

# FIRE THIS TIME

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

**Stop the Israeli Assault on Lebanon & Gaza!**



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Mar 6 2006 demonstration at a CARE International food distribution centre in Kabul after Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) cut the funding.

## US/UK OUT of IRAQ!

March 18 2006, New York City.

# Occupation is a Daily Crime: US Atrocities in Iraq

By Shannon Bundock

*"Rape. The latest of American atrocities. Though it's not really the latest- it's just the one that's being publicized the most. The poor girl Abeer was neither the first to be raped by American troops, nor will she be the last. The only reason this rape was brought to light and publicized is that her whole immediate family were killed along with her. ... We've been hearing whisperings about rapes in American-controlled prisons and during sieges of towns like Haditha and Samarra for the last three years. The naiveté of Americans who can't believe their 'heroes' are committing such atrocities is ridiculous. Who ever heard of an occupying army committing rape??? You raped the country, why not the people?"*

– July 11th 2006, from a young Iraqi woman's blog, "riverbendblog.blogspot.com"

In the three years and four months that US-led forces have been occupying Iraq the list of massacres, rapes, torture, humiliation, and destruction has become difficult to navigate. The following paragraphs attempt to summarize, to focus on those atrocities that can represent the gravity of the crisis facing Iraqi people under occupation. Through this, perhaps we

can gain an understanding of life and death in Iraq. What fuels the Iraqi resistance? What future – or lack thereof – faces Iraqi people living under the boot of this era of war and occupation?

## The Invasion

While Iraqis suffered immeasurably under deadly United Nations sanctions for twelve years prior to the US-led invasion, a new chapter in death and destruction opened in March 2003. Before the war started, Bush had bragged that the US would cripple the infrastructure, hearts and minds of the Iraqi people with this two day massive barrage of bombings. Clearly, this attack was meant to murder hundreds of thousands of Iraqi people and deal out "shock and awe" to the dissident people of the world with a clear lesson; if you cross the US, you will be destroyed.

On March 21st 2003, following the official entry of occupation forces on March 20th, parts of the port town of Umm Qasr, south of Basra, were seized by US military. Bombs and missiles began to strike Baghdad for a third successive night, in a massive scaling-up of air strikes.

On March 23rd 2003, American B-52 bombers continued heavy raids on Baghdad with these raids killing 106 civilians in that single night. On



Iraqis throw rocks at passing British occupation troops. May 2006.

attack was met with a great force of resistance, backed by record-breaking international mobilizations against the war. Iraqi forces, making clever use of guerrilla warfare and flanking tactics, shattered confident predictions of an easy victory and the rapid demise of Saddam Hussein and his regime.

were shown on CBS television news in America. The face of occupation that the Iraqi people had known for too long, was being slowly brought into light for the world to view. Stomach turning photographs of physical and sexual torture, humiliation, and degradation of Iraqis also showed the

children were being detained, although the actual number is significantly higher since the organization was denied access to many prison facilities known to be holding children.

## Imperialist Massacres Continue

**May 20th 2004 – Baghdad, The Wedding Party Massacre:** "A senior Iraqi police officer told the Associated Press that a helicopter fired at the [wedding] party early yesterday morning in a remote village close to the Syrian border, killing between 42 and 45 people. Television footage showed a truck carrying the bodies of the dead arriving in Ramadi, the

nearest big town. Many of the dead were clearly children." – "Iraqis claim more than 40 killed in US helicopter attack" Thursday May 20th 2004 The Guardian

**August 2004 – Three Week Siege of Najaf:** The US invaded the Holy city of



Iraqi family flees as US tanks roll into Baghdad. March 2003.

March 24th 2003, a US missile hit a Syrian passenger bus near the Iraqi border killing five innocent people. That same day, the Red Cross warned of a humanitarian emergency as water supplies began to run out in Basra.

The bombing of civilian targets continued thought the invasion and on March 26th 2003 a US missile struck a busy Baghdad market, killing many civilians. By March 27th 2003 – only one week after the invasion – 350 Iraqi civilians had died in air raids alone.

"The read we get on the people of Iraq is there is no question but what they want to the get rid of Saddam Hussein and they will welcome as liberators the United States when we come to do that."

– Dick Cheney, March 16th 2003, "Meet the Press" Interview

Despite the terrorizing "Shock and Awe" of the opening week of destruction of Iraq, the US and UK were finding out the victory may not be as near as they'd predicted. In fact, the brutality and intensity of the

Resentment and fear among these soldiers was growing, and according to independent sources, the morale of soldiers was lowering. At a rear base in Kuwait, a US Army Captain was killed and 15 wounded when grenades were rolled into three tents of the 101st Airborne Division by one of its own soldiers. By March 24th 2003, US and UK casualties totaled at least 60 dead, 20 captured, 300 wounded.

This pattern of aerial bombardment and killing continued throughout the opening months. Despite the May 1st declaration of the "end of major combat" by George Bush, "Operation Iraqi Freedom" was actually only the first in a series of criminal military operations that continue today.

## Escalation of Attacks and the First Siege of Fallujah

By April 2004, over one year after the initial invasion, the imperialist occupying forces had descended into a deep quagmire. As a result, of this crisis for the occupation forces they escalated their attacks tremendously. On April 4th, in Kufa, near Najaf during a demonstration denouncing the closure of a Baghdad newspaper at least 20 Iraqi protesters and two occupation soldiers were killed and more than 200 people injured.

On April 6th fierce gun battles broke out as US troops fought their way, block by block, into the city of Fallujah. US warplanes pounded Fallujah with 500lb laser-guided bombs and marines battled with Iraqi resistance fighters on the ground. Abrams tanks and an AC-130 gunship pounded outlying neighborhoods with shells and machine gun fire. US planes fired rockets into the town, destroying four houses and killing 26 Iraqis, including women and children, and wounding 30 others, said a doctor at Fallujah general hospital.

According to US reports, some 615 Iraqis were killed in the First Battle of Fallujah, along with approximately

smiling, laughing, sadistic faces of the "heroes of America". The worst of these photographs, including US soldiers gang raping Iraqi women, were never released publicly.

The US administration responded by sacrificing some of its lowest ranking troops; piling the mountains of responsibility and blame onto the shoulders of a handful of privates. An empty apology was issued by Donald Rumsfeld, who then proceeded to wash his hands clean of the scandal. Over the following weeks however, more and more soldiers came forward to report that the abuse was ordered and sanctioned by higher levels. This was echoed by the author of a scathing internal Army report on the abuses. "...Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, told Congress that they were caused by lax leadership. He blamed not so much individual soldiers as their superior officers, from the brigade commander on down." – Christian Science Monitor, May 12th 2004

While Rumsfeld attempted to play innocent, speculation increased that he knew of the torture long before the images were exposed. "... as details emerge of the physical abuse and deaths of scores of Iraqi and Afghan detainees in US military custody, other documents and reports suggest a contributing factor was the top-down weakening of military standards of humane prisoner treatment as part of the Bush administration's drive for intelligence in the war on terrorism." Christian Science Monitor, June 10th 2004

And despite the international scandal of Abu Ghraib, reports of torture and abuse are still flowing in. Both the British and Australian troops have faced their own Abu Ghraib-style torture scandals. As well, taking the crisis further were August 2004 reports of the existence of a 'children's wing' of Abu Ghraib prison. A UNICEF report has discovered that over 100

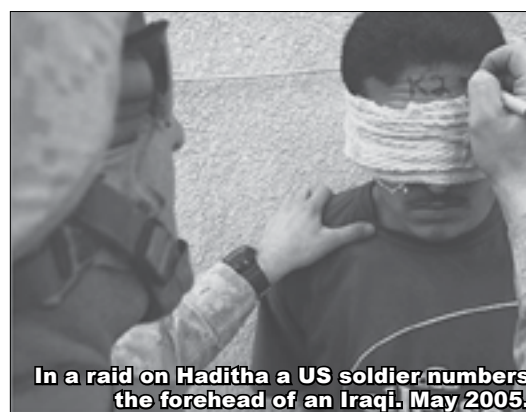
Najaf in August 2004, killing hundreds of civilians in the opening week of the siege. For three weeks Najaf was the site of the most intensive battles in Iraq since the war began. Whole areas of the city were left in ruins; scores of civilians left dead and tens of thousands of people were forced to flee.

**September 12th 2004 – US Attack Baghdad:** "The heaviest fighting for months erupted in the centre of Baghdad yesterday, only a brief stroll from the office of the prime minister, Ayad Allawi. Witnesses said at least 13 Iraqis were killed and 55 wounded after US helicopters attacked a crowd of unarmed demonstrators" – "Thirteen die in US attack on Baghdad crowd" Sept 13th 2004 The Guardian

**September 12th 2004 – US Attack Tal-Afar:** "Reports put the death toll across Iraq yesterday at between 60 and 100. The health ministry said the worst casualties were in the capital, where 37 were killed, and in Tal Afar, near the Syrian border, where 51 people died after US troops mounted a large offensive." – "Thirteen die in US attack on Baghdad crowd" Sept 13th 2004 The Guardian

**October 1st 2004 -The Assault on Samarra:** "US and Iraqi government troops, backed by armored vehicles and warplanes, advanced through the town [of Samarra] neighborhood by neighborhood. ...Some of the fighting took place close to a mosque that attracts many Shia Muslim pilgrims to the region. Residents spoke of cowering in their homes during a night of explosions." "Scores die" in Samarra assault" October 1st BCC News

During this dual siege of Samarra all water and electricity was cut. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld commented on the siege, "What has to be done in [Iraq] is what basically was done in Samarra over the last 48 hours."



In a raid on Haditha a US soldier numbers the forehead of an Iraqi. May 2005.



Massacre in Fallujah.

# Atrocities in Iraq, Continued

## The Second Siege of Fallujah

In November 2004, for a second time, the US-led occupation forces prepared for a massive siege of the city of Fallujah. The city suffered extensive damage nearly half of the city's 200 mosques were destroyed in the attack. Half of the homes in the city suffered damage. About 7,000 to 10,000 out of 50,000 buildings in the city were destroyed. While "Operation Phantom Fury" shared many of the atrocious characteristics of previous land and air raids of cities across Iraq, it also carried a particularly disturbing factor.

White Phosphorous - a chemical weapon that burns through human flesh - was admittedly used by US forces in the second siege of Fallujah. Official US administration documents dispute the particularities of the use of this weapon "It is only used to create a smoke shield" (!). In November 2005, the Italian state-run broadcaster RAI (Radio Audizioni Italiane) ran a documentary titled "Fallujah, The Hidden Massacre" depicting the United States' use of white phosphorus in the attack. The bodies of the people of Fallujah attacked by this weapon were partially turned into what appears to be ash, and sometimes the hands of the bodies had skin or skin layers peeled off, hanging like gloves.

## November 2004 - November 2005: Attacks and Sieges from Ramadi to Haidtha

From November 2004 throughout 2005, more and more sieges and massacres, by means of land and air attacks continued across Iraqi cities, towns and villages. On May 7th 2005 US forces launched a massive assault on Qaim, killing scores of people, attacking the local hospital and forcing thousands to flee their homes. In June

19th in Haidtha, a massacre took place which only began to come to light months later, in early 2006. According to Time Magazine March 27, 2006 "The incident seemed like so many others from this war, the kind of tragedy that has become numbingly routine amid the daily reports of violence in Iraq. On the morning of Nov. 19, 2005, a roadside bomb struck a humvee carrying Marines from Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, on a road near Haditha, a restive town in western Iraq. The next day a Marine communiqué from Camp Blue Diamond in Ramadi reported that ... 15 Iraqi civilians were killed by the blast and that "gunmen attacked the convoy with small-arms fire," prompting the Marines to return fire, killing eight insurgents and wounding one other...

"But the details of what happened that morning in Haditha are more disturbing, disputed and horrific than the military initially reported. According to eyewitnesses and local officials interviewed over the past 10 weeks, the civilians who died in Haditha on Nov. 19 were killed not by a roadside bomb but by the Marines themselves, who went on a rampage in the village after the attack, killing 15 unarmed Iraqis in their homes, including seven women and three children. Human-rights activists say that if the accusations are true, the incident ranks as the worst case of deliberate killing of Iraqi civilians by U.S. service members since the war began."

Following the massacre in Haditha the words Mai Lai were being whispered across the world. Once again the Vietnamization of Iraq had surfaced. In 1971 Daniel Ellsberg leaked the



Protest Against Occupation - Feb 14 2006, Basra Iraq.

who failed to act on evidence troops may have killed civilians at Haditha on November 19."

## March 2006: "Rape, Kill, Burn" - Mahmoudiya

When I was searching for news about the most recently exposed atrocity by American troops in Iraq, I googled "Rape, Kill, Burn". I got dozens of results. "American GIs Rape Iraqi Woman, Kill 3 Fam Members, Then Burn Her Body" and "Described as 'Adult Female' Alleged Iraqi Rape Victim Was Actually 14 Years Old".

It was only late last month that the story surfaced. In March 2006, a group of four US soldiers identified their target; a 14-year-old Iraqi girl.

and infuriating, it is unfortunately not unusual. Women all over the world know the synonyms for "war" include "rape". What the case of Abeer exposes is the depths of brutality to which this war has sunk. Like Vietnam, where stories of rape and killing of women and children poured from the shaking lips of returned US soldiers, this time around in Iraq we can expect no less.

## Resistance

Sifting through three years of massacres, torture and indiscriminate killing of Iraqi men, women and children begs one central question: how have Iraqi's responded?

The resistance to occupation which has taken a hold of Iraq, and which

have sabotaged and infiltrated the collaborator Iraqi police and military. They have also fought militarily, with what little means they have at their disposal.

So, one may ask "What future is there for Iraq under occupation?" The answer unquestionably, is "No future". The only road towards a just, humane society in Iraq is the road constructed by Iraqi hands themselves. The past three and a half years have proven the failure and impossibility of imperialist imposed so-called "liberation" and so-called "democracy". With this understanding amazingly, heroically, the Iraqi people, against all odds, have

2005 US forces attacked Karabila and Qaim, killing at least 17 civilians. Iraq's deputy health minister warned of possible starvation among the 6,000 families who fled the assault. In August 2005 US-led forces attacked Haditha, Haqlaniya and Barwana. One Haditha resident described the bombs as 'falling like heavy rain'. That same month 40 civilians were killed in air strikes in Husayba. On September 2nd 2005 US-led forces launched a massive assault on Tal Afar. The local hospital reported receiving cases of dead women and children. Tens of thousands of residents fled the city in anticipation. On October 1st 2005 1,000 US troops backed by helicopters attacked Sadah. On October 16th 2005 US airstrikes in western Iraq killed more than 70 people, including dozens of women and children.

About one month later, on November

Pentagon Papers, which exposed the detailed pater of lies and deceptions by the American administration to conceal their war crimes in Vietnam. Ellsberg commented on the Haditha massacre in a June 11th 2006 article that he wrote for the Los Angeles Times, "Haditha holds up a mirror not just to American troops in the field, but to our whole society. Not just the liars in government but to those who believe them too easily. And to all of us in the public, in the administration, in Congress, in the media who dissent so far ineffectively or who stand by as murder is being done and do nothing to stop it or expose it."

According to Reuters on July 9th 2006, "Officers say generals are cracking down to try to curb harm to civilians that have turned Iraqis against U.S. troops. One said a report submitted on Friday to the top general in Iraq should see action against Marine commanders

They armed themselves with M4 rifles from the armory and they were fuelled with alcohol. According to the Guardian "Three of the alleged assailants changed into dark clothing; a witness also said Mr Green covered his face with a brown T-shirt." They then moved, on foot, to the home of 14-year-old Abeer Qasim Hamza, where they carried out this disturbing and premeditated crime.

With one soldier standing guard outside, the other three entered the home. They murdered Abeer's parents, and her seven-year-old sister with gunshots to the head. Three of the soldiers then took turns raping Abeer. She too, was shot in the head. In a callous attempt to cover their criminal tracks, they then burned the bodies of the family.

As the opening sentences of this article read, we should not take this as such a surprise. While disturbing

has forced the US-led forces into an impossible quagmire, was born out of the bombed Mosques, homes, hospitals and schools of Baghdad, Samarra, Najaf, Tal Afar, Fallujah, Haditha, of Mahmoudiya. It was born in the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib. Millions of Iraqis birthed this resistance as they saw their loved ones, their neighbors, their brothers and sisters across the country being murdered, tortured, raped and humiliated.

Despite imperialist attempts to paint all resistance fighters as "Saddamist Insurgents" and "Terrorists", Iraqi women, youth, workers and students are those returning fire. And returning fire has meant several things. Iraqis have staged massive demonstrations in the streets since the opening of the invasion, they have led workers strikes to cripple the occupation-controlled economy. They have boycotted the occupation-run farce elections. They

beat back the occupation forces, and threatened to decisively destabilize their foothold.

The US Administration now faces skyrocketing desertions among their troops, plummeting support from the US population and splits in the ruling class about how the hell they are going to get out of Iraq, and when. On the ground in Iraq, the desperation has played out in increasingly brutal assaults.

## Fighting for Humanity on Every Front

Over the past three and a half years, people of the world have looked on in wonder and amazement at the resilience of the Iraqi people. But awe is not enough. To do justice to our brothers and sisters on the front lines against this imperialist battle for empire, we too must join the struggle.

The US and its imperialist allies and opponents have set forth on a mission to carve up the Middle East, and from there, to spread their tentacles to the corners of the earth. This project for domination, this era of war and occupation, must be decisively challenged in its opening stage.

For all peace loving people, all people who would like to see a better world, there are two choices: to join the struggle for humanity, or accept this era of war and occupation. The Iraqi people have chosen their side, we, across the world, must join them.

END IMPERIALIST ATROCITIES AND MASSACRES IN IRAQ!

US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!

BRING ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR IRAQ NOW!

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# There are two powers in Iraq: Occupying troops and the Iraqi resistance

Transcribed and edited:

By Shannon Bundock

On the weekend of June 17-19, the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) held a conference in Vancouver entitled "Towards a Just and Lasting Peace". At that conference, Iraqi activist Sami Ala'a was a guest speaker, and he presented on the struggles of the Iraqi resistance against the US-led imperialist occupation of Iraq. On June 20th, Sami was the featured speaker at a forum organized by the ILPS focused on the occupation of Iraq. Below we have transcribed the bulk of his educational and militant presentation from June 20th. Sami currently lives in Denmark and works with the "Free Iraq Committee".

## Imperialist Three Pillar Strategy\*

The US thought that after 13 years (since the war in 1991), that the country [Iraq] was exhausted economically, politically and socially. The US's strategy included the false understanding that resistance to US imperialism did not and would not exist in Iraq. Along with factoring a non-existent resistance and with the use of high tech weaponry, after invading Iraq, the US had a strategy based on three pillars. The first pillar is occupying troops. The second pillar is permanent military bases, fourteen military bases. Fourteen is the number of former Iraqi military bases in Iraq, and they simply want to occupy these bases. The third pillar of this strategy is direct military administration of Iraq.

I'm sure you know the famous statement on May 1st, where Bush

## A Talk by Sami Ala'a (Free Iraq Committee – Denmark)

They thought that Iraq would be very easy to occupy, they never calculated the resistance there. What happened after this was that the resistance started. The first Thursday after they [US-led forces] occupied Baghdad – on the 10th of April, there was an attack on the occupying troops by a woman named Fatima Robeh, and she died. The next day there was another woman who attacked occupying troops named Noshahr Delainy, they killed several US soldiers in Baghdad. And the resistance started.

A few months after, two, three months after – in May – the occupying troops didn't know how to handle this. They wanted to find out what was going on. From the very beginning, the resistance was very strong. For us Iraqis and for people outside, it's like this resistance was what the imperialist power deserved.

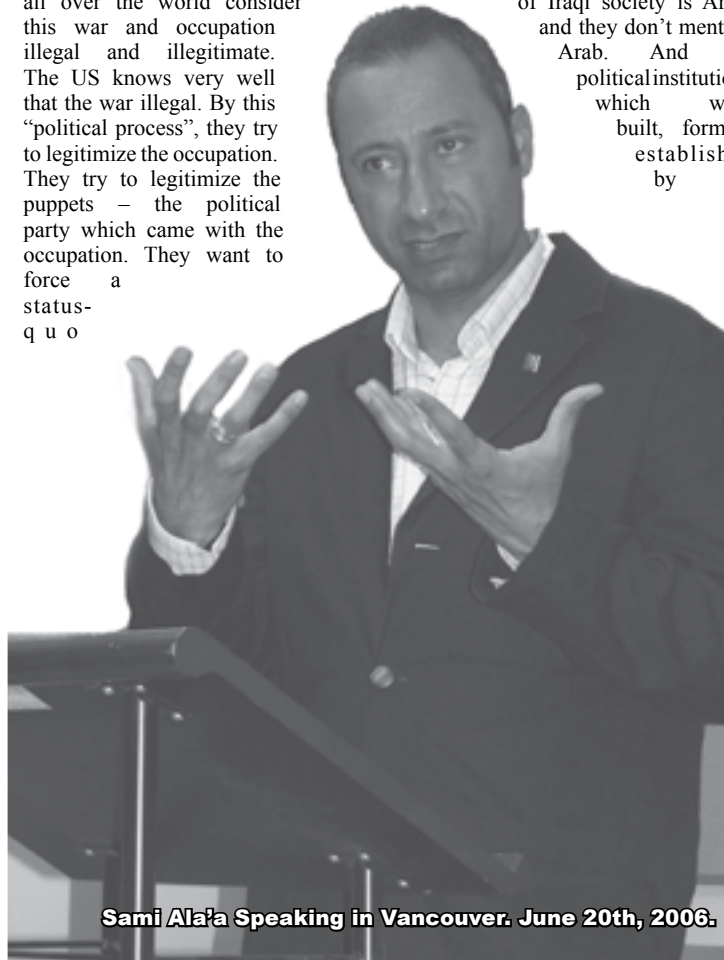
## Change in Strategy

But the occupying forces changed their strategy. They sent their generals home and they chose Paul Bremmer – the first American Administrator to Iraq. Every body knows that Paul Bremmer is not an expert in political science, he has no experience in building peace, development. He has no experience in economy. Paul Bremmer is a terrorist expert. He got this mission to Iraq to go to Iraq and find out what is going on. In that time, in the first five months of the resistance, they talk about "Saddamists".

As the situation now, they began to

very well the reason for this "political process" that they started. They know that from the United Nations to people all over the world consider this war and occupation illegal and illegitimate. The US knows very well that the war illegal. By this "political process", they try to legitimize the occupation. They try to legitimize the puppets – the political party which came with the occupation. They want to force a status-quo

there is already a mix between religious and nationality. Kurd is only 17% of Iraqi society. 85% of Iraqi society is Arab, and they don't mention Arab. And all political institutions which were built, formed, established by the



Sami Ala'a Speaking in Vancouver. June 20th, 2006.

process" in Iraq is a reaction to the military resistance. Paul Bremmer on one side, with one hand in our "political process" saying "if you accept the occupation, you can join us, you can have political power". But at the same time they massacre the Iraqi people. Do you remember the first Fallujah 2004? From the second Fallujah November 2004, the first so-called election in January 2005 and the last election in December 2005, and until now there have been 5 or 6 cities completely destroyed. We talk about 57,000 houses completely destroyed. This "political process" goes on at the same time.

## Divide and Conquer

The purpose of this "political process" of course is to find some way to split the Iraqi people. To try to put pressure on the Iraqi resistance. "If you don't compromise with us, then we will destroy all which is material and social." It was about three times that the occupying forces tried to contact the Iraqi resistance, not directly, but by mediator – one from the United Nations. We don't know who, but they met three times. And all these three times, the Iraqi resistance repeated their conditions, which is unconditional withdrawal from Iraq. We don't make compromises. This will explain the destruction of Iraq. We know very well that this occupation of Iraq is part of building the US empire by capturing Iraq. By using Iraqi oil and a political and economic instrument. Blackmailing the European Union, China, etc. We know the consequences



Anti-Occupation Protest. Basra, Iraq. Feb 2006.

announced "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq. There was also a statement that is important to repeat to give an understanding of how they did not calculate the strength of resistance in Iraq. Richard Pearle, the Prince of Darkness (as he liked to be called) also addressed Syria. He said that 'we don't need to send our army to liberate Syria – what they will see in Iraq will be enough for the Syrian system to collapse'. Another statement, by Dick Cheney, on March 16th [2003] four days before the war, he said "indeed, Iraqis will welcome us as a liberator. The operation will grow relatively quickly and it will not take us months, it will take us only weeks". This was the original plan of the US occupation; no resistance, fourteen military bases, troops, etc. And there are many other statements: John Bolton [Undersecretary of State at the time – now American Ambassador to the UN], one week after the war said that "Syria, Iran and North Korea must learn the lesson of Iraq."

talk about "No, no, we don't want to rule you, we are just in a transition period and we will give the sovereignty to the Iraqis." But he needed to change the pretext of the occupation. There is no more weapons of mass destruction, there is no link to al-Qaeda, everyone knows.

So he came with the pretext of "rebuilding Iraq" and "Democracy", as a cover for the ongoing occupation of Iraq. But at that time, in June 2003, he never calculated – or he calculated wrong – the continuation of the resistance. He thought, "OK, I will go there and I will find out." But he never calculated that the resistance would accelerate.

So what he did was try to fragment Iraqi society and to divide Iraqi society. So he starts to call for a "political process". Very strange term that they use: "process". Because there was no end to this "process". So they start this so-called "political process". The American administration knows

policy on the political situation in Iraq and on the international political scene.

## 'Political Process'

This "political process" is built on agreement. The first of which is between occupying troops from one side and Iraqi political parties from the other side. These Iraqi political parties must accept the war, and accept the occupation and in return, the occupying troops will give them formal political power in the country. We now have 275 political parties in Iraq. All of them, all of them, there is not one of them that participates in this "political process". They refuse the occupation, or they refuse the permanent military presence of occupying troops in their country.

The next principle in this "political process" which is very important is built upon the sectarian and racial "quota system". They divide Iraqi society into three groups: Shia, Sunni and Kurd. If you just pay attention,

occupying troops have been built on this "quota system". Ethnic, racial, and sectarian quarter system. Iraqi governing council, Interim government, National assembly and the state administration are all divided between Shia, Sunni and Kurd.

## Iraqi CP, An Imperialist Collaborator

Let me give you an example of this. The governing council, which was formed by Paul Bremmer, it was 25 members. One of them is the General Secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP). When he entered this governing council, he entered not as the General Secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party; no, his number is on the Shia quota. This shows the collaborator leadership of the Iraqi Communist Party that they accept this racial and sectarian quota system in Iraq. As you know, the aim or objective of this division of the Iraqis is to control. This is old colonial politics. The British colony, they did the exact same in 1914 when they invaded Iraq – divide and rule politics. Exactly the same. They also divided Iraq, but at that time, not based on Kurds, Shia and Sunni. And of course you know, to split Iraqi society. These political parties, which participate in the so-called "political process", all of them, all of them, even the Iraqi Communist Party, they have ethnic or religious political program. They do not have any ideological program in their parties. For example, if I am Shia, I cannot be a member of a Sunni party because all of their program concentrates on the Sunni. Same with Kurd. If you read all of their program is built on this. And these political parties get security and political cover from the occupying forces. And nobody can seize them, nobody can process them for whatever crime they commit against the Iraqi people.

This Iraqi constitution is also based on this division of Iraqis into three parts; Sunni, Shia and Kurd. The "political

if US imperialism is defeated in Iraq will be huge for all of humanity. It means the US is no longer the number one political power.

The Americans adjusted their strategy on the 30th of November 2005, which they called "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq". This is a huge, 30 page strategy, which has all aspects, political, economic, social, military. What is new in this strategy is that the American occupying troops try to avoid the use of soldiers on the ground and have more use of what you call "air-strike"; F-16, Cobra helicopters. This is to reduce the casualties of the soldiers. They tried to avoid collapse of the American army. American soldiers are so demoralized, they don't have any case anymore. This propaganda, which they tell soldiers, that they go to Iraq to liberate Iraq, to rebuild Iraq. Maybe some of you know the American soldier who escaped to Canada to seek asylum. He made this case for asylum in Canada and he said that in one day – in 24 hours – his unit killed 30 Iraqi people.

Now they began to talk officially and publicly about this next new strategy. They call it the "Second Liberation of Baghdad". They want to replicate the Fallujah model – an urban warfare to gain military control of Baghdad. The problem is that they don't have control of Baghdad. Even this so-called Green Zone in Baghdad, which is about 2 kilometers, has been attacked by the Iraqi resistance. Their goal is to gain military control of Baghdad, and also expand the support and authority of the Iraqi government. This government and political parties became a burden for them because they need to protect them. Every one of these 25 Iraqi governing council, they have six American body guards, 24 hours.

## Second Liberation of Baghdad

This strategy, as I said, the Second

Continues on Page 13



By Nita Palmer

On July 16<sup>th</sup> 2006, over one million people descended on Mexico City to protest the recent fraudulent elections, marking the biggest demonstration in Mexican history. The elections, held July 2<sup>nd</sup> had declared conservative candidate Felipe Calderon of the National Action Party (PAN) the winner by a mere margin of 0.6%. However, as the hours ticked by, increasing evidence came to show that the elections had been plagued by massive fraud, and that centre-left candidate Lopez Obrador of the Party for a Democratic Revolution (PRD) was likely the winner.

On Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> suspicious election results began to expose the fraud, carried out by the

Increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo, mass pressure from poor, working, and oppressed people has very real potential to push Obrador to make reforms in the interests of the masses, rather than in the interests of the ruling class.

Fearing that Mexico under an Obrador government under mass pressure would be heading down the same anti-imperialist path as Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia, the Mexican government had to intervene to preserve the interests of the Mexican ruling class. The fraudulent elections were a desperate attempt by the ruling class in Mexico to preserve their control.

#### Deepening Social Crisis

poverty line, and 10% living on less than \$1 per day (UNICEF, 2005). Instead, money goes to the estimated 40 families in Mexico who own 30% of the country's wealth. In the end, the only ones who see profit from the Mexican economy today are those whose hands the wealth is already concentrated in – the Mexican ruling class, and the U.S. ruling class, who exert their influence over Mexico.

The widening of this gulf between the gains of the wealthy few and the gains of the poor majority have turned Mexico into a tinderbox of class conflict, ready to be ignited at any moment. The readiness of the Mexican people to mobilize for their rights – and the readiness

central square of the city, which 30,000 people had been occupying in support of the teachers. The police unleashed a no-holds-barred attack from the air and from the ground. Red Cross reports indicate that 11 people were killed, and many more wounded.

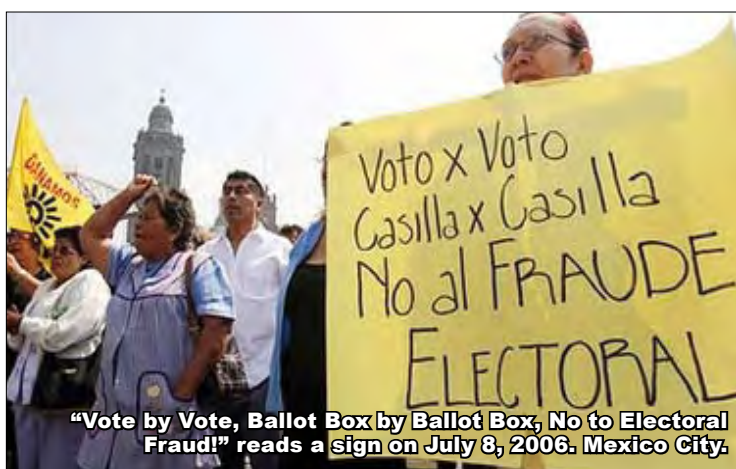
Just a few short weeks prior to this, the town of San Salvador Atenco had seen a similar clash between government forces and poor and working people. After police arrested flower vendors in the nearby town of Texcoco for “illegally selling flowers”, the people of Atenco set up a blockade of the highway in solidarity with the flower vendors. Again, people's resistance to the Mexican ruling class was met with violent police

#### Steps to Social Change

For people in Mexico, the fog of turmoil and confusion that the Mexican government is attempting to cover the election fraud with still means only one thing - the Mexican government must respect their own laws, and the wish of the majority. The people of Mexico chose Lopez Obrador as their president, and so they must have him. Left too long without a leadership capable of representing the wishes of poor, working, and oppressed people, people in Mexico have pushed Obrador to the front, and are demanding that he be their vehicle for change.

How far Obrador will go as the leader of the PRD to meet the demands of the people remains to be seen. But, given opportunity, the people of Mexico have the potential to set Mexico on the same course as Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia. This is the true leadership that the people of Mexico need – the leadership provided by Cuba for nearly 48 years, and that Venezuela and Bolivia have now joined in,

# Result of Mexican Elections: Reflection of Deepening Social Crisis



“Vote by Vote, Ballot Box by Ballot Box, No to Electoral Fraud!” reads a sign on July 8, 2006. Mexico City.



Demonstration Against Electoral Fraud. July 8, 2006. Mexico City.

Federal Electoral Institute (IFE). The IFE claimed that they had tabulated 98.5% of the votes. But, on Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> over 2.5 million ballots were discovered in garbage bins and dumps. These votes were dumped in over 11,000 precincts – most of which Obrador had claimed victory in. People in Mexico began clamouring for a recount. After these 2.5 million ballots were “found” by the IFE, a count of them narrowed Calderon's lead by 145,000 votes – and exposed many more irregularities in the vote tabulation procedure.

#### Election Fraud: Ruling Class Clings to Power

In Mexico today, the poor, working, and oppressed majority are undergoing growing radicalization, and are less and less tolerant to oppression from the ruling class. People are demanding a government that represents the needs of the people, rather than the demands of profit-making and the pressure of US imperialism. Within this context, the PRD and Obrador represent the people's wishes better than any of the other major bourgeois or reformist political parties – thus the huge support for Obrador in the recent elections in light of a revolutionary leadership. The support for Obrador is truly a reflection of an ever-deepening social crisis in Mexico, where the wishes of the masses and the goals of the ruling class are increasingly spinning towards opposite poles. In this context, a PRD government under Obrador poses a threat to the Mexican ruling class in spite of his insistence that he is friendly to both of these opposite classes.

*“I would like to mention with great satisfaction how productive the relation with the United States has been on bilateral basis... in order to promote development here in Mexico. And all this is part of a commitment and obligation of generating opportunities, making sure that we can build up, create jobs, create greater income, revenues for the families in Mexico”*

- President Vicente Fox (PAN), March 30<sup>th</sup> 2006

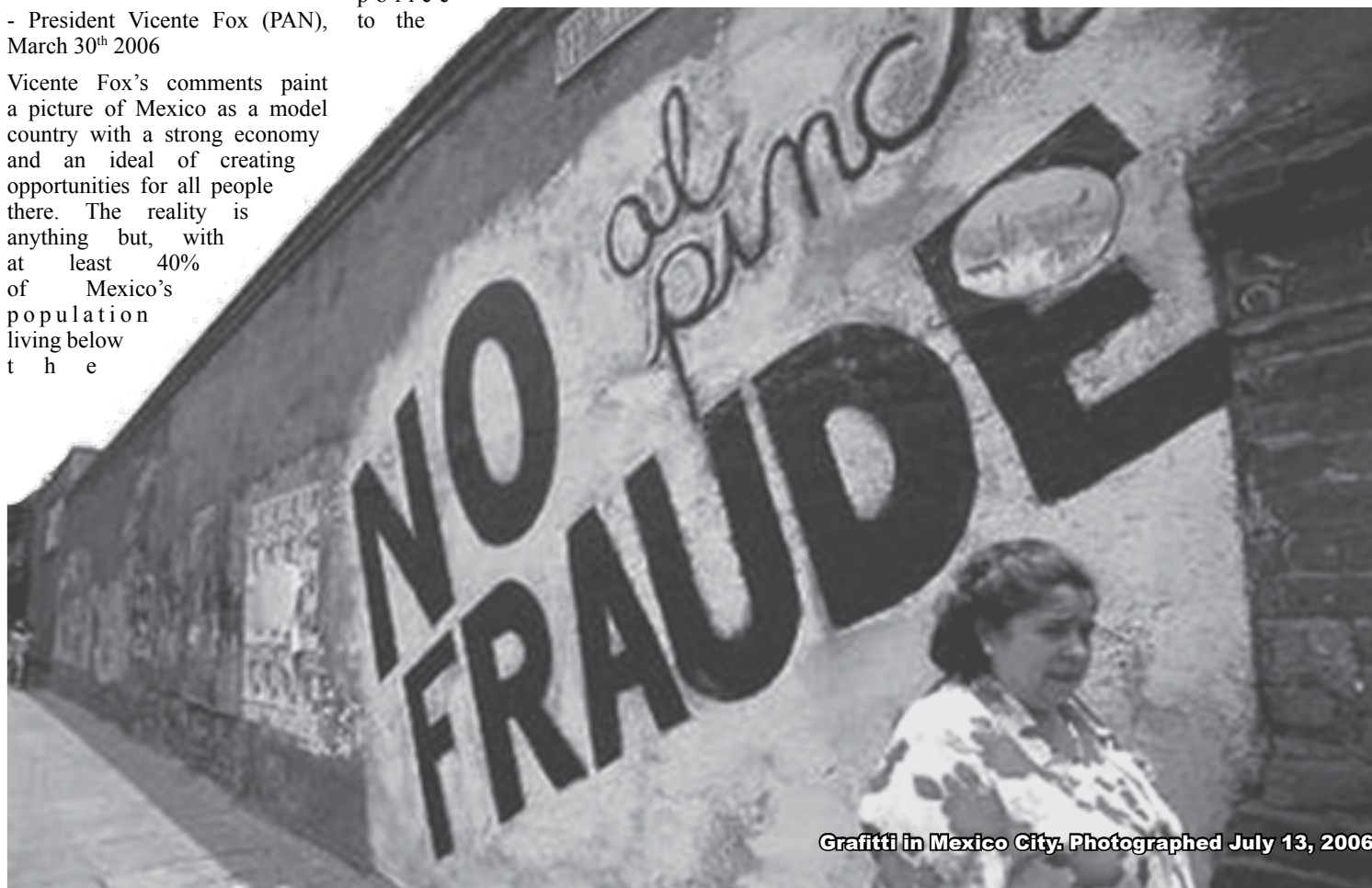
Vicente Fox's comments paint a picture of Mexico as a model country with a strong economy and an ideal of creating opportunities for all people there. The reality is anything but, with at least 40% of Mexico's population living below the

of the Mexican government to immediately stamp these movements out - has been shown repeatedly in the last few months.

In Oaxaca, 70,000 teachers began a strike on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2006, demanding increased funding to schools and fair wages. Oaxaca quickly became a frontline of class conflict, as on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2006, the Mexican government sent 3,000 police to the

repression, in which a 14-year-old boy was killed, and many people arrested were raped and badly beaten. As the class divisions sharpen in Mexico, so too do these clashes. Each mobilization of people is a threat to the Mexican ruling capitalist class, as each mobilization threatens to be the spark that engulfs Mexico in a fire of resistance and social upheaval.

in the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA). This anti-imperialist bloc in Latin America is strengthening every day. If Mexico joined this bloc, it would mean another gain for people in Mexico and throughout Latin America, as well as another blow to US imperialism.



Graffiti in Mexico City. Photographed July 13, 2006.

By Tamara Hansen

"Neither weapons, nor experience, nor fortuitous factors accompanied that first effort, which signified the beginning of a path that has never been abandoned. The path opened the conquest of power for the revolutionary people. And that essential characteristic of our Revolution: the confidence of the people in themselves, the faith of the people in their cause, the conviction that no difficulty, however great, would prevent victory. That no road, however difficult would make us incapable of continuing until the end...To remember the moments of adversity is good, to remember the time when the present reality was no more than a dream is good, to remember the sacrifice the victories have cost is good because the memories teach us, tell us, that nothing is easy on the path of the peoples."

- Cuban Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz (July 26th 1967)

July 26th 1953 is not about a victory or a defeat during the battle at the Moncada army garrison. The importance of this day is the vision presented to the Cuban people, showing the necessity and the character of the upcoming Cuban revolution. July 26th 1953 was about a revolutionary vision, from a young revolutionary named Fidel Castro, who along with his compañeros opened Cuba's path towards revolution which was triumphantly pushed into existence 6 years later changing the historical process in all of Latin America, the West, and as we understand today - the World.

**Cuba in 1953: Repression, poverty**

#### and ignorance

In March 1952 the Cuban dictator Batista led a coup just prior to elections seizing power for himself with the support of the United States. According to Jerry A. Sierra a free-lance journalist from Cuba, "Batista opened the way for large-scale gambling in Havana, and he reorganized the Cuban state so that he and his political appointees could harvest the nation's riches... Under Batista, Cuba became profitable for American business and organized crime. Havana became the "Latin Las Vegas," a playground of choice for wealthy gamblers, and very little was said about democracy, or the rights of the average Cuban. Opposition was swiftly and violently crushed, and many began to fear the new government."

In 1953, 90% of people in Cuba were illiterate or semi-literate, without even a 6th grade education level. At the same time only 3.2% of the school-aged population over the age of 10 were enrolled in junior or senior high school. One third of all homes in Cuba were classified as huts, while only 56% of homes had electricity.

An employment census taken for the year 1953 showed that 8.4% of the work force was unemployed. This shameful unemployment rate does not even give the full picture of the poverty facing Cubans as the census was taken during the height of the sugar harvest when unemployment was at its lowest. It is estimated that real unemployment throughout the year was closer to 30%.

In 2003, looking back on situation in Cuba 50 years before Fidel Castro said, "Ignorance has been the most powerful and fearsome weapon of the exploiters throughout all

# July 26th 1953: Attack on the Moncada Army Garrison in Cuba 'The Beginning of a Path that has Never Been Abandoned'

of history."

How could a country be changed from a situation of repression, poverty and ignorance to a country with the most doctors per capita in the world, with a literacy rate of 97% and an unemployment rate of only 1.9%?

Was it the will of one man? Was it the will of 150 rebellious young people? Or was it the will of millions of poor and oppressed people across Cuba who were tired of a system and government that did not represent their interests?

#### What changed on July 26th 1953?

On July 26th 1953 the first major battle against the repressive Batista regime took place when a group of approximately 150 organized rebellious young people lead by Fidel Castro (who at that time was only 26) took up arms to attack the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba and the Carlos Manuel de Cespedes garrison in Bayamo.

This attack was planned in order to seize arms from the oppressive Batista regime and to trigger a vast popular insurrection against the government. Who were these rebels? Students, workers, artists, teachers and many others who had sold and mortgaged

the torture were brought to trial.

At his trial, the young revolutionary Fidel Castro, who was also a lawyer in training, represented himself-giving a groundbreaking speech that condemned his captors for working together with the inhuman and corrupt dictatorship. At the end of his speech he simply and fore-tellingly stated, "Sentence me. It doesn't matter. History will absolve me."

Despite the moving speech, Fidel Castro along with his other compañeros were found "Guilty" and sentenced to anywhere from 5-15 years. However, two years after they were found guilty, the truth about what happened on July 26th, along with the text of Fidel Castro's courtroom speech spread throughout Cuba. With that, momentum grew to release Castro and other political prisoners of the Batista regime. Under pressure, the dictator was forced to release them. From there Fidel and others left to Mexico where they would re-group to form 'the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement' and plot a new attack against the Batista regime.

July 26th 1953 gained significance because it showed people throughout

nor would it ever be.

#### How the Ideals of July 26th are being upheld in Cuba today

**Health:** Today, the Cuban constitution guarantees access to medical care and citizens receive free healthcare from dental and major surgery to regular check-ups, everything is covered. Cuba has one doctor for every 156 citizens, that is the most doctors per capita of any country in the world. In

workers. These actions, as well as raises in social assistance and social security benefited 4.4 million people, which accounted for 30.9% of the population.

At the same time Cuba has worked hard to provide jobs for all Cubans and today, according to the CIA world fact book Cuba's unemployment rate sits at only 1.9%.

Because of these amazing strides being made in Cuba for universal access to



their possessions to raise \$15,000 in order to buy military uniforms and guns.

Despite their preparation, their attempt to take the two garrisons failed and most were imprisoned. In the introduction to the book 'The Twelve,' Tana de Gamez wrote, "Half of the rebels died, not in combat, but under torture. Their captors were eager to pin the blame for the aborted insurrection on some high official or foreign instigator. The irate tyranny could not conceive that the near-defeat it suffered had been inflicted by a group of ill-equipped youthful civilians with no ties whatsoever to disgruntled politicians, army chiefs, or an exotic ideology. There simply was nothing to confess to, and the truth was too compromising for the government, too indicative of oppression and discontent to be admitted." Those who survived

Cuba that the revolutionaries were not doublespeaking politicians. They were motivated and driven to take action against the brutal Batista government. This gave people confidence in their leadership and inspired more Cubans to get involved in the fight for Cuba's liberation and for justice.

In 1956, Fidel Castro and other leaders of the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement returned to Cuba from Mexico and began a campaign to defeat the government of Batista. Three years later, on January 1st 1959, after many fights and battles ending in both losses and victories the cruel dictator Batista fled Cuba. The revolutionaries had won!

This is where the dreams and aspirations of the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement needed to be implemented and quickly become a reality, to re-affirm with the people of Cuba that the revolution had not been fought in vain, but for specific goals and ideals. Most importantly that the path that the revolutionaries had shown to the Cuban people on July 26th 1953, the path of hope, social justice and prosperity for all poor and oppressed people in Cuba, had not been abandoned-

1959, life expectancy in Cuba was 45 years. Today, even according to the CIA world fact book, life expectancy in Cuba is 77 years. Cuba's infant mortality rate is also the lowest in Latin America at 6.22%.

With "Operation Miracle," Cuban doctors have performed 250,000 free eye operations returning sight to many blind or partially blind people in Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia. The goal of this operation is to cure all of the estimated 5 million blind people in Latin America. The Cuban government has even offered free eye surgery to 100,000 people living in the US, no response yet from the US government.

**Education:** This year on June 6th, Cuba celebrated 45 years of free education. According to Cuban newswire Prensa Latina, "On June 6, 1961, the revolutionary government decreed the Teaching Nationalization Law. Two months after defeating the US invasion of Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs), the country ended the education system that served a privileged minority and brought real democracy to teaching."

Since the triumph of the revolution 69 of the army garrisons formerly controlled by the Batista dictatorship were converted into schools and classrooms for over 40,000 students. Along with that, more than 10,000 classrooms have been created, because of these new classrooms 90% of people aged 9-12 are able to go to school.

Most importantly, free education in Cuba does not only mean at the primary and secondary level, but university degrees and PhD's as well!

**Jobs:** In May 2005 the minimum wage in Cuba went up from 100 to 225 pesos benefiting over 1.6 million workers which accounts for 54% of state employees. In July 2005 wages rose in the healthcare and education sectors, which benefited over 850,000

social programs and the gains made by the revolution for students, workers, women, people of colour and other oppressed groups, July 26th continues to be a day of great celebration and renewal of hope for gains to be made in the near and far futures.

According to journalist Onelio Castillo Corderi, the most important thing about these celebrations was that they "emphasized the will of this portion of land [Cuba] to defend the glory they have reached, that is preserving the beautiful everyday feats that astonish the world." And defending these feats is becoming more important as the years go on. Because the gains made by the Cuban revolution do not exist in a vacuum.

#### US Attacks on Cuba

While the Cuban revolution overthrew the dictator Batista it also redistributed land owned by US companies, and nationalized many industries previously monopolized by US companies. This aggravated the US and has led to numerous attempts to overthrow the Cuban revolution: from bombing and military invasion, to media smear campaigns and spreading lies about Cuba. These attacks have all either been led or covertly funded by the US government- among them the most long lasting campaign has been the US economic blockade against Cuba.

Basically since the revolution triumphed the United States has maintained a cruel, illegal, and genocidal blockade against Cuba. Limiting access to food, medicine, teaching equipment and technology the blockade has caused immense hardship for the Cuban people. In fact the blockade has cost Cuba over \$82Billion in the last 45 years.

By George W. Bush's own admission the blockade exists because, "trade

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## USA & CUBA:

# THE RIPE FRUIT OF AGONY

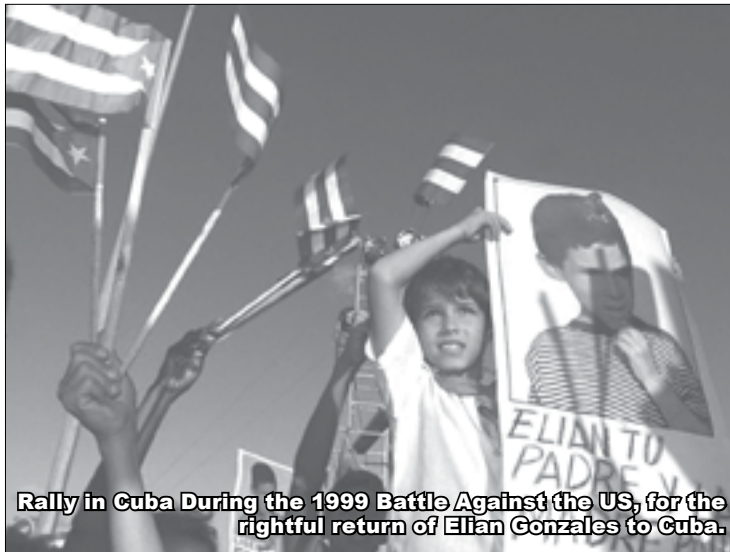
By Manuel E Yepe\*

The American “powers that be” have persistently longed for Cuba since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, before the island’s first independence wars.

Two precepts have conditioned US foreign policies towards Cuba at the highest levels of government since then: the ‘manifest destiny doctrine’ and the ‘theory of the ripe fruit’.

On June 1783, the second US president, John Adams, expressed that the island of Cuba was a natural extension of the North American continent, and that its annexation was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the United States. He sustained that independence was never to be allowed and that the best way to achieve that purpose was to let Cuba remain under Spanish rule until the island could be absorbed.

The “manifest destiny” was a conception developed in those days as a doctrine attributing to the US an alleged special mission: to carry its particular form of economic, social and political organization; first within North America and later throughout the Western Hemisphere. The Westward expansion was completed by the end of the 19th century: the indigenous population was annihilated and the Mexican



Rally in Cuba During the 1999 Battle Against the US, for the rightful return of Elian Gonzales to Cuba.

power in the newly emerging Latin American republics would be considered an unfriendly act against the US itself and, therefore, the US had the right to “protect” the region. This apparent US defensive paternalism towards the rest of the hemisphere very soon became forceful expansionism.

Some years before, John Quincy Adams, then secretary of state in Monroe’s administration and

her off from its bosom.”

This principle was no obstacle, however, for the US trying to buy Cuba from Spain. An offer to purchase the island for \$100 million was refused by the Iberian crown.

By the 1880s, US capital was heavily involved in the Cuban economy, particularly in the sugar industry, as a result of its global interest in turning the Caribbean Islands into sugar-based economies.

his successor as president, had written: “... if an apple, severed by the tempest from its native tree, cannot but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its unnatural connection with Spain and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only to the North American union, which by the same law of nature, cannot cast

The revolutionary origins of the US were still alive in popular memory and many ordinary US citizens were sympathetic to Cuba. This fact overlapped a tense build-up in the US for a direct military intervention in Cuba’s independence war against Spain. However, in 1895, shortly before being killed in combat, the

Cuban revolutionary leader José Martí drew attention to the fact that, while fighting Spain, he also wanted “to prevent the United States, with the independence of Cuba, from extending itself through the West Indies and falling with added weight upon our lands of America. Everything that I have done is for that purpose”, he concluded.

On December 24<sup>th</sup> 1897, US Under-Secretary of War J.C. Breckenridge wrote in a memorandum: “This [the Cuban] population is made up of whites, blacks, Asians and people who are mixture of these races. The inhabitants are generally indolent and apathetic – Since they only possess a vague notion of what is right and wrong, the people tend to seek pleasure not through work, but through violence. It is obvious that the immediate annexation of these disturbing elements into our own federation in such large numbers would be madness, so before we do that we must clean up the country. We must destroy everything within our cannons’ range of fire. We must impose a harsh blockade so that hunger and its constant companion, disease, undermine the peaceful population and decimate the army. The allied army must be constantly

temporary maintenance by force of the new independent government of a minority of the autonomists and Spaniards who remained, until it was strong enough to maintain itself against the separatists.

“When this moment arrives, - he concluded- we must create conflicts for the independent government. That government will be faced with these difficulties. These difficulties must coincide with the unrest and violence among the aforementioned elements, to whom we must give our backing. To sum up, our policy must always be to support the weaker against the stronger, until we have obtained the extermination of them both, in order to annex the Pearl of the Antilles.”

Early in 1898, the battleship USS Maine arrived at Cuba on a “courtesy visit”. In the morning of 15 February, the Maine exploded and 260 of the crew were killed. US papers blamed Spain and coined the slogan “Remember the Maine, to hell with Spain”. One of the photographs published, allegedly showed the hole made in the hull by a Spanish torpedo.

Over 80 years after de Maine incident, US Admiral G.H. Rickover

neighbors lost nearly half their territory (Texas, New Mexico and California).

In 1823, President John Monroe pronounced what became known as the Monroe doctrine or the “America for the Americans” doctrine stating that interference by any European

engaged in reconnaissance and vanguard actions so that the Cuban army is irreparably caught between two fronts.”

The high US official went on to explain the plan for the military occupation of Cuba and the

admitted that the Spanish had not blown up the Maine, and that actually US “specialists” had set the explosives on board. The majority of the 260 US crew killed were black, the white officers having been ashore at the time. Incidentally, it

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## The July 26th Movement

Continued From Page 5

with the country enables a tyrant to stay in power.” Even if we were to agree that Fidel is a tyrant, since when is this the US trade policy? Executive Director at Americans for Humanitarian Trade, George Fernandez, pointed out in 1999 that, “The U.S. embargo on Cuba is the single most restrictive policy of its kind. Even Iraq [under sanctions] is able to buy food and medicine from U.S. sources...As a Cuban American, I speak for the vast majority of us who do not think the U.S. should be in the business of denying basic sustenance to families and children in Cuba.”

Recently, on July 5th 2006, the US State Department’s Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba released a new report which lines up the US’ immediate plan of action following the death or incapacitation of Fidel Castro. According to the Miami Herald, “[The report] calls for the creation of a two-year \$80 million “Cuba Fund for a Democratic Future.” The money is to “increase support for Cuban civil society, expand international awareness, break the regime’s information blockade, and continue developing assistance initiatives to help Cuban civil society realize a democratic transition.” After the initial two

years, the commission recommends adding at least \$20 million annually to the fund “until the dictatorship ceases to exist.””

**What is the US so afraid of?**

What frightens the strongest military in the world? What frightens the strongest capitalist ruling class in the world? What makes them so unwilling to trade with Cuba, a little third-world island only 90 miles away?

The power of ideas. This is what makes the United States so weak in the knees.

For over 45 years the US government has done everything in its power to isolate Cuba from the rest of the world. From yelling accusations of ‘human rights abuses’ to ‘dictator’ to ‘outpost of tyranny’ to ‘state sponsor of terror’ the United States has accused Cuba of horrendous crimes. But in return Cuba has reached out to the rest of the world, offering to send 1,500 doctors to New Orleans after hurricane Katrina, sending 3,500 doctors free of charge to Pakistan, using its exemplary literacy campaign to teach people across Latin America how to read.

For this Cuba has won the respect of many governments around the world, and the admiration of millions oppressed people around the world. This respect can be seen with the

United Nations voting to condemn the US blockade on Cuba in November 2005 for the 14th consecutive year, and Cuba’s recent election the United Nations Human Rights Council, where Cuba elected by 70% of the UN member nations (135 votes in favour).

However, the United States is not really afraid of Cuba’s advances in the United Nations. What frightens the US is the possibility that the ideas represented in that battle on July 26th 1953 will spread to other countries. That seeing the gains Cuba has made since kicking the United States out of their country, will inspire other countries to do the same.

The US blockade on Cuba and all other US attacks on Cuba are meant to prevent the spread of the Cuba’s largest strength, its ideas.

But like the powerful sound of Cuban music, Cuba’s ideas are traveling the world over and no blockade can ever stop them.

**The Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)**

“Wise grandfather, Fidel; Father, Hugo; I am the son of you both”

- Evo Morales, President of Bolivia

On April 29th 2006 the presidents of Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia came together to affirm their commitment to the Bolivarian Alternative for the

peoples of Our America (ALBA). In their agreement the countries agreed to fund programs to eradicate illiteracy; for each country to attempt to hold at least 51% of all bi-national or tri-national companies in their countries; to organize joint cultural projects; educational exchanges; strengthen communication infrastructure in all three countries; and to share scientific and technical know-how in order to promote economic and social



Cuba’s school teachers march for the revolution. 1961.

development. Unfortunately for the US, it has nothing to offer the people of Latin America- promises of freedom of speech, democracy, or improved economy have all been disproved by years of US-backed dictators from: Batista to Pinochet or US-backed coup d’etats: from Venezuela to Haiti.

In 2005, in his yearly July 26th address, Cuban president Fidel Castro stated, “The agreement between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Republic of Cuba, signed in

accordance with the principles of ALBA, means a considerable step forward on the way to unity and the true integration of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean... Because of these noble, constructive and peaceful efforts, the imperialist government is accusing Venezuela and Cuba, Chávez and Castro, of destabilizing and subverting other countries in the region. Faced with such accusations against Venezuela and Cuba, and if President Chávez agreed, a day like today would be most opportune to reply: Condemn us, it doesn’t matter, history will absolve us!”

Fifty-three years ago, on July 26th 1953, it was time for the Cuban revolutionaries to show their fellow Cubans an alternative to the repressive dictator Batista. Today, that alternative has been realised and surpassed by the gains made by the Cuban revolution.

Today, in the year 2006, it is time for ALBA to show all of Latin America an alternative to the neo-liberal policies of the US and their puppet governments throughout Latin America. Tomorrow, that alternative will be realised and surpassed if we continue to struggle- Until Victory, Always! We will win!

¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre;  
¡Venceremos!

# The Ripe Fruit of Agony Continued

Continued From Page 6

was known that the “hole in the hull” was actually an eclipse of the sun photographed much earlier.

On April 11, 1898, President McKinley requested authorization from the US Congress and Senate to intervene, and a few days later declared war on Spain.

The US had never recognized the Cuban people's struggle for independence or their liberation army as a legitimate force. Just a few hours after declaring war on Spain, McKinley said he would not recognize the Republic of Cuba as declared by the revolutionary Government in Arms. He only wanted to drive Spain out and gain sole influence for the US.

In just eight months, Cuba saw US military intervention, the defeat of Spain, actions by the US forces against the Cuban independence army and the imposition of a transitional government - a US military governorship. More than thirty years of patriotic struggle for independence had served for nothing.

On December 10, the Treaty of Paris was signed. The US treated Cuba as a conquered country and got Spain to hand over the island to their military occupation. Cuban representatives were excluded from the proceedings.

The Cuban people angrily opposed annexation. General Máximo Gómez, one of the founders of Cuban independence, wrote in his campaign

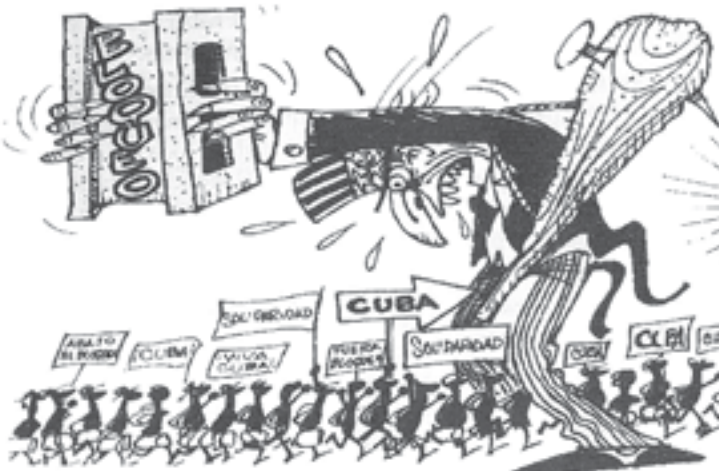
diary: “The Americans’ military occupation is too high a price to pay for their spontaneous intervention in the war we waged against Spain for freedom and independence. The American government’s attitude toward the heroic Cuban people at this history making time is, in my opinion, one of big business (...). Cuba cannot have true moral peace (...) under the transitional government. This transitional government was imposed by force by a foreign power and, therefore, is illegitimate and incompatible with the principles that the entire country has been upholding for so long and in the defense of which its sons have given their lives and all of its wealth has been consumed.”

On July 1900, the Constitutional Convention of Cuban representatives started its deliberations in order to implement the US Joint Resolution by drafting a new Constitution and agree stipulations concerning US-Cuban relations.

On March 1901, the US congress attached an amendment to the Cuban Constitutional project imposing, as conditions for the US to leave the government of the island in Cuban hands, those contained in

it, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.”

Invasions, threats and treaties made at gunpoint characterized Roosevelt's term as president. On 24 March 1902, he met with Tomás Estrada Palma, US appointed future



President of Cuba. He told him which places had been chosen for the establishment of naval bases or coaling stations, as stipulated in the Platt Amendment.

In a memorable ceremony in which the Cuban flag was raised by respected General Maximo Gomez himself, the Republic of Cuba was officially established on May 20, 1902, but to pretend Cuba became independent that day is to disguise the historical truth and to twist the true role played by the United

requested that the event be discreet because the Cuban people were protesting against the lease, and it sent only one representative. At noon on that day, the Cuban flag was lowered, and the US flag rose to sound of a 21-gun salute. Then 600 US Marines landed.

One hundred years later a terror prison camp for the abuse and torture of detainees under US custody was established there in defiance of international humanitarian law and is still existent despite almost unanimous universal reproach. The US naval base at Guantánamo, has also been the place from where the US has launched many invasions

on other countries in the region, most recently Haiti, Dominican Republic, Panama and Grenada.

Opening the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Cuba emerged as the model for US imperialism. American economic and political domination had been secured without the seizure of a colony. The US could continue to boast its anti-colonial tradition and beliefs despite having made Cuba a dependency. It was at this time that the term “sphere of influence” became an international euphemism

interests at the expense of Cuban national development.

Between 1925 and 1933, US interests in Cuba were looked after by the dictator Gerardo Machado, nicknamed “the Butcher” or “the griped donkey”. Towards the last years of that period, with the worldwide depression, increasing social unrest and fear of revolution, the US became convinced that Machado was more of a burden than a benefit for them.

In March 1933, US President Franklyn Delano Roosevelt proposed what he called the “Good Neighbor Policy”, and said he was opposed to armed intervention in Latin America.

A special ambassador named Sumner Welles was sent to Cuba, charged with preventing a left-wing government to replace Machado after a strong revolutionary movement extended along the island.

The US put its trust in Fulgencio Batista when Machado was ousted and, after the former's successful installation as dictator, the Treaty of Reciprocity was signed in Washington. It repealed the Platt Amendment and the Permanent Treaty, but maintained the Guantanamo naval base. A new sugar agreement was made, which reinforced Cuban dependence on the US. Batista formed an alliance with the reactionary pro-US elite in Cuba and was rewarded with a 25 year period in power, which was notorious for its corruption and repression.

what became known as the Platt Amendment, after Senator Orville Platt, who presented it. Under this amendment, the US limited the country's sovereignty and turned it into a neocolonial enclave. It legalized US military intervention. It assumed the right to seize part of Cuba's territory by leaving ownership of the Isle of Pines (the second largest island in the Cuban archipelago) to be adjusted by future treaty. It limited Cuba's rights to enter into treaties with other countries and it forced the country to sell or lease a part of its territory for the establishment of naval stations.

Coercion and fraud were used to establish US military bases in Cuba, factors that, under international law, make any agreement null and void. The Cuban Convention was warned not to modify the Amendment and told that the US troops would not leave Cuba until its terms had been adopted. So there could be no possible misunderstanding, Senator Platt finished his warning by saying that, if the Amendment were not accepted, there would be no Republic of Cuba.

In 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became US President. He had been Assistant Secretary for the Navy under President McKinley and one of the strongest advocates of military intervention in Cuba. The war had made his political career. He made an addition to the Monroe doctrine, known as the Roosevelt Corollary: “Chronic wrongdoing or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society may, in America as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force

States in the outcome of Cuba's war of independence against Spanish colonialism.

Almost seventy percent of the sugar industry - the most important and almost sole industry on the island - was in the hands of US capitalists, who also owned Cuba's best arable lands.

The Cuban Revolutionary Party, founded by Jose Marti as the single political organization intended to unite all the Cubans to struggle for independence against Spain and prevent the US from absorbing Cuba, had been dissolved; the Cuban Liberation Army had been discharged and the Platt Amendment was securely attached to the Cuban Constitution.

So vile was the American interference in Cuba's internal affairs that Leonard Wood, Cuba's military governor after the Spanish-American War, wrote in a letter to Theodore Roosevelt, “There is, of course, little or no independence left for Cuba under the Platt Amendment.”

By 1902, time had come for the first elections to be called. The elected president was a Cuban who had become a naturalized American citizen after living in the United States for 25 years and who favored the annexation of Cuba to the US.

In July 1903, a so-called Permanent Treaty was signed, which involved, among other “generous Cuban concessions to the US, the unlimited lease a territory in the bay of Guantánamo. The neocolonial Cuban government

for neo-colonialism.

However, the US militarily intervened in Cuba in 1906, 1909 and 1912. During this last intervention, the US took the opportunity to impose an extension of its territory at Guantánamo in exchange for giving up Honda Bay. That same year, US President William Howard Taft said: “The day is not far distant when three Stars and Stripes at three equidistant points will mark our territory; one at the North Pole, another at the Panama Canal, and the third at the South Pole. The whole hemisphere will be ours in fact as, by virtue of our superiority of race, it already is ours morally.”

Cuba was occupied by US Marines once more from 1917 to 1923, when the Russian Revolution inspired a revolutionary upsurge in Cuba. They suppressed strikes and protected US property. A US governor virtually

During the revolutionary war 1952-59, the Batista regime had full support of the US with military advisors in every arm and branch. The Guantánamo base served as a fuel and ammunition supplier to the dictator's planes that indiscriminately bombed rural areas and defenseless towns.

After the triumph of the Revolution in January first 1959, the United States Administration, under General Dwight B. Eisenhower began subversive actions against Cuba. At the end of the year, the CIA began to land saboteurs in Cuba.

On July 6, the US sugar quota for imports of Cuban sugar was cut off and the Cuban government retaliated by nationalising US-owned sugar mills. Immediately, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended the President to authorise a full invasion of the island nation.

As the invasion force approached on 16 April of the next year, Fidel Castro announced the socialist character of the Revolution. The next day, an unofficial intervention force of 1,500 mercenaries recruited, trained, armed and conducted by the CIA. It consisted in a troupe of police torturers and paramilitary gunmen under Batista's tyranny and other reactionary exiles in Miami that landed at

the Bay of Pigs, in the Cuban southern coast. Fidel Castro personally directed the counterattack.

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Cuban Women Protest the Batista Dictatorship. 1957.

managed the finances of the Cuban government and representatives of US sugar interests were leading political figures. They enforced policies which suited US economic



## Estados Unidos y Cuba:

# LA AGONIA DE LA FRUTA MADURA

Por Manuel E Yepe\*

La clase dirigente estadounidense ha venido abogando persistentemente por la posesión de Cuba desde fines del siglo XVIII, antes de las primeras guerras de independencia de la isla.

Dos preceptos han condicionado la política exterior de los EEUU hacia Cuba en los niveles más altos de gobierno: la doctrina del destino manifiesto y la teoría de la fruta madura.

En junio de 1783, el segundo presidente de los EEUU, John Adams, expresó que la isla de Cuba era una extensión natural del continente norteamericano y que su anexión era absolutamente necesaria para la existencia de los Estados Unidos. Sostuvo que jamás sería permitida su independencia y que lo mejor manera de lograr este propósito era que Cuba permaneciera en posesión de España hasta que la isla pudiera ser absorbida.

El "Destino Manifiesto" era la concepción desarrollada en esos días como doctrina que atribuía a una supuesta misión especial a EEUU: la de llevar su sistema de organización económica, social y política, primero, a toda la América del Norte y, posteriormente, a todo el Hemisferio Occidental.

La expansión al Oeste se completó a fines del Siglo XIX: la población aborigen fue aniquilada y los vecinos mexicanos perdieron casi la mitad de su territorio (Texas, Nuevo México y California).

En 1823, el presidente John Monroe pronunció lo que sería conocido como la Doctrina Monroe o la doctrina de "América para los americanos" que establecía que toda interferencia por cualquier potencia europea en las nacientes repúblicas



sido para eso", concluía.

El 24 de diciembre de 1897, el Subsecretario de Guerra J.C. Breckenridge escribió en un memorando: "Esta población (la cubana) está constituida de blancos, negros, asiáticos y personas que resultan de la mezcla de estas razas. Los habitantes son generalmente indolentes y apáticos... En tanto este pueblo sólo posee una vaga noción del bien y del mal, tiende a buscar placer no a través del trabajo sino de la violencia. Es obvio que la anexión inmediata de estos elementos perturbadores y tan numerosos a nuestra federación constituiría una locura, así que, antes de proceder a ello, debemos limpiar el país. Tenemos que destruir todo aquello que esté al alcance del fuego de nuestros cañones. Debemos imponer un férreo bloqueo de manera

la mañana del 15 de febrero, el Maine explotó y 260 miembros de su tripulación perecieron. Los diarios de Estados Unidos acusaron a España y acuñaron el slogan "Recuerden al Maine y España al demonio". Una de las fotografías publicadas mostraba un boquete hecho en el casco por un torpedo español.

Más de ochenta años después del incidente del Maine, el Almirante de EU G.H. Rickover reconocía que los españoles no habían hecho explotar al Maine, y que fueron "especialistas" norteamericanos, quienes habían colocado los explosivos a bordo del acorazado. La mayoría de los 260 tripulantes muertos eran negros, ya que los oficiales blancos estaban en tierra en el momento de la explosión. Incidentalmente, se conoció que "el boquete en el casco" era realmente un eclipse

latinoamericanas que emergían, sería considerada un acto inamistoso contra los propios Estados Unidos y, por tanto, EEUU se atribuía el derecho de "proteger a la región". El aparente paternalismo defensivo hacia el resto del hemisferio pronto se convertiría en evidente expansionismo.

Algunos años antes, John Quincy Adams, entonces Secretario de Estado en el gobierno de Monroe y su sucesor como Presidente, había escrito: "...si una manzana, derribada de su árbol por la tempestad, no puede otra cosa que caer a tierra, Cuba, separada por la fuerza de su anormal conexión con España e incapaz de sostenerse por sí misma, solo puede gravitar, hacia la Unión Norteamericana, la que no puede por la misma ley natural, rechazarla de su regazo."

Este principio no fue obstáculo, sin embargo, para que Estados Unidos tratara de comprar a Cuba de España. Una oferta de comprar la isla por cien millones de dólares fue rechazada por la corona ibérica.

Ya en 1880, el capital estadounidense estaba sólidamente involucrado en Cuba, especialmente en la industria azucarera, como resultado de su interés global de convertir a las islas del Caribe en economías azucareras.

Dado que en la memoria popular estaban aún vivas las raíces revolucionarias de los Estados Unidos, muchos ciudadanos comunes de los EEUU tenían simpatías por Cuba. Este hecho solapó una tensa preparación en los EEUU para una intervención militar directa en la guerra por la independencia de Cuba contra España. Sin embargo, en 1895, poco antes de caer en combate, el líder revolucionario cubano José Martí escribió que, al luchar contra España, él pretendía también "evitar, con la independencia de Cuba, que los Estados Unidos se expandieran por las Antillas y cayeran con esa fuerza más sobre nuestras tierras de América. Todo lo que he hecho hasta ahora ha

que el hambre y su compañera perenne, la enfermedad, socaven la población pacífica y diezmen el ejército. El ejército aliado deberá estar comprometido constantemente en acciones de reconocimiento y de vanguardia, para que el ejército cubano esté irreparablemente atrapado entre dos frentes."

El alto funcionario norteamericano continuó explicando el plan para la ocupación militar de Cuba y el mantenimiento por la fuerza del nuevo gobierno independiente, integrado por una minoría de los autonomistas y de los españoles, quienes permanecerían hasta que se fortalecieran suficientemente frente a los separatistas.



"Cuando llegue este momento, concluía, debemos crear conflictos a este gobierno independiente. Este gobierno deberá enfrentarse a estas dificultades. Estas dificultades deben coincidir con los desasosiegos y la violencia entre los elementos antes mencionados, a quienes debemos apoyar. Para resumir, nuestra política debe ser siempre apoyar al más débil frente el más fuerte, hasta que hayamos logrado exterminarlos a ambos, a fin de anexarnos la Perla de las Antillas."

A inicios de 1898, el acorazado USS Maine llegó a Cuba para una "visita de cortesía". En

de sol fotografiado mucho tiempo antes.

El 11 de abril de 1898 el Presidente McKinley solicitó la autorización del Congreso y del Senado para intervenir y días más tarde declaró la guerra a España.

Los Estados Unidos nunca habían reconocido la lucha del pueblo de Cuba por su independencia ni a su ejército de liberación como su fuerza legítima. Pocas horas después de declararle la guerra a España, McKinley expresó que no reconocería a la República de Cuba, tal y como había sido declarado por el Gobierno Revolucionario en Armas. Su intención era sacar a España y lograr la influencia absoluta de los Estados Unidos.

En sólo ocho meses, Cuba presenció la intervención militar norteamericana, la derrota de España, acciones de las fuerzas de EEUU contra el ejército independentista cubano y la imposición de un gobierno de transición: una gobernación militar de EU. No habían servido para nada más de treinta años de luchas patrióticas por la independencia.

El 10 de diciembre, se firmó el Tratado de París. Estados Unidos trató a Cuba como país conquistado y logró que España le entregara la isla para ocuparla militarmente. Los representantes cubanos fueron excluidos de los procedimientos.

El pueblo cubano se opuso ferozmente a la anexión. El General Máximo Gómez, uno de los fundadores de la independencia cubana, escribió en su diario de campaña: "La ocupación militar de los americanos es un precio demasiado alto para pagar por su espontánea intervención en la guerra que desarrollamos contra España por la libertad y la independencia. La actitud del gobierno americano hacia el heroico pueblo

### The Ripe Fruit of Agony

Continued From Page 7

The Bay of Pigs invasion was an embarrassing fiasco for the US, with the invaders defeated in just 72 hours. Defenders suffered a much larger number of casualties.

Invaders were better equipped and militarily trained than defenders, but they lacked morals. Prisoners were sent back to the US, exchanged for foodstuff destined to Cuban children. None of the prisoners had been killed, tortured or disrespected their human rights, as has always been the ethical principle of the Cuban Revolution.

Ten US Administrations have used every means at their disposal, short of all-out war, to strangle the Revolution. During the early years of the Revolution, various American presidents and their attorneys general repeatedly violated international laws and seriously compromised U.S. safety by enlisting the services of organized crime leaders for actions against Cuba.

Terrorist proceedings originated in the US have resulted in the death of 3 thousand 500 Cubans, while 2 thousand 100 persons have been handicapped by these same actions. Terrorist acts have included the explosion of a passenger aircraft killing 73 passengers, the assassination of Cuban diplomats in several countries, including the United Nations in New York; hit and run attacks against

alleged "strategic" targets; the sinking in Cuban and international waters of vessels flagged in various nations; the bombing of Cuban factories, hotels and mills; sabotage on economic objectives; bacteriological warfare, and repeated attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro and other leaders.

The economic blockade, euphemistically called embargo in the US, which has been exercised against Cuba for 46 consecutive years has had an estimated cost of 125 billion US dollars.

US policymakers still believe that U.S. policy toward Cuba should aim, as the May 1961 National Security Council directive declared, at the downfall of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

In order to justify outright military aggression to achieve such a goal, US strategists have resorted to dreadful schemes intended to provide "pretexts for invasion" which only come to be known many years after, when CIA or other secret service's papers are declassified.

Among them, it was recently disclosed that plans to sink a boatload of Cubans en route to Florida were approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but fortunately vetoed by the then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

As those who manipulate and control the media in a global scale happen to be the same interests served by the policy-makers and strategists that generate these deceptive US actions, it is extremely important for world public opinion to remain aware of such ripe fruit appetites.

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## LA AGONIA DE LA FRUTA MADURA

de Cuba en este momento histórico es, en mi opinión, propia de un gran negocio (...). Cuba no puede tener una verdadera paz moral (...) bajo un gobierno de transición. Este gobierno de transición fue impuesto por la fuerza de un poder extranjero y, por tanto, es ilegítimo e incompatible con los principios por los que todo el país ha estado luchando por tanto tiempo y por cuya defensa sus hijos han entregado sus vidas y han consumido todas sus riquezas.”

En julio de 1900, la Convención Constituyente de los representantes cubanos comenzó sus deliberaciones a fin de dar cumplimiento a lo dispuesto en la Resolución Conjunta de EEUU redactando el proyecto de una nueva Constitución y para acordar las estipulaciones respecto a las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y Cuba.

En marzo de 1901, el Congreso de EU adjuntó una enmienda al proyecto constitucional cubano en la que se expresan un conjunto de condiciones exigidas por los Estados Unidos como requisito para traspasar el gobierno de la Isla a los cubanos. Estaban contenidas en lo que se conoció como Enmienda Platt, nombrada así por el Senador Orville Platt, quien la presentó.

Por medio de esta enmienda, Estados Unidos limitaba la soberanía del país y lo convertía en un enclave neocolonial. Legalizaba la intervención militar norteamericana y estipulaba abrogó el derecho de apropiarse de parte del territorio cubano, por la vía de dejar la cuestión de la propiedad de la Isla de Pinos (la segunda isla en proporciones territoriales en el archipiélago cubano) para ser resuelta en un futuro tratado. Limitaba los derechos de Cuba a firmar tratados con otros países y forzaba al país a vender o arrendar parte de su territorio para establecer estaciones navales.

Se emplearon la coerción y el fraude como recursos para establecer las bases militares de EU en Cuba, factores que, según las leyes internacionales, anulan e invalidan todo

Había hecho de la guerra su carrera política. Elaboró el añadido a la Doctrina Monroe, conocido como el Corolario Roosevelt: “La maledicencia crónica o la impotencia que resulte en una descomposición del entramado de la sociedad civilizada podría requerir en América, al igual que en cualquier otro lugar, la intervención por parte de alguna nación civilizada; y en el hemisferio occidental, la adscripción de los Estados Unidos a la Doctrina Monroe podría forzarle, por muy renuente que resulte, en casos de maledicencia o impotencia, al ejercicio de una fuerza policial internacional.”

Las invasiones, las amenazas y los tratados firmados a punta de pistola caracterizaron la presidencia de Roosevelt. El 24 de marzo de 1902, se entrevistó con Tomás Estrada Palma, quien fuera designado por los EEUU como Presidente de Cuba. Le comunicó qué lugares habían sido elegidos para establecer bases navales

haber vivido durante 25 años en los Estados Unidos y quien favorecía la anexión de Cuba a ese país.

En julio de 1903, se firmó el llamado Tratado Permanente que incluía entre otras “generosas concesiones cubanas” a los Estados Unidos, el arriendo por tiempo indefinido de un territorio en la bahía de Guantánamo.

El gobierno neocolonial de Cuba solicitó que la inauguración se hiciera de manera muy discreta porque el pueblo estaba protestando contra el arriendo, y envió a la firma solo un representante. Al mediodía de ese día la bandera cubana fue arriada y se izó la de Estados Unidos saludada por 21 cañonazos. A continuación desembarcaron 600 marines estadounidenses.

Cien años más tarde se estableció allí un execrable campo de concentración y tortura de detenidos bajo custodia de Estados Unidos, en

de ese período, con la depresión mundial, los descontentos sociales en aumento y el temor a la revolución, EEUU se convenció que Machado constituía más en una carga que en un beneficio.

En marzo de 1933 el Presidente estadounidense Franklyn Delano Roosevelt propuso lo que denominó la “Política del Buen Vecino” y se manifestó contrario a las intervenciones armadas en América Latina.

Enviaron a Cuba al embajador especial Sumner Welles, con el encargo de prevenir que un gobierno de tendencia izquierdista sustituyera al de Machado, después que un poderoso movimiento revolucionario se había extendido a lo largo de la Isla.

Estados Unidos apostó por Fulgencio Batista cuando Machado fue derrocado y, una vez que se instaló como dictador, se firmó el Tratado de Reciprocidad en Washington. Revocó la Enmienda Platt y el Tratado Permanente, pero mantuvo la base naval de Guantánamo. Se firmó un nuevo acuerdo azucarero, que reforzó la dependencia cubana hacia Estados Unidos.

Tras casi dos décadas de “democracia representativa” bajo el control y la supervisión de EEUU, Batista nuevamente fue llamado en marzo de 1952 para llevar a cabo un golpe de estado, seguido por una feroz dictadura notoria por su corrupción y represión. La lucha armada contra la tiranía se desarrolló intensamente.

Durante la guerra revolucionaria de 1952 a 1959, el régimen de Batista contó con un amplio apoyo de EU, con consejeros militares en cada arma y en cada rama. La base de Guantánamo sirvió como un suministrador de combustible y municiones para los aviones del dictador, que bombardeaban indiscriminadamente las áreas rurales y los poblados indefensos.

Después del Triunfo Revolucionario del primero de enero de 1959, La Administración de EU, bajo la égida del General Dwight B. Eisenhower comenzó a fomentar acciones de subversión



tratado.

A la Convención Constituyente cubana se le amenazó contra cualquier modificación a la Enmienda y se le previno que las tropas de Estados Unidos no abandonarían Cuba hasta tanto la Convención no aceptara los términos contenidos en la Enmienda. Para evitar cualquier posible duda, el Senador Platt concluyó su amenaza exponiendo que, si la Enmienda no fuere aceptada, no habría una República de Cuba.

En 1901, Teodoro Roosevelt fue proclamado Presidente de los EEUU. Durante el gobierno de McKinley, había fungido como Subsecretario de la Marina y había sido uno de los más fuertes promotores de la intervención militar en Cuba.

o estaciones carboneras, tal y como lo estipulaba la Enmienda Platt.

En una ceremonia memorable en la que la bandera cubana fue izada por el respetado General Máximo Gómez, la República de Cuba fue establecida oficialmente el 20 de Mayo de 1902. Pero sería un error considerar que Cuba obtuvo su independencia ese día, ya que ello ocultaría la verdad histórica y distorsionaría el verdadero papel de los Estados Unidos en los resultados de la guerra de independencia que Cuba libró frente al colonialismo español.

Casi 70 por ciento de la industria azucarera —la más importante y casi la única de la isla— estaba en manos de los capitalistas estadounidenses, quienes también eran dueños de la mejor tierra arable.

El Partido Revolucionario Cubano, fundado por José Martí como organización política única dirigida a unir a todos los cubanos para luchar por la independencia contra España y evitar que los EEUU absorbieran a Cuba, había sido disuelto; el Ejército Libertador cubano había sido desmovilizado y la Enmienda Platt había quedado firmemente incrustada en la Constitución cubana.

Tan vil fue la interferencia en los asuntos internos de Cuba que Leonard Word, Gobernador militar de la isla después de la Guerra Hispano-Americana, escribió en una carta a Theodore Roosevelt, que “queda, por supuesta poca o ninguna independencia para Cuba bajo la Enmienda Platt.”

En 1902, llegó el momento de convocar a las primeras elecciones. El presidente electo fue un cubano naturalizado como ciudadano estadounidense luego de

desafío al derecho internacional humanitario, y aún sigue existiendo no obstante la casi unánime condena internacional.

La base naval de Guantánamo ha sido también el lugar desde donde Estados Unidos ha lanzado muchas invasiones contra países de la región, las más recientes contra Haití, República Dominicana, Panamá y Granada.

Abriendo el siglo XX, Cuba se convirtió en el modelo del imperialismo estadounidense. El dominio económico y político había sido logrado sin apelar a la conquista de una colonia a la vieja usanza. Los Estados Unidos podían seguir proclamando sus tradiciones y creencias anticoloniales a pesar de haber convertido a Cuba en una nación dependiente de ellos. Fue en estos tiempos que el término “esfera de influencia” se convirtió en un eufemismo internacional para el neocolonialismo.

Sin embargo los Estados Unidos intervinieron militarmente en Cuba en 1906, 1909 y en 1912. Durante esta última intervención, EEUU aprovechó la oportunidad de imponer la extensión de su territorio en Guantánamo a cambio de devolver otra base que tenía en Bahía Honda, al oeste de La Habana. Ese mismo año el Presidente de EEUU William Howard Taft expresó: “No está lejos el día en que tres Estrellas y Barras en tres puntos equidistantes marcarán nuestro territorio: uno en el Polo Norte, otro en el Canal de Panamá y el tercero en el Polo Sur. Todo el hemisferio será nuestro, como ya nos pertenece moralmente en virtud de nuestra superioridad racial.”

Cuba fue ocupada nuevamente por los Marines de EU entre 1917 y 1923, cuando la Revolución Rusa inspiró un resurgir revolucionario en Cuba. Suprimieron las huelgas y protegieron las propiedades norteamericanas. Un gobernador norteamericano administraba prácticamente las finanzas del gobierno cubano y representantes de los intereses azucareros se convirtieron en figuras políticas prominentes. Ellos introdujeron políticas que se adecuaban a los intereses de EEUU a expensas del desarrollo nacional cubano.

Entre 1925 y 1933 los intereses de Estados Unidos en Cuba fueron supervisados por el dictador Gerardo Machado, apodado “El Carnicero” o “el Asno con Garras”. A finales

contra Cuba. Al finalizar el año, la CIA comenzó a introducir saboteadores en Cuba.

El 6 de julio el gobierno de Estados Unidos cortó la cuota azucarera asignada a Cuba y el gobierno cubano respondió nacionalizando los centrales azucareros de propiedad norteamericana. Inmediatamente, el Estado Mayor Conjunto las Fuerzas Armadas de EEUU recomendó al Presidente que autorizara una invasión total a la Isla.

Cuando la fuerza invasora se aproximaba el 16 de abril de 1961 y varios aeropuertos cubanos eran atacados por bombarderos procedentes de EEUU, Fidel Castro anunció al mundo el carácter socialista de la Revolución.

Al día siguiente una fuerza interventora de 1 500 mercenarios, reclutados, armados y dirigidos por la CIA, desembarcó en Cuba. Consistía en una tropa de policías torturadores y pistoleros paramilitares de la tiranía de Batista y otros exilados reaccionarios de Miami que desembarcaron en la bahía de Cochinos, en la costa Sur cubana. Fidel Castro dirigió personalmente la contraofensiva.

La invasión de la bahía de Cochinos constituyó un humillante fracaso para los Estados Unidos al ser derrotados sus invasores en solo 72 horas. Los defensores sufrieron un número mayor de bajas dado que los invasores estaban mejor equipados y tenían mejor entrenamiento militar, solo que carecían de recursos morales.

Los prisioneros fueron devueltos a Estados Unidos a cambio de alimentos para los niños cubanos. Ni un solo prisionero fue asesinado, torturado o vio menoscabado sus derechos humanos, porque tales han sido siempre los principios éticos de la revolución cubana.

Diez sucesivos gobiernos de los Estados Unidos han intentado estrangular a la revolución cubana con todos los medios a su disposición, a excepción de la guerra abierta y total. Durante los primeros años de la revolución, varios presidentes norteamericanos y sus Fiscales Generales han violado repetidamente las leyes internacionales y comprometido seriamente la seguridad de EEUU reclutando los servicios de capos del crimen organizado para acciones contra Cuba.

continuado en la página 12



Che Guevara y Camillo Cienfuegos

# “Cuba Can be Counted Upon to Fight for Truth & Transparency”

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. FELIPE PÉREZ ROQUE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Geneva, 20 June 2006

Excellencies:

Today is a particularly symbolic day. Cuba is a founding member of the Human Rights Council and the United States is not. Cuba was elected with the overwhelming support of 135 countries, more than two-thirds of the United Nations General Assembly, while the United States did not even dare to run as a candidate. Cuba relied on the secret vote for the same reasons that the United States was afraid of it.

Cuba's election epitomizes the victory of principles and truth; it stands as recognition of the value of our resilience. The absence of the United States is the defeat of lies; it is the moral punishment for the haughtiness of an empire.

The election entailed a demanding assessment. Each one got what they deserved. Cuba was rewarded and the United States was punished. Each one had its history and the voting countries were well aware of it.

The African countries recalled that over 2,000 Cuban fighters had shed their generous blood in the struggle against the outrageous Apartheid regime, which the United States supported and furnished with weapons, even nuclear ones.

The election for Cuba came at a moment in which nearly 30,000 Cuban doctors were saving lives

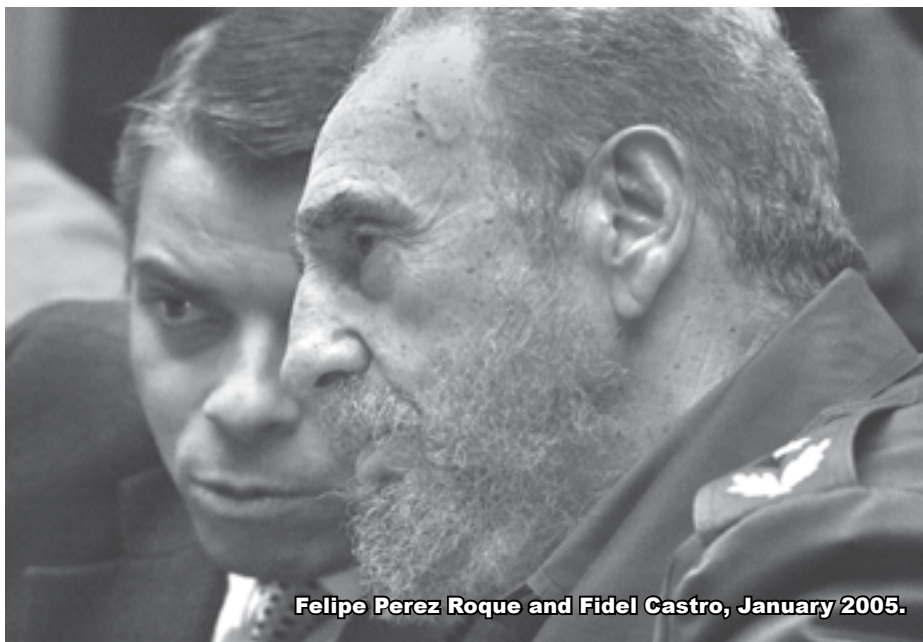
behind Israel's crimes and atrocities.

While under the striking force of Hurricane Katrina the US Government abandoned hundreds of thousands of people to their luck, most of them black and poor, Cuba immediately offered to send 1,100 doctors, who could have saved lives and alleviated their suffering.

I could go on and on listing reasons until tomorrow. I just want to add that it is the Government of the United States, not its people, which does not have a seat today as a member of the Council. The American people will be represented in the others, including Cuba's seat. Our delegation will also speak out for the rights of the American people and, particularly, for the rights of its most discriminated and excluded sectors.

Now, the truth is that the United States was not alone in its gross and desperate schemes and pressures to prevent Cuba's election. A handful of its allies followed them to the very end. The usual posse: beneficiaries of the unjust and exclusion-oriented world order, most of them former colonial metropolises, which have not yet paid off their historical debt to their once-colonies.

Cuba is perfectly aware, even to its barest details, of the secret agreement negotiated in Brussels through which the European Union undertook not to vote for Cuba and then work closely with the United States against our candidature. But



Felipe Perez Roque and Fidel Castro, January 2005.

Cuba. Not because they colluded with the United States to try to prevent our election. Not because they have never been able to have an ethical and independent policy towards Cuba.

We are awaiting a rectification to the attitude of the European Union, which last year prevented the Commission on Human Rights from adopting an investigation into the massive, flagrant and systematic human rights violations at Guantánamo Naval Base.

A rectification to the silent complicity with which they allowed hundreds of secret CIA flights carrying kidnapped people and the establishment of clandestine prisons right on European soil, where prisoners are tortured and harassed. So far, the European Union has hypocritically hindered the investigation and the clarification of these events.

The European Union has not mustered the courage to serve exemplary sanctions on the miserable manifestations of lack of respect for

bow their head.

Cuba cannot be counted upon to use the new universal periodical review mechanism as an instrument of new pressures and media campaigns.

Nor can Cuba be counted upon to defend lies and act hypocritically.

Cuba can be counted upon to fight for truth and transparency, to defend the right to independence, to self-determination, to social justice, to equality. And also to defend the right to food, to education, to health, to dignity, the right to a dignified life.

Cuba can be counted upon to defend real democracy, true participation and the real enjoyment of all human rights.

Cuba's cooperation cannot be counted upon to assist the spurious mandate of any envoy, representative or rapporteur imposed through

and alleviating the pain in 70 countries, while the United States reached that stage with 150,000 invading soldiers, sent to kill and die in an unjust and illegal war.

The election for Cuba came with more than 300,000 patients from 26 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean who were recovering their eyesight thanks to the cost-free surgeries performed by Cuban eye specialists. It came for the United States with over 100,000 civilians murdered and 2,500 American youths dead in a war concocted to steal a country's oil and give away sumptuous contracts to a group of cronies of the President of the world's sole superpower.

The election for Cuba came with more than 25,000 youths from 120 Third World countries studying in its universities and colleges free of charge. It came for the United States with a concentration camp in Guantánamo, where prisoners are subjected to torture and where the official statement of the prison wardens was that the suicide of three human beings “is not an act of despair but an act of war and propaganda.”

The election for Cuba came with its airplanes carrying Cuban medical doctors and field hospitals to places where there had been natural disasters or epidemics. It came for the United States with its aircraft secretly carrying drugged and handcuffed prisoners from one jail to another.

The election for Cuba came with its proclamation of the prevalence of lawfulness over force, defending the United Nations Charter, demanding and fighting for a better world. It came for the United States with its proclamation of “if you are not on our side, you are against us.”

The election for Cuba came with its proposal of setting aside the trillion US dollars annually spent on weapons to fight off the yearly death of preventable causes of 11 million children under the age of five years and 600,000 poor women at childbirth. In the meantime, it came for the United States with its proclamation of its right to bomb and “pre-emptively” wipe out what it scornfully called “any dark corners of the world” if its designs were not obeyed. That included the city of The Hague, if there were any attempts to prosecute an American soldier at the International Criminal Court.

While Cuba defended the rights of the Palestinian people, the United States was the main pillar



they failed famously. It turned out that Cuba was elected without its support and its uncomfortable ally, which they need as a policeman to guarantee its privileges and squandering opulence, could not even run as a candidate.

The corridors and halls of this building are now reverberating with repeated calls for “a fresh start” and “breathing fresh air into the new Council” – precisely by those who are responsible for the manipulation, hypocrisy and selectivity that caused the Commission on Human Rights to run aground. It is fitting to point out that a fresh start cannot be built on the oblivion of what has been happening or the simulation that some sugar-coated rhetoric is a problem-solver. What we need are deeds and not words.

If there is any truth to the statements by the spokespersons of the European Union and we are actually faced with a mea culpa, then we are still awaiting their rectification. Not because of

other religions and customs.

The European Union was an accomplice to the United States in turning the former Commission into some sort of Inquisition Tribunal against the countries of the South. We just hope that it will not happen again now.

The European Union has not even acknowledged its historical debt to the nearly 100 countries – currently independent nations after years of struggle and sacrifice – which were its pillaged colonies when, fifty-seven years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, which paradoxically stated that: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Excellencies:

This session can usher in a new stage in the struggle to create a real system for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all the inhabitants on the planet, and not just for the rich and privileged. A radical change will be required to that end; a real revolution in the concepts and methods that weighed down the defunct Commission.

Cuba does not indulge in wishful thinking about the real willingness of the developed countries – allies of the United States – to take that significant and historical step. However, it will give them the benefit of the doubt. It will wait and watch them.

Cuba can be counted upon if we work towards fulfilling the promises that have been trumpeted. If the past repeats itself and the Council becomes a battlefield again, from now on Cuba can be counted upon to turn, one more time, into a fighter in the trenches of ideas of the Third World.

Cuba cannot be counted upon to turn the Council into an exclusive tribunal against the underdeveloped countries and ensure the impunity of those in the North. Nor can it be relied upon to use the Council's suspension clause against rebellious countries or to continue using, in a politicized and selective fashion, the country resolutions to punish those that do not

force and blackmail. Cuba can be counted upon to cooperate, on an equal footing, with the Council and its non-selective mechanisms.

Cuba's cooperation cannot be counted upon to make silence and fail to speak out against the ruthless economic blockade that we have endured for over four decades, nor can it be relied upon not to demand the return to our Homeland of five pure and courageous Cuban youths that were fighting terrorism and are currently imprisoned in US jails unjustly and illegally.

Cuba's cooperation cannot be counted upon to relinquish a single principle. Cuba will always be counted upon to uphold the noble ideal of building a better world for all.

Finally, on behalf of the Cuban people, who dream, build and defend their Revolution back in our Homeland, I would like to extend a special gratitude to our Third World brothers and sisters for their decisive support for Cuba's election as a member of the Human Rights Council – and I hereby reiterate that the Cubans will never betray the trust that you have placed in us.

For those who support Cuba's struggle for its rights, which is also the struggle for the rights of all the nations in the Third World and the progressive and democratic forces in the First World, we have a message: Until victory onwards!

For those who attack Cuba and for their accomplices, we have another message: Homeland or Death!

We shall overcome!

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Ginebra 20 de junio de 2006

Excelencias:

Hoy es un día especialmente simbólico. Cuba es miembro fundador del Consejo de Derechos Humanos y Estados Unidos no. Cuba resultó elegida con el apoyo abrumador de 135 países, más de dos tercios de la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas, mientras Estados Unidos no se atrevió siquiera a presentarse como candidato. Cuba confiaba en el voto secreto por las mismas razones que Estados Unidos lo temía.

La elección de Cuba es la victoria de los principios y de la verdad, es un reconocimiento al valor de nuestra resistencia. La ausencia de Estados Unidos es la derrota de la mentira, es el castigo moral a la arrogancia de un imperio.

La elección supuso una exigente evaluación. Cada uno recibió lo que merecía. Cuba fue premiada y Estados Unidos fue castigado. Cada uno tenía su historia y los países que votaron la conocían bien.

Los países africanos recordaban que más de dos mil combatientes cubanos habían derramado su sangre generosa en la lucha contra el oprobioso régimen del apartheid, al que Estados Unidos apoyó y armó, incluso con armas nucleares.

Cuba llegó a la elección con casi 30 mil médicos cubanos salvando vidas y aliviando el dolor en 70 países mientras Estados Unidos llegó con 150 mil soldados invasores, enviados a matar y a morir en una guerra injusta e ilegal.

Cuba llegó con más de 300 mil pacientes de 26 países de América Latina y el Caribe que recuperaban la

# Para luchar por la verdad y la transparencia

**INTERVENCIÓN DE FELIPE PÉREZ ROQUE, MINISTRO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA EN EL SEGMENTO DE ALTO NIVEL DEL CONSEJO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS.**



Felipe Pérez Roque en Puerto Rico.

capaces jamás de tener una política ética e independiente hacia Cuba.

Esperamos una rectificación de la actitud de la Unión Europea, que impidió el pasado año que se aprobara en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos una investigación sobre las masivas, flagrantes y sistemáticas violaciones de derechos humanos en la Base Naval de Guantánamo.

Una rectificación del cómplice silencio con el que permitieron la realización de cientos de vuelos secretos de la CIA trasladando personas secuestradas y el establecimiento de cárceles clandestinas en el propio territorio europeo, en las que se tortura y se veja a los prisioneros. La Unión Europea ha obstaculizado hipócritamente hasta hoy la investigación y el esclarecimiento de estos hechos.

La Unión Europea no ha tenido el valor de sancionar ejemplarmente las miserables manifestaciones de falta de respeto contra otras religiones y costumbres.

La Unión Europea fue cómplice de Estados Unidos en la conversión de la antigua Comisión en una suerte de tribunal inquisidor contra los países del Sur. Esperamos que ahora no se repita.

La Unión Europea no ha reconocido siquiera su deuda histórica con los casi 100 países, hoy naciones independientes tras años de lucha y sacrificio, que eran sus expoliadas colonias en el momento en que 57 años atrás se aprobaba la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos, en la que paradójicamente se afirmaba que: "Todos los seres humanos nacen libres e iguales en dignidad y derechos".

Excelencias:

instrumento de nuevas presiones y campañas mediáticas, no se podrá contar con Cuba.

Para defender la mentira y actuar con hipocresía, tampoco se podrá contar con Cuba.

Para luchar por la verdad y la transparencia, para defender el derecho a la independencia, a la libre determinación, a la justicia social, a la igualdad, si se puede contar con Cuba. También para defender el derecho a la alimentación, a la educación, a la salud, a la dignidad, el derecho a una vida decorosa.

Para defender la democracia real, la participación verdadera, el disfrute real de todos los derechos humanos, se puede contar con Cuba.

Para cooperar con el espurio mandato de cualquier enviado, representante o relator impuesto a través de la fuerza y el chantaje, no se puede contar con la colaboración de Cuba. Para cooperar, en plano de igualdad con los demás, con el Consejo y sus mecanismos no selectivos, se puede contar con Cuba.

No se podrá contar con la colaboración de Cuba para que haga silencio y no denuncie el cruel bloqueo económico que sufrimos hace más de cuatro décadas y no reclame el regreso a nuestra Patria de cinco puros y valerosos jóvenes luchadores antiterroristas cubanos, presos injusta e ilegalmente en cárceles norteamericanas.

Para que renunciemos a un solo principio, no se podrá contar con la colaboración de Cuba. Para defender el noble ideal de construir un mundo mejor para todos, se podrá siempre contar con Cuba.

Finalmente, a nombre del pueblo cubano, que allá en nuestra Patria sueña,

visión gracias a las cirugías gratuitas realizadas por oftalmólogos cubanos. Estados Unidos llegó con más de 100 mil civiles asesinados y 2500 jóvenes norteamericanos muertos en una guerra fraguada para robarse el petróleo de un país y regalarle jugosos contratos a un grupo de los amiguetes del Presidente de la única superpotencia del planeta.

Cuba llegó a la elección con más de 25 mil jóvenes de 120 países del Tercer Mundo estudiando gratuitamente en sus universidades. Estados Unidos llegó con un campo de concentración en Guantánamo, donde se tortura a los prisioneros y en el que se declara oficialmente por los carceleros que el suicidio de tres seres humanos "no es un acto de desesperación sino un acto de guerra y de propaganda".

Cuba llegó a la elección mientras sus aviones transportaban médicos cubanos y hospitales de campaña a lugares donde ocurrieron desastres naturales o epidemias. Estados Unidos llegó mientras sus aviones transportaban en secreto de unas cárceles a otras a prisioneros drogados y maniatados.

Cuba llegó a la elección proclamando la vigencia del derecho sobre la fuerza, defendiendo la Carta de Naciones Unidas, reclamando y luchando por un mundo mejor. Estados Unidos llegó proclamando que "si no están de nuestro lado están contra nosotros".

Cuba llegó a la elección proponiendo dedicar el millón de millones de dólares que anualmente se gasta en armas a luchar contra la muerte por

causas prevenibles de 11 millones de niños menores de 5 años y de 600 mil mujeres pobres en el parto cada año. Mientras, Estados Unidos llegó proclamando su derecho a bombardear y arrasarse "preventivamente" lo que llamó con desprecio "cualquier oscuro rincón del mundo" si no se obedecían sus designios. Ello incluía a la ciudad de La Haya, si se pretendía juzgar a algún soldado norteamericano en la Corte Penal Internacional.

Mientras Cuba defendía los derechos del pueblo palestino, Estados Unidos era el principal sostén de los crímenes y atrocidades de Israel.

Mientras bajo el azote del huracán Katrina, el gobierno de Estados Unidos abandonaba a cientos de miles de personas a su suerte, la mayoría negros y pobres, Cuba ofrecía el envío inmediato de 1100 médicos, que hubieran podido salvar vidas y aliviar el sufrimiento.

Podría seguir así desgranando razones hasta mañana. Sólo quiero agregar



'Misión Milagro': Derechos humanos de los Cubal

que quien no ocupa hoy un escaño como miembro del Consejo es el gobierno de Estados Unidos, no su pueblo. El pueblo norteamericano estará representado en los demás, incluido el escaño de Cuba. Nuestra delegación será vocera también de los

derechos del pueblo norteamericano y, en particular, de sus sectores más discriminados y excluidos.

Ahora bien, la verdad es que Estados Unidos no estuvo solo en sus groseras y desesperadas maniobras y presiones para impedir la elección de Cuba. Un pequeño grupo de aliados lo acompañó hasta el final. Son los de siempre. Beneficiarios del injusto y excluyente orden mundial, antiguas metrópolis coloniales en su mayoría, que no han pagado todavía su deuda histórica con las que fueron sus colonias.

Cuba conoce perfectamente, hasta en sus mínimos detalles, el acuerdo secreto negociado en Bruselas a través del cual la Unión Europea se comprometió a no votar por Cuba y a trabajar estrechamente junto a Estados Unidos contra nuestra candidatura. Pero fracasaron rotundamente. Resulta que Cuba fue elegida sin su apoyo y su incómodo aliado, al que necesitan como gendarme que garantice sus privilegios y su opulencia derrochadora, no se pudo presentar siquiera a las elecciones.

En los pasillos y salones de este edificio se escuchan ahora reiterados llamados a "un nuevo comienzo" y a "imprimirle aire fresco al nuevo Consejo", precisamente de parte de los mismos que son responsables de la manipulación, la hipocresía y la selectividad que hicieron naufragar a la Comisión. Conviene señalar que un nuevo comienzo no puede construirse sobre la base de olvidar lo que ha venido ocurriendo o simular que un poco de retórica edulcorada resuelve los problemas. Hechos y no palabras es lo que necesitamos.

Si son sinceras las declaraciones de los voceros de la Unión Europea y estamos de verdad ante un mea culpa, pues entonces esperamos todavía por su rectificación. No por Cuba. No porque se hayan confabulado con Estados Unidos para tratar de impedir nuestra elección. No porque no hayan sido

Esta sesión puede marcar el inicio de una nueva etapa en la lucha por crear un verdadero sistema de promoción y protección de todos los derechos humanos para todos los habitantes del planeta, y no sólo para los ricos y privilegiados. Se necesitará para ello un cambio radical, una verdadera revolución en las concepciones y métodos que lastraron a la defenestrada Comisión.

Cuba no se hace ilusiones con la real disposición de los países desarrollados, aliados de Estados Unidos, a dar ese paso trascendente histórico. Sin embargo, les concederá el beneficio de la duda. Esperará y los observará.

Si se trabaja para hacer realidad las promesas que han sido proclamadas a todos los vientos, se podrá contar con Cuba. Si se repite el pasado, y el Consejo vuelve a tornarse en un campo de batalla, se puede contar desde ahora con que Cuba será otra vez un combatiente en las trincheras de ideas del Tercer Mundo.

Para convertir el Consejo en tribunal exclusivo contra los países subdesarrollados y asegurar impunidad a los del Norte, no se podrá contar con Cuba. Tampoco para usar la cláusula de suspensión del Consejo contra los países rebeldes, ni para seguir usando politizada y selectivamente las resoluciones sobre países para castigar a los que no bajan la cabeza.

Para usar el nuevo mecanismo de revisión periódica universal como



Guantánamo: Derechos humanos de los E.E.U.U.

construye y defiende su Revolución, agradezco de modo especial a nuestros hermanos del Tercer Mundo su apoyo decisivo a la elección de Cuba como miembro del Consejo de Derechos Humanos y les reitero que los cubanos no defraudaremos jamás la confianza que ustedes depositan en nosotros.

Para los que apoyan la lucha de Cuba por sus derechos, que es también la lucha por los derechos de todos los pueblos del Tercer Mundo y de las fuerzas progresistas y democráticas en el Primer Mundo, tenemos un mensaje: ¡Hasta la victoria siempre!

Para los que agreden a Cuba y para sus cómplices, tenemos otro mensaje: ¡Patria o Muerte!

¡Venceremos!

By Nita Palmer

On July 9, 2006, headlines in Canada were once again set ablaze by the death of Cpl. Anthony Boneca, the 17<sup>th</sup> Canadian soldier to die in Afghanistan. Boneca died during combat in Operation Mountain Thrust, the biggest offensive against Afghan people since the 2001 invasion. Boneca's death was another mark in the Canadian war drive, as the deaths of thousands of Afghans have each marked a step in the brutal Canadian

advancement to the standard of living and human rights of the Afghan people." (May 16, 2006).

### Life in Afghanistan: Daily Crisis, Daily Resistance

On the first anniversary of the intensified Canadian War Drive in Afghanistan, Harper's comments about bringing "human rights" to Afghan people ring more false than ever. Today, the civilian death toll as

For the imperialist occupiers, bringing "stability" to Afghanistan means crushing the resistance as effectively as possible. It means preventing people from defending their land, their rights, and their right to self-determination. It means securing the area politically, as it is an area strategically situated between Asia, Europe, and the Middle East that is "set to become a regional business hub over the next 10 to 15 years", according to the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency. For Afghan people, stability

before, it is time for all poor, working, and oppressed people in Canada to unite against this criminal occupation. It is time for all peace-loving, all humanity-loving people to unite against this criminal occupation. And it is the responsibility of all antiwar, peace, and social justice activists and organizations to unite against this criminal occupation. It is the responsibility of these organizations to unite in defense of the Afghan people, and against the Canadian war drive.

**Canada Out of Afghanistan Now!  
End the Criminal Occupation of  
Afghanistan!  
Stop the Canadian War Drive!**

# AFGHANISTAN:

## Canada's War Drive Uncovered

war drive. However, Boneca's death also began to peel away at the reality of the Canadian occupation of Afghanistan. According to Boneca's uncle, Boneca didn't "[believe] totally in what he was doing because... he saw things he didn't expect to see and didn't want to see and probably did things he didn't want to do." More than ever, the opposition to the Canadian War Drive is growing, both in Canada and in Afghanistan.

### Intensified Canadian War Drive: One Year Later

During the October 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan, the government of Canada sent troops to Afghanistan under the name of Operation Apollo. They claimed that these troops were there for purposes of "peacekeeping", and "reconstruction". However, during this time, the life expectancy dropped by four years, maternal mortality rates skyrocketed, and the number of people living below the poverty line expanded to 80%.

On July 14, 2005, another leap in the Canadian



Protest in Kabul Against US. May 2006.

war drive occurred. Chief of Defense Staff General Rick Hillier announced that 2,000 more troops would be sent to Southern Afghanistan, to take command of the NATO occupation in the Kandahar area. As he announced this, he also shattered the mask of so-called "peacekeeping" that the Canadian occupation had been wearing for years, saying that Afghans were "detestable murderers and scumbags", and that the job of the Canadian Forces was "to be able to kill people".

a result of the occupation is higher than any time since the 2001 invasion. Poverty is rampant in the country, and basic services such as water, health care, and sanitation effectively do not exist.

The crisis of everyday life under occupation for Afghan people has created a growing resistance to the occupation in Afghanistan. According to the Washington Post, July 2006 has seen the "worst surge in Taliban

and security means an end to the criminal occupation of their country. It means control over their land, and the ability to establish a country in their interests, rather than for the interests of the occupiers.

### Towards an effective antiwar movement

This brutal, criminal occupation has clearly failed to win the hearts and minds of people in Afghanistan. As well, it has failed to

win hearts and minds here in Canada. The last year of the intensified Canadian War Drive in Afghanistan has awoken people in Canada to a new reality: Canada is at war. Opposition to this war drive is increasing every day. In the Lower Mainland alone, over 10,000 people have signed Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO)'s petition demanding Canada Out of Afghanistan Now! This opposition must – and will – continue to grow. But in order to build a broad opposition to this war drive, people in Canada must demand an Independent Public Inquiry into the Canadian war drive in Afghanistan, to ask: Why were 2,000 more troops deployed to Afghanistan without public consultation or debate? Why do education and health care go under

more money is put into the military budget? Demanding an Independent Public Inquiry is important to building a broad movement to demand Canada Out of Afghanistan.

As opposition to the Canadian War Drive grows, and as the brutal reality of Canadian imperialism exposes itself more than ever



Canadian Soldiers do house-to-house raids in Kandahar as part of 'Operation Archer'. July 9, 2006.

And so the boots of 2,000 more troops began marching off to war. In the last year, people in Canada have seen 17 soldiers and one diplomat come home in body bags. But more horrifying is the killings we do not hear about – such as the deaths of over 700 Afghans between May 2006-

July 2006 alone. Amidst this death and destruction, the Canadian government has made repeated statements to bolster support for the occupation of Afghanistan. According to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, "What we are doing there is not just protecting our national interests, but [we are] providing international leadership and providing real

violence since 2001". In reality, this "surge in Taliban violence" means a growing resistance from everyday civilians. While the occupying forces claim that they are trying to create stability and security in Afghanistan, the truth is just the opposite, as more and more people are forced to fight for their lives every day.

continuado de la página 9

### LA AGONIA DE LA FRUTA MADURA

Las actividades terroristas promovidas por Estados Unidos han provocado la muerte de tres mil quinientos cubanos, en tanto que dos mil cien personas han quedado mutiladas por tales acciones. Los actos terroristas han incluido la explosión de un avión de pasajeros en el que murieron 73 pasajeros, el asesinato de diplomáticos cubanos en varios países, incluyendo las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York, ataques

sorpresivos contra supuestos objetivos "estratégicos"; el hundimiento en aguas internacionales y cubanas de buques con banderas de varias naciones, explosión de bombas en fábricas y hoteles. Sabotajes en objetivos económicos, acciones de guerra bacteriológica y repetidos atentados contra la vida de Fidel Castro y otros dirigentes.

El bloqueo económico, que se ha ejecutado

contra Cuba durante 47 años consecutivos, eufemísticamente llamado "embargo" en los EEUU, ha tenido para Cuba un costo aproximado de 125 billones de dólares.

Los diseñadores de política de los Estados Unidos hacia Cuba aún creen que ésta debe estar dirigida, como declaraba la directiva de mayo de 1961 del Consejo de Seguridad Nacional de ese país, a lograr el derrocamiento del Presidente cubano, Fidel Castro.

A fin de justificar una agresión militar directa a fin de lograr ese propósito, los estrategas estadounidenses han recurrido a diabólicos esquemas dirigidos a proporcionar "pretextos para la invasión" que solo se han conocido muchos años más tarde, cuando son desclasificados documentos de la CIA y otros servicios secretos.

Entre ellos, fue recientemente descubierto que la Junta de Jefes de Estados Mayores había aprobado planes para hundir un barco con cubanos en ruta hacia la Florida, que afortunadamente fueron vetados por el Secretario de Defensa

Robert McNamara.

Comoquiera que quienes manipulan y controlan los medios a escala global responden a los mismos intereses que los diseñadores de las políticas y estrategias que generan esas engañosas acciones estadounidenses, es extremadamente importante que la opinión pública mundial permanezca alerta ante tales apatitos de frutas maduras.

*\*Manuel E. Yepe Menéndez*

*es Secretario del Movimiento Cubano por la Paz y la Soberanía de los Pueblos, O.N.G. constituida en 1949 que disfruta de status consultivo en el Consejo Económico y Social de la Organización de Naciones Unidas. Es abogado, economista y científico social, y se desempeña como Profesor Adjunto del Instituto Superior de Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana. Fue Embajador de Cuba en Rumanía, Director General de la Agencia Latinoamericana de Noticias Prensa Latina y Vicepresidente del Instituto Cubano de Radio y Televisión.*

# Sami Ala'a Vancouver Speech

Continued From Page 3

Liberation of Baghdad, they will use 130 aircraft, F16 and Cobra helicopters, with special forces and marine units. It is difficult to control Baghdad, because Baghdad is not a small city – there are 7 million in Baghdad, and Baghdad is huge. They will cut Baghdad into small pieces. They want to combat any resistance places in Baghdad. Officially, they talk about starting this strategy at the end of this month [June]. It is already started, you have a report from one week ago, that they started a big operation in Baghdad which involved 70,000 soldiers – American and Iraqi. Which by the way, contradicted to the American strategy because this operation is in the favour of the Iraqi resistance because it means that you need to make a checkpoint. You may see that a permanent checkpoint is to the advantage of the Iraqi resistance because they can attack it. You heard about these two soldiers who went missing last week, and yesterday they found them dead. Now they reduced the talk about this 70,000 operation. They don't talk about it anymore.

Of course, the war and occupation is illegal, illegitimate, which the Iraqi resistance understands. The political and security infrastructure, which was built by the occupation, is also illegal and illegitimate. Iraqi resistance defines itself as a national liberation movement, which has only one political objective: liberation of Iraq. This is very important to understand, all these main [resistance] groups, and military groups, there is no one that has the objective to take power. So all the talk about the Iraqi resistance wants to build a religious state, Baath party

Iraq will cost. He told the congress committee that it would cost between 100 and 200 billion dollars. Until now, the war and occupation has cost about 400 billion. The problem is Paul Wolfowitz made a wrong calculation? No, I do not think so. I think what he thought was that the US would occupy Iraq very quickly and export Iraqi oil by 7 million barrels a day. Now, after three years, they hardly export one million barrels of oil a day. Before



Protest against occupation forces. Najaf, Iraq, Feb 2006.

the war, despite sanctions, the Iraqi state succeeded to export 2.5 million barrels a day. This is the second target of the Iraqi resistance. The third target is all institutions of the so-called Iraqi government. This is an illegal government, installed by the occupying troops. All government institutions are illegal too. Iraqi police, National Guard, the Iraqi army are illegitimate. These police and army have one function: to protect occupying troops, to be a shield between Iraqi people and occupying troops. And of course you see Iraq resistance succeeding to put the occupation in a real quagmire. It relies on the Iraqi people and on our history of resistance. We never identify ourselves in ethnic or religious

are very weak, they are only on paper. We have one, which is now called Sunni and is part of the Brotherhood in Egypt, which started in 1957. But from 1957 until occupation, it existed only on paper. Two other religious parties that we have, both started in 1982 in Iran by the Khomeini government. The other two Shia political parties came with the occupation. This is part of the media distortion of the situation in Iraq. The news about Iraqi people constantly refers to Sunni, Shia and Kurd.

About the issue about the civil war or sectarian war, I would say that there is no sectarian war in Iraq. There is a war between two fronts, Iraqi people and Iraqi resistance on one side and occupation forces and its Iraqi allies from the other side. If you heard from time to time, through the media, that for example they found in Baghdad that 11 people had been killed, beheaded, this is committed by the Iraqi elite, which is protected and financed and established by occupying forces. They operate with the direct protection of occupying troops.

If you remember earlier this year a mosque was bombed in Sammara. After this bombing, a few days massacres were committed on the so-called Sunni, in Baghdad. In ten days they killed 1400 people and burned 86 mosques in Baghdad. To kill this number in one week, and to burn 86 mosques in Baghdad in daylight, with the direct protection from the American occupation forces on the ground. So there is no civil war. There are two powers in Iraq that proved their ability to affect the security and balance in

wants to come to power again, this is not the agenda of the resistance. The Iraqi groups inside the resistance are united even though for three years the occupying forces tried to split the Iraqi

context. Our national identity is more important than our ethnic, religious or even ideological identity. I never saw an Iraqi before the occupation who would identify himself or herself as

the country; occupying troops and the Iraqi resistance.

## War of Liberation

So who has interest in this so-called civil war? The Iraqi resistance has no interest in this. If you look at the history it is not strange because the US, American, they tried this strategy in Vietnam. They create one million recruit, one million Vietnamese in the Vietnam army. They fight with the US troops in Vietnam. But the war in Vietnam was liberation. We would never consider the war at that time a civil war. It is the same strategy in Iraq. But Iraq has the added strategy of death-squads and the so-called "El Salvador Option", which became very active after the US administration appointed John Negroponte in 2004 as the US ambassador to Iraq. John Negroponte has a history and experience with death squads in El Salvador and Latin America. So they repeated this strategy in Iraq and try to give the picture that the Iraqi resistance is not organized, that they are killing women and children. They try to demonize the Iraqi resistance, but they will never succeed. They will succeed in their media, of course, but I think the people of the world know what is going on. It is a fight between occupation and the people. By the way, the Iraqi government never say that there is a civil war or sectarian war. They call it a "political vacuum". Rumsfeld and Bush say, "There is a civil war you know, and if we leave, there will be war between Iraqis." Even the Iraqi government knows that this is a lie. Iraqi people will not believe us if we say there is a civil war between Shia and Sunni. In one tribe, in one clan, you will find Sunni and Shia.

I think I will stop here so we can have time to discuss and have questions and comments.

\*Subtitles by Shannon Bundock



All women's protest in support of Iraq in Gaza City, Palestine.

resistance. Of course, for liberation of Iraq and to keep Iraq united for Iraqis. This is the stand very clear in the political and strategic program of the Iraqi resistance.

## Resistance Strategy

The Iraqi resistance used the strategy of 'war of attrition', which targets three subjects. The first is occupying troops and military bases, which is a legitimate target for the Iraqi resistance. The second one is to hinder the oil export. When I say this it is only oil export, the Iraqi resistance is only targeting oil export. They don't attack any gas stations or refineries. This is not in the interest of the Iraqi resistance. By attacking the oil export it is attacking a live nerve of the occupation. You see three months before the occupation, Paul Wolfowitz, who is now the World Bank director, he was in the congress committee to give an estimation on how much the war and occupation of

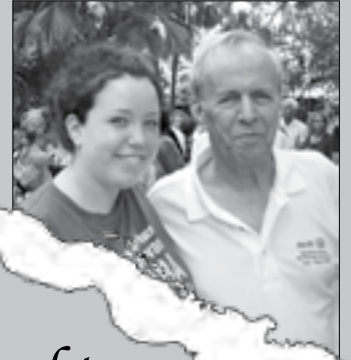
Shia, Sunni, Kurd or Arab. We say we are Iraqi. This is what the Americans didn't understand. They thought, that because this is a mosaic society, Kurd, Arab, Turkeman. In a religious context there are Muslim, Christian, Jewish. If you talk about Muslims, which are 90% of the society, we are Shia, Sunni. So America thought, that this society would be very easy [to divide]. But in Iraq, you see, you can find Shia marry to Sunni, Arab married to a Kurd. So this is not an issue in our mentality.

## What Sectarian War?

Contrary, political context plays a big role in our society. Since our modern state formation in 1919-21, there have been two political parties in Iraq that play a huge role. From the 30's, the Iraqi Communist Party and from the end of the 50's the Baath party, until now. We, in our political process, we only know these two parties, and both of them are secular. The religious parties in Iraq

# Visiting Cuba Through the Eyes of a Young Canadian Activist

## Memoir of a trip with Adventure, Education and Politics!



OR

## How I Learned to Love Cuba!

Part 3 - Final

By Sophie Ziner

"Fi-del, Fi-del, Fi-del", a sea of people beneath our balcony were chanting. It was ten minutes to 6:00 on July 26<sup>th</sup>, and we were in the Karl Marx Theatre in Havana. The 3000 other people that were chanting, waving flags and singing were the representatives of schools, unions, neighborhoods from all over Cuba. Two young women on stage with microphones were calling on different delegations, and that group would stand up and do a cheer.

Cubans celebrate on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July to mark a significant battle in 1953, in which a fledgling group of revolutionaries attempted an attack on the military barracks in

intentionally breaking the US blockade of Cuba. Traveling with 150 other "Caravanistas", we had taken 180 tonnes of humanitarian aid across the Texas/Mexico border, loaded the aid onto a barge, and traveled on to Cuba.

Pastors for Peace is one of many Cuba solidarity groups around the world which have taken up the task of defending Cuba from the attacks it faces. As a young person and a social justice activist, I had become involved in Cuba solidarity organizing after learning about how Cuba has fought for the human lives and dignity of its people.

This trip was my first time traveling to Cuba.

Moncada. This attempt sparked a series of events and actions that would eventually, in 1959, lead to the overthrow of the oppressive US-backed dictatorship of Fulencio Batista and the establishment of a revolutionary government.

So that's what Fidel started out his speech talking about- the attacks that Cuba had faced over the last year. He spoke on the tightening of the blockade by the US administration, of the five Cuban heroes that are currently being held in US jails for investigating terrorism against Cuba in Miami, and the constant slander and attacks by the media of imperialist countries. He outlined these things and then went into Cuba's response to them- that is to continue to build, to fight for the gains that have been made for the people of Cuba in the face of these attacks.

Fidel finished his speech by talking about the importance of the ever-growing connections between Cuba and Venezuela, about how the changes Venezuela is going through show how the ideas of the Cuban revolution can never be blockaded or killed.

The opportunity to hear this historic figure, this revolutionary was unbelievable.

I was in Cuba hearing Fidel speak on the 26<sup>th</sup> with a group called Pastors for Peace, a US-based solidarity group. Since 1992, Pastors for Peace has traveled to Cuba, carrying humanitarian aid down from Canada and the US and across the US border to Mexico,

The next day, we left Havana for a trip to the Isle of Youth. After a boat ride on a 100% Cuban made, state-of-the-art ferry, we arrived at the city of Nueva Gerona, and were met coming off the boat by children giving us all roses and a full band playing.

The Isle of Youth is famous for its arts schools, and our two-day visit there featured several wonderful cultural events with music, dancers, a contortionist and many other incredible things. We also continued to visit clinics, museums (such as the Presido Modelo Prison, where Fidel and others were held for two years following their capture during the attack on the Moncada Barracks, where Fidel wrote his famous speech "History will Absolve Me"), foster homes, schools etc.

We met up with representatives from the Island's UJC-Union of Communist Youth. We sat facing each other. There were maybe 40 of us, and 30 of them. Several people spoke from both delegations, including the young woman who is the head of the UJC for the province. During discussion that followed, a young man from the Cuban delegation got up and said "We see that there are young people in your group, and I wanted to ask them a question specifically- I want to know why young people in North America are interested in Cuba, and why they would choose to support the revolution."

I realized then that I definitely had something to say on this subject, and that the question cut to the heart

# "All Human Beings have to Unite against injustice, racism and Islamophobia"

## An interview with Brother Roshan Jamal of the United Muslim Alliance and the Canadian Muslim Alliance

By Ivan Drury

The Canadian Muslim Alliance formed in the early summer of 2006 in a climate of an increasing racist and Islamophobic war drive by the government of Canada. Brother Jamal, Shamas Umedaly, Sheikh Hasnain, Molana Nomani, Brother Karam Din and the president of the new Canadian Muslim Alliance, Mohammad Afzal Malik, formed in order to organize in this climate for greater unity between Muslims and non-Muslims in Canada.

Fire This Time welcomes the formation of this new group as a progressive response to the Canadian war drive, and as a model of the work that must be done to overcome the divisions between oppressed people in Canada. With cooperation between non-Muslim progressive groups and the Canadian Muslim all working, poor and oppressed people in Canada will be put in a better position to build a broad and effective movement for social justice and against racism, Islamophobia, war and occupation.

Fire This Time conducted this interview with Canadian Muslim Alliance founder Brother Roshan Jamal in order to find out more about this initiative and how both Muslim and non-Muslim people can get involved and help in this struggle.

**Fire This Time: Brother Jamal, can you explain what the Canadian Muslim Alliance is and why you formed this year?**

**Brother Jamal:** We wanted to have unity of all the Muslims and at the same time, to have unity with all the

Canadians, the Muslims should come out and join with other Canadians and start an interfaith dialogue and become closer to each other.

We will bring all Canadians together and our ideas will work for interfaith and I can see that there is no difference between Canadians. Canadians are very close to each other and that's why we decided that there should be more and more interfaith dialogue

Between '94 and now there have been lots of changes I can see that people are very close to each other politically friendly... between Muslim and non-Muslim.

**FTT: Can you explain to me what United Muslim Alliance has accomplished since 1992?**

**BJ:** Unity! And I really appreciate that. Everybody, all religious people have the ability to come together and stand together. That is the lesson of United Muslim Alliance since 1992.

We are trying to build a group that can bring Muslim brothers and sisters out and get involved in other groups. Everyone is practicing their own religion but we all agree that there is a god. So this means we should be able to work together.

This Interfaith drive is also happening at the time of an increasing racist and islamophobic drive in Canada. And this surprises me. The government should change its policies regarding this.

So we are trying to bring Muslim and non-Muslim people together against injustice and for a better world. Until now Canadians had one of the best names in the world. Canadians were everywhere as peace makers, peace keepers. We shouldn't change that.

**FTT: You have worked, as part of United Muslim Alliance, and hopefully will continue with Canadian Muslim Alliance, to work in cooperation with non-Muslim groups, especially in the antiwar movement and especially with Mobilization Against War and Occupation.**

**BJ:** Here in Vancouver, to my knowledge, there is only one group – MAWO – where I have seen young people of all faiths and all backgrounds come together and work for justice. I really admire the way they work. MAWO is a model for young people and for all people... there are many things we have to learn from MAWO because MAWO is doing a wonderful job in the antiwar movement. I'll tell you, they are very young, they don't get the financial support they need and I don't know how those young people survive with all the work they do for the people of the world.

Now, if you go deep, I believe people should help MAWO and encourage MAWO to do even more than they are doing. I think people should follow the example of MAWO and unite across religions and all backgrounds and work for social justice.

The Canadian Muslim Alliance will 100 percent continue to work with MAWO because we each have the same idea about how to work with other people, to work in unity for improvement in social life, for improvement in the community, and against injustice.

**FTT: Can you talk about the invasion of Lebanon by Israel and the impact this has on Muslims and all oppressed people around the world?**

**BJ:** It's not only Lebanon! In Iraq



they're talking about democracy and they don't have any democracy there. The same thing in Lebanon. If anything against Israel government, the US will automatically take the Israel side. Why? If the US wants to be the police of the world, they have to have justice, there is no other way.

We don't want lip service to democracy, we want real democracy. Even in Canada, we should not have any reason to fear, Canada should be a free country. We don't want lip service in Canada or in the Middle East. We want to see that all people are equal in reality.

Whenever the media talks about

Muslims they say that we are terrorists. Countries that invade Iraq and Lebanon are not terrorists? Guns and tanks and helicopters and bombs mean you are not a terrorist? But whenever someone fights for their rights they are terrorists. I would be happy if America practiced as they preached, but they do not. They are the biggest terrorists.

Our religion does not agree with fighting somebody... if you respect me I'll respect you. But if you don't respect me why should I respect you?

What they are doing in Lebanon has nothing to do with democracy. Killing innocent people has nothing to do with democracy. We want real democracy, we are part of that. But we don't want anything to do with lip service democracy.

**FTT: Can you talk about the arrest of the 17 Muslims in Toronto and the media and government treatment of that case?**

**BJ:** The entire Muslim community in Canada is in fear. Now, all seven to eight hundred thousand Muslim people in Canada are in fear and we don't even know what happened inside this case. They even put a media ban on the case so no one knows anything. Why do they have to hide? If you are not guilty then you have nothing to hide. But people are smart and they are educated, and they know this. We know that if you're not guilty you have nothing to hide.

You can't tell me that you are more

Canadian than me... why, because you are white? Is that right?

**FTT: What can non-Muslims do to help in the fight against racism and against Islamophobia?**

**BJ:** They should ask the government why they have to hide everything, why media should not be allowed in the court for the Toronto 17 case. We have to help each other. We are all human beings, and we are all brothers and sisters.

Everyone believes in justice and not in injustice. Why should these problems exist? If people could work together more and more then these problems would not exist. Canadians have to unite, and all human beings have to unite.

**FTT: Thank you Brother Jamal for your time.**



July 26th Rally, Havana, Cuba. 1959.

of why I was in Cuba, so I spoke up. I reiterated what had been said- that young people and students are marginalized in North America- and how we understand that we are under attack by capitalism, our education suffers while money is spent on military, we face low wages and low job security, but that we also see that there are many other people in this world who face these attacks and attacks from the same source. I talked about feeling connected to the struggles of people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and Palestine, and the struggles of Indigenous people all over the world. I said that we see these connections and we want to fight for them too, but it's a huge fight, overwhelmingly so, and it's easy to get demoralized and frustrated. So to deal with that, we turn to the leadership of those who are at the forefront of the struggle against imperialism- Cuba. I talked about how the leadership of Cubans, especially young Cubans, reminds us of the world we want to build and leaves us with no choice but to join them.

After dinner, we got back on the bus and went into the city and to a neighbourhood party organized by

and applauded, and it was very clear how proud the neighbourhood was to have him part of their community. After that, the music started again, and soon we were all dancing, eating and chatting.

It was amazing to see how connected everyone was, how these almost 150 people in the neighbourhood seemed like one family, and to see the energy and excitement and pride they had for their CDR and for Cuba.

I left thinking about the place where I grew up on Vancouver Island, where even though it was a small town, we rarely talked to our neighbours, and where I maybe saw the mayor or the MLA for our area once a year in a parade. Cuba has a 97% average turn out for each election, compared to a 64.7 % rate of eligible voter turnout in the January 2006 general election in Canada. The comparison between the attitude of Cuban people towards their government and their communities, and their commitment, energy and confidence is completely different to what I've experienced growing up in Canada.

a Committee for the Defence of the Revolution, or CDR. In Cuba there is a CDR in every neighbourhood, and they are the most local level of government. In each neighbourhood, representatives are elected and represent their communities on a municipal level.

The head of the CDR introduced several dance and singing performances by several children. She then announced that she wanted to give us a glimpse of what their CDR was like. She first asked everyone who was part of the Jose Marti Pioneers to put their hand up. (The Pioneers is an organization for children in Cuba, sort of like Scouts or Guides.) All of the children put their hands up. She then asked for everyone who was part of the High School Students' League to put up their hands, and many of the teenagers did. She asked everyone who was part of the University Federation to raise their hands, and many of the young adults put up their hands. Out of maybe 150 people, almost all of the adults put up their hands when she asked for everyone who was part of a union to raise their hand. Most of the women were part of the Women's Federation. She went on, asking for those who were in the Communist Party, asking for those who were part of the blockade watch, on and on, and then finally she asked:

"Would everyone who fought with Fidel and Che in the Sierra Miestra please put up their hand?" and sitting at the front, one old man put up his hand- and every one cheered

When we returned to Havana the next afternoon, I spent some time with a friend of mine that I had made at the facility where we were staying. My Spanish is not great, and in a halting and stumbling conversation with Julio, I guess I accidentally used a French word, and we discovered that we could both speak French.

Julio spoke French because his grandparents were from Haiti. Haiti is a country 90 miles away from Cuba to the East, where the people live in stark contrast to the people of Cuba. Already devastated for hundreds of years by colonial and imperialist intervention, in 2004, the US, Canada and France invaded Haiti, expelling Haiti's first democratically elected president. The turmoil that the people in Haiti have experienced since has dropped them to the poorest nation in the western hemisphere.

Julio talked about a lot of things- the challenges of life in Cuba under the blockade, the position he saw Cuba in the world, his hopes for the international Cuba Solidarity movement. He talked about going to school in Cuba, and about the "Special Period" Cuba went through after the fall of the Soviet Union, which had devastating effects on the Cuban economy.

In fact, almost every Cuban I met told me something similar- that life in Cuba wasn't always easy, that Cuba IS still a third-world country, and that the blockade makes getting things as simple as an aspirin almost impossible sometimes. But they also told me that they would

# TORONTO 17: VICTIMS OF THE ANTI-MUSLIM & RACIST WITCH HUNT AT HOME

## Mobilization Against War and Occupation-MAWO Statement

on the June 2nd 2006 arrests in the Toronto area

On Friday June 2nd seventeen mostly young, all Muslim men were arrested in South-Western Ontario under unspecified allegations of being involved in a "terrorist plot." Alongside the Canadian military's spring transition from a housekeeping occupation presence in Kabul to a savage combat mission in Southern Afghanistan, the arrest of the Toronto 17 has signaled that the war at home – a couple steps behind the war abroad – has entered its own "combat mission" against the democratic and human rights of oppressed people in Canada.

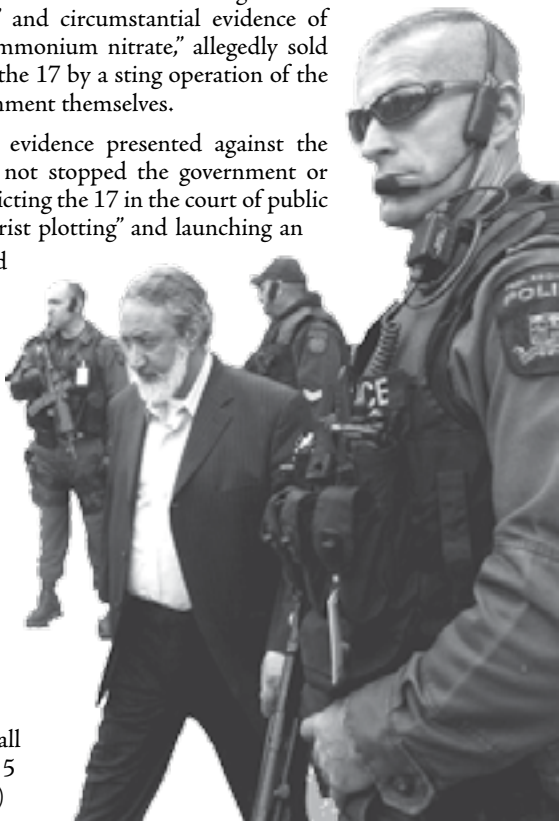
The Toronto 17, already found guilty of "terrorism" by the anti-Muslim smokescreen of the government of Canada and the mainstream media, represent something important for working, poor and oppressed people in Canada. The storm troopers of the right wing of Canadian politics are entering through the window of the arrest of the Toronto 17 into the homes of all Muslims in Canada.

### TERRORISM OR STATE TERRORIST FRAME-UP?

One week into the saga of the arrest of the Toronto 17 still no charges have been released. The "allegations" that the Toronto 17 were involved in a "terrorist plot" have not been elaborated beyond allegation. The synopsis of the prosecution's case that was presented at the June 6th court appearance was still nothing but a collection of imaginary police

government has substituted further allegation of "terrorist camps" and circumstantial evidence of the "3 tons of ammonium nitrate," allegedly sold and delivered to the 17 by a sting operation of the police and government themselves.

But the lack of evidence presented against the Toronto 17 has not stopped the government or media from convicting the 17 in the court of public opinion of "terrorist plotting" and launching an unprecedented fear mongering campaign. The lack of evidence has not stopped the courts and prisons from violating every civil, democratic, human, and legal right of the Toronto 17 – keeping them in solitary confinement, denying them all (including the 5 minors arrested) access to their lawyers, families, and each other. "Rule of Law" indeed. And the lack of evidence against the Toronto 17 has certainly not stopped the government and racist war mongering ruling class from taking the opportunity to ratchet up anti-Muslim hysteria, hostility, and paranoia in the media and amongst "average Canadians."



Afghanistan – forces under Canada's control – will be doubled so "[w]hat you're going to see is a massive influx of new troops, more troops than the Afghans have seen in a long time." (Canadian Lt.-Col. Ian Hope, June 4th 2006)

In answer to the growing anti-war sentiment amongst people

never, ever go back to the Cuba of pre-1959, the gangster's paradise, the poverty, the illiteracy, and the disease, and that they would defend the gains that have been made to the last drop of their blood.

On our last day in Cuba, we had a very exciting meeting with the families of the Cuban Five, as well as the President of the National Assembly of People's Power and Vice President of Cuba, Ricardo Alarcon.

The Cuban Five are five Cuban men who have been held in US jails since 1998. They were arrested for investigating the terrorist groups that work out of Miami. Sent there by the Cuban government, they had collected hundreds of pages of documents outlining the plots that these anti-Cuban government groups were intending to carry out to terrorize the people of Cuba. They turned the information in to the Cuban government and to the FBI – an agency that is supposed to be fighting terrorism in the US. Instead of gratitude for information about terrorist threats in their own country, the US authorities threw the five men in prison, and continue to deny them many rights and fair treatment.

Fernando Gonzalez's mother opened the meeting, talking about the history of the case, and the international campaign that has been going on for seven years. Then Mr. Alarcon spoke. He talked about the case in a political context of Cuba being under attack by the US, and using the case as a tool to expand Cuba solidarity and expose the hypocrisy of the US

administration, and their so-called "War on Terror". He talked about the corporate media in the US and their cover-up of the trial and case. He said that we need to be confronting the lies put out by the media of the imperialist countries where we live, but also creating other means of media.

Tears running down my cheeks, I sat quiet on the bus that night driving out of Havana to the airport, my head full of the things I saw and learned. My brief glimpse of Cuba, of the Cuban revolution, the gains, the contradictions, the visions and goals, the people and the institutions had given me a whole new perspective of the world I lived in. Returning to Vancouver, I thought about what Ricardo Alarcon said to us that day in Havana: that Cuba solidarity, which is so important to the continuation of the revolution, needs to grow. The lessons that Cuba gives us here in Canada, a major imperialist power, of what regular people must fight for and can gain are vital to any social justice work we do. The example of Cuba, the leadership of Cuba, needs to be part of the arsenal of weapons, the ideas that us oppressed people must fight with. Under attack for 47 years, the Cuban people still fight, not just to protect what they have gained, but for real gains for all people around the world. Cuba's resistance to imperialist attacks sets an example for all people in struggle, and with them we share our humanity, our hopes and our resistance.

I left Cuba changed, inspired and motivated.



Family members of one of the 'Toronto 17' leave the courthouse.

allegations.

The arrests come as result of a two-year investigation group of 17. If there was evidence of a "terrorist plot" the crown prosecution would have been certain to include some of this evidence in the synopsis documents presented at the first appearance of the Toronto 17 in court on June 6th. But no facts were presented. Instead, a mere 8 page summary of the case was presented to the defense lawyers. The desperation of the prosecution team in trying to dig up "evidence" was evident in the ludicrous allegations that were found in these 8 pages. These allegations have been broadcasted through international media as fact. They include a "plot" to bomb parliament buildings, and the "plot" to kidnap parliamentarians and to "behead" Prime Minister Stephen Harper. In fact, none of these "plots" were elaborated or developed into actual "plots" but have been presented as court evidence as loose talk, personal desires, and thoughts. In place of evidence of intent to carry out these "plots" the

Here we find the truth. The guilt or innocence of the Toronto 17 is not important as far as the Canadian war drive is concerned. The motivation for these arrests at this particular time has nothing to do with the alleged actions or "plots" of the Toronto 17. The arrests have everything to do with covering up the government's war drive in Afghanistan, dividing Muslim and non-Muslim oppressed and working people in Canada, and pouring the foundation for a new round of attacks on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and all working and poor people in Canada.

### FEAR OF TERRORISTS = SUPPORT FOR WAR

Since the May 17th vote in parliament to extend Canada's combat mission in Southern Afghanistan until 2009 opinion polls have found a steady climb in public opposition to Canada's occupation of Afghanistan. And just two days after the arrests, and buried beneath the Islamophobic media storm, was the news that the occupation forces in Southern

in Canada, the government of Canada borrowed a trick from the masters of fear mongering in the US government. Immediately after the arrest of the 17, Liberal MP Wajjid Khan quoted the "hateful comments" of Qayyum Abdul Jamal, the so-called "ringleader" of the Toronto 17 when the MP visited a Jamal's mosque last summer. MP Khan recalled, "[Jamal] went on saying that we don't need him [MP Khan] here, that our government is telling us what to do and that the Canadian troops in Afghanistan have gone there to rape Muslim women."

In the halls of "justice", parliament, and the newspapers rang a new truth... that opposing Canada's occupation of Afghanistan is equal to terrorism, or at least supporting terrorism.

The proven success of this racist and Islamophobic campaign shows in the voices of people across Canada on AM talk-radio call-in shows. Many of us have been fooled. Many do not see the refusal of democratic, civil, and legal rights to the Toronto 17 as an attack on "our" rights – because we have been fooled. We do not see the attack on the democratic rights of all Muslims to express their opposition to the government's war drive as an attack on "our" rights – because we have been fooled.

This is the poison of the racist and Islamophobic campaign of the government and war mongers; they are dividing working and oppressed people in Canada along the lines of race and religion so that we cannot defend our collectively held rights. This divisive campaign pops and explodes in attacks of race hatred and Islamophobia like the June 4th vandalism of a Toronto mosque.

In the very moment of the racist and Islamophobic heat wave, the deputy director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)'s pronouncement was released that about 90 percent of immigration applicants from Pakistan and Afghanistan in the past five years have not been sufficiently screened for "security concerns." The lesson is, of course, that more restrictions are necessary to curb the threat of "terrorism" that comes to Canada with Muslim immigrants.

Restrictions like Security Certificates – a Canadian legal clause that allows the arrest and indefinite detention of non-citizens of Canada for suspicion of involvement in "terrorism" without evidence or charges. Coincidentally, the constitutionality of Security Certificates are set to go before Supreme Court on Monday June 12th – just over one week after the arrest of the 17.

### NO TO ANTI-MUSLIM FEAR MONGERING! DEFEND THE TORONTO 17!

Under government driven racist and Islamophobic hysteria, the Toronto 17 do not stand a chance of a fair trial anywhere in Canada. For working, poor and oppressed people in Canada, the real threat to our "security" does not come from oppressed people – Muslim or otherwise. The clear and present danger to our security, our civil liberties and democratic and human rights comes from a government that is using the frame-up case of the Toronto 17 as a cover-up for their war drive in Afghanistan, and their assaults on the rights of working and oppressed people in Canada.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) calls on all organizations and people committed to the cause of peace and social justice to take a stand against the government of Canada's war drive, and against this racist, anti-Muslim arrest of the Toronto 17. We must stand in defense of the democratic, human, and civil rights of Muslims and all oppressed people in Canada. In the case of the Toronto 17, these rights are what really stand trial.

End Attacks on Muslims!

Defend the Toronto 17! End the criminal occupation of Afghanistan!

Stop the Canadian War Drive!

Stop all attacks on the rights of immigrants and refugees!

VANCOUVER, JUNE 9-2006



## Canada's Anti-Native Policies

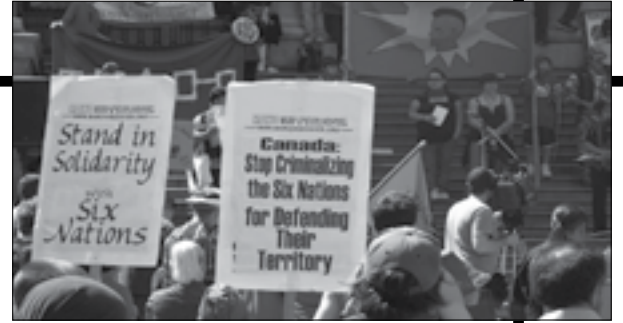
By Aaron Mercredi

July 1<sup>st</sup> marked Canada's 139<sup>th</sup> birthday. What is a Canadian lie? It's white picket fenced cul-de-sac communities next to a reservation without clean water. It's a country with a booming resource economy taking away all that Indigenous people have left. It's that 139 years later, and Indigenous people still exist here and have a claim to the land Canada is occupying and the resources it is taking. What Canada is hiding is that it doesn't really have legitimacy on this land.

What do Indigenous people within Canada have to celebrate on Canada Day? 139 years of denial. Two days earlier, on June 29<sup>th</sup>, Canada was one of two countries that voted against a draft declaration in the United Nations Human Rights Council to protect the rights of Indigenous people around the world, including their claims to land and resources. By a 30-2 vote, the body approved the declaration that said that Indigenous people should be free from discrimination and that they have a right 'to consider themselves different and to be respected as such.'

By voting against this draft declaration, Canada showed its true colours to the world. The motion was also opposed by the colonial governments of the US, Australia and New Zealand, but they did not have voting privileges. Canada first tried to filibuster the motion, saying they needed a three-month delay on the vote, even though this declaration has been debated for 2 decades already.

## Meet the United Nations



most pressing human rights issue facing Canadians."

Canada's racist policy towards Indigenous women was exposed once again in 2005, when the UN Human Rights Committee criticized Canada for its failure to protect Aboriginal women from violence, failure to correct the overt discrimination in laws that affect an Aboriginal woman's ability to pass on her status and reserve

Indigenous people, but it is nothing new to the ears or eyes of Native people in this country. And we don't need the UN to address it to know that it exists. The UN, as a body controlled by colonial and imperialist states, cannot decide what is and what is not a fundamental right. In the case of Indigenous people, we don't need a watered-down UN motion recognizing that we have these rights as if they are

colonial Israel, and Palestinians suffer the same abuse and humiliation that Indigenous people in Canada have had to undergo throughout history.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the federal Conservative government took a stronger stand in support of Israel by siding with the US against a non-binding UN motion calling on Israel to allow all Palestinian refugee women and children to return to their homes. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Canada was the first country besides Israel to cut aid and sever ties with the Palestinian Authority after Hamas was democratically elected

### A Tarnished Image?

This is not the first time that Canada's true nature has been exposed to the UN. It is a difficult thing for the country and its representatives to keep hidden the war that they are waging on Native people at home and what conditions this has left Indigenous people living in. This year, the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights criticized Canada for its failure to live up to its commitments under an international treaty that is supposed to protect people's economic, social and cultural rights. Apparently, Canada's record had actually gotten worse since it was last scrutinized in 1998 and 1993. The conditions of poverty, homelessness, and discrimination have not gone away. During an investigation in 1999, the UN Human Rights Committee ruled that Canada's treatment of Aboriginal people is in violation of international law and the social situation of First Nations "is the

membership to her children and grandchildren, and failure to respect matrimonial property rights and basic human rights of Indigenous women.

Of course, there are the touchy land and resource issues that affect Canada's trade and investment relationships with other countries and the multinational corporations who search the world for profits. Cases like the Lubicon Cree, who have been trying to deal with outstanding land and resource issues with Canada for over 6 decades, while their land is plundered for its oil and gas resources, have drawn attention and condemnation from the UN. There are cases like Six Nations, with Indigenous people appealing to the UN body to force Canada to deal with them on a nation-to-nation basis, as their treaty stipulates.

Of course, Canada exposing itself to other countries in the UN is something that we can use against Canada's record on

being granted to us. We know that. Those rights are inherent.

We don't need to hear about Canada's repression of Indigenous people to know what happens in this country. All we have to do is look to Dudley George, who was an unarmed Native activist who was shot and killed by the Ontario Provincial Police at Ipperwash in 1995, or any other time Native people have been brutalized simply for standing up for their rights.

We don't need to read declarations about the discrimination against Indigenous women in this country. Many families have a story about a loved one who was taken from them. How many degrees of separation are there between us and over 500 Indigenous women who have gone missing in Canada without much investigation? We don't need to see resolutions passed to know that Canada continues to steal from Native people, whether it is land, resources, language, or culture. This is the reality that Indigenous people have always known here because this is the history and relationship to Canada.

### Canada's Twin in the Middle East

It is no surprise then, that Canada provides a lot of political support for apartheid state of Israel. Israel is a colonial-settler state nestled on the land of Palestinians in the Middle East. It is a country that was built on the same bloody foundations of Canada: on the displacement, ethnic cleansing, and murder of the Indigenous population -Palestinians. Today, the West Bank and Gaza Strip are huge Indigenous reservations within

by the Palestinian people.

With the recent intensified Israeli aggression in Palestine, along with its military attacks on Lebanon, Canada again was one of the first countries giving the green light to Israel to continue its bloody campaign. In Lebanon and Gaza, hundreds of people have been killed. Infrastructure like bridges, roads, power plants, gas stations, ports, airports and vehicles have been targeted and destroyed by Israeli military strikes. With the enforcement of a sea and air blockade of the country, Israel is trying to strangle the people of Lebanon. In his statement, Stephen Harper framed the attack on Lebanon as a justified act for Israel to defend itself, condemning Hezbollah attacks on Israeli military targets, but saying nothing about the civilian casualties caused by the Israeli military.

One hundred and thirty-nine years later, Canada remains a colonial country, an imperialist power. One hundred and thirty-nine years later, Canada continues its policies of displacement, segregation, and violence against Indigenous people. One hundred and thirty-nine years later, Canada is supporting newer colonial countries, like Israel, in their wars against Indigenous people. Something that can be said about Canada's sick relationship with Israel is the establishment of 'Canada Park,' a so-called nature conservation that was built to cover up the rubble of three destroyed Palestinian villages.

It is not enough that declarations and resolutions be brought against Canada by other countries in the UN, but that people living in Canada join sides with Indigenous people here to put an end to over 139 years of destruction and colonization.



# "It's the world of the natural ways versus the European colonial thinking"

## An Interview with Neecha, an Indigenous woman activist

By Aaron Mercredi

The following is an interview with Neecha, an Indigenous woman activist who has been involved in the struggle at Six Nations. Neecha was in Vancouver recently to talk about the situation on the ground over there and to build support and solidarity in Vancouver.

**Fire This Time: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?**

**Neecha:** My name is Neecha and from the Anishinaabe-Ojibwe Nation of Northwest Ontario.

**FTT: Why did you go and support Six Nations?**

**Neecha:** Because my friends called me up and asked me to go to Six Nations. I didn't really know why I was supposed to go to Six Nations, but I went because my friends needed me.

**FTT: How long were you at the reclamation site for?**

**Neecha:** 3 months, 2 weeks and one day.

**FTT: And what was the situation like there?**

**N:** At the beginning, it was just a handful of people that stood together. To this day a lot of us are still involved. It just got bigger from then. The OPP was supposed to come in mid March to serve



us with some papers that would pretty much tell us to vacate the land. And on that day, they were supposed to come and remove us from the site. That's when a lot of people started showing up, because they knew that was the actual deadline. And what we did with the papers is we just chucked it in the sacred fire because we didn't accept it. We didn't look at it. We didn't take it. We just threw it out because it didn't really apply to the First Nations people, because within the confederacy they have their own governance, a nation within a nation.

A lot of people diminished because there wasn't a lot we could do in regards to the OPP coming in. It was just a matter of time of when they were going to come in. So we started building infrastructures and getting a lot of support from Toronto, Guelph and local areas. Mainly young college students

that believe the First Nations struggle is something that is really important, taking the awareness back to their campuses wherever they network. You know, it's really important that the solidarity is shown and a lot of participation is taken. A lot of actions have taken place in solidarity with six nations. A lot of groups and organizations have written letters of support and have organized protests and rallies and brought awareness to what's happening in Six Nations because a lot of stuff that you hear out there is not really true.

What happens behind the barricades is one thing that they'll never see. There's a lot of stuff that happens behind the barricades. There's a lot of talking, a lot of sharing. There's a lot of people that come with their own life experiences and they pass it on and it's all good because when somebody speaks and somebody has an understanding, maybe two people to your side will have an understanding also and they can explain to another person later on.

So, with that being said, let's move on to 4:20. April 20, 2006. That's the day that the OPP came in to try and remove our people from the site, which they were pretty successful considering they had to beat us and taser us, choke us and handcuff us. I guess they had to do what they had to do get us out. Because it took a while, it took a lot of work on behalf of the OPP to do

footage is pretty powerful. But it is out there and hopefully you guys will see it sometime. On the footage, it doesn't show the actual invasion, or the actual impact, but it shows an hour later after they came in. and it shows the OPP in Silver Pines. It shows our people on the road. And it shows us marching the OPP back off the land because you know what, it's our land. There were too many of us because a call was made to all nations. It's been made throughout Six Nations and surrounding territories to where people are travelling from all over just to come stand with us. And once there was enough people there, my friend Mike played his drum and he played the men's warrior song and that's when everyone's spirits were getting ready to awaken and stand up and be strong. And I think that was pretty awesome because just playing that one song on the drum is what brought the spirit back to the people and that's when they started walking and started pushing the OPP off the land and eventually off sixth line. And after that, they walked to the front line and again there they had around 50 OPPs on the front line.

**FTT: What kind of solidarity has come from other Indigenous nations and non-Indigenous people?**

**Neecha:** On the morning of the raid, I heard that at Tyendinaga,

**Neecha:** I think we've got to protect our natural resources. Because, you know what? That's the one thing that Canada wants. They want the natural resources and that's what they're looking for. That's what they live, that's what they want. And if our people were to actually stand up for 24 hours, on D-Day, on June 29<sup>th</sup>, a lot of different people are going to start in their individual territories and own individual mines, they are going to take it upon themselves to show the government of Canada that we're not alone. And I think it's really important for people to know that we're not doing this in spite. We're just doing this because we want them to listen. Because emails don't work, faxes don't work. Telephone calls don't work. Letter-writing doesn't work. We've been doing it for so many years. Supreme court rulings don't work. Talking to your MP doesn't work. Talking to your provincial members of parliament doesn't work. We've been through these avenues I don't know how many times. People have been doing so much work trying to create awareness and get some pro-active actions done and the bottom line is that nothing works. But for us, it's the whole destruction of our lands. It's the destruction of who we are. And you know what? I'm not going to take it and I don't think anybody else wants to take



the research, the documentation, get the papers in order and to actually get the manpower to come out there and actually remove us which was pretty funny because my friend, one of the women who was actually sleeping in the RV, was actually got woken up by getting kicked in the ribs by the OPP. Because she didn't know what it was, she just rolled over and went back to bed. But what happened is that she got kicked in the ribs again and that's when she got woken up, and when she stood up one of the women OPP actually grabbed her by the throat and started squeezing her throat. And my friend, of course she's defending herself, so she punched that OPP in the face. And by doing that, that's when they tackled her and threw her to the ground and put the handcuffs on her. And then they brought her in to custody.

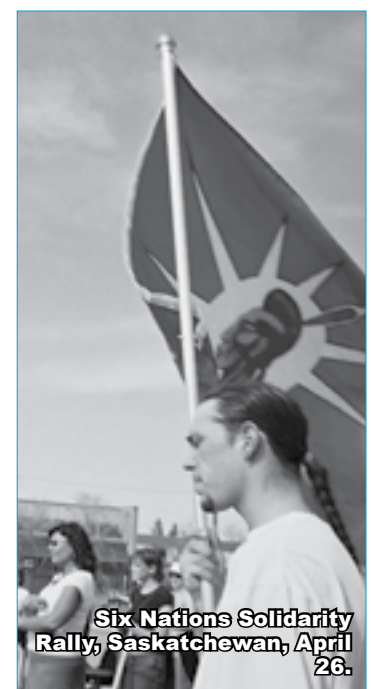
Eventually, they moved in to Silver Pines and that's when it actually hit the fan. That's pretty much what is being portrayed in the media. Silver Pines is the actual place of confrontation between the OPP and the Haudenosaunee territory. The morning they came in, they pretty much occupied Silver Pines. The OPP were standing on the site and our original people were standing on the road. There's actual footage out there that I've been showing. It isn't ready for the world yet, but is circulating among our own people because I think it is really important that our people see it first because it's really important that our people know how our people are being treated. I guess we're all being treated bad in different ways, but having it on

they shut down the railway. I heard that Akwesasne, they shut down the international bridge. They marched across it really slowly, apparently. At Kanasetake and Kahnawake, they shut down the Mercier Bridge. And that was just to show in the Mohawk nation, in the confederacy what they have done. In different provinces, there were different solidarity protests and rallies that have taken place. In British Columbia, I guess they had a march from the Vancouver Art Gallery to the bridge at Stanley Park and blocked that, which was pretty awesome. We heard that something was done in the states also. And I think a lot of non-native organizations, like CUPE, and so many people and countries that have shown solidarity. Like, so many countries. We've been hanging flags from different countries. You know, we've teamed up with Palestine, with the Palestinians. We've teamed up with so many nations. There are always people from different nations wanting to find out about what's going on up here. We got a call recently from Colombia wanting to find out what's going on up here. A lot of people have been sending letters of support and financial donations. A lot of people have been bringing awareness about what's happening with Six Nations. It's just so amazing.

**FTT: What do you see as the way forward in the struggle against colonialism, against land theft, against the destruction of the environment, and everything that the colonial government of Canada has been doing against us for hundreds of years?**

it either. Like I've been telling people, our worlds are colliding. It's the world of the natural ways versus the European colonial thinking, which is just money, money, money. And they make the money off our natural resources. And my opinion from my heart is that we should just shut down this country and then we'll see what happens. You know, Dalton McGuinty said to us: "Take down the barricades, or we'll see." Well, you know what? We'll see what happens. We'll see what we can do. We'll see what our people can come up with. We'll see you, man. That's the whole thing with this whole "we'll see," you know? We'll see you there.

**FTT: Thanks a lot for the interview.**



# "Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations people have never surrendered our sovereignty"

## Introduction to this Historical Document

Alongside the direct physical land reclamation, people at Six Nations have been continuing their appeals to the government of Canada to end its aggression against Six Nations people and to deal with the Rotino'shon:ni on a nation-to-nation basis. The following is a letter written by the Women Title Holders to the Governor General of Canada. This is an important document because it outlines Canada's complete illegitimacy in trying to suppress the ROTINO'SHON:NI people.

- Aaron Mercredi

WHEREAS according to the letter from Her Majesty the Queen you have the duty to deal with this issue of the violations of the agreements between Britain and its ally, the Six Nations. We, the Women Title Holders, support the request for a meeting between the Chiefs and Clan Mothers of the Six Nations and yourself to discuss these matters at your earliest convenience;

WHEREAS the Charter of the United Nations requires respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, requiring its members to ensure that armed force is not used to resolve international differences and to resolve disagreements by peaceful means in conformity with justice and international law;

WHEREAS Canada has ascribed to the internationally recognized standards for respecting political rights of the People as set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other international legal instruments;

WHEREAS General Assembly Resolution 1541 (XV) requires the informed consent of a people before they are included in another state;

WHEREAS the International Court of Justice affirmed Resolution 1541 in the Western Sahara case;

WHEREAS the courts of other colonial states like the Supreme Court of Australia in Mabo have formally repudiated past colonial reasoning and

Covenant Chain which required mutual respect and cooperation in accord with both ancient and modern principles of international law.

Our nations, the Rotino'shon:ni, formed a Confederacy before colonial contact. Our confederation is founded on relations of equality and mutual respect as affirmed by the Kaianereh'ko:wa, our Great Law of Peace.

As affirmed by Wampum 44 of the Kaiahereh'ko:wa, we Women have a trust obligation to maintain the land for the future generations of our People.

Our current problems with Canada are because of our alliance with Britain. Some of us were forced to leave our traditional settlements in what is now New York State during the revolt of British subjects known as the American Revolutionary war.

On October 25, 1784, General Frederick Haldimand pledged Britain's protection for the Rotino'shon:ni people on a tract of land within our traditional domain extending six miles deep on either side of the Grand River running from its mouth in Lake Erie to its source, "to them and their posterity forever".

Britain and its colonial agents failed to respect and protect the agreements that have been made between the Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations and the British Crown. Today we have only 5% of our original tract. The rest is illegally

to speculative investments over our objections or through gifts to outside institutions, including the Law Society of Upper Canada [the bar association of Ontario].

The problems experienced by the Rotino'shon:ni with the British Empire and its Canadian colony were first brought to international attention in 1923. At that time the Six Nations Confederacy from Grand River sent Deskaheh to the League of Nations as our representative. He applied for membership of the Six Nations in the League. He was denied a hearing. His mistreatment set a precedent for ignoring the sovereignty of colonized Indigenous nations. Since then we have never been allowed to speak to the other nations of the world as the sovereign nation we are.

In 1924 Canada imposed a puppet government under its illegal Indian Act. It was passed in violation of the constitution of Canada. It denied our traditional Rotino'shon:ni government access to our national treasury which they held in trust. One of the reasons why our government was deposed was because we were trying to get a court hearing so we could demonstrate that Canada's Indian Act was ultra vires the British North America Act 1867. We are not and never were British subjects. We are not Canadians. We are independent.

We have been allies of Great Britain. Should both parties wish to maintain

necessary measures to correct the injustices that have been committed against us.

In 1982 Britain enacted Canada's Constitution Act which includes formal recognition and affirmation of "Existing Aboriginal and treaty rights" in Section 35. However, Canada continues to violate our sovereignty and our right to self-determination, insisting on dealing with us only through its puppet Indian Act government. Canada continues to block all our attempts to rectify these injustices, to obtain the return of all our land and compensation for the assets that were taken fraudulently.

Canada and the province of Ontario have continued to issue permits for the use of our land even though they know they do not have legal title. As a result, a private company called Henco Industries began building a subdivision on the "Haldimand Tract" for sale to non-Indigenous people who may not have been aware that there was no legal root to the title they were given.

On February 28th, 2006, the Rotino'shon:ni decided to stop this new encroachment on our land by blocking the entrance to the housing project known as the "Douglas Creek Estates". Most Canadians do not know anything about our history. We have never surrendered our sovereignty or given Canada jurisdiction over us or our land.

On March 17, 2006, Henco Industries

28 June, 2006 For immediate release

Following is the text of a letter send to Mme. Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.

TO: MME. MICHAËLLE JEAN  
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA

1 RIDEAU DRIVE, OTTAWA, CANADA

FROM: The WOMEN TITLE HOLDERS OF THE ROTINO'SHON:NI

Also known as the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy on Turtle Island.

According to attached instructions from Buckingham Palace regarding the protocol to discuss urgent matters between two allies, the Six Nations and Great Britain, we are requesting a meeting to discuss the following:

OBJECTION TO:

INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF KAIANEREH'KO:WA/ GREAT LAW TERRITORY BY THE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA AND ONTARIO, THEIR CORPORATE AGENTS AND ASSIGNS;

THE ARREST OF ROTINO'SHON:NI PEOPLE FOR DEFENDING OUR LAND; AND

THE REFUSAL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF BRITAIN, OF CANADA AS ITS SUCCESSOR STATE, AND OF ONTARIO, AS A PROVINCE OF CANADA, TO ABIDE BY THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

DATE: June 20, 2006

practices;

WHEREAS the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination found on March 6, 2006 that the United States was denying the Western Shoshone people "their rights to own, develop, control and use their land and resources"; warning the U.S. to respect the Convention; and to "freeze", "desist" and "stop" their actions immediately and to abide by the Committee's "Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedure";

WHEREAS international law is firmly committed to affirming the equal and inalienable rights of all peoples and rejecting colonial encroachment on other peoples, including Indigenous nations;

WHEREAS both the U.S. and Canada must abide by the international law principle that there can be no development on Indigenous land without consulting the Title Holders; ignoring the true Indigenous people is now universally recognized as being illegal; Indigenous people must be consulted; and our perspectives on the issues can no longer be ignored;

We the WOMEN TITLE HOLDERS and the PEOPLE of the Rotino'shon:ni also known as the SIX NATIONS IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY ask you, our allies, for support and assistance to help us end the serious breach of the peace that we are suffering from. We would like your support and assistance to encourage Canada to live up to its own laws and solemn commitments. We wish to inform you that:

We, the Rotino'shon:ni people have always been allies, not subjects of Britain, nor citizens of its successor state, Canada. Valid relations between us and the colonial state were founded on the Two Row Wampum and the



occupied. Canada allowed most of our resources to be taken by squatters, illegal land transfers and fraud. Scores of cities and towns were established on our land without our consent. Indian Affairs dissipated our trust funds

this alliance, we strongly recommend that the Crown honor its side of the agreement. Should you disregard this recommendation and continue to deliberately breach this agreement, then you will force us to take the

obtained an ex parte order from an Ontario court to evict us from our land. Our people have been protesting these thefts of our land for over 200 years. Our complaints were well-known. Yet, Henco was never required to prove the legality of its title. Ontario was never required to prove its capacity to issue title. No attempt had been made to speak with us.

On April 20th 2006, the people protecting our land, including grandmothers and small children, were attacked by a heavily armed force of the Ontario Provincial Police. None of our people were armed. Many were severely beaten up and assaulted with batons, pepper spray and taser guns. 16 were arrested. However, many reinforcements arrived and the police retreated. We are still occupying our land.

We have reason to believe Canada was planning a much more serious assault. Neighboring jails and hospital wards were cleared before the attack. A convoy of ambulances and paddy wagons appeared. An unknown number of police and military forces were marshaled in support. The procedures being used were a blatant violation of the international covenants and agreements that Canada has signed and are contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

After the attack the Indian Act band council voted to turn land issues over to the people and the Confederacy chiefs of our traditional government.

Canada has appointed "negotiators" but our land is not negotiable. At least one of the appointees, Jane Stewart, is in a conflict of interest because she and her husband are involved in another housing project on our land. There

Continues on Page 19

# Letter from Women Title Holders of Six Nations cont.

Continued From Page 18

has been no indication that any of Canada's representatives are interested in respecting our rights or the laws.

At the current talks we've been told point blank by a "negotiator" from Ontario that we must leave our land and take down our barricades. Meanwhile a build-up of armed forces around us continues. Our delegates carry our voice to the table following the protocol set out in the Two Row Wampum Agreement/Covenant Chain to which we are both bound. Canada's representatives have met our delegates with ultimatums and threats of war while we send them in Peace.

FOR THE ABOVE REASONS, WE FEAR THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PROTECT OUR PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OR OUR LEGAL RIGHTS WITHOUT YOUR ASSISTANCE. We call on all peaceful and law abiding nations to come to our support.

We, the Women Title Holders and the People of the Rotino'shon:ni, accordingly request the following:

that Canada withdraw its police and military forces and stop its armed siege at the Six Nations Grand River territory.

that Canada must carry out its pledge to uphold freedom, justice and peace in the world, including the inherent right of all people to self-determination.

that Canada must deal with us on a nation-to-nation basis and uphold its commitment to ensure that all unresolved issues are determined either by consensus or by a neutral third party.

that the Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations people have never surrendered our sovereignty and Canada must deal with us through our freely chosen representatives and not through the Indian Act machine that it imposed on us in 1924.

that its courts or representatives are not in a position to act as a neutral arbiter in any disputes with the Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations.

that Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations land is inalienable.

that we want to resolve a situation that Canada created when they broke both their law and international law and our agreements with the Crown. Canada unlawfully forced their laws on us without the fully informed consent or consensus

of our people.

that Canada has no right whatsoever to charge or criminalize anyone of our people under Canadian laws because we are not Canadian. Our people should not be criminalized for upholding our obligations according to our constitution, the Kaianereh'ko:wa, to preserve our land for our coming generations. Our acts have been totally defensive. The aggression has always been against us by agents of the state.

that everyone should put their documents on the table so that everyone can see who owns what; that the Governor General request the appointment of an independent international mediator who is agreeable to both sides and has no conflict of interest to bring this to a legal resolution. We do not want to wait another 200 years.

Madame Governor General, we, the Women Title Holders, and the People of the Rotino'shon:ni Six Nations insist on an immediate end to Canada's on-going aggression and institute an open and public process of dialogue between our nations so that we can reach solutions by consensus. The Rotino'shon:ni will no longer tolerate the violation of our constitution, ancient customs, traditions and agreements. We will not tolerate Canada's representatives threatening us with guns and violence to squash our inherent rights and steal our possessions. Their attempt to pacify us through time-wasting and meaningless "negotiations" is an insult to our historic relationship with Canada and Great Britain.

For over 200 years Canada has tried to impose its institutions on us. Canada, it is never too late to polish the Covenant Chain. We would like to invite Canada to take part in renewing the spirit of the Two Row Wampum, which has since been affirmed in international law. We would like the settler population to experience the power of our Great Law, the solemn relations that were established and to enter the kind of talks that will make consensus possible, the kind that were used in the beginning the settlers first arrived.

Rotino'shon:ni Women Title Holders

Kahentinetha /s/ \_\_\_\_\_

Katenies /s/ \_\_\_\_\_

% P.O. Box 49, Kanatakon Akwesasne  
H0M 1A0

<http://sisis.nativeweb.org/actionalert/updates/060628fp.html>



Six Nations Solidarity Rally, Saskatchewan. April 26, 2006.

# Open Letter to the Assembly of First Nations

By Ray Bobb

The leaflet to the right was handed out to members of the national organization representing status Indians in Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, at their annual general meeting. The leaflet originates in an as yet unorganized element of Indian, left, nationalists whose position is that, commonly called, First Nations do not exist as nations but as tribal components of a single oppressed nation. This position is in line with the concept of the internal colony which describes the condition of the natives of Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand, and African-Americans and Mexican-Americans. These colonies, incorporated into imperialist settler-states, constitute nations of an exceptional type. This position holds that, strategically, these internal colonies can be liberated in the context of the victory of national liberation movements in the global South, imperial collapse and social revolution in the (former) imperialist countries.

Opposed to this vision, is Canada's policy of doing away with Indians, as a people with separate status, along with the Indian Act, the Department of Indian Affairs and Indian reserves. This idea first appeared as a Federal Government proposal in 1969, the Government White Paper Policy On Indians. This proposal failed because of widespread opposition and, legally, because it was to be elected unilaterally. At that time, Indians had no formal representation. Since that time, Government has funded the creation of band and tribal representation in the provinces, territories, and on the national level. It is now proceeding with the legislative extinguishments of Indians, bilaterally, in its country-wide treaty process.

July 11, 2006

Open Letter to the Assembly of First Nations From an Indian Nationalist Tendency

Dear Leaders:

- (1) For more than ten years the Canadian government, through a treaty process circumscribed by Government's Comprehensive Land Claims Settlement Policy, has been extinguishing aboriginal rights and title and Indians, themselves, as under the meaning of the Indian Act. The treaty process has been nothing but the negotiation of terms for the renunciation of Indian nationality. The Canadian government has been securing "certainty" for "investors" by doing away with Indian as a legal entity. We ask you, as our representatives: why have you not exposed and denounced this fascist attack on our people?
- (2) Thus far, in our relations with the European settlers, the choice of assimilation or national self-determination has not been extended to us. We recognize that you, as leaders who are in effect paid by the Canadian government, can only follow the path favored by Government, i.e., assimilation. For you to make decisions in regard to the native national question would be improper. This is so, because the interests of the Indian national entity would, then, be immorally and unethically controlled by the opposing interests of the Canadian settler-state. We, therefore, call upon you to never surrender any rights or entitlements that may bear on our right to national self-determination.
- (3) You have, as your name (AFN) indicates, accepted Government's term "first nations" in regard to our tribes. The propagation of such terminology is in keeping with Government's plan to liquidate the Indian national entity and incorporate its tribal components into the Canadian settler-state as glorified municipalities. Please understand that we are not against assimilation. Some Indians do want to assimilate. What we are against is that Indians are being given no choice.
- (4) We know that some people lack the vision to see that a people colonized within an imperialist settler-nation can achieve national self-determination. Be assured that, one day, we will be able to negotiate terms for the resolution of the native national question in good faith with a friendly Canadian government. This is so, because the passing of political power from big business warmongers to the people of every country is now becoming a matter of human survival. Thank you.

Ray Bobb  
Vancouver

# Mobilization Against War and Occupation-MAWO Statement Against the Israeli Siege on the Gaza Strip in Palestine

July 7, 2006

In the very early hours of June 28, 2006, Israel launched a large-scale military operation in the Gaza Strip, with the mobilization of nearly 5,000 troops, hundreds of tanks and other military equipment.

The Israeli operation targeted the main electric plant in Gaza, leaving over half of that area without electricity. Israel bombed some of the bridges that connected different areas of the Gaza strip, they re-occupied important areas in southern Palestinian territory, and they arrested many Palestinian government members and leaders.

Israel is attempting to justify the brutal siege as a legitimate response to the widely publicized capture of one Israeli soldier by the Palestinian resistance forces on June 25th. At the same time, Israel conceals the fact that in June 2006 alone Israeli forces have murdered 52 Palestinians, including nine children.

The United Nations is estimating that as a result of this siege up to 25,000 Palestinians could be forced from their homes in northern Gaza.

These most recent attacks on the people of Palestine by Israel come as Israel is finding itself faced with the rising militancy of Palestinians who will not tolerate any longer the 58-year occupation of their land. The election of Hamas in January 2006 is a reflection of the atmosphere of militancy and resistance in Palestine against occupation. Israel recognizes that this new force within the Palestinian government will not capitulate to Israel's demand for control as easily as others have. Israel also recognizes this more militant

leadership as a dire threat to their ability to expand their control of Palestinian territory and to continue the exploitation of Palestinian people. Thus, these attacks on Gaza are an attempt to destroy the leadership in Palestine, in order to crush a leadership that has come closer than any other at this time to representing the legitimate and just demands of Palestinian people.

give them freedom. However, the current brutal and devastating attacks have revealed that the Gaza "pullout" was a farce. Israel only abandoned Gaza in order to be able control and dominate the area by better tactical military means, and more easily turn Gaza into a killing field of Palestinians with the hope of crushing the heroic Palestinian resistance.

In Vancouver, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) has taken a clear and firm position against this most recent illegal, inhuman, and vicious attack by the Zionist Apartheid State of Israel. We demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the immediate end to state-terrorism and atrocious military actions by Israel. We stand behind and support the demands of the Palestinian people for self-determination, for an end to the 58-year occupation of historic Palestine, and for the right of return - al-Awda - for the millions of Palestinians refugees driven out of their homeland. We call on all peace-loving people and humanists to stand behind our sisters and brothers of Palestine as they wage a historic fight against the oppressive Apartheid State of Israel, and for their dignity, sovereignty and liberation.

Stop Israeli military aggression in Gaza!

Israel out of Gaza!

Israel Out of Palestine!

Self-determination for Palestinians!

Self-determination for all oppressed nations!

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)



These attacks have also revealed the true intentions of the Israeli government after the "historic pullout" from Gaza. In the fall of 2005, world headlines were filled with news taking note of Israel's great "humanitarian" effort in the pullout. At the time, it was obvious that this pullout was only painting an attractive face on the occupation and covering for the more brutal attacks that would surely come. The Israeli government is playing a game of deception, convincing people in Israel that the Gaza "pullout" was a step forward for Palestinians, while simultaneously trying to convince Palestinians that this pullout would

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US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!**

End Israeli Attacks on Gaza & Lebanon!  
Israel Out of Lebanon!  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PALESTINE & ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!

**R SAT  
A AUGUST  
L 26  
Y 3pm**

END CANADA'S CRIMINAL  
OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN!  
BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!  
CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC  
INQUIRY INTO THE CANADIAN WAR  
DRIVE IN AFGHANISTAN!

Vancouver Art Gallery  
(Robson St. & Howe St.)  
Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO  
**WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG | 604.322.1764**



By Noah Fine

"We said that due to our love for our homeland and humankind we undertook the mission of confronting the enemy on the front line by infiltrating terrorist organizations."

- Statement by Fernando Gonzalez one of The Five Cuban Heroes in an Interview with Granma, a news publication of Cuba.

Throughout the case of these Five Heroes, the need for the great work these Five men contribute to the cause of humanity has become ever more apparent. Since their cruel imprisonment by the government of the U.S., we have seen the true hypocrisy of the U.S. justice system and to whom it benefits.

Recently, Robert Ferro, an admitted member of "Alpha 66", a group well known for its commitment to terrorism against the Cuban people, was arrested in California. He was found to be holding the largest arsenal of weaponry ever in the hands of a single person. However,

he was pardoned by the U.S. justice system for stating that the weapons were going to be used against the government of Cuba.

It was for this and countless other acts of terror against the Cuban people that the 5 Cuban Heroes were sent to Miami.

**A History of Terrorism against Cuba led to the arrest of The Five**

Since the Cuban Revolution of 1959 that booted U.S. imperialism off the island, the U.S. has attempted everything to destroy the hope of the Cuban people and the gains made by their revolution. The U.S. has broken its own as well as international laws to try to bring an end to the revolution of Cuba. Direct terrorism, funding the many anti-Cuban terrorist gangs in Miami that operate with impunity there, as well as a harsh economical and political blockade that has attempted to suffocate the Cuban people and was just recently reinforced by an \$80,000,000 expansion, are two ways that the US has tried to

destroy the Cuban revolution. It was for this that these 5 innocent men took a mission to the belly of the world's terrorist problem.

**The Mission of The 5 Cuban Heroes**

Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González, the 5 Cuban Heroes, were sent to Miami in the early 1990s to attempt to bring an end to the terrorism that has beleaguered the Cuban people for decades. They were sent with their only weapon: truth - and the tools they needed to extract it, including recording devices and video cameras from which they captured hundreds of documents proving their case of Miami terrorist plots against Cuba. They gave the information they had collected to the Cuban government, who forwarded it to the U.S. in hopes of finding a solution. The U.S. authorities were very impressed with the information the 5 Cubans were able to obtain. They told the Cuban government that they would take care of the issue. Shortly after, on September 12<sup>th</sup> 1998, the 5 anti-terrorist Cuban's were arrested, and placed in solitary confinement for 17 months while the terrorists who they tried to stop continued to run freely in Miami.

Without receiving a trial until 2001, the 5 were constantly subjected to brutal and unacceptable acts of harassment. Their trial was held in Miami where it is impossible to find an impartial jury if the case is to do with Cuba, due to the extreme prejudice of the government of Miami against Cuba.

In the summer of 2005, the 5 Cuban Heroes received an important gain in their legal battle. Three judges of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously granted them a re-trial with a change of venue.

However, this gain was short lived after the U.S. government intervened, appealing the decision and demanding the full 12-judge panel of the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court review the decision. Today, almost a year later, we are still awaiting their decision.

**The Campaign to Free The 5**

As millions of people world wide prepare for the upcoming milestone of injustice that has fallen on Gerardo, Ramón, Fernando, René, and Antonio, we must look back on the past years that have created one of the most criminal and inhumane cases in U.S. history. This September 12<sup>th</sup> will mark eight years of assault on the human rights of these 5 honorable men, and on the rights of all people fighting against terrorism by the U.S. This year, we have to fight harder than ever to ensure these men do not miss another of their children's birthdays, another anniversary of their marriage, and

## Five Heroes Freedom Fund

Since the imprisonment of the 5 Cuban Heroes in 1998, the biggest roadblock for the case has been a complete media blackout. The National Committee to Free the Cuban Five in the U.S. has launched a \$250,000 fund for a mass national media campaign. They are asking all individuals

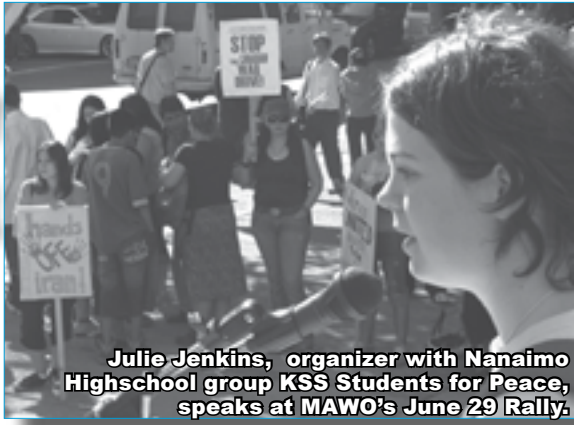
and organizations to do whatever possible in the raising of this urgently needed money.

To make a donation or to find out more about the "Five Heroes Freedom Fund" please check out

www.freethefive.org or  
www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca



## JUNE 29: VANCOUVER RALLY AGAINST WAR ATTRACTS MANY YOUTH



Julie Jenkins, organizer with Nanaimo Highschool group KSS Students for Peace, speaks at MAWO's June 29 Rally.

On Thursday, June 29, more than 200 people participated energetically and actively in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery, demanding an end to war at home and abroad. The rally, organized by Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), was in response to the recent attack on the 17 Muslims arrested in Toronto on allegations of terrorism, and to the massive new military war drive by Canadian and NATO troops on the people of Afghanistan.

Dalal Assad, an organizer with the Mesopotamian Women's and Orphan's Education and Welfare Society condemned the US-led occupation of Iraq and the absolute destruction that the war has wreaked on the lives of millions of Iraqis. Second, Herebierto Salas, an organizer with the People's Front in Defense of the Land in Atenco, Mexico, discussed the struggle of poor and working people in Mexico for their land and for human rights, and against the recent brutality by police in Mexico against poor and working people in Atenco.

Reflecting on the war at home and attacks on oppressed people in Canada, Julie Jenkins, Kwilikum Secondary School student and organizer with KSS Students for Peace spoke on attacks on students and youth, from cuts to education funding to drives for military recruitment.

Jane Ivanonva, an organizer with the Free the Cuban Five Committee – Vancouver spoke of Cuba's struggle against imperialism.

Highlighting the struggle against the war at home, Ivan Drury, coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice spoke about arrests of the Toronto 17, noting that "the attacks on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006 on 17 Muslim men is setting the conditions to continue these attacks on all working people, all poor people, all oppressed people in Canada."

Bringing the anti-war message to music, Colombian hip hop crew Sepia performed, garnering enthusiastic cheers from the crowd.

Lindsay Clarke, an organizer with MAWO, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, and Capilano Student's Union Social Justice Committee Coordinator tied the program together. Lindsay connected the struggles of people around the world, noting that the expansion of imperialism and the opening of the era of war and occupation has meant increased attacks on people from Iraq to Afghanistan, Six Nations to Palestine.

The program was closed with a resolution read by MAWO organizer and Kitsilano Secondary School student Ashlin Youngworth, which passed with loud cheers and support from the crowd.

## Six Nations Struggle & the Rights of Indigenous People: Eyewitness Report from Six Nations' Struggle for their Rights



(L-R) Jenica Tanner, Aaron Mercredi, Giselle Aibans

Gustafsen Lake, Aaron noted that all these struggles were connected by the common denominator of being repeated attempts by the Government of Canada to steal Indigenous land and suffocate Indigenous resistance, driving Indigenous people around Canada further into poverty.

As the months-long battle of the people of Six Nations to reclaim land stolen from them by the Government of Canada over 200 years ago reached the boiling point, people in Vancouver organized to show their support for the struggle. On June 10, 2006, Vancouver anti-war coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) and the Capilano Students' Union, organized a public forum on the struggle in Six Nations.

60 people filled the Simon Baker Room in the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre to hear speakers Aaron Mercredi and Jenica Tanner discuss the situation in Six Nations, and to discuss solidarity work to be done in Vancouver. The evening was facilitated by the organizer of the Capilano Students' Union, Giselle Aibans, who had recently returned from a visit to Six Nations.

Aaron Mercredi, an organizer with MAWO and board member of Redwire Native Youth Media, spoke about the historical and the current context that the struggle of Six Nations is taking place in. Connecting other struggles, such as Oka, Burnt Church, and

Next, featured speaker Jenica Tanner shared her first-hand experience with the struggle at Six Nations. Jenica, who co-ordinated the medical tent at the Six Nations Reclamation Site, shared some of the truth that wasn't heard in the media of the brutal Ontario Provincial Police attacks on peaceful defenders of Six Nations' land. She also explained that the housing development that was planned to be built on Six Nations' land was another instance of plunder of Indigenous land, given permission – and support - to continue by the Government of Canada.

Following speeches, many people in the room participated in discussion on the attacks on Six Nations and the escalating attacks against Indigenous people in Canada, as well as bringing ideas for further solidarity work in Vancouver.

Forum was organized jointly by the Mobilization Against War and Occupation –MAWO and the Capilano College Student Union –CSU.

## PICKET AGAINST CANADIAN WAR DRIVE IN AFGHANISTAN

During the week that the US government admitted to the deaths of over 300 Afghans, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held its thirteenth picket action since July 2005 against the occupation of Afghanistan.

This action on May 25th, 2006 marked the milestone of over 10,000 signatures on MAWO's petition demanding Canadian troops out of Afghanistan. MAWO's acting secretary, Nita Palmer, opened the picket with a press statement, "In the Lower Mainland alone MAWO has collected more than

10,000 signatures against Canada's occupation of Afghanistan. These 10,000 signatures represent the anti-war and anti-occupation sentiment of millions of people across Canada." She continued on to respond to the parliamentary vote to extend Canada's combat mission mandate in Southern Afghanistan, saying "The result of the vote in parliament last week to extend Canada's combat mission in Southern Afghanistan does not match the anti-war and anti-occupation sentiment of people in Canada."



MAWO Organizer, David Whittlesey.

Long time social justice fighter, 1960's civil rights activist and current MAWO organizer David Whittlesey also spoke against the occupation of Afghanistan, emphasizing the need to build a strong, Canada-wide antiwar movement that can effectively oppose Canada's imperialist project. Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice coordinator Ivan Drury also addressed the picketers and those gathered from the street, "This is a criminal occupation. Canada has contributed nothing but bloodshed, suffering and destruction to the people of Afghanistan. That is why the anti-occupation resistance is growing in Southern Afghanistan." In his closing, Ivan reiterated MAWO's call for an Independent Public Inquiry into Canada's occupation of Afghanistan.

### MAWO's Toronto 17 Forum in Vancouver:

## Terrorism, State-Terrorism, Problems and Solutions

On Tuesday June 13 2006 over 80 people gathered at the Metrotown Burnaby Public Library for a free public forum, "TERRORISM, STATE TERRORISM, PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS: What is behind the case of the Toronto 17?"

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) organized the forum in direct response to the June 2<sup>nd</sup> arrest of 17 mostly young, Muslim men in Ontario under vague allegations of being involved in a "terrorist plot." Quickly found guilty of "terrorism" by the media and speeches made by the government of Canada, these 17 men – the Toronto 17, are the first victims the government of Canada's battle to drum-up support for their new war drive in Afghanistan and clamp-down on any dissent or dissatisfaction at home.

The forum featured: Syed Asif Ali Shah, Member of United Muslim Alliance & Antiwar Organizer; Alison Bodine, Executive Member of the UBC Social Justice Centre; David Whittlesey, Veteran of the US Civil Rights and Peace Campaigns in the 1960's & MAWO Organizer; and Ali Yerevani

Editor of Fire This Time Newspaper & participant in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. All speakers expressed the need to stand in defense of the democratic, human, and civil rights of Muslims and all oppressed people in Canada.

After the speakers there was very little time for discussion as the library was closing 9 PM. With that MC Shannon Bundock closed the forum stating, "The guilt or innocence of the Toronto 17 is not important, these arrests were motivated by the government's need to cover up their war drive in Afghanistan; to divide Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Canada, and solidifying a base for the government's future attacks on the rights of immigrants, refugees, and all working and poor people in Canada."

From there people who were still interested in discussion gathered outside in the park beside the library and continued discussion with over 30 people staying until 11 PM to discuss about continuing the fight against war and in defence of the Toronto 17.

# Cuba Solidarity Work Gains Momentum in Vancouver!

\*All reports on this page by Tamara Hansen.



## Visit Revolutionary Cuba: Education Volunteering & Fun!

On Tuesday April 18th 2006, the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association and Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) were thrilled to have a special guest from the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) come to visit Vancouver.

Fernando Duque Gomez, director of the Canada Desk of ICAP, came to Vancouver as a part of his cross Canada tour with Cuba solidarity organizers and activists across the country.

Fernando spoke first to a group of over 20 students at Capilano College. Jane Ivanova, an organizer with the Social Justice Committee of the Capilano Students Union welcomed everyone and introduced Fernando. Fernando gave a dynamic account of Cuba's history and present situation, plus what could be expected traveling to Cuba with the Brigade.

That evening, Fernando joined activists and interested community members at the Dogwood Centre for a second event. MC Lindsay Clark, an executive on the Capilano Students' Union and an organizer with VCSC opened the evening. The first speaker, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba coordinator Tamara Hansen spoke

about her trip with the Che Brigade in 2005 introducing why everyone should visit Cuba.

Nino Pagliccia, an executive board member of the Canadian Network on Cuba and Coordinator of the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade then spoke about the Brigade that is being planned for August 2006.

Fernando Duque Gomez was the last speaker, his talk focused on building international solidarity with Cuba. He encouraged Vancouverites to travel to Cuba- both to show Cuban people solidarity and support, but also to return home and help dispel the myths and slander that are spread by mainstream media against Cuba.

There was a lot of time for questions and discussion which saw a great number of the audience participate, asking questions about different aspects of Cuban society: the democratic process in Cuba, the many programs and organizations that are operating in Cuba presently and much, much more.

The night ended with a buzz about the room and much of the audience longing to visit Revolutionary Cuba.

## Pastors For Peace Caravan to Cuba Send-Off Rally at the US/Canada Border!

June 18, 2006 – Waving Cuban flags and holding banners and signs against the US blockade on Cuba, 100 people rallied at the Peace Arch Border Crossing on June 18 to send off six caravanistas and a wide range of educational, medical and domestic supplies on the 17th Annual Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan to Cuba.

Victoria Goods for Cuba, Bellingham Cuba Solidarity, Salt Spring Goods for Cuba and Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) all co-sponsored and organized the successful border crossing from Canada into Washington State this year.

Participants gathered at Peace Arch park for a potluck and program of speakers. Randy Caravaggio

from Victoria Goods for Cuba opened, introducing speakers and energizing the crowd for this border challenge. Randy explained, "For the caravan, the real challenge lies ahead with the challenge at the Texas/Mexico border when the caravanistas will break the blockade." His introduction was followed by the Raging Grannies; Al Vale, a Bellingham Pastor; Tamara Hansen, Coordinator of VCSC; Tom from the Seattle Cuba Friendship Committee; and Rick, a caravan bus driver.

Finally, the six caravanistas departing on the caravan that day, Nicole, Sophie and Alison (from Vancouver), Tania (from Salt Spring Island), Angie (from Scotland) and Carlos (Cuban-born, living in Olympia), spoke about their excitement for their trip. The final speaker to charge up the crowd was special guest, Richard Becker, official Pastors for Peace Caravan speaker and organizer with the US antiwar coalition, International A.N.S.W.E.R.

The group of supporters then descended from the park cheering and chanting as the cars crossed the border loudly and successfully and met the Pastors for Peace caravan bus on the other side. Participants then worked together to load the aid gathered in Vancouver and Victoria from the surrounding areas into the caravan bus. The last to be loaded on the bus, the departing caravanistas waved goodbye as they began their journey along with the precious cargo, down the road toward Cuba.



Jax FitzGibbon and Ashlin Youngworth fly the Cuban flag at the Pastors for Peace border crossing.

## Pastors For Peace Caravan To Cuba!

June 17, 2006 – The energy and excitement of 60 people gathered in support of Cuba filled the room of the local community center to kick off Vancouver-leg of the 2006 Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba. The fundraiser for the Caravan, organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with

Cuba (VCSC) marked an exciting beginning to this year's Caravan, which will bring aid to Cuba in defiance of the US blockade.

VCSC organizer and MC for the night Lindsay Clarke introduced the program for the night, which began with the film "Bloqueo".

Filmed on the 2001 Pastors for Peace Caravan, "Bloqueo" outlined some of the brutal effects of the US's criminal blockade against Cuba.

Next, VCSC Coordinator Tamara Hansen outlined various campaigns that the US wages



(L-R) Lindsay Clarke, Tamara Hansen and Richard Becker

against Cuba – including the 44-year-old blockade, and the many exceptional gains Cuba has made in education, health care, and all fields – gains that often surpass the United States.

Next, guest speaker Richard Becker of International ANSWER and the Party for Socialism and Liberation shared his perspective on Cuba solidarity work and the important role Cuba is playing in today's world.

Richard noted the interesting observation that, while the United States has a long history of waging violent wars and exploiting people around the world – particularly in Iraq today – Cuba is known for supporting the South African struggle against apartheid, for sending tens of thousands of doctors, nurses, and teachers to poor countries around the world, and for actions that improve the lives of millions of people, and support people's human rights.

After the program and discussion, music and entertainment began, with DJ Contradiction. The atmosphere was one of excitement for the rally to send off the Caravan the next day. Overall, the lively atmosphere of solidarity and support for Cuba was a great kick-off to the 2006 Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba

## HANDS OFF CUBA & VENEZUELA!

The streets of downtown Vancouver were a little louder, a little more energetic and a little more revolucionario on Saturday, May 20th 2006. A broad coalition of 80 unions, student groups, NGO's, grassroots organizations and individuals mobilized over 250 people as part of rallies around North America demanding, "Hands Off Cuba & Venezuela!"

The rally began with chants of "US Hands off Venezuela!" and "US Hands Off Cuba!" from co-MC's Wilson Munoz of the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church and Tamara Hansen of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC).

Long time activist, and former Vancouver City Councillor Tim Louis opened up discrediting the recent US campaigns against Venezuela and Cuba. Tim was followed by many dynamic speakers: Leonor, from the Other Campaign Vancouver and Organizations in Solidarity with Atenco; and Marysol Torres of the Vancouver Internationalist Bolivarian Circle "Bob Everton".

These two strong women spoke strongly in defence of people's right to fight for social justice. They were followed by Fred Muzin, President of the Hospital Employees Union (HEU) who compared the great gains being made in Cuba and Venezuela while Canada is stuck with the conservative party.

With that, people flooded the streets chanting "Viva Cuba! Viva Venezuela!" Students, young people, women, and people of the 3rd world all marched to the US Consulate where co-MC Tamara Hansen read a condemning statement written by the Hands Off Cuba & Venezuelan May 20th Coalition to bring the demands of the rally directly to the Consulate.

Returning to the Art Gallery- Colleen Glynn, an executive of the Richmond NDP spoke, followed by Andrew Berry from Victoria Solidarity with Venezuela. Next the rally was greeted by Reverend Lucius Walker, Executive Director of the Pastors for Peace who called from the May 20th



Latin American Solidarity Activists Leonor Arenas and Andrew Barrie lead the rally on May 20th.

rally in Washington, DC. Lifting the feeling the solidarity and buzz in the air Lucius was followed by Noah Fine, of the Free the Cuba 5 Committee – Vancouver who briefly announced their upcoming picket at the US consulate.

Lindsay Clarke, Social Justice Coordinator for the Capilano Students' Union summarized by taking her perspective as a student and generalizing it for everyone at the rally, "When students in Canada struggle for access to education.

When students in Cuba and Venezuela struggle for self-determination. We must remember that our struggle is the same struggle. We must stand in solidarity with our Cuban and Venezuelan brothers and sisters in our fight for human rights!"

As the beats of DJ Contradiction filled downtown, people carried the message with them back to their homes, communities, and workplaces, as part of a growing movement in solidarity with Cuba and Venezuela.

# EVENTS and ACTIONS

## Vancouver

**Monday July 24**  
**Picket to Free the Five Cuban Heroes Held in U.S. Jails!**

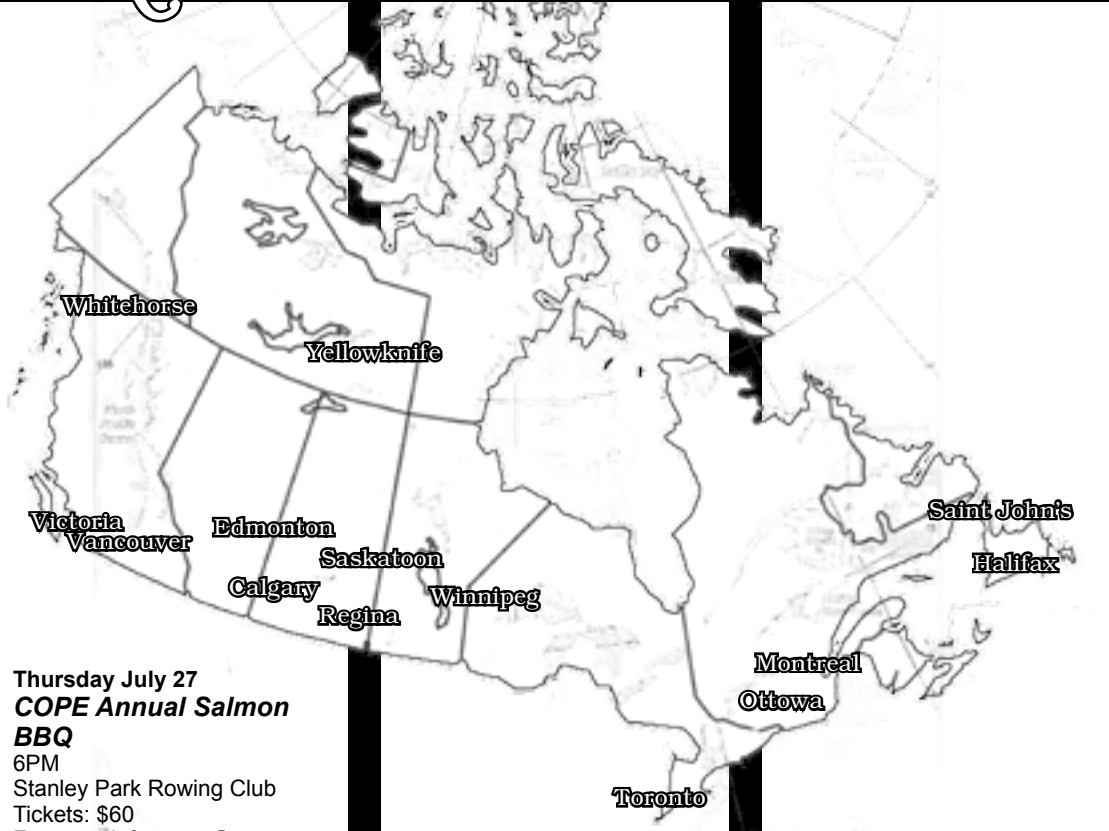
12pm-1pm  
 U.S. Consulate - 1075 W. Pender St.  
 Org'd by the Free the Cuban Five Committee-Vancouver  
 For more info:  
[vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html](http://vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html)  
[cuban5\\_van@yahoo.ca](mailto:cuban5_van@yahoo.ca)  
 604.719.6947

**Tuesday July 25**  
**There Are Things Decent People Don't Do: Refusing The IDF**

Presentation and Discussion  
 7:30 pm  
 The Tigers Cafe, 2133 Granville Street (near 5th)  
 Org'd By Jews for a Just Peace

**Wednesday July 26**  
**Celebrate the Gains of the Cuban Revolution!**

6:30pm  
 Unitarian Church of Vancouver - 949 W. 49th Ave  
 Org'd by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver  
 For more information:  
[vancubasolidarity.com](http://vancubasolidarity.com)  
[cubacommunities@yahoo.ca](mailto:cubacommunities@yahoo.ca)  
 778.882.5223



**Thursday July 27**  
**COPE Annual Salmon BBQ**

6PM  
 Stanley Park Rowing Club  
 Tickets: \$60  
 For more info: [cope@cope.bc.ca](mailto:cope@cope.bc.ca) | 604.255.0400

**Saturday July 29**  
**Moncada Day Celebration**

3PM ~ Chilean Housing Co-op, 3390 School Ave  
 Org'd by Canadian Cuban Friendship Assoc - Vancouver

**Wednesday August 17**  
**Picket: Stop the Repression and Killings in Haiti!**

6:30PM  
 2741 W. 4th Ave, Vancouver  
 Org'd by: Haiti Solidarity BC

**Saturday August 26**  
**RALLY: Canada Out of Afghanistan! US/UK Out of Iraq! Israel Out of Lebanon!**

3PM  
 Vancouver Art Gallery (750 Hornby St)  
 Org'd by: Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO)  
 For more info:  
[mawovancouver.org](http://mawovancouver.org)  
[info@mawovancouver.org](mailto:info@mawovancouver.org)

## Toronto

**Sunday July 23**  
**Jose Marti Tertulia**

3pm  
 Latinada Tapas Bar - 1671 Bloor St West  
 For more info: [pidahosa@georgebrown.ca](mailto:pidahosa@georgebrown.ca)

**Wednesday July 26**  
**Celebrate the 53rd Anniversary of Moncada Day!**

6pm  
 Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St.  
 Org'd by: Toronto Forum on Cuba  
 Free the Cuban Five Committee - Toronto

**Thursday August 10**  
**March and Demonstration: Prison Justice Day**

12 noon  
 All Saints Church  
 Org'd by Ontario Coalition Against Poverty  
 For more info: [www.ocap.ca](http://www.ocap.ca)

**Saturday August 26**  
**Toronto-Cuba Friendship Day**

11am -6pm  
 Nathan Phillips Square - Toronto City Hall  
 For more info: 905.951.8499

## Hamilton

**Wednesday July 26**  
**VIGIL: No to Occupation and War! Stand for Peace! Defend Lebanon and Palestine!**

3:30pm-5:30pm  
 King St & James St  
 FORUM & DISCUSSION:  
 "What the Canadian People Can Do"  
 4PM - Location TBA

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 Or view all available titles at [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net)

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# VANCOUVER'S SECOND ANNUAL 2006

# WIP WOP

## FESTIVAL

## AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION

### JULY 21-23 FREE!

### FRIDAY JULY 21

**AFTERNOON OUTDOOR SHOW IN WEST VAN!**  
 Ambleside Beach & Park West Vancouver  
 5pm to 9pm  
 FREE to ALL AGES  
 Skateboard demo + graffiti wall!  
 In partnership with the District of West Vancouver and the Ambleside Youth Centre

### FRIDAY JULY 21

**OPENING NIGHT CLUB SHOW!**  
 at the Pic Pub  
 620 W. Pender St Vancouver  
 Doors 9pm / Show 10pm  
 FREE! 19+ Only

### SATURDAY JULY 22

**ALL DAY OUTDOOR SHOW IN SURREY!**  
 Jabez Cafe (CHANGE OF VENUE!)  
 10294 135st Surrey (across from Surrey Central Skytrain)  
 2pm to 8pm  
 FREE ALL AGES  
 LOCAL BREAKDANCE COMPETITION!

### SATURDAY JULY 22

**EVENING YOUTH SHOW IN RICHMOND!**  
 Thompson Community Centre  
 5151 Granville Avenue Richmond  
 Doors 7pm / Show 8pm  
 FREE ALL AGES  
 LOCAL BREAKDANCE COMPETITION  
 In partnership with the City of Richmond and the Thompson Community Centre

### SUNDAY JULY 23

**ALL DAY OUTDOOR SHOW IN VANCOUVER!**  
 Britannia Oval Track  
 West Side of Britannia Comm Ctr off Commercial Drive & Napier  
 12noon to 7pm  
 FREE ALL AGES  
 COMMUNITY GRAFFITI WALL AND BREAKDANCE EXPO!  
 In partnership with the Britannia Community Centre

### SUNDAY JULY 23

**FESTIVAL WRAP-UP PARTY SHOW!**  
 El Cocal Restaurant  
 1037 Commercial Drive  
 Doors 8pm / Show 9pm  
 FREE ALL AGES  
 ANTI-WAR FREESTYLE SHOWDOWN

### FEATURED PERFORMERS

Sepia | Philistines | NOMADS | Sunday School Dropoutz | Signia | Threat From Outer Space | 7th Generation | Snake Eyes | Daybi | Jay Kin | Seko | Illa Brown | Kaboom | Influents | JB the First Lady | Crystal Schooner | Genetics | Nadia Chaney | Ndid Cascade & Triple 3 | Lindsay Bomberry | Lady Sincere | Shay Faded | Dance Dance Revolution | Inez | Obese Chief | Will Wadhams | Kytami | Alexander Jawanda | Platino Latin Productions | Aline MC Line | El Esquadron | Chadrio | Lyric | Project | Illegitimate | B-Urban | The What? | Kid Lithium | Obscldn | Spin | El Esquadron | Free Thinkers Society | The On Point Collective | Logic | EV |

\*\*\*B-Boy & B-Girl Cyphers featuring the FLOOR FILLAHS & Savage Rock



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