

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

# Fire This Time!

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## DROP ALL CHARGES! AGAINST THE FOUR Venezuela EMBASSY PROTECTORS

Embassy Protection Collective (EPC) members stayed in the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC for 37 days to protect the Vienna Convention and prevent an escalation of conflict with Venezuela. On May 16, federal agents raided the embassy and arrested the four remaining EPC members inside.

The arrested Embassy Protectors — Kevin Zeese, Margaret Flowers, Adrienne Pine, David Paul — are now facing trials on the trumped-up charge of "interfering with certain protective functions" of the Federal Government, a misdemeanor charge that carries a maximum of one-year imprisonment and \$100,000 fine for each one of them.

Because this case sets a precedent challenging the US government's favoring of international law, the prosecution will likely seek the maximum sentence for the four defendants in order to make an example of them so that no one else would ever dare taking a similar action in the future.

The Embassy Protectors Defense Committee invites all defenders of peace and justice in the US and around the world to join us in our crucial campaign to defend the four, the result of which will inevitably have serious impact on the future course of our government and country.

Please Visit:

[DefendEmbassyProtectors.org](http://DefendEmbassyProtectors.org)

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Embassy Protectors Defense Committee  
[DefendEmbassyProtectors.org](http://DefendEmbassyProtectors.org)



## VENEZUELA: AN EYEWITNESS REPORT FROM AN EPICENTRE FOR CHANGE

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In Defense of Mother Nature

# FROM THE AMAZON IN BRAZIL TO BRITISH COLUMBIA IN CANADA SYSTEM CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE! WHY IS THE AMAZON BURNING?

By Alison Bodine

So far in 2019, an area about the size of the U.S. state of New Jersey, 18,600 square kilometres, has burned in the Amazon basin in Brazil. As the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) in Brazil recorded in August, the over 76,000 fires burning this year are 80% more than what burned from January to August of 2018.

This news was alarming and devastating for people around the world, who know the importance of the biodiversity of the Amazon rainforest and understand it to be the lungs of the earth, because of its incredible carbon capturing and oxygen-producing capacity. The Amazon basin is indeed one of earth's most important ecosystems – and the escalating of its burning is another example of the climate in crisis.

Once they eventually began reporting on the fires, weeks after they started, mainstream media was prepared to control the message when it came to the Amazon burning. They reported some of the reactionary policies of the government of the ultra-right-wing President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, which has eroded environmental protections and attacked Indigenous rights, in-turn promoting illegal deforestation. While at the same time, the capitalist media also opened space for articles advocating a more personal approach to helping the Amazon – for example, the idea to

reduce or stop eating meat.

However, as usual the mainstream corporate media did little in the way of addressing, or even sparking debate to question the systemic

causes of the fires – and the drive for more crop and grazing land – that is behind them.

Offering a slight break to the mould, the article "We're thinking about the Amazon fires all wrong. These maps show why," published in the Washington Post, states "The consequences of the fires in the Amazon know no borders, and neither do the forces that ignited them. If the developed nations want a greater say in the stewardship of the rainforest, they might need to provide more than the modest \$20 million offered by the G-7 last month. They might need to pay for it at higher prices for agricultural imports. Most importantly, they might have to readjust their own consumption habits."

Although the last sentence once again seems to point towards a personal-choice approach to the climate crisis with "adjust their own consumption habits," looking at it a bit more closely this paragraph introduces, among others, two important questions into the discussion. These are important questions, not only about the fires in the Amazon but also about other devastating effects of the climate crisis that humanity faces today.

1. What is the contribution of the developed nations to the climate catastrophe, including the burning of the Amazon? Do these countries have moral authority when it comes to this crisis facing humanity?

Continued on page 18

*By Alison Bodine*

Climate friendly leaders don't build dirty tar sands pipelines. But this summer the Trudeau government showed once again that building the Trans Mountain Pipelines Expansion (TMX) is exactly what it intends on doing – and they are champing at the bit to get shovels in the ground.

However, it has been a year since the government of Canada purchased the existing Kinder Morgan Pipeline and TMX project for 4.5 billion taxpayer dollars. Yet, flawed approvals, legal cases and public opposition and protest continue to stand in their way – and for good reason:

» In August 2018 the Federal Court of Appeals “quashed” the TMX project; citing a faulty National Energy Board (NEB) review process which had not considered the marine impact of increased tanker traffic, and the government’s failure to fulfil its constitutional requirement to “meaningfully consult” with Indigenous nations. This ruling led to another 22-week long sham review process by the NEB – and to the surprise of no one, the TMX pipeline was re-approved in June 2019.

» Despite claiming that building the TMX pipeline will create jobs and a prosperous future for people along the route, the original application that Kinder Morgan made to the NEB for the project claimed that only 90 permanent jobs would be created.

» The government of Canada has already spent \$4.5 billion on this disastrous project – and the expansion is expected to cost another \$15 billion more. Just think how much better these funds could be spent – on housing, healthcare, education, and more.

» The TMX would triple crude volumes moving from Alberta to the British Columbia

(B.C.) coast and beyond – posing a serious threat to the Salish Sea and the fishing and tourism economy that it supports, as well as to the dwindling population of the Southern Resident Orca whales.

» Over its lifetime, the TMX pipeline will have a greenhouse gas footprint equivalent to over 120 million tonnes of carbon dioxide when considering extraction, transportation, processing and burning in other nations after

fine for “impairing or interrupting” pipeline construction. These new laws, which are in violation of civil and democratic rights, are intended to send a chill through the climate justice movement and discourage people from protesting.

### **“Drums Not Drills!” Activists Return to Burnaby Mountain**

On August 5, over 150 people gathered at the Westridge Marine Terminal for “Drums Not Drills!” an action to protest Trans Mountain’s

## *In Defense of Mother Nature*

# **WE MUST BUILD A MOVEMENT TO STOP THE TMX PIPELINE!**

## **PM Justin Trudeau and The Broken Promises**

export. The United Nation International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report in 2018 giving humanity 12 years to drastically cut emissions or face catastrophic and likely irreversible consequences. Another 120 million tonnes of CO2 in the atmosphere is not what the planet needs.

The list of reasons to oppose the TMX pipeline could go on and on, but what is most important is that whatever the reason, people across BC, Alberta and Canada came together to build a broad and consistent movement. This pipeline is already years behind schedule – and continuing this movement bulduing is the only chance we have at stopping this catastrophic project.

Want more proof that building an anti-pipeline movement has those upholding the climate-destroying status-quo shaking in their boots? Look to the United States where laws making it a crime to protest pipelines have been passed in seven states – and have been put forward in many more. As of September 1, someone in Texas can face up to two years in jail and a \$10,000

intention to begin drilling a 2.6km tunnel through Burnaby Mountain. The NEB had given the green light to the Trans Mountain Pipeline ULC (which is owned by the government of Canada) to begin construction work at the terminal that day – so the presence of anti-pipeline activists was critical.

“Drums Not Drills!” was organized by the Vancouver area grassroots climate organizations Mountain Protectors, BROKE and Climate Convergence. Soon after the action began on the hill overlooking the terminal, the air was electric with speeches, drumming and people discussing the next steps in the ongoing campaign to end the TMX once and for all. Speakers during the program, which was emceed by Cedar George-Parker from the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, included Rueben George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation; Lesley Durrant, a Burnaby mountain resident with BROKE; Alison Bodine, from Climate Convergence and Svend Robinson, a former NDP-MP

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**Drumming and rally at the “Drums Not Drills Action” - Burnaby, BC. August 5, 2019**



# Women's Liberation & Venezuela

## Gains for Women in the Bolivarian Revolution

By Alison Bodine

"The most significant achievement of women in the revolution is that we now have central and important position in the revolution, as a collective we are now active participants in society, which has allowed us to win many of the battles we have fought, together with our conscience, organization, productivity, and legacy as women." These are the words of María León, a leading revolutionary politician and feminist in Venezuela, who was speaking to a meeting of women in Lara State in 2017.

Just over 20 years ago Bolivarian revolutionary process in Venezuela began with the election of President Hugo Chávez. Since then, the lives of poor, working and oppressed people in Venezuela have been transformed through tremendous gains in nutrition, housing, healthcare, and education. As protagonists within the revolution, women in Venezuela have made great advances.

In their traditional role as mothers and caretakers, women were at the center of the social fabric of Venezuela when the revolution began, but they were also the most disadvantaged. Therefore, women had the most to gain from advances such as social housing (2.8 million homes built), and free healthcare, education (including 6 million free laptops), school lunches, and childcare.

Incorporating women fully into society was one of the first steps taken by President Chávez and the people of Venezuela when they rewrote and then overwhelmingly voted for a new constitution in 1999. This constitution guarantees many rights for women which were previously denied to them – including equal rights and protections under law, while also outlawing discrimination based on "race, sex, creed or social standing."

There is also an article in the constitution unique to Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolutionary process which recognizes the work of women in the house as work. Article 88 reads, in part, "The State guarantees the equality and equitable treatment of men and women in the exercise of the right

to work. The state recognizes work at home as an economic activity that creates added value and produces social welfare and wealth." – and with this, women who work as homemakers now receive a pension.

The National Institute of Women, Inamujer, was also founded in 1999. This institution continues to be responsible for many aspects of promoting women's rights in Venezuela. This includes education campaigns about violence and abuse against women, human trafficking, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, among others. Inamujer also runs programs such as: domestic violence shelters; a free domestic violence hotline; "Mother is the Homeland," a program for women with cancer (which provides psychological support as well as supplies that facilitate a dignified life during treatment and recovery); and also carries out work to strengthen the relationship between the feminist organizations and women in community movements in Venezuela with the revolutionary government.

Since then, women in Venezuela have continued to make gains. Both through leadership and participation in political and social life, as well as the ongoing development of laws and institutions promoting women's rights. In 2001, a women's development bank, Banmujer, was founded to further integrate women into the economic life. In 2007 a groundbreaking law was passed called the Law on the Women's Right to a Life Free from Violence. This law recognizes 19 forms of violence against women and provides for the legal framework for the prosecution of crimes against women. In 2012, the Labor Law was updated to guarantee 6 months maternity leave and breastfeeding rights.

Women in Venezuela are leaders in the Bolivarian revolutionary process, as the heads of communal councils, social organizations, as well as in the government.



**Top to Bottom: Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro meets with Indigenous women in 2014; Fire This Time organizers Alison and Tamara meet Venezuelan Feminist and revolutionary, María León in July 2019; organizers gather signatures for the "No More Trump" petition campaign in Caracas August 2019.**

This includes Delcy Rodríguez, Vice President of Venezuela, Asia Villegas, the Minister of Popular Power for Women and Gender Equality, Aloha Núñez the Minister of Popular Power for Indigenous Peoples, Blanca Eekhout, the Minister of Popular Power for Communes and Social Movements, and Tibisay Lucena Ramírez,

*Continued on page 6*

Por Alison Bodine

Traducido por Ana Laura Torres

“El logro más significativo que hemos alcanzado las mujeres en revolución es el protagonismo, la participación protagónica colectiva, lo que ha permitido ganar muchas de las batallas que hemos librado con conciencia, organización, producción, distribución y legado.” Estas son las palabras de María León, una líder política revolucionaria y feminista de Venezuela, dirigiéndose a una reunión de mujeres en el Estado de Lara en 2017.

Hace poco más de 20 años comenzó el proceso revolucionario bolivariano en Venezuela con la elección del Presidente Hugo Chávez. Desde entonces, las vidas del pueblo pobre, trabajador y oprimido en Venezuela han sido transformadas a través de inmensas conquistas en alimentación, vivienda, salud y educación. Como protagonistas de la revolución, las mujeres

estaban negados, incluyendo igualdad de derechos y protección bajo la ley, a la vez que proscribía la discriminación basada en “raza, sexo, credo o condición social”.

La constitución también incluye un artículo, exclusivo de Venezuela y el proceso revolucionario bolivariano, que reconoce como trabajo las tareas de las mujeres en el hogar. El artículo 88 dice, entre otras cosas, “El Estado garantizará la igualdad y equidad de hombres y mujeres en el ejercicio del derecho al trabajo. El Estado reconocerá el trabajo del hogar como actividad económica que crea valor agregado y produce riqueza y bienestar social”. De esta manera, las mujeres que se dedican a labores domésticos ahora reciben una pensión.

El Instituto Nacional de la Mujer, Inamujer, también fue fundado en 1999. La institución continúa siendo responsable de muchos aspectos relacionados con la promoción de los derechos de las mujeres

Banmujer, un banco de desarrollo de la mujer, fue fundado para favorecer más la integración de la mujer en la vida económica. En 2007 se aprobó una ley innovadora llamada la Ley sobre el derecho de las mujeres a una vida libre de violencia. Esta ley reconoce 19 formas de violencia en contra de las mujeres y establece el marco legal para el procesamiento de crímenes en contra de las mujeres. En 2012 se actualizó la legislación laboral para garantizar 6 meses de licencia por maternidad y derechos de lactancia.

Las mujeres en Venezuela son líderes en el proceso de la Revolución Bolivariana, ya sea como jefas de consejos comunales, líderes organizaciones sociales o en el gobierno. Esto incluye a Delcy Rodríguez, Vicepresidenta de Venezuela, Asia Villegas, la Ministra de Poder Popular para la Mujer y la Igualdad de Género, Aloha Núñez, Ministra de Poder Popular para los Pueblos

**De izquierda a derecha: mujeres que participan en el programa "Soy Mujer" que beneficia a mujeres con pequeñas empresas; Ministra Asia Villegas Poljak, Ministra del Poder Popular para la Mujer y la Igualdad de Género y una madre; mujeres trabajadoras organizadas participan en una manifestación pública en Caracas.**



# **Liberación de la Mujer y Venezuela**

## **Las conquistas de las mujeres en la Revolución Bolivariana**

venezolanas han logrado importantes avances.

En su rol tradicional como madres y cuidadoras, las mujeres estuvieron en el centro del tejido social de Venezuela cuando comenzó la revolución, pero también eran las más desfavorecidas. Por eso las mujeres tenían mucho que ganar de los avances en vivienda social (construcción de 2,8 millones de viviendas), salud pública gratuita, educación (incluyendo la distribución de 6 millones de computadoras portátiles gratuitas), almuerzos escolares y cuidado infantil.

Incorporar a las mujeres plenamente a la sociedad fue uno de los primeros pasos que tomaron el Presidente Chávez y el pueblo de Venezuela cuando reformaron y aprobaron la nueva constitución de 1999 en una votación abrumadoramente a favor. Esta constitución garantiza muchos derechos para las mujeres que anteriormente les

en Venezuela. Esto incluye campañas educativas sobre violencia y abuso hacia las mujeres, trata de personas, salud y derechos sexuales y reproductivos, entre otros. Inamujer también gestiona programas tales como: refugios para víctimas de violencia doméstica, una línea telefónica gratuita de violencia doméstica; “La patria es una mujer”, un programa para mujeres con cáncer que ofrece apoyo psicológico e insumos para garantizar una vida digna durante el tratamiento y la recuperación; y también lleva adelante tareas para fortalecer la relación entre las organizaciones feministas y de mujeres en los movimientos comunales de Venezuela con el gobierno revolucionario.

Desde entonces, las mujeres en Venezuela continúan logrando conquistas, tanto a través del liderazgo y la participación en la vida social y política, como en el desarrollo continuo de leyes e instituciones que promueven sus derechos. En 2001,

Indígenas, Blanca Eekhout, Ministra de Poder Popular para las Comunas y Movimientos Sociales, y Tibisay Lucena Ramírez, Presidenta del Consejo Nacional Electoral (uno de los cinco poderes del gobierno venezolano).

Otra contribución a las conquistas que han logrado las mujeres en este país fue el reconocimiento del rol de las mujeres, en particular mujeres afro-venezolanas e indígenas, en la historia y la lucha por la independencia de Venezuela. Tres de las mujeres que lucharon contra la colonización europea son hoy parte del Panteón Nacional de los Héroes en Caracas: Apacuana, Matea Bolívar e Hipólita Bolívar.

Las mujeres en Venezuela han recorrido un largo camino en los últimos 20 años, pero aún hay más batallas por ganar en la lucha por derechos e igualdad plena, incluyendo el derecho a decidir sobre

*continúa en la página 6*

the President of the National Electoral Council (one of the five branches of Venezuela's government).

Another contribution to the gains that women have made in Venezuela has also been through the recognition of the role of women, especially Afro-Venezuelan and Indigenous women in Venezuela's history and struggle for independence. Three of these women, who were part of the struggle against European colonization, are now part of the National Pantheon of Heroes in Caracas: Apacuana, Matea Bolivar and Hipolita Bolivar.

Women in Venezuela have come a long way in the last 20 years, but there are still more battles to be won in their struggle for full rights and equality, including the right to choice. In the last five years, increasing U.S.-led sanctions, threats and intervention in Venezuela has made their fight much more difficult. Sanctions disproportionately impact women, as the center of families and society, and they have created shortages in food, medicines and basic goods, killing an estimated 40,000 people in Venezuela from 2017-2018 alone as reported by the Center for Economic Policy Research (CEPR).

Through blockading Venezuela, the United States and their imperialist allies, including Canada are increasing pressure on women and on all people in Venezuela. These brutal attacks tighten the space that exists for debate and discussion in society, as people in Venezuela must not only increasingly focus on their daily hardships but must also center their efforts on uniting against war. As well, U.S. and imperialist funding and support for Venezuela's counter-revolutionary opposition has fueled violent street riots, assassinations and attacks on people that are suspected supporters of the government and the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

By creating frustration and tremendous hardship, these callous and murderous governments like that of the United States are hoping to incite the people of Venezuela

**END THE BLOCKADE AGAINST VENEZUELA!**  
**U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!**  
 #TrumpUnblockVenezuela  
 #TrumpDesbloqueeVenezuela

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 6 2019**

**1. PROTEST ACTION 4-5PM**  
 U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!  
 U.S. CONSULATE IN VANCOUVER - 1070 WEST PENDER ST.

**2. INFO TABLING & PETITIONING 5:30-6:30PM**  
 NO MORE U.S./CANADA SANCTIONS & THREATS!  
 VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY CENTRAL BRANCH - ROBSON ST. AND HOMER ST.

**3. FREE PUBLIC FORUM 6:30-9:30PM**  
 VENEZUELA TODAY: AN EYEWITNESS REPORT FROM THE SAO PAULO FORUM  
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to overthrow their democratically elected President, Nicolas Maduro. However, people in Venezuela, led by women, continue to demonstrate that they are not afraid of the U.S. government or Venezuela's violent opposition. Through organization, mobilization and participation in all sectors of life, the people of Venezuela continue to defend their revolutionary government, their sovereignty and their self-determination.

As was said by Gladys Requena, an elected member of the National Constituent Assembly, "Trump knows that women in Venezuela are not going to back down, because we know that it is a battle for history, that we will not allow the Yankee boot to own our land because that would strike a blow against women." (Correro Orinoco)

As people living in the U.S. and Canada, the most important thing that we can do is to stand with Gladys and the women of Venezuela. We must educate, organize and mobilize and demand that the United States and their allies like Canada end the blockade and war against Venezuela.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

el propio cuerpo. En los últimos cinco años, la agudización de las sanciones, amenazas e intervención encabezadas por los Estados Unidos han hecho su lucha mucho más difícil. Las sanciones impactan desproporcionadamente a las mujeres, como figuras centrales en las familias y la sociedad. Han generado escasez de comida, medicina y productos básicos, causando la muerte a unas 40.000 personas en Venezuela solamente entre 2017 y 2018, según informa el Centro de Investigación en Política Económica (CEPR, por sus siglas en inglés).

Con el bloqueo a Venezuela, los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas, incluyendo a Canadá, aumentan las presiones sobre las mujeres y todo el pueblo Venezolano. Estos ataques brutales reducen el espacio disponible en la sociedad necesario para el debate y la discusión, ya que en Venezuela las personas no sólo deben enfrentarse cada vez más a dificultades cotidianas, sino también enfocar sus esfuerzos en unirse en contra de la guerra. Del mismo modo, la financiación y colaboración de los Estados Unidos y aliados imperialistas con la oposición contra-revolucionaria de Venezuela incitó revueltas violentas, asesinatos y ataques a personas sospechadas de apoyar al gobierno y el proceso de la revolución bolivariana.

Al crear frustraciones y terribles sufrimientos, los gobiernos crueles y asesinos como el de Estados Unidos buscan empujar al pueblo venezolano a deponer al persistente electo Nicolas Maduro. Sin embargo, el pueblo de Venezuela, con las mujeres a la cabeza, continúa demostrando que no le tienen miedo al gobierno de Estados Unidos ni a la violenta oposición venezolana. Con organización, movilización y participación en todas las esferas de la vida, el pueblo venezolano continúa defendiendo a su gobierno revolucionario, su soberanía y su auto-determinación.

En las palabras de Gladys Requena, miembro electa de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, "Sepa Trump que las mujeres nos plantaremos, porque sabemos que es una batalla por la historia, que no vamos a permitir que la bota yanqui se pose en nuestra tierra porque eso lesionaría a las mujeres". (Correro Orinoco)

Como habitantes de los Estados Unidos y Canadá, el mayor aporte que podemos hacer es apoyar a Gladys y las mujeres de Venezuela. Debemos educar, organizar y mobiliarnos para exigir que los Estados Unidos y los países aliados como Canadá pongan fin al bloqueo y guerra en contra de Venezuela.

Sigue Alison en Twitter: @Alisoncolette

# VOICE FROM YEMEN

## YEMENI ARTIST AHMED JAHAF

*Translated 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 graphic showcased in this article represents some of Ahmed's work, to see more from his art visit: [www.ajahaf.com](http://www.ajahaf.com) and follow him on twitter @A7medJa7af*

*This article below was written by Ahmed as an introduction to the upcoming book "U.S. and Saudi Arabia War on the People of Yemen" by Azza Rojbi, published by Battle of Ideas Press, Vancouver, Canada.*

My child fell asleep while watching cartoons, so I carried him, tucked him into bed and went to my bedroom. My wife was asleep, the electricity went out and I couldn't fall asleep, I opened my laptop to watch an episode of a documentary and suddenly huge explosions rocked the capital Sana'a from all sides. I couldn't stop myself and yelled loudly while running towards my child's room, I picked him up, I did not know where to go or what was happening so we went to the first floor of the house. We saw the signs of horror and confusion in the faces of all members of our family, the children were screaming frightened, shocked by what had happened and we couldn't even try to calm or comfort them.



and air and under the naval, aerial and land blockade on Yemen, while by contrast the arms and weapons factories all over the world began signing deals to supply arms, weapons and accessories to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They are making millions of dollars from this war while the Yemeni people are suffering from the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, and certainly the world will not move to stop this suffering because it is winning and benefiting and continuing to sign deals at the expense of Yemeni blood.

We are now in the fifth year of this war, which has been paid for with the blood of thousands of Yemenis. In return, the Saudi treasury paid billions of dollars in several areas, including the purchase of weapons, the purchase of allegiances and the change of policies, and the purchase of the conscience of some human rights organizations in exchange for their silence about what is happening in Yemen. The world discovered that this Saudi-led coalition could not win any victory, so it began to use blackmail to opportunistically earn billions of dollars from it.



**Yemeni Artist Ahmed Jahaf**

While the world is continuing its silence paid for by the massacres in Yemen, there were voices calling to stop these atrocities, I like to call them the "voice of angels", those who stood with us and our suffering without any motives or interests, who stood with us only because they are human beings and their hearts are beating. We have seen many protests and demonstrations in several countries such as Britain, France, Canada and Germany, and although their number is small the echo of their actions is disturbing to their governments and sends us hope. We will never forget such stands, we will not forget each organization or group or even an individual that defended humanity through solidarity and against the oppression of the Yemeni people - either by demonstrations or by sending letters and petitions to their governments demanding to stop supporting the Saudi-led coalition, or by breaking the silence and speaking up about this injustice in the media and social media platforms.

Finally, all I wish after the end of the war in Yemen is to invite all who stood with us to visit Yemen, and it will be an honor for me to have them as our guests. This is the least that can be done to express our love for them. Yemenis and history will not forget their honorable stands.

**Battle of Ideas Press** By Azza Rojbi

Upcoming Book Release

**U.S. & SAUDI WAR ON THE PEOPLE OF YEMEN**

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Azza Rojbi is a Tunisian anti-war and social justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. She is an executive member of Vancouver's anti-war coalition Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) and a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper.

# U.S. & ALL IMPERIALISTS HANDS OFF YEMEN! WHY DO IMPERIALISTS WANT TO SPLIT YEMEN?

By Azza Rojbi

While children all over North America are starting the new school year, reuniting with their friends and meeting new ones, children in Yemen are being robbed of their future. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "2 million children in Yemen are out of school with few options to return to learning. One in five schools is either damaged, destroyed or being used for shelter or military purposes".

Children in Yemen and their families are suffering daily under the war that is ravaging their country. In addition to the staggering death toll of the war, now approaching 100,000 people killed, Yemen's vital infrastructure has been targeted and schools, homes and hospitals have been completely destroyed by the Saudi-led coalition's bombing campaign. "Around 360,000 children under 5 years old are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and require treatment, with cases of acute watery diarrhoea and suspected cholera soaring in early 2019", UNICEF reported.

In the midst of this humanitarian crisis, the United Nations announced that some of their aid programs in Yemen are shutting down because of lack of funds. "The UN was forced to suspend most of the country's vaccination campaigns in May. Procurement of medicines has been stopped and thousands of health workers are no longer receiving financial support. Plans to construct 30 new nutrition centres have been shelved and 14 safe houses and four specialized mental health facilities for women have closed. A treatment plant that purifies the water used to irrigate agricultural fields shut in June." The main reason for this huge shortfall in funding is that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have failed to pay their promised pledges. According to the UN statement, if "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, paid in full, the

fulfillment figure for pledges made at the Geneva conference would rise to 95 per cent."

The Saudi-led coalition, which includes the UAE and Kuwait, is not only responsible for creating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, but they are now putting access to food, aid, water and medications at risk for millions of Yemenis. Saudi Arabia has never cared for the life or the well-being of the Yemeni people as they have been claiming.

## What has been achieved?

The Saudi-led coalition, with the full backing of the United States, started the war on Yemen in March 2015 with the pretense of restoring legitimacy and stability to Yemen and to the

In addition to the daily bombings and killings, Saudi Arabia is imposing a sea, land and air blockade on Yemen. This blockade is causing an extreme shortage of fuel, food and medicine which has worsened the humanitarian crisis. The Saudi-led coalition has been stopping and delaying fuel tankers and ships loaded with life-saving goods from entering Yemen.

## Imperialist plan: dividing Yemen

Yemen has been a very expensive war for Saudi Arabia and its coalition and very profitable for imperialist countries, especially the United States. They have sold billions of dollars' worth of weapons and ammunition to the countries participating in the war. Unfortunately, this criminal war and destruction has devastated

what was already the poorest country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The people of Yemen are the latest victim of imperialist aggression and expansion in the MENA region, which started with the new era of war and occupation beginning with attacking and occupying Afghanistan in October 2001.

The fact remains that the imperialist plan to completely

take over and control Yemen has been a huge defeat and failure. With hundreds of billions spent bombing and killing the Yemeni people, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have created a vicious cycle of bombing and more bombing with no win. The people of Yemen with their heroic resistance defended themselves and fought back for the sovereignty, self-determination and independence of their country.

Failure to win the war in Yemen has led imperialists to a new plan, more vicious and dangerous than the first one. Now the U.S., France and the UK, the three leading imperialist powers intervening in the Yemen



region.

Saudi generals arrogantly predicted that within a few weeks they would take back control of Sana'a and reinstate to power their puppet Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

As the war on Yemen is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year today, it is clear that the U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition hasn't achieved its goal to eliminate Houthi forces and bring back to power the illegitimate president Hadi. All that the Saudi military intervention has achieved in Yemen is death and destruction. Yemen today is "the world's worst humanitarian crisis", as the United Nations describes it.

*Continued on page 15*



# VENEZUELA, A REVOLUTION IN MOTION

## AN EYEWITNESS REPORT FROM AN EPICENTRE FOR CHANGE

By Alison Bodine & Tamara Hansen

In *Fire This Time* Volume 13 Issue 8 we published, "Fire This Time in Caracas, Venezuela at the Sao Paulo Forum: The Only Thing that Guarantees Triumph is Unity!" with a report from the *Fire This Time* delegation to Venezuela in July 2019 for the dynamic international Sao Paulo Forum. Alison and Tamara, members of the *Fire This Time* Editorial Board, also took the opportunity while in Venezuela to spend some time outside of the forum meeting with Venezuelans and conducting interviews. This article in three parts will share some anecdotes and first-hand observations of what they witnessed during the trip.

### PART ONE

#### Why Are We Involved in Venezuela Solidarity? What is the Bolivarian Revolution?

In 1998 people in Venezuela elected President Hugo Chávez. This began the Bolivarian revolutionary process where poor, working, and oppressed people in Venezuela have made tremendous gains for their basic rights and dignity. Among many other gains: healthcare, education and housing are no longer privileges in Venezuela, but human rights. For example, healthcare, including medications, is free in Venezuela, and so is public education all the way through university. In the last five years alone, the government of Venezuela has built nearly 3 million homes that are available for free or low-cost to the most marginalized people in Venezuela through the social housing mission "Gran Misión Vivienda."

President Hugo Chávez passed away in 2013, and since then democratically elected President Nicolás Maduro, together with the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) has led the Bolivarian revolutionary process. During the last Presidential election in May of 2018 President Maduro was re-elected for a term of six years, receiving nearly 68% of the votes (6.3 million votes), of course some of the most right-wing parties boycotted the election and many imperialist countries, including Canada and the U.S. said they would not recognize the results. Despite this, millions of Venezuelans went to the polls in favour of their candidate, President Maduro.

Throughout the past 20 years the government of the United States and

their allies (including the government of Canada) have been attempting to overthrow the democratically elected government of Venezuela and reverse the tremendous gains achieved by poor, working, and oppressed people in Venezuela. To achieve this, imperialist governments have carried out attempted coup d'états, threats of war, cruel sanctions, economic sabotage, and provided their ongoing support for Venezuela's violent corrupt counter-revolutionary opposition. So, their support of the right-wing boycott of the May 2018 presidential elections came as no surprise.

Today, the people of Venezuela are facing an economic and financial blockade imposed by the U.S., Canada, and the European Union (EU). While these governments have tried to say that their sanctions are targeted at specific personalities or government officials, Venezuelans see it very differently. They are no longer using the term "sanctions" and now refer to this international right-wing campaign as a "blockade" and charge that an estimated 40,000 people died as a result of the blockade from 2017-2018. These statistics are backed up by a recent report by the Washington, DC-based, Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), "Economic Sanctions as Collective Punishment: The Case of Venezuela". However, this criminal blockade, combined with continuous threats of war by the U.S., and the attempted installation of their puppet Juan Guaido as "interim President" of Venezuela in January 2019 has not stopped the people of Venezuela from defending their hard-fought-for sovereignty, independence, and self-determination.

Having the opportunity to see Venezuela first-hand left us clearer than ever before that the people of Venezuela are mobilizing to defend the Bolivarian revolutionary



Top to Bottom: Alison and Tamara of Fire This Time at the rally in Venezuela with compañeros Tulio, Marcos & Semprún; visiting the Otra Beta centre in Petare; Visting with construction workers building their own housing complex as part of the Venezuelan housing mission, or "la Gran Misión Vivienda" with City Counsellor Jimmy Guidiño; Clothing studio at the el Panal commune.

process and the democratically elected government of President Maduro. Although their voices are deliberately eliminated by mainstream media in the U.S. and Canada in order to justify the regime-change agenda of imperialist governments, talking to people on the streets of Caracas we experienced their determination and their courage first-hand.

Throughout our trip, many Venezuelans approached us wanting to explain why they support the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and President Nicolás Maduro. It became clear that Venezuelans who support the revolution understand that the media outside of their country – especially in the U.S., Canada, and Europe – is portraying the government of Nicolás Maduro as a dictatorship and accusing his government of a multitude of democratic and human rights violations. Around the Sao Paulo Forum, and also in visits to different areas outside of the Forum, many Venezuelans approached us for the explicit reason of explaining why they are personally invested in supporting the Bolivarian revolutionary process and asking us to share everything we saw and heard with people when we returned to Canada.

Each of these encounters reminded us of the importance of building an international movement in solidarity with the people of Venezuela for their self-determination and their right to continue building their revolutionary Bolivarian project.

### Grassroots and Mass Support for the Revolution

On July 27 a march and a rally were held against U.S. imperialism in Latin America as part of the Sao Paulo Forum. As thousands of people marched down the streets of Caracas towards the front stage, the mood was defiant, but also festive and joyful. There were giant Venezuelan flags, printed and hand-made signs of all sorts, and people in costumes performing street theatre. This may come as a surprise to people in North America, but we did not see violence or fear, instead, we saw a people full of strength and determination. Despite hardships and shortages – brought on by brutal U.S. sanctions and right-wing sabotage of Venezuela's economy – people from all walks of life used their Saturday to take to the streets with friends, family, and co-workers; to listen to revolutionary music and political speeches; and to show the world that they will fight to defend their independence and sovereignty.

As the march approached, we stood on the side of the road with the Fire This Time banner, which features an image of Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara. Dozens of

Venezuelans stopped and came over to ask to take photos with us and to know where we were from. We made many friends who accompanied us during the rally: Marcos, Semprún, Hernan, and Elba who reminded us to wear our backpacks on our fronts to discourage petty theft and invited people over to take photos with us. Elba is a hotel worker and *Chavista* (a supporter of the Bolivarian



**Photo of the construction workers building their own housing complex as part of the Venezuelan housing mission, or "la Gran Misión Vivienda" that Tamara met in Antimano.**

revolutionary process). She was a petit woman who jokingly volunteered to be our "Guardespalda" (bodyguard) staying with us for about two hours. Like so many others, she wanted to know what the media says about Venezuela in Canada and to tell us about the challenges and gains she has seen through the revolution. We shared snacks, political materials, and she gave us some of her handmade soap, all that she asked of us was that we let people in Canada and the U.S. know about the reality in Venezuela.

We also had the chance to visit many community projects throughout various municipalities in Caracas (a city with a population of about 3 million people), specifically: El Panal 2021 commune and "La Estafeta" cultural centre both in the Libertador Municipality, and the Comuna Apacúana and the "Otra Beta" Movement Centre both in the Municipality of Sucre.

The "El Panal 2021" commune is in the hills below the Cuartel de la Montaña, where President Hugo Chávez is buried. The commune and the 23 de Enero neighbourhood where it is located, are known for their revolutionary spirit and high level of organization, which was apparent throughout the commune, not only within the presentations we received, but also painted on to the walls for all to see. In some ways, an urban commune such as El Panal 2021 can be compared to a community center or a neighbourhood house, with programs ranging from classes for seniors, to recreational activities, to skill-sharing workshops. However, the commune

also goes well beyond that, by providing services for free and teaching members to create things they are able to sell through a bakery and clothing factory, in order to integrate production and make the centre more sustainable in the long-run.

El Panal 2021, which today includes about 10,000 families, was started with resources from the revolutionary government, and

today is working towards becoming a self-sufficient community. In fact, the clothing factory which now produces a range of products, including the backpacks that are distributed to children in Venezuela free of charge, was the initiative of President Hugo Chávez. The commune has also recently purchased a generator for the community, which will ensure that the community radio and other services, including the *Misión Barrio Al Dentro* health clinic (which provides free, primary care services to the community, in cooperation with the Cuban medical mission in Venezuela), will continue to have power during blackout periods.

The Comuna Apacúana is a much newer and smaller commune than El Panal. At the Comuna Apacúana, Alison attended a Sunday morning weekly planning meeting and educational session for their urban agriculture project. This commune formed two years ago when a large house in the neighbourhood was left abandoned. People from the neighbourhood took it over, turning the house into a community centre and the grounds into a garden that enables the community to better confront U.S. sanctions and economic sabotage. All kinds of people were at the meeting: students, teachers, retired people and families, ready and willing to learn about urban agriculture and work together to build their community. It was a beautiful experience to see people taking an active role in their lives and in the Bolivarian revolutionary process, where one of the most present impacts of the past twenty years is that poor, working, and oppressed people in Venezuela who never had a voice, or a mechanism to work together to achieve gains in their communities are now armed with the resources, knowledge, and confidence that they need.

### END OF PART ONE

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# FIRE THIS TIME INTERVIEWS Revolutionary Venezuelans

## How U.S. Aggression and Sanctions Violate and Undermine the Human Rights of Venezuelan People

*While in Caracas, Fire This Time had the chance to interview two revolutionary Venezuelans about the conclusion of the international Sao Paulo Forum; the impact of the unjust economic blockade on Venezuela; and about their message for people living in Canada, the United States, and around the world. First, we spoke with Lucrecia Hernández who coordinates a non-governmental human rights organization, SURES. Secondly, we interviewed Victor Salcedo, an organizer with the JPSUV (Youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela) who is in charge of international relations of the JPSUV in the state of La Guaira, this was his second interview with Fire This Time, to read his first interview please see Fire This Time Volume 13 Issue 5 (May 2019).*

**1** **Fire This Time: Lucrecia, thank you for being here with Fire This Time. Do you want to introduce yourself?**

**Lucrecia Hernández:** My name is Lucrecia Hernández. I run a social human rights organization called SURES. We work and study the issue of human rights in general and principally the issue of political violence by the opposition in the country.

**FTT:** After the Sao Paulo Forum - where Venezuela invited thousands of people from all over the progressive world to join in working and planning the tasks of the anti-imperialist movement - What do you see as the achievements of the Forum and what do we need to do next?

**LH:** I believe that one of the fundamental achievements is that we get together, that we meet and are able to see each other face to face. To be able to discuss and strengthen ties, not only through social networks or in a virtual way, but also to communicate, to feel each other, to hug, and to express our solidarity directly. I think that the forum was very important. I congratulate the forum due to the participation of social movements and as with the previous the forum where we built an agenda of dialogue with political parties to put forward a plan for our struggle, a plan for common struggle related to different issues. From actions to how to strengthen joint mobilizations and how solidarity goes in both directions, not only towards Venezuela, but also how social movements and organizations in Venezuela want to express our support for struggles in other countries. I think there was an important advance in this aspect.

I also believe that we made important

advances in our communication and political development. Social movements discussed and set a common action plan and strengthened the formative aspect of our organizations. In exchanges we learn about experiences from different places. We often have little information about what is happening in the United States or what is happening in Canada, and when the agenda allows for these exchanges our social movements, and the youth of our countries, can learn about experiences in Canada and the United States. So that they see that the American dream does not exist. That in the U.S. there are also difficulties, there is an economic situation that is very difficult and complex for the most disadvantaged classes.

**FTT:** Well, you have already answered part of my second question, but I want to ask you more specifically about the sanctions, not only by the United States, but also Canada and Europe. How do they have an impact on the daily lives of Venezuelan people?

**LH:** Yes, since 2014 our organization, along with other human rights organizations, have been denouncing this situation. Today we are becoming a platform against the economic blockade on Venezuela. We have been denouncing - both in national and international arenas and in multilateral organizations - the impact that these sanctions have had on the lives of revolutionary people, on the daily lives of all people, in terms of their right to food, health, and all socio-economic developments in the country. They have tried to create the idea that the sanctions are only aimed at public officials, but most of the sanctions are impacting both public and private companies in our country and are impacting the main industry of the state, that is the oil industry de Venezuela, which is the one that produces all the profits that the state requires for social investment to develop social programs.

The issue of the exact impacts is complex. As social movements, we have been trying to systematize the impact the blockade has



**Lucrecia Hernández, Venezuelan lawyer and director of the Venezuelan Human Rights group SURES speaks at a forum on Human Rights in Caracas on July 29, 2019**

had, but today the impact is very real. We also feel it because most of the food was imported, also medicines were imported, these necessities came from countries that have imposed the sanctions, from the U.S., from Canada, from Switzerland. Now we must rebuild Venezuelan imports, look for new markets, look for new routes, search for ships that can bring medicines and food. Because those ships and those entrepreneurs have also had sanctions imposed against them. So, we must rebuild the entire structure to be able to give satisfaction to the Venezuelan people. There is a real impact, but there is also a very strong path being developed by social movements to confront that impact and to advance the struggle of the Venezuelan people of solidarity, of all the alternative methods that we have been developing in this battle against the bullying economic measures that the governments' of North America have been forcing on our country.

**FTT:** Thank you, your answer gives us a good idea of our great task, which is to confront that economic blockade against Venezuela. My final question is how people in Canada, the United States, Europe and around the world can stand in solidarity with the Bolivarian process and with the Venezuelan people?

**LH:** Of course, it is important that they come to see Venezuela for themselves. Let them see that Venezuela is a place of peace, it is a people of peace. Let them come to know the experience of how our communities are resisting. Then that they take that message back to their countries and help us with the dissemination of this campaign against the blockade so that more and more voices are added to this campaign against the economic blockade from the communities, from

grassroots organizations, and from social movements all over the world. We would also like your support in the United Nations and the OAS (Organization of American States) to raise your voices against the criminal, unfair, and illegal blockade that continues to weigh on our country.

**FTT: Thank you very much, on behalf of Fire This Time we are super grateful that you were able to be here with us for a few minutes.**

**LH:** For us it is an honor, a pleasure and all the love of the Venezuelan people to you.

**FTT: Thank you!**



**Victor Salcedo with Tamara Hansen of Fire This Time, at the International Sao Paulo Forum in Caracas, Venezuela, July 2019**

**2** Fire This Time: Thank you for being here with Fire This Time once again! First, can you please introduce yourself and your work here in Venezuela and in Vargas.

**Victor Salcedo:** How are you Tamara? A greeting to all our friends of Canada, please send my thanks to them for their ongoing solidarity there in Canada and in Vancouver. A fraternal and supportive hug for you all. My name is Víctor Salcedo, I am a young person who belongs to the JPSUV (Youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela) and I am in charge of international relations of the JPSUV in the state of La Guaira. In addition, I currently work in the Mayor's Office with an international relations project that will help us connect ourselves internationally with movements, delegations, and political parties allied to the Bolivarian Revolution and to receive them here in La Guaira.

**FTT: Perfect! You participated with us in the Sao Paulo Forum which was very successful for Venezuela, to unite progressive people from many parts of the world. How do you foresee the work continuing or what do you think are the next steps after this successful forum?**

**VS:** Look, as you just said, I think the twenty-fifth edition of the Sao Paulo Forum was successful. It has given us positive results and we are now able to link the Latin American left movements together with the rest of the world, in the fight against imperialism, against foreign aggression and in favor of the self-determination and the independence of the peoples. This event, precisely, leaves us with a task that is to consolidate that network, that foundation, which must be permanent, must not be temporary, these must be permanent to fight together against imperialist aggression. We must be able to fight until we win.

**FTT: We now know that sanctions and the blockade against Venezuela - not only from the United States, but also Canada and Europe - have an impact on Venezuela. Can you tell us a little about the impact on the daily life of Venezuelans?**

**VS:** Of course, there is an impact. Indeed, unilateral coercive measures affect ordinary citizens, Venezuelan people, who are the ones who are hit by the consequences of this imperialist aggression. Obviously it impacts our everyday life, because the food that is distributed through the CLAP [Local Supply and Production Committee], an institution founded by our president Nicolás Maduro, is affected because, for example, I'll make the figure clear: of the 8 or 10 shipping companies that bring food here by boat, are only one or two are coming a month because they receive pressure. Those companies that dare to disobey the orders of the empire are hit by sanctions. Indeed, it impacts the lives of Venezuelans, because through that food subsidy Venezuelans can buy products at very low prices, very low. That food may not longer arrive, or it does not arrive as often as it arrived one or two years ago after the CLAP project was created. This is a result of imperialist aggression. I believe that the empire is increasingly digging its claws into Venezuela and the Venezuelan people. We are telling them to leave us alone. Do you want us to be free? Well, lift all the sanctions, repeal the sanctions so that they can see how the Venezuelan people can truly solve their own problems internally and without any tutelage of any empire or any country.

**FTT: How do you think the people of North America, Europe and also of the whole world can support the people of Venezuela and work towards ending the sanctions?**

**VS:** What I think is necessary are permanent meetings and events. That you come here to Venezuela, see the reality of people in Venezuela, so that you can return to your countries to share that truth. To have the people, in this case Canadian people, hear from you, their fellow citizen who has visited

Venezuela and tells them firsthand what is happening here in Venezuela, and what our people fight for – because obviously we are in struggle – it will be a daily fight we will finally win.

**FTT: Thank you Victor.**

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**An Instagram post by Victor Salcedo with Alison Bodine of Fire This Time, at the International Sao Paulo Forum in Caracas, Venezuela, July 2019**

## Battle of Ideas Press

### Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela

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

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# WHY VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY ACTIVITIES ARE OUR CENTRAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST IMPERIALISM WORLD PROTEST DAY DEMANDS HANDS OFF VENEZUELA IN VANCOUVER AND AROUND THE WORLD!

By Janine Solanki

The U.S. government has been using escalating methods to force “regime-change” in Venezuela, and to bring the independent, sovereign nation under U.S. imperialist control. The U.S. has engaged in economic warfare, with sanctions that amount to a blockade of Venezuela. This blockade limits Venezuela’s access to imported food and medicine, impacts their ability to trade on the world market, and prevents exports of their resources, particularly oil. A recent report by the Center for Economic Policy Research (cepr.org) also put the malicious intent of the U.S. blockade into figures, finding that U.S. sanctions amount to “collective punishment” and have been responsible for over 40,000 deaths between 2017 and 2018. This brutality is increasing, and on August 5, 2019, U.S. President Trump signed yet another executive order imposing further sanctions against Venezuela.

Since January 2019 the U.S. has also tried, and failed, to conduct a coup against the democratically elected Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. While the attempted coup was directed by the U.S. government and backed by their right-wing allies, it was defeated by the Venezuelan people who defended the Bolivarian revolution and their democratic process.

As a blockade and attempted coup have not succeeded to bring Venezuela under U.S. domination, the U.S. threats of military intervention are becoming more and more dangerous. The White House press statement on August 6, 2019 didn’t mince words and said, “as the Trump Administration has made clear: All options are on the table.”

Now more than ever is a critical time to defend Venezuela against sanctions and further imperialist attacks. August 10 was called as a “World Protest Day”, with massive demonstrations that took place in Venezuela and actions by supporters of the Bolivarian revolution around the world. Demonstrations took place across the U.S., in Canada, as well as in Australia, France, Aruba, South Korea, Haiti, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Mozambique, along with other countries.

Here in Vancouver, activists and peace-loving people joined the global efforts with an action on August 9<sup>th</sup>. While part of the World Protest Day, the action is also organized every month by the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. The protest kicked off in downtown Vancouver, with picketing and chanting in front of the U.S. Consulate. Between rounds of picketing, activists gathered to hear from speakers including a solidarity message from Dakotah

Lilly, a youth activist who was part of the New York City protest in Grand Central Station, organized by the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle. Dakotah reminded activists of the many other countries that have been victim to U.S.-backed coups and right-wing governments, and that we will not allow this to happen to Venezuela “like it has happened in Honduras, like it has happened in Argentina, and like it has happened in Chile.”

Alongside the demands of “U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!” protesters also demanded that all charges be dropped against members of the Embassy Protection Collective. The activists were arrested by the U.S. government in their heroic defense of Venezuela’s

*Continued on page 30*

## SUPPORT THE EMBASSY PROTECTORS DEFENSE COMMITTEE!

Collecting funds for the Embassy Protectors who defended the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC from U.S. government sponsored pro-coup Venezuelans for 37 days in the Spring of 2019.

*Funds will go toward legal defense for the four members of the Embassy Protection Collective that have been charged with “interfering with protective services” and now face up to a year in jail and up to a \$100,000 fine, as well as other supporters.*



<https://defendembassyprotectors.org>

## DROP ALL CHARGES! AGAINST THE FOUR Venezuela EMBASSY PROTECTORS

Embassy Protection Collective (EPC) members stayed in the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC for 37 days to protect the Vienna Convention and prevent an escalation of conflict with Venezuela. On May 16, federal agents raided the embassy and arrested the four remaining EPC members inside.



The arrested Embassy Protectors — Kevin Zeese, Margaret Flowers, Adrienne Pine, David Paul — are now facing trials on the trumped-up charge of “interfering with certain protective functions” of the Federal Government, a misdemeanor charge that carries a maximum of one-year imprisonment and \$100,000 fine for each one of them.



Because this case sets a precedent challenging the US government’s flaunting of international law, the prosecution will likely seek the maximum sentence for the four defendants in order to make an example of them so that no one else would ever dare taking a similar action in the future.



The Embassy Protectors Defense Committee invites all defenders of peace and justice in the US and around the world to join us in our crucial campaign in defense of the four, the result of which will inevitably have serious impact on the future course of our government and country.



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# PUERTO RICAN UNITY DROVE OUT ROSSELLÓ NEXT UP LA JUNTA AND COLONIALISM

By *Graciela Pichardo*

On the night of July 24, Puerto Ricans who had been protesting for hours in San Juan began to chant a victorious “Olé Olé Olé” as they celebrated Ricardo Rosselló’s resignation — a victory for the people, and won by the people. Ricardo Rosselló announced via Facebook Live that he would resign from his position as governor of Puerto Rico as of August 2. It is a remarkable change for a governor who just days prior had insisted he would never resign. The tenacity and unity of the Puerto Rican people — in the face of considerable repression — made him eat his words.

The Puerto Rican people’s massive struggle exposed not only Rosselló but increasingly called into question the Puerto Rican political establishment as a whole, and the colonial dynamic on which its authority rests. It is no wonder why so many in that establishment, including his own party, abandoned him. But the genie cannot be put back in the bottle. Having tossed out Rosselló, the people will not simply go home, but now turn towards the undemocratic junta — banks that control the the island’s finances and budget — and ultimately the question of Puerto Rican independence comes the forefront as well. This victory comes just before the 67th anniversary of the day Puerto Rico became a “free associated state” of the United States.

One protestor told the Washington Post, “We are the generation that does not give up, and we will keep on moving forward, and we will remove all the corrupt that think they cannot be removed. This is simply the beginning of a new era.”

Just days ago over half a million people flooded the streets of Las Americas Expressway in San Juan in a national strike demanding Ricardo Rosselló’s resignation. The national strike which was called on July 19 came after Rosselló had issued a statement via Facebook live on Sunday where he resigned from his position as President of his political party, and announced that he would not seek reelection (while refusing to resign as governor). He declared he would confront the impeachment process started by the Legislative Assembly.

Clearly, Rosselló was hoping these promises would end the protests, but he just enraged them further. The hypocrisy of Rosselló’s words promising “truth” and “responsibility” mirror the farce that has been his governorship. The Puerto Rican people have had enough.

Laura Rodriguez a teacher from Caguas attending the national strike told the LA Times, “He has disrespected us,” she said. “But the pueblo — the people he has abandoned — we will keep packing the streets until he’s



gone.”

In their recently released song “Afilando los Cuchillos” (Sharpening the Knives)- rappers Bad Bunny and Residente capture the outrage and anger of the Puerto Rican people and their willingness to fight back against injustice. The song’s chorus describes the Puerto Rican people as sharp knives ready to cut the weed from the soil, vowing to never let anyone take advantage of what is theirs. And indeed, since July 14, united under the hashtag #RickyRenuncia, people old and young have poured into the streets of San Juan with their placards, drums and flags, chanting while being tear gassed and shot at with rubber bullets by the police, to demand that Rosselló resign from office. Celebrities, like Ricky Martin, Bad Bunny and Residente have all joined the protests using their international fame to ask for Rosselló’s resignation and to call people to the streets.

The mass protests were ignited by Rosselló’s refusal to resign after the Center for Investigative Journalism of Puerto Rico released 900 pages of a Telegram chat Rosselló had with other government functionaries where they made misogynistic, homophobic and transphobic remarks and conspired against other politicians.

Rosselló and his cronies went so far as to wish death upon San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz and threaten to give House Representative Manuel Natal a public lesson for his criticisms against the government. They made fun of the thousands of people that died due to Hurricane Maria. When asked about the forensics budget the governor replied, “And now that we are on that subject do we have any extra bodies to feed our crows?”

But the leaked information was just the tipping point for the Puerto Rican people who had long been disillusioned and outraged by the mismanagement of the local government.

Immediately following Maria the local and federal government failed to provide aid to

the people. To this day Donald Trump will say that the death toll of Maria was 64 and it took Rosselló a year to admit that the death toll was higher 64 and elevate it from 64 to 2,975.

Their improper assessment of the death toll led to more deaths, lack of aid and adequate resources for the Puerto Rican people. Almost two years after Maria, Puerto Rico is still struggling to get back on its feet, the economic crisis has worsened, crime rates have increased and thousands have left the island.

The incompetence of Rosselló and La Junta- the U.S. appointed fiscal board- have only escalated since Maria. Corruption scandals have plagued the local government. In June Julia Keleher, the former education secretary who closed down 400 schools because Puerto Rico did not have enough money, and Ángela Ávila Marrero, the former executive director of the Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration, and four other government officials were indicted for redirecting about \$15.5 million in federal contracts to politically connected consultants.

A federal investigation has been launched into Unidos por Puerto Rico, the non-profit created by Beatriz Rosselló to manage donations from Hurricane Maria after Rosselló was accused of asking accounting firm BDO to change reports regarding missing freights with donations because it made his wife look bad.

Rosselló denied all fraud accusations and in a statement following all the arrests said, “The agenda of this Government does not stop, despite those who have incorrectly decided to treason the trust of the People.” But ultimately it was Rosselló who was found to have committed treason against the trust of the people — they proved that in the streets. For that reason the people of Puerto Rico, in the mainland and in the diaspora, drove him out.

*Published July 25, 2019*

*From Liberation News: [www.liberationnews.org](http://www.liberationnews.org)*

Continued from page 8

war, have started a new course which is basically to divide Yemen into north and south. This plan will only bring more war and devastation to the people of Yemen.

The U.S. and their allies, including their puppets Saudi Arabia, UAE and their coalition have had some initial success in the south of Yemen by taking over the major city and port of Aden and consolidating their presence in that area. Since they are unable to win against Houthis in the north, imperialists are now shifting to a new plan to consolidate a new lackey government in the south of Yemen and immediately reinforce and accelerate all kinds of sanctions and the blockade of the north.

This plan helps the United States and other colonial powers to completely dominate and control access to the Arabian Sea and a big part of the Red Sea. Furthermore, with imposing severe sanctions and blockade they will try to bring the Houthi government to its knees to accept the imperialist hegemony of the U.S., France and UK over the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. This is all part of a very important strategic area for imperialists to have a permanent presence in, as one of the world's most important trade and shipping routes.

In early August, clashes and infighting erupted in Aden between the Saudi-backed forces and the UAE-backed ones over who has control of the city. Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE have spent millions of dollars training and arming different factions and mercenaries in Yemen. This is only creating more chaos in the country and further pushing the agenda of dividing and destabilizing Yemen.

The division between Saudi Arabia and the UAE is a fight between two lap dogs fighting over leftover bones, in this case after dividing Yemen in two, who gets to rule the south. It is a fight between puppets about who will better represent and serve the interests of the U.S. and its imperialist allies in region.



**Red Crescent workers collected bags containing the bodies of victims of the Saudi-led bombing on a detention centre in Dhamar, Yemen on September 1, 2019. More than 100 detainees were killed and about 40 others wounded in the attack.**

### All Foreign Troops Out of Yemen

Dividing Yemen and arming and training different factions and mercenaries will bring more chaos, death and destruction to the country. It will weaken Yemen in favor of serving the agenda of the United States and imperialists in the region.

The Yemeni people have been heroically standing up against the foreign war and intervention in their country. A future of peace and prosperity can't be achieved in Yemen by imperialist foreign intervention and occupation. The United States and its allies have only a history of destruction, war and occupation to show for, and their plan for Yemen is no different. A solution to the crisis in Yemen needs to be local, involving Yemeni voices without any foreign interference or meddling. This is why our role is important as people living in imperialist countries such as the United States and Canada, to voice our opposition to the Saudi-led war on Yemen and to hold our respective governments accountable for having Yemeni blood on their hands.

U.S., Saudi and UAE Stop the War on Yemen!  
End the Blockade of Yemen!  
No to a divided Yemen!

Follow Azza Rojbi on Twitter: @Azza\_R14



### Silence Is A disgrace

Excerpt from a poem by Khalida Al-Nasiry\*

*The chains of evil cannot be broken by poetry,  
I will certainly knock down the corners of my enemies,  
And the injustice in my homeland will not last long.  
The pulse of my heart will tweet with dreams,  
And the blood of those who have been killed will make a  
revolution,  
A white revolution that will rise up against those who  
infringed the dignity,*



*Khalida al-Nasiry: (B. 1986) is a poet from Sana'a, Yemen. She holds a degree in Arabic literature from Sana'a University. Khalida's poem represented the voices of Yemenis against the intervention of Saudi in Yemen.*

*To read the full poem and other poems by Young Yemenis visit:  
[www.shatteredwindows.com](http://www.shatteredwindows.com)*



**“SHUT YOUR MOUTH.  
I’M NOT JUST OLDER THAN YOU,  
I’M OLDER THAN YOUR STATE.”**

**END THE OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PALESTINE!**

**[WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET](http://WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET)**

Continued from page 2

The short answer is no. The Journal of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America has put the answer to this question simply as, “the wealthiest one billion people produce 60% of GHGs [Greenhouse Gases] whereas the poorest three billion produce only 5%.” As a study from the charity Christian Aid reports – “a person in the UK has a carbon footprint that is 200 times larger than a person in Burundi, the world’s most food-insecure country.” The U.S. military is the world’s biggest consumer of fossil fuels and the world’s biggest polluter, while at the same time being responsible for the complete destruction and poisoning of entire countries, and the murder of millions of people throughout the Middle East and North Africa. These are just three examples of many.

Despite this, the Financial Post here in Canada and other media outlets continue to promote the dangerous idea that not only does Canada not significantly contribute to global warming, but also that Canada would benefit from climate change. In a special article penned by none other than the former Minister of Natural Resources under the Conservative Harper government Joe Oliver, the idea that due to warmer temperatures “Canada would have a wonderful opportunity to help feed a hungry world,” is presented as a real argument. In fact, worldwide scientific opinion is clear – massive hunger will only be one of the major crises facing humanity if the global temperature rise exceeds 1.5°C. Not to mention that with warmer temperatures will also come flooding and droughts, which will have an impact on the ability to grow food.

When trying to understand the impact that Canada has on global warming, it is important to realize that rich and developed countries like Canada outsource their environmental impact. This means that people in the U.S. and Canada enjoy relatively pollution-free environments, clean water (not counting Indigenous reserves in Canada; or Flint, Michigan and Pittsburgh in the U.S., among others) and breathable air. Meanwhile, millions of people around the world that live where goods are produced,



Photos bottom to top: Amazon burning in Brazil; Oil Tar Sands in Alberta, Canada

from clothing to electronics and more which people in the U.S. and Canada buy, live surrounded by contaminants and poisons.

Additionally, any time that an argument is made that global warming will be good for the economy in Canada, it is also important to ask the simple question, who will benefit? For this, the only answer from Joe Oliver and his cohorts would be the ultra-rich oil and natural resource extraction executives they count among their closest friends and allies. It is certainly not poor, working and oppressed people in Canada that he is thinking about.

It must be noted that there are two glaring absences from the calculations related to greenhouse gas emissions used to claim that Canada doesn't have a stake in the climate crisis. The first is emissions from the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defense, which are not included in calculations (nor, for that matter, in any GHG calculations that are used in international agreements like the Paris Agreement). The second is that just because tar sands oil isn't burned in Canada doesn't mean that its emissions shouldn't be counted towards Canada's impact.

Even without these, Canada is, per person, the highest GHG emitter in the world (World Resources Institute). Canada's transportation sector and buildings produce emissions that are four times the G20 average; each person in Canada produces 22 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year, three times the G20 average. Canada may have a relatively small population and a large landmass, but its climate-impact is great.

## 2. Are the “solutions” that the capitalist system is offering enough to really address the crisis for humanity at hand?

This is the question that must be asked when more funding for forest conservation is presented as a solution to the burning of the Amazon. This question is also an important one to be asked about the “Climate Change and Land: Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems” report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on August 8, 2019. Taken as a whole, this report is another alarming reminder of the climate crisis, focusing on how the way that humans use and exploit land impacts climate change.

This new report was compiled by a team of 107 experts from 52 countries. They present scientific evidence and analysis of the various ways that human's land-use effects the climate. In the end, the report offers 40 generalized recommendations for how the impact of human land-use on climate change can be minimized.

For example, one part of the report

describes the impact of food waste. “Currently, 25-30% of the total food produced is lost or wasted.” Clearly, the over-production of food in some parts of the world and severe malnutrition in other parts of the world would contribute to GHG emissions and climate change in many ways.

Here too, Canada is no shining star. Each year it is estimated that \$49 billion in food is lost or wasted in Canada each year, as reported by Second Harvest, a food rescue charity.

So, the question is, if food waste is such a problem, can the capitalist system fix it? Although it might be someone’s first assumption that wasted food is equal to wasted money, that not the case. Under capitalism food is produced for profit, not based on human need, and food is left to rot in fields in order to raise prices and increase profits. Or, food that is not aesthetically pleasing enough to fetch a price is thrown away, rather than sold. These are just two ways that the capitalist system ensures that food is wasted. These are fundamental problems that better technology cannot fix.

This also applies to other solutions examined by the IPCC such as sustainable land management and the diversification of the food system. How are any of these measures possible under a system where profit will always come before people’s needs? Large-scale farms, mono-cropping, the use of pesticides, deforestation - these are all the opposite of what the world needs today, but they are exactly what the capitalist system needs in order to satisfy its insatiable demand for profits and new markets.

As Evo Morales, the revolutionary President of Bolivia stated in 2012, “The causes of this climate crisis are directly related to the accumulation and concentration of wealth in a few countries and in small social groups; to massive, excessive and expensive consumption



Protest in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. August, 2019.

resulting from the belief that to have more is to live better; to pollutant production of disposable goods to enrich capital, increasing the ecological footprint; as well as the excessive and unsustainable extractive use for production of renewable and non-renewable natural resources at high environmental costs.”

### **Building a Mass Movement to Confront the Climate Crisis**

From the IPCC report to the increased burning of the Amazon, every day there is more and more evidence that what the world needs today is system change, not climate change. To get there, we need to build a mass movement in opposition to the devastating anti-environment and anti-human policies that are being imposed on poor, working and oppressed people by capitalist and imperialist governments around the world.

In Canada, this means doing everything that we can and encouraging everyone to get involved in building a movement against the government of Canada’s disastrous environmental policies. Urgently, people from all walks of life must stand against the government of Canada’s purchase and approval of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion in British Columbia.

It is not acceptable for the government of Canada to turn a blind eye on the fact that they are nowhere close to being a “climate leader,” and equally far from meeting the climate emissions targets that they agreed to in the already modest Paris Agreements. Through united protests, petitioning and other forms of direct action we must make this known.

### **Climate Strike: Organize, Mobilize, Educate**

From September 20 – 27, 2019 people around the world will be participating in a Global Climate Strike, led by the students of the Fridays for Future movement. These actions must be fully supported by all who believe that a better world is not only possible – but necessary for the future of humanity on Mother Earth. For more information on actions in Canada visit: [www.climatestrikecanada.org](http://www.climatestrikecanada.org)

*Follow Alison  
on Twitter:  
@Alisoncolette*

## **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.*

“Divide and Rule” is a basic method of oppressive action that is as old as imperialism itself. Since the colonizer subordinates and dominates the rank-and-file natives, it is necessary to keep them divided in order to remain in power. The oppressor cannot permit himself the luxury of tolerating the unification of indigenous people, which would undoubtedly cause a serious threat to the status-quo rule. Accordingly oppressors prevent any method and any action by which the oppressed could be awakened to the need for unity. Concepts such as unity, organization and struggle are immediately labeled as dangerous. These concepts are dangerous to the oppressor because he knows they are necessary for actions of liberation. It is in the interest of the colonizer to continuously weaken the oppressed, to isolate them, to create and deepen rifts amount them. This is done by various means, from repressive methods of police action to forms of cultural imperialism and community action programs. The colonizer manipulates the people by giving them the impression that they are being helped, e.g., community development programs, free education, etc.

*Excerpt from Prison of Grass – Chapter 14 “The Failure of Native Leadership”*

Continued from page 3

who is running in the Burnaby North riding for the NDP in the upcoming Federal election, among others. These speakers delivered a powerful and united message to Trans Mountain and the Federal government – this dirty tar sands pipeline will not be built!

Returning to Westridge Terminal at the foot of Burnaby Mountain was the next step in building an ongoing campaign against TMX that can stop the pipeline construction right in its tracks.

From September 20-27, 2019, here in BC, across Canada and around the world, there is another important opportunity to be out on the streets fighting for our future and showing the power of united action.

**Build Our Future – Not a Pipeline! Youth in Action!**

This week of Global Climate Strike actions



has been called by the Fridays for Future movement that was begun by 15-year-old Swedish climate justice activist Greta Thunberg. One year ago, she started a one-person climate



strike in front of the Swedish Parliament, and today she leads protests of tens of thousands around the world. During the last Global Climate Strike on May 24 there were protests in more than 1600 towns and cities in over 125 countries.

In Vancouver, the high school student-organized group “Sustainabiliteens” has called for the Global Climate Strike action to begin at 1 pm at the Vancouver City Hall near Cambie and 12<sup>th</sup> Street on Friday, March 27. For more information on this action, and other actions across Canada visit: [climatestrikecanada.org](http://climatestrikecanada.org)

**Top: Climate Convergence Rally, Vancouver, Canada, September 2018. Above: Vancouver poet Rita Wong is arrested on Burnaby Mountain Peacefully protesting against the TMX pipeline in August 2018. Over 200 people were arrested that summer during protests. In August 2019 Rita was unjustly sentenced to 28 days in jail for her actions.**

Vancouver, it is urgent that we come together to support the students and participate in the September 27 action. Whether it is the Federal government spending \$15 billion on the TMX expansion, or the Provincial government giving \$5.35 billion in financial incentives to LNG Canada for its massive natural gas pipeline, these climate-destroying projects are not only bringing humanity closer to climate catastrophe, they are stealing money from the housing, healthcare and education that youth and students especially need.

Climate Convergence has joined with other Metro Vancouver groups and the Sustainabiliteens to build the September 27 Climate Strike action as big as possible. For more information on how to get involved in this vital effort and on upcoming meetings, events and outreach actions visit [www.climateconvergence.ca](http://www.climateconvergence.ca)!

*Follow Alison on Twitter:  
@Alisoncolette*

**GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE**  
SEPTEMBER 20-27

**NO TMX PIPELINE!**  
**INTERSECTION ACTION**

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24**

**Environment and Climate Change Canada Office**  
**4pm - 6pm**      **401 Burrard St. (at Pender St)**  
**Downtown Vancouver**

Intersection Action Organized by:  
**Climate Convergence** - [www.climateconvergence.ca](http://www.climateconvergence.ca)  
**Mountain Protectors** - [www.facebook.com/mountainprotectors](http://www.facebook.com/mountainprotectors)  
**Burnaby Residents Opposing Kinder Morgan Expansion (BROKE)**  
[www.brokepipelinewatch.ca](http://www.brokepipelinewatch.ca)

FOR MORE INFO ON ALL SEPTEMBER 20 - 27 CLIMATE STRIKE ACTIONS IN VANCOUVER:  
[sustainabiliteens@gmail.com](mailto:sustainabiliteens@gmail.com)    [@sustainabiliteens](https://www.facebook.com/sustainabiliteens)    [@climatestrikecanada](https://www.instagram.com/climatestrikecanada)

# U.S. HANDS OFF IRAN, YEMEN & VENEZUELA!

By Janine Solanki

## Unacceptable:

Every day there are more and more reasons to oppose the deadly U.S. war drive that is attacking innocent people around the world.

## In Iran:

Since U.S. President Trump broke the Iran nuclear deal last year, the U.S. has been intensifying their brutal sanctions and threats on Iran as part of a “massive pressure campaign”. This has caused huge strain to the Iranian economy. On August 19, 2019 an NBC news report quoted Arash Ahmadian, the head of Iran’s Mahak Pediatric Cancer Center, saying that “strict U.S. financial sanctions have spooked foreign banks from touching any transaction with Iran, even for those permitted under the sanctions laws.” In October of 2018, the International Court of Justice ruled that so-called humanitarian exemptions in the U.S. sanctions are insufficient, leaving “little prospect of improvement” in the “serious detrimental impact on the health and lives” of Iranian individuals. The result today is children in Iran are dying from a lack of vital cancer drug imports.

## In Yemen:

The effects of imperialist countries are also bringing suffering to the Yemeni people. Last year the United Nations called the situation in Yemen the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. In February 2019, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs found the “severity of needs is deepening”, with the

number of people in acute need, a staggering 27 per cent higher than last year. This amounts to more than 20 million people across the country that are food insecure, half of whom are suffering extreme levels of hunger. This is the crisis of over four years of a Saudi-led, U.S.-backed bombing and war, as well as a land, sea and air blockade preventing medicines, food, fuel and other essential aid from reaching the Yemeni people.

## In Venezuela:

The tactic of indiscriminate targeting of a population through sanctions is also being used against the Venezuelan people. On August 5, 2019 U.S. President Trump signed an Executive Order that further increases the cruel and illegal blockade against Venezuela. This murderous blockade has already killed an estimated 40,000 people in Venezuela. The U.S. government has used a failed coup and sanctions to attempt to force “regime-change” and overthrow the democratically elected government of President Nicolas Maduro. While these methods haven’t worked, the Trump administration has repeatedly stated that a military intervention in Venezuela is “on the table”.

On August 23, Vancouver’s antiwar coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation



(MAWO) took to the street to oppose all of these criminal imperialist wars and occupations. MAWO’s monthly antiwar rally and petition campaign set up in downtown Vancouver’s busy Robson street plaza, with picket signs and banners reading “Don’t attack Iran!” and “U.S./Saudi Arabia Hands Off Yemen!” An information table was busy with people stopping to find out more information, talk to organizers and pick up antiwar literature, while teams of activists collected petition signatures. Passersby were particularly interested to sign the petition demanding that Canada stop its \$15 billion arms deal supplying Saudi Arabia with so-called “light” armored vehicles – essentially heavily weaponized military vehicles.

MAWO’s monthly action, and other antiwar events and actions will continue as long as these imperialist wars, occupations and sanctions continue to attack oppressed nations around the world. To find out about the next action visit [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org), follow MAWO on Facebook or on Twitter @MAWOVan

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki



## VANCOUVER & INTERNATIONAL UPCOMING ANTIWAR ACTIONS



**The People’s Mobilization to Stop the US War Machine and to Save the Planet**

**peoplesmobe.org** Herald Square, NYC 34th & 6th ave

Sunday, Sept. 22, 2-5 PM

**RAGE AGAINST THE WAR MACHINE**

We will gather on October 11 at 11:00 am near the White House and will march together on a pre-determined route through Washington DC.

WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 11, 2019  
THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, DC  
[MarchOnPentagon.com](http://MarchOnPentagon.com)

MONTHLY ANTIWAR RALLY & PETITION DRIVE

**No to War & Occupation!  
No to Environmental Degradation!**

USA, CANADA, NATO  
**HANDS OFF:**

- » IRAN
- » YEMEN
- » VENEZUELA
- » SYRIA » AFGHANISTAN
- » IRAQ » NORTH KOREA

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 20  
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ROBSON ST. BETWEEN HOWE & HORNBY 5PM

[WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG](http://WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG)

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**ANTI-IMPERIALISM  
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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12 | 11:30 - 8:00

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By Manuel Yepe

Philippe Waechter, Chief Economist with French Company Ostrum Asset Management, published on May 17 last year an interesting analysis of the current tensions between China and the United States.

The French expert explains that Donald Trump's tweets of May 5 increased tension between Washington and Beijing and re-launched new discussions on the terms of a trade agreement between the two powers.

Chinese retaliation against US imports in response to the new U.S. tariffs calls into question the lengthy period of calm begun after the G20 meeting on December 1st last year.

Trump's desire to impose new restrictions on China reflects his desire to repatriate jobs, especially in the manufacturing sector, and also to reduce US dependence on China.

In 2018, the U.S. external trade balance with China showed a more than \$400 billion deficit.

The counterpart of this Chinese surplus with the United States reflected Chinese financing of the U.S. economy through the purchase of U.S. federal bonds. The logic was that the Chinese products in the U.S. market financed the U.S. economy to compensate for the lack of savings there.

The functioning of the Chinese-American trade was on the basis of complement, but this balance is now changing in nature because China's weight in financing the US economy has been declining.

In March 2019, the weight of U.S. financial assets in the hands of China as part of the total U.S. foreign funding had fallen to the low level observed in June 2006.

The balance of the relationship between the two countries is changing and the United States no longer has the capacity to influence China as it did in the past. China now has more autonomy, says Waechter.

The White House is impatient over Chinese

unwillingness to respond to its requests. By taxing Chinese imports, Washington wants to influence Beijing's economy by creating strong social tension there that would force the hand of the Chinese authorities who do not wish to take this social risk.

The slow pace of Chinese activity indicators since the beginning of the year could validate Washington's analysis and encourage it to further harden its commercial tone.

At the beginning of 2019, the weight of the United States in Chinese exports slowed significantly. China's dependence on the United States is being reversed and, at the same time, the Chinese are re-launching the New Silk Road initiative, whose objective is,

# U.S. HANDS OFF CHINA! WHY IS THE U.S. BULLYING CHINA?



Reactionary Pro-U.S. Protest in Hong Kong, August 22, 2019

among others, to further diversify Chinese markets.

China is now expanding market opportunities and effectively limiting the influence of the U.S. on its internal economic situation.

The other major point of disagreement between Washington and Beijing concerns technology. "It seems to me that this is the main point of the differences between the two countries," says Waechter.

The Chinese have updated technologically very quickly in the last twenty years. This has been the case both in technology transfers as in resources to facilitate it. And this has worked so well that the Chinese are now considerably ahead of the U.S. in 5G and Artificial Intelligence, among other significant developments.

In this question of technological supremacy, there is a radical change because the Chinese

have the means to develop these technologies without American support.

This situation could have arisen with Japan a few years ago, but the Japanese always opted for remaining in the US fold, which is not the case in Beijing –says Waechter– because China has a very large internal market and this them to create conditions for autonomous technological dynamics.

The stakes are simple:

Whoever sets the standards for these new technologies will have a considerable comparative advantage. It will be easier to develop innovations using these technologies. That's why this is where the negotiations get stuck.

The Chinese have devoted significant resources to achieving this technological advantage and will not fall naively under U.S. control.

This technological stagnation will not be resolved spontaneously, and the possibility of an agreement between the two countries seems unlikely.

"The dynamics of the world economy are changing. This is the first time in modern history that a situation occurs that makes it likely that the world economy moves to a new region due to criteria related to technological innovation."

When the core of the world economy moved from the United Kingdom to the United States, there was a continuity that does not exist in the current situation. This will alter the dynamics of the world economy and will inevitably redistribute the cards among the regions of the world," concludes Philippe Waechter.

*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  
Walter Lippmann.  
www.walterlippmann.com*

*www.englishmanuelyepe.wordpress.com*

Por Manuel Yepe

Philippe Waechter, economista jefe de la administradora de activos francesa Ostrum Asset Management, formuló el 17 de mayo último un interesante análisis acerca de las actuales tensiones entre China y Estados Unidos. Explica el experto francés que los tweets de Donald Trump del cinco de mayo aumentaron las tensiones entre Washington y Beijing, relanzando las discusiones sobre los términos de un acuerdo entre ambas potencias en el ámbito comercial.

Las represalias chinas contra las importaciones de EEUU en respuesta a los nuevos aranceles estadounidenses ponen en tela de juicio el largo período de calma comenzado después de la reunión del G20 el primero de diciembre del año pasado.

El deseo de Trump de imponer nuevas restricciones a China refleja su voluntad de repatriar puestos de trabajo, especialmente en el sector manufacturero, y también de reducir la dependencia en China de Estados Unidos. En 2018, la balanza exterior de EEUU con China era deficitaria en más de 400 mil millones de dólares.

La contrapartida de este superávit chino con EEUU reflejaba una financiación china de la economía de EEUU a través de la compra de bonos federales estadounidenses. La lógica era que los productos chinos en el mercado estadounidense financiaban la economía de EEUU para compensar la falta de ahorro allí.

El funcionamiento del comercio chino-estadounidense era a base de complementariedad, pero este equilibrio está cambiando ahora de naturaleza porque el peso de China en la financiación de la economía estadounidense ha ido disminuyendo.

En marzo de 2019, el peso de los activos financieros de EEUU en poder de China en el total de la financiación exterior de Estados Unidos había descendido al bajo nivel observado en junio de 2006.

El equilibrio de la relación entre los dos países está cambiando y Estados Unidos ya no tiene capacidad de influir en China como en el pasado. China tiene ahora más autonomía, afirma Waechter.

La Casa Blanca está impaciente por la falta de voluntad de los chinos para responder a sus peticiones. Al gravar las importaciones chinas, Washington quiere influir en la economía de Beijing, a riesgo de crear allí fuertes tensiones sociales y forzar así la mano de las autoridades chinas que no desean asumir este riesgo social. El bajo ritmo de los indicadores chinos de actividad desde principios de año podría



## ¡EEUU MANOS FUERA DE CHINA! ¿POR QUÉ LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS ACOSAN A CHINA?

validar el análisis de Washington y animarle a endurecer aún más su tono comercial. A principios de 2019, el peso de Estados Unidos en las exportaciones chinas se ralentizó significativamente. La dependencia de China respecto a Estados Unidos se está invirtiendo y, al mismo tiempo, los chinos están relanzando la iniciativa de las Nuevas Rutas de la Seda, cuyo objetivo es, entre otros, diversificar aún más los mercados chinos. China está ahora ampliando oportunidades de mercado y limitando efectivamente la influencia de EEUU en su situación económica interna.

El otro gran punto de desacuerdo entre Washington y Pekín se refiere a la tecnología. "Me parece que éste es el principal punto de las diferencias entre los dos países", dice Waechter. Los chinos se han puesto al día tecnológicamente muy rápidamente en los últimos veinte años. Esto ha sido así tanto en transferencias de tecnología como en recursos para facilitarla. Y esto ha funcionado tan bien que los chinos ahora aventajan considerablemente a EEUU en 5G e Inteligencia Artificial, entre otros desarrollos significativos.

En esta cuestión de la supremacía tecnológica hay un cambio radical porque los chinos tienen los medios para desarrollar estas tecnologías sin el apoyo estadounidense. Esta situación pudo haber surgido con Japón hace unos años, pero los japoneses siempre optaron por permanecer en el redil de EEUU, lo que no es el caso de Beijing— dice Waechter— porque China tiene un mercado interno muy

grande y esto les permite crear condiciones para una dinámica tecnológica autónoma.

Lo que está en juego es simple. Quienquiera que fije los estándares para estas nuevas tecnologías tendrá una ventaja comparativa considerable. Será más fácil desarrollar innovaciones utilizando estas tecnologías. Por eso es aquí donde se estancan las negociaciones. Los chinos han dedicado recursos significativos para lograr esta ventaja tecnológica y no caerán inocentemente bajo el control estadounidense. Este estancamiento tecnológico no se resolverá de manera espontánea y la posibilidad de un acuerdo entre los dos países parece improbable.

"La dinámica de la economía mundial está cambiando. Es la primera vez en la historia moderna que se produce una situación que hace probable que la economía mundial se desplace hacia una nueva región en virtud de criterios relacionados con la innovación tecnológica. Cuando el corazón de la economía mundial se trasladó del Reino Unido a Estados Unidos, hubo una continuidad que no existe en la situación actual y ello alterará la dinámica de la economía mundial e inevitablemente redistribuirá las cartas entre las regiones del mundo", concluye Philippe Waechter.

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

[www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com](http://www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com)

# LGBTQ+ RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!

## VANCOUVERITES CELEBRATE CUBA'S ADVANCEMENT FOR LGBTQ+ RIGHTS



in leading the struggle against homophobia and transphobia in Cuba.

human rights!" The march wrapped up at Victoria Park, with beautiful performances by local trans artists.



Here in Vancouver, Cuba has been part of Pride events for over 13 years, with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)! At these events VCSC dispels the myths promoted by mainstream media which falsely demonize Cuba, and lets the truth be

The next day, the 16<sup>th</sup> Vancouver Dyke March and Festival took to the streets! Cuba supporters with the VCSC banner and Cuba, Pride and Trans flags joined the march down Commercial Drive, alongside other banners and signs. Highlighting the Dyke march's inclusion of the trans community, marchers chanted "trans women are women!" The march ended with a festival at Grandview Park where VCSC also had an information table.



**Top and bottom: Slideshow from Cuba's International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, and trivia game at VCSC Cuba Pride event, Aug. 22, 2019**  
**Middle: VCSC at the Dyke March, Aug. 3, 2019.**

known – Cuba is a country of diversity, inclusion, respect and love between people of all genders and sexual orientations.

The biggest event of Vancouver Pride was the Vancouver Pride Parade on August 4, which takes over downtown Vancouver for a day of festivities! The VCSC delegation in the parade decorated a truck with banners, flags and many, many festive rainbow decorations, and decorated themselves too! The group of about 20 people danced down the street lined with people watching the parade go by, wearing this year's beautiful VCSC Cuba Pride t-shirt printed with "Humanidad es Diversidad" (humanity is diversity) between a Cuban and rainbow Pride flag. Throughout the parade, Coast Salish Elder, activist and Cuba supporter Kelly White drummed and lead chants of "Viva Cuba! Viva Pride!" Hundreds of thousands of people come out to watch or participate in the Vancouver Pride Parade, and many saw the banner held up reading "Cuba Says: Sexual Diversity is not Dangerous! Homophobia and Transphobia Are!" The parade ended with a festival at Sunset Beach where VCSC had an information table and were able to talk to hundreds of people who stopped by to find out about LGBTQ+ rights in Cuba.

*By Janine Solanki*

"People understand that homosexuality is not dangerous, but homophobia and transphobia are."

Mariela Castro, director of Cuba's National Center for Sexual Education (CENESEX), speaking at the May 13, 2017 march through Havana for the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Cuba today is making huge strides for LGBTQ+ rights and is inspiring the queer community throughout Latin America and beyond in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Some of Cuba's achievements include the right to free gender confirmation surgery, the right for same-sex couples to adopt, and an active and effective campaign against homophobia and transphobia across Cuba. Much of this is the work of Cuba's National Center for Sexual Education (CENESEX), which is not only responsible for implementing the national sexual education and health programs but is also working alongside the LGBTQ+ community

Pride on June 22 and the Pride Premiere on July 26 with Cuba LGBTQ+ information tables. VCSC also contributed a salsa lesson at East Side Pride and at the Pride Picnic in the Park on July 21, bringing a bit of Cuba to Vancouver through dance and music!

August is Vancouver's busiest month in the Pride season, and VCSC was out alongside the queer community marching, chanting, dancing and celebrating! On August 2 the Trans, Two-Spirit, Genderqueer, Intersex March started out at East Vancouver's Clark Park before marching down Commercial Drive. The VCSC banner reading "Cuba Says: LGBTQ+ Rights are Human Rights!" complete with a rainbow Cuba map was held by Cuba solidarity activists in the march, alongside signs such as "trans rights are

**Left: VCSC at the Vancouver Pride Parade, Aug. 4, 2019.**  
**Right: VCSC table at New Westminster Pride, Aug. 17, 2019**



*Continued on page 29*

**FTT:** Could you please introduce yourself and what brings you to Vancouver?

**Pablo Menendez:** Well, my name is Pablo Menendez and I was born in Oakland, California.

My mother is a blues singer, a jazz singer, a people's struggles singer from the United States, called Barbara Dane. She was here at the Vancouver Folk Festival in 1983 and I came with her to sing. But she also was the first person from the United States, the first public person to defy the State Department ban on travel to Cuba, which still exists. She went there in 1966 preparing for me to go to study music there.

So, I went to Cuba thinking I would be there for a year. And now I've been there for 53 years, traveling around the world as a Cuban musician. I came back to the Vancouver Folk Festival with my band Mezcla out from Havana, Cuba.

**FTT:** You took the original step of contacting and trying to contact the media yourself about the challenges you and your band faced coming into Canada. Could you please explain why you did that and what happened?

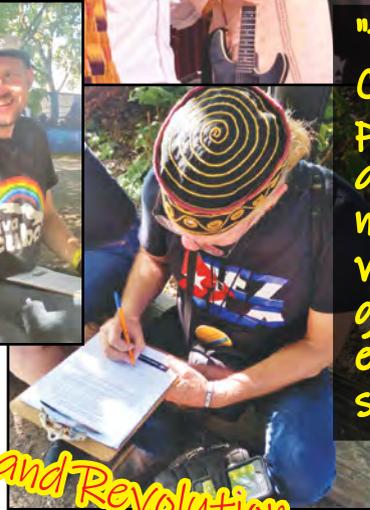
**PM:** Well, the thing is that in Cuba, everyone knows that Canada is a good friend of Cuba and it's normal for Canadians to visit Cuba.

As I've found here in the festival, every time I ask people how many of you have been to Cuba? Everybody in the audience has been to Cuba at one point or another. Unlike the U.S., where the government still has made it illegal for them to travel there. They have to use some, you know, some categories that are allowed. But basically, they scare people from trying to go to Cuba.

Just very recently we started to apply for a visa to come here, after we've been here many

# INTERVIEW WITH CUBAN MUSICIAN PABLO MENÉNDEZ

**Top:** Pablo Menéndez and his band Mezcla  
**Bottom photos:** Pablo Menéndez being interviewed by Fire This Time and signing petition demanding Canada reopen visa services in Cuba



"People of Canada, people of Cuba are friends no matter what and no government is ever going to stop me"

*Cuba, Canada, Music and Revolution*

times  
i n  
the past  
for festivals like  
Luminato in Toronto  
or Toronto Jazz Festival,  
Montreal Jazz Fest or Ottawa Blues  
Festival, Sunfest, or the World Music  
Festival in London, Ontario.

So, you know, we started to apply for a visa to come to Canada. And it turns out that the Canadian government has closed, for all practical purposes, there. It's impossible to get a visa to come to Canada now for Cubans in Cuba.

So, this really created difficulties for us. I had to figure out some very creative ways to get the band here and perform, because for us, it's like it's a matter of principle. People of Canada, people of Cuba are friends no

matter  
w h a t  
and no  
government is ever going to stop me. So, I decided to come anyway and play and I wanted people to know because I think it's really sad in a country that supposedly is a democratic country with information and freedom of information, how nobody here knew anything.

Maybe in the best cases, they knew a little bit of fake news about some supposed "harm for Canadian diplomats," which even if you were to take seriously, I could tell you a solution right away. The security forces of the Canadian Embassy in Cuba are Cubans, Cuban nationals. You just hire two more, one to take photographs, one to take fingerprints, do everything else on the Internet and you didn't need to risk any Canadians. It's ridiculous to think that anybody in Cuba would have any reason to harm any Canadian ever, because Canada is the only friend we have in North America, because United States government still has a blockade, which the United States calls embargo. Every country in the world votes against it, every year in the U.N., the U.S. blockade of Cuba, and the United States says it's not a blockade, it's an embargo.



**Cubans in Toronto, Canada protest the government of Canada closing visa services in Havana, Cuba, June 2019. Signs include "1.3 million Canadian visit Cuba annually, I want my family here!" and "Canada closes a door on Cuban Culture"**

It's pretty sad.

Because as I say, even if you were to take, you know, seriously some ridiculous accusations, unfounded and unsubstantiated, and believe fake news that you've heard that some diplomats were hurt. Well, okay. You know, take, for example, if you want to apply for a visa for Canada in the United States, the people that take your fingerprints and your photographs, which has only been necessary, I must say, since last December, are U.S. people, not Canadians, and they send it to the Canadian government and there's no problem. So you get your visa. Now, why couldn't they do that in the case of Cuba, instead of asking the impossible, totally impossible process of - Okay, you have to apply in Mexico. Meaning that you have to get an airplane ticket, get a visa, get a hotel, go, and spend two or three weeks waiting to see if you're going to get a visa or not from the Canadian government in Mexico?

No, I mean, you know, this is totally absurd and totally inappropriate and totally un-Canadian as far as I'm concerned, because I know that the Canadian people do not feel that way. And even if you wanted to be really special, extra special, careful, okay, then hire a couple more Cubans to do the work and do the rest of it on the Internet. And there you go.

**FTT: The great thing is I had a couple other questions prepared, but you answered them with you with your first answer. So, if Justin Trudeau is at the folk festival today, the Prime minister of Canada. What would you say to him?**

**PM:** I'd say his father would be rolling in his grave thinking about some other stuff

**Top: Collecting signatures on petition demanding Canada reopen visa services in Cuba at Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba table at Car Free Day Festival, July 7, 2019.**



that he's done. Because, you know, I mean, it's pretty ironic.

I flew out of Cuba. I got on the plane in an airport that was built by Canadians and inaugurated by President Fidel Castro and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. So, you know, this is very ironic to get to Canada through this kind of like backdoor way because Canada is refusing to give the possibility to come and visit this beautiful country in the summer and have the usual academic, cultural and athletic exchanges that you've enjoyed in Canada for many, many years. You should have the freedom to be able to enjoy having your Cuban friends come and visit you. Canadian families are suffering from this, Cuban families are suffering from this, it's just totally unacceptable. Totally. And something has to be done about it.

**FTT: You've been speaking about this from the stage. What is the response then from people who are hearing about it?**

**PM:** I think they're bewildered because it is



**Bottom: Students from Queen's University's global development studies course delivered a letter of protest against closure of visa services to the Canadian embassy in Havana, Cuba. May 17, 2019.**

**SCAN TO SIGN THE PETITION! →**



**CANADA MUST FULLY REOPEN THE IRCC OFFICE & ALL VISA SERVICES TO CUBANS IN HAVANA, CUBA!**

**#CDNVISAS4CUBA  
#UNBLOCKCUBA #NOMÁSBLOQUEO**

**[www.change.org/p/justin-trudeau-canada-must-reopen-ircc-office-all-visa-services-to-cubans](http://www.change.org/p/justin-trudeau-canada-must-reopen-ircc-office-all-visa-services-to-cubans)**

impossible to wrap your mind around why and how this happened. What is impossible for me to understand is how is it possible in a country that is supposedly democratic and has freedom of information that people don't know about it. Something that was done in their names.

One million four hundred thousand Canadians each year visit Cuba, right? And everybody knows that that's where you go for a beach, for good music, for, you know, a culture, for a peaceful place where there is no drug trafficking, there is no danger on the streets. And I mean, people from Canada come all the time, everybody knows about Cuba.

So how is it possible they don't know about the fact that now Canada is refusing to give visas to come and visit Canada? Because, you know, I know a lot of Cubans that are permanent residents of Canada that have done a lot in a country of, basically of immigrants and, you know, people that have come from all over the world to build a prosperous, friendly, and neighborly nation like Canada. So, you know, how can this be? How can this happen?

And if I had the possibility to see the Prime Minister? I don't know. I mean, you know, because I come from a country where the President does walk around the streets and you can talk to him. But I have not seen Justin Trudeau at the festival at all. I don't know.

**FTT: Thank you very much for taking the time. This is a really important issue that we've been working on and have you taken the initiative and to be speaking about it, I think it really helped get the word out, especially, so far so good.**

*Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavis59*

# JOIN THE CALIXTO GARCIA BRIGADE IN CUBA!

DECEMBER 1-14, 2019



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## REMEMBERING SOCIAL JUSTICE & CUBA SOLIDARITY ACTIVIST PAUL LYNCH

1952-2019



On behalf of the Canadian Network on Cuba we are deeply saddened to announce the passing of a dear friend and solidarity activist, Paul Lynch on August 5th in Toronto after a short illness.

Paul was an easy-going, generous, warm person, who worked tirelessly in solidarity with Cuba and for peace and social justice. In Cuba, his vibrant presence at the brigades over the years livened up the spirits of everyone around him. His deep commitment and love for Cuba was reflected in his constant return and solidarity with the Cuban Revolution. He found hope, solace and renewed energy from the Cuban people and their innumerable accomplishments; and in turn brought that optimism back to Canada and shared it with all those he encountered.

Back in Toronto, Paul was an executive member of the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association and attended

the 9th Biennial Convention in June 2019 as a delegate. He was always keen to welcome our Cuban visitors. Most recently, during the convention held in Toronto, he had the opportunity to drive ICAP representatives Sandra Yisel Ramírez and Yamil Edwardo Martínez Marrero around the city; and around Ontario during their post-convention tour.

Paul's presence was omnipresent with CCFA. He helped organize the Bravo Film Festival in 2018. With a keen proofreaders' eye, Paul helped put out the CCFA Toronto newsletter Amistad. He delivered cots for the large Pastors for Peace caravan on its stopover in Toronto last fall. Paul always had his cell phone camera ready to take photos, documenting demonstrations, events, travel and friends everywhere.

We express our heartfelt condolences to Paul's family and friends.

Our dear, wonderful Paul will be greatly missed by his numerous friends in Canada and Cuba and around the world.

Elizabeth Hill and Isaac Saney, Co-chairs Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC)

By Janine Solanki

For nearly 60 years, Cuba has been inventing ways to survive under acruel and inhumane U.S. blockade. This blockade is intended to break the Cuban people and bring Cuba under U.S. domination, and for close to 60 years it has failed. When Cubans were unable to get replacement parts for their old American cars and machinery, they invented ways to mix, match and create parts to keep them running. Unable to import many medicines and medical supplies due to the blockade, Cuba has developed a world class health care system based on prevention and a holistic approach to patients, pioneered "green" medicine using their natural resources, and produced their own medicines including breakthroughs that the world can benefit from, such as a vaccine for lung cancer. When the U.S. blockade stopped Cuba's access to fertilizers and pesticides, Cubans started a movement of urban and organic agriculture, with techniques that the world is learning from today.

If Trump thinks he will be the U.S. President

athletes and others. Across Canada this action has been protested, including with an online petition at <https://www.change.org/p/justin-trudeau-canada-must-reopen-ircc-office-all-visa-services-to-cubans>

In Vancouver, along with Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine, every month coordinated actions protest the U.S. blockade against Cuba. On August 17 in Vancouver, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade came together in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. Activists picketed and let their

chants carry up to the offices of the U.S. Consulate, demanding "Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" Bright yellow picket signs and a big banner caught the attention of cars and people going by, some of whom stopped to get more information. Between rounds of picketing, the protesters gathered

to hear from speakers condemning the U.S. blockade, as well as a solidarity message via phone from fellow activists in Ottawa Cuba Connections who also had their monthly

picket action at the U.S. Embassy. The action wrapped up with a customary photo of the activists holding picket signs, banners and the Cuban flag defiantly under the U.S. Consulate sign, to be shared on social media around the world!

As long as the U.S. imposes this criminal blockade, the Cuban people and supporters around the world will hold events and protest actions demanding the blockade be lifted. To join the next action in Vancouver visit [www.vancubavblockade.org](http://www.vancubavblockade.org) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

**FRIENDS OF CUBA IN VANCOUVER, OTTAWA, MONTREAL AND KIEV SAY:  
LIFE THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!**



to break the Cuban people by tightening the blockade, he has another thing coming. Yes, the blockade is severely detrimental to the Cuban people. The blockade has caused economic losses of \$134.5 billion over six decades, and now Trump has sanctioned more than 100 Cuban companies and imposed stricter travel restrictions on U.S. citizens. But until the U.S. blockade is lifted, Cuba will keep inventing its way to survive the blockade and progress despite the challenges, with the support of those in solidarity with Cuba around the world.

The government of Canada has also shamefully taken hostile actions against Cuba. On May 8, 2019, Canada shut down the visa services section of their Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) offices in Havana. While Cuba opens its doors to more than a million Canadians every year, Canada is effectively shutting out visiting Cuban family members, artists, academics, students,



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of Solidarity  
for Democracy  
and against Neoliberalism**

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More info at:  
[siempreconcuba.wordpress.com](http://siempreconcuba.wordpress.com)

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**LIFT THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!**

**RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA!**

**CANADA REOPEN THE VISA OFFICE IN HAVANA!**

**NO HELMS-BURTON ACT! STOP "TITLE III!"**



**#UnBlockCuba**  
**#NoMasBloqueo**

**MONTHLY PROTEST ACTION!**  
**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17 2019**  
**U.S. CONSULATE - 4PM**  
**1075 W. PENDER ST.**  
**Vancouver, Canada**



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Continued from page 24

On August 17 New Westminster Pride's street festival took over Columbia street with info and vendor tables, food trucks, and music and drag performances. VCSC's colourful display of banners and flags attracted people who talked to organizers and signed the petition to lift the U.S. blockade against Cuba, and the recent petition demanding Canada re-open its visa services in Havana, Cuba.

To wrap up Pride season, VCSC held its own event on August 22<sup>nd</sup> titled "Humanity is Diversity! Celebrate the Gains of Cuba's Queer Community". The event, held at New Westminster's popular Old Crow Coffee Co brought together a mix of people, some who heard about the event at other Pride festivities earlier in the month. The evening started with VCSC coordinator Tamara Hansen, who outlined the history and current achievements of the LGBTQ+ community in Cuba, before introducing some short documentaries from Cuba. The films showed some of the campaigns by CENESEX in Cuba and included heartfelt interviews with people in Cuba's queer community.

Azza Rojbi and Janine Solanki, organizers with VCSC, then spoke and showed photos from their experience at Cuba's 2016 International Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia. Their stories and pictures helped convey to the room just how vibrant, active and dynamic Cuba's queer community is! The event continued with an exciting trivia game, a crowd favourite, and teams competed by answering questions on Cuban and LGBTQ+ history and current events. The event wrapped up by turning up the music and turning the coffee shop into a dance party!

Aside from the multitude of Pride activities, VCSC also participated in two other community events this last month. As a community partner of the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival, VCSC's coordinator Tamara Hansen spoke to introduce the Cuban/Brazilian/French film "On the Starting Line" (La Arrancada). VCSC also had an info table at the August 29 and September 1 screening at Vancouver's Pacific Cinematheque, giving filmgoers a chance to learn more about Cuba!

Also on September 1, VCSC participated with an info table at the Annual Corn Festival (Festival del Maís), organized by the Canada El Salvador Action Network. The festival featured musical and dance performances and delicious Latin American corn-based food!

This one-month snapshot shows that Cuba solidarity is alive and well in Vancouver! To find out about more Cuba solidarity events visit [www.vancubasolidarity.com](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @VanCuba\_VCSC

**REPORT BACK FROM THE 2018 CALIXTO GARCIA BRIGADE IN CUBA!**

~ ~ Want to visit Cuba? ~ ~



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## “By Any Means Necessary...”



### MALCOLM X SPEAKS

We are living in a society that is by and large controlled by people who believe in segregation. We are living in a society that is by and large controlled by a people who believe in racism, and practice segregation and discrimination and racism. We believe in and I say that it is controlled, not by the well-meaning whites, but controlled by the segregationists, the racists. And you can see by the pattern that this society follows all over the world. Right now in Asia you have the American army dropping bombs on darkskinned people. You can't say that—it's as though you can justify being that far from home, dropping bombs on somebody else. If you were next door, I could see it, but you can't go that far away from this country and drop bombs on somebody else and justify your presence over there, not with me.

It's racism. Racism practiced by America. Racism which involves a war against the dark-skinned people in Asia, another form of racism involving a war against the dark-skinned people in the Congo, as it involves a war against the dark-skinned people in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Rochester, New York. So we're not against people because they're white. But we're against those who practice racism. We're against those who drop bombs on people because their color happens to be of a different shade than yours.

*Excerpt from Speech: "Not Just an American Problem, But a World Problem" (Feb. 16, 1965)*

*Continued from page 13*

sovereignty. For 37 days the Embassy Protection Collective protected the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC from take-over by supporters of the U.S.-backed puppet so-called, “interim President” of Venezuela Juan Guaido.

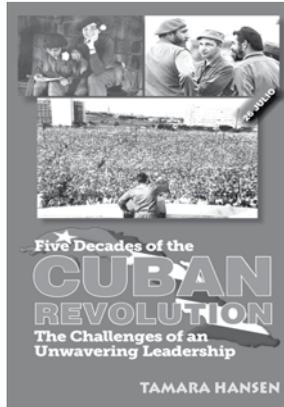
The picket action wrapped up with the protesters gathered under the U.S. Consulate sign, holding up picket signs and banners, and chanting energetically for photos and a video that was shared hundreds of times around the world on Twitter and other social media!

The action then continued at the busy Robson street plaza, with banners and a giant Venezuelan flag attracting the attention of people passing by. An information table was set up too, and many stopped to talk to organizers, sign a petition against the sanctions on Venezuela, and to get a better sense of the true situation in Venezuela which is not reflected in mainstream news. Activists also took the chance to take video clips asserting their support for the Bolivarian Revolution, which were shared on Twitter and other social media with the World Protest Day's hashtags #NoMoreTrump, #NoMasTrump and #HandsOffVenezuela.

In Venezuela, around the world, and here in Vancouver, activists are defending the Bolivarian revolution and the Venezuela people! Join the next action in solidarity with Venezuela, and find out more at [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net) as well as on Facebook, on Twitter @ftt\_np and on Instagram @ftt.venezuela

### 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

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## OUR HERITAGE



### Rosa Luxemburg

Revolutionary Marxist Leader  
1871-1919

It is contrary to history to represent work for reforms as a long-drawn out revolution and revolution as a condensed series of reforms. A social transformation and a legislative reform do not differ according to their duration but according to their content. The secret of historic change through the utilisation of political power resides precisely in the transformation of simple quantitative modification into a new quality, or to speak more concretely, in the passage of an historic period from one given form of society to another.

That is why people who pronounce themselves in favour of the method of legislative reform in place and in contradistinction to the conquest of political power and social revolution, do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the same goal, but a different goal. Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a new society they take a stand for surface modifications of the old society. If we follow the political conceptions of revisionism, we arrive at the same conclusion that is reached when we follow the economic theories of revisionism. Our program becomes not the realisation of socialism, but the reform of capitalism; not the suppression of the wage labour system but the diminution of exploitation, that is, the suppression of the abuses of capitalism instead of suppression of capitalism itself.

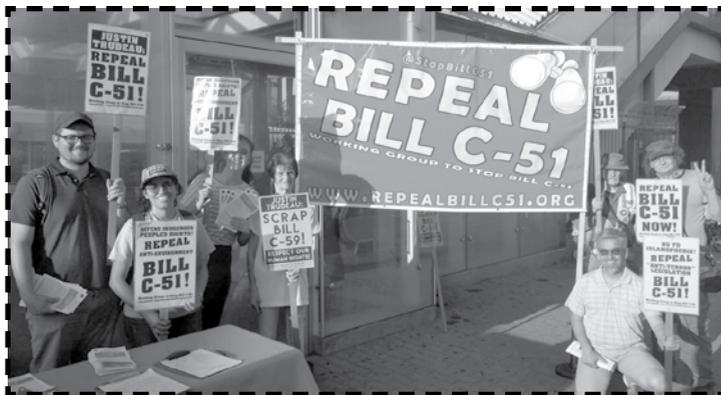
*Excerpt from Reform or Revolution (1900)*

By *Janine Solanki*

Today in Canada, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) has undefined powers of "disruption" which include actions that violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. You are also are subject to mass surveillance, government agencies can share your personal information without your consent and violate your freedoms with secret "no fly lists". And with vague and broad definitions of "terrorism" activists come under threat of having this term used against them.

This and more are the result of the much-hated Bill C-51 "Anti-Terrorism" law passed in 2015. After four years of empty promises to "fix" the human rights violations, the Trudeau government passed "National Security" Bill C-59, which doesn't address many of the fundamental human rights concerns regarding Bill C-51, creates an even worse cyber surveillance regime and gives the Communications Security Establishment powers to launch cyber-attacks!

Soon after Bill C-59 was passed recently we received another chilling reminder of how these bills threaten our privacy and rights to protest and organize. The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) published thousands of pages of heavily-redacted documents disclosed by CSIS that suggest the spy agency spied on the peaceful protest and organizing activities of Indigenous groups and environmentalists who were



## REPEAL UNDEMOCRATIC BILLS C-51 AND C-59!

opposed to pipeline expansion – and actively shared and received classified information with oil and gas corporation representatives.

Since Bill C-51 was introduced, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 has been consistently organizing to stop and then repeal Bill C-51, and now Bill C-59. Alongside regular protests and banner drops, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 also periodically holds educational forums and publishes a brochure to keep the issue of this anti-democratic law in the public eye!

On August 6, the 219<sup>th</sup> bi-weekly action took place at Metrotown station. The info table at this busy transit hub attracted many people to sign onto the petitions against Bill C-51 and C-59. On August 19 the 220<sup>th</sup> action setup at Vancouver City Centre Station. The big pink and yellow "Repeal Bill C-51!" banner and picket signs drew the curiosity of people walking by, and organizers had many great conversations with those opposed to the bill or wanting to learn more.

Find out about the next action to oppose Bill C-51 and C-59 at <http://www.RepealBillC51.org/> and on Facebook or Twitter @stopbillc51

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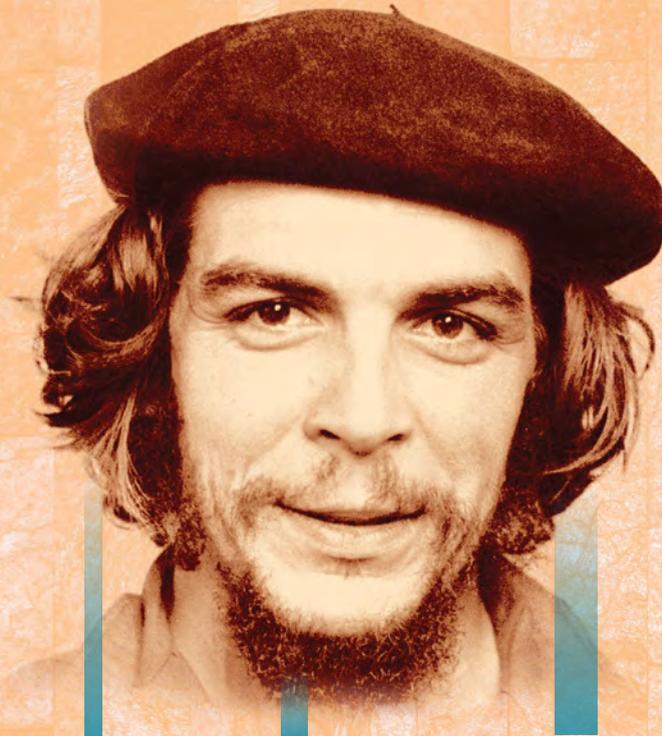
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