

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



Fire This Time!

SUPPORT VANCOUVER HOTEL WORKERS!



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NEW ERA OF WAR & OCCUPATION

Imperialist Strategy in the Middle East and the War on Yemen



Top Left: Yemeni Forces capture Saudi Arabian military vehicles after Saudi forces flee Saudi border town of Najran - September 28, 2019

Middle: Yemeni protest against Saudi Arabia bombing - March 28, 2019

Bottom: Yemeni Army captures Saudi Forces after defeating them at the Saudi border town of Najran - September 28, 2019



By Azza Rojbi

Today, Yemen remains the world's worst humanitarian crisis as described by the United Nations (UN). The Saudi-led war on Yemen has ravaged the country and brought death and destruction onto its people. According to the U.S. based research group, Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), nearly 100,000 people have been killed in Yemen. Those who survive the bombings and war are pushed to the brink of famine.

The Saudi-led coalition had indiscriminately bombed homes, hospitals, schools, mosques, markets, water and sanitation facilities, roads and many other civilian infrastructures. This destruction, combined with an air, naval and maritime blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their evil coalition, has created an unliveable situation for the people of Yemen where access to food and basic necessities is almost impossible. The most recent example is the fuel shortage crisis which is exacerbating the already dire humanitarian situation. Several hospitals will run out of fuel; thousands of lives will be in peril as a direct action of the Saudi-led coalition which continues to prevent fuel ships from entering the port of Hodeidah in Yemen.

5 Years of Saudi-led War, No Victory in Sight

Saudi Arabia started its war on Yemen

in March 2015. Without the full support of the United States and its imperialist allies, the Saudi-led coalition would have not been capable of continuing its senseless war against the people of Yemen. As the Guardian Newspaper (theguardian.com) recently published on October 3, in an Opinion piece by @BazziNYU "A team of United Nations investigators, commissioned by the UN Human Rights Council, presented a devastating report in Geneva in early September detailing how the US, along with Britain and France, are likely complicit in war crimes in Yemen because of continued weapons sales and intelligence support to the Saudis and their allies, especially the United Arab Emirates [UAE]."

Almost five years of war and billions of dollars spent in arms and weaponry, have not brought Saudi Arabia even one iota closer to a victory in Yemen. The Saudi-led coalition has not achieved any of its so-called goals. They have failed to eliminate Ansar al-Allah (Houthi) forces and reinstate to power their puppet, former Yemeni president Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, who continues to hide in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi-led coalition is nowhere near

declaring any victory in Yemen, the morale is low among the thousands of mercenaries recruited by the coalition. Clashes and infighting has erupted in Aden between the Saudi-backed forces and the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) militia.

In contrast, Yemen is showing that it can defend itself and take the offensive against the Saudi-led coalition. The Houthis have launched multiple drones and cruise missiles attacks against targets in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The most significant one took place on September 14 as they targeted the world's largest oil processing facility in Saudi Arabia and another major oilfield in the country. The shockwaves from the attack were felt internationally as it knocked out 50% of Saudi Arabia's oil production, which is over 5% of the daily global oil supply.

Saudi Arabia is the world's third-highest defence spender. The kingdom spent about \$70 billion on buying arms in 2018. Despite all the sophisticated weapons

and military equipment, the Yemeni resistance was able to deal a big blow to Saudi oil infrastructure. Saudi and U.S. missile defence systems failed to detect or deter the attack, a big embarrassment for the U.S. military machine.

A week after the attack, the Trump administration authorized deploying additional air defence systems, accompanied by 200 U.S. troops, to Saudi Arabia to help protect their Saudi puppet regime.

Saudi Nightmare Continues

Another key moment in the war on Yemen came two weeks after the major attack on Saudi oil infrastructure as Houthi forces announced a successful military offensive against Saudi-led coalition forces near the border with Saudi Arabia. Speaking to media, Ansar al-Allah military spokesman Yahya Saria said that the operation destroyed three brigades and one regiment of the Saudi-led coalition forces, killing or wounding 500 fighters and capturing 2,000 troops, a large number of weapons, and hundreds of military vehicles belonging to the Saudi forces.

The Saudi-led coalition dismissed the assertions of a victory by the Houthi forces, but multiple images and footage released of the aftermath of the attack make it impossible for the Saudi-led coalition to deny its massive losses.

In an article the Washington Post on September 29, 2019 @raghavanWaPo writes:

“The Houthi-owned Al-Masirah television network broadcast footage showing a long, snaking line of what the rebels said was captured troops walking in rugged terrain. Many of the men, who apparently surrendered to the rebels, were dressed in flip flops and the traditional sarong-like clothing worn in Yemen and parts of Saudi Arabia. A handful wore tan camouflage uniforms. At least two said on camera that they were citizens of Saudi Arabia.”

These embarrassing setbacks are more proof that Saudi Arabia is losing the war. The Yemeni Houthi resistance is in a stronger position against the Saudi-led coalition forces, and they have shown their willingness to defend themselves and fight to stop the horrific war on their country. They have announced that they will halt drones and ballistic missiles against Saudi Arabia if the coalition stops launching airstrikes against Yemen and the Yemeni resistance has unilaterally released 290 prisoners that were captured fighting for the Saudi-led coalition.

Canada's Ugly Role in Yemen Exposed Again

Since 2015, the year the war on Yemen started, the government of Canada has approved “more than \$284 million in exports of Canadian weapons and military goods to the countries bombing Yemen” according to an investigative article published by the Toronto Star on April 30, 2018.

In addition, in 2016 the Trudeau government approved a \$15 billion arms deal, signed by the previous Harper government, to supply Saudi Arabia with light-armoured vehicles (LAV) equipped with heavy guns and cannon. Canada's former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Dennis Horak, defended the deal in an interview with CBC News in October 2018: “we’ve been selling some of this



equipment to them for more than 25 years. We don't have a record of them using these particular vehicles and this equipment for abusing human rights.”

As reported by CBC/Radio Canada International, recent footage released by the Houthis of the aftermath of their cross border offensive against the Saudi-led coalition “appear to show at least five damaged or destroyed LAVs of various models produced by General Dynamics Land Systems – Canada (GDLS-C) in London, Ontario, along with other armoured vehicles and large quantities of light weapons and ammunition.” This has not been the first sighting of the Canadian made armoured vehicles being used by Saudi Arabia and their mercenaries

in the horrendous war on Yemen, but the Canadian government continues to ignore the damning evidence.

According to the Report on Exports of Military Goods from Canada for the 2018 calendar year published by Global Affairs Canada on their website “Saudi Arabia was the largest non-U.S. export destination in 2018, receiving approximately \$1.282 billion in Canadian military exports (accounting for 61.96% of the total value of non-U.S. military exports).”

As people living in Canada, it is crucial that to unite our voices and continue to hold the government of Canada for selling weapons and military equipment to Saudi Arabia and challenge their complicity in the atrocities of the war on Yemen.

End the War on Yemen

Saudi Arabia is one of the most militarized nations in the world, with the support of the U.S. and other imperialist countries it has been waging a cruel war against the people of Yemen. The war has only brought death and destruction to Yemen and has further fractured the country and destabilized the Middle East. A real solution to the crisis would have to include an immediate end of the Saudi-led war on Yemen. The cruel blockade on the country must be immediately lifted to allow for critical goods and medicine to reach Yemen.

The Yemeni people have shown their steadfast commitment in defending their country and their hope for peace and an end to the foreign aggression on their homeland.

The self-determination and sovereignty of Yemen needs to be respected, the future of Yemen needs to be decided and built by Yemenis themselves, not by foreign powers fueling the conflict with money and weaponry. The only interest of the United States and its imperialist allies is to expand their hegemony and control in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). They have no credibility whatsoever. Their history of interventions in MENA is one of continuous destruction by war and occupation.

U.S., Saudi and UAE Stop the War on Yemen!

All Foreign Troops Out of Yemen Now!

Stop Bombing People of Yemen!

End the Blockade of Yemen!

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

ON STRIKE! Hotel Workers in Vancouver fighting Back!

By Alison Bodine

Despite the impending rains, the city of Vancouver remains a popular tourist destination and home of some of Canada's best-rated upscale hotels. This September, Vancouver also became the centre for an important fightback by the hospitality workers that make this city such a great place to travel. For the first time in 20 years, over 1500 hotel room attendants, cooks, front desk workers, and bellmen from UNITE HERE Local 40 went on an ongoing open-ended strike demanding vital improvements in working conditions, wages, security and safety, and benefits.

Workers at the Hyatt Regency, Westin Bayshore and Pinnacle Hotel Harbourfront began their strike on September 19, following 14 months of bargaining. They were joined three days later by workers from the Hotel Georgia, who have been working without a contract for eight months. Their demands are straight-forward – from stable, full-time jobs that provide a living wage, to an end to chronic understaffing that leads to increased workplace injuries and a decline in quality of life. However, the

Greater Vancouver Hotel Employers Association, which represents the hotel management, has been unwilling to continue negotiating with good faith at the bargaining table.

As Naden Abenes, who has been a room attendant at the Hyatt Regency for 11 years explained to Province newspaper reporter @nickeagland (theprovince.com) on September 22, 2019 “The company, they just want to talk about wages and dismiss all the other demands we’re asking for – job security, workload, benefits, retirement for long-term people, health and safety – and that’s very important.”

Another critical issue that remains on the table for workers at the Rosewood Hotel Georgia is sexual harassment. Just this year, 10 female workers from the hotel have filed complaints with the BC

Human Rights Tribunal against their employer for the harassment that they were forced to endure in order to keep their jobs. Now, the hotel management is refusing to accept basic protections for their workers: panic buttons, a guest ban and protection for employees who come forward

with complaints. Although the Hyatt Regency, Westin Bayshore and Pinnacle Hotel Harbourfront have agreed to these important protections, it is yet to be seen whether they will carry through with their promises.

Hotel Workers in Vancouver Are Standing Up for All of Us!

According to a press release from UNITE HERE Local 40, “As hotels under strike have doubled their revenues from just years ago, workers have been left behind – on their current wages, striking room attendants have to work 89 hours a week just to earn enough to afford a one-bedroom apartment in Vancouver.”

Unfortunately, this is a familiar story for many workers across Vancouver and British Columbia. As of 2018, one in five children in B.C. grow up in poverty, many of them in homes with at least one working parent (BC Child Poverty 2018 Report Card). One of the reasons for this is that real wages for workers in Canada have remained stagnant since the 1970's – even though the hospitality industry and other sectors across Canada have continued to rake in massive profits.

Hotel workers in Vancouver are standing up for the right to dignified work and retirement, a workplace free of injury and sexual harassment and job security. By going on strike and fighting for their basic rights, they are also defending the rights of all unionized and non-unionized workers in BC. All poor, working and oppressed people should support them in their struggle.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette



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Support Vancouver's Hotel Workers!



<https://www.uniteherelocal40.org/campaigns/support-vancouvers-hotel-workers/>

CANADA DIRTY ROLE IN HAITI! WHAT CANADA IS REALLY DOING IN HAITI?



By Janine Solanki

The 2016 election of Jovenel Moïse as Haiti's president was marked by fraud and protests, and since then his presidency has been met by waves of protests. His presidency has not improved the lives of the Haitian people who are suffering food scarcity, fuel shortages and a lack of infrastructure and social services. 61.7% of Haiti's population of 11 million live below the international poverty line, with \$1.25 USD or less a day, according to UNICEF. Yet – the government of Jovenel Moïse receives economic, policing and political support from the “Core Group” made up of the United States, Canada, France, Spain, Brazil, the European Union, and a representative of the United Nations. Without the support of these imperialist countries and bodies, the Moïse government wouldn't have a leg to stand on.

In May 2019 Haiti's Superior Court of Auditors directly linked the president, as well as others aligned with his party and previous administrations, of embezzling billions of dollars in savings from the Venezuelan aid program PetroCaribe, intended for development and to fund social services. Even funds allocated for reconstruction after the devastating 2010 earthquake were fed into the pockets of companies owned by or linked to Moïse. Furthermore, a June 2019 report by the Haiti Relief and Reconstruction Watch found that the Canadian company SNC-Lavalin (already at the center of a bribery scandal

involving Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau) ran a construction project in Haiti that has also been implicated in swallowing up PetroCaribe funds.

Since September 2019, the Haitian people have held near-daily protests across Haiti. Beyond demanding the resignation of Jovenel Moïse, the protesters have demanded an end to foreign intervention and backing of corrupt leaders like Moïse. A peaceful mass protest on October 4th marched to where the real seat of power in Haiti is – the United Nations offices, where protesters delivered a letter demanding the UN end its support for Moïse. Alongside protest signs reading “Resign Jovenel,” were also signs demanding “America come to take your corrupt and gangster president in Haiti that you give to us in fraudulent elections” and “Core group = diplomatic cartel”.

Haiti has a proud history of many firsts. Haiti is the only nation founded as the result of a slave revolution, which won independence from France in 1804. Haiti also became the world's first black-led republic and the first independent Caribbean state.

Since then though, Haiti has been plundered and exploited by imperialist powers. This started in 1825 with France extorting 150 million gold francs from Haiti, shamefully as

Photos from protests held between 2010-2013 against MINUSTAH, the United Nations mission in Haiti. The sign on the left reads: “Everyone who has suffered under the hands of the soldiers - MINUSTAH and the UN have closed their eyes on the victims - Down with MINUSTAH rapist.” The sign in the centre photo is referring to the implication of the UN mission in the deadly 2010 cholera outbreak.

reparations for the loss of slaves and property. Then came the 1915 invasion of Haiti by the U.S. who occupied Haiti for 19 years, during which they controlled Haiti's finances, ran forced labour camps and murdered those who resisted the occupation. The U.S. also forced the election of a U.S. puppet president – as we can see, this has not changed today!

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Demonstrator protests in Port-au-Prince, Haiti - October 4, 2019.

By Tamara Hansen

WHY IS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TIGHTENING ITS CRUEL BLOCKADE AGAINST CUBA?

Spiralling Into a Whirlpool

On May 2, 2019, the U.S. government tightened its 57-year-old blockade on Cuba by invoking "Title III" of the Helms-Burton Law. Starting with President Clinton in 1996, all following U.S. presidents – including Trump until May – never implemented "Title III", which is one of the more punishing measures within the Helms-Burton Law. However, the Trump administration did not stop there. Since May 2019, the U.S. government has continued its campaign of escalating hostile and aggressive measures against Cuba.

On June 5, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) restricted non-family travel to Cuba by removing a previous authorization for group "people-to-people educational travel". This is meant to stop Americans from visiting Cuba in an educational capacity, for sports, artistic, cultural or other educational exchanges. These measures isolate Cuba but also ensure that fewer Americans will travel to Cuba and see with their own eyes the important gains of the Cuban revolution.

On June 20, Cuba was added to the "lowest tier" on the U.S. State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report. According to CNN, this means the U.S. government is accusing Cuba of, "not fully meet[ing] the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and not making any efforts to do so." In a press conference U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo explained that Cuba was being downgraded in this report due to Cuba's internationalist medical missions

in which Havana sends tens of thousands of doctors and medical professionals around the world to treat people for free. This is a world-renowned Cuban program that has received many awards and accolades from various international institutions including the World Health Organization and United Nations. The U.S. government is trying to undermine these life-saving programs by accusing the Cuban government of threatening or coercing its doctors into participating in the medical missions.

On September 6, the U.S. Department

of the Treasury released a statement, "Treasury Issues Changes to Strengthen Cuba Sanctions Rules." The changes made further restrict Cubans living in the U.S. from sending remittances to their family members in

Cuba, they also halted U-turn transactions. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin stated, "We are taking additional steps to financially isolate the Cuban regime. The United States holds the Cuban regime accountable for its oppression of the Cuban people and support of other dictatorships throughout the region, such as the illegitimate Maduro regime." These false pretexts about increasing the blockade on Cuba due to its close relationship with Venezuela did not stop there.

On September 24, U.S. President Trump spoke at the United Nations General Assembly stating, "The dictator Maduro is a Cuban puppet, protected by Cuban bodyguards, hiding from his own people, while Cubans plunder Venezuela's oil wealth to sustain its own corrupt communist rule." Like many of Trump's outlandish statements, this is easily verifiable as false. President

Maduro's bodyguards are Venezuelan and there are numerous international accords between Cuba and Venezuela related

to exchanging cheaper oil for Cuban doctors and medical professionals to work in rural communities in Venezuela.

On September 26, the Trump administration imposed new sanctions on former Cuban President and leader of Cuba's Communist Party, Raul Castro. They also extended the sanctions to all of Castro's children. Mike Pompeo tweeted, "Today we designate Raul Castro and his immediate family for his involvement in gross violations of human rights. The Cuban regime's disregard for human rights and the use of violence to





U.S. President Trump speaking at the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly - September 24, 2019.

prop up the former Maduro regime are responsible for the ongoing crises in #Cuba and #Venezuela.”

These on-going attacks on Cuba, specifically those on former President Raul Castro, were strangely foreshadowed by the actions of an important American company. Just a week before Trump’s UN speech, Twitter blocked dozens of official Cuban twitter accounts including Raul Castro; his daughter, Mariela Castro (who leads Cuba’s National Centre for Sex Education); Cuba Debate, Granma, Mesa Redonda (news and discussion on Cuba); and many accounts of journalists for Cuban media. The blocking of the accounts took place at a suspiciously calculated moment. According to the Guardian UK Newspaper on September 12, 2019, “The move came just as Cuba’s president, Miguel Diaz-Canel, was addressing the nation on state-run TV, warning of an energy crisis due to US sanctions.” While most accounts were restored the next day, Twitter did not explain or apologize, instead the company stated that they followed their company’s policy guidelines and accused the accounts of breaking Twitter’s rules. However, no specifics were given to answer the questions about: why it happened at this particular time; why it happened to verified accounts; or why several accounts were quickly restored.

Cuba Responds to U.S. Attacks

Throughout these months of attacks and increasing blockade, the Cuban government and Cuban people have been responding, with petition campaigns, social media campaigns, speeches at international summits, articles in the Cuban and international

press, and statements from the Ministry of Foreign affairs and other government institutions.

On September 28, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla spoke during the general debate of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). He responded to the U.S. government’s ongoing attacks on Cuba explaining, “In the course of last year, the U.S. government has steadily and qualitatively increased its hostile actions and the blockade of Cuba. [...] The economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the U.S. continues to be the principal obstacle to our country’s development and progress in the process to update the socialist economic and social development model that our country has designed.”

During his address to the UNGA, Rodríguez not only questioned the U.S. blockade on Cuba, but the whole

capitalist and imperialist system defended by Trump. Rodríguez stated, “As we witnessed a few days ago in this Assembly, the U.S. President usually attacks socialism in his public statements, with clearly electoral purposes, while promoting a McCarthyist intolerance of those who believe in the possibility of a better world and entertain the hope of living in peace in sustainable harmony with nature and in solidarity with all others. President Trump ignores or intends to overlook the fact that neoliberal capitalism is responsible for the increasing social and economic inequality affecting even the most developed societies and that, given its nature, fosters corruption, social marginalization, a rise in crime, racial intolerance, and xenophobia. He forgets, or does not know, that capitalism begots fascism, apartheid, and imperialism.”

History of the U.S. Blockade on Cuba

After the triumph of the Cuban revolution on January 1, 1959, the U.S. government imposed a series of sanctions on Cuba. A full trade blockade was imposed on Cuba in 1962. Since its inception this unjust and cruel U.S. policy has hurt all sectors of Cuban society: cutting access to medicines, school supplies, travel, international trade, construction materials, and the list goes on. The blockade also hurts people living in the United States: imposing travel restrictions, international legal/financial penalties on U.S. companies, blocking the sale of Cuban medicines to the United States, etc.

Of course, the blockade is only one element in the U.S. government’s campaign against Cuba and its revolutionary people and government. The U.S. has also led invasions (Bay of Pigs), used biological warfare (the spread of dengue fever and swine flu), funded opposition groups, launched international media campaigns, and imposed other “diplomatic” pressure and threats against Cuba.

In 2014 when Cuba and the United States formally re-established diplomatic ties – under then-Cuban President Raul Castro and then-U.S. president Barack Obama – many believed it was only a matter of time until the blockade would end. However, Obama did not have the

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IN DEFENCE OF MOTHER EARTH!

Global Climate Strike Mobilizes 9 Million People



Greta Thunberg marches at the front of the Global Climate Strike action in Montreal, Quebec which brought out 500,000 people - September 27, 2019.

By Alison Bodine

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words and yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are at the beginning of mass extinction and all you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!"

— Greta Thunberg at the United Nations Climate Summit, September 23, 2019

These are some of the powerful words of Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old climate activist whose one-person protest in front of the Swedish Parliament a year ago sparked a global climate protest movement that has proven its capacity to mobilize millions.

From September 20-27, 2019 over 9 million people from 185 countries, and all seven continents went out into the streets in defence of mother earth and humanity. On Friday, September 20, the first day of the Global Climate Strike week of action there were 4 million people participating in Climate Strike actions – from 5,000 people in South Africa to 250,000 people in New York City to 1.4 million people in Germany and beyond. On Friday, September 27th over 2 million people mobilized in Canada and Italy alone.

Following the example of Greta, the Global Climate Strike actions around the world were called for by youth and student-led organizations. These actions raise the voices of youth – those whose futures are at risk from an increasingly unstable and disruptive climate, which was most recently modelled in a 2018 United Nations report giving humanity 12 years to drastically cut greenhouse gas

emissions. Although the demands of the actions varied – the overall theme was clear – time is running out for humanity to come together to prevent climate catastrophe. As protestors in New York City put it – "Climate change is not a lie, we won't let our planet die," and "Our planet is not for profit!" – or as they demanded in Vietnam "Save Our Planet – Fight Capitalism" and "#SaveThePlanet Change NOW."

Over 1 Million People Mobilize in Canada

In Canada, more than 1 million people mobilized for the Climate Strike on September 27, as reported by Fridays for Future – making the actions the largest demonstrations in the history of Canada. There were 500,000 people in Montreal, Quebec; 250,000 people in Vancouver, British Columbia; there were even 4,000 people in Edmonton, Alberta, which is at the heart of the oil and natural resource extraction industry in Canada. These were just a few of the 241 actions that were recorded across the country, spanning every province and territory.

Hypocritically, Prime Minister Trudeau, who has led a government that has failed to take action that would even come close to meeting the modest United Nations climate targets, also joined the Climate Strike action in Montreal. The satirical news website the Beaverton highlighted this glaring contradiction when they reported on Trudeau's participation in the action – "I need to get off my duff and do something!" yelled Trudeau heckling himself and his government through a megaphone. "Climate leaders don't build pipelines! They take swift and immediate



Global Climate Strikes around the world (from top to bottom): Hamburg, Germany; Port Vila, Vanuatu; Sydney, Australia; Capetown, South Africa - September 20, 2019.

action. Greta was right, I clearly have not done enough,” in reference to the Trudeau government’s purchase of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion for 4.5 billion tax-payer dollars.

Before the massive actions on September 27, the youth and students of Climate Strike Canada called for “die-in” actions on September 20. These actions involved people demonstrating at public locations and feigning “death” by falling on the ground at a coordinated time. For example, in Vancouver this took place in front of the Teck Resources offices (Teck is one of the largest investors in expanding the tar sands oil extraction operations in Alberta, Canada), while protestors in Winnipeg chose to demonstrate at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to call attention to the deaths and violations of human rights brought on by climate change around the world.

250,000 People Fill the Streets of Vancouver

The September 27 action in Vancouver, Canada was the largest demonstration ever to be held in the city. A powerful 250,000 people came out that day – which amounts to nearly one out of every ten people living in the Metro Vancouver region. With the turn out far exceeding any predictions, the Vancouver infrastructure was clearly not ready for that tremendous influx of people, there were long waits to get on the SkyTrain line, and eventually people decided to just start walking to get to the march on time.

With energy and determination, people joined for a rally and march called for by the high school student-organized group “Sustainabiliteens,” which began with an Indigenous opening and speakers at Vancouver City Hall. Youth and students, and people of all ages and from all different communities carried colourful signs and banners as they marched and chanted, filling all four lanes of the Cambie Street Bridge into Downtown Vancouver.

As with other marches around the world, there were many beautiful and creative

signs with demands against climate change in and in defence of mother earth – but the chant of “Hey, Hey Trudeau – this pipeline has got to go!” was clearly one that resonated through the spirited crowds.

Must Continue Beyond the Global Climate Strike

The Sept 20-27, 2019 Global Climate Strike demonstrated the tremendous potential that exists to mobilize people around the world in defence of mother earth. We live at a time when those living in the richest countries are still enjoying a relatively high quality of life that intentionally paralyzes them from taking action, while those in the poorest are struggling for their very survival under imperialist wars and occupation and economic devastation. The fact that the international Climate Strike mobilizations have brought millions of people to act by mobilizing in the streets is an incredible opportunity for everyone who believes that climate justice and a better world are possible. However, building a movement to fundamentally confront the climate catastrophe is going to take many more Global Climate Strikes and many more consistent mass actions that unite all working, poor and oppressed people.

In Vancouver and British Columbia, it is also important that the Climate Strike movement joins with the people and organizations mobilizing against the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, fracking and the LNG Natural Gas pipeline and the construction of the Site-C Dam – unjustifiable climate-destroying projects that will contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and violate Indigenous rights and sovereignty. Moving beyond “Climate Action Now!” to the concrete demands that challenge the profit over people mode of operation in Canada – and around the world – is an important next step. System Change Not Climate Change!

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Merci, Miigwich, Thank You Canada

241 strikes

1,000,000 people

Strikes in every province & territory

1 out of every 37 Canadians

Change is coming!

SEPT. 20TH

CLIMATE ACTION WEEK FOR FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2019

EARTH STRIKE

@FFFCanada

80% of groups reported their numbers as of September 29, 2019



Global Climate Strikes across Canada (from top to bottom): Fire This Time in Vancouver, BC; march to downtown Vancouver; Vancouver action organizers the Sustainabiliteens guide the march; action in Edmonton, Alberta; rally in Toronto, Ontario - September 27, 2019.

Battle of Ideas Press

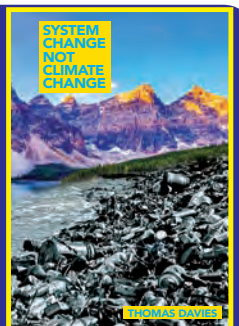
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By Thomas Davies

Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro-Vancouver.



Excerpts from Speech to the United Nations General Assembly by Evo Morales, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, September 24, 2019

Sisters and brothers of the International Organizations and all the peoples of the world:

Once again we meet in the most important multilateral organization of humanity, to reflect and analyze collectively on the global problems that concern the peoples of the world. We note with concern the deterioration of the multilateral system, product of unilateral measures promoted by some states which have decided to ignore the commitments, good faith and global structures built for a healthy coexistence between states, within the framework of international law and the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We meet in this forum to discuss and find solutions to the serious threats facing humanity and life on the planet.

Our house, Mother Earth, is our only home and is irreplaceable. It increasingly suffers more fires, more floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, droughts and other catastrophes. Each year is hotter than the previous one, the thaws are greater, the level of the oceans grows. Every day we suffer the disappearance of species, soil erosion, desertification and deforestation.

Sisters and brothers, we are warned that if we follow this course of action, by the year 2100 we will reach an increase of 3 degrees Celsius. That would imply massive and devastating changes. The consequences of climate change will condemn, according to data from our organization [the United Nations], millions of people to poverty, hunger, no potable water, losing their homes, forced displacement, more refugee crises and new armed conflicts.

Sisters and brothers, in recent weeks we have been surprised by the forest fires that have been unleashed in different parts of the planet: in the Amazon, in Oceania and Africa, affecting flora,

fauna and biodiversity. In recent weeks, fires have broken out in Bolivia, which we have been fighting against using our financial, technical and human resources. To date, our country has spent more than \$15 million to mitigate fires. We thank the International Community for their timely cooperation in our fight against the fires, as well as their commitment to participate in post-fire actions.

Sisters, brothers and the peoples of the world:

VERY CLEARLY THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM IS IN THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM



Bolivian President Evo Morales speaking at the UN General Assembly

The arms race, military spending, technology at the service of death and the unscrupulous arms trade have increased.

The financial system remains undemocratic, inequitable and unstable, which privileges tax havens and the banking secrecy that subjects weak countries to accept conditions that perpetuate their dependence.

We note with sadness that the great social asymmetries continue. According to Oxfam, today 1.3 billion people live in poverty, while 1% of the richest kept 82% of the world's wealth in 2017. Inequality, hunger, poverty, the migration crisis, epidemic diseases, unemployment, are not just local problems, they are global problems.

On the other hand, the creative capacity

of humanity, every day surprises us with new inventions and new technological applications. They have offered great solutions to very complex problems. Technology has meant a qualitative leap for humanity. However, it is necessary that from this multilateral body agreements on the matter be established with the participation of all States.

Sisters and brothers, it is essential to talk about the structural causes of the different crises. Transnational companies control food, water, non-renewable resources, weapons, technology and our personal data.

They intend to commercialize everything, to accumulate more capital. The world is being controlled by a global oligarchy, only a handful of billionaires define the political and economic destiny of humanity.

26 people have the same wealth as 3.8 billion people. That is unfair, that is immoral, that is inadmissible. The underlying problem lies in the model of production and consumerism, in the ownership of natural resources and in the unequal distribution of wealth. Let's say it very clearly: the root of the problem is in the capitalist system. That is why the United Nations is more relevant and important than ever. Individual efforts are insufficient and only joint action and unity will give us an opportunity to overcome them. As we have already said, the responsibility of our generation is to give the next a fairer and more human world. That will only be achieved if we work together to consolidate a multipolar world, with common rules, defending multilateralism and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and International Law.

Continued on page 20

LA RAÍZ DE LOS PROBLEMAS ESTÁ EN EL SISTEMA CAPITALISTA

Extracto del discurso del presidente de Bolivia Evo Morales en la Asamblea General de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, 24 de septiembre de 2019.

Hermanas y hermanos de los Organismos Internacionales y a todos los pueblos del mundo.

Una vez más, nos reunimos en la Organización Multilateral más importante de la humanidad, para reflexionar y analizar de manera colectiva, sobre los problemas globales que preocupan a los pueblos del mundo. Observamos con preocupación el deterioro del sistema multilateral, producto de las medidas de carácter unilateral impulsadas por algunos estados, que han decidido desconocer los compromisos, la buena fe y las estructuras globales construidas para una convivencia sana entre los estados, en el marco del derecho internacional y los principios básicos de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas. Nos reunimos en este foro para debatir y buscar soluciones a las graves amenazas que sufren la humanidad y la vida en el planeta.

Nuestra casa, la Madre Tierra, es nuestro único hogar y es irremplazable. Cada vez sufre más incendios, más inundaciones, huracanes, terremotos, sequías y otras catástrofes. Cada año es más caliente que el anterior, el deshielo es mayor, el nivel de los océanos crece. Cada día sufrimos la desaparición de especies, la erosión de la tierra, la desertificación y la deforestación.

Hermanas y hermanos, estamos advertidos de que si seguimos este curso de acción, para el año 2.100 llegaremos a un incremento de 3 grados centígrados. eso implicaría cambios masivos y devastadores. Las consecuencias del Cambio Climático condenarán, según datos de nuestra organización, a millones de personas a la pobreza, al hambre, a no contar con agua potable, a perder sus hogares, a desplazamientos forzados, a más crisis de refugiados y a nuevos conflictos armados.

Hermanas y hermanos, en las últimas semanas hemos sido sorprendidos por los incendios forestales que se han desatado en distintos lugares del planeta: En la amazonia, en Oceanía y África, afectando a la flora, la fauna y la biodiversidad. En las últimas semanas, en Bolivia también se han generado focos de calor, que los venimos combatiendo haciendo uso de nuestros recursos financieros, técnicos y humanos. Hasta la fecha nuestro País ha erogado más de 15 millones de dólares para mitigar los incendios. Agradecemos a la Comunidad Internacional por su cooperación oportuna en nuestra lucha contra el fuego, así como su compromiso para participar en las acciones post incendio.

Hermanas, hermanos y los pueblos del mundo:

La carrera armamentística, el gasto

militar, la tecnología puesta al servicio de la muerte y el comercio de armas sin escrúpulos se han incrementado. El sistema financiero sigue siendo antidemocrático, inequitativo e inestable que privilegia a los paraísos fiscales y el secreto bancario que somete a los países débiles a aceptar condiciones que perpetúan su dependencia.

Constatamos con tristeza que continúan las grandes asimetrías sociales. Según datos de Oxfam, en la actualidad 1.300 millones de personas viven en la pobreza, mientras el 1% de los más ricos se quedó con el 82% de la riqueza mundial en 2017. La desigualdad, el hambre, la pobreza, la crisis migratoria, las enfermedades epidémicas, el desempleo, no son sólo problemas locales, son problemas globales.

Por otro lado, la capacidad creativa de la humanidad, cada día nos sorprende con nuevos inventos y nuevas aplicaciones tecnológicas. Las mismas han ofrecido, grandes soluciones a problemáticas muy complejas. La tecnología ha significado un salto cualitativo para la humanidad. Sin embargo, se hace necesario que desde este órgano multilateral se establezcan acuerdos en la materia con participación de todos los Estados.

Hermanas y hermanos, es imprescindible hablar de las causas estructurales de las diferentes crisis. Las empresas trasnacionales controlan los alimentos, el agua, los recursos no renovables, las armas, la tecnología y nuestros datos personales. Se pretende mercantilizar todo, para acumular más capital. El mundo está siendo controlado por una oligarquía global, sólo un puñado de multimillonarios define el destino político y económico de la humanidad.

26 personas tienen la misma riqueza que 3.800 millones de personas. Eso es injusto, eso es inmoral, eso es inadmisibles. El problema de fondo está en el modelo de producción y el consumismo, en la propiedad de los recursos naturales y en la distribución inequitativa de la riqueza. Digámoslo con mucha claridad: la raíz del problema está en el sistema capitalista. Es por eso que las Naciones Unidas son más relevantes e importantes que nunca, pese a los esfuerzos individuales, éstos son insuficientes y sólo la acción



El presidente Evo Morales apangando brotes del incendio en la comunidad de Santa Rosa, Bolivia.

continúa en la página 20

Venezuela, a Revolution in Motion

An Eyewitness Report from an Epicentre for Change



By Alison Bodine & Tamara Hansen

In Fire This Time Volume 13 Issue 8 we published, "Fire This Time in Caracas, Venezuela at the Sao Paulo Forum: The Only Thing that Guarantees Triumph is Unity!" with a report from the Fire This Time delegation to Venezuela in July 2019 for the dynamic international Sao Paulo Forum. Alison and Tamara, members of the Fire This Time Editorial Board, also took the opportunity while in Venezuela to spend some time outside of the forum meeting with Venezuelans and conducting interviews.

Part one of this article, which shares some anecdotes and first-hand observations of what they witnessed during the trip was printed in Fire This Time Volume 13, Issue 9 (September 2019).

Part two covers experiences from Venezuela following the Sao Paulo Forum, as Tamara and Alison continue to share in the every day lives of Venezuelans who are fighting back and organizing against U.S.-led war and blockade and in defence of their sovereignty and self-determination. The report begins with a reflection from visiting a neighbourhood communal council, one of the many ways that people in Venezuela have organized their communities within the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

PART TWO

Next, we attended a meeting of a communal council; these are neighbourhood councils organized within the Bolivarian process. They explained their work to Tamara and asked Tamara about the Venezuela solidarity movement in Canada and the work of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice – Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Again, they were eager to understand how media in Canada portrays the government of Nicolas Maduro and hoped that we could understand the daily struggles their neighbourhood is going through, but also how they have all

come together to make sure everyone has the basics covered. Their council featured some people with years of experience as well as four women who were new and just getting integrated into the work. One of the most outspoken members was a Peruvian woman who had been living in Venezuela for decades. She expressed how the media says so many people are leaving Venezuela, and she has the option to be in Peru, but chooses Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolutionary process.



Top to bottom: Tamara visits a "Gran Misión Vivienda" construction site in Caracas. This social housing program has delivered 2.8 million homes to the most marginalized people in Venezuela in the last 5 years; Alison at the Sao Paulo Forum with Francisco Torrealba, President of the Workers Commission within Venezuela's National Consistent Assembly.

"Human Rights" in Venezuela: The case of Michelle Bachelet and the U.N. Report on Human Rights in Venezuela?

At the beginning of July 2019, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report about the human rights situation in Venezuela. This report has been widely used by imperialist governments and their major media mouthpieces to condemn the government of Venezuela for a whole range of so-called human rights abuses. At the same time, this report ignores the severe impact of the U.S. and imperialist blockade on the people of Venezuela, as well as the violence committed by the right-wing opposition in Venezuela. Given the UN High Commissioner's history of compliance and assistance in U.S.-led campaigns to condemn countries for "human rights abuses," this report's bias against the government of Venezuela was not a surprise.

During our time in Venezuela, we heard from many people with different perspectives on the fundamental flaws of the report. Many people were frustrated that Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights who was responsible for the report, had met with the Venezuelan government, as well as individuals and organizations that are part of the Bolivarian revolutionary process, but had deliberately silenced their comments and experiences by not including them in the final report.

Within the Bolivarian revolutionary process poor, working, and oppressed people in Venezuela have made tremendous advances towards achieving human rights – and continue to fight for more – which is what the speakers on the panel emphasized. For example, women in Venezuela have made incredible gains, especially from 1999-2014. However, the increasing economic blockade and war against Venezuela has slowed down the pace of advancement – as women in Venezuela



must now concern themselves more with taking care of the basic needs of their families and communities. Women in Venezuela make up more than 80% of the leadership in community and social organizations, and therefore are on the frontlines in standing up against the imperialist attack that is denying Venezuelans access to food, medicine, and other necessities.

The Revolutionary Bolivarian Process Confronts Shortages and Sanctions

When we talk about real and fundamental human rights, one example is thinking about access to food. Tamara was lucky to be with Jimmy Gudiño, an elected Councilor for the Municipal Council of the Libertador Municipality of Caracas, on the day of the CLAP distribution. CLAP stands for “Comite Local de Abastecimiento y Produccion” (Local Supply and Production Committees). The CLAP distributes food at low cost to communities and homes across Venezuela. Currently six million Venezuelan families are benefiting from this program, getting food at a subsidy of 98%. Throughout Caracas there was lots of food on shelves, however we were told by many Venezuelans that the prices are unaffordable for many families. This is in contrast with last summer where there were food shortages in many parts of the city, but when the food was available it was affordable and subsidized. Both of these situations are informed by greedy private companies and corporations which have been caught selling products across the border in Colombia. In Colombia they can make more profits and at the same time this create shortages in Venezuela which assists in their effort to create distrust and frustration with the Bolivarian revolutionary process. There are also many cases of price-gouging by the private sector which controls the majority of food production and distribution. The CLAP program began in 2016 to provide basic foods to poor and working families. This May, President Maduro announced the Bolivarian Militia would begin supervising the CLAP system to fight incidents of corruption and hoarding.

Tamara saw first-hand how this project is helping to improve the lives of poor and working people. She was, without any pre-scheduling, invited as a guest to hand out bags of food and connect with people. Within the community Tamara met two senior citizens, a mother and her son, who had been identified by the community as at risk and unable to pay for the CLAP bag. Other members of the community offered to pay a bit more for their bags to ensure that this family could take their bags for free. Inside each sack was cooking oil, pasta, flour, dried beans, and other products meant to help families make it through the month.

This important program has been threatened by the United States government, which



Tamara and Jimmy Gudiño, an elected Councilor for the Municipal Council of the Libertador Municipality of Caracas participating in the CLAP subsidized food distribution program.

2017-2018. European and U.S. impede financial operations of the Venezuelan government, for a total of \$300 million destined for the purchase of food.



Social media campaign by Venezuelan social movements against the economic and financial war on their country. Follow the campaign on twitter: @DesbloqueeVE

Left to right: Alison & Tamara at anti-imperialist march in Caracas, July 2019; Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro & his wife Celia Flores greet a rally celebrating the 11th anniversary of the Youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (JPSUV), September 2019; rally in Venezuela against U.S. intervention and blockade against Venezuela, August 2019. The signs read "Trump Unblock Venezuela" & "Respect Venezuela."

imposed sanctions on the CLAP program at the end of July during the time we were in Venezuela. This is a cynical and despicable move by the government of the U.S. that once again demonstrates how their blockade on Venezuela is meant to harm poor and working people – and similar to the U.S. blockade on Cuba – create distrust and poverty so that the people of Venezuela will become disillusioned and revolt against the Bolivarian process. However, those who are the poorest and the most in need of the CLAP are also the most loyal to President Maduro's government and the Bolivarian project, because they are the ones who know that the wealthy oligarchs who used to rule Venezuela and their puppet masters in the United States have nothing to offer poor and working people.

International Solidarity within the Revolutionary Bolivarian Project

The importance of solidarity was also highlighted in a book launch event that Tamara attended at the Mayor's office in La Guaira, the capital of the Venezuelan state of Vargas, to the North of Caracas. Three young Argentinians have just published a book “Más allá de los monstruos” (Beyond the monsters) an anti-imperialist compilation of essays and articles about the geopolitics of Latin America today. Over a hundred Venezuelans attended the event to learn more about this book. Tamara was also invited to speak a bit about the work of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign in Canada. It was an important demonstration of solidarity against U.S. imperialism amongst peoples.

Continued on page 26



Venezuela is Not Alone, United We Will Win

Interview with Youth Leader Yakuana Martinez

Interview by Tamara Hansen

Transcribed & Translated
by Alison Bodine

While in Caracas, Venezuela for the Sao Paulo Forum at the end of July 2019, Fire This Time had the chance to interview revolutionary Venezuelan youth about the impact of the unjust economic blockade on Venezuela; and about their message for people living in Canada, the United States, and around the world. The following is an interview with a young revolutionary Venezuelan woman Yakuana Martinez, the coordinator of the Estafeta Cultural Centre, a collaborative art space that opened one year ago in the heart of Caracas. To read more about Fire This Time's experiences in Venezuela, and for some of our other interviews see Fire This Time Volume 13 Issue 9 (September 2019) and Issue 8 (August 2019).

Fire This Time: Hello, thank you for being here with Fire This Time social justice newspaper. Can you please introduce yourself and say a little about what you do here in this cultural centre?

Yekuana Martinez: My name is Yekuana Martínez. I am the coordinator of this cultural centre, which is one of the many projects that exist in Venezuela led by young people. These are cultural-political projects supported by the Bolivarian revolution. In the past 20 years of Bolivarian project young people and women, because we are also militants in the Venezuelan feminist movement, have had a very interesting process of empowerment and of unprecedented access to study and to work. This is despite everything that we must deal with related to the issue of sanctions and the economic blockade.

We are developing autonomous productive experiences that can slightly counteract the effects of the crisis that undoubtedly affects us as young people, as women. It affects our work and our

daily lives. We believe that the response to this crisis cannot be individual, as capitalism tells us, but that it must be a collective response. We must join with our communities to undertake productive projects and to promote popular power, by carrying out collective work, an economy of solidarity, and collective life, which exists in a small way here in the Estafeta.

The Estafeta is a cultural centre in the heart of the city of Caracas, in a parish that is within the centre of the city of Caracas. We are organized by a collective of 15 young people from different experiences. Some are artists, others are designers, historians, or computer scientists, others come more from administrative areas. We came together with the idea of developing this political and cultural experience.

FTT: If you could talk to the youth of Canada and the United States, whose governments are attacking Venezuela, what would you say about the experience of youth in Venezuela, and what Venezuela needs?

YM: The first thing that I would say it that here in Venezuela there is a people and a youth that resists; that resists the onslaught of the blockade and of a war that is not only economic, but also a propaganda, cultural, and psychological war. The whole of the great empires is against our project because we decided to be free, we decided to build our own project here in Venezuela. We decided to give ourselves our own form of democracy, political participation, and organization and to take control of our natural resources.

Given the level of attack against Venezuela today, it seems that the cost of these decisions is high. It is very expensive to be young, be revolutionary and have a struggle for independence that has gone on for more than 200 years. The great empires continue to see us as the third world, as their backyard, as a people who do not deserve self-determination.



In the 21st century, we continue fighting for that right, which seems incredible, but it's true. When finally, we have decided to give ourselves our own form, we are attacked brutally as we see happening today. These attacks have also increased after Comandante Chavez died. At that time, they believed that everything was going to end with the death of Comandante Chavez, but it turned out not to be the case.

Next, I would tell the youth of Canada and the United States to come to our country. Here, you can counteract all the false discourse about Venezuela. We know what is said about us outside - that here there is a dictatorship, that human rights are violated, that youth are going outside to look for opportunities. We do not deny the difficult economic circumstances, but we say that we must examine the causes of this crisis. Who benefits from this crisis? Who is economically choking the Venezuelan people? It is not the revolution, it is the Venezuelan oligarchy, it is the national bourgeoisie that doesn't want poor people, working people, to have the power.

FTT: What are the impacts of the U.S., Canada and European Union sanctions against Venezuela?

YM: The most brutal impact of the sanctions is how they have attacked living conditions in Venezuela. For example, the whole issue of medicines impacts us very much because we do not produce medicines in our country but depend on these medicines coming from outside. We

are talking about patients with chronic diseases, for example, that are denied the right to their medicines because the Venezuelan state is prohibited from being able to legally purchase those medicines from companies around the world. There are cancer patients, there are AIDS patients, there are patients who need those medications. This impacts us brutally.

The sanctions also impact, for example, us as young people in our right to a free, enjoyable and responsible sexuality. Likewise, the current situation with contraceptives is very difficult, because we do not produce them in Venezuela. They are produced in European or North American laboratories, and it is now impossible to buy them. This has the effect of increasing unwanted pregnancies and taking away our ability to control our own pregnancy, and our right to decide whether to have children.

Food supply is also impacted, which has led us to think that we need food sovereignty, to produce our own food. The sanctions have been suffocating, especially in the last three years, and if they continue, the issue of importing food will more and more become an uphill battle. Even third countries that try to trade with us are sanctioned from providing us with food or medicine.

FTT: What do you think peace-loving people in North America or European can do to help the Venezuelan people?

YM: Look, I think it is very important to convey the truth of Venezuela. I think it is key that you are here, that you keep coming, that we can also connect through digital means so that when you are not

here we can continue to weave bridges between us through social networks and other mechanisms that allow us to keep in touch.

For us, it is crucial that the truth of Venezuela comes out. If they manage to isolate us, if they manage to impose their version of the truth, if they successfully impose on the world that in Venezuela there is a dictatorship and not an authentic revolution led by a people who want to be free, if they win that battle, we believe that will be the end.

That is why it is important for us that at the same time as we are resisting here in Venezuela, there are revolutionaries around the world and noble and humanistic people of the world, who may not fully agree with our Bolivarian project, but who stand with us. I believe that the humanists of the world, the sensitive people of the world, can help us to spread out the reality of our country, denounce the consequences of the blockade and put pressure on their governments.

We know that not all the people of Canada, for example, are in favour of what the government of Canada is doing against Venezuela. We know that there are critical people, people who think, people who have ideas, who reason and who cannot be in favour of their government's decisions to support, for example, Guaido [the U.S.-backed self-declared "interim President" of Venezuela].

To convey that it is very valuable. It is very valuable every time people take action in our defence, every time they go to the embassy to protest or have public actions, every time they write. We do not always get all the news about actions in support of Venezuela that happen around the world, but we do know that every time there are international days of solidarity with Venezuela people from all over the world mobilize, as they mobilized in favour of the Cuban Revolution or in favour of Nicaragua.

Venezuela is not alone, and I believe that the United States and imperialism must be reminded that even if they have economic power, the peoples of the world are also strong, if we are coordinated and united.

FTT: Thank you very much.

OUR HERITAGE



Rosa Luxemburg

**Revolutionary Marxist Leader
1871-1919**

ON DEMOCRACY

But the conflict within the capitalist State, described above, manifests itself even more emphatically in modern parliamentarism. Indeed, in accordance with its form, parliamentarism serves to express, within the organisation of the State, the interests of the whole society. But what parliamentarism expresses here is capitalist society, that is to say, a society in which capitalist interests predominate. In this society, the representative institutions, democratic in form, are in content the instruments of the interests of the ruling class. This manifests itself in a tangible fashion in the fact that as soon as democracy shows the tendency to negate its class character and become transformed into an instrument of the real interests of the population, the democratic forms are sacrificed by the bourgeoisie, and by its State representatives. That is why the idea of the conquest of a parliamentary reformist majority is a calculation which, entirely in the spirit of bourgeois liberalism, pre-occupies itself only with one side – the formal side – of democracy, but does not take into account the other side, its real content. All in all, parliamentarism is not a directly socialist element impregnating gradually the whole capitalist society. It is, on the contrary, a specific form of the bourgeois class State, helping to ripen and develop the existing antagonisms of capitalism.

Excerpt from Reform or Revolution



A women self-defence class at La Estafeta Cultural Centre & Cafe from their facebook page, June 2019.

COMANDANTES CHE GUEVARA, RAUL CASTRO & FIDEL CASTRO

UNWAVERING LEADERSHIP OF CUBA'S REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PROJECT



FIRETHISTIME.NET

Continued from page 7

political will or political power needed to end this unjust U.S. policy. Now we see that many of the gains are being reversed by the Trump administration, however, both countries have decided to maintain their formal diplomatic ties.

Why Does Blockade Exist?

Since the triumph of the Cuban revolution, the U.S. government has been searching for ways to destroy the Cuban revolution and, with it, Cuba's independence. The U.S. government cannot afford to have governments' independent of its hegemonic and imperialist agenda anywhere in the world, much less on an island only 90 miles off their shores.

Cuba is the threat of a good example for Americans and people the world. When they learn about the gains of the Cuban revolution: free healthcare, free education, and many other areas, they might start to ask why those gains have not been made in the wealthiest places on earth. Why is the U.S. government unable to provide these services for free, when a small natural-resource-poor 'third-world' nation to the south is providing them for its people and internationally to the world?

The blockade is meant to divide people in the U.S. and Cuba, but it is also meant to create shortages and poverty within Cuba so that the Cuban people become disillusioned with their own socialist revolutionary project. It is meant to create desperation and misery so that the Cuban people and government give up on their socialist vision for the future. In over 57 years this policy has been unsuccessful, and rather than isolating Cuba, it has isolated the U.S. However, the U.S. government seems intent on doubling-down on this policy of blockade, which means deepening hardship for the people of Cuba.

Why the U.S. Blockade on Cuba Must End

On November 6-7, 2019, the United Nations General Assembly will hold its 28th annual debate and vote on the "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial

and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba." Last year the world community stood together with 189 countries voting in favour of ending the U.S. blockade on Cuba. Once again the United States and Israel stood alone on the wrong side of history in voting against the resolution to end the blockade. Every year the United States government and its blockade on Cuba has been condemned by the international community during this vote. However, it is not only countries voting at the United Nations. Around the world in letters, petitions, on social media, and in interviews people from all continents participate in regular actions to condemn the U.S. blockade on Cuba. In Canada on the 17th of every month solidarity activists and organizers gather in front of the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver and Montreal and in front of the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa to raise their voices against the blockade on Cuba.

Of course, the strongest and most steadfast opposition to the blockade for over 57 years has come from the dignified and independent people of Cuba and their revolutionary government who study and protest the impacts of the blockade on their society, economy and daily lives.

Together the Cuban people and the world must continue to stand united chanting, "¡Cuba Si! ¡Bloqueo No!"

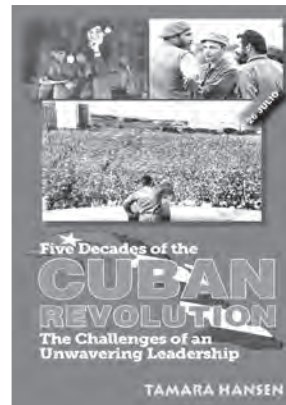
Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01



Tweet by Cuban president Miguel Díaz-Canel

Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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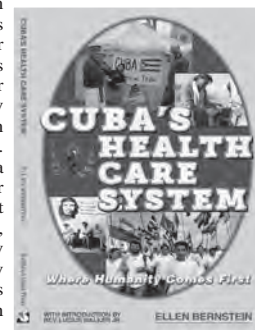
CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

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

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003.

She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.



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AN OPEN LETTER TO PARTY LEADERS IN THE 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION OF CANADA

CANADIAN NETWORK ON CUBA -CNC
WWW.CANADIANNETWORKONCUBA.CA

I am writing to you on behalf of the Canadian Network On Cuba (CNC), which represents Cana-da-Cuba friendship and solidarity organizations across Canada, ranging from Vancouver to Hali-fax and with over 50,000 in membership. One of the CNC's principal objectives is advocating that Canadian foreign policy regarding Cuba remains based on equality and respect for sover-eignty and the right of selfdetermination. Consequently, the CNC is deeply concerned by recent decisions and actions of the Government of Canada. Canadians are very worried that recent developments in Ottawa-Havana relations could lead to the mirroring of the policy of the United States.

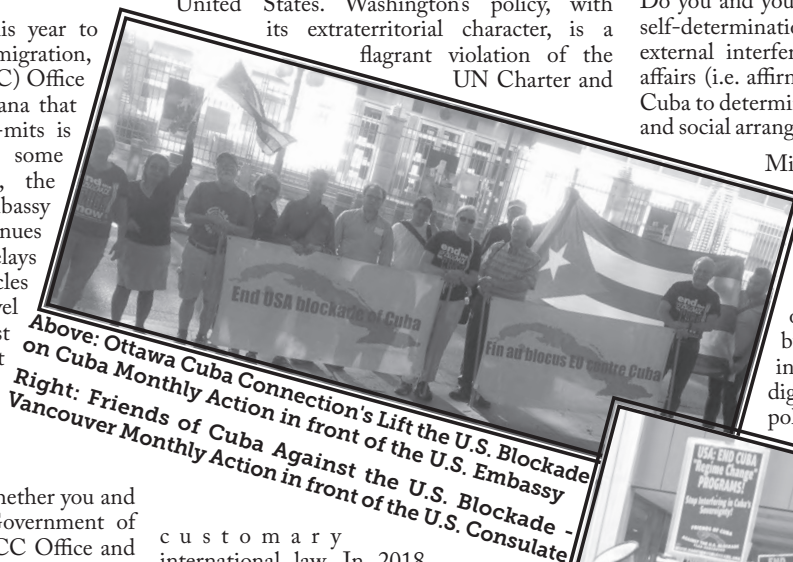
The abrupt decision earlier this year to shut down the section of its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) Office in Embassy of Canada in Havana that processed visas and study per-mits is particularly perturbing. While some services have been restored, the continued reduc-tion in embassy staffing has resulted - and continues to result - in unreasonable delays and significant financial obstacles for those Cubans seeking to travel to Canada, and will, amongst other things, cause significant damage to people-to-people contacts, business, cultural, academic, scientific and sporting relations.

Therefore, we wish to inquire whether you and your party will support the Government of Canada fully reopening the IRCC Office and all visa services offered to Cubans in Havana, Cuba, so that visa processing may proceed in a reasonable manner?

In 2014, the world rejoiced to see the restoration of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba in a signed agreement between then Presidents Raúl Castro Barrack Obama. The world held out great hopes that relations between the two countries would be normalized. Canada helped by providing a venue for the talks which led to the improvement of those relations. However, under the administration of Donald Trump, we have witnessed a return to the policy of overt and ever escalating hostility and aggression against Cuba. The United States continues to zealously pursue and implement the extensive series of economic sanctions arrayed against the island nation, including the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows U.S. companies and citizens to sue in U.S. courts not only Cuban companies but also Canadian and other international companies engaged in business and other economic activity in Cuba.

In short, Washington is waging an economic war - more than an embargo - against Cuba, with the objective of negating and extinguishing Cuba's right to selfdetermination, sovereignty and independence. This effort to asphyxiate Cuba is the principal obstacle to this proud island nation's social and economic development, costing the people of Cuba in excess of \$100 billion. In short, the economic blockade is an egregious violation of the human rights of the people of Cuba.

For 27-consecutive years, the General Assembly of the United Nations has rejected and condemned these economic sanctions - an economic blockade- imposed on Cuba by United States. Washington's policy, with its extraterritorial character, is a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and



Above: Ottawa Cuba Connection's Lift the U.S. Blockade on Cuba Monthly Action in front of the U.S. Embassy
Right: Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - Vancouver Monthly Action in front of the U.S. Consulate

customary international law. In 2018, as in previous years, the global community over-whelmingly stood with Cuba, voting 189- 2 against Washington. Canada was once again count-ed in the vast ranks of the world's nations resoundingly rejecting the coercive, unilateral and extra-territorial U.S. policy. Within this context, the Canadian Network On Cuba wishes to in-quire what are the stances of you and your party on the following very important and salient questions:

How do you and your party intend to respond to and counter the escalation of Washington's hostility towards Cuba by the administration of Donald Trump?

What further steps will you and your party take to oppose the economic sanctions of the United States against Cuba condemned by the United Nations and several other international organizations?

What concrete measures will you and your party implement to oppose the extraterritorial ap-plication of U.S. sanctions against Cuba, especially as they pertain to Canadian businesses and Canadian citizens? Especially regarding the enforcement of the Foreign Extraterritorial Measures Act?

The CNC resolutely reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Cuba - and all other peoples - to determine their future and their political, economic and social system without external in-terference: a right enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-Operation Among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Will you and your party support the right of Cuba to the return of the illegally occupied territory of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay?

Do you and your party support Cuba's right to self-determination and sovereignty, free of any external interference in the island's domestic affairs (i.e. affirming the right of the people of Cuba to determine their own political, economic and social arrangements without foreign diktat)?

Millions of Canadians have travelled to Cuba and having witnessed Cuban reality for them-selves have come away with a profound respect and admiration for the people of Cuba and their efforts to build a society centered on independence, justice and human dignity. Irrespective of their political or ideological positions, Canadians stand for the building of genuine friendship with the island nation: relations based on mutual respect, equality and recognition of Cuba's right to self-determination and sovereignty. Consequently, Canada's relations with Cuba should be based on mutual respect and equality, not on outmoded colonialist ideas and practices.

In closing, we wish to thank you in advance for your consideration of the issues raised and an-swering the questions posed by the CNC. Please find enclosed, the recently published book, Cuba Solidarity in Canada: Five Decades of People to People Foreign Relations.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Isaac Saney,
Co-Chair and National Spokesperson
Canadian Network On Cuba



Continued from page 10

Sisters and brothers, our countries face diverse and conflicting situations, which must be approached in a sovereign manner and solutions must be found through dialogue and negotiation, in favor of the interests of the people.

Bolivia, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations, ratifies its rejection of the economic and financial blockade imposed against Cuba, which violates all human rights.

Finally, sisters and brothers, I take this opportunity to thank all member countries for their support in the various initiatives promoted by Bolivia. This year: The International Year of Indigenous Languages, The Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and the Declaration of June 21 as International Solstice Day. To conclude, we ratify our commitment to consolidate a new world order of peace with social justice, in harmony with Mother Earth to Live Well [Vivir Bien], respecting the dignity and identity of the peoples.

Thank you.

From: Orinoco Tribune <https://orinocotribune.com/>

Viene de la página 11

mancomunada y la unidad nos dará una oportunidad para superarlos. Como ya lo dijimos: la responsabilidad de nuestra generación es entregar a la siguiente, un mundo más justo y más humano. Eso solamente se conseguirá si es que trabajamos juntos para consolidar un mundo multipolar, con reglas comunes, defendiendo al multilateralismo, a los principios y propósitos de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y al Derecho Internacional.

Hermanas y hermanos, nuestros países enfrentan situaciones diversas y conflictivas, que deben ser abordadas de manera soberana y se deben encontrar soluciones a través del diálogo y la negociación, a favor de los intereses del pueblo. Bolivia, en concordancia con las resoluciones de Naciones Unidas, ratifica su rechazo al bloqueo económico y financiero impuesto en contra de Cuba, que atenta contra todos los derechos humanos.

Finalmente, hermanas y hermanos, aprovecho esta oportunidad para agradecer a todos los países miembros su acompañamiento en las diversas iniciativas impulsadas por Bolivia. Como ser: El Año Internacional de las Lenguas Indígenas, La Declaración de los Derechos de los Campesinos y La Declaratoria del 21 de junio como Día Internacional del Solsticio. Para concluir, ratificamos nuestro compromiso para consolidar un nuevo orden mundial de paz con justicia social, en armonía con la Madre Tierra para Vivir Bien, respetando la dignidad e identidad de los pueblos.

Muchas gracias.

Desde: <http://www.cancilleria.gob.bo>

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By Azza Rojbi

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



Azza Rojbi

THE FEDERAL ELECTION in CANADA & the CLIMATE CRISIS



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ARE THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND ITS CORPORATE ENDORSERS TRUTHFUL?

THE CASE OF TMX PIPELINE & TAR SANDS EXPANSION IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY!

By Alison Bodine

British Columbia may be known for a breathtaking coastline and pristine mountain wilderness – but people living in the province are no stranger to the urgency of the climate emergency. After a record year of forest fires in 2018 and recent reports that the Southern Resident orca is facing extinction if business continues as usual, the Province and the Federal government continue to push ahead with climate-destroying projects in BC.

Combined, the LNG Canada pipeline and the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion will pump the equivalent of 220 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere – when the extraction, shipping and burning of the fuels are included. This is nearly four times the estimate for the total greenhouse gases emitted by the entire Province of BC every year. Yet, somehow, the government of Canada still claims they are going to meet the emissions targets of the UN Paris Agreement?

This is not to mention the tremendous waste of public tax-payer money that goes into mega-projects like these. Trudeau used \$4.5 billion of public money to buy the Trans Mountain pipeline after the Texas billionaires Kinder Morgan decided the project wasn't in their best business interests. Now, the project is projected to cost \$20 billion by the time it is completed.

Despite six ongoing court challenges from Indigenous nations in the Federal Court of Appeal, 1200 outstanding permit applications in BC, and the recent ruling from the BC Court of Appeal that the previous environmental review by the Provincial government must be re-considered, the Federal government continues to push ahead with the TMX pipeline expansion. This includes current construction work at the Burnaby Mountain tank farm and Westridge Marine terminal and preparations for drilling a 2.6km hole right through the mountain. They have also stock-piled 550km of pipe along the route.

By committing to expanding the pipeline, the government of Canada has also committed to decades of continued climate destruction through the expansion of the Alberta Tar Sands. The Canadian Energy Research Institute (CERI) has predicted that the output from the Tar Sands will double by the year 2036. This includes this summer's Federal

government approval of the massive Frontier open-pit tar sands mine which will cover an area twice the size of the City of Vancouver. This mine, which is to be built by Vancouver-based Teck Resources, has a life span of 41 years. As the University of Alberta, Professor Gordon Laxer explained to The Narwhal, "The oilsands are Canada's fastest-growing source of emissions... Their growth is going to make it virtually impossible to meet our 2030 Paris climate targets."

On **September 24, 2019**, these reasons and more brought a diverse group of people out into the streets of Vancouver for action against the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and the growth of the Alberta tar sands. The rally and march were organized by grassroots climate justice organizations from across the Lower Mainland: Climate Convergence, the Mountain Protectors, BROKE, 350 Vancouver and Extinction Rebellion Vancouver, as part of the Global Climate Strike week of actions from September 20-27, 2019.

As participants gathered in front of the Environment Canada building in downtown Vancouver, speakers called attention to the sheer hypocrisy of the Trudeau government and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna for claiming to be fighting climate change while consistently putting the interests of resource extraction corporations and agri-business first. Others highlighted the violations to Indigenous rights and sovereignty by projects such as Trans Mountain and the tar sands.

Before the protest took to the streets and marched up Burrard towards the busy intersection at Georgia Street, there was singing, chanting and many rounds of marching through the intersection in front of Environment Canada. Full of enthusiasm, the march continued up to RBC bank, a major investor in climate-destroying projects in Canada, and then wrapped up in front of the Teck Resources, the mining company responsible for much of the planned tar sands expansion.

United We Win!

This dynamic action was an important example of the unity in action that is needed



to build a strong movement against the TMX pipeline, the tar sands expansion and the climate killing policies of the government of Canada. Although anger and frustration at the inaction of the Trudeau Liberal government hung heavy in the air that day – there was also a strong feeling of optimism and hope that a future is possible – and a powerful sense of support for the coming September 27 cross-Canada climate strike actions.

Declaring a "climate emergency," as the Trudeau government has done, is meaningless without concrete actions to drastically and immediately cut fossil fuel emissions. As people who see a future for humanity on this planet, we must make it clear to Prime Minister Trudeau, and the next Prime Minister of Canada too that we do not believe in nice words and false equivalencies – pledging to plant 2 billion trees does not justify building a dirty and dangerous tar sands pipeline. What we need is a government that invests in healthcare, education, and sustainable energy development, a climate justice government that will no longer line the pockets of corporate oil executives in exchange for our future.

As the leading climate justice activist, 16-year-old Greta Thunberg said, "If solutions within this system are so difficult to find then maybe we should change the system itself."

To get involved with climate justice organizing in Vancouver with Climate Convergence and for information on upcoming meetings, events and outreach actions visit www.climateconvergence.ca!

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Canada in Haiti: A Bad and Oppressive Example

On February 29, 2004, the U.S., Canada and France orchestrated a coup which forcibly removed President Aristide, who was taken by U.S. guards onto a U.S. jet and exiled. From Aristide's account of events, "The coup and kidnapping were led by the U.S., France and Canada. [They] were on the front lines by sending their soldiers to Haiti before February 29, by having their soldiers either at the airport or at my residence, or around the palace, or in the capital to make sure that they succeeded in kidnapping me, leading [to] the coup." Alongside U.S. and French troops, Canada immediately sent 500 troops to Haiti to secure the coup. The occupying force was soon conducted by the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which maintained imperialist control in Haiti from 2004 to 2017, followed by the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) which continues today. Canada touts its contribution to the UN missions with RCMP officers to reinforce and train the Haitian National Police, and Canadian Forces officers which have led the UN mission.

Alongside brutal raids and military occupation, the new occupying forces showed disregard for the standard of living of Haitian people. Haiti's

literacy program was quickly dismantled, as were plans to raise the minimum wage. In 2011, Wikileaks, with the Nation and Haitian weekly newspaper *Haiti Liberté*, published documents showing that a proposed increase of 37 cents an hour was opposed by the U.S. government, and the U.S. ambassador pressured then Haitian President Préval into a \$3 per day wage for textile workers, \$2 less than the proposed \$5 a day. This goes to show how imperialist countries viewed Haiti as location for cheap labour. Shortly after the 2004 coup, Canadian textile company Gildan opened three sweatshop factories in Haiti. A November 27, 2014 *Globe and Mail* article detailed the conditions for Gildan workers in Haiti, with an interview with union leader Jean Bonald Golinsky Fatal. "It's worse than slavery... The slave owners had obligations to feed and clothe the slaves. Here you don't have to do that... The employer uses the extreme poverty and unemployment in Haiti because they know other workers will take the wage." This is Canada's legacy in Haiti.



Haitian community members & Solidarité Québec-Haïti occupy Prime Minister Trudeau's office to protest Canada's intervention in Haiti- September 30, 2019.

Haitian people, and still doesn't.

The response of Canada and the U.S. to Haiti's earthquake was deplorable. In a time when Haiti needed doctors and aid, the U.S. deployed 22,000 troops and Canada sent 2,000 troops to maintain "security", along with military ships, planes and helicopters. U.S. forces took control of the Port-au-Prince airport and prevented flights carrying aid from other countries or organizations like Doctors Without Borders from landing.

Another result of the United Nations disregard for Haitian lives started in the months following the earthquake, when raw sewage from a UN base leaked into one of Haiti's most heavily utilized rivers, causing a cholera epidemic. The UN initially refused to investigate the source of the outbreak and took six years to acknowledge its role in the outbreak. More than 10,000 people died from cholera since 2010, and over 800,000 were infected.

Cuba in Haiti: A Good and Human Example

For those that argue that Haiti needs our international support and aid, we have already seen what this looks like when with imperialist interests at heart. However, Cuba has shown what real humanitarian aid and assistance looks like. While the U.S. and Canada send troops and police, for decades Cuba has been exporting its best resources to Haiti – healthcare and education. Cuba's example was impossible to ignore following the 2010 earthquake in



Police confront peaceful protesters standing against Haitian President Moïse in Port-au-Prince, Haiti - October 4, 2019.

On January 12, 2010, a devastating 7.0 earthquake hit Haiti. Over 220,000 people were killed, 1.5-2.3 million people displaced, and more than 300,000 homes destroyed or badly damaged. Haiti was entirely unprepared – 500 years of colonization, foreign-backed dictators and imperialist occupations had not prioritized safety or infrastructure for the



A Cuban doctor administers a shot to a Haitian child in 2013.

Haiti. As a December 26, 2010 headline in the British Independent newspaper put it best, “Cuban Medics in Haiti put the World to Shame”. Following the earthquake, Cuba’s medical brigade of 1,200 operated across Haiti, which was the largest foreign contingent, treating around 40% of all cholera patients.

Cuba’s medical assistance didn’t start or end with the earthquake though – Cuba already had 350 healthcare workers in Cuba, where Cuba had been since 1998. Today Cuba has almost 600 medical staff in Haiti, who are responsible for 21 community referral hospitals, 31 rehabilitation wards, 14 health centers, an ophthalmological center, a comprehensive care room, an ortho-prosthesis workshop and an electromedical workshop. (Statistics

from the Cuban Medical Brigade in Haiti)

Cuba is also committed to training the future of Haiti’s healthcare system – as of 2010 Cuba had trained 550 Haitian doctors for free at the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba and has since trained hundreds more. Beyond healthcare, in January 2013, Cuba and Haiti signed eight bilateral agreements to expand their cooperation, including agreements for

development in the agricultural and industrial sectors and to continue Cuba’s commitment to health and education.

The positive impacts of Cuba towards Haiti are undeniable, from a country guided by the principles of revolutionary internationalism that are a cornerstone to Cuba’s socialist revolution, in contrast to the profit-seeking and destructive impacts of imperialism from Canada, the U.S. and France.

Canada Hands Off Haiti!

As the Haitian people are struggling to strike a path free from foreign domination, it is with the solidarity of social justice and peace-

loving people here in Canada. Although Justin Trudeau is trying his best to disregard those trying to hold him responsible for his support of Moïse and Canada’s shameful role in Haiti, Haiti’s supporters are becoming more difficult to ignore. On September 30, 2019, Justin Trudeau’s Montreal campaign office was occupied by 15 Haitian community members, supporters and activists for over three hours, and other actions have aimed to bring Canada’s role in Haiti to the spotlight.

The government of Canada must be held to account for its criminal actions in Haiti, for supporting the corrupt puppet president Moïse and for years of intervention, occupation and exploitation against the Haitian people.

US/Canada/France Hands of Haiti!

All Foreign Troops and Police Forces Out of Haiti Now!

US/Canada/France must compensate the Haitian people for damages since the 2004 coup!

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

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8TH VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL CHE GUEVARA CONFERENCE – VANCOUVER, KAMLOOPS & CALGARY, CANADA
SOCIALISM YESTERDAY, TODAY, TOMORROW

CONTINUITY OF THE CUBAN SOCIALIST PROJECT

OCTOBER 26-27, 2019

RUSSIAN HALL - 600 CAMPBELL AVE. - VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CHE GUEVARA CONFERENCE

Since the triumph of Cuba's 1959 revolution to today, the vision and political ideas that shape the Cuban revolution remain a source of inspiration, discussion and debate around the world. Through the ideas of Fidel, Che, the Cuban socialist project, and the dynamics of the mass revolutionary movement, and especially the concept of Revolutionary Internationalism, Cuba has become a country renowned for its achievements in health, education, culture, science and many other aspects of social and human progress. The Cuban socialist revolution and socialist project and the Cuban revolutionary leadership, despite 50 years of an inhuman and criminal blockade by consecutive US administrations, have never wavered to imperialist pressure.

The International Che Guevara Conference is an opportunity to discuss and debate the ideas of the Cuban revolution, its dynamism and how it has impacted Latin America and the world.

The First International Che Conference in 2008 was on the theme "Che Guevara, Thinker and Fighter: Are His Ideas Relevant for the 21st Century?" Every Vancouver international Che Guevara Conference since has discussed and debated a wide variety of topics including: "50 Years of Dynamism of the Cuban Revolution," "Cuba & Revolutionary Internationalism," "Cuba Today - The Gains & Challenges," "Cuba's Reforms: Capitalism or Socialism,"

and "Cuba: a Socialist Project in Progress." Each conference has featured amazing guest speakers from Cuba, Venezuela, the U.S., Europe and Canada.

In October 2017 over 350 people attended the 7th International Che Guevara Conference over three days, as well as over 600 watched online through Youtube and live stream. This October 2019 the 8th International Che Guevara Conference, "Socialism Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Continuity of The Cuban Socialist Project" will once again bring these ideas and politics to life!

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CONTINUITY OF THE CUBAN SOCIALIST PROJECT

**8TH VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL
CHE GUEVARA
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SATURDAY & SUNDAY OCTOBER 26TH-27TH 2019
RUSSIAN HALL - 600 CAMPBELL AVENUE, VANCOUVER, CANADA

► FEATURING SPEAKERS FROM CUBA, VENEZUELA,
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This event will take place on the traditional and unceded territories of the Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaʔ), the Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), and the Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh) Coast Salish Nations.

FEATURING SPEAKERS:



GUIVEL OROZCO ORTEGA (Havana, Cuba/Ottawa, Canada) The Deputy Head of Mission & Counsellor at the Cuban Embassy in Ottawa, Canada. A Graduate of the University of Havana & the "Raúl Roa García"

Higher Institute of International Relations (ISRI). Guivel Orozco has served as a Foreign Service official and participated in official missions on behalf of Cuba in Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, Jamaica, Venezuela, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Republic of Guinea, Togo, Niger, Ethiopia and the Republic of the Congo.



DR. LUIS ACUÑA CEDEÑO

(Sucre, Venezuela/Ottawa, Canada) Chargé d'Affaires in the Venezuelan Embassy in Ottawa, Canada. Former Minister of Higher Education in Venezuela under then-President Comandante Hugo

Chavez. From 2012-2017 Luis Acuña was the elected governor of the state of Sucre in Venezuela. He was also elected deputy of his state to the National Assembly of Venezuela on three separate occasions.



DAVID ALDAMA PANDO (Havana, Cuba / Ottawa, Canada) The Third Secretary of the Embassy of Cuba in Canada in charge of academic affairs and relations with Cuba solidarity groups in Canada. David Aldama has a bachelor's degree in international Relations from the "Raúl Roa García" Higher Institute of International Relations (ISRI).



DR. HELEN YAFFE (London, England) Visiting Fellow at the Latin America and Caribbean Centre and a Lecturer in Economic and Social History in the University of Glasgow. Helen Yaffe is author of "Che Guevara: The Economics of

Revolution" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). She is an economic historian specialising in Cuba and Latin America, the history of economics, and the political economy of late development.



KEITH BOLENDER (Toronto, Canada) Author of the newly published book, "Manufacturing the Enemy: The Media War Against Cuba" (Pluto, 2019). He is also the author of "Cuba Under Siege: American Policy, the Revolution and Its People"

(Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2012) and "Voices From the Other Side: An Oral History of Terrorism Against Cuba" (Pluto, 2010). Keith Bolender is a freelance journalist who worked for more than 10 years with the Toronto Star. He is a member of the Institute for Public Accuracy on their Roster of Experts for Cuban Affairs, and lectures at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies.



ARNOLD AUGUST (Montreal, Canada) Author of many articles and books including: "Democracy in Cuba and the 1997-98 Elections" (Editorial José Martí, 1999), "Cuba and Its Neighbours: Democracy in Motion" (Fernwood Publishing/Zed Books, 2013), "Cuba-U.S.

Relations: Obama and Beyond" (Fernwood, 2017). An accomplished journalist, he contributes articles in English, Spanish and French to news and research sites in the United States, Canada, Cuba, Latin America and Europe. Since 1997, he has spent extended periods in Cuba pursuing his intensive investigations.



WENDY HOLM (Vancouver, Canada) Wendy Holm is a retired Agrologist, columnist, author and speaker. She has been named a Distinguished Alumni of UBC, and has received two Queen's Medals for contribution to community.

She has published multiple articles and papers on Cuba's commitment to sustainable farming practices and organizes the Canada-Cuba Farmer to Farmer Project. She has won ten

national journalism awards since 2002. She recently edited the book, "Damming the Peace: The hidden costs of the Site C Dam" (Lorimer Press, 2018).

STEPHANY MAZUERA VARGAS (Vancouver, Canada) Colombian social justice activist and graduate of the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana, Cuba.



TAMARA HANSEN (Vancouver, Canada) Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba. Author of "5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution: The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership" (Battle of Ideas Press, 2010).



ALISON BODINE (Vancouver, Canada) Coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Author of "Revolution & Counter-Revolution in Venezuela" (Battle of Ideas Press, 2018).



AZZA ROJBI (Vancouver, Canada) Tunisian social justice, LGBTQ+ activist & coordinator of Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. blockade - Vancouver. Author of "U.S. & Saudi War on the People Of Yemen" (Battle of Ideas Press, 2019).



ALI YEREVANI (Vancouver, Canada) Political Editor of the Fire This Time Newspaper. Participant in the 1979 Iranian Revolution.



KELLY WHITE (Vancouver, Canada) Coast Salish elder, teacher, broadcaster, and longtime social justice activist.



CHE GUEVARA CONFERENCE

WWW.CHEGUEVARACONFERENCE.CA

Continued from page 13

Despite challenges in Venezuela, there is also a dedicated Cuba solidarity movement in Venezuela. Many organizers in this movement – including Yhonny Garcia, the president of the National Mutual Friendship & Solidarity Movement Cuba-Venezuela – have been organizing solidarity with Cuba since before Chávez was elected President of Venezuela in 1998. Tamara had a chance to meet with Yhonny and the members of their group to learn more about their ongoing efforts to build friendship and links, not only supporting government to government relations for Cuba and Venezuela, but people to people relations.

Building Solidarity with Venezuela Against Imperialism is an Essential Strategy

So many of the Venezuelans we met left a lasting impression on us for their friendliness, their warmth, their humanity, and their frankness in discussing challenging and complex economic, social, and political issues that do not always have easy solutions. Informing people in Canada, the U.S. and other imperialist countries of what we heard and saw in Venezuela is important for breaking the attempt by international mainstream media to isolate revolutionary Bolivarian Venezuelans and their President Nicolás Maduro.

However, the much larger task is holding imperialist governments accountable for their actions and attempts to destabilize and undermine the independence of the Venezuelan government and the majority of people in Venezuela that are working hard every day to push the Bolivarian process forward. The most important way that we can help our compañeras and compañeros in Venezuela is by working in our own countries to push the governments of the United States, Canada, and European Union to drop all sanctions against Venezuela and to end their campaign of aggression, sabotage, and threats of war. We must multiply our efforts to build a movement in defence of the Venezuelan people demanding “U.S., Canada and All Other Imperialists Hands Off Venezuela!” and “End the Blockade Against Venezuela!”

Imperialism is deeply threatened by the gains of the Venezuelan Bolivarian process, the more independent revolutionary Venezuela becomes, the more it threatens imperialist military and financial domination and soft-power strategic influence, along with their attempt at hegemony over international markets and natural resources throughout Latin America. Needless to say, Venezuela's independent government is also a threat to imperialism and it is indeed a source of inspiration for poor and working people in other countries who desire to nationalize resources, redistribute land, and make sure the basic human rights to food, water, housing, education, and health are provided to all. The Venezuelan Bolivarian revolutionary process is the biggest and most clear message to all Latin America and the world for: *Imperialists Out!*

2015-2018. The total losses and costs to the Venezuelan economy, a product of the economic blockade imposed by the U.S., is estimated at \$130 billion USD.



Social media campaign by Venezuelan social movements against the economic and financial war on their country. Follow the campaign on twitter: @DesbloqueaVE

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01
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Battle of Ideas Press

Revolution & Counter Revolution
in Venezuela



By Alison Bodine

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

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VENEZUELA, WE ARE WITH YOU!

By Janine Solanki

"The [U.S.] goal is crystal clear — to bring the Venezuelan economy to its knees and to prevent the government from meeting the basic needs of its people, as well as to bring about a change of government by unconstitutional means through the use of force..."

These very true words from Venezuela's foreign minister Jorge Arreaza Montserrat were spoken to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland on September 9, 2019. The U.S., European Union and Canada have imposed brutal sanctions amounting to a blockade of Venezuela, preventing access to everything from medicine to construction equipment. The U.S. government has frozen \$5.5 billion of Venezuelan funds in international accounts in at least 50 banks and financial institutions. In addition, the U.S. has seized the assets of Venezuela's U.S. oil subsidiary CITGO, valued at about \$8 billion. Even if Venezuela could get money abroad, the United States has long blocked international trade by threatening sanctions on foreign companies for doing business with Venezuela.

What does this look like for the Venezuelan people? As Venezuela struggles to purchase and import medicines and medical equipment from abroad, more than 300,000 Venezuelan medical patients are estimated to be at risk due to the sanctions, according to a report published on April 2019, by the Washington-based Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR).

In Vancouver, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is defending Venezuela against sanctions, threats and dangerous foreign meddling by the U.S. and their allies. On **September 6**, activists came together in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver for a monthly picket action demanding "U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!" Between rounds of energetic picketing, supporters gathered to hear from speakers and raised their voices and demands high to the offices of the U.S. Consulate.

The action continued with information tabling outside the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, where activists talked to



passersby attracted by the giant Venezuelan flag and banner reading "Hands Off Venezuela! No Sanctions! No War!" Many stopped to sign petitions demanding the government of Canada and the U.S. end their sanctions on Venezuela.

Solidarity with Venezuela continued into the evening, with an event held at the Vancouver Public Library. At the end of July, two members of the Editorial Board of Fire This Time Newspaper, Tamara Hansen and Alison Bodine, travelled to Caracas, Venezuela as delegates to the 25th International Sao Paulo Forum. This large anti-imperialist conference brought together thousands of people from Venezuela and around the world and gave Alison and Tamara an eyewitness view of what is happening on the ground in Venezuela today. The feature of the evening was Tamara and Alison's stories, photos and videos from Venezuela, which served to counter the many mainstream media lies about Venezuela with their first-hand experiences.

The event was also a raffle fundraiser for the defence of the Embassy Protection Collective. For 37 days in the Spring of 2019, the Embassy Protection Collective protected the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC from take-over by supporters of the U.S.-backed puppet and so-called "interim President" of Venezuela Juan Guaido. Four protectors were arrested that now face one year in prison and a large fine. To learn more about this important struggle see the article in Fire This Time Newspaper, Volume 13, Issue 6, June 2019.

For more information on Venezuela solidarity events visit www.firethistime.net or follow on Facebook, on Twitter @FTT_np, or on Instagram @FTT.Venezuela

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

SUPPORT THE EMBASSY PROTECTORS DEFENSE COMMITTEE!

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

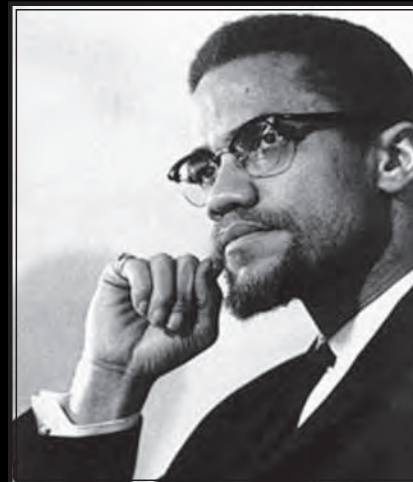
Funds will go toward legal defense for the four members of the Embassy Protection Collective that have been charged with "interfering with protective services" and now face up to a year in jail and up to a \$100,000 fine, as well as other supporters.



Scan to donate!

<https://defendembassyprotectors.org>

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

April 12, 1964

No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism.

One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver - no; not I.

I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.

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By Janine Solanki

More than one million people travel from Canada to Cuba every year, enjoying Cuba's beautiful beaches and rich culture. However, there is much more to see and experience in Cuba – from the history of Cuba's wars of independence and the Cuban revolution, to the ongoing process of the Cuban revolutionary project visible in every aspect of Cuba. Cuba is not only a place for us to defend against the cruel U.S. blockade, regime change programs and negative mass media campaigns. Cuba is also a place to learn from as they work to build a better and more just world based on human needs instead of profit.

On Saturday September 28, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) held an event to report back from the 2018 Calixto Garcia Brigade to Cuba. VCSC coordinator Tamara Hansen and organizer Mike Larson traveled to Cuba on this brigade, a unique way to visit Cuba and to be immersed in Cuban history, culture, and

vibrant daily life over a two-week program.

The event opened with an Indigenous welcoming by Coast Salish elder and activist Kelly White and Vivian Sandy, and elder of the Shuswap and Northern Diné

Tamara Hansen and Mike Larson then shared their experiences from the Calixto Garcia Brigade to Cuba, with their anecdotes alongside video clips and photos. The exciting account of their travels in Cuba prompted

many questions in the discussion period, especially from those interested in traveling on the upcoming 2019 Calixto Garcia Brigade!

Following the presentation, VCSC organizer Janine Solanki provided a preview of an essential brigade experience – a Cuban salsa lesson! Participants got out of their seats and learned the steps, with the promise that those travelling on the brigade will have much more salsa dancing in Cuba.

For more events information on Cuba, visit www.vancubasolidarity.com or follow on Facebook or Twitter @VanCuba_VCSC. For more information on the Calixto Garcia Brigade to Cuba, email calixtogarciabrigade@gmail.com.

Let's Find Out What Cuba Can Offer You! Calixto Garcia Brigade Inspires New Brigadistas to Travel to Cuba!



Nations, who led a full house in song and calls of "Viva Cuba!" Next in the program, the audience viewed video clips about Cuba which highlighted the recent fuel shortages, a result of new U.S. government steps to tighten the inhuman U.S. blockade.

For more events information on Cuba, visit www.vancubasolidarity.com or follow on Facebook or Twitter @VanCuba_VCSC. For more information on the Calixto Garcia Brigade to Cuba, email calixtogarciabrigade@gmail.com.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

HANDS OFF CUBA! LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA!

By Janine Solanki

"We are taking additional steps to financially isolate the Cuban regime," U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement on September 6, 2019, announcing new restrictions imposed by the U.S. government limiting the amount of money Cuban Americans can send to their family in Cuba.

This is one of many inhuman measures the U.S. government is taking to tighten the cruel blockade on Cuba. These include restricting Cuba's access to foreign exchange, impacting Cuba's contracts with shipping companies and limiting access to fuel. The U.S. sanctions on Venezuela have also reduced Venezuela's ability to ship oil to Cuba, further intensifying the impacts of the blockade.

Cubans are now feeling the effects of these blockade-imposed fuel shortages, which have caused long lineups at bus stops and gas stations. Cubans are getting through this in the same way they have survived almost 60 years of the U.S. blockade – by pulling together and finding solutions, such as state cars and trucks helping to transport people, suspending some energy-intensive investment projects, and Cubans working from home if possible. Cuban President Díaz-Canel was on Cuban TV to announce these and other measures to ensure basic services until regular fuel shipments resume, where he reminded Cubans to "remain alert and ready to respond to any challenge with unity, firmness, optimism,

and unwavering confidence in victory."

On September 17, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - FCAB in Vancouver along with activists in Montreal



and Ottawa, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine united around the world and on the streets for a monthly coordinated action against the U.S. blockade. At the Vancouver action, protesters picketed in front of the U.S. Consulate with voices raised high demanding "lift the blockade on Cuba now!" and "return Guantanamo to Cuba now!" In between rounds of picketing, local participants spoke to the crowd about the increasingly brutal measures of the U.S. blockade and the importance of people here

in Canada standing up to defend Cuba. This is especially true as the government of Canada has taken recent measures against Cubans, by halting visa services at Canada's IRCC offices in Havana, Cuba. This means it is near impossible for Cubans to travel to Canada, including those visiting family members, as well as academics, artists and students.

There is a Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) petition to demand that the government of Canada fully reopen all visa services offered to Cubans in Havana, Cuba, check out the QR code to sign it below.

Vancouver protesters felt the connection to the other coordinated protests through a voice message from Ottawa Cuba Connections, who shared words of solidarity from their action. The Vancouver action also made their protest felt worldwide by sharing photos of the action on social media, including the customary photo of signs, banners and Cuban flags held high in front of the U.S. Consulate doors!

For the next action, visit www.vancubavsblockade.org or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

**SCAN TO SIGN
THE PETITION! →**



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

**NO HELMS-BURTON ACT! STOP "TITILE III"!
RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA!
CANADA REOPEN THE VISA OFFICE IN HAVANA!**

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



FRIENDS OF CUBA AGAINST THE U.S. BLOCKADE-VANCOUVER
NoBloqueoVancouver@gmail.com @NOBLOQUEOVAN
WWW.VANCUBAVSBLOCKADE.ORG

No to War & Occupation!
No to Environmental Degradation!

By Janine Solanki

From September 20 – 27, 2019, one of the largest coordinated global protests in history took place, with 9 million people and counting who took to the streets in 185 countries, demanding action on climate change. It is not only the sheer number of people uniting and protesting for a single cause that these mass mobilizations have in common. In both cases, the perpetrators are the same and acts of war are hand-in-hand with the destruction of the environment.

The single largest institutional consumer of fossil fuels in the world is the US Department of Defense (DoD) which uses 4.6 trillion gallons of fuel every year. Canada's Department of National Defence also uses 57% of all the fuel used by the Canadian government. However, the U.S. military, as well as the Canadian military, don't disclose these figures when they report the amount of greenhouse gases and pollution they emit. International agreements from the Kyoto Protocol to the Paris Agreement, already inadequate and fundamentally flawed, hold even less weight when the elephant in the room, military emissions, are exempt from these agreements.

The governments of the U.S., Canada and their imperialist allies are destroying our environment at an unprecedented rate and are destroying the lives of people in oppressed nations around the world through brutal wars and occupations, sanctions, military interventions and bloody coups. Alongside, occupations and military interventions, there are over 800 foreign U.S. military bases around the world, polluting our oceans with their aircraft carriers and releasing fuel into the atmosphere with their jets, planes, tanks and military vehicles. In addition, the military uses all sorts of toxic and radioactive substances



that kill our environment as they kill the victims of war, from nuclear and chemical weapons to depleted uranium coated bullets.

Around the world, antiwar and environmental activists and human-loving people are standing up to the war and environmental degradation. Today, more than ever, it is more and more important to bring those forces together. On **Friday September 20**, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) added an action to the Global Climate Strike to protest the devastating impact that wars and occupations have on climate catastrophes.

This action took place in the busy downtown Vancouver Robson Plaza, and drew the attention of people walking by with signs and banners reading “Stop the War! Stop the Occupation! Stop Environmental Degradation!” The MAWO info table was busy with passersby who stopped to talk to organizers and pick up antiwar literature. MAWO had several petitions ready for people to sign, including one demanding Canada stop its \$15 billion deal with Saudi Arabia for so-called “light” armoured vehicles – which in reality are heavily weaponized military vehicles.

For the next action visit
www.mawovancouver.org or follow on
 Facebook and Twitter @MAWO_Van

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

*Indigenous struggle
against colonialism*



Dallas Goldtooth & Jade Begay

*writers, artists, and activists with the
Indigenous Environmental Network*

As land defenders—people who are working for Indigenous territories to be protected from contamination and exploitation—we see Indigenous Peoples Day as progress; it signals a crucial shift in our culture to recognize the dark past of colonization. No longer are our communities, towns, cities, and states remaining silent and complacent in celebrating the cultural genocide that ensued after Christopher Columbus landed on Turtle Island (a.k.a. North America). Today also means that the erasure of our narrative as Indigenous peoples is ending and our truths are rising to the surface. These truths include: Christopher Columbus was not a hero; he was a murderer. The land we all exist on is stolen. The history we've been taught is not accurate or complete. And perhaps most important among those truths, Indigenous lands are still being colonized, and our people are still suffering the trauma and impacts of colonization.

*Excerpt from Letter From Indigenous
Activists: Essential reading on, and
beyond, Indigenous Peoples Day
(October 8, 2018)*



SCAN ME

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**SOCIALISM YESTERDAY,
SOCIALISM TODAY,
SOCIALISM TOMORROW
CONTINUITY OF THE CUBAN SOCIALIST PROJECT**



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