

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

**ftt**  
FIRE THIS TIME

In English / En Español

		<p>Gerardo Hernández Antonio Guerrero Ramón Labañino Fernando Gonzáles René Gonzáles</p>

**The Cuban 5**  
**Heroes of the People of the World!**

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**WORKERS OF THE WORLD:  
Unite Against  
War & Occupation!**

Caracas, Venezuela

Havana, Cuba

Los Angeles, USA

Northern Gaza Strip, Palestine

# Million March in IRAQ to demand "OUT NOW"!

By Shannon Bundock

"I want the occupation to leave right away. Now, no timetable. We want to be ruled by Iraqis only."

Farhan Turki, Najaf, April 9<sup>th</sup> 2007

On April 9<sup>th</sup> 2007 an unprecedented explosion rocked Iraq. This time, however, the target was placed squarely on the occupation forces, and the blows were delivered via tremendous chants of, "NO, NO AMERICA! LEAVE OCCUPIER!" Nearly a million Iraqis filled the streets of Najaf with a single, united demand, "Yes to Iraq! Yes to Sovereignty! No to Occupation!" According to the New York Times, the numbers at the April 9<sup>th</sup> demonstration topped any protest since those during the US-led invasion of 2003.

A statement was read over loudspeakers at the rally, on behalf of Shia cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, "Iraqi people, you are aware, as 48 months have passed, that we live in a state of oppression, unjust repression and occupation... 48 hard months – that makes 4 years – in which we have gotten nothing but more killing, destruction and degradation. Tens of people are being

killed every day. Tens are disabled every day."

The statement continued on, calling for unity in the face of the brutal occupation, "America made efforts to stoke sectarian strife, and here I would like to tell you, the sons of the two rivers, that you have proved your ability to surpass difficulties and sacrifice yourselves, despite the conspiracies of the evil powers against you."

These same sentiments were reflected in the streets, "This demonstration is a friendly message to unite Iraqis on one common issue and that is end of occupation," said Abdul Qadir Al Daim of the Iraqi Islamic Party, a powerful Sunni bloc.

"The fall of Saddam means nothing to us, as long as the alternative is the American occupation" said Interior Ministry employee, Haider Abdul Rahim Mustafa.



The April 9<sup>th</sup> demonstration was a great show of force by Iraqi people, and an inspiring reflection of the unity of the anti-occupation resistance in Iraq. While this rally was one of the largest in the past four years, it was by no means the only mass protest against the occupation.

On March 29<sup>th</sup> in Baghdad Iraqi women staged a protest rally in the Gazaliya district to demand the release of the detainees who were arrested by US Forces during military operations during the week prior.

For the US/UK occupation of Iraq, this should serve as a grim warning. Four years of bombing, torture, house raids, murder and suppression has not broken the Iraqi people. Now the question is; how much farther can the occupier go to establish stability for their occupation of Iraq?

## Long-term Occupation; Long-term Crisis

On March 20<sup>th</sup> 2006, during a White House Press Conference, this question was posed to George Bush, "...will there come a day when there will be no more American forces in Iraq?" His response was telling, "That, of course, is an objective, and that will be decided by future Presidents and future governments of Iraq."

While the invasion and take-down of Iraq was intended to be speedy, the plans for occupation were never so humble. The objective of this occupation is woven into the fabric of the new era of war and occupation. This era is characterized by the expansion of imperialist hegemony and the carving up of oppressed nations of the world, at the dinner table of the world's powers. The plans of the US in Iraq include permanent bases, a permanent presence and turning the Iraqi government

into a US-proxy.

The undying anti-occupation resistance in Iraq is unravelling this plan. April 9<sup>th</sup> was another gut wrenching reminder for the occupiers, that in four years, they still face a nation that refuses to lie down. Caught in a contradiction of their aims versus reality, the US/UK forces are left with little option but to turn up the dial on their killing machine and slaughter as many Iraqis as the possibly can.

## Occupation Forces: The Source of All Violence in Iraq

At the same time as people were preparing the flood to Najaf to demand an end to the illegal, inhuman occupation of Iraq, US forces were engaged in their own actions. Operation Black

Eagle, led by the US, included air strikes by US warplanes in Diwaniya, a district south of Baghdad. On Saturday April 7<sup>th</sup> a missile attack demolished a house in Diwaniya and attack helicopters hovered over the area.

"We can't send our ambulances in to collect dead bodies or the wounded from the streets. And we are running out of essential medical items such as pain killer tablets, IV fluids, anaesthesia, stitches, antiseptics and things like bandages and cotton," said Dr Kamal Hussein of Diwaniya's general hospital on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

On April 17<sup>th</sup> 2007 at least 25 Iraqis were killed in a town in the north of Wasit province according to Voices of Iraq news agency. The deaths were a result of a US operation to implement the Fard al-

implementation is also much reduced now, certainly because of insecurity. So the main concern is the future of Iraqi children in general: what will be their future?"

- Cedric Turlan, information officer for the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (as told to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

## War on Iraqi Women

Alongside the horrors that the war and occupation of Iraq has brought to the children, there is another sector of Iraqi society that is suffering gravely, the women.

It is not known how many Iraqi women have been imprisoned since the occupation began. In April 2006, Mohammed Jorshid, a representative from a network of human rights NGO's, told the Asharq al-Awasat newspaper that 2,000 women are currently detained "for security reasons."

At present, Iraqi women are facing the loss of a series of measures that had been achieved through the former Family Code, including the right to inheritance and divorce, and everyday the situation is deteriorating.

Up to half of the national population is currently unemployed in Iraq, where women represent almost 60 percent of the total populace. "Female unemployment is now twice as high as that for males, while female poverty has also increased," said Iman Saeed, spokesperson for a women's NGO in Iraq. "In addition, the number of widows – already high as a result of the Iran-Iraq war [in the 1980s] – has increased since the US invasion, making the situation worse."

## Out Now!

The tally sheet at the end of these four years reveals that this war and occupation has only brought hell to the people of Iraq.

Qanoun (Law Enforcement) security plan launched February 14<sup>th</sup>.

These are only the latest – reported – instances of occupation violence in Iraq. However, the impact runs much deeper than these deaths alone. A survey of the damage brought by the invasion, war, and occupation is revealed among the most devastated layers of Iraqi society; women and children.

## War on Iraqi Children

"Every explosion, air strike, fighting or targeting in Iraq makes a child injured. In addition, we cannot forget the remaining UXOs [unexploded ordnance] whose victims are mostly children... If you make a summation of all these children, they are going to be thousands and we cannot forget that the number of them killed since April 2003 by diseases, explosions or bullets, has reached 260,000,"

- Khalid Ala'a, spokesman for Keeping Children Alive (KCA), an Iraqi Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

There are an estimated 4.8 million children under five in Iraq in total. About one in five of them are thought to be chronically malnourished ("stunted") and about one in 10 are underweight, according to UNICEF.

"Iraq has signed the conventions related to the rights of the children, but their

The Iraqi people have been relentlessly demanding that the occupation forces immediately leave the country.

All peace-loving people across the world



must listen and learn from the words on the streets of Najaf on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

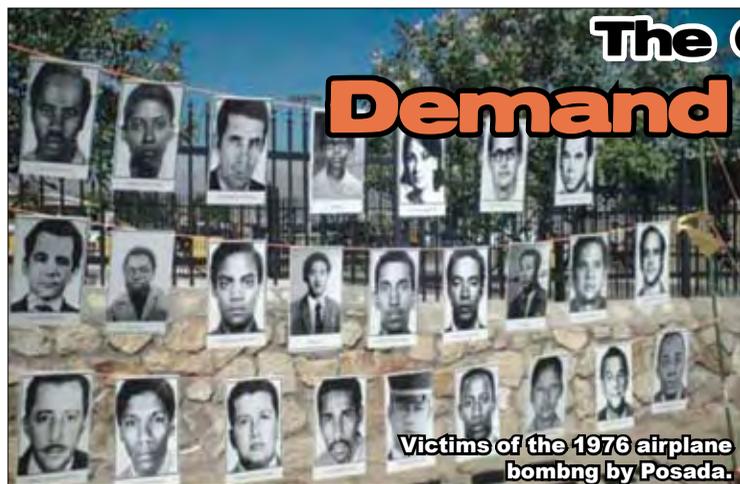
"In four years of occupation, our sons were murdered and our women widowed," explained Ahmed al Mayahie, who joined the protest from his city, Basra. "The occupiers say that Iraq was liberated. What liberty? There is only destruction. We do not want their liberation. We are asking them to leave our land."

In the face of the most brutal and savage military machine that the world has ever seen, the Iraqi people continue to stand up for their most basic right to life and dignity. It is up to the people of the world to stand beside them, to raise their voices, to march in the streets and to echo the demands:

"End the Occupation of Iraq!"

"Self-Determination for Iraq!"

"Out Now!"



**Victims of the 1976 airplane bombing by Posada.**

# The Case Against Luis Posada Carriles: Demand Posada's Extradition to Venezuela NOW!

By Tamara Hansen

## POSADA'S HISTORY IN LATIN AMERICA

A very little known name in North America, Luis Posada Carriles, is well known to the people of Latin America. Trained by the United States' CIA in explosives in the early 1960's, he was a participant in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba along with many other US-backed right-wing groups of former Cubans in 1962. This invasion was a complete and utter failure for these right-wing groups who were harbouring themselves in the US, as well as for the US government itself which had hoped to rid themselves of Fidel Castro and the sweeping changes being made by the Cuban revolution. Posada soon moved on, working for the Venezuelan secret police in the 1970's.

His list of terrorism-related crimes in Latin America is long. Even Reuters, a news agency that is generally quite critical of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution, had to admit the charges of terrorism hanging against this man.

In an article on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2007,

in Caracas in 1976, but fled prison in 1985 disguised as a priest. Posada Carriles is also accused of tourist bombings in Havana in 1997. He was jailed in Panama for a plot to assassinate Castro during an Ibero-American summit in 2000, but was pardoned by outgoing President Mireya Moscoso."

## RESURFACING IN THE U.S.

In March 2005, Posada resurfaced requesting political asylum in the United States. For two months Posada walked freely on the streets on Miami. However, someone in the US government must have informed him that as leaders of the "war on terror" it would be impossible for the US government to publicly support him without getting themselves into a whirlwind of trouble. On May 17<sup>th</sup> 2005, Posada skipped out on an immigration hearing and instead held a press conference publicly announcing that he would be leaving the US shortly.

But with all of this hullabaloo and pressure growing from Cuba, Venezuela, and social justice groups around the world, the US government was forced to act. On the same day as his press conference

Paso, Texas since May 2005, while the US government looks for the best option to protect its "image" as a leader in the global "war on terror" and at the same time help out one of their former agents.

## THE CASE FOR EXTRADITION

*"Venezuela accuses Mr Posada Carriles of planning the bombing of the Cubana Airlines plane on a flight from Caracas to Havana in 1976, an attack which left 73 people dead... He escaped from a Venezuelan prison in 1985 while awaiting a trial on appeal."* – BBC, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2005

*"A federal immigration judge ruled in 2005 that Posada must be deported, but said he could not be sent to Cuba, where he was born, or Venezuela, where he is a naturalized citizen, because of fears that he could be tortured."* – Associated Press, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2007

*"We've sent a message that is understood throughout the world: if you harbour a terrorist, if you support a terrorist, if you feed a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorists."* – George W. Bush, President of the United States, August 26<sup>th</sup> 2003

Then Bush and the US government is itself a terrorist. The only way for justice to prevail is if Posada is charged with his true crimes against humanity, not for breaking immigrations laws or entering the US illegally. Legally the United

## HOW THE U.S. IS PROTECTING POSADA

Now Posada has been fighting for access to bail and being released before his trial on immigration fraud charges coming up on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2007. The US government's attorneys have been petitioning to keep him in prison until the trial, but on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2007 it was ruled that the former CIA operative will be released on a quarter of a million dollar bond.

The US government's own attorneys released a long document as a motion for an emergency stay after the District Court ordered Posada's pretrial release. The attorneys stated a long list of reasons why Posada should not be released: his previous escape from Venezuelan prison in the 1980's; his press conference in 2005, when he was "too ill" to attend his immigration hearing, and his use



**Cubans rally against the US government's leniency on Posada.**

of their current CIA agents that they will be protected in the future from the crimes they have committed in the CIA's name? Thirdly, the White House has stayed away from accusing or charging Posada with ANY of his terrorist crimes and will only charge him with immigration issues - a decision obviously meant to protect Posada.

## "JAIL POSADA! FREE THE CUBAN 5!"

The US government's hypocrisy is not only seen in their treatment of Posada. They are not only protecting



Reuters recognized, "[Posada Carriles] is wanted in Venezuela on charges he planned the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people. He was detained

Posada Carriles was taken into US custody, but not for his terrorist crimes. No, instead he was charged for entering the US illegally. Posada has now been in a US prison in El

States has an extradition treaty with Venezuela so they must send Posada there to be charged. However, the US is using lame-duck excuses such as Venezuela not having enough evidence against Posada or that Posada may be tortured as reasons to harbour this terrorist within their own borders. After witnessing the United States' war in Iraq, their occupation of Afghanistan, their recent bombing campaign against Somalia and conditions their prisoners face in their Guantanamo Bay detention camp, we don't really need more evidence that they indeed support terrorism whenever it is in their favour. Despite this, the case of Luis Posada Carriles stands as strong proof that that US is not concerned about terrorism, and that they are willing to harbour terrorists, especially if they are ex-agents of the US government.

of many fake IDs and passports in the past, all as evidence that Posada poses a slight risk.

But is the US government really against releasing Posada? Obviously the decision of the judge to release this terrorist, especially after the evidence presented proved the risk involved, had to come from somewhere. While their attorneys make it seem as if the US government is fighting the good fight, it is certain that the White House pressured the courts to release Posada before his trial.

First, the White House has been trying to find a country to take Posada off of their hands since his arrival in the US, but nowhere "suitable" has been willing to take such a high profile criminal. Secondly, if the White House does not aid Posada how are they going to convince any

this terrorist. They have also jailed 5 Cubans who came into the United States to investigate the crimes of the anti-Cuban terrorist organizations that Posada works with in Miami.

Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González were falsely accused by the US government of "conspiracy to commit espionage", "conspiracy to commit murder" and other bogus charges. These men did not come to spy on the US government, but to collect evidence about the acts of terrorism planned by the right-wing anti-Cuba groups in Miami. The five Cubans never harmed anyone, which even the US government knows, and that is why they could only be charged with "conspiracy to commit" these crimes and not even that they "attempted to commit" these crimes. Despite the lack of evidence against them, these five heroes, who were defending the people of Cuba against terrorists (like Luis Posada Carriles), are serving four life sentences and 75 years collectively, after being unjustly imprisoned by the US government.

But Cuba, Venezuela and people around the world who are concerned about social justice are exposing the United States' blatant hypocrisy and have been speaking out, demanding justice in both the case of the anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles and in the case of these five anti-terrorist Cuban heroes. These people have been uniting and appealing to others to join them in the demands:

**"Jail Posada! Free the Five!"**

**"Free the Cuban 5 NOW!"**

**"Extradite Posada to Venezuela NOW!"**



**March against terrorism, Havana, Cuba. May 17, 2005.**

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# IMPERIALIST CANADA AND AFGHANISTAN



By Nita Palmer

On April 8<sup>th</sup> 2007, the Canadian Forces marked their deadliest day since the Korean War in 1953 when six Canadian soldiers were killed when a roadside bomb exploded near Kandahar, Afghanistan. The deaths of two more soldiers on April 11<sup>th</sup> in Afghanistan made it the deadliest week for Canadian forces since 2001. Then, just seven days later, on April 18<sup>th</sup>, a Special Forces officer with the Canadian Forces was killed in a fall from a communications tower.

"[The troops] are there to defend our national interests and protect

during childbirth in Afghanistan – as compared to one in 8,700 in Canada. The infant mortality rate in Afghanistan is 165 per 1000 live births – 33 times higher than Canada's. The occupation has also brought with it a more threatening epidemic – AIDS. Virtually non-existent before 2001, there are now 31 confirmed cases of HIV/AIDS in Afghanistan – although UN AIDS estimates it to be many times higher.

"...31 cases have been confirmed through blood screening countrywide, however, we are estimating between 600 to 7000 cases in the country," Dr.

the population of Afghanistan. It is the Taliban who are committing violence against our troops and the Afghan people," Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper claimed on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

But really, the recent deaths of these Canadian soldiers make only one thing clear: Canada is not "protecting" the people of Afghanistan. Canada is waging war against the people of Afghanistan. For every Canadian or NATO soldier that dies in Afghanistan, countless hundreds more Afghans are killed. 55 Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed so far in the 5-year-long occupation, but the estimates of the number of Afghan deaths range in the tens of thousands.

## A CRISIS OF HUMAN SUFFERING

The website of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team proclaims that, "Five years after the fall of the Taliban, the progress in Afghanistan is remarkable by any standards." Just what progress has Afghanistan made, exactly? While the government of Canada touts its claims of "rebuilding Afghanistan" and bringing to the people the "civil society" of the West, the facts on the ground tell a different story. One in six women now dies

Naqibullah Safi, the national program manager for HIV/AIDS in Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health, noted earlier this month. UN AIDS notes that the groups identified as being at highest risk for HIV/AIDS are women, internally displaced persons, and intravenous drug users. Since the occupation began, hundreds of thousands of Afghans have been forced to flee their homes, becoming known as "internally displaced persons", this is happening particularly in the Kandahar province in which Canadian troops are currently operating. Increasing numbers of women are being forced into prostitution by the poverty created by the occupation. Intravenous drugs, unheard of in Afghanistan before the 2001 invasion, are



now increasingly prevalent in urban areas like Kabul. The blame for this epidemic of HIV/AIDS in Afghanistan can only rest squarely on the shoulders of the devastating NATO occupation.

## THE IMPERIALIST DILEMMA

"Don't mix up Iraq with Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a success story. Afghanistan is improving."

- Gordon O'Connor, Canada Defence Minister, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2007

Actions speak louder than words, as the saying goes, and it only takes one look at Canada and NATO's actions in Afghanistan to see that their words of helping people in Afghanistan are nothing but lies. Furthermore, Canada, NATO, and the rest of Afghanistan's imperialist occupiers face a crisis in Afghanistan. Despite the occupiers' weapons, despite a military budget in Canada alone worth \$25.8 Billion, despite their Apache

helicopters, their Leopard tanks and their special forces, the Afghan resistance is getting stronger every day.

While Gordon O'Connor tries desperately to claim that Afghanistan is not like Iraq, the reality is that the occupation forces there are sinking deeper into a quagmire every day. Even their "democratically elected" puppet government with Afghan President Hamid Karzai is failing. The low wages paid to police and other government workers – usually about \$40/month – have caused protest against corruption in the lower levels, which often includes extortion of money from the desperately poor majority in Afghanistan. Support is daily turning away

from the Karzai government, as recently indicated by protests against a raid on Afghanistan's most popular television provider which was ordered by Afghan Attorney General, Abdul Jabar Sabet, allegedly because the station "misrepresented" comments he had made. Every day, the imperialists' puppet is losing its legitimacy.

Given the deepening quagmire, why don't the occupying countries pull out before they face an even greater crisis? Precisely because their own falling economy and their own "war on terror" have trapped them. In an era marked by a world economy

its NATO occupiers are not winning the support of people in Afghanistan. However, they are not winning support in Canada either. In Vancouver, more than 12,000 people have already signed Mobilization Against War & Occupation's petition demanding an end to the occupation of Afghanistan – and opposition is growing every day. Meanwhile, the government of Canada is preparing for a long war in Afghanistan – a testament to this is the 100 Leopard tanks that they bought last week, and the increasing drive for military recruitment that can be seen at bus stops, in high schools, and in newspapers. "We see Afghanistan



Rally in Kabul, Afghanistan against occupation forces raid on a TV station, April 2007.

increasingly in crisis, countries like Canada have no choice but to make their bid to control strategically important areas like Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a pivot point between the resource-rich areas of the Middle East and Africa that imperialist countries would like to exploit and the trade markets of Europe and East Asia. Contrary to their claims, Canada and NATO do not want to "liberate" Afghanistan – simply control this important area.

Now Afghanistan is also becoming more important for imperialist countries vying for control of the Middle East – this time, as a base to establish in their campaign to attack and control Iran. "Over, say, the last year or so there have been increasing concerns raised over Iran's behaviour in Afghanistan," US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia noted. Increasingly, imperialist countries are claiming that Iran is aiding the Taliban. This is simply another part of the ongoing campaign by imperialist countries to attack Iran – a crucial move to control the Middle East.

## LOSING HEARTS & MINDS ON THE HOME FRONT

The growing resistance in Afghanistan is a testament to the fact that Canada and

is the future. Afghanistan and these type of engagements are the future for 10, 15 years," Gordon O'Connor stated while announcing the purchase of the tanks.

Ten to fifteen years of occupation? After just five years, the government of Canada has proved that it is not "liberating" Afghanistan. Plus the occupation isn't in the interests of people in Canada either, as money is pinched, pulled, and chopped from health care, education, and welfare to fund the military budget. It's time for us – people in Canada – to organize against the occupation, alongside people fighting the Canada and NATO occupying troops in Afghanistan. We must call for an independent public inquiry into the Canadian war drive in Afghanistan which is increasing every day, without the consultation of people in Canada. We must call for an immediate withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan, to put an end to this suffering created by the occupation.

CANADA/NATO OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE CANADIAN WAR DRIVE!

OUT NOW!

## REFLECTIONS BY THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

# A BRUTAL REPLY

George W. Bush is undoubtedly the most genuine representative of a system of terror forced on the world by the technological, economic and political superiority of the most powerful country known to this planet. For this reason, we share the tragedy of the American people and their ethical values. The instructions for the verdict issued by Judge Kathleen Cardone, of the El Paso Federal Court last Friday, granting Luis Posada Carriles freedom on bail, could only have come from the White House.

It was President Bush himself who ignored at all times the criminal and terrorist nature of the defendant who was protected with a simple accusation of immigration violation leveled at him. The reply is brutal. The government of the United States and its most representative institutions had already decided to release the monster.

The backgrounds are well-known and reach far back. The people who trained him and ordered him to destroy a Cuban passenger plane in midair, with 73 athletes, students and other Cuban and foreign travelers on board, together with its dedicated crew; those who bought his freedom while the terrorist was held in prison in Venezuela, so that he could supply and practically conduct a dirty war against the people of Nicaragua, resulting in the loss of thousands

Abu Ghraib on the territory illegally occupied in Guantánamo, horrifying the world with this procedure. The cruel actions of his predecessors seemed not enough for him. It was not enough to force a poor and underdeveloped country like Cuba to spend 100 billion dollars. To accuse Posada Carriles was tantamount to accusing himself.

Throughout almost half a century, everything was fair game against our small island lying 90 miles away from its coast, wanting to be independent. Florida saw the installation of the largest station for intelligence and subversion that ever existed on this planet.

It was not enough to send a mercenary invasion on the Bay of Pigs, costing us 176 dead and more than 300 wounded at a time when the few medical specialists they left us had no experience treating war wounds.

Earlier still, the French ship *La Coubre* carrying Belgian weapons and grenades for Cuba had exploded on the docks of Havana Harbor. The two well synchronized explosions caused the deaths of more than 100

of lives and the devastation of a country for decades to come; those who empowered him to smuggle with drugs and weapons making a mockery of the laws of Congress; those who collaborated with him to create the terrible Operation Condor and to internationalize terror; the same who brought torture, death and often the physical disappearance of hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans, could not possibly act any different.

Even though Bush's decision was to be expected, it is certainly no less humiliating for our people. Thanks to the revelations of "Por Esto!" a Mexican publication from the state of Quintana Roo later complemented by our own sources, Cuba knew with absolute precision how Posada Carriles entered from Central America, via Cancun, to the Isla Mujeres departing from there on board the *Santrina*, after the ship was inspected by the Mexican federal authorities, heading with other terrorists straight to Miami.

Denounced and publicly challenged with exact information on the matter, since April 15, 2005, it took the government of that country more than a month to arrest the terrorist, and a year and two months to admit that Luis Posada Carriles had entered through the Florida coast illegally on board the *Santrina*, a presumed school-ship licensed in the United States.

Not a single word is said of his countless victims, of the bombs he set off in tourist facilities in recent years, of his dozens of plans financed by the government of the United States to physically eliminate me.

It was not enough for Bush to offend the name of Cuba by installing a horrible torture center similar to

workers and wounded others as many of them took part in the rescue attempts.

It was not enough to have the Missile Crisis of 1962, which brought the world to the brink of an all-consuming thermonuclear war, at a time when there were bombs 50 times more powerful than the ones dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It was not enough to introduce in our country viruses, bacteria and fungi to attack plantations and flocks; and incredible as it may seem, to attack human beings. Some of these pathogens came out of American laboratories and were brought to Cuba by well-known terrorists in the service of the United States government.

Add to all this the enormous injustice of keeping five heroic patriots imprisoned for supplying information about terrorist activities; they were condemned in a fraudulent manner to sentences that include two life sentences and they stoically withstand cruel mistreatment, each of them in a different prison.

Time and again the Cuban people have fearlessly faced the threat of death. They have demonstrated that with intelligence, using appropriate tactics and strategies, and especially preserving unity around their political and social vanguard, there can be no force on this earth capable of defeating them.

I think that the coming May Day celebration would be the ideal day for our people, --using the minimum of fuel and transportation-- to show their feelings to the workers and the poor of the world.

*Fidel Castro Ruz - April 10, 2007.*

## REFLEXIONES DEL COMANDANTE EN JEFE

# LA RESPUESTA BRUTAL

El más genuino representante de un sistema de terror que ha sido impuesto al mundo por la superioridad tecnológica, económica y política de la potencia más poderosa que ha conocido nuestro planeta,

que actuaran de otra forma.

No por esperada la decisión de Bush es menos humillante para nuestro pueblo, porque fue Cuba la que, partiendo de las revelaciones de "Por Esto!", órgano de prensa del Estado mexicano de Quintana Roo, complementadas después por nuestros propios medios, supo con toda precisión que Posada Carriles entró desde Centroamérica, vía Cancún, hacia Isla Mujeres, desde donde, a bordo del *Santrina*, después de ser inspeccionada la nave por las autoridades federales de México, se dirigió junto a otros terroristas directamente a Miami.

Denunciado y emplazado públicamente el gobierno de ese país con datos exactos sobre el tema desde el 11 de abril del 2005, demoró más de un mes en arrestar al terrorista y tardó un año y dos meses en reconocer que Luis Posada Carriles entró ilegalmente por las costas de la Florida a bordo del *Santrina*, un

No bastaba la invasión mercenaria de Girón, que costó a nuestro pueblo 176 muertos y más de 300 heridos cuando los pocos especialistas de Medicina que nos dejaron no tenían experiencia en heridas de guerra.

Antes había estallado en los muelles del puerto de La Habana el buque francés *La Coubre*, que transportaba armas y granadas de fabricación belga para Cuba, causando con sus dos explosiones, bien sincronizadas, la muerte a más de 100 trabajadores y heridas a otros muchos en plena faena de salvamento.

No bastaba la Crisis de Octubre de 1962, que llevó al mundo al borde límite de una guerra termonuclear total, cuando ya existían bombas 50 veces más poderosas que las que estallaron sobre Hiroshima y Nagasaki.

No bastaba la introducción en nuestro país de virus, bacterias y hongos contra plantaciones y rebaños, e incluso, aunque parezca increíble, contra seres humanos. De laboratorios norteamericanos salieron algunos de estos patógenos para ser trasladados a Cuba por terroristas bien conocidos al servicio del gobierno de Estados Unidos.

A todo esto se añade la enorme injusticia de mantener en prisión a cinco heroicos patriotas que, por



es sin duda George W. Bush. Compartimos, por ello, la tragedia del propio pueblo norteamericano y sus valores éticos. Solo de la Casa Blanca podían proceder las instrucciones para el fallo dictado por Kathleen Cardone, jueza de la Corte Federal de El Paso, Texas, el pasado viernes, concediéndole la libertad bajo fianza a Luis Posada Carriles.

Fue el propio presidente Bush quien eludió en todo momento el carácter criminal y terrorista del acusado. Se le protegió imputándole una simple violación de trámites migratorios. La respuesta es brutal. El gobierno de Estados Unidos y sus instituciones más representativas decidieron de antemano la libertad del monstruo.

Los antecedentes son bien conocidos y vienen de muy atrás. Los que lo entrenaron y le ordenaron destruir una nave cubana de pasajeros en pleno vuelo, con 73 atletas, estudiantes y otros viajeros nacionales y extranjeros a bordo, además de su abnegada tripulación; los que, estando preso el terrorista en Venezuela, compraron su libertad para suministrar y prácticamente dirigir una guerra sucia contra el pueblo de Nicaragua, que significó la pérdida de miles de vidas y la ruina del país por décadas; los que le dieron facultades para contrabandear con drogas y armas a fin de burlar las leyes del Congreso; los que con él crearon la terrible Operación Cóndor e internacionalizaron el terror; los que llevaron a la tortura, la muerte y muchas veces a la desaparición física de cientos de miles de latinoamericanos, era imposible

suministrar información sobre las actividades terroristas, fueron condenados de forma fraudulenta a sanciones que alcanzan hasta dos cadenas perpetuas, y soportan estoicamente, cada uno de ellos en cárceles diferentes, crueles maltratos.

Más de una vez el pueblo cubano ha desafiado sin vacilar el peligro de morir. Demostró que con inteligencia, usando tácticas y estrategias adecuadas, especialmente estrechando la unidad en torno a su vanguardia política y social, no habrá fuerza en el mundo capaz de vencerlo.

Pienso que el próximo Primero de Mayo sería el día ideal para que nuestro pueblo, con un mínimo de gasto en combustible y medios de transporte, exteriorice sus sentimientos a los trabajadores y los pobres del mundo.

*Fidel Castro Ruz.  
10 de abril del 2007.*



# Coming Iraq in Africa: Somalia After Occupation

By Thomas Davies

It didn't take a crystal ball to know what was going to happen for the many voices who protested the US-backed Ethiopian invasion of Somalia at the end of 2006. Four months later and the urgent predictions of massacres, brutal puppet governments, and crisis have all come true. However, also as predicted, Somalis have become much more than a thorn in the side of their occupiers - as they continue a proud history of opposing foreign invasion and fighting for their right to self-determination.

## Completely Exposed

The capital of Somalia, Mogadishu, is in flames. What else could have anyone expected as 15,000 US-equipped Ethiopian troops shook the ground as they rolled into the country in heavily armed tanks and jeeps. They were charged with installing a puppet government created in Kenya and ridding the country of the broadly supported Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) government. Now joined by 1,500 Ugandan "peacekeepers", the facts speak for themselves about their impact:

- According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, at least 280,000 people have been forced to flee Mogadishu since



Smoke rises from a Ethiopian helicopter after it is shot down by Somali anti-invasion resistance in Mogadishu, March 30, 2007.

and Somalia to Ethiopia, where they are kept without charge or access to lawyers and families."

- The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) is protesting the April 8<sup>th</sup> arrest of two of its reporters. Meanwhile the current puppet government has officially banned all unauthorised conferences, lectures and public events about media matters, in some areas, as well as the creation of media associations.

- One kilo of sugar now costs almost three times the regular price, while the cost of gasoline has doubled.

All this, and they've only been occupying



February 2007 alone. A Somali report covered by Reuters News puts the number at a staggering 1.4 million.

- The same report puts the number dead in the capital alone at 1,086 people as of April 10<sup>th</sup>. Colonel Hussein Siyaad, a member of the committee grouping security officials and civil society activists, stated, "This is a rough estimate and the number is going to be much higher because we have not ventured out of the main roads... The dead bodies are still there and it will take weeks to collect all of them."

- According to the Associated Press, "Human rights groups, lawyers and several Western diplomats assert hundreds of prisoners, who include women and children, have been transferred secretly and illegally in recent months from Kenya

the country for four months...

## Still Completely Isolated

The "Transitional Governing Authority", a coalition of US backed warlords, continues to try and rule the country from the farm town of Baidoa, close to the Kenyan border. They cannot enter Mogadishu for fear of their lives and recently had to fire 31 members of parliament who had simply stopped coming to meetings.

Jendayi Frazer, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, was the highest ranking US government official to visit Somalia in 13 years when she visited Baidoa on April 7<sup>th</sup>. As what the Red Cross called, "the worst fighting in Mogadishu in more than 15 years" raged in the capital, her amazing solution for everything was to continue to push for a "reconciliation conference"

on April 16<sup>th</sup>. The conference was then postponed to May- and now to June due to the complete lack of conditions for anything even resembling this to take place.

As for the African Union, it continues to be unable to find any African country willing to actually send either the troops or the funding for the 6,500 more soldiers it promised to send as "peacekeepers" to Somalia months ago.

## Somalia Rising

*"I call upon the Somali people, wherever it exists, to unity in the fight against the Ethiopians. The war is not between Ethiopia and our tribe, it is between Ethiopia and all Somali people."*

- Hawai clan spokesperson, Mogadishu

How is the US going to convince any more African countries to plunge their troops into this?

The UIC has also been making a resurgence. Sheikh Dahir Aweys, chief of the Supreme Islamic Council of the Somali Islamic Courts, had a public interview on al-Jazeera News. He emphasized that, "The Somalis are now more united than before proving that they are one nation against the Ethiopian invaders." Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the other main leader of the UIC, recently met with Isaias Afwerki, the president of the neighbouring country of Eritrea. This is terrible news for the US, whose post-invasion propaganda had always emphasized the downfall of what had been the main emerging political force in Somalia.

## New Wave

Somali anti-imperialist poet Safi Abdi once wrote in a poem "Broken Hearted Somalia",

*There are times I wish  
I were a roaring ocean  
So as to toss overboard  
The scum caught on my sails.*

This roaring ocean is now growing in her homeland, bearing down on the "scum" of foreign occupation. What is plain to see is that groups from all sides are calling for and responding to a united Somali people fighting for the freedom of their country from foreign occupation. This will continue until the last boot of the last foreign troop has left their land, and Somalis are finally able to begin to rebuild their lives and country.

All Foreign Troops OUT NOW!



Somalis demonstrate against US-backed Ethiopian invasion. April 13 2007.

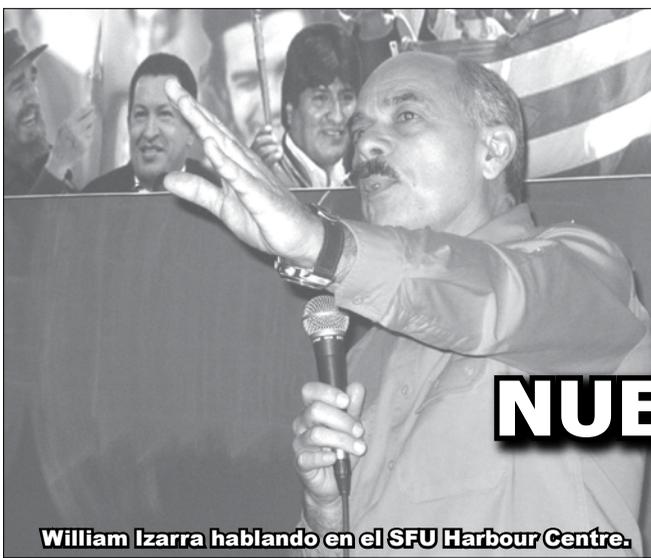
Things got a lot worse for the occupiers on April 13<sup>th</sup>, when the largest clan in Somalia, the Hawai, called for unity in a determined fight against occupation. They join what BBC News calls, "a groundswell of popular anger" and "the swelling ranks of the opposition" in a fight that has occupation forces reeling.

Uganda has already admitted to casualties, while 89 Ethiopian soldiers recently deserted by boat to southern Yemen. Muhammad Hassan, an Ethiopian officer who had participated in the invasion explained why they left, "We did not expect the fighting to reach this level of ferocity or that it could turn into a guerrilla war." He added that more troops were fleeing Somalia after they found themselves stuck in a "flaming hell."

William Izarra es el anterior Viceministro de Relaciones Exteriores en el Medio Oriente, Asia y Oceanía. El Comandante Izarra era un militar central y líder político de las fuerzas armadas lideradas por Chávez antes de que Chávez fuera inicialmente elegido Presidente de Venezuela. Izarra es actualmente un creador de políticas para el gobierno de Chávez, así como el director nacional de los Centros de Formación Ideológica (CFIs). Es un líder central de la Revolución Bolivariana y un marxista veterano. El estuvo recientemente en un tour sobre la importancia del Socialismo del siglo 21 en Vancouver y Victoria, iniciado y organizado por la Sociedad Bolivariana de Vancouver. Abajo se encuentra una transcripción del discurso completo que dio en el SFU Harbour Centre en Vancouver.

Buenas Noches... [Estas] son conferencias didácticas, que están referidas ha estimular la conciencia revolucionaria en Venezuela... Hemos denominado esta presentación como La Traslación Revolucionaria y el Cambio de Estructura... el diez de enero de este año cuando el presidente Chávez juramenta para su segundo periodo presidencial, que indica el inicio de la traslación revolucionaria, y para aclarar para los que no tiene un conocimiento claro de lo que es el proceso revolucionario, que aquí vamos a dividir este periodo en reforma y revolución. Reforma antes del

99, cuyo modo de gestión esta identificado por la pirámide, es un poder sustentado en las cúpulas, el vértice de la pirámide, estas cúpulas se convierten en cogollos, y eso genera una relación asimétrica de poder... se caracteriza principalmente por el usufructo del poder. De tal manera la reforma tiene una caracteriza de exclusión. El sustento de la reforma son las leyes del mercado. Cuando entra el 99 y Hugo Chávez gana la presidencia de la republica. Comienza el proceso de la revolución... que comienza como una escalera... cuyo propósito es invertir la pirámide y ese poder de cogollo de la



William Izarra hablando en el SFU Harbour Centre.

cúpula tiene que pasar ha ser la base. En donde la búsqueda es que la asamblea de ciudadanos se convierta en la primera instancia de poder. Esta es una especie de metodología del proceso revolucionario que puede ser referencia para los otros países del continente que asumen el proceso revolucionario.

Como metodología podríamos decir que hay varios pasos. Asumir el acto electoral como el acto revolucionario... En el año 1997 se genera una ruptura de paradigmas, acerca de cómo hacer la revolución. Hasta ese año la revolución se hacia por la vía violenta, pero a partir del año 1997 hay una ruptura al momento de asumir la vía electoral para hacer la revolución. Y eso lo establece el Movimiento Bolivariano Revolucionario 200. Aclaro para los que no saben el MBR200 es un movimiento político que nace en el seno de

las fuerzas armadas, y hace un primer intento revolucionario en el año 1992 con Hugo Chávez, el golpe de febrero. El MBR 200 decide entonces en el año 1997 ir a las elecciones del 1998. Por lo tanto la revolución ya no se hace por la vía violenta. Y se establece



Organizadores con la Mision Robinson.

como un nuevo paradigma. Atendiendo que el movimiento MBR200 a través del Movimiento Quinta Republica es la estructura que gana las elecciones y por lo tanto, Hugo Chávez al palacio presidencial. El segundo paso es la convocatoria a una asamblea constituyente, y por lo tanto señalare la siguiente precisión de orden político, no es lo mismo una asamblea constituida como una asamblea constituyente. La constituyente tiene como razón que ser, y ese es el tercer paso: crear una Constitución Nacional. Y establecida una nueva constitución, se pasa el cambio de estructura. ¿A que nivel? Al nivel de las relaciones sociales, relaciones de poder, y relaciones de producción. Esta sería la secuencia que de hecho se esta aplicando en países que están orientados por el proceso revolucionario Bolivariano.

¿A donde nos conduce esto?

Nos conduce a un cambio de estructura que es lo más importante, es la esencia de la revolución. Y hay que precisar y por lo tanto hay que enseñar que se significa estructura... El cambio de estructura es la base del sustento, y por lo tanto la ruptura de paradigmas. Cuando se decide a las elecciones se rompe un paradigma, porque hasta ese momento la revolución era por la vía violenta. Y los paradigmas... están referidos al nivel teórico, generado una nueva ideología, que es el Socialismo del Siglo 21, y esa ideología como sistema político, va a generar entonces un nuevo modelo de sociedad. Y hay ruptura de paradigmas al nivel de la práctica, la generación de un nuevo estado. Como el órgano regulador del colectivo de la sociedad, en Venezuela se va hacia la construcción del estado social-comunal. Romper el paradigma del estado burocrático, de la democracia representativa, sustentado en el capitalismo y las leyes del mercado.

Estos paradigmas nos llevan a definir lo que podíamos llamar un modelo para interpretar el proceso revolucionario, y como proceso es la sumatoria de momentos, la suma de momentos

# UNA PLATICA DE WILLIAM IZARRA UN LÍDER CENTRAL DE LA REVOLUCIÓN BOLIVARIANA NUESTRA REVOLUCIÓN ES EL INSTRUMENTO DEL PUEBLO

constituye fases. El conjunto de fases constituye etapas. Y el conjunto de etapas es el proceso. Ese modelo lo aplicamos a la realidad actual. Y tendríamos una escalera, por decir algo con veinte escalones, el proceso revolucionario esta en el tercero, hemos transcurrido dos fases, y una etapa ya superada... La etapa de traslación comienza el 10 de enero, el segundo periodo del presidente Chávez... El proceso Bolivariano revolucionario, un niño todavía, falta recorrer todavía muchas etapas y fases, que siendo afin al desarrollo biológico del ser, se transformaría en un adulto maduro, pero por lo pronto es un niño. Y que es lo que busca la revolución, arriba, el último escalón, el bien común. Identificamos entonces la etapa de traslación, en la siguiente

con Vietnam, ni con China, ni con Cuba. Hermandad, alianzas y fraternidad con esos países, pero sus modelos políticos son distintos... El origen inspirador... tiene que ver con tres pensadores y prohombres, genios, como Bolívar, que cada uno de ellos tiene un significado, estableciendo los orígenes de este proceso. Simón Bolívar, cual es la síntesis del pensamiento de Simón Bolívar: La emancipación; romper con cualquier relación de dependencia. La emancipación es la libertad plena. Simón Rodríguez maestro de Bolívar, socialismo, ya a mediados del siglo 19, teníamos un socialista que era Simón Rodríguez, y sus ideas se las transmitió al Libertador. Y allí tenemos a Ezequiel Zamora, en la segunda mitad del siglo 19, revoluciona rompiendo esquemas

manera, La etapa de traslación consiste en convertir el poder representativo de las cúpulas en el poder popular. Convertir a la asamblea de ciudadanos en lo que sería la base de aquella pirámide invertida. Y la definimos la etapa de traslación como la transferencia del poder a la comunidad organizada. Identifica al momento en el que el presidente se juramenta, decreta los cinco motores, como el inicio de la etapa de traslación. Los motores identifican actividades políticas. Dirigidos a trasladar el poder a la comunidad organizada. Y eso motores van dirigidos hacia el Socialismo del Siglo 21.

Nos preguntariamos nosotros. ¿Socialismo del siglo 21? ¿Ruptura de paradigmas? ¿Qué es el Socialismo del Siglo 21? Podemos tener dos tipos de conceptos. Un concepto de lo que podríamos llamar la dimensión coloquial, la conversación ordinaria. El lenguaje rutinario, el dialogo, eso lo podríamos llamar un tipo de concepto, para definir de manera inmediata lo que es socialismo. Pero también podemos elaborar, una conceptualización con fundamentos científicos, y vamos hacerlo de la manera más sintética que podamos. ¿Qué es el socialismo del Siglo 21? En esta dimensión tendríamos que irnos un poco a ver las raíces. Que para efecto de entender este nuevo parámetro universal. Que no tiene comparación, no puede compararse con el marxismo, ni con el socialismo utópico, ni con la Unión Soviética, ni

contra la oligarquía venezolana. Representa a la revolución. Además de esto, la emancipación que sería socialismo y revolución, se le unen pensamientos, la acción, la actitud, de Cristo, para buscar el bien común. El bien común se sustenta en el amor al prójimo y en la buena voluntad. Y nos vamos dando cuenta que el socialismo del siglo 21 tiene un rasgo que lo caracteriza de lo demás, que esta sustentado en la espiritualidad del ser. Y le sumamos entonces lo que podría sintetizar a la rebeldía, al marxismo, al socialismo utópico: el Che. ¿Que es el Che? Ética, la nueva ética del ser, la nueva moral, un nuevo ser. El Che es la lucha imperecedera contra la injusticia.

Pero además de los orígenes inspiradores, se le incorporar los elementos culturales propios como nación. La característica de negritud que llevamos los venezolanos, y todo el mestizaje, consecuencia de la conquista, las practicas culturales que se derivan de esa nueva mezcla. Pero además de estos elementos culturales, ahí las nuevas tendencias en el pensamiento universal, y se le agregan los factores espirituales, que definen una nueva posición ante el mundo y la vida. Este proceso constante, permanente, genera el socialismo del siglo 21, en construcción. Y lo vemos de esta manera, aquí tuviéramos la primera respuesta. ¿Que es el Socialismo del Siglo 21?

continuado en la página 7



Manifestación pro-Chávez en Caracas.

Y respondemos, es la continuidad del proyecto del Libertador Simón Bolívar. Pero también podemos decir, es la emancipación plena del pueblo. Allí tenemos un primer concepto sencillo, fácil de decir. Pero además podríamos complementarlo, tomando de Cristo, es la búsqueda del bien común del pueblo. Pero además podríamos decir como el Che lo manifestó. ¿Qué es el Socialismo del Siglo 21? Es el fomento de la ética del individuo, para fortalecer la moral del hombre nuevo. Pero también podemos tomar del propio Hugo Chávez, por su postura en el mundo. ¿Qué es el Socialismo del Siglo 21? Es la conciencia antiimperialista, Podríamos tener, entonces, una primera aproximación, para darle un concepto mas acabado.

Esta fuente de inspiración, Cristo, Bolívar, El Che, Hugo Chávez, de estos combinados, podemos entonces extraer los tres componentes fundamentales del Socialismo del Siglo 21. El primero, y más importante, la raíz que sostiene el modelo, el bien común; segundo, la producción social; tercero, la participación directa. Y esto entonces combinado nos puede producir este concepto. Sistemas, ya que requiere que sus componentes, actúen de manera equilibrada. Y podríamos decirlo así: sistema político-económico y social-cultural, de fundamentos humanistas, basado en el bien común, la producción social, la participación directa del colectivo en las decisiones que involucran el destino y prosperidad de la nación. De ahí hay que teorizarlo mucho más, por supuesto.

Si ustedes me han seguido, dijimos que hay un proceso en la elaboración del Socialismo del Siglo 21. Por ejemplo la producción social hay que teorizar mucho más, y como justificar el estadio que alcanzar que sería el capital igual que el trabajo, porque más adelante tenemos que llegar a que el trabajo impone las relaciones

en esta fase hay dos grandes sectores, que la revolución tiene que asumir de frente, batiendo todas las adversidades, que son muchas, entre ellas la insistencia del imperio de desestabilizar el proceso. En Venezuela ahora operan todas las agencias de inteligencia de los Estados Unidos, la CIA, la Agencia Nacional de Seguridad, la Agencia de Inteligencia del Comando Estratégico del Sur, el Comando Militar que tiene actualmente tres planes contra América Latina, permítanme enumerarlos, por si ustedes no los sabían, porque lo mejor no se tiene la vibración de lo que significa el imperio, probablemente porque ustedes están dentro del imperio, pero hay tres planes militares bien definidos, Comando Estratégico del Sur; el elemento de las Fuerzas Militares Norteamericanas para ejecutarlo; el primer Plan Pueblo-Panamá, que se va desde México hasta Panamá; control de lo que se llama el corredor Mesoamericano, que es desde México hasta Centroamérica, por su riqueza, y biodiversidad. Además el Plan Colombia, y el Plan Colombia tiene una parte que se llama el Plan Venezuela, y el Plan Dignidad, que el objetivo de Plan Dignidad es la búsqueda de controlar todo lo que es la Amazonia. Y entonces aun ante eso planes militares, el propósito del gobierno es fortalecer lo social, y lo político, y tiene que ver con la traslación, y con el cambio de estructura.

En lo social, esta dirigido a fortalecer las misiones. Las misiones son programas que están dirigidos a incluir a la población excluida por el anterior sistema. En el área de salud, educación, y alimentación, principalmente. De ahí tenemos la misión Barrio Adentro, que es salud, gratuita, a toda la población que la necesita, incluyendo los cerros, los sectores marginales, con distintas etapas, estamos horita en la construcción, y se han bautizado, múltiples centros de diagnóstico general, equipados con alta tecnología, para referir al que no puede

pagarse operación de cáncer o niños que nacen con algo congénito. Se le garantiza no solamente, la atención, sino la operación si fuera necesario, la continuidad el seguimiento, y la medicina. El producto nuestro que viene del petróleo, y vamos a señalar que Venezuela tiene las reservas de petróleo más grandes del mundo, y se están descubriendo nuevos yacimientos, y [tambien] de gas, el lunes empieza una Cumbre Energética en Caracas, para establecer un poco la unión Latinoamericana de los países, y favorecerse del petróleo. Se han descubiertos nuevos yacimientos de gas, que [significa que] del quinto lugar, Venezuela puede ocupar el segundo lugar. Incluso ahora se esta construyendo el gaseoducto caribeño, un programa en conjunto con Colombia, para llevar el gas por el pacifico y acercarlo al Asia.

La importancia del Asia para la pluripolaridad, de allí la alianzas que se están haciendo con Irán, alianza estrecha, identificación plena con los gobiernos revolucionarios, y con China, India, y Rusia, ustedes saben que Rusia es de Europa pero también es de Asia, de hecho se han adquirido varios nuevos sistemas de armas de Rusia, con la particularidad, que todas las alianzas que se están haciendo con todos los países del mundo, establecen en su cláusula, transferencia de tecnología.

Pero les digo todo esto porque del petróleo es que están saliendo las misiones. Lo que se extraía del petróleo, la riqueza que se generaba anteriormente, no iba para el pueblo, enriquecía a las grandes corporaciones transnacionales, y a los grupos elite que manejaban a la sociedad, del petróleo se están elaborando, construyendo, todas las misiones. Como a través de la red de Mercal, los mercados del pueblo, romper las roscas que controlan los alimentos. Venezuela además de

petróleo es rico en peces, sin embargo el pescado no constituye un alimento de la dieta diaria, porque lo controla también las roscas, y la comercialización del pescado, afecta el precio, que es imposible pagarlo. Romper las roscas significa primer paso, darle conciencia a las comunidades pesqueras, de conocer esto y por supuesto mucho más.

De ahí salen las misiones, como la Misión Ribas, donde se ensaña a leer y escribir, continúan con primaria, continúan con la educación secundaria, y además de eso van a la universidad. Como nunca antes hay una matrícula escolar, por la vía de los programas y las misiones. Hay un caso de un indígena Guayu de la Guajira venezolana, cuyo nombre es Aurelio, de 75 años, llevo a su nieto a aprender a leer y escribir, y el se quedo también allí. Aurelio aprendió a leer y escribir, paso a la misión Ribas, paso a la misión Sucre, hoy en día no solamente alcanzo su grado universitario, sino que se le descubrió un talento a Aurelio. Ahora es un gran genio de la guitarra, ahora compone música, es un maestro de la guitarra. Y usted oye tocando a Aurelio, y le ve su rostro indígena y no lo cree, pero usted cierra los ojos y escucha esa melodía. Es como de un maestro europeo, ese es Aurelio, próximo ha cumplir los 80 años. Gracias a las misiones se le descubrió un talento que de otra manera hubiera muerto. Entonces las misiones también cumplen eso, descubren el talento del pueblo. Ahí en el pueblo esta la riqueza de Socialismo de Siglo 21. Y hay un propósito, en los próximos cuatro años, disminuir un 30% la pobreza.

Además los cinco motores, estimulan al revolucionario, y lo llevan al revolucionario a que se identifique con el proceso. Porque hay también el falso revolucionario, que se metió en las filas de la revolución con la cultura heredada de la Cuarta Republica, de la Reforma, y se viste de rojo, ese color que simboliza la revolución, pero su corazón no

es revolucionario, es simplemente cúpula, y esta allí para mantener el poder. Y hay muchos que todavía están metidos en el poder, que no son revolucionarios. Una primera oleada de expurgación, hace cinco años con el golpe de estado pero hay unos que todavía están allí mimetizados, pronto tiene que haber otra sacudida, porque vamos hacia la centrifugadora, el revolucionario convertido en centrifugadora.

¿Y que significa la centrifugadora?

La centrifugadora significa, el revolucionario se convierte en engranaje de estos cinco motores, que es la rueda grande. Y tiene que empujar, contribuir a mover esos cinco motores, generando acciones para elevar la conciencia, y transferir el poder a la comunidad organizada. Tenemos, por ejemplo, como esto tiene que ver con el cambio de estructura, y el revolucionario inicia la traslación, buscando el cambio en las relaciones de poder, en relaciones sociales, y en las relaciones de producción. Por eso es importante señalar, como la nueva estructura que se esta componiendo, el Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV), que tiene que ver con la extensión del cambio político, las dos áreas grandes del proceso, lo político y lo

social. Y lo político demanda una nueva estructura: Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela. Que dentro del concepto de la revolución, cambio de paradigma, el partido como concepto, como categoría política, tiene que cambiar. Los partidos en todo el mundo tienen un rasgo clientelar. Los partidos, incluyendo los partidos de izquierda, son clientelares, inclusive los de Europa. Es mas yo creo que inclusive en Europa hoy no existe un partido revolucionario, han sidos sumidos por el status quo, se han incorporado a lo establecido, han perdido la pasión y la lucha por los excluidos, estás son estructuras netamente clientelares, inclusive las que están en Venezuela, y para avanzar en el proceso revolucionario, se requiere que esta estructura el PSUV cambien también de paradigmas. Y no es manejar el pueblo para mantenerse en el poder, es transformarse en instrumento del pueblo. ¿Y que va hacer como instrumento del pueblo? Instrumento político para contribuir a la emancipación del Pueblo. Esta es una discusión que se esta dando en Venezuela actualmente, y los partidos que apoyan al proceso revolucionario, que de alguna manera han conseguido votos, incluyendo el Partido Comunista, no quieren incorporarse el PSUV. Están apelando a la diversidad del pensamiento, pero no están metidos dentro del marco conceptual, del proceso revolucionario venezolano. Porque si están metidos dentro de la dimensión revolucionaria, tienen que entender que lo más importante no son los votos, o ser el líder, porque quiere ser gobernador, eso no es importante, lo importante es la esencia, el marco conceptual de la revolución. ¿Y cual es el marco conceptual? El poder popular. Toda estructura que se crea tiene que estar relacionada con lo que significa la transferencia de toma de decisiones a la comunidad organizada. Si no lo hacen dentro de ese marco conceptual, permítanme hacer este juicio de valor: no son revolucionarios. En Venezuela

estamos en un momento en el que hay que desprenderse de las posiciones personalistas, hay que irnos al marco conceptual de la revolución. Por eso este instrumento creado por el presidente,

continuado en la página 8





## A TALK BY WILLIAM IZARRA A CENTRAL LEADER OF THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION

# OUR REVOLUTION IS THE INSTRUMENT OF THE PEOPLE

Translation  
By Esteban González Arteaga

William Izarra is Venezuela's former deputy minister for foreign relations in the Middle East, Asia and Oceania. Commander Izarra was a central military and political leader in the armed forces led by Chavez before Chavez was first elected President of Venezuela. Izarra is presently a policy maker for the Chavez government, as well as the national director of the Centers for Ideological Formation (CFIs). He is a central leader of Bolivarian Revolution and is a veteran Marxist. He was recently on a tour on the importance of 21st Century Socialism in Vancouver and Victoria, initiated and organized by Bolivarian Society of Vancouver. Below is a copy edit of the complete speech which he gave in the SFU Harbour Centre in Vancouver. Subtitles are by Fire This Time.

Good Evening...These are didactic conferences, meant to stimulate revolutionary consciousness in Venezuela...We have called this presentation The Revolutionary Transition en Change of Structure...on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January of this year when President Chavez is sworn in for his second presidential term, that indicates the beginning of the revolutionary transition. And to make it clear for those of you who do not have a clear understanding of what the revolutionary process is we are going to divide this period in Reform and Revolution. Reform previous to 1999, the form of government of which is characterized by a pyramid, the power is concentrated in the highest strata, the vertices of the pyramid, this higher strata becomes an elite, and this generates an asymmetrical balance of power...it is characterized by the appropriation of power. So the Reform is characterized by exclusion. The foundations of the Reform are the laws of commerce. When in '99

Hugo Chavez gains the presidency of the republic the revolutionary process begins...it begins like a ladder...the propose of which is to invert the pyramid, and that power of the power of the elites at the top must pass to be the power of the base. Where the intention is that the Citizen's Assembly becomes the highest body of power. This is a sort of methodology of the revolutionary process, which can be a reference for other countries on the continent the take on the revolutionary process.

### USING ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR REVOLUTIONARY GOAL

As a methodology we could say there are many steps. To take on elections as a revolutionary act...In the year 1997 there is a paradigm shift, in terms of how to carry out a revolution. Up until that year revolution was carried out through violent means. But starting in the year 1997 there is a shift in the moment the electoral path is taken to make a revolution. The

Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement 200 (MBR200) establishes this. To make it clear for those who might not know, MBR200 is a political movement that is born in the midst of the armed forces. And carries out its first revolutionary action in 1992 with Hugo Chavez, the February Coup. MBR200 decides in the year 1997 to participate in the elections of 1998, so the revolution is not carried out through violent means, and it is established as a new paradigm. That the MBR200 through the Fifth Republic Movement is the structure that wins the election, and for that reason, Hugo Chavez is taken to the presidential palace.

The second step is the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, will make the following political clarification, an assembly constituted by delegates is not the same as a Constituent Assembly. The reason for being of the Constituent Assembly and that is the third step, to

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que esta en proceso de evaluación, esta en un proceso de búsqueda de sus integrantes, donde aparece ahora el concepto de vocero, y el vocero no manda, manda la asamblea, el vocero simplemente lleva la voz, y dice lo que le diga la asamblea. Esta es una conducta que rompe paradigmas también. Y los que están acostumbrados a mantener el poder, y no tomar en cuenta el pueblo, por supuesto que le huyen a esto, de allí la importancia de que quien no se identifique con la esencia del marco conceptual revolucionario, aunque se llame Partido Comunista, esta asumiendo actitudes contrarrevolucionarias.

Por otro lado también tenemos el cambio de estructura al nivel de estado, el estado social comunal. El estado actual es aún un estado reformista, por lo tanto hay que eliminar toda esa estructura, como es, la alcaldía, las gobernaciones, los consejos municipales. Todas estas son estructuras reformistas...y hay que cambiarlas...y que buscar expresiones, que las tiene la propia constitución, más las nuevas que están apareciendo, como consecuencia de la acción directa del pueblo. Por ejemplo ahí tenemos a los consejos comunales, una estructura donde allí tiene la oportunidad del

ejercicio del pueblo en lo que se llama la democracia directa. La Asamblea Ciudadana que es la primera instancia del poder. La Contraloría Social, el control directamente del pueblo en la acción política. Los cabildos abiertos revisión de cuentas al publico, estas son las estructuras que tienen que sustituir el estado reformista actual.

También cambio de estructura al nivel de las Fuerzas Armadas, las fuerzas armadas revolucionarias, cambio al nivel de la doctrina. La doctrina ustedes ya saben es el conjunto de principios para operar los

equipos, siguiendo un concepto operativo. Cambio a la doctrina, hay que reconocer que todas las fuerzas de Latinoamérica... fueron formados bajo concepto operario de los Estados Unidos. La doctrina de seguridad prevaleciente, hasta la caída del Muro de Berlín, estaba enfocada en contra del comunismo y en contra de la subversión, de después de la caída del Muro de Berlín, como desaparece ese enemigo que era el comunismo, el enemigo pasa a ser la masa, el pueblo, y por lo tanto sigue sus conceptos, persiguiendo al los movimientos nacionalistas. Y lo que consideran para ellos una

amenaza asimétrica, la conciencia del pueblo. La conciencia del pueblo es para los Estados Unidos una amenaza asimétrica. Todo eso tiene que ver con la nueva doctrina para las Fuerzas Armadas de Venezuela, que es la unión del pueblo y Fuerza Armada. También cambio de estructura al nivel de tecnología. Es el dominio de la tecnología que esta llegando, y la creación de la ciencia militar. Y al nivel de la nueva cultura de militar, que se identifica con el eslogan 'Socialismo, Patria, o Muerte'

Entonces el poder, contra la reforma, que es la cúpula, el poder apunta a las decisiones directas del pueblo... la revolución ya estas dirigidas a la construcción de poder al nivel de la comunidad organizada. Entonces lo que tenemos es la síntesis de que este proceso revolucionario en las dos áreas actuales donde se inicia la etapa de traslación, lo social, reforzar las misiones y los programas especiales para las comunidades, y en lo político, en el cambio de las estructuras a nivel

de toda la composición de una sociedad para alcanzar el bien común... esto es lo que traduce el proceso actual...para que puedan sentir la pasión, la pasión como virtud, para poder señalar su identificación plena con un proceso que no es materialista, es un proceso sustentado en la espiritualidad. El apoyo que le dio Hugo Chávez a Bolivia y los 15 millones de dólares, fueron cuestionados por la oposición, porque el marco referente de la oposición, no esta sustentado en la espiritualidad, lo esta en orden material de la vida. Y se queda señalando 'son 15 millones que se están perdiendo, cuando lo requerimos para resolver nuestros problemas de la pobreza.' No pueden entender el marco de la revolución, que se sustenta en la espiritualidad, y la solidaridad es algo netamente espiritual. Ojalá ustedes puedan de alguna manera seguir el proceso Bolivariano Venezolano, estudiarlo más. Y servirle aquí en Vancouver, ser un factor que desmonte la manipulación de los medios de comunicación internacionales sobre el proceso revolucionario y específicamente Hugo Chávez. El mayor numero de ustedes que se identifiquen con el proceso, y se conviertan en voceros, y que le digan al pueblo Canadiense... lo que esta sucediendo de verdad en Venezuela esa es una de las mejores formas de ayudar al pueblo Venezolano...convertirse en voz del proceso Venezolano... Saludos y agradecimientos por haber asistido.



create a National Constitution.

And once the new constitution is established, we begin the change of structure. At what level? At the level of social relations, power relations, and relations of production. This is the sequence that is being followed in countries guided by the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

#### TRANSITIONAL STAGES

Where does this take us? It takes us to a change of structure, that is the most important, it is the essence of the revolution... When it is decided to go to elections we break a paradigm, because up to this point revolutions were carried out violently. And paradigms... are referred to at the theoretical level, generating a new ideology that is the Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. There is also a breaking of paradigms at the level of practice, the creation of a new state. As the regulating body of the collective of society, in Venezuela we are going towards the construction of a social-communal state. To break the paradigm of the bureaucratic state, of representative democracy based on capitalism and the laws of the market.

These paradigms take us to define what we could call a model to interpret the revolutionary process. And as a process it is the summation of moments, the sum of moments constitutes phases. A group of phases constitute stages. And the whole of the stages is the process. We apply this model

to reality. An we have a ladder with let's say twenty steps, the revolutionary process is in the third, we have gone through two phases, and one stage already surpassed... The transitional stage began the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, the second term of President Chavez... The revolutionary Bolivarian process, still a child, still has to go through many stages and phases, that being similar to the development of a biological being, will transform into an adult, but for now it is a child. And that is what the revolution searches for, at the top, the last step, the common good.

We identify then, the transitional stage, in the following manner. The transitional stage consists in turning the representative power of the elites in popular power. To turn the Citizen's Assembly, in what will become the base of the inverted pyramid. And we define the transitional stage as the transference of power to the organized communities. It identifies the moment in which the president takes oath, and decrees the five motors, as the beginning of the transition. The motors are political activities, directed towards transferring power to organized communities. And those motors are directed towards Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

#### SOCIALISM OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

We ask ourselves. Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Breaking of

paradigms? What is Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? We can have two types of concepts. One concept is within colloquial parameters, ordinary conversation. Day to day language, dialog, we could call this one type of concept, to immediately define socialism. But we can also elaborate, conceptualize, with scientific bases, and we will do it in the briefest way possible. What is Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? We would have to go to the roots, to understand this new universal parameter. Which has no comparison; it cannot be compared to Marxism, or with utopian socialism, or with the Soviet Union, or with Vietnam, or with China, or with Cuba. Brotherhood, alliances, and fraternity with these countries, but there political models are distinct... The inspirational foundation... has to do with three thinkers and great men, geniuses, like Bolivar, each one of them has his significance establishing the origins of this process. Simon Bolivar, what is the synthesis of the thinking of Simon Bolivar: emancipation. To break any relation of dependency. Emancipation is total freedom. Simon Rodriguez, Bolivar's teacher, socialism already by the half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we had a socialist who was Simon Rodriguez, and he transmitted his ideas to the Liberator. There we have Ezquiel Zamora in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he revolutionizes breaking ground against the oligarchy. He represents revolution. Apart from this, to the emancipation

that would be socialism and revolution we add the thought, the action, the attitude, of Christ, in the search for the common good. Common Good is based on the love of one's fellow and good will. And we begin to see that Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has a feature that separates it from the rest, that it is sustained on the spirituality of the being. And we add what could bring together rebellion, Marxism, utopian socialism: El Che. What is El Che? The new ethic of being, a new morality, a new being, El Che is the undying struggle against injustice.

Apart from the inspirational foundations are incorporated the nation's own cultural elements: the African characteristics that Venezuelans have, and all the mixing, a consequence of the conquest, and the cultural practices that are derived from this mix. But apart from these cultural elements, there are many new tendencies in universal thought, and we add spiritual factors, that define a new position towards life and the world. This constant and permanent process generates Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, in construction. If we look at it this way we have our first answer. What is Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? We respond it is the continuation of the project of the Liberator Simon Bolivar. We can also say, it is the total emancipation of the people. There we have our first simple concept, easy to say. But we could complement it; taking

from Christ, it is the search for the common good. But we could also say like El Che manifested. What is Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? It is the strengthening of the ethic of the individual, to strengthen the morality of the new man. But we could also take from Hugo Chavez himself, from his international position. What is Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?



It is anti-imperialist conscience. We could have an approximation to give a more finished concept.

#### THE SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

The sources of inspiration, Christ, Bolivar, El Che, Hugo Chavez, if we combine these, we

can the extract the fundamental components of Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The first and the most important, the common good, the root that feeds the process. Second, social production. Third, direct participation. If we combine these we can produce this concept. Systems that require that their components work in a coordinated manner. We could say it this way: political-economic and social-cultural system, with a humanist basis, based on the common good, social production, the direct participation of the collective in the decisions that involve the destiny and prosperity of the nation. This has to be theorized further of course.

If you have followed me, we have said the Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a process in construction. For example social production must still be theorized further; how to justify the state where capital equals work, because further on we have to get to the stage where work imposes conditions on capital, which would be to invert the current pyramid. Like you already know capital imposes conditions on labor.

All this conceptualization of the state, society and its organic structure, must be at the service of the common good of the people. One example to talk about common good: in Venezuela there are still extremely poor sectors. The hill around Caracas, which are a structural problem of

poverty.

#### COMMON GOOD

We have an example for common good, how is it that beer reaches the hill... one brand named Polar, this Polar beer is conspirator, it participated in the coup five years ago, and it still continues to try to destabilize the process... we can see the trucks that go up to the hill. We have to ask ourselves:

Why does the beer go up to the hill? And this is the response: to increase its sales, maximize profits. The fundamental and basic law: accumulation. Polar beer does not go up to fix the problems of the community... but, as well, doctors also go up to the hills through one of the

principal missions, which is Barrio Adentro. The doctor also goes up to the hills. Why does the doctor go to the hills? The doctor goes to give attention, affection and solidarity. The doctor lives with the community in the hill, he generates expectations, hope. And that's why we continue to form the doctor battalions, one of the most important programs of the revolutionary process. We have that comparison. Polar beer is a pragmatic and materialistic act, based on the laws of the market, capitalism. The doctor goes up to hills as a human and spiritual act, he is moved by the common good, that is socialism.

#### THE EMPIRE

Here we have President Chavez, in this phase there are two big sectors, that the revolution must take head on, surpassing all adversities, which are many, among them the insistence of the empire of destabilizing the process. Today there are two U.S. intelligence agencies operating in Venezuela, the CIA, the National Security Agency, the Strategic Command Agency for South America, the military command that currently has three plans against Latin America, let me list them, in case you don't know them, because perhaps you don't have an understanding of what the empire means, probably because you are in the empire, but there are three well defined plans, the Strategic Command of the South, the U.S. Military Forces capable of

carrying it out, the first Puebla-Panama Plan, that goes from Mexico to Panama, control of what is called the Mesoamerican corridor, because of its resource and biodiversity. As well, Plan Colombia, and Plan Colombia has a part named Plan Venezuela, and Plan Dignity, which has as its objective the control of the Amazon. And despite these

military plans, the goal of the government to strengthen the social, and political, that has to do with transition, and the change of structure.

#### THE MISSIONS

Socially, this is directed towards strengthening the missions. The

missions are the programs that are directed to include the people excluded by the previous system. In the areas of health, education, and nutrition principally. From there we have Barrio Adentro, which is health, free, to all the people who need it, including the hills, the marginalized sectors, through different stages, we are right now building and christening, many general diagnostic centers, equipped with advanced technology, to refer there people who can not pay for an operation for cancer or for a child born with a disability. Not only are they guaranteed attention, but also the operation if necessary, follow up, and medication. Our product comes from oil, and let's point out that Venezuela possesses the largest oil reserves in the world, and there are new reserves being discovered, Monday begins a new Energy Summit in Caracas, to begin to establish the union of Latin-American countries, and to take advantage of the oil. New gas reserves have been discovered which [means that] from the fifth place; Venezuela will occupy the second place. Today the Caribbean gas pipe is being built, a project in unison with Colombia, to take gas to the Pacific and bring it closer to Asia.

The importance of Asia for polypolarity, that's why there are alliances with Iran, a broad alliance, total identification with

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revolutionary governments, and with China, India, and Russia, as you know Russia is part of Europe but also part of Asia, in fact various weapon systems have been acquired from Russia, with the particularity, that all the alliances that are being made with the countries of the world, establish as a clause, the transference of technology.

I say all of this because it is from oil that all these missions are coming from. What was extracted from oil, the wealth that it generated previously, did not go to the people. It benefited the big multinational corporations, and the elite group that managed society; from the oil we are building, constructing all the missions. The network of Mercal, the markets of the people, will be breaking the monopolies that controlled food. Venezuela aside from oil is also rich in fish, nonetheless fish does not constitute an item of daily consumption, because it is also controlled by monopolies, and the commercialization of fish affects the price, which is impossible to pay. Breaking the monopolies is the first step, to generate conscience in the fishing communities, to know of this, and of course much more.

That's where the missions come from, like Mision Ribas, where reading and writing is taught, it continues with primary education, then on to secondary, and including going to university. There has never been such a number of inscriptions for school,

the revolution, and make the revolutionary identify with the process. Because there are also false revolutionaries, who went into the ranks of the revolution with culture borrowed from the Fourth republic, of the Reform, and wear red, the color that symbolizes revolution, but his heart is not revolutionary, he is only an elite, and is there to maintain power. And there are many who are still have power, who are not revolutionary. There was a wave of purges, five years ago after the coup d'etat but there are those still incognito, soon they will be shaken of, because we are going into the centrifuge, the revolutionary converted into centrifuge. What does centrifuge mean?

Centrifuge means the revolutionary become a cog of the five motors, which is the big wheel. And has to push, contribute to move the five motors, generating actions to elevate conscience and transfer power to the organized communities. We have for, example, how this contributes to the change of structure, and the revolutionary begins the transition, looking for a shift in the power relations, social relations, and production relations. That's why it is important to point out the new structure that is being created, The United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) that has to do with the extension of the political change. The two major areas of the process: political and social. The political demands a new structure: United Socialist Party of Venezuela.

this through the programs and missions. There is the case of an Indigenous man of the Guayu of the Venezuelan Guajira, whose name was Aurelio, of 75 years. He took his grandchild to learn to read and write, and he stayed there too. Aureliano learned to read and write, he went on to Mision Ribas, he went to Mision Sucre, today not only does he have his university degree, but also a talent was discovered in Aurelio. Now he is a genius with the guitar, he composes music; he is a master with the guitar. And you hear him play and you look at his indigenous face and you don't believe it, but you close your eyes and you listen to the melody. It is like a European master, that's Aureliano, about to turn 80. Thanks to the missions a talent was discovered that otherwise would have died. So the missions also accomplish this, they discover the talent of the people. There in the people is the richness of the Socialism of the 21st Century. A there is a goal, to reduce poverty by 30% in the next four years.

UNITED SOCIALIST PARTY OF VENEZUELA

Apart from the five motors of the revolution, which stimulate

Within the framework of the revolution, change of paradigm, the party as concept, as a political category, has to change. The parties of the entire world are clients in character. The parties, including those on the left, are clients, even in



Europe. Moreover, I believe that in Europe there doesn't exist a single revolutionary party, they have been subdued into the status quo, they have incorporated themselves into the establishment, they have lost their passion, the struggle for the marginalized, these are completely client structures, even those in Venezuela. And to advance the revolutionary process it is required that this structure, the PSUV, changes

paradigms. And it is not to manipulate the people to stay in power; it is to transform itself into an instrument of the people. And what will it do as an instrument of the people? A political instrument to contribute to the emancipation of the people. This is a discussion in Venezuela today, the parties that support

importance that those who do not identify themselves with the revolutionary framework, be they called Communist Party, are representing counterrevolutionary attitudes.

CHANGES OF STRUCTURE

On the other side we also have change of structure at the state

change of structure at the level of technology. The mastering of the technology that arrives, and the creation of military science. And the new culture of the soldier that can be identified with the slogan "Socialism, Motherland, or Death"

Then the power, against the reform, which is the elite, power,



Rally outside Miraflores Palace on April 14, 2007, the anniversary of the failed coup against Chavez.

the revolutionary process, that somehow have gotten votes, including the Communist Party, do not want to join the PSUV. They are appealing to diversity of expression, but they are not within the conceptual framework of the revolutionary Venezuelan process. Because if they are in the

level, the social-communal state. The current state is a reformist state, therefore these structures have to be eliminated, all those structures, the mayors, the governorships, the municipal council. All these are reformist structures; we must change them...we must look for

is aimed towards the direct decisions of the people... the revolution is already directed to the construction of power at the level of organized communities. So then we have an overview of what the revolutionary process is in the two areas where the transitional stage is beginning, the

revolutionary framework they have to understand that the most important thing is not votes, or to be a leader, because he wants to be governor, that is not important, what is important is the essence of the revolution. And what is the conceptual framework? Popular power. Every structure that is created has to be oriented towards the transference of power to the organized community. If they are not doing it within the conceptual framework let me make this value judgment: they are not revolutionaries. In Venezuela we are at a moment when we most detach ourselves from personalized policies, and we must go to the conceptual framework of the revolution. That's why this instrument created by the president, that is in a process of evaluation, that is in a process of looking for members, where the concept of the spokesperson appears, the spokesperson does not rule, the assembly rules, the spokesperson simply carries the message, he says what the assembly tells him to say. This conduct also shatters paradigms. And those who are accustomed to maintain power, and not to take the people into account, of course they flee from this, from there come the

expressions, which are in the very constitution, plus the ones that are appearing, as a direct result of the action of the people. For example we have the Communal Councils, a structure where the people can exercise what is known as direct democracy. The Citizen's Assembly, which is the highest body of power. The Social Controller, the direct control of the people of political action. Open and public accounting, these are the structures which must replace the present reformist state.

Also changes of structure in the armed forces, revolutionary armed forces, change of doctrine. Doctrine, as you already know, is a set of principals through which a team is operated, following an operational concept. Change of doctrine, we must recognize that all the armed forces of Latin America...were formed under the operational concept of the U.S. The dominating security doctrine until the fall of the Berlin Wall, was focus against communism and subversion, from the Fall of the Berlin Wall because the enemy, communism, disappears, the enemy become the masses, the people, and for this reason they continue with the same concept, and begin to attack nationalist movements. The United States considers the conscience of the people to be an asymmetric threat. All of this has to do with the new doctrine of the Venezuelan armed forces, that is the union of the people and the armed forces. Also

social, to strengthen the missions and the special programs for the communities, and in the political, the change of structures in order to change the composition of society to reach the common good...this is a translation of the actual process...so that you can feel the passion, passion as a virtue, to begin the process of total identification with a process that is not materialist, it is a process sustained in spirituality. The support that Hugo Chavez gave to Bolivia and the 15 million dollars, were challenged by the opposition, because the framework of the opposition, is not based on spirituality, but on the material order of life. And they are left pointing out: "those 15 million are being lost, when we need it to fix our poverty problems." They cannot understand the framework of the revolution, based on spirituality, and solidarity is something completely spiritual. Hopefully you can in some way serve the Bolivarian Revolutionary process, study it more. And to work here in Vancouver, to expose the media manipulation against the revolutionary process, and specifically Hugo Chavez. The greater number of you who identify with the process, and become spokespeople, and tell the Canadian people...what is happening in Venezuela, is one of the best ways of aiding the Venezuelan people...to become a voice of the Venezuelan process...Greetings and thanks for coming.

# A Prejudiced Listener

By Manuel Yepe\*

*“What the Cubans are saying and doing today, other hungry people in Latin America are going to be saying and doing tomorrow.”*

- C. Wright Mills, 1960.

Forty-seven years ago, in 1960, a book published in the United States titled “Listen, Yankee” warned the government of that Nation about the great historical mistake it was committing in its policies towards Cuba due to its inability to understand the outreach and meaning of the Cuban revolution.

The worthiness of the warning derived from the fact that it came from one of the leading sociologists of the time in the US, Charles Wright Mills (1916-1962).

In January 1959, when the victory of the Cuban revolution took place, Wright Mills was already an outstanding scholar for his works *The Power Elite*; *White-collar* (*The American Middle Classes*) and *The Sociological Imagination*, among others. He was considered an acute analyst of the every-day life in the United States, whose sharp comments in

simulating a democratic debate. He was probably the first author in the United States stating that the overflow of information does not favor communication but, on the contrary, creates a real problem of assimilation.

It was acknowledged that C. W. Mills had an amazing sense of anticipation in his analysis, which validated his sociological arguments. The soundness of this assessment is confirmed by his book *Listen, Yankee* at the light of the present situation in Latin America.

Three and a half days of conversations with the then Prime Minister Fidel Castro and five or six more days with the delegate of the National Institute for the Agrarian Reform, Rene Vallejo, as well as interviews with many other Cuban leaders and a number of peasants, workers, students and house wives, in August 1960 supplied the arguments in the book.

The readers of this book find as its conductive axle a warning to the American society, rather than to the American government, that the Cuban revolution might not simply be an isolated accident but the beginning of a succession of similar scenarios in the entire underdeveloped world, especially in Latin America.

Caribbean. The Caribbean is not a North American lake. All that, that’s over.”

Wright Mills reasons in the initial note to the reader that: “The voice of Cuba today is the voice of revolutionary euphoria. It is also an angry voice. I am trying to explain something of all this along with the Cubans’ reasons for it. For their reasons are not only theirs: they are the reasons of the entire hungry world.”

He shows an exact understanding of the Cuban political situation when he spells his mind about the electoral exigency promoted by US media and the internal counterrevolution which Washington was trying to oxygen. In his final note to the reader Wright Mills declares: “I share the view of every competent observer that in any election the victory of the fidelistas will be overwhelming. But what seems to me more relevant to the question is that no matter how elections were organized, and no matter

approved by all its citizens, as well as a self-developed electoral system, truly democratic and participative, very different from the US system, the ideas expressed in the book were confirmed: the US electoral model is not a valid paradigm for the underdeveloped countries.

Wright Mills clearly identifies the historical antecedents, economic roots and universal outreach of U.S. imperialism expressed in its Cuban policies when the Cuban revolutionary character

anticommunist. He had studied and written about Marxism, and evidently he felt attracted by the Cuban revolution. “Were I a Cuban, I have no doubt that I would be working with all my effort for the success of my revolution. But I am not a Cuban. I am a Yankee.”

And, as an American, he formulated a recommendation to the government of his country which he put in the words of the protagonist of his book: “You ought to use Cuba as The Case –The Case in which to establish the way you are going to act when there are revolutions in hungry countries everywhere in the world.”

Recently, Cuba was visited by



Rally in Havana, Cuba. Sign depicting torture by US troops in Abu Ghraib “In Cuba, it would never happen”

relevant publications frequently triggered harsh polemics. When analyzing the power structures, he warned about the degradation of democracy through the social control exercised by the oligarchies, the bureaucratization of industrial society and the techniques applied for the control of workers.

Wright Mills also studied the role played by the media by means of adulterating information and manipulating public opinion in order to profit the elites, while debasing the public scenario by

Wright Mills expresses an advice, by means of eight successive letters from the figurative Cuban revolutionary protagonist who, sometimes with arrogance, others with serenity, but always with pride, voices the feelings that the author gathered in our country a year and a half after the popular victory of January 1959.

In one of these eight letters, the Cuban revolutionary proclaims that “we Cubans are part of Latin America –not of North America-. Our history is not part of your history; it is part of the Latin America history. And Latin America is 180,000,000 people, growing faster than you are growing, and scattered over a territory more than twice as large as the U.S.A. Like all of Latin America, we’re fed up with what your corporations and what your governments do down here. They’ve dominated us long enough, we’ve said it to ourselves now. Your government supported Batista right up to the last minute of his gangster regime. But now Cuba is not just another island in the

how they may be supervised by an international agency, such a victory would be quite meaningless. To have meaningful elections it is necessary to have at least two political parties and it would be necessary for these parties to campaign on some range of issues. The only issue in Cuba today is the revolution, conceived by the Cuban government primarily as economic and educational construction and as military defense of Cuban sovereignty. Any party that campaigned today against the revolution and against the present Government’s management of it would probably be set upon by the majority of the people of Cuba. So I think it must be faced up to: a real election is an impossible and meaningless idea. It will only be made meaningful by deliberately giving institutional form to the counterrevolution, and that today would be unacceptable to the immense majority of the people of Cuba. The absence of elections signifies absence of democracy only on the formal assumption that the electoral process is at all times and in all places indispensable to democracy. But be that as it may, an election in Cuba is at the present time an impossible and meaningless demand.”

When, 15 years later, in 1975, Cuba institutionalized its major social and political revolutionary achievements in a new Constitution discussed and

states that “there cannot be peace –by which we mean real understanding- between North and South America as long as these Yankee corporations own the riches of our countries. Because with this kind of ownership goes the real control of the politics of our countries... That’s not ideology. That’s just a plain fact that we have lived in Cuba, and that most of Latin America is still living.”

However, in his own final observations, he prefers not to go so deep into the question and states that “the policies the United States has pursued and is still pursuing against Cuba are based upon a profound ignorance, and are shot through with hysteria.”

The shamelessly declared imperialist objective to bring democracy to Cuba was also rejected by the “Cuban revolutionary” created by Wright Mills 47 years ago when he says: “We don’t know what you mean by the word ‘democratic’ but if what we are doing isn’t democratic, then we don’t want democracy. And if you identify a free society with what you have in North America, please know that we don’t. We’ve tried that kind of political system in Cuba. Maybe it works for you –that’s your business; it certainly did not work for us.”

C. Wright Mills did not have a formal political militancy and he was neither a communist nor an

the famed U.S. writer Gore Vidal, accompanied by a group of other fellow citizens among who I recognized Saul Landau, an outstanding writer, political scientist, filmmaker and journalist who, being very young and already a bright intellectual, worked with Charles Wright Mills in the days of *Listen, Yankee* and he could have been the one who attracted Mills to the studies of the Cuban revolution.

At the beginning of 1960, they and many other excellent intellectuals in the United States created the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New York and not without serious risks to their lives, pronounced themselves against a policy that, as they foresaw and advised, would sink their country in dishonor.

Sadly, the message was never listened to.

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Havana, March 2007.

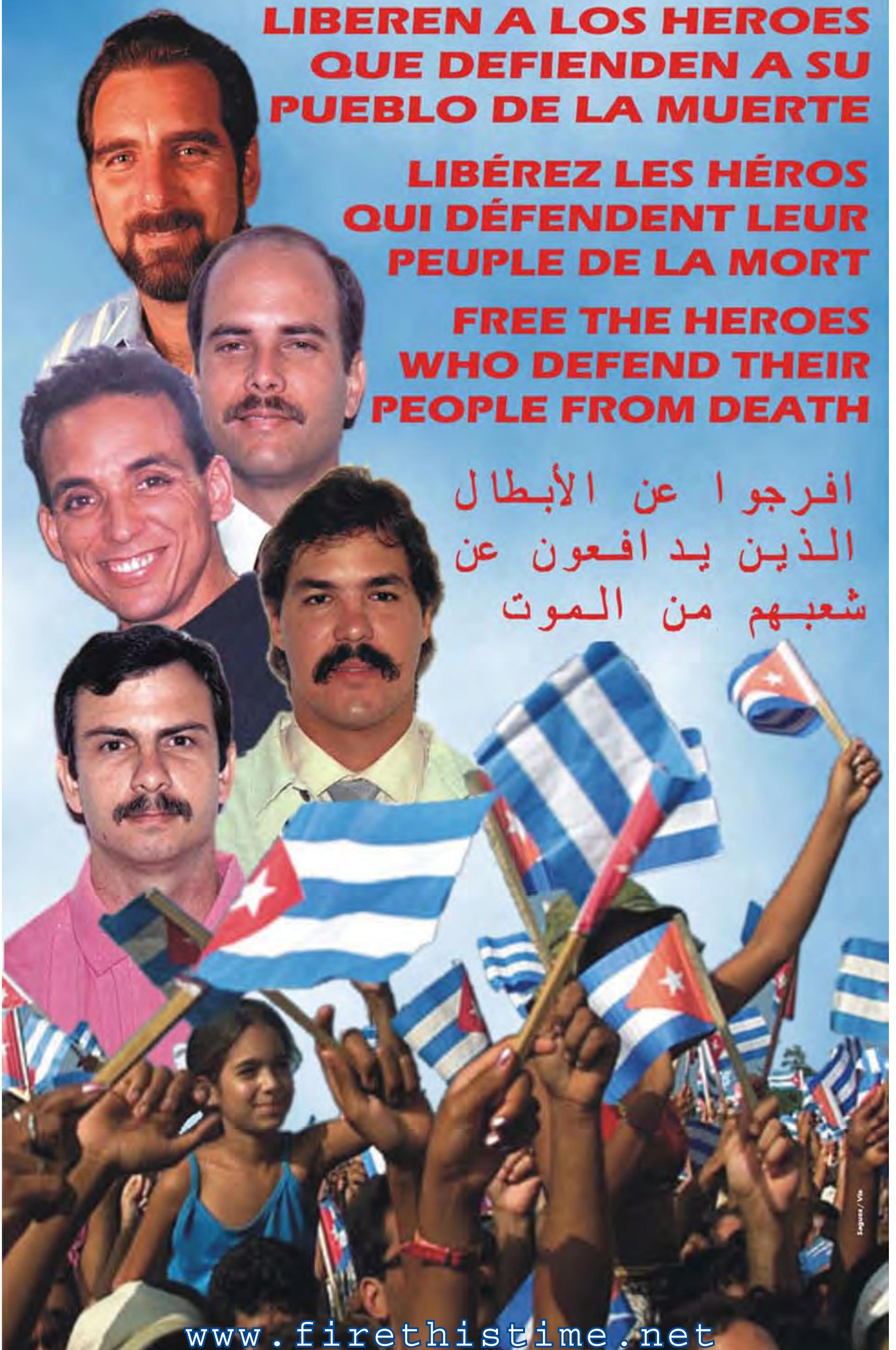


**LIBEREN A LOS HEROES  
QUE DEFIENDEN A SU  
PUEBLO DE LA MUERTE**

**LIBÉREZ LES HÉROS  
QUI DÉFENDENT LEUR  
PEUPLE DE LA MORT**

**FREE THE HEROES  
WHO DEFEND THEIR  
PEOPLE FROM DEATH**

افرجوا عن الأبطال  
الذين يدافعون عن  
شعبهم من الموت



# No Hay Peor Sordo

Por Manuel Yepe\*

*“Lo que los cubanos están diciendo y haciendo hoy, es lo que otros pueblos hambrientos de América Latina harán mañana.”*

C. Wright Mills, 1960.

Hace 47 años, en 1960, se publicó en los Estados Unidos de América un libro titulado Escucha, Yanqui (Listen, Yankee) que era toda una advertencia al gobierno de ese país y a su opinión pública acerca del monumental error histórico en el que comenzaban a incurrir por su incompreensión del alcance y contenido de la revolución cubana.

El valor mayor de la advertencia derivaba del hecho de que provenía de uno de los más importantes sociólogos estadounidenses de la época, Charles Wright Mills (1916-1962).

Cuando triunfa en Cuba la revolución el primero de enero de 1959, Wright Mills era ya célebre por sus obras La Elite del Poder (The Power Elite); Cuello Blanco: Las clases medias en Norteamérica (White-collar: The American Middle Classes) y La imaginación sociológica (The Sociological Imagination). Se le consideraba un agudo analista de la vida cotidiana en los Estados Unidos cuyas críticas desde las páginas de diversos diarios provocaban polémicas con frecuencia. Alertaba acerca de la degradación de la democracia y del control social ejercido por las oligarquías cuando analizaba las estructuras del poder real, la burocratización de la sociedad industrial y las técnicas destinadas al control de los

pero siempre con mucho orgullo, expresa los sentimientos que el autor apreció en nuestro país a solo un año y medio de la victoria popular de enero de 1959.

En una de sus ocho enjundiosas misivas, el “revolucionario cubano” proclama que “nosotros somos parte de América Latina, no de Norte América. Nuestra historia no es parte de la de ustedes, es parte de la historia de América Latina. Y América Latina tiene 180 millones de personas y crece más rápido que ustedes, y cubre un territorio que es más de dos veces mayor que el de ustedes. Como toda América Latina, estamos cansados de sus corporaciones y de lo que sus gobiernos hacen aquí. Ya nos han dominado bastante, así nos lo hemos propuesto. Su gobierno apoyó a Batista hasta el último minuto de su régimen gansteril. Pero ya Cuba no es una isla más en el Caribe. El Caribe no es ya un lago norteamericano. Todo eso, se acabó.”

De ahí que Wright Mills advierta en la Introducción: “La voz de Cuba hoy es la voz de la euforia revolucionaria. Es también una voz airada. Algo de esto quiero expresar junto con las razones cubanas para ello. Porque sus razones no son solo las de ellos: son las razones de todo el mundo hambreado.”

Wright Mills demuestra una cabal comprensión del momento político cubano cuando se pronuncia acerca de la exigencia de la convocatoria a elecciones que levantó la campaña mediática

trabajadores.

Wright Mills estudiaba también el papel de los medios de comunicación y la labor de adulteración y manipulación de la opinión pública que ejercen en beneficio de las élites, mientras distraen la escena pública con la simulación democrática del debate. Fue probablemente el primero en Estados Unidos en afirmar que la sobresaturación informativa no favorece la comunicación sino que, por el contrario, crea un real problema de asimilación.

De Wright Mills siempre se dijo que poseía un sorprendente sentido de anticipación en sus análisis, lo que aporta una notable vigencia en el tiempo a muchos de sus argumentos sociológicos.

Su obra “Listen, Yankee”, a la luz de la actual situación latinoamericana, es prueba fehaciente de esta última afirmación.

Tres y medio días de conversaciones con el entonces Primer Ministro Fidel Castro y cinco o seis días más con el delegado del Instituto Nacional de la Reforma Agraria en la provincia de Oriente, René Vallejo, amén de encuentros con muchos otros dirigentes cubanos y un buen número de campesinos, obreros, estudiantes, amas de casa, todo en el mes de agosto de 1960, argumentaron la obra.

Se percibe como eje conductor de este libro una advertencia a la sociedad estadounidense, más que al gobierno del país del autor, en el sentido de que la revolución cubana podría no ser un accidente aislado sino el inicio de una sucesión de similares escenarios en todo el mundo subdesarrollado y, en especial en Latinoamérica.

Wright Mills formula el consejo por intermedio de ocho cartas sucesivas de un figurado revolucionario cubano que, a veces con soberbia y otras con serenidad,



sería por ello impugnado por la mayoría del pueblo de Cuba. Así que pienso que debe verse el asunto así: una verdadera elección en Cuba es imposible y una idea sin sentido. Solo tendría sentido dándole deliberadamente forma institucional a la

contra Cuba promovida por los medios estadounidenses y la contrarrevolución interna que Estados Unidos trataba de oxigenar. Wright Mills declara en su comentario final: “Yo comparto la opinión de todo observador competente de que en cualquier elección la victoria de los fidelistas sería abrumadora. Pero lo que me parece más pertinente al asunto es que no importa cómo se organice la elección y no importa como ella sea supervisada por alguna agencia internacional, tal victoria carecería absolutamente de sentido. Para celebrar elecciones que tengan sentido, sería necesario tener como mínimo dos partidos políticos y que estos partidos hicieran campañas sobre una gama de asuntos. El único asunto en Cuba hoy es la revolución, concebida por el gobierno cubano básicamente como un proceso de construcción económica y educacional, así como de defensa militar de la soberanía de Cuba. Por eso, cualquier partido que hiciera campaña hoy contra la revolución y contra su presente gobierno,

contrarrevolución y eso hoy en día no sería aceptable para la inmensa mayoría del pueblo cubano. La ausencia de elecciones significa la “ausencia de democracia” solo en la suposición formal de que el proceso electoral es siempre y dondequiera indispensable para la democracia. Pero sea lo que sea, una elección en Cuba es una demanda imposible y sin sentido.”

Cuando 15 años más tarde, en 1975, Cuba institucionalizó los principales logros del período inicial de la revolución con una nueva Constitución e inauguró un sistema electoral propio, verdaderamente democrático y participativo, bien diferente al de los Estados Unidos, se confirmaron también otras ideas expresadas en el libro: la de que el modelo de proceso electoral estadounidense no constituía un ejemplo válido para los países pobres.

Wright Mills identifica con claridad los antecedentes históricos, la raíz económica y el alcance universal del imperialismo estadounidense que se expresan en la



política hacia Cuba del gobierno de su país, por ejemplo, cuando pone en boca del “revolucionario cubano” la afirmación de que “no puede haber paz —es decir, verdadero entendimiento— entre Norte y Suramérica mientras estas corporaciones yanquis sean dueñas de las riquezas de nuestros países (porque) la propiedad de nuestras riquezas significa el control de nuestras políticas. Esto no es ideología. Es simplemente un hecho concreto que hemos vivido en Cuba y que América Latina aún vive.”

Pero, en su propio comentario final, prefiere no hurgar tan profundo y declara que “las políticas que los Estados Unidos han perseguido y persiguen contra Cuba se basan en una profunda ignorancia y se ejecutan históricamente.”

El impudicamente declarado objetivo imperialista de llevar la democracia a Cuba era ya rechazado por el “revolucionario cubano” creado por Wright Mills hace 47 años cuando afirmaba: “Nosotros no sabemos lo que ustedes entienden por la palabra democracia, pero si lo que nosotros estamos haciendo no es democrático, entonces nosotros no queremos democracia. Y si lo que ustedes llaman sociedad libre es lo que ustedes tienen en Norteamérica, por favor sepan que nosotros, no lo creemos así. Nosotros probamos esa forma de sistema político en Cuba. Quizás funcione con ustedes, pero con nosotros, no.”

C. Wright Mills no tenía militancia política formal alguna y tampoco era comunista ni anticomunista. Había estudiado y escrito sobre el marxismo y, evidentemente, se sintió motivado por la revolución cubana. “Si yo fuera cubano, no tengo duda de que estaría trabajando esforzadamente por el éxito de mi revolución. Pero yo no soy cubano, soy un yanqui...”

Y como estadounidense trasladó a los

gobernantes de su país una recomendación que pone en boca del protagonista de su libro: “Ustedes debían tomar el caso de Cuba como una experiencia que les sirva para establecer la forma en la que habrán de actuar cuando surjan revoluciones en los países hambreados de todas partes del mundo.”

Recientemente estuvo en Cuba el afamado escritor estadounidense Gore Vidal, acompañado por un grupo de otros destacados intelectuales coterráneos suyos, entre los cuales reconocí a Saul Landau, reputado escritor, politólogo, cineasta y periodista, quien, muy joven pero ya un brillante intelectual, trabajaba con Charles Wright Mills en los tiempos de “Listen, Yankee” y probablemente fuera quien le atrajo al estudio de la revolución cubana.

En aquella época, ellos y muchos otros intelectuales de valía en Estados Unidos integraron el Comité de Trato Justo para Cuba (Fair Play for Cuba Committee) que fue creado en Nueva York a inicios de 1960 y se pronunciaban, con serios riesgos para sus personas, contra una política que, como ellos previeron y advirtieron, hundiría a su país en el deshonor.

Pero no hay peor sordo que aquel que no quiere escuchar.

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La Habana, marzo de 2007.

By Manuel Yepe\*

Recently, comparing the Cuban revolutionary process with other leftist socio-political processes has become a favorite pastime to sow doubt and disunity among progressives both on the continent and throughout the world.

Since events have discredited arguments like Cuba being a satellite nation, isolated and in need of the costly support of other revolutions, the death of Marxism, the unviability



tried to inculcate.

Despite all that, the Cuban model, represented by its leader Fidel Castro, far from losing the sympathy of the ordinary people throughout the continent, has remained and grown among the new generations in Latin America who see it as a banner in the struggle for their demands. The Cuban revolutionary process obtained power via armed struggle. The new popular leaders in Latin America have achieved power via the electoral process. The ways that revolutionary changes are made may vary greatly.

However, the popular leaders now winning office through elections, seek to implement programs ranging from well-structured, self-activating revolutionary programs to declared nationalist platforms based on honest administration, understanding that the underlying factors toward unity has become a process which must not be interrupted.

And that serves reaction's campaign to make comparisons that lead to confusion. They recommend that Cuba use or expand elements of the market economy, including privatization, as a solution to any economic problem, like other countries undertaking recent revolutionary processes and are being maligned for applying solutions "a lo Cubano".

The moment of national sovereignty in our Latin America which we are currently experiencing is part of an evolution ruled by laws of social

# The Comparison Game

of socialism, and more recently the dependence of Cuba's political process on a 'caudillo', reactionary forces have made comparisons with other revolutions fashionable. The fact that China, a socialist nation, has become a world leader with a sustained rate of economic, technological and scientific development based on socialist concepts, has awakened a tendency to emphasize the differences between our process and that of the great Asian nation.

in both countries, the solutions and the means to achieve them must be different, as are different needs concerning the endogenous nature of the processes and the priority given social objectives.

China, for example, has adopted a "socialist market economy" mixed with some of the mechanisms characteristic of early capitalism more so than Cuba because, among other reasons, the development of bourgeois society in each country was very different when revolutionary changes were begun.

The U.S. companies on the Island had introduced elements

Obviously, each newly-elected leader has an agenda, one that has generally not been promoted by the traditional political parties whose programs, and above all the methods used to impose them, follow rules dictated by the interests of the oligarchies and the empire who have structured the electoral systems in their own image.

The agendas of the new popular leaders have many things in common. But there are also notable differences.

The reaffirmation of national identity and the defense of sovereignty are similar objectives, as are the paths

The rise of China as a driving force of global development leaves no room to doubt the predictions for Cuba's revolutionary process having a dismal future, considering the similarities between its goals and those of socialist China when China was slandered by the empire's propaganda machine as being a technologically-backward failed state with a hungry, discontented people devoid of hope.

China's success, having emerged from its sad state of underdevelopment lies entirely with its people and the wisdom of its communist leaders who mobilized and guided the people, not without errors, in its struggle to emerge from feudal backwardness and the incoherence of a bourgeois order despite the historic, geopolitical, social, cultural and economic peculiarities of this most populous nation on the planet.

In Cuba there was a contemplative and political process with similar characteristics, but a very different background. While both systems were led toward socialism by Marxist-Leninists and while there were many similarities, there were many differences, as well.

Both processes are taking place at a time in history when humanity is meeting the challenge of advancing to a new stage of development, since capitalism, having lost the progressive nature shown during the industrial revolution, has brought the world to a chaos of contrasts, injustice, inequities, violence and environmental destruction.

Since there are different situations

of the socialization of production, commerce and services, allowing the process to skip stages – not without difficulties and insufficiencies – in the development of pre-socialist basic capitalist production relations. Because of its size and potential, and the priority given to macro-economic development owing to its lack of technological and economic growth, China's approach was different: it opted to take greater advantage of low-level market relations.

Similarly, but also differently, where brutal capitalism had existed briefly in a society with a very primitive economy, and whose development was stalled by constant aggression against its national independence, Vietnam had to face the enormous task of rebuilding its country with its most important resource: its extraordinary, hardworking people.

Lacking any financial resources of its own, and with no other option, Vietnam chose to take full advantage of market relations to facilitate the effective development of its socialist goals, following its victory over the richest, most powerful and aggressive power humanity has ever known.

The recent leftist trend seen in Latin America is now the rule while just a few years ago such a thing would have been unimaginable: popular leaders, who are opposed to a policy of economic neo-liberalism imposed by a superpower, are being elected to power, and who are not imposed, supported or "acceptable" to the United States government. This is unprecedented in the region.

toward social justice. Differences may be large or small because they stem from different factors. They can also differ in the capacity to resist pressure and temptation.

For nearly half a century, the Latin American oligarchies and the U.S. superpower have waged an enormous worldwide campaign of propaganda and lies against the Cuban Revolution, using it as an excuse to attack any popular aspiration or patriotic measure any government in the region attempts, accusing it of being "just like Cuba".

It has been the systematic practice that any revolutionary move toward independence or social justice on the continent will feel the power of the media resources of the oligarchies and the empire that will draw parallels to the Cuban model, feeding the scare tactics that for years the media has

development in which we must find our self-activating roots in each of our countries. The process will be more complete and authentic to the extent that the characteristics inherent in each nation are considered.

Each one's experiences must be shared to avoid inevitable error. Never again should pre-established models be imposed like a straightjacket.

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*A CubaNews translation by Ana Portela. Edited by Walter Lippmann.*



# CUBAN REVOLUTION

## *A Revolutionary Example of the Past, Present and Future*

*John Waller – coordinator of the Pastors for Peace caravan to Cuba – spoke in Victoria in February after a showing of a film about the work of 1500 Cuban doctors who went to Pakistan immediately after the terrible earthquake in November 2005*

I want to firstly say a few things about that film. Before those doctors went to Pakistan, Pakistan was one of the few countries that didn't have diplomatic relations with Cuba. To some extent Pakistan was towing the American line. Pakistan now has diplomatic relations with Cuba. Because of what those doctors did.

I was in England at the time when the earthquake happened. England has a fairly big Pakistani community, so quite a few Pakistanis were involved in raising money and sending aid to their people back in Pakistan. A few doctors from Britain went to help and there was a lot of publicity in the British press about that, but there was no mention of this, which is typical. When Cuba does something like this in the world the press says nothing. This is part of the blockade, an information blockade. The other thing I want to say about the film is that it referred at one point to the Henry Reeve brigade - that's what those doctors were known as. The Henry Reeve brigade was formed two months beforehand in specific response to hurricane Katrina. When hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Cuba was ready to send 1500 doctors immediately to help. George Bush turned them down. We know what happened in New Orleans.

### **Cuba: World Health Power**

You're Canadians; you've got a Prime Minister Stephen Harper and a Prime Minister before him, Paul Martin who increasingly talk about turning Canada into a world power. By which they mean a world military power and a world economic power. For 25 years Fidel Castro has talked about turning Cuba into a world health power, the first nation ever in the world to try to be a world health power. There are currently something like 25,000 Cuban doctors elsewhere in the world, most of them in Venezuela. A few thousand other health workers, 10,000 other internationalists; teachers, engineers, economists, and not a single one of them is a soldier. What a contrast between your country and my country and the U.S. that when we go in, supposedly, to help somewhere, we send our military.

I'll give you a few more examples of Cuba's role. One of the doctors in the film referred to what happened after hurricane Mitch in 1998. Hurricane Mitch devastated Nicaragua and Honduras, Cuba immediately sent a couple of thousand of doctors to do the same kind of work that you saw in this film. Fidel said this is only the short term, what Central America needs is its own doctors. Well trained doctors and also doctors who are going to be prepared to go to the hardest areas, the poorest locations, the worst hit locations. So Cuba set up what's called the Latin American Medical School, in Havana. We visit it every year; initially they trained 10,000 young people from all the communities in Latin America, and in particular the poorest communities such as the indigenous communities of Bolivia and Guatemala. In 2000, one of my colleagues, was taking a delegation of U.S. congress members, members of the black caucus, to Cuba and they met with Fidel Castro. One of them from the Mississippi delta said to Fidel Castro "there are parts of my district where there are no doctors because the people are poor and in the U.S. doctors don't want to work for people who are poor". So he

said "can you send some Cuban doctors to Mississippi?"

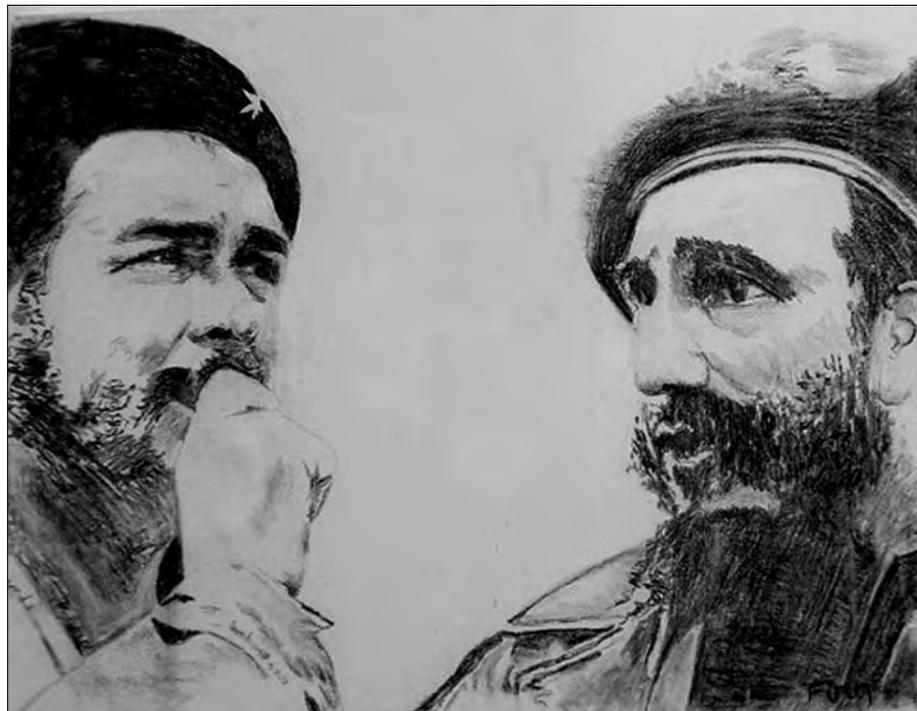
Fidel's response was to say "in principal yes, but probably your government will have an objection. So maybe the best answer is actually that we train people from your community." So that is when the offer began, to enable young people from the U.S., from poor backgrounds, from Black, Latino, Native American and poor white communities to come to Cuba to train for free to become doctors. Pastors for Peace administers that scheme which now has about 100 young Americans who are doing this. One more example of what Cuba is offering, not just to poor nations, but in this case to the world's richest nation, that isn't prepared to train enough doctors of its own.

### **Operation Miracle**

Another thing I want to mention is Operation Miracle, Cuba has developed a very complex health service that can do operations anywhere in the world. One of the things it is most specialized in has been the removal of cataracts. They have a production line process for the removing of cataracts. And they have provided this service for many years to their own people, and in recent years they have started to provide this service on a mass scale to other people. First to Venezuelans. I think now a quarter of a million Venezuelans have had cataracts removed in Cuba for free. Venezuela paid to get them there, for the flight, Cuba puts them in what were tourist hotels, for a few days while they are waiting, they are operated on within a day and they go back home. These

are poor Venezuelans for whom flying in an airplane, staying in a hotel, is something they have never imagined doing. And they are getting their eyesight back. For free.

That program has now been extended to other countries, Bolivia, Panama, many of the Caribbean countries. In principal the



offer has been made to U.S. citizens, who can't afford within the U.S. to have their cataracts removed. Nobody has yet taken up the offer because if they went they would be breaking U.S. law and they would be fined \$7,500 dollars by the U.S. government. Lets move on now from health care. Its not just healthcare, Randy spoke earlier about the literacy program. I just want to add in one thing that although most of the work of Cuba has been spreading literacy around the world to other poor countries, it's not just poor countries. New Zealand's government has

hired Cuban specialists to provide a literacy program for its Maori people.

### **Cuba Champion of Sustainable Development**

And then there is the example of Cuba in agriculture, particularly in organic agriculture. Have any of you seen the film "Power of Community, how Cuba survived peak oil"? It is our world, the economically advanced western world, learning from Cuba about how to undertake organic agriculture, how to develop a country in an environmentally sustainable way.

A few months ago the World Wildlife Fund wrote a report where it said that the only country in the world that has truly sustainable development is Cuba. I want to say a bit more about that report. They measured sustainable development in terms of human development and how you deal with the environment. So because of the human development there are many countries of the advanced world, like the U.S., like Britain, like Canada that are seen as having an advanced level of human development. Based on wealth, based on education, based on healthcare. Cuba is in with them.

Then there is environmental sustainability. We know that the U.S. and Canada, Canada is just as bad as the U.S., have an enormous environmental footprint, as they term it. Our countries waste an awful lot of resources, and consume vast amounts of energy. Most of the countries of the world that consume

very little energy are the very poorest countries. But the only country in the world that consumes, relative to its population, very low energy and has a high level of social development is Cuba. The report said that in one line. It said "no country in the world has truly sustainable development, except Cuba". And said nothing more. Because the World Wildlife Fund was probably thinking of all the money they get from the United States, and they couldn't alter the facts but they didn't want to really talk about Cuba as an example, although they had to admit it. One more example of the information



blockade, and I could tell many more.

How does the U.S. respond to this? Do they applaud and celebrate? No, they are threatened by this example. Because it highlights what the U.S. does in the world. How with all its wealth it doesn't aid people. Its usual response to bring peace and development to other countries is to send in the military, and really it is invading other countries to get oil.

### **Blockade Result of US Fear by Cuban Revolutionary Example**

The U.S. for 50 years has been threatened by the Cuban example and has tried to destroy it, tried to overthrow it. But they couldn't destroy it, so they've tried to isolate it, to stop its example from spreading. For 40 years they were quite successful at that, but now with the development of the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela that isolation has broken down. Cuba's example, not an exact copy of Cuba, but Cuba's example, its ideas are spreading to Venezuela, Bolivia, and elsewhere in the Latin American continent. Some of Cuba's ideas have just spread to some poor people in Pakistan. This makes Cuba even more of a threat. And finally if

it couldn't stop the example from spreading, then the US government is determined to damage Cuba, to weaken it. To make its example less good. To try and make the Cuban people rebel and blame not the U.S. but their own government, to rise up in arms, kick their government out, and if they aren't going to do that, to leave their country.

The main weapon in the 48 year policy of aggression is a 46 year economic blockade. I haven't the time to go into all the details of the economic blockade, but I will highlight certain things.

For 46 years there have been restrictions on the U.S. selling anything to Cuba or Cuba selling anything to the U.S... Prior to 1961 90% of Cuba's trade was with the United States and to lose that was devastating. Canada does 80% of its trade with the U.S.; imagine if overnight Canada couldn't buy anything or sell anything with the U.S. it would be devastating for your life. Just as it was devastating for the Cuban life. In 1961 when it lost trade with the U.S. they substituted trade with the Soviet Union. Then the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and they lost 90% of their trade once again. And the U.S. moved in for the kill, in 1992, by bringing in laws that meant that it wasn't just illegal for any U.S. firm to trade with Cuba. Now any subsidiary of any U.S. firm anywhere in the world was banned from trading with Cuba. So up till that point, although Cuba couldn't buy foodstuffs from Heinz, it could buy foodstuffs from Heinz Canada. And in 1992 that trade was stopped. Cuba lost \$750m million worth of imports of food and medicines overnight. That's one example. It has had major implications for the supply of medicines. Although Cuba has a remarkable health service in terms of skilled personnel, it needs things, it needs medicines, it needs equipment, it needs supplies. And a lot of that equipment, medicines and supplies come from the advanced world, and they're expensive.

*Continues on Page 17*

# The Case of Leonard Peltier, Political Prisoner in the US Jails

## West Coast Justice for Leonard Peltier Tour, A Great Success!



By Aaron Mercredi

"...no human being should ever have to fear for his or her life because of their political or religious beliefs. We are in this together, my friends, the rich, the poor, the red, white, black, brown and yellow. We share responsibility for Mother Earth and those who live and breathe upon her. Never forget that."

-Leonard Peltier

The end of March brought a flood of activity to raise awareness around Leonard Peltier's struggle for freedom in the US prison system. With the intention of re-igniting solidarity work in Canada for Leonard Peltier, the Justice for Leonard Peltier West Coast Tour travelled to different campuses and community centres throughout the lower mainland and Victoria. Organized by the Indigenous Rights and Action Project (IRAP), this tour featured Bob Robideau, the co-director of the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee, a relative of Leonard's and also a co-defendant in the shoot-out at Oglala. Bob travelled from the US to speak on Leonard's case and follow up on the great amount of support that Leonard has been received in the past from people in Canada.

On June 26<sup>th</sup> 1975, Leonard was involved in a shoot-out on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. This shoot-out took place during the FBI-orchestrated 'reign of terror' on that reservation, which

saw over 60 Indigenous people murdered and hundreds more assaulted in an effort to crush resistance to uranium mining and the selling of their land. The FBI's other hope was to rid the area of the American Indian Movement (AIM). AIM had gone to Pine Ridge to defend traditional people who opposed the US domination over their territory and the corrupt tribal president, Dick Wilson, who was in the colonial government's pocketbook and had his personal mercenary squad, the Guardians of the Oglala Nation (GOONS). Leonard joined the ranks of many young Indigenous people from all over the US who went to defend Lakota people against Dick Wilson, his GOONS, the FBI and the threats of murder on Pine Ridge.

It was in this period of heightened political terror that two FBI agents in unmarked cars sped on to the Jumping Bull compound and a shoot-out ensued. It ended with the deaths of the two agents, Special Agents Coler and Williams, along with Joe Stuntz, a young

Indigenous man who was shot in the FBI attack. Although Joe Stuntz's murder was never investigated, the hunt was on to pin the deaths of the agents on someone.

Fearing that he would not receive a fair trial in the US, Leonard fled to Canada. Bob Robideau and Dino Butler, who were also involved in the shoot-out, were arrested and went to trial for the deaths of the agents. They were acquitted on grounds of self-defence, finding their involvement in the shoot-out was justified given the climate of fear that existed on the reservation. With the FBI's full scope on Leonard Peltier, he was arrested in Canada in 1976. The FBI presented fabricated evidence to the Canadian court, and the Canadian authorities collaborated to have him extradited to face trial in the US for the deaths of two agents. On April 18<sup>th</sup> 1977, Leonard was convicted for the first degree murder of the agents, and sentenced to two consecutive life sentences in a courtroom that reeked with blatant bias, fabricated evidence, and the intimidation of witnesses. Anything it would take to lock Leonard up.

For 31 years now, he has been a political prisoner in a US jail. He has come to represent the struggle of Native people who fight back for what is theirs; a symbol of the US government's hypocrisy and the injustice that has been inflicted on Native people for hundreds of years. He also continues to provide inspiration to not only Native people, who see a man who continues to fight even behind prison bars, but to all people who struggle against oppression.

The recent tour was a result of that inspiration and the need to build awareness and support for his freedom with people around the world. The West Coast Justice for Leonard Peltier tour re-ignited activity in Canada around Leonard's struggle. Over 350 people came out to the five events that were organized; from speaking events at Capilano College, the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia, and the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, to the musical fundraiser which brought out artists and community members who wanted to show their support for the cause.

The tour did, however, encounter some minor obstacles in building solidarity work around Leonard's case. At two of the events, attempts by individuals were made to disrupt the forums and hijack them away from the focus on Leonard's freedom. Although it is unfortunate that this has the potential to ruin an event, the widespread interest among people, especially young people, about Leonard's case kept the events going.

Something that was inspiring about this whole tour was seeing people who had been involved in Leonard's original defence committee in Canada come out, with the determination to keep fighting for his freedom. Combined with a newer generation of people who are learning about the injustice committed against Leonard, and who see his case as their own, there is a strong amount of support to build the necessary defence and solidarity work here in Canada. That is why we need to continue moving forward to free him from prison. All poor and working people in Canada need to know about this case and fight for it.

His freedom is our freedom.

## Interview with Bob Robideau Co-director of Leonard Peltier Defence Committee

By Aaron Mercredi

In the last week of March Vancouver and Victoria saw a very important tour by Bob Robideau, the co-director of the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee and International spokesperson for the committee. We spoke with Bob just before he left Vancouver back to US.

**FTT:** Can you tell us who you are and where you're from?

**BR:** My name is Bob Robideau. I am currently the co-director for the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (LPDC). I am also a co-defendant. We are first cousins, Leonard and I. We're from the Anishnabe Nation, Turtle Mountain, White Earth and Spirit Lake Lakota. We have both been long-time members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) since the 1970s.

**FTT:** What is the current work of the LPDC right now?

**BR:** Currently, the LPDC is focused on a new campaign to free Leonard Peltier through clemency. This campaign will last approximately six years. This is because presidents normally do not consider clemency until their term ends. Our estimate of the work that we've already done in over 30 years that Leonard has been in prison, and also our experience during his attempt for clemency in 2002 has brought us to the realization that clemency is the only vehicle that will open the door for Leonard Peltier.

Parole, of which he is scheduled to have hearings on in December of

2008, is not realistic in our estimation simply because the parole board in the past has denied him any sort of reasonable hearings. They have brought in FBI agents, introduced Coler and Williams' families. This is normally what parole boards do, but they have stated on two separate occasions that they feel that Leonard Peltier is guilty as charged of the conviction in 1977, so the mentality of the parole board is basically that of the FBI agents, who in 2002 demonstrated en masse against clemency for Leonard Peltier.

We feel that because of the political climate inside the United States in relationship to the war on Iraq and the current posture of the Democratic Party and recent events that have included Leonard Peltier in the national democratic campaign, this has revealed that there is significant support for Leonard Peltier's clemency. We have so far begun to get re-endorsements in the European community. From Ireland, who have committed themselves; the Irish government of Gerry Adams. And also Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu have stated that they too will re-endorse their support. We have no doubt that the European Union will as well. And all of the support that Leonard received in 2002 in the United States and Canada will be forthcoming as well.

**FTT:** What was the purpose of your trip in to Canada with this tour?

**BR:** My purpose in coming to Canada was to begin a national campaign to free Leonard Peltier, and I felt that it was very important to choose Canada as a beginning point simply because Canada was the place where the United States Department of Justice fabricated documents. Following that, the Canadian Justice Department accepted those documents, knowing that they were fabricated by the FBI Department of Justice and used them as a vehicle to extradite Leonard Peltier back to the United States.

**FTT:** What kind of support work has been done in Canada in the past?

**BR:** Since that extradition in 1976 there has been widespread support in Canada, especially during the clemency campaign and before that. There has been an attempt to get an investigation in Canada around the illegal extradition and

the Canadian government has thus far refused to open up an investigation. In conjunction with that, we have also attempted to get congressional hearings on the same issue, and also on issues around the 'reign of terror' in which 300 Oglala Lakotas were assaulted and more than 50 were killed. The United States, as in Canada, they have refused to open up congressional hearings to hear testimony on these incidents.

**FTT:** Looking at the history of AIM is also looking at the US government's war on Native people. With AIM, it was the FBI, COINTELPRO, and they continue to wage a campaign against Leonard's freedom.

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Leonard Peltier.

## Peltier Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

At the beginning of April, Leonard Peltier, Indigenous activist and political prisoner, received an official nomination for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, along with 181 other registered candidates. This is not the first time that Leonard received this nomination and not the first time that he has been recognized as a freedom fighter and dedicated activist. In 2004, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and over the years has received countless awards and recognition for his never-ending struggle

against  
injustice  
and for  
human  
rights.



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The very fact that Cuba can't buy from the U.S., it has to buy things from Europe or China, far away, which means they become even more expensive and Cuba can buy less of them. And in the field of medicines, 50% of the worlds medicines, including many of the most modern, advanced and specialist medicines are only produced by U.S. pharmaceutical companies or their subsidiaries. Cuba cannot legally buy them anywhere. I say legally because they have at times obtained things by a back door route, but I want to give an example of how even that sometimes doesn't work.

In Britain the health workers union UNISON has a lot of links to its sister union in Cuba. On one occasion the Cuban health workers union requested UNISON in Britain - we need urgently a certain specialist medicine, can you buy it for us from a U.S. subsidiary in Britain?. The union went to do that but they knew they might be asked why the union was buying medicine. So they said "ok we will pretend that we are donating this medicine to a project we are supporting in Honduras". They went to the pharmaceutical company, the pharmaceutical company smelt a rat and basically said "we want the evidence, we want to talk to the doctors in Honduras who are going to use this medicine, we want the names of the patients in Honduras, and if you don't give us this then we won't sell it to you". Because U.S. pharmaceutical companies are on alert. They are looking out for people who are trying to buy medicines from them for Cuba.

One final example of the way the blockade works, which is a

Canadian example. Cuba needs water purification supplies. For Cuba in general but specifically for its hospitals because pure water in hospitals is crucial. Cuba was buying water purification supplies from a small company in Ontario, a small businessman called James Sabzali. His company was taken over by a U.S. company, but he carried on selling supplies to Cuba. He was doing business but he was being naïve. He thought he was legal. The U.S. multi national didn't pick up on what he was doing. He was promoted to head office in Philadelphia; new life, better wage. He goes to Philadelphia and a few days later he's arrested because the U.S. treasury knew what he was doing and as far as they were concerned what he was doing was illegal under U.S. laws, even though it is perfectly legal in Canada. The Canadian government made a very token protest about it but really abandoned him. Basically after a lot of publicity and several years of house arrest he was let go free pleading guilty to a minor charge. Just examples of the insidious way the blockade on Cuba works.

### Pastor for Peace Caravan to Cuba

My organization Pastors for Peace, comes out of the tradition of the U.S. civil rights movement and the thinking of people like Martin Luther King, the idea that when black people in southern USA couldn't sit in certain seats reserved for whites, they sat in them and

said "we are not moving". Pastors for Peace director Lucius Walker is a Baptist pastor, a contemporary of Martin. Since 1992 we have taken aid to Cuba and people to Cuba from the U.S. That's illegal without explicit U.S. government permission. And we are saying to the U.S.; we are not obeying your law, we are obeying our humanity, our values or as Lucius Walker would say, we are obeying a higher authority. And we go to Cuba and we say; what are you going to do about it, U.S. government? We first went in 1992, very respectable, only taking medicines and bibles.



And literally priests and pastors were arrested at the U.S. border for trying to take bibles to Cuba. And were very quickly released because it was creating a lot of good publicity, or bad publicity for them.

In 1993 we came back again, and this time with some Canadian support, and it came from Goods

for Cuba here in Victoria. In 1993 we were taking a little yellow school bus to Cuba. The U.S. government said "you can't take this yellow school bus to Cuba, it could be used as a military vehicle, to attack the United States" They literally said that. People on board said "we are not getting off until this bus goes to Cuba". It was taken to a customs compound and they went on a hunger strike for 23 days, there was a sympathy hunger strike in Cuba and then Clinton once again backed down and let it go.

1996 they stopped us again, they seized a consignment of old computers, they were already 7 years old in 1996, this was pre-windows. They were going to be used to run an email network in the Cuban health service. They seized them again saying "these computers could be used to fire missiles at the United States". You laugh, and it is laughable, but they really do say this. So 5 members of the caravan, including Lucis Walker went on a hunger strike, just taking honey and water, for 90 days. Which is very serious, close to irreversible body damage.

They took the hunger strike to D.C. to a Methodist Church very close to the White House. They put tents on the lawn and went on a hunger strike and they started lobbying Congress. And for the first time some members of congress, mainly black congressional members, started saying "this is crazy, we should not carry on with this policy". 60 members of congress

signed the letter to Clinton saying let the computers go, and after 90 days he did.

### Clinton and Bush, Same Policy , Different Face

After that for many years Clinton and Bush adopted a different tactic, to deny us publicity, they said "ok we know you are breaking the law, but you can break it and we're not going to stop you". In the last couple of years Bush has started to move to a harder position. In 2005 they seized some of the computers we were trying to take. We made a long protest, while the rest of the aid went. Eventually those computers were released, some we donated to reconstruction in New Orleans the rest we took last year. Last year they didn't try to stop us. They are always thinking, what is the publicity going to be like if we try to stop this from going?

In the last 3 years they have been trying to take action against individual caravanistas. The U.S. caravanistas are the ones who are breaking the law. Every year for the past 3 years when we have returned they have tried to interrogate those individuals, demand that they fill in long questionnaires that would be self incriminating, and when they refuse and assert their rights under the U.S. constitution they send them the same questionnaire and a letter threatening a fine of \$7,500 dollars. People continue to refuse. Once again they have backed off. We can't be sure that that will remain the case, but for now they have not dared prosecute any of our caravanistas, because of the publicity it will create.

In July of 2006 we were there in Cuba and the Bush government

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While you were here in Vancouver, I know you experienced some disruptions of events that were in support of Leonard Peltier. Have you experienced this sort of sabotage of these solidarity or support events in the US?

**BR:** Never. This is the first time in the history of the struggle to free Leonard Peltier that the LPDC has experienced these types of disruptions by Native people. But, the disruptions that were experienced in Vancouver, BC, are similar to the disruptions in which the FBI attempted to initiate with the American Indian Movement during its height as a political body. The United States perceived AIM as a threat to the security of the United States, which they stated in their congressional hearing where they only called one witness, Douglas Durham, who was exposed as an FBI informant provocateur.

The COINTELPRO program was originally directed at the civil rights movement in the 1960s, the Black Panther Party and the anti-war movement. The intent of the COINTELPRO program initiated through the FBI was to disrupt organizations from within. Basically by imploding the organization through provocateurs whose responsibility was to create dissatisfaction and disruptions from within, through various methods and venues. The FBI, also through the COINTELPRO program, initiated burglaries to get at sensitive information from these organizations. They worked with state police to disrupt the Black Panther Party, for example, who on several occasions, initiated violence with the Black Panther Party, resulting in several deaths of Black Panthers. These were basically murders perpetuated through this program.

Certainly similar occurrences have occurred within the American Indian Movement as well that have been initiated by the FBI, supported and financed by the United States government. This goes back to the 55 Oglala Lakotas who were murdered during the 'reign of terror,' which was from 1973, at which time there was the 71-day occupation of Wounded Knee, through to the summer of 1976, in which also



300 Oglala Lakotas were assaulted.

**FTT:** How is Leonard's struggle for freedom, a man who represents the AIM and the struggle of Native people, ultimately a universal struggle?

**BR:** Through the struggle to free Leonard Peltier, the LPDC itself has gone globally to create awareness of the injustice of Leonard Peltier's case. On a wider spectrum is the struggle for the end of Native American oppression in North America. Of course, this covers a wide spectrum of activities by the US government; not only historically, but also contemporarily. Today we see the continuous attacks to remove Native people from their lands and continuation of insidious silent genocide that continues in Native country through various programs that the US continues to impose on Native nations. Leonard Peltier has become a symbol of Native struggle in North America. Leonard Peltier continues to be active, despite the fact that he is in prison

and through various communication channels (writing, various interviews), Leonard has been able to voice his concerns in various areas of Native struggle.

**FTT:** Any final words?

**BR:** As we enter this new platform to free Leonard Peltier, we are enthusiastic. There is a new climate in North America, as well as other parts of the world, that has basically allowed us to be enthusiastic. Recent communications, national and international communications, through the recent democratic candidates who have announced their candidacy, have revealed a strong support within the American community and have voiced their objections to the 2002 denial of Leonard Peltier's clemency, through Clinton at that time. Because of this and because of the fact that the Republican party has initiated another war against a people, simply to steal their natural resources, to initiate another colonized state in which they can manipulate the people, the political administration of Iraq, just as they continue to do with

Native nations in this country and as they intend to do with Iran and the Palestinian people with the assistance Israel in regards to the Palestinian people and their struggle, we must always keep in mind that these struggles that are going on to maintain their freedom in other countries are the same as ours in this country. The methodologies to oppress and take over these countries, to get at their natural resources, are the same methodologies used against Native people in this country, historically and contemporarily.

Leonard Peltier and the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee would like to thank the Coast Salish Nation for allowing us to come in to their country to talk about truth and justice in relationship to his case and in relationship to the ongoing struggles of all Native people across Canada and the United States.



## Aboriginal Sin

by Leonard Peltier

We each begin in innocence.  
We all become guilty.  
In this life you find yourself guilty  
of being who you are.  
Being yourself, that's Aboriginal Sin.  
the worst sin of all.  
That's a sin you'll never be forgiven for.

We Indians are all guilty,  
guilty of being ourselves.  
We're taught that guilt from the day  
we're born.  
We learn it well.

To each of my brothers and sisters, I say,  
be proud of that guilt.  
You are guilty only of being innocent,  
of being yourselves,  
of being Indian,  
of being human.

Your guilt makes you holy.

This selections is from Leonard Peltier's book  
PRISON WRITINGS: MY LIFE IS MY  
SUNDANCE

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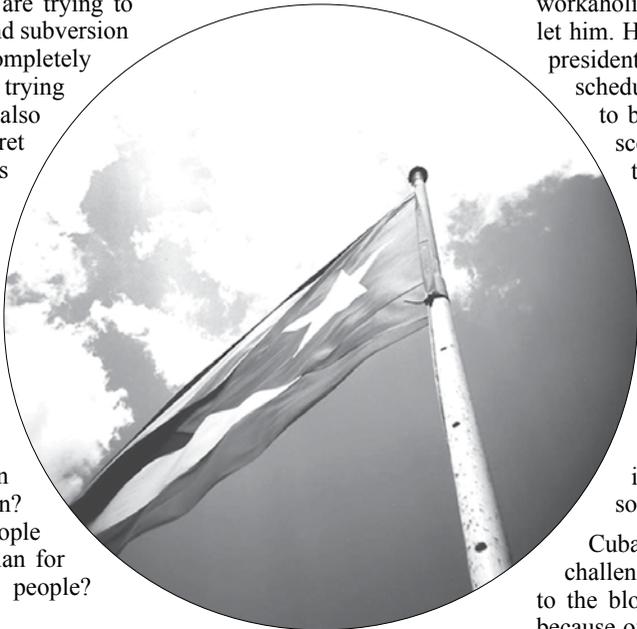
released another report from "the commission for assistance to a free Cuba", version 2. It was more dirty tricks, more money to the Miami Cuban Mafia, more money to dissidents in Cuba, more money to Radio and TV Marti which is basically a US military plane flying around Cuba trying to beam in radio and TV signals. Not TV and radio that's heard in the U.S., it's not for a U.S. audience, it's for a Cuban audience. In fact it's totally illegal under international law and they try and beam it in but Cuba blocks the transmissions. They are trying to generate dissidence and subversion in Cuba. It is completely explicit what they are trying to do, but there is also in this report a secret annex and when this report was publicized a White House spokesperson was asked "what's in the secret annex?" and of course the White House spokesperson said "it's a secret, we're not telling you". We can only speculate, is it a plan for a military invasion? Is it there to make people think it could be a plan for invasion to frighten people? We don't know.

What we do know is that Florida is 90 miles from Cuba. The flight time for a cruise missile from Florida to Cuba is about 3 minutes. It would be very easy to bring, what Donald Rumsfeld said, "Shock and awe" to Cuba. It's not so easy for them, as they discovered in Iraq, to subdue a people, to take over a country. I'm sure if George Bush was to

ask the saner of his generals "how many troops do we need to take on Cuba?" Well I guess they might say 250,000. And they haven't got them at the moment. So we are not predicting an invasion of Cuba in the foreseeable future. But we have to be aware that in their dreams, in their fantasies, this is what they would like to do.

**After Fidel?**

Their dream has become that after Fidel everything will collapse. I was back in England when it was announced that Fidel was stepping down



temporarily. That night the BBC was speculating - will shops be open the next morning? Will the people rise up in the streets? Will they get in boats to go to Florida? And I knew it was all nonsense. 6 months on they are saying "ah well when he actually dies, that is when it will happen". I have this image

of tens of thousands of Cubans with boats in their back yards, turning the radio on every day saying "is he dead yet?" More nonsense.

I'm not going to say a lot about Fidel because I'm sure that some of you are going to ask me what happens after Fidel. But I will say that all the evidence is that after a difficult operation, probably where he had part of his intestines removed, and a difficult recovery, he is improving. Is he going to come back to be president? Well he is not going to come back to be president as in the past, he's not going to be the workaholic again, his doctors wont let him. He could come back to be president but in a less demanding schedule, he could come back to be the advisor behind the scenes, because I'm sure that for as long as Fidel Castro lives his brain, his strategic wisdom, is going to be available to the Cuban revolution, the Cuban government and to anyone else who wants to listen. Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales certainly do. He may die this year, he is 80 years old, he will die sometime.

Cuba faces many economic challenges. It's not totally due to the blockade, but a big part is because of the blockade. But that's the challenge for the current and future Cuban government and the Cuban people. I have the confidence that they can handle that, if they are left alone to their own devices. And it's our role in the solidarity movement to stop the United States prevailing in whatever way they try, particularly if they dare think of an invasion.

And we think that little by little there will be a change in the mood in the U.S. Congress, mainly because of the resilience and the strength of the Cuban people and the Cuban revolution. They have been trying to overthrow the revolution for 48 years and they have failed. More and more they recognize that.

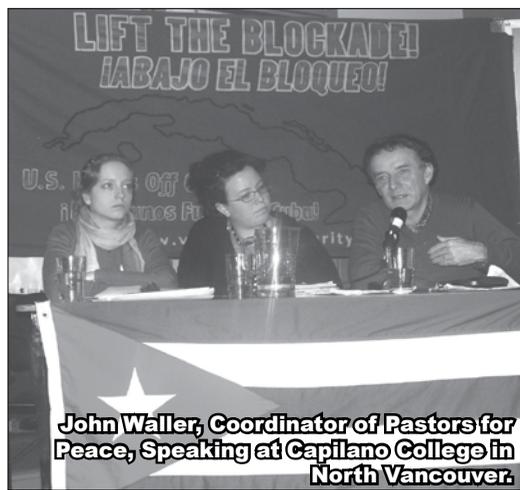
For many members of congress are starting to say Fidel's handed over power and nothing has happened, our policies are not working, what do we do? Some people in congress who represent farming states, or who are linked to the oil industry or the tourist industry or the pharmaceutical industry are saying "other people are doing business with Cuba, so should we - lets make some profits now". That's an important lobby in congress because money talks in congress. One of the congressional leaders making the moves to get the blockade lifted or partly lifted is a man named Jeff Blake from Arizona. He argues explicitly that the way to overthrow the Cuban revolution is to hug it to death with love. We think he's wrong, George Bush thinks he's wrong - that's why the U.S. government has never adopted that policy. But if he is going to vote to end the blockade for that reason then I welcome his vote. There are other members in congress who, without his conviction, are thinking that the blockade policy isn't working so we have to do something different. There well may be a vote in congress this year in favor of lifting the travel ban. Bush we can expect to veto it. So we are not expecting any immediate change, certainly not until 2009 and we don't know even then.

**Join Caravan to Cuba: We Must**

**Work and Fight**

But the pressure is building, we carry on doing what we do with the caravan, with a very clear policy of we want the total lifting of the blockade, we want it unconditionally and we want it now! We call this a People to People foreign policy. But we welcome any move within congress that is unconditional, that partially moves in that direction. So we are encouraging our supporters to lobby their congressional representatives, as we say that it helps keep Bush on the defensive at a time when he wants to be making the case for an intervention in Cuba at some point.

We are preparing for our next caravan. In the July 2006 report it said that the people who organize travel to Cuba, not the people who participate, but the people who organize it, could now be subject to criminal charges. They haven't done anything about that yet, we're not expecting them to. But they are making the threat. It also said that they have had enough of aid being sent to Cuban churches. There used to be some travel between U.S. churches and Cuban churches and they have largely eliminated that. We take aid which is distributed by an ecumenical distribution committee. Which goes to hospitals, health clinics and schools but the church groups distribute it. And they say in their report that they are going to stop that kind of aid. Whether or not they are going to try this year and stop all the aid, just some of the aid, or once again just let us go, we don't know. We plan for every possibility. If we make it through we say we have broken the blockade, and if they try and stop us we make a lot of publicity. Either way we are going to win.



**John Waller, Coordinator of Pastors for Peace, Speaking at Capilano College in North Vancouver.**

By Sophie Ziner

On February 18<sup>th</sup> the second annual Lift the Blockade Tour, featuring Pastors For Peace caravan coordinator John Waller, was launched at the St. John the Divine Hall in Courtenay, BC. The tour, organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), had 12 events and traveled all over Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. Highlighting both the challenges Cuba faces because of the 48-year-old US Blockade, and the huge gains that have been won by the Cuban revolution, the tour carried a message inviting people from all over BC to get involved in defending Cuba with the Pastors for Peace caravan!

Every year since 1992 the caravan has traveled through Canada and the US collecting humanitarian aid and having educational events in over 120 cities before going on to Cuba, as an open challenge to the blockade, which makes it illegal to bring humanitarian aid from the US to Cuba, and for US citizens to travel there. Over 100 activists from the US and around the world traveled with

the caravan last year.

John Waller, who has been a leading Cuba solidarity activist in the US and Britain for the last 15 years is the national coordinator of the caravan. At each event on the Lift the Blockade Tour, John was joined by Cuba solidarity organizers from Vancouver- Alison Bodine, Nicole Burton and Sophie Ziner, all of whom traveled on the caravan last summer, and shared slides and talked about their experiences.

The event in Courtenay, where John and caravanista Sophie Ziner spoke to a full house of 40 people, was followed the next morning by a visit to Vanier High School, where over 120 students participated in presentations. That afternoon in Qualicum Beach, Students for Peace Organizer Julie Jenkins welcomed a crowd of students and community members at Kwalikum Secondary School.

The following day, John and caravanista Alison Bodine made a presentation in the Student Union Building at Langara College. Kira Koshelanyk of Langara Students United Against War and Occupation (LSUAWO), co-organizers of the event, MC'd. The two spoke the next day at Simon Fraser University, where the MAWO-SFU club helped organize an event which was MC'd by Jesus Moreno, an MAWO-SFU organizer and an international student from Venezuela.

At Douglas College on the 22<sup>nd</sup>,

# Lift the Blockade Tour 2007

## Join Pastor for Peace Caravan to Cuba!

caravanista Nicole Burton joined John to speak at an event co-organized by the Douglas College Anti-War Club, MC'd by DCSAW organizer Mona Teymory.

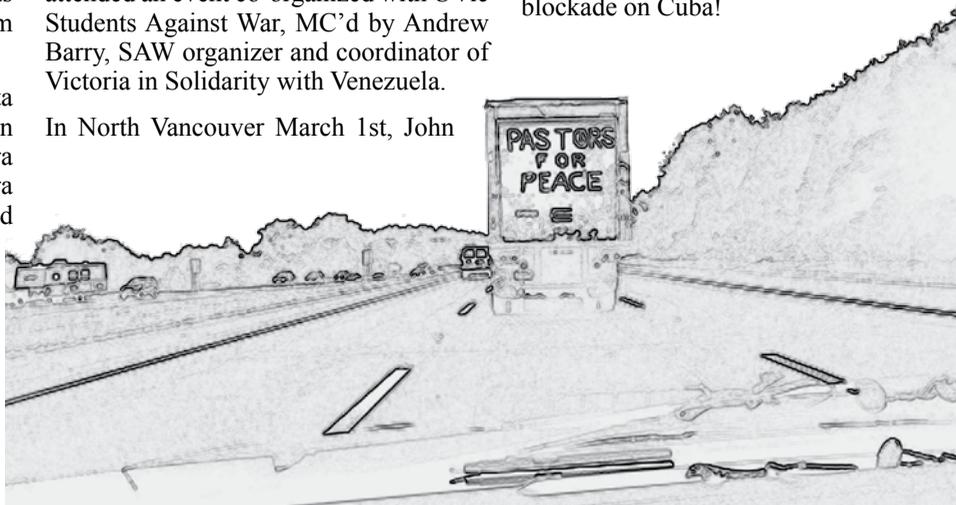
The Unitarian Church of Vancouver filled with over 75 people for the city-wide that evening. Wilson Muñoz, coordinator of the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver (which co-organized the event) welcomed everyone, and MCs Tamara Hansen, coordinator of VCSC, and Colleen Glynn, president of the Richmond NDP, started the program. The program was spiced up by poetry by the Cuban 5, read by Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver organizer Mike Larson.

At the University of Victoria the following Tuesday February 27<sup>th</sup> several dozen community members and UVic students attended an event co-organized with UVic Students Against War, MC'd by Andrew Barry, SAW organizer and coordinator of Victoria in Solidarity with Venezuela.

In North Vancouver March 1st, John

and Sophie spoke at Capilano College, where Jane Ivanova, coordinator of the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Capilano welcomed over 25 students to the event. Energized by the great success of the tour, that evening supporters and organizers got together at El Rancho Restaurant and danced to the great music of Cuban musician Deborah Ledon and Her Amigos Guapo, as well as enjoying the moving poetry of Poets Del Sur and slam poet Kevaan, and some great jokes and anecdotes from John Waller!

The tour saw over 500 people attending events all over the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island and sparked interest about Cuba, about the Caravan and about solidarity organizing. When the Caravan visits BC this summer on its way south, it's sure to be sent off with great enthusiasm and determination to break the US blockade on Cuba!



# MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION - MAWO - ORGANIZE EDUCATE MOBILIZE

MAWO ADVANCES ANTI-WAR/ANTI-OCCUPATION ACTIVITY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

By Kira Koshelanyk

Taking their lead from people in struggle in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Somalia, Indigenous nations in Canada and all oppressed people, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) has continued organizing consistent antiwar actions from within the belly of the beast.

MAWO's monthly anti-war demonstrations in downtown Vancouver continued with the rally at the Vancouver Art Gallery Saturday February 24<sup>th</sup>. Protesting the daily atrocities of the occupations in the Middle East and Africa and against the plunder and threats toward Iran, Sudan and other oppressed countries, more than 200 protesters braved intermittent snow to show their opposition to war and occupation. Chanting to warm up the cold Vancouver streets, organizers distributed hundreds of anti-war newsletters and leaflets for upcoming anti-war events and collected even more signatures for the

12,000-strong MAWO petition calling for "Canada Out of Afghanistan!"

In rapid response to increased and brutal attacks on the Afghan people by occupation forces, including indiscriminate shootings of individuals and anti-occupation protesters, MAWO held two picket lines against the occupation in two weeks. On March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> more than 60 people gathered on only a few days notice to picket the Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment Centre. This came after the news of the 45<sup>th</sup> Canadian soldier death in Afghanistan, while the much less reported, Afghan death toll continues to rise. Students, women, workers, and several people who joined in as they happened to walk by picketed and chanted "Canada Out of Afghanistan Now!"

With these picket lines, rallies and many events organized on college, university and high school campuses MAWO organized for and built up to the march and rally held on March 17<sup>th</sup>. This rally was called in Vancouver by Stopwar.ca coalition as a part of the International Days of Action marking the 4th anniversary of the US-led invasion of Iraq. MAWO marched with hundreds of people through Vancouver streets, with banners and signs calling for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iraq to Afghanistan to Somalia and for self-determination

for all oppressed nations.

Following this successful mobilization and as part of the International Weekend of Action, on March 18<sup>th</sup>, more than 85 people gathered together for MAWO's 8<sup>th</sup> anti-war conference "The Struggle Against Imperialist Terrorism: Confronting the Wars & Occupations After 9/11". The day's discussion dug deeply into the state of struggle between oppressed people battling against imperialist aggression for their right to self-determination across many continents, and how to continue organizing and building the movement in solidarity with them, to effectively challenge imperialist war and occupation.

While imperialists have dragged the year 2007 into the bloodbath of war, occupation and destruction of this unfolding era; in Vancouver MAWO has maintained consistent and dynamic opposition - inspired by the fight of oppressed people all over the world. This active opposition is necessary and must and will be maintained through February 2007, March 2007, April 2007, and beyond until this drive for war and occupation for profit is defeated!



Feb 24th Antiwar Rally, Vancouver BC.



March 8th Picket at the Canadian Forces Recruitment Centre, Vancouver BC.



March 18 Conference on the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, Vancouver BC.



March 17 Rally on the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, Vancouver BC.

## STATEMENT FROM

## IRANIAN COMMITTEE AGAINST WAR (ICAW):

# HANDS OFF IRAN!

## STOP US MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAN!

## UNITE AGAINST US AGGRESSION ON IRAN!

Once again George Bush and the United States ruling elite have decided to roll ahead their bloodthirsty war machine. The recent massive American military buildup in the Persian Gulf - with 50 warships, many submarines, two aircraft carriers with more than 100 warplanes, stationed batteries of Patriot anti-missile systems, more than 6000 troops in naval groups, heavy bombing warplanes stationed in the Diego Garcia air base, as well as military and political provocations - are all part of the march to war for broad military aggression against people of Iran.

Once again the US bloodsucking rulers, who have killed 700,000 innocent people in Iraq so far, and who have completely destroyed civil society and normal life for innocent Iraqi and Afghan people, have decided to start the third phase of the war in the Middle East - the first phase of which started in 2001 against Afghanistan. In the interest of US corporations, and of plundering and pillaging the people of the Middle East (especially Iran)

for their oil and the entirety of their wealth, the US government is starting another savage and criminal war.

The American killing machine will destroy yet another cradle of civilization with its 'Shock and Awe' strategy of massive pre-emptive bombing carried out with all kinds of weaponry - including radioactive DU bunker buster bombs. In the weeks ahead the US-Pentagon march to war will be completed, and now, once again, the entire human conscience is being challenged by this war drive. This anti-human act must be condemned and rejected by all.

*In the case that the US starts bombing and marching in Iran, come to the US consulate on the day of attack at 4pm and for the next day at the same time, and daily protests for the first week.*



## Who is the Iranian Committee Against War (ICAW)?

Iranian Committee Against War is a coalition of Iranians who are against war and occupation of Iran and all oppressed countries around the world.

**Please join us!**

Contact:  
iranianagainstarwar@yahoo.ca  
or  
604-771-7290



# Vancouver Celebrates International Women's Day (IWD)

By Lindsay Clarke

Unite to stop attacks on women's rights at home and abroad! End poverty! End war! This was the theme that united women in Vancouver on International Women's Day (IWD) 2007, a day to celebrate and reaffirm the goals of our continued fight for women's equality.

For more than 20 years the International Women's Day Organizing Committee in Vancouver has come together to organize a day of action to honour women and continue the struggle for women's rights. On March 3<sup>rd</sup> alongside women all around the world who are fighting for dignity and basic human rights, 200 people gathered at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre to march in the streets. Rallying at the Vancouver Public Library, more people joined to hear the program. Judith Radovan opened the event with music from Kat Wahamma and acappella group the Sapphic Songweavers followed by speakers including; Jinny Sims, President of the BC Teachers Federation; Giovana Lemus, Coordinator of the Network for non-Violence in Guatemala; June Clearsky, First Nations activist and Vancouver Status of Women; Saida Osman, Students of Color Liaison and Executive

of the Capilano Students Union; and a special report from Sheila Day on a meeting with Canada's status of women minister, Bev Oda. Following the rally there was an information fair featuring many progressive grassroots organizations, labour unions and others in Vancouver who are fighting for women's rights.

That evening over 110 people came together to celebrate International Women's Day at Trout Lake Community Centre. Parvin Ashrafi MC'd the evening starting with a film about the first IWD rally in Iran after the 1979 revolution, bringing a sense of struggle, dignity and justice to the room. The celebration featured performances by the Solidarity Notes Choir and emotions ran high when Leela Gilda y

captivated the audience with her soulful songs. Striking images of women's struggle played behind DJ Aliboa as she kept everyone dancing well into the night with her eclectic music.

On Saturday March 10<sup>th</sup> the Latin American community came together to organize a special political and cultural night for IWD focused on women's issues in Latin America and around the world. The powerful evening was the first event organized by the March 8<sup>th</sup> Coalition.

The program was very ambitious with MCs Gladys Uribe and Tamara Hansen welcoming over 120 people to the warm room filled with images of women's struggles from all over the world. The coalition presented a three part statement on the situation of women, written by the coalition and read in English and Spanish by Deidra Casumpang and Elba Espinosa, Xiomara Zazueta and Shannon Bundock and concluded by Marysol Torres and Myra Reyes. The musical notes of Familia Gomez captured people, followed by the stirring poetry of Delia Ochoa. Given a short intermission



March 3<sup>rd</sup>, IWD Rally, Vancouver BC.



March 3<sup>rd</sup>, IWD Celebration, Solidarity Notes Labour Choir.



Coalición 8 de Marzo Celebration, March 10<sup>th</sup>.



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# Release Cuban 5 Heroes from US Jails! Extradite Anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela!

*This speech was given on February 23rd 2007 by Jesus Moreno, a Venezuelan social justice activist, at a picket action held outside the US consulate in Vancouver to demand that the 5 anti-terrorist Cuban Heroes be freed.*

On October 6th 1976, two time bombs planted on the Cubana Flight 455 of Cubana de Aviación exploded, killing all 73 people on board. All 48 passengers and 25 crew aboard the plane died: 57 Cubans, 11 Guyanese, and five North Koreans. Among the dead were all 24 members of the 1975 national Cuban Fencing team that had just won all the gold medals in the Central American and Caribbean Championship - many were teenagers. Two men were charged for the planning of the terrorist act: Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles. Both belonged to an anti-Cuban terrorist organization known as Coordination of United Revolutionary Organizations - CORU.

During the trial for their crime, Bosch was acquitted because of technical defects in the prosecution evidence. He now lives in Miami, Florida after being pardoned of all American charges by President George H.W. Bush on July 18th 1990; Posada Carriles, on the

other hand, escaped from prison and eventually fled to the United States, where he is currently being held on charges of entering the country illegally, as of August 2006. Posada did not stop his terrorist career after his Venezuelan imprisonment. It is known that Posada Carriles helped to coordinate drops of military supplies to the Contras, a paramilitary collective opposed to the leftist Sandinistas in Nicaragua. This started a civil war, leaving more than 30,000 dead in this Central American nation. Posada also admitted being part of a plot to bomb Havana hotels, which led to the death of an Italian tourist. In addition, he was jailed for an assassination attempt on President Castro in Panama in 2000.

In April of 2005, a new warrant for Posada's arrest in connection with the bombing was issued by Venezuela. In September of the same year, a US immigration

judge ruled that Posada should not be deported to either Cuba or Venezuela because he could be subject to torture.

The government of the United States refused to send a terrorist threat to trial because he could be subject to torture. If the United States is so concerned with torture, then perhaps they should close down Guantanamo Bay, where hundreds of detainees are subject to sensory deprivation, sleep deprivation, the use of so-called truth drugs, beatings, locking in confined and cold cells, and

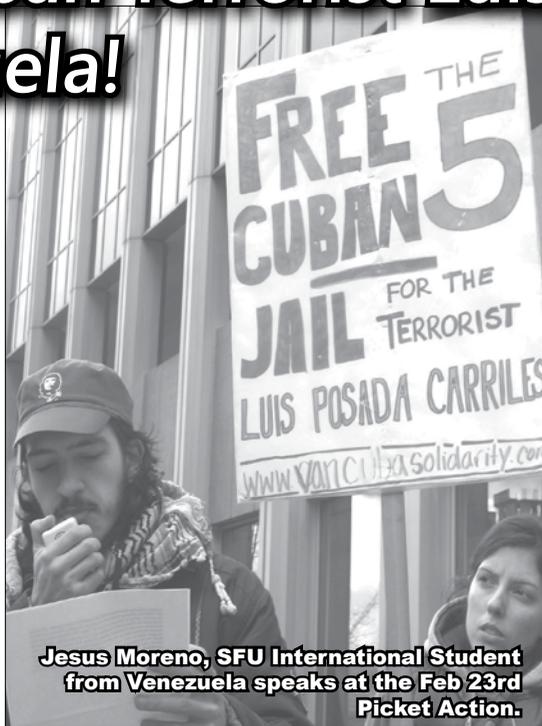
being forced to stand in stress positions for long periods of time. But of course, this is not torture according to the US government; rather this is called counter-resistance techniques to break down detainees. Well, then what about Abu Ghraib, with its thousands of shameful photos recording the bizarre abuses committed on the Iraqi people?

Or perhaps it would be better to go back in time, to talk about Nicaragua and its 30,000 deaths, killings which were carried out thanks to the economical and political support of the Reagan administration. Or perhaps even earlier, with Pinochet's Caravan of Death, or the Argentinean military dictatorship's dirty war. The whole of Operation Condor, in which 50,000 persons were murdered and other 30,000 "disappeared". The list could go almost forever. Just name a country, and there would be a case of terrorism which has not only been promoted but also carried out by the government of the United States of America.

To try these men would amount to set a trial against the innumerable atrocities committed by a handful of people who disguise their desire for profit under the stars and stripes of a flag. This is what the United States cannot accept.

To them, the idea of allowing the justice of the masses to prevail over the justice of profit seems not only ridiculous but also dangerous in a time when Latin America has chosen to take its destiny in its own hands, at a time when Cuba more than ever is an example to follow for a fundamental change. But obviously, if committing terrorism is a virtue to the government of the United States, then preventing it must be a crime. Those five Cuban men who are now being held in prison are 5 brave Latin American heroes. Those five men left everything behind in order to fight the real terrorist threat in the world, namely, US state-sponsored terrorism. Gerardo, Antonio, Ramón, Fernando, and René: five names which enclose 522 million souls demanding justice. These five names will be always present in our hearts, and the light of their example will cover the whole of our land starting from Rio Grande, all across the Caribbean, jumping from peak to peak in the Andes, from tree to tree in the Amazon, going all the way down to our Tierra del Fuego.

We are here today not only to demand the immediate extradition of Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela, but also the immediate release of these five brave Cubans, for their struggle has been done in the name of Latin America, and now Latin America struggles back in their name. Gerardo, Antonio, Ramón, Fernando, and René, the struggle will continue until the last of you has reached the pure soil of your beloved Cuba.



**Jesus Moreno, SFU International Student from Venezuela speaks at the Feb 23rd Picket Action.**

**-> PICKET ACTION <-**

**FREE THE 5 CUBAN HEROES HELD IN U.S. JAILS**

**NOW!**

**TUESDAY APRIL 24**

**3pm-4pm**

**U.S. Consulate (1075 W. Pender St.)**

Free the Cuban  Committee-Vancouver  
604.719.6947 | cuban5\_van@yahoo.com  
[www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html)



# As US Terror Grows, so does Solidarity and Resistance

## FREE THE 5 CUBAN HEROES HELD IN US JAILS NOW!

By Noah Fine

On Tuesday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, over 35 people gathered outside the US consulate in Vancouver for a picket action to demand that the 5 inspirational Cuban Heroes be freed. In between energetic picketing, the participants got to hear from some great guest speakers.

First to speak was Jesus Moreno, an international student from Venezuela. Jesus spoke about the case of anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, who escaped from prison in Venezuela while awaiting to be charged for his terrorist activity. Jesus demanded that Posada not be given asylum

in the US, where he can freely continue to organize terrorism against Cuba, and demanded that the US abide by an extradition treaty it has with Venezuela, where Posada will be tried and punished fairly for his terrorist crimes. The protesters chanted: Extradite Posada to Venezuela Now!

The second guest speaker was John Waller, the coordinator of the Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba. John spoke about the increasing solidarity with the 5 worldwide, and announced that the Russian Duma had just sent a letter to US congress urging them to act on the case of the Cuban 5. John also announced the news

that over 300 committees are working in almost 100 different countries to free the Cuban 5.

The picket wrapped up with participants and organizers alike assuring the US government that they will return next month by shouting "We will not rest until the 5 are free!"

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver continued the fight for freedom of the 5 Cuban Heroes with another dynamic monthly picket action. Over 40 supporters representing different communities in Vancouver brought their support and solidarity to the Cuban 5. Noah Fine, the coordinator of the committee, opened the picket by highlighting the injustice faced by family members of the Cuban 5, who are prevented from visiting their loved ones in jail by the US authorities. With loud chants of "Taken from their families - the Cuban 5 must be free!", the protesters picketed the consulate.

Jane Ivanova, coordinator of Free the Cuban 5 Committee at Capilano College spoke about the case of anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles. Mike Larson, a student at Kwantlen College and an organizer with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver



Jane Ivanova, Coordinator of the Capilano College Free the Cuban 5 Committee. Vancouver BC. March 27, 2007.



Picketing the US Consulate to Free the Cuban 5. Vancouver BC. Feb 23, 2007.

read a powerful resolution demanding the immediate release of the Cuban 5, that travel visas be granted to their family members and that Posada be extradited to Venezuela. The resolution passed to loud cheers and applause. The picketers left with new energy and new ideas to continue the fight for freedom of these 5 great fighters for humanity.

For more information about the case of the 5 Cuban Heroes check out:

[www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html)

[www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca](http://www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca)

[www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org)

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### Who is VCSC?

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 3 petition 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

Through petitioning throughout the lower mainland, at events, 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 a 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!

For more information contact:

[cubacommunities@yahoo.ca](mailto:cubacommunities@yahoo.ca)

778-882-5223

[vancubasolidarity.com](http://vancubasolidarity.com)

Comunidades de Vancouver en Solidaridad con Cuba (VCSC por sus siglas en ingles) es una organización que trabaja para crear apoyo y solidaridad para Cuba en Vancouver, Canadá e internacionalmente. Para cumplir con esta labor nosotros organizamos frecuentes eventos educativos y culturales, conferencias, movilizaciones y acciones en defensa de la soberanía de Cuba contra los ataques imperialistas y en defensa de las victorias de la Revolución Cubana.

Además apoyamos 3 campañas de peticiones:

- 1- Contra el Bloqueo de los EE.UU. contra Cuba
- 2- Por Libertad de los Cinco Cubanos Encarcelados en los EE.UU.
- 3- Por la Extradición del Terrorista Anticubano Luis Posada Carriles

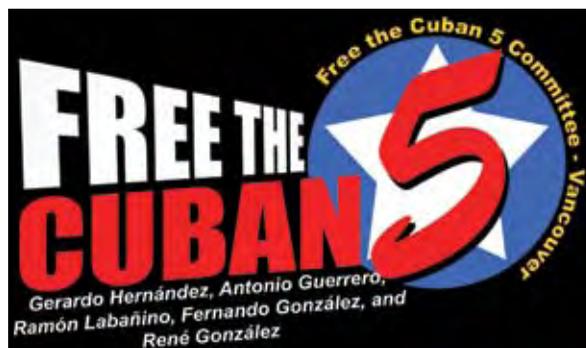
A través de las campañas de peticiones en toda la lower mainland, en eventos, festivales, secundarias, y universidades,

### ¿Quiénes son VCSC?

podemos conversar con miles de personas sobre Cuba. El objetivo de este trabajo es llevar a Cuba, un país haciendo importantes avances sociales, a jóvenes, estudiantes, mujeres, personas de América Latina, personas del tercer mundo y a otras personas trabajadoras y oprimidas en Canadá, como un ejemplo de la construcción de un mundo mejor.

Cualquier miembro nuevo es bienvenido y animamos a todos a que se involucren con VCSC para construir un movimiento de solidaridad con Cuba más fuerte y más grande en Canadá.

Para conseguir mas información contacta:  
[cubacommunities@yahoo.ca](mailto:cubacommunities@yahoo.ca)  
778-882-5223  
[www.vancubasolidarity.com](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com)



### FiveHeroes Freedom Fund

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

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

[www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org) or

[www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca](http://www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca)

# EVENTS and ACTIONS

## VANCOUVER

**Free the 5 Cuban Heroes Held in US Jails! Extradite Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela!**

Picket Action  
Tues., April 24 – 3pm  
US Consulate, 1075 W. Pender St  
Org'd by: Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver  
Info: [www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html)

### Life Inside Out:

Documentary film screening on women in the prison system in Canada  
Thurs., April 26 - 7pm  
Rhizome Cafe, 317 E Broadway (at Kingsway)  
Presented by the Stark Raven Media Collective  
Info: [www.prisonjustice.ca](http://www.prisonjustice.ca)

### Canada/NATO Out of Afghanistan! US/UK Out of Iraq!

Self-determination for all oppressed nations!  
Anti-war rally  
Sat., April 28 – 2pm  
Vancouver Art Gallery – Robson @ Howe  
Org'd by: Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)  
Info: [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) | [info@mawovancouver.org](mailto:info@mawovancouver.org) | 604-322-1764



### Insurrectionary Fundraiser '07

Anti-war Music & Cultural Night  
Sat., April 28 – 8pm  
El Rancho Restaurant – 112 Kingsway  
Org'd by: Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)  
Info: [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) | [info@mawovancouver.org](mailto:info@mawovancouver.org) | 604-322-1764

### Canada: Stop Subsidizing Israeli Apartheid Through the Jewish National Fund!

Protest outside the JNF's annual fundraiser  
Sun., April 29 – 4:30-6:00pm  
Four Seasons Hotel – Georgia @ Howe  
Sponsored by: Palestine Community Centre, Canada Palestine Association, No One Is Illegal, International Solidarity Movement, Jews for a Just Peace, Canpalnet, Trade Union Committee for Justice in the Middle East

### MAY DAY 2007

March for Worker's Rights: Solidarity with all Immigrant, Migrant, & Undocumented Workers!  
Tues., May 1  
Gather: 6pm at Clark Park (Commercial Dr. & 14<sup>th</sup> Ave)  
March to Grandview Park - gathering @ 7:30pm  
Org'd by: STATUS Coalition & May Day 2007 Organizing Committee  
Info: [saic@resist.ca](mailto:saic@resist.ca) | [ilps\\_canada@shawcable.com](mailto:ilps_canada@shawcable.com)

### Revolutionary Venezuela: Jorge Martin North American Tour 2007

Mon., May 7 – 7pm  
SFU Harbour Centre – 515 W. Hastings Rm. 1700  
Info: [www.handsoffvenezuela.org](http://www.handsoffvenezuela.org) | [canada@handsoffvenezuela.org](mailto:canada@handsoffvenezuela.org)

## EDMONTON

May Day March  
Tues., May 1 – 5:30pm  
March gathers at 5:30pm – Tipton Park  
Rally 6:30pm – End of Steel Park  
Org'd by: May Week Labour Arts Festival  
Info: [www.mayweek.ab.ca](http://www.mayweek.ab.ca)

## WINNIPEG

**Greed & Gold vs. Community Needs**  
Canadian mining companies in Central America  
Mon., April 23 - 7pm  
Event at University of Winnipeg Bulman Centre  
Org'd by: Rights Action and the Winnipeg Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement

### May Day March – Another World is Possible!

Tues., May 1 – 5pm  
March gathering at City Hall  
Event at University of Winnipeg Bulman Centre  
Org'd by: MayWorks Manitoba  
Info: 204-589-7840

## TORONTO

### May Day of Action for Status for All

Sat., May 5 -12pm  
Bloor and Christie (Christie Pitts Park)  
Org'd by: No One Is Illegal – Toronto  
Info: [www.toronto.nooneisillegal.org](http://www.toronto.nooneisillegal.org)

## MISSISSIGUA

### May Day Rally

Tues., May 1 - 5pm  
Huronario and Dundas  
Org'd by: Mississagua Coalition for Peace and Justice  
Info: [www.mcpj.org](http://www.mcpj.org)



## Distribute Revolutionary Change in Your Area!

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Publicity and Distribution Coordinator

Phone: (604) 518-5009

Email: [distro@firethistime.net](mailto:distro@firethistime.net)



## Also Available from FIRE THIS TIME



For more pamphlets available from Fire This Time Contact:  
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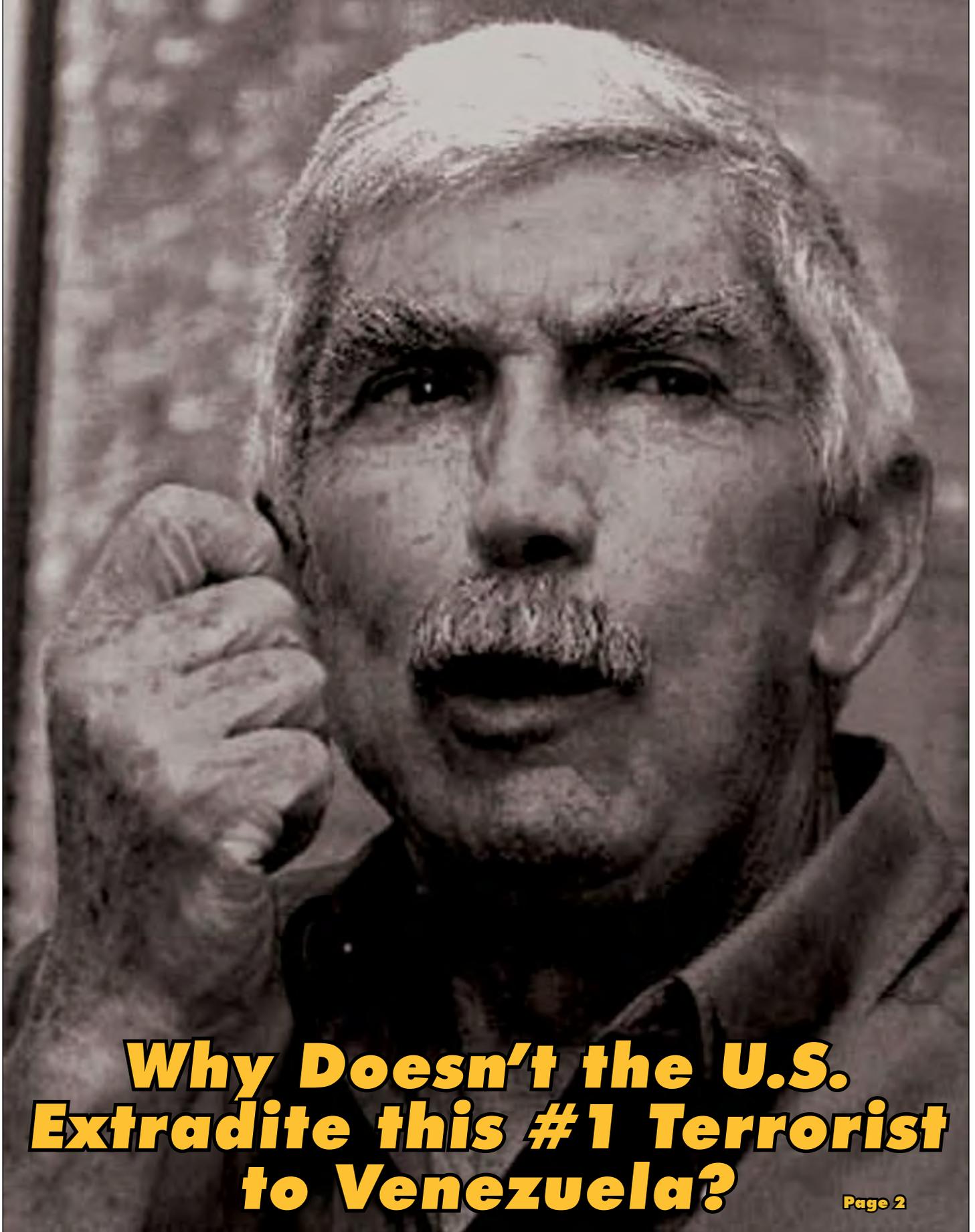
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**Notorious Anti-Cuba Terrorist - Luis Posada Carriles**



**Why Doesn't the U.S.  
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