



Australia-Cuba Friendship Society
Melbourne NEWSLETTER
July 2019

Next Meeting
Monday 1st
July
7.30pm
Unitarian Church
110 Grey St,
East Melbourne

Melbourne	Sydney	Perth	Brisbane	Canberra	Hobart	Adelaide	Central Coast	NSW/Vic Sthn Border	New Zealand
PO Box 1051 Collingwood Vic. 3066	PO Box k364 Haymarket NSW 1240	PO Box 1455 South Perth WA 6951	PO Box 5683 West End Qld 4101	PO Box 6139 Kingston ACT 2604	GPO Box 323 Hobart Tas. 7001	Box 381 N. Adelaide SA 5006	PO Box 1082 Gosford NSW 2250	PO Box 854 Albury NSW 2640	220a Adelaide Rd Newtown Wellington New Zealand

Dear Comrades

June 23, 2019

Another cheery editorial I'm afraid, but what else can you write when the bloody world is falling apart and the most powerful man in it and those hovering around him are full-on psychos. An attack was launched on Iran to hit three sites and then was unlaunched, followed by a vicious cyber attack. There are many different versions about what happened, all of them bizarre. These loonies are trying to have it all ways, 'restrained', talking tough while working around the clock to get away with starting another war without any justification, looking for excuses that will stick or inventing some if they don't. The fix is in. The show is rigged. Like the events leading up to the Gulf War (1991) and the invasion of Iraq (2003) when we were lied to by war criminals, Bush, Blair and Howard. And in a move that surprised no-one, Secretary of State Liar in Chief, Mike Pompeo, wasted no time in blaming Iran for damage done to two sea vessels in the Gulf of Oman, providing no evidence and taking no questions, and told **a meeting of Jewish leaders they would stop Jeremy Corbyn from becoming PM!**

While we might never know who 'sabotaged' the two tankers, we do know that the US has been sabotaging Iranian oil shipments since May 2, to 'bring Iran's oil exports to zero', its principal source of revenue, causing immense hardship for the people, not the Ayatollahs. One of the worst impacts of US sanctions is their extraterritorial reach when it slaps third-country businesses with penalties for 'violations'. The US boasted that in just one day it sanctioned more than 700 individuals, entities, aircraft and vessels doing business with Iran. *'Sanctions on Iran is economic terrorism'*, Iran responded. **The facts are stark. Tehran will not accept all-out economic war lying down. It might shut down the Strait of Hormuz that would destroy the American economy and collapse the world banking system. The price of oil would skyrocket to \$200 a barrel or \$500 or even \$1000.** Whatever happens, sparks will fly. None of it good. The Yankees have written rules and unwritten rules they force everyone to follow. The audience is being primed. The dogs of war are barking mad.

Iran is now the nuclear devil developing nuclear weapons. No facts, just rhetoric, but the Yankees will claim they have 'secret evidence' that must be withheld in the name of 'national security', a term meaning nothing and everything, but used in a brazen power grab to take away more of our freedoms. It's just a short skip and a jump from governments locking up people in detention centres to subjecting others to similar treatment. When governments determine the crime, no-one is safe. The slide into totalitarianism doesn't happen overnight, but we're heading down that path right now, with over-criminalisation, government surveillance, privatised prisons and police raids. **A police state does not discriminate. Everyone is a suspect and anyone can be a criminal.** Which brings me to the coming show trial of Julian Assange. Those who have followed his persecution will feel deeply

unsettled. Publishing is not a crime, but will become one if he is extradited and convicted.

The message is clear. No matter who or where you are, if you expose the Empire's inner workings you will be hunted down, kidnapped and brought to the United States to be tried as a spy. We know what will happen to Assange. It's happened to thousands kidnapped and then detained in black sites around the world where sadistic and scientific forms of torture were used to turn them into zombies. On the outside, it will mean the end of public investigations into the crimes of ruling elites and cement into place a corporate tyranny. Outlets like The New York Times and The Guardian, which printed pages of WikiLeaks stories and then legitimised Washington's carefully orchestrated character assassination of Assange, are equally scared. And how disgraceful that a leading journalist who'd worked for Al-Jazeera, Peter Greste, chose this critical time to attack Assange by claiming he was not a journalist and thereby giving Washington a free kick to prosecute him for espionage or even worse.

There are good unions who work hard for their members, like the militant CFMEU, which employers and the government want to smash, and the bosses' unions, the sell-out merchants, like the Shop Assistants. I've never met John Setka nor did I attend the meeting in question and nor will I fail to defend the rights of women whatever the circumstances, but something doesn't add up on this one. It smells like a hatchet job. And shame on Anthony Albanese for joining the mob on the anti-union bandwagon.

A few words about the art of memory and forgetting, very deliberately forgetting. D-Day. Probably the last time we'll see the aged veterans. But there was something missing. The Normandy Invasion would never have succeeded had it not been for the efforts of the Red Army. For three years before the first wave of GIs splashed ashore at Omaha Beach, Russian troops had been waging a titanic struggle along a vast front in their own devastated land against the elite of the German military machine. In May 1944, there were 160 German divisions tied up, two-thirds of the Third Reich, 160 combat divisions unavailable to fight. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, representing the defeated army, attended the D-Day celebrations, but not Russian President Vladimir Putin, obviating any need to acknowledge the Soviet role in winning WW2, when they lost between 22-28 million of its people, 14%. **It was the Red Army that kept General Eisenhower's command from being pushed back into the channel. Thank God for the godless communists.**

Joan Coxsedg
Commentator-in-Chief, Melbourne ACFS (03) 9857 9249

Subtle Reminder – Subs are due...please help keep the flags flying

[The Helms-Burton is also illegal within the United States](#)

Not even the legal system of said nation respects the Helms-Burton Act, its authors blinded by their desire to destroy the Cuban Revolution, by their interest in bending and submitting a people whose dignity and courage, is recognized within the community of nations, which has helped to confront them, and resist aggressions, in defense of its freedom, their independence and its sovereignty

[Is Diabetes actually the eighth cause of death in Cuba?](#)

Scientific evidence has already shown the harmful relationship between diabetes and cardiovascular and vascular diseases



[What was Cuba seeking in Africa?](#)

In all missions of Cuba in Africa, 385,908 Cuban combatants fulfil their internationalist duty. Of them, 2,398 lost their lives

[The births of Maceo and Che](#)

The two legendary leaders were both born on June 14; chance could not have devised anything more appropriate



[Cuban and UK business leaders meet to foster bilateral cooperation](#)

With the participation of Cuban President, Miguel Díaz-Canel, a business forum was held on June 17 with Cuban and UK business leaders to analyze projects of mutual interest.

[Pastors for Peace sends Trump administration a strong message](#)

The group's solidarity caravan conveys a clear message to the U.S. - and the world - challenging the hostile policy toward Cuba being followed by the current government

[Machado Ventura receives delegation of Communists from Cyprus](#)

The Second Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee yesterday received a delegation from the Working People's Progressive Party of Cyprus chaired by Giorgos Loukaides, member of the Political Bureau and head of this political formation's parliamentary caucus



[Cuba will never negotiate under pressure or threats](#)

President Miguel Díaz-Canel said that Cuba will never negotiate with the United States under pressure and threats

[The empire's double standards](#)

The Federation of Cuban Workers expresses its commitment to continue representing self-employed workers and condemns the growing hostility of the United States and its obsessive efforts to subjugate the Cuban people, activating all sections of the notorious Helms-Burton Act.

[The country we want](#)

President Díaz-Canel met with administrative vice presidents from all provinces and the Isle of Youth special municipality and advocated for a sovereign, participatory, socialist nation, based on balanced, sustainable development, that defends its identity more than 120 doctors

[Cuba is not intimidated by measures adopted to reinforce the blockade](#)

Revolutionary Government Declaration

[Taking advantage of national industry and its potential](#)

Council of Ministers holds meeting headed by President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez

[We will renounce none of our principles](#)

Excerpts from speeches by Army General Raúl Castro Ruz emphasizing the need to respond to every challenge with unity, strength, optimism, and unwavering confidence in victory



[For the first time in Cuba, minimally invasive surgery for esophageal cancer](#)

The National Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology (INOR) is performing minimally invasive esophagectomies, to avoid respiratory complications and improve postoperative recovery

[Revised forecasts on rising sea levels](#)

The estimated increase in sea levels around the island is projected to be on the order of 29.3cm by 2050, and 95cm by 2100



Continued next page...

Descendants of Batista's henchmen look to be "compensated" under the Helms-Burton Act

With the U.S. government re-activating the Helms-Burton Act's Title III, José Ramón López - son of a swindler and lackey of the Batista dictatorship, José López Vilaboy - has filed a claim on Cubana Airlines, legally confiscated as a misappropriated asset after the triumph of the Revolution

Modern ecological cement plant begins production

The first low carbon cement plant (LC3) of its kind in the world, began operations at Las Villas Marta Abreu Central University, with Comandante de la Revolución Ramiro Valdés Menéndez on hand

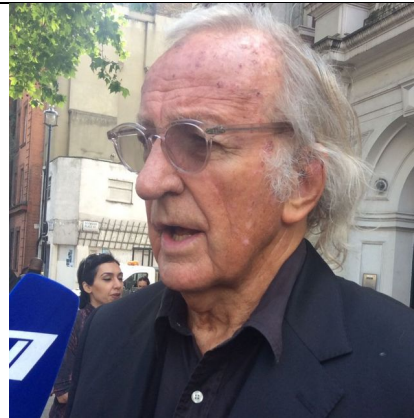


John Pilger speaks out:

"Today it's Julian Assange, tomorrow it could be you"

By our reporters
31 May 2019

Investigative journalist, broadcaster and film maker John Pilger told the media outside the Westminster Magistrates Court that Julian Assange's "'crime' here, is the crime of good journalism, and every journalist who practices their craft in a conscientious way, and in a truthful way, and who investigates the power that imposes itself on people, be it the government or their vested interests, should be deeply concerned about this. Because today it's Julian Assange, tomorrow it could be you.



John Pilger speaking to the media outside the court

"I am here to show support for a distinguished fellow journalist and someone whose one crime was free journalism. As a journalist myself of many years and actually as a friend of Julian Assange as well, I am here to support that. I think the level of public support for Julian Assange is very high, you should never judge public support by media. That's a completely false reality, a false impression.

"My understanding is in this country, in the United States, certainly in his home country of Australia, there is enormous public support for Julian Assange. People understand that he has been singled out as an example, of a concerted assault on freethinking, free speech and certainly on free-journalism.

"He couldn't appear today because he was unwell, he's in the prison hospital. When I saw him a couple of weeks ago he wasn't very well then. But then he's been in an embassy, in a confined space, without natural light for almost seven years. He needs a great deal of diagnostic care and rehabilitation. He's gone through an extraordinary physical and mental ordeal, and now he has to go

through this.

"This is so shameful, so shameful that we are even here today to consider the extradition of a journalist for trying to protect his sources. Or even the extradition of Julian Assange to Sweden to an entirely bogus case when much of it has been suppressed. That's what is shameful. But that's what I think many people understand."

Asked if he had a message for readers of the *World Socialist Web Site*, Pilger said. "Your website has done some of the best reporting, best analysis [on Assange's case].

"This is one of the most serious attacks in a society that considers itself to be free. George Orwell says you can have totalitarianism in a free society; it doesn't have to be totalitarian. And that's what we are seeing with this kind of ordeal that Julian Assange is going through. It was a totalitarian act. All those who believe in freedom, it doesn't matter really what political affiliation they have, if they believe in true freedom, should be supporting Julian Assange."

Giving further details on Assange's extensive health problems, Pilger added, "When I saw him, he was unwell; he was having difficulty keeping food down. But he was extraordinarily resilient at the same time. We spoke for a couple of hours. Now I think his conditioned has worsened.

"He couldn't appear today because he is in the prison hospital. None of this ought to be surprising. He spent seven years in a confined space without natural light. For many years, he had a terrible cough. He hasn't been able to have the kind of diagnosis that all of us would take for granted, to have an x-ray or whatever, because he was denied free passage out of the embassy."

UN expert criticizes States for ‘ganging up’ on Wikileaks’ Assange; warns against extradition, fearing ‘serious’ rights violations

Professor Nils Melzer, UN Special Rapporteur on torture, at a press conference at UN Headquarters in New York.

31 May 2019 - [Human Rights](#)

After visiting Julian Assange in a London prison, an independent UN human rights expert expressed urgent concern on Friday, for the Wikileaks co-founder’s well-being, accusing “a group of democratic States” of “ganging up” on the prisoner to “isolate, demonize and abuse” him and warned against extraditing the controversial publisher to the United States.

“My most urgent concern is that, in the United States, Mr. Assange would be exposed to a real risk of serious violations of his human rights, including his freedom of expression, his right to a fair trial and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,” said Nils Melzer, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, in a statement.

Mr. Assange’s health has been seriously affected by the extremely hostile and arbitrary environment he has been exposed to for many years – *UN expert*

He said he was “particularly alarmed” at the recent announcement that the US Department of Justice had lodged 17 new charges against Mr. Assange under the Espionage Act, which could lead to a sentence of 175 years in prison.

“This may well result in a life sentence without parole, or possibly even the death penalty, if further charges were to be added in the future,” said the Special Rapporteur, who was also following up on earlier concerns for Mr. Assange’s health.

On Thursday, according to reports, he was too ill to appear via video-link from a British prison in a hearing over an extradition request from the US.

Although Mr. Assange is not being held in solitary confinement, Mr. Melzer said he was gravely concerned over the limited frequency and duration of lawyers’ visits and lack of access to case files, which make it impossible to prepare and adequate defense.

“In 20 years of work with victims of war, violence and political persecution I have never seen a group of democratic States ganging up to deliberately isolate, demonize and abuse a single individual for such a long time and with so little regard for human dignity and the rule of law,” Mr. Melzer asserted.

“Since 2010, when Wikileaks started publishing evidence of war crimes and torture committed by US forces, we have seen a sustained and concerted effort by several States towards getting Mr. Assange extradited to the United States for prosecution, raising serious concern over the criminalization of investigative journalism in violation of both the US Constitution and international human rights law,” the expert spelled out.

Since then, he said that there has been a “relentless and unrestrained campaign of public mobbing, intimidation and defamation” against the defendant – not only in the US, but also in the UK, Sweden and more recently, Ecuador – that includes humiliating, debasing and threatening statements in the press and online as well as by senior political figures and magistrates involved in proceedings.

“In the course of the past nine years, Mr. Assange has been exposed to persistent, progressively severe abuse ranging from systematic judicial persecution and arbitrary confinement in the Ecuadorian embassy, to his oppressive isolation, harassment and surveillance inside the embassy, and from deliberate collective ridicule, insults and humiliation, to open instigation of violence and even repeated calls for his assassination”, the UN expert asserted.

Cellblock meeting

On 9 May, the Special Rapporteur visited Mr. Assange with two medical experts who specialize in examining victims of ill-treatment. The team spoke to the prisoner and conducted a thorough medical assessment.

“It was obvious that Mr. Assange’s health has been seriously affected by the extremely hostile and arbitrary environment he has been exposed to for many years,” the expert said. “Most importantly, in addition to physical ailments, Mr. Assange showed all symptoms typical for prolonged exposure to psychological torture, including extreme stress, chronic anxiety and intense psychological trauma.”

Calling the evidence “overwhelming and clear,” Mr. Melzer said that Mr. Assange “has been deliberately exposed, for a period of several years, to progressively severe forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the cumulative effects of which can only be described as psychological torture”.

The Special Rapporteur condemned “in the strongest terms” the “deliberate, concerted and sustained nature of the abuse inflicted” on the prisoner.

“By displaying an attitude of complacency at best, and of complicity at worst, these governments have created an atmosphere of impunity encouraging Mr. Assange’s uninhibited vilification and abuse”, the expert argued.

In official letters, Mr. Melzer urged the four involved governments to cease all activities prejudicial to Mr. Assange’s human rights and to provide him with redress and rehabilitation for past harm.

He appealed to the UK not to extradite the prisoner to the US or any other State that would not provide guarantees against his onward transfer to the US; and reminded Britain of its obligation to ensure Assange’s unimpeded access to legal counsel and adequate preparation for his proceedings.

“The collective persecution of Julian Assange must end here and now”, concluded the UN expert.

Special Rapporteurs and independent experts are appointed by the Geneva-based [UN Human Rights Council](#) to examine and report back on a specific human rights theme or a country situation. The positions are honorary and the experts are not UN staff, nor are they paid for their work.

Several world champions set to compete in Lima Pan American Games

Cuban athlete Rafael Alba secured gold in the 87+ kg division at the Manchester World Taekwondo Championships

Author: [Víctor Vitaliano Báez Sánchez](#) | internet@granma.cu - may 29, 2019 18:05:29

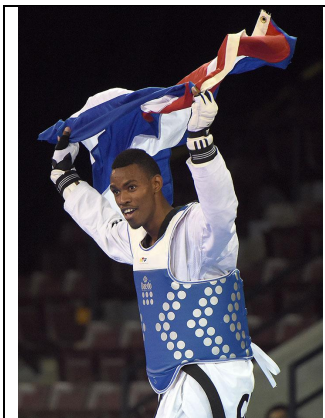


Photo: Ricardo López Hevia

RAFAEL Alba, gold medalist in the 87+ kg division at the recently concluded World Taekwondo Championships in Manchester, UK, stated in Havana that "This result is a great achievement of Cuban sport.

"With this performance I accumulate points for the Olympic ranking, and it allows me a more direct classification for Tokyo 2020. The event contributed to my preparation for the upcoming Pan American Games, in Lima, since there will be three or four world medalists from my division, so it will be of a high competitive level," he added.

The athlete from Santiago, who will turn 26 on August 12, also secured the gold in the 2013 Puebla edition of the Championships, and the bronze in the 2015 Chelyabinsk edition. This time he climbed to the top of the podium for the first time in a new weight category.

Alba has been excelling since 2007, when he obtained his first gold

medal in Cuba's School Games, and from there he experienced a qualitative leap that led him to take the lead in the Veracruz 2014 Central American and Caribbean Games, and in Barranquilla 2018. He also secured gold in the Toronto 2015 Pan American Games, and the Pan-American Championship of this sport, held in Querétaro, Mexico, in 2016.

The President of the Cuban Taekwondo Federation, Iván Fernández, speaking to **Jit**, described this World Championship as one of the toughest in the history of this sport, as it was attended by all current world champions.



*Cuba's Rafael Alba continues to feature among the world's best in his sport. **Photo:** Ricardo López Hevia*

Cuban female handball team wins spot in world championship

Cuba's women handball team won undefeated the North American and Caribbean Handball Tournament (Norca)

Author: [Sports news staff](#) | informacion@granma.cu - june 21, 2019 12:06:42

Cuba's women handball team won undefeated the North American and Caribbean Handball Tournament (Norca), which awarded a single ticket for the World Championship to be held in the Japanese city of Kumamoto from November 30 to December 15, 2019.

The girls led by Jorge Coll arrived on Mexican soil without the favorite label; however, they were, day after day, leaving each of their rival teams on the way to ratify the growth of handball as one of the best collective sports in Cuba today.

In their competitive stint, the Antilleans, who won the bronze medal in the Central American and Caribbean Games in Barranquilla 2018, defeated Canada (30-17), Greenland (25-17) and the United States (27-21) to lead the group A in the eliminatory phase.. At semi-finals, Cubans defeated the Dominicans 30 goals per 23. In the finals, it was Puerto Rico who lost the throne with a slate of 27 goals per 24.

"It is an achievement that showcases the work of our whole team and encourages us to continue improving in order to get in better shape for the Pan American Games in Lima and the World Championship itself," said Franklin Guevara, national commissioner of this sport discipline to sports publication Jit. "Players such as Lisandra Luzón, Shakira Robert and Eyatne Rizo played a leading role in the organization and synchronization of the team," the director added.

The North American and the Caribbean Handball Tournament was an excellent opportunity to train ahead of the Panamerican Games in Lima, scheduled to be held from July 26 to August 11. The women's team becomes the second Cuban handball team to win a ticket to the World Championship this year. The U-24 men team won the Norca back in April, also securing a spot to the World Championship in this category.

Cuban medical collaboration: A source of life

Cuba not only prides itself on having a rate of 8.5 doctors per thousand inhabitants, one of the best in the world, but also having provided the services of 407,000 health professionals in 164 countries on all continents since 1963

Author: [Lisandra Fariñas Acosta](mailto:lisandra@granma.cu) | lisandra@granma.cu - may 30, 2019 10:05:50

CUBA not only prides itself on having a rate of 8.5 doctors per thousand inhabitants, one of the best in the world, but also because “due to the values of solidarity and humanism that characterize us, from 1963 to the present, 407,000 health professionals have been present in 164 countries on all continents. Currently, there are more than 29,000 in 66 nations,” Cuban Public Health Minister, Dr. José Ángel Portal Miranda, recently noted on speaking at the 72nd session of the World Health Assembly, held in Geneva, Switzerland, May 20 through 28.

“More than 35,000 professionals from 136 countries have been trained in our universities, and 8,478 from 121 nations are currently studying. The positive impact on the lives of millions of people in tens of thousands of communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean is unquestionable,” Portal stressed.

The Minister emphasized that these achievements have been possible despite the unjust and cruel economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the U.S. government for almost 60 years, which is currently intensifying and constitutes the main obstacle to the country’s development. .

Despite this, he said, “Cuba reiterates its commitment to share its experiences in the development of primary health care, making available to the World Health Organization and its member states, cooperation programs, medical universities for the training of professionals and technicians, the products of the medical-pharmaceutical and biotechnological industry, as a way of contributing to universal health coverage for all.”



*Cuban doctors working around the world are true heroes.
Photo: Yudy Castro Morales*

HeberFeron used successfully to treat skin cancer

Impressive results attained with the Cuban medication discussed at conference in Holguín attended by more than 120 doctors

Author: [Nuria Barbosa León](mailto:nuria@granma.cu) | [internet@granma.cu](mailto:nuria@granma.cu) - june 10, 2019 11:06:51



Photo: Prensa Latina

The evaluation of results in the treatment of one type of skin cancer (basal cell carcinoma) with HeberFeron - produced by Cuba’s Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology – has shown that the drug can reduce the appearance of new lesions eightfold.

The news attracted attention at a scientific meeting to analyze the issue, in the province of Holguín, with more than 120 doctors in attendance, including specialists and residents from across the country,

Studies show that HeberFeron heals and reduces skin tumors of any size; provides superior effects in comparison with other interferons; reduced the need for complex surgeries on the face; and supposes a better quality of life for patients.

The medication reduces the cancerous mass efficiently and quickly, and leaves an excellent aesthetic. Its use in the country’s hospitals has been generalized, given the benefits afforded patients resisting surgery or concerned about scarring. The medication can also be used post-operatively, to eliminate any residual malignant cells and prevent recurrences. The novel drug is an effective agent in treating advanced tumors, locally extensive or invasive, commonly seen on the nose, ears, eyelids, and facial areas around the eye.

Doses are injected directly into lesions, with rapid recovery noted during the first three weeks. The best results have been documented after treatment over a 16-week period.

The country we want

President Díaz-Canel met with administrative vice presidents from all provinces and the Isle of Youth special municipality and advocated for a sovereign, participatory, socialist nation, based on balanced, sustainable development, that defends its identity

Author: [Leticia Martínez Hernández](#) | internet@granma.cu - june 10, 2019 16:06:54

THE President of Cuba's Councils of State and of Ministers, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, during an exchange at the Palace of the Revolution with administration vice presidents from all provinces and the Isle of Youth special municipality, advocated for a socialist, sovereign, participatory nation, that is faithful to its history and defends its identity.

The country we want, he said, must be based on balanced, sustainable development, on prosperity in harmony with the environment, a fair distribution of wealth, and quality services for the entire people, according to the official Presidential website.

Also participating were the president of the National Assembly of People's Power, Esteban Lazo Hernández, and First Vice President of the Councils of State and Ministers Salvador Valdés Mesa, as the President spoke of practicing solidarity; rejecting self-interest; repudiating discrimination; and defending the rights of all Cubans, not exclusive or privileged segments.

After discussing difficulties facing the nation with the regional cadres, Díaz-Canel reiterated the government's two priorities: preparation for defense and the economic battle, both afforded the same level of importance.

Regardless of the circumstances, he stressed, we will not renounce the principles that have defined the Cuban Revolution since its inception, such as the worker-campesino alliance, the right to land for those who work it, universal and free access to education and health, as well as state ownership of the basic means of production.

During the meeting cardinal issues for the development of the country were analyzed, such as meeting commercial circulation plans, conserving energy, housing programs, and municipal food self-sufficiency.

Likewise, proposals from deputies to the National Assembly of People's Power must be heeded, including those related to

housing construction and subsidies; preventing fuel theft; and the production of food.

Among the unavoidable tasks in developing a better economy, Díaz-Canel mentioned the strengthening of socialist state enterprises; the ordering of non-state economic activity, without affecting its performance negatively; integrating all actors, forms of ownership and management involved in Cuba's economic environment; making the investment process more efficient; boosting foreign investment; exporting more and replacing imports with domestic products.

He urged the efficient use of valuable human resources, and the skilled scientific workforce trained by the Revolution, to defend national production and encourage local development programs in all territories.

In this first exchange of this kind, the vice presidents of Administration Councils presented their experiences in each of the analyzed programs.

WITH LITTLE STEPS, GREAT THINGS ARE ACCOMPLISHED

We face the challenge of ensuring the comprehensive training of our athletes, to be young revolutionaries, true patriots and with extensive development as athletes, commented the President of Cuba's Councils of State and Ministers, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, to close the XXXI National Seminar to prepare of the coming school year in the Cuban sports system.

After outlining aspects of increasing threats by the United States government in the region, and the resurgence of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade on our country, the President insisted on the need to put an end to "the import mentality that sometimes delays initiative and proposals to overcome problems.

"This is a school year in which we must continue confronting, from a socialist position, banality, ignorance and vulgarity, elements that imperialism attempts to cultivate. And we must help our young athletes understand that the construction of



The housing program was one of those analyzed by the President in a meeting with administration vice presidents from all provinces and the Isle of Youth special municipality. Photo: Leidys Labrador

socialism is challenging, because it is based on sacrifice, on collectivism, on the defense of all and for all," he stressed.

Referring to Physical Education classes, he said that this is where values are shaped, personalities molded, collectivism and solidarity forged.

Let us work toward developing beauty and the culture of detail as daily practices in sports, as well, he said, with little steps, great things are accomplished.

BATOS: AN INDUSTRY IS REBORN

While touring the Batos Sports Company, affiliated with the Light Industry Enterprise Group, President Díaz-Canel was able to appreciate the exquisite cleanliness and organization that reigns in the workshops, in which 256 types of sporting goods were manufactured last year.

Batos, founded in June 1965, produces and distributes sports implements and equipment, textile garments, supplies and services for the Cuban sports system, and in 2018 its more than 700 workers produced some 600,000 items, a figure that had not been reached since the years prior to the Special Period.

Accompanied by Osvaldo Vento Monttiller, president of the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation, and Andrés Alberdi Valero, Batos director, the Cuban leader toured areas involved in leatherworks, woodworking, and the fabrication of balls for different sports, where he asked about stability of the workforce and the quality of productions, among other issues.

Walking through the textile workshop, he recognized the new uniform models being crafted, with unique designs, high quality, and patriotic symbols standing out. (Info from www.presidencia.gob.cu)

Pastors for Peace sends Trump administration a strong message

The group's solidarity caravan conveys a clear message to the U.S. - and the world - challenging the hostile policy toward Cuba being followed by the current government

Author: [International news staff](#) | informacion@granma.cu - june 11, 2019 14:06:59



*Reverend Raúl Suárez, from Ebenezer Baptist Church in the Havana municipality of Marianao, emphasized the importance of the Cuba-U.S. Friendship Caravan project organized by Pastors for Peace to the struggle against the blockade. **Photo:** Yaimi Ravelo*

Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations, Ana Silvia Rodríguez, stated that the Pastors for Peace solidarity caravan this year is of great relevance, since it is taking place during a difficult period for relations between Cuba and the United States, amidst escalating U.S. sanctions on Cuba.

According to Prensa Latina, the work of Caravan participants is sending a clear message to the United States and the rest of the world, challenging the hostile policies of the current administration, the Cuban diplomat said during a solidarity event held in New York.

Anti-Cuban leaders have learned nothing over these years of resistance, she added, our people will not surrender to pressure or threats. Now Washington is tightening the siege of Cuba, increasing aggressive measures, re-activating the Helms-Burton Act's Title III, for example.

Restrictions on travel to the island have been increased, "Perhaps they are afraid that the U.S. people will learn the true reality of my country," the ambassador observed.

Since 1992, when the Pastors for Peace Caravans began, Caravan organizers and participants have faced the harassment of the different U.S. administrations and forces hostile to the normalization of relations between the two countries. Caravan activists have overcome thousands of ob-

stacles, making great sacrifices to deliver solidarity support to Cuba, recalled Rodríguez, Cuba's alternate permanent representative to the United Nations.

The executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization-Pastors for Peace, Gail Walker, noted that the solidarity work they do allows them to debunk misinformation and lies spread by the Donald Trump administration.

The Caravan's travels around the continental U.S. are taking place early in June this year, rescheduled to better meet their goals since the Venceremos Brigade organized by U.S. and Puerto Rican activists will be in Cuba to commemorate its 50th anniversary in July, she reported.

The travel license system imposed by the White House is meant to "control what we do, where we go (...), so we will travel without a license, love is our only license," Walker insisted.

"Ours is a labor of love toward our friends in Cuba, reflecting our commitment to the cause of ending the blockade," she concluded.

In addition to bringing solidarity aid to Cuba, the Pastors for Peace caravans, under the guidance of the unforgettable Reverend Lucius Walker, was founded with the objective of challenging the economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba, which the U.S. has maintained for almost 60 years.

Why Guaidó won't accept elections

The time will soon come for the "self-proclaimed President" to answer to the people, and be held accountable for attempting to usurp a position to which he has no right

Author: [Elson Concepción Pérez](#) | internet@granma.cu - may 30, 2019 14:05:40

During his first public appearances in Venezuela, whenever he could, the National Assembly in-contempt deputy, Juan Guaidó, would put on a media show demanding new elections, insisting that those of 2018, when Nicolás Maduro was elected President, were "illegal."

Now, the deputy is surprised that, as a result of negotiations with the opposition and the Bolivarian government's goodwill, President Maduro has agreed to early elections for the National Assembly.

The poorly advised, improvised figure, anxious to play a leading role and make money, has faithfully followed orders from the U.S. government and won the support of the worse elements in Trump's neo-fascist retinue, including Pompeo, Bolton, Rubio, Abrams, and Mike Pence.

Guaidó doesn't want elections because he knows he's lost. And the time will soon come for him to answer to the people of his country, and be held accountable before the law for attempting to usurp a position to which he has no right; for proposing a foreign military intervention; encouraging an economic war that has already left children dead, as a result of the blockade of food, medicine, and other vital resources; and for taking possession of diplomatic offices abroad in violation of international laws and conventions.

Doesn't Guaidó know that he is legally responsible for the violations he has committed? Or does he think that Venezuela is a failed state with no laws or bodies to enforce them?

Guaidó wants Maduro to leave the Presidency and hand it over to him. He wants the 6,190,612 votes cast for the legitimate President in 2018, recognized by international authorities, to be given to him for his "noble" efforts to destabilize the country, even though U.S. sanctions have caused hunger and a military intervention could have incalculable consequences.

Juan Guaidó does not want elections, and moreover expresses himself with a vulgarity indicative of his frustration, describing President Maduro as "increasingly disjointed," dismissing early legislative elections outright.

It remains to be seen what opinion of early elections his U.S. masters may have, those who have repeatedly called for "restoring democracy" and were sorely disappointed by the self-proclamation show.



*Juan Guaidó with Colombian President Iván Duque and U.S. Vice President Mike Pence. **Photo:** TN.COM*

international action center statement: **u.s. role in hong kong protests**

U.S. imperialism is the greatest enemy of the world's peoples struggling for a future with dignity, sovereignty and full human rights. Wall Street and finance capital maintains its dominance through the threat of over 800 foreign military bases, aircraft carriers, constant coups, targeted assassinations, drone attacks and starvation sanctions imposed on over 30 countries around the world.

Wall Street also uses the soft power National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to fund many thousands of NGOs, reactionary political parties, and alliances with corrupt dictators all over the world.

U.S. aid or interventions have never protected human rights or democracy.

Recent mass protests against a proposed modification of extradition laws have rattled Hong Kong. It is the natural response of all progressive forces to rally to the side of mass demonstrations. **But it is the duty of revolutionaries to look deeper, to ask what forces are behind a movement, and who stands to benefit.**

Background

Britain stole Hong Kong from China at the conclusion of the 1st Opium War in 1842. Through the Opium Wars, Britain and the U.S. military imposed the opium trade, unequal treaties and occupation. One hundred years of imperialist looting completely impoverished and underdeveloped China.

The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 radically changed China and began the efforts to build socialism. But for 30 years, from 1949 to 1979 China was completely walled off, blockaded and sanctioned by the U.S. and western imperialist countries.

In 1979 under the 'reform and opening up' initiated under Deng Xiaoping China made the concession of capitalist market reforms. This finally gave China access to some technology and capital from the industrialized world but was a deal with the devil, strengthening the capitalist class in China.

The British colony of Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under the 'one country, two systems' principle that preserved much of the British colonial legal/judicial system in the former colony. Hong Kong is a center of world finance capital. It is deeply hostile to the social measures that have lifted hundreds of millions of people in mainland China out of extreme poverty and provided high standards of health care, education and modern infrastructure.

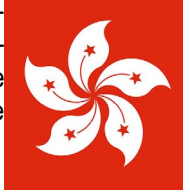
Finance capital has made strong inroads into China. Hong Kong is the West's base of operations, encouraging the growth of a capitalist class in China that threatens the foundations of socialism.

Today China is a deeply contradictory society, characterized by the struggle between a re-born capitalist class and the aspirations of Chinese workers and peasants to maintain and expand a planned economy.

It is in the context of this struggle, as well as the escalating U.S. military encirclement and trade war against China that the current protests in Hong Kong must be understood. The forces of finance capital in Hong Kong and their allies in the U.S. and Europe want to pull Hong Kong away from China so it can function as an economic and political outpost in the region. This means limiting legal and political integration with China as much as possible. To this end the U.S. has provided extensive political, financial and media support to the protests.

The vocabulary of protest is available to both the left and right. Through the NED the U.S. has financed coup attempts, often involving a component of mass protest in Honduras, Nicaragua,

Venezuela, Haiti, Ukraine and Syria. Any movement has the potential to sweep into it many well-meaning progressive people, often with legitimate grievances whose interests are not those of the movement's leadership.



Facts about the Hong Kong protests

Multiple member organizations of the Civil

Human Rights Front, the coalition behind the recent protests receive or have received funding from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) a U.S. funded soft-power organization that doles out money in the interests of U.S. imperialism. These include the: Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management, Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, Hong Kong Journalists Association, Civic Party, Labor Party and Democratic Party.

Over 37,000 NGOs, with staff in the tens of thousands are registered in Hong Kong, many of which receive funding from the U.S. and Europe.

Martin Lee, founder of the Democratic Party, a member organization of the Civil Human Rights Front met with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during the protests. Pompeo expressed support for the protests at the meeting. If the protests are in fact serving a progressive end, they would not be supported by the reactionary leadership of U.S. imperialism, the very force attempting to carry out a coup in Venezuela, threatening Peoples Korea and trying to start a war with Iran.

Hong Kong's independent judicial/legal system is a relic British colonialism. Nowhere else in the world does a city have independent extradition laws, with authority above that of a sovereign country.

Despite decades of multi-million dollar western funding Hong Kong has a poverty rate of 20% (23.1% for children) compared to less than 1% in mainland China. In the past 20 years poverty in Hong Kong has remained high while mainland China has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. Recent protests, much like the 'Occupy Central' protests in Hong Kong in 2014 have not raised this issue. The protests have been directed at leadership connected to mainland China while ignoring the U.S. connected banks and ultra wealthy capitalists based in Hong Kong who clearly show no interest in addressing poverty or other desperate needs.

The U.S. claims to be concerned with free speech and politically motivated extraditions, while it aggressively pursues the extradition of Julian Assange for exposing the crimes of U.S. imperialism.

The corporate media in the U.S. and Europe have enthusiastically reported on Hong Kong protests, in stark contrast to the meager, often critical coverage of mass protests in Gaza, Honduras, Sudan, Yemen, France or the recent general strike in Brazil. The difference in coverage exposes a difference in the forces behind the protests, a difference in who stands to benefit from them.

U.S. imperialism has a long history of 'color revolutions' in which protests with a progressive, even revolutionary patina are used as cover for a reactionary, pro U.S. agenda.

The world finance capital forces in Hong Kong are allied with U.S. imperialism and opposed to socialist ownership and the leadership of China by the Chinese Communist Party.

U.S. Hands Off China!

Hong Kong is part of China!

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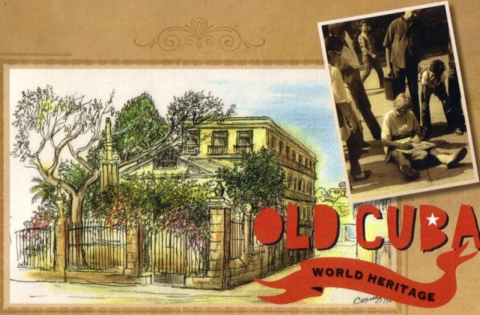
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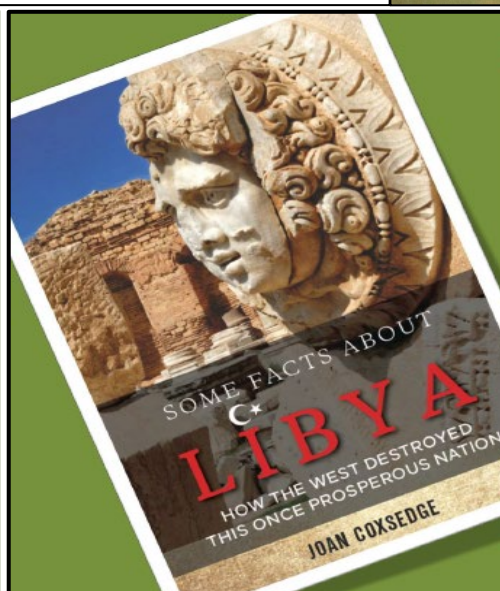
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