

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

Fire This Time!

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THE UNITED STATES ISOLATED SUPERPOWER





By Alison Bodine

In the dark early morning on February 6, 2020, the RCMP violently raided Wet'suwet'en territory in Northern British Columbia, Canada.

"They're invading our people again, starting in the wee hours of the morning, arresting people who have been providing food and medical supplies to our camps, who are camped out along the side of the road doing amazing and righteous work. And right now, they're being arrested, and they're being removed," –Sleydo' (Molly Wickham), spokesperson for the Gidimt'en land defenders camp, reported through a video on Facebook.

The people arrested that morning are supporters of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs who are opposed to the construction of the Coastal GasLink (CGL) natural gas pipeline on their territory.

Over the next five days, the RCMP continued to send heavily armed officers, supported by RCMP tactical teams dropped from helicopters, to arrest and forcibly remove peaceful, unarmed land-defenders. This was an armed invasion of unceded, sovereign Wet'suwet'en territory by the Canadian state.

The brutal invasion was an escalation of the ongoing RCMP occupation of Wet'suwet'en territory that intensified at the beginning of January 2020. At that time, the RCMP increased their presence on the territory to attempt to enforce an injunction order against peaceful land defenders who had set up camps along the Morice Forest Service Road. These camps were organized by Wet'suwet'en

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!

RCMP OUT OF WET'SUWET'EN!

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN WET'SUWET'EN?

people and their allies to prevent CGL from accessing Wet'suwet'en territory without the permission of the hereditary chiefs, who, under Wet'suwet'en law, have the right to control access to their lands.

With this occupation came continuous harassment and aggression by the RCMP. This includes the imposition of an arbitrary and ever-expanding exclusion zone which the RCMP use to control the entry of supplies, media, lawyers, doctors, and Wet'suwet'en people into their own territory and the support camps. This RCMP blockade, as well as the brutal raids in February all go far beyond the boundaries of the injunction.

The shamefulness of this attack on the land defenders is further intensified because the CGL pipeline project does not have all the permits that they need to proceed with the project. They are missing one permit from BC's Environmental Assessment Office. The question is if the project is still delayed, then why the violent urgency?

However, in the face of this violence by the RCMP, Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs and their supporters have continued to oppose the CGL pipeline project and defend their rights and sovereignty – simply put, their right to decide if, how and when the CGL pipeline project can proceed.

Who Defines "Rule of Law"?

The Premier of British Columbia, John Horgan, has justified this continuing RCMP occupation and brutality by claiming the supposed necessity to uphold the "rule of law." Of course, the "rule of law" that Horgan is referring to is the enforcement of the injunction and the construction of the CGL pipeline without the consent of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs. However, this is not the only law that must be considered in any honest discussion about resource extraction and

development projects in Canada.

Wet'suwet'en territory, as with over 95% of land in British Columbia, was never surrendered by Indigenous people to the government of Canada. Therefore, Indigenous nations have rights and title to their traditional territories, as has been proven in the Supreme Court of Canada case of Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa.

In their "Open Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Horgan Re: Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs' Opposition to Coastal GasLink Pipeline Project," 40 lawyers and academics from across Canada explain this landmark case, which happened in 1997:

"The Hereditary Chiefs, not the band councils, were the plaintiffs in the landmark Delgamuukw Gisday'wa case before the Supreme Court. The Court confirmed that the Wet'suwet'en never surrendered title to their ancestral lands, and accepted extensive evidence outlining their hereditary governance system. The fact that band councils have signed benefit agreements with Coastal GasLink cannot justify the erasure of Indigenous law or negate the Crown's obligation to meet with the Hereditary Chiefs."

If the government of Canada's "rule of law" therefore recognizes the territory of Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs, certainly it would be logical for there also to be the understanding that Wet'suwet'en laws are to be followed on Wet'suwet'en territory. Therefore, Anuc'nu'at'en (Wet'suwet'en law) is the law that applies on Wet'suwet'en territory. It is clear that John Horgan does not believe in this law, which existed long before the colonization of Canada.

Another "rule of law" that Horgan and the government of Canada are willfully ignoring is Indigenous rights, which are fundamental human rights. The United

Student walkout for Wet'suwet'en in Vancouver, January 27, 2020



Nations has created a framework for these laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). UNDRIP calls for "free, prior and informed consent" of Indigenous nations regarding development projects on their territories. It also speaks against the forceable removal of Indigenous people from their land. The federal government of Canada claims to be currently working on UNDRIP legislation, while legislation to implement UNDRIP in B.C. passed in 2019.

Fundamental human rights must form the basis of any just law, and it is clear the laws that the federal and provincial governments are attempting to impose are trampling all over Indigenous rights. This should not come as too much of a surprise as this is the same "rule of law" that colonial settlers have imposed on Indigenous people for 500 years and especially after the formation of Canada in 1867. This is the same so-called "rule of law" that facilitated stealing Indigenous lands, and Indigenous children from their families, installed torture and brainwashing camps called residential schools, and attempted to erase language and culture, as well as exterminating millions of Indigenous people. This is the "rule of law" that is useless when it comes to the over 100 Indigenous reserves in Canada that don't have access to clean drinking water, sanitation, basic health care and housing.

As recently uncovered by the Narwhal magazine, this is also the same "rule of law" that tried to undermine the Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa decision almost immediately after it was released over 20 years ago. Provincial negotiators for benefit agreements between development projects

and Indigenous nations suggested "using federal funds intended for the healing of residential school survivors to advance treaty negotiations," in desperation to "sweeten the deal" so that Indigenous people wouldn't be tempted to invoke the Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa decision in defense of their rights.

Indigenous Rights Are Human Rights

According to the Yellowhead Institute, LNG Canada, of which the CGL pipeline is one component, received \$5.35 billion in subsidies from the provincial government and an estimated \$1 billion from the federal government.

As Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chief Dsta'hyl explained in a press release on January 15, 2020 - "The problem we are faced with is that the Horgan government has invested billions of dollars of taxpayer's money to subsidize the CGL project. This investment is being used to undermine Wet'suwet'en authority and empower CGL to proceed using the full force of the RCMP and judicial system."

The struggle of the Wet'suwet'en has once again laid bare the empty claims of "truth and reconciliation," spoken by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Although the federal government attempted to shuffle the responsibility for the CGL pipeline

off to the provincial government, Trudeau can call the RCMP off Wet'suwet'en land and put an end to the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline.

What this comes down to is that once again, the government of Canada is putting the interest of capitalist profits ahead of fundamental Indigenous rights. Chief Dsta'hyl has rightfully placed the responsibility for the current violence and any economic impacts from ongoing solidarity actions, squarely where it belongs, on the shoulders of the provincial and the federal governments. Trudeau and Horgan alike continue to promote, subsidize and approve mass resource extraction projects with no regard for Indigenous rights and Mother Earth.

Coast to Coast Action is Growing!

In response to the attack on Wet'suwet'en land defenders, there have been hundreds of actions organized calling for RCMP out of Wet'suwet'en and in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs fight for their sovereignty. This struggle is much bigger, and more fundamental to the colonial foundations of the state of Canada than a struggle against a dirty, climate killing pipeline alone.

Across Canada, there have been rallies and marches, street and intersection protests and blockades, rail blockades, occupations in government offices, and fundraisers. Most of these actions have been Indigenous-led solidarity actions, including a strong rail blockade by the Mohawk nation at Tyendinaga.

However, these actions for Wet'suwet'en are as powerful, spontaneous, independent, and continuous as they are because they are not only about Wet'suwet'en rights or the CGL fracked-gas pipeline. This is about 500 years of colonialism, settler violence, genocide, and 150 years of repression since 1867 by the settler colonial state of Canada.

As Sleydo' (Molly Wickham) said in an interview on the Los Angeles-based radio show "Sojourner Truth" with Margaret Prescod, on January 16, 2020, "We see this fight as bigger than just us as one nation

WET'SUWET'EN



NO PIPELINES

Graphics by: christibeltcourt.com

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Colonial Domination and Racism Against Indigenous People in Canada

"I just hope it doesn't happen to anybody else." Indigenous Grandfather and Granddaughter handcuffed by Vancouver Police while trying to open a bank account in Vancouver



Maxwell Johnson and his granddaughter Tori-Anne



Johnson shows their Indian Status Cards

By Tamara Hansen

On December 20, 2019, Maxwell Johnson of the Heiltsuk First Nation and his 12-year-old granddaughter, Tori-Anne, entered a Bank of Montreal (BMO) in Downtown Vancouver, Canada. The two were planning to open a bank account for Tori-Anne. She is often out of town playing basketball, and her grandfather wanted to make sure she was able to access funds easily.

The BMO bank teller said she had some trouble verifying Johnson's identification and asked them to wait. Soon after, police arrived, grabbing Johnson and his granddaughter and taking them outside. There they were handcuffed and read their rights. Tori-Anne began to cry. Earlier, when police had walked through the doors of BMO Tori-Anne had said to her grandfather, 'Papa, one of these guys is for us.' He had laughed, saying, 'I don't think so.' Nevertheless, her suspicions had been proven accurate.

Johnson explained to CBC news how he was racially profiled. One of the reasons he believes the bank teller may have called 911 was because he had a large sum of money in his account, \$30,000, as part of an Aboriginal rights settlement between the Heiltsuk people and the government of Canada.

Johnson's claim of being racially profiled is backed up by the fact that both Johnson and his granddaughter had two pieces of government identification (his Indian Status Card and birth certificate and her Indian Status Card and her medical card), which are all standard government-issued ID in British Columbia. Johnson has also been a BMO customer since

2014, and he had presented the teller with his BMO card. BMO has refused to answer questions about what issue the teller had with the numbers on the valid IDs. Johnson told Global News that towards the end of the incident, he was told by someone that the teller thought his granddaughter was too young to have a status card and that there was an issue with two of the numbers on her ID. This has neither been confirmed or denied by the bank.

It took almost a month for BMO to make full apologies. However, within all apologies, they refuse to acknowledge that the incident was fueled by racism. Erminia Johansson, a BMO executive, spoke with Global News on January 16. She admitted calling the police was a mistake and that they regret what happened. The interviewer asks what about the bank protocol called for the teller to call the police. Rather than answering about bank protocol directly, Johansson says, "that was a mistake." According to the Global News article, "Johansson rejected the allegation that racism was in any way involved in the call to police reporting an alleged fraud." She stated there was a "real issue in the validation of that ID."

Vancouver Police Chief Adam Palmer contradicts Johansson's claim that there was no racism involved. In a TV interview with CBC, he said the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) received a call about a "fraud in progress." In the 911 call – according to police – suspects were

described as "a 50-year-old South Asian man" and "a 16-year-old South Asian girl". How could this not be an issue of racism and racial profiling, when two pieces of their ID clearly indicated that they were not of South Asian descent (Unless the bank teller is so uneducated and ignorant that they believed "Indian Status Cards" are issued by the government of Canada for Indians from India!). It should be added the Indian Status Cards are photo ID and that the valid IDs present at the bank clearly display Johnson and his granddaughter's faces.

Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart put most of the blame on BMO. In a statement, he said, "the misleading information provided by BMO staff led the officers who responded to take actions they did."

However, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) does not seem to believe the way the Vancouver Police Department and Mayor are spinning this story. In a January 23 open letter to the VPD, the UBCIC writes, "We ask that the transcript of the BMO call to the VPD be made public because we believe it is a matter of public interest. The public needs to know what was said in order to have an informed conversation and dialogue, and to work toward collectively and concretely addressing racism." The recordings have not been publicly released.

Speaking to CTV, Chief Councillor of the Heiltsuk Tribal Council, Marilyn Slett said, "The experience of racial profiling is something that we've all experienced in our daily lives, but this has certainly been the extreme." Slett added

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Statement by Heiltsuk Nation on BMO Racial Profiling and Handcuffing Incident and Subsequent Developments



Nation stands behind Maxwell Johnson and his granddaughter, in their pursuit of justice, and the fight against racism in BC.

Heiltsuk Nation's leadership, Heiltsuk Tribal Council and Heiltsuk Hemas, issued the following statement on behalf of the Nation on the recent incident of racial profiling and handcuffing of Maxwell Johnson and his 12 year-old granddaughter, after they attempted to open a joint bank account at a BMO branch in Vancouver.

"On behalf of the Heiltsuk Nation, we express our steadfast support for Maxwell Johnson and his granddaughter. Max is a much-loved and respected artist, carver, cultural leader, singer, foster parent, and knowledge holder in our community, who leads by example. Most recently, Max mentored Heiltsuk youth and led the painting of the Gvákva'aus Haítzaqv (Heiltsuk Big House) in Bella Bella, sharing his knowledge with the next generation.

"Max is also an advocate for mental health and awareness and is open in sharing his struggles with anxiety and panic disorder. He embodies Heiltsuk values and has always been there to support the community. In light of

this, our nation is outraged by the treatment and trauma that Max and his granddaughter experienced at the hands of BMO staff and members of the Vancouver Police Department. Max's son, Morgan, was also forced to helplessly watch the incident unfold as the VPD handcuffed his father and his niece.

"In the same way Max has supported our community, we are committed to supporting him and his family's pursuit of justice.

"In recent days, we have spoken with Max and his family to determine how to best support them. We have consulted with lawyers and other experts and we will be announcing additional steps soon in the pursuit of justice and to help fight racism in BC. At this time, we can comment on the following aspects of this ongoing story:

1. The responses from BMO and the Vancouver Police Department have been woefully inadequate. Others have provided good explanations for why this is the case. We will simply say that we take strong exception to

the VPD Chief's contention that his officers' response reflected "standard operating procedure" and that they thought they were responding to a call involving a 50 year-old South Asian man and a 16 year-old South Asian girl, as if that somehow justified the outcome. BMO's call to 911 to report a fraud in progress, without seeking any more information, was clearly racial profiling. BMO, while claiming to be apologetic and wanting to implement true reconciliatory measures, has avoided disclosing what transpired in their reporting of the alleged fraud.

2. The recently announced Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC) investigation, with Delta Police Department appointed to investigate this incident, falls short of addressing community concerns. While this investigation is a step in the right direction, and it should be broad and its results made public, it is not comforting or acceptable to us that police should be investigating police on a matter that goes to the heart of systemic racism. Based on this, we are calling on the Vancouver Police Board to conduct its own review with the civilian governance and oversight this situation demands.

"Ultimately, we must all struggle to understand how opening a bank account could result in a 911 call to police, and a 12-year old girl and her grandfather in handcuffs. In the era of reconciliation, this kind of treatment of Indigenous people, or any person of colour, is completely unacceptable. There are many more steps that must be taken before things are made right.

"To conclude, Max and his family have been overwhelmed by the positive public support and media attention this story has generated in Canada and around the world. Media are asked to direct all inquiries and interview requests to Heiltsuk Nation Communications."

BELLA BELLA, BRITISH COLUMBIA
– Jan. 15, 2020 –
From: www.heiltsuknation.ca

The real enemy of free and fair elections in Venezuela is the U.S. interference

Interview with Venezuelan Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Carlos Ron

*Interview by Alison Bodine
Transcription by Azza Rojbi*

While in Caracas, Venezuela, attending the World Anti-imperialist conference on January 22-24, 2020, Fire This Time editorial board member Alison Bodine had the chance to interview Carlos Ron, the Vice Minister for North America, at Venezuela's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Read the report from Alison's trip to the Anti-imperialist conference in page 18 of this issue.

Fire This Time: First, thank you, Campanero Carlos Ron, for taking the time to sit down with me tonight here at the Anti-Imperialist Forum in Caracas. I know that you've just gotten back from some long and good trips, so I really appreciate your time. One year ago, just about today, in January 2019, U.S. puppet Juan Guaidó declared himself president of Venezuela. In January 2020, Guaidó is even farther away from where he was to taking power in Venezuela. What are the main reasons that this U.S. strategy to overthrow Nicolas Maduro, the democratically elected president of Venezuela, has failed, in your opinion?

Carlos Ron: Well, the main reason I think is the obvious reason that they don't have the support of the people of Venezuela. I think that a lot of people even from the opposition reject violence and reject a change of government that doesn't comply somehow with the constitution or with our democratic process. And what Guaidó has been proposing is precisely that, it is either a coup or some sort of intervention or some sort of tutelage by the United States,

things that the Venezuelan people in general terms reject. And not having that backing from the Venezuelan people that you could see, you know, every time he convenes a mobilization there's very few people. This has been probably the period where the opposition in Venezuela has had the least power to gather people and move them around the country. You see that reflected in that their own base has withered out and they're not supportive of Guaidó. That's not to say there's not an opposition. There is a vibrant opposition, as a matter of fact, the newly elected board from the National Assembly is composed of all members of the opposition. But this is an opposition that doesn't believe in sanctions or at least is not looking for sanctions, it is an opposition that wants to dispute things within the political system, within the democratic process and it's not willing to have their country invaded or taken over by the United States or any foreign power.

FTT: Recently, the U.S. secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, sent a tweet saying that the people of Venezuela deserve "a free and fair presidential election", I am sure we can expect in the coming days a similar comment from someone in Canada's government. What is your response to the statement?"

CR: Well, the interesting thing is that they know that this year there needs to be by law, as it is said in our constitution, we need to have elections



Alison Bodine interviewing Venezuelan Vice Minister Carlos Ron in Caracas, Venezuela, January 2020

for a new national assembly. So, what's interesting is that they are also now talking about those elections and only the presidential elections, which they were arguing about from years ago. Venezuela's electoral system has been proven by international observers for over 25 elections in 20 years, that it is a trustworthy process and has been handled in a free and fair manner. However, whenever the United States doesn't consider their winning choice or their candidate as a winner, then they question the electoral system, it is basically a matter of choice. The only free elections, or the only elections that will be free for Mike Pompeo is one where, you know, his candidate is the one that wins. And this is true not only for Venezuela, this is true for anywhere else the U.S. has any interest in. And really the national assembly is supposed to meet this year and elect a new electoral board. And it doesn't happen because the United States orders its puppets like Guaidó, and his groups to block that negotiation. So really, the real enemy of free and fair elections in Venezuela is the United States interference.

FTT: Within the first two weeks of January, the United States had already announced new sanctions against Venezuela. The government of Canada and the European Union, where you've recently been have also imposed sanctions. Can you describe some of the main impacts of this brutal blockade on the people of Venezuela?

CR: Again, we haven't had normal



Sign at a protest against U.S. sanctions in Caracas, Venezuela



Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro greeting supporters at a mass rally in Caracas

transactions in the financial sector for a couple of years now. These sanctions don't allow us to, for example, make important purchases that are needed to import food, medicine, parts for our basic industries that are necessary for the country's development. There's about 15000 people that have not been able to have access to their dialysis medicine and equipment because of these blockades. When there's a shutdown of the electrical system like we had before, companies that use the service of Venezuela's electrical supply can no longer do their work because they're forbidden.

You have other companies that won't even do business with Venezuela anymore because they fear that they could get punished in another way in the United States or in any of these countries. So, it's really, it's making everyday life for Venezuelans difficult. In the banks alone, you know, there is over 30 billion dollars that have been frozen in Venezuelan accounts, not to take into consideration that, you know, Venezuela has lost Citgo, which was an oil company in the United States, Venezuela has lost others in Colombia as well. So, there is a very sharp blockade that doesn't allow Venezuelans to live their everyday life like they used to before. It is a violation of international law. These are unilateral coercive measures which are forbidden explicitly by the U.N. charter and that no country has a right to do alone or in a collective manner, because what they're really doing is in a way they've made unilateralism collective by having several countries apply unilateral measures. But these are all illegal because the only sanctions that can be legal are ones that are dictated within the Security Council in a multilateral institution like the United Nations. So, this is breach of

law and its harm that goes directly not to the Venezuelan government, not to Venezuelan officials, but to the whole Venezuelan population itself. It's a form of collective punishment, which really is a violation of Venezuelan human rights.

FTT: So, at this time, what is your message to the people of U.S. and Canada, as a Venezuelan, as a Venezuelan diplomat?

CR: Well, I think our message is that we feel that we have strong ties. We feel that we have the same aspirations in life. When we see, for example, this year in the United States that you see the campaign or the campaign a few months ago in Canada, you see that a lot of the people mobilizing in the streets that are asking for the same things that Venezuelans were trying to build here. You know, housing is affordable and available to all, health care system is provided for all, education that is free and doesn't tie you to debt for the rest of your life. These are things that we have here in Venezuela and that we've been fighting for over 20 years. So, I think to the people of Canada, to the people in the United States, we see things eye to eye, we have the same needs, we have the same longings. Our problem is with the governments that are completely sold out to corporate interests that want to take Venezuela's resources such as our oil, our gold and many other important natural resources that we have and use them at their disposal while not use them for the benefit of the Venezuelan people.

So we have a problem with those governments, we have problem with governments that want to interfere into Venezuela's internal affairs and want to portray Venezuela's democracy as some sort of old time dictatorship, when in fact we have a very vibrant and participatory

democracy, that we know many of our friends in Canada and the United States would want for themselves. We have no issues but solidarity and brotherhood, sisterhood with our comrades in the United States and Canada.

We do have an issue with the imperialist attitudes of those two governments that at different levels and at different times, they have combined their actions to attack Venezuela's sovereignty and Venezuela's democratic revolution.

FTT: Great. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

CR: No. I would say that we like to invite our friends from Canada, from the U.S. to come to Venezuela to see for yourself, not take my word. See for yourself what goes on here, and the way that we live and that this is a project for humanity. That's what we defend. And hopefully we can share that with you.

FTT: Thank you very much.

*Follow Carlos Ron on Twitter:
@CarlosJRonVE*

*Follow Alison Bodine on Twitter:
@Alisoncolette*

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.

October 2017, paperback, \$10.00
190 pages, illustrated, ISBN 978-0-9864716-5-0
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Visit Cuba, See Cuba, Enjoy Cuba & Discover Its Revolutionary Spirit

Join the Che Guevara Brigade!

By Janine Solanki

When I went to Cuba for the first time in 2006, I thought I knew what to expect. I had read all about Cuba's renowned universal healthcare and education systems and knew those famous names like Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. I had recently graduated from high school, and I was prepared with my journal to take notes on all I would learn while on the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade! However, it was the less tangible aspects of the Cuban revolution that really taught me about Cuba, and made me fall

in love with this incredible country.

In Cuba I learned about consciousness from a 9 year old who shared her cookies with us and schooled us on the history of imperialist U.S. aggression against her country. I learned kindness and warmth from Cubans who patiently endured our broken Spanish and made us feel welcome by spontaneously buying us ice cream. I learned about pride and dignity everywhere I went. It was on the faces

of the brave young soldiers who guard the border of the U.S.-occupied territory of Guantanamo Bay. It was in the heartfelt voice of the taxi driver who told me how "yo soy Fidel" (I am Fidel) means that Fidel's spirit is reflected in the Cuban people, and that their leader, although physically no longer with us, is in the very mountains and palm trees of Cuba. When I met former combatants, who fought in the Cuban Revolution, I learned that this revolution was by and

for the people, made by farmers and workers, when they joined us in our volunteer work and showed us how hard these campesinos can work!

Cuba made a lifelong impact on me when I first joined the Che Guevara Brigade in 2006, and continues each time



I visit - soon to be 8 times on the Che Brigade! But enough about my stories and experiences - how about yours?

Cuba is known as an excellent tourist destination by many in Canada - over a million tourists visit from Canada every year! While there is much appeal in Cuba's famous beaches, classic cars and irresistible music that compels you to get up and dance... it is only scratching the surface. This island nation defied U.S. imperialism, right under their nose, when Cuban revolutionaries threw out U.S. backed dictator Batista in 1959 and began developing a socialist society on their own terms. After 60 years of a criminal U.S. blockade, despite this enormous economic pressure the Cuban Revolution has not only survived but has thrived and made huge gains. Cuban scientists are developing life-saving medicines, and Cuban doctors share their renowned healthcare around the world on internationalist missions. Just two years after the triumph of the revolution, Cuba eliminated illiteracy



and have developed a world class, universal education system. Even in the field of sports and arts, Cuba is well known on the world stage. So, what is the best way to experience all of these aspects of Cuba? As both a repeat brigadista, and as the national coordinator of the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade, I claim that there is no better way to see Cuba than on the Che Guevara Brigade, a project of the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) and the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP). I encourage you to join this trip and prove me right!

From April 27 to May 10, 2020, brigadistas travelling to Cuba on the 27th Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade will learn from the Cuban people, whether by doing volunteer work together on a farm, or by celebrating with over a million Cubans in Havana during International Workers Day on May 1, a truly amazing experience! Brigadistas will learn about the Cuban revolution by visiting

historic sites, but also by seeing the Cuban revolution as it develops its future today - while meeting with Cuban university students, or organizers in Cuba's LGBTQ community. Of course, Cuba's natural beauty is not to be missed, including visits to the beach! And one thing that cannot be escaped in Cuba, and which the Che Guevara Brigade embraces, is the rich art and culture, including salsa dance lessons! Most importantly, in everything the Che Guevara Brigade does, we will be practicing solidarity with our Cuban friends, while on the brigade and in the stories and experiences we take back to Canada.

Don't just take my word for it - across Canada there are hundreds of people who have taken part in this unique trip over the last 27 years, from the

age of 7 all the way to 87 years old, and of all backgrounds and abilities! So if you are reading this now and want to be a brigadista on the 2020 Che Guevara Brigade, head over to www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/brigade for more info on the program and cost of the trip, or to register. Alternatively, you can give me a call at 778-881-6156 or email me at chevolbrigade@gmail.com and I'd be happy to answer your questions.

¡Vamos a Cuba!
Let's go to Cuba!

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

i  cuba!



Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC), Shamefully Lies About Venezuela! *Using Taxpayer Money to Deceive Us*



By Alison Bodine

Canada's public media the CBC long-ago entered the ranks of yellow journalism when it comes to its reporting on Venezuela. However, two recent reports, in particular, one on CBC radio's "The Current" and the other a CBC News article by reporter Evan Dyer, weigh heavy on the sensationalism and light on facts. Filled with unsubstantiated claims, right-wing pundits parading as "pro-democracy" advocates and unchallenged declarations by the government of Canada officials, once again, the CBC firmly establishes their role as the mouthpiece of the government Canada.

CBC's Lies and Manipulations Against Venezuela

The January 28 report on Venezuela on The Current could have been shortened to the 30 second sound clip from the Foreign Affairs Minister of Canada François-Philippe Champagne that was played near the beginning of the report -

"You have to look at the economic hardship that people are living. You have to look at the environmental disaster that is going on now with the illegal mining of gold. You have to look at the humanitarian crisis that is going on. We think that there will be about six million displaced by the end of the year. So everything that we're seeing suggests that we should redouble our efforts. The solution needs to come from the region. We will work with the region, but I think the president would tell you that with Canada's support, we're going to look ahead to restore democracy in Venezuela."

The economic and humanitarian crisis, environmental disaster, restoring democracy, Minister Champagne said them all. The other 16 minutes of the program had nothing further to offer, in terms of reporting or analysis because these are the buzzwords that mark the depth of mainstream media coverage on Venezuela. Minister Champagne also fails to mention one word, one which the mainstream media has also willfully neglected to include in any of their reporting - sanctions. Neither he or the entire episode of The Current bothers to mention that the governments of

Canada, the United States, and the European Union have all imposed illegal and immoral sanctions and blockade on the people of Venezuela. So much for an objective discussion on the government of Canada's Venezuela policies and actions.

And who did Matt Galloway and the CBC invite to the program to comment on the government of Canada's foreign policy with Venezuela?

First, Mr. Galloway welcomed Yvon Grenier, as a "professor of political science at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia" Supposedly presenting him as an intellectual authority figure, with an objective point of view, the CBC neglected to mention the title of his most recent book - "Culture and the Cuban State, Participation, Recognition, and Dissonance under Communism (2017)," or his position as a fellow at the right-wing Brian Mulroney Institute of Government, which recently hosted Stephen Harper's former Chief of Staff as a "honoured guest speaker." Clearly, his position on the revolutionary government of Venezuela, which spends over 75% of its budget on social investment, including free healthcare, free education, and pensions for women who have consumed their lives as housewives and mothers, is not a government Mr. Grenier supports.

The Current did play the words of the NDP deputy foreign affairs critic, Heather McPherson, including her comment that "What concerns me most is the idea that by meeting with Guaido that the prime minister is taking a side and is putting his nose where it doesn't belong" (which he clearly is). However, Matt Galloway allowed Professor Grenier to dismiss her statement with a mere one-sentence repetition of what he had already said - that Guaido is a legitimate President and the government of Canada is right to intervene - in so



Fire This Time Venezuela solidarity campaign protest outside of CBC Vancouver

many words. Yet again, the pundits go unchallenged, and an audio clip that could have led to critical thought and discussion about Canada's warmongering foreign policy was cut off before it could begin.

Next, Mr. Galloway welcomed Maryhen Jimenez, as a "lecturer in political science at the University of Oxford who has studied the Venezuelan opposition movement," to the program. Her introduction was slightly more revealing of her bias, but it omitted the focus of her research "explore uneven patterns of opposition coordination in autocracies..." Of which, her biography continues, Venezuela is one of her countries of study. Matt Galloway started the report on Venezuela with "It was just over a year ago that Juan Guaido declared himself interim president following national elections widely considered to be fraudulent," so inviting Ms. Jimenez, who bases her research on the idea that Venezuela is an "autocracy" is fitting.

It's almost as if the producers for The Current looked for two guest speakers with the most similar perspective as possible - if it was a position against the government of President Maduro.

CBC Silences the Voices of Those That Support Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro

Now, it might be considered understandable that former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who declared the election system in Venezuela the "best in the world," might

have been hard to reach for comment. However, there are many people from Canada, including the author of this article, that was in Venezuela as elections observers when President Maduro was re-elected in May of 2018.

It seems out of the question that the CBC would ever get comments from any of the millions of people in Venezuela that support the Bolivarian revolutionary process and President Maduro. However, there are journalists, academics, unionists, students, and workers right here in Canada that could attest to how the United Nations and 75% of countries around the world recognize President Maduro, not the U.S. puppet Guaido, as the President of Venezuela. People who could talk about how President Maduro received 68% of the vote, which represented a higher percentage of votes from the entire electorate, then either Trudeau or Trump received in their last election. Venezuelan Canadians who could comment on how the government of Canada refused to let them vote from within Canada in the Venezuelan Presidential election. Even someone that could remind the CBC and their “expert” guests that Guaido never ran in any election to be President of Venezuela. Undoubtedly, one of us would have been available, had anyone from the CBC asked.

If The Current and the CBC intended to discuss the government of Canada’s foreign policy towards Venezuela – they indeed



Massive march in Caracas, Venezuela against the coup in Bolivia and against imperialism and U.S. interventions in Latin America, November 2019

should have reached out to someone directly impacted by Canada’s sanctions against Venezuela. Only a week before this report, Venezuela Olympic athlete Alejandra Benítez was denied a visa to Canada under these cruel and arbitrary sanctions. Alejandra Benítez had hoped to compete in the Montreal Grand Prix, a fencing competition that is a qualifying event for

the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. But, her chances of making it to the Olympics were quashed because she was Venezuela’s Minister of Sports from 2013-2014. Indeed, she would have been happy to share her story with people in Canada.

Instead, The Current didn’t even bother to pretend that they are providing balanced reporting that is in opposition to the line of the Liberal government. The Trudeau government’s policy towards Venezuela is a playbook lock in step with the United States’ objective to bring about the overthrow of the President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro. For all intents and purposes, the CBC is in support of these anti-democratic and anti-human policies.

CBC Ignores U.S. and Canada Sanctions on Venezuela

Now, undoubtedly, the CBC would work harder to present more than rhetoric on Venezuela in their articles. Well, not if the article “Canada considers new international push to oust Venezuela’s Nicolas Maduro,”

by veteran CBC journalist Evan Dyer is of any indication. This 1500-word article could also be summed with a short quote from the government of Canada. Justin Trudeau’s, “I commend Interim President Guaidó for the courage and leadership he has shown in his efforts to return democracy to Venezuela, and I offer Canada’s continued support. Canadians stand with the people of Venezuela in their pursuit of free and fair elections, and basic human rights” would do just fine.

In 1500 words, Mr. Dyer managed to parrot nearly every lie about the government of President Maduro that has become the mainstay of the mainstream media war against Venezuela, especially when it comes to the election of Luis Parra as the President of the National Assembly in Venezuela on



Supporters of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro rally against U.S. sanctions in Caracas, Venezuela

January 5. Guaido is not President of the National Assembly anymore. Yet, Mr. Dyer continues the CBC’s shameful trend of presenting the point of view of Venezuela’s counter-revolutionary opposition as objective fact – all the while presenting the government of Canada’s intervention in the internal affairs of Venezuela as a foregone conclusion that is immune to any critical thought.

Much the same as The Current, Mr. Dyer couldn’t be bothered to mention U.S., Canada, and European Union sanctions in his article. How could he dare bring up the words “humanitarian crisis” without referencing a report by economists Mark Weisbrot and Jeremy Sachs of the Center for Economic Policy Research, which documented the deadly impact of the over 350 sanctions since 2015. According to their findings, these sanctions killed an estimated 40,000 people from 2017-2018. As Alfred de Zayas, a United Nations Independent Expert, wrote in his 2018 report from his mission to Venezuela to the UN Human Rights Council, “Modern-day economic sanctions and blockades are comparable with medieval sieges of towns with the intention of forcing them to surrender. Twenty-first-century sanctions attempt to bring not just a town, but sovereign countries to their knees.” It appears these types of reports are of no use to the CBC.

This pro-war, “news” article, would be a much better fit in the opinion page of any major corporate newspaper or website.

With manipulative coverage such as this, how is it that the CBC can continue to claim that they operate on the principle that “All employees of CBC News, as well as the content they create, must respect the principles of accuracy, fairness, balance,

Continued on page 28

By Manuel E. Yepe

On March 12, 1996, the Congress of the United States of America approved one of the most regressive and draconian imperialist foreign policy initiatives, ironically named the Solidarity Act of Freedom and Democracy for Cuba (LIBERTAD), known as the Helms-Burton Act.

Before the triumph of Cuban guerrilla weapons over the armed forces of Fulgencio Batista's tyranny, which had been imposed by Washington on Cuba, the United States exercised absolute control. The economy of the island was ultimately subordinated to the interests of U.S. companies involved in relations with the Cuban authorities and entities.

After the victory of the revolution in January 1959, the situation changed completely. Cubans became masters of their country and their economy. Nevertheless, Cuba could not conduct its normal foreign trade relations with the US because US hostility became present in economic relations.

However, before the 1990s, the blockade on trade with Cuba had not been legally established although it started working through so-called "executive orders".

It was President Kennedy who officially initiated the blockade, euphemistically called the "embargo", in 1962. He did this on the basis of [U.S. national] self-interest in response to the nationalization of US assets ordered by Cuba following the revolution's coming to power.

Happily for Cuba, that moment arrived just at the moment when Moscow was in a position to become Cuba's main trading partner in the New World. There were special incentives from its ideological affinity and a certain economic complementarity that the political alliance would bring about.

It is rightly said that the community's approach and world public opinion have very little influence on the policy of the United States of America. This perception was fully confirmed by history during the second half of the 20th century.

Every year, Cubans, many Latin Americans and not a few Americans, humiliated by the shame of the criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade that their country, the richest and most militarily powerful in the world,

UNITED STATES, THE ISOLATED SUPERPOWER



has been exercising against this small island. Cuba is a giant in terms of dignity. The sole justification of Washington's fear is that the example of Cuba's successful resistance to unjust abuse will encourage other peoples and governments of the continent to defend their sovereignty, which cannot be renounced.

Once again this year, the most representative body of the international community debated and approved almost unanimously, in a plenary session of its General Assembly, the resolution "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba".

A few minutes after the conclusion of this most recent session of the UN General Assembly, the whole of Cuba celebrated, as it does every year, "the new victory against imperialism" with as much joy as if it were the first time that it did so as an expression of its condemnation

of the unjust blockade imposed on the Caribbean country.

This was the umpteenth time in as many consecutive years that the United Nations General Assembly approved the same resolution. It calls for the suspension of the longest blockade in human history. It has already caused the island more than \$100 billion in losses. It could have served to bring Cuba out of underdevelopment through its own efforts, according to the original projects of the triumphant revolution in January 1959.

The Helms-Burton Act was not the only piece of explicitly anti-Cuban legislation circulating in Congress at the time. On February 9, 1995, Representative Charles Rangel (D-NY) introduced a bill with a diametrically opposed text, the Cuba Free Trade Act. It was aimed at eliminating the blockade and establishing a dialogue with Cuba. In doing so, Rangel sought to draft an agreement on the disposition of expropriated U.S. assets in Cuba.

Congress did not approve that law, opting for a hard-line stance against Cuba and avoiding constructive policies that would transform it.

December 27, 2019

Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.

Article originally published in spanish by the daily POR ESTO! of Merida, Mexico.

*A CubaNews translation. Edited by
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LA SUPERPOTENCIA AISLADA

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por Manuel E. Yepe

El 12 de marzo de 1996, el Congreso de los Estados Unidos de América aprobó uno de los más regresivos y draconianas iniciativas de política exterior imperialista, irónicamente bautizada como Ley solidaria de libertad y democracia para Cuba (LIBERTAD), conocida como Ley Helms-Burton.

Antes del triunfo de las armas guerrilleras cubanas sobre las fuerzas armadas de la tiranía de Fulgencio Batista impuesta por Washington a Cuba, Estados Unidos ejercía un absoluto control. La economía de la Isla que, en última instancia, se subordinaba a los intereses de las empresas estadounidenses que participaban en las relaciones que en las autoridades y entidades cubanas.

Tras la victoria de la revolución en enero de 1959 la situación cambio totalmente. Los cubanos se hicieron dueños de su país y su economía pero aún Cuba no podía realizar sus relaciones normales de comercio exterior con EEUU porque la hostilidad se hizo presente en las relaciones económicas.

Sin embargo, antes de la década de 1990, el bloqueo del comercio con Cuba no se había sido establecido legalmente aunque comenzó a funcionar mediante las llamadas “órdenes ejecutivas”.

Fue el Presidente Kennedy quien inició oficialmente el bloqueo, eufemísticamente bautizado como “embargo” en 1962, sobre la base de un interés propio de responder a la nacionalización de activos estadounidenses dispuesta por Cuba a raíz de la llegada al poder de la revolución.

Felizmente para Cuba ese momento llegó justamente en los momentos en que Moscú estaba en capacidad de convertirse en su principal socio comercial en el Nuevo

Mundo, con especial incentivo de su afinidad ideológica y cierta complementariedad económica que propiciaría la alianza política.

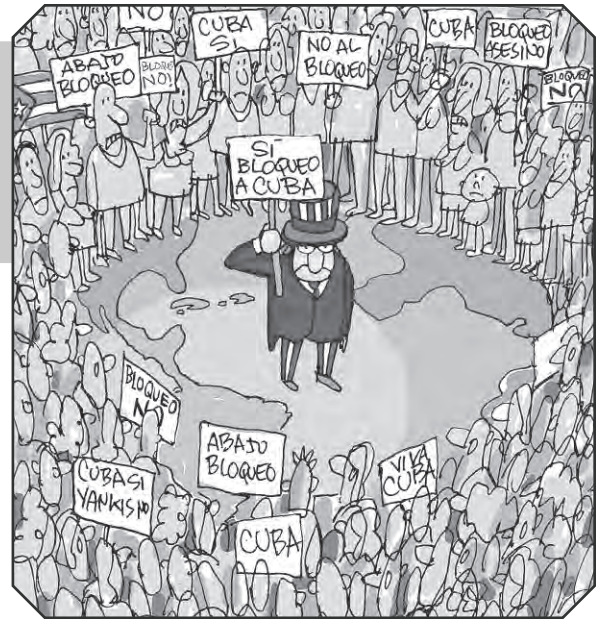
Con razón se dice que el criterio de la comunidad internacional y la opinión pública mundial muy poco influyen en la política de los Estados Unidos de América. Esta percepción se vio plenamente confirmada por la historia durante la segunda mitad del siglo XX.

Cada año, los cubanos, buena parte de los latinoamericanos y no pocos estadounidenses humillados por la vergüenza del criminal bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero que hace casi ochenta años ejerce su país, el más rico y militarmente poderoso del mundo, contra esta isla pequeña, pero gigantesca en términos de dignidad, con la única justificación de su temor a que el ejemplo a su exitosa resistencia a tan injusto abuso estimulara a otros pueblos y gobiernos del continente a la defensa irrenunciable de su soberanía.

Nuevamente este año, el órgano más representativo de la comunidad internacional debatió y aprobó casi por unanimidad, en sesión plenaria de su Asamblea General, la resolución “Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico comercial y financiero impuesto por Estados Unidos a Cuba”.

Pocos minutos después de concluida esta más reciente sesión de la Asamblea General de la ONU, Cuba entera festejaba como cada año “la nueva victoria contra el imperialismo” con tanto júbilo como si fuera ésta la primera vez que lo hacía como expresión de su condena por el injusto bloqueo impuesto al país caribeño.

Pero el hecho cierto es que esta era la enésima ocasión en igual número de años



consecutivos que la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas aprobaba la misma resolución, que exige la suspensión del bloqueo mas largo que recuerda la historia de la humanidad y que ya ha causado a la isla más de 100 mil millones de dólares de pérdidas que habrían servido para sacar a Cuba del subdesarrollo mediante esfuerzo propio, según los proyectos originales de la revolución triunfante en enero de 1959.

Ley Helms-Burton no fue la única pieza de legislación explícitamente anticubana que circulaba en el Congreso en el momento. El 9 de febrero de 1995 el representante Charles Rangel (Demócrata por Nueva York) presentó un proyecto de ley de texto diametralmente opuesto, la ley de libre comercio con Cuba, destinada a eliminar el bloqueo y entablar un diálogo con Cuba. Al hacerlo, Rangel intentó elaborar un acuerdo en cuanto a la disposición de los bienes estadounidenses expropiados en Cuba.

El Congreso no aprobó esa ley, optando por una postura de línea dura contra Cuba y evitando políticas constructivas que la transformen.

Diciembre 27 de 2019

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Artículo publicado originalmente en por el diario ¡POR ESTO! de Mérida, México.

"THE U.S. GOVERNMENT-THE WORLD'S BIGGEST TERRORIST" MIDDLE EAST RALLIES DEMAND: U.S. OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!



Sign at the massive rally in Baghdad, Iraq demanding U.S. out of Iraq

Millions attending Soleimani's funeral in Tehran, Iran

By Janine Solanki

On January 3, 2020, the U.S. assassination of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in Iraq sparked outrage throughout the Middle East and around the world. With this arrogant and murderous act, the U.S. government and President Trump were saying, "the world is our backyard, where we can kill whoever wants, wherever and whenever we want."

This assassination does not stand by itself – the U.S.-led war and occupation have killed well over 1 million Iraqi people since their criminal invasion in March 2003. Iraqi people have suffered 17 years of U.S.-led war and occupation that has destroyed their infrastructure, healthcare and education systems. They have left the Iraqi people with high rates of unemployment and poverty. Even rates of cancer and birth defects have risen dramatically, due to the U.S. military's use of toxic and radioactive depleted uranium weapons, the effects of which will plague the Iraqi people for generations to come.

Meanwhile, in Iran, in 2018, U.S. President Trump withdrew from the Iran deal that was negotiated in 2015 and quickly re-imposed further economic sanctions against Iran. Trump's campaign of "maximum pressure" against Iran is economically strangling Iran and the Iranian people. Most notably, Iranian cancer patients, along with those needing treatment for other conditions, are in a life or death situation as U.S. sanctions

prevent Iran to import critical medicines and equipment.

If the January 3rd assassination was a message of imperialist dominance from the U.S., the people of Iraq and Iran, and throughout the Middle East, also have a message – U.S. imperialists, GET OUT NOW.

In Iraq, protests against the U.S. occupation had already been growing, including a protest which occupied the heavily fortified U.S. embassy in Baghdad from December 31 to January 1, in response to recent U.S. airstrikes. Since the January 3rd assassination, protests have grown, with over a million on the streets of Baghdad on January 24, including men, women, and children demanding that the U.S. leave Iraq. One young protester, 18-year-old Mariam, told Al Jazeera at the January 25 demonstration, "we want to liberate our country from these chains of oppression. We have been suppressed and hurt by the U.S.'s interests in the region, so we want them out of Iraq." Another protester, Aliya al-Ajeel from Sadr City, said, "the U.S. occupation has taken everything from us. We have nothing left. Since 2003, we have been stripped from our basic dignity and right to live a normal life. We're living in decrepit houses; we have no jobs, no salaries. We don't want America here."

Iraq's government has also demanded that U.S. forces leave Iraq. On January 6, a vote in Iraqi parliament passed to expel U.S. troops. U.S. President Trump's response

was to threaten economic sanctions on Iraq, before flatly refusing to respect Iraq's self-determination and demands to leave.

Meanwhile, in Iran, millions came out onto the streets in mourning and protest in Tehran, Mashhad, and other cities. In the city of Ahvaz, a funeral procession for General Soleimani stretched more than three kilometers! Faced with the direct attack on Iran through the assassination of their top general and diplomat Qasem Soleimani, Iran responded in the language that the U.S. is used to speaking and not receiving – force. On January 8 Iran hit two U.S. bases in Iraq with missiles, demonstrating Iran's ability to strike back against U.S. aggression, and to tell the U.S. government that they cannot carry on their warmongering actions without consequences and retaliation. U.S. media reports reflected their shock at having a taste of the aggression they are usually inflicting. On January 12, a CNN reporter on the ground in Iraq made the point on CNN TV that "the U.S. has rarely been on the receiving end of this kind of strike, they are usually the ones who are delivering it." While there were no U.S. casualties in this attack (likely intentionally, as the U.S. had advance knowledge to move their soldiers to bunkers), the U.S. is now reporting 109 soldiers diagnosed with brain injuries (such as concussions). This delay and covering up is drawing criticism at the Trump administration, who have tried to dismiss the magnitude of the Iranian response.

Beyond Iraq and Iran, the U.S. is facing more

setbacks to its attempts to dominate the Middle East. In Afghanistan, throughout 19 years U.S./Canada/NATO occupation, various administrations have vowed never to negotiate with the Taliban. Not out of any moral reasons; however, almost two decades of U.S. occupation have proved that advancing Afghanistan in the interest of Afghans was never a goal. The U.S. government has supported, funded, and backed notorious warlords in Afghanistan who now hold power or positions in government, and has fueled corruption, all to benefit U.S. interests at the expense of the Afghan people. However, now the U.S. government is in negotiations with the Taliban, including discussion of troop withdrawal, after 19 years of the Afghan resistance against the U.S. occupation.

In Syria, U.S. troops are also facing resistance – in recent days, video footage has shown villagers in northeastern Syria blocking and throwing rocks at a U.S. armored convoy which had shot and killed a civilian. Footage shows the villagers taking the U.S. flag off the top of an armored vehicle and arguing with U.S. troops. In another instance, U.S. patrols came under attack by small arms fire. Another video shows a Syrian civilian confronting U.S. soldiers on patrol, asking, “what are you doing in my country? What do you want from my country? What business do you have here?”

From Iraq to Iran, Afghanistan to Syria, people in the Middle East are telling U.S. imperialism, “we will not back down. We will not relinquish our self-determination, our sovereignty, or our dignity. Even with rocks against a giant, we will fight back.”

No More Wars, U.S. Out of the Middle East

Here in Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) is standing alongside our Iraqi and Iranian brothers and sisters fighting for their self-determination. On **January 10**, MAWO held a protest action in downtown Vancouver, attracting the attention of passersby with a large banner reading “No War with Iran! U.S./Canada/NATO All Troops Out of Iraq!” The protest brought together many new people who had heard about the protests in Iraq and Iran and were eager to join in solidarity from Canada.

The next day, on **January 11**, MAWO held

a free public forum about the escalation of U.S. wars and aggression in the Middle East. The forum was emceed by Azza Rojbi, MAWO executive member and Tunisian social justice activist. The program started with a series of video clips, showing both the history and recent events in Iraq and Iran. The first speaker was Wala Zaidan,



Protest action in Vancouver, January 10, 2020



Public forum on the escalation of U.S. wars and aggression in the Middle East in Vancouver, January 11, 2020. Left to right Ali Yerevani, Wala Zaidan and Azza Rojbi



Protest action in Vancouver for the international day of action “No War with Iran”, January 25, 2020

an Iraqi poet and social justice activist, who spoke from her experiences of seeing her home country being destroyed by the U.S. war and occupation. Wala also shared a beautiful and touching poem she had written. The next speaker was Ali Yerevani, who is the political editor of the Fire This Time Newspaper, and was a participant

in the 1979 Iranian revolution. Ali spoke about the overall U.S. imperialist strategy for hegemony in the Middle East, and how the U.S. needs to control Iran as part of this strategy but also cannot easily attack Iran. Following the speakers, there was a dynamic discussion from participants before the event wrapped up.

On **January 25**, a day after the million-strong united protest against U.S. occupation called in Iraq, an international day of action was called by CodePink in the U.S., demanding no war with Iran, and the U.S. out of Iraq. Over 115 cities on every inhabited continent held actions, including Vancouver. Mobilization Against War and Occupation held a rally in a busy downtown square, where passersby couldn’t pass without seeing the banners and picket signs reflecting the demands of the rally. An info table was busy with people stopping to get more information, to sign on to antiwar petitions, and to talk to organizers. Many people joined the rally from the Iranian community, as well as Iraqi and Yemeni community members. At the beginning of the rally, a group of pro-US intervention, pro-sanctions counter-protesters tried to disrupt the action. After strong and united continuous chanting against war and sanctions on Iran by the protesters, the counter-protesters gave up and left!

The rally continued with a program that was a diverse mix of youth and long-time activists and speakers from the Middle Eastern, North African, Indian, and Latin American communities. Protesters also heard

a solidarity voice message from Ken Stone from the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War, as well as from Venezuela, where the MAWO chairperson Alison Bodine was attending the World Anti-Imperialist Conference.

In Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation continues to organize, educate, and mobilize against this new era of war and occupation that started with the war on

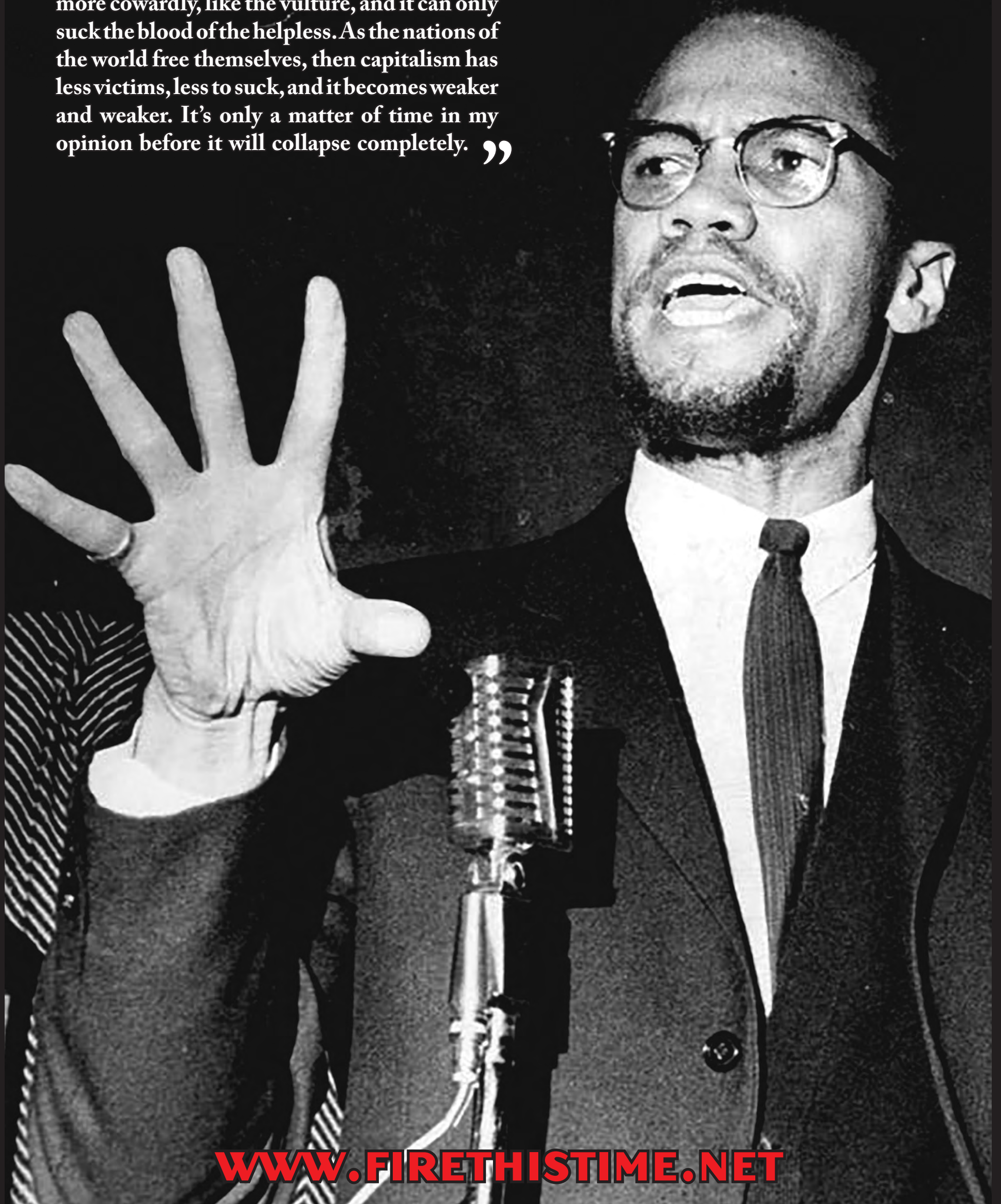
Afghanistan and continues today. To find out about upcoming events and actions, visit www.mawovancouver.org, or follow on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @MAWOVan.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

MALCOLM X

1925-1965

“ Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it's more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody's blood whether they were strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless. As the nations of the world free themselves, then capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It's only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely. ”



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WE MUST BUILD A STRONGER AND MORE UNITED ANTI-WAR, ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT

Eye-Witness Report from the Anti-Imperialist Conference in Caracas, Venezuela

By Alison Bodine

"Task that we have a single global agenda of struggle and permanent mobilization. I ask everyone to play their part in their country, everyone to lead the fight in their country and be united in the ideas, in the spirit and strength." – Nicolás Maduro, President of Venezuela, January 24, 2020

These were some of the last words said by President Maduro at the closing ceremony of the First International Encounter Against Imperialism, for Peace, Sovereignty, and Life, held in Caracas, Venezuela from January 22-24, 2020. However, these words are also the best way to start a report from this dynamic conference. Because at the summary of three days of discussions, debates, planning and, of course, dancing and music too – building a more united and stronger world-wide anti-imperialist, anti-war movement was on the top of everyone's minds.

This successful inaugural gathering brought over 400 international delegates from 72 countries and all five continents together with over 2,000 delegates from across Venezuela. Delegates were there to exchange ideas, learn from the struggles against imperialist war around the world, and plan for coordinated actions in solidarity with Venezuela, and against the U.S.-led war drive of sanctions, war, and occupations.

The U.S. War Against Venezuela

As the delegates to the anti-imperialist conference raised their voices against the death, destruction and chaos imposed by the U.S. government and their allies in Venezuela, war-mongering U.S. Secretary of State



January 21, 2020: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro addressing supporters in Caracas, Venezuela at a massive rally to mark the anniversary of the overthrow of dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez in 1958

Mike Pompeo landed in the neighbour country of Colombia. Colombia, a so-called Global Partner in NATO, is host to seven U.S. military bases. Right-wing Colombian President Ivan Duque is a key ally of the United States in their interventions in Latin America and their war against Venezuela.

While in Colombia, Pompeo also met with U.S. puppet Juan Guaido. On January 23, 2019 Juan Guaido declared himself "interim President" of Venezuela. Today, he is no closer to overthrowing the democratically elected President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, then he was one year ago. The people of Venezuela have mobilized against this U.S. sponsored attempted coup. As President Maduro explained, also at the closing ceremony of the conference:

"With everything they do, with all the money they have spent, with the 500 million dollars they have given to Guaido, with everything they have invested, they have not been able to and will not be able to defeat the Bolivarian revolution of the 21st century. They have not been able to, nor will they be able to defeat Venezuela, they have not been able, nor will they be able to defeat us, now or ever. We will continue along the path of peace, democracy, freedom, independence and absolute sovereignty."

Conference Unites Against U.S. Sanctions, War & Occupation!

Having an anti-imperialist conference in Caracas, Venezuela was significant not only because of what was happening in Colombia at the time, but also because the people of Venezuela face the brunt of U.S. imperialism every day. U.S.-led sanctions and blockade on Venezuela, which began under President Obama in 2015, have imposed tremendous pressure and difficulty on the people of Venezuela.

The U.S. government has blockaded Venezuela from buying food, medicines and basic goods, while at the same time also making it more difficult for Venezuela to sell its goods, and oil, in the international market. As reported by the U.S.-based think-tank CEPR (Center for Economic Policy Research), these sanctions have been estimated to have killed 40,000 people in Venezuela from 2017-2018 alone, and put another 300,000 people at risk.

The defiance and resistance which the people of Venezuela have fought against U.S. intervention in their country weaved its way into every part of the anti-Imperialist conference – from plenary sessions where there were standing ovations to the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation, to workshops

discussing the important role of women, afro-descendants, youth and Indigenous people in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Fire This Time in Caracas

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice send a delegate to this conference, Alison Bodine, who is also a member of the Fire This Time newspaper editorial board and the coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuelan Solidarity Campaign.

On the first morning of the conference alone there were 12 simultaneous workshops covering topics such as NATO and the Military Aggressions of Imperialism in the 21st Century, Environmentally Sustained Development and Preservation of Mother Earth, Organizational Proposal and the Battle Plan for an International Anti-Imperialist Agenda in the 21st Century and Sovereignty and Liberation of the Peoples. The next day there were workshops dedicated to workers, women, communes, social movements, Indigenous people, afro-descendants, communication, youth and students, and



FTT organizer Alison Bodine with panelists at the women's roundtable including Asia Villegas, the Minister of Women in Venezuela

parliamentarians.

Additionally, the workshops were not only an important opportunity for people to report on their struggle against U.S. imperialism in their home countries, but also an occasion to exchange directly with people in Venezuela that are leading the struggle for Venezuela's sovereignty and independence and building the Bolivarian revolutionary process every day.

As part of the conference, there was also the opportunity to participate in multiple interviews with Venezuelan media. Alison was interviewed multiple



Women's roundtable as part of the program of the Anti-imperialist conference

times, including on the show of Gladys Requena, who is the Second Vice-President of the National Constituent Assembly in Venezuela. Her show is called "Junto al Pueblo," (Together with the People). During the interview, Gladys Requena and Alison discussed the anti-imperialist conference, the government of Canada's sanctions and attacks on Venezuela and about the struggle of Indigenous women in Canada.

The Conference Concludes in Solidarity with Iraq – U.S. Troops Out Now!

At the final plenary of the anti-imperialist conference a powerful declaration was passed with enthusiasm (which can be read in this issue of Fire This Time on page 20). There were also

special resolutions in support of people of Chile who are mobilizing every day against their repressive neo-liberal government; people in Colombia who have also mobilized in the millions against their right-wing government; the people of the Western Sahara who are fighting for their sovereignty and self-determination and resolutions against imperialist sanctions and blockades.

One of the most powerful movements of the final day of the conference was dedicated to the people of Iraq. On January 24, 2020 millions of people

were marching in Iraq against U.S. troops. This tremendous action and courage of the people of Iraq, who are fighting back against a U.S.-led occupation for nearly 17 years, inspired participants in the conference to pass a special resolution in solidarity with the people of Iraq.

President Maduro also spoke in solidarity with the people of Iraq as part of the closing event of the conference, and the crowd of international guests and Venezuelans erupted in support:

"Because international censorship covers the truth of the people, surely you none saw the images of the millions of Iraqis who went out to the streets of Baghdad today. With a single slogan 'US Troops Out of Iraq! the people of Iraq united on the streets. Today the people of Iraq spoke in one voice."

...From Venezuela, from Caracas, I give the people of Iraq all my support. All our support to the people of Iraq in their struggle to remove the imperialist US troops from the sacred territory of Iraq. All the support of the people of Venezuela to Iraq. The peoples of the world cry for peace!"

Build a United Movement Against Imperialism and Neoliberalism!

Conferences such as the First International Encounter Against Imperialism, for Peace, Sovereignty, and Life demonstrate exactly why we need a world-wide anti-imperialist anti-war coalition. In the face of the U.S. military machine we need to bring hundreds of organizations, millions of people together with more coordination and more consistency in our actions.

Continued on page 30

The delegations of the Political Parties and Social Movements, gathered in the city of Caracas, capital of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on the occasion of the “World Meeting against Imperialism”, after the deliberations we have reached the following conclusions:

The future of humanity is in grave danger. Peace on the planet is seriously threatened as a result of the military aggression policy of the US and its allies, as well as the deadly arms race that brings only dividends to large corporations in the military industry. War is the favored mechanism of imperial expansionism, especially that of the United States, and we observe that dramatically in the most recent regional conflicts that have severely affected the peoples of Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan and the entire region.

Likewise, the human race suffers the ravages of an economic model that in its suicidal deployment destroys nature by the insatiable obsession to maximize profits. That is precisely the logic of the capitalist system, which not only compromises its functioning but also puts humanity in danger of extinction.

The neoliberal model that implements the globalization of large corporations under the domination of imperialist States, has made the world economy extremely fragile. Crises are more recurrent, and large financial speculators control the planet. The distribution of wealth generated has imposed a standard of inequality, injustice and exclusion that affects a growing part of the world's population. The scourges of poverty and misery affect billions of people like never before in the history of mankind. Undoubtedly, the development of capitalism breeds unsustainable phenomena, from the social, political and ethical points of view.

To this is added an ethical crisis derived from the prevailing way of life of market economies, where national cultures and human values are buried, in order to impose the consumer society. The cult of the anti-values of capitalism contributes to enhance the crisis of the human condition generated by the current model of coexistence.

Imperialism is in crisis and this makes it much more aggressive, dangerous and destructive. With the twilight of the unipolar world, American imperialism implements a strategy of global domination. The geopolitical commitment

of the White House in the face of the resistance of the peoples and the violence of emerging powers has been to defend its hegemony, through a neo-colonial policy aimed at taking ownership of natural resources, especially energy resources, controlling markets and politically dominating nations.

To preserve the current unjust world order, imperialism violates public international

conceives NATO as the global military arm of neoliberalism. In addition, within the framework of its Doctrine of the Unconventional War, terrorist actions, the use of paramilitaries, the prosecution of anti-imperialist leaders and targeted assassination, are some of the most emblematic actions of a genocidal policy, which puts humanity at risk.

Such practices have been “legitimized” through the cultural industry of capitalism, big transnational of communication and the use of social media. Likewise, the use of “Big Data” has become a powerful weapon to modify the behavior of the population and influence their political decisions.

In the attempt to impose a “single thinking”, the powerful people of the world manipulate religious beliefs, try to justify the current power relations at the expense of democracy, the imposition of free markets, Eurocentric racism, segregation of minorities, gender oppression, the eugenic nature of the global educational model, among many other factors, that perfectly fit the requirements of the capital dictatorship.

Neoliberal capitalism strengthens the exploitation of the working class, further oppresses women in terms of maximizing the profits of large transnational corporations, takes the future away from young people and blurs the identity of indigenous peoples. This shows that the solution to the great problems of today's world requires a new model of human coexistence.

In that context, the multi-centric and multi-polar world emerges with greater force. The political and economic strengthening of powers such as Russia and China, along with that of other nations, makes an increasingly serious counterweight to the power of American imperialism. Evidently, the heroic resistance in the Middle East, the struggles of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, have contained and pushed back the plans of imperialism.

Moreover, the experiences of progressive governments around the world are already emerging as an alternative to neoliberalism. An example of this is the Bolivarian Revolution, which is projected as an anti-imperialist referent with enormous popular strength within the framework of the powerful civic-military union and based on the ideology of Liberator Simón

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE WORLD MEETING AGAINST IMPERIALISM



The First Vice President of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), Diosdado Cabello speaking at the World Meeting against Imperialism in Caracas, Venezuela

law, has turned the world into a great theater of military operations, develops unilateral coercive measures, imposes extraterritorial laws, attacks multilateralism, violates the sovereignty of nations and suppresses the self-determination of peoples. In its arrogant conception, its borders reach as far as its expansionist interests extend.

In line with this policy, imperialism resorts to military intervention, political destabilization of governments, wars and economic blockade. Its strategic planning

Bolívar and Commander Hugo Chávez.

This has provoked the brutal attack by US imperialism against the Venezuelan people, who have squandered dignity and love for the Homeland, ratifying its course towards socialism in numerous electoral processes that support the vigorous participatory democracy existing in this country. Hard days of popular struggle have defeated threats of US military intervention, coup attempts and terrorist violence.

This example of fighting, alongside that of Nicaragua and Cuba, as well as recent advances in Argentina and Mexico, has allowed the strengthening of antiimperialist forces and will lead to the strengthening of new regional integration mechanisms (CELAC, ALBA-TPC, PETROCARIBE, etc.). Although in Honduras, Paraguay, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador and Bolivia, neo-colonialism has been repositioned as part of the new edition of the Monroe Doctrine, popular struggles continue.

In the rest of the world people also resist, revolt and popular governments exercise their sovereignty. The anti-imperialist union is an uncompromising strategic goal.

In this context, the **“World Meeting against Imperialism”** states:

We urge the peoples of the world to fight for life, the preservation of nature and against structural conditions that generate climate change. Likewise, we demand developed nations to work decisively to prevent the destruction of the planet and especially the US to overcome its primitive stance that seeks to ignore the terrible damage that is caused to nature with the current production model based on the accumulation of capital.

We support the demand to build a more just international order that places peoples' interests at the forefront and allows the development of social inclusion and justice policies to overcome the enormous social and economic inequalities that prevail among the nations of the world.

We call on the citizens of the world to defend peace, sovereignty of the peoples and join the legitimate struggles for the socioeconomic process on the basis of a broad platform of united struggle against the common enemy, US imperialism.

We reject the implementation of illegal unilateral coercive measures by imperialist powers, since those are criminal policies that affect the peoples. We specially condemn the genocidal policy of economic blockade applied against the nations of the

world that exercise their sovereignty.

We reject the militarization of Our America and specially the presence of military bases of the United States in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We firmly condemn the military invasion and other aggressions committed by imperialism against the peoples of the Middle East. In particular, we reject the violation of the sovereignty of Syria and Iraq, the aggressions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the vicious assassination of Commander Qasem Soleimani, a martyr of the peoples of the world fighting for freedom.

We demand respect to the sovereignty of Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua, and support the efforts of Nicolás Maduro Moros, Constitutional President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to maintain peace.

We denounce the attempt orchestrated by the White House to censor the multistate companies TeleSur and HispanTV. This represents an outrage against the freedom of speech of the peoples.

We condemn the coup d'état, orchestrated from Washington, against President Evo Morales Ayma. We condemn the violent repression and racism against the people of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Likewise, the **“Global Meeting against Imperialism”** agrees:

To build a Unitary World Platform organized by continents, regions, sub-regions and countries in order to confront imperialism. This organizational structure will be shaped according to the characteristics of each territory.

To hold the **“Continental Meetings against Imperialism”** in 2020, aiming to form unitary continental, regional and sub-regional platforms articulated on the basis of a common plan of struggle against imperialism.

To call for the **“Second Global Meeting against Imperialism”** to be held in Caracas, capital of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in order to define the name of the Unitary World Platform, as well as the articulation of the different continental

and regional platforms in a common plan that will unite the struggles of the peoples.

Finally, the **“Global Meeting against Imperialism”** agrees to take on the Agenda of Struggles introduced in the “First International Meeting of Workers in Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution”, endorsed by the “First International Women Congress”, by the “International Congress of Communes, Social Movements and the People's Power”, by the “First International Meeting of Indigenous People”, by the “International Congress of Afro-descendants” and the “International Communication Congress”, held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in 2019,



Banner reads “No to Imperialist War” at a rally to mark the anniversary of the overthrow of dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez in 1958 in Caracas, Venezuela, January 21, 2020

an agenda that includes the following:

1. To hold an international day of mobilization in support of the Bolivarian Revolution and against neoliberalism on February 27th, 2020 (Commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the first insurrection in Caracas against neoliberalism).
2. Call for a world mobilization for peace in Venezuela, in Our America and against war plans of the Government of the United States for April, 2020.
3. Develop an international day in rejection to the Monroe Doctrine, against the blockade and other Unilateral Coercive Measures for June 28th, 2020.
4. To create, until the next Meeting, a Coordinating Commission for the delegations present in the “First Global Meeting against Imperialism”, aiming to fulfill this plan.

Approved in the City of Caracas, Birthplace of the Liberator Simón Bolívar and Capital of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on January 24th, 2020.

★★★★ U.S. CRUSADE AGAINST CUBAN INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL COOPERATION ★★★★

Statement by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX)

As MINREX warned in a statement released August 29, 2019, the United States government has, since last year, been waging an intense, offensive campaign against the medical collaboration Cuba provides, along with threats of sanctions against Cuban leaders and pressure on recipient states to end such cooperation.

Directed in detail by the National Security Council at the White House, the campaign has the active participation of Senators and Representatives associated with the anti-Cuban mafia in Florida and rabid State Department officials.

They accuse Cuba of alleged “modern slavery” and “trafficking in persons,” referring to Cuban health system professionals, for the purpose of their exploitation and alleged interference in the internal affairs of the nations in which they are located.

The U.S. government is also attempting to re-establish the so-called “Parole Program for Cuban Medical Professionals,” in existence until January 12, 2017, as the basis for active efforts to incite defection, offering to pay for travel and legal services, provision of U.S. visas and documents to collaborators in third countries, with the purpose of sabotaging bilateral agreements signed with these nations, depriving them of our services and depriving Cuba of highly qualified human resources.

In May of 2019, the secretary general of the Organization of American States organized a conference at its headquarters on the alleged crimes against humanity committed by Cuba in connection with our medical cooperation abroad.

In June, the State Department, in its 2019 Report on Trafficking in Persons, disparaged Cuba’s international medical cooperation and, a month later, imposed visa-restriction sanctions on Cuban officials linked to medical missions.

Later, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), a U.S. institution that provides funds for subversion programs against the Cuban government, earmarked three million dollars for projects directed against Cuba’s medical brigades abroad.

This U.S. persecution began in Latin America and has forced the suspension of cooperation programs in Brazil, Ecuador and Bolivia.

The servile, fascist Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro insulted and abruptly expelled our specialist doctors who, under a tripartite agreement with the Pan American Health Organization, effective August 2013 through November 2018, treated 113,359,000 patients in more than 3,600 of the country’s municipalities, and provided permanent coverage to 60 million Brazilians.

In our country, 1,214 Brazilian students have completed medical school.

This decision allowed Bolsonaro to demonstrate his subservience to the U.S. government, while dismantling a program for low-income families, as part of a brutal policy to eliminate social gains made during progressive Workers Party governments.

Senior U.S. officials have used the slander that Cuban medical brigades in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are military troops, which Bolsonaro parroted, in September of 2019, during his speech in the United Nations General Assembly, maliciously or ignorantly tripling, in a ridiculous manner, the false, unfounded figure used by Washington.

Officials from the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. embassies have turned to national authorities, as in Guatemala, to peremptorily and suspiciously request precise data on Cuban medical cooperation, looking for a way to eliminate it.

In May of 2019, the U.S. embassy in Ecuador asked senior government officials for detailed information on agreements and services provided by Cuban collaborators. Five months later, the Ecuadorian government terminated these programs precipitously, despite their imminent expiration, citing economic reasons.

Since the beginning of medical collaboration in this country, a total of 3,565 Cuban health professionals have provided their services, including 6,749,666 medical consultations, 212,360 surgeries, 3,548 births assisted, and 100,084 vaccinations administered. Some 153 collaborators participated in Operation Miracle, a program through which 168,543 surgical interventions were performed. As a result of the Manuela Espejo Solidarity Mission, 825,576 people were assisted, 35,257



of them in specialized neurophysiology and otorhinolaryngology consultations and 21,062 patients underwent clinical genetic studies.

Additionally, 2093 young Ecuadorians completed medical studies in Cuba.

In October, Ecuador’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested information on the purpose of trips to the country by a group of Cuban citizens carrying diplomatic and official passports. Later, the Minister of Government offensively declared that several Cubans, associated with cooperation agreements, had participated in protests by the Ecuadorian people against the implementation of neoliberal measures, at that time.

As has been shown, no Cuban participated in or organized these massive popular demonstrations, and not a single official or diplomatic passport was improperly used. The manipulators have not been able to present a single piece of evidence.

The Cuban state issues diplomatic, official and service passports, in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations, and guarantees that the holders comply with what is established for their proper use.

During the coup in Bolivia, the U.S. embassy in La Paz instigated, conducted, and participated in hostile actions by police forces and, surprisingly by firefighters, against Cuban collaborators. As was publicly denounced, U.S. officials participated directly in these acts, using a U.S. diplomatic car with license plate 28 CD-17.

During these days, there were 26 serious incidents against our collaborators, including the beating of two; public incitement to violence by coup authorities; brutal searches of their persons, belongings and homes; false accusations; the arbitrary, temporary detention of 50 health workers, four for several days.



Cuban doctor in Brazil

Faced with this situation, the Cuban government was forced to proceed with the immediate withdrawal of our personnel, while energetically condemning the false statements of the so-called minister of Health, named by the coup-plotters, who shamelessly exaggerated the value of stipends earned by Cuban medical specialists, in reality lower than those of Bolivian general practitioners, and concealing the fact that Cuba did not receive a penny as compensation for this cooperation.

The Cuban medical brigade in Bolivia, 54% female, was composed of 406 doctors in 32 specialties, including General Integral Medicine, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Anesthesiology and Reanimation, Ophthalmology, General Surgery, Orthopedics and Traumatology, Intensive and Emergency Medicine, Neonatology, among others. Also performing outstanding work were 258 graduates in health technologies such as imaging, endoscopy, electromedicine, clinical lab testing, rehabilitation and nursing.

Over the years, they provided 73,330,447 consultations and 1,529,301 surgeries. Some 60,640 births were assisted; 22,221 vaccinations administered; and 508,403

ophthalmic surgeries performed.

Additionally, some 5,184 Bolivian doctors graduated from Cuban universities.

The persecution and search for information has included attempts to interrogate Cuban personnel by U.S. "diplomats" in the very health centers where they work, including in North Africa and the Middle East.

It is immoral and unacceptable to question the dignity, professionalism and altruism of the more than 400,000 Cuban health care collaborators who, over 56 years, have completed missions in 164 nations.



Cuban doctor in Bolivia

They have made outstanding contributions to the fight against Ebola in Africa, against blindness in Latin America and the Caribbean, and cholera in Haiti; in 26 brigades from the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disasters and Major Epidemics, in Pakistan, Indonesia, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Venezuela, among others.

With the same disinterest and dedication, 35,613 health professionals from 138 countries have been trained free of charge in Cuba.

In the case of nations with less favorable economic conditions, Cuba assumes practically

the entire cost of collaboration. Similarly, and in line with United Nations conception of cooperation between developing countries, our support is offered in other nations on the basis of complementarity and partial compensation for services provided.

The Cuban technicians and professionals who participate in these programs do so absolutely of their own free will. During the performance of their missions, they continue to receive their full salary in Cuba, and also a stipend in the country of destination, along with other benefits.

When Cuba receives compensation for our cooperation, these collaborators are meritoriously providing a fair and totally legitimate contribution to the financing, sustainability and development of our country's free, universal health system, accessible to all Cubans, as well as to cooperation programs provided free of charge, in many parts of the world.

As we stated last August 29, access to health care is a human right. The U.S. campaign against our international medical cooperation is a disgraceful, criminal act against peoples in need of medical assistance, which cannot overshadow the solidarity and human contribution of the 29,000 Cuban health care professionals, who, with enormous sacrifice and understanding on the part of their families, currently provide services to 65 nations.

The attitude of the United States government in this matter is despicable. Cuba's response is firm: we will continue to save lives, to seek health and well-being for the world, within the limits of our possibilities, wherever we are requested.

Havana, December 5, 2019.

By Janine Solanki

2020 started out with yet another measure to tighten the U.S. blockade on Cuba, increasing the enormous strain that the blockade puts on the Cuban economy and the Cuban people even more. On January 10, 2020 the U.S. State Department announced the suspension of charter flights from the U.S. to every airport in Cuba - except Havana. This unjustifiable action comes after similar measures were put in place by the U.S. government in December 2019, regarding commercial flights to Cuba.

In announcing this measure, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared, "Today's action will further restrict the Cuban regime's ability to obtain revenue, which it uses to finance its ongoing repression of the Cuban people and its unconscionable support for dictator Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela." The hypocrisy of this statement is astounding. If Pompeo wants to talk about repression, consider that the United States has about 22% of the

#UNBLOCKCUBA #NOMASBLOQUEO #SOMOSCUBA

world's prison population, with only about 5% of the world's population! Or that while 25% of Americans say they or a family member have delayed medical treatment for a serious illness due to the costs of care (Gallup poll, December 2019), often leading to preventable deaths, in Cuba and Venezuela healthcare is free, with their main challenge to healthcare being the U.S. blockade!

Lift the Inhumane, Brutal and illegal Blockade on Cuba

In Vancouver, Canada, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade (FCAB) is bringing the injustice of the U.S. blockade on Cuba to the streets every month, in coordination with

activists in Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine. On January 17, FCAB had the first action of 2020, and despite the snow brought together a committed group of activists and supporters. The protesters picketed in front of the U.S. Consulate and gathered to hear from local speakers, and to hear a voice message of solidarity from Ottawa Cuba Connections who had a coordinated action in front of the U.S. Embassy. At the end of the action the activists gathered under the United States Consulate building sign, holding a banner and signs reading "End the U.S. Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "Return Guantanamo Bay to Cuba!" This defiant photo can be found on social media, tweeted and shared for people around the world to see the support Cuba has internationally!

To find out about the next monthly action against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, visit www.vancubavsblockade.org or find FCAB on Facebook or on Twitter @NoBloqueoVan



Join the "International Conference for the Normalization of US-Cuba Relations" in New York City!

By Tamara Hansen

It's time to Organize & Mobilize! This March 21-22, 2020 you are invited to participate in the "International Conference for the Normalization of US-Cuba Relations" in New York City.

The conference is uniting people from across the U.S. & Canada as well as invited guests from Puerto Rico, Grenada, Haiti, Venezuela, and of course, Cuba - all with the goal of strengthening the ongoing campaign to fully normalize U.S.-Cuba relations and against attacks by the Trump administration on Cuba's right to self-determination.

The conference "call to action" outlines the recent attacks by the Trump administration on Cuba, "in 2019 the Trump White House and State Department has escalated political belligerency, economic sanctions, and military threats against Cuba." This includes a tightening of the U.S. blockade on Cuba and many dangerous and embarrassing threats against Cuba's internationalist medical missions which are providing free much-needed healthcare to poor and isolated communities around the world.

The conference "call to action" also recognizes the dangerous policies of the government of Canada with regards to Latin America. This is exemplified in Canada's leadership role in the destructive "Lima Group" a coalition of countries seeking to destabilize and over-throw all independent and/or socialist governments in Latin America.

Over 40 organizations in Canada and the U.S. have united to endorse this conference, including Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice. The conference will tackle many important and urgent issues including: "Canada, Quebec, and the US: Building Cross-Border Solidarity"; "Cuba and Medical Solidarity"; "Cuba, the Caribbean, and Latin America"; "Defend Your Right to Travel to Cuba!"; "Impact of the Blockade on the People of the United States"; and "National, City, and State Legislative Initiatives for Cuba".

Two editorial board members of the Fire This Time Newspaper, Tamara Hansen and Alison Bodine will be attending the conference from Vancouver, Canada. Tamara is co-organizing the panel on "Canada, Quebec, and the US: Building Cross-Border Solidarity" and will be speaking as the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and a member of the executive of the Canadian Network on Cuba. Alison Bodine is also the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. She is also invited to speak on "Cuba to Haiti and Grenada to Chile, Bolivia and Venezuela - Different waves of the same revolution: Building the Latin American solidarity movement" as part of the "Cuba, the Caribbean, and Latin America" panel.

A cultural event on Saturday evening will feature dynamic performances by amazing New York-based artists: Rebel Diaz, Immortal Technique, and José "Pepito" Gómez & the Orquesta Akonkán.



On Sunday March 21 conference attendees will work together to elaborate an action plan for building Cuba solidarity and a campaign towards a full normalization of U.S.-Cuba relations.

To learn more about the "International Conference for the Normalization of US-Cuba Relations" and to register please visit:

www.us-cubanormalization.org

To donate towards the "International Conference for the Normalization of US-Cuba Relations" and this important work please visit:

<https://fs24.formsite.com/IFCO7120/vlbp77rths/index.html>

Hope to see you in New York City!
¡Viva Cuba!

OUR HERITAGE



NINA SIMONE

(1933-2003)

Born in North Carolina, she became one of the most recognizable Black women in jazz, blues, folk and classical music. She was an outspoken civil rights and revolutionary activist.

"The fight for civil rights hadn't sprung up with Dr King and the Montgomery bus boycott; it had been around since slavery days, and the movement I knew was the latest version of that struggle. Like all newcomers to it, the first thing I had to do was educate myself in my own history and understand the reasons why I should be proud of my own culture.

I read, or was told, about the great black nations of Africa - Benin, Egypt, Nigeria, all over - about how black civilisations had existed while Europe was still in the dark ages, and the days when the only civilised peoples in North America were the native Indians who had yet to suffer the white man.

At the end of 1963 it wasn't simply a question of being for civil rights. By then many of the aims that the movement had fought for in the 50s looked like they were on the way: the Civil Rights Act was made law in July 1964, and the Voting Rights Act in 1965. We knew that just because the rights we demanded were protected by federal law, it didn't mean those laws would automatically be applied in every state. But the hopes of those early years looked like coming true, and the question everyone was asking was: "Where do we go from here?"

From her autobiography, "I Put A Spell On You" (1992)

U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!

By Janine Solanki

On January 27, Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau welcomed the so-called "Interim Venezuelan President Guaido" to Ottawa. In a statement from the Prime Minister's office, Trudeau was quoted saying "I commend Interim President Guaido for the courage and leadership he has shown in his efforts to return democracy to Venezuela, and I offer Canada's continued support." This meeting was met with opposition online and on the streets from people in Canada who do NOT support this illegitimate puppet Guaido!

One must ask Trudeau about his definition of democracy. On May 20, 2018 Nicolas Maduro was elected as Venezuela's president. During this election the government of Canada took the undemocratic action of not allowing Venezuelan citizens living in Canada to be able to vote (as is customary at foreign consulates). By all respects the elections were fair and transparent, as noted by many organizations and public figures from former U.S. President Jimmy Carter to Fire This Time reporters from this newspaper who were on the ground as observers. Yet –

the government of Canada didn't recognize the elections as legitimate before they even took place, and instead have backed the U.S. puppet Juan Guaido who simply "declared" himself interim president. Now after one year of imperialist backed attempted failed coup against democratically elected President Maduro, Guaido is on a multi-country tour to bolster international support from imperialist and right-wing governments because he has no legitimacy or support from people in Venezuela.

In Vancouver, Canada, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign organizes a monthly action in defense of Venezuela against the imperialist meddling and criminal sanctions imposed by Canada, the U.S. and European Union. On January 13, protesters came out to the snow-covered streets in downtown Vancouver, holding picket signs and banners reading "U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!" Supporters picketed in front of the U.S. Consulate and gathered to hear from speakers, before taking a customary group photo with picket signs held high under the U.S. Consulate sign, to be shared on social



media worldwide. The protest then continued to the busy downtown square at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Despite the snow, plenty of people stopped at the information table or to talk to petitioners and sign to oppose U.S. and Canadian sanctions against Venezuela.

For more information about Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, please visit our website www.firethistime.net.

The Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is committed to continuing protest and educational events to support and defend Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution. Find out about the next action at www.firethistime.net or on Facebook, on Twitter @FTT_np or Instagram @ftt.venezuela

REPEAL BILL C-59 AND BILL C-51

By Janine Solanki

"We are challenging a terrorist state bent on forcing their projects through our lands with lies and deceit. They will try and break many of their own laws, ignore the Constitution and Charter, as well as mislabel oil pipelines as LNG pipelines to get their way."

Freda Huson, spokesperson of the Unist'ot'en People.

While the struggle against the Coastal Gas Link pipeline crossing Wet'suwet'en Indigenous territory is at a critical point today, the quote above is not recent – it is from a February 19, 2015 press release from the Unist'ot'en clan, who have been leading the fight against pipelines crossing the unceded Wet'suwet'en territory for over 10 years. The press release is specifically to oppose Bill 51 which at the time was in the final stages of being passed into law in 2015, under the conservative Harper administration.

Although Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was elected in 2015 on promises to "fix" the widely opposed Bill C51, finally in

the summer of 2019 Bill C59 was enacted. However, this bill just proved that Bill C51 is not something that can be fixed, it violates our human and democratic rights from its foundation and must be totally scrapped. Bill C-59 not only doesn't address many of the fundamental human rights concerns in Bill C-51, it also creates an even worse cyber surveillance regime. This includes that your personal information can still be shared with up to 17 government agencies without your consent or knowledge, Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) continue to have the chilling and undefined powers of "disruption", and CSIS is still able to violate a person's rights as defined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In 2015, the Working Group to Stop Bill C51 was formed in Vancouver to fight back in defence of our rights. Now in 2020, the group continues to organize, with bi-weekly actions across Metro Vancouver transit stations. On January 6, 2020 the Working Group to Stop Bill C51 setup at Broadway City Hall Skytrain Station, for their 229th action, and on January 20, for the 230th action at 22nd



street Skytrain Station. Holding signs and banners demanding "Repeal Bill C-51 and C-59!" the group drew attention from passersby who stopped to take more information and sign on to the petition against these bills. With these bills actively criminalizing Indigenous activists in the midst of a fight for land, Indigenous rights and the environment, opposing these bills is more critical than ever!

To find out about the next action, visit www.repealbillc51.org and follow on Facebook and Twitter @stopbillc51 campaign.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

41st

2 DAYS
THAT
SHOOK
THE
WORLD

Anniversary of the Iranian Revolution

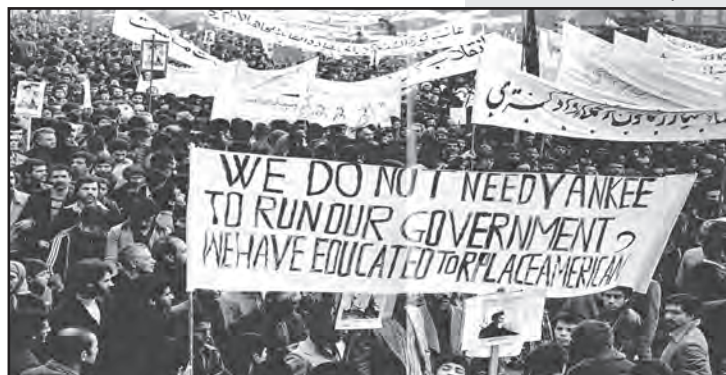
A PARTICIPANT'S HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Ali Yerevani

This is an introduction to an upcoming article on Iran by Ali Yerevani for the March 2020 issue of Fire This Time newspaper.

PART ONE (Introduction)

February 10 and 11 mark the anniversary of the triumph of the 1979 Iranian revolution; 2 days that shook the world. I'm honored, like millions of other Iranians, both young and old, who were able to participate to finish the overdue task of overthrowing the imperialist



Banner reads: "We do not need yankee to run our government We have educated to replace America" Tehran, Iran, 1979.

puppet monarch Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and cut the hands of colonial powers from Iran.

As a revolutionary socialist organizer and young leader, I witnessed the validity of every theory and analysis from Marx to Lenin in a tremendous exhibition of power and will by the heroic Iranian people. The Iranian revolution of 1979 was deeply rooted in the history of struggle of the Iranian people for freedom and democracy. The roots stem from Iran's first anti-imperialist movement in 1891 – the Anti-British Tobacco Movement – which was the vanguard of oppressed peoples' anti-colonial movements throughout Asia and Africa. This fundamental desire for change never rested, repeating itself in 1905-1911, the 1920s and 1945-1953 and finally 1979. The Iranian people were consistently on the march for change.

No matter what one calls it – the Iranian revolution or the Iranian Islamic revolution – the 1979 revolution was not only one of the most important and significant mass popular movements in modern time, deeply embedded in its character and process, it was a classic revolution with perfectly clear antagonistic classes in motion with both sides fighting to prevail over history in their own respective terms. If I may say, the 1979 revolution in Iran perfectly resembled the great Russian revolution of 1917. In terms of the dynamics of the battle between revolution and counter-revolution of the social classes, they finally reached their exhaustion in dialogue and compromise. It became clear that one would have to remove the other. Millions of Iranians in mass revolutionary struggle for a new order, inevitably lead to a mass armed insurrection of millions of Iranians against the old, corrupt, and broken regime.

By the dawn of February 12, 1979, the will of the mass majority of Iranians prevailed. History took a deep breath of relief. It is fair to say, every honest revolutionary who participated and had the honor and privilege to intervene – as much as it was in one's physical, intellectual and political capacity – in this gigantic shake up of history in Iran, regardless of all difficulties, tremendous pressures, violence, physical harm, and death one will say with utmost certainty and

confidence, even with knowing and understanding fully today's condition in Iran, we would do it again, only this time we would be wiser.

The Iranian revolution changed the whole political equation in the Middle East and North Africa. It has changed the balance and

relationship of social and political forces for the foreseeable future, not only in the immediate region, the Middle East, but the whole of Africa, Asia, and the rest of the world. The powerful message of the Iranian revolution for independence and self-determination is still resonating, influencing, motivating, and inspiring millions of masses in the Middle East and North Africa today.

Imperialism with all its savagery and brutality is currently in its lowest capacity to dominate oppressed nations. From the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, which started a new era of war and occupation; to and Iraq in 2003; to revolutionary uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011; and the ongoing resistance of Yemenis, Syrians and Palestinians to imperialist aggression, we see the proof of the continuation of the spirit of the Iranian revolution and its aftershocks for fundamental

Millions of Iranians took to the streets against the despotic monarchy of the Shah in 1979.



change. And today, no matter who is in power in Iran, the revolution continues its course – internally and externally.

The Iranian revolution, its revolutionary dynamics, and its resistance to imperialism have put working class and oppressed people in the Middle East, North Africa, and around the world in a better position to win the struggle against imperialist powers, to win national independence and self-determination. All of this with the continued hope of striking forward towards future socialist revolutions.

Follow Ali on Twitter: @aliyerevani

Iran's first women's march on International Women's Day, March 8, 1979, one month after millions of Iranian people overthrew the monarchy. The partially seen banner reads "Equal Rights for Women" and partially seen sign reads, "We Demand Compulsory Education for Women."

Photo credit: Ali Yerevani 1979



Continued from page 3

within so-called Canada. This is really a struggle for Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous rights globally.”

Keep Building the Movement for Indigenous Rights & Climate Justice

In the face of the oppression and racism Indigenous people confront every day, the struggle of the Wet'suwet'en for sovereignty and their rights has reached a critical point, one that threatens “business as usual” in Canada. The climate justice movement must recognize this and join in the struggle for Indigenous rights. Poor, working, and oppressed people must unite to demand that the RCMP end their occupation of Wet'suwet'en territory immediately and stand with the Wet'suwet'en nation in its fight to assert its rights against the government of Canada, TC Energy and the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline.

Whether it is the struggle in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en, or the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion (TMX), which is planned to bring toxic tar sands oil from Alberta to the coast of B.C., what the government of Canada is most afraid of is our unity as poor, working and oppressed people.

Mass media, the RCMP and government officials initiated their campaign of lies and manipulations about Wet'suwet'en and the actions to defend Indigenous rights as soon as this struggle began. What they are most afraid of is that Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers, students, and immigrants, will unite in defense of Indigenous rights. The capitalist ruling class in Canada is fully aware that our unity for Indigenous rights is a further expansion of rights for all oppressed people in Canada. This unity has the potential of developing the mass of working class and oppressed people into people who think socially and act politically for change. And this will be a fundamental change, nothing short of dismantling capitalism.

The government of Canada has spent untold millions of tax-payer dollars occupying and invading Wet'suwet'en to try to teach Indigenous people in Canada a lesson about that what will happen if they assert their fundamental human rights. This violence and intimidation are not only used to target Wet'suwet'en land defenders and their allies, but also to try to convince non-Indigenous people in Canada that Indigenous people are against the rest of Canada – that they are against our jobs, against our comfortable life, and they are violent and dangerous and must be suppressed with a great force. The capitalist ruling class in Canada is reinforcing the law of the jungle, which exists only for animals; that means comfort for one must mean inconvenience

and an insubordinate life for others. We must remind all these capitalist thinkers and politicians that human rights are based on equality in fundamental rights, law, and life.

To build a movement for Indigenous rights, we need sustained campaigns and mass actions based on the demand for self-determination for all Indigenous nations and Indigenous rights in Canada. All this means constant and consistent coordination and mobilization between Indigenous people and climate justice organizations and activists. Together we are stronger and we will win.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette



Movie showing & fundraiser in support of Wet'suwet'en organized by Climate Convergence Vancouver, January 29, 2020

Climate Convergence Joins the Struggle for Wet'suwet'en

Since the RCMP and the government of Canada began their increasing attacks against Wet'suwet'en in January, the grassroots climate justice coalition Climate Convergence has intensified their work in Metro Vancouver for Indigenous rights and against the CGL pipeline. From educational events to marches, rallies, and beyond Climate Convergence has supported, attended, and organized many events in the last month.

These actions included powerful street actions, where Climate Convergence united with many other organizations and individuals in Vancouver. On January 11, the first large Indigenous-led march and rally for Wet'suwet'en was organized in Vancouver, beginning at the B.C. Supreme Court and ending at Victory Square. Then, on January 27, there was a student walkout to City Hall, which brought out hundreds of people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth taking the lead at the event, supporting the rights of the Wet'suwet'en people to control of their land and resources and reject the CGL pipeline.

On January 29, Climate Convergence organized a double-feature film showing at the Anti-Social Skate Shop in Vancouver, sponsored by Climate Convergence, Antisocial Skateboard Shop, and Mutual Aid Media, who produced both documentaries shown. Not being a conventional venue to go and see a movie, this event brought out a full, standing room only crowd, the majority of whom had never been to Climate Convergence events before.

Two films were featured at the event, followed by a short, but a very lively discussion. The first film was “Invasion” about the 2019 RCMP invasion of the Unist'ot'en Camp, Gidim't'en checkpoint, and Wet'suwet'en. The second film brought the struggle for Indigenous rights and climate justice from Northern B.C. to Honduras in Central America. “Berta Didn't Die; She Multiplied” was about the life and legacy of Berta Cáceres, who was assassinated by hired thugs for defending Indigenous land and rights from resource extraction projects, including a Canadian hydroelectrical dam project.

With these films, Climate Convergence tied the struggle of Indigenous people in Canada to that of Indigenous people around the world. Especially Latin America, where the government of Canada is promoting coups and supporting repressive right-wing governments, while Canadian mining companies destroy the environment and trample on the rights of Indigenous people.

To continuing supporting the Wet'suwet'en struggle against CGL, find out actions and donate visit: www.unistoten.camp

Climate Convergence is planning ongoing actions in support of Wet'suwet'en. To come out to a meeting or the next action visit www.climateconvergence.ca

Rally in support of Wet'suwet'en in front of Parliament Hill in Ottawa



Continued from page 11

impartiality, and integrity as expressed through the Journalistic Standards and Practices”?

The Media War Against Venezuela Continues

It is not just the CBC, major corporate media in the U.S. and Canada is decidedly attempting to manufacture consent for the pro-intervention stance of Trump and Trudeau through lies and manipulations. A study by the non-profit organization FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) found that in the three months between January 15 and April 15, 2019, there were



Venezuelans organizing food distribution in their neighborhood with the subsidized CLAP food program which reaches 6 million Venezuelan households

“no voices in elite corporate media that opposed regime change in that country... zero opinion pieces in the New York Times and Washington Post took an anti-regime change or pro-Maduro/Chavista position. Not a single commentator on the big three Sunday morning talk shows or PBS NewsHour came out against President Nicolás Maduro stepping down from the Venezuelan government.”

Is it a mere coincidence that the CBC upped its slanderous coverage about the

democratically elected government of Venezuela just as Guaido was about to touch down in Ottawa? No way.

The CBC is a crucial part of maintaining the dog and pony show that Prime Minister Trudeau created around the arrival of Juan Guaido to Canada on January 27, 2020. They made sure that people in Canada were unprepared to question the perfect selfie and the friendly exchange between Trudeau and Guaido. Their profoundly inadequate, one-sided and manipulative coverage on Venezuela has silenced the millions of people in Venezuela that support the Bolivarian revolutionary process and the democratically elected President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro.

U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!

The CBC has proven time and time again that they are unwilling to question the government of Canada's sanctions and intervention in the internal affairs of Venezuela. They have refused to introduce even a shred of critical thought against the campaign led by the United States to overthrow the President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, and reverse the tremendous gains of the last 20 years of the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

This professional neglect by the CBC, and other mainstream, capitalist media, elevates our responsibility as poor, working and oppressed people in Canada and the United States. We must unite together to create our own media and use all the means at hand to end U.S.-led intervention, blockade, and threats against the sovereign and independent country of Venezuela!

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

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The Newspaper Of
FIRE THIS TIME
MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE
www.firethistime.net
Volume 14 Issue 2 February 2020
Published Monthly

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Fire This Time Newspaper is written, produced and distributed entirely by volunteer labour and printed in Burnaby, Greater Vancouver, Canada

ISSN-1712-1817



No TMX and CGL Pipelines! Unfair, Unjust and Unacceptable Government Attacks Won't Stop the Struggle

A Statement by Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver

In only one week the government of Canada has trampled Indigenous rights in favour of climate killing pipeline projects twice. First, there was the Federal Court of Appeal ruling in favour of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion (TMX). Now they have arrested and attacked Wet'suwet'en land defenders in an attempt make way for the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline. The struggle against TMX and CGL, and in defense of Indigenous rights and Mother Earth continues!

The Federal Court of Appeals has done its best to ignore the obvious on TMX: It is impossible for the Federal government, which has already purchased a pipeline project for \$4.5 billion dollars, to retroactively consult in good faith as to whether or not they should build it.

The Federal and BC Provincial governments are doing their best to ignore the obvious on CGL as well: There is no "free, prior and informed" Indigenous consent for the pipeline when resistance on the ground is so strong and all five Hereditary Chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en unanimously oppose the project.

However, this unacceptable decision also opens another chapter of successful Indigenous-led resistance to the TMX and CGL Pipelines. It is this resistance in the courts and in the streets that forced Texas oil giant Kinder Morgan to abandon TMX and has stalled both projects so far. Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs emphasized that, *"The court's decision does not signal defeat; rather it signals a renewed call for all of us to collectively work together to permanently halt the project and make it clear to Canada and BC that they can't adhere to reconciliation only when it serves their interests."*

The Federal and BC Provincial governments continue to insist that a new dirty Tar Sands and hydraulically fractured "natural gas" pipelines are in our interests. This despite

having already sunk billions of taxpayer dollars into the TMX project whose costs are ballooning and whose market value is misrepresented. As global warming and its associated extreme weather events continue to wreak havoc in Canada and around the world – prolonging the extreme pollution of Tar Sands oil and "fracked" natural gas production is a recipe for climate disaster. Adding insult to injury, consideration of the TMX's catastrophic climate impact was purposely excluded from every regulatory review and court decision.

If we gave up this struggle every time there was a disappointing government or court decision, the TMX and CGL pipelines would be have been built long ago. Our most important task continues to be what has been effective so far: sustained mass action and campaigns uniting as many groups and communities as possible to stop the pipelines.

As Climate Convergence we remain fully committed to:

- **Mobilizing in solidarity with the many Indigenous Nations defending their traditional territories and right to self-determination;**
- **Organizing with young people rising up to demand a healthy future;**
- **Uniting with everyone in Canada and around the world demanding people and planet before pipelines and profits.**

As Climate Convergence we demand

- **No TMX and CGL Pipelines!**
- **Stop harassing Indigenous communities and land defenders everywhere!**
- **No violence, no attack and no arrest of Wet'suwet'en land defenders!**
- **No to RCMP invasion of Wet'suwet'en!**

In Defence of Mother Earth, we say: "No TMX and CGL Pipelines! Build Our Future, Not Pipelines!"

From: www.climateconvergence.ca

MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

*Indigenous struggle
against colonialism*



Freda Huson

Known as Chief Howibkat of the Wet'suwet'en people in British Columbia, Canada. Freda is the Unist'ot'en spokesperson, founder of the Unist'ot'en healing centre and a leading voice in defense of the unceded territory of the Wet'suwet'en people and against the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline.

With the impacts of climate change and toxic dangers from industrial projects based on greed and selfishness we have always expressed our concern that this is not just a challenge that my people need to overcome but a challenge that faces all of humanity. Together we must make a collective effort to provide an outcome that will allow for our survival as humans. We need to decolonize and heal the planet because if we don't, she will make us pay. That is why we are making a Healing Center on our lands. It will be a place for healing and decolonization.

We are challenging a terrorist state bent on forcing their projects through our lands with lies and deceit. They will try and break many of their own laws, ignore the Constitution and Charter, as well as mislabel oil pipelines as LNG pipelines to get their way. We will prevail because we are guided by prayers and ceremonies.

We are healers and teachers who uphold our responsibilities with the hopes, guidance, and blessings of our Warrior ancestors.

These conferences help us to overcome the divisions that exist between peoples, between organizations, and between continents; help is to overcome divisions among working class that make it impossible to overcome imperialism.

Just as the United States and their allies, including the government of Canada, have infiltrated every corner of the globe with their agenda war and destruction, peace-loving people around the world need to come together with our message of resistance to imperialism and sovereignty and self-determination for all oppressed nations.

As President Maduro stated, *"Another world is possible, and another world is emerging from our struggle, from our resistance, from our fighting capacity. Another world is emerging step by step."*

As people living in the United States and Canada, we carry the additional responsibility of fighting to end imperialist sanctions, wars and occupations – from Latin America to the Middle East and North Africa, and beyond.

Follow Alison Bodine on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

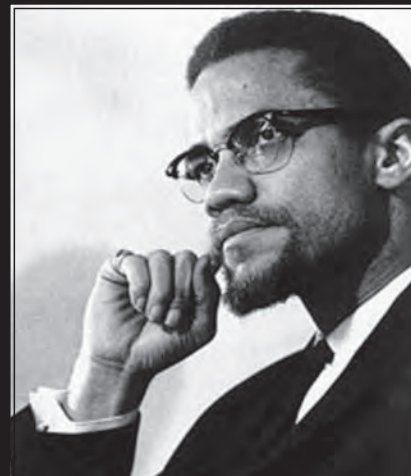


International delegates participating at the plenary session as part of the program of the Anti-imperialist conference



FTT organizer Alison Bodine with Gladys Requena, Second Vice-President of the National Constituent Assembly in Venezuela

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

We don't care anything about your atomic bomb; it's useless, because other countries have atomic bombs. When two or three different countries have atomic bombs, nobody can use them. So it means that the white man today is without a weapon. If you want some action you've got to come on down to Earth, and there's more black people on Earth than there are white people.

I only got a couple more minutes. The white man can never win another war on the ground. His days of war – victory – his days of battleground victory are over. Can I prove it? Yes. Take all the action that's going on this Earth right now that he's involved in. Tell me where he's winning – nowhere. Why, some rice farmers, some rice farmers! Some rice-eaters ran him out of Korea, yes they ran him out of Korea. Rice-eaters, with nothing but gym shoes and a rifle and a bowl of rice, took him and his tanks and his napalm and all that other action he's supposed to have and ran him across the Yalu. Why? Because the day that he can win on the ground has passed.

Up in French Indochina, those little peasants, rice-growers, took on the might of the French army and ran all the Frenchmen, you remember Dien Bien Phu! The same thing happened in Algeria, in Africa.

Excerpt from "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech on April 12, 1964, at King Solomon Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan



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that Johnson is well known in his community as an artist and cultural leader. She further explains, “when this happened to Max, it just really saddened everybody, and also, we rallied around him to make sure that he was supported.”

In Vancouver, rallies were organized in support of Maxwell Johnson and his daughter Tori-Anne on January 10 outside the BMO, and another on January 14 at Britannia Community Centre. In a Facebook post, one of the organizers, Kat Norris, wrote, “How do we stand up for ourselves? How do we stop racism? It’s time for us to come together, to share our medicine, for each other, and for all those who have been mistreated by those who choose to believe in the stereotype that we indigenous people do not deserve equal treatment. **TAKING BACK OUR PRIDE, USING OUR VOICES, EDUCATING OURSELVES TO OUR RIGHTS.**”

In an interview with CBC News, Johnson confirmed that he is working with lawyers and may make a Human Rights complaint. Johnson told CBC, “If I have to go to court to make this right, not only for myself but for every First Nations person that’s been discriminated against by a bank or a big store or something like that, I will.”

Roots of racism run deep: Canada’s ongoing legacy

Numerous reports and studies in Canada have investigated the impact of anti-Indigenous racism on the quality of life, health, and safety of Indigenous people in Canada. Some examples include:

- “First Peoples, Second Class Treatment: The role of racism in the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada” (Wellesley Institute)
- “Ignored to Death: Systemic Racism in the Canadian Healthcare System” (Brenda L Gunn, Associate Professor, Robson Hall Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba, Canada)
- “Welcome to Winnipeg Where Canada’s Racism Problem is at its Worst” (Maclean’s Magazine)
- “Systemic Discrimination Against Aboriginal Peoples” (The Canadian Race Relations Foundation)
- “Doctrines of Dispossession - Racism Against Indigenous Peoples” (The United Nations)

Of course, the report that came as a huge shock to many non-Indigenous people in Canada was the June 23, 2019 Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls which declared that “Canada’s past and current colonial policies, actions, and inactions towards Indigenous Peoples is genocide.”

As Fire This Time reported on previously (“Canada’s 152 Birthday: Why the National



Protest in front of the BMO branch in downtown Vancouver, January 10, 2020

Inquiry Into Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (NIMMIWG) is Correct that Canada’s Treatment of Indigenous People Is an Ongoing Genocide” July 2019 - Volume 13 Issue 7), despite strong backlash from mainstream media in Canada, the final report of the NIMMIWG based its finding not only on the inquiry they led but also 98 previous reports that focused on or mentioned violence against Indigenous women in Canada. These previous reports dating back to the Bryce Report of 1907, which sounded the alarm on the health crisis and high death rates in Residential Schools in Canada.

The deep rooted anti-Indigenous racism in Canada affects physical and mental health, imprisonment and incarceration rates, life expectancy, poverty, education, and so many other areas of daily life for Indigenous people in Canada. While the stereotypes held by many non-Indigenous people are that Indigenous people have tremendous privileges bestowed on them by the government of Canada, the statistics and reports outline a different reality unseen or ignored by many in non-Indigenous Canada.

In 2015 for the 150th year of Canada, Statistics Canada wrote, “In 2017 the life expectancy for the total Canadian population is projected to be 79 years for men and 83 years for women. Among the Aboriginal population, the Inuit have the lowest projected life expectancy in 2017, of 64 years for men and 73 years for women.” This means that on average Inuit women live ten years less than the average person in Canada, while Inuit men are expected to have lives that are, on average, 15 years shorter. However, many people living in Canada are not aware of these realities in their own country.

On top of this, First Nations and Métis people also face life expectancy rates about five years lower than their non-Indigenous counterparts in Canada. Today in Canada, Indigenous women are six times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women (Statistics Canada). An

investigation into Statistics Canada reports on health indicators, incarceration rates, poverty rates, and other social issues all indicate that Indigenous people in Canada are literally in a struggle for their lives and futures in Canada. How many people are aware of these gaps in our standards of living across Canada?

What’s next?

This case is far from an isolated incident, and it highlights the ongoing legacy of stereotyping and prejudice against Indigenous people in Canada. Such incidents have severe implications for an individual’s well-being; in this case, the well-being of both Maxwell Johnson and Tori-Anne.

As Johnson works with lawyers to decide his next steps, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people must stand together with him against this case of racial profiling and violation of his human rights. It is important to continue to watch the developments in the case and provide support when needed.

Of course, dealing with the deep rooted and systemic racism of Canada will take a much larger effort. The government of Canada and other state authorities such as the RCMP and Vancouver Police Department gained their power and dominance with the suppression of Indigenous people – their human rights, their rights to the land, and their right to self-determination.

It is only when Indigenous people have control over their lands, resources, and communities that they will be able to start recovering and rebuilding after centuries of racist policies and unjust, discriminatory laws. It is up to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to stand together to demand the government of Canada and all institutions in this country – from the police to the banks – respect Indigenous people and their rights.

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01

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**NO
TMX
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FEB. 19
5PM**



This action takes place on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples of the salilwataʔ (Tsleil-Waututh), Skwx-wú7mesh (Squamish), and x'mə8k'e'yəm (Musqueam) Nations.

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