



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

In Times Square: U.S. out of Ukraine! Hands off Venezuela!

written by Greg Butterfield
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Photos: Greg Butterfield

New York — The week of Feb. 17-23 marks five years since a U.S.-backed coup in Kiev, Ukraine, overthrew the elected president and installed a far-right government that includes open neo-Nazis. Anti-fascists and anti-war activists are using this tragic anniversary to warn workers of the similar campaign being waged by the Trump administration today against Venezuela, and to build solidarity with those fighting the repressive Kiev dictatorship.

A squad of activists, including members of Struggle-La Lucha, went to New York's Times Square at rush hour on Feb. 18 to hand out leaflets and hold an informational picket outside the U.S. military recruitment center. They distributed a flyer headlined "U.S. coups: Ukraine 2014 - Honduras 2009 - Venezuela 2019? We say no!" It provided information on the effects of U.S. supported coups on the people in these countries and the importance of taking to the streets on Feb. 23 for the global #HandsOffVenezuela day of action.

Pickets chanted: "USA, CIA, out of Ukraine! Hands off Venezuela!" Signs also pointed to the need to stop the ongoing war by Ukraine, armed and funded by the U.S./NATO, against the anti-fascist Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics.

Although bitter cold and high winds made leafleting difficult, many passersby took flyers. Some stopped to listen and expressed solidarity with the anti-war activists.

On a few occasions, the anti-war squad was challenged by groups of right-wing Venezuelans who live in the U.S., who claimed that socialist President Nicolás Maduro is “starving the people.”

When confronted with the destruction that U.S. sanctions, coups and military interventions have wreaked on other countries, their only response was to shout, “Maduro is a communist!”

When this reporter asked one of the right-wingers if she thought Trump was really intervening for humanitarian reasons, she responded, “Of course they will take the oil, but that’s fine. ... We have to get rid of that communist dictator Maduro.”

This was a valuable admission of the priorities of the Venezuelan upper classes, who are willing to sacrifice their country’s sovereignty and resources to suppress the Bolivarian movement of workers and peasants.

Barbara Larissa, a Brazilian worker living in the U.S., told Struggle-La Lucha why she joined the action: “The U.S. is well known for its history of invasions and coups around the globe, like the intervention in Ukraine five years ago that is still happening, causing damage to that country and its people. It needs to stop.

“Now all of Trump’s attention is on Venezuela,” she explained, “because he decided to support Juan Guaidó, favorite of the far right, and give Venezuela back to capital again.

“Our current president, Jair Bolsonaro, was elected last year with U.S. and mass media help. Now, Trump wants to work very closely with Brazil, to get Bolsonaro’s support to invade Venezuela with the help of Colombia. We are already denouncing Bolsonaro’s government around the globe. He is a threat to Brazilian people and to

the world,” Larissa concluded.

