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# Los Angeles: Groups protest U.S. intervention in Cuba and Haiti

written by John Parker

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Photo: Insook Lee

Los Angeles — An emergency protest by progressive organizations was held July 17 in solidarity with the people of Haiti and Cuba. The rally demanded that the U.S. end its

attacks, sabotage and internal subversion in Cuba and Haiti, including an immediate end to the blockade of Cuba and no U.S. troops to Haiti.

The rally was co-sponsored by the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, American Indian Movement SoCal and *Unión del Barrio*.

“We’re sending a clear message to President Biden, who has continued and in some cases escalated the attacks against Cuba and Haiti,” said Anthony Dawahare of the Harriet Tubman Center.

“From the 60-year-old blockade that has denied Cuba basic necessities, to continual military interventions that have devastated the Haitian economy, we are demanding the U.S. end its attacks on their right to self-determination.”

“We don’t need a country that kills Black and Brown people in the streets telling Cuba how to handle its affairs or intervening in their country,” said Rebecka Jackson from the Harriet Tubman Center, who MC’d the rally. “The U.S. has a long history of sabotaging Cuba’s economy, and that economic blockade is condemned by the world.

“The U.S. uses its intelligence agencies and vast amounts of money to take advantage of the hardships the blockade creates to manufacture internal divisions. That is well-documented,” Jackson stated.

Ron Gochez of *Unión del Barrio* gave an impassioned speech about the importance of defending Cuba and its solidarity with the world’s workers and oppressed peoples: “We support the Cuban government, we support the revolution, we support socialism, because we know that it’s not socialism that’s causing the poverty in Cuba — it’s the blockade.

“For those of us who know a little bit of history, we know what the Cuban Revolution has meant for Africa and the liberation struggles there. We know what Cuba has

meant for all of Nuestra America and the many revolutions that have happened across the continent," explained Gochez.

"We know the solidarity of Cuban doctors, sent all over the world to heal people for free. We know what Cuba is about and we are not going to let the mainstream media lie about it and say that there's a 'revolution' happening in Cuba. I've got news for them, it already happened; it happened in 1959."



Photo: Revo Grafia

**Defending rally from fascists**

There was a disturbance during Gochez's talk which briefly interrupted the rally. Unbeknownst to the organizers and activists, the Proud Boys had called a fascist demonstration one block away at a spa that refused to turn away transgender customers.

Many Proud Boys passed through the Cuba-Haiti action and participants naturally assumed they had come to violently stop the rally. Most of them kept walking down the block to their own event. However, during the entire rally, the anti-intervention protest was threatened by some members of the Proud Boys, who were then firmly encouraged to leave, and did.

Organizers of the Cuba action found out the next day that the Proud Boys' demonstration was met by a counter-protest of progressive activists. The counter-protesters were targeted by the Los Angeles Police Department. Some were shot at with rubber bullets and some were arrested.

As of this writing, there is no evidence of any Proud Boys being shot at or arrested, even though some were armed with rifles and bats, or wore bullet proof vests and helmets.

In spite of the actions of the police and Proud Boys, the program of those who supported Cuba and the Haitian people continued. Other speakers represented Code Pink: Women for Peace, Anti-Racist Action, BAYAN USA, the U.S. Hands of Cuba Committee and the Internationalist Group. Walter Lippmann of the Cuba News Service also spoke.

Jefferson Azevedo of the Socialist Unity Party drew the connection between the attacks on the Cuban Revolution and the long history of U.S. intervention against Haiti, ever since the Haitian people had the audacity to free themselves with the first successful slave revolution in 1804.

Despite several U.S. military interventions, the Haitian people refuse to give up their right to self-determination, which includes today's demand for no U.S. troops in Haiti.



Photo: Revo Grafia



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