at that time, and of course the unilateral coercive measures, which people refer to as sanctions, that the United States is using against Venezuela and other countries are illegal by the United Nations Charter, as well as the violation of the Vienna Convention by actually invading a foreign embassy is illegal. We want to bring this to the United Nations General Assembly.

We'll have a mass march on Saturday, September 21st, which is also the International Day of Peace. So it's nice that that coincides with the General Assembly. Organizations

are also looking at having a conference there on Friday and Saturday, around the march and then on Sunday coming together for some sort of educational and strategizing event and then perhaps something actually at the United Nations on Monday. So I hope that people will look at it as a whole weekend of activity and that people from around the world will be able to attend and participate.

Not only was it really amazing to see the solidarity that we got from social movements in Venezuela, but also from other countries around the world. In Germany, they're doing weekly Hands Off Venezuela actions and sending us reports and things like that. So it's really great to see this kind of global solidarity because it's really needed if we're going to take on U.S. empire, which is really at the foundation of all of this.

FTT: Thank you both for your time today. I know you're very busy and especially with a court case happening tomorrow outside of all of your regular work. Is anything you'd like to add or just to say to our readers?

Kevin: I just want to thank you for your work. You've been a very great ally throughout the various projects I've already mentioned and we

appreciate the work being done in Vancouver and in Canada. Any Hands Off Coalition has a strong community aspect to it, as does the effort to end Venezuelan sanctions, and I think that Canada has really shown itself in the Trudeau years to be an aggressive militarist government that is really into stealing the resources of countries around the world particularly in Latin America and they've been a major player in the attack on Venezuela. So we really appreciate Canadian activism and your support and participation in all the work we're trying to do.

Margaret: I would just quickly add that it's great to work with you in Canada and I hope that what we can really do is create a united North American anti-war and peace movement because as Kevin said the Canadian government does work so closely with the United States government on these projects. So let's build it, let's keep building it and get a peaceful future.

Kevin: Keep up the great work. Solidarity!

FTT: Thank you.

Since the Secret Service police arrested the remaining Embassy Protection Collective members, protests at the embassy continue. Projected words on the embassy read "No U.S. Imperialism in Venezuela. End Sanctions Now!"





“THROUGH ITS MESSAGES, ART IS STRENGTHENING THE PRINCIPLES OF STEADFASTNESS AND RESISTANCE AT HOME, IN THE YEMENI CITIZENS, AND ALSO ABROAD.”

An Interview with Yemeni Artist Ahmed Jahaf



Interview & translation from Arabic
by *Azza Rojbi*

Ahmed Jahaf, is an artist and graphic designer living in the Yemeni capital, Sana'a. He uses his art to raise awareness about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and to speak up against the over 4 years long war on his country led by Saudi Arabia and backed by the United States and other western countries. The graphics showcased in this article are some of Ahmed's work, to see more from his art visit: www.ajahaf.com and follow him on twitter @A7medJa7af

Fire This Time: Thank you, Ahmed, for taking the time for this interview with Fire This Time. You are living with your family in Yemen's capital city, Sana'a, under constant brutal bombing by the Saudi-led coalition. Can you describe a bit daily life under the bombardment in Sana'a?

Ahmed Jahaf: About daily life in Sana'a under bombing. After more than four years living under raids, under shelling, under siege, it has become a normal thing for Yemeni citizens, for me, for adults in general. Hearing the sound of aircraft, hearing the sound of air raids became normal for us, we only worry about children when they hear these sounds, we fear how these sounds will affect the children even if it seems to be coming from an area far away. As for us adults, it became very, very ordinary. Sometimes, when a few days pass by and we do not hear the sound of the planes, we are surprised and find it strange. Imagine the situation, more than four years, if a day passes without hearing the sound of an air raid, then we hear the sound of planes flying over.

Today, for example, there were air raids on Sana'a airport. In the morning and while

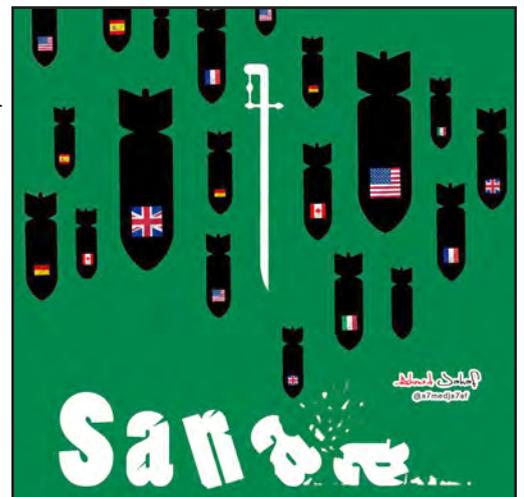
people were sleeping in Ramadan, it was normal, we got up to the sounds and then I asked in my house "I think I heard the sound of an air raid, I think I heard the sound of flying", someone said "yes they dropped bombs in the north of the capital Sana'a". It has become a normal thing to live under air raids, unfortunately. We say unfortunately that it has become such a normal thing, that sometimes even when we hear the sound of air raid and an explosion and realize that it was in a residential area, we take our phones and camera and go to the area targeted even though it is dangerous because during the last four years, fighter jets deliberately returned to bomb the same place again.

This is life under constant air raids. As you may know 14 days ago there were several air raids in the capital Sana'a, one of which targeted the Ministry of Information which is right next to my house. Part of my house was affected, it was a raid on the ministry building and a raid that targeted a densely populated residential area, an area where a lot of people live.

They targeted the president of the Yemeni Media Union, Professor Abdullah al-Sabri, a Yemeni journalist, they bombed his house. At that time, six people from the building where he lives were killed, one of whom was his son. Four days after, his other son died succumbing to his wounds and this morning we attended the funeral of the mother of Professor Abdullah al-Sabri. Yesterday she martyred also succumbing to her wounds because of the coalition's air raids.

FTT: How do people manage their daily life considering the lack of supply of basic necessities like food, medicine, gas and oil because of the Saudi-led coalition blockading Yemen by air, land and sea?

Ahmed: The way of life for the Yemeni citizen has become very, very difficult. Especially now, for example, in the month of Ramadan, with prices in the markets very high because of the blockade, because of the shortages in oil and its derivatives, especially in the past few days, there is a crisis of oil. Gas makes it to the neighbourhoods but there is always long lines and distribution is restricted, I need to have a card to get gas. It means that I get one gas cylinder only once every period with these cards distributed to the neighbourhoods. Life has become very difficult. We spend all our time looking for basic life necessities. We spend hours searching for either oil, electricity, solar energy, gas, any way to provide for our



basic necessities, a life that is difficult in Sana'a, in rural areas it is even more difficult.

All of these shortages are caused by the blockade. The air blockade caused a major crisis because of the closure of the airport in Sana'a. In recent days flights from Aden airport have been blocked. As you know, travelling from Sana'a to Aden is not easy nor safe. Many patients cannot afford to travel to Aden, endure all that hardship to get there and then be prevented from flying. Most people do not leave here except for emergency situation such as sickness or for studies and education opportunities, basically, all of them are citizens who need to travel. They are prevented from doing so because of the air blockade.

Because of the sea blockade, there is a crisis of a shortage of oil. Seven oil tankers have been held by the coalition for more than two months. They let a ship enter once every so often after a major crisis and shortages are deeply felt in the streets. The land blockade has also caused a lack of products and caused high prices. Now when goods from abroad or from China are imported, for example, we pay ten times more because of transportation costs. All of this because of the coalition's blockade on our country.

FTT: Lately, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi complained to the UN that the UN special envoy in Hodeidah is siding with Houthis against Hadi's mercenary forces, can you tell us what is happening in Hodeidah?

Ahmed: As far as Hodeidah is concerned, it is strange that Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his side are complaining about the UN envoy. Well, what happened during the last period is that the Sana'a side, or what some call, the Houthis have taken unilateral action to deliver a message that they are reaching their hands towards peace. They handed over the port, three ports in Hodeidah, according to the Swedish agreement, and they handed it over, waiting for the Hadi side to implement what was agreed upon in the Swedish agreements.

After this, the UN envoy commented positively about the Sana'a side because they took this important step. Unfortunately, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and the coalition supporting him did not like such a move. So, what do they want? What do they want? We have taken unilateral action for peace and there is a neutral party monitoring this. Well actually for me I do not consider the United Nations neutral, I kind of consider the United Nations to be standing in



the side of the coalition's forces. It is strange that Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his people complain about the UN envoy only because he praised the positive step taken by the Sana'a side while they are still waiting for the Hadi to take it's agreed on the step. They want the United Nations envoy to be a soldier with them, a soldier who only receives their orders. The reality is that he is with them, in many examples he does not speak the truth. For example, the last United Nations statement issued by the UN coordinator in Sana'a was very weak. When you speak about regrets about the deaths of Yemeni civilians because of an explosion, as it was in the text of the statement, because of an explosion! What explosion? By whom?

And then they say we also regret the killing of such and such citizen in Taiz because of

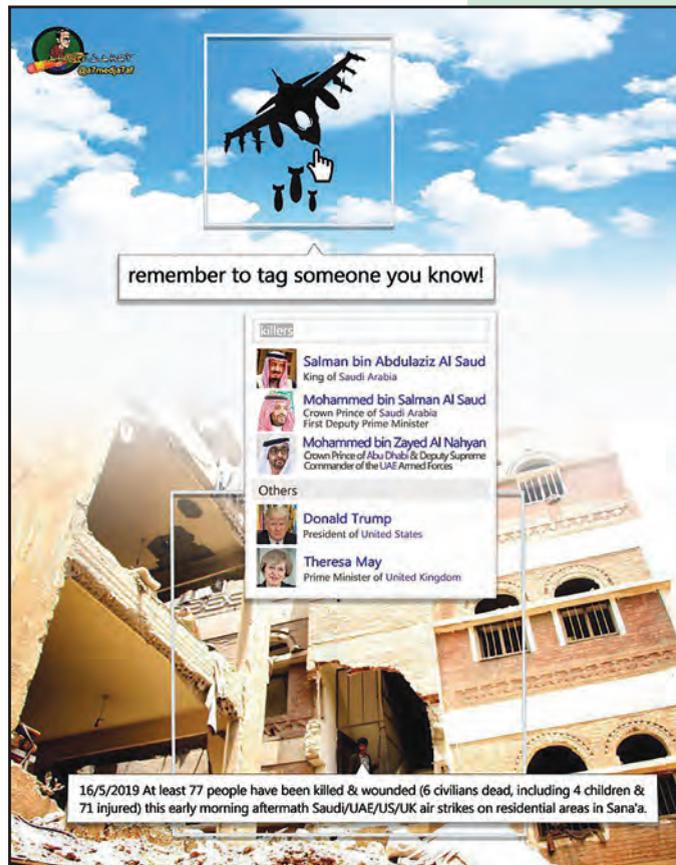
an explosion at a station. Explosion? It was an air raid, and we all know who is guilty of this bombardment. Why not condemning real criminals? why describing these attacks so vaguely and anonymously? It is clear to us who is responsible for these explosions and killing, it is directed by the coalition's bombardment campaign.

FTT: You are a very talented graphic designer and artist and you have been using your talent and art to raise awareness about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and the atrocities committed by the U.S. backed Saudi-led coalition on your country. How do you see your art as an act of defiance and resistance?

Ahmed: In talking about art and graphics, I first want to send a special thanks to you personally. Because more than once I see pictures and videos of you holding these images, and this makes me very, very happy and I am honoured by this.

Regarding this message, the message of art, in the beginning, some, especially in Sana'a, were unfortunately uninterested in this aspect of art in many ways, not only in the field of graphic design, for example, even in caricatures, drawing. In the early years of the war, I was trying to create an exhibition or a similar art project about the war, I was looking for colleagues in this area but nothing, I asked about the names of artists but they all prefer to stay neutral, as if it is something that does not concern them, and this was sad to see.

But at the end of the third year of the war, local newspapers, some TV channels started supporting some of the artists, to highlight their talent and guide it in the right direction, in the direction of conveying a message that reflects what is happening in our country. You should not be neutral about what is happening, we do not ask you to stand with a particular side, all you should do is to talk



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FOLLOW UP...

VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE OF PHILIPPINES AS IMPERIALIST CANADA IS FORCED TO TAKE BACK ITS GARBAGE!



By Tamara Hansen

Last month in Fire This Time Volume 13 Issue 5 we brought you the story of why the Philippines was threatening war against Canada. (View article here: <http://www.firethistime.net/articles/Volume13/V13I5/canada-garbage-philippines.html>)

As it turns out since 2013 and 2014 over 100 containers (or 1,500 tonnes) of Canadian garbage have been rotting in the Philippines. The containers were shipped to the Philippines by a private Canadian company, who claimed it was recycling. However, when the containers were opened, Filipino authorities found dirty diapers, appliances, electronic waste, food waste, household garbage, as well as potentially hazardous waste.

Although Canada signed onto the Basel Convention in 1992 - which is meant to stop wealthy countries from shipping their garbage to developing nations - the government of Canada has been slow to act. Behind the scenes, the government of Canada has been putting pressure on the Philippines to take care of the problem themselves. However, the Philippines flatly refused to do this, and in April 2019 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."

Suddenly, after years of dragging their feet, the government of Canada was embarrassed, exposed, and interested in solving this clearly made-in-Canada problem.

Victory for the Filipino people! Canada will take back its Garbage

According to a May 26, 2019 article printed in the Province Newspaper titled, "Burnaby incinerator to take Philippines trash," the Filipino people have secured a major victory and a solution to the problem is now in the works.

Journalist Scott Brown writes, "the prodigal

Above: Workers wave goodbye to the Canadian trash as it leaves a Filipino port

trash will be accepted as special handle waste under Metro Vancouver's tipping fee bylaw of \$250 a tonne which works out to \$375,000. The federal government will be responsible for all costs, Metro Vancouver said." The Burnaby incinerator runs what is deemed a "waste-to-energy" facility, which produces electricity by burning garbage.

This victory is an important reminder that in order to cut costs and increase their profits, corporations and governments are off-loading whatever burden they can onto working and oppressed people in so-called "third world" countries. As people living in Canada, we have a duty to stand with these countries in defence of their right to a healthy environment and climate.

Canada has a real garbage problem

Imperialist countries, like Canada, are some of the world's heaviest polluters per capita. In fact, a November 2017 article for Canadian Geographic titled, "Canada's dirty secret" explains, "The 720 kilos per capita of waste produced annually by every Canadian is about twice what is produced per capita in Japan, and as much as 10 times what is produced by a half-dozen countries in Africa. More alarmingly, our production is seven percent higher than per capita output of waste in the United States, which all but invented consumer excess." What does this mean? Canada is the largest producer of garbage per person of any country in the world.

It is also important to note that Canada is a toxic world polluter as the highest emitter of greenhouse emissions per person on the planet. In November 2018 the Globe and Mail Newspaper published an article declaring, "Canadians produce three times



more greenhouse gas emissions than G20 average".

While consumerism and the push to buy lots of new products are partly to blame under the capitalist market system. Numerous studies show that the majority of this waste - both garbage and Greenhouse gas emissions - come from private businesses, corporations, and industrial waste, not from household garbage like that which it seems was dumped in the Philippines.

Solidarity

While it is important that the government of Canada is planning to rectify the situation with the people and the government of the Philippines, we must remember it came only after Trudeau and Canada were exposed on the international stage.

This demonstrates the importance of international solidarity. The people of the Philippines have been protesting for years in front of the Canadian Embassy in Manilla. However, it was when this situation grabbed international headlines, that their demands grew louder and they won an important victory against imperialist Canada.

As working and oppressed people living in Canada, we need to demand more of the government of Canada to confront environmental issues, like garbage, but also the larger questions facing Canada in this ongoing climate crisis.

Nevertheless, for now, we take the time to celebrate this crucial victory with our brothers and sisters in the Philippines!

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01

SOÑANDO EN MIAMI

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

*Por Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada**

Luego de tres meses de amagos y amenazas y en un escenario doble -el Departamento de Estado en Washington DC y un teatro de Miami- finalmente la Administración yanqui anunció lo que se propone hacer para intensificar su guerra económica contra Cuba.

El día 17, a media mañana en breve ceremonia, apenas unos minutos, en la capital, el Secretario de Estado Mike Pompeo hizo saber que aplicarán completamente el Título III de la Ley Helms-Burton. No ofreció mayores explicaciones aunque sí dijo que a partir del dos de mayo los “cubanoamericanos” podrán actuar ante los tribunales de Estados Unidos contra quienes utilicen de algún modo las propiedades que, alegan, fueron suyas o de sus familias.

No hubo preguntas ni fue entregado algún texto que respondiese a las interrogantes que semejante decisión debía provocar entre quienes recuerden que durante veintitrés años – Clinton, W. Bush, Obama y el propio Trump – habían adoptado una posición contraria a lo que ahora se anuncia.

Se produjeron inmediatamente declaraciones oficiales de España, Canadá, México y de las autoridades de la Unión Europea que, además de protestar advirtieron que adoptarán las medidas que sean necesarias para neutralizar cualquier intento de dañar sus legítimos intereses y recordaron que están en capacidad de hacerlo tomando en cuenta que no son pocas las inversiones norteamericanas en sus países.

El espectáculo más notorio fue reservado para Miami y John Bolton, Asesor Nacional de Seguridad, desempeñó la función principal. Su auditorio eran los integrantes de lo que queda de quienes fueron parte de la Brigada 2506, o sea, los restos del grupo invasor que 58 años atrás fue derrotado por el pueblo cubano en 66 horas.

Bolton repitió lo antes dicho por Pompeo respecto a las demandas judiciales y anunció asimismo la reimposición de severas restricciones a los viajes de los cubanoamericanos a su país de origen y a las remesas que envían a sus familiares en la isla, medidas estas que antes aplicó W.

Bush y generaron el rechazo de la inmensa mayoría de esa comunidad lo cual ha sido reflejado desde entonces en las elecciones del Condado Miami-Dade.

El show miamense fue tan patético como grotesco.

Los viejos y cansados veteranos fracasaron cuando eran jóvenes, y organizados por la CIA y con el apoyo de las fuerzas armadas yanquis fueron a Cuba a recuperar “sus” latifundios, “sus” fábricas y “sus” mansiones. Ahora Bolton les promete que, finalmente, la quimera será realidad.

El espectáculo lo resumió Nicolás Gutiérrez Castaño: “Ni en nuestros sueños más febriles pudimos concebir que un gobierno de Estados Unidos lo haría. Ninguno lo hizo nunca. Olvídense de Reagan. Olvídense de Bush”.

Emocionado, el habilidoso abogado gestor de la Helms-Burton, cree llegado el momento de “recuperar” las cuantiosas propiedades que robó su bisabuelo.

Soñador desaforado, Bolton, por su parte, invitó a hacer un brindis por la Doctrina Monroe que, según él, está viva y saludable.

Embriagados, “celebrando” su fulminante derrota, los invitados al extraño banquete, lo aplaudieron con delirio.

Es hora de hacerlos despertar.

**Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada - Doctor en Filosofía y Letras, escritor y político cubano. Fue Embajador ante la ONU y Canciller de Cuba. Presidió durante 20 años la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular de Cuba.*

<https://www.poresto.net>

First appeared in English in Fire This Time May 2019



John Bolton habló en un evento en Miami dedicado a la Brigada 2506, cuyos miembros entrenados por la CIA participaron en la invasión de Playa Giron en Cuba en 1961



Banner en Cuba en la marcha del primero de mayo.



LA LEY HELMS-BURTON CONSTA DE CUATRO TÍTULOS:

TÍTULO I

Está dirigido a fortalecer internacionalmente la aplicación del bloqueo y las sanciones económicas contra Cuba. Codifica ese entramado legal en una ley.

TÍTULO II

Establece una especie de plan de “transición” política en Cuba y de intervención de EE.UU. en el destino de nuestro país.

TÍTULO III

Plantea que los reclamantes de propiedades que fueron nacionalizadas o expropiadas en Cuba, incluyendo los que en ese momento no eran estadounidenses, debían ser protegidos. Para ello establece un grupo de normas que incluye la posibilidad de demandar ante tribunales de Estados Unidos a entidades que “trafiquen” con esas propiedades. La posibilidad de demandar a los beneficiarios del “tráfico” ha sido suspendida desde 1996 hasta la actualidad.

TÍTULO IV

Prohíbe la entrada a Estados Unidos de ejecutivos y sus familiares y de propietarios de entidades que “trafiquen” con las propiedades nacionalizadas o expropiadas.





Canadian Network On Cuba Calls on Ottawa to Reopen Visa Office in Cuba



The Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper strongly supports this important statement

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) is deeply concerned by Ottawa's abrupt decision to shut down the section of its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) Office in Havana through which visas were processed for Cuban citizens wishing to visit Canada and those seeking work or study permits. This measure follows the 50 percent reduction of the staff of Canada's embassy in Cuba which took place in January of this year. Cubans now have to make their applications through a visa application centre in a third country (the nearest being Mexico). Those having to submit their biometrics (photo and fingerprints), a requirement instituted in 2018 that will apply to most, will have to travel to a centre outside of Cuba to record this information.

These decisions have introduced unreasonable delays and significant financial obstacles for those Cubans seeking to travel to Canada, and will, amongst other things, cause significant damage to the business, cultural, scientific and sporting relations. Indeed, they have already had a drastic impact on academic exchanges between Canada and Cuba with some of the Cuban academics scheduled to attend the annual conference of the Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies on May 10-12 not able to procure visas.

Canada and Cuba have enjoyed uninterrupted diplomatic relations since 1945. This development represents a serious departure from the relations which have existed all those years. Canada, along with Mexico, refused to break diplomatic relations with Cuba in the 1960s when the United States established the all-sided blockade it has maintained since then. At that time the U.S. demanded that all members of the Organization of American States (OAS) sever any connection with Cuba and, even though Canada was not a member of the OAS at that time, it still did not follow suit.

One wonders what crime Cuba has committed against Canada to make Canada take what can only amount to hostile actions against Cuba? Why now, at a time the U.S. has reversed the Obama government's attempts to bring an end to the failed policy that Washington has maintained against Cuba for 60 years?

In 2014, the world rejoiced to see the

restoration of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba and held out great hopes that relations between the two countries would be normalized. Canada helped by providing a venue for the talks which led to the improvement of those relations.

Everyone knows that sanctions target the people and deprive them of food, medicines and normalcy in the conduct of elemental commercial, financial and other relations. For 27 years, the vast majority of countries of the world have overwhelmingly rejected the U.S. all-sided economic war against Cuba. In 2018 alone, 189 countries voted with Cuba to end the blockade and only 2 voted against, of which one was the U.S. itself.

And now this! Is Canada so attracted to the Trump administration's anti-democratic counter-revolutionary attacks against Venezuela's right to self-determination as to take its revenge on Cuba? Or it is poised to admit that the United States dictates Canadian policy? Shame on Canada either way.

Who will benefit from the closing of the Havana visa service? Not Cubans trying to have normal relations with Canada and Canadians. What wrong has Cuba ever done to Canada?

The CNC calls on the Canadian government to reinstate the discontinued services at the IRCC Office in Havana, so that visa processing may proceed in a reasonable manner. If the abrupt shutdown is simply the result of the lack of necessary staff, as the Ministry of Global Affairs asserts, then Ottawa should issue a clear statement that visa and other related operations will resume once staffing issues are resolved.

Canadians, thousands upon thousands of whom visit Cuba for many reasons including tourism, business, academic, political and cultural exchanges of all kinds, want Ottawa to pursue a foreign policy based on mutual respect and equality. The CNC is confident that Canadians will reject any course of action taken by Ottawa which undermines the long-standing diplomatic relations based on norms recognized by the international rule of law and the ties of friendship and solidarity that exist between the peoples of our two countries.

*Spokesperson for Canada Network on Cuba,
Issac Saney*

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.

Today, schooling is an agency of dehumanization and oppression. Scholars have pointed out very clearly that one of society's problems today is schooling and all the myths that surround it. Schooling leads to alienation, subordination, and conformity. Instead of providing social mobility and serving as an equalizer for its citizens, it rigidly maintains the class system. In addition, it serves to legitimize the capitalist myths and fails to provide any path to personal or political liberation. It is the dominant social institution in society today and unfortunately has become a serious impediment to personal fulfillment and liberation.

Schools engage in political socialization mostly in terms that are highly functional in the prevailing social and political order. In other words, educational institutions at all levels generally fulfill an important conservative role and act with considerable effectiveness to preserve the status quo in their societies. Today school deliberately seek to instill into their students conservative philosophy whose themes remain tradition, religion, nationalism, authority, hierarchy, and an exceedingly narrow view of the meaning of democracy.

Excerpt from Prison of Grass – Chapter 12 "Schooling the Redman"

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Delegations of the member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America –Peoples’ Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), meeting in Havana on the occasion of their XVIII Political Council;

Inspired by the independence ideals of Simón Bolívar and José Martí, by the legacy of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution Fidel Castro Ruz and the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela Hugo Chávez Frías, whose thinking and works confirm the full validity of the struggle for the emancipation of the peoples, the necessity of preserving the peace, of civilized coexistence and of unity within diversity in the region;

1. We express our concern about the aggressive escalation against Our America, the actions against peace and regional security, especially the threats to the use of force against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which constitute dangers for regional peace in opposition to the precepts contained in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace signed by the Heads of State and/or Government at the Second CELAC Summit held in Havana. On the 28th and 29th of January of 2014.

2. We emphasize the resistance of the Venezuelan Government and people against external interference and the unilateral coercive measures against their country.

3. We renew our support for the Constitutional President Nicolás Maduro Moros, the Bolivarian and Chavist Revolution and the civilian-military union of his people.

4. We reject the violation of the inviolability of the premises of diplomatic missions, in total violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

5. We call for support for the Montevideo Mechanism initiative made up of Mexico, Uruguay, Bolivia and CARICOM which seeks to preserve the peace in Venezuela, based on the principles of non-intervention in domestic affairs, the sovereign equality of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

6. We demand strict observance of the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter and International Law, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the prohibition of the use of force and the threat of use of force,

respect for self-determination, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the non-interference in the domestic affairs of States.

7. We insist that the implementation of unilateral coercive measures, rejected by numerous resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, is contrary to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of that organization and in International Law, violate the freedom of trade and navigation, threaten international peace and security and restrict the enjoyment of the human rights of the peoples of the States against whom they are implemented.

8. We ratify our support for the process of dialogue and negotiation of the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua in its decision to continue defending its sovereignty, the peace, the notable social and economic advances, and the security and national unity attained.



9. We reject the interventionist conduct of the Government of the United States which is once more using OAS and its Secretary General in its interventionist policy against the sovereignty, self-determination and constitutional order of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Republic of Nicaragua and the Republic of Cuba.

10. We repudiate the Monroe Doctrine, the old reflection of the hegemonic and imperialist ambitions of the United States upon the lands and peoples of the Americas, which has been revived today and which poses the most serious and urgent threat to the peace of the hemisphere.

11. We reiterate the claims of the international community to lift, unconditionally, the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba, which constitutes a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people and whose extraterritorial nature affects all States.

12. We reject the recent decision of the Government of the United States to activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, legislation that reinforces the extraterritorial nature of the blockade against Cuba and harms the international economic and trade relations of Cuba and the trade relations of the international community with Cuba.

13. We welcome the approval of the new Constitution of the Republic of Cuba which expresses its revolutionary commitment, its solidarity and its integrationist conviction.

14. We reaffirm the need of strengthening the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) as a mechanism for regional political coordination based on the strict observance and defense of the principles of International Law, including the peaceful settlement of disputes, prohibition of the use and the threat of the use of force, respect for self-determination, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States.

15. We support the pro tempore presidency of the Plurinational State of Bolivia of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

16. We reaffirm our committed support for the people and Government of Bolivia in their historic and just right to a seaport with sovereignty.

17. We strongly reject the measures adopted against our sister countries in the Caribbean, considering them as non-cooperative jurisdictions, at the same time as we urge a review of the graduation criteria as “middle income countries”, a condition that makes it difficult for them to access loans and international cooperation.

18. We reaffirm our ongoing support for the Caribbean countries in their claims for compensation and reparatory justice for the

Continued on page 15

DECLARACIÓN XVIII CONSEJO POLÍTICO DEL ALBA-TCP



* EN ESPAÑOL *

Declaración XVIII Consejo Político del ALBA-TCP

Los Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores y los Jefes de Delegaciones de los países miembros de la Alianza Bolivariana para los pueblos de Nuestra América-Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (ALBA-TCP) reunidos en La Habana, Cuba, en ocasión del XVIII Consejo Político;

Inspirados en los ideales independentistas de Simón Bolívar y José Martí, en el legado de los líderes de la Revolución Cubana, Fidel Castro Ruz, y de la Revolución Bolivariana en Venezuela, Hugo Chávez Frías, cuyo pensamiento y obra confirman la plena vigencia de la lucha por la emancipación de los pueblos, la necesidad de la preservación de la paz, de la convivencia civilizada y de la unidad dentro de la diversidad en la región:

1. Expresamos nuestra preocupación por la agresiva escalada contra Nuestra América, las acciones contra la paz y la seguridad regionales, especialmente las amenazas del uso de la fuerza contra la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, que constituyen peligros para la paz regional en oposición a los preceptos contenidos en la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, firmada por los Jefes de Estado y/o Gobierno en la II Cumbre de la CELAC, celebrada en La Habana los días 28 y 29 de enero de 2014.

2. Destacamos la resistencia del Gobierno y pueblo venezolanos frente a la injerencia externa y las medidas coercitivas unilaterales contra su país.

3. Renovamos nuestro apoyo al Presidente Constitucional Nicolás Maduro Moros, la Revolución bolivariana y chavista y la unión cívico-militar de su pueblo.

4. Rechazamos la vulneración de la inviolabilidad de los locales de las misiones diplomáticas, en total violación de la

Convención de Viena sobre Relaciones Diplomáticas.

5. Llamamos a respaldar la iniciativa del “Mecanismo de Montevideo”, integrada por México, Uruguay, Bolivia y CARICOM, que busca preservar la paz en Venezuela basada, en los principios de no intervención en los asuntos internos, la igualdad soberana de los Estados y la solución pacífica de controversias.

6. Demandamos la estricta observancia de los Propósitos y Principios de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y el Derecho Internacional, la solución pacífica de controversias, la prohibición del uso de la fuerza y de la amenaza del uso de la fuerza, el respeto a la libre determinación, a la soberanía, la integridad territorial, y la no injerencia en los asuntos internos de los Estados.

7. Insistimos que la aplicación de medidas coercitivas unilaterales, rechazada por numerosas resoluciones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, es contraria a los propósitos y principios consagrados en la Carta de esa organización y al Derecho Internacional, vulneran la libertad de comercio y navegación, amenazan la paz y la seguridad internacionales y restringen el disfrute de los derechos humanos de la población de los Estados contra los cuales se aplican.

8. Ratificamos nuestro apoyo al proceso de diálogo y negociación del Gobierno de Reconciliación y Unidad Nacional de Nicaragua en su decisión de continuar defendiendo su soberanía, la paz, los notables avances sociales, económicos, de seguridad y de unidad nacional alcanzados.

9. Rechazamos la conducta injerencista del Gobierno de Estados Unidos, que utiliza una vez más a la OEA y a su Secretario General en su política intervencionista contra la soberanía, la libre determinación y el orden constitucional de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, de la República de Nicaragua y de la República de Cuba.

10. Repudiamos la Doctrina Monroe,

viejo reflejo de la ambición hegemónica e imperialista de los Estados Unidos sobre las tierras y los pueblos de América, que se resucita hoy y que plantea la amenaza más grave y perentoria para la paz del hemisferio.

11. Reiteramos el reclamo de la comunidad internacional a que se levante de manera incondicional el bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos contra Cuba, que constituye una violación masiva, flagrante y sistemática de los derechos humanos del pueblo cubano y cuyo carácter extraterritorial afecta a todos los Estados.

12. Rechazamos la reciente decisión del gobierno de los Estados Unidos de activar el Título III de la Ley Helms-Burton, legislación que refuerza el carácter extraterritorial del bloqueo contra Cuba y daña las relaciones económicas y comerciales internacionales de Cuba y de la comunidad internacional con Cuba.

13. Saludamos la aprobación de la nueva Constitución de la República de Cuba que expresa su compromiso revolucionario y su convicción solidaria e integracionista.

14. Reafirmamos la necesidad de fortalecer la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC) como mecanismo de concertación política regional basado en la estricta observancia y defensa de los principios del Derecho Internacional, incluidos la solución pacífica de controversias, la prohibición del uso y de la amenaza del uso de la fuerza, el respeto a la libre determinación, a la soberanía, la integridad territorial, y la no injerencia en los asuntos internos de los Estados.

15. Respaldamos la presidencia Pro Tempore del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia al frente de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC).

16. Reafirmamos nuestro apoyo comprometido al pueblo y gobierno de Bolivia en su histórico y justo derecho a una salida al mar con soberanía.

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Viene de la página 14

17.Rechazamos enérgicamente las medidas adoptadas contra los hermanos países caribeños, considerándolos jurisdicciones no cooperativas, a la vez que exhortamos a revisar los criterios de graduación como “países de renta media”, lo que dificulta su acceso al crédito y a la cooperación internacional.

18.Reafirmamos nuestro continuo apoyo a los países caribeños en su reclamo de compensación y justicia reparadora por el genocidio de la población nativa y los horrores de la esclavitud y la trata de esclavos.

19.Rechazamos la utilización de manera selectiva y políticamente motivada del tema de los derechos humanos, con el propósito de crear condiciones para desestabilizar gobiernos legítimos, justificar la injerencia en sus asuntos internos e imponer políticas de cambio de régimen.

20.Saludamos la celebración del 25 al 28 de julio del presente año, del XXV Encuentro del Foro de Sao Paulo e n Caracas, Venezuela, espacio que contribuirá al diálogo constante entre las fuerzas políticas progresistas y los movimientos sociales de la región.

21.Saludamos además la realización de la Reunión Ministerial del Buró de Coordinación del Movimiento de Países No Alineados, a celebrarse en la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, del 20 al 21 de julio de 2019, bajo el tema central “Promoción y consolidación de la paz a través del respeto al Derecho Internacional”.

22.Renovamos el compromiso con la concertación política, la cooperación y la integración, y la defensa de la unidad frente a la injerencia y dominación política y económica.

La Habana 21 de mayo de 2019.



genocide of the native population and the horrors of the slave trade and chattel slavery.

19. We reject the selective and politically motivated utilization of the human rights issue for the purpose of creating conditions to destabilize legitimate governments, justify interference in internal affairs and impose regime changing policies.

20. We welcome the XXV Forum of Sao Paulo to be held on the 25th to the 28th of July of 2019, as an event that will contribute to the constant dialogue among the progressive political forces and the social movements of the region.

21. We also welcome the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, to be held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from the 20th to the 21st of July of 2019, under the theme “Promotion and consolidation of peace through respect of International Law”.

22. We renew the commitment for political coordination, cooperation and integration, and for the defense of unity to confront political and economic interference and domination.

Havana, 21 May 2019

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK. WHAT DO WE DO? STAND UP FIGHT BACK! CAMPAIGN TO REPEAL BILL C-51 & SCRAP BILL C-59 STILL IN THE STREETS.

By Thomas Davies

As May comes to a close, the Liberal government’s proposed “National Security” Bill C-59 now has less than one month left to pass through the Senate before the end of this parliamentary session. In a long drawn out process where no political party has been observably energized either for or against the law, the Senate National Security and Defence Committee has reported it back with amendments, and the Senate will now deliberate if it will accept the proposed changes. If Bill C-59 does not pass a vote before the deadline, it “dies” and would have to begin the process of becoming a law all over again after the Federal Election.

While the interest in protecting democratic and human rights is at what appears to be an all-time low in parliament, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 continues to be energized and committed to demanding a full Repeal of the Conservatives “Anti-Terrorism” Bill C-51, and the Liberal “light” version Bill C-59. Neither party has been able

to explain how either law would make anybody any safer, while both set back hard-won rights to assembly, privacy and speech. OUR SECURITY LIES IN DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF ALL

In contrast, the Working Group continued its bi-weekly campaign with its 213th and 214th consecutive actions at the busy Metrotown Station in Burnaby, as well as a new location at the Lonsdale Quay Seabus terminal in North Vancouver. This consistent grassroots campaign continues to demonstrate that if given the opportunity, poor and working people certainly have a lot of questions and answers about human rights and security. While the government continues to create laws that defend neither, the Working Group will continue the important campaign to “Repeal Bill C-51 and Scrap Bill C-59!”

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



214th Action at Lonsdale Quay in North Vancouver



213th Action at Metrotown Station in Burnaby.

1919-2019

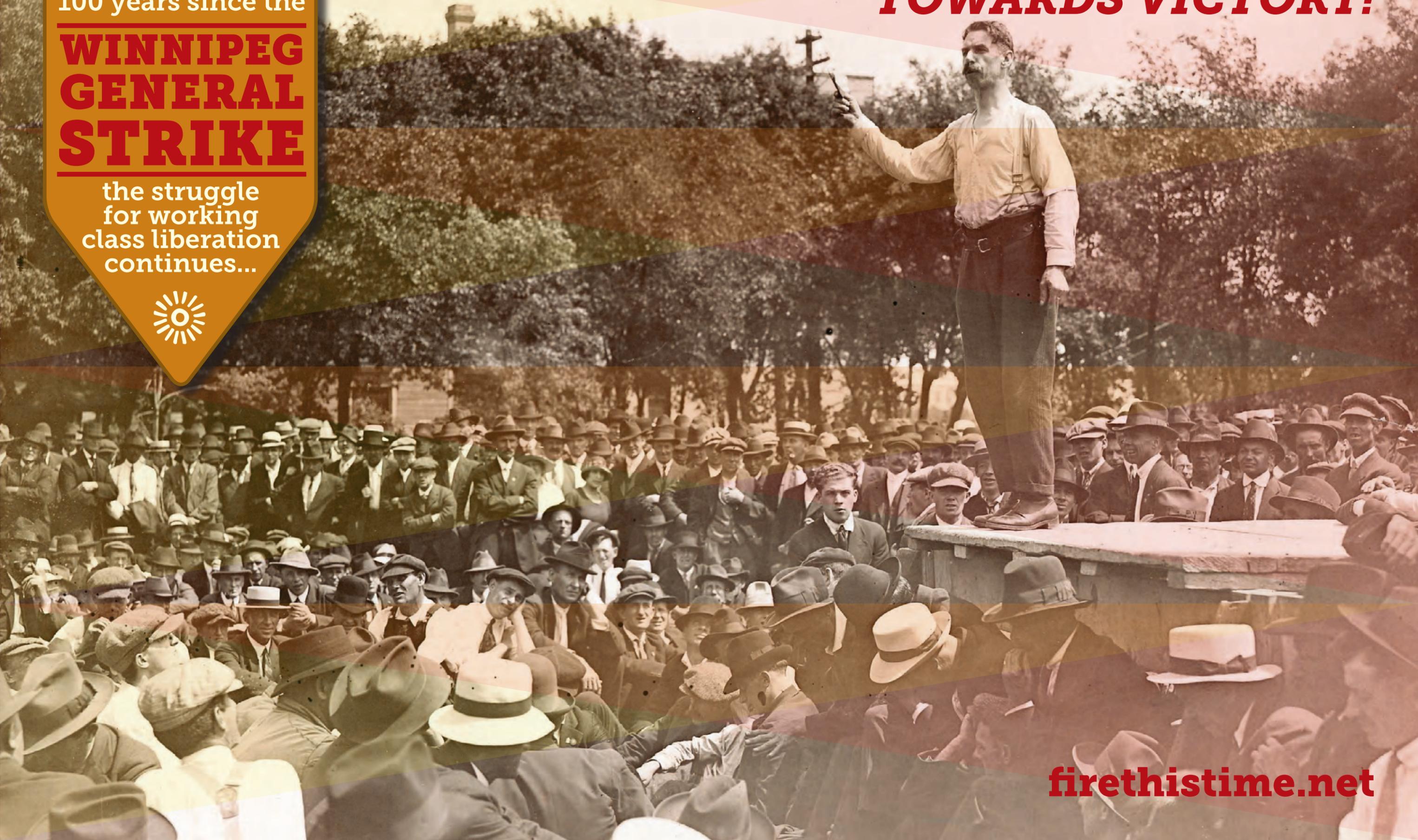
100 years since the

**WINNIPEG
GENERAL
STRIKE**

the struggle
for working
class liberation
continues...



***EVER ONWARD
TOWARDS VICTORY!***



firethistime.net

By Manuel Yepe*

“Right now, there’s a good chance that the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, be very brief. The word impeachment is already part of the current language in the media and social networks in the South American giant.”

At least that’s what Andrés Ferrari Haines, a professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Brazil, wrote in an article published, on May 21, by the Argentinean newspaper “Página 12”.

Eduardo Bolsonaro, the president’s son, warned in Buenos Aires that an electoral victory of Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner’s would represent the risk of turning Argentina into another Venezuela.

Curiously, says the newspaper, his father is achieving in Brazil what mercenary Juan Guaidó could not achieve in Venezuela: to have protests everywhere promoting the rule of law and opposition to the President.

An historic march took place on Wednesday, May 15, in which nearly two million people took to the streets in 200 Brazilian cities to protest against the budget cuts in education. It was a turning point in the rejection of President Jair Bolsonaro, his children and several personalities close to him.

Those who, during his electoral campaign, thought that his violent and bellicose style was part of an electoral strategy to attack his opponents are realizing that this is a trait of his personality.

It seems that his capacity for dialogue is zero, and he can only express himself aggressively – even if this might not be his intention.

One could think that Bolsonaro, together with his sons, tried to strengthen his image in a direct relationship with his electoral base, discrediting sectors that were part of the coalition government, such as the military, which occupy several positions in allied political parties.

Even more serious, in the field of the economy, has been the appointment of his “super minister” Paulo Guedes, an extreme neoliberal

choice, submissive to U.S. capital, especially to those that seek the extreme exploitation of natural resources and the control of state financial institutions and companies such as Petrobras.

In his strategy, Guedes placed all his chips in favor of the approval of a brutal reform aimed at preventing an “inevitable” economic catastrophe. Here he is meeting great resistance in and out of parliament.

It is a strategy of submission to private activity that launched Minister of Education Weintraub who, summoned by Congress, in the midst of a student protest, made it clear that the objective was not to cut the educational budget, but to extinguish the public education system

In line with his President, the minister ignored the students and affirmed that “the graduates of the Brazilian public universities don’t know

The Bolsonaro Phenomenon May Be Brief



anything.”

Reality, however, has demonstrated the opposite: public schools are at the top of the list in the national ranking –with only two or three private ones– in the front rank. Even more so: the public ones are among the first in comparisons with those in emerging countries, and some have reputable placements at the international level. Thus, it is clear that there is no basis whatsoever for the government project aimed at dismantling public education to the benefit of private education that the minister so much praises.

For his part, Foreign Minister Ernesto

Araújo aligned Brazil’s foreign policy to the United States in a moralistic crusade that identifies “globalization” with a process driven by “cultural Marxism” and climate risks with a “communist conspiracy”, even at the expense of losing important foreign markets. Meanwhile, the economy comes to a standstill, the stock market falls and the dollar soars.

In addition, it has become known that consulting firm A.T. Kearney removed Brazil –for the first time—from the top 25 destinations for the United States investors. During the government of Dilma Rousseff, Brazil was in the third place.

Bolsonaro was losing so much support in the last week that even his “guru,” astrologer Olavo de Carvalho, predicted that he will abandon politics in Brazil.

The Brasil Livre [Free Brazil] Movement, a great player in the fall of Rousseff and in the anti-PT wave, also announced its breaking up Bolsonaro.

The students are calling for a mobilization on May 30 and, in addition, they have joined the General Strike, on June 14, against Bolsonaro’s reforms.

The main print media, O Globo de Rio and Folha do Estado de Sao Paulo, in their editorials are very critical of the political maneuvers of the President and his attacks on democracy.

Investigations of corruption and illicit association against one of his sons, Flavio, are growing every day, and affect nearly one hundred people who were hired or moved fortunes in connection with his office, including the President’s wife herself.

May 24, 2019.

Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba’s ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.

*A CubaNews translation. Edited by
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El fenómeno Bolsonaro podría ser breve

* EN ESPAÑOL *

Por Manuel Yepe*

Al menos así lo considera Andrés Ferrari Haines, profesor en la Universidad Federal de Río Grande de Sul (UFRGS), Brasil, en un trabajo que publicó el 21 de mayo el diario argentino "Página 12". Eduardo Bolsonaro, hijo del presidente, alertó en Buenos Aires que una victoria electoral de Cristina Fernández de Kirchner supondría el riesgo de convertir a Argentina en otra Venezuela.

Curiosamente, dice el periódico, su padre está consiguiendo en Brasil lo que no pudo lograr el mercenario Juan Guaidó para Venezuela, de que surgieran en todas partes levantamientos y protestas que promuevan la oposición al mandatario.

La histórica marcha del miércoles 15 de mayo, en la que cerca de dos millones de personas salieron a las calles de 200 ciudades de Brasil para protestar contra los recortes presupuestales en la educación, fue un punto de inflexión en el rechazo al presidente Jair Bolsonaro, sus hijos y varias personalidades allegadas a él.

Quienes durante su campaña electoral pensaron que aquel estilo violento y belicoso constituía parte de una estrategia electoral para atacar a sus opositores, están percibiendo que se trata de una faceta de su personalidad. Da la impresión de que su capacidad de diálogo es nula, y que sólo sabe expresarse de manera agresiva –aun cuando ello pudiera no ser su intención–. Pareciera que Bolsonaro, con sus hijos, trató de fortalecer su imagen en una relación directa con su base electoral, desprestigiando a sectores que formaban parte de la coalición de gobierno, tales como los militares, que ocupan varios cargos en partidos políticos aliados.

Más grave aún, en el campo de la



El cartel lee
educación no es mercancía

economía, ha sido el nombramiento de su "superministro" Paulo Guedes, una opción extremadamente neoliberal y sumisa a capitales estadounidenses, en especial a los que pretenden la explotación extrema de recursos naturales y al control de instituciones financieras estatales y de empresas tales como Petrobras.

En esta estrategia, Guedes colocó todas sus fichas a favor de la aprobación de una brutal reforma enfocada a prevenir una "inevitable" catástrofe económica, en lo que encuentra gran resistencia dentro y fuera del parlamento.

Se trata de una estrategia de sumisión a la actividad privada que culminó el ministro de Educación Weintraub quien, convocado por el Congreso en medio de una protesta estudiantil, dejó bien en claro que el objetivo no era recortar el presupuesto educativo, sino extinguir del sistema educativo público. En línea con su presidente, el ministro descalificó a los estudiantes y afirmó que "los egresados de las universidades públicas brasileñas no saben nada".

La realidad, sin embargo, ha demostrado que, por el contrario, las escuelas públicas son las que ocupan los primeros puestos en el ranking nacional –con sólo dos o tres de las privadas– en el pelotón de proa, e incluso las públicas están entre las primeras en cotejos con países emergentes. Además, algunas de las públicas tienen respetables colocaciones a nivel internacional. Así, queda claro que no tiene fundamento alguno el proyecto gubernamental destinado a dismantlar la educación pública en beneficio de la privada que el ministro tanto elogia.

Por su parte, el canciller Ernesto Araújo alineó la política externa de Brasil a Estados Unidos en una cruzada moralista que identifica la

"globalización" como un proceso manejado por el "marxismo cultural" y a los riesgos climáticos con una "conspiración comunista", aun a costa de perder mercados externos importantes.

Mientras tanto, la economía se paraliza, la bolsa cae y el dólar se dispara. Además, se ha conocido que la consultora A.T. Kearney sacó a Brasil, por primera vez, de los 25 principales destinos para los inversores de Estados Unidos. Durante el gobierno de Dilma Rousseff estaba en tercer lugar.

Bolsonaro fue perdiendo tanto apoyo en la última semana que incluso su "gurú", el astrólogo Olavo de Carvalho, pronosticó que él abandonará la política de Brasil. El Movimiento Brasil Libre, gran participante de la caída de Rousseff y en la ola anti-PT, también anunció su ruptura con él. Los estudiantes están convocando una movilización mayor para el 30 de mayo y, además, se han sumado a la Huelga General del 14 de junio contra la reforma de Bolsonaro.

Los tres medios impresos principales, O Globo de Rio y Folha do Estado de Sao Paulo, en sus editoriales son muy críticos sobre los manejos políticos del presidente y de sus ataques a la democracia. Las investigaciones de corrupción y asociación ilícita sobre otro de sus hijos, Flavio, crecen cada día y afectan a casi cien personas que estuvieron contratadas o movieron fortunas en relación con su oficina, incluyendo a la mismísima esposa del mandatario.

Manuel E. Yepe Menendez es periodista y se desempeña como Profesor adjunto en el Instituto Superior de las Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana.

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"WHEN THE SO-CALLED LEADERS STOP LEADING..."

CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVEMENT GROWS IN VANCOUVER & BEYOND

By Thomas Davies

Want to know how out of touch Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is with regular people? When he held his second fundraiser in Vancouver at \$1500 a plate, he was 'gracious' enough to offer a discount price of \$750 for those under 35. Earlier in the day, for the bargain of \$250, you could listen to him to speak at a hotel downtown. Who can afford that?

That's not the only thing he's out of touch with. Elected as a 'climate leader', the Prime Minister's decision to bail out Texas oil giant Kinder Morgan by buying the Trans Mountain pipeline and Expansion project for \$4.5 billion flew in the face of what he had promised. As the worldwide climate crises becomes more apparent every day – the consequences of his attempt to put the Alberta Tar Sands on life support with billions of our tax dollars become more outrageous by the minute. It's for that reason that more people were protesting outside the fancy downtown hotel than listening to Trudeau inside, and why climate justice and anti-pipeline events continue to grow.

As the June 18 deadline for the Trudeau government's decision on re-approving the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion approaches, the activity before should give them something to worry about.

The highschool student-organized group "Sustainabiliteens" held two actions in one week. Starting with a "Mourn for Our Future" mock funeral in front of a large Canada Gas & LNG Conference in downtown Vancouver, and then a "die in" with hundreds of students in front Canadian mining corporation Teck Resources' offices in Vancouver. This was part of the international student climate strikes which took place in more than 1600 towns in over 125 countries – even larger than the 1.6 million people who participated in the record protests in March.

The Mountain Protectors have kept up a consistent presence at the 'Watch House' outside of the Trans Mountain tank farm on Burnaby Mountain, where the pipeline would terminate. They organized a public ceremony on May 13. This was followed by a town hall with Burnaby mayor Mike Hurley - with residents continuing to express huge concerns about the safety of the 65 year old oil storage tanks, as well as the lack of fire access and escape route for the more than 6000 residents who would be trapped on the mountain in case of a fire.



Climate Convergence Banner Drop. May 22, 2019



Protest at PM Trudeau Fundraiser in Vancouver. May 22, 2019



Climate Convergence continued its ongoing bi-weekly campaign to stop the Trans Mountain Pipeline, holding a busy information table in downtown Vancouver and then a loud banner drop while Trudeau was in town on May 22. The banners covered both sides of the overpass during rush hour in New Westminister, and the supportive honks were basically non-stop from every type of vehicle possible – from bicycles to semi-trucks!

Climate Convergence also supported the large protests on May 22 outside of PM Trudeau's downtown Vancouver fundraiser. Tsleil Watuth nation member Will George confronted Trudeau inside the event, while protesters chanted outside. An elderly woman was shoved to the ground and another indigenous man violently detained. A truck saying "Trudeau: No Pipeline in a Climate Emergency!" also

followed the Prime Minister wherever he went.

Want another example of how out of touch the Prime Minister is? As Will George was being pushed outside the room, Trudeau smugly told him to, "Please give everyone outside my best." Martin Luther King Jr observed, "The ultimate measure of man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands in time of challenge and controversy." The Trudeau administration might be great for beautiful social media posts and inspiring empty slogans, but we're in the middle of a climate crisis and the world demands more. As we've seen in Vancouver, when the so-called leaders stop leading, it's up to poor and working people to step up instead. This is happening around the world, and Climate Convergence and other climate justice organizations continue to play a vital role in building the better future Trudeau refuses to take responsibility for.

**Build Our Future Not a Pipeline!
Not Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion
– Not Now, Not Ever!**

*Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter:
@Climate604*

OUR HERITAGE



Evelyn Reed

Revolutionary leader and women's revolution theorist

In conclusion, we must ask, what are the connections between the struggle for women's liberation and the struggle for socialism?

First, even though the full goal of women's liberation cannot be achieved short of the socialist revolution, this does not mean that the struggle to secure reforms must be postponed until then. It is imperative for Marxist women to fight shoulder to shoulder with all our embattled sisters in organized actions for specific objectives from now on. This has been our policy ever since the new phase of the women's liberation movement surfaced a year or so ago, and even before. The women's movement begins, like other movements for liberation, by putting forward elementary demands, such as equal opportunities with men in education, jobs and equal pay; for free abortions on demand; for childcare centers financed by the government but controlled by the community. Mobilizing women behind these issues not only gives us the possibility of securing some improvements but exposes, curbs and modifies the worst aspects of our subordination in this society.

Excerpt from Women: Caste, Class or Oppressed Sex (1970)

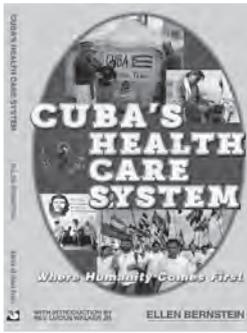
Battle of Ideas Press

CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

"The unflinching dedication of Cuban health care professionals has led to dramatic improvements in quality of life, for millions of people who previously had no other hope of receiving decent medical care. IFCO/Pastors for Peace is pleased to honor the diligent health care professionals of the Cuban health care system. We especially pay tribute to Cuba's national leadership, whose vision of universal health care as a right of every citizen sets an example for the world."

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003. She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.



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Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela



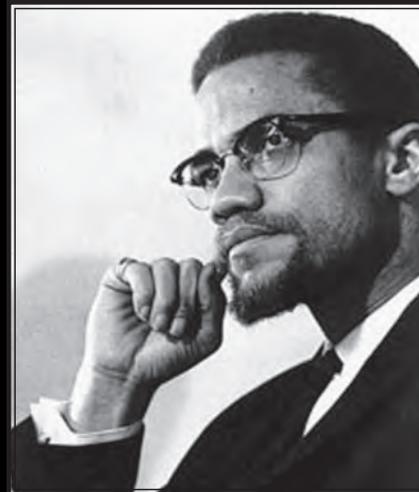
By Alison Bodine

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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"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

The newly awakened people all over the world pose a problem for what's known as Western interests, which is imperialism, colonialism, racism, and all these other negative isms or vulturistic isms. Just as the external forces pose a grave threat, they can now see that the internal forces pose an even greater threat. But the internal forces pose an even greater threat only when they have properly analyzed the situation and know what the stakes really are.

Just by advocating a coalition of Africans, Afro-Americans, Arabs, and Asians who live within the structure, it automatically has upset France, which is supposed to be one of the most liberal—heh!—countries on earth, and it made them expose their hand. England the same way. And I don't have to tell you about this country that we are living in now.

So when you count the number of dark-skinned people in the Western Hemisphere you can see that there are probably over 100 million. When you consider Brazil has two-thirds what we call colored, or nonwhite, and Venezuela, Honduras and other Central American countries, Cuba and Jamaica, and the United States and even Canada—when you total all these people up, you have probably over 100 million. And this 100 million on the inside of the power structure today is what is causing a great deal of concern for the power structure itself.

Excerpt from Malcolm X – "Speech at the Ford Auditorium" (1965)

By Tamara Hansen

On Saturday, May 4, 2019, nearly 200 people crowded into the Peter Kaye & Alma VanDusen Rooms at the Vancouver Public Library to welcome the Cuban Ambassador to Canada, Her Excellency Josefina Vidal to Vancouver for the very first time.

In a meeting organized under the umbrella of the Canadian Network on Cuba, local Cuba solidarity groups: Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver; the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver; and Vancouver Communities and Solidarity with Cuba came together to jointly organize the successful evening event.

The program was opened by co-MCs Tamara Hansen, the coordinator of Vancouver Communities and Solidarity with Cuba and Michael O'Neill, an executive member of the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver.

Her Excellency Josefina Vidal gave an educational and dynamic talk, giving her unique perspective on "Cuba Today." Ambassador Vidal focused on Cuba's social, economic, and political successes and challenges, as well as current events including the recent popular vote approving Cuba's new constitution.

Ambassador Vidal's in-depth analysis comes from her long and distinguished diplomatic career. She served in

CUBA TODAY: CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

HER EXCELLENCY JOSEFINA VIDAL, CUBAN AMBASSADOR TO CANADA, HAS A VERY SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO VANCOUVER!

DYNAMIC SPEECH DELIVERED BY HER EXCELLENCY IN VANCOUVER FEATURED IN FIRE THIS TIME



relations between both countries under Cuban President Raul Castro and American President Barack Obama, as well as the freedom of our 5 Cuban heroes held in U.S. jails. In January 2018, she was awarded the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba and in March she was appointed Ambassador of Cuba to Canada.

The Vancouver event on May 4 also featured a lively question and answer period with Her Excellency, in which many people with diverse perspectives participated.

The event concluded with a drumming song by Coast Salish Elder, Kelly White, who presented the ambassador with a beautiful colourful star blanket. Audience members were invited to stand and clap to the beat of the drum, bringing everyone together in a symbolic act of unity as the event ended.

Fire This Time Newspaper wishes

to share with our readers the superb talk by Her Excellency Josefina Vidal, Cuban Ambassador to Canada. Her speech, with some minor edits for clarity, is printed on the following pages.

We are also printing the opening comments delivered by Tamara Hansen, who encouraging everyone to get involved in the Cuba solidarity movement.

both the Cuban Embassy in France and the Cuban Interests Section in Washington. Afterwards, she spent 15 years at the Cuban Foreign Ministry as both Deputy Director and later Director of the North America Division. In 2012, she became Director General of the newly created United States General Directorate. In this capacity, she lead the Cuban delegation in the first and second rounds of Cuba-U.S. talks, which paved the way for the restoration of diplomatic

Opening comments delivered by Tamara Hansen, coordinator of Vancouver Communities and Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)



Transcribed by Tamara Hansen

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, welcome! We are very honored to have here today with us our amazing Cuban Ambassador to Canada Her Excellency Josefina Vidal.

My name is Tamara Hansen, I'm the coordinator of Vancouver Communities and Solidarity with Cuba, and I will be MCing this evening with Michael O'Neill who is an executive member of the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver. I wanted to begin tonight by recognizing that we are gathered on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. As I mentioned we are very excited that this evening is going to be a conversation with Her Excellency Josefina Vidal, Cuban Ambassador to Canada. But I also want to recognize that we have some other important guests with us this evening including José Anselmo López Perera, the minister counsellor of the Embassy of Cuba and Canada. José Anselmo also happens to be Josefina Vidal's husband.

We are also very honored to have with us former city councillor, lawyer, and a very important supporter of the case to free our 5 Cuban heroes, Tim Louis. Of course, we thank all of you folks for being here tonight with us. We are so honored to be here in excellent company.

[Later in the event Tamara also welcomed the Consul de Segunda of the Venezuelan Consulate in Vancouver, Tatiana Vizcaya. She was welcomed by thunderous applause and support by

the those in attendance.]

While we are excited to hear from Her Excellency Josefina Vidal and her perspective on Cuba today, we also wanted to take a moment to remind everybody that tonight is organized entirely by volunteers and supporters of the Cuba solidarity movement. Our movement is organized in Canada by an umbrella organization called the Canadian Network on Cuba, which is across Canada coalition of 20 organizations working together to promote Cuba solidarity. Of course, all of our work is made possible because of the amazing support of great folks like you gathered here with us tonight. As the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, I want to encourage you all to get involved and to learn more about the reality of Cuba and why we are so passionate about promoting Cuba and its amazing social projects - as well as defending Cuba against attacks, especially those by our neighbours to the south, the United States. Many of you might know they have recently strengthened their unjust and cruel blockade on Cuba by invoking Title III of the Helms-Burton law. I don't want to go into detail about that because I'm sure that is the part of our ambassador's talk this evening.

Today with a new constitution - approved by a referendum in February 2019 in which over 90 percent of Cuban voters participated - the Cuban Revolution is an important example for the world of what is possible with socialism. Throughout six decades of revolution, Cuba has pushed

forward to become a leader in health care, education, music, sports, and sustainability, among other disciplines. Despite remaining a so-called 'third-world' or developing country under harsh U.S. blockade.

The revolutionary people of Cuba are also working consistently to include those who are traditionally marginalized in societies around the world: Workers, youth, elders, women, people with disabilities, people of colour, and the LGBTQ+ community. With a goal of integrating all of those marginalized people into dynamic politics, culture, and life on the island. This is not an easy task and not something that could be accomplished in just 60 years of revolution. But the progress made, and the government and institutional support of that progress is truly impressive. Whether it is by coming to a monthly picket action against the blockade on the 17th of every month at the US Consulate; by signing up to an email list; buying a book; joining a Cuba cultural event or conference; or traveling to Cuba with the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade - We hope that tonight we will be able to invite you and encourage you to get more involved in the Cuba solidarity movement.

In defending and promoting Cuba we also enrich our own struggles for justice in Canada. As the Cubans always say, "Un mundo mejor es posible" - a better world is possible. And a better world is more and more necessary every day. So, let us join together and work towards it. Viva Cuba! Viva Fidel! Viva Che! Viva Raul!

CUBA TODAY

Celebrating 60 years of the Cuban Revolution

A talk by Her Excellency Josefina Vidal,
Cuban Ambassador to Canada



Transcribed by Tamara Hansen

Good evening everyone! It is such a pleasure for me to be, for the first time, in this part of Canada. I am very happy because I know that there are many friends of Cuba in British Columbia. It was high time for me to be with you this evening. Thank you for this great attendance and I very much appreciate you being here with us this evening.

So first of all, I would like to express our big gratitude and thanks to the organizers of this event: the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association - CCFA-Vancouver, the Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, which for many years have been doing a great job in solidarity with Cuba and you all are very well known by many Cubans because they recognize that you have always been by the side of the Cuban people in the best times and in the worst of times. Thank you very much. [Applause]

You know this year we are commemorating in Cuba the 60th anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. [Applause]

The path travelled thus far since 1959 has not been an easy one, as Fidel Castro himself predicted when he arrived in Havana on January 8th, 1959, when he warned all Cubans that everything might be more difficult in the future.

And that was the reality we had to face for many years. Back then we not only had to remove the basis of the foundations of the

Cuban society of that time and radically transform the country's political and economic system, but we also had to face all types of aggression and threats - both internal and external - some of which unfortunately continues to this day. Such as the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba and the campaigns to denigrate Cuba and its leaders that also continues today. Despite this adverse context, the Cuban people have made significant progress in the efforts to build a more just, inclusive, and caring free society. Now we can proudly say that Cuba has achieved all possible social justice in the midst of adverse domestic and foreign circumstances. It has offered its selfless solidarity to other countries in need and it has contributed decisively to peace and stability in our region and in the rest of the world. Today Cuba can show major achievements in healthcare, education, social security, sports, culture, and public safety in which indicators are similar - and sometimes higher - than those of developed countries.

This is possible thanks to the will of the Cuban state and to the fact that more than half of the nation's budget is allocated to health and education alone. Cuba has conquered rights not only for its own people. It has also made a valuable contribution to the advancement of human rights of other peoples. The four hundred and seven thousand Cuban collaborators, mainly doctors and nurses,

who over the last 55 years have offered their assistance in 164 countries. As well, the 56,000 foreign students from 137 countries who have studied in Cuba, most of them studying medicine, are a living testimony of this.

Although modestly, the Cuban economy grows every year. As the modernization of our economic and social model advances, with that comes the resolute decision of the Cuban government to achieve a more efficient economy and improve the standard of living of the Cuban population.

Last year, 2018, was a very important year for Cuba. Two very important events in our history took place. First, in April 2018, we witnessed in Cuba the election of our new president, Miguel Díaz-Canel. [Applause] With that we witnessed a successful transfer of the main state and governmental duties and responsibilities to the new generation of Cuban leaders.

Another event of paramount importance that took place in Cuba last year was the approval of a new constitution. A new constitution that was approved following a broad popular consultation in which more than eight million Cubans participated, and not only Cubans living in Cuba, but also Cubans living abroad. As a result of this huge popular debate that was carried out in Cuba for three months. More than 700,000 proposed changes were made by the Cuban population to the original draft that



was written by the commission and adopted in the first stage by the Cuban parliament. That led to changes in 60% of the articles of the original text of the constitution that was submitted to the Cuban people. Then the constitution was ratified in a popular referendum, as Tamara said, on February 24 of this year 2019. Ninety percent of Cubans with the right to vote voted, 86.8% out of them voted 'yes' in favour of the new Cuban constitution and 9% voted 'no'. On April 10 of this year, the new constitution was formally proclaimed by the Cuban National Assembly, the Cuban parliament.

The figures that I just mentioned to you, show the genuine democratic character of the constitutional reforms process in which all Cubans had the opportunity to participate and make their contribution to the most important decisions for the life of the nation in the following years. You might ask yourself why this was needed at this stage of our development in Cuba, to conduct a process of constitutional reform. The previous Cuban constitution was approved in 1976 and it was amended three times. But, taking into consideration the very important deep transformations that we have been making in Cuba for more than a decade, it was not enough to introduce new amendments to the Constitution. Because of the magnitude of the changes that we had to make within the fundamental law of the country, a decision was made that amendments were not sufficient and that we had to do a huge and very broad process of constitutional reform. This included a referendum for the population to give its support, or not, to the new Cuban constitution.

So, it's important for you to know that since 2010, for almost nine years now, Cuba has been going through important transformations in its economic and social model. This process has been dictated by changes in the international

situation - including the persistence and strengthening of the economic, financial, and commercial blockade imposed by the United States government - aimed at achieving a more efficient economy and improving the standard of living of the population.

Among the changes that have been taking place in Cuba in the last decade, I can mention the following: greater openness to foreign investment; the separation of the state functions from those of enterprise; the recognition of other types of ownership and property, in addition to state ownership; the elimination of unnecessary subsidies; to name only the most relevant. All of these changes that have been happening in Cuba for almost 10 years now are being made within socialism. This is very important to underline.

which makes Cuba one of the safest countries in the world. In short, what we have been doing in Cuba for several years now are changes within continuity, with the aim of improving our socialist model of development and advancing in the construction of a nation that is increasingly democratic, prosperous, and sustainable.

What are the main changes that were introduced in the Cuban constitution as compared to the previous one? The new constitution reaffirms that socialist ownership is an essential principle of the Cuban economic model and that state enterprise is the main economic actor. But at the same time, it recognizes the role of the market and other forms of ownership: mixed property, cooperative property, private property, personal property, and the property of associations and different organizations that exist in Cuba.

Another important change is that the rights of citizens in the new constitution are expanded to guarantee equality and non-discrimination of any kind in our society. Human dignity is recognized as the supreme value for Cuban citizens. The rights of children and adolescents are expanded, and the protection of the elderly is introduced for the first time in the Cuban constitution. The new text establishes the right of people to found a family whatever its form of organization and it defines that families are constituted by legal or defacto links. Actually, I have to tell you that according to data from the 2012 census in Cuba, more than 5 million people live in stable couples in Cuba. Of them, 48 percent are defacto legal unions and 52 percent are married. So, it's important that the constitution recognizes that families can be of different types.

At the same time, the mention of the subjects that make up marriage (i.e. a man and a woman) was eliminated from the new text. I can explain that later to you, the problem is that the old constitution defined what marriage was, and it said that it was a union between a man and a woman. The commission that wrote the draft for the new constitution



(Above) Josefina Vidal speaks in Vancouver. May 4, 2019.

(Below) May Day 2019 in Havana Cuba, the sign reads "Cuban children against the blockade."



Preserving the social achievements, we are so proud of such as universal education and health care; social security coverage; and citizen safety,



wanted to keep the definition of marriage in the constitution, but in a more progressive way and it proposed to the Cuban population that marriage be considered a union between persons. [Applause] But, it didn't pass. That was the issue that was most debated in our society.

We learned, as a result of that debate, that the population is not ready yet to accept something like this. But what the commission did was to take into consideration the opinion of the population, and even though it was not an issue that divided the population in half, it was very divisive. So, a decision was made to take out of the constitutional text the definition of marriage and deferred that to future legislation that must be passed in Cuba in around two years. But the constitution says in the end that marriage is a social and legal institution and one of the forms of organization of the family, and

at the same time, the constitution says that families could be of any kind. So, it's a first step in the direction that we believe that we have to go in the future. What we are doing in Cuba is to try to continue building a society in which no discrimination of any kind exists, we should, and we have to continue working in that direction. [Applause]

New rights were added in the new text in the areas of justice and due process. That was a demand by the Cuban population, and not to defer that to more specific legislation. They wanted the constitution to speak about this.

The duty to protect the flora and fauna was incorporated, that didn't exist before, but there was a demand by the population to guarantee some protection for animals in the constitution. And I think that is progress when compared with the previous text.

In the structure of the state, there are

important changes in the constitution. Now, very soon because we have to have elections once again, we will have two important figures in our country. The president of the Republic, who will be the head of state, and the Prime Minister, who will be in charge of the government. This is going to be new.

In the last 40 years, because Fidel Castro at the beginning of the revolution was Prime Minister and we have a President, but when we adopted the Constitution of 1976, those two positions were merged, and Fidel became the head of

We are becoming an older population and people didn't understand why at 60 people considered that was very low and there were many proposals for increasing the age limit. But in the end, the Commission and the parliament prevailed, because of the magnitude and the importance and the size of the big task that the government will have in the future. The president will be responsible for that. The idea was that we need a young president, at least when elected for the first time, although he can stay two mandates total of ten years as the head of the state.



May Day 2019 in Havana Cuba, the banner reads "Unity, Commitment, Victory."

At the level of the provincial governments, new positions were created. We will have, in the future in the provinces of Cuba, a governor and a lieutenant governor. That was also an issue of debate because people in Cuba didn't like those names, but in the end, the commission and the parliament prevailed. More prerogatives will be granted to municipal

governments in Cuba. the Council of State and Council of Ministers. But now we will divide that once again. I have to tell you that the President won't be a decorative protocol figure. It will be a very important person. He will be the head of state. He will appoint ambassadors. He will accept ambassadors from foreign countries, but he will also be in charge of defense, national security, and foreign affairs. Those are very important strategic issues for the country. The Prime Minister will be in charge of the day to day operations of the government. And I think that would be good. According to the big tasks and goals that we have set up for the development of Cuba in the next few years, a limit of two terms each of five years was established for the President of the republic. Also, the President of the republic must be at least 35 years old and not older than 60 at the time of the first election. That was a huge debate in Cuba.

The new constitution also ratifies the principles of Cuba's foreign policy and this is very important because the chapter dedicated to foreign policy in the constitution is bigger than in the previous one. There are traditional principles, but new principles were added according to the new international conditions in which we live. For example, the constitution ratified Cuba's aspiration for peace for all states and the observation of the principles and norms of international law in relations between states. But at the same time, as an addition to those principles, we find the protection and conservation of the environment and coping with climate change. This is new. [Applause]

The combination of direct or indirect intervention in the internal or external affairs of any states, and therefore of armed aggression and any form of economic or political coercion, that existed in the

previous text but is more developed now in the new constitution. The promotion of general and complete disarmament and the rejection of the existing proliferation or use of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass extermination, is there too. The repudiation and condemnation of terrorism in any of its forms and manifestations. This is new.

As well, the promotion of multilateralism and multipolarity in international relations. Those are the principles that have guided Cuba's foreign policy for some time and there are new issues added now. But I have to tell you that Cuba's foreign policy is also guided by the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace. That was signed by all heads of state and governments in our region in January 2014 in Havana. This proclamation now - from what we see as very concerning trends in our region - is very important, because it expresses a commitment to foster friendly and cooperative relations among countries regardless of their differences in their political, economic, and social systems or levels of development and to practice tolerance and coexist in peace as good neighbours. It also recognizes the inalienable right of every state to choose its political, economic, social, and cultural system as an essential condition to ensure peaceful coexistence in the region. In the current complex international context, mainly in our region, these principles acquire significant relevance. When interference and aggressive actions intensify in our region seeking to provoke a regime change in Venezuela and Nicaragua. When the U.S. government has once again taken the course of confrontation with Cuba presenting our peaceful and solidarity country as a threat to the region, which Cuba is not.

In strict adherence to these principles Cuba has currently called upon all peoples and governments, regardless of political or ideological differences that may exist between us, to defend peace and to put up a joint opposition to a new U.S. military intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean - specifically in Venezuela which will harm the independence, sovereignty,



(Above) A Cuban woman votes in the 2019 Constitutional referendum.

(Below) A Cuban doctor working in Peru, 2017.

and interests of all peoples. [Applause & Chants “¡Viva Venezuela!”]

For Cuba, what is at stake today in Venezuela is the sovereignty and dignity of Latin America and the Caribbean. The survival of the principles and rules of international law and the principles enshrined in the U.N. charter and whether the legitimacy of a government emanates from the expressed and sovereign will of its people or from the recognition of foreign powers.

As a conclusion of my presentation, because I want to have time to have a real conversation with you, I can tell you that the Cuban Revolution faces important challenges in the future. In Cuba, the main battle - where all the efforts and the energies are being concentrated - in the battle to achieve an efficient economy that responds to the country's development needs and to the growing needs of the Cuban

population. That implies for us in Cuba that we will need to better exploit our huge internal reserves and improve the economic management of the country. While we continue to deal with the U.S. blockade, which is being reinforced. Only in 2011, it cost almost \$12 million a day to the Cuban economy. That is why, apart from our own internal shortcomings - and we know what they are and we have identified them - we reiterate all the time that the blockade continues to be the main obstacle for the development of the Cuban economy.

In the international arena, we will have to face an adversarial scenario, characterized by a growing U.S. hostility towards Cuba and the reinforcement of the blockade, just recently it was once again reinforced. As well as increasing aggression against Venezuela, Nicaragua, and other progressive forces in our region. We are mindful and ready to deal with the external threats facing Cuba once again coming from some, mainly in the United States, who despite their repeated defeats fail to understand that there is no way to break down a generous, brave, and solidarity people who have fought for almost 100 years to be independent and sovereign. [Standing ovation & applause]

Cuba will continue standing strong to continue to be free. Thank you very much. [Applause & Chants of “¡Viva Cuba!”; “¡Viva Fidel!”; “¡Viva Raul!”]

You know I forgot to say something at the beginning. This is unforgivable. Yes, because I said at the beginning that we are celebrating 60 years of the Cuban Revolution, but I have to tell you something very important. If we have come thus far in Cuba it is not just because of the resistance of the Cuban people. The Cuban people are very resilient, this is a new word, but we have been resilient for a long time. This is also because of how we have been able to guarantee and keep unity in Cuba around our leaders. But also because of the solidarity that we have always received from many many friends of Cuba. And tonight is an example of how many friends Cuba still has. Thank you very much. [Applause]

VANCOUVER ANTIWAR ACTIVISTS PROTEST THE U.S. IMPERIALIST WAR DRIVE!

By Janine Solanki

The worst refugee crisis in human history, which saw a much-reported rising in 2015, is still happening today. As of May 28, 2019, the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) reported 26,537 refugees had arrived in Europe in 2019. This crisis has received less and less coverage in mainstream media, along with the media silence around the root causes for this crisis - imperialist wars and occupations which have made homelands inhabitable and forced people to become refugees. So far in 2019 Afghanistan has the highest number of refugees arriving in Europe - the country which the U.S. and its allies have been occupying since 2001.

What has been the answer of imperialist countries to this human tragedy, that they themselves are the cause of through these brutal wars? More war, occupation, crippling sanctions and military

interventions.

The U.S. government has also re-escalated its dangerous warmongering against Iran. Since the U.S. unilaterally abandoned the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal, the people of Iran have faced tightening sanctions, sabotage, and increased provocation by the United States. The U.S. government recently sent new aircraft carriers and B-52 bombers towards the Persian Gulf and has also reportedly discussed a plan to deploy 120,000 troops to the Middle East.

The U.S. government have also set their targets south to Venezuela, with years of support and funding for violet right-wing forces in Venezuela, sanctions and economic warfare, and a vicious media manipulation campaign. In recent months the U.S. government has backed a failed coup attempt in Venezuela, and even threatened military intervention against Venezuela with U.S. government

statements that "all options on the table".

On May 24, 2019, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Vancouver's antiwar coalition, organized its monthly antiwar rally and petition campaign. It was impossible to walk through busy downtown Vancouver's Robson Square without seeing banners and picket signs reading "No War on Iran!" and "U.S./Saudi Arabia Hands Off Yemen!". An information table was set up, attracting people who stopped to talk to organizers, pickup antiwar literature and find out about how to get involved in antiwar activities. Teams of activists approached passersby, collecting petition signatures demanding that Canada end it's \$15 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. These consistent, monthly actions are an important way to reach out to the general public in Vancouver and to encourage more people to get involved in the antiwar movement. This rally and petition campaign came to a close, promising to be on streets month after month until these criminal wars and occupations are ended!

Join the next antiwar event or action! Visit www.mawovancouver.org, or follow on Facebook or Twitter @MAWovan



May 24 MAWO rally in downtown Vancouver

VANCOUVER, OTTAWA, KIEV & MONTREAL DEMAND:

NO TITLE III! LIFT THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA! CANADA, REINSTATE EMBASSY PROCESSING VISA IN CUBA!

By Janine Solanki

On May 2, 2019, the U.S. government activated Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which threatens Cuba's economy by punishing foreign entities who do business with Cuba. This is on top of nearly 60 years of the criminal U.S. blockade. With Title III, the Trump administration is escalating its hostile and aggressive campaign against Cuba.

The government of Canada is also taking hostile steps against Cuba. In January 2019, the Trudeau administration reduced 50% of its staff at the Canadian embassy in Cuba, based on the fictitious dis-proven claims of "sonic attack" against U.S. and Canadian embassy staff. Despite a lack of evidence, the Canadian government has now announced that its embassy in Havana will no longer process applications for visitor and residence visas or work and study permits. This impacts Canadian-Cuban families and greatly

disrupts the people to people exchanges between Cuba and Canada. Now Cuban musicians, artists, professors, students, and athletes will not be able to travel to Canada without great difficulty.

Cuba has faced six decades of the U.S. blockade, and countless U.S. operations aimed at bringing down the Cuban government and harming the people of Cuba. However, despite enormous pressure, Cuba has never faltered in its commitment to provide universal healthcare and education to the Cuban people, and have fought to advance the gains of the Cuban revolution. With so much that Cuba has been able to accomplish, one can just imagine how much more Cuba could do if the U.S. blockade was lifted!

On May 17, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - Vancouver brought people together for a monthly picket action in front of the U.S. consulate in downtown Vancouver. With banners, flags and picket signs reading "Lift the

Blockade on Cuba!" and "USA: End Cuba "Regime Change" Programs!" the protesters made their demands loud and clear to the U.S. consulate offices above. In between rounds of chanting and picketing, activists and supporters gathered together to hear from speakers. This included a voice message from activists in Ottawa Cuba Connections, who also held their monthly picket action in front of the U.S. Embassy. This message reminds protesters that not only is this action in Vancouver,

but part of coordinated monthly protests in Montreal and Ottawa, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine!

Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - Vancouver is committed to defending Cuba's right to self-determination and demanding an end to the U.S. blockade and the return of the U.S. occupied territory of Guantanamo, Cuba. To find out about the next action visit www.vancubavblockade.org or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan



May 17 picket in front of US Consulate in Vancouver

By Janine Solanki

On January 23, 2019, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, released a statement recognizing Juan Guaidó as the interim President of Venezuela. While Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro was elected in transparent, fair elections, Guaidó just "declared" himself president of Venezuela – with the support of the governments U.S. and Canada. Ignoring Venezuela's sovereignty, self-determination and democratic process, the mainstream media in Canada has reflected the position of the government of Canada, reporting a manipulated view of the situation in Venezuela.

The government of Canada's aggressive approach to independent countries also has

June 1 event at the Calgary Central Library



"Cuba-U.S. Relations: Obama and Beyond". Since 1997, he has spent extended periods in Cuba pursuing his intensive investigations.

asked to leave. This very successful event was also an example of the struggle within Venezuela – the counter-revolutionary opposition may try to provoke and disrupt, and assert force, but when the majority is standing up for their rights and in defense of the truth, they can and will win.

These important events in Calgary are opening the door to more educational events and actions in Calgary and other parts of Canada,

CALGARY EVENTS DISCUSS "WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN CUBA AND VENEZUELA?"

targeted Cuba. On May 8, 2019, the Canadian Embassy in Cuba announced they are no longer processing visas. This heavy-handed move affects families, Cuban students, Cuban musicians and visiting Cuban professors... and many other Cuban visitors, impacting culture, sports, education and other exchanges in Canada.

With these recent actions by the government of Canada, an important question that people in Canada should be asking is, what is really happening in Cuba and Venezuela?

On May 31 and June 1, two events were organized in Calgary, Alberta to discuss this very question. Both events featured visiting speakers Alison Bodine (Vancouver) and Arnold August (Montreal). Alison Bodine is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, and recently returned from an eye-witness delegation to Venezuela that studied the impacts of U.S. and Canada sanctions. She is also the author of the book "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Venezuela" from Battle of

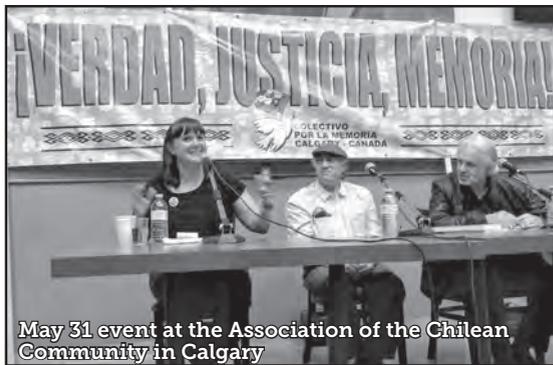
He has recently returned from both Cuba and Venezuela.

On May 31, the Association of the Chilean Community in Calgary opened its doors for a Spanish-language event, organized by the Colectivo por la Memoria Salvador Allende and the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association – Calgary. In attendance were many people from the Chilean community in Calgary, who understood all too well how dangerous U.S. interventions and coups are, from their experience with U.S. economic warfare and the 1973 U.S.-backed coup in Chile. After the speakers gave their presentations the event continued with a lively question and answer period. At the close of the event, the authors were busy signing copies of their books purchased by attendees.

On June 1, another event with the title "Cuba and Venezuela: What's Really Happening?" took place at the Calgary Central Library in downtown Calgary. This event was co-organized by the Canadian-Cuban Friendship

Association - Calgary, Colectivo por la Memoria Salvador Allende, and Fire This Time Movement For Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Both speakers gave talks which provided solid facts alongside personal experiences from their travels in Cuba and Venezuela. Many of those in attendance were supporters of Venezuela, or genuinely just there to find out what is "really" happening. However, some in attendance were right-wing Venezuelan opposition, with the sole intention of disrupting the event. While everyone was welcome to share their comments or questions in the discussion when it became apparent that some people were not respecting the organizers and the majority rule of the event, they were

aimed at countering the hostile actions by the government of Canada and the mainstream media lies against Cuba and Venezuela. Through events and actions like these, Cuba and Venezuela solidarity activists can bring the truth about Venezuela and Cuba to people in Canada, and defend the self-determination of these countries under imperialist attack.

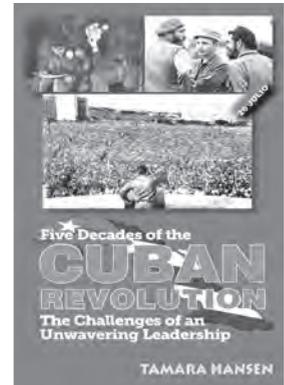


May 31 event at the Association of the Chilean Community in Calgary

Ideas Press. Arnold August is a journalist and author of several books including: "Cuba & Its Neighbours: Democracy in Motion" and

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.

April 2010, paperback, \$10.00

314 pages, illustrated,

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Continued from page 9

about the situation, talk about the tragedy, talk about famine, talk about the raids that target civilians, talk about cholera, talk about the blockade. No one is asking you to take a position with one side, all you should do is to stand with yourself and your compatriots, to stand for what is happening in your neighbourhood, this is what is required from us both in art and non-art.

As I just said, the people in Sana'a, the government in Sana'a, have begun to pay more attention to the importance of art. The Ministry of Culture began to take an interest in this field, whether it was painting, whether it was music or songs. Through its messages, art is strengthening the principles of steadfastness and resistance at home, in the Yemeni citizens, and also abroad. Abroad, it was very important to use art to communicate what is happening in Yemen. Art is a message or a language comprehended by everyone around the world, it is a unified language that everyone can understand.

FTT: Your voice has been very important in breaking the media blackout about the war on Yemen. Your art and designs have reached an international audience and some of your designs have been used as posters in different antiwar actions against the war on Yemen around the world. What is the message you want to convey through your art to people of the world?

Ahmed: The message I want to convey through my graphics and designs since day



one of the start of this aggression until today is breaking the media siege about what is happening in Yemen. It is true that I used to call it the forgotten war. Because of some changes in foreign policy, I do not claim that they had a change of heart and now suddenly they are all talking for a just cause, no the reality is some that variables have changed, and some started talking about the Yemen issue because it was in their own interests. This is a positive thing, to bring up the Yemen issue for us is something positive even if they have other goals. Then I began to see that the Yemen war is not forgotten, it is mentioned from time to time in the media and in social media sites.

For me, my goal was from the beginning to use art, to use graphics, to use designs to convey what was happening in my country in an unusual way. I mean, there are some people that are distressed by the publication bloody and horrific scenes from the war, so when these scenes are expressed with graphics and cartoons, it is lighter and easier for being shared among people, among activists, among

journalists, in the media, in the newspapers. In some way, it is not as painful to see as bloody images, Through these drawings and graphics, you can sometimes convey a message that can be stronger than the real images and reach a broader audience.

My message also is that everyone can resist in their own way. There is the soldier resisting with his weapon, there

is the journalist with a microphone or his voice or his pen, the painter resists with his brush, the farmer is planting his land. Every human being can resist, resist occupation, resist this coalition, resist this aggression on our country. Even the student is resisting by his studying and learning. And that is how we direct our work in a just way.

FTT: What do you think people in the U.S., Canada and around the world can do to help the people of Yemen and stop the war and bombing in Yemen?

Ahmed: There are many activists in the United States, in Britain, in Canada, in France who have been with Yemen since the first day of the war and we thank them, we cannot even express the depth of our thanks and pride. These are a few, but they have managed to send a message to their governments, to organizations in their home country, about what is happening in Yemen. Many activists and organizations have stood against arms deals that supply Saudi Arabia or the UAE with weapons to kill the Yemeni people.

Activists that I can count with my fingers have managed to break the silence, to break the media silence, to do what perhaps hundreds couldn't do. We thank them and wish from them more and more. They are standing with the oppressed, with the Yemeni child, with the Yemeni woman, with the Yemeni citizen, who has been under attack by more than ten countries.

There are countries that are directly involved in the war and other countries indirectly benefiting from what is happening in Yemen in arms deals, logistical support, oil transactions. There are many who are profiting on the blood of Yemenis and there are also heroes abroad who are standing up against this war with demonstrations, rallies, continuous condemnation to denounce their government's support for these atrocities. A big thank to all of those and a special thank to you my dear, thank you from all Yemenis and we wish you more success. Thanks.

FTT: Thank you very much Ahmed for your time. We will support your struggle for freedom and peace.

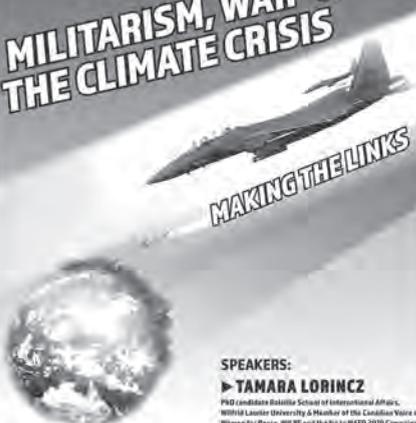


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SPEAKERS:

- TAMARA LORINCZ**
PhD candidate, Bachelor of International Affairs, WHUW Laurier University & Member of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, WFPF and the 1000 Women 2010 Campaign.
- THOMAS DAVIES**
Organizer with Climate Campaign Vancouver, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) and author of "System Change Not Climate Change" (Battle of Ideas Press, 2015)

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Canadian Network on Cuba CNCI Tour

CUBA TODAY!



Guest Speakers Direct from Cuba:



Sandra Ramirez Rodriguez
Director of the North American Desk of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)



Yamil Martinez Marrero
Canada Desk of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)

Sunday June 16, 2019
2:00pm

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For Fire This Time in your area across BC, Canada, and internationally contact Publicity and Distribution Coordinator Thomas Davies
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Submissions & Suggestions
We welcome articles, letters, unsolicited submissions, and suggestions. However, we cannot promise publication. Submissions and suggestions can be made by email by contacting firethistimecanada@yandex.com fax, or regular mail. Submissions will not be returned.

The opinions expressed in the newspaper are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of Fire This Time.

Donations
If you find Fire This Time to be an effective tool in the struggle of oppressed people for justice, more than ever, we need your support. On top of our regular costs of production, we regularly send members of our editorial board on assignment throughout North America, the Caribbean and beyond in order to make Fire This Time a better resource. These efforts have strained our finances.

If you would like to help with a donation, please make cheques payable to "Thomas Davies".

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Celebrating the Birthday of Revolutionary Hero
Ernesto Guevara



Featuring Guest Speakers
DIRECT FROM CUBA!
 Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) Tour



Sandra Ramirez Rodriguez
 Director of the North America Desk of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)



Yamil Martinez Marrero
 Canada Desk of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)

**** A FREE COMMUNITY EVENT ****
 Music • Poetry • Speakers • Multimedia

FRIDAY JUNE 14 2019

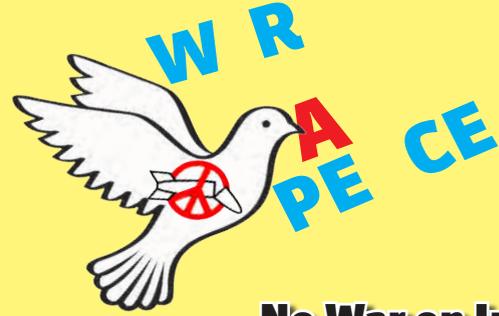
7pm Britannia Community Centre
 Learning Resource Centre (LRC) - Under the Library
 1661 Napier St. (Vancouver, Canada)



Organized by:
Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - Vancouver
& Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)
 778-882-5223 | vancubasolidarity@gmail.com
WWW.VANCUBASOLIDARITY.COM

Monthly Antiwar Rally & Petition Drive

**U.S./Canada/NATO Hands Off
 Yemen, Venezuela, Syria, Iraq,
 Iran, Afghanistan & North Korea!**



No War on Iran!

**Self-Determination for All Oppressed Nations!
 Money for Healthcare, Housing & Education - Not
 for War & Occupation!
 Free Julian Assange & Chelsea Manning!**

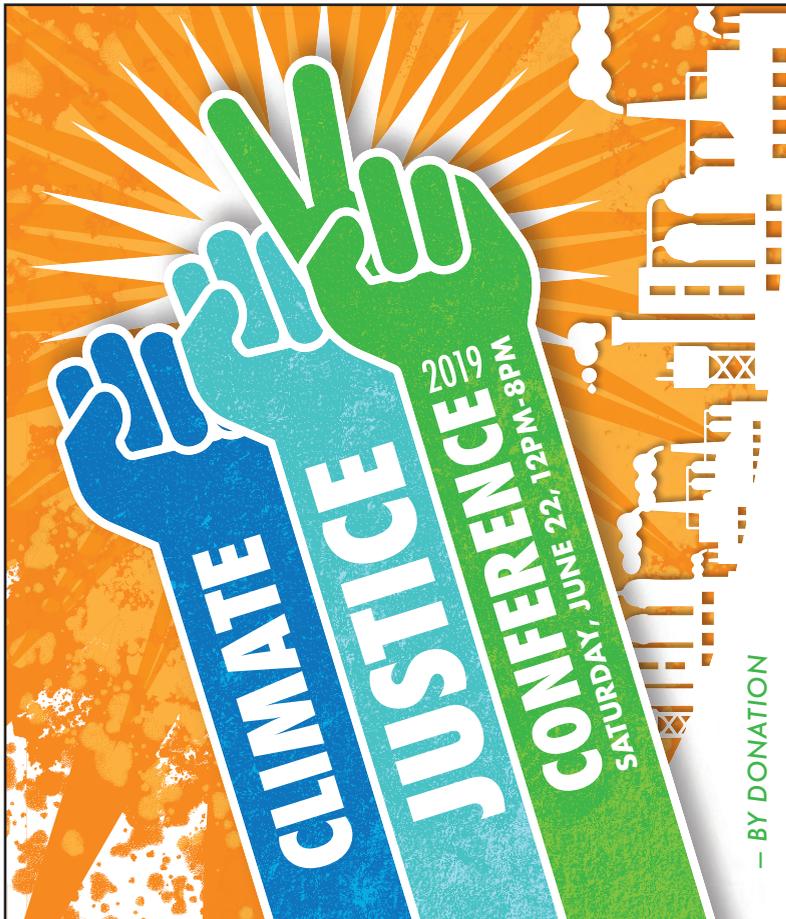
Vancouver Art Gallery
 Robson St. & Howe St.

Friday
June 28 2019
5PM

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)
WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG



@MAWOVAN



— BY DONATION

12 Noon / Conference Registration

12:30 / "What's War Got to Do With it? Militarization, War and the Climate Crisis"
 Special Presentation by **Tamara Lorincz**, co-founder of the East Coast Environmental Law Association and Board Member of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace.

1:00PM / "What Do You Mean System Change Not Climate Change?"

Feature Seminar by **David Barsamian**, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio. Author of over 25 books, including interview collections with Arundhati Roy, Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn, Tariq Ali, and Edward Said.

3:30PM / "The Climate Justice Movement- How Far We Have Come"

6:00PM / "Climate Convergence: Our Struggle, Our Perspective"

Djavad Mowafaghian
World Art Centre

SFU Woodwards
 149 West Hastings @ Abbott

climateconvergence.ca
 778-889-7664
climateconvergence604@gmail.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This event takes place on the traditional, unceded, occupied territories of the salilwataḥ (Tsil'it-Wautuh), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and x'məkkəyám (Musqueam) Nations.

Organized by **Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver** | Co-Sponsored by the SFU School for the Contemporary Arts