

H1N1

and the Government of Canada's Inaction to Help Native People: Still Racist After All These Years!

By Aaron Mercredi

Body Bags Instead of Prevention

In September, the Wasagamack First Nation and God's River First Nation in Manitoba were shocked to find that the H1N1 preparation kits that Health Canada had sent to them contained about 30 body bags with hand sanitizer and face masks. Health Canada's investigation into the matter tried to downplay the shipment on miscommunication and claimed it was only isolated to one community, denying the physical evidence from the other. Besides sending a morbid message through the shipment of body bags to Native people looking for prevention, Health Canada had stalled the shipping of hand sanitizers beforehand to remote reserves on the grounds that they contained alcohol and might be ingested by Natives desperate for a drink.

Identified as one of the 'at risk' groups for catching the H1N1 influenza, many Native communities had put pressure on Ottawa to provide them with a means of combating what could end up being a pandemic among reservations and Native people across the country. This was the government response.

Neglect and Mistrust

There is good reason for Native people in Canada to be suspicious of the government's response to this recent influenza. Beyond the body bags is plain old history. The amount of diseases and epidemics that decimated the Indigenous population of what is now Canada since Europeans first arrived amounts to a holocaust. This is aside from the direct wars that were waged against them. The colonial powers, and eventually the government of Canada don't have a positive mark on their record throughout this whole period.

Colonization introduced smallpox, cholera, tuberculosis, measles and the bubonic plague to Native people and because they never had any previous exposure to them they had no immunity to fight against the foreign diseases. In many cases, entire villages were wiped out.

In 1918, the Spanish flu reduced Native people in Canada to around 100,000 people; the lowest population in history. It wiped through Okak, Labrador, where 204 out of the 263 community members died within a year of contracting it. It decimated the community of Hebron, Newfoundland where 86 out of 100 people died. Native people were 9 times more likely than non-Natives to contract the flu, and the complete lack of healthcare facilities available to them in their com-



Wasagamack Chief Jerry Knott shows reporters body bags sent to his community for H1N1 "assistance"



Protest in Kashechewan Native Reservation in Canada

munities left them feeling betrayed by the same government that was trying to impose another culture and set of values on them through the residential schools. Because tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases were contracted in these schools and most Na-

tive people lived in crowded conditions, they were the best spreading ground for the flu. Often, Native communities were abandoned to bury their own dead relatives, if they had the strength to do it.

There is substance to the feeling of abandonment. The federal and provincial governments have been, since the very creation of Canada, in a perpetual game of 'pass the buck' when it comes to the well-being of Native people. The British North America Act, which united Canada as a single country (they didn't think to consult the Indigenous people) declared "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" were a federal responsibility; however, within that same act healthcare was declared a provincial responsibility. So, while Ottawa tried to offload on to the provinces, and they offload back, the impact can only be felt in Native communities who suffer from the neglect of proper healthcare and well-being. The most significant part of any pandemic or health issue facing Indigenous people in Canada is government response and accountability, which ultimately shows how much it values Natives' lives.



Colonialists in early Canada giving Native people blankets infected with smallpox

Let's fast forward to 2005. The Cree community of Kashechewan in Northern Ontario is evacuated, many of them sent to shelters and relatives homes in Southern cities.

Many are hospitalized. What happened? Many living in Kashechewan, a community of 1,900 people and plagued by unemployment and neglected living conditions, started getting sick. After tests were made in October 2005, E. Coli was discovered coming through the water treatment plant that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) had constructed for the community, downstream from a sewage lagoon. When a heavy dose of chlorine was added to clean the community water supply, scores of people developed more sicknesses, impetigo and scabies from chlorine contamination. It made international news and brought out from under the rug Canada's hidden shame. Indian Affairs Minister, Andy Scott, first offered the community more bottled water, and they were advised to keep boiling their water, like they had been doing on and off for years as they were under a boil-water advisory. Canadian Forces then sent the same water purification treatment unit that it uses in disaster zones like Kashmir and Sri Lanka. After the back-and-

Protest at Kashechewan reserve where water is contaminated



forth between the Ontario and federal governments, half the community was airlifted for treatment out of town. Today, the problem of safe drinking water in Kashechewan is as present as their problems of flooding and moldy homes.

So, what's the worry?

So, why are so many Native communities being affected by this pandemic? The majority of them suffer from overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. They also lack the basic infrastructure for prevention of the spread of diseases. Many are on a boil-water advisory and struggle for clean, drinkable water. It's not pretty for the Canadian public who don't live there, but third world living conditions are commonplace for Native communities in this country. Viruses, like the H1N1, spread most easily in these conditions.

The 2006 Aboriginal People's Survey found that 31% of Inuit in Canada live in crowded homes, compared to 3% of the total population of the country. That number jumps even higher in Inuit communities in Northern Canada, to 41%. Statistics from other Native communities show the same patterns, with many homes in disrepair. The World Health Organization (WHO) has stressed that there is a link

between the severity of influenza cases and pre-existing chronic diseases, living in poor and overcrowded housing, poor-quality drinking water and sub-standard healthcare.

In June, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) noted that the measures aimed at containing the virus were not suited to the social realities of First Nations. 'For example, being told to avoid contact with others while living in cramped and overcrowded conditions or being told to wash their hands frequently when running water was not available,' the AFN said.



Accountability and Dignity

There really is no way that Native people can continue along this path. Through taking the land and resources from Indigenous people, and denying them their self-determination, Canada has created third world countries

within itself. It is very aware of this and refused to sign the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Who should claim responsibility for the last 250 years of suffering of Native people? Did diabetes among Indigenous people exist before contact, before the reservation system and residential schools? Given the history of neglect and current inaction, the government of Canada does not deserve trust to deal with Indigenous people fairly, especially when it comes to health and well-being.

Healthcare is a right to all people in Canada, but a priority needs to be placed on those most vulnerable as a result of Canada's capitalist and colonial system. Proper healthcare facilities in every Indigenous community, a special budget allocated to deal with specific health issues facing Native people are the most basic and immediate and rights that all people in Canada need to demand from the government of Canada. The self-determination of Indigenous nations, the stealing of land and resources, the colonial meddling in Native people's affairs are part of this process.



War and Occupation in Afghanistan: Which Way Forward?

By Nita Palmer

The following article is an excerpt from the book, "War and Occupation in Afghanistan: Which Way Forward?" by Nita Palmer. The book is available from Battle of Ideas Press at www.battleofideaspress.com.

Afghanistan Eight Years Later

It has now been eight years since the US invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent occupation of the country by Canada/US/NATO troops. When the first bombs began to drop on Afghanistan in October 2001, it was largely portrayed by the invading forces as a war that would be over quickly and easily – the unstable Taliban government would be overthrown, a new government following 'Western democracy' would be installed, human rights violations would end, women's living conditions would improve and Af-

ghanistan would no longer be a haven for terrorists.

Eight years later, nothing could be farther from the truth.

As the war enters its ninth year, voices from across the political spectrum are echoing one thing: the occupying forces aren't achieving any of their stated objectives in Afghanistan. Not only this, but the cost of the war is high – both on a financial and human level.

As more and more soldiers come home in caskets, opposition to the war is rising on the home front. In the US, according to an ABC poll 51% of people say the war is "not worth fighting" (August 2009). An October 2009 Angus Reid poll in Canada showed that 56% of people oppose the war in Afghanistan. Despite this, the drums of war march on. On Tuesday, December 1, US President Barack Obama announced that the US would send 30,000 more soldiers to Afghanistan. Other NATO countries will be increasing their troop contributions as well.

As people in the US and Canada, it's time for us to take a look at the facts of the war and ask ourselves: is this war, as government officials of our countries tell us, "still worth fighting"?

War of Lies

When the war began, there were a host of reasons we were given for the US, Canada and NATO sending troops to Afghanistan. What were some of these reasons, and do they still hold weight today?

Reason #1: Troops are there to rebuild Afghanistan and improve the quality of Afghan life.

Despite receiving over \$36 billion in foreign aid in the past eight years – and having troops there under the guise of helping the country rebuild – Afghanistan remains one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world. Just 13% of the population has access to improved water sources (World Bank, October 2009) and 92% of the country has no access to improved sanitation (Water Aid, 2008). Improving these basic facilities could be easily carried out by the 100,000 troops in the country if this really was a priority for Canada, the US and NATO.

The country's hospitals remain in a desperate state, now operating well beyond capacity as victims of US and NATO bombings pour in. "Sometimes we give one bed to three patients with minor ailments because of space limits," said Daud Farhad, the director of Kandahar city's Mirwais Hospital in an interview with IRIN news. Matters were made worse in Helmand province in September when US forces began occupying two health clinics in the province. "One of the two buildings in a health clinic in 52 [name of area] of Nawa has been occupied by US and Afghan forces which has impacted health



Afghans protest the US bombing of their village, January 27, 2009.

services because people are scared and do not want to go to this clinic. The clinic in Miyanposhta was functioning when US forces occupied it. It is now closed. And the clinic in Khan Nishin District was closed before US forces occupied it," said Enayatullah Ghafari, director of Helmand's health department. (IRIN, September 8, 2009).

Since 2007, Afghanistan has fallen down the ranks of the UN Human Development Index, which ranks countries on factors such as life expectancy, per capita income, and infant mortality rate. In 2007, Afghanistan ranked 178th out of 182 countries on the index. In 2009, it ranks 181st out of 182 countries, lower than countries like Haiti or Rwanda. Only Niger ranks lower than Afghanistan in human development. Added to this, the UN Human Poverty Index (a combined measure of the likelihood of dying before age 40, access to education, and basic living standards) ranks Afghanistan as lowest in the world.

Opium production in Afghanistan has also skyrocketed since the beginning of the occupation. In 2001, Afghanistan produced less than 10% of the world's opium. In 2007, Afghanistan produced 93% of the world's opium, according to the UN Of-



Canadian forces search Afghan man, Kandahar, Afghanistan.

fice on Drugs and Crime. Opium production is down in 2009, but the UNODC acknowledges that this is probably primarily a result of a surplus of opium on the market, rather than of any huge success of the occupation forces in eliminating drug production.

Opium addiction levels in Afghanistan are also at their highest since 2001. An April 2009 UN survey revealed that one in 12 Afghans use drugs, mainly opium, heroin, or hashish. This number has doubled since the last survey in 2005. Many Afghans use opium as a pain reliever because medical services are not available to them, or simply use drugs to cope with the stress of daily life in the war-ravaged country. An estimated 7% of opium addicts – about 140,000 – are children.

These above factors offer proof that the occupation is not benefiting Afghan people. Beyond this, there is one fundamental question to be asked: how can foreign forces claim to be improving Afghan quality of life when at least 40,000 people have been killed as a result of this war? No matter what they claim, foreign forces are not improving social conditions or living standards and creating a better future for Afghans by sheltering their schools, hospitals, homes and mosques by murdering men, women, young and old in daily



US Forces on patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

air strikes.

Reason #2: Troops are there to improve women's rights.

The fall of the Taliban in 2001 was championed as a leap forward in women's rights. Yet today, the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) notes that domestic violence against women is increasing at 'an alarming rate'. Ninety percent of Afghan women are victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence, according to UNIFEM. Poverty and lack of education among boys are cited as major factors behind violence against women – and neither of these conditions are being improved by war.

Lack of education is also a huge problem for Afghan women. Just 12.6% of women in Afghanistan are literate (UN Human Development Report 2009), and only 35% are enrolled in primary education, according to UNICEF. Aside from building a few "show schools" in the major cities, US/Canada/NATO forces have done nothing to improve access to education for Afghan women. "In the province I was in literacy was less than 1% for women and the only employment opportunity I was aware of was done by the US military in partnership with USAID and USDA – this was for roughly 20 widows to clean raisins," stated Matthew Hoh. Hoh was a political officer in the US Foreign Service and the Senior Civilian Representative for the US Government in Zabul province until he resigned from his post on September 10, 2009 in protest over the war in Afghanistan.

Afghan women, on average, earn just 24 cents on every dollar earned by a man (UN Gender Development Index 2009), and this number is even lower in rural Afghanistan where 80% of the popu-

lation resides. For women who have lost their husbands in war, this puts them in a desperate situation. Decades of war have left Afghanistan with the highest per capita population of widows in the world – an estimated 1.5 million in the country. Most are forced to beg, sell their children or send them to work, or enter into prostitution in order to survive. A survey by UNIFEM, conducted between 2004 and 2009, revealed that 65% of widows living in Kabul see suicide as their only option to get out of their misery and suffering.

Women also face a major lack of health services. There are few hospitals in Afghanistan and few midwives as well. In fact, only 14% of Afghan women have a doctor or midwife attending the birth of their child. As a result of this and other factors, Afghanistan's maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world – an estimated 16-19% of women die during childbirth (UNIFEM).

As a comparison to Afghanistan, it is useful to examine the conditions for women in three of Afghanistan's neighbouring Muslim countries: Iran to the west and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the north. Women comprise 63% of university students in Iran (CNN, 2009), while in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the female literacy rate is 99% (CIA World Factbook 2009). In terms of women's health services, 83% of Tajikistani women, 97% of Iranian women and 100% of Uzbekistani women have a medical professional attending the birth of their child (UNICEF, 2007). The maternal mortality rate in Iran and Tajikistan is less than 0.002%; in Uzbekistan, it is less than 0.0003%. Although neither the political system nor the women's rights situation in these countries is perfect, it



Afghan woman shouts anti-U.S. slogans outside her house that was destroyed by a US airstrike.

is important to note what women in these three nearby countries have accomplished with independent, sovereign governments and self-determination.

The conditions of life for Afghan women today are no better than they were before 2001 – except now there are bombs, checkpoint shootings, and the insecurity of war to deal with as well. One of the most telling factors of life for Afghan women under the occupation is the rate of Afghan women committing self-immolation – burning themselves to death. Although statistics are difficult to come by due to massive under-reporting, hospitals in a number of Afghanistan's western and southern provinces have reported a rise in cases. Since 2004, a number of NGOs, including Medica Mondiale and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), have reported an increasing number of cases. The AIHRC reported 106 cases of self-immolation in 2006, and 184 in 2007, although the actual number is likely much higher. This is the reality of Afghan women, despite the 100,000 troops sent there to 'liberate' them.

The truth is, except for a few minor facilities built in for women in Kabul as a

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MINIMUM WAGE:

**\$10 Ridiculous, \$15 Not Enough,
\$17 Acceptable... For Now**

By Thomas Davies

At a time when governments are cutting social programs and spending trillions of dollars of taxpayer's money on bailing out their big businesses friends, they continue to tell us that paying workers a decent living wage is unreasonable. It is obvious that no one in Canada can reasonably be expected to support themselves on \$8 an hour, and also just as obvious that the demand for a dignified wage for all workers is more important now than ever.

History of Struggle

Like all advancements for workers, the existence of minimum wage was not something handed down benevolently from above by governments. The first minimum wages internationally were won in New Zealand and Australia in the 1890's. The first minimum wages in Canada were won in BC and Manitoba in 1918, within the context of the early 1900's – a period of huge escalations in labour activity as workers demanded universal 8 hours days, union recognition and better wages.

BC was no exception, with the creation of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) in 1910, which by 1917 had gained enough support to run candidates in the Federal Elections. The struggle for a minimum wage was led by women, who faced the most savage conditions in unregulated industries. Women workers were also in a new position to demand

their rights, as many were recruited to work in “non traditional” industrial and agricultural jobs during World War I. Labour organizer Helena Guteridge organized the Women's Employment League and later the Minimum Wage League in a growing effort by women workers to demand fair wages for their work. Joined by other organized labour organizations including the BCFED, the Minimum Wage League was able to demand, and win, the minimum wage for women on April 23, 1918. In 1925, it was legislated for men as well.

It did not end there, as the fight between

workers and their employers about the level of minimum wage still raged on along with other labour issues. July 1918 saw Canada's first General Strike in Vancouver in response to the murder of labour and anti-war activist Ginger Goodwin. Between 1919 and 1920 there was over 1500 strikes in Canada, including the Winnipeg General Strike which involved over 25,000 workers. In this case, as in most, the government and its business allies called

in the police, the army, and paid private armed militias to violently suppress the workers. A 1919 Vancouver strike in sympathy with Winnipeg would be the longest General Strike in Canadian history.

Same Fight Today

While this history may be little known today, the interests have remained the same. Employers have continued to try and squeeze the most for the least from workers, while workers have needed to continue to organize for their rights. The current fight against the criminally low \$8 minimum wage



is one of the most important.

BC has the lowest minimum wage in Canada, and according to a recent report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), also has the highest overall rate of poverty (21 percent), child poverty (24 percent) and working poor. Full-time earnings for minimum wage workers in BC amount to only \$16,640 a year, more than \$5000 below the Statistics Canada poverty line for an individual living in a large urban centre in 2007.

Women continue to be the most exploited section of workers, as women constitute over two thirds of minimum wage earners in Canada. Women also earn an average of 62.8 percent of men's income (\$23,500 versus \$37,400 in 2003).

In contrast, Premier Gordon Campbell and the Ministers's in the BC Legislature voted themselves a 29-per-cent increase in the basic MLA's salary - to \$98,000 in 2007. The Premier's salary was raised 54%, from \$121,100 to \$186,200. Then they tell us there is no money for poor and working people in BC?

Current Demands

Based on different calculations and concessions, different progressive organizations have called for different minimum



Helena Guteridge,
Organizer of the Minimum Wage League.

wages. \$10 an hour, \$12 an hour, \$15 an hour, and many others have all been proposed.

The most credible proposal of these has come from the CCPA, which in 2008 released a report which calculated a minimum living wage of \$16.74 an hour in Metro Vancouver, "Based on the principle that full-time work should provide families with a basic level of economic security, not keep them in poverty. The amount needed for a family of four with two parents working full-time to pay for necessities, support the healthy development of their children, escape financial stress and participate in their communities."

They call their budget for different aspects covered on the living wage as "bare bones," and are clear that it does not in-

clude:

- Savings for children's future education
- Savings for retirement
- Owning a home
- Credit card, loan, or other debt/interest payments
- Anything beyond minimal recreation, entertainment, or holiday costs
- Costs of caring for a disabled, seriously ill, or elderly family member
- Much of a cushion for emergencies or tough times

Today's BCFED President Jim Sinclair agrees that it would take almost \$17 an hour for a worker in BC to live comfortably. If this is his standard, why should

we call for anything less for any worker in BC? While younger workers might not be in a position to support families, every worker has a right to a dignified wage, especially when lower wage work is often accompanied by the worst working conditions. Fire This Time supports a \$17 an hour minimum dignified wage for all workers, adjusted every year based on cost of living increases.

A Time to Rise

We have been told when times are relatively good economically that workers should not "rock the boat" by demanding higher wages. Now that big businesses have thrown us into the midst of a huge recession, we are told that times are too economically difficult to demand better wages, and to be happy even to be



People wait for food baskets at the Sun Youth food bank in Montreal. April 9, 2009.

employed.

We must ask, whose fault is the current economic crisis? How is it reasonable to pay trillions of dollars in bailouts and con-

cessions to corporations, yet unreasonable for the workers whose taxes paid the bailouts and whose work sustains the economies, to receive a dignified wage?

Quite simply, if they tell us that wages which can provide the human rights of food, housing, healthcare, and education are impossible under their obviously failing economic order, why should we try and accommodate it? Especially when those who make the most demand from us the least. A \$17 an hour dignified wage is not only reasonable, but also an important demand for all poor and working people as part of fighting back against the BC Liberal government and towards ensuring we are all able to live with dignity and security.

\$17 an hour DIGNIFIED Wage Now!

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Washington: Honduras and Latin America

Interview with Arnold August for CJSF Radio (Vancouver, Canada) concerning the coup in Honduras and the involvement of the United States. August 31, 2009

By Karine Walsh

Arnold August, Montreal author and expert on Cuban democracy, was invited on August 24 by Sylvia Richardson of CJSF Radio to shed light on the June 28 events in Honduras and the revelations surrounding the case which are being exposed over time. After more than 60 days following the kidnapping of President Zelaya and the seizure of power by the usurper “government” of Roberto Micheletti, it became impossible for Washington to continue to deny its direct involvement in this reprehensible and internationally condemned act.

As noted by Mr. August it is now a known fact that the aircraft that carried Zelaya the night of his abduction from his home landed at the U.S. military base in Soto Cano in Honduras, before continuing to its final destination of Costa Rica. “Even if one is not a military expert, how can a plane land and to take off again on a military base where you have 600 American soldiers and a lot of military equipment there, without the knowledge, expertise and support of the Americans at that base?” August asked.

Therefore, the study of the U.S. State Department’s official publications since June 28, which August has followed closely, show that the strategy of Washington since this military coup has not consisted solely in emphasising the “mediation” by the President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias, a hoped-for dialogue between what Washington calls “the two parties.”

Sylvia Richardson noted that the United States invaded or interfered in more than 50 countries in the last century and draws a dark portrait of Yankee interventions, the most recent having occurred in Haiti in 2004 and

Venezuela in 2002. The latest demonstration of U.S. hegemonic intent: the agreement between the United States and Colombia to establish seven military bases in this country sharing a border with, amongst others, Ecuador and Venezuela. Colombia is the

an economic, social and political alliance as an alternative to U.S. dominated alliances.

August stated: “The military coup d’état that took place in Honduras was sort of a threat, an indication from Washington that even if power has changed hands,



Hondurans rally against fraudulent elections in the capital city Tegucigalpa. November 25, 2009.

main geopolitical powerful ally of the United States in the region. Mr. August indicated that compared to the 60s, the situation has changed drastically. At that time Cuba was isolated by the vast majority of southern governments. All governments in the south now recognize the socialist island. In the entire hemisphere, only the United States refuses to do so. The coup in Honduras was not only directed against President Manuel Zelaya and the Honduran people, but it especially targeted the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean which had chosen to join ALBA,

even if we have a new face there, the empire still considers Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean to be areas that should be dominated by the United States.” Mr. Obama, at the August 10 meeting in Mexico with Canada’s Prime Minister Harper and Mexican President Calderon, lost his cool by qualifying as hypocrites those who ask him to intervene strongly in favour of the return of President Zelaya and the Honduran people to power. In this sudden lack of diplomatic tact, Obama has shown the true face

of his administration by putting down those who, like Venezuela, demand that Washington takes a firm stand against the coup.

August said: “What is being demanded that the United States act upon is certainly not an intervention in the internal affairs of Honduras, but Washington should at least withdraw their own ambassador as have already done most countries, and completely stop all military and economic aid to Honduras.” He continues: “What we’re seeing evolving before our very eyes is Washington applying the same imperial policy in Central and Latin America, that is to say a policy of domination and interference in order to control the natural resources of the region and have a stranglehold on the geo-strategic areas.”

August noted that the growing and all-encompassing resistance in the south against U.S. policy is now so palpable in the light of the Honduran people occupying the streets of the country by claiming not only the return of their democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya, but also the holding of a Constituent Assembly to change the Constitution. The growing prestige of countries such as Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay, and the reputation of their leaders and their social programs, has spawned a growing movement against U.S. domination, the capitalist system and neo liberalism, not considered viable for the peoples of the world.

** Karine Walsh is a social justice activist and member of the Table de concertation de solidarité Québec-Cuba. Since 2006 she is hosting a francophone radio program called Dimension Cubaine about Cuban reality on a Montreal community station, Radio Centre-Ville.*

Washington: Honduras y América Latina

Entrevista con Arnold August realizado por la Radio CJSF (Vancouver, Canadá) con relación al golpe en Honduras y el involucramiento de los Estados Unidos. 31 de Agosto del 2009.

By Karine Walsh

Arnold August, de Montreal, autor y experto en la democracia cubana, fue invitado el 24 de Agosto por Sylvia Richardson de la Radio CJSF para arrojar luz acerca de los acontecimientos del 28 de Junio sucedidos en Honduras, así como las revelaciones acerca de este caso que han sido expuestas durante todo este tiempo. Luego de más de 60 días del secuestro del Presidente Zelaya y la toma del poder por el “gobierno” usurpador de Roberto Micheletti, parece imposible para Washington, el seguir negando su involucramiento directo en este reprobable e internacionalmente condenado acto.

Como señaló el Sr. August, ahora es un hecho conocido que la aeronave que condujo a Zelaya luego de la abducción de su hogar, aterrizó en una base militar de los EE.UU, en Soto Cano, Honduras, antes de continuar hacia su destino final en Costa Rica. “Aún cuando uno no sea un experto militar, ¿cómo puede un avión aterrizar y posteriormente despegar en una base donde hay 600 soldados estadounidenses con equipamiento militar, sin el conocimiento, experiencia, pericia y apoyo de los estadounidenses de esa base?, pregunta August.

El estudio de las publicaciones oficiales del Departamento de Estado de los EE.UU desde el 28 de Junio, las cuales han sido seguidas muy de cerca por el Sr. August, muestra que la estrategia de Washington desde el golpe militar no ha consistido solamente en enfatizar la “mediación” del presidente de Costa Rica, Oscar Arias en el diálogo deseado, entre lo que Washington ha denominado “las dos partes”.

Sylvia Richardson señaló que los Estados Unidos, invadieron o interfirieron en más de 50 países en el pasado siglo y muestra la oscura imagen de las intervenciones yanquis, las más

recientes ocurridas en Haití en el 2004 y Venezuela en el 2002. La última demostración de la intención hegemónica de los EE.UU: el acuerdo entre los Estados Unidos y Colombia para el establecimiento de siete bases militares en ese país que comparte fronteras con, entre otros, Ecuador y Venezuela. Colombia es el principal poderoso aliado geopolítico de los Estados Unidos en esa región.

August dijo que comparado con los años 60, la situación ha cambiado drásticamente. En esa

económica, política y social como alternativa a las alianzas dominantes de los EE.UU. El Sr. August declaró: “El golpe de estado militar que tuvo lugar en Honduras, fue una especie de amenaza, una indicación desde Washington, de que aún cuando el poder haya cambiado de manos, aun cuando tengamos allá una nueva cara, el imperio sigue considerando a América Latina, América Central y el Caribe como áreas que deben ser dominadas por los Estados Unidos”.

ezuela, demandan que Washington adopte una posición firme en contra del golpe.

August dijo: “Lo que está demandando de los Estados Unidos para que actúe, no es precisamente una intervención en los asuntos internos de Honduras, sino que debería al menos retirar a su embajador como han hecho la mayoría de los otros países y detener completamente toda ayuda económica y militar a Honduras”. Él continua: “Lo que estamos viendo evolucionar ante nuestros ojos, es a Washington aplicando la misma política imperial en América Latina, es decir una política de dominación e interferencia con el objetivo de controlar los recursos naturales de la región y tener un dominio completo de las áreas geoestratégicas”.

August dijo que el crecimiento y la abarcadora resistencia del sur en contra de la política de los EE.UU, es ahora palpable a la luz de la ocupación, por parte del pueblo de Honduras, de las calles del país clamando no sólo por el retorno de su presidente Manuel Zelaya electo democráticamente, sino también reclamando por una Asamblea Constituyente para cambiar la Constitución. El creciente prestigio de países como Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Nicaragua y Paraguay, junto a la reputación de sus líderes y sus programas sociales, ha generado un movimiento creciente en contra de la dominación de los EE.UU, del sistema capitalista y del neoliberalismo, considerados como no viables para los pueblos del mundo

* *Karine Walsh es una activista por la justicia social, miembro de la Mesa de Concertación de Solidaridad Quebec-Cuba. Desde el año 2006 conduce un espacio francófono de una emisión de radio llamada Dimension Cubaine, acerca de la realidad cubana en el canal comunitario de Montreal, Radio Centre-Ville (Quebec, Canadá).*



Hondureños protestan contra el golpe de estado. 5 de julio 2009.

época, Cuba estaba aislada por la mayoría de los gobiernos suramericanos. Hoy todos los gobiernos del sur reconocen a la isla socialista. En todo el hemisferio, sólo los Estados Unidos rechazan ese reconocimiento. El golpe en Honduras no fue sólo directamente en contra del Presidente Manuel Zelaya y del pueblo hondureño, sino que se dirigió especialmente a las naciones de América Latina y del Caribe que han elegido unirse al ALBA, una alianza

El Sr. Obama en una reunión el 10 de Agosto en México, con el Primer Ministro Canadiense, Harper y el Presidente de México, Calderón, perdió la calma al calificar de hipócritas a aquellos que le piden a él que intervenga con mayor fuerza a favor del retorno del presidente Zelaya y del pueblo de Honduras, al poder. En esta súbita falta de tacto diplomático, Obama ha mostrado la verdadera cara de su administración rechazando a aquellos, que como Ven-

People Organize Resistance and Fight Back at the G-20 Meeting in Pittsburgh, USA

By Alison Bodine

A'int no stoppin us now, we're on the move!
A'int no stoppin us now, we're on the groove!
Classic McFadden and Whitehead song

A'int no stoppin us now, we want a job, right now!
A'int no stoppin us now, we want a job, right now!

-Chant of demonstrators at the March for Jobs, proceeding the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In the days leading up to the G-20 Summit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania police and military forces prepared for the presence of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors from the countries with the 20 largest economies in the world (including the European Union). During this period, social justice, human rights and environmental groups from all over the US also prepared. The G-20 Summit meant an opportunity to call attention to the devastating effects of the current world economic crisis on the majority of humanity. While the big bankers and corporations would have their seats inside of the summit, the people outside would organize and mobilize, demanding that peoples basic rights to clean food and water, housing, homes, healthcare and a job, be met.

Currently over 1 billion people face undernourishment daily due to lowering wages and increased unemployment worldwide, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. In the United States, unemployment during the month

of September increased to 9.8% on average; for the Black community it is 15.4% and for Latinos 12.7% (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). The AFL-CIO estimates that the actual unemployment rate in the US is at least 17%, including people that have given up looking for work, or who are underemployed. But, the G-20 Summit did not discuss solutions to any crises facing humanity. So, the question is, what is the significance of this meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bankers to working, poor and oppressed people?

During the G-20 a number of decisions were made that insure profits, not human rights. These policy decisions, guided by the most powerful imperialist countries present, like the US, Canada and France, included regulatory and "peer review" measures all designed to protect the profits of the banks and the biggest corporations in the world.

Also discussed was the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF is known

Trade Zones" for sweatshops, and forcing debilitating loans upon developing countries looking to improve their services and infrastructures. Under pressure of the developing countries present at the G-20, they decided to increase the voting power of emerging countries in the IMF. But, its basic character will remain the same, and the US will still maintain the upper hand. The G-20 also called for stricter regulations on banking activities and limiting pay on banking and financing executives, but major news sources, including the AP have questioned if any regulations will be possible to enforce. In summary, nothing was done to address worldwide poverty and unemployment. Nothing was decided that will change the lives of the majority of people living on the planet.

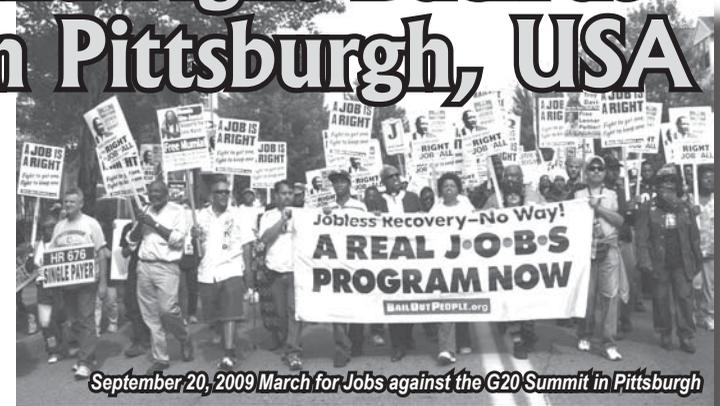
But, this is just what happened inside of the G-20 meeting. Outside, people marched, picketed, discussed and debated. They demanded jobs, housing and healthcare. They called for an end to imperialist war and freedom for all political prisoners in the US. Together, they shared strategies for organizing and fighting back in the midst of



Protesters at the March for Jobs against the 2009 G20 Summit

around the world for imposing "structural adjustments"- like the creation of "Free

Trade Zones" for sweatshops, and forcing debilitating loans upon developing countries looking to improve their services and infrastructures. Under pressure of the developing countries present at the G-20, they decided to increase the voting power of emerging countries in the IMF. But, its basic character will remain the same, and the US will still maintain the upper hand. The G-20 also called for stricter regulations on banking activities and limiting pay on banking and financing executives, but major news sources, including the AP have questioned if any regulations will be possible to enforce. In summary, nothing was done to address worldwide poverty and unemployment. Nothing was decided that will change the lives of the majority of people living on the planet.



September 20, 2009 March for Jobs against the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh

economic devastation.

On September 20, the Sunday before the G-20 began, the Bail Out the People Movement and Rev Thomas E. Smith of Monumental Baptist Church convened a march endorsed by the United Steelworkers and the United Electrical Workers unions. The call of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for a job was revived in the voices of 1,000 people that gathered on "The Hill" that day, in a Black community facing widespread poverty and gentrification. People came from all over the US to join together in the March for Jobs. San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland, Akron, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Miami, New York, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Providence, North Carolina, Boston, Tampa, and more had representatives. Speakers at the march and rally included Fred Redmond, United Steelworkers Vice President; a recorded message of support from political prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal and a group of people still fighting to return home after leaving New Orleans in the 2006 Hurricane Katrina.

Rosemary Williams from the Minnesota Bailout Coalition, who is currently fight-

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“People need to see that when we do come together that we can make a difference...”

By Alison Bodine

During the September 20-25, 2009 protests at the G-20 Summit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Fire This Time had the opportunity to sit down with Reverend Thomas E. Smith. Rev. Smith is currently the Pastor at Monumental Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Monumental Baptist Church was one of the main organizing centres for the Sept 20 March for Jobs and the following Tent City and Rev. Smith, himself, was one of the initiators of the March for Jobs and Tent City.

Rev. Smith is President of the Board of Directors of IFCO/Pastors for Peace. He has traveled with Pastors for Peace caravans to Cuba on several occasions, and participated in caravans to Chiapas, Mexico. He has a rich history of civil rights and social justice organizing, and continues to be a strong voice for not only his own community, but people fighting for peace with justice all over the world.

Monumental Baptist Church is located in a district of Pittsburgh known as “The Hill.” The Hill District is a historic African American community, once known as home to some of the most famous jazz musicians and writers, and now home to

boarded up buildings, poverty, and unemployment. Rev. Smith has been witness to the destruction and the effect that so-called ‘economic development’ has had on his community, and will continue to be part of the fight back.

FTT: Tell me about the relationship between the G-20 activities that are going to be starting later this week and your community here in Pittsburgh?

RTS: A lot of the economic problems that we face in this community are result of the change in the economic opportunities in Pennsylvania. We have gone through this transition as a result of losing the steel industry, steel mills that have gone to China and other places and consequently impact of the loss of the manufacturing sector. This has a devastating effect on the African American community in particular, the whole community in general, but the African American community in particular. All of these jobs and other jobs that are related to that industry, or that help support that industry, were cut back. So a lot of Black people are unemployed as a conse-

quence; coupled with the lack of health insurance, the unemployment and indecent housing. We saw this as a good opportunity to voice our concerns about the need for jobs and the need for

it have here on the Hill?

RTS: I think it is the impact that it will have. It is a first step, it’s this kind of organizing that needs to occur throughout the country and throughout the world. Workers need to come together to combat the systemic problem that we have in the world today. Globalization has really brought a lot of these industrial economies together and has tied them together in such a way that now, as we have just experienced in this country, we have industries that are too big to fail. So they get bailed out and still move the jobs somewhere else, that’s a systemic problem. The government is doing more for the corporations than it is for working people. That process needs to be changed and the only way that it is going to change is for the workers to organize and demand the change.

Right now corporations have the money. They have the influence to protect their interests and they are doing that with the G-20. There is no comparable organization, no comparable institution that’s able to negotiate with the

G-20 on behalf of workers to offset that. That is why the march yesterday was very significant, to see people coming from all over the country, everyone having the same story, because it is the same issue in all of our communities.

Seeing jobs leave the country, seeing people being devastated, families being devastated; I have a personal interest as a Pastor of a church because people need jobs to support their families and the families support the church. If they don’t have jobs that means that I eventually won’t have a job. So it’s direct harm that is being done for me and is why I am so concerned about it.

FTT: What changes have you seen here on the Hill in your time here, what is it like to live on the Hill today?

RTS: There is a lot of new housing coming up in this community after 30 years of land banking, but the people that used to live here now cannot afford the new housing that is being built and so the community is being gentrified. There seems to be, I don’t want to say apathy, but the people feel beat down, in a way, in a sense, and don’t believe that their voices count, that the things that they do make a difference,



September 20, 2009 - Reverend Smith at the March for Jobs against the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh

change in the system that continues to produce this kind of devastation on our community.

FTT: What is the significance of the March for Jobs that happened yesterday and the continuing Tent City? What impact does

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Speech by Muntadhar al-Zaidi, upon his release from prison:

My Flower to Bush, the Occupier The Story of My Shoe

Muntadhar al-Zaidi is the Iraqi who threw his shoes at George Bush in protest against the occupation of his country, Iraq.

September 15, 2009

In the name of God, the most gracious and most merciful.

Here I am, free. But my country is still a prisoner of war.

Firstly, I give my thanks and my regards to everyone who stood beside me, whether inside my country, in the Islamic world, in the free world. There has been a lot of talk about the action and about the person who took it, and about the hero and the heroic act, and the symbol and the symbolic act.

But, simply, I answer: What compelled me to confront is the injustice that befell my people, and how the occupation wanted to humiliate my homeland by putting it under its boot.

And how it wanted to crush the skulls of (the homeland's) sons under its boots, whether sheikhs, women, children or men. And during the past few years, more than a million martyrs fell by the bullets of the occupation and the country is now filled with more than 5 million orphans, a million widows and hundreds of thousands of maimed. And

many millions of homeless because of displacement inside and outside the country.

We used to be a nation in which the Arab would share with the Turkman and the Kurd and the Assyrian and the Sabeian



and the Yazid his daily bread. And the Shiite would pray with the Sunni in one line. And the Muslim would celebrate with the Christian the birthday of Christ, may peace be upon him. And despite the fact that we shared hunger under sanctions for more than 10 years,

for more than a decade.

Our patience and our solidarity did not make us forget the oppression. Until we were invaded by the illusion of liberation that some had. (The occupation) divided one brother from another, one

neighbor from another, and the son from his uncle. It turned our homes into never-ending funeral tents. And our graveyards spread into parks and roadsides. It is a plague. It is the occupation that is killing us, that is violating the houses of worship and the sanctity of our homes



and that is throwing thousands daily into makeshift prisons.

I am not a hero, and I admit that. But I have a point of view and I have a stance. It humiliated me to see my country humiliated. And to see my Baghdad burned. And my people being killed. Thousands of tragic pictures remained in my head, and this weighs on me every day and pushes me toward the righteous path, the path of confrontation, the path of rejecting injustice, deceit and duplicity. It deprived me of a good night's sleep.

Dozens, no, hundreds, of images of massacres that would turn the hair of a newborn white used to bring tears to my eyes and wound me. The scandal of Abu Ghraib. The massacre of Fallujah, Najaf, Haditha, Sadr City, Basra, Diyala, Mosul, Tal Afar, and every inch of our wounded land. In the past years, I traveled through my burning land and saw with my own eyes the pain of the victims, and hear with my own ears the screams of the bereaved and the orphans. And a feeling of shame haunted me like an ugly name because I was powerless.

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RESISTANCE TO THE G20 MEETING IN PITTSBURGH

continued from page 9

ing against foreclosure and eviction, inspired everyone when she said, “We will go back in again, it is not going to stop us, we must resist! We must resist! We cannot stop, we cannot go back!”

Over the next week there were many other actions including a Tent City of workshops and discussions, also organized by the Bail Out the People Movement, and another Tent City focusing on the effects of economic devastation and war on women organized by CODE Pink. On Tuesday September 22, Cindy Sheehan, a prominent US anti-war activist joined a picket on Mellon Bank saying,

“Health care, housing, jobs, food, clean water are basic human rights... they are rights for every human being.” On Friday September 25, there was a “Peoples March to the G-20” of 10,000 people, largely youth and students that was organized through the Thomas Merton Center.

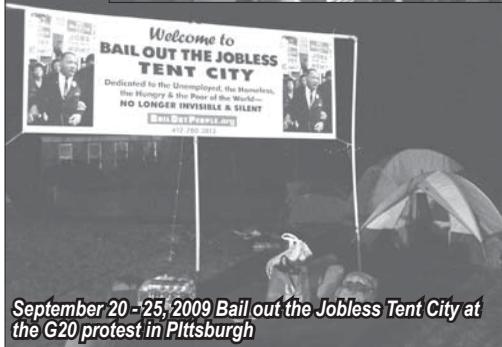
As the G-20 representatives scrambled to insure that the rich got richer, people from all over the US were able to take the opportunity to share in common experiences and struggles. A family from Rochester,

NY whose bread-winner had just lost their job, talked with a couple from Tampa, FL that had been homeless since facing foreclosure last year. And they could do more than just talk, because people who gathered in Pittsburgh did so in order to take action. Action to organize for basic rights, action to unite, and action to fight back. If the G-20 is considered a “forum for international economic cooperation” then organizing during it is a forum for the international struggle.

At a time when all over the globe, social movements are up in arms, workers



September 20, 2009 March for Jobs against the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh



September 20 - 25, 2009 Bail out the Jobless Tent City at the G20 protest in Pittsburgh

are striking, and entire countries are forming networks of cooperation beyond the US imperialist model it is important that we, as people in the US and Canada, don't remain silent. Actions at the G-20 are just a first step. Building a movement against the war at home and abroad during this time of economic

destruction is what we have to do. In Canada there are constant cutbacks to services: healthcare, education, women's services and childcare, rising tuition. There is also a sharply increasing military budget. The next G-20 is scheduled to take place in Canada in June of 2010, but there is no reason to wait until then to demand basic human rights for all people in Canada, and all people around the world.

INTERVIEW WITH REV. SMITH AT THE G20 PROTESTS

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and that has to change. People need to see that when we do come together that we can make a difference.

The march yesterday was very significant in the impact that it had on this city. A lot of people see that when people from all over the country come together in an orderly fashion, raising their voices out of a concern for jobs, I think that what happened will have a tremendous impact on the future.

FTT: What is next for organizing for social justice, here in Pittsburgh?

RTS: In Pittsburgh, I think that the civil rights organizations need to get back on task to refocus their attention on the real agenda, that is jobs for people, health-care, decent housing, education. Not that they are not doing some of that, but I don't think it is as focused as it ought to be and organized in a way that people really see how it is all related.

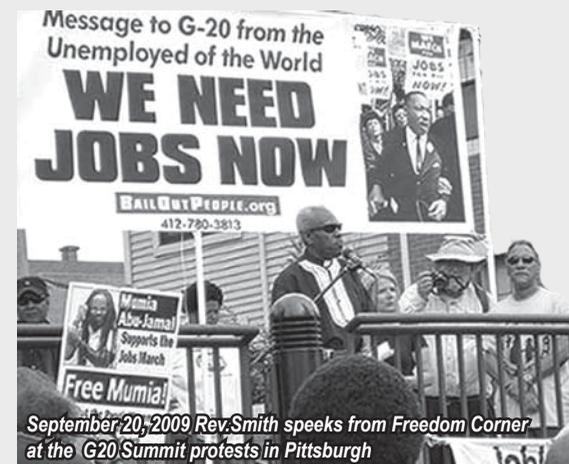
I also think that we need to, that people need to, understand that the cause of all of this is a systemic problem that we are facing- that we need an institutional solution. We can start a movement, but that movement isn't going to be sustained unless there is some kind of institutional process or some kind of institutional force that will sustain it that will continue to groom the leaders and show that there is some continuity within the movement.

That's been the problem in the past, that when we have a great leader that comes along and gets things going, they will say let's kill the dreamer and see what happens to

the dream. We should, by this time, be smart enough to understand that we cannot continue to wait for a messiah. We cannot continue to wait for a leader. We have to continuously groom leadership in a process that has continuity that is staying focused on issues and continues to fight for the long haul. I think that is the major thing that I see.

I would hope, and certainly, the church can play a major role in that because the church is the only thing that we control and can sustain us for the long haul. But activists, social activists need to understand the significance of the church, as an institution for change, and help to empower the church by getting more involved with the church. Even though in the 60s there was some distance with social activists outside of the church, who saw the church as a part of the problem, it is time that we put away those fears. We are all in this together and we need that kind of institutional support in order to wage the struggle.

FTT: Thank you.



September 20, 2009 Rev. Smith speaks from Freedom Corner at the G20 Summit protests in Pittsburgh

THE STORY OF MY SHOE

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And as soon as I finished my professional duties in reporting the daily tragedies of the Iraqis, and while I washed away the remains of the debris of the



al-Zaidi throws his shoes at George Bush during a press conference in Baghdad. December 14, 2008.

ruined Iraqi houses, or the traces of the blood of victims that stained my clothes, I would clench my teeth and make a pledge to our victims, a pledge of vengeance.

The opportunity came, and I took it.

I took it out of loyalty to every drop of innocent blood that has been shed through the occupation or because of it, every scream of a bereaved mother, every moan of an orphan, the sorrow of a rape victim, the teardrop of an orphan.

I say to those who reproach me: Do you know how many broken homes that shoe that I threw had entered because

of the occupation? How many times it had trodden over the blood of innocent victims? And how many times it had entered homes in which free Iraqi women and their sanctity had been violated? Maybe that shoe was the appropriate response when all values were violated.

When I threw the shoe in the face of the

criminal, Bush, I wanted to express my rejection of his lies, his occupation of my country, my rejection of his killing my people. My rejection of his plundering the wealth of my country, and destroying its infrastructure. And casting out its sons into a diaspora.

After six years of humiliation, of indignity, of killing and violations of sanctity, and desecration of houses of worship, the killer comes, boasting, bragging about victory and democracy. He came to say goodbye to his victims and wanted flowers in response.

Put simply, that was my flower to the

occupier, and to all who are in league with him, whether by spreading lies or taking action, before the occupation or after.

I wanted to defend the honor of my profession and suppressed patriotism on the day the country was violated and its high honor lost. Some say: Why didn't he ask Bush an embarrassing question at the press conference, to shame him? And now I will answer you, journalists. How can I ask Bush when we were ordered to ask no questions before the press conference began, but only to cover the event. It was prohibited for any person to question Bush.

And in regard to professionalism: The professionalism mourned by some under the auspices of the occupation should not have a voice louder than the voice of patriotism. And if patriotism were to speak out, then professionalism should be allied with it.

I take this opportunity: If I have wronged journalism without intention, because of the professional embarrassment I caused the establishment, I wish to apologize to you for any embarrassment I may have caused those establishments. All that I meant to do was express with a living conscience the feelings of a citizen who sees his

homeland desecrated every day.

History mentions many stories where professionalism was also compromised at the hands of American policymakers, whether in the assassination attempt against Fidel Castro by booby-trapping a TV camera that CIA agents posing as journalists from Cuban TV were carrying, or what they did in the Iraqi war by deceiving the general public about what was happening. And there are many other examples that I won't get into here.

But what I would like to call your attention to is that these suspicious agencies -- the American intelligence and its other agencies and those that follow them -- will not spare any effort to track me down (because I am) a rebel opposed to their occupation. They will try to kill me or neutralize me, and I call the attention



Kelly White welcomes participants to a protest against the occupation of Iraq organized by Mobilization Against War and Occupation in Vancouver, Canada.

of those who are close to me to the traps that these agencies will set up to capture or kill me in various ways, physically, socially or professionally.

And at the time that the Iraqi prime minister came out on satellite channels to say that he didn't sleep until he had checked in on my safety, and

were involved in torturing me, and some of them were high-ranking officials in the government and in the army.



US soldiers patrol streets of Baghdad. December 19, 2008.

that I had found a bed and a blanket, even as he spoke I was being tortured with the most horrific methods: electric shocks, getting hit with cables, getting hit with metal rods, and all this in the backyard of the place where the press conference was held. And the conference was still going on and I could hear the voices of the people in it. And maybe they, too, could hear my screams and moans.

In the morning, I was left in the cold of winter, tied up after they soaked me in water at dawn. And I apologize for Mr. Maliki for keeping the truth from the people. I will speak later, giving names of the people who

I didn't do this so my name would enter history or for material gains. All I wanted was to defend my country, and that is a legitimate cause confirmed by international laws and divine rights. I wanted to defend a country, an ancient civilization that has been desecrated, and I am sure that history -- especially in America -- will state how the American occupation was able to subjugate Iraq and Iraqis, until its submission.

They will boast about the deceit and the means they used in order to gain their objective. It is not strange, not much different from what happened to the Native Americans at the hands of colonialists. Here I say to them

(the occupiers) and to all who follow their steps, and all those who support them and spoke up for their cause: Never.

Because we are a people who would rather die than face humiliation.

And, lastly, I say that I am independent. I am not a member of any political party, something that was said during torture -- one time that I'm far-right, another that I'm a leftist. I am independent of any political party, and my future efforts will be in civil service to my people and to any who need it, without waging any political wars, as some said that I would. My efforts will be toward providing care for widows and orphans, and all those whose lives were damaged by the occupation.

I pray for mercy upon the souls of the martyrs who fell in wounded Iraq, and for shame upon those who occupied Iraq and everyone who assisted them in their abominable acts. And I pray for peace upon those who are in their graves, and those who are oppressed with the chains of imprison-

ment. And peace be upon you who are patient and looking to God for release.

And to my beloved country I say: If the night of injustice is prolonged, it will not stop the rising of a sun and it will be the sun of freedom.

One last word. I say to the government: It is a trust that I carry from my fellow detainees. They said, 'Muntadhar, if you get out, tell of our plight to the omnipotent powers' -- I know that only God is omnipotent and I pray to Him -- 'remind them that there are dozens, hundreds, of victims rotting in prisons because of an informant's word.'

they have not been charged or tried.

They've only been snatched up from the streets and put into these prisons. And now, in front of you, and in the presence of God, I hope they can hear me or see me. I have now made good on my promise of reminding the government and the officials and the politicians to look into what's happening inside the prisons. The injustice that's caused by the delay in the judicial system.

Thank you. And may God's peace be upon you

The translation is by McClatchy's special correspondent, Sahar Issa.



Iraqi women protest the occupation. November 19, 2009.

They have been there for years,

The Untold Story of the Cuban Five

Impossible Mission



René - Antonio - Fernando - Ramón - Gerardo

By Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

When the Supreme Court decided not to hear the Cuban Five petition, the Justices acted exactly as requested by President Obama's Solicitor General, showing that on this issue, there has been no change, certainly not a change we can believe in.

The Supreme Court last June 14 simply joined the other two branches of Government in demonstrating their hostility towards the Cuban people. During the 1990s this official animus, had among its main features their connivance with a terrorist campaign that has cost lives, caused human suffering and material damages, which the US instead of preventing – as was its obligation – tolerated or promoted.

Immediately after the break up of the Soviet Union, Cuba entered an extremely severe economic crisis, worst for us than the Big Depression of 1929. It was precisely the time chosen by the US to strengthen its economic blockade as reflected in the Torricelli Amendment (1992) and the Helms-Burton Act (1996). The trio – Torricelli, Helms and Burton – replying to those objecting the illegal extraterritorial legislations assured their colleagues that it was the last year of the Government led by Fidel Castro.

Others made easy money in those days publishing cheap texts, announcing with specific datelines the inevitable end of the Cuban Revolution. It became an uncontested dogma for many scholars, politicians and



journalists and a source of encouragement for those who have actively sought revenge for decades.

Some, unsatisfied with what they perceived as Washington's insufficient aggressiveness, tried to make a final assault on the abandoned, isolated island.

Paradoxically in September 1994 and May 1995, Cuba and the US succeeded in negotiating new migration accords in an exercise of quiet private diplomacy that involved the commitment to move towards the lifting of the embargo and a promise to curb terrorist actions against Cuba.

It was then that Mr. Basulto and his cohorts ramped up their airborne incursions. Basulto was very open in explaining his intentions. The alleged "humanitarian" nature of their previous flights – to help undocumented Cubans to enter the US – had disappeared with the new US policy, since May 2, 1995 to send them back to the Island. From that day on, as recognized by Basulto, the flights would continue and be multiplied with a subversive purpose. Almost daily he was on the media announc-

ing the next provocation and proclaiming that Cuba was so weakened by the economic crisis that it could not protect its borders or even impede him to overfly downtown Havana as he did on more than one occasion. The US authorities knew what he and his group were doing, as it was known by anybody having a TV set because the provocations were filmed and reported live by the Miami local stations of national TV networks.

In 1995 and early 1996 we made our utmost to persuade Washington to prevent those completely illicit air provocations. We were just asking the US Administration to respect international law and abide by its own domestic laws and regulations.

A rather intense wave of official communications took place between the authorities of both countries through which the US side explicitly recognized the illegal character of the flights and initiated, with Cuban cooperation, administrative proceedings against the transgressors. Or so they reiterated in diplomatic notes.

Apart from the open channel we warned time and again, at the highest level, both US civilian and military authorities.

Fidel Castro was personally involved in those efforts. He spent many hours with more than one US important visitor, some with clear White House endorsement. And we succeeded in getting a very specific commitment by President Clinton that those provocations will never happen again. (Indictment À la Carte, Counter-

punch, September 3, 2009; Annals of Diplomacy, Backfire, The New Yorker, January 26, 1998).

Something rather strange happened on the road from Washington to Miami. It appears that President Clinton gave specific instructions to fulfill his commitment. But in that peculiar town (Remember Elian?) the US Commander in Chief's orders are not always obeyed. As soon as the Miami mafia learned of the President's instructions, the provocateurs organized their last violation. That was the real conspiracy, the only one, leading to the tragic events of February 24, 1996.

President Clinton astonishingly reacted as if he never knew anything and rushed to sign the Helms-Burton Act in a deplorable ceremony at the White House, joyfully surrounded by some of the true culprits, the very individuals who defied him. It was a presidential election year and Clinton won easily in Miami.

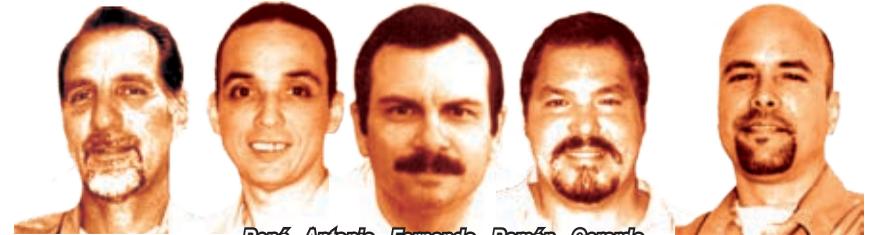
That experience would have been more than enough to anybody in terms of believing in the possibility of serious talks and engagement with such frivolous partners, some kind of mission impossible.

But we tried it again. We didn't have a choice.

*September 30, 2009
Reprinted from Counterpunch*

La Historia no contada de los Cinco

Misión Imposible



René=Antonio=Fernando=Ramón=Gerardo

Por Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

Cuando la Corte Suprema decidió no escuchar la petición de los Cinco, los magistrados actuaron exactamente cómo se les solicitó a nombre del Presidente Obama, mostrando que en este tema, no ha habido ningún cambio, evidentemente ningún cambio en el que nosotros podamos creer.

El pasado 14 de junio la Corte Suprema simplemente se unió a las otras dos ramas del Gobierno en su hostilidad hacia el pueblo de Cuba, que durante los años 90 había tenido entre sus principales características su complicidad con la campaña terrorista que ha costado vidas, sufrimiento humano y daños materiales, y que Estados Unidos en lugar de evitar – como era su obligación – toleró y promovió.

Inmediatamente después del derrumbe de la Unión Soviética, Cuba entró en una extremadamente severa crisis económica, para nosotros peor que la Gran Depresión de 1929. Este fue precisamente el momento escogido por Estados Unidos para fortalecer su bloqueo económico como se reflejó en la Enmienda Torricelli (1992) y en la Ley Helms-Burton (1996). El trío – Torricelli, Helms y Burton – al responderle a aquellos que objetaban las ilegales legislaciones extraterritoriales les aseguraba a sus colegas que ese era el último año del Gobierno dirigido por Fidel Castro.

Otros hicieron dinero fácil en esos días publicando textos baratos, que anunciaban con fechas específicas el inevitable fin de la

Revolución Cubana. Esto se convirtió en un indiscutible dogma para muchos académicos, políticos y periodistas y una fuente de aliento para aquellos que han buscado venganza de forma activa durante décadas.

Algunos, no satisfechos con lo que ellos percibían como insuficiente agresividad por parte de Washington, trataron de realizar un asalto final a la isla abandonada y aislada.

Paradójicamente, en septiembre de 1994 y mayo de 1995 Cuba y Estados Unidos tuvieron éxito en la negociación de nuevos acuerdos migratorios en un ejercicio de tranquila diplomacia privada que incluyó el compromiso de avanzar hacia el levantamiento del bloqueo y una promesa de frenar las acciones terroristas contra Cuba.

Fue entonces cuando el Sr. Basulto y sus seguidores multiplicaron sus incursiones aéreas. Él fue muy franco al explicar sus intenciones. La supuesta naturaleza “humanitaria” de sus vuelos previos – ayudar a los cubanos indocumentados a entrar a Estados Unidos – había desaparecido desde el 2 de mayo de 1995 con la nueva política norteamericana de enviarlos de regreso a la Isla. Desde ese día, como reconoció el Sr. Basulto, los vuelos continuarían y se multiplicarían con propósitos subversivos. Casi a diario estaba en los medios anunciando la próxima provocación y proclamando que Cuba estaba tan debilitada por la crisis económica que no podía proteger sus fronteras, ni siquiera impedir que él sobrevolará el centro de la Habana, como hizo en más de una ocasión. Las autoridades de Estados Unidos sabían lo que él y su grupo estaban

haciendo, como era sabido por cualquiera que tuviera un aparato de televisión porque las provocaciones eran filmadas y reportadas en vivo por las estaciones locales de Miami de las cadenas nacionales de televisión.

En 1995 y principios de 1996 hicimos todo lo posible para persuadir a Washington de que impidiera esas provocaciones aéreas completamente ilícitas. Le estábamos pidiendo solamente a la administración norteamericana que respetara el derecho internacional y cumpliera sus propias leyes y regulaciones nacionales.

Una oleada bastante intensa de comunicaciones oficiales tuvo lugar entre las autoridades de ambos países a través de la cual la parte norteamericana reconoció explícitamente el carácter ilegal de los vuelos e inició, con la cooperación cubana, los procedimientos administrativos contra los transgresores. O eso fue lo que reiteraron en sus notas diplomáticas.

Además de por los canales abiertos, advertimos una y otra vez, a los más altos niveles, tanto a las autoridades civiles como militares de Estados Unidos.

Fidel Castro estuvo involucrado personalmente en esas tareas. Pasó muchas horas con más de un importante visitante de Estados Unidos, algunos de ellos con un evidente aval de la Casa Blanca. Y tuvimos éxito en lograr un compromiso muy específico por parte del Presidente Clinton de que esas provocaciones no volverían a suceder jamás. (Acusación À La Carte, www.anti-terroristas.cu, Septiembre 7, 2009; Annals

of Diplomacy, Backfire, The New Yorker, January 26, 1998).

Algo bastante extraño sucedió en el camino de Washington a Miami. Al parecer el Presidente Clinton dio instrucciones específicas para que este compromiso se cumpliera. Pero en esa peculiar ciudad (¿Recuerdan a Elián?) las órdenes del Comandante en Jefe de Estados Unidos no son siempre obedecidas. Tan pronto la mafia de Miami supo de las instrucciones del Presidente, los provocadores organizaron su última violación. Esa fue la verdadera conspiración, la única, que llevó a los trágicos hechos del 24 de febrero de 1996.

Increíblemente el Presidente Clinton reaccionó como si nunca hubiera sabido nada y corrió a firmar la Ley Helms-Burton en una deplorable ceremonia en la Casa Blanca, rodeado alegremente por algunos de los verdaderos culpables, los mismos individuos que lo desafiaron. Fue un año de elecciones presidenciales y Clinton ganó fácilmente en Miami.

Esa experiencia hubiera sido más que suficiente para que cualquiera se olvidara de la posibilidad de tener conversaciones serias y alcanzar compromisos con socios tan frívolos, algo así como una misión imposible.

Pero nosotros lo intentamos de nuevo. No teníamos otra opción.

*30 de septiembre de 2009
Tomado de antiterroristas.cu*

Washington on Honduras: The Tight Rope Walker

By Arnold August

Part I of "Washington on Honduras" appeared in Volume 6 Issue 3 of Fire This Time.

Unwise, Premature And Reckless?

The following day, on July 23, as a reply to another question on the time frame for the Arias mediation, Assistant Secretary of State Crowley said that there should be no "time-line". And then in a retort to another query about Zelaya's plan to return to Honduras, he called it "unwise."

July 24: The struggles were increasing in the streets of Honduras and in areas close along the Nicaraguan border where Zelaya was organizing his return. On that day the official State Department video could not camouflage Assistant Secretary of State Crowley's reaction to yet another question on the same theme of the Zelaya's return. One could easily notice the frustration on his face. Crowley seemed to sigh in exasperation. He turned up the ratchet a bit more against Zelaya and his sympathisers; now the return would be "premature."^a

There may not have been a major difference between "unwise" and "premature", however the same day, July 24 Mrs. Clinton appeared in a press remark opportunity with Iraqi Prime Minister Nour al-Maliki after their meeting at the State Department. She stated on her own, not in response to any question, that she considered the return of Zelaya to be "reckless." This is definitely turning up the ratchet. Is this not an encouragement to Micheletti to take a hard stance against Zelaya? Her "tough phone call" to Micheletti must have been very far in the back of his mind when he heard Clinton publicly warn-

ing Zelaya.^b

The Clinton-Micheletti Duo

From Friday July 24 to Sunday July 26 the military tried (and to a certain extent succeeded) in repressing by brute force the very evident massive and heroic support of the Honduran people to welcome Zelaya back over the border. Despite this, Kelly confirmed on Monday July 27 that Clinton's characterization of a Zelaya return as "quite rightly, reckless." He also added that the State Department supported the return of Zelaya by "mutual agreement." In response a question regarding the July 27 Zelaya demand for sanctions against the de facto regime Kelly avoided the question by saying that they "support President Arias."^c

How can there be a "mutual agreement" when the putschists refuse a Zelaya return as President either through vague dubious diplomatic means (the Arias proposals) or via a peaceful return over the border? In the context of the tense situation along the Nicaraguan-Honduras border, "supporting Arias" indicates increasingly every day the following: the US-sponsored Arias plan is geared to provide the military-backed regime the necessary time to organize nationally and internationally. Micheletti develops his contacts internationally and at the same time uses brute force against the people: time plays in the favor of the status quo. The State Department, Arias and Micheletti are doing everything to demoralize and discourage the social movements in the country while striving to provoke divisions and desertions internationally.

Talking about providing time to the Micheletti regime, on July 27, the Wall Street Journal provided to Micheletti an op-ed opportunity on its editorial page. He literally praised Clinton's characterization of the "reckless"

Zelaya return as being "appropriate." Micheletti goes on by appealing to the extreme right wing and hawkish elements in the US oligarchy: "... rather than impose sanctions, the U.S. should continue the wise policies of Mrs. Clinton. She is supporting President Arias' efforts to mediate the issues."^d

There must be a lot of pressure on the new Washington administration to maintain the pro-US military domination over Honduras irrespective of the political costs to the Obama Administration. The Wall Street Journal is indicative of this coercion.

The Wall Street Journal And The US Right-wing

In a recent article by Venezuelan/American lawyer/author/journalist Eva Golinger published in Cubadebate, she wrote that [my translation from the original Spanish]:

"The Wall Street Journal is part of the Dow Jones News Corporation news company. Its owner is the powerful multi-millionaire Rupert Murdoch, who through his monopoly media, News Corporation, controls hundreds of newspapers, magazines, television and radio at the world level. Murdoch is well known for its American Fox News Channel, which promotes the imperialist and neoconservative vision of the United States. Some of its other businesses media include National Geographic Channel, The Film Zone, all FOX channels and studios, Film Channel, MySpace (internet) Harper Collins (editorial books), New York Post (newspaper), The Sunday Times (UK), The Sun (UK), among



Protest in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. December 2, 2009.

many others.

The Wall Street Journal is a daily with a circulation of over two million copies per day on the world level and 931,000 users on the internet. The editorial of the dictator Roberto Micheletti was written and promoted by his lobby in the United States, Attorney Lanny Davis, who is a close friend and lawyer of former President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary, current Secretary of State of President Barack Obama.

The Wall Street Journal has argued in favour of the coup in Honduras since the first day, and has even published a series of articles that are trying to accuse Venezuela and President Hugo Chavez for having caused the crisis in the Central American country."^e

The network of connections is exposing itself, as the above information divulges. The tight rope walker is having an increasingly difficult time keeping his or her balance. The performer seems to be inevitably, and in full view of the audience, falling to the side of military might at the expense of the edge representing the Trojan horse of "dialogue and diplomacy". It would take an acrobat to maintain the teetering position of the high-wire performer.

I'll Need To Get You An Update On That

The State Department was first asked by reporters about the standing or results of the legal classification of the coup on June 29, the day after the coup. Kelley said as I quote above: “Let us get back to you on that.” On July 28, I am purposely repeating, July 28, that is one month later:

“QUESTION: And one – one other on Honduras. I’m well aware that the Legal Adviser’s Office was examining whether the events in Honduras technically met their definition of a coup and therefore would trigger the cutoff in aid that I realize you have already suspended.

MR. KELLY: Yes.

QUESTION: Have you yet reached a determination on that question?

MR. KELLY: I’ll have to get you an update on that.

QUESTION: Ian?

QUESTION: This doesn’t mean that you’ve decided or that that review is coming to an end?

MR. KELLY: I – just like I say, I just need to – I’ll need to get you an update on that.”¹

What is even more telling than the transcripts is the body language exhibited by Kelly and so visible on the official video. Kelly’s last answer: “I – just like I say, I just need to – I’ll need to get you an update on that”, seemed to have taken an eternity for him to finally get it out of his mouth. He fidgeted to no end. There were no more questions from the reporters. No reporter mentioned that the State Department said the same thing a month ago!! If it was not for the most serious and critical situation in which the people of Honduras, and for that matter the whole of South America finds itself in the historical context of the coup, the circus in the State Department should be laughed out of town.

But The Show Goes On: Is It A Military Coup Or Not?

On August 1:

“QUESTION: Since you haven’t condemned that government yet, do you somewhat support it?

MR. CROWLEY: For about a month we’ve strongly condemned the action of the de facto regime and the ouster of President Zelaya.

QUESTION: Do

you acknowledge that it was a coup, a military coup?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, there are legal issues there that we have chosen not to exercise at this point. But clearly, in every way possible, we have said that what happened in Honduras is a violation of the OAS Charter, which is why we took action against Honduras. It’s a violation of the Inter-American Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter. And we continue to work intensively to try to resolve the situation.”²

On August 6, one reporter insisted on the issue of legal classification of the coup:

“MR. Wood.But a coup took place in the country, and –

QUESTION: Well, you haven’t officially legally declared it a coup yet.

MR. WOOD: We have called it a coup. What we have said is that we legally can’t determine it to be a military coup. That review is still ongoing.

QUESTION: Why does it take so long to review whether there’s a military coup or not?

MR. WOOD: Well, look, there are a lot of legal issues here that have to be carefully examined before we can make that determination, and it requires information being shared amongst a number of parties. We need to be able to take a look at that information and make our best legal judgment as to whether or not –

QUESTION: It seems to be taking a very long time.

MR. WOOD: Well, things take time when you’re dealing with these kinds of very sensitive legal issues. So we want to make sure that –

QUESTION: Have you made a decision on whether to impose additional sanctions on the de facto government?

MR. WOOD: No decision has been made to do anything right now, other than support the San Jose Accords and the mediation process.

QUESTION:My question was whether you’ve made the decision not to impose new sanctions on Honduras?

MR. WOOD: And what I’m saying to you is that where we’re focused right now is on supporting that process and trying to get the two parties to come to some sort of a political settlement. But beyond that, I don’t have anything to add on that question.”³

At this point, what one does not read in the transcript but can be very vividly seen in the video is the following: Wood was visibly annoyed. He cut off the insisting reporter by pointing to another reporter. However, the people of Honduras know that it is a military coup. They are further uniting and organizing their forces in the course of stepping up their struggle against the military and police. This is being carried out despite the increased repression. This includes, so far, at least six assassinations and many hundreds of arrests and injuries.

On the same day, August 6, according to a Reuters report, the State Department went even further:

“ ‘Our policy and strategy for engagement is not based on supporting any particular politician or individual. Rather, it is based on finding a resolution that best serves the Honduran people and their democratic aspirations,’ wrote Richard Verma, the assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs. ‘We

have rejected calls for crippling economic sanctions and made clear that all states should seek to facilitate a solution without calls for violence and with respect for the principle of non-intervention,’ he said. The letter was obtained by the Reuters news service.”⁴

Two important points:

From the position of supposedly supporting Zelaya and opposing Micheletti, the State Department policy (as quoted above) is “not based on supporting any particular politician or individual.” The State Department is now neutral! However this shows that the fine line that the State Department was walking along was not that fine. In reality it was in the camp of the de facto regime. Maintaining the status quo means supporting Micheletti.

When State Department official Richard Verma indicates above that “We have rejected calls for crippling economic sanctions...” does this inadvertently provide us with a reason why the US has not legally classified the coup as a military coup d’etat?

Obama: Victim Or Accomplice?

We have thus far dealt extensively with the State Department and Mrs. Clinton but not President Obama. This is hard to avoid seeing as that Obama has so far not placed himself in the center of this issue. Since the beginning of the crisis on June 28 and at the time of writing, President Obama and his Press Secretary have made a total of six comments:

On June 29, in a press opportunity in the White House with Colum-

continued on page 25



Protest in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Sign reads “Obama: Nobel Prize Coup Plotter”. December 2, 2009.

EL CASO DE HONDURAS: Washington en la Cuerda Floja



Por Arnold August

Parte I de *El Caso de Honduras: Washington en la Cuerda Floja* se publicó en Vol. 6 No. 3 de *Fire This Time*.

¿Imprudente, Prematuro e Irreflexivo?

El día siguiente, el 23 de Julio, como respuesta a otra pregunta acerca de un marco de tiempo para la mediación de Arias, Secretario de Estado Asistente, Crowley dijo que no debía haber un “tiempo límite”. En respuesta a otra pregunta acerca los planes de Zelaya de retornar a Honduras, los consideró “imprudentes”.

24 de Julio: Las batallas se incrementaban en las calles de Honduras y en áreas cercanas a la frontera con Nicaragua donde Zelaya estaba organizando su retorno. Ese día el video oficial del Departamento de Estado no pudo camuflagear la reacción del Secretario de Estado Asistente, Crowley, ante otra pregunta sobre el mismo

tema, el retorno de Zelaya. Se podía notar fácilmente la frustración en su rostro. Crowley parecía exasperado. Perdió los estribos contra Zelaya y sus simpatizantes; ahora el retorno era considerado como “prematuro.”^a

Puede no haber una gran diferencia entre “imprudente” y “prematuro”, sin embargo el mismo día 24 de Julio, la Sra. Clinton compareció en un intercambio con la prensa junto al Primer Ministro iraquí Tour al-Maliki luego de su reunión en el Departamento de Estado. Ella planteo espontáneamente, sin ser en respuesta a pregunta alguna, que ella consideraba el retorno de Zelaya como “irreflexivo”. Esto es definitivamente perder los estribos. ¿No es ello un estímulo a Micheletti para adoptar una postura más enérgica en contra de Zelaya? Su “fuerte llamada telefónica” debió parecerle a Micheletti algo muy lejano en el fondo de su mente, cuando él oyó a la Clinton advertir así públicamente a Zelaya.^b

El Dúo Clinton-Micheletti

Entre el viernes 24 de Julio y el domingo 26 de Julio los militares trataron (y en cierta medida con éxito) de reprimir mediante el uso de la fuerza bruta las evidentes y heroicas acciones de apoyo del pueblo de Honduras como bienvenida a la

llegada de Zelaya a la frontera. A pesar de ello, Kelly confirmó el lunes 27 de Julio, la caracterización de la Clinton con respecto al retorno de Zelaya, como “realmente irreflexivo”. A su vez añadió que el Departamento de Estado apoyaba el retorno de Zelaya por “mutuo acuerdo”. En respuesta a una pregunta referida a la demanda de Zelaya el 27 de Julio de sanciones en contra del régimen de facto, Kelly evadió la pregunta diciendo que ellos “apoyan al presidente Arias”.^c

¿Cómo puede haber un “mutuo acuerdo” cuando los golpistas rechazan el retorno de Zelaya como presidente ya sea a través vagos y dudosos medios diplomáticos (las propuestas de Arias) o la vía del retorno pacífico a través de la frontera? En el contexto de la tensa situación a todo lo largo de la frontera entre Honduras y Nicaragua, el “apoyo de Arias” muestra incrementarse diariamente: del plan de Arias patrocinado por los EEUU es maniobrado para darle tiempo a los militares causantes del golpe para organizarse nacional e internacionalmente. Micheletti desarrolla sus contactos internacionales al mismo tiempo que usa la fuerza bruta contra el pueblo: el tiempo juega un papel a favor del status quo. El Departamento de Estado, Arias y Micheletti están haciendo todo por desmoralizar y desanimar los movimientos sociales en el país, mientras se esfuerzan en provocar divisiones y deserciones en el plano internacional.

Hablando acerca de darle tiempo al régimen de Micheletti, el 17 de Julio el “Wall Street Journal” ofreció a Micheletti una oportunidad para expresar su opinión en su página editorial. Literalmente él elogió la caracterización de la Clinton acerca de un “irreflexivo” retorno de Zelaya, considerándola como “apropiada”. Micheletti fue más allá, recurriendo a la extrema derecha y a elementos representantes de los halcones en la oligarquía de EEUU: “...mas que imponer sanciones, los EEUU deben continuar la sabia política de la Sra. Clinton. Ella está apoyando los

esfuerzos del Presidente Arias en mediar las discrepancias.”^d

La nueva administración de Washington, tiene que estar con mucha presión para mantener la dominación militar pro-EEUU en Honduras, a independientemente del costo político que ello represente para la administración de Obama. El “Wall Street Journal” es un indicativo de esta coerción.

El “Wall Street Journal” Y El Ala Derecha De Los Eeuu

En un artículo reciente de la abogada, escritora y periodista venezolano-americana Eva Golinger publicado en *Cubadebate*, ella escribió que: “El “Wall Street Journal” forma parte de la empresa noticiosa Don Jones Corporation. Su dueño es el poderoso multi-millonario Rupert Murdoch, quien a través de su monopolio mediático, News Corporation, controla a cientos de periódicos, revistas, canales de televisión y emisoras de radio a nivel mundial. Murdoch es muy conocido por su canal estadounidense Fox News Channel, que promueve la visión imperialista y neoconservadora de los Estados Unidos. Algunas de sus otras empresas mediáticas incluyen a National Geographic Channel, The Film Zone, todos los canales y estudios Fox, Cine Canal, My Space (Internet), Harper Collins (editorial de libros), New Cork Post (periódico), The Sunday Times (Reino Unido), The Sun (Reino Unido), entre muchos otros.

El Wall Street Journal es un diario con una circulación por encima de dos millones de ejemplares diarios a nivel mundial y 931 000 usuarios en Internet. El editorial del dictador Roberto Micheletti fue escrito y promovido por su lobista en Estados Unidos, el abogado Lanny Davis, quien es amigo íntimo y abogado del ex presidente Bill Clinton y su esposa Hillary, actual Secretaria de Estado del Presidente

Barack Obama.

El Wall Street Journal ha abogado a favor del golpe en Honduras desde el primer día, e incluso ha publicado una serie de artículos que intentan acusar a Venezuela y al Presidente Hugo Chávez por haber causado la crisis en el país centroamericano.”^e

La red de conexiones se está mostrando por sí misma, como revela la anterior información. Él o la equilibrista que está en la cuerda floja, tiene cada vez más dificultades para mantener el equilibrio. El ejecutante parece que inevitablemente, y a la vista de todos, está cayendo hacia el lado de los militares, a costa del borde afilado representado por el caballo de Troya del “diálogo y la diplomacia”. Ello le costaría a un acróbata mantener el equilibrio balanceándose en la cuerda floja.

Yo Necesitaré Conseguirle Una Actualización En Esto

El Departamento de Estado fue encuestado por los reporteros acerca de la clasificación legal del golpe el 29 de Junio, el día después del golpe. Kelley dijo, como cité anteriormente: “Entonces volvamos al tema de la definición legal”. El 28 de Julio, y lo repito expresamente, el 28 de Julio, eso es un mes después...-

“Pregunta: Y una –otra más sobre Honduras. Yo estoy de acuerdo en que la Oficina de Asesoramiento legal estaba examinando si los eventos ocurridos en Honduras técnicamente encajaban en la definición de un golpe, y si eso desencadenaría el corte de la ayuda que entiendo ustedes ya han suspendido.

Mr.Kelly: Si

Pregunta: ¿Han arribado ustedes a una determinación en este tema?

Mr. Kelly: Yo tendré que conseguirle a usted una actualización en esto.

Pregunta: ¿Jan?

Pregunta: ¿Esto no significa que ustedes ya hayan decidido o que el análisis esté llegando a un final?

Mr. Kelly: Yo, exactamente como yo dije, yo precisamente necesito, yo necesitaré conseguirle a usted una actualización en esto.”^f

Lo que dice más que la transcripción, es el lenguaje corporal exhibido por Kelly y bien visible en el video oficial. La ultima respuesta de Kelly: “Yo, exactamente como yo dije, yo precisamente necesito, yo necesitaré conseguirle a usted una actualización en esto”, pareció tomarle una eternidad para él finalmente poder expresarlo. Él se mostró extremadamente inquieto. No hubo más preguntas por parte de los reporteros. ¡Ningún reportero mencionó que el Departamento de Estado dijo la misma cosa un mes atrás! Si no fuera por ser esta la más seria y crítica situación que ha enfren-

tado el pueblo de Honduras, y que a los efectos toda Suramérica que se ha encontrado ha visto envuelta en el contexto histórico del golpe, el circo del Departamento de Estado causaría risas que se oirían más allá de la ciudad.

Pero El Show Continúa: ¿Es Un Golpe De Estado Militar O No?



El primero de agosto-

“Pregunta: ¿Dado que ustedes no han condenado aún a ese gobierno, ustedes lo están apoyando de algún modo?

Mr. Crowley: Por más de un mes nosotros hemos condenado fuertemente la acción del régimen de facto y el derrocamiento del Presidente Zelaya

Pregunta: ¿Ustedes reconocen que fue un golpe, un golpe militar?

Mr. Crowley: Bien, en eso hay

temas legales sobre los que hemos escogido no pronunciarnos en este punto. Pero claramente, en todos los modos posibles, hemos dicho que lo que tuvo lugar en Honduras es una violación de la carta de la OEA, que es por lo cual ejecutamos acciones contra Honduras. Eso es una violación de la Carta Interamericana, la Carta Democrática Interamericana. Y nosotros continuamos trabajando intensamente para tratar de resolver la situación.”^g

El 6 de Agosto, un reportero insistió acerca del tema de la clasificación legal del golpe:

“Mr.Wood. Pero un golpe ocurrió en el país, y –

Pregunta: Bien, ustedes aún no lo han declarado oficialmente como un golpe.

Mr. Wood: Nosotros lo hemos llamado un golpe. Lo que nosotros hemos dicho es que legalmente no podemos determinar que sea un golpe militar. Ese análisis aún está en marcha.

Pregunta: ¿Por qué toma tanto tiempo revisar si allí hay o no un golpe militar?

Mr. Wood: Bien. Mire, hay muchas cuestiones legales que deben ser cuidadosamente examinadas antes de que nosotros podamos hacer una determi-

nación, y ello requiere compartir información entre un número de partes. Nosotros necesitamos estar en capacidad de revisar esa información y hacer nuestro mejor juicio legal acerca de si es un golpe militar o no. –

Pregunta: Parece que eso se está demorando mucho tiempo.

Mr. Wood: Bien, las cosas llevan tiempo cuando Usted está tratando con este tipo de cuestiones legales muy sensibles. Y nosotros queremos estar seguros.–

Pregunta: ¿Han tomado Ustedes alguna decisión acerca de imponer sanciones adicionales al gobierno de facto?

Mr. Wood: No ha sido tomada decisión alguna de hacer algo en este preciso momento, como no sea apoyar los Acuerdos de San José y el proceso de mediación

Pregunta:¿Mi pregunta fue si ustedes han tomado la decisión de no imponer nuevas sanciones a Honduras?

Mr. Wood: Y lo que yo le estoy diciendo es que en lo que hemos estado concentrados ahora ha sido en apoyar el proceso y tratar de llevar a las dos partes a algún tipo de acuerdo político. Pero más allá de eso, no tengo nada que añadir con respecto a esa pregunta.”^h

En este punto, algo que no se puede leer en la transcripción pero que puede ser visto de modo muy vívido en el video es lo siguiente: Wood estaba visiblemente irritado. Cortó al insistente report-

continúa en la página 28

Louis Riel: A Revolutionary Legacy

By Aaron Mercredi

"I am more convinced every day that without a single exception I did right. And I have always believed that, as I have acted honestly, the time will come when the people of Canada will see and acknowledge it."
—Louis Riel

On November 16th 2008, there was a ceremony at the Native Friendship Centre in Vancouver honouring the life of Louis Riel. It had been 124 years since he was sent to the gallows for defending his people against a tyrannical regime in Canada. It was a modest and simple affair to pay tribute to a man who gave his life to the Métis people, Indigenous people and all of humanity.

Riel is a man whose name and whose cause have been distorted by official Canadian history. The man who for so long was officially remembered as a crazy,

power-hungry and Messianic Métis leader is now sometimes lauded as one of the fathers of Confederation by descendants of the same government that hanged him. Both accounts, though, dismiss Riel's role in the struggle that took place in Canada's history.

Through the haze perpetuated by official historians is one of the finest examples of oppressed people uniting and fighting together. Riel was a leading figure in this struggle. What is the relevance of the Red River struggle and the Northwest resistance today?

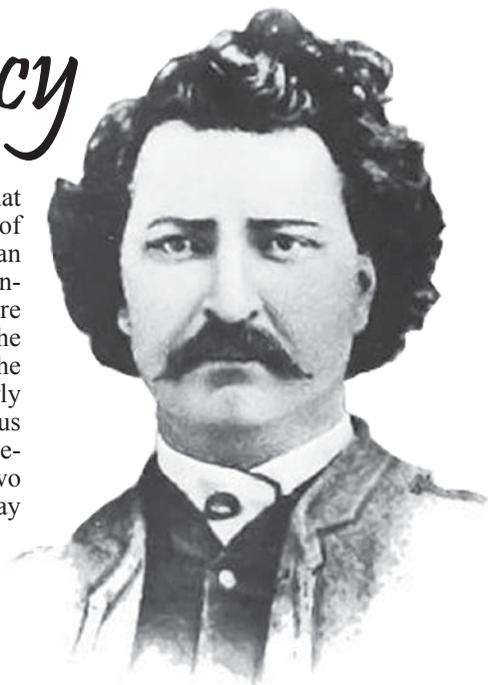
Riel came to be known from his role as a leader in the Red River Valley - modern-day Winnipeg - where the Métis began their fight for liberation. The conditions that brought on this struggle were rooted in the history of colonialism.

It Began with Colonialism

The struggle over rights in the Red River

was the result of the class struggle that developed through the colonization of Northern North America. The European market for furs meant a great dependency on Indigenous labour to acquire the raw materials. Relations built on the exploitation of Indigenous labour for the production of furs was the basis of early colonizers' approach towards Indigenous people. With the establishment of settlements, forts and trading posts, the two main fur trading giants, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the Northwest Company, fought over the monopoly of the European market. When the Montreal-based Northwest Company was defeated and merged with the British-run Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, the HBC became the most powerful organization in North America. From coast to coast of Northern North America, the HBC strengthened its control over the land, resources and people. One of these areas was the vast land mass that was adopted by the British as Rupert's Land, which the HBC had been granted by England in 1670. It also worked to centralize the fur trade in the Red River settlement, where it had established its first agricultural settlement in 1812. The settlement was made up of primarily Métis and Native people, with a minority of Europeans.

The Métis roots are traced back to the very beginning of the fur trade. They were the mixed-blood children of fur traders from the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company and Cree, Ojibway or Saulteaux women. As people of mixed ancestry increased in number and married amongst themselves, they developed a distinct culture, neither European nor Indian, but a fusion of the two and a new



identity as Métis. Because of their position in the fur trade, having the knowledge of European and Indigenous languages, the Métis were used as a cheap labour force, from the direct gathering of the raw materials to the intermediary positions, and the HBC was able to use its power over them to exploit their labour more than the European immigrants. Like typical British-style divide and conquer tactics, some Métis were given certain positions that put them on a level higher than other Indigenous people.

The HBC ruled Rupert's Land and the Red River settlement through two colonial governments: the Council of Rupert's Land and the Council of Assiniboia. Both were made up of the fur trading officers of the HBC, and were ultimately governed by the chief officer of the Hudson's Bay Company. At this time, the population of



*Three leaders of the Northwest Rebellion.
From left: Gabriel Dumont, Chief Big Bear, Chief Poundmaker.*

the Red River settlement was a mainly Métis, the majority of whom laboured for the HBC in order to survive. Once the HBC had the monopoly and Indigenous people were all being exploited by one main company, those who felt the brunt of the exploitation became conscious of their oppressor and fought against it. Out of the extreme low pay for their furs and the fact that the wealth of their work was being sent out of the country instead of benefiting the people, they began selling elsewhere for a higher price, mainly in the US. The HBC clamped down heavily on this activity as a threat to its monopoly of profits, made it illegal to sell furs or to buy goods from anywhere but the HBC, and raised their prices. The consequences were harsh and people could have their houses raided at any time if they were under suspicion. It became clearer every day that the Council of Assiniboia, which governed the civil affairs of the Red River settle-

ment, represented the interests of British colonialists and not interests of Métis people.

The Red River Resistance and Riel's Role

Louis Riel emerged as a leader of the Métis during the period of Canada's confederation. As the 1800s moved on, the fur trade was in decline and the rulers of the HBC made more serious steps to begin the industrialization and establishment of a Canadian state. This was a great period of unrest in the Red River as the conditions they lived under had not improved and the citizens were never consulted on whether the Red River settlement should join Canada. Since Canada only consisted of four provinces after the 1867 confederation (Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia), the annexation of Rupert's land in to Canada was an imminent threat to the Red River. The agreement that the heads of the HBC were making with Anglo-Canadian

bankers was to incorporate Rupert's Land as a territory under Canada, where there would be no political or democratic rights for the people. Being colonial subjects would not have changed for the people; instead of the HBC ruling over them, it would be Anglo-Canadians.

Louis Riel was 23 years old when Canada confederated. Having recently returned from Montreal, where he was sent to enter priesthood, he was immersed in the turmoil facing the people of the Red River.

Officially, what took place is commonly known as the 'Red River Rebellion.' With the leadership of Riel, the Métis established a provisional government in the Red River settlement. In its founding document, they explained that their former HBC rulers had abandoned them to a foreign power, which they refused to be handed over to. The word 'rebellion' is an intentionally misleading account of his-

tory and justifies the soldiers that Canada sent in to kill the sovereigntists in the Red River. In 1869, Canada was a foreign government to the people of the Red River; the colonial rulers of the HBC were still negotiating with Canada. The provisional government established in the Red River represented the interests of its inhabitants. Canada did not.

The events that followed were turbulent. Canada, whose officials were refused entrance in to the Red River settlement to claim it as part of the new nation-state, and the Orangemen, who were Anglo-Protestant loyalists to Canada, were constantly trying to undermine the democratic process that was underway in the Red River. Thomas Scott, one of the most notorious Orangemen, was put on trial for attempted murder, and sentenced to death by a seven-member council. Riel was not part of this process, but would end up taking the blame by Canadian authorities to rile people against him.

The provisional government, which represented all people of the Red River settlement, drafted up demands to be met by Canada in order for the Red River, Rupert's land, to become a part of Canada. Canada made promises of protection and rights to the Métis and on July 2, 1870, Manitoba became Canada's 5th province. These rights were never recognized and Canada's military was sent to bring a reign of terror to those Métis who had stood up. While land grants in the Red River were given to European immigrants and Eastern Canadians, many Métis were

forced to flee persecution. Despite all of this, Riel was elected to Parliament on three separate occasions, though he was never able to attend because there was a bounty on his head. In 1875, he was exiled from Canada.

The Northwest Resistance—Riel and Dumont, Big Bear and Poundmaker

Conditions did not improve for the majority of the people in the Red River area and in the newer settlement on the South branch of the Saskatchewan River. The Métis who had fled the Red River and settled in the Northwest Territory were fighting for political representation and rights just as they had in 1869. Under the Indian Act of 1876, Indigenous nations were divided up and forced onto reservations. Their way of life uprooted, the Natives on the reserves were dependant on an unresponsive colonial government to supply food, and as a result, people were starving on most reservations. White settlers saw that the Canadian government was operating in the territory only for the benefit of Eastern Canadian business interests, and not local ones.

In 1884, while living in Montana, Riel was visited by a delegation from the community of Métis from the South branch of the Saskatchewan river. He was convinced to return to present their grievances to the Canadian government. Despite Riel's return, Canada continued to ignore Métis interests. By March 1885,

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Métis Prisoners in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.

*"I am more convinced every day
I did right. And I have acted
honestly, the time Canada
will see and I will be
glad to die."*



The Trial of Louis Riel, Reel 108
www.fireth.com

*May that without a single exception
always believed that, as I have
will come when the people of
acknowledge it." -Louis Riel*



Regina Saskatchewan, 1885.

[mistime.net](http://www.mistime.net)

WASHINGTON ON HONDURAS: THE TIGHTROPE WALKER

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bian President Uribe, Obama declared that “We believe that the coup was not legal and that President Zelaya remains the President of Honduras, the democratically elected President there. In that we have joined all the countries in the region, including Colombia and the Organization of American States.”¹

On June 29, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs performs in front of reporters:

“QUESTION: ...Still on the Honduras issue and trying to get a clear picture of what the U.S. is considering. Is the administration looking at withdrawing its ambassador as the leftist Latin American governments have decided to do, or even looking at a possible cutoff of aid?”

MR. GIBBS: Well, again, I think some of that is in the next -- in the frame of next steps in evaluating this. I just don't want to get real specific at this point.

QUESTION: Did the United States have any advance knowledge or word of a planned coup? Did it do anything to try to head that off? And what does the administration's failure to have headed that off say about its credibility in Latin America?

MR. GIBBS: Well, I think as I said a minute ago, the administration, our government, working with partners, were attempting to prevent the type of unrest that we've seen happen over the last 24 hours. They worked on that over the past several days. And we will continue to work to restore democratic order in Honduras.

QUESTION: Did the administration warn President Zelaya that this was in the making?

MR. GIBBS: That I don't know.”^k

Based on the above, is this any different from the State Department tight-rope walking performance?

There does not seem to be such a great dif-

ference:

On July 1, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs faces reporters:

“QUESTION: But with the Pentagon suspending joint military operations, how far-reaching is that and are there next steps that are under consideration as well?”

MR. GIBBS: Well, we continue to monitor the situation and will respond accordingly as events transpire. But, again, as I said, we're



Honduran soldier stands next to graffiti reading “Yes to the constituent assembly! More power to the people! Out with the coup regime!”

watching closely what's going on.”¹

However, while the State Department seemed to be caught up increasingly in the “if and but” scenario regarding the return of president Zelaya, President Obama made a comment on Honduras in response to questions in Moscow during his visit there. On July 7 ABC News Senior White House Correspondent, Jack Tapper, not known as a conservative nor ABC not exactly being like right-wing Fox News, wrote from Moscow and quoted President Obama as follows: “America supports now the restoration of the democratically-elected President of Honduras, even though he has strongly opposed

American policies...”²

Tapper, based on his long experience in White House politics, wrote: “Facing criticism for having backed the ‘wrong’ side in the recent coup in Honduras, President Obama Tuesday [July 7] tried to explain his advocacy on behalf of ousted President Manuel Zelaya.... But conservatives have criticized the president and blamed Zelaya for his current lot.” Correspondent Tapper quoted as examples of conservatives pressure, Florida right-wing

told reporters that he still supports the reinstatement of Zelaya. However, he added, “I can't press a button and suddenly reinstate Mr. Zelaya,” Obama said... “It is important to note the irony that the people that were complaining about the U.S. interfering in Latin America are now complaining that we are not interfering enough.”³

Here again one may get the impression that there is a significance difference between the president and the State Department. While the State Department declared on August 6, as quoted above, that its policy is “not based on supporting any particular politician or individual”, Obama declares the next day on August 7 that he “...still supports the reinstatement of Zelaya.” However, using his gift for oratory, Obama conditions this support for Zelaya by saying that he “can't press a button” to reinstate Zelaya. Does this mean that the pressures against Obama from the right-wing US and Latin American oligarchies and even the State Department are too strong for him to make a move? Or is Obama simply using different words and images to support the State Department politics consisting of stalling for time and thus oxygenate the de facto government?

Regarding Obama's remarks about the “irony” in reference to opposition versus support for US interference: Honduras has on its territory an important fully-sponsored US military base with US armed forces and equipment on its territory. A decision to completely shut down the base, immediately withdraw US troops and military equipment and fully stop the training does not consist of interfering in the internal affairs of Honduras. These bases, whether in Honduras or Columbia, are merely extensions of US military might in other countries.

Even though it is another context and with different legal and historical conditions, who would complain of foreign interference in Cuban affairs if the US would shut down Guantanamo, withdraw completely and hand over that piece of Cuban territory back to the Cuban people? Who would complain of for-

anti-Venezuela, anti-Cuban activists, Republicans Congress Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Connie Mack.”^m

Taking the above Obama statement into account, on the surface there indeed seems to be a difference if not a conflict between on the one hand President Obama and on the other hand the State Department. The latter (as we have seen above on numerous occasions and most recently in the Wall Street Journal Micheletti piece), is more shamelessly tied to the military and the Bush era right-wing forces.

On August 7, according to Reuters, “Obama

eign interference (aside from Micheletti) if Obama decides today as President to withdraw the US Ambassador to Honduras and cut of diplomatic relations until Zelaya is restored? These are buttons which the president can press.

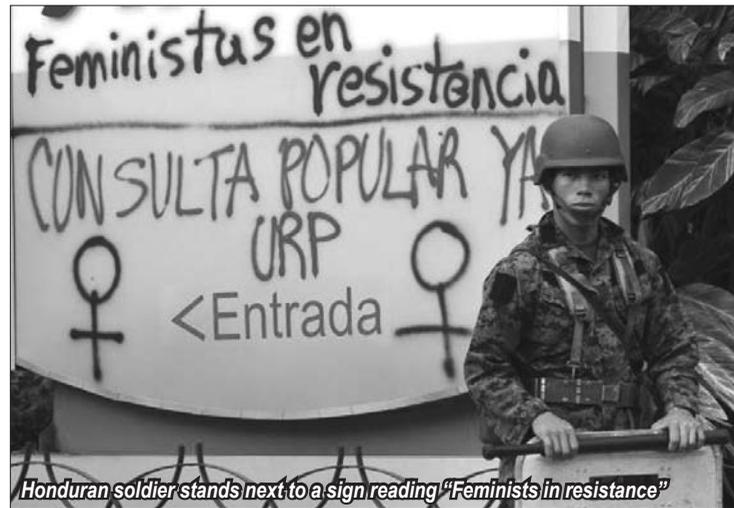
On August 10 at the North American Leaders' Summit (USA, Mexico and Canada), it was reported that Obama declared:

“The same critics who say that the United States has not intervened enough in Honduras are the same

“...We have thoroughly discussed the coup in Honduras and reaffirm our support for the San José Accord and the ongoing OAS effort to seek a peaceful resolution of the political crisis - a resolution which restores democratic governance and the rule of law and respects the rights of all Hondurans....”

What Does This Tell Us About Obama?

Firstly, what is the formal legal and constitutional link between the US president, the US military and the



Honduran soldier stands next to a sign reading "Feminists in resistance"

people who say that we're always intervening and the Yankees need to get out of Latin America...If these critics think that it's appropriate for us to suddenly act in ways that in every other context they consider inappropriate, then I think what that indicates is that maybe there's some hypocrisy involved in their -- their approach to U.S.-Latin American relations..."

The official Joint Statement issued by the three leaders declared on the issue of Honduras:

State Department? This is what the White House web site indicates:

“The power of the Executive Branch is vested in the President of the United States, who also acts as head of state and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces....”

The Department of State plays the lead role in developing and implementing the President's foreign policy. Major responsibilities include United States representation abroad, foreign assistance, foreign military training programs....”

And the US Constitution:

Article II. Section 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States....”

On June 29, 2009, political analyst Thierry Meyssan wrote under the following headline (my translation from the original French):

“The SOUTHCOM took power in a member-state of ALBA”

“... The small Honduran army has been entirely armed, trained and instructed by United States. It is supposed to obey their commander in chief, President and Chief of Staff. But in practice, is under the control of SOUTHCOM, from Soto Cano and Miami. Just last Thursday [June 25 2009] the Pentagon hastily installed the new commander of SOUTHCOM, General Douglas M. Fraser, to follow the coup.... The SOUTHCOM is located in Miami, but also has a station at Soto Cano [Honduras] and outposts in Comalapa (Salvador), Manta (Ecuador) and on the islands of Aruba and Curacao (Netherlands Antilles).”

And so President Obama has to take his responsibilities. Is he allowing the State Department to do the dirty work for him while he remains relatively aloof in order to desperately hang on to the image of “change” for the well-being of his own Administration? The pro military coup newspaper in Honduras, El Heraldito, as quoted above, noted way back in January 19, 2009 that the extreme right-wing in Honduras, South America and the US had to keep the pressure up: “He [Obama] knows that he has no right to disappoint his followers....” Obama seems to be caught between, on the one hand “his followers” that is the electorate and that section of the

ruling circles which supported his accession to the presidency, and on the other hand his electioneering declarations on change which can be interpreted as being his good intentions. Will he join the circus high-wire act? Is he already becoming part of the show?

Does Obama Have His Feet On The Ground?

El Heraldito was quite right six months ago in noticing the contradictions between words and actions and how the right-wing has to manoeuvre in this situation. Polls are already showing that Obama is losing many of “his followers”.

On July 22 the AP-GfK Poll results headlined: “Great hopes for Obama fade to reality.” In the text itself: “That was fast. The hope and optimism that washed over the country in the opening months of Barack Obama's presidency are giving way to harsh realities...; [Confidence in removal of] troops from Iraq and improved respect for the U.S. around the world, all slipping 15 points....”

An August 6 CNN poll: Only forty-one percent of Americans favor the war in Afghanistan, down 9 points since May.”

Is Obama aware of what is happening? It seems that his trips abroad to Europe, Russia, Cairo and Africa seem to have gotten to his head. On July 23 the Chicago Tribune reported on Obama's visit to Chicago that day for two Democratic Party fundraisers (\$15,200 per person with the goal of attaining \$2 million in one night.) The president responded to a reporter's question regarding his administration's prestige on the international scene. While the courageous people of Honduras were confronting for the fourth consecutive week (at that time) the US-

backed military, Obama is quoted as saying that “Anti-Americanism is no longer fashionable.”

Anti-Americanism has never been fashionable in the upper spheres of the Democratic Party. Obama may find, or wants to believe that he has found, some allies on the world scale, but ask the people of Honduras who are bravely declaring to Obama that “we also have a dream!” Ask the peoples of South America? Ask the vast majority of governments in Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean what their opinions are of US domination, control and interference in their America?

The crisis in Honduras continues. Washington, or at least certain right-wing sections in the oligarchy, seems to be continuing the policies which foster “anti-Americanism”. For example, it was reported on August 4 by a Swedish journalist based in South America that according to Honduras human rights activists, Israeli commando forces are now further training the Honduran military and police forces in suppression.”

This situation reminds us of the role played par excellence by Israel: combining on the one hand talk of peace/dialogue and the olive branch while on the other hand using the sword in the most brutal manner, committing genocide. This constitutes a warning to the governments and peoples of South America and the Caribbean about certain attempts to supposedly extend the olive branch.

On August 4, it was also reported that Washington and Columbia

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have come to an agreement to establish seven military bases in Columbia. This has been in the making for some time. However, take into account the military coup d'état in Honduras and the latest Colombian decision. They constitute a new offensive against the rising prestige of Cuba, Venezuela, the other ALBA-member-states (of which Honduras under Zelaya became a member), other countries and the vast majority of governments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The US ruling circles are trying everything to defeat the uprising in Honduras, including media terrorism. The US major media such as the CNN are in tune with the State Department in providing all the excuses for the coup either directly or indirectly. Completely avoiding a report on the resistance against the violent repression is the CNN's contribution in attempting to demoralize the people of Honduras. CNN says in effect: let us give the Honduran people the impression that the world does not know what is happening. This will of course make it easier for the US to continue its Honduran policy or even strike harder against the people. Let us take one of many examples to illustrate the above: several cable news agencies such as AFP reported on the August 5 demonstration of more than 3000 students against the coup at the UNAH University in Tegucigalpa and its violent suppression.^x

However, the CNN carried nothing at all on Honduras. Its only report on South America was on the Chavez criticism of Columbia's accusation of a supposed Chavez-FARC arms connection. The article terminated with disinformation this issue.^y

"...On August 10, more than 10,000 supporters of the deposed Honduran President Manuel Zelaya repudiated the de facto government and warned that they will deepen their protests for the return of the president.... This was the largest demonstration for the return of Zelaya since July 5 near the airport of Toncontin in Tegucigalpa, where the

ousted president attempted a landing with a Venezuelan airplane; however, the de facto government prevented the landing by erecting obstacles on the runway. The march was strengthened with the arrival of crowds from the eastern and northern regions of the country and an expected column from the south. Other went to San Pedro Sula...." (translated from the Spanish by the author)^z

The People Of Honduras Are The Ones Who Will Have The Last Word

The peoples of the world, in my view, also have to keep the pressure up on Obama and his administration. As he looks at the polls, he must be aware: If the Honduras issue backfires on him, as is quite possible, and thus fuels "anti-Americanism", how will his foreign policy look to the US population and even to those who pay \$15,200 per plate for a fundraiser? The latter did not invest this money in order to usher in another Bush-like era of an anti-US atmosphere spreading across the globe. Then again, Obama also has to look ahead to the next presidential elections in 2012 for which he seems to be already seeking to fill the coffers. Does he not want to have the right-wing oligarchy on his side as well in order to assure a victory in 2012?

The swirl of US politics seems to be inevitably drawing Obama into the high wire act. I hope that this is not the case. The people of Honduras as well as the peoples and most governments of South America are determined to force him to take a stand. Which actions? Here are some that Obama can take: Executing serious actions and sanctions (not showcasing the revocation of a few visas to Honduran de facto regime members) against the coup regime; and supporting in real concrete unconditional terms the return of President Zelaya to his post. Obama, as a lawyer, should also be able to deal with all bureaucracy in the US government (if that is the problem, which I doubt) which six weeks after the coup has still not decided how to legally classify the coup!

The evolution of the political situation of the new US Administration also raises some questions about the US type of democracy and elections and how they operate in the USA.

That country supposedly gives (through diplomacy and by military force) lessons about democracy and elections to the peoples of the world. If this current international situation proves to represent "change" that people can NOT believe in, than some may wonder: What is the meaning of democracy and elections in the USA? (I will be dealing with this thoroughly in a future publication.) Obama should accept the notion of mutual respect between different countries and their respective political systems.

Obama and Clinton and their entire administration are being judged. "...The people of Honduras are the ones who will have the last word", predicted Fidel Castro on July 21 in the midst of the most complicated situation facing the people: the US-backed Arias mediation combined simultaneously with police and military repression against the resistance.¹

As the situation evolves, Fidel Castro's prediction (and confidence in the peoples) is proving to be right. In fact it seems to be irreversible, notwithstanding the ups and downs. One of the leaders of the resistance in Honduras, a deputy in the Honduran Congress, made a most profound comment to Prensa Latina reporter Raimundo López. The latter has been courageously and continuously reporting from the ground in military-occupied Honduras. On July 18 the Honduran activist César Lam told the reporter in an interview that "There is a pre-coup Honduras and a post-coup Honduras."²

This statement reflects the resistance movement of all the Honduran social and new political forces.

Even the most experienced tight-rope walker can be shaken to the ground by the force of the peoples' desire for change. It would be preferable for President Obama to take a just stand.

** Arnold August lives in Montreal, Canada and is an author and journalist specializing on Cuba.*

Footnotes:

a - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126412.htm>

b - <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126445.htm>
c - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126506.htm>
d - <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204886304574311083177158174.html>
e - <http://www.cubadebate.cu/opinion/2009/07/27/euuu-wall-street-journal-publica-editorial-del-dictador-roberto-micheletti-justificando-el-golpe-de-estado-en-honduras/>
f - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126589.htm>
g - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/aug/126847.htm>
h - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/aug/126950.htm>
i - <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/05/AR2009080503998.html>
j - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-President-Obama-and-President-Urbe-of-Columbia-in-Joint-Press-Availability/
k - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Briefing-by-White-House-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-6-29-09/
l - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Briefing-by-White-House-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-7-1-09/
m - <http://blogs.abcnews.com/politicalpunch/2009/07/in-russia-president-obama-explains-his-support-for-ousted-president-of-honduras.html>
n - http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=2009/8/8/worldupdates/2009-08-08T055507Z_01_NOOTR_RTRM-DNC_0_416221-1&sec=Worldupdates
o - <http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2009/08/10/politics/politicalhotsheet/entry5230498.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody>
p - http://www.ewspsf.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9464:joint-statement-by-north-american-leaders-august-10-2009&catid=88888983:latest-national-news&Itemid=88889930
q - http://www.whitehouse.gov/our_government/executive_branch/
r - http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html
s - <http://www.voltairenet.org/article160801.html#article160801>
t - http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/07/22/ap_gfk_poll_great_hopes_for_obama_fade_to_reality/
u - <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/08/06/poll.afghanistan/>
v - http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/clout_st/2009/07/president-barack-obama-in-town-tonight-for-two-democratic-fundraisers.html
w - <http://www.cubadebate.cu/especiales/2009/08/04/comandos-israelitas-con-experiencias-de-palestina-y-colombia-capacitan-a-las-fiaa-de-honduras-audio/>
x - http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/afp/090805/world/honduras_politics_military_coup_122
y - <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/> (accessed August 5 and 6)
z - <http://www.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2009/08/11/miles-marcharon-por-zelaya-en-la-mayor-manifestacion-desde-el-5-de-julio/>
1 - <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/reflexiones/2009/ing/f210709i.html>
2 - <http://www.gramma.cubaweb.cu/2009/07/18/interna-artic08.html>

EL CASO DE HONDURAS: WASHINGTON EN LA CUERDA FLOJA

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ero, dirigiéndose a otro reportero. Pero a pesar de eso el pueblo de Honduras sabe que lo que ocurrió es un golpe militar. Ellos están organizando y uniendo más sus fuerzas para avanzar en su lucha contra las fuerzas militares y la policía. Y esto se está llevando a cabo a pesar de la represión que se ha incrementado. Represión que ya alcanza por lo menos a seis asesinatos y cientos de arrestos y heridos.

El mismo día, 6 de Agosto, según un informe de Reuters, el Departamento de Estado fue incluso más lejos: “nuestra política y estrategia para un compromiso no está basada en apoyar algún político o individuo en particular. Más bien, está basada en encontrar la solución que mejor sirva al pueblo hondureño y sus aspiraciones democráticas” escribió Richard Verma, el subsecretario de estado de asuntos legislativos. ‘Hemos rechazado llamados a imponer demoleadoras sanciones económicas y hemos dejado claro que todos los estados deben tratar de facilitar una solución sin llamados a la violencia y respetando el principio de no intervención’, dijo Verma. El documento fue obtenido mediante el servicio de noticias Reuters.”ⁱ

Dos puntos importantes:

1. Desde la posición de supuestamente apoyar a Zelaya y oponerse a Micheletti, el Departamento de Estado (como he citado anteriormente) no se basa en “apoyar algún político o individuo en particular”. ¡El Departamento de Estado es ahora neutral! Sin embargo, esto muestra que la fina línea sobre la que el Departamento de Estado caminaba no era tan fina. En realidad estaba en territorio del régimen de facto. Mantener el status quo significa apoyar a Micheletti.

2. Cuando el representante del

Departamento de Estado Richard Verma indique que hemos rechazado “sanciones económicas demoleadoras”... ¿no nos está dando una razón de por qué los Estados Unidos no han clasificado legalmente el golpe como un golpe de estado militar?

Obama: ¿Víctima O Cómplice?

Nosotros hemos estado tratando extensamente con el Departamento de Estado y la Sra. Clinton pero no con el Presidente Obama. Esto es difícil de evitar si vemos como Obama se ha mantenido alejado de colocarse él mismo en el centro de este tema. Desde los inicios de la crisis el 29 de Junio hasta el momento en que se escriben estas páginas, el Presidente Obama y su Secretario de Prensa han hecho un total de seis comentarios.

El 29 de Junio, en una oportunidad ante la prensa en la Casa Blanca con el Presidente colombiano Uribe, Obama dijo: “Nosotros creemos que el golpe no es legal y que el Presidente Zelaya sigue siendo el Presidente de Honduras, el Presidente democráticamente electo allí. En eso estamos unidos todos los países de la región, incluyendo Colombia y la Organización de Estados Americanos.”^j

El 29 de Julio, el Secretario de Prensa de la Casa Blanca Robert Gibbs se presentó ante los reporteros:

“Pregunta: ... aún en el tema Honduras, y para tratar de obtener una clara imagen acerca de lo que EEUU está considerando. ¿Está la administración evaluando retirar a su embajador como los gobiernos de izquierda de América Latina han decidido hacer, o evaluando un posible corte de la ayuda?”

Mr. Gibbs: bien, nuevamente, yo pienso que algo de esto en las próximas -en el marco de los siguientes pasos que estamos evaluando. Yo no quisiera ser realmente específico en este punto.

Pregunta: ¿Tenían los Estados Unidos algún conocimiento previo o habían oído

alguna palabra acerca de que se planeaba un golpe? ¿Hizo todo lo posible para tratar de tener información de ello? ¿Qué nos dice este fallo de la administración en haber obtenido esa información acerca de su credibilidad en América Latina?

Mr. Gibbs:

Bien, yo pienso como le dije minutos antes, la administración, nuestro gobierno, trabajando con sus socios, estuvo tratando de impedir el tipo de levantamiento que esta sucediendo en las últimas 24 horas. Ellos trabajaron en ello durante muchos días atrás. Y continuarán trabajando para restaurar el orden democrático en Honduras.

Pregunta: ¿Advirtió la administración al presidente Zelaya de lo que se estaba gestando?

Mr. Gibbs: Eso yo no lo sé.”^k

Basado en lo anterior, ¿hay alguna diferencia entre esto y el acto del equilibrista desarrollado por el Departamento de Estado?

No parece haber una gran diferencia.

El 1 de Julio, el Secretario de Prensa de la Casa Blanca, Robert Gibbs enfrentó a los reporteros:

“Pregunta: Pero con el Pentágono suspendiendo operaciones militares conjuntas, ¿qué alcance tiene ello si existen nuevos pasos bajo consideración en estos momentos?”



Protesta contra el golpe en Tegucigalpa, Honduras. 23 de septiembre, 2009.

Mr. Gibbs: Bien, nosotros continuamos monitoreando la situación y responderemos de acuerdo a como los eventos se desenvuelvan. Pero, de nuevo, como le dije, nosotros estamos observando de muy cerca lo que está sucediendo allá.”^l

Sin embargo, mientras el Departamento de Estado parecía estar cada vez mas atrapado en el escenario del “si y pero” en relación con el retorno del presidente Zelaya, el Presidente Obama hizo un comentario con relación a Honduras en respuesta a preguntas realizadas en Moscú durante su visita a Rusia. El 7 de Julio el Corresponsal titular de la ABC News ante la Casa Blanca, Jack Tapper, quien no es conocido como un conservador ni la ABC exactamente parte del ala derecha, como si lo es la Fox News, escribió desde Moscú y citó al Presidente Obama: “...”América apoya ahora la restitución del Presidente Zelaya, electo democráticamente en Honduras, aún cuando él se ha opuesto energicamente a las políticas Americanas...”

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EL CASO DE HONDURAS: WASHINGTON EN LA CUERDA FLOJA

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Tapper, basado en su larga experiencia en la política de la Casa Blanca escribió: “Enfrentando las críticas por haber apoyado el “lado equivocado” en el reciente golpe en Honduras, el Presidente Obama el martes [7 de Julio], trató de explicar su defensa en nombre del expulsado Presidente Manuel Zelaya. Pero los conservadores han criticado al presidente y culparon a Zelaya por su posición actual”. El corresponsal Tapper señaló ello como un ejemplo de la presión de los conservadores, el ala derecha de la Florida anti-Venezuela y anti-Cuba, representantes del Congreso Republicano Ileana Ros-Lehtinen y Connie Mack.¹¹

Tomando en cuenta la anterior declaración de Obama, en la superficie parece haber diferencias, si no un conflicto, entre, por un lado, el presidente Obama y del otro lado el Departamento de Estado. Este último (como hemos visto anteriormente en numerosas ocasiones y más recientemente en el artículo de Micheletti en el Wall Street Journal) está más descaradamente ligado a los militares y fuerzas del ala derecha de la era de Bush.

El 7 de agosto, según Reuters, Obama dijo a los periodistas que el todavía apoya la reincorporación de Zelaya. Sin embargo, añadió, “No puedo pulsar un botón y, de repente restablecer el Sr. Zelaya, “Obama dijo... “Es importante observar la ironía de que la gente que se quejan de la injerencia norteamericana

en América Latina están ahora quejándose de que no estamos interviniendo lo suficiente.”¹²

Aquí nuevamente un observador puede recibir la impresión de que existe una diferencia significativa entre el Presidente y el Departamento de Estado. Mientras que el Departamento de Estado declaró el 6 de agosto, como he citado anteriormente, que su política no se basa en apoyar algún político o individuo en particular, Obama declara al día siguiente el 7 de agosto que él “...todavía apoya el restablecimiento de Zelaya.” Sin embargo, utilizando su don de oratoria, Obama condiciona este apoyo a Zelaya diciendo que él “no puede pulsar un botón para restablecer a Zelaya”. ¿Quiere esto quiere decir que las presiones contra Obama desde las oligarquías de derecha en América del Norte y América Latina, e incluso desde el Departamento de Estado, son tan fuertes como para que él pueda hacer algo? ¿O está Obama simplemente usando diferentes palabras e imágenes para apoyar la política del Departamento de Estado que consiste en ganar tiempo y ofrecer así oxígeno al gobierno de facto?

En referencia a los comentarios de Obama sobre la ironía en relación a los que se oponen versus los que apoyan la injerencia de Washington: Honduras tiene en su territorio una importante base militar que está plenamente patrocinada por los Estados Unidos. Hay fuerzas armadas y aparato militar norteamericano en territorio hondureño y de ahí el sustento a la violenta represión del pueblo Hondureño que está teniendo lugar. Cerrar

completamente la base militar, y retirar inmediatamente las tropas norteamericanas y el equipamiento militar y detener total y definitivamente la capacitación de los militares, no significa interferir en los asuntos internos de Honduras. Estas bases, bien sea en Honduras o Colombia, son simplemente extensiones del poder militar de los Estados Unidos en otros países.

Aunque es otro contexto y con diferentes ordenamientos jurídicos y condiciones históricas, ¿quien se quejaría de injerencia extranjera en asuntos Cubanos, si los Estados Unidos cierra ahora Guantánamo, se retira completamente y entrega todo ese pedazo de territorio cubano al pueblo cubano? ¿Quién se quejaría de la injerencia extranjera (aparte de Micheletti) si Obama decide hoy como Presidente, retirar el Embajador de Estados Unidos en Honduras y cortar las relaciones diplomáticas hasta que Zelaya sea restaurado? Son “botones” que el Presidente Obama puede pulsar.

Día 10 de Agosto, según Associated Press, en la Cumbre de Líderes de América del Norte, Obama repitió-

“ Los mismos críticos que dicen que los Estados Unidos no han intervenido lo suficiente en Honduras son las mismas personas que dicen que siempre estamos interviniendo y que los yanquis necesitan salirse de Latinoamérica”, declaró el mandatario en una rueda de prensa al finalizar la Cumbre de Líderes de América del Norte.

...

“Si estos críticos creen que es apropiado que nosotros de repente actuemos de manera que en otro contexto ellos mismos considerarían inapropiado, creo que entonces eso indica que quizás hay algo de hipocresía... (y) ciertamente eso no va a dirigir las políticas de mi administración”, expresó el presidente estadounidense.¹³

...

En la declaración conjunta tras la cumbre los mandatarios dijeron que habían discutido el tema ‘ampliamente’ y reafirmaron su ‘apoyo al Acuerdo de San José y a los esfuerzos que actualmente desarrolla la OEA para encontrar una resolución pacífica a la crisis política, que restaure la gobernabilidad democrática, el estado de derecho y que respete los derechos de todos los hondureños.’¹⁴

¿Qué Nos Dice Esto Acerca De Obama?

Primeramente, ¿cual es el vínculo legal formal y constitucional entre el presidente de los EEUU, los militares de los EEUU y el Departamento de Estado? Esto es lo que indica el sitio web de la Casa Blanca:

“El poder en la rama ejecutiva recae en el Presidente de los Estados Unidos, quien a su vez actúa como jefe de estado y Comandante en Jefe de las fuerzas armadas...”

El Departamento de Estado juega el papel principal en el desarrollo e implementación de la política exterior del Presidente. Sus principales responsabilidades incluyen la representación de los Estados Unidos en el ex-

terior, la ayuda internacional, los programas internacionales de entrenamiento militar...”¹⁵

En la Constitución de los EEUU-

Artículo II Sección 2

“El Presidente será el Comandante en Jefe del Ejército y la Marina de los Estados Unidos...”¹⁶

El 29 de Junio, el analista político Thierry Meyssan escribió con el siguiente encabezamiento:

“El SouthCom toma el poder en un estado del ALBA”

...”el pequeño ejército hondureño ha sido enteramente armado, entrenado e instruido por los Estados Unidos. Se supone obediencia a su Comandante en jefe, el Presidente de la República y al Jefe de su Estado Mayor; pero en la práctica, se encuentra bajo el control del SouthCom, desde Soto cano y Miami.

Precisamente el jueves pasado 25 de junio 2009, el Pentágono instaló apresuradamente al nuevo comandante del SouthCom, el general Douglas M. Fraser, para darle seguimiento al golpe....

El SouthCom tiene su sede en Miami, pero dispone además de una estación en Soto Cano y de puestos avanzados en Comalapa (Salvador), Manta (Ecuador) así como en las islas de Aruba y Curazao (Antillas Holandesas).¹⁷

El presidente Obama tiene que

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asumir sus responsabilidades. ¿Está él permitiendo que el Departamento de Estado haga el trabajo sucio, mientras él permanece distante con el objetivo de aferrarse a su imagen de “cambio” para el bien de su propia administración? El periódico pro golpe militar en Honduras, El Heraldito, como se citó anteriormente, señaló el 19 de Enero del 2009, que la extrema derecha en Honduras, Suramérica y los EEUU tenían que mantener la presión: “El (Obama) sabe que no tiene el derecho de decepcionar a sus seguidores”... Obama parece estar atrapado entre, por un lado, “sus seguidores”, esto es, el electorado y la sección de círculos de los círculos dirigentes que apoyaron su ascenso a la presidencia, y del otro lado sus declaraciones de cambio durante el período electoral, las cuales pueden ser interpretadas como expresión de sus buenas intenciones. ¿Se unirá él al acto circense de la cuerda floja? ¿Se estará convirtiendo en parte del show?

¿Tiene Obama Los Pies En La Tierra?

El Heraldito tenía razón seis meses atrás cuando se refirió a las contradicciones entre las palabras y las acciones y a como el ala derecha tiene que maniobrar en esa situación. Ya actualmente las encuestas están mostrando que Obama está perdiendo a muchos de “sus seguidores”.

El 22 de Julio, resultados de la encuesta AP-GfK señalaron: “Grandes esperanzas en Obama se desvanecen a pasar a la realidad”. Y en el texto señalaron: “Ello fue rápido. La esperanza y el optimismo que inundó el país durante los primeros meses de la presidencia de Barack Obama, están dando paso a la dura realidad...; [La confianza en el retiro de] tropas de Irak y mejorar el respeto a EEUU en todo el mundo, han caído 15 puntos...”¹

Una encuesta de CNN del 6 de agosto: sólo el 41% de estadounidenses favorecen la guerra en Afganistán, un respaldo 9 puntos más bajo que en mayo.²

¿Está Obama consciente de lo que está pasando? Tal parece que su viaje a través de toda Europa, Rusia, El Cairo y África se le ha ido a la cabeza. El 23 de Julio el Chicago Tribune reportó la visita de Obama a Chicago ese día a dos actividades para la recaudación de fondos para el Partido Demócrata (15 200 USD por persona con la meta de alcanzar 2 millones en una noche). El presidente respondió a las preguntas de los reporteros con relación a su administración y prestigio en la escena internacional. Mientras el valiente pueblo de Honduras estaba enfrentando por cuarta semana consecutiva a los militares respaldados por EEUU, Obama es citado diciendo que “El Anti-americanismo ya no está más de moda”.³

El Anti-americanismo nunca ha sido una moda en las altas esferas del Partido demócrata. Obama puede encontrar, o quiere creer que ha encontrado algunos aliados a escala mundial, pero pregunten al pueblo de Honduras que valientemente declara a Obama “¡nosotros también tenemos un sueño![We also have a dream]”. Pregunte a los pueblos de Suramérica. Pregunte a las amplias mayorías de gobiernos de América Latina, de América Central y del Caribe ¿cual es su opinión acerca de la dominación de los EEUU, y de su control e interferencia en América?

La crisis en Honduras continúa. Washington, o al menos algunas fracciones derechistas de la oligarquía, parece continuar las políticas que fomentan el anti-americanismo. Por ejemplo, el 4 de agosto un periodista Sueco radicado en América del Sur informó: Según activistas Hondureños de derechos humanos, fuerzas de comandos israelíes están ahora incrementando la capacitación de los militares hondureños y fuerzas de policía en cómo reprimir al pueblo.⁴

Esta situación nos recuerda el papel que por excelencia ha desempeñado Israel: combinar por un lado palabras de paz y diálogo y la rama de olivo, mientras que,

por otro lado hacen uso de la espada en la manera más brutal, cometiendo un genocidio. Esto constituye una advertencia a los gobiernos y pueblos de América del Sur y el Caribe acerca de algunas supuestas intenciones de extenderles la rama de olivo.

El 4 de agosto, también se informó que Washington y Colombia han llegado a un acuerdo para crear siete bases militares en Colombia. Esto es algo que lleva algún tiempo preparándose. Sin embargo, hay que tener en consideración el vínculo entre el golpe de Estado militar en Honduras y la última decisión Colombiana. Estas acciones constituyen una nueva ofensiva contra el creciente prestigio de Cuba, Venezuela, y los demás estados miembro de ALBA (Alianza a la cual Honduras se incorporó como miembro durante la presidencia de Zelaya), y contra otros países, y la inmensa mayoría de los gobiernos de América Latina y el Caribe.

Los círculos gobernantes en Estados Unidos están intentándolo todo para derrotar al levantamiento en Honduras, incluido el terrorismo mediático. Los grandes medios de comunicación norteamericanos como CNN estén en sintonía con el Departamento de Estado. CNN justifica directa o indirectamente el golpe. Al evitar completamente reportar la resistencia que realmente está teniendo lugar en Honduras contra el golpe, la CNN está contribuyendo a los intentos de desmoralizar al pueblo. Permítasenos, la CNN en efecto dice, dar al pueblo Hondureño la impre-



sión de que el mundo no sabe lo que está sucediendo. Por supuesto, ello hará más fácil para los Estados Unidos continuar su política hondureña o incluso a golpear aún más duro contra el pueblo. Tomemos uno de muchos ejemplos para ilustrar lo anterior: muchas agencias de noticias por cable tales como AFP reportó sobre la manifestación que llevaron a cabo más de 3000 estudiantes el 5 de Agosto en la UNAH en Tegucigalpa, y la violenta represión a que fue sometida.⁵

Sin embargo, la CNN no reportó absolutamente nada sobre Honduras. Su único reporte sobre América del Sur fue las críticas de Chávez en contra la acusación de Colombia de una supuesta entrega de armas de Chávez a las FARC. El artículo terminó brindando desinformación sobre esta cuestión.⁶

“...Día 10 de agosto, más de 10 000 partidarios del depuesto presidente hondureño, Manuel Zelaya, repudiaron ayer al gobierno de facto y advirtieron que profundizarán sus protestas por el regreso del mandatario...”

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Las campanas están doblando por el dólar

REFLEXIONES DEL COMPAÑERO FIDEL

El imperio dominó al mundo más por la economía y la mentira que por la fuerza. Había obtenido el privilegio de imprimir las divisas convertibles al finalizar la Segunda Guerra Mundial, monopolizaba el arma nuclear, disponía de casi todo el oro del mundo y era el único productor en gran escala de equipos productivos, bienes de consumo, alimentos y servicios a nivel mundial. Tenía, sin embargo, un límite a la impresión de papel moneda: el respaldo en oro, al precio constante de 35 dólares la onza troy. Así ocurrió durante

más de 25 años, hasta que el 15 de agosto de 1971 mediante una orden presidencial de Richard Nixon, Estados Unidos rompió unilateralmente ese compromiso internacional estafando al mundo. No me cansaré de repetirlo. De esa forma lanzó sobre la economía mundial sus gastos del rearme y aventuras bélicas, en especial la guerra de Viet Nam que, según cálculos conservadores, costó no menos de 200 mil millones de dólares y la vida de más de 45 mil jóvenes norteamericanos.

Sobre ese pequeño país del Tercer Mundo fueron lanzadas más bombas que las utilizadas en la última guerra mundial. Millones de personas murieron o fueron mutiladas. Al suspender la conversión, el dólar pasó a ser una divisa que podía imprimirse a voluntad del Gobierno norteamericano sin el respaldo de un valor constante.

Los bonos y billetes de la Tesorería continuaron circulando como divisas convertibles; las reservas de los Estados continuaron nutriéndose de esos billetes que, por un lado, servían para adquirir materias primas, propiedades, bienes y servicios de cualquier parte del mundo y, por otro, privilegiaban las exportaciones de Estados Unidos frente a las demás economías del planeta. Los políticos y académicos mencionan una y otra vez el costo real de aquella guerra genocida, admirablemente descrita en la película de Oliver Stone. Las personas tienden a realizar cálculos como si los millones fuesen iguales. No suelen percatarse de que los millones de dólares de 1971 no son iguales a los millones del 2009.

Un millón de dólares hoy, cuando el oro —un metal cuyo valor ha sido el más estable a lo largo de siglos— tiene un precio que sobrepasa los mil dólares la onza troy, vale alrededor de 30 veces lo que valía cuando Nixon suspendió la conversión.

Doscientos mil millones en 1971, equivalen a 6 millones de millones de dólares en el 2009. Si no se tiene en cuenta esto, las nuevas generaciones no tendrán una idea de la barbarie imperialista.

De igual modo, cuando se habla de los 20 mil millones invertidos en Europa al finalizar la Segunda Guerra Mundial —en virtud del Plan Marshall para reconstruir y controlar la economía de las principales potencias europeas, que poseían la fuerza de trabajo y la cultura técnica necesaria para el rápido desarrollo de la producción y los servicios— las personas suelen ignorar que el valor real de lo invertido entonces por el imperio equivale al valor internacional actual de 600 mil millones de dólares. No advierten que 20 mil millones apenas alcanzarían hoy para construir tres grandes refinerías de petróleo, capaces de suministrar 800 mil barriles diarios de gasolina, además de otros derivados del petróleo.

Las sociedades de consumo, el despilfarro absurdo y caprichoso de energía y de recursos naturales que hoy amenazan la supervivencia de la especie, no serían explicables en tan breve período histórico si no se conoce la forma irresponsable en que el capitalismo desarrollado, en su fase superior, ha regido los destinos del mundo.

Tan asombroso despilfarro explica por qué los dos países más industrializados del mundo, Estados Unidos y Japón, están endeudados en aproximadamente 20 millones de millones de dólares.

Desde luego que la economía de Estados Unidos se aproxima a un Producto Interno Bruto anual de 15 millones de millones de dólares. Las crisis del capitalismo son cíclicas, como lo demuestra irrefutablemente la historia del sistema, pero esta vez se trata de algo más: una crisis estructural, como explicaba el Ministro de Planificación y

Desarrollo de Venezuela, el profesor Jorge Giordani a Walter Martínez en su programa por Telesur en la noche de ayer.

Los despachos cablegráficos divulgados hoy, viernes 9 de octubre, añaden datos que son irrefutables. Un despacho de AFP procedente de Washington precisa que el déficit presupuestal de Estados Unidos, en el año fiscal 2009, se eleva a 1,4 millones de millones de dólares, el 9,9% del PIB, “algo nunca visto desde 1945, al finalizar la Segunda Guerra Mundial”, añade.

El déficit en el año 2007 había sido ya un tercio de esa cifra. Se esperan elevadas sumas de carácter deficitario los años 2010, 2011 y 2012. Ese enorme déficit está dictado, fundamentalmente, por el Congreso y el Gobierno de Estados Unidos para salvar los grandes bancos de ese país, impedir que el desempleo se eleve por encima del 10% y sacar a Estados Unidos de la recesión. Es lógico que si inundan la nación de dólares, las grandes cadenas comerciales venderán más mercancías, las industrias incrementarán la producción, menos ciudadanos perderán sus viviendas, la marea del desempleo dejará de crecer, y las acciones de Wall Street elevarán su valor. Fue la forma clásica de resolver la crisis. Sin embargo, el mundo no volverá ya a ser el mismo. Paul Krugman, prestigioso Premio Nobel de Economía, acaba de afirmar que el comercio internacional ha sufrido su mayor caída, peor todavía que la de la Gran Depresión y expresó dudas sobre la pronta recuperación.

No se puede inundar también el mundo de dólares y pensar que esos papeles sin respaldo en oro mantendrán su valor. Otras

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The Bells are Tolling For the Dollar

REFLECTIONS OF FIDEL

The Empire dominated the world more through the economy and lies than by force. It obtained the privilege of printing convertible currency at the end of World War II; it had a monopoly of nuclear weapons; it had virtually all the gold in the world; and was the only large-scale producer of productive equipment, consumer goods, food and services at global level. However, it did have a limit on printing paper money: the backing of gold, at the constant price of \$35 per troy ounce. That was the case for more than 25 years until, on August 15,

1971, via a presidential order from Richard Nixon, the United States unilaterally broke that international commitment by defrauding the world. I shall insist on repeating that. In that way it launched on the world economy its rearmament costs and military adventures – in particular the Vietnam war – which, in line with conservative calculations, cost no less than \$200 billion and the lives of more than 45,000 young Americans.

More bombs were dropped on this little Third World country than all of those used in the last world war. Millions of people died or were mutilated. When the conversion rate was suspended, the dollar became a currency that could be printed at the will of the U.S. government without the backing of a constant value.

Treasury bonds and bills continued to circulate as convertible currency; state reserves continued nourishing themselves on those bills which, on the one hand, served to acquire raw materials, properties, goods and services from every part of the world and, on the other, privileged U.S. exports in the face of other economies of the planet. Time and time again, politicians and academics refer to the real cost of that suicidal war, admirably described in the film by Oliver Stone. People tend to make calculations as if the millions were the same. They do not usually take note of the fact that the millions of dollars of 1971 are not the same as the millions of 2009.

One million dollars today, when gold – a metal whose value has been the most stable throughout the centuries – has a price in excess of \$1,000 per troy ounce, is worth approximately 30 times what it was worth when Nixon suspended the conversion rate. In 2009, \$6 trillion is equivalent to \$200 billion in 1971. If this is not taken into consideration, the new generations will have no idea of imperialist barbarism.

In the same way, when one speaks of the \$20 billion invested in Europe at the end of World War II – in virtue of the Marshall Plan for reconstructing and controlling the principal European powers that had the necessary workforce and technical culture for the rapid development of goods and services – people usually ignore the fact that the real value of what was invested at that time by the empire is equivalent to a current value of \$600 billion. They do not note that today, \$20 billion would barely stretch to building three large oil refineries capable of supplying 800,000 barrels of gasoline per day, in addition to other oil derivatives.

The consumer societies, the absurd and capricious waste of energy and natural resources that are currently threatening the survival of the species, would not be explicable in such a brief historical period if one is unaware of the irresponsible manner in which developed capitalism, in its superior phase, has ruled the destinies of the world.

That astounding waste explains why the two most industrialized countries of the world, the United States and Japan, are indebted to approximately \$20 trillion.

Of course the U.S. economy has an annual gross domestic product of \$15 trillion. The crises of capitalism are cyclical, as the history of the system irrefutably demonstrates, but this time it is about something more: a



structural crisis, as Professor Jorge Giordani, Venezuelan minister of planning and development, explained to Walter Martínez in the latter's Telesur program last night.

News agency reports circulated today, Friday October 9, add irrefutable data. An AFP cable from Washington notes that the budget deficit of the United States in the fiscal year 2009 is rising to \$1.4 trillion, 9.9% of the GDP, “something unseen since 1945, at the end of World War II,” it adds.

The deficit in 2007 was one third of that figure. High deficit figures are expected for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012. That huge deficit is fundamentally determined by the U.S. Congress, to save that country's major banks, to prevent unemployment rising above 10% and to pull the United States out of recession. It is logical that if they flood the nation with dollars, the large commercial chains will sell more merchandise, industries will increase production, fewer citizens will lose their homes, the unemployment tide will stop rising, and

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REFLEXIONES DEL COMPAÑERO FIDEL

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economías, hoy más sólidas, han surgido. El dólar dejó de ser ya la reserva en divisas de todos los Estados, más bien sus poseedores desean apartarse de él, aunque evitando en lo posible que se devalúe antes de que puedan desprenderse de ellos.

El euro de la Unión Europea, el yuan chino, el franco suizo, el yen japonés —a pesar de las deudas de ese país—, hasta la libra esterlina, junto a otras divisas, pasaron a ocupar el lugar del dólar en el comercio internacional. El oro metálico vuelve a convertirse en importante moneda de reserva internacional.

No se trata de una opinión personal caprichosa, ni deseo calumniar esa moneda.

Otro Premio Nobel de Economía, Joseph Stiglitz, expresó, según despacho cablegráfico: “lo más probable es que el billete verde siga de capa caída. Los políticos no deciden los tipos de cambio y los discursos tampoco lo hacen”. Esto lo declaró el 6 de octubre en la Asamblea Anual Conjunta del FMI y el Banco Mundial que se celebró en Estambul”. En esa ciudad se pudo apreciar una violenta represión. El evento fue saludado con vidrieras comerciales rotas e incendios producidos por cocteles molotov.

Otras noticias hablaban de que los países europeos temían el efecto negativo de la debilidad del dólar frente al euro y sus consecuencias sobre las exportaciones europeas. El Secretario del Tesoro de Estados Unidos declaró que a su país “le interesaba un dólar fuerte”. Stiglitz se burló de la declaración oficial y expresó según EFE, que “en el caso de Estados Unidos el dinero se ha derrochado y la causa ha sido el rescate multimillonario de los bancos y sufragar guerras como Afganistán”. Según la agencia, el Premio Nobel “insistió en que en vez de invertir 700 mil millones en ayuda a los banqueros, EE.UU. pudo haber

destinado parte de ese dinero a ayudar a los países en desarrollo, lo que a su vez habría estimulado la demanda global”.

Robert Zoellick, presidente del Banco Mundial, dio la voz de alarma días antes, y advirtió que el dólar no podía mantener indefinidamente su status como divisa de reserva.

Un eminente profesor de Economía de la Universidad de Harvard, Kenneth Rogoff, afirmó que la próxima gran crisis financiera será la de “los déficit públicos”.

El Banco Mundial declaró que “el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) mostró que los bancos centrales del mundo acumularon menos dólares durante el segundo semestre del 2009 que en ningún otro momento durante los últimos 10 años e incrementaron su tenencia de euros”.

El propio 6 de octubre, la AFP publicó que el oro alcanzó la cifra récord de 1 045 dólares la onza, impulsado por el debilitamiento del dólar y el temor a la inflación.

El diario Independent, de Londres, publicó que un grupo de países petroleros estudiaban reemplazar el dólar en las transacciones comerciales por una cesta de divisas que incluirán el yen, el yuan, el euro, el oro y una futura moneda común.

La noticia filtrada o deducida con impresionante lógica fue desmentida por algunos de los países presuntamente interesados en esa medida de protección. No desean que colapse, pero tampoco seguir acumulando una moneda que ha perdido 30 veces su valor en menos de tres décadas.

No puedo dejar de consignar un despacho de la agencia EFE, la cual no puede ser acusada de antiimperialista y que en las actuales circunstancias transmite opiniones de especial interés:

“Expertos de economía y finanzas coincidieron hoy en Nueva York en afirmar que la peor crisis desde la Gran Depresión ha llevado a ese país a jugar un papel menos significativo en la economía mundial”.

“La recesión ha hecho que el mundo

haya cambiado la forma en que se mira a EE.UU. Ahora nuestro país es menos significativo que antes y eso es algo que debemos reconocer”, afirmó David Rubenstein, presidente y fundador de Carlyle Group, la mayor firma de capital de riesgo del mundo, en su intervención en el World Business Forum”.

“El mundo financiero va a estar menos centrado en EE.UU. (¼) Nueva York no va a ser nunca más la capital financiera mundial y ese papel se repartirá con Londres, Shanghai, Dubai, Sao Paulo y otras ciudades”, aseveró”.

“¼ desgranó los problemas a los que se enfrentará EE.UU. cuando salga de ‘una gran recesión’ de la que aún quedan ‘un par de meses por delante’”.

“¼ ‘el enorme endeudamiento’ público, la inflación, el desempleo, la pérdida de valor del dólar como divisa de reserva, los precios de la energía¼”.

“El Gobierno debe disminuir el gasto público para enfrentar el problema de la deuda y hacer algo que gusta poco: subir los impuestos”.

“El economista de la Universidad de Columbia y asesor especial de la ONU, Jeffrey Sachs, coincidió con Rubenstein en que el predominio económico y financiero de EE.UU. ‘se está apagando’.”

“Hemos dejado un sistema centrado en EE.UU. por uno ‘multilateral’¼”.

“¼ ‘veinte años de irresponsabilidad por parte primero de la administración de Bill Clinton y luego de la de George W. Bush’, cedieron a las presiones de Wall Street¼”.

“¼ los bancos negociaban con ‘activos tóxicos’ para conseguir dinero fácil, explicó Sachs”.

“Lo importante ahora es reconocer el desafío sin precedentes que supone lograr un desarrollo económico sostenible y consecuente con las reglas básicas físicas y biológicas de este planeta¼”.

Por otro lado, las noticias que llegaban directamente de nuestra delegación en Bangkok, capital de Tailandia, no eran en absoluto alentadoras:

“Lo esencial que se discute —informó textualmente nuestro Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores— es la ratificación o no del concepto responsabilidades comunes pero diferenciadas entre los países industrializados y las llamadas economías emergentes, básicamente China, Brasil, India y Sudáfrica, y los países subdesarrollados.

“China, Brasil, India, Sudáfrica, Egipto, Bangladesh, Pakistán y el ALBA son los más activos. En general el Grupo de los 77, en su mayoría, se mantiene en posiciones firmes y correctas.

“Las cifras de reducción de emisiones de carbono que se están negociando no se corresponden con las que se calculan por los científicos para mantener el aumento de la temperatura a un nivel inferior a 2 grados Celsius, 25-40%. En este momento, la negociación se mueve en torno a una reducción del 11-18%.

“Estados Unidos no está haciendo ningún esfuerzo real. Sólo están aceptando un 4% de reducción con respecto al año 1990”.

En horas de la mañana de hoy viernes 9, el mundo se despertó con la noticia de que “el Obama bueno” del enigma, explicado por el Presidente Bolivariano Hugo Chávez en las Naciones Unidas, recibió el Premio Nobel de la Paz. No siempre comparto las posiciones de esa institución, pero me veo obligado a reconocer que en estos instantes fue, a mi juicio, una medida positiva. Compensa el revés que sufrió Obama en Copenhague al ser designada Río de Janeiro y no Chicago como la sede de las Olimpiadas del 2016, lo cual provocó airados ataques de sus adversarios de extrema derecha.

Muchos opinarán que no se ha ganado to-

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REFLECTIONS OF FIDEL

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Wall Street shares will increase in value. However, the world can no longer return to what it was. The economist Paul Krugman, an eminent Nobel Prize winner, has just affirmed that international trade has suffered its greatest fall, worse than that of the Great Depression, and has expressed doubts on its recovery in the short term.

Nor can the world be inundated with dollars and think that those bills without backing in gold will maintain their value. Other economies, today more solid, have emerged. The dollar is no longer the hard currency reserve of all states; on the contrary, its holders wish to move away from that currency, while as far as possible avoiding its devaluation before they can get rid of it.

The European Union euro, the Chinese yuan, the Swiss franc, the Japanese yen – despite that country's debts – even the pound sterling, together with other hard currencies, have moved to take the place of the dollar in international trade. Gold metal is once again becoming an important international reserve currency.

This is not a capricious personal opinion, nor do I wish to slander that currency.

Another Nobel Prize winner in economy, Joseph Stiglitz, commented, according to one news agency, that the most likely thing is that the green bill will continue its decline. He stated this on October 6 at the IMF World Bank Joint Annual Meeting in Istanbul. Violent repression could be noted in that city. The event was greeted with broken windows in the commercial sector and fires from Molotov cocktails.

Other agencies talked of the fact that the European countries are fearful of the negative effect of the weakness of the dollar compared to the euro and the consequences of that on European exports. The U.S. treasury secretary stated that his country “was interested in a strong dollar.” Stiglitz made fun of an official statement and stated, according to EFE: “In the case of the United

States money has been squandered and the reason has been the multimillion rescue of the banks and defraying the cost of wars like that of Afghanistan.” EFE reported that the Nobel Prize winner “insisted that instead of investing \$700 billion to help bankers, the United States should have directed part of that money into helping the developing countries which, at the same time, would have stimulated global demand.”

Robert Zoellick, president of the World Bank, raised the alarm a few days earlier, warning that the dollar could not maintain its status as a reserve currency indefinitely.

Kenneth Rogoff, an eminent professor of economics at Harvard, stated that the next major financial crisis will be that of “public deficits.”

The World Bank declared that “the International Monetary Fund has demonstrated that the central banks of the world accumulated fewer dollars during the second half of 2009 than at any other point in the last 10 years and increased their euro holdings.”

That very same October 6, AFP reported that gold reached the record figure of \$1,045 per ounce, prompted by the weakening of the dollar and fears of inflation.

The Independent newspaper of London published that a group of oil producing countries were studying the possibility of replacing the dollar in commercial transactions with a basket of currencies including the yen, the yuan, the euro, gold and a new unified currency.

The news leaked or deduced with impressive logic was refuted by some of the countries presumably interested in that protection measure. They do not want it [the dollar] to collapse, but neither do they want to continue accumulating a currency that has lost its value thirty-fold in less than 30 years.

I must mention a cable from the EFE agency, which cannot be accused of being anti-imperialist and which, in the current circumstances, includes opinions of particular

interest:

“Experts in economy and finance were in agreement today in New York in affirming that the worst crisis since the Great Depression has resulted in this country playing a less significant role in the world economy.”

“The recession has led to the world changing its way of looking at the United States. Our country is now less significant than before and that is something that we have to recognize,” affirmed David Rubenstein, president and founder of the Carlyle Group, the largest risk capital company in the world, addressing the World Business Forum.”

“The financial world is going to be less centered in the United States... New York is never again going to be the world financial capital and that role will be shared with London, Shanghai, Dubai, Sao Paulo and other cities,” he noted.

“...sort out the problems that the U.S. will confront when it comes out of the ‘great recession,’ which will probably go another month or two.”

“...’enormous public debt, inflation, unemployment, loss in value of the dollar as a reserve currency, energy prices...”

“The government must reduce public spending in order to confront the debt problem and do something that it doesn’t much like: increase taxes.”

“Jeffrey Sachs, an economist at the University of Columbia and UN special adviser, agreed with Rubenstein that the economic and financial predominance of the U.S. ‘is fading.’”

“We have left a system centered in the U.S. for a multilateral one...”

“...’20 years of irresponsibility by the first part of the Bill Clinton administration and then that of George W. Bush,’ yielded to the pressures of Wall Street...”

“...the banks negotiated with ‘toxic assets’ to obtain easy money,’ Sachs explained.”

“The important thing now is to recognize the unprecedented challenge that supposes achieving sustainable economic development in line with the basic physical and biological rules of this planet’...”

On the other hand, the direct news from our delegation in Bangkok, capital of Thailand, was not at all encouraging:

“The essential issue being discussed – our minister of foreign affairs noted textually – is the ratification or not of the concept of shared but differentiated responsibilities between the industrialized countries and the so-called emerging economies, basically China, Brazil, India and South Africa, and the underdeveloped countries.

“China, Brazil, India, South Africa, Egypt, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the ALBA are the most active. In general terms, the majority of the Group of 77, are holding to firm and correct positions.

“Figures being negotiated for the reduction of carbon emissions do not correspond to those calculated by scientists for keeping temperature increases to a level below 2 degrees Celsius, 25-40%. At this point, negotiations are moving around a reduction of 11-18%.

“The United States is not making any real effort. It is only accepting a 4% reduction in relation to the year 1990.”

In the morning of today, October 9, the world awoke to the news that the “good Obama” of the enigma explained by the Bolivarian President Hugo Chávez at the United Nations, has received the Nobel Peace prize. I do not always agree with the positions of that institution but I am obliged to acknowledge at this moment in time, that – in my view – it was a positive measure. It compensates for the setback that Obama suffered in Copenhagen when Rio de Janeiro and not Chicago was chosen as the venue for the 2016 Olympics, which

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HIP-HOP VERSUS WAR



Vancouver Hip-Hop Festival Promotes Peace and Humanity

By *Shakeel Lochan*

"Minds are the real-estate of the 21st century." - Chuck D of Public Enemy

In this new era of growing war and occupation, economic recession and emerging political polarization, there are growing numbers of people connecting with Hip Hop while simultaneously struggling against poverty, violence and exploitation war and occupation. As a result, Hip Hop culture has been percolating within regions like Latin America and the Middle East actively engaged in struggles for self-determination against the governments and ruling classes of countries like the US, Canada, Britain and France. These battles are against forces behind the loss of millions of innocent lives, destruction of civil infrastructure and evaporation of basic necessities and essential services for poor and working people. Within refugee camps filled with Afghan people, Abu Gharib Prison in Iraq, the concentration camp that is Palestine, the overwhelming poverty of Haiti or Somalia to the decrepit under supplied Native Reservations in Canada as part of an ongoing genocidal project, the struggles of oppressed people fighting for social justice and peace are being taken up by Hip Hop.

After 30 years; beyond profit and hype, Hip Hop culture provides means to connect with young people and introduce antiwar politics / the struggle for peace. This idea and effort is the basis of the Vancouver International Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation; A unique series of events that showcases international, local and Indigenous talent. The festival is held in Vancouver, Canada and organized by anti-war coalition Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO). The festival is free, all ages and continues to have programs representative of the most oppressed and marginalized layers of society. This year's festival was aptly titled, "HIP HOP VERSUS WAR 5," being in it's 5th consecutive year in the Greater Vancouver Area and captivated a crowd of hundreds over two days.

This year was that of the 'Cuba Libre,' served in the way of a three person outfit known as



Left to Right: Janine Solanki, JB the First Lady, Scruffmouth, Shakeel Lochan, and Obsesión - Isnay Rodriguez, Alexay Rodriguez, and Magia Lopez - participate in Day 1 opening panel, "Rebel Without a Pause"



Alexay pumps up the huge crowd at the Vancouver Art Gallery on Day 2



MAWO organizers Nestor and Amy collect signatures for the "Canada Out of Afghanistan!" petition campaign on Day 2

- 'Obsesion,' direct from Cuba. As one of the islands most successful and outspoken groups Obsesion has garnered the attention and admiration of fans, international media and superstar artists like Afrika Bambaata, Mos Def, and Philadelphia's, The Roots, who shared a stage at the Apollo Theatre as part of Obsesion's landmark American tour in 2003. The group is comprised of Mc's, Magia (Magia Lopez) and El Tipo Este (Alexey Rodriguez, also a producer) as well as their DJ and gifted beat-smith, Isnay Rodriguez. This highly respected trio has become relative pioneers in the Cuban Hip Hop scene, collaborating, supporting and promoting an extensive list of local talent and legitimate narratives of Cuban society. Equally as significant, is Obsesion's active participation within the 'Agencia Cubana de Rap' (government sponsored Cuban Rap Agency developed in 2002 as a way of encouraging and making space for young artists developing their skill and expressing what was important to them) and organizing around women and Afro Cuban rights struggle. Suffice it to say, the first thing Obsesion did when they landed in Vancity Vancouver was grab their warmest jackets, THEN, proceeded to tear through a week long offensive of live shows, collaborations and interviews that culminated in performances on both days of this year's festival. All fears of language barriers were quickly extinguished as they took to their microphones and turntables and lit up back to back epic sets that had fans and casual pedestrians alike chanting, 'Otra' (Spanish for 'more!'). Obsesion succeeded in bringing a Cuban fighting spirit Sierra Maestra style that ambushed us here in the frozen north with a searing heat!

Alongside Obsesion was a posse of individual artists, groups and antiwar organizers representing global communities, including indigenous nations, women and other oppressed groups. This talented roster represented the four major elements of Hip Hop; DJ'ing, Breakdancing, Graffiti and MC'ing, as well as Beatboxing and exemplified the

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EL CASO DE HONDURAS: WASHINGTON EN LA CUERDA FLOJA

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Esta fue la mayor manifestación por el retorno de Zelaya desde la del 5 de julio cerca del aeropuerto de Toncontin en Tegucigalpa, cuando el mandatario depuesto intentó aterrizar en un avión venezolano, pero el gobierno de facto lo impidió con obstáculos en la pista. La marcha se fortaleció con la llegada de multitudes del este y norte del país y una esperada columna del sur. Otras se dirigieron a San Pedro Sula...”z

Pero de parte de CNN- nada.

El Pueblo De Honduras Es Quien Dirá La Última Palabra

Desde mi punto de vista, los pueblos del mundo también tienen que mantener la presión sobre Obama y su administración. Como reflejan las encuestas, él debe estar atento. Si el caso Honduras tiene efectos contraproducentes sobre él, lo cual es posible, y ello le echa combustible al “Anti-americanismo”, ¿cómo el pueblo de los EEUU verá su política exterior y más aún esos que pagan 15, 200 USD por plato para recaudar fondos? Estos últimos no invirtieron su dinero para potenciar otra era parecida a la de Bush cuando una atmósfera anti-EEUU se extendía en todo el planeta. Una vez más, Obama ha de mirar hacia las próximas elecciones presidenciales en el 2012 para las cuales él parece estar buscando llenar las arcas. ¿Querrá él tener él al ala derecha de la oligarquía de su lado con el objetivo de asegurar la victoria en el 2012?

El remolino de la política de los EEUU parece estar inevitablemente arrastrando a Obama a la cuerda floja. Yo espero este no sea el caso. El pueblo de Honduras, los pueblos y la mayor parte de los gobiernos de Suramérica están determinados a forzarle a tomar una posición. ¿Qué posición? Ejecutando acciones y sancio-

nes serias (no sólo revocando unas pocas visas) contra el régimen golpista, y apoyando en términos concretos e incondicionales el retorno del Presidente Zelaya a su puesto. Obama, como abogado, deberá a su vez ser capaz de vérselas con toda la burocracia del gobierno de los EEUU (si ese es el problema, lo cual yo dudo); que transcurrido seis semanas después del golpe aun no se ha decidido como clasificar legalmente el golpe!.

La evolución de la situación política de la nueva Administración plantea también algunas preguntas acerca del tipo de democracia y elecciones de los EEUU y como ellas operan en el país que supuestamente da (por la vía diplomática y de la fuerza militar) lecciones a los pueblos del mundo. Si ello muestra un “cambio” en el que la gente no puede creer, entonces algunos pueden preguntarse ¿cuál es el significado de democracia y elecciones en los EEUU? (Voy a tratar de este tema en detalle en una publicación futura.) Obama debería aceptar la idea del respeto mutuo entre diferentes países y sus respectivos sistemas políticos.

Obama y Clinton, junto a toda su administración están siendo juzgados...” ..El pueblo de Honduras es quien dirá la última palabra”, predijo Fidel Castro el 22 de Julio en el medio de la situación mas compleja que está enfrentando el pueblo: la mediación de Arias respaldada por los EEUU, combinada simultáneamente con la represión policial y militar a la resistencia.

A medida que la situación evoluciona, las predicciones de Fidel Castro (y la confianza en el pueblo) están demostrando ser correctas. De hecho parece ser irreversible, independientemente de sus altas y bajas. Uno de los líderes de la resistencia en Honduras, un diputado del Congreso de Honduras, hizo un profundo comentario al reportero de Prensa Latina Raimundo López. Este último estuvo valientemente reportando de forma continua

desde el terreno en la Honduras ocupada militarmente. El 18 de Julio el activista hondureño César Lam dijo al reportero en una entrevista que: “Existe una Honduras antes del golpe y otra después del golpe” .2

Esta declaración refleja lo nuevo del movimiento de resistencia de todas las fuerzas sociales y políticas.

Aún el más experimentado equilibrista en actos de cuerda floja puede ser derribado por la fuerza del pueblo que desea cambios. Sería preferible para el Presidente Obama adoptar la posición más justa.

** Arnold August - Montreal, autor/periodista/conferencista especializado en Cuba.*

(Traducido por Elena Martínez Canals y Jesús Pastor García Brigos)

Footnotes:

- a - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126412.htm>
- b - <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126445.htm>
- d - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126506.htm>
- e - <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204886304574311083177158174.html>
- f - <http://www.cubadebate.com/opinion/2009/07/27/eeuu-wall-street-journal-publica-editorial-del-dictador-roberto-micheletti-justificando-el-golpe-de-estado-en-honduras/>
- g - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/july/126589.htm>
- h - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/aug/126847.htm>
- i - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2009/aug/126950.htm>
- j - <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/05/AR2009080503998.html>
- k - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-President-Obama-and-President-Uribe-of-Colombia-in-Joint-Press-Availability/
- l - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Briefing-by-White-House-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-6-29-09/
- m - http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Briefing-by-White-House-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-7-1-09/
- n - <http://blogs.abcnnews.com/politicalpunch/2009/07/in-russia-president-obama-explains-his-support-for-ousted-president-of-honduras.html>
- o - http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=2009/8/8/worldupdates/2009-08-08T055507Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-416221-1&sec=Worldupdates
- p - <http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2009/08/10/politics/politicalhot-sheet/entry5230498.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody>
- q - http://www.ewspsf.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9464:joint-statement-by-north-american-leaders-august-10-2009&catid=88888983:latest-national-news&Itemid=88889930
- r - http://www.whitehouse.gov/our_government/executive_branch/s
- s - http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html
- t - <http://www.voltairenet.org/article160801.html#article160801>

- u - http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/07/22/ap_gfk_poll_great_hopes_for_obama_fade_to_reality/
- v - <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/08/06/poll.afghanistan/>
- w - http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/clout_st/2009/07/president-barack-obama-in-town-tonight-for-two-democratic-fundraisers.html
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- y - http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/afp/090805/world/honduras_politics_military_coup_122
- z - <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/> (accessed August 5 and 6)
- 1 - <http://www.cubadebate.com/noticias/2009/08/11/miles-marcharon-por-zelaya-en-la-mayor-manifestacion-desde-el-5-de-julio/>
- 2 - <http://www.cuba.com/gobierno/reflexiones/2009/ing/t210709i.html>
- 3 - <http://www.granma.cubaweb.com/2009/07/18/interna/artic08.html>

iVolveran!



A book of poems from the first poetry night for the Five Cuban Heroes in Vancouver, Canada in commemoration of 10 years of their unjust imprisonment in US jails

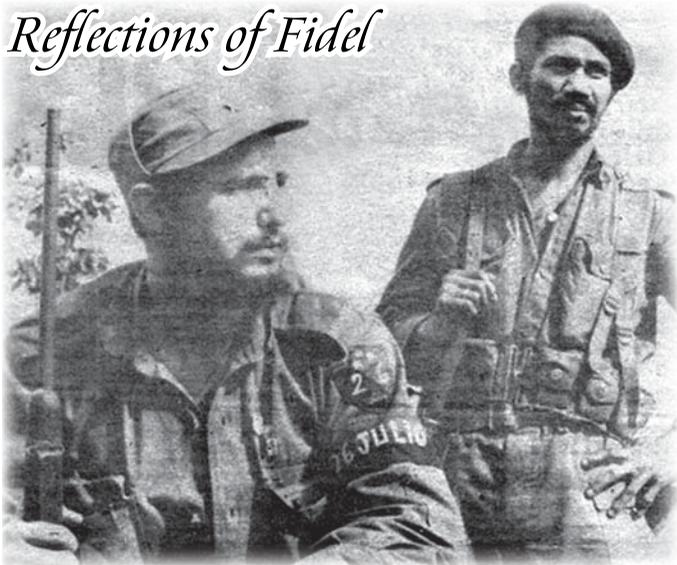
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Almeida Lives Today More Than Ever

Reflections of Fidel



Juan Almeida and Fidel in the Sierra Maestra

I have been watching for hours now on television the tribute that the entire country is paying to Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida Bosque. I think that facing death was for him just another duty as so many others he made throughout his life. He did not know neither did we how much sadness the news of his physical absence would bring to us.

I was privileged to know that young black militant worker who would successively be the leader of a revolutionary group, a combatant at the Moncada, a comrade in prison, a platoon captain at the time of the Granma landing, an officer with the Rebel Army --held back by a shot on his chest during the violent combat at Uvero— the Commander of a column marching on to create the Third Eastern Front, and the comrade sharing the leadership of our forces in the last successful battles to

overthrow the tyranny.

I was an exceptional witness to his exemplary conduct for over half a century of heroic and victorious resistance in the struggle against the bandits, during the Giron counteroffensive, the Missile Crisis, the internationalist missions and the resistance to the imperialist blockade.

It was a pleasure to listen to some of his songs, especially the one particularly emotional where he bade farewell to human dreams in response to the homeland's call to "win or die". I was not aware that he had composed over 300 songs in addition to his literary work, a source of historical narratives and enjoyable readings. He defended principles of justice that will be defended at any time and age while human beings breathe on Earth.

Let's not say that Almeida is dead! Almeida lives today more than ever!

Fidel Castro Ruz
September 13, 2009
3:12 P.M.

Almeida Vive Hoy Mas Que Nunca

Reflexiones de Fidel

Ejército Rebelde —paralizado en su avance por un disparo en el pecho durante el violento Combate del Uvero—, Comandante de Columna, marchando para crear el Tercer Frente Oriental, compañero que comparte la dirección de nuestras fuerzas en las últimas batallas victoriosas que derrocaron a la tiranía.

Fui privilegiado testigo de su conducta ejemplar durante más de medio siglo de resistencia heroica y victoriosa, en la lucha contra bandidos, el contragolpe de Girón, la Crisis de Octubre, las misiones internacionalistas y la resistencia al bloqueo imperialista.

Escuchaba con placer algunas de sus canciones, y en especial aquella de encendida emoción que ante el llamado de la Patria a "vencer o a morir" se despedía de humanos sueños. Ignoraba que había escrito más de 300 de ellas, las cuales sumó a su obra literaria, fuente de lectura amena y de hechos históricos. Defendió principios de justicia que serán defendidos en cualquier tiempo y en cualquier época, mientras los seres humanos respiren sobre la tierra.

¡No digamos que Almeida ha muerto!
¡Vive hoy más que nunca!

Fidel Castro Ruz
Septiembre 13 de 2009
3 y 12 p.m.



Comandante de la Revolución Juan Almeida Bosque

In Vancouver, Canada: International Day of Action to ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Free the Cuban 5

By Sarah Alwell

September 12, 2009 marked the 11th anniversary of the unjust imprisonment of Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labanino, Rene Gonzalez, Fernando Gonzalez and Antonio Guerrero. They are known internationally as the Cuban 5 heroes, imprisoned in the United States for defending their people against US sponsored terrorism against Cuba. This anniversary occurred during a very important period in the case of the Cuban 5, as two months earlier, on June 15, the Supreme Court of the United States announced its decision that it would not review the case of the Cuban 5.

On September 12, hundreds of thousands of peace loving people around the world came together to demand FREE THE CUBAN 5 NOW! Various actions and demonstrations took place in 12 cities across the United States and four cities across Canada. Actions were also held in Mexico, Guyana, Colombia, Argentina, England, Scotland, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Sweden, Italy, Philippines, Australia, Czech Republic, Lebanon and Nigeria.

Here in Vancouver, over 100 people responded to this international call for action and gathered together outside the Vancouver Art Gallery at a protest organized by the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver. The rally featured international solidarity greetings from Jorge Soberon, the Cuban Consul General in Toronto; Alicia Jrapko, coordinator of the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five; and Gloria La Riva, coordinator of the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five in the US. Throughout the rally, over 120 postcards were signed addressed to US President Barack Obama demanding "Yes we

can - Free the Cuban 5!"

The year 2009 has proven to be a more important time than ever in the case of the Cuban 5 heroes. Undeniably, the struggle for their freedom has continued to grow and to strengthen around the world more rapidly and more broadly over the last two years. We must join the international



community to accelerate organizing our efforts to demand the immediate and complete freedom of the 5 Cuban heroes. To find out more about the case of the Cuban 5 heroes or to get involved in organizing with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver please visit:

<http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html>

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ En Vancouver, Canadá: Día de Acción Internacional por la Libertad de los 5 Cubanos

Por Sarah Alwell

Traducción Por Javier Anchieta

El 12 de Septiembre del 2009 fue marcado por el Undécimo aniversario del injusto encarcelamiento de Gerardo Hernandez, Ramón Labanino, René González, Fernando González y Antonio Guerrero. Es-

tos son conocidos internacionalmente como los 5 Héroes cubanos, encarcelados en Los Estados Unidos por defender a su pueblo contra el terrorismo patrocinado por el imperio Norteamericano sobre Cuba. Este aniversario ocurrió durante un periodo muy importante en el Caso de los 5, como 2 meses antes, el 15 de Junio, la Corte Suprema de Los Estados Unidos anuncio su decisión de no revisar el caso

de los 5 cubanos.

El 12 de Septiembre, cientos de miles de personas amantes de la paz alrededor del mundo se unieron por la demanda de ¡La Liberación de los 5 Cubanos!, diversas acciones y manifestaciones tuvieron lugar en 12 ciudades de Los Estados Unidos y en 4 ciudades en Canadá. Las acciones también se llevaron a cabo en países tales como: México, Guyana, Colombia, Argentina, Inglaterra, Escocia, Bélgica, Austria, Alemania, Luxemburgo, Suiza, Suecia, Italia,

Filipinas, Australia, República Checa, Líbano y Nigeria.

Aquí en Vancouver, gracias al Comité-Vancouver por la Liberación de los 5 Cubanos, más de 100 personas se reunieron en las afueras de la Galería de Arte de Vancouver para responder a este llamado internacional, dicha manifestación contó con el agradecimiento internacional por parte de Jorge Soberón, el Cónsul General de Cuba en Toronto, Alicia Jrapko, coordinadora del Comité Internacional por la Libertad de los Cinco, y Gloria La Riva, coordinadora del Comité Nacional en Los Estados Unidos por la Libertad de los Cinco Cubanos. En esta manifestación se pudieron firmar más de 120 postales dirigidas al presidente de Los Estados Unidos Barack Obama, exigiéndole: Nosotros Si Podemos- Libertad para los 5 cubanos.

El año 2009 ha demostrado ser el momento más importante que jamás se haya visto en el caso de los 5 héroes Cubanos. Sin lugar a dudas, el movimiento de lucha por la libertad, se ha incrementado a nivel mundial y fortalecido con mayor rapidez en estos 2 últimos años. Nosotros debemos unirnos a la comunidad internacional para acelerar la organización de nuestros esfuerzos para exigir la libertad inmediata y completa de los 5 héroes cubanos. Para obtener mayor información sobre el caso de los 5 héroes cubanos o para involucrarse en la organización de la Libertad de los 5 cubanos Comité-Vancouver por favor visite:

<http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html>

WORLD FOOD DAY

IN CRISIS

By Manuel Yepe

For the nearly one billion hungry people on the planet, World Food Day means little: they have neither the time nor the strength to demand the support that the world community has agreed to give them but failed to provide so far because of a global socioeconomic system based on selfishness.

October 16, when this Day is observed, also marks the anniversary of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), founded in 1945. Declared in 1979 by the FAO Conference and made official in 1980 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, World Food Day seeks to “raise public awareness about the world food problem and strengthen solidarity in the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty”.

About 30% of the world’s population suffers from some form of malnutrition, with half of all known diseases ascribable to hunger, poor nutrition or vitamin and mineral deficiency. FAO data have it that in order to meet the goals laid down in 1996 by the World Food Summit to cut by half the number of undernourished people by 2015, 22 million people must be kept from being hungry every year.

But it happens that not even a third of that figure has managed to escape the horror

of not having the food they need to survive. This is not counting those who are jobless or not eligible for social security benefits and therefore join the ranks of the underfed every year.

Neoliberal globalization and privatization are to be blamed for the current food disaster, significantly fueled as well by the usual injustice –which grows rather than subside– in North-South relations, based on unequal exchange, brain-drain policies, and the plundering of poor nations of their natural resources.

According to estimates, an additional 25 to 30 billion dollars’ worth of aid per year are required to halve the number of hungry people. As a rule, however, those who hold the world’s wealth reject multilateral cooperation and only listen to bilateral proposals entailing financial contributions contingent on terms that allow them to get around, in the medium- or long-term, the needy nations’ food self-sufficiency.

The World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), influenced by a manipulative U.S. Treasury and the big agribusiness corporations, have seen to it this sector makes a beeline for the liberal economic practices which are deemed by far the main culprit for today’s crisis.

Yet, this is not a new outbreak of a circumstantial situation, but a process with deep roots in a worldwide economic and commer-

cial system created by the neoliberal obsession of Bretton Woods economic institutions –namely WB and the IMF. They are bent on setting up a global free-trade system that makes it possible for big business in the rich countries to do what best suits their mean interests.

The IMF’s Structural Adjustment Plans have made poor countries rely on exports by specializing in an intensive agriculture largely dependent on mechanization, chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides. The foods thus produced become exportable goods sold at a market price very few southern countries can afford.

The high mobility of capital caused by this phenomenon has fostered speculative investments in the food market. The financial markets have reacted by building up claims on these products, thus accelerating the growth in demand and, therefore, rising prices. These markets not only sell tangible products but also futures.

A rise in the retail price index hardly helps producers, as it only affects one end of the production-consumption chain in a food and agriculture market where large companies have control over everything



from the relationship with the growers to retail trade.

Only an international order that fully reverses today’s structure of relationships and provides a preferential and differentiated treatment to nations with fewer resources through unconditional cooperation will deflect us from the path of self-destruction that a hunger-triggering neoliberal globalization has forced us to take.

Let this be known very clearly on a World Food Day wracked by a serious crisis.

** Manuel E. Yepe Menéndez is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He is a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana.*

<http://www.walterlippmann.com/docs2710.html>

A CubaNews translation.

Edited by Walter Lippmann.

DÍA MUNDIAL DE UNA ALIMENTACIÓN EN CRISIS

Por Manuel Yepe

Para los casi mil millones de hambrientos del planeta poco significa el Día Mundial de la Alimentación, porque no tienen tiempo ni fuerzas para exigir la solidaridad que la comunidad mundial ha acordado para ellos, sin que nada se mueva por culpa de un sistema socioeconómico global que descansa en el egoísmo.

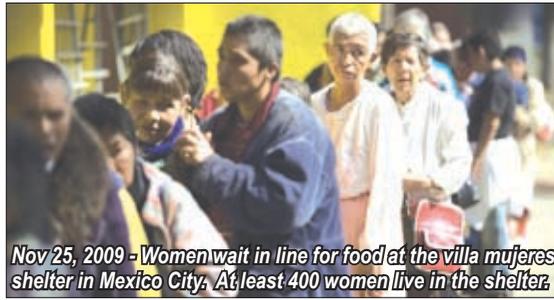
El 16 de octubre, fecha de observancia cada año de este Día, coincide con la de la fundación de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO) en 1945.

La finalidad del Día Mundial de la Alimentación, proclamada en 1979 por la Conferencia de la FAO y formalizada en 1980 por la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas, es “concientizar a las poblaciones acerca del problema alimentario mundial y fortalecer la solidaridad en la lucha contra el hambre, la desnutrición y la pobreza”.

Alrededor de un 30% de la población del planeta sufre alguna forma de malnutrición, en tanto que la mitad de las enfermedades conocidas son atribuibles al hambre, la alimentación insuficiente o a la deficiencia de vitaminas y minerales.

Según cálculos de la FAO, para que se cumpla el objetivo que propugnara la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación en 1996 de llegar a 2015 con un 50% menos de personas subalimentadas, el hambre debía eliminarse a razón de 22 millones de personas cada año.

Pero ocurre que ni siquiera una tercera parte de esa cifra de hambrientos ha podido escapar cada año del horror de carecer de los alimentos necesarios para la subsistencia; sin contar a aquellos que, privados de tra-



Nov 25, 2009 - Women wait in line for food at the villa mujeres shelter in Mexico City. At least 400 women live in the shelter.



Afghan woman with starving child in Herat Hospital, Afghanistan.

bajo o de una seguridad social elemental, pasan a incluirse en la categoría como nuevos subalimentados.

La globalización neoliberal y las políticas privatizadoras han sido responsables del desastre alimentario actual, al que han contribuido de manera importante las viejas injusticias características de las relaciones Norte-Sur que crecen en vez de amainar: el intercambio desigual, el robo de cerebros y el despojo de las riquezas naturales a las naciones pobres.

Se ha calculado entre 25 y 30 mil millones de dólares anuales la ayuda adicional requerida para reducir a la mitad el número de hambrientos. Pero, como regla, aquellos que detentan las riquezas del mundo rechazan la cooperación multilateral y sólo aceptan propuestas de carácter bilateral con aporte de fondos atados a condiciones que les permitan burlar en su propio beneficio, a mediano o largo plazo, la soberanía alimen-

taria de las naciones necesitadas.

El Banco Mundial (BM), el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) y la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), con manipuladora influencia del Departamento del Tesoro de los Estados Unidos y de las grandes empresas transnacionales de la agroindustria alimentaria, se han encargado de conducir al sector por los caminos de la economía liberal que se aprecia como principal responsable de su actual crisis.

No se trata, sin embargo, de un fenómeno coyuntural de nueva aparición, sino de un proceso con profundas raíces en el sistema económico y comercial internacional generado por la obsesión neoliberal con que las instituciones económicas de Bretton Woods (BM y FMI) han trabajado por instaurar un sistema libre-cambista global que permita a las empresas transnacionales de los países opulentos operar de la manera que más favorece a sus mezquinos intereses.

Los Planes de Ajuste Estructural del FMI han llevado a los países empobrecidos a orientar su producción a la exportación mediante la especialización en una agricultura intensiva muy dependiente de la mecanización, los fertilizantes químicos, los insecticidas y los pesticidas. Los alimentos así producidos, se convierten en mercancías exportables con precios internacionales no asequibles a muchos países del Sur.

La alta movilidad de capitales que propicia este fenómeno ha promovido las inversiones especulativas en el mercado alimentario. Los mercados financieros han reaccionado acumulando títulos sobre estos productos,

acelerando así el incremento de la demanda y, por lo tanto, el precio. Las compras que se realizan en estos mercados no son sólo de productos existentes sino también de productos futuros.

El aumento del precio de esta materia prima, a su vez, provoca un incremento adicional derivado de su transportación desde/hasta lugares lejanos, lo que agrega nuevos obstáculos a los pequeños productores para sobrevivir y genera así condiciones para una mayor concentración de la tierra y de la industria en manos de los grandes capitalistas.

El aumento de los precios para los consumidores no repercute a favor de los productores porque el fenómeno se presenta solo en un extremo de la cadena producción-consumo, con el mercado agroalimentario dominado por grandes corporaciones que ya controlan desde la relación con los productores hasta las ventas minoristas.

Solo un orden internacional que, invirtiendo totalmente la estructura actual de relaciones, brinde un trato preferencial y diferenciado a los países que tienen menos posibilidades, mediante una cooperación sin condicionamientos, evitaría a la humanidad la perspectiva de autodestrucción desencadenada por el hambre que le está dejando ver la globalización neoliberal.

Sea esto dicho con absoluta claridad en el Día Mundial de una Alimentación que está en grave crisis.

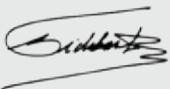
Octubre de 2009.

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

REFLEXIONES DE FIDEL

continua de la página 33

davía el derecho a recibir tal distinción. Deseamos ver en la decisión, más que un premio al Presidente de Estados Unidos, una crítica a la política genocida que han seguido no pocos presidentes de ese país, los cuales condujeron el mundo a la encrucijada donde hoy se encuentra; una exhortación a la paz y la búsqueda de soluciones que conduzcan a la supervivencia de la especie.



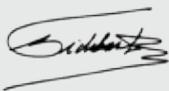
Fidel Castro Ruz
Octubre 9 de 2009
6 y 11 p.m.

REFLECTIONS OF FIDEL

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prompted irate attacks from the extreme right.

Many people will say that he has not as yet won the right to receive such a distinction. We would like to see in the decision, more than a prize to the president of the United States, a criticism of the genocidal policy followed by more than a few presidents of that country, who have brought the world to the crossroads where it finds itself today; an exhortation to peace, and the search for solutions that will lead to the survival of the species.



Fidel Castro Ruz
October 9, 2009
6.11 p.m.

Translated by Granma International

Vancouver Commemorates the Struggle and Legacy of Ernesto Che Guevara

By Noah Fine

Ernesto Che Guevara was a true revolutionary who fought for humanity and a better world for us all. To commemorate his struggle and legacy, over 65 people attended an event held in Vancouver on Friday, October 9th to commemorate the 42nd year since the death of our hero Che.

The night was introduced by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) coordinator Tamara Hansen, who read a statement she had written about the importance of Che's ideas and its relevance to today's struggle for liberation and humanity. The night was filled with stories, live music, poetry and much more dedicated to Ernesto Che Guevara.

Throughout the night, participants listened to stories by many people, including Lance Read, a past participant in the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade to Cuba, as well as from Payvand Pejvack and Janine Solanki, both members of VCSC who told a story of their trip to the Che memorial in Santa Clara, Cuba.

Beautiful poetry was read by local poets and activists Alejandro Mujica and Shakeel Lochan, who both shared original poems about Che and the struggle for

emancipation and socialism. Live musical performances were made by Joaquin Ernesto and Noah Fine, who sang songs of love and struggle dedicated to Che.

The night was wrapped up with the Cuban documentary "Che Guevara Where You'd Never Imagine Him." The documentary follows the life of Che from his birth to his travels on motorcycle through Latin America. The film covers Che's life during the Cuban revolution, from his time as a leader of the Cuban Revolution and as an internationalist in Africa, to his death in combat in Bolivia against imperialist domination and tyranny.

The event was a great success, with many people sharing their stories and art dedicated to Che and many more coming to learn about Che Guevara, one of the greatest fighters for freedom and justice who set an example for all who are interested in a world without exploitation and oppression, in a world driven by love for one another and collective good for all.

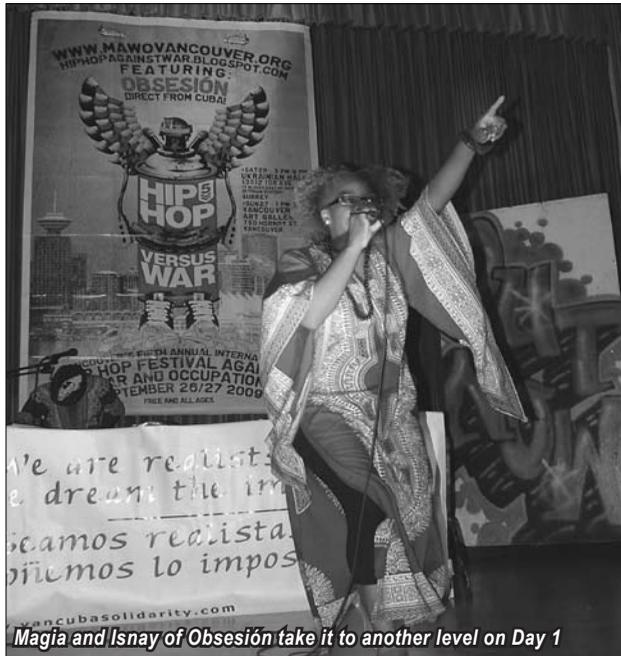


HIP HOP vs. WAR

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international pulse of anti war Hip Hop culture.

Day 1 of HIP HOP VERSUS WAR 5 took place in the Whalley area of Surrey, British Columbia (BC); a largely poor and racialized area that faces increasing poverty, gentrification and social program cutbacks. It opened with an indigenous welcoming ceremony by Kat Norris organizer with Indigenous Action Movement, calling for unity, wishing success for the event and highlighting the continuing genocidal attacks on Indigenous peoples in this country, and across the world. Up next was the forum titled, "Hip Hop: Rebel Without a Pause," which included artists, festival organizers and special guests, Obsesión. Each spoke on different issues, from Indigenous struggle, to women in Hip Hop, to the history of Hip Hop, to international Hip Hop and Hip Hop and the antiwar movement. This opening forum packed the Ukrainian Hall with a crowd that spanned age, ethnic



and gender spectrums. Riding on this initial success, the day progressed into a duo of interactive workshops; 'Bring the Noize,' an MC'ing workshop run by Joos Justice (of Killawatt Records) and friends, which introduced the method and art of freestyling. The following workshop, 'Put it Up,' was facilitated by Savage Rock and Yutang (of world champion Bboy crew, 'Now or Never,') and delivered to a rowdy and exuberant audience the philosophy of breakdancing and how-to's for an assortment of styles and moves. The festival then moved into its evening showcase, 'Louder than a Bomb,'—that had all of Surrey bouncing right up until the show's end, including acts like Ra Focus, Lil' Precious, Conspirituality and of course Obsesión! The evening ended to see a pack of sweaty smiling participants gearing up for day 2 of the festival.

Day 2 of HIP HOP VERSUS WAR 5 erupted at the Vancouver Art Gallery in downtown Vancouver, under a clear sunny sky and a vibrant Indigenous welcoming ceremony by Kelly White (Indigenous Rights Media Activist and Coast Salish Elder). The all-day program included artists like: Manic Iderful (Stressed Street / Urban Buffalos), Ndi Cascade & Deanna Teeple, Joos Justice (Killawatt Records), Fully Faded, Estea & Krec, A-slam (Punjabi / Rnb fusion), Discreet Da Chosen One, Speeches Beyond, JB the First Lady, Heatwave (Killawatt Records), Groundbreakers Crew and Skruffmouth (Spoken Word Artist / Advocate and Slam Poet / Champion) The day's program resonated with radical messages for peace, party grooves and a record crates full of choice samples and spontaneous freestyling sessions.

In the early afternoon the breakdancing floor opened up and captivated droves

of people who formed a ring around the dancers that was 500 people deep! The lust for breakdancing battle was thick and people of all skill levels joined in for this top notch annual breakdancing showdown!

Along side the main stage and breakdancing ring was the Malcolm X tent; an assemblage of images, quotes, and information about the man who struggled for human rights and dignity. Within this tent dedicated to the man who once said, "The only way we'll get freedom for ourselves is to identify ourselves with every oppressed people in the world. We are blood brothers to the people of Brazil, Venezuela, Haiti... Cuba - yes Cuba too," was also a section dedicated to Cuba solidarity. This section gave participants and passersby information about the struggle of this tiny island and its heroic people under the illegal and inhuman US economic blockade

As Obsesión stepped up for their final set, the crowd in front of the Art Gallery steps was packed tight, shoulder to shoulder, with clenched fists pumping in the air! There was Spanish in the rap but in the air was a sentiment of resistance, hope and that international boom bap!

Hundreds had participated over the weekend and many lingered long after the custom



graffiti walls were taken down. They collected materials and leaflets for upcoming rallies, forums and pickets. They signed up on email lists and petitions, and they continued conversations and debate that began throughout the performances. In the end many people left commenting that they had experienced a truly original and special collaboration of art and politics, already asking how they could become further involved.

Seminal Hip Hop pioneer, Afrika Bambaataa, once said, "How you act, walk, look and talk is all part of Hip Hop culture. And the music is colorless. Hip Hop music is made from Black, brown, yellow, red and white." Well, if the annual Hip Hop Festival Against War and Occupation – HIP HOP VERSUS WAR, is any sort of proof, then Hip Hop is also – how we resist – Hip Hop IS antiwar!

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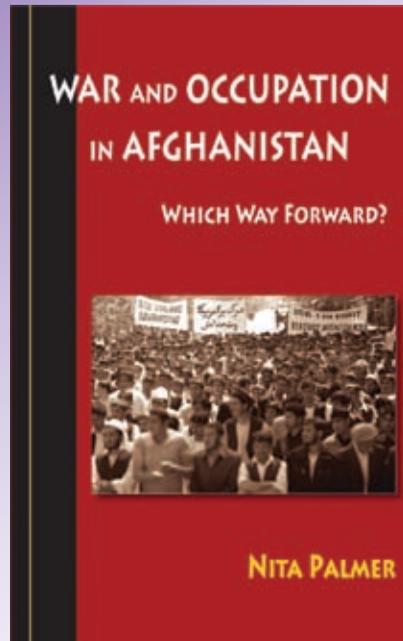
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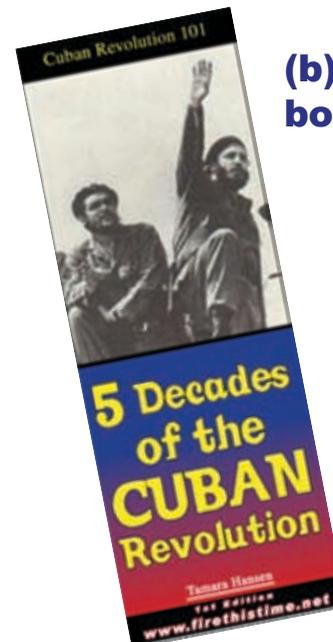
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WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN

continued from page 4

‘facelift’ to the women’s rights situation in Kabul or other major cities, the overwhelming majority of Afghan women remain in poverty and despair. This is certainly not the ‘liberation’ that Afghan women want.

Reason #3: Troops are there to stop the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

“If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which Al-Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans. So this is not only a war worth fighting. This is fundamental to the defense of our people.”

~US President Barack Obama in August 18, 2009 speech to Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention

Taking this claim at face value, it would seem that at the very least it is an illogical and ineffective strategy for fighting terrorism. After the 2001 invasion, the influence of the Taliban in Afghanistan was small relative to today. According to an August 2009 report by the International Council on Security and Development (www.icosgroup.net), the Taliban now have a permanent presence in 80% of Af-

ghanistan – up from 48% in 2007. Attacks on occupation forces by the Taliban have increased, with a number of attacks even within the ‘green zone’ around Kabul.

The reason behind the increase in strength of the Taliban is simple: the more people the occupation forces kill, the more they have to kill, as family and friends of those killed join the resistance forces fighting the occupation of their country. After eight years of foreign occupation with no improvement to their country, there are an increasing number of people joining one of the main forces fighting against the occupation of their country – the Taliban. This merits the question: how does an occupying force eliminate the Taliban if killing them only makes them stronger?

We hear often that the difficulty of fighting the Taliban is that Taliban fighters hide among the civilian population. This is also given as a justification for the high level of civilian killings by the occupation forces. The truth of the matter is not that the Taliban *look* exactly like the civilian population – they *are* the civilian population. Canada/US/NATO forces are not fighting an isolated extremist group in Afghanistan which is trying to regain political power; they are fighting the majority of the Afghan population in their towns, villages, valleys and farms, who never wanted them there in the first place.

In an October 28, 2009 online forum hosted by the Washington Post, former Senior Civilian Representative for the US Government in Zabol Province Matthew Hoh explained that “the people we are fighting, for the most part, in Afghanistan are fighting us because they do not want to be occupied by either a foreign army or a cen-

tral government force.”

The ‘war on terror’ is what US civil rights leader Malcolm X once called an old colonial trick of turning the victimizer to the victim and the victim to the victimizer. After hundreds of years of intense colonization, plundering, and exploitation, people from the third world are beginning to rise up and fight against imperialist domination by any means they have. The imperialists turn the victims of colonization to the victimizers by labeling them ‘crazy Muslims’ who are jealous of the privileges of the rich countries of the world. Malcolm X’s statement about turning the victimizer to the victim was reflected very well by former US President George W. Bush at a leadership conference in New Delhi, India on October 31, 2009. “[The Taliban] attack political, financial and diplomatic targets because they hate our way of life and they hate our vision for freedom and human rights and human dignity and prosperity and peace,” Bush explained. In fact, organizations like the Taliban are gaining support because they are fighting for freedom and human dignity against those who are plundering their countries.

Which Way Forward?

Today, more troops are being sent to Afghanistan in the name of turning the country into a “modern democracy” and bettering the lives of Afghan people. Yet eight years after this occupation began, that “better life” for Afghan people is nothing but a farce. The Afghan people, with their proud history of resistance to foreign domination behind them, have once again steeled their resolve to drive the occupation forces out of their country. From mothers who have lost their children to Canada, US and NATO forces, to children who have watched their parents die in front of them, to farmers who have seen their fields obliterated by bombs, all are voicing their resistance to foreign occupiers.

There are two ways forward in Afghanistan today: the way forward of the occupation forces – more bloodshed, more killing, more destruction – and the way forward of the Afghan people – dignity and self-determination. It is up to us, peace-loving people in Canada, the US and around the world, to choose which we support.

Pulling all foreign troops out of Afghanistan will not mean that Afghanistan will be a perfect country. It may make things difficult for Afghan people in new ways. After all, Afghanistan will still be a third-world country suffering under the boot of imperialism. But in the last eight years, the occupying imperialist forces have proven beyond a shadow of doubt that they are incapable of bringing a better life to Afghan people, and in fact have only worsened their situation. If the Afghan people have the basic right to determine their own future, they will at least have the opportunity to build a better life for themselves.

Working and oppressed people in Canada and around the world must stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters in their call for self-determination. It is in neither our interest, nor the interest of Afghan people, that the governments of our countries are spending billions of taxpayer dollars on a brutal war in Afghanistan instead of creating much-needed jobs and social programs in our own communities. It is neither in our interest, nor the interest of Afghan people, that thousands of young soldiers and tens of thousands of innocent Afghan civilians have been lost to this war. It *is* in our interest, the interest of Afghan people, and the interest of humanity to demand:

**Canada/US/NATO
Out of Afghanistan Now!
Self-determination for Afghanistan Now!
Troops Home Now!**



Afghan students protest civilian killings. Kabul, October 25, 2009.

LOUIS RIEL: A REVOLUTIONARY LEGACY

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after the attempts to deal with an unresponsive government saw no results, the Métis declared a provisional government.

Gabriel Dumont, a strong Métis military and community leader, became leader of the new provisional government, and the Métis began immediately to make more alliances with the other Indigenous people who had grievances with Canada.

The Métis had strong roots in military combat. From the tradition of the buffalo hunt, they developed their military skills that they were able to use in successful battles. The Métis' first engagement in the battle of Duck Lake, on March 26, 1885 forced the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP) to retreat. During the Battle of Fish Creek on April

24th, even though the Canadian militia outnumbered the Métis by a ratio of five-to-one, they were driven off by the Métis. Under Dumont's military leadership, the Métis also held off a much larger military force for three days in the battle of Batoche. This was when Canada first employed the Gatling gun. While the Métis were fighting one front against the Canadian military, the Cree, with the leadership of Big Bear and Poundmaker, had created a second and third front against the military and NWMP.

The Aftermath

Outgunned and outnumbered, the Métis were defeated at Batoche on May 12th after three days of fighting. Riel surrendered himself to the Canadian military forces, while Dumont fled to the United States. Chief Poundmaker surrendered on May 27th, and Chief Big Bear on July 2nd. While he was being carted away

to Regina, the Canada's conquering troops abused the surviving Métis, looting their farms and homesteads.

Riel was charged with high treason and at his show trial in Regina he was sold out by his defence, who had helped the prosecution in framing him up as insane. Not only did government and medical records prove that he was sane, Riel in his own testimony exposed the insanity of the colonial government of that time:

"An irresponsible government is an insane government. If you take the plea of the defense that I am not responsible for my acts, acquit me completely, since I have been quarreling with an irresponsible government. If you pronounce in favour of the Crown and declare that I am responsible, then acquit me all the same. You are perfectly justified in declaring that, having my reason and sound mind, I have acted reasonably and in self-defense, while the government, my accuser, being irresponsible and consequently insane, cannot but have acted wrong, and if high treason there is, it must be on its side and not my part."

Riel was hanged on November 16, 1885. Within two weeks, eight more Indigenous fighters who took part in the Northwest re-

sistance were hanged. Chiefs Big Bear and Poundmaker were both handed long prison sentences, but were released for poor health and died shortly afterward.

Riel's Legacy Then and Today

Riel did play a large role in bringing Manitoba into Confederation, but calling him a 'father of confederation' only undermines what the Métis were trying to accomplish in the Red River. Over a century later, it is easy for heads in the government to re-interpret the events, and even credit Riel and the struggle as something exhibiting Canadian values. It is safe for them because it is no longer a direct threat to their existence. Let us not be mistaken. They were fighting for their rights to be recognized. Today, this vision has not become a reality. Métis and Indigenous people are still oppressed and did not even get the right to take part in democratic elections until 1960. The poverty and destitution that exists on many reservations and urban native communities is still very high.

The events in the Red River (1869) and the Territory of the Northwest (1885) are something foundational to the social justice movement today. When under attack, we need to seek allies and unite against a common attacker. This is Louis Riel's legacy. His tactics in building a broad people's government united the oppressed layers of the Red River settlement to create a provisional government there, as well as helped build a provisional government among the Métis along the Saskatchewan River.

Allied with the Cree Chiefs Poundmaker and Big Bear, they were able to militarily stand up to an invading Canadian military force. Although many people did not join the resistance, the success of the unity between Métis, Cree and non-Native sympathizers could have influenced other people in the territory who did not have the confidence to fight against the colonial power in Ottawa. The Métis cause was also championed by the Quebecois, who saw they were also being suppressed by the new Anglo-government. Their pressure helped prolong Riel's execution, and over 50,000 people demonstrated in the streets when he was hanged.

The unity of oppressed people is the one obstacle that we face in effectively fighting for our rights today. Whether it is the struggle of Indigenous people for self-determination and dignity, of immigrants and refugees for rights to live in Canada without being exploited and persecuted, workers for better pay and working conditions, these struggles are not isolated from each other. Like the conditions in the late 1800s, we have a common attacker. Riel's example of trying to bring together oppressed people is the biggest challenge we have today as Indigenous, workers, students, immigrants and refugees. When we learn there is a great strong history of struggle on this land for liberation, we better educate ourselves with lessons and inspiration for future battles.



Riel and members of the Métis provisional government, 1870.