



Australia-Cuba Friendship Society
Melbourne NEWSLETTER
November 2019

Next Meeting
Monday 11th
November
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

5 November, 2019

If you have a tendency to wake up at 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock in the early hours like I do, it can be bloody hard to get back to sleep again, especially if your undisciplined mind starts jumping around and thinking about our fractured world and what it would be like if we had progressive leaders who were prepared to implement progressive policies. And then reality kicks in and you're stuck with Trump, wondering who's next on his hit list. I doubt he knows himself, just shoots from the hip hoping he'll land on something. Not that things are looking too flash here with a bible-thumping mini-Trump at the helm who believes in the Old Testament, Armageddon and anything with 'private' in front of it, with special thanks to Hawke and Keating for pushing the privatisation/deregulation fiasco.

Last week I saw a disturbing film called *Joker*, a film you can't lightly dismiss because it presents a parable of our troubled times, a world of 'them' and 'us', of winners and losers, leading to a diabolical chain of events. Arthur Fleck works part-time as a rent-a-clown and is clearly a nut-case living on the margins with a sick mother, battling a condition where he laughs and cries out simultaneously, very loudly and very publicly. Abandoned and horribly abused, he gets his kicks out of attacking and killing his persecutors. It was impossible to watch the film without being dragged into it emotionally with a mixture of horror and revulsion. A social worker interviewing Arthur told him: **'They don't give a shit about people like you...and they don't give a shit about people like me either'**, nicely summing up the appalling state of our public 'care' system and the people who work in it. And, of course, it's a lot more than that. Critics are frightened that Arthur's plight will catch on and the dispossessed will start bumping off those who get in their way.. Perhaps governments should take note, except they couldn't care less about our most vulnerable. The recent Royal Commission Report into Aged Care made that clear. We've had 18 successive inquiries and recommendations that showed widespread neglect and abuse, all of them ignored over and over again. A 'national disgrace' doesn't seem to cut it. The thought that The State has lost its marbles and is deliberately punishing millions of innocent people is entirely believable.

And then there's our coppers, both state and federal, who dress up in black, are armed to the teeth and have fascist tendencies. More para than civic. And now our local plods are being given the power to shoot wayward car drivers, while protestors blocking a mining conference were tear-gassed. Mr PM Climate Denier who praises violent US-run Hong Kong gangs who fire-bomb buildings, attack people and are destroying its infrastructure displays his moral duplicity by vowing to ban protests here (especially if they affect mining) and pass laws to limit free speech, a lesson from the Nazi song book. It brought to mind an earlier time when Menzies' bill banning communism almost got through. At the ready, camps to incarcerate those dangerous reds. Years later, when Whitlam got the chop, the army was put on full alert ready to take over our streets, when we should have taken them over ourselves. So we've got form in the anti-democratic stakes.

And now former CIA director John E. McLaughlin has come clean about the irrelevance of national governments, when he 'Thanked God for the Deep State'. Proof from the man who knows, that there's another higher layer of control going on, an 'invisible government' to make sure we don't stray from the narrow neo-liberal capitalist road. It's real and it's active and is directly linked to those who 'stray', like whistle-blowers. Former ambassador and human rights activist, Craig Murray, sat through last week's events in Westminster's Magistrates Court to hear the charges against Julian Assange, presided over by a callous magistrate, Vanessa Baraitser, who barely pretended to listen. **The charges were quite specific and had nothing to do with Sweden, nothing to do with sex and nothing to do with the 2016 US election, but related to publishing the Iraqi War Logs, the Afghanistan War Logs and US State Department cables.**

'Everybody in that court saw one of the greatest journalists and most important dissidents of our time being tortured to death by the state before our eyes', said Craig Murray. **'This highly articulate man was reduced to a shambling incoherent wreck'**. Nils Melzer, the UN's Special Rapporteur on Torture claimed that Julian exhibited all the symptoms of a torture victim, disorientation and confusion. **There were five representatives of the US government present in that court seated at desks behind James Lewis QC and other prosecution lawyers** who went into a huddle and then scurried outside the courtroom. **Lewis actually admitted that he was 'taking instructions from those behind', meaning a British judge in a British court was being dictated to by the US Embassy. The Deep State in action.** Lewis 'suggested' that the defence should not waste the court's time with arguments and Baraitser finished off the legal farce by saying that the February hearing would not be held in the relatively open and accessible Westminster Court but in the grim Belmarsh Magistrates Court where there are only six public seats. British justice should hang its head in shame. And shame on us for not defending one of our own.

'Christmas is coming and the goose is getting fat', we used to sing when I was a kid. Not that we ever ate goose, but maybe as a special treat we had chicken on Christmas Day, because chicken was special back then. And we also used to sing **'good will to all men'**, which is not only sexist but clearly out of date. Good will to anyone seems to be in short supply today, I reckon. There's plenty of half-way good people trying to make ends meet, pay the bills and keep out of the way of our gun-toting, pepper-spraying coppers, who even accept there's such a thing as climate change, would like a better health care system, but then leave it at that. For a loud-mouthed minority - like you and me - that's not good enough. It's not just our animals and birds that are threatened with extinction, but us, the people. So we must keep fighting and shouting for a society that puts all living things before profits and exploitation. And keep fighting and shouting... Cuba is. Viva!

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

It's AGM time! Monday 11th November. Same time, Same place.

[Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Conference, for Democracy and against Neoliberalism opens in Havana](#)

The gathering opened with the presence of more than 1200 delegates from around the world

[Tobacco continues to be Cuba's main agricultural export](#)

Some 16,300 growers will participate in this year's campaign, with more than 30,000 hectares to again be planted



[There should be no barriers to scientific cooperation between Cuba and the United States](#)

Scientists from several countries participate in International Cardiology Congress, Cardiovilla 2019, held in Villa Clara



[Havana, the capital of anti-imperialism and solidarity](#)

Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Conference, for Democracy and against Neoliberalism set to take place November 1-3 in the Cuban capital

[South Americans visiting Cuba express support for the Revolution](#)

More than 200 people from Argentina, Brazil and Chile arrived in Cuba as part of the 23rd South American Voluntary Work Brigade, running January 24 through February 7, motivated by the desire to express solidarity and fraternity with the Cuban people



FESTIVAL OF IBERO-AMERICAN CULTURE

[Strong cultural ties across the Caribbean](#)

The 25th Festival of Ibero-American Culture is taking place in Holguin, October 24-30, bringing together intellectuals and artists from a variety of countries



[Camilo lives and triumphs with his people \(+ Photos\)](#)



Floral wreaths from Army General Raúl Castro, Party first secretary, and the people of Cuba were placed alongside the Yaguajay Historical Complex, declared National Monument in memory of Camilo Cienfuegos

- [A flower for Camilo](#)

[Travelling to Cuba will remain attractive and safe, despite U.S. aggression](#)

Visitors during the upcoming winter season will enjoy 3,768 new rooms in 25 hotels, and unique accommodations in remodelled colonial buildings



Congratulations to two brothers, both ACFS members.

Sasha Gillies-Lekakis - Writer and presenter of 'Latin American Update' on 3CR

- National History Challenger state finalist with his essay 'Has Cuba Absolved Fidel Castro?', which was also published on Telesur news
- Melbourne Unitarian Church address: 'Oceans Apart- a Comparison of Australia and Cuba in the Pacific'
- Panelist on the MUPMC youth group's address on Climate Change
- Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholar (University of Melbourne)
- *And has just been awarded a Casa Cuba Scholarship to study for one semester at the University of Havana (worth \$40,000 Aud)*

Julian Gillies-Lekakis

- National winner of the National History Challenge (Year 10) with his essay
- 'The Role of Australian Communists in Making the World a Better Place'.
- Selected for the Melbourne Youth Orchestra Flagship Ensemble's European Tour in July 2020
- Panelist on the MUPMC youth group's address on Climate Change
- Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholar (University of Melbourne)
- Member of the 'Young Achiever's mentoring programme (Big Brothers Big Sisters Foundation)

Six decades of aggression toward Cuba

New Treasury Department regulations to tighten the blockade are intended to disrupt the daily lives of Cubans, including essential health care

Author: [Ronald Suárez Rivas](#) | internet@granma.cu - october 7, 2019 15:10:59

On his bed in the intensive care unit of Pepe Portilla Pediatric Hospital, where he has lived the last two years and seven months, King Dennys Santiesteban shows me his collection of toy dinosaurs.

He assures me that the fiercest is the Tyrannosaurus Rex, and that there are really big ones that they only eat grass.

At six, he tells me that he already knows how to read and write, thanks to the dedication of his grandmother and the doctors who care for him day and night, but admits that his greatest wish is to return home.

The disease he suffers requires him to remain attached to a mechanical ventilator, so without one at home, he stays here.

Dr. Liliana María Cueto explains that these are very expensive devices, only manufactured by capitalist corporations.

"If the equipment has any component from the United States, it isn't sold to our country," she says.

Liliana points out that, if there is one area which the U.S. blockade impacts every day, it is public health.

"We feel the lack of medications, such as first-generation antibiotics and equipment with some component of U.S. origin. The firms that produce them are afraid to sell to us, or if they do, they don't supply us with spare parts."

Nonetheless, Cuban doctors are committed to defending life and fighting disease. After more than half a century of resistance, it has almost become normal for a country in which most of its inhabitants were born under the effects of the blockade.

But nothing more cruel and anachronistic than this genocidal policy, supported by more than a dozen administrations in the White House.

Beyond the enormous figures describing the damage done to our economy and the negative impact on development, each and every Cuban has had a personal experience with the blockade - be it an unavailable medicine, a closed plant, equipment that could no longer be repaired because a U.S. firm bought the factory where it was produced...

The examples have multiplied recently, with the obsessive aggressiveness of the Trump administration.

The drastic reduction of services offered at the U.S. embassy in Havana, greatly complicating procedures Cubans must follow to travel to the United States; the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act; further restrictions on travel to the island by U.S. citizens; limits on remittances; fines on companies that allegedly violate the blockade; increased subversive projects; sanctions to prevent the arrival of fuel to the country, meant to generate chaos and discontent, are just some of the measures adopted by the President and his minions.

With incredible cynicism, they have said that these actions are intended to "free the Cuban people from suffering," as if each and every measure is meant to cause exactly the opposite.

A statement released by the U.S. embassy in Havana, this past September 6, shamelessly states that the escalation in Treasury Department regulations to tighten the blockade will deny Cuba access to foreign currency "as part of our support for the Cuban people."

But life goes on in Cuba, with the conviction that there are peoples who do not surrender, and sacred principles, like human dignity and love for the homeland, that will always be worth fighting for.

HOSTILE U.S. MEASURES IMPOSED ON CUBA SINCE JUNE OF 2017

June 16, 2017

Principal changes in U.S. policy toward Cuba made by Donald Trump:

- ⇄ Increased restrictions on travel to Cuba for U.S. citizens, by reducing the number of categories of travel permitted with a general license, as opposed to a specific permit from the Treasury Department.
- ⇄ Reinforcement of the blockade via the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.
- ⇄ Repeal of Presidential Policy Directive issued by President Barack Obama in 2016, which stated that the blockade was an obsolete burden for the Cuban people and an impediment to U.S. interests.^{3 de e 2018}

September 29, 2017

Then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced a significant reduction of diplomatic staff at the U.S. embassy in Havana and withdrew all family members, on the grounds that there had been "attacks" on U.S. officials in Cuba, which had impacted their health.

October 3, 2017

The U.S. government, in an unjustified move, ordered 15 officials at the Cuban embassy in Washington to leave the country, allegedly since U.S. diplomatic personnel in Havana had been reduced and the Cuban government had not taken the necessary steps to prevent further "attacks."



Life goes on in Cuba, with the conviction that there are peoples who do not surrender, and sacred principles, like human dignity and love for the homeland, that will always be worth fighting for. Photo: Ricardo López Hevia

cont'd...

November 9, 2017

The State Department published a list of 179 Cuban entities with which U.S. citizens were not allowed to conduct direct financial transactions. The list includes the ministries of Armed Forces and the Interior; the National Revolutionary Police; state enterprises; the Mariel Special Development Zone and Havana container terminals; dozens of hotels throughout Cuba; travel agencies; and stores.

December 22, 2017

Washington moves its immigration office in Cuba to Mexico.

January 10, 2018

The United States issues travel advisory instructing its citizens to reconsider trips to Cuba.

January 23, 2018

The United States creates a Cuba Internet Task Force, announced on January 23 by the State Department, opening the doors to a return to failed Cold War policy.

March 2018

Washington releases funds for subversion in Cuba and the border wall with Mexico. The budget approved by the United States Congress includes 20 million dollars for subversion in Cuba.

March 29, 2018

The United States announces that, beginning April 1, the immigrant visa process for Cubans will once again change, to be conducted now at the U.S. embassy in Georgetown, Guyana. Due to these unilateral measures, since September of 2017, the U.S. consul in Havana is virtually paralyzed and only offers emergency services.

September 10, 2018

President Donald Trump extends the Trading with the Enemy Act's application against Cuba for another year.

May 2, 2019

The Trump administration activates Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

June 5, 2019

The Treasury Department will no longer permit group educational and cultural trips known as "people to people."

September 2019

The United States Department of the Treasury modified the Asset Control Regulations for Cuba to impose new sanctions on our country, basically, adding further restrictions on remittances and bank transactions. U.S. President Donald Trump again renews the application of the Trading with the Enemy Law to Cuba, for another year.

<http://en.granma.cu/cuba/2019-10-07/six-decades-of-aggression-toward-cuba>

There should be no barriers to scientific cooperation between Cuba and the United States

Scientists from several countries participate in International Cardiology Congress, Cardiovilla 2019, held in Villa Clara

Author: [Ángel Freddy Pérez Cabrera](mailto:freddy@granma.cu) | freddy@granma.cu - october 29, 2019 14:10:00



Photo: Freddy Pérez Cabrera

CAIBARIÉN, Villa Clara.— The blockade of Cuba is anachronistic and must cease, said Dr. Matthew W. Martinez, a renowned U.S. cardiologist participating in the International Cardiology Congress, Cardiovilla 2019, which took place in Cayo Santa María, who added that there should be no barriers to collaboration between Cuban scientists and those of the United States.

Speaking to the press, Martinez, who is a member of the American College of Cardiology and works at the Morristown Medical Center in New Jersey, said that there is much to learn from Cuban medicine, which in addition to being provided free of charge despite financial limitations, manages to do a great deal for the health of the nation's inhabitants.

"Cuba's results in the field of Cardiology are fabulous, and should be known by the world scientific community," Dr. Martinez said, who noted the quality of Cuban specialists who have the ability to serve everyone who needs treatment.

He insisted that it is important to come to Cuba to events like this, to share and exchange common experiences in the field of Cardiology, because we have the same problems with cholesterol, arrhythmias, damage caused to smokers, and other pathologies that affect the heart.

The gathering of some 400 specialists was also attended by Professor Giovanni Pedrazzini, president of the Swiss Society of Cardiology, who highlighted the quality of Cuban medicine, which amidst many limitations maintains all its services.

During a presentation offered within the framework of the event, Pedrazzini said that if something merits attention in the case of Cuba, it is the joint work of its institutions that, despite limited resources, make the most of the country's indisputable medical talent.

<http://en.granma.cu/cuba/2019-10-29/there-should-be-no-barriers-to-scientific-cooperation-between-cuba-and-the-united-states>

The real enemies of the planet

Commentary

Posted in [Class struggle](#), [Climate & Environment](#) - By Deirdre Griswold - October 29, 2019

A map of the world, recently circulated online, claims to identify the world's worst offenders responsible for the climate crisis. It named energy ministers in scores of countries — rich and poor, imperialist and oppressed — as equally the culprits for the biggest challenge facing humanity.

The map was no doubt a sincere attempt. But it has a basic flaw.

It is not energy ministers who have been pushing fossil fuels over more sustainable forms of energy. It is the powerful oil, gas and coal industry.

This is why today the U.S., with only 5 percent of the world's people, consumes 20 percent of the world's energy supply.

It is why the U.S. produces, per person, four times the greenhouse gas emissions of China, even though China has the world's largest population and has become the world's largest manufacturer.

Rockefellers, Gettys — fossil fuel dynasties

For well over a century, families like the Rockefellers and Gettys in the U.S. built enormous fortunes on the backs of miners and oil workers who dug up or pumped out the fossil fuels that have powered capitalism's ongoing industrial — later the high-tech — revolution.

Beginning less than a decade after the U.S. Civil War ended, newly acquired oil and coal money played a major role in the emergence of an extravagant lifestyle for the super-rich in a few big cities, especially New York. Industrialists and their bankers began to overtake landowners in a surge of wealth that they flaunted shamelessly, aping the opulent customs of the decadent European ruling classes.

Between 1873 and 1875, the U.S. suffered one of what were then becoming recurrent economic depressions. It was in that period that the



John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil.

Rockefeller family fortune began to skyrocket, as they bought crude oil at ever-lower prices and then sold it for a healthy profit. (See "The Rich and the Super-Rich" by Ferdinand Lundberg.) That was nearly a century and a half ago. Since then, the Rockefellers and other powerful industrial and banking families — the Rockefellers used their vast oil wealth to "diversify" and became powerful bankers on Wall Street — have run the United States, lock, stock and barrel. Most of the time they have been satisfied with doing it behind the scenes, leaving public pronouncements to the politicians whose loyalty they can count on. But occasionally they even run for public office.

John D. Rockefeller founded Standard Oil in 1870. His grandson, Nelson Rockefeller, became governor of New York state from 1959 to 1973 and was vice president from 1974 to 1977 under President Gerald Ford. But every administration, whether Democrat or Republican, has had to follow an agenda approved by the super-wealthy families of the fossil fuel industry.

<https://iacenter.org/2019/10/30/the-real-enemies-of-the-planet/>

Oil wars and counter-revolutions

U.S. foreign policy in particular has reflected the dominance of the oil billionaires. There is no question that this is what has driven the horribly destructive U.S. wars in the Middle East and northern Africa, where so much of the world's oil is extracted. And it didn't start with the current wars.

Back in 1953, the CIA mounted an operation that overthrew the elected government of Iran, headed by Mohammed Mossadegh, who had nationalized the country's oil industry. The CIA operation was led by Kermit Roosevelt, a grandson of Theodore Roosevelt.

Once the U.S. had installed the Shah to run Iran, and it seemed this oil-rich country was safely back under the thumb of U.S. corporations, Kermit Roosevelt became an executive of Gulf Oil.

But the triumph of the oil billionaires was not permanent. By 1979, the Shah was overthrown in a revolution that once again nationalized Iran's oil and toppled the monarchy. That's why today the U.S. is threatening another war against Iran.



The Cuyahoga River burns in Ohio in 1952, polluted by refineries including Standard Oil.

'System change, not climate change!'

The oil billionaires who have toppled governments abroad while dominating U.S. politics at home are not ready to allow a little thing like global warming and climate change interfere with their profits. They are driven by the insatiable need of capitalism to produce profits now, not some time down the road.

That is why the fervent pleas of the climate movement get only a mournful "What a shame" response while business goes on as usual. Even when water rises around their ocean-front estates and their ski chalets have to manufacture snow, the super-rich ruling class have bigger worries: What's going to happen to their investments?

To really fight for and win a sustainable future, we have to understand who the real enemies are. And many, many people in the environmental movement do understand. The growing popularity of the slogan "System change, not climate change" is a testament to this awareness.

The enemies of our movement are the class of billionaires who have profited off our labor while powering their economy with the fossil fuels they have appropriated. Liberating the working class is a precondition to liberating the planet.

Bigot Trump's real crimes

Posted in [Climate & Environment](#), [Immigrants & Refugees](#), [In the U.S.](#), [People with disabilities](#), [Racism & Oppression](#), [Women](#)

October 2, 2019

Let us count the crimes the current U.S. president has committed against the working class and all the oppressed masses.

His campaign vilified Mexicans and other Central American migrants and refugees, calling them gangsters and rapists. In office, he shut down legal asylum, jailing migrants and separating parents from children, and restricted entry for Muslims.

All his life, Trump wore his misogyny openly, boasting of groping women. In office he appointed misogynist judges to federal courts and even the Supreme Court.

Long before he ran for office, Donald Trump waged a racist campaign against the Central Park 5, Black and Latinx youths railroaded to jail on false accusations of raping a jogger, who were finally exonerated. In office, he railed against "shithole countries," all of which were countries in Africa or inhabited by people of African descent.

Among other things, this president has insulted people with disabilities for their disability, has

tried to bar trans people from the military, and with all the above has committed grave crimes against the working and oppressed masses.

Yet the charges that the Democratic Party and various ruling-class sectors have attempted to use against this president have been those most isolated from the working class and people facing oppression.

First, they investigated POTUS's relations with the Russian president, attempting to link him with aiding Trump's election. That failed.

Now the impeachment charges involve Trump's attempt to use a U.S.-installed Ukrainian regime against Biden, one of the more likely Democratic candidates for president next year.

The first year of the Trump administration brought smiles to the faces of the ruling class as he cut taxes for the rich and the corporations and opened up new areas of the Earth to the wanton exploitation of natural resources. Now they are smiling less. Business is shaky, and the boast to "make

[U.S.] America great again" has cost the U.S. strategically and economically.

Impeachment seems possible, perhaps also to Trump, who exploded against those Democrats attacking him. In his usual blatantly racist style, he called those Democrats heading the House investigation against him "savages," singling out Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez and the rest of "the Squad," plus Adam Schiff and Jerrold Nadler — four women of color and two Jewish men. The president also hinted that his impeachment might bring on a civil war.

These verbal crimes are worthy of a mass mobilization to get rid of the president. But what's really needed is not a legal maneuver that replaces blatant Trump with subservient Mike Pence, but one that sweeps out the whole racist, bigoted, money-grubbing gang.



<https://iicenter.org/2019/10/10/bigot-trumps-real-crimes/>

Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Conference, for Democracy and against Neoliberalism opens in Havana

The gathering opened with the presence of more than 1200 delegates from around the world

Author: [International news staff](#) | informacion@granma.cu - november 1, 2019 15:11:32



Photo: Twitter

"We continue to dream of the world we deserve," he said, noting that the event is taking place in the context of celebrations for the 500th anniversary of Havana's founding, "with the goal of uniting broad forces in solidarity with Cuba."

González said that it was a pleasure to share this space with left organizations at a time when the United States is attempting to distort Cuba's altruistic mission and international health collaboration, and reaffirmed that Cuba will never betray its friends. For his part, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez addressed Cuba's foreign policy and the struggle against the blockade.



Photo: Twitter

"A profound expression of our people's struggles can be felt in this hall," he stated, noting that the Trump administration is a serious threat, as the U.S. increases intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. He insisted that the capitalist model is not viable and unsustainable environmentally. He stated that the electoral campaign in the United States may cause the confrontational course of U.S. policy toward Cuba to sharpen, adding that severe difficulties are being faced in acquiring fuel not only for development, but to sustain the country's daily life. He denounced U.S. government violations of international law, navigation and trade regulations, trampling the human rights of Cubans, while launching an aggression campaign against Cuban medical cooperation, to cut Cuba's legitimately earned income. He recalled that the Helms-Burton Act is the main document guiding U.S. hostility against Cuba. "We appreciate the solidarity that you have expressed in the face of this aggression, that our people resist and will continue resisting no matter the consequences," he said. He noted that the Organization of American States (OAS) is being used to attack the left and defend neoliberalism, and that the U.S. needs to blame Cuba for its resounding failure in Venezuela and justify the blockade. He insisted that capitalism and imperialism are responsible for Latin America being the world's most unequal region. On the other hand, he stated that the reelection of Evo Morales is a historic victory, and that our sister republics of the Caribbean deserve the fair and differentiated treatment they demand, as well as Haiti which needs the international community's full support. Rodríguez Parrilla also reiterated Cuba's commitment to the independence of Puerto Rico and the Saharawi people.

<http://en.granma.cu/cuba/2019-11-01/anti-imperialist-solidarity-conference-for-democracy-and-against-neoliberalism-opens-in-havana>



Photo: Twitter

Impromptu march brings democracy to the streets of London

1 November 2019

News, Topics: [Brexit](#)

With nothing to celebrate about 31 October, the planned official Brexit rally in Parliament Square in London did not go ahead. Instead, hundreds of demonstrators chose to arrive with their home-made banners to stand opposite parliament to make their feelings felt.

And then some more arrived. And some more. Then with great efficiency some of the demonstrators organised themselves into a march formation and took off, first to the media circus tents outside Westminster and then around Parliament Square, down past Downing Street and onwards to Trafalgar Square.

Many of the demonstrators were live streaming the event on their mobile phones and calling on others to come and join the demonstration. They then decided to march the route again, and then again with increasing numbers each time, as Brexiteer Londoners came to join the groups who had arrived from different parts of the country.

The main slogan was the predictable "What do we want? Brexit Now! And what else do we want? Democracy Now!" Other slogans included "The people are sovereign, not parliament".

The many police who are now always around parliament had little option but to facilitate the impromptu demonstration.

Rotten

In time as the march grew they did become anxious about the way it stopped outside Downing Street to allow demonstrators to vent feelings on what they called "the rotten deal", and mounted police were enlisted to cover the Downing Street entrance.

Despite the proximity of the media tents at Westminster no footage of the extremely noisy demonstration managed to make the news bulletins.

When the noise levels permitted many of the demonstrators were deep in conversation about how we needed to organise ourselves constituency by constituency in the General Election so as not to split the vote to leave the EU. The politicians may not be able to agree a Leave alliance, but the people seem to be planning one anyway.

Late in the afternoon, in a provocative move, the Liberal Democrat Party drove a van with a giant electronic hoarding on it with the slogan "Stop Brexit! The future is Jo Swinson" alongside parliament – an indicator of their planned tactics in the election battle ahead.

But the van was swiftly surrounded, and the police instructed the driver to switch off the electronic display. The vehicle was unable to proceed along Parliament Square as the demonstrators just stayed in the road. Eventually, with police assistance, the blacked-out vehicle was reversed and sent off over Westminster Bridge to great cheers.

<https://www.cpbml.org.uk/news/impromptu-march-brings-democracy-streets-london>



Marchers showing what they think outside Downing Street on 31 October. Photo Workers.

Did this happen in the home of Magna Carta?

28 October 2019

In a special comment written for [Consortium News](#), John Pilger describes the disturbing scene inside a London courtroom last week when the WikiLeaks publisher, Julian Assange, appeared at the start of a landmark extradition case that will define the future of free journalism.

The worst moment was one of a number of 'worst' moments. I have sat in many courtrooms and seen judges abuse their positions. This judge, Vanessa Baraitser - actually she isn't a judge at all; she's a magistrate - shocked all of us who were there.

Her face was a progression of sneers and imperious indifference; she addressed Julian with an arrogance that reminded me of a magistrate presiding over apartheid South Africa's Race Classification Board. When Julian struggled to speak, he couldn't get words out, even stumbling over his name and date of birth.

When he spoke truth and when his barrister spoke, Baraitser contrived boredom; when the prosecuting barrister spoke, she was attentive. She had nothing to do; it was demonstrably preordained. In the table in front of us were a handful of American officials, whose directions to the prosecutor were carried by his junior; back and forth this young woman went, delivering instructions.

The judge watched this outrage without a comment. It reminded me of a newsreel of a show trial in Stalin's Moscow; the difference was that Soviet show trials were broadcast. Here, the state broadcaster, the BBC, blacked it out, as did the other mainstream channels.

Having ignored Julian's barrister's factual description of how the CIA had run a Spanish security firm that spied on him in the Ecuadorian embassy, she didn't yawn, but her disinterest was as expressive. She then denied Julian's lawyers any more time to prepare their case - even though their client was prevented in prison from receiving legal documents and other tools with which to defend himself.

Her knee in the groin was to announce that the next court hearing would be at remote Woolwich, which adjoins Belmarsh prison and has few seats for the public. This will

ensure isolation and be as close to a secret trial as it's possible to get. Did this happen in the home of the Magna Carta? Yes, but who knew?

Julian's case is often compared with Dreyfus; but historically it's far more important. No one doubts - not his enemies on The New York Times, not the Murdoch press in Australia - that if he is extradited to the United States and the inevitable supermax, journalism will be incarcerated, too.

Who will then dare to expose anything of importance, let alone the high crimes of the West? Who will dare publish 'Collateral Murder'? Who will dare tell the public that democracy, such as it is, has been subverted by a corporate authoritarianism from which fascism draws its strength.

Once there were spaces, gaps, boltholes, in mainstream journalism in which mavericks, who are the best journalists, could work. These are long closed now. The hope is the samizdat on the internet, where fine disobedient journalism is still practised. The greater hope is that a judge or even judges in Britain's court of appeal, the High Court, will rediscover justice and set him free. In the meantime, it's our responsibility to fight in ways we know but which now require more than a modicum of Julian Assange's courage.

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Evo Morales wins; the OAS and U.S. lose

Despite Evo's clear victory with 46.64% of the vote in recent elections, the U.S. continues its campaign to discredit Bolivia's electoral process and promote destabilization during a special OAS meeting in Washington

Author: [Elson Concepción](mailto:Elson_Concepción@granma.cu) | internet@granma.cu - october 28, 2019 17:10:18



Evo Morales wins; the OAS and U.S. lose **Photo:** Granma

The irreversible victory of Evo Morales in Bolivia's recent elections, (with 46.64% of the vote vs 36.83% for Carlos Mesa), has shed light several aspects of the role of the OAS and Washington throughout their campaign to destabilize popular or left-wing governments, and return control to those who raise the banners of neoliberalism and submission to the United States.

The OAS, as expected, was aligned with the losers and opted to question the voting system and electoral law which states verbatim, "The candidate who surpasses the closest opponent by ten percentage points is declared the winner."

President Evo Morales has described OAS action as an attempted coup against the Bolivian people, while the U.S. government, in addition to guiding the OAS, took direct action from its embassy in La Paz.

The Organization of American States insisted that "there is sufficient reason to suggest a second round..." and called a meeting of its Permanent Council in Washington, where the Bolivian electoral process was questioned, the possibility of

fraud raised, and a call made for a second round vote, among other issues, with the sole purpose of denying Evo's victory.

U.S. ambassador Carlos Trujillo dared to say that the delay in the vote count was due to the fact that Morales' party was not winning.

While Nicaragua's representative, Ruth Tapia, warned, "The OAS has no authority to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign countries." Similarly, Mexican ambassador Luz Elena Baños stated, "The report presented by the OAS must await the full count of electoral records."

For its part, the Jubileo Sur Américas network has published several articles on its website recently, exposing crude U.S. interference in Bolivia's electoral process.

Reports indicate that ships loaded with weapons have been traveling from the United States, specifically Miami, to the Chilean port of Iquique. This cargo is then shipped in containers declared as miscellanea.

Bolivian citizen Juan Carlos

Rivero has also been denounced as responsible for purchasing weapons in the United States and sending them to the National Military Coordinator in Bolivia. This person has direct ties with Manfred Reyes, an opposition politician based in Miami, who is also linked to the U.S. Embassy in La Paz.

Other articles published on the Jubileo Sur Américas website indicate that U.S. diplomatic headquarters have been continuously monitoring the delivery of weapons and ammunition through secret collaborators. They have met with central leaders of the Bolivian opposition to address financing and offer advice on planned violence.

With this backing in their favor, losing opposition candidate Carlos Mesa and his closest collaborators have called for destabilizing actions, while seeking to declare themselves winners and create a kind of parallel power in the department of Santa Cruz.

<http://en.granma.cu/mundo/2019-10-28/evo-morales-wins-the-oas-and-us-lose>

No easy victories

Posted in [Bolivia](#), [Class struggle](#), [Latin America & The Caribbean](#) - October 31, 2019

The African Marxist and liberation leader of Guinea-Bissau, Amílcar Cabral, once said, most famously, "Tell no lies. ... Claim no easy victories."

Today's revolutionary activists looking at Latin America and the Caribbean should keep that phrase in mind as they review the month of October 2019. Massive popular struggles set back rightist regimes. Electoral advances turned into what are at least partial or temporary wins for the working class and poor of the hemisphere. Some enormous mass struggles are filled with potential. Still, all these are just the opening battles in a long period of struggle.

The overall picture is this: The capitalist/imperialist system dominates the world. This system has been in crisis, in recession, at least since 2008. The recession has reduced the need for raw materials, which reduces the prices of exports from many Latin American countries. This in turn reduces these countries' ability to pay interest on their loans from imperialist banks that they need to keep social programs functional.

Imperialist financial entities like the International Monetary Fund want no part of social programs. They demand instead that governments impose austerity, privatizations, anti-popular measures. Where center-left governments resist or delay squeezing the masses, the imperialists and local oligarchs have deposed them, using elections, the courts and even coups: in Paraguay, Honduras, most recently in Ecuador and Brazil and by elections in Chile and Argentina. And they keep trying to overthrow the governments in Nicaragua and Venezuela.

In the past few weeks the laboring masses have said: "No more!" In Haiti, a historic leader in the struggle for emancipation in this hemisphere, the people are demanding the government resign. In Ecuador, a national general strike forced a president — who betrayed his own party along with the people — to pull back on an anti-popular decree. In Chile, massive demonstrations defied police and army terror and forced the president to retreat. All these struggles are still alive and undecided. (They are covered in other articles in this issue of Workers World.) In Bolivia, the popular President Evo Morales was reelected on Oct. 20, getting just the 10 percent margin necessary to win the first round of the

contest. Morales faces a possible coup in the coming days by the country's oligarchs and is mobilizing the masses who support him to stop the coup. Just as with President Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, U.S. imperialism sees Morales as an enemy, and will try to undermine his government.

Argentina's Oct. 27 election deposed the incumbent neoliberal enemy of the people, Mauricio Macri, in the first round, by 48 percent to 40 percent. This puts back into office the political forces continuing the center-left government that was in before Macri's 2015 win, including Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, this time as vice president.

The reaction of many in Argentina's communist left has been more or less like this: "Great, let's celebrate Sunday night and start mobilizing the masses on Monday morning to battle the IMF and the Argentine capitalists." The whirlwind of mass struggle from Chile is contagious.

There is a reason for the reluctance of the Argentine communists to "claim an easy victory." The people of Latin America and the Caribbean are fed up with unfettered neoliberalism and the outrageous inequalities it generates. The problem is that within the framework of capitalism, no one can resolve the problems imposed on these countries by world imperialism.

We must defend the rights of the people of this hemisphere to select their own governments, and help them to the extent that we can to get the imperialist boot off their necks.

We must also realize that as long as capitalists control the banks, the media and, most importantly, the repressive state apparatuses in these countries, the crisis imposed by world imperialism is inescapable. Neither the local capitalists, nor their backers in Washington, Brussels and Tokyo, will just hand over the power. This is just the beginning of a new phase in a long class war.

<https://iacenter.org/2019/11/01/no-easy-victories/>

Internet in Cuba: Realities and prospects

Cuba's telecommunication's company, Etecsa, continues to advance in expanding internet access and diversifying options for the population, commercial enterprises, and institutions

Author: [Susana Antón](#) | informacion@granmai.cu - november 4, 2019 10:11:47

Internet services in Cuba will continue to be developed, not only via expansion and generalization, but also with diversification, explained Mayra Arevich Marín, president of Cuba's telecommunications company, Etecsa.

During the closing day of the second International Cybersociety Congress 2019, company leaders reported that new offers will be available, for both individuals and entities, directed toward expanding broadband internet access, meeting new demands, and providing greater affordability and service quality.

These options are meant to continue expanding 3G mobile network coverage, as well as the 4G/lte network, the latter in its first stage, prioritizing Havana, provincial capitals, and areas of significant economic impact.

In this regard, Arevich said that, by the end of 2019, Havana is expected to have cell phone 4G coverage in 49.8% of its territory. Likewise, new internet access offers will be available for cell, promoting 4g networks with more suitable packages, as well as new modalities to bring connectivity to homes through wireless networks and different fibre optic solutions.

Regarding electronic commerce, Arevich reported that Etecsa, in collaboration with the national banking system, developed the Trans-fermóvil application, which already has more than 305,000 registered users, and is processing more than 4.4 million transactions every month. As per Etecsa's public data center services, projected is the availability of virtual server rental, the hosting of email domains, remote saving, and supervision services, among others. She stressed that work is also being done to offer customized solutions to entities, which will allow them to advance more rapidly in automation and computerization. Likewise, Arevich said, the Etecsa state enterprise is interested in establishing alliances with other national entities to broaden commercial options with digital services and innovative solutions, to guarantee greater and better access for Cubans to the advances achieved with the computerization of Cuban society. In figures- 1.41 million telephone accounts- 5.67 million telephone lines- 2,961 radio bases- 111,015 households with internet access- 2,013,805 permanent navigation accounts- 2,896,987 clients with cell phone internet access (APN Nauta)

Some 100 Cuban athletes to compete in Tokyo 2020

Final figure to be confirmed as the qualification process progresses

Author: [Sports news staff](#) | informacion@granmai.cu - september 4, 2019 15:09:24

The Cuban delegation to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will include some 100 athletes, stated Osvaldo Vento Montiller, president of the country's Institute for Sports, recreation, and Physical Education (INDER), in the Japanese capital, where he attended a seminar for national Olympic representatives.

According to information from the Cuban embassy in Japan, Vento said the final figure will be confirmed as the qualification process progresses. The head of the sports organization also thanked Japanese authorities for facilities offered to conduct training session prior to the big event.

During the visit, Vento was accompanied by the president of Cuba's Olympic Committee, Roberto León Richards and Jorge Polo, INDER vice president. They held meetings with the highest authorities at the Japanese Sports Agency, Daichi Suzuki, in which both parties reiterated their interest in expanding bilateral cooperation.

The Japanese sports leader was also interested in Cuba's preparations for its participation in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and shared information about the cities that will host Cuban teams for training before the Games begin.

Cuba signed a memorandum of understanding with authorities from the cities of Sendai and Tagajo, as well as the Sendai Ikuei School, as projected training sites.

"Surely they will end their preparation on a high note," Vento tweeted, following the agreement.



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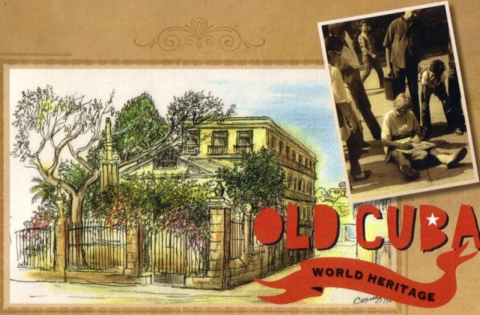
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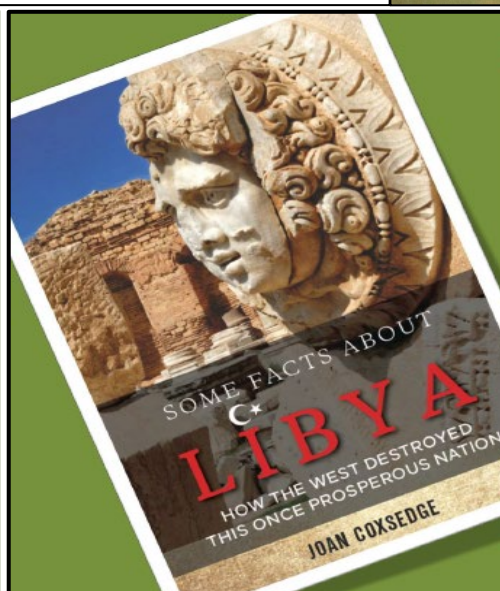
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