

FREE BRADLEY MANNING SOLDIER OF HUMANITY!



Bradley Manning is the 24 year old US soldier accused of leaking over 260,000 classified United States diplomatic cables as well as videos and documents which have become known as the Afghan War Diary and the Iraq War Logs. Published on the whistleblower site Wikileaks, they further exposed US war crimes around the world, including mass killings, torture, corruption and the government's web of lies and attempted cover-ups of United States atrocities.

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QUÉBEC STUDENTS LEAD THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMANITY & DIGNITY IN CANADA!

With the feet of hundreds of thousands of students marching on the streets of Québec's cities for the last three and a half months, it's no surprise who the first victim of the movements strength would be.

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FIRE THIS TIME

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



NO TO NATO! ABOLISH NATO!

Demands of No to NATO! No to War! will soon fill the streets of Chicago as people from the U.S and around the world gather in protest at the Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), May 20th-21st.

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NATO will be 'welcomed' with banners, picket signs, loud voices and marching feet!

DROP ALL CHARGES AGAINST CARLOS MONTES!

It is 5:00am on May 17th, 2011. At a home in Los Angeles, California, FBI agents and police officers dressed in black and armed with automatic weapons knock down the front door and violently arrest Carlos Montes at his home. They raid and ransack his house, taking with them his computer, his cell phone and many documents and files.

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MUSQUEAM NATION STANDS UP FOR ANCIENT VILLAGE



Photo by Murray Bush

Lower mainland commuters may wonder what all the commotion is about in South Vancouver. Along the sidewalk of the 1300-block of Southwest Marine Drive, members of the Musqueam First Nation have been maintaining a round-the-clock protest to halt the construction of a 5-storey residential and commercial project on a major ancient burial site and Musqueam village called c̓əsnaʔəm (commonly known as Marpole Midden).

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WHO'S BEING MEAN-SPIRITED?

Response to Jon Ferry's Article, "Mean-Spirited BCTF Really Hurting Kids"

On Friday May 11, 2012 Vancouver's The Province newspaper published an article about the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) by columnist Jon Ferry. The article entitled "Mean-spirited BCTF really hurting kids" caused me to raise an eyebrow.

Page 8



FREE THE CUBAN 5! FREE THE CUBAN 5 COMMITTEE-VANCOUVER STRENGTHENS CAMPAIGN FOR THEIR RELEASE

If you were a small island nation which had been subject to terrorism for more than 50 years, what would you do? You'd probably ask that the attacks immediately stop. That's what the small country of Cuba with 11 million population has asked for decades of its close neighbour, the United States, to no avail. For more than 50 years, armed terrorist gangs of Cuban exiles have been organizing



in Miami, Florida with the purpose of creating chaos in Cuba.

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By Aaron Mercredi

Lower mainland commuters may wonder what all the commotion is about in South Vancouver. Along the sidewalk of the 1300-block of Southwest Marine Drive, members of the Musqueam First Nation have been maintaining a round-the-clock protest to halt the construction of a 5-storey residential and commercial project on a major ancient burial site and Musqueam village called *čəsnaʔəm* (commonly known as Marpole Midden). Two infant graves were recently unearthed by the excavating equipment in the construction zone and the Musqueam are determined to see that the rest of their ancestors will remain undisturbed.

An Ancient Village

The land in question, *čəsnaʔəm*, or Marpole Midden, lies within the traditional territory of the Musqueam Nation. The Musqueam, whose name means 'People of the River Grass', are a Coast Salish people who have lived in this area for thousands of years. The development of Vancouver and surrounding areas in the heart of Musqueam territory are very recent developments in the long and rich history of this people, but had a very significant impact on them like many other Indigenous nations who suffered from Canadian colonialism. While Vancouver exists as a metropolitan city today, the Musqueam now live on a very small portion of their traditional territory, known as the Musqueam Indian Reserve, located South of Marine Drive on the banks of the Fraser River.

The Marpole Midden was recognized as an important archaeological site more than 100 years ago. In 1933, it was recognized as a National Historic Site of Canada as *čəsnaʔəm* dates back 4,000 years ago, the time of the pyramids of Egypt, and the site contains priceless artifacts and undisturbed

intact burials of Musqueam people. Regardless of the recognition that this is one of the most important native village and burial sites in Canada, construction and development have taken place in the area over the years. Today, while the Musqueam maintain Aboriginal rights and titles over the land, it is held in 'fee simple' by another party who is now developing the land.

The Current Fight

What took place with this current con-

Archaeological Branch in the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Resources sent a letter to the Musqueam First Nation to inform them that the owner of the land wanted to apply for an archaeological permit. The band office was closed from December 23 to January 4 and the BC government approved the permit, stating the Musqueam 'did not respond' to the proposal. In January 2012, the archaeological work began. Soon after, an intact burial, undisturbed since it was placed there by Musqueam ancestors thousands of years ago, was unearthed.

On March 5, the Musqueam First Nation band council passed a motion calling on the developers to 'cease and desist' work on the project until a joint resolution could be found. Musqueam community members then took to the streets on March 12 to physically block the construction. After three days of negotiations, the Musqueam ended their peaceful demonstration once an

interim agreement was reached between the Musqueam, the property developer, the City of Vancouver and the province of BC to 'ensure the protection of the ancient burial site that was found in January and to enable negotiations to be held on the future of the site and putting in place long-term protection.'

However, the construction work and archaeological digging resumed. On April 18th, the Musqueam Indian Band issued an open letter to BC Premier Christy Clark and Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson stating their position and urging them to stop the construction project and desecration

of *čəsnaʔəm*. The Musqueam proposed a land swap, exchanging the condo development land for a valuable parcel of their land. They also offered to pay some of the costs associated with the project so that it would be of no cost to taxpayers.

The Musqueam's goal is to turn the area of the Marpole Midden in to an interpretive



čəsnaʔəm: MUSQUEAM NATION STANDS UP FOR ANCIENT VILLAGE



struction project is a classic example of the exclusion of Indigenous people from decisions and processes regarding their lands and resources and how Native people are continually put in the position to take to the streets to demand their rights.

On December 23, 2011, BC's

park, open to the public, which would celebrate the Musqueam cultural heritage and history. While the province appointed a mediator, discussions moved slowly and the developer warned that he would continue to work on the site if a resolution wasn't imminently found.

Continued construction work and excavations revealed two more intact burials; this time, those of two infants. In response, on the morning of May 3, more than 100 Musqueam community members and their supporters marched to the construction site and held a rally outside the fenced-off area where their ancestors and ancient village remain, to raise public awareness and demand an end to the continued destruction and desecration of their ancestors' remains. On May 10, they went further by gathering more than 100 Musqueam nation members and supporters to demonstrate on the grounds of the BC Legislature to call the provincial government to action on the issue.

In a press statement released on May 10, Chief Ernest C. Campbell of the Musqueam Indian Band stated, "The present excavation and development on this burial site – especially following the recent discovery of intact infant burials – is unconscionable. These acts erase our culture and our identity. We have a proposal for an interpretive centre and park, funded by Musqueam, but the provincial government has yet to respond to our offer."

BC's Legal Right

While some people may argue 'to get over it' or that 'most of the area has already been developed already, so what's the big deal now?', it's important to look at the facts, the context that the province of BC operates within. As a fact, 97 percent of this province is un-ceded territory, which means that when this area was colonized and confederated, the Crown did not enter treaty negotiations with the majority of Indigenous nations whose traditional territories make up what is today the province of BC.

So, according to the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the land does not legally belong to Canada, let alone one of its provinces. Regardless, the federal and provincial governments have made countless offensives



the Musqueam shouldn't need to be put in a position to protest.

Stop the Desecration of , ɥəsnaʔəm!

As the BC Liberal government continues to delay this process, the preservation of ɥəsnaʔəm is still at risk. The Musqueam Nation has received support from other First Nations and many other organizations who are echoing their just demands. President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, recently said, "To ignore the Musqueam's offer, is to challenge not only the determination of Musqueam's position to protect the entire site but a challenge to all First Nations in BC."

This needs to be a challenge met by all people living in this province, and especially those living in urban centres like the lower mainland. This fight is a wake-up call that

Indigenous land issues don't just take place in the countryside, but are issues that affect us everywhere. Supporters are encouraged to visit the protest site on the 1300-block of Southwest Marine Drive and to sign the on-line petition at <http://www.petitiononlinecanada.com/petition/stop-the-immediate-destruction-of-indigenous-burial-sites/943>

This fight is to protect traditional land. Saving Musqueam history is protecting their people's future.



Photo by Murray Bush



Photo by Murray Bush

on the sovereignty, land and resources of Indigenous nations here in this province. Indigenous people have met these offensives by defending themselves in whatever means they could; be it on the streets or in the courts.

So, what does this have to do with an ancient Musqueam village? While treaties are rare in this province, legal victories have recognized the Aboriginal rights and title to lands and resources, and have won First Nations the right to be consulted on developments on their traditional lands; on Crown lands, and even 'fee simple,' or private, lands. So, given this legal precedent,

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Cuban Exiles Guilty Of Blasting Ships

MIAMI, Fla. (AP) — Nine Cuban exiles, including former Havana postmistress Orlando Bosch, were found guilty in federal court Friday of conspiring to blast ships of foreign countries which trade with Cuba.

In addition, Bosch was adjudged guilty on three counts of sending telegrams to the heads of state of Spain, Mexico and England, threatening that the mysterious Cuban Power organization would bomb their ships.

Bosch and two other refugees — Barbara Balan and Jose Diaz More-

no—were convicted of firing on the Polish freighter Polanika while it was in the Port of Miami.

Bosch, frequently accused of United States neutrality laws in previous plots against Fidel Castro's Cuban government, could be sentenced to a total of 28 years in federal prison.

The eight male defendants showed no expression when the verdict was read, but the lone woman—Almece Miranda—weep.

Judge William O. Meherets delayed (See EXILES on Back Page)

Sunny, Cool
Dewels of 24

The Miami Herald

Final Edition
Sunday, January 16, 1983

Unmasking of a master terrorist: Omega 7's 'Omar' is on the run

WANTED by the FBI



Special Florida Attorney
Age 38
Height 5' 7"
Hair Brown
Eyes Blue

Search for a change of identity transportation or evidence in connection with a March 23, 1981, attempt to invade Cuba's shore in the United States.

Omega 7: The Face of Terror

Omega 7 is a group of Cuban exiles who are active in the United States and are known for their involvement in terrorist activities. The group is led by a man known as 'Omar' who is currently on the run from the FBI.

ATTACKS ON SHIPS PLANNED

Nine Cuban Exiles Jailed As Terror Plotters



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Bosch and two other refugees — Barbara Balan and Jose Diaz More-

Free Cuba.

TORCH A TRAVEL AGENCY!

By Saul Landau*

You can disagree with violent anti-Castro dogma, but such dissent could also get you killed – or your business torched as happened on April 25 to Airline Brokers Co. Some Cuban exiles apparently take free speech so seriously that they punish those who use it in “inappropriate” ways.

Miami has witnessed countless incidents for five plus decades where those who consider their own views on how to bring freedom to Cuba as so pure and irrefragable, that anyone who challenges their doctrine merits a bomb, a bullet, or an accelerant.

Ironically, these extremists don't do their macho violence in Cuba. They choose safer places. Orlando Bosch and his cohort Luis Posada Carriles said they were trying to free Cuba when they masterminded the

bombing of the Cuban passenger plane over Barbados in 1976. If you believe in freeing Cuba, so their logic goes, you be-

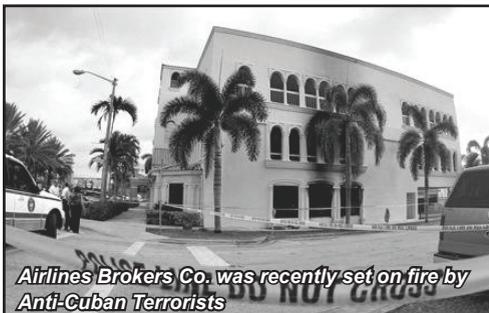
come free to kill all 73 on board. How this helped to free Cuba – well, you know.

By fighting for freedom in Cuba – or claiming to – you get a license from God to destroy and intimidate in the United States or anywhere else. Indeed, in Miami hundreds

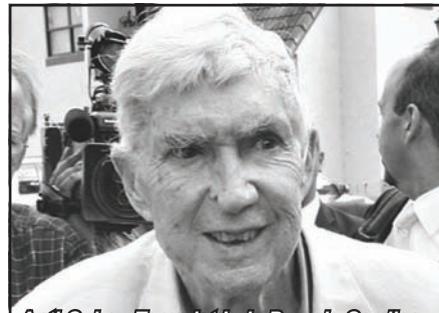
of bombings, shootings, and arson have occurred – all this mayhem in the name of that glorious cause of freeing Cuba. Although no one has yet actually explained how a fire or shooting in Miami helps liberate Cuba.

Instead, the majority of this “liberating” violence has targeted civilians in the United States. Did killing Cuban UN diplomat Felix Garcia in New York in 1980, and bombing and torching movie theaters in New York and Los Angeles (where my “Fidel” film was supposed to open in 1970) because they didn't like the movie they hadn't even seen help free Cuba? In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a bomber put a charge on the wall of Marazul Travel – an agency providing legal travel to Cuba. Three Molotov cocktails got tossed into Marazul offices. Travel to Cuba became a sin against the religion of “fighting for freedom in Cuba.”

From the 1960s through the 1980s, “Bombs Away” could have referred to Miami rather than a video game about space aliens. And this “violence against people who disagree with violence in the United States will free Cuba” equation continues.



Airlines Brokers Co. was recently set on fire by Anti-Cuban Terrorists



Anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles



Anti-Cuban Terrorist Orlando Bosch



UN Diplomat Felix Garcia Was Murdered by Anti-Cuban Terrorist Organization - Omega 7

On April 25, 2012, fifty-three plus years after the Cuban revolutionaries took power, God's licensed terrorists burned the offices of an airline charter company ostensibly because it flew pilgrims to Cuba. How such actions advanced their cause of freedom for Cuba remains a logical mystery – or perhaps simply a pretext for baser motives. The targets for violence have shared two qualities: 1) they disagreed with the dictates



laid down by the extremist wing of exiles who demanded everyone submit to their views or suffer the consequences; 2) they had no chance to defend themselves.

The most recent “sinner,” who offended the self-anointed arsonists owned Airlines Brokers Co. Vivian Mannerud told Miami’s Channel 10: “It’s not that it’s burned. It’s pulverized.” She stared at the ashes that once housed her charter company. “I have never seen a fire pulverize things. I’ve seen it in pictures of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.”

Investigators aided by dogs trained to recognize the odor of accelerant determined that the fire was “deliberate.” So, the arsonists did a professional job, just as their predecessors, the bombers and shooters did in their countless acts of murder and mayhem in Miami, New York, San Juan and Washington, DC – all to free Cuba, of course.

In March, the Miami Archdiocese, which had received bomb threats in 1998 during a previous Pope’s (John Paul II) visit to Cuba, contracted with Mannerud’s company to

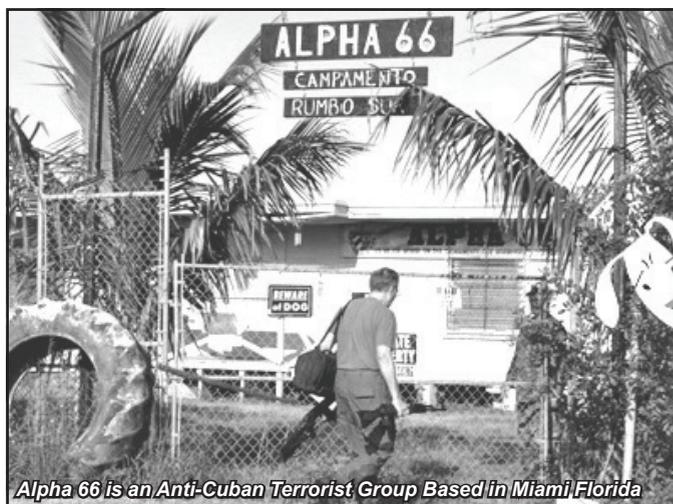
transport several hundred of the faithful from South Florida to the island. Was this the motive? Or did it relate to a sin of her father who started the charter company in 1982 and had testified in the trial of Eduardo Arocena of the Cuban Nationalist Movement and its “action arm” Omega 7. The jury convicted Arocena.

If the Cuban Five network had remained in Miami they might have infiltrated the

group that torched Mannerud’s company and tipped the police to the caper. But those anti-terrorists remain in federal custody, while arsonists roam the Miami streets and a bomber, like Luis Posada Carriles, has a publicized painting exhibition in a Coral Gables bank.

The “patriots” have no plans to “free Cuba,” only rhetoric with phrases like

“return Cuba to freedom” (non-existent in Cuba before the revolution), and “get rid of the dictatorship” (which some of them supported under Batista). But decades of



violence in the United States has hurt this country, but had no effect on Cuba. Ironically, the macho perpetrators even deny their deeds, but nevertheless get honored for doing them and accept the honors.

They can’t explain how destroying a Coral Gables travel agency helps free Cuba. “The money visitors spend in Cuba supports the Castro regime.” As if bombing travel agencies stops travel!

Reach beneath the unconvincing rhetoric and into baser motives. Do the violence makers make their living from violence? After the April 25 fire, did Coral Gables business neighbors of the Airline Charter Co. receive visits? “Hey, you got a nice store here...” You know the dialogue from the Sopranos. Except Cuban exile criminals cover their shakedowns with “patriotic” rhetoric.

I feel certain, however, that Miami area elected officials have strong feelings against this act of terrorism despite their deafening silence.

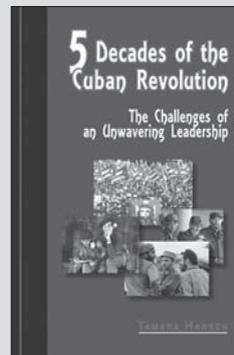
**Saul Landau, Saul is Professor Emeritus at California State University, Pomona, and a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies at the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. He has produced more than 40 films on social, political and historical issues, and worldwide human rights, throughout his career. Throughout his career, he has been the recipient of the Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award, the George Polk Award for Investigative Reporting, and the First Amendment Award, as well as an Emmy for “Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang.” Professor Landau’s most recent film, “Will the Real Terrorist Please Stand Up?” was screened at this year’s Vancouver International Film Festival.*

Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution
The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership
By Tamara Hansen

“The battles Cuba has fought have not been easy. Some were physical battles, such as the battle against bandits in the Escambray Mountains or the Bay of Pigs invasion. However, most were not battles of physical might, but battles of ideas. But with every twist and turn, every up and down Fidel has been one of the first leaders to say, ‘this way forward’ or ‘we made a wrong turn, we must change course.’”

Tamara Hansen is the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba ten times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.



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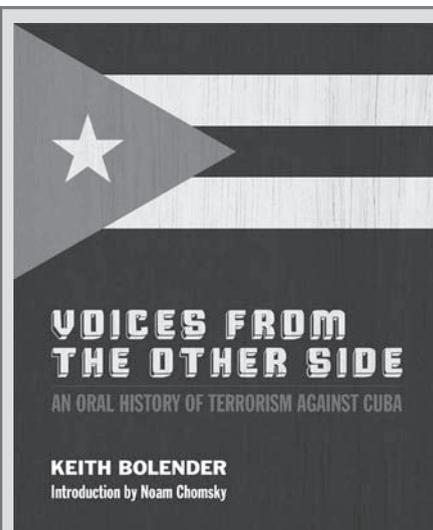
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Next Prints:

Volume 7 Issue 3, June 8, 2012

Volume 7 Issue 4, June 29, 2012



Book event on victims from terrorist acts against Cuba, Saturday May 20

New book examines history of terrorism against
Cuba

Voices From the Other Side: An Oral History
of Terrorism Against Cuba, examines the
largely unknown history of violence against
Cuban citizens since the earliest days of the
Revolution through a series of emotional and
personal testimonials.

Written by Canadian author Keith Bolender,
the book is the first ever collection of inter-
views with dozens of Cubans who
have suffered directly from these
acts or have had friends or relatives
killed. The Cuban government has
documented more than 700 incidents
of terrorism, resulting in the deaths
of 3,500, with thousands more
injured. Most have been committed
by anti-revolutionary groups
originating from the United States,
the Cuban side maintains.

Chapters include the Cubana
Airlines bombing of Flight 455 in
1976, killing all 73 on board. The
two recognized masterminds,
Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando
Bosch, continue to live in Miami.
The bombing remains the second worst

act of air terrorism in the Americas, after 9/11.
Other topics include biological terrorism, the
1997 bombing campaign against tourist facilities,
attacks on villages, the murder of teachers during
the literacy campaign and Operation Peter Pan,
a psychological terror program that convinced
thousands of Cuban parents to send their children
out of country, on their own.

Introduction of the book has been written by
Noam Chomsky.

Voices From the Other Side: An Oral History
of Terrorism Against Cuba is published by Pluto
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Keith Bolender is a freelance journalist living in
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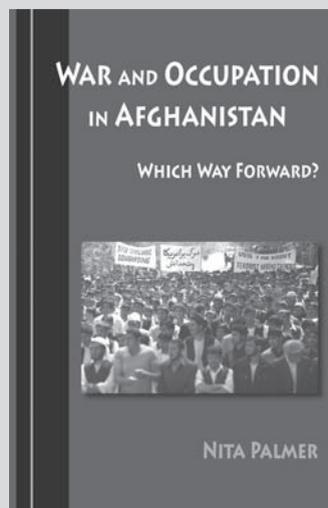
Contact 905-760-9684.

Email bolodive@gmail.com

The event takes place Saturday, May 20 from 2 to
4 p.m. at Peoples Co-op Bookstore in Vancouver,
1391 Commercial Drive. Call 604-253-6442 for
more details.

Battle of Ideas Press

WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WAY FORWARD?



"The problem of Afghanistan boils down to just two words: foreign occupation. The Canada/US/NATO occupation forces claim that corruption, poverty, drug production, the presence of the Taliban and other social or political crises are the fundamental problems of Afghanistan which they must fix. The irony of this claim is that the same occupation forces have proven themselves completely incapable of fixing these problems or of bettering the lives of Afghan people one bit after eight years of occupation. Under the watchful eye of the occupation forces, corruption has become rampant in Afghanistan, from the local level all the way up to the highest levels of government. Afghanistan has gone from producing less than 10% of the world's opium in 2001 to producing a staggering 93% of the world's opium in 2008, according to the UN World Health Organization."

BY NITA PALMER

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

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REFLEXIONES BY
FIDEL CASTRO



THE 67TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY OVER NAZI FASCISM

No political event can be judged outside of the period and circumstances in which it took place. No one knows even one percent of the fabulous history of human beings, but thanks to this history, we know about events which surpass the limits of the imaginable.

The privilege of having known persons, and even places where certain events related to the historic battle took place, increased the interest with which I awaited this year's commemoration.

The colossal feat was accomplished by a group of nations which the revolution and socialism had united and linked in order to end the brutal exploitation endured by the world for thousands of year. The Russians were always proud of having led that revolution, and of the sacrifices they made carrying it out.

This extremely important anniversary of the victory cannot be comprehended under a flag or name different from the one which presided over the heroism of the

combatants of the Great Patriotic War.

Something doubtlessly untouchable and indelible remained: the anthem's unforgettable notes to which millions of men and women defied death, and crushed the invaders in their attempt to impose a thousand years of Nazism and holocaust on all of humanity.

With these ideas in mind, I enjoyed the hours I dedicated to the most organized and martial parade imaginable, staged by men trained in Russian military academies.

The yankees and the bloody armies of NATO surely could not have imagined that the crimes committed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya; the attacks on Pakistan and Syria; the threats to Iran and other countries in the Middle East; the military bases in Latin America, Africa and Asia could all be carried out with absolute impunity, without the world becoming aware of the unprecedented and insane threat.

How quickly empires forget the lessons of history!

REFLEXIONES DEL FIDEL CASTRO

EL 67 ANIVERSARIO DE LA VICTORIA SOBRE EL NAZI FASCISMO

Ningún hecho político puede ser juzgado fuera de la época y las circunstancias en que tuvo lugar. Nadie conoce siquiera el uno por ciento de la fabulosa historia del hombre; pero gracias a ella, conocemos sucesos que rebasan los límites de lo imaginable.

El privilegio de haber conocido personas, incluso sitios en los que se llevaron a cabo algunos de los sucesos relacionados con la histórica batalla, incrementaba el interés con que esperaba este año la conmemoración.

La colosal hazaña era fruto del heroísmo de un conjunto de pueblos que la revolución y el socialismo habían unido y entrelazado para poner fin a la brutal explotación que el mundo había soportado a lo largo de milenios. Los rusos estuvieron siempre orgullosos de haber encabezado aquella revolución, y de los sacrificios con que fueron capaces de llevarla a cabo.

Este importantísimo aniversario de la victoria no podía ser comprendido bajo el signo de una bandera y un nombre diferente al que presidió el heroísmo de los

combatientes de la Gran Guerra Patria. Quedaba algo sin duda intocable e imborrable: el himno bajo cuyas inolvidables notas millones de hombres y mujeres desafiaron la muerte, y aplastaron a los invasores que quisieron imponer mil años de nazismo y holocausto a toda la humanidad.

Con esas ideas en la mente, disfruté las horas que dediqué al desfile más organizado y marcial que pude imaginar nunca, protagonizado por hombres formados en las universidades militares rusas.

Los yanquis y los ejércitos sanguinarios de la



FIRE THIS TIME

The military technology exhibited in Moscow on May 9 displayed the impressive capacity of the Russian Federation to make an effective and variable response to imperialism's most sophisticated conventional and nuclear armaments.

It was the event we were awaiting on the glorious anniversary of the Soviet victory over fascism.

Fidel Castro Ruz
May 10, 2012



Protest Against NATO in Pakistan

OTAN seguramente no podían imaginarse que los crímenes cometidos en Afganistán, Iraq y Libia; los ataques a Pakistán y Siria; las amenazas contra Irán y otros países del Medio Oriente; las bases militares en América Latina, África y Asia; podrían llevarse a cabo con absoluta impunidad, sin que el mundo tomara conciencia de la insólita y descabellada amenaza.

¡Qué pronto se olvidan los imperios de las lecciones de la historia!

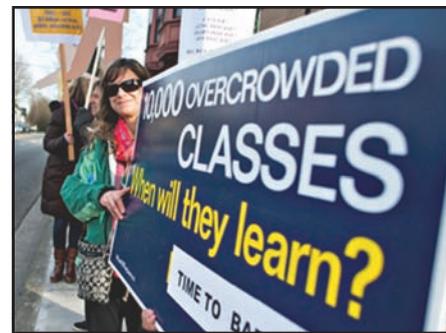
La técnica militar exhibida en Moscú el 9 de mayo, mostraba la impresionante capacidad de la Federación Rusa para ofrecer respuesta adecuada y variable a los más sofisticados medios convencionales y nucleares del imperialismo.

Fue el acto que esperábamos en el glorioso aniversario de la victoria soviética sobre el fascismo.

Fidel Castro Ruz
May 10 de 2012

WHO'S BEING MEAN-SPIRITED?

A Response to Jon Ferry's Article,
"Mean-Spirited BCTF Really Hurting Kids"



Student Protest in Downtown Vancouver as Part of A BC Wide BC Highschool Student Walk-out in Support of BC Teachers

By Tamara Hansen

On Friday May 11, 2012 Vancouver's *The Province* newspaper published an article about the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) by columnist Jon Ferry. The article entitled "Mean-spirited BCTF really hurting kids" caused me to raise an eyebrow.

Ferry begins his article with some assessment of the difficulties faced on both sides of the current labour dispute between BC teachers and the BC government. This first section seems to be his 'I can see some wrongdoing on both sides of this issue' bit, all the while he is winding up for his attack on teachers and the BCTF.

What's the dispute between BC teachers and the BC government?

Throughout his article Ferry never mentions what I would argue is at the heart of this labour dispute, which is the current direction of BC's public education system. In an article published in *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* in February 2012, Susan Lambert, president of the BCTF writes, "In 1991-92 the Ministry of Education's budget was 26 per cent of the provincial budget. By 2009-10 it had shrunk to 15 per cent". With inflation, the desire to

integrate new technology in schools and the general rising cost of living in BC, how has the education system adapted to these cuts? We see more reliance on private funding and community fundraising, the lengthening the school day while cutting the number of days in the school year, and raising class sizes while removing previous guarantees about class composition.

All of these things are having a major impact on the ability of teachers to do their job and for their students to meet the learning outcomes. Many long-time teachers are fed up with this state of affairs and agree with the BCTF's decision to fight against the BC governments "net-zero" mandate and to demand that class size and composition be put back on the negotiation table. So yes, pay is an issue, mainly keeping up with the rate of inflation and the pay of other teachers across Canada. However, it is not the main issue for most teachers. The future of BC's public education system is really what teachers want to say in.

When the BC government decided that a negotiated settlement in 2012 was not likely, they decided to legislate teachers back to work. On March 15, 2012 the BC government passed Bill 22, which they call "The Education Improvement Act". It states, "every employee must continue or resume his or her full duties and work schedules of employment with the

employer". Teachers and their union were angry and ready to resist this law, which does very little to improve the current situation in BC's public schools and is an attempt to scare teachers into silence by imposing severe fines if teachers continue their job action.

Why Ferry believes the BCTF is mean-spirited...

In his article, Ferry lays out his argument by explaining, "What is really angering the public now is the union's own mean-spirited order to its members to withdraw from coaching sports and other extracurricular activities." Here Ferry tries to make the union a separate entity from its membership. Ignoring that there was no "order to its members to withdraw". In fact, on April 17-19, 2012 BCTF members took a democratic vote in which 73% voted in favour of withdrawing these voluntary services as one part of a nine point action plan to confront the BC government's draconian "Education Improvement Act".

Ferry uses anecdotal evidence to back up his claim of public anger. "Just ask Peter Froese of the B.C. Federation of Independent School Associations, who said the issue is causing a number of parents to consider taking their kids out of the public-school system. [...] he recently had a call from a Victoria public schoolteacher who was so frustrated that he and his wife, also a public schoolteacher, wanted to enrol their own

children in an independent school.” No evidence here that the teacher was considering an independent school for their children based on the withdrawal of extracurricular activities. BC public school teachers are protesting the government’s implementation of Bill 22, because they see a decline in BC’s public education system on a daily basis. Are those issues not a reason that



some teachers might choose to send their children to an independent school? These mounting problems inside classrooms and the BC government’s chronic underfunding for public education seem like a more likely reason for these public school teachers to want to send their children to an independent school, than a few months without extracurricular activities.

Ferry then proclaims, “Certainly, I have to agree with Premier Christy Clark that it was “wrong for the union to try to bully its members into withdrawing those services.” I am not sure how much more ludicrous Ferry can be. Yes the BCTF is a big “bully”, and 73% of BCTF members (or bully victims) voted in favour of their own “victimization”.

“They gotta be kiddin”

Later, Ferry wonders aloud, “what impact all this adult unpleasantness will have on our children.” Later he answers his own ponderings with, “the BCTF keeps saying it’s doing it for the kids. But if folks actually believe this after all this crass dispute has put the kids through, I say they gotta be kiddin’.” This type of rhetorical question is very popular in the media right now. It is meant to enrage readers against teachers and make teachers feel guilty. However, if we are honest and look beyond the immediate implications of a few months of public schools without teachers volunteering outside of class time, and consider the bigger issues that our public school system is facing, this question seems irrelevant

and unfair.

I would like to quote my article in volume 7 issue 1 of Fire This Time: “Everyone is saying that with teacher’s committing to stop extracurricular participation, ‘Kids will pay the price.’ What does this mean? Yes, current students are paying a certain price for teacher job action, but ultimately the job action is to save the public education system. A public education system is supposed to provide each young person in BC with a world-class education equally without bias of where they grow up or their family income. Our public education system today is already underfunded and unequal across the province. Schools that are in wealthier areas are better off because of parent, student and teacher fundraising. Already we

have gaps in what we have promised future generations and what is being delivered. The government of BC has its eyes shut and is happy to deepen the inequality.”

It seems to me that Ferry is also trying to close his eyes on what is happening in BC public schools. Through his article, he hopes to isolate the BCTF as the mean-spirited bully that is victimizing students, teachers and anyone else standing in its way. I would like to speculate that while it is true that many students, teachers and parents are unhappy with the current withdrawal of voluntary activities, most who care about the future of public education know that teachers have not been left with much choice.

“If you don’t want to fight, it’s impossible to win”

In recent weeks many BC newspapers have featured stories about teachers who are not standing with the union’s decision and are continuing their participation in extracurricular activities. Many editorials have held these teachers up as courageous heroes, and in fact, all of the articles I have read so far have featured male sports coaches. These articles have a particular macho mood and

made me want to find some words of wisdom from a sports icon to summarize my views about the political battle between BC Teachers and the BC government, and how I could answer when someone accuses me of forcing kids to pay the price of our ‘adult’ battle.

I chose the words of Bud Wilkinson, who admittedly I know very little about, but was a football player, coach and ran for a seat in the US senate with the Republican party. He said, “If a team is to reach its potential, each player must be willing to subordinate his personal goals to the good of the team.” This view of a team, also applies here to solidarity - and if the ‘team’ in this case is public education - students, parents and teachers are going to have to grin and bear these temporary pains in the hopes of protecting public education in this province for future generations.

A healthy public education system is not a current priority for the BC government. Christy Clark made it clear on the first day of the three day teacher’s strike on March 5, 2012. Clark had planned to visit a private Christian school that day. Who cares about public schools or teachers anyways? These small actions speak volumes. Of course, the



BC government’s spending priorities also paint the same bigger picture. So I bring yet another sports quote from Wilkinson: “Football, in its purest form, remains a physical fight. As in any fight, if you don’t want to fight, it’s impossible to win.” This labour dispute between BC teachers and the BC government is a fight. Most BC teachers understand “if you don’t want to fight, it’s impossible to win.” This government will continue to strip BC public schools if we give up now. As teachers we have a responsibility to tell the public about what is happening inside BC schools today and to fight to get our public education system back on track.

FREE BRADLEY MANNING NOW!

BRADLEY MANNING SOLDIER OF HUMANITY

*By Shakeel Lochan**

Bradley Manning is the 24 year old US soldier accused of leaking over 260,000 classified United States diplomatic cables as well as videos and documents which have become known as the Afghan War Diary and the Iraq War Logs. Published on the whistleblower site Wikileaks, they further exposed US war crimes around the world, including mass killings, torture, corruption and the government's web of lies and attempted cover-ups of United States atrocities.

For telling the truth and acting upon his conscience, Bradley faces 22 charges, including "aiding the enemy by indirect means", which could result in the death penalty or life in prison. He was also held in solitary confinement for the first 10 months of his incarceration. During this time he was denied meaningful exercise, social interaction, sunlight, and has occasionally been kept completely naked. These conditions were unique to Bradley and are illegal even under US military law as they amount to extreme pre-trial punishment.

Public outcry for this "soldier of humanity" has been widespread all around the world. In one week in April 2011, over half a million people signed a petition calling on President Obama to end the isolation and torture of Bradley Manning, as those conditions serve as "a chilling deterrent to other potential whistleblowers committed to public integrity".

Bradley's treatment has also sparked a probe by the United Nations chief

torture investigator Juan Mendez, who says he has been "frustrated by the prevarication of the US government with regard to my attempts to visit Mr. Manning". Protests continue across the world and Bradley has also been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

In Canada antiwar coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation – MAWO, has taken up the campaign to Free Bradley Manning. The Vancouver campaign launched with a public forum titled, "Bradley Manning, Soldier of Humanity", which brought together over 60 participants as well as visiting US Veterans for Peace member and organizer Cliff Wells. The forum was also joined by Jeff Paterson, who spoke via video conference from Oakland, California. Jeff is the project director of Courage to Resist, an organization which provides for war resisters and whistleblowers. Jeff is also on the steering committee of the Bradley Manning Support Network. Janine Solanki, co-chair of Mobilization Against War and Occupation was the MC for the event. The forum included inspired discussion and featured the launch of a petition campaign as well as informational booklets and buttons for mass distribution.

Only four days after the launch of the campaign and the successful public forum, MAWO organizers and supporters took to the streets of Downtown Vancouver for their monthly antiwar demonstration with a special focus on the case of Bradley Manning and getting signatures for the petition campaign. By the end of the rally the number of petition signatures collected was already close to 200.



Five days later, the campaign was once again on the streets of downtown Vancouver, this time in front of the US Embassy, where over two dozens of organizers and supporters picketed, gathered petition signatures and demanded freedom for Bradley Manning.

The case of Bradley Manning was also brought to this year's Vancouver May Day Rally with the unfurling of a new banner and continued distribution of informational materials.

In less than two weeks, the launching of the Vancouver Campaign to Free Bradley Manning saw three successful public events organized, hundreds of signatures collected, thousands of leaflets and informational brochures on the case of Bradley Manning distributed, and the establishment of a large web presence through social media. The next event is a public forum on May 15th and the campaign continues to gain momentum!

To join the campaign and to sign a petition demanding Bradley Manning's freedom, visit: www.mawovancouver.org and www.bradleymanning.org for more information on getting involved!

*Text modified from Bradley Manning Support Network Website:
www.bradleymanning.org*

AFGHANISTAN: PERMANENT OCCUPATION PLANNED

By Stephen Lendman*

An excerpt, Global Research, May 3, 2012**

Replicating post-WW II occupations is planned. Sixty-seven years after war's end, US troops still occupy Germany, Japan and Korea. They're part of America's growing empire of bases.

Status of forces (SOFA) agreements establish the framework under which US forces operate abroad.

The Department of Defense Technical Information Center calls them agreements "that defines the legal position of a 'visiting' military force deployed in the territory of a friendly state."

They delineate "the status of visiting military forces (and) may be bilateral or multilateral. Provisions pertaining to the status of visiting forces may be set forth in a separate agreement, or they may form a part of a more comprehensive agreement."

"These provisions describe how the authorities of a visiting force may control members of that force and the amenability of the force or its member to the local law or to the authority of local officials."

"To the extent that agreements delineate matters affecting the relations between a military force and civilian authorities and population, they may be considered as civil affairs agreements."

Occupied countries get little choice. Pentagon officials draft provisions. They're largely one way.

In his book, "The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic," Chalmers Johnson explained SOFAs as follows:

"America's foreign military enclaves, though structurally, legally, and conceptually different from colonies, are themselves something like microcolonies in that they are completely beyond the jurisdiction of the occupied nation."

"The US virtually always negotiates a 'status of forces agreement' (SOFA) with the ostensibly independent 'host' nation."

They're a modern day version of 19th century China's "extraterritoriality" agreements. They granted foreigners charged with crimes the "right" to be tried by his (or her) own government under his (or her) own national law.

Most SOFAs prevent local courts from exercising legal jurisdiction over American personnel. Even those committing murder and rape are exempt unless US officials yield to local authorities. Usually, offenders are whisked out of countries before they ask.

America's total number of SOFAs is unknown. Most are secret. Some are too embarrassing to reveal. America has hundreds

died. Others were injured. Resistance fighters showed disdain for Obama's

"enduring partnership."

He came at night. He and Karzai met after midnight. A signing ceremony followed. It excluded "a new chapter" marked by "mutual respect."

US media media ignored what foreign ones reported. Among others, London's Telegraph headlined "US troops may stay in Afghanistan until 2024," saying:

Obama's strategic pact provides for US trainers, "special forces and air power to remain." Handing over control to Afghan ones conceals permanent occupation plans.

Karzai's top security advisor, Rangin Dadfar Spanta, said America's long-term presence is needed. "In the Afghan proposal, we are talking about 10 years from 2014, but this is under discussion."

Russia's Kabul ambassador, Andrey Avetisyan, said:

"Afghanistan needs many other things apart from the permanent presence of some countries.

It needs economic help and it needs peace. Military bases are not a tool for peace."

"I don't understand why such bases are needed. If the job is done, if terrorism is defeated and peace and stability are brought back, then why would you need bases?"

"If the job is not done, then several thousand troops, even special forces, will not be able to do the job that 150,000 troops couldn't do. It is not possible."

America came to stay. Afghans want them out. A recipe for protracted conflict persists. Another decade of war may follow. In 2001, who thought one was possible. It's America's longest war.

*Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago and can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbc-global.net.

His new book is titled "How Wall Street Fleeces America: Privatized Banking, Government Collusion and Class War" <http://www.claritypress.com/Lendman.html>

**Global Research <http://www.globalresearch.ca>



of known, shared, and secret bases in over 150 countries.

Johnson said they "usurp, distort, or subvert whatever institutions of democratic (or other form of) government may exist with the host society."

Their presence assures trouble. It includes murder, rape, theft, drunken driving, and other crimes. Locals also face unacceptable noise, pollution, environmental destruction, appropriated public land, and US personnel mindless of local laws, customs, and rights of ordinary people.

Explosions rocked Kabul shortly after Obama's brief visit. Taliban forces claimed responsibility. Reports said at least seven

Venezuelan Elections:

WHAT IS AT STAKE? TWO COMPETING PERSPECTIVES

By Jose Hernandez*

Over the last thirteen years a new Latin America has emerged. After much bloodshed and many years of struggle against imperialism and for self-determination, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and other leaders in the region were elected to power when people went to the polls to reclaim what was rightfully theirs: their homeland.

In that sense, the upcoming presidential elections in Venezuela on October 7, 2012, represent a point of no return on the Latin American scene. The United States knows this, and therefore they are fully present, launching attacks from all sides with the support and to the satisfaction of various sectors of the Venezuelan - especially the right wing - opposition.

This election is about the self-determination of the people of Venezuela and Latin America, as against the submission of the right wing to foreign interests, particularly the United States. The right wing, which does not have the approval of the majority, has allied itself with the U.S. and their Interference in Venezuela, in an attempt to destabilize the country before the October elections. With this in mind, they have launched their main campaign and agenda: to distort the facts, sabotage the government reforms and create confusion among the masses in order to justify military intervention in Venezuela by the United States.

The interest of the imperialist super power in Venezuela is well known: Venezuelan "black gold" - the oil that they used to get for little more than \$7 a barrel, for which they must now pay twenty times more than that paltry figure. Given this, the opposition candidate, Henrique Capriles Radonski, has not hesitated to promise the privatization of the nationalized state oil company PDVSA.

In these elections the people will decide if they want to manage their natural resources and invest the profits for their own benefit, or if they want to give it away as they did 13 years ago before President



Chavez came to power. The electorate knows the impact that this oil money has had on educational, social and economic programs which have dramatically improved their quality of life. That is why Capriles, led by his advisers, strives to say he will keep these programs. However, for years he has been advocating that it is "dangerous" for the economy to "spend too much money on these things."

In his speeches, in which he makes an exaggerated and even laughable effort to imitate President Hugo Chávez, Capriles offers what the President has already given so far. But if he privatizes PDVSA, where is he going to get the money to keep these programs running?

Although the campaign has not formally begun, Capriles has visited various parts of the country trying to "reach" the people. But while Chavez marked International Workers Day with the announcement of a government employment support program, enacting a new law that guarantees stability for workers, Capriles said in an interview that he was not going to march on May 1st, because, "in any case, he is an employer" - let us remember, he is the governor of a state in Venezuela.

Capriles claims that he is an equal of the people, but recognizes himself as an employer, as a bourgeois gentleman set apart from the Venezuelans whom he says he will represent. Today in Venezuela, pensioners earn a salary like that of an active worker, and housewives too are acknowledged as workers. However, Capriles shows confidence in the current prevailing worldwide model based on new liberalism - cutbacks on welfare for the poor and added privileges for the rich, as is happening in Europe, the U.S.



and all around the world.

But it is time. The great powers are in crisis and Latin America is emerging with increasing independent force, for dignity and independence. A new consciousness based on economic and social equality and self-determination is growing. A union of countries for cooperation has been born. Latin America is like a snake which it shedding its skin, but is still fighting to get rid of the old scales from which it is suffocating.

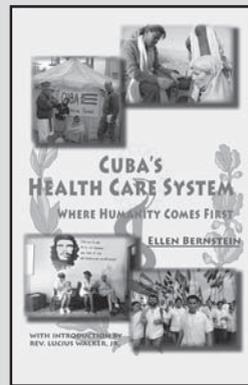
* José Hernández is a young activist and journalist from Venezuela

Battle of Ideas Press

CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

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

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



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Elecciones en Venezuela

¿QUÉ ESTA EN JUEGO? DOS PERSPECTIVAS OPUESTAS



Presidente Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías

Henrique Capriles Radonski

Por José Hernández*

Durante los últimos trece años una nueva América Latina ha nacido. Después de mucho derramamiento de sangre y de muchos años de lucha contra el imperialismo y por la autodeterminación, Hugo Chávez en Venezuela y otros líderes de la región llegaron al poder a través de la vía electoral, cuando la gente acudió a las urnas para reclamar lo que era suyo por derecho: su patria.

En ese sentido, las próximas elecciones presidenciales en Venezuela el 7 de octubre de 2012, representan un punto de no retorno en la escena latinoamericana. Los Estados Unidos lo saben, y por lo eso están plenamente presente, lanzando ataques desde todos lados, con el apoyo y la satisfacción de la derecha venezolana.

Esta elección se trata de la autodeterminación del pueblo de Venezuela y América Latina, en oposición a la sumisión de la derecha a los intereses extranjeros (los intereses de los Estados Unidos). El ala derecha, que no tiene la aprobación de la mayoría, se ha aliado con los EE.UU. y su injerencia en Venezuela, en un intento de desestabilizar el país antes de las elecciones de octubre.

Con esto en mente, han puesto en marcha su campaña electoral sin olvidar su principal agenda: distorsionar los hechos, sabotear los programas del gobierno y las instituciones políticas y crear confusión

entre las masas y en el ámbito internacional con el fin de justificar la intervención militar en Venezuela por parte de los Estados Unidos .

Los intereses de la súper potencia imperialista en Venezuela son bien conocidos: El "oro negro" de Venezuela- ese petróleo que antes obtenían por poco más de \$ 7 el barril y por el cual ahora tienen que pagar veinte veces más de esa insignificante cifra. Teniendo en cuenta esto, el candidato de la oposición, Henrique Capriles Radonski, no ha dudado en prometer la privatización de la empresa estatal PDVSA.

En estas elecciones el pueblo decidirá si quiere manejar sus recursos naturales e invertir las ganancias para su propio beneficio, o si quiere regalarlo como sucedía hace 13 años antes de la llegada del Presidente Chávez al poder.

El electorado sabe el impacto que el dinero del petróleo ha tenido en los programas educativos, sociales y económicos que han mejorado enormemente su calidad de vida. Es por eso que Capriles, guiado por sus asesores, se esfuerza en decir que va a mantener estos programas. Sin embargo, durante años ha estado diciendo que es "peligroso" para la economía venezolana "gastar demasiado dinero en estas cosas."

En sus discursos, en los que hace un esfuerzo exagerado, e incluso ridículo, por imitar al Presidente, Capriles ofrece lo que Chávez ya ha dado hasta ahora. Pero si se privatiza PDVSA, ¿dónde va a conseguir el dinero para mantener estos programas en ejecución?

Aunque la campaña no ha comenzado formalmente, Capriles ha visitado

varias partes del país, tratando de "alcanzar a la gente". Sin embargo, mientras Chávez celebró el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores

con el anuncio de una nueva ley del gobierno que garantiza la estabilidad de los trabajadores, Capriles dijo en una entrevista que él no iba a marchar el 1ero de mayo, debido a que, "en todo caso, él es un empleador" - no olvidemos que es el gobernador de un importante estado en Venezuela-.

Capriles afirma que es igual a las demás personas, pero él se reconoce a sí mismo como un empresario, como un señor burgués, distinto a los venezolanos que, según él, va a representar.

Aunque hoy en día en Venezuela, los pensionados ganan un salario como el de un trabajador activo, y las amas de casa también son reconocidas como trabajadoras, Capriles muestra confianza en el modelo neoliberal imperante en el mundo - basado en recortes a los pobres y más privilegios para los ricos, como está ocurriendo en Europa, EE.UU. y en casi todo el planeta.

Pero es la hora. Las grandes potencias están en crisis y América Latina está emergiendo con fuerza, y cada vez con mayor independencia y dignidad. Un nuevo modelo basado en la igualdad económica y social y en la libre determinación de los pueblos está naciendo. Una unión de países para la cooperación, y no para la autodestrucción.

América Latina es como una serpiente que está mudando de piel, pero todavía está luchando para librarse de las viejas escamas que tratan de asfixiarla.

* José Hernández es un joven activista y periodista de Venezuela

BRICS SUMMIT OPPOSES INTERVENTION IN SYRIA, IRAN

By *Abayomi Azikiwe**

New Delhi, India, was the venue for the fourth BRICS Summit, which convened on March 29. BRICS stands for Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa, which together house 43 percent of the world's population and are playing a greater role within a world economic system still dominated by the capitalist mode of production and social relations.

The Republic of South Africa was incorporated into the organization in 2010, the only African state among the group. Brazil is the only country from Latin America.

One of the key points of departure for the BRICS Summit was its disagreement with the United States and NATO over the resolution of the current situation in Syria. The New Delhi gathering categorically opposed Western military intervention in Syria and issued statements related to the ongoing threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The New Delhi Declaration said: "We express our deep concern at the current situation in Syria and call for an immediate end to all violence and violation of human rights in that country. Global interests would best be served by dealing with the crisis through peaceful means that encourage broad national dialogues that reflect the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society and respect Syrian indepen-

has a crucial role to play for the peaceful development and prosperity of a region of high political and economic relevance."

BRICS further stressed, "We recognize Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy consistent with its international obligations, and support resolution of the issues involved through political and diplomatic means and dialogue between the parties concerned, including between the IAEA and Iran and in accordance with the provisions of the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions."

This declaration contrasts with the proceedings of the so-called "Friends of Syria" meeting in Istanbul on March 31-April 1, when the U.S. and other imperialist countries escalated their threats against Syria and openly admitted they would supply military assistance to Syrian

opposition groups that are fighting the government in Damascus.

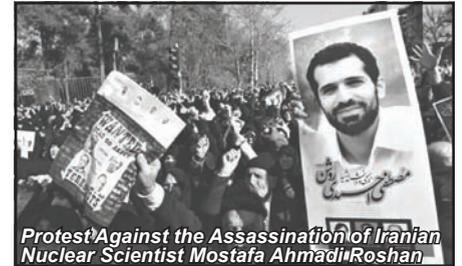
Character of the BRICS states

The BRICS states are playing a greater role in the areas of manufacturing and world trade. All of them, with the exception of the People's Republic of China, are thoroughly capitalist.

Brazil, the only Latin American BRICS country, has a government led by the Workers Party, but its economy is heavily dominated by private capital. India has made tremendous strides in industrial and technological development over the last three

with the masses organized within the trade union movement and strong civil society and youth organizations.

Although capitalism has been restored in Russia, there remain serious contradictions between Moscow and the U.S. as well as the imperialist states in Europe. Russia opposed the war against Libya that began in March of 2011, although it did not use



its veto to stop the U.N. Security Council resolution used by the imperialists to attack Libya. Since the disastrous conquest of Libya by the U.S. and NATO, Russia has vetoed similar efforts to provide a pseudolegal rationale for war against Syria and Iran.

Economic agreements of the BRICS summit

The BRICS states have laid out ambitious plans to coordinate economic development strategies that are designed to lessen dependence upon the imperialist states. There are efforts underway to facilitate trade outside the dollar and the euro.

Section five of the New Delhi Declaration points out that "while the BRICS recovered relatively quickly from the global crisis, the growth prospects worldwide have again got dampened by market instability, especially in the eurozone."

The Summit placed the blame for the ongoing economic crisis on the Western industrialized states.

Within the capitalist states themselves, the workers and youth are becoming more class conscious and active. The general strikes in Greece, Portugal and Spain, along with mass demonstrations and rebellions in Britain and France, illustrate that the crisis is not subsiding.

*Editor, Pan-African News Wire
panafricannews.blogspot.ca

Article taken from www.iacenter.org



Operation Eager Lion 2012-12,000 Soldier Multi-National Military Exercises Being Conducted on Jordan/Syria Border Lead by the U.S. Including U.S. Special Forces and Marines

dence, territorial integrity and sovereignty." (Delhi Declaration, March 29)

In Section 22 of the declaration, the BRICS Summit took up the current threats being made by the U.S. and other Western states toward Iran. It said: "The situation concerning Iran cannot be allowed to escalate into conflict, the disastrous consequences of which will be in no one's interest. Iran

decades but remains a capitalist society with great extremes of wealth and poverty.

South Africa, which made a historical contribution to the global struggle against racism when the masses overthrew the apartheid system in 1994, has remained integrated into the world capitalist system. Nonetheless, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) maintains strong links

QUÉBEC STUDENTS LEAD THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMANITY & DIGNITY IN CANADA



By Mike Larson & Noah Fine

With the feet of hundreds of thousands of students marching on the streets of Québec's cities for the last three and a half months, it's no surprise who the first victim of the movements strength would be. On Monday May 14th, after 14 weeks of ongoing protest by Québec students, Education Minister, Line Beauchamp, announced her resignation stating, "I am resigning because I no longer believe I'm part of the solution." This comes one week after students overwhelmingly rejected a provincial government brokered deal attempting to appease the student strike movement.

Hours after Beauchamp stepped down, Québec Liberal Premiere Jean Charest swore in the replacement, Treasury Board President Michelle Courchesne. Even if the resignation is simply an attempt to put the students' blame on the previous minister while ushering in the new one, it still shows that the pressure of Québec's students on the government has won them a small but important victory.

Charest Government Austerity Package

On November 10, 2011 more than 30,000 students marched in Montreal to protest the proposed 2011-2012 provincial budget. The budget, seen as an austerity package most clearly and controversially relating to education, was passed in March 2011, which proposed a tuition fee increase of \$325 per year over a 5-year period. In the end of the five years, students would see a total tuition fee increase of \$1,625. That equals a 75% increase overall, meaning paying \$3,793 per year for a full-time university student.

On March 17, 2011 Liberal Finance Minister Raymond Bachand delivered the 2011-2012 budget speech outlining the government's plan to reduce the current provincial deficit by burdening students with a tuition fee increase. "To those who fear this adjustment will act as a deterrent on university participation, I have this to say: there is no evidence of a link between university participation and tuition fees," stated Bachand defending the budget, "students should pay their fair share." Is it possible the student strikers have missed something? Perhaps they would cease their protesting if the government could somehow prove the budget deficit was their fault! Needless to say Bachand's words fell far short of comforting to hundreds of thousands of students and hundreds of thousands more that will in time become students. The reality is that students are not at fault for the deficit, so why are they expected to cover the bill?

On March 22, 2012 one of the biggest student strikes in Québec's history saw almost 200,000 students miss or leave class in order to protest. Their demand of "No tuition hike!" rang out across Canada and to many parts of the world where international media presented the struggle. Action has continued on a daily basis in Québec with protests, conferences, forums, banner drops, occupations, sit-ins, and the list continues.

On May 15, 2012 several strike actions by students swept the province. Despite tear-gas and percussion grenades used by the riot police, students continued their protest blocking highways, colleges, and meetings of some of Québec's wealthiest corporations.

As riot police broke through the protesters at one student blockade at Lionel-Groulx college, North of Montreal, The National Post newspaper grabbed some comments from the activists which included, students, staff, teachers, parents and children, "People will say we were repressed!... (You were) hitting people with billy-clubs, gassing young people." The police pulled people out of the protest one by one with the aid of chemical deterrents in the protest declared illegal early that morning by the government. Five were arrested and one was injured during the police crackdown.

That crackdown and the ones before it however, are just the beginning. On Wednesday May 16th, Premiere Jean Charest is expected to outline the course of the government towards the students and possibly enact new legislation illegalizing the strike. One of the leaders and spokesperson for strike-leading student group, CLASSE, Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois told the National Post, "It would be a major step backward... You can't end a strike like this with police force." But Sgt. Ian Lafrenière from the Montreal police begged to differ, "If you do something criminal, it will not be tolerated any more." So it seems if the next step of the government is to legalize the majority peaceful movement we will see a much heavier hand from the police and government.

Who's Gonna Give First?

On May 7th and 8th students voted 83% against accepting a deal proposed by the Liberal government of Charest. "Everyone comes out of this a winner", stated Charest before presenting the proposal. The deal was an attempt to reduce the

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immediate impact of the government's austerity measures by levying in the cost increases being implemented against Québec students over an extended period of time. The most significant part of the deal is maintaining the hike but instead of over a five year period it would stretch out to seven years. Unfortunately for the government, students don't buy the seven year plan any more than the five year plan. It seems that after 14 weeks of daily manifestations of student anger towards the tuition fee hike, the message has not been received by the Liberal provincial government within their austerity perspective. Students don't want a drawn out disintegration of their right to an education. They want no disintegration! The students marching in their hundreds of thousands are marching solely in opposition to any fee increase.

But the government will certainly not stop in their attempts to kill the movement through negotiations, delays, meetings and 'deals'. The overwhelming student rejection of the deal shows a good sign of where the movement is standing at this stage in the struggle.

This is not the first time Québec's students and the government have gone to battle. Québec's students have a proud history of struggling to maintain the accessibility of education in their province.

In 2005, the provincial government proposed a cut of \$108 million from student loans and bursaries. In response more than 200,000 students took to the streets in protest. The strike would set an example for Québec's students and people in Canada about how to fight and win. With a mountain of pressure from students against the governments plan, the government withdrew the cuts and the funding was maintained.



A Victory for Québec's Students is a Victory for all Students in Canada!

The proposed tuition fee increase in Québec is nothing new for that province. It is certainly nothing new for the rest of Canada. In fact the rest of Canada has already seen increases far passing that of those proposed in Québec. In some provinces including BC, before the current tuition fee freeze went into effect, the cost of education at a number of colleges and universities was raised by more than 100% within a couple of years. At the moment there is a shaky freeze limiting institutions from raising the tuition fee levels in BC over 2% per year. The 2% may seem small but that's in addition to the more than 100% rise only a few years ago.

Tuition fees are not the only thing on the rise in this country. Student debt is skyrocketing. The accumulated student debt in Canada will soon reach \$14.5 billion, according to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), just more than half the cost of Canada's unpopular war and occupation in Afghanistan.

The blame for unbalanced budgets and austerity measures is not the fault of the students. It is the fault of the government of Canada and the provincial government in Québec. With the more than \$22 billion Canada has spent in Afghanistan, as well as \$150 million spent on bombing Libya to kill innocent people and destroy infrastructure, Canada could eradicate student debt, provide a free education to all currently enrolled students and then some!



Injury to One, is Injury to All! Unity is the Key to Win!

Students in Canada must take as an example the striking students of Québec. If the government is trying to raise the cost of education in a province that time and time again has firmly rejected their attempts, we can certainly expect further



cuts to education in the rest of Canada and increases to the cost.

The Québec student movement has demonstrated beautifully and powerfully its' strength. It has shown an uncompromising attitude against the Charest government in its attempt to lay to rest their struggle, and an uncompromising attitude to pursue their rights and demands.

The reality is, this country could afford to provide a free, quality education for all. So why should we demand anything less?

Former Québec Education Minister Beauchamp got one thing right. She was absolutely correct when she stated, "I no longer believe I'm part of the solution." What she missed in her statement was that the only way to be part of the solution in Québec is to be on the streets fighting alongside the students.

The student strike in Québec has demonstrated to every corner of Canada and beyond that 'we've gotta fight for our rights.' There is no other option but for students, workers and all oppressed people in Canada to defend the students of Québec in their fight for their right to a dignified education.

**NO TO AUSTERITY!
FREEZE THE FEES IN QUÉBEC!
FREE AND ACCESSIBLE
EDUCATION FOR ALL!**



REFLECTIONS BY FIDEL CASTRO

THE NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE



BARAK OBAMA FOR PEACE ???

I will hardly refer to the Cuban people, who one day rid their country of the United States domain, when the imperialist system had reached the height of its power.

Men and women of different ages paraded on May Day down the most symbolic squares in all provinces of the country.

Our Revolution emerged where it was least expected by the empire, in a hemisphere where it was used to act like an all-powerful master.

Cuba came to be the last country to get rid of Spanish colonialism and the first to shake off the heinous imperialist tutelage.

Today I am thinking particularly about the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its heroic struggle against the ruthless plunder of the resources with which Nature has endowed that noble and self-sacrificing people who one day sent their soldiers to faraway places in this continent to bring the Spanish military power to its knees.

Cuba has no need to explain why we have been in solidarity not only with all the countries of this hemisphere but also with many others in Africa and other regions of the world.

The Bolivarian Revolution has also been in solidarity with our homeland. Its support was transcendental during the years of the Special Period. That cooperation, however, in no way came up at Cuba's request.

Neither did we demand any condition from any of the peoples that required our educational or medical services. We would have offered Venezuela our maximum support no matter the circumstances.

For revolutionary Cubans, to cooperate with other poor and exploited peoples has always been a political principle and a duty towards humanity.

I feel great satisfaction to watch, as I did yesterday, through *Venezolana de Televisión* and *Telesur*, the profound impact that the adoption of the Labor Organic Law enacted by the Bolivarian leader and president of the Republic, Hugo Chávez Frías, caused among the people. I had never seen anything like that in the political landscape of our hemisphere.

I paid attention to the huge crowds that gathered in the squares and avenues of Caracas, particularly the spontaneous comments made by the citizens who were

interviewed. I had hardly –ever, perhaps– seen the level of emotion and hope that transpired in their statements. It became evident that the overwhelming majority of the people are humble workers. A true battle of ideas is being powerfully waged.

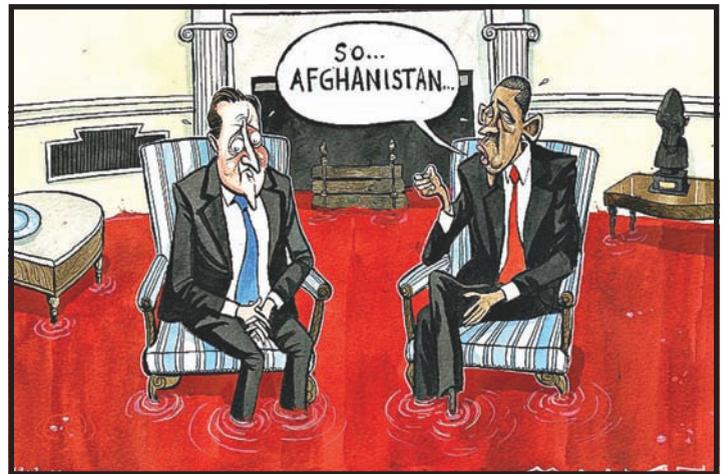
Rafael Correa, President of Ecuador, courageously stated that we are living through a change of times rather than through times of change. Both Rafael Correa and Hugo Chávez are Christians. But, Obama, what is he? What does he believe in?

One year after the murder of Bin Laden, Obama is competing with his rival, Mitt Romney, to justify that action which was perpetrated at a facility close to the Military Academy of Pakistan, a Muslim country allied to the United States.

Marx and Engels never talked about murdering the bourgeois. According to the old bourgeois concept, the judges were the ones who judged and the executioners were the ones who executed.

There is no doubt that Obama was a Christian; one of the facets of that religion helped him to learn the trade of conveying his ideas, an art that meant a lot to him during his meteoric rise to the upper echelons of his party.

The principled declaration of Philadelphia of July of 1776 stated that all men were born equal and free and that they were all endowed by their Creator with certain rights. As far as we know, three quarters of a century after independence the black slaves,



with their wives and children, continued to be sold at public squares; and almost two centuries later, Martin Luther King, a Nobel Peace Laureate, had a dream, but he was murdered.

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REFLEXIONES DEL FIDEL CASTRO

EL PREMIO NOBEL DE LA PAZ



BARAK OBAMA POR LA PAZ ????

A penas hablaré del pueblo cubano, que un día barrió de su Patria el dominio de Estados Unidos, cuando el sistema imperialista había alcanzado la cúpula de su poder.

Hombres y mujeres de las más diversas edades se han visto desfilar el 1º de Mayo por las plazas más simbólicas de todas las provincias del país.

Nuestra Revolución surgió en el lugar menos esperado por el imperio, en un hemisferio donde actuaba como dueño absoluto.

Cuba pasó a ser el último país en librarse del yugo colonial español y el primero en sacudirse de la odiosa tutela imperialista.

Pienso hoy fundamentalmente en la hermana República Bolivariana de Venezuela y su lucha heroica contra el saqueo despiadado de los recursos con que la naturaleza dotó a ese noble y abnegado pueblo, que un día llevó sus soldados a los rincones apartados de este continente para poner de rodillas al poderío militar español.

Cuba no necesita explicar por qué hemos sido solidarios, no solo con todos los países de este hemisferio, sino también con muchos de África y otras regiones del mundo.

La Revolución Bolivariana ha sido también solidaria con nuestra Patria, y su apoyo a nuestro país se convirtió en un hecho de gran importancia en los años del Período Especial. Esa cooperación sin embargo

no fue fruto de solicitud alguna por parte de Cuba, como tampoco lo fue establecer ninguna condición a los pueblos que requirieron de nuestros servicios educacionales o médicos. A Venezuela le habríamos ofrecido en cualquier circunstancia la máxima ayuda.

Cooperar con otros pueblos explotados y pobres fue siempre para los revolucionarios cubanos un principio político y un deber con la humanidad.

Me satisface enormemente observar, como hice ayer a través de Venezolana de Televisión y TeleSur, el profundo impacto que produjo en el pueblo hermano de Venezuela la Ley Orgánica del Trabajo promulgada por el líder bolivariano y Presidente de la República, Hugo Chávez Frías. Jamás vi nada parecido en el escenario político de nuestro hemisferio.

Presté atención a la enorme multitud que se reunió en plazas y avenidas de Caracas y, en especial, las palabras espontáneas de los ciudadanos entrevistados. Pocas veces vi, y tal vez nunca, el nivel de emoción y esperanza que estos ponían en sus declaraciones. Se podía observar con claridad que la inmensa mayoría de la población está constituida por trabajadores

humildes. Una verdadera batalla de ideas se está librando con fuerza.

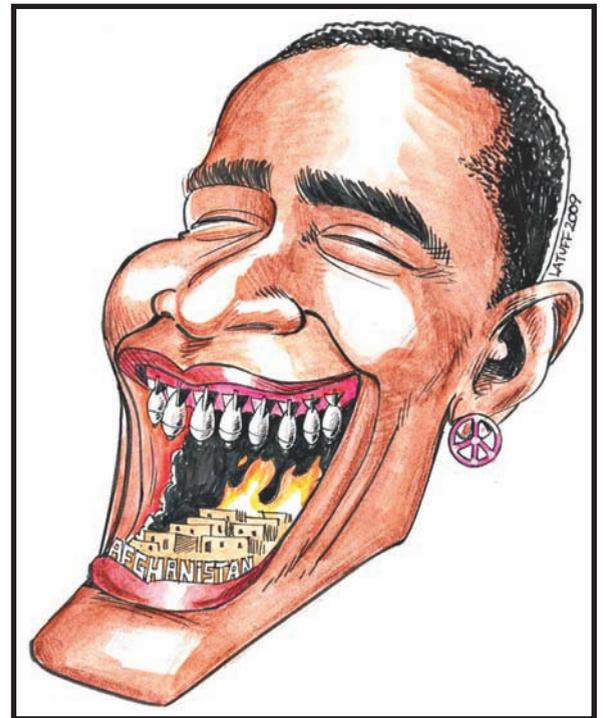
Rafael Correa, presidente de Ecuador, declaró valientemente que más que una época de cambio estamos viviendo un cambio de época. Ambos, Rafael Correa y Hugo Chávez, son cristianos. Obama, en cambio, ¿qué es, en qué cree?

Al cumplirse el primer aniversario del asesinato de Bin Laden, Obama compite con su rival Mitt Romney en la justificación de aquel acto perpetrado en una instalación próxima a la Academia Militar de Pakistán, un país musulmán aliado de Estados Unidos.

Marx y Engels nunca hablaron de asesinar a los burgueses. En el viejo concepto burgués los jueces juzgaban, los verdugos ejecutaban.

No hay dudas de que Obama fue cristiano; en una de las vertientes de esa religión aprendió el oficio de transmitir sus ideas, un arte que le significó mucho en su ascenso acelerado dentro de la jerarquía de su partido.

En la declaración de principios de Filadelfia, en julio de 1776, se afirmaba que



todos los hombres nacían libres e iguales y a todos les concedía su creador determinados derechos. Por lo que se conoce, tres cuartos de siglos después de la independencia, los esclavos negros seguían siendo vendidos en las plazas públicas con sus mujeres e hijos, y casi dos siglos después Martin Luther

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The Oslo Nobel Committee awarded Obama his prize, and he almost became a legend. However, millions of persons must have watched the images. Nobel Laureate Barack Obama traveled hurriedly to Afghanistan as if the world ignored the mass murders, the burnings of Muslims' sacred

books and the desecration of the corpses of murdered persons.

No honest person will ever assent to the perpetration of terrorist actions. But, has the US president any right to judge or kill, to become both the judge and the executioner and commit such crimes in a country and against a people on the opposite side



Afghans burn an effigy of President Barack Obama during a protest at Bagram airbase, in Ghani Khail, Feb. 24, 2012.

of the planet?

We watched the US President in shirt-sleeves, running up a steep staircase, walking at quick pace down an overhead corridor and stop to give a speech to a large military contingent that applauded unwillingly the words of the illustrious President. Those men were not all American-born. I thought about the colossal expenses this meant, whose burden is being borne by the world. After all, who is bearing the burden of that huge cost which exceeds already 15 trillion dollars? That is what the illustrious Nobel Peace Laureate offers humanity.

Fidel Castro Ruz
May 3, 2012

continúa de la página 17

King, premio Nobel de la Paz, tuvo un sueño, pero fue asesinado.

A Obama el tribunal de Oslo le obsequió el suyo y se había convertido casi en una leyenda. Sin embargo millones de personas deben haber visto las escenas. El Premio Nobel Barack Obama, viajó aceleradamente a Afganistán como si el mundo ignorara los asesinatos masivos, la guerra

de libros que son sagrados para los musulmanes y los ultrajes de los cadáveres de las personas asesinadas.

Nadie que sea honesto estará jamás de acuerdo con los actos terroristas, pero ¿tiene acaso el Presidente de Estados Unidos el derecho a juzgar y el derecho a matar; a convertirse en tribunal y a la vez en verdugo y llevar a cabo tales crímenes, en un

país y contra un pueblo situado en el lado opuesto del planeta?

Vimos al Presidente de Estados Unidos subiendo al trote los peldaños de una empinada escalera, en mangas de camisa, avanzar con pasos acelerados por un pasillo volante y detenerse a endilgarle un discurso a un nutrido contingente de militares que aplaudían con desgano las palabras del ilustre Presidente. Aquellos hombres no eran todos nacidos ciudadanos norteamericanos. Pensaba en los colosales gastos que eso implica y que el mundo paga, pues ¿quién carga con ese enorme gasto que ya rebasa los 15 millones de millones de dólares? Eso es lo que ofrece a la humanidad el ilustre Premio Nobel de la Paz.



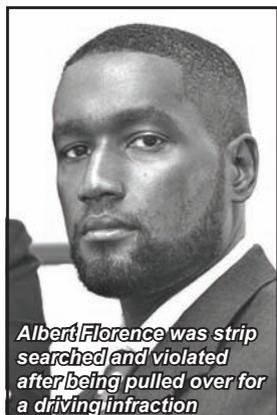
Afghan women protest against the US war and occupation in Kabul, Oct. 6, 2011

Fidel Castro Ruz
Mayo 3 de 2012

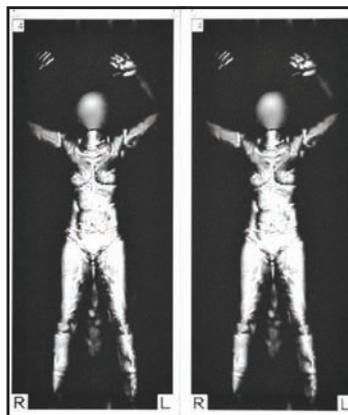
By Manuel Yepe*

In a five-four ruling a few days ago, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that anyone can be strip-searched upon arrest for any offense, however minor, at any time.

This decision is in keeping with other recent legal dispositions: the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which lets anyone be arrested forever at any time, and HR 347, the “trespass bill”, which gives a person a 10-year sentence for protesting anywhere near a building or a place with Secret Service protection. Both are repressive measures targeting the Occupy Wall Street movement.



Albert Florence was strip searched and violated after being pulled over for a driving infraction



SEXUAL HUMILIATION AS TORTURE IN THE U.S.

On these laws, US political consultant and feminist writer Naomi Wolf published an essay with the title How the US uses sexual humiliation as a political tool to control the masses, in which she analyzes the reach and purposes of this legislation.

The writer says that in a situation where anyone can be arrested for walking a dog without a leash, what Albert Florence, the citizen who brought the initial suit against the government for these laws, narrates is alarming.

Florence denounced that he was stopped for a driving infraction, and described having been told to “turn around. Squat and cough. Spread your cheeks.” He said he felt humiliated: “It made me feel like less of a man.”

History shows that the use of forced nudity

by a state is a typical practice of fascism and of any kind of oppressive regime that uses degradation as a means of controlling and subduing populations. Forcing people to undress is the first step in breaking down their sense of individuality and dignity and reinforcing their powerlessness.

“One of the most terrifying moments for me,” writes Naomi Wolf, “when I visited Guantanamo prison in 2009 was seeing the way the architecture of the building positioned glass-fronted shower cubicles facing intentionally right into the central atrium – where young female guards stood watch over the forced nakedness of Muslim prisoners, who had no way to conceal themselves.”

“I have watched male police and TSA

personnel – powers to terrify and traumatize people who have not gone through due process or trial?”

Wolf ridicules the reasoning of a Supreme Court judge who said these practices are necessary to prevent terrorist acts. She asks, “Can anyone imagine that the means to blow up the Twin Towers could have been concealed in a body cavity? Or could any of the authors of that terrorist act have been discovered while being stopped for speeding?”

According to a report published by the Washington Post, quoted by Wolf, in 2010 there were 1,271 government agencies and 1,931 private companies that worked on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security and intelligence in about

10,000 locations across the United States. There were 854,000 people with top-secret security clearances, and in Washington, DC, and the surrounding area 33 building complexes for top-secret intelligence work are under construction or have been built since September 2011.

“This enormous new sector of the economy has a multi-billion-dollar vested interest in setting up a system to surveil, physically intimidate and prey upon the rest of American society.

Now, with the new legislation, they can do so by threatening to demean you sexually – a potent tool in the hands of any bully,” concludes Naomi Wolf.

April 2012.

A CubaNews translation.

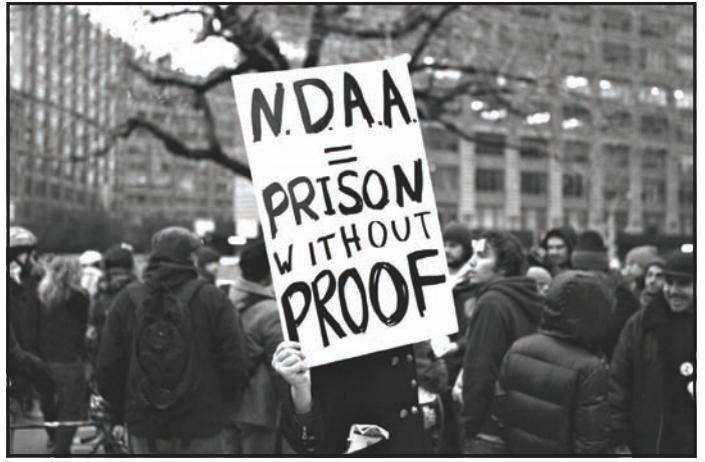
Edited by Walter Lippmann.

(Transportation Security Administration, the border police) members standing by side by side salaciously observing women as they have been “patted down” in airports. I believe that these searches are designed to psychologically habituate US citizens to a condition in which they are demeaned and sexually intruded upon by the state – at any moment.”

“One of my Facebook commentators suggested that more women are about to be found liable for arrest for petty reasons. I found that the genital groping that is obligatory in the US is illegal in Britain.”

“Where are we headed with these recent laws criminalizing protest, and giving local police – who, let’s recall, are now infused with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) money, military hardware and

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HUMILLACIÓN SEXUAL COMO TORTURA EN EEUU

*Por Manuel Yepe**

La Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos decidió hace unos días, por votación de 5 a 4, que cualquier ciudadano puede ser obligado a desnudarse para ser registrado al ser arrestado por sospecha de delito, por leve que este sea y en cualquier momento.

La decisión está en línea con otras dos disposiciones legales recientes: la National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) de 31 de diciembre de 2011 que autoriza el arresto de cualquier persona por tiempo indefinido, y la HR 347 o “Ley contra intrusos”, identificada también como “Ley contra Protestas”, que establece condena de 10 años de prisión por protestar en lugares cercanos a edificaciones o terrenos protegidos por los servicios secretos. Ambas responden a objetivos represivos contra el Movimiento Occupy Wall Street.

Sobre estas leyes, la consultora política y escritora feminista estadounidense Naomi Wolf publicó un ensayo titulado “How the US uses sexual humiliation as a political tool to control the masses” (“Cómo EEUU usa la humillación sexual como instrumento para el control de las masas”) en el que analiza el alcance y los propósitos de estos actos legislativos.

Refiere la escritora que en una situación en la que cualquier persona puede ser arrestada por sacar el perro a pasear sin correa, es alarmante lo relatado por Albert Florence, el ciudadano que presentó la primera querrela contra el gobierno con motivo de estas leyes.

Florence denunció que, al ser detenido por una infracción del tránsito, fue obligado a darse vuelta, ponerse en cuclillas, toser y separarse las nalgas. “Me sentí humillado

y llevado a una condición inferior a la que la corresponde a un ser humano”, declaró.

La historia muestra que el uso de la desnudez forzada por un Estado es práctica propia del fascismo y de todo tipo de régimen opresivo que utilice la degradación de la población como medio para controlarla y someterla. Forzar a la gente a desnudarse es el primer paso para romper su sentido de la individualidad y dignidad, reforzando su impotencia.

Uno de los momentos más aterradores para mí —escribe Naomi Wolf— fue cuando visité la prisión de Guantánamo en 2009 y noté en la arquitectura del edificio que los cubículos de las duchas tenían paredes transparentes a través de las cuales mujeres jóvenes que se desempeñaban como guardias observaban la desnudez forzada de prisioneros musulmanes, sin tener ellos posibilidad de ocultarse.

“He observado a agentes hombres de la TSA (policías de fronteras), observando con excitación a las mujeres toqueteadas en los aeropuertos. Creo que la práctica de esos registros está diseñada para habitar psicológicamente a los ciudadanos estadounidenses a una condición en la que pueden ser humillados sexualmente por el Estado, en cualquier momento.

“Un comentarista de mi Facebook opinaba que el número de mujeres objeto de detención y registro está incrementándose por razones mezquinas. He visto que el examen genital que es obligatorio en los Estados Unidos es ilegal en Gran Bretaña.

“¿Hacia dónde vamos con estas nuevas leyes que criminalizan la protesta y dan a la policía local —ahora empoderada con dinero del Departamento de Homeland Security, equipos militares y personal— facultades

para aterrorizar y traumatizar a las personas sin debido proceso o juicio previo”.

Wolf ridiculiza el argumento de un juez de la Corte Suprema de que estas prácticas son necesarias para evitar actos terroristas y pregunta: ¿Puede alguien imaginar que los medios utilizados para volar las Torres Gemelas podrían ocultarse en alguna cavidad corporal? ¿O que alguno de los autores de aquel acto de terror pudo haber sido descubierto al ser detenido por conducir a exceso de velocidad?

Según un informe publicado por el Washington Post y citado por Wolf, en 2010 había 1.271 agencias gubernamentales y 1.931 empresas privadas trabajando en programas relacionados con el contraterrorismo, la seguridad nacional y la inteligencia en unas 10.000 ubicaciones en el territorio de los Estados Unidos. Había entonces 854.000 personas habilitadas con permisos de acceso a los servicios secretos de máxima seguridad. En Washington DC y el área circundante, treinta y tres complejos para labores secretas de inteligencia estaban en proceso de construcción o habían sido edificadas después de septiembre de 2011.

“Este enorme nuevo sector de la economía tiene intereses multimillonarios que requieren del establecimiento de un sistema de vigilancia, intimidación psicológica y rapiña sobre el resto de la sociedad estadounidense. Con estas nuevas legislaciones pueden lograrlo humillando sexualmente a los demás: una poderosa herramienta en poder de cualquier matón”, concluye Naomi Wolf.

Abril de 2012.

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

By Alison Bodine

It is 5:00am on May 17th, 2011. At a home in Los Angeles, California, FBI agents and police officers dressed in black and armed

FBI and the US government against the basic human and democratic rights to protest and organize against war and occupation. But this is not the first time that these rights have come under attack in the US. For decades the US government has

Muslim community that has come under the most attack as charitable organizations, mosques, community groups and individuals have faced US government persecution, infiltration by the FBI, framed-up arrests and prosecution.

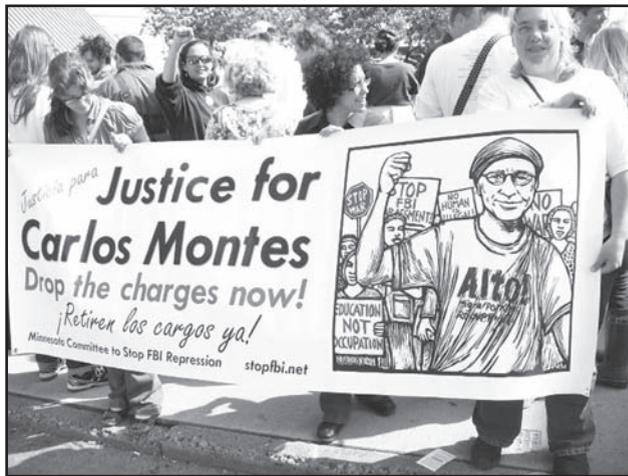
DEFEND CARLOS MONTES!

Defend the Right to Organize for Immigrant Rights & Against War & Occupation!

with automatic weapons knock down the front door and violently arrest Carlos Montes at his home. They raid and ransack his house, taking with them his computer, his cell phone and many documents and files. Now, one year later, Carlos is on trial in the US, targeted by the Los Angeles police, the FBI and the US government for his role as an antiwar and social justice organizer. His trial for bogus charges related to a Chicano student strike he led 42 years ago at an East L.A. College is really a thin veil for the attempt by the US government to silence voices in the US that are taking a stand against war and occupation, racism and economic injustice.

Carlos, a life-long fighter for Chicano and immigrant rights and an antiwar and social justice activist, knew that the raid was coming. His name had appeared on a search warrant carried out eight months earlier. In September of 2010, over 70 FBI agents led coordinated raids on the homes of activists in Minnesota, Illinois and Michigan and at the office of the Twin-Cities Antiwar Committee. During these raids, the FBI seized personal computers, cell phones and files. The agents also delivered subpoenas to 14 activists, ordering them to appear in front of a Federal Grand Jury, which is used by the US government to get information out of activists about their work for peace and justice. The raids were justified under the guise of investigating "material support for terrorism", especially related to the work of these activists in solidarity with the people of Palestine and Colombia.

In total, 24 antiwar activists have been included in this latest crackdown by the



used whatever means possible to suppress and intimidate people and organizations fighting for change. During the 1950's, 60's and 70's, a US government counter-intelligence program known as Cointelpro targeted many people and organizations including US Civil rights organizer Martin Luther King, Jr., anti-Vietnam war groups and Indigenous people fighting for their self-determination. More recently it is the

Why should people in Canada support Carlos Montes and all people in the US under attack by the FBI and US government?

From the continued occupation of Afghanistan and the bombing of Libya to the current threats against Iran and Syria, it is clear that in the world we live in today, imperialist war against oppressed people is expanding. These attacks abroad are not isolated from increasing austerity measures and attacks on democratic rights that are part of the war against people in the US, Canada, or Europe. It is this war against oppressed people at home that has led to the arrest of Carlos Montes and the targeting of antiwar activists in the US.

As peace-loving people in Canada we must stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the US who are under attack and speak up for human and democratic rights. When the right to protest and organize against war and occupation comes under attack in the US, we can be sure that as voices of dissent against war and occupation in Canada grow, these same attacks will increase against people here. We must let the governments of the US, Canada and other imperialist countries know that as their wars and occupations increase, so will resistance here at home. We will not be intimidated by government attacks on our basic human and democratic rights!

Drop all charges against Carlos Montes! Stop FBI attacks now!

How Can You Defend Carlos Montes?

The trial of Carlos Montes is scheduled to begin in Los Angeles on June 20th. Action in his defence is becoming more and more urgent!

- Go on-line and sign a petition in defence of Carlos Montes addressed to Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley: www.iacenter.org
- Call the office of Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley and leave a message demanding that they drop all charges against Carlos Montes: 213-974-3512
- Find out more about Carlos Montes and the antiwar activists under attack by the FBI and what you can do to help stop these attacks at www.stopfbi.net
- Carlos Montes and the Committee to Stop FBI Repression will also be marching in the May 20th demonstration against the NATO Summit in Chicago organized by CANG8. They will be meeting at 12 noon on the Northeast corner of Columbus Drive and Jackson Boulevard. Look for the "Opposing War is Not a Crime" banner.

¡Venceremos!

We Will Win!

OUR STRUGGLE

AROUND THE WORLD



Cuba and Venezuela Strengthen Socialist Unity

HAVANA, Cuba

From Granma International
www.granma.cu

In statements to Venezuelan News Agency published on Tuesday, May 8th, the diplomat reaffirmed that the two nations have strengthened their ties based on friendship and are looking to consolidate a process of unity.

The Cuban ambassador explained that the bilateral agreements, which he characterized as strategic, open the doors to sectors like energy, health, education, agriculture, sports and culture.

Cuba and Venezuela have become for the American continent, two great Revolutions towards the path of

Socialism, said Ramirez who was quoted by AVN accompanied with a photo of one of the multiple encounters between the leader of the Cuban Revolution Fidel Castro and President Hugo Chavez.

They are both anti imperialist revolutions that have shaped peoples that today are conscious and accumulate the strength of achieving a new international scenario, said the ambassador.

He referred to the creation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, ALBA, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Union of South American Nations, all institutions "with a look to the future prioritizing sovereignty and independence".

Cuban Workers Celebrate May Day

Cuban workers celebrate May Day, united and determined to defend the Revolution and perfect socialism in Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba

From Granma International
www.granma.cu

President Raúl Castro presided during Cuba's national May Day march in which 500,000 participants celebrated International Workers' Day, in Havana's José Martí Plaza de la Revolución.

The march began with a speech by Salvador Valdés Mesa Secretary General of the Cuban Workers Federation (CTC) and a member of the Party's Political Bureau. He described the

mobilizations across the country as genuine expressions of the workers' and the people's support for the Revolution and their commitment to socialism.

He said, "We are celebrating a day of reaffirmation and commitment to the fulfillment of the Social and Economic Policy Guidelines approved at the 6th Communist Party of Cuba Congress."

Valdés added that workers and the trade union movement are the principal protagonists in efforts to perfect Cuba's economic model, acknowledging that the current economic

CARACAS, Venezuela

From Prensa Latina
www.plenglish.com

May 1, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans took the streets of the capital, turned into human rivers flowing into the central Plaza O'Leary, scene of the main event for the International Workers Day.

The avenues Francisco de Miranda and Bolivar, two major roads, were filled from early morning by men and women of virtually all employment sectors, who marched in tight blocks.

"With Chavez everything, without Chavez nothing" chanted, among others, several thousand construction workers, when parading down the avenue Mexico wearing jerseys in blue.

battle is not without obstacles and hardship. He called for increased production, improved discipline on the job and greater productivity.

Health workers were awarded the honor of leading the march this year in recognition of the importance of their work to the country and the role they play in Cuba's international collaboration, currently working in 66 nations around the globe.

Workers and communities were organized into 23 blocks, each assigned a place within the march, and carried an incredible variety of banners, posters and photographs of Fidel, Raúl, Che

But was the predominant was the red color associated with the Bolivarian Revolution led by Hugo Chavez, for whom many expressed the desire to heal in order to continue as president many years.

The head of state, who left last night to Havana to continue medical treatment based on radiation, which he receives since the end of March, welcomed today's march through his account on Twitter @chavezcandanga.

Amid the massive and enthusiastic parade, the Minister of Communication and Information Andres Izarra said that the march can only be compared with the massive support that people will give to Chavez in the presidential elections on 7 October.

and revolutionaries from around the world, including Karl Marx and Lenin.

Most evident were images of the Cuban Five, unjustly convicted for their anti-terrorist activities in the United States: Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González. Posters and banners called for their immediate release and definitive return to Cuba.

Witnessing the event from a tribunal in the Plaza were 1,900 special guests, trade unionists and members of solidarity groups from 117 countries.

OUR STRUGGLE

AROUND THE WORLD



Fifth National Campaign Against Homophobia Underway in Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba, May 9
From ACN

An exhibition of paintings and other plastic arts works promoting the acceptance of and respect for free and responsible sexual orientation and gender identity was inaugurated on Tuesday in Havana during the opening day of the Fifth National Campaign against Homophobia that runs in Cuba along the month of May.

In a press conference at Havana's National Center of Sexual Education (CENESEX), the director of this institution, Mariela Castro Espín, explained that, as in previous years, the main purpose of the campaign is to contribute to the education

of society, focusing mainly on the family and youths.

Castro Espín noted that on this occasion the event will have a higher scientific level as the program includes lectures, discussions, the screening of documentaries, and several cultural activities.

She added that another objective of the event is to raise public awareness to promote permanent educational actions and full respect for sexual rights and gender identity.

The main activity to celebrate the International Day against Homophobia, on May 17th, will take place in the central city of Cienfuegos, which will host a gala and festivities for the diversity.

Chilean Students Stage New Protests

SANTIAGO de CHILE, May 15

Chile's Student Confederation announced a new march on Tuesday against the segregation generated by the sociopolitical model of the country's education system.

We are imposed the highest fees in the world and one of the most excluding education systems on the planet, said Confederation spokesperson Noam Titelman in the call to the protest on May 16th.

"They are profiting from the dreams of millions of Chileans," said Titelman, who is also president of the Catholic University Student Federation, as cited by PL news agency.

We, the students, have made proposals about a reform in education, but the government in return imposes a tariff adjustment custom-made for the rich while it reinforces private education to the detriment of public education, said the student leader.

President Chavez Signs New Labour Law On May 1st, Workers Day

CARACAS, Venezuela, May 1st 2012 From: Venezuelanalysis-Rachael Boothroy

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has

signed into law the country's new labour legislation after a consultation process with the Venezuelan public which lasted nearly five

May 12, 2012

Cuba Condemns Bomb Attacks in Syria

Cuba's deputy foreign minister Marco Rodríguez condemned on Thursday the bomb attacks that killed 55 people and injured another 370 in Syria. Cuba condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, said Rodríguez who also expressed his country's strong rejection of foreign interference and threats against the

independence and territorial integrity of Syria.alt

The Cuban deputy foreign minister also said that only the Syrian people and authorities can find a peaceful solution to the problems facing their nation, according to a press release posted on the Cuban Foreign Ministry's website.

Cuba Supports Nationalization of Argentinian Giant Oil Company YPF

HAVANA, April 19, 2012

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba has learned of the decision made by the government of the Republic of Argentina to expropriate 51% of the oil company YPF, as stipulated in national legislation. Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales is a subsidiary of the Spanish corporation Repsol which operates in Argentine territory.

The company YPF, originally an Argentine state enterprise, was among the many privatized or sold at implausibly low prices by President Carlos Saúl Menem, who governed the country between 1989 and

1999, within the framework of neoliberal policies which were imposed on Our America during this period given the insistence and collusion of the United States.

Cuba reiterates its unconditional solidarity with the Argentine Republic and affirms that the country is acting within its rights to fully exercise its sovereignty over its natural resources, including oilfields. The country's action is based on international law and numerous related decisions which have been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

months. Discussion on the law in the national assembly began in 2003.

In what has been widely hailed as a victory for the working class in Venezuela, the country's new labour law will see the working week reduced to 40 hours and maternity leave increased to 6.5 months. The law also seeks to eliminate private sub-contracted labour in Venezuela, which the government has previously described

as an exploitative practice produced by the neo-liberal politics of the 1990s.

Recently returned from undergoing radiotherapy treatment in Cuba, Chavez signed the law on national television from the Miraflores Palace, stating that he was carrying out an act of "social justice" for Venezuelan workers at a time when labour rights were being rolled back across Europe and the United States.

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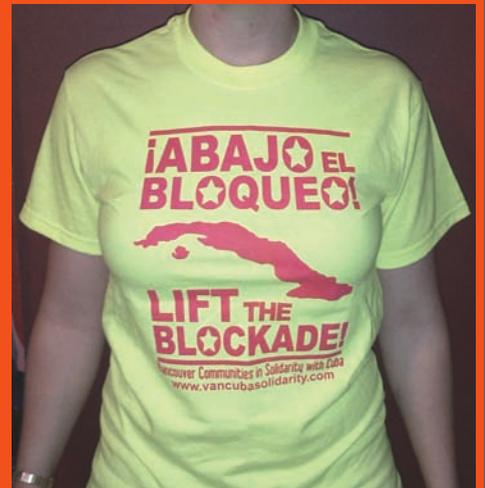


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Who is VCSC?
VANCOUVER COMMUNITIES
IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA

For more information contact:
vancubasolidarity@gmail.com
778-882-5223
www.vancubasolidarity.com



Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) is an organization working to build solidarity and support for Cuba in Vancouver, Canada and internationally. To do this, we organize frequent educational events, cultural events, conferences, mobilizations and actions in support of Cuba's sovereignty against Imperialist attacks and in defence of the gains of the Cuban revolution.

We also support campaigns:

- 1- Against the US Blockade on Cuba
- 2- To Free the Cuban 5 held in US Jails
- 3- To Extradite anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela

Throughout the lower mainland, at events, actions, festivals, high schools and campuses, we engage with thousands of people about Cuba. Our work aims to bring Cuba, as a country making important social gains, to youth, students, women, Latin American people, people of the third world and other working and oppressed people in Canada, as an example of building a better world.

We welcome new members and encourage everyone to get involved with VCSC to build a larger, stronger Cuba solidarity movement in Canada!

"DEALING WITH IRAN"

By Ismael Hossein-Zadeh*

Dr. James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute and brother of the well-known pollster John Zogby, recently published an article on "Dealing with Iran" in Huffington Post that is problematic on a number of grounds.

To begin with, Dr. Zogby claims that Iran harbors "aspirations for regional hegemony," and it is therefore a "threat" to its neighbors: "Make no mistake, the regime in Tehran is a meddlesome menace and their aspirations for regional hegemony do pose a threat, not to Israel ... but to the Arab Gulf States." Dr. Zogby goes even one step further, arguing that Iran is more than just a threat; it is "the real danger to its ... its neighbors."

Israel's Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar recently admitted (boastfully) that the Israeli government had succeeded in distracting the attention of the entire world away from the Palestinians to the Iranians. Dr. Zogby's argument that Iran is "the real danger to its neighbors" shows that Mr. Sa'ar is, indeed, justified in boasting about the fantastic success of Israel's policy of distraction. Instead of blaming the US-Israeli axis of aggression for the never-ending and escalating turbulence in the Middle East, Dr. Zogby blames Iran!

But let us examine Dr. Zogby's allegation in light of reality: (1) Iran has not invaded (or threatened invasion of) any country for over 250 years. (2) Iran was invaded in 1980 by Saddam Hussein, which culminated in the devastating 8-year war—a war that was instigated, supported and sustained by Western powers and their proxy regimes in the Persian Gulf region. (3) The "Arab Gulf States," headed by the Saudi kingdom, are collaborating with the US-Israeli axis of aggression in their efforts to destabilize and overthrow the Iranian government. (4) The "Arab Gulf States," not Iran, serve (literally) as military bases of Western powers that support Israel and its policies of settlements and occupation.

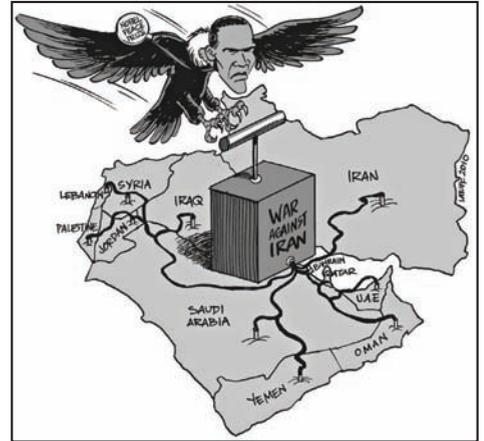
Against this background, Dr. Zogby's claim that Iran is a "meddlesome menace" is

obviously counterfactual and preposterous.

Ironically, Dr. Zogby's claim that Iran poses "the real danger to its neighbors" is flatly rejected by the Arab people. Public opinion polls have consistently shown that the overwhelming majority of the Arab neighbors of Iran view the U.S. and Israel as the real threats, not Iran. For example, the most recent (2011) and most comprehensive public opinion survey to date, which covered 12 Arab/Muslim countries and 16,731 face-to-face interviews, and which was conducted by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS), found that "by a 15-1 ratio, Israel and the US are seen as more threatening than Iran."

Since Dr. Zogby does not tell his readers why or how Iran is "the real danger to its neighbors," let me offer an explanation for his allegation. The "threat" he is talking about is not a military threat. Nor is it a threat to Arab people or their territory—Iran has no territorial ambitions. It is, rather, the threat to the autocratic Arab rulers; a threat that results from Iran's example or model of national sovereignty, not its "aspirations for regional hegemony," as Dr. Zogby claims. As Iran's policies of national independence and resistance to external pressure make the client Arab regimes look bad in the eyes of the Arab people, they tend to discredit and threaten their dictatorial rulers. And as those policies earn respect from the Arab people, they also earn the wrath of the Arab leaders. This means that Dr. Zogby's arguments against the Iranian government reflect the views of the dictatorial Arab leaders, and their imperialist backers, not those of the Arab people.

One salutary point in Dr. Zogby's article seems to be his advice against military threats against Iran. Unfortunately, he does so for the wrong reasons; he opposes military actions against Iran not because such actions would be unlawful and immoral, but because (a) military threats "only serve to embolden Iran," which is not clear why or how; and (b)



USS Enterprise Battle Group

"continued targeted sanctions...are having a real impact."

Dr. Zogby is either uninformed about the sanctions on Iran, or uses a peculiar definition of targeted sanctions. The brutal sanctions imposed on Iran are way beyond targeted sanctions; they are a most comprehensive sanctions, designed to be "crippling" as they include Iran's oil exports and its banks, which, in effect, means its international trade. Targeted sanctions are almost always expanded to broader, comprehensive sanctions, as has been the case with Iran. Furthermore, sanctions are essentially a disguised and an insidious form of war whose primary victims are the poor, the children, the elderly, and the infirm. And when sanctions fail to bring about "regime change," military actions follow logically "to do the job."

In his article Dr. Zogby also writes (with a dash of sarcasm): "What, one might ask the leaders of Iran, will they do with their nuclear program and their provocation? Can it feed their people, rebuild their neglected and decayed infrastructure, give hope to their

continued on page 28

continued from page 27

unemployed young, or secure their role in the community of nations? . . . As the Gulf States make significant progress, providing a model for development and growth, Iran remains trapped in an archaic system which feeds off of fear and anger, and goes nowhere.”

It is only fair to ask Dr. Zogby: how can “Arab Gulf States provide a model of develop-

ment for Iran” when they are essentially consumers markets for foreign products? What product line, manufacturing process or technological know-how can Iran learn from these states? Dr. Zogby seems to confuse financial services,

extravagant consumerism (made possible by abundant oil and smaller populations), unrestricted import of luxury goods from abroad, glossy shopping malls, ballooning skyscrapers, and man-made islands with manufacturing, industrialization, labor productivity and real development. With the exception of oil, which is produced, processed and managed largely with the help foreign experts, Persian Gulf kingdoms do not produce much of what they consume.

By contrast, Iran produces much of what it needs or consumes. It has made considerable progress in scientific research and technological know-how. It has taken advantage of the imperialist sanctions and boycotts to become self-reliant in many technological areas.

For example, Iran is now self-sufficient in producing many of its industrial products such as home and electric appliances (television sets, washers and dryers, refrigerators, washing machines, and the like), textiles, leather products, pharmaceuticals, agricultural products, processed food, and beverage products. The country has also made considerable progress in manufacturing steel, copper products, paper, rubber products, telecommunications equipment, cement, and industrial machinery. Iran has the largest operational stock of industrial robots in West Asia.

Iran’s progress in automobile and other motor vehicle production has especially been impressive. Motor vehicles, including farming equipment, now count among Iran’s exports. Most remarkable of Iran’s industrial progress, however, can be seen in the manufacture of various types of its armaments needs. Iran’s defense industry has taken great strides in the past few decades, and now manufactures many types of arms and equipment. Iran’s Defense Industries Organization (DIO) now

produces its own tanks, armored personnel carriers, guided missiles, radar systems, military vessels, submarines, fighter planes, and more. Despite these achievements, Iran’s military spending is relatively modest. For example, while Iran’s military spending is currently about \$7 billion, or nearly 2% of its GDP, that of Saudi Arabia is about \$43 billion, or nearly 11.2% of its GDP, and that of Israel is about \$13 billion, or 6.3% of its GDP. And while

Iran produces most of its military equipment at home, Saudi Arabia imports its military hardware (source).

Contrary to Dr. Zogby’s claims, Iran’s military preparedness and

its nuclear program, have not meant neglect of its infrastructure. Iran has, indeed, invested considerably in both physical infrastructures (such as transportation and communication) and soft/social infrastructures (such as education and healthcare services). Health care is free for those who can’t pay. All public education, including university, is free.

Although women are required to comply with the official dress code, they are encouraged (both by their families and the government) to excel in educational and professional pursuits. The results have been quite impressive. Women now constitute the majority of university students. Despite the very high level of unemployment, which is largely due to the criminal economic sanctions and military threats from abroad, more and more women are joining the workforce. They are doctors, engineers, teachers, scientists, writers, artists, business owners, salespersons, firefighters and taxi drivers. Working women in Iran are entitled to 90 days of maternity leave at two-thirds pay, with the right to return to their previous jobs. Women in the US do not have these benefits. Sex change operations and abortion under certain circumstances (and before the ensoulment, i.e. during the first four months of pregnancy) are legal.

In a number of the “Arab Gulf States,” by contrast, women can’t hold public office, are denied the right to vote, cannot get a university education, drive a car, or even leave home without a chaperone. How or why Dr. Zogby thinks that these states can “provide a

model of development and progress for Iran” is unfathomable.

Dr. Zogby also chides Iran for not supporting the ongoing efforts by the US and its allies, including the “Arab Gulf States,” to overthrow the Syrian regime. Yet, there is undeniable evidence that the Syrian opposition is hatched largely by NATO, Israel and their cringing allies in the Arab League. “The Free Syria Army (FSA) fighting against Assad inside Syria is a creation of NATO. Sources indicate 600 to 1,500 fighters from the Islamic Fighting Group in Libya, now known as al-Qaeda in Libya, are working with the FSA to topple the Assad regime. An Arab League report revealed last month that Mossad, MI6, the CIA, and British SAS are in Syria working with the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian National Council.” It is a shame that Dr. Zogby would allow himself to support this orgy of mercenary forces, benignly called the “Syrian opposition.”

In his Article Dr. Zogby refers to the Persian Gulf simply as the “Gulf,” without the word “Persian.” I suspect this omission is not fortuitous. Let me explain why. As mentioned earlier, Iran’s resistance to US-Israeli axis of aggression infuriates the autocratic Arab rulers as such resistance to injustice, which Dr. Zogby calls Iran’s “provocations,” exposes the complicity of these rulers with the imperialist-Zionist powers in the occupation and militarization of their lands. To counter this “problem” and to turn the Arab public opinion against Iran, the Arab client regimes (with the help of their imperialist patrons) have in recent years cooked up a scheme that is based on a harebrained idea that the word “Persian” should be dropped

from the name of Persian Gulf and replaced with the word “Arab,” that is, it should be the Arab Gulf, not the Persian Gulf! The scheme is, obviously, part of an insidious strategy that is designed to pit the Persians/Iranians against

the Arabs and the Shias against the Sunnis. Regrettably, Dr. Zogby seems to have fallen for this age-old divide-and-conquer ploy.

Ismael Hossein-zadeh is Professor Emeritus of Economics, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa. He is the author of The Political Economy of U.S. Militarism (Palgrave – Macmillan 2007) and the Soviet Non-capitalist Development: The Case of Nasser’s Egypt (Praeger Publishers 1989). He is a contributor to Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion, forthcoming from AK Press.



See CUBA for Yourself and Challenge the U.S. Blockade!

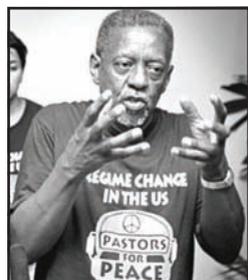


20th Anniversary Pastors for Peace Caravan to CUBA! July 1st - July 31st 2012

By Alison Bodine

This summer for the 23rd time, the Pastors for Peace Friendshipment Caravan to Cuba will challenge the United State's government's economic and travel blockade on Cuba, that has been imposed by the U.S. government on the Cuban people for over 50 years. The Caravan will travel through up to 140 cities in the U.S. and Canada, raising awareness about the U.S. blockade and gathering humanitarian aid to take to Cuba. After two weeks of traveling through the U.S. there is a blockade-busting border crossing into Mexico when participants directly break U.S. law in an act of civil disobedience by taking humanitarian aid that is destined for Cuba across the border into Mexico. Participants will then travel through Mexico and depart for nine days in Cuba, participating in a variety of educational and cultural events.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Pastors for Peace Caravans to Cuba. Over the past 20 years thousands of participants and over 30000 tons of humanitarian aid have been brought to Cuba, building a 'people-to-people' foreign policy based on mutual respect, solidarity and friendship between the people of the U.S. and Cuba.



This Caravan also commemorates Rev. Lucius Walker, Jr., the founding director of Pastors for Peace, who died peacefully in September 2010.

Now is the time to secure your spot on the bus!

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Here in British Columbia, Canada, the BC Aid Network for Cuba (BCANC) will once again be collecting humanitarian aid to send on the Pastors for Peace Caravan and encouraging people in BC and Canada to do all that they can to support this important project. We are looking for assistance from all peace and social justice minded people in BC to join us in making the 23rd Caravan to Cuba a great success!

Despite growing world-wide opinion against the U.S. blockade, this cruel policy still remains in full effect. As people in BC and Canada we must join in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the U.S.

There are three fundamental ways that you can get involved:

1. Collect aid from across British Columbia to send to Cuba.
2. Collect financial donations, especially fundraising, across BC to help pay the cost of getting the aid all the way from BC to Cuba.
3. Help BCANC to encourage people to travel with the Caravan through the US and Mexico to Cuba.

For more information and to get involved with BCANC visit:

WWW.BCANC.NET



WWW.PASTORSFORPEACE.ORG

No to NATO! No to WAR! Abolish NATO Now!

By *Alison Bodine*

NATO will be 'welcomed' with banners, picket signs, loud voices and marching feet!

Demands of No to NATO! No to War! will soon fill the streets of Chicago as people from the U.S and around the world gather in protest at the Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), May 20th-21st.

At the same time, within the walls of the Summit, leaders representing the 28 NATO member countries are meeting to discuss the best way to move forward with their increasing attacks on oppressed people, focusing on the brutal NATO occupation of Afghanistan. NATO leaders may make their plans in the name of 'mutual defense and security' but people outside of the Summit walls know that these words are only a cover for more death and destruction. They know NATO and it's terrible and bloody history of foreign intervention, wars and occupations in the interest of imperialism.

NATO is responsible for the destruction and break-up of Yugoslavia in the late 1990's. It has led the over 10 year occupation of Afghanistan that has made that country the most dangerous country in the world to be a a woman, with the high maternal mortality rates and near total lack of economic rights for women. Only one year ago, NATO initiated a so-called no-fly zone over Libya that paved the way for a massive bombing campaign and complete destruction of that sovereign country. Now NATO is lining up for conflict with Russia, as member countries face increasing competition with other powerful states as they look for new markets and resources to try save their crumbling economies. These are the reasons that the NATO Summit is being welcomed to Chicago with banners, picket signs and the loud voices of people standing up for a world of peace and justice, not war, occupation and austerity.



Dozens of events, from concerts to forums and discussions to protests in the street, are being organized both during the NATO Summit and in the week leading up to it. In fact, activists first began to arrive in Chicago May 12th and 13th for a 'People's Summit,' two days of educational workshops, plenaries and discussions to talk about NATO, the G8 and how to organize for a better world. The G8 is a meeting of the eight biggest economies in the world also taking place in the U.S. during this week, in Camp David, Maryland. The 'People's Summit' was organized by Occupy Chicago and CANG8, a coalition of antiwar, social justice and labour organizations.

Then, on May 20th, the opening day of the NATO Summit will be met with a massive protest also organized by CANG8, whose members have spent the last nine months engaged in a massive outreach and educational campaign calling on people to come to Chicago. The May 20th protest includes a musical program, as well as speakers from many prominent antiwar and social justice organizations. The protest culminates with a march to the NATO Summit and an

ending rally organized by Iraq Veterans Against War (IVAW).

It is not only people from Chicago coming out onto the streets during the NATO Summit, they will be joined by people from all over the U.S. and around the world. Given that NATO is an international organization, it is even more important that international antiwar movement unite and join together in protests to demand an end to NATO, especially those from NATO member countries.

At the time of this article, people are confirmed to be in Chicago from Europe, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Latin America and Asia, as well as all over US. This includes a contingent going to Chicago from Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Vancouver's antiwar coalition. MAWO, which has been involved in CANG8 since their formation in August of 2010, was also asked to have a speaker during the main rally program, and co-chair Alison Bodine will take the stage as a guest speaker with other speakers to denounce the participation of the government of Canada in NATO and to demand that NATO be abolished.

The wars, occupations and destruction caused NATO will not come to a screeching halt with the protest of tens of thousands in Chicago. NATO will only end with consistent and unified actions between people and organizations all over the world.

No to NATO!

No to War!

Abolish NATO Now!

For more information about actions being organized in Chicago visit the CANG8 website: www.cang8.org

To find out how you can support the actions in Chicago from here in Vancouver, contact Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) at www.mawovancouver.org or info@mawovancouver.org



Free the Cuban 5 Heroes!

If you were a small island nation which had been subject to terrorism for more than 50 years, what would you do? You'd probably ask that the attacks immediately stop. That's what the small country of Cuba with 11 million population has asked for decades of its close neighbour, the United States, to no avail.

For more than 50 years, armed terrorist gangs of Cuban exiles

have been organizing in Miami, Florida with the purpose of creating chaos in Cuba. These groups are responsible, in many cases admittedly, for acts of terrorism that have taken the lives of almost 3,500 Cubans and others including tourists. These terrorists have bombed airplanes, hotels and even assassinated people within the US for their 'cause' of overthrowing the Cuban government.

After receiving no help from the US in stopping the terrorists, Cuba did what any country should do to defend its people from terrorism: they acted. But instead of US-style "anti-terrorism" using bombs and tanks, Cuba sent five unarmed men: Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and René González. These five were given the heroic task of infiltrating and collecting information. The "Cuban 5" as they are known internationally, collected thousands of documents uncovering the activities of these terrorist groups. With this information, Cuba made an appeal to the US government to stop the attacks.

However, the US government did nothing to stop the terrorists. Instead, in 1998, they jailed the Cuban 5. They were held without charge or trial until 2001. During that time were subjected to 17 months of solitary confinement, a length of time illegal by US law. Despite dozens of requests from the Cuban 5 and their legal team to change the venue, the trial took place in Miami, the only city where they had zero opportunity for a fair trial.

The Five were falsely charged of 'conspiracy to commit espionage' and 'conspiracy to commit murder', and other lesser charges. The term

Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver Strengthens Campaign for Their Release



'conspiracy' was used due to the fact that the prosecution admitted they had no evidence against these men. The Five received sentences ranging from 15 years to two life sentences plus 15 years. These sentences have recently been minimally reduced.

In Miami, you have terrorists walking the streets freely, while five Cuban anti-terrorists have been locked away in prison for almost 14 years.

Now, what would you do if you were the US government? You would probably thank the Five

and act to stop the terrorists. And that is exactly what we should demand that the US government do - thank them by freeing the 5 Cuban Heroes from US prisons immediately.

Worldwide Voice to Free the 5!

Since their imprisonment, an international campaign has grown around the world, with more than 300 committees organized on every continent dedicated to the release of the Five.

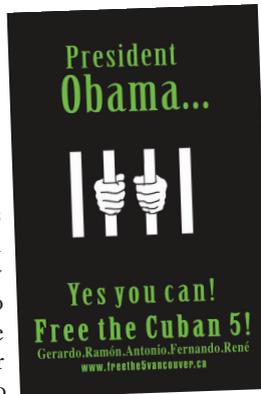
Between April 17-21, "5 Days for the Cuban 5" took place in Washington DC organized by the International Committee to Free the Cuban 5. The Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver sent a team which was able to participate in the many forums, conferences, lobbying government and even a protest in front of the White House which rallied more than 300 people demanding the immediate freedom of the Five. The events were certainly a step forward for the campaign.

Vancouver Committee Demands: Free the Cuban 5 Now!

On Saturday May 5th, supporters of the 5 Cuban Heroes gathered for their "5th of every month for the Cuban 5" event. May's protest was the 78th monthly protest since the Vancouver Committees' campaign began. Usually the monthly protest would be held in front of the US Consulate, however, May 5th fell on a Saturday when the US Consulate was closed. The committee decided instead to organize its protest at the Vancouver Art Gallery, where thousands of people walk by on a sunny Saturday. Organizers and supporters of the Cuban 5 lobbied people walking by for their support. Many people heard the name of the Cuban 5 for the first time as thousands of pieces of literature were handed out and plenty of postcards were signed demanding their freedom.

Two New Campaigns to Free the 5!

Recently, two new postcard campaigns have been released. The International Committee to Free the Cuban 5 has created a postcard campaign demanding "Obama, Give me 5!", which calls on the Nobel Peace Prize winner to end the injustice immediately. Also, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver started a postcard campaign locally to compliment that of the International Committee by collecting support from people living in Canada demanding Obama release the Five.



The Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver would like to invite you to get involved in

this important campaign. Sign a postcard, come to our monthly protest actions or help us to plan activities and events to free the Cuban 5 now!

For more information please visit:
www.free5vancouver.ca
www.thecuban5.org
www.free5.org

MONTHLY ANTIWAR RALLY & PETITION CAMPAIGN

NO WAR! NO SANCTIONS! HANDS OFF IRAN & SYRIA!

- END THE OCCUPATIONS OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, PALESTINE & HAITI!
- SAUDI AND ALL FOREIGN TROOPS OUT OF BAHRAIN!
- U.S., U.K., CANADA, FRANCE, NATO, HANDS OFF LIBYA NOW!
- U.S. HANDS OFF NORTH AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST!
- SELF DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS & ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!
- FREE BRADLEY MANNING NOW!
- > JOIN THE WORLD WIDE FREE BRADLEY MANNING CAMPAIGN TODAY!

**SATURDAY MAY 26TH 4PM
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY
ROBSON STREET**



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