

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

"The truth must not only be the truth...it must also be told" - Fidel



FIRE THIS TIME



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Alison Bodine speaks at the International Hybrid U.S.-Cuba Normalization Conference in New York, March 2022.

By Alison Bodine

The Fight for Climate Justice

It has been yet another difficult week of the climate crisis for Mother Earth and humanity. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has just released yet another report. This 6th report highlights how governments lie about the progress they have made to address climate change. This report also focuses on the drastic and immediate cuts to oil and gas production necessary to prevent the planet from warming above 2 degrees Celsius and avoid the most catastrophic impacts on humanity. Yet, the world's richest capitalist countries and the wealthiest corporations in the world are doing nothing in response to this clear call for climate action.

Our world today is characterized by a drastically warming planet, air pollution, deforestation, ocean acidification, species extinction, soil degradation, the continuing genocide of Indigenous peoples, and never-ending U.S.-led wars and occupations. In this world, Cuba's



Cuban students learn about indigenous plants at the "Parque ecológico Rosa Elena Simeón" in February 2020 in Granma province. The land was previously a huge dump, in June 2011 a community intervention turned the area into a park and environmental project that works with all age groups, scientific societies, and interested community members.

WHAT DOES CUBA HAVE TO DO WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST THE CLIMATE CRISIS?

100-year plan to combat climate change is more than just a breath of fresh air.

Cuba's Life Task: Combatting Climate Change

In contrast to the inaction of the world's biggest capitalist countries - Cuba is action. Cuba shows us that building a more sustainable and just world is possible but that it requires a fundamental change. Reversing humanity's destructive relationship with Mother Earth requires overthrowing capitalism, "system change, not climate change."

Tarea Vida, or Life Task in English, is Cuba's 100-year plan to combat climate change and the focus of Dr. Helen Yaffe's documentary. As the film demonstrates so powerfully, this plan, which was first passed into law in 2017, is fueled by the dynamism of the Cuban revolution. A revolution that is constantly changing, reflecting, and updating - but with the guiding principles of building a transitional socialist society and a planned economy that puts people before profit.

It is only with socialism that Cuba, an island of 11.5 million people, has become a leader in the worldwide struggle against climate change. It is only with socialism that the World Wildlife Fund declared in 2006 that Cuba is the only country in the world with sustainable development, and the Sustainable Development Index ranked Cuba as the number one country in the world in 2019.

Tarea Vida - is only possible because of Cuba's socialist revolution

Since the 1959 Cuban revolution, the relationship between Cuba's economy, society and the Cuban environment has

been fundamentally restructured - and this can be seen in all facets of Cuban life.

Just think about it, are any of the following actions against climate change possible on a significant scale under capitalism?

Sustainable agriculture. Cuba's ability to broadly implement sustainable agriculture is based on land reform that began with the triumph of the 1959 Cuban revolution. The land was taken out of the hands of multinational corporations and large landowners, enabling the development of state farms and cooperatives, which laid the ground for Cuba's sustainable agriculture movement, which grew significantly after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Legislative action that is accountable to the Cuban people. Article 27 of the 1976 Cuban Constitution states, "The duty of the state and society to care about the environment." The updated 2018 Constitution includes Article 75, which enshrines the "right to enjoy a healthy and balanced environment." Both Constitutions were approved by the Cuban people in a popular vote.

The coordination necessary to implement a common plan for combatting climate change is enabled by a planned economy. Beyond the economy, civil society, state institutions and levels of government are also able to coordinate public education campaigns with all levels of society through free and accessible mediums. From school curriculums to television programs and billboards, Cuba can make the climate crisis an issue discussed at the dinner table.

Can you imagine if billboards in Canada were dedicated to educating society about the climate crisis instead of selling fast food and disposable commodities? If mass media, the nightly news, and television programming were campaigning about the worldwide impact of more frequent extreme weather events?

As marine scientist David Guggenheim, President of Ocean Doctor, a non-profit in Washington, D.C. that has projects in Cuba, stated in Dr. Helen Yaffe's film, "It's impressive, Cuba is an unusual country in that they actually respect their scientists, and their climate change policy is science driven."

Defeating the U.S. blockade against Cuba is



The proactive Cuban project "Costa Viva" (longlive the coast), from the University of Granma, was one of the nominees for the Youth category of the International Energy Globe Award in February 2020.

a climate justice issue

Another aspect of "Cuba's Life Task: Combatting Climate Change" that we have not discussed is that Cuba has become a leader in defending Mother Earth despite the terrible impacts of a brutal U.S. blockade. The U.S. blockade prevents Cuba from accessing resources and technology needed to combat climate change effectively. It is also an information blockade that limits the possibilities of exchange and collaboration between Cuban and U.S. scientists. This is especially criminal given that the U.S. and Cuba share a vital ocean ecosystem.

The US blockade has also prevented people in the U.S. from learning about and from Cuba's achievements – from sustainable agriculture to methods for preserving life and the environment with disaster preparedness.

The impact of the cruel U.S. blockade will magnify the effects of extreme weather events and rising sea levels in Cuba, regardless of the preparations and plans of the government of Cuba. Ending the U.S. blockade on Cuba is a climate justice issue because Cuba will only be able to comprehensively tackle the climate emergency if it is able to do so without being tied by the chains of the criminal blockade.

As long as capitalism exists, climate crisis exists

The power of Cuba's socialist revolution and commitment to defending Mother Earth and humanity is more clearly understood when we examine its alternative – capitalism. The economic system of imperialist countries, capitalism, is a system that puts profit and the exploitation of resources above human needs. Capitalism is warming, melting, and killing the planet and humanity. In 2017, just 100 corporations produced 71% of global emissions, yet governments around the world let the pollution continue. Why? Because the capitalist system demands that they do so – because capitalism is a system that lives only through the exploitation of humans and Mother Earth for profit.

Each time a new report is released, such as the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the predictions are grimmer and the united voice of scientists clearer. Yet, the governments of the wealthiest countries in the world continue their operations 'business as usual'. The capitalist system demands that

they do so.

Canada, the big-time polluter

This is as true in Canada, a capitalist-imperialist country with a relatively small population; it is a big-time polluter as is the United States. Despite the Trudeau Liberal government professing to be a climate leader on the international stage, Canada is, per person, the world's highest Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emitter. In fact, GHG emissions in Canada have risen the most of any G7 country since the Paris

Climate Agreement in 2015. Each person in Canada produces 22 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year, three times the G20 average. So, what is the government of Canada doing to reverse this disastrous equation?

The policies of the Trudeau Liberal government are only making Canada's ecological footprint larger. On March 29, 2022, the Trudeau Liberal government released the "2030 Emissions Reduction Plan: Canada's Next Steps to Clean Air and a Strong Economy." This \$9.1 billion plan claims to provide the roadmap for Canada to achieve its 2030 emissions reduction targets and reach net-zero emissions in 2050. Instead, it is nothing but a pretty package that hides more oil and gas extraction and export. In April 2022, the Trudeau government also approved the Bay du Nord offshore oil drilling project. They also announced intentions to buy 88 new F-35 fighter jets, which solely aim to destroy humans and nature.

This is what status-quo climate destruction looks like in Canada.

Cuba cannot reverse climate change alone – We need an international climate justice movement

No single country, no one group, no matter how big, will be able to solve the climate crisis by itself. By its nature, the political struggle for a sustainable world requires international cooperation and international class struggle. We need solidarity and, more importantly, unity across borders to become a powerful and effective force against the destruction of the earth by capitalism.

As people that believe that a just and sustainable world is possible, we must fight in defence of Mother Earth at every level – from local struggles against climate destroying pipelines to mobilizing in defence of Indigenous rights to demanding an end to U.S.-led wars. We must build a more united and

stronger climate justice movement with the vision and strategy to direct this movement towards anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. Fighting against the madness of the capitalist pollution drive is interrelated with all other ills of capitalism. This is why Cuba, and the incredible achievements of the Cuban revolution, are such a fundamental part of our conversation. We can fundamentally change humanity's destructive relationship with our Mother Earth. Cuba is showing us the way.

What Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro spoke about at the Rio Summit in 1992 is as true today as it was then. I encourage people to read his entire speech. I will end with this excerpt: "Unequal trade, protectionism and the foreign debt assault the ecological balance and promote the destruction of the environment. If we want to save humanity from this self-destruction, wealth and available technologies must be distributed better throughout the planet. Less luxury and less waste in a few countries would mean less poverty and hunger in much of the world."

Stop transferring to the Third World lifestyles and consumer habits that ruin the environment. Make human life more rational. Adopt a just international economic order. Use science to achieve sustainable development without pollution. Pay the ecological debt. Eradicate hunger and not humanity."

Cuba's message is clear. A just and sustainable world is possible and necessary. Unity and building united fronts are the key to our victory in the struggle for human and mother earth's liberation.

This article is based on talks given by Alison Bodine at the International US-Cuba Normalization Conference on March 19-20, 2022 in New York City and on the April 8, 2022 webinar and Vancouver premiere of "Cuba's Life Task: Combatting Climate Change!", featuring Dr. Helen Yaffe. The April 8 webinar was organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver, Seattle/ Cuba Friendship Committee and Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Scan the QR code to watch VCSC Cuba & Climate webinar:



Scan the QR code to watch the full documentary "Cuba's Life Task"



CUBA'S LIFE TASK

COMBATTING CLIMATE CHANGE

A documentary about 'Tarea Vida' (Life Task) Cuba's unique plan for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Directed by Daniesky Acosta
Co-directed by Hugo Rivalta
Co-produced by Helen Yaffe
Assistant producer Laura Rivalta

VENICE GLASSON
FILM FESTIVAL
2021

Stop TMX No CGL Drop Charges Against Land Defenders!

By Alison Bodine

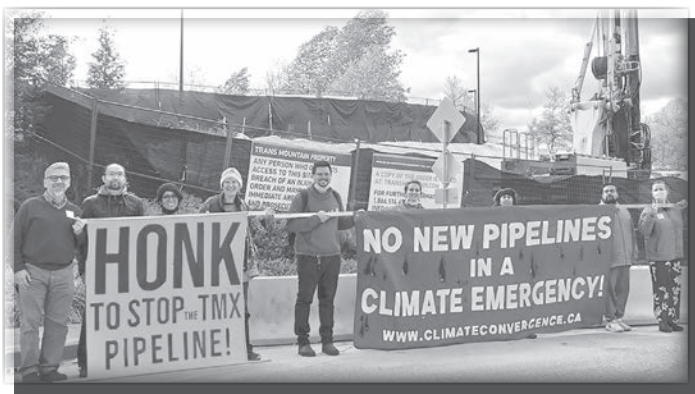
On May 10, 2022, the Federal Liberal government announced that it is providing \$10 billion in loan guarantees to the Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) pipeline project. After the costs for this dirty tar-sands pipeline jumped 70% to the outrageous price tag of \$21.4 billion, the Trudeau government announced that there would be no more public money for TMX. However, this subsidy assures that the financial and environmental costs of TMX will continue to fall on the shoulders of poor, working and oppressed people in Canada.

The Liberal government, which claims to be fighting climate change, continues using tax-payer money to give hand-outs to the world's worst polluters – the fossil fuel companies and bankers that reported record-breaking profits in 2021. According to research from the advocacy group Oil Change International, between 2018 and 2020, Canada provided more public financing to oil and gas companies than any other G20 country (the 20 countries with the world's largest economies).

The Trudeau federal government and the BC NDP government of Premier Horgan have also given their full support to the fracked-gas Coastal GasLink (CGL) pipeline, which crosses through Wet'suwet'en territory in Northern British Columbia. Despite the demands of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs to stop pipeline construction immediately, CGL construction has continued.

Indigenous land defenders and climate activists face intimidation, violence, arrests, arbitrary detentions, and persecution in their struggle against the TMX and CGL pipelines. When presented with evidence regarding the ongoing harassment and violence against Secwepemc and Wet'suwet'en communities, the United

Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination sent a letter to Leslie Norton, the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations. In this letter from April 29, 2022, the committee re-stated their call on the government of Canada to immediately cease the construction of the TMX and CGL pipelines. The committee



Climate Convergence Banner Action on May 18, 2022.

also asked that the government of Canada present information on measures they have taken to "Prevent and duly investigate the allegations of surveillance measures, practices of arbitrary detention, instances of excessive use of force against protesters," among other concerns regarding the human and democratic rights of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Both the TMX and CGL pipelines are facing growing opposition. In the Lower Mainland, Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver has been working together with other grassroots organizations on campaigns to stop the TMX and CGL pipelines, as well as in the fight against the Site-C Dam and supporting

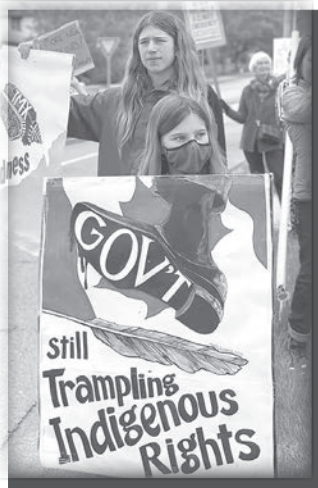
Indigenous land defenders and climate activists facing unjust charges for their peaceful actions to defend Mother Earth.

On April 22, Climate Convergence co-sponsored an Earth Day rally and march along with Save Old Growth, Protect the Planet! Stop TMX! and Extinction Rebellion Vancouver. At least 250 people gathered for this action, which began at Vancouver City Hall, went on a march across the Cambie Street bridge and ended up at Cooper's Park downtown for a closing rally. It was an energetic rally and march, with lots of families, young children, and lots of vocal support from people passing by.

Hug Burnaby Mountain, an action against the TMX pipeline held on May 7, was a great success. Altogether, at least 600 people came out to different stations located around Burnaby Mountain, one of the sites of the TMX pipeline project, and linked hands to join in a gigantic human chain. There were more than 120 people at the Climate Convergence station at the Intersection of Inlet Drive and Hastings Street in Burnaby. The Climate Convergence station included the "Speak for Us" art of the late Marta Robertson-Smythe, which made a very important and beautiful contribution to the large banners and signs. The station also had a visit from the Left Coast Labour Chorus, who sang protest songs all along the human chain, connecting the Climate Convergence station to the station organized by 350-Vancouver.

Following the creation of the human chain and the actions at the stations, participants gathered for a closing rally near the Kwekwecnewtxw Traditional Coast Salish Watch House on Burnaby Mountain. Speakers at this rally included Kukpi7 Judy Wilson of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and Reuban and Cedar George from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation's Sacred Trust Initiative.

Hug Burnaby Mountain was a great step forward in our continuing fight to stop the TMX pipeline. This dynamic action was organized by Protect the



Hug Burnaby Mountain "No Pipeline Action"

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What is Going on in Yemen?



What is Canada's Role in This War?

Chris Cook of Gorilla Radio Interviews

Author, Activist and Fire This Time Journalist Azza Rojbi

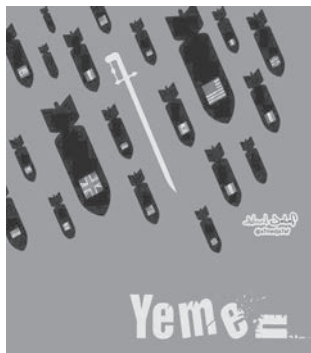
Chris Cook: Welcome back to Gorilla Radio. Well, April begins the 8th year of the world's most dire humanitarian crisis, the asymmetrical conflict in Yemen. They're backed by Western nations. Saudi Arabia has led a coalition of wealthy Arab states in a protracted war that has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians and threatens millions more. Well, I haven't talked to somebody who's written a book about it, and I'm really anxious to get your take on it, and especially from a Canadian point of view. What is Canada doing right now? What is Canada's role in this ongoing war?

Azza Rojbi: Definitely. I think that's a really good question and a very important thing to talk about. And this doesn't, unfortunately, get covered by a lot of the media in Canada. So, I'm glad to be here and able to speak about this issue because Canada is basically fueling this humanitarian crisis, this war that's happening in Yemen for over seven years now. We are entering the eighth year of the war, and even the United Nations has called Canada twice as one of the countries fueling the war. One might

ask, how is Canada doing this? Canada, the United States, and other European countries have consistently and are still selling weapons to Saudi Arabia, the main country leading the war against the people of Yemen. So, by continuing to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia, we are continuing to fuel this war. So, for example, since the start of this war in 2015, Canada has exported over \$8 billion worth of arms to Saudi Arabia. So basically, the Liberal government of Canada is making a profit at the expense of Yemeni lives. This war has created a tragedy in Yemen. It is the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Chris Cook: Well, in 2019, Azza, the same year that your book was released, Canada signed an international treaty,

the arms treaty agreement that Canada said it would not export arms into conflict areas. That was a part of the treaty. And yet they're still selling arms



Left: Rally in Saada, Yemen against the Saudi-led war in Yemen, June 3, 2022

to the Saudis, as you mentioned. How does Canada rectify these two seemingly disparate positions?

Azza Rojbi: Exactly. That's a very good point, Chris, because I think that's a point that unfortunately shows the hypocrisy of the government of Canada. On one point, signing such a treaty, and then on the other end, continuing to arm and fund, and sell weapons to Saudi Arabia. Another important piece is that the Liberal Trudeau government has said that they were going to look and review these arms sales with Saudi Arabia. They paused them for a little bit. They went and reviewed them and then came back and said, all is good here, nothing to see. We're going to continue selling weapons to Saudi Arabia. This is total hypocrisy by the government of Canada. But we can look at it from the point of view of how basically Saudi Arabia, after the United States, is the largest buyer of Canadian military goods. And so, of course, unfortunately, Canada is prioritizing profit for the big manufacturing of military and weaponry as opposed to prioritizing the life of the people of Yemen. And so the government of Canada is continuing to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia to fuel this war. Despite the hypocrisy that you're pointing out, Chris, and many other hypocrisies really, Canada is talking about being a champion of human rights and Trudeau being a feminist leader and championing human rights around the world while continuing to arm a country that is a despotic monarchy regime, who has human rights abuses against their own people, but also has been killing and continuing this war against the people of Yemen for over seven years now.

Chris Cook: Well, we've suffered Justin Trudeau for just as long, and he's reversed himself on many positions in that period. What are the opposition in the House saying about the continuing Canadian supplying of arms to the belligerent Saudi Arabia?

Azza Rojbi: Yeah, and unfortunately, the issue of Yemen has not been really at the forefront of discussions either in the media in Canada or the Parliament of Canada. But it's also important to point out that different Members of Parliament from the NDP have supported and sponsored a petition to the Parliament

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By Azza Rojbi

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



Continued on page 20

PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!

JUSTICE FOR SHIREEN ABU AKLEH!

ISRAEL / USA HANDS OFF PALESTINE!

On May 11, 2022, Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, was assassinated by an Israeli soldier. She was shot in the face by an Israeli sniper while reporting on a raid being conducted against Palestinians by Israeli occupation forces in the Jenin refugee camp. When she was murdered, Shireen was wearing a helmet and a bullet-proof vest clearly identifying herself as press. Her colleague Ali al-Samoudi was also shot by Israeli forces at the same time, but he is recovering from his injuries.



The targeted murder of Shireen Abu Akleh is intended to strike fear into journalists who expose the crimes of Israel. Since the occupation of Palestine began in 1948, Palestinian journalists, and journalists reporting on the struggle of the people of Palestine, have faced continuous harassment and intimidation by Israel, including violent assaults and other targeted murders. However, the people of Palestine and the journalists who cover their struggle have not been, and will not be, silenced.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice fiercely denounces the Israeli assassination of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh and we stand with the people of Palestine in their continued struggle against the brutal Israeli occupation.

Since last year, the people of Palestine have faced a ruthless escalation in attacks and bombing by Israel, including the forced and violent removal of Palestinian residents of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in Jerusalem. For 11 days in May 2021, 259 people, including 65 children across Gaza and the West Bank, were killed by Israeli occupation forces. This continuous bloodshed and destruction also destroyed thousands of

homes, public buildings, medical facilities, schools, and other basic infrastructure.

The genocidal policies of Israel are funded and supported by imperialist governments around the world, led by the United States. Israel is a manufactured state on Palestinian land, existing only with U.S. funding and weapons, and the diplomatic cover, political support and aid that they receive from imperialist governments such as

Canada. Each year, the United States gives \$38 billion in direct military aid to Israeli occupation forces. During the May 2021 assault on Gaza, the U.S. Biden Administration approved a \$735 million weapons sale to Israel. Israel would not be able to exist for even one week if not for the massive diplomatic, financial, and military support of the United States. The state of Israel is not a secure land for Jewish people, but was and is, a war machine state to divide and suppress the Middle East on behalf of imperialist powers.

In the face of merciless attacks and ethnic cleansing, the people of Palestine continue to fight for their right to land and self-determination. Despite 74 years of suffering and hardship they have not given up the struggle for their rights and their land including their right of return. No amount of violence by the state of Israel has ever been able to change that.

The Israeli racist regime is now fighting with three powerful Palestinian forces, Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and within Israel. This resistance included a historic general strike of people of Palestine on May 18, 2021.

In response to the savage killing of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh there has been a worldwide outcry and protests. Over the past year the continued racist Israeli war on Palestine has mobilized millions of people around the world to demonstrate their support for the brave people of Palestine. In Vancouver, Canada, as well as hundreds of cities and towns around the world, poor, working and oppressed people are joining together in recognition of their shared humanity with the people of Palestine and to demand justice for Shireen.

We, the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice stand with the brave people of Palestine in their continued struggle for dignity and self-determination against the racist, Zionist, and colonial state of Israel. We call on all peace-loving, working class, and oppressed people around the world to stand up and to be consistently active in the ongoing fight for the liberation of Palestine! Palestinian liberation from Israeli Zionist occupation is liberation for us all.

- Stop Killing Palestinian Journalists!
- Israel/USA Hands Off Palestine!
- Stop Bombing and Killing Palestinians!
- Self-determination for Palestine!
- End the Israeli Occupation of Palestine Now!
- Long Live Palestine!
- Long Live International Solidarity!

*Statement by the Fire This Time
Movement for Social Justice
May 14, 2022*



The New Cuban Families Code

A Giant Step for Humanity & Cuba's Socialist Project



By Azza Rojbi

To begin with, we need to see the new Cuban families code within the history and the reality of popular democracy and popular mass institutions in Cuba. Since the beginning of the revolution, Cuba has always encouraged the Cuban people to engage in the political process and to mass mobilize for a better society. This families code is another example that shows us firmly how Cuba is a revolution in motion.

And in this specific case, this motion started in 2019 when 86% of the Cuban population approved the new constitution. This new constitution stands for human rights and the protection of the Cuban people. This families code is the continuity of the constitution and expands the protection of all Cuban families.

The new code is another step in the revolutionary process of Cuba. It further consolidates the human rights that the Cuban people and families have achieved since the revolution. This new families code does not limit the existing code, but it expands it. It does not restrict the rights of anyone but again expands and extends them. This is a very important point to reiterate.

LGBTQ+ and Families Code

LGBTQ+ people in Cuba are protected from discrimination under the country's current constitution. Trans people in Cuba have had access to free, gender-affirming surgery and healthcare since 2008. Additionally, in Cuba, trans people can correct their legal names and gender on official documents without surgery since 2013. Cuba also has a national network of trans people and supporters called TransCuba, formed to provide support and family counselling and build social awareness about trans issues across the country. This is more than we can say about the United States or Canada, where many trans people are constantly under attack, their rights threatened, and access to gender-affirming

care is difficult, and even in parts of the U.S. and Canada.

The new families code expands on the rights of the LGBTQ+ community and families by expanding the definition of family. It protects the rights of same-sex parents to construct a family, whether that is through marriage, adoption, or assisted reproduction.

Mass popular consultation

This new code was not only written by lawyers or legislators. It was the result of the research and work of many years by sociologists, psychologists, doctors, statisticians, social workers, workers, and farmers. It was a collaborative process by a multidisciplinary team working on the research and drafting of the code. All of this resulted in giving an image of the reality of Cuban families and the new issues and problems facing them.

The mass majority of the Cuban people are deeply involved in their popular democratic practices and are responding positively to exercising their rights to advance and build a socialist society for all. The fact that 6.4 million people participated in 79,000 meetings to discuss this new families code indicates the broad participation of people in making the decision about their destiny and the progress of society as a whole.

This is not something new for Cuba. The Cuban Socialist Revolution, from the beginning, was not only a popular revolution supported by the Cuban people, but it also brought with it democracy from below. A democracy that is for working and oppressed people. A democracy that is based on the interest of the Cuban people. A democracy that is based on the human rights of all Cubans. No wonder the Cuban Revolution, Cuban democracy, and the Cuban government, with its leadership have always enjoyed the support of the overwhelming majority of the Cuban people.

very expensive, inexistent

This new families code is again the best proof showing how dynamic and alive is Cuba's socialist project and how close the relationship is between the people and the leadership of the revolution, including the government, state, and the popular mass revolutionary institutions such as the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), the Cuban National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX), the University Student Federation (FEU) and others.

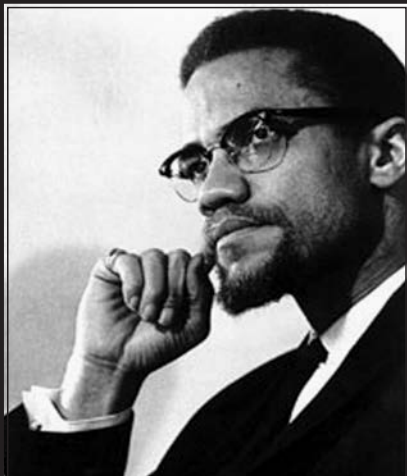
It is very important to understand the importance of the work of CENESEX in advancing LGBTQ+ rights in Cuba. CENESEX organizes the Annual National Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia. Basically, the whole event is days of action that include cultural and educational events, what we call here a pride parade, which they call in Cuba a conga against homophobia and transphobia. It's a beautiful march full of music, full of colours, full of dancing, really a day full of Cuban diversity taking over the beautiful streets of Havana. The new families code builds on all this colourful dynamism of Cuban society to further expands the rights of all Cuban people and families.

Always forward

The new families code is a great victory for the Cuban revolution. It not only advances the human rights of the Cuban people but also advances Cuba's socialist path, to advance its revolution to the higher stage of human and social development. It is good to finish with a quote published by the Associated Press in an article about the public mass consultation about the new families code written in February 2022. Heidi Sanchez, a nursing assistant, interviewed in the article, said she likes the changes in the new code, "because it includes everyone in the world: children, the elderly, people of the same sex. [...] We are all human beings and Cubans. I don't see anything abnormal."

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

But one of the arguments against getting you and me to do this has always been that our problem is a domestic problem of the United States. And as such, we should not think to put it at a level where somebody else can come and mess with United States domestic affairs. But you're giving Uncle Sam a break. Uncle Sam's got his hands in the Congo, in Cuba, in South America, in Saigon. Uncle Sam has got his bloody hands in every continent and in everybody else's business on this earth. But at the same time, when it comes to taking forceful action in this country where our rights are concerned, he's always going to tell you and me, "Well, these are states' rights." Or he'll make some kind of off-the-wall alibi that's not a bona fide alibi—not because it's an alibi, but to justify his inactivity where your and my rights are concerned.

Speech To Civil Rights Workers from Mississippi (Jan. 1, 1965)

Continued from page 4

Planet! Stop TMX! and co-sponsored by Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver, 350-Vancouver, SFU-350, Youth Stop TMX, Mountain Protectors, Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS), Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), BROKE, For Our Kids - Burnaby, and Doctors for Planetary Health - West Coast. For more information on the action, including photos, videos and updates about future events, visit - <https://hugthemountain.ca/>

Then, on **May 18**, Climate Convergence held a banner action demanding "Stop the TMX Pipeline Now!" at a busy intersection in Burnaby near a TMX construction site, which is also only 100 metres away from Burnaby Mountain Secondary School. Pipeline construction through this area is a clear danger to students and yet more proof that the government of Canada is putting profits before the health and safety of people. This successful action received a lot of support from people walking, biking, and driving by and got media coverage from City News, CTV and the Chinese community station Fairchild.

We Must Organize to Stop the Climate Catastrophe!

The scientific consensus is clear—the world needs immediate action to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and put an end to the destruction of Mother Earth. If the status-quo exploitation of nature continues, there will be devastating consequences for humanity. However, the government of Canada is not acting on this urgent call. People in Canada need money for healthcare, education, housing, and social justice, not pipelines that destroy the planet and trample on Indigenous rights.

Join Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver as we continue organizing and mobilizing to build the climate justice movement locally and internationally. Climate Convergence holds an organizing meeting twice a month, and all interested in joining the fight for climate justice are welcome to attend. For information and to get involved in Climate Convergence, visit www.climateconvergence.ca, on Twitter and Facebook: @climate604 and on Instagram: @climateconvergence.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

OUR HERITAGE



Rosa Luxemburg

Revolutionary Marxist Leader (1871-1919)

And this fateful hour is hastened by capital, at an ever-increasing rate, by mobilizing its future gravediggers, the proletarians, in ever greater numbers, by extending its domination to all countries of the globe, by establishing a chaotic world economy, and by laying the foundation for the solidarity of the proletariat of all countries into one revolutionary world power which shall sweep aside the class rule of capital. Socialism ceased being a scheme, a pretty fancy, or an experiment carried out in each country by isolated groups of workers, each on its own hook. As the common political program of action for the entire international proletariat, socialism becomes a historic necessity, because it is a result of the operation of the very laws of capitalist development.

*Rosa Luxemburg Speaks
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—from What is Economics?
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The People's Summit was organized as a counter summit to Biden's failed 9th Summit of the Americas that took place June 8, 9, and 10, 2022 in Los Angeles. The People's Summit welcomed over 3000 attendees from 15 countries to share three days of art, music, speakers, debates, workshops, panel discussion, and performances.

Dear Manolo; comrades who are participating in the Summit of the Peoples;

I was not wrong when I said that I will not be in the Summit of the Americas but the voice of Cuba certainly will.

You are our voice. The Revolution has always had it very clear: wherever governments deprive us from our voice, peoples will be there to represent us, to speak on our behalf.

And so it has been since the times of the Ministry of Colonies, when there were governments that were pushed by the empire to break relations with Cuba, and ended up by obeying the order of the master, with the honorable exception of Mexico.

The Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) was born from that understanding.

Solidarity is not only a principle that is inseparable from the revolutionary praxis. It is the most formidable weapon for those of us who believe in the power of the masses, in the telluric force of mobilized peoples and the inspiring struggle for social justice.

Wherever peoples are struggling, Cuba will be. And wherever Cuba is, peoples will be struggling.

The struggle that we are sharing today dates back to centuries, at the cost of the blood of some of the best sons and daughters of the Greater Homeland. That struggle is waged against the powerful neighbor's re-colonizing attempts of our American nations. It is waged against the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine that continues to guide the US and its political approach to our region.

It is waged against the imperial policies of sanctions and penalties for countries that will not yield to such designs. It is waged against the US politicians' aspirations to become

gendarmes and supreme judges, determined to establish who should be our leaders and even our civil society.

Cuba was the first Latin American nation that was excluded from the hemispheric alliances for having rebelled against the empire. Others tried to do the same before but they were subject to coup d'états, dictatorships and transnationals of terror like Operation Condor.

Cuba was expelled from the OAS; it was alienated from its natural environment. Several aggressions were financed and are still financed against the Revolution. We are the honorable survivors of 63 years of blockade and, to the disgrace of that powerful



Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel

our behalf, understand that where there used to be a punished nation before, now there are three and tomorrow there will be 10. However, if peoples line up in close ranks,

the giant in its seven-league boots that floats around in heavens devouring worlds shall not trespass.

Thanks to that understanding the Ninth Summit of the Americas was not

exactly what its organizers expected. Solidarity was ever more present also where it had not been invited to, where it was not wanted.

Therefore, I would ask you to share our most sincere appreciation with the governments of the region that firmly opposed the exclusions of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua from the Summit of the Americas.

Deserving our special recognition are President Manuel López Obrador from Mexico; the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves; the Presidents of Bolivia, Lucho Arce, and from Honduras, Xiomara Castro; as well as the many leaders and heads of Caribbean and Latin American delegations who, during the Summit itself, have rejected the exclusion of Cuba and the criminal blockade against our people.

North America is not the enemy. The North America of workers, indigenous populations and immigrants, who have also been excluded, not only once but day after day, by the merciless empire of the market; that North America that you are showing to us, a rebellious, insubordinate, pro-active and fraternal North America, is our natural sister is not, and will never be, our enemy.

Thank you for giving voice to the excluded. Thank you for painting the horizon with hope. Thank you for ratifying to us, once again, that a better world is possible.

MESSAGE FROM CUBAN PRESIDENT MIGUEL DIAZ-CANEL TO THE PEOPLES SUMMIT



empire, which is 30 times bigger than our Island, we are among the countries of the hemisphere that can show the best education and health indicators as well as a scientific development of our own.

The fraternal Venezuela is also being arrogantly punished. It has been robbed of its savings and its assets abroad and its legitimate government has been ignored. Vicious attacks have been launched to strangle Nicaragua, a nation that has faced so many conquest attempts in history and where at some point in time a dictatorship that was strongly sponsored by Washington was imposed.

Peoples are wise. Peoples have memory. Those peoples that have organized a Summit that the empire wanted to prevent, as well as the proud governments that did not silence their denunciations and raised their voices also in



REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN TUNISIA

THE CRISIS OF THE STATE, THE ECONOMY, AND THE CAPITALIST RULING CLASS

Interview conducted, transcribed & translated from arabic by Azza Rojbi

Hamma Hammami is a long-time Tunisian revolutionary socialist activist and leader. Hammami began his militant journey as a student activist in 1970 within the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET). He was imprisoned and tortured for his political activism, spent 10 years in prison, and more than 10 years in hiding. Hammami was a strong vocal opposition to the government of former Tunisian dictator Ben Ali and played a key leadership role in the 2011 Tunisian revolution. Hammami is the Secretary General of the Tunisian Workers' Party and author of several books on politics and economy.

The below interview was conducted with Hamma Hammami in June 2022 ahead of the constitutional referendum in Tunisia announced for July 25, 2022. We believe this is a very important and educational interview that highlights an example of the struggle that many colonial and semi-colonial countries are going through in a time of capitalist-imperialist decay, rapid polarization of world politics and finance system, and an unfolding new cold war.



Police violently block Hamma Hammami and protesters as they head toward the headquarters of electoral authority, during a rally on 4 June, 2022

Azza Rojbi: On June 1, Tunisian President Kais Saied fired 57 judges, accusing them of corruption, and further consolidated his control over the country's judiciary. What do you think about this, and what is the response of the Tunisian civil society to this latest move by Saied?

Hamma Hammami: The dismissal of 57 judges by Kais Saied is a continuation of the dissolution of the Supreme Judicial Council and the changing of its composition with a new one loyal to Kais Saied. Kais Saied took advantage of the existence of real corruption and other issues within the judiciary system, and he also took advantage of the presence of some names involved in corruption cases. He took advantage of all this to get rid of the judges who bothered him and who refused his instructions. For your information, out of the 57 judges who were dismissed, there are 55 judicial judges and two judges affiliated with the administrative judiciary.

Kais Saied, after taking over the judiciary, wants to seize the keys to the prison and eventually turn himself into the public prosecution office. We are facing a terrible attack, a massacre as it was called, a massacre of the Tunisian judiciary system. What I personally consider the degeneration of a state, are the accusations levelled against some female judges of adultery and so on.

The president of the Republic accuses judges of affairs on live TV! It is a degeneration of a state, an assault and violation of the sanctity of female judges, and a violation and assault on the sanctity of Tunisian women. For your knowledge, assuming that there is serious evidence indicating the existence of ethical issues, it is customary, according to the law, that they are discussed in closed sessions inside the court. Without the presence of the public, some judges will even ask the court clerk to withdraw because the court clerk is not required to keep the deliberations secret. Faced with this, we find a head



Hamma Hammami & Azza Rojbi at an international conference in Venezuela in March 2018

of state accusing female judges on air of adultery, showing his bad faith and lack of respect for the most basic moral principles.

AR: On June 4, you and other protesters were attacked and pepper-sprayed by police at a protest against the planned July referendum announced by President Saied. Could you explain this referendum and the opposition campaign against it?

HH: Kais Saied overturned the revolutionary path; he overturned the constitution and, as I said, took control of all branches of government in Tunisia. On December 13, 2021, he announced his road map. So instead of putting an end to the "period of exception," he extended it by a full year and announced the road map. This map contains three stages: the first stage is a consultation, the second stage is a referendum on a constitution, and the third stage is elections next December.

The consultation was failed in the most total sense of the word. Of the 12 million Tunisians and 9 million eligible voters, only 530,000 Tunisians participated in this consultation. Nevertheless, Kais Saied announced that it was successful and that 86% of those that participated wanted a presidential system. Therefore, he decided to hold a national dialogue and then a referendum based on the results of this failed consultation. What we have witnessed in the last few days is a farce. He gathered some politicians, including the last Minister of Interior under Ben Ali. The latter was responsible for killings, four

ministers from the past government he criticized, and some insignificant elements within society formed a committee. He put on the presidency of this committee Sadok Belaid, who, although a legal scholar, has nothing to do with the democratic struggle in Tunisia or with the Tunisian revolution. Kais Saied created this committee and asked the participants to submit to him within 72hrs a document with a vision of the country over the next forty years. Does the Prime Minister of Canada ask his advisors to prepare for him a report about the future of Canada this way? I know very well that in some countries, hundreds, if not thousands of advisors and experts spend months, even years, envisioning the future of a country over four decades. Kais asked his committee, in 72hrs, to decide on the constitution and a vision of Tunisia on the economic, social, cultural, security and diplomatic fronts and all other aspects of the country.

This shows that this dialogue process is a false dialogue. The constitution is there. The body is in the hands of Kais Saied, but he wanted to conduct this farce dialogue, which the main political forces boycotted, such as the Tunisian General Labor Union. He wanted this dialogue to be a decoration, nothing more, nothing less, to pass a ready-made constitution. It is important also to know that he didn't put the Electoral Law up for discussion within this dialogue but left it to himself to decide by decree.

So, the upcoming referendum will be a referendum based: First, on the results of a failed consultation. Secondly, on ready-made topics prepared by Kais Saied, including the constitution, without having been seriously discussed, not even by the fake committee he summoned to his presidential guesthouse. We consider that replacing the members of the Independent Higher Authority for Elections (ISIE) and the appointment of new ones by Kais Saied is another proof that Saied aims to pass this referendum by all means. Another point I want to add, which is important, is that this new constitution will be presented on June 30 at midnight. All political and social forces in Tunisia that want to participate in this referendum will only have 24hrs to read and discuss the constitution and decide

whether they will support it.

So, we started our campaign; five political parties launched the “National Campaign



Supporters of the General Union of Tunisian Workers during a rally against austerity measures holding signs against the privatisation of public institutions. Tunis, June 16, 2022

Against the Referendum.” We started with a press conference and then marched to protest outside the ISIE headquarters. We informed the police before the protest, but when we arrived, we found that the street was closed, and the police attacked us. The police were kicking and beating us, which is their usual behaviour; this time, they pepper-sprayed us. These are methods of bandits and criminals. It shows the authoritarian approach that Kais Saied is taking.

AR: We are close to one year after Saied's taking over the absolute presidency by dismantling democratic institutions in Tunisia. How do you assess his work in the last year, and how sincere has he been in his claim toward a healthy democracy?

HH: No, he is not honest. There is no honest dictator and no honest tyrant. I have said that more than once, he is a fraudulent person, he is a person who is deceiving the intelligence of Tunisians, he is a liar who says one thing and does the opposite. As I said, this is the case with all tyrants. First, he said that he will use Article 80 of the Tunisian constitution for a month, then he extended it for another month, and now we are close to 11 months, and he is exploiting all this time to seize power.

If we go back to his electoral program or what he said before the elections, we will understand that he is hostile to liberties, the freedom to organize, and freedom of expression. He is also a conservative

figure. He is to the right of the Ennahda movement on some issues, such as freedom of conscience or equality. He is closer to Hizb ut-Tahrir and other religious extremists than the Ennahda movement. He took advantage of the corrupt and failed decade of the Ennahda government; he exploited and took advantage of Tunisians' resentment against Ennahda's rule. For context, we were also calling for the downfall of the regime led by Ennahda. He took advantage of the situation in the country, not to replace the corrupt system with a new one, that is, a real democracy with an economic and social system that meets the needs of all Tunisians. Instead, he took advantage of the political circumstances to establish an authoritarian regime and we see the results today.

From the socio-economic point of view, Kais Saied has not changed anything in terms of method. He is still using the same brutal neoliberal policies based on foreign dependency, based on destroying peoples' purchasing power, based on starving Tunisian women and men. According to all the indicators, the situation did not improve from what it was in the era of the Ennahda but worsened. The indebtedness has increased, prices are skyrocketing, unemployment has increased, and the trade balance deficit has increased, which means that, in general, we find that the conditions of Tunisians have worsened. And in all of this, his government continues with the program started by Youssef Chahed [Former Tunisian Prime Minister] in 2016 to satisfy the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) demands. In other words, the current economic and social conditions will become even more difficult for Tunisians in the next stage. So, we see how during this period, Kais Saied did not bring anything to improve the life condition of the Tunisian people. Instead, he walks on the path of tyranny while preserving the same unpatriotic and unpopular economic policies.

End of Part 1

*Follow Azza Rojbi on Twitter:
@Azza_R14*



CUBA VIVE Y TRABAJA! REPORT BACK FROM THE 28TH CHE GUEVARA VOLUNTEER WORK BRIGADE!

- ★ **May Day!**
- ★ **Volunteering!**
- ★ **Solidarity!**
- ★ **Fun!**



By Janine Solanki

On April 26, brigadistas arrived in Havana, Cuba to embark on the 28th Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade, a unique opportunity to learn about Cuba first-hand and to practice solidarity with the Cuban people. The Che Guevara Brigade has been coming to Cuba since 1992, and this year brought a group of 33 people, many who were travelling to Cuba for the first time. While most brigadistas hailed from five provinces across Canada, the Che Brigade also welcomes international participants and this year was joined by brigadistas from England and Mexico. Brigadistas arrived eager to learn about this island nation and the remarkable achievements of the Cuban Revolution, as well as to see for themselves the impacts of the over 60 year U.S. blockade against Cuba.

The Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade is a project of the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), an umbrella group of Cuba solidarity organizations across Canada, with the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP). The 28th Che Guevara Brigade was itself an achievement after the Covid-19 pandemic limiting of international travel and multiple postponements since 2020. Despite the uncertainty of the last two years, the Che Guevara Brigade organizing committee continued to build for the eventual return to Cuba and held numerous webinars

about Cuba's history, politics, and culture until travel in person was possible. Due to the work and consistent organizing of the Che Brigade organizing committee, the Che Guevara Brigade has now completed two successful brigades within two months!

The Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade aims to provide brigadistas with a full understanding of Cuba from a historical, political, social and cultural perspective. While mainstream media manipulations and misinformation about Cuba run rampant, the Che Brigade invites brigadistas to form their own opinions from their own experiences. One of the central activities of the Che Brigade is volunteer work, where brigadistas work side-by-side with Cuban workers, seeing first-hand how a society run by and for the working class functions, and learning the reality of Cuba's popular slogan "Cuba Vive y Trabaja" (Cuba Lives and Works). Throughout the two week program brigadistas cleared a field at a cooperative ecological farm, harvested potatoes, and cleared brush from a guava grove. Brigadistas also learned that there is nothing better after working on a field than juice straight from a coconut!

One of the first activities of the Che Guevara Brigade was a visit to the newly inaugurated Fidel Castro Center in Havana. The state-of-the-art interactive institution is dedicated to study of the thought and work of the great Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro.

Brigadistas exploring the center learned about Fidel Castro's extraordinary contribution not just to the lives

of Cubans, but also his internationalis. One example of this internationalism was the creation of Cuba's Latin American School of Medicine which today trains students from at least 110 countries to be doctors, on a full scholarship.

Brigadista's also learned about one of the most important recent achievements Cuba has made, the development of five vaccines effective against Covid-19. Brigadista's visited the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) in Havana, which developed the Covid-19 vaccine Abdala. The vaccine, which has an efficacy of 92.28% is itself a form of Cuba's medical internationalism, and is being exported to Venezuela, Vietnam, Iran and Nicaragua. Cuba is requesting the World Health Organization approval of Abdala which will help the vaccine reach more people especially in developing nations. At CIGB, scientists took time out of their busy day to answer the questions of brigadistas, who learned about the impressive history of Cuba's medical research and vaccine development long before Covid-19!

One of the most inspiring experiences for anyone visiting Cuba is to participate in May 1 - International Workers Day. Early in the morning on May 1, brigadistas gathered at the Jose Marti Memorial in Havana's Plaza de la Revolución, where the march would pass through for the first time in two years since the pandemic. Soon after the sun rose the march began with a massive banner reading "Cuba Vive y Trabaja" (Cuba Lives and



▼ Photos by brigadistas at International Workers Day in Havana, Cuba



Works) followed by a 50,000-strong block of doctors, medical scientists and students, nurses and other healthcare workers, who were being honoured with the lead position in the march in recognition and appreciation of their heroic fight against the pandemic. Brigadistas held the “Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade” banner facing the hundreds of thousands more Cuban workers who passed by proudly holding banners from their workplaces, posters of revolutionary heroes like Fidel and Che, and signs demanding an end to the U.S. blockade against Cuba. Brigadistas crowded up close to the passing march, and exchanged enthusiastic chants of “Viva Cuba!”, enormous smiles, waves and fist pumps with Cuban workers celebrating this day. Across Cuba, 6 million people – over half of Cuba’s population participated in May Day marches and activities.

The next day brigadistas participated in the May 2 International Solidarity Conference, meeting with activists from around the world who are engaged in solidarity work for Cuba as well as other social justice struggles. Cuba’s President Miguel Díaz-Canel came to address the conference. Brigadistas were especially struck by the words of the Cuban President as he said “solidarity cannot be blockaded”, stressing the unwavering power that exists in the solidarity between Cuba and social justice causes around the world, including in the struggle against the U.S. blockade on Cuba.

For the second half of the trip, brigadistas travelled to the city of Santa Clara, where Che Guevara led the last battle of the Cuban revolution to victory, ensuring the triumph of the Cuban Revolution on January 1, 1959. The first stop in Santa Clara was to visit the museum and mausoleum of Che Guevara, where the remains of Che and other guerrilla fighters are interred. Here brigadistas paid tribute to Che Guevara, the revolutionary hero, leader and thinker for which the brigade is named.

In Santa Clara the Che Brigade was able to learn more about Cuba’s renowned education and healthcare systems. The brigade visited the Central University “Martha Abreu” where brigadistas had an exchange with students, and the “Arnaldo Milián Castro” hospital, where doctors took time to give a presentation and answer questions.

Brigadistas had come to Cuba aware of the immense pressure that the U.S. blockade puts on Cuba’s economy and ability to import goods. This over 60 year cruel blockade was made even more difficult with 243 new measures added by former U.S. President Trump, alongside the pandemic which made medical supplies even more out of reach and which hit Cuba’s tourism sector hard. This is why the Che Brigade brought as much medical aid as possible, including

17 suitcases full of medical supplies, with the help of the organization Not Just Tourists. These medical supplies were donated to the “Arnaldo Milián Castro” hospital, where they will be put to good use by Cuba’s skilled medical professionals.

An important part of the trip is learning how the Cuban revolution is truly grassroots with a base in popular institutions such as the Federation of Cuban Women and the University Students Federation. One of Cuba’s core popular institutions are the Committees for Defense of the Revolution (CDR) which organize communities on a neighbourhood level in a multitude of ways. This includes facilitating vaccination campaigns (even prior to Covid-19). Recently, CDRs have been organizing the popular consultations about Cuba’s Families Code, which is currently being reworked, advancing, and enshrining the rights of all Cubans, including the 2SLGBTQAI+ community.

A local CDR invited the Che Guevara Brigade for a block party one evening, and brigadistas were welcomed with a presentation of the local musicians and dancers of the community, as well as dancing and intense games of dominos! This experience of seeing a community united and organized to encourage and care for one another cemented the truth behind the CDR slogan “Somos el Barrio” (We are the Neighbourhood).

Another extraordinary example of the strength of community in Cuba was at El Mejunje in Santa Clara. This one-of-a-kind community space started out in 1985, founded by Ramon Silverio. Brigadistas had a chance to meet with Ramon Silverio and hear his vision for El Mejunje and how it had developed as a cultural center for the 2SLGBTQAI+ community but also as a truly inclusive space for all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. El Mejunje’s theater, bar, cafe, restaurant and art gallery features rock music nights, drag shows, trova concerts, seniors afternoons and even children’s activities. During the pandemic, they became a center to organize deliveries of food throughout Santa Clara. Through experiences like this brigadistas learned how the Cuban revolution is living and breathing, nurturing the desire of Cubans to develop an inclusive society that is



Top: Brigadistas volunteering at a farm in Camito, Cuba. Below: Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel and former President Raul Castro at International Worker's Day in Havana, May 1, 2022

always progressing.

On the final day of the trip, the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) held a ceremony to show their appreciation for the solidarity efforts of the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade. President of ICAP and national hero Fernando Gonzalez presented a commemorative medallion which marks the 60th anniversary of ICAP, and a certificate of recognition, which Che Brigade national coordinator Janine Solanki and a brigadista from Nova Scotia received on behalf of the Che Guevara Brigade. While this great honour recognizes the solidarity of the Che Guevara Brigade, the last two weeks of the trip proved to all that it is the brigadistas that have Cuba to thank, for the example Cuba provides for those wanting to build a better and more just world.

Brigadistas returned home with many inspired to join the Cuba solidarity movement, and some writing articles or reporting back on the trip to their local organizations. This report is just a short representation of this incredible trip, and if you are reading this, you too can join the 29th Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade in Spring of 2023! The Che Guevara Brigade is open to people of all ages and abilities, we have had brigadistas from 7 to 86 years old! While we are based in Canada, we welcome brigadistas to join us from other countries too. For more info and updates visit www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/brigade or email chevolbrigade@gmail.com or follow on social media @chevolbrigade on Twitter and Facebook.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki





LET'S BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND CUBA, VENEZUELA, & NICARAGUA! PEOPLE'S SUMMIT FOR DEMOCRACY & WORKER'S SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS ARE PAVING THE ROAD TO FIGHT BACK

By Alison Bodine

At a press conference in January 2022, U.S. President Biden referred to "everything south of the Mexican border" as the "front yard" of the United States. These outrageous comments were a serious warning sign that the United States government remains committed to its imperialist and colonial ambitions in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The 9th Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles in June 2022 was an example of the U.S.'s attempt to assert its hegemony over Latin America and the Caribbean. However, it was a complete failure. The Biden administration tried to isolate countries which resisted U.S. imperialism by excluding Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua from the summit. As a result, heads of state from Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Bolivia boycotted the summit, alongside leaders from several Caribbean countries. Many of those who did attend took to the podium to denounce the exclusion and to call for an end to the United States' cruel policies of sanctions and blockades.



International delegates gather for the Workers' Summit of the Americas in Tijuana, Mexico June 10-12, 2022

In response to Biden's farce of a summit, peace and social justice activists from across the Americas held alternative actions which built unity between people from across the U.S., Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean: The People's Summit for Democracy held in Los Angeles from June 8-10, and the Worker's Summit of the Americas in Tijuana, Mexico from June 10-12. Both the People's and Workers' Summits called for an end to U.S.-led sanctions and attacks against Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua and for the immediate release of Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, who is unlawfully detained by U.S. authorities.

1. People's Summit for Democracy – Los Angeles, U.S.

The People's Summit for Democracy was convened by Alba Movimientos, International Peoples' Assembly, CODEPINK, ANSWER Antiwar Coalition, American Federation of Teachers - 1521, and the Poor People's Campaign - California Chapter, among other union locals and social justice organizations. It was co-sponsored by over 250 organizations including: Vancouver's peace coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), and Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice.

The program from June 8-10 included three days of art, music, speakers, debates, workshops, panel discussions, and performances. The actions culminated in a dynamic march of 2,000 people through the streets of Los Angeles to the location of Biden's Summit.

2. Worker's Summit of the Americas – Tijuana, Mexico

The unified voices of people from

across the Americas against U.S. intervention, sanctions and blockades in Latin America and the Caribbean was also heard loud and clear South of the U.S.-Mexico border at the Worker's Summit of the Americas held in Tijuana, Mexico from June 10-12.

More than 30 co-sponsoring organizations came together for this successful action, including the Anti-Imperialist Worker's Platform (PCOA), the Alliance for Global Justice, CODEPINK, Unión del Barrio, the International Action Center, the Freedom Road Socialist Organization, and civil society organizations and unions from Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Mexico. Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice was the only sponsoring organization from Canada.

FireThisTime Movement for Social Justice had two delegates at the Worker's



PCOA
Plataforma de la Clase Obrera Antimperialista



Miguel Angel Alvarez, International Relations of the Cuban Central Trade Union (CTC) with Fire This Time delegates Alison Bodine and Mike Larson at Workers' Summit of the Americas

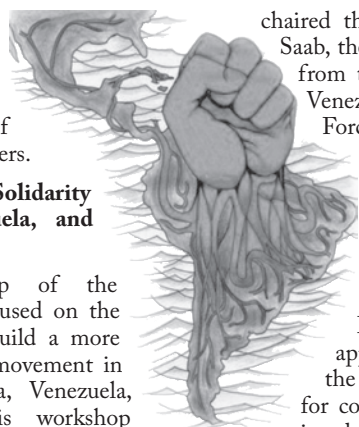
Summit, Alison Bodine and Michael Larson. They joined over 140 participants in Tijuana, alongside over 100 more people participating in the program online for two full days of presentations and workshops. The third day was a march and rally which brought the demand of "U.S. Hands Off Latin America and the Caribbean!" and "Free Alex Saab!" right to the criminal U.S./Mexico border wall.

Speakers from Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua with a strong message of unity against escalating U.S. aggression in the region were a highlight of the Worker's Summit. They included: Rosario Rodríguez Remos and Miguel Ángel González, Workers' Central Union of Cuba (CTC); Nelson Herrera, Secretary of the Vice-Presidency for the Working Class of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV); Braulio Álvarez, Farmers Leader and Deputy to the National Assembly

of Venezuela; and Fausto Torres Arauz, a central leader in the Rural Workers Association (ATC) of Nicaragua; among others.

Building Active Solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua

The first workshop of the Worker's Summit focused on the urgent necessity to build a more united and stronger movement in solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. This workshop also featured a special section on the campaign to Free Alex Saab, a Venezuelan diplomat being unjustly held in U.S. jails for his work procuring food, medicine, and fuel for people in Venezuela to alleviate the impact of the cruel and unilateral U.S. sanctions. William Camacaro, a prominent social justice organizer and Venezuelan living in the U.S.,



chaired the panel, which included Camilla Saab, the wife of Alex Saab, Roigar Lopez from the Free Alex Saab Movement in Venezuela, Roger Harris of the Task Force on the Americas in the U.S., Brenda Lopez from US Hands Off Cuba, Los Angeles, and Alison Bodine, the Coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign.

During the workshop, Alison appealed to participants not to leave the Worker's Summit without a plan for coordinating and unifying our work in defense of Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua over the next year.

As Alison urged, "Campaigns in solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua are indeed part of the working class struggle locally and internationally. These campaigns give a perspective to the working class locally and internationally that they are not alone,

and by joining working class struggles, we are stronger and more effective. When we leave this Worker's Summit, let's push together for a united front to carry out our campaign of international solidarity – a united front that I call a united front in defense of the Troika of Resistance Against Imperialism in Latin America: Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua."

The failure of the Biden Administration's Summit of the Americas demonstrates a weakening U.S. control of Latin America and the Caribbean. However, at the same time, the U.S. government is also escalating their attacks on the people of Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. As people living in Canada and the U.S., it is our responsibility to stand with these countries in defense of their sovereignty and self-determination.

More about the People's Summit and the Worker's Summit of America's can be found on their websites:

<https://peoplessummit2022.org/>
<https://workerssummit.com/>

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

Mumia Abu-Jamal Speaks

Mumia Abu-Jamal is one of the longest standing political prisoners in the United States. On December 9, 1981, Mumia was shot and beaten by police, then arrested and imprisoned in Philadelphia on the accusation of killing a police officer. Months later, he was unjustly charged for the murder based on manufactured and false evidence and given the death penalty. Mumia Abu-Jamal has spent the last 40 years in a U.S. prison, almost 30 of them in solitary confinement on death row.

In the past two years, new evidence has emerged showing the prosecution paid the two main witnesses and engaged in other misconducts, but the courts have refused to allow the evidence.

From prison, Mumia has continued his work as a revolutionary journalist, standing with poor, working, and oppressed people around the world in the fight against imperialist wars, racism, and oppression. Below is his recorded greeting to the Workers' Summit of the Americas.

For more information on Mumia's case and to get involved in the struggle for his freedom, please visit: www.BringMumiaHome.com



Message from Political Prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to the Workers' Summit of the Americas



Greetings from Mumia Abu-Jamal to the Workers' Summit of the Americas in Tijuana, Mexico(June 10-12, 2022)

My brothers, sisters and comrades in Tijuana, I welcome you, delegates of the excluded. People from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and beyond.

Many of you come from poor nations, countries with relatively low GDP, like Cuba, for example, which has a GDP roughly equal to Ghana. As I write from the richest nation on earth, I have to add that I also write from a nation that cannot protect its own children. See the ugly massacre in Texas, where 19 babies were slain in an elementary school, while cops filled the halls.

Here, tens of thousands of former students can't afford to pay their loans to schools and colleges. Again, look at Cuba, where people can go from kindergarten to medical school for free. And not just Cubans. Students can go to medical school in Cuba, even if they aren't from Cuba. And remember, Cuba isn't a rich country. It does what it does because it dedicates its resources (medicine) to public service.

What does it matter if America with all its riches, couldn't prevent the deaths of 1 million people because of COVID-19? In fact, you can go to any ghetto in America and see hunger and poverty. People who live in food deserts, people who are homeless. You'll also find the greatest level of imprisonment in the world.

So why should poor nations listen to rich nations? What do they have to teach us? Racism, class strife, violent cops, corrupt politicians, greedy businessmen, and militarism. The poor and excluded of the world have only each other. If we work in solidarity, we surely can do better. Thank you, muchas gracias.

With love, not fear, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
www.BringMumiaHome.com



We, representatives of Trade Union, Peasant, Political and Social organizations, gathered in Tijuana – Mexico, June 10-12, 2022, on the occasion of the realization of the Summit of the Americas of the Working Men and Women Workers, in immediate response to the exclusion of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua imposed by the Government of the United States.

There is a systemic and structural crisis of capitalism in its imperialist phase. It is in itself a civilizational crisis. The capitalist economic model and its political arm neoliberalism, as well as its modern cultural foundation, have put the planet's life in crisis. If not eliminated, imperialism's neocolonialism leads us to the planetary collective

suicide, which is more lacerating in the sectors less favored by the current world system. Our position is a bet for life, and the empire offers us death: it is either life or death!

We are witnessing a process of recolonization over the people. This is expressed in the excessive growth of racism, poverty, unemployment, job insecurity, environmental deterioration of territories, criminalization of migration, and gender and cultural violence. For this reason, we call upon the programmatic unity of the American continent's workers, peasants, and progressive and popular forces to reflect, debate, and take concrete action to combat the labor and social violence applied to our peoples by the U.S. and Canadian governments.

We consider that the working class of the 21st century will only be able to play an independent and central role if -in addition to fighting for the most heartfelt demands of the labor movement- it assumes the struggle against patriarchy together with the feminist movement, the struggle of the native peoples against climate change and the defense of the biosphere together with the youth and the broad spectrum of professionals and scientists.

We must build articulations and alliances in which we structure our common forces for a unique and global struggle. Globalize the struggles. Build new organic forms of the working class from the political-cultural to the socio-productive to overcome capitalism and build socialism.

A robust internationalism is needed to pay adequate and immediate attention to the dangers of extinction: extinction by nuclear war, climate catastrophe, and social collapse. In this regard, we agree:

1. To promote active solidarity with the peoples and sovereign nations (Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela) and the other peoples of the world "sanctioned" and attacked by economic blockades and unilateral coercive measures imposed by the U.S. and its allies.
2. To hold an annual meeting in Tijuana, Mexico, with the workers and social movements of the Americas

to express solidarity with the peoples of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua and their revolutions to repudiate unilateral coercive measures against sovereign governments.

3. **To constitute a Committee for the organization of the Meetings to be held annually in the North and South of Mexico, integrated by: Unión del Barrio of the USA, Movimiento Social Por la Tierra de México (MST), Sindicato Mexicano Electricista (SME), Alianza por la Justicia Global de the USA, Central Bolivariana Socialista de Trabajadores de Venezuela, Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo de Nicaragua (ATC), Movimiento Magisterial Popular de Veracruz Mexico, Fire This Time of Canada, Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) of the USA, International Action Center (IAC) of the USA, Task Force on the Americas of the USA and the Plataforma de la Clase Obrera Ant-imperialista (PCOA).**

4. Demand the immediate release of Alex Saab. He is a Venezuelan diplomat kidnapped by the U.S. and illegally detained in its territory since October 16, 2021. Saab's arrest is an action that attacks diplomatic immunity, a right guaranteed by international law to any diplomatic official in the exercise of his duties.

5. Reaffirm the resolutions agreed upon at the Meeting of the Peoples of the Americas, held June 7-8, 2022, in Chiapas, Mexico.

6. To ratify our unwavering solidarity

with the Palestinian and Saharawi peoples.

7. Demand that the U.S. Congress immediately cut off military aid funds to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Haiti.

8. Promote a campaign to hold an international day of action in solidarity with Cuba to be held when the U.N. General Assembly meets to condemn the blockade against the Caribbean island.

9. Expand the "Bridges of Love" program to other countries

and international coordinate days on the last Sunday of each month in the form of caravans or other activities.

10. Demand the immediate release of comrades Mumia Abu Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Iman Jamil Abdullah al-Amin and Julian Assange.

11. Demand the immediate release of the social fighter Simón Trinidad from Colombia, who is deprived of liberty in prison in the USA.

12. To promote the regional integration of the anti-imperialist working class of Our America and the participation in the strengthening of ALBA TCP, CELAC, and UNASUR. In this sense, the Bolivarian Socialist Workers Central of Venezuela will call a meeting for the 3rd quarter of 2022.

13. To promote a campaign against the U.S., Nato, and Colombia's policies of interference and expansionism and to ratify the declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace promoted by CELAC.

14. We reaffirm the Mexican Electricians Union workers' demands for their reinstatement in the Federal Electricity Commission.

15. We stand in solidarity with the Puerto Rican people and their dignified struggle for independence and sovereignty.

ONLY THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE WILL SAVE HUMANITY, NATURE, AND THE PLANET!!!!



Declaración Final de la Cumbre de las Américas de los Trabajadores y Trabajadoras

* En Español *

Nosotros, representantes de organizaciones Sindicales, Campesinas, Políticas y Sociales, reunidos en Tijuana – México, del 10 al 12 de junio 2022, con motivo a la realización de La Cumbre de las Américas de los Trabajadores y Trabajadoras, en respuesta inmediata a la exclusión de Venezuela, Cuba y Nicaragua impuesta por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Existe una crisis sistémica y estructural del capitalismo en su fase imperialista. Es en sí misma una crisis civilizatoria. El modelo económico capitalista y su brazo político el neoliberalismo, así como su fundamento cultural moderno, han puesto a la vida del planeta en crisis. La necropolítica del imperialismo de no ser eliminada nos conduce al suicidio colectivo planetario, que es más lacerante en los sectores menos favorecidos por el actual sistema-mundo. Nuestra posición es una apuesta por la vida y el imperio nos ofrece muerte ¡O es vida o es muerte!

Presenciamos un proceso de recolonización sobre los pueblos, expresados en el crecimiento desmesurado del racismo, la pobreza, el desempleo y precariedad del trabajo, el deterioro ambiental de los territorios, la criminalización de la migración, la violencia de género y cultural. Por esta razón, nos llamamos a la unidad programática de las fuerzas obreras, campesinas, progresistas y populares del continente americano a la reflexión, el debate y la acción concreta para combatir la violencia laboral y social aplicada a nuestros pueblos por el Gobierno de EEUU y Canadá.

Consideramos que la clase obrera del siglo XXI sólo podrá jugar un papel independiente y central si además de luchar por las reivindicaciones más sentidas del movimiento obrero, asume el combate contra el patriarcado junto al movimiento feminista, la lucha de los pueblos originarios, contra el cambio climático y la defensa de la biosfera, en conjunto con la juventud y el amplio espectro de profesionales y científicos.

Debemos construir articulaciones y alianzas en la que estructuramos nuestras fuerzas comunes para una lucha única y global. Mundializar las luchas. Construir nuevas formas orgánicas de la clase obrera desde lo

político-cultural hasta lo socioproductivo, para superar el capitalismo y construir el socialismo.

Se necesita un internacionalismo robusto para prestar una atención adecuada e inmediata a los peligros de la extinción: extinción por la guerra nuclear, por la catástrofe climática y por el colapso social. En este sentido, acordamos:

1. Impulsar la solidaridad activa con los pueblos y naciones soberanas (Cuba, Nicaragua y Venezuela) y los demás pueblos del mundo “sancionados” y agredidos por bloqueos económicos y medidas coercitivas unilaterales impuestos por los EEUU y sus aliados.

2. Realizar un encuentro anual en Tijuana, México con los movimientos obreros y sociales de América con el objeto de manifestar la solidaridad con los pueblos de Venezuela, Cuba y Nicaragua y sus Revoluciones. Repudiar las medidas coercitivas unilaterales contra los gobiernos soberanos.

3. **Constituir un Comité para la organización de los Encuentros a realizarse anualmente en el Norte y Sur de México, integrado por: Unión del Barrio de EEUU, Movimiento Social Por la Tierra de México (MST), Sindicato Mexicano Electricista (SME), Alianza por la Justicia Global de EEUU, Central Bolivariana Socialista de Trabajadores de Venezuela, Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo de Nicaragua (ATC), Movimiento Magisterial Popular de Veracruz México, Fire This Time de Canada, Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) de EEUU, International Action Center (IAC) de EEUU, Task Force on the Americas de EEUU, y la Plataforma de la Clase Obrera Antimperialista (PCOA).**

4. Exigir la liberación inmediata de Alex Saab, diplomático venezolano, quien fue secuestrado por los EE.UU. y se encuentra ilegalmente detenido en su territorio desde el 16 de octubre de 2021, acción que arremete contra la inmunidad diplomática, un derecho garantizado por las leyes internacionales a todo funcionario diplomático en el ejercicio de sus funciones.

5. Reafirmar los resolutivos acordados en el Encuentro de los Pueblos de las Américas, llevado a cabo entre el 7 y 8 de

junio de 2022 en Chiapas, México.

6. Ratificar nuestra invariable solidaridad con los pueblos palestinos y saharauis.

7. Demandar al Congreso de los EEUU, el corte inmediato de los fondos de ayuda militar a El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia y Haití.

8. Promover una campaña para celebrar un día Internacional de acción de apoyo en solidaridad con Cuba que se debe llevar a cabo cuando la asamblea general de la ONU, se reúne a condenar el bloqueo a la Isla Caribeña.

9. Expandir el programa “Puentes de Amor” a otros países y coordinación de jornadas internacionales el último domingo de cada mes en forma de caravanas u otras actividades gracias.

10. Exigir la liberación inmediata de los compañeros Mumia Abu Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Iman Jamil Abdullah al-Amin y Julian Assange.

11. Demandar la libertad inmediata del luchador Social Simón Trinidad de Colombia, quien se encuentra privado de libertad en cárcel en los EEUU.

12. Impulsar la integración regional de la clase obrera antimperialista de Nuestramérica y la participación en el fortalecimiento del ALBA TCP, la CELAC y UNASUR. En este sentido, la Central Bolivariana Socialista de Trabajadores de Venezuela convocará una reunión para el 3 trimestre del año 2022.

13. Impulsar una campaña contra las políticas de injerencia y expansionismo por parte de los EEUU, la OTAN y su socio global Colombia y ratificar la declaración de América Latina y el Caribe como zona de paz impulsada por la CELAC.

14. Reafirmamos las demandas de los trabajadores y trabajadoras del Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas por su reinserción laboral en la Comisión Federal de Electricidad.

15. Nos levantamos en solidaridad con el pueblo de Puerto Rico y su digna y justa lucha por su independencia y soberanía.

¡SOLO LA LUCHA DE LAS TRABAJADORAS Y TRABAJADORES SALVARÁN A LA HUMANIDAD, LA NATURALEZA Y EL PLANETA!

LIFT THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA! JOIN THE CAR CARAVAN FOR CUBA!



By Andrew Barry

For over 60 years, the U.S. government has imposed a complete financial and economic blockade on the people of Cuba. And for over 60 years, the people of Cuba have resisted this economic warfare from the United States. Through revolutionary methods and various creative and dynamic responses, they have defended their country's right to self-determination and built their socialist project in Cuba.

In 1959, the Cuban people toppled the hated U.S. puppet dictator Fulgencio Batista. The U.S. government has never forgiven Cuba for this and has tried relentlessly to return Cuba to being a pawn controlled by U.S. business interests. Using its economic might, the U.S. has attempted to isolate Cuba and impose a cruel, unjust, and illegal blockade to starve the Cuban people to give up on their revolution and sovereignty.

Throughout these six decades of hostility from the United States towards Cuba, international solidarity activists have defended Cuba and called for an immediate end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba. When the Covid-19 pandemic swept across the globe in early 2020, Cuba faced significant challenges and shortages as a result of this brutal blockade.

The pandemic added another blow to the Cuban people, already suffering from the U.S. blockade for over six decades. Instead of the two countries coming together during the worldwide pandemic, as Cuba successfully developed five highly effective vaccines, the U.S. government, under President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump, increased the intensity and cruelty of the blockade. Medical supplies used to combat the coronavirus, like syringes and masks, were extremely

difficult to access in Cuba as the U.S. tightened the screws on the economic details of the blockade by adding numerous new sanction regimes.

Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love)

Cuban-American activist Carlos Lazo, who heads the Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love) organization in Miami, came up with a new form of protest in the time of pandemic: a car caravan for Cuba against the U.S. blockade! Vehicles lined up behind one another, covered with Cuban flags and banners condemning the blockade, are peacefully driven through the streets of Miami.

Within a few months, this protest caught on around the world, and now, every last Sunday of the month, activists from across Cuba, the U.S., Canada, and the world form car caravans to defend Cuba against the U.S. blockade!

In Vancouver, Canada, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade have organized monthly car caravans to coincide with these international days of action against the blockade. These actions have been supported by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), Yemeni Community Association of Canada, Vancouver Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), Supporters of the Communist League in Vancouver, Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice – Vancouver, and Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO).

Leading up to the May 29, 2022 car caravan, Cuba solidarity activists in Miami were threatened by right-wing anti-Cuban forces. These anti-Cubans posted on social media calling for their supporters to attack, intimidate and stop the Caravan from proceeding. Their goal was to sabotage the peaceful car caravan and destroy the democratic rights of the caravan supporters.

Puentes de Amor issued a call out to solidarity activists from across the United States and Canada to come to join the Miami car caravan on May 29 to counter these right-wing threats of violence. Two organizers from Vancouver, Tamara Hansen and Alison Bodine, joined the call out and headed to participate, support

and defend the Miami car caravan for Cuba against the U.S. blockade!

Tamara and Alison joined other activists from across the U.S. to support a large Miami car caravan. The right-wing anti-Cuban forces showed up as well to intimidate and threaten the peaceful caravanistas. Miami has traditionally been a hotbed of right-wing anti-Cuban activity, but this attempt to sabotage the caravan failed miserably as many Cuban-Americans joined the car caravan. The strength of Cuba solidarity activists completed a dynamic and large car caravan against the blockade!

Vancouver Car Caravan, June 26, 2022



The united effort of Cuba solidarity activists in Miami was a huge defeat for the U.S.-backed right-wing forces in Miami. It showed the significance of what working people fighting for human rights and against oppression can accomplish when we stand together in a united front.

As the world continues to battle the Covid-19 pandemic, the U.S. government has cruelly and unjustifiably intensified its blockade on the people of Cuba. Cubans have endured and stood up to six decades of this inhuman policy of hate and blockade from the U.S. We encourage peace-loving people from around the world to join the monthly car caravan for Cuba against the U.S. blockade! Cuba has a right to exist without a blockade attempting to strangle it!

**LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!
LET CUBA LIVE!
CUBA SI, BLOQUEO NO!**

*Follow Andrew Barry on Twitter:
@andrewbarry*



Vancouver Car Caravan, May 29, 2022

Miami Stands Strong Against the U.S. Blockade on Cuba!

By *Tamara Hansen & Alison Bodine*

On May 29, 2022, in the face of escalated threats and a counter-protest called by the right-wing pro-blockade Youtube personality Otaola, over 130 people and 75 vehicles joined together to demand an end to the criminal U.S. blockade on Cuba. Miami caravan organizers and participants, as well as Carlos Lazo, the founder of Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love), and Cuba solidarity activists from Vancouver, Canada; Minneapolis, MN; New York City, NY; Las Vegas, NV; Tampa and Jacksonville, FL., and Tennessee, outnumbered the pro-blockade mob.

Tamara Hansen, Executive Member of the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) and Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) and Alison Bodine, Executive Member of Friends of Cuba Against the US Blockade – Vancouver (FCAB) and member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper travelled to Miami in response to the call for support as the Miami Caravan prepared to confront right-wing hostility. It was a great honour to stand with folks in Miami against the criminal blockade on Cuba in such a dynamic and celebratory action.

Following the Caravan through the streets of Miami, there was a rally at the Miami Airport. In front of the international terminal, speakers from Cuba, the United States, and Tamara Hansen from Canada demanded an end to the cruel U.S. blockade on Cuba and that President Biden normalize U.S.-Cuba relations.

The Miami Caravan was not an isolated action, in response to threats by the right-wing pro-blockade forces, more than 60 letters in support of the caravan had been sent to the mayors of both Miami and Miami-Dade County. These letters demanded that the democratic right to protest in Miami be respected and enforced and that the Miami Caravan be allowed to have its message heard loud and clear!

Furthermore, Caravans and rallies across the U.S. and Canada have been taking place on the last Sunday of every month in response to the call by Carlos Lazo and Puentes de Amor. In May 2022 rallies and Caravans took place in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal in Canada.

The success of the 23rd monthly Miami Caravan and the victory over the pro-blockade right-wing forces sets up the Miami Caravan and all other Puentes de Amor inspired actions for continued success. The May 29 Miami Caravan and coordinated actions in the U.S., Canada and around the world are an example of the unity that is needed to build a movement that can effectively work to put an end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba! Come out in the streets for the next Caravan on Sunday, June 26, 2022!

President Biden: Stop Sanctioning Cuban Families!
End the US Blockade on Cuba Now!

Follow Tamara on Twitter:
@THans01

Follow Alison on Twitter:
@Alisoncolette



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photos & videos!



Group photo from rally against the blockade on Cuba at the Miami international airport following the car caravan



Miami car caravan against the blockade on Cuba



Tamara Hansen speaking during the rally against the blockade on Cuba at the Miami international airport



Tamara Hansen, Carlos Lazo founder of Puentes de Amor & Alison Bodine

Continued from page 5

of Canada against the sale of weapons. A coalition of organizations, including us in Vancouver with Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), and other groups from across Canada came together under an umbrella that Canada stop arming Saudi, and we reached out to different Members of Parliament. And so the MP Matthew Green, an NDP Member of Parliament, sponsored this petition.

I would invite folks listening here today and wondering, what can I do? What can I do to add pressure on my Member of Parliament, whether I live in Victoria, whether I live in Vancouver, Manitoba or anywhere around Canada? As the Canada Stop Arming Saudi Coalition, there are little things that we invite people to do. I will just explain to people quickly that we have, as I mentioned, this petition sponsored by MP Matthew Green. It is open for signatures. People are encouraged to sign it and share it. And we also we have created a tool that helps you to send an email directly to your Member of Parliament where you are expressing your opposition to the war, but specifically, your opposition to Canada continuing to sell arms to Saudi Arabia.

So if folks are interested in signing the petition or sending the letter to a Member of Parliament, they can visit the Mobilization Against War & Occupation website www.mawovancouver.org. You can find these tools, and I encourage people to join us in this because we have to put pressure on the government of Canada. This issue is silent. This war has been going on for over seven years, and Members of Parliament rarely speak about it. So by joining with folks across Canada, we can put pressure on the government of Canada, saying this is enough, this war is enough, and the complicity of the government of Canada is enough.

Chris Cook: Well, and again, that is Trudeau Stop Arming Saudi Arabia. Canada Stop Arming Saudi. Go to the website and that is www.mawovancouver.org. So you can sign on to the petition Azza mentions there. Azza well about this ongoing disaster in Yemen, it's difficult to get consistent information about it, even



Rescue members remove rubble covering victims after Saudi-led airstrikes in Saada, Yemen, January 22, 2022.

about something as simple as the amount of casualties being suffered. Even when you go to organizations like Human Rights Watch, the numbers vary wildly. Can you give us a source of information on what's happening in Yemen that you trust?

Azza Rojbi: Yeah, that's a very good point, Chris, because that really shows the general media silence and the lack of interest in the issue of Yemen. As you said, there is very little information when anybody tries to find out what's happening in Yemen. As you mentioned, there are not a lot of clear numbers or clear statistics. And part of that is that we must remember that the Saudi-led coalition has also been imposing a blockade on Yemen. This is an air, land and sea blockade, which also means that it's really hard for a lot of different aid organizations and humanitarian organizations actually to send their staff or to be able to work inside of Yemen. Collecting this data or collecting this different information and seeing what's happening on the ground in Yemen is hard. And a lot of the data that comes from what's happening in Yemen a lot of the time, as you mentioned, can be conflicting and not very straightforward. But the United Nations actually has been releasing data a little bit too late generally. For example, their most recent data is that almost 400,000 people were killed during this war on Yemen. If we think about this, nearly 400,000 people are tremendous loss of life in this war that has been going on for too long.

For the complete interview visit
www.firethistime.net
Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14



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MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

Indigenous struggle against colonialism



Lee Maracle

(July 2, 1950 - November 11, 2021)

*Sto:lo Author, Poet, Instructor
[University of Toronto - INS] and
Traditional Teacher First Nations
House.*

Your previous governments secured this country by hook and by crook. These "newfound" lands cost Indigenous people their lives. Headhunting and epidemics were the forces most commonly used. Now by policing that is so chronic and relentless it feels like a solid wall of semi-military occupation: Canada controls us instead of protecting us. Not a single Canadian has ever asked us how this happened without our consent. Couple this with the majority population's accepted belief that this is all good and proper, and you have summed up Canadian colonial strategy.

We cannot say no to the development and rape of the land and our persons. We have been infantilized and animalized and finally objectified and commodified. Canadian's are horrified at some of the answers to their questions, "No," they blurt out and then they gasp. That is just annoying. Sometimes they say, "I don't understand." "Actually," I answer, "you do. This is English, this is your language." They admit that they do understand, but they are shocked. It is the shock of the innocent.

*My Conversations With Canadians
(1997) From Conversation 1:
Meeting the Public*

Weapons of War, Made in Canada

By Janine Solanki

In today's world defined by a new era of war and occupation, the government of Canada is not just beating the drums of war, but also manufacturing war and along with it, death and devastation. On June 1-2, 2022, the arms industry showed off the latest technology of how to kill, with the CANSEC arms show in Ottawa. These weapons of war are used against the people of Yemen, Syria, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, and many others. The UN Human Rights Council has twice named Canada as one of the states fuelling the war in Yemen by continuing arms sales to Saudi Arabia, which exceeded \$8 billion since Saudi Arabia's military intervention in Yemen began in 2015. The CANSEC arms show is a sign that despite the UN condemnations of Canada's arms trade, the government of Canada is continuing its weapons industry full force.

Anyone entering the CANSEC arms show had to pass protesters with signs and banners, chanting for Canada to stop its bloody war machine. In Vancouver on June 2, activists also gathered to support the protests against CANSEC and to demand an end to Canada's deadly arms trade. The Vancouver action was organized by members of the Canada Peace & Justice Network in Greater Vancouver which included the Just Peace

Committee, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, Vancouver Peace Council, World Beyond War, Global Peace Alliance-Surrey Society, and ILPS-Vancouver. The protest outside Canada Place in Downtown Vancouver attracted the attention of passers-by, who stopped to



Al-Nabka Rally for Palestine, Vancouver, Canada. May 15, 2022.

talk to protesters and to take literature and antiwar buttons from the MAWO information table.

The government of Canada's support for the war, both politically and through the arms trade, is a long story in the ongoing Zionist Israeli occupation of Palestine. Canada is also quietly guilty of Israeli atrocities against Palestinians, with Israel wielding weapons made in Canada. The total value of arms and components sent from Canada to Israel in 2021 exceeded \$26 million Canadian, a 33% increase from the year before.



MAWO Participates in antiwar action in Downtown Vancouver, Canada demanding Stop the Arms Trade. June, 2, 2022.

Self-determination for Palestine! Struggle and resistance to Israeli occupation and demands for self-determination of Palestine continue in a mass scale with the support of millions of Palestinians in occupied Palestine since 1948, and with the support of activists around the world. In Vancouver on May 15, 2022, peace and justice-loving people gathered together for a protest organized by the Palestinian Youth Movement – Vancouver to mark Nakba day, or “The Catastrophe”. This day marks the massacre and forced expulsion of Palestinians from their lands, following the declaration of the state of Israel, and the ongoing fight for Palestinian self-determination. Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) supported and joined the rally at the Vancouver Art Gallery in downtown Vancouver and marched alongside Palestine supporters and activists to the U.S. Consulate. While this is a historic day of resistance, recent events show the escalation of Israeli attacks against the Palestinian people and the need to keep organizing in support of Palestine. This action took place just a few days after the murder of Palestinian reporter Shireen Abu Akleh by an Israeli sniper, with a bullet later found to be made in the US. While her killing has garnered worldwide media attention, it is not an isolated case. The day she was killed Abu Akleh was covering an Israeli military raid on Palestinians in the Jenin refugee camp, one day in many of covering the ongoing Israeli atrocities and injustices committed against the Palestinian people.



MAWO organizers at Al-Nabka Rally for Palestine, Vancouver, May 15, 2022.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

DEFEND THE PEOPLE'S FORUM AGAINST RIGHT-WING ATTACKS IN NEW YORK CITY!

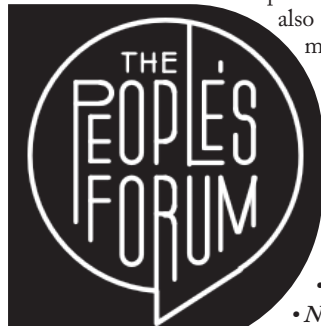
Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice in Canada strongly condemns the June 3 right-wing attack on The People's Forum in New York City. On Friday June 3, a right-wing mob entered The People's Forum to harass and intimidate staff and guests who were gathered in this important organizing hub for working class and oppressed people. More than 12 New York City police officers (NYPD) allowed the abuse, harassment, vandalism, and intimidation to continue for more than an hour.



**New York City Police enter the People's Forum
June 3, 2022**

This ultra right-wing attack, enabled by the NYPD, must be condemned strongly by working class fighters and peace-loving people everywhere. This is an attack not just on The People's Forum but on our democratic rights, freedom of speech and our right to organize. If this attack and the collusion of the NYPD is not strongly condemned, it will set a very dangerous precedent for further attack on The People's Forum and other working class spaces and organizations in the U.S. and beyond. We must recognize this attack on The People's Forum is an attack on all working class and oppressed people.

In the short time since they opened in 2018, The People's Forum has been playing a central role in the social justice movement in New York City and the United States. They have continued to bring together working class fighters, revolutionaries, and their allies, uniting many organizations and individuals against war, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and all forms of discrimination and oppression. They have also consistently and generously provided their space for those mobilizing against imperialism and capitalism.



We must unite to defend the right of The People's Forum to exist and continue their great and exemplary work towards building a better world. We encourage all social justice organizations, activists, and peace-loving people to come out in vigorous defense of The People's Forum and the rights of all working class and oppressed people to organize and to be heard.

- *No More Right-Wing Attacks on The People's Forum!*
- *NYPD Hands Off The People's Forum!*
- *Long Live International Solidarity!*
- *¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre! ¡Venceremos!*

**Fire This Time
Movement for Social Justice, Canada
June 4, 2022**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
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Fire This Time Remembers Our Compañeros

By Tamara Hansen

Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

May 21, 1937-May 1, 2022

On May 1, 2022, International Workers' Day was marked by the passing of a distinguished Cuban revolutionary leader, Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada.

From his university days, Alarcón was linked to the revolutionary struggle and Comandante Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement. In 1959, following the triumph of the Cuban revolution, he was elected president of the University Student Federation (FEU).

Alarcón served as Cuba's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) for nearly 30 years, then acted as Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 1993-2013 Alarcón was President of Cuba's National Assembly of People's Power (Cuban Parliament).

Alarcón was a proud and fiery Cuban revolutionary. He spent much of his lengthy career defending the Cuban revolution in hostile environments and educating folks in the Americas about the realities of Cuba, which were often lied about and mischaracterized in the international mainstream and bourgeois press. Alarcón was a steadfast voice internationally demanding freedom for all 5 of our Cuban heroes held for over 16 years in U.S. jails.

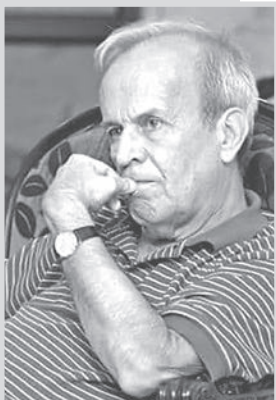
On Facebook, Cuba's Deputy Foreign Minister, Josefina Vidal, wrote, "To the Master of the diplomats of our generation, we will always keep deep respect, admiration and immense affection. Thank you for the privilege and honor of having been his disciples. Our heartfelt condolences to Margarita and Ricardito."

Fire This Time sends our most heartfelt condolences to Ricardo Alarcón's family, the people of Cuba, and all his friends across Canada and around the world.

¡Ricardo Alarcón Presente!



Ricardo Alarcón with Comandante Fidel Castro in the early years of the Cuban revolution



Manuel Eugenio Yepe Menéndez

November 15, 1936 -

May 16, 2022

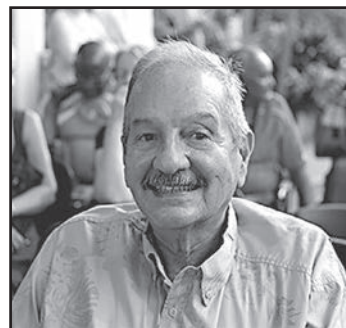
On May 16, 2022, Manuel Yepe, an important Cuban revolutionary leader, passed away in Havana. Manuel Yepe travelled to Canada on many occasions and was a close friend and compañero.

Yepe was a member of the Youth Brigades of the 26th of July Movement leading up to the Cuban revolution. After the triumph of the Cuban revolution, Yepe worked for decades in Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a Cuban diplomat internationally, and as the general director of Prensa Latina News Agency. Most recently, he was a member of the Secretariat of the Cuban Peace Movement and continued working as a writer and researcher during his retirement years.

I first met Manuel Yepe at an event hosted by the B.C. Teachers' Federation in July 2005, when he visited Vancouver in preparation for the 2006 World Peace Forum. Our first meeting was less than a week before I travelled to Cuba for the first time with the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade in August 2005. At our first meeting, Yepe took the time to discuss politics and was very encouraging of my work as a young Cuba solidarity activist and organizer.

After that first meeting, I had the immense privilege to visit with Yepe and his wonderful wife Marta on almost every trip I made to Havana. We would sit in his backyard under the mango tree discussing politics for hours. He was a great host, always taking time out of his day to share stories and was always interested in meeting with young people who were visiting Cuba for the first time.

Manuel Yepe travelled to Vancouver three



times for the Vancouver International Che Guevara Conference in 2010, 2011, and 2012. It was an honour to host him for each visit. As someone who worked alongside Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, and many other legendary Cuban revolutionaries, he would always include some personal anecdotes within his more extensive discussions of politics.

Fire This Time newspaper has printed dozens of Yepe's articles over the years. He wrote on a wide variety of topics, including articles titled, "Twisted Justice in Miami: The Case of Cuban 5 and Others...", "Lifting the U.S. Blockade Will Benefit Both Peoples", and most recently, "The Capitalist Crisis is Worse than Covid-19". His writing style was always educational and dynamic, offering Cuba's revolutionary internationalist perspective on countless issues concerning humanity.

Fire This Time sends our most heartfelt condolences to Manuel Yepe's family, the people of Cuba, and all his friends across Canada and around the world.

¡Manuel Yepe Presente!



Tamara Hansen, Marta Nuñez, Manuel Yepe & Alison Bodine in Havana, 2010.

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