

Honduras: Expose right-wing attacks against the people

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 21, 2023



The historic meeting of presidents Xiomara Castro and Xi Jinping has enraged the U.S.-backed right wing in Honduras.

The recalcitrant Honduran right wing is enraged at the country's new diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and the agreements for collaboration reached by President Xiomara Castro de Zelaya to benefit the vast majority.

It is only a matter of listening to their voices and seeing their megaphones, paid for by the disinformation media and out-of-touch representatives with "anti-communist" discourse, to realize it.

And their response is to ferociously attack the government of Democratic Socialism, not only through information warfare but even perpetrating crimes such as the terrorist attacks against the Honduran National Electric Power Company (ENEEH) and producing fatal blackouts that cause terrible damage to the people, as denounced by Minister of Energy Erick Tejada on national television June 13.

The purpose of the attacks and sabotage of the ENEEH is to outrage the population and turn it against the government, create chaos, destabilization, violence, and make it look ineffective in order to justify a possible coup.

This is nothing new. In Venezuela, the right-wing did the same in 2019. It perpetrated terrorist attacks against the electrical power system and produced terrible blackouts throughout the country as a way of destabilizing the government of President Nicolás Maduro.

But they did well in Venezuela, and we will do well in Honduras. We are going to beat them this time as we have beaten them before. They will not be able to stand against the people.

Our call to the Honduran people, then, is not to fall into the trap of the right and the powerful groups composed of the same coup leaders as always. Therefore, do not allow yourself to be manipulated by the failed strategies of the right, which does not want and has never wanted the good of the majority.

An example is that in Honduras since President Xiomara took office, more than a million poor Hondurans do not pay for energy. But of course, the megaphones on the right don't talk about that.

For this and for all the important actions that our government is taking and that the right-wing media hide, we must support it. President Xiomara Castro is doing everything possible to solve the problems inherited from the drug dictatorship, even though it is a great challenge. She works tirelessly to make sure the community gets justice.

The coup plotters shall not pass!

The writer is coordinator of Partido Libre D19 USA-Canada.

Translated by Melinda Butterfield



Honduras: Derecha perpetua

ataques terroristas contra el pueblo

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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La derecha recalcitrante hondureña está rabiosa con las nuevas relaciones diplomáticas de nuestro país con La República Popular de China y los acuerdos de colaboración logrados para beneficiar a las grandes mayorías.

Solo es cuestión de escuchar y ver a sus megáfonos y gargantas asalariadas por los medios de desinformación y a personeros completamente desfazados con un discurso 'anticomunista' que ni el mismo se lo cree, como el del arlequín empolvado de Nasralla, para darnos cuenta.

Y su respuesta es atacar ferozmente al gobierno del Socialismo Democrático, no solo a través de la guerra mediática, sino que hasta perpetrando crímenes como los ataques terroristas contra la Empresa Nacional de Energía Eléctrica Hondureña (ENEEH) y produciendo fatales apagones que le causan terribles daños al pueblo, así como lo denunció el ministro Erick Tejada en cadena nacional el pasado, martes, 13 de junio.

El propósito de los ataques y sabotajes a la Empresa Nacional de Energía Eléctrica es indignar a la población y ponerla en contra del gobierno, crear caos, desestabilización, violencia y hacerlo ver cómo inoperante para de esa forma justificar un posible golpe.

Esto no es nada nuevo, en Venezuela la derecha hizo lo mismo en 2019. Perpetró ataques terroristas contra el sistema de energía eléctrica y produjo terribles apagones en todo el país como una forma de desestabilización del gobierno del presidente Nicolás Maduro Moros.

Pero les salió guaya en Venezuela y les saldrá guaya en Honduras. Los vamos a

vencer esta vez como ya los hemos vencido otras veces. No podrán contra el pueblo.

El llamado al pueblo hondureño entonces es, a no caer en la trampa de la derecha y los grupos de poder que son los mismos golpistas de siempre. Por tanto que no se dejen manipular por las estrategias fracasadas de la derecha que no quiere y jamás ha querido el bien de las mayorías. Un ejemplo es que en Honduras desde que asumió la Presidenta Xiomara más de un millón de hondureños pobres no pagan energía. Pero claro de eso no hablan los megáfonos de la derecha.

Por ello y por todas las acciones importantes que está haciendo nuestro gobierno y que los medios de la derecha ocultan, hay que apoyarlo. Nuestra Presidenta Xiomara Castro de Zelaya, si está haciendo todo lo posible por resolver los problemas heredados por la narco dictadura aunque sea un gran reto. Ella trabaja sin descanso para asegurarse que al pueblo se le haga justicia.

¡Los golpistas no pasarán!

La escritora es coordinadora del Partido Libre D19 Estados Unidos-Canadá.

‘What do we want? Reparations!’: Celebrating Juneteenth in Newark, N.J.

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Over a hundred people rallied on Juneteenth in Newark, New Jersey, to demand reparations. The June 19 march and rally was organized by the People's Organization for Progress.

People gathered at Market and Springfield avenues. Larry Hamm, POP's chairperson, described the broken promise given to enslaved Africans during the U.S. Civil War.

Two hundred thousand Black soldiers and sailors fought in the Union Army and Navy. Over 40,000 were killed. In January 1865, General William Tecumseh Sherman issued field order No. 15, which turned over abandoned plantations to Black families. This order was later reversed by President Andrew Johnson, a former



Tennessee slave master.

Hamm also reminded people that two days before, June 17, was the anniversary of the 2015 murder of nine Black people in Charleston, South Carolina, by neo-Nazi Dylann Roof. The massacre happened in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. One of the church's founders was the slave revolt leader Denmark Vesey.

The day before these killings, Trump announced his presidential candidacy by denouncing Mexicans as "rapists."

Another speaker at the Juneteenth rally was Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, whose father, the poet and activist Amiri Baraka, was brutalized by police during the 1967 Newark Rebellion.

Baba Zayid demanded reparations and justice. Dayvus Leesa denounced the attempted frame-up of Omali Yeshitela and other members and supporters of the Uhuru Movement for opposing the U.S./NATO war against Russia.

Dozens of drivers passing by the rally honked their horns in support. They could see the wonderfully large, banner-like signs that are a feature of POP's activities.

One of the signs read, "Stop the Ban & Attacks on Black History."

Revenge for Newark Rebellion

People marched to the corners of Broad and Market, the center of Newark. They passed the site of the old Bamberger's - later Macy's - department store that closed 30 years ago. Larry Hamm has told of how Black shoppers weren't allowed to use the fitting rooms there.

Department stores have been shut down in many Black-majority cities like Newark. The 2 million square foot Hudson's department store in Detroit was closed in the

1970s.

Four department stores that were once at the corners of Lexington and Howard streets in Baltimore are no more. Black and poor people are forced to go to the suburbs to shop.

A Dollar General store now occupies part of the 11-story, 1.2 million square foot Bamberger's site.

The billionaire class has never forgiven the 1967 Newark Rebellion against racism. The closing of factories, like the Westinghouse plants, has helped impoverish the city.

But the people of Newark are fighting back.

SLL photos: Stephen Millies



Join Peoples Power Assembly contingent at Baltimore Pride, June 24

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023 AT 12:00 PM EDT

Join Baltimore Pride March Contingent

34th Street & N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218

The Peoples Power Assembly will be participating in the Baltimore Pride March under the banner of “Protect Trans Youth and People” “Black Trans Lives Matter”. You can join us in the March by meeting at our staging area at North Charles and

slightly above 34th Street by 12 noon. Organizers will meet at 11 am, so you are free to come earlier. But don't be late or you will not be able to get in. All genders and sexual orientations are welcome. We are supporting the Oct 7 national March in Orlando to Protect Trans Youth & People — so help is also needed to distribute literature. The March is short — from N. Charles St and 33rd Street to 23rd Street (10 blocks) and will end at the Block Party. Our office will be open during the Block Party for refreshments and literature.



‘A zone of peace, saving lives: that’s what Cuba stands for’

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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Testimony by National Network on Cuba co-Chair Cheryl LaBash at the International People’s Tribunal on U.S. Imperialism, Cuba country hearing, on June 10.

Thank you to the organizers of this timely International People’s Tribunal on U.S. Imperialism focusing on targeted sanctions and blockades that inflict such pain on

millions of innocent people.

Greetings and solidarity, too, to our colleagues from Cuba who represent the resistance and resilience of the Cuban people.

We recognize that the unilateral U.S. coercive economic measures – the blockade – hurt the Cuban people and their aspirations for a better world, first and foremost. We know and recognize that the blockade is extraterritorial; it attacks foreign banks and businesses, Europeans who enjoy vacations in Cuba, Cubans living in other countries, and many others in numerous ways.

However, today I want to recognize that the policies of the U.S. government also hurt the people of the United States – ordinary working class and poor people, migrants, and farmers and growers who want to conduct business with Cuba – in short, the majority.

I want to speak about the pandemic, about travel, and show that the U.S. government is out of step with the people of the United States who, when they travel to Cuba or learn about the blockade, do not support these measures.

This is the reason the U.S. government hides its intentional plan to create hardship and desperation among the Cuban people, making its actions unseen, “as adroit and inconspicuous as possible.” The State Department’s Mallory-Rubottom memo, written on April 6, 1960, says it just that way.

The U.S. tries dangerous smokescreens like the Wall Street Journal fabrication of a China-Cuba spy center. In his quick rebuttal, Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío pointed out previous false accusations used to intensify the economic war: alleged acoustic attacks against U.S. diplomats, the falsehood of Cuban military troops in Venezuela, and the lie about imaginary Cuban biological weapons plants.

The only foreign military installation in Cuba is the illegal U.S. occupation of Cuban territory in Guantanamo. Why won't the Wall Street Journal write about the Zone of Peace initiated by Cuba and Venezuela through the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in 2014?

Drawn to Cuba's example

A Zone of Peace. Saving Lives. That is what Cuba stands for. Is it any surprise people - especially youth - are drawn to Cuba's example? We have found the generation born in this century quickly sees through the lies.

Imagine you are 20 years old. What does the future hold? Disastrous climate catastrophes; unaffordable education, health care, and rent; holding down multiple gig jobs just to exist; frequent mass shootings and police repression, combined with racist, homophobic, and transphobic state government initiatives.

On May 3 and again on May 7, a total of 19 travelers returning from May Day in Cuba were pulled aside at four U.S. airports for additional scrutiny and intensive questioning. This treatment has not been widely experienced since the Obama administration re-established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in 2015 and opened direct flights on U.S. carriers from U.S. airports, making travel to Cuba "legal" within certain changing rules.

Our experience this year follows the FBI visits to the Puerto Rican Cuba Solidarity Committee when they returned from July 26 celebrations last year. If the intention was intimidation, it only made the injustice of the blockade more real to these activists. It fired their will to fight harder. Their enthusiasm was not dampened.

The stepped-up intimidation at the borders is particularly troubling in light of the recent raids and indictments of the African People's Socialist Party for their political views and the raid on the Atlanta Bail Fund for assisting the Stop Cop City protests.

Although travel is said to be a right, travel to Cuba has been severely limited by the U.S. government. In 1964, Black revolutionaries had to first travel halfway around the world to Czechoslovakia to reach Cuba.

Some of the earliest Venceremos Brigades traveled by ship to and from Canada, having all their writings and literature seized on return at the U.S. border. Aggressive FBI visits to parents and employers followed. Later, indirect travel was okay if the trip was fully hosted and no U.S. money was spent.

Much about travel has changed. Now U.S.-based airlines fly regular routes to Cuba. Airlines, travel agencies and companies like Airbnb enforce the travel regulations under the threat of fines or loss of U.S. license to do Cuba-related business.

Every traveler, including non-U.S. citizens – another example of extraterritoriality – must sign a document declaring one of 12 “categories” under which they travel to Cuba. Without it, you cannot board the plane unless the traveler understands that a record of their full schedule of activity must be kept for five years in case a federal agent wants to know how they spent their time in Cuba.

Vacationing is strictly forbidden, as is staying at a hotel, drinking the wrong cola, or even buying a book from an entire Cuban publishing house. Honestly, the U.S. government spends our tax dollars making detailed lists of what is forbidden in Cuba. Such is the unique “freedom to travel” to Cuba.

Often, we hear first-time travelers comment that Cuba is the first place they feel free. They experience shock returning to the land of advertising, anxiety, isolation, and stress. Every week people email us to get on the list for the 2024 May Day trip.

And it is because the life experiences of working people in the U.S. sharply contrast with Cuba’s human-centered priorities, as demonstrated by Cuba’s medical internationalism.

Medical internationalism

In 2005, how many lives could have been saved when hurricanes Katrina and Rita drowned New Orleans if the U.S. government had accepted Fidel Castro's offer of 1,586 fully-equipped health workers? They sat ready at the former Coast Guard base that is now the home of Cuba's Latin American School of Medicine – only 1.5 hours away by plane.

Of course, then we had no way to hear about it until a horrified world asked why Cuba wasn't helping, and Fidel explained the offer was not accepted. How different it is now, with instant communication! In 2005, there was no way for us to know what Cuba had prepared and offered until later.

Even before vaccines, from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba's public health organization kept deaths to a minimum. From the first recorded case in March 2020 until December 2020, only 146 Cubans died. In Michigan, a state with about 1 million fewer people, some 9,269 died. In Detroit, a small city with less than 700,000 people, 1,500 people died in four months.

Unlike 2005, in 2020 we watched the Cuban television reports and saw Dr. Duran giving daily COVID reports. We saw how Cuba was fighting for every life. There was still no vaccine then, but a robust public health organization had everyone cooperating to save lives. We could see the Henry Reeve Brigades, named during the mobilization for Katrina, now going wherever they were called.

Not only would the U.S. government not call for Cuba to help Detroiters, but it then used the pandemic as a weapon against Cuba, doubling down on the blockade measures.

Like travel, Washington intended for information technology to be used as a weapon against Cuba's self-determination and sovereignty. But it is also a powerful tool in

our hands. Imperialism's lies can be torn to shreds before they become embedded in the public consciousness. And the solidarity movement can unite its voice across this very large country of many time zones.

Resolutions challenge blockade, SSOT

Like the false accusation leveled against Cuba and China by the Wall Street Journal this week, the anti-Cuba strategists are using old playbooks in Congress.

Hoping that Cuba seems unimportant to the rest of the country, Rep. Salazar from Florida has introduced HR314, the FORCE Act, in the House of Representatives, while Senators Rubio, Cruz, and Scott introduced S538, Fighting Oppression until the Reign of Castro Ends.

Talk about detached from reality. Don't they know that Miguel Diaz-Canel is president of Cuba?

These bills would freeze Cuba permanently on the list of state sponsors of terrorism until a president determines that a "transition [to capitalist] government is in power in Cuba." Using the Helms-Burton Act model, It is an attempt to checkmate any possible action by President Biden to use his executive authority to remove Cuba from the State Department list. Because that's all that is needed.

The National Network on Cuba recognizes through our activity that the U.S. government is out of step with the people of this country about Cuba. Even in the U.S. capital, Washington, D.C., the governing District Council unanimously passed a strong resolution calling for Cuba to be removed from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, to end the blockade, and for relations with Cuba to be normalized. They are not alone.

Ninety resolutions by elected bodies representing an estimated 45 million people - city councils, county commissions, state legislatures, school boards, and labor

unions – oppose U.S. policy on Cuba. Nearly one-third of those resolutions have been passed in the last six months.

This movement is growing, especially among young workers like the Amazon and Starbucks organizers who are fueling a unionization wave.

We call on President Biden to heed the voices of Cuban Americans, labor organizations, and local elected officials calling for Cuba to be taken off the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism and for an end to the unilateral U.S. blockade.

President Biden has the authority to send a letter to Congress declaring he is removing Cuba from the State Department list. Being on the list is a switch that automatically sets into motion many additional hurdles to economic activity related to Cuba. It is harder for Cuba to function in the dollar-dominated international financial arena, and it makes it more difficult for U.S. and international solidarity activists, too.

The lies about Cuba that underpin the legal supports for the blockade are weakening. Cuba is a State Sponsor of Peace, as shown by the recent agreement between the government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN), assisted by Cuba.

We are winning, but we need everyone's help. This series of tribunals is an important contribution to a movement in the United States that is irresistible.

Our first national push to get Cuba off the State Department list is a day of protest on Sunday, June 25, corresponding with the monthly international car and bike caravans inspired by the Cuban Americans of Puentes de Amor and their call in the summer of 2020 to build bridges of love, not hate.

We are carrying that message to Congress with allied groups that specialize in Congressional work. So join us at the White House at 1 p.m. on June 25. If you can't

be there, tell us what you can do in your local area. Sign up for news and updates at our website, NNOC.org.

I'd like to end with a quote published recently by Real News from another NNOC co-chair, Shaquille Fontenot from South Carolina.

"There are so many cultural, environmental, and educational exchanges that could happen if relations were normalized. We're in a moment here where people [in the U.S.] are seeing the parallels between our own experiences and what's done in our name to people abroad.

"People here need food, water, shelter—and people in Cuba need those things too. The same institutions are keeping those things from all of us. That's why it's critical for us in the United States to speak up about it. People around the world need to see the truth."

Solidarity cannot be blockaded.



Gobierno de PR intenta sustituir la población

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Puerto Rico se acerca vertiginosamente a cumplir el abominable deseo de algunos políticos del patio, anexionistas nauseabundos que se avergüenzan de la puertorriqueñidad, y sueñan con un PR sin puertorriqueños. Y no es imaginación. Así mismo lo expresaron en el chat de la aplicación Telegram que se publicó durante la turbulencia del levantamiento popular que destituyó el gobernador Ricky Roselló en el verano del 2019.

Cuatro años han pasado desde entonces, pero las acciones del actual gobierno liderado por Pedro Pierluisi, otro corrupto anexionista que considera al invasor EUA como su amo y señor mientras desprecia a nuestro pueblo, han aumentado las posibilidades de que la población boricua se reduzca al mínimo. Ya sea por muertes por negligencias, por accidentes prevenibles en las carreteras, por suicidios, por la extrema violencia y los feminicidios que están arrojando al país, o por la eventual emigración forzada.

La situación para la gran mayoría del pueblo es insostenible sin que el gobierno intervenga a su favor. Al contrario, ha privatizado los servicios esenciales como la salud, y está en vías de privatizar la educación, ha permitido el desplazamiento de poblaciones pobres para dar prioridad a los arrendamientos de corto plazo y ha promovido las edificaciones de viviendas de lujo para extranjeros millonarios. A éstos les facilita permisos de construcción hasta en áreas protegidas por su valor histórico o ambiental.

El propósito final es sustituir la población.

Pero cada vez hay más grupos comunitarios, ambientalistas, de apoyo mutuo y de organizaciones progresistas que van uniendo voluntades para enfrentar esta agresión, tanto del imperio a través de la Junta de Control fiscal impuesta por el gobierno estadounidense, como de sus lacayos locales.

Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló, Berta Joubert-Ceci.



Juneteenth, reparations and the legacy of Tulsa

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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On June 19, 1865, the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, to end slavery there. It has become the symbolic date for the ending of slavery in the United States.

After the Emancipation Proclamation officially abolished legal slavery on Jan. 1, 1863, some African people were still forced to work as slaves until freedom was enforced by the U.S. government in those locations — two-and-a-half years, and in some cases up to six years, later.

Like all historical achievements regarding African people in this country, Juneteenth has two sides — one for celebration, and one that painfully shows how systemic racism endures in this capitalist and imperialist country. For those who want to change the world, it is always important to appreciate both sides of that coin in order to remain realistic and optimistic in preparing other possible victories.

The other aspect of our historical achievements is that, when they become too visible to ignore, the ruling class sends in its political lackeys to defang its most potent effects. President Joe Biden, who just sent a solid endorsement of white supremacy and genocide with his \$735-million gift to the racist Israeli government, continues to echo his inaction and enabling of systemic racism here in this country, especially in regard to police terror and mass incarceration of Black people.

Biden has a history of passing legislation encouraging racist incarceration and the prison-industrial complex, and his public statements refusing to hold police accountable or even approach the subject with any seriousness make that clear.

Biden also recently addressed a 100-year commemoration of what is now officially called the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921, when a terrorist, racist white mob destroyed the entire Greenwood neighborhood in a day and took the lives of hundreds of Black people, with cooperation from the police and Oklahoma National Guard.

However, Biden refused to mention the demand that survivors, their descendants, and people around the world have endorsed and that members of the Congressional Black Caucus put before Congress year after year – reparations for the victims and community institutions to help rectify and reverse some of the damage that was done.

Biden spurns Tulsa survivors

The massacre saw the first-ever use of aerial bombings in the U.S. and the burning of homes and buildings while Black people were burned alive. Like the many white mob riots that occurred before and after Tulsa, including in Rosewood, Fla., that damaged destroyed lives and wealth for future generations.

Millions of dollars of property was destroyed, and hundreds of millions of dollars of potential wealth was looted by the white terrorists and the corporate and government institutions that facilitated the riot.

In the audience for the Tulsa commemoration, there were three people listening to Biden who made a special effort to attend, who had given congressional testimony for the case for reparations, and whose time was running out.

Those three were surviving victims of the Tulsa massacre. All were over 100 years old and desperately hoped to see some type of remedy for the victims' descendants and the Black community of Tulsa, still affected by the massacre and stripping of their relatives' wealth.

And they all witnessed how U.S. educational and financial institutions continue to deny the pursuit of life and liberty for their community — something the reparations proposal they and many others advocate would address. Imagine their disappointment when Biden methodically avoided using the word.

Another victim from Tulsa, Olivia Hooker, who died in 2018 at the age of 103, was 99 when she [shared her story](#) with Al Jazeera.

Olivia witnessed the Tulsa massacre when she was just 6 years old. Her parents hid her while white thugs rampaged through her home and poured gas inside. She recalled seeing those same men set fire to dolls made for her by her mother as a testament to their hatred for Black children.

During her rich and successful life, Hooker spent much of her time fighting for

reparations and hoped to see that happen before she died.

She rightly called the massacre a “catastrophe” — reminding us of another “race” massacre, when white Western colonialists drove Arab people out of their homes to create the state of Israel. The Palestinian word for it is al-Nakba, and it continues today.

Like in Tulsa, aerial bombings are used, with thugs and murderers all blessed in their evil by the Israeli government — which, in addition to the recent \$735-million gift from Biden, gets \$3.8 billion and weapons every year from the U.S. to target Palestinian children en masse.

It’s a catastrophe of stolen homes and property and land, just like Tulsa. And like what’s going on in Palestine, the theft continues here too.

In Tulsa, the property that was destroyed or seized along with the land was never given back to its owners, who still hold the deeds to the property. They were robbed and left with nothing to pass on to their descendants.

Tulsa Tribune’s racist role

That is a very different reality from that of the Jones family, the white owners of a conservative newspaper, the Tulsa Tribune, whose claim to fame today is its responsibility for setting off the 1921 riot by white terrorists.

The Tulsa Tribune headline and article that sparked the riot incorrectly stated that a 19-year-old Black youth had attacked and possibly raped a white woman. An editorial promoted a group that was actively planning to take the youth from police custody and lynch him.

The white woman who was the alleged victim said it didn’t happen and was adamant in her denial of any wrongdoing by the youth. She refused to press any charges

against him. But the paper's owner, Richard Lloyd Jones, wasn't interested in the truth. That lie helped continue the profitability of the paper and would be passed on down the line.

Richard Lloyd Jones [passed on control of the newspaper](#) to his sons, Richard Lloyd Jones Jr. and Jenkin Lloyd Jones Sr. In 1984, the Tribune's corporate owner merged with Swab-Fox Companies Inc., a diversified energy and real estate firm, and the paper finally ceased publication in 1992. The initial wealth, compounded by its sale and diversification into real estate and energy, undoubtedly lined the family's pockets for generations.

Not so for Olivia Hooker. Her father's department store was destroyed, and her family never received a penny.

In fact, none of the victims, as of this writing, have ever received repayment of the wealth that was stripped from them and transferred to those responsible for the terrorism they survived. And, although they had insurance, the state of Oklahoma helped insurance companies avoid paying out for the damage and loss of homes and businesses to the property owners.

Not one person was held accountable for this racist murder and terrorism. As Donald Glover's Childish Gambino character says: "This is America."

The case for reparations

Tulsa shines a light on the experience of African people and the arguments for reparations in general. After all, it was African slaves who created the foundation of wealth that U.S. capitalism rests upon.

As we commemorate Juneteenth, we should also understand that Tulsa provides an excellent example of the reality of imperialism and capitalism, its racist and violent nature, just as it exposes those who perpetuate that system.

Let's commemorate Juneteenth by drawing the conclusion, if you haven't already, that these good-for-nothing politicians from Biden on down, either Democrat or Republican, who enable systemic racism, legitimize inaction, and actively block any real attempts at attacking the systemic causes, are an integral part of this anti-human system.

They can't be trusted to make any real change — that's not what they were given millions of dollars in campaign funds by the corporations and monopolies that run this country to do.

But there is something very powerful that we can do and have done. Black people have forced great achievements in the struggle for liberation and social justice in general - and that's a testament to our strength and determination.

Those strides allowed us a greater ability to effect change. We must continue to do what works — build the power of the movements for liberation and self-determination that empower our working class, both here and abroad.

Defend the right of Black and Brown people and all oppressed peoples to live free from the terror of the police and ICE! Continue to call for those police and ICE entities to be abolished and replaced by the community.

We must defend the right of every person to a job or income. We must join the local tenant rights organizations fighting homelessness, and join the struggle for health care for all, especially for Black and Brown people still dying from COVID-19.

Let's build on our unity and solidarity so that the next time a white supremacist mob comes to a Black or Brown neighborhood, they will be met with a righteous wrath that spares not a one. Those capitalists and politicians who enable them and the system they protect must be dismantled through the building of a movement that cannot be ignored.

Let's get to it.

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The Rosenbergs were heroes

written by Struggle - La Lucha
June 21, 2023

70th anniversary of their execution

In his funeral eulogy for Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, W.E.B. Du Bois declared, "They died because they would not lie." The Rosenbergs were executed by the U.S. government on Juneteenth, 1953.

Du Bois, the legendary Black scholar, also arranged the adoption of the Rosenbergs' two young children, Michael and Robert. The Jewish orphans were adopted by Anne Meeropol and Abel Meeropol. Abel wrote "Strange Fruit," a song about lynching that Billie Holiday made famous.

The Rosenbergs were blamed for the Soviet Union being able to develop an atomic bomb. Their frame-up and execution for espionage during the Korean War was the peak of the anti-communist witch hunt in the United States.

The ruling class was in a frenzy because of the Chinese Revolution. The Soviet Union's ability to defend itself against the Pentagon's nukes made the bankers even more mad.

The FBI and corporate media insisted the Soviets "stole the secret" of the atomic bomb. The real secret was revealed when the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945. By incinerating 100,000 people, including 30,000 Korean slave laborers, the Pentagon showed it was possible to develop nuclear weapons.

Showing it was what made it knowable. Some of the scientists involved in the Manhattan Project — the code name for the U.S. atom bomb project — gave the Soviets five years to match the U.S. effort.

The rub wouldn't be in the theoretical work. U.S. scientists knew the Soviet Union had capable physicists.

Among them was Lev Landau, who would win the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1962. Even before the Bolshevik Revolution, the Russian chemist Dmitri Mendeleev had devised the periodic table of the elements.

U.S. scientists thought the Soviets would have difficulty in making extremely pure chemicals and seals to lock in corrosive gases. Because of socialist economic planning, the Soviet Union was able to concentrate its efforts and explode a nuclear device on Aug. 29, 1949. It took four years, not five, to produce.

Decades of lies

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover immediately set out to nab the “communist spies” that smuggled secrets. How else could those “stupid people” in the Soviet Union have produced nuclear weapons?

U.S. schoolchildren were taught their country was the land of great inventors like Thomas Edison. Newspapers told their readers that only the U.S. could have built the bomb.

Thirty years later, President Ronald Reagan said there wasn’t a Russian word for freedom. (There is. It’s svoboda.)

So U.S. capitalists were astonished when the Soviet Union sent the first artificial satellite into space on Nov. 7, 1957 — the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Claims that the Sputnik satellite was the result of spying fell flat. The Pentagon wasn’t able to launch its own satellite until months later, on Jan. 31, 1958.

It would have been much more difficult to execute the Rosenbergs after Sputnik. It shattered the bigoted conception that 150 different nationalities in the Soviet Union couldn’t do science.

Today another big lie is being told. The People’s Republic of China is being blamed for the COVID-19 pandemic.

With no evidence, the media and even comedians like Jon Stewart are claiming the coronavirus “leaked” from a Wuhan laboratory. This is a blood libel similar to blaming Jewish people for plagues in medieval Europe or the racist myth that immigrants bring diseases to the U.S.

Building a frame-up

The FBI framed the Rosenbergs and a co-defendant, Morton Sobell, by connecting dots and forging evidence. At the end of World War II, the Communist Party in the United States had around 75,000 members, according to the University of Washington's ["Mapping Social Movements" project](#), including thousands of Black members. They fought racism and built unions.

Over 10,000 party members were members of the U.S. armed forces. Some party members had government jobs, including the electrical engineer Julius Rosenberg, who was employed at Fort Monmouth Army base in New Jersey.

The Manhattan Project had 130,000 employees. U.S. Army counterintelligence agents constantly spied on them.

Even J. Robert Oppenheimer, considered to be the father of the atomic bomb, was a suspect. The army hesitated appointing Oppenheimer to lead the Manhattan Project's Los Alamos laboratory because of his left-wing associations before the war.

Yet with thousands of U.S. Army and FBI agents prowling around, nobody claimed to have found any spy rings until after the Soviets exploded their bomb.

Julius Rosenberg was fired from his civilian job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in January 1945 as a suspected communist. (He actually resigned his membership in 1942.) But Julius wasn't arrested until July 1950.

At the time, there were still around 40,000 Communist Party members. Hundreds of thousands of people had worked with the CP or the Young Communist League.

That was a big talent pool for Hoover and his FBI agents to construct a frame-up by matching people with left-wing backgrounds. They found out that Julius Rosenberg's brother-in-law David Greenglass, an ex-YCL member, had worked as a machinist at Los Alamos.

Presto! The “Rosenberg spy ring” was invented.

Under threat of the death penalty, David Greenglass told prosecutors whatever they wanted. [His lying testimony](#) sent his sister Ethel Rosenberg to the electric chair. It took five jolts of electricity to kill her.

Show trial

The Rosenbergs and Morton Sobell were convicted in a show trial. Although, at the time, a quarter of New York City’s population was Jewish, not a single Jewish juror was chosen.

One of the federal prosecutors was Roy Cohn, who had illegal “ex parte” conversations with presiding Judge Irving Kaufman in which Cohn urged the death penalty. After serving as Senator Joe McCarthy’s sidekick, Cohn became a lawyer and mentor for Donald Trump.

The evidence was flimsy. David Greenglass produced three crude sketches. One looked like a pie chart. A baby carriage couldn’t have been made from them, much less an atomic bomb.

Greenglass said his spy contact was Harry Gold, [a chemist and pathological liar](#) who admitted that he “lied for a period of 16 years.” Gold also claimed to be a courier for Klaus Fuchs, a scientist at Los Alamos.

Fuchs confessed he was a spy to a Scotland Yard detective and was jailed in Britain. Fuchs identified Gold as his contact from a picture.

Fuchs’ statement and identification of Gold is questionable. Fuchs never confronted Gold in a U.S. court and thus couldn’t be cross-examined. It’s striking that the convictions of Greenglass, Gold and Fuchs would have been impossible without their confessions.

The FBI even suspected future Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman, who had been Fuchs' roommate at Los Alamos. FBI agents changed their mind only because Feynman was completely non-political.

Morton Sobell was indicted because he was a schoolmate of Julius Rosenberg at New York's City College and a former YCL member. The only witness against Sobell was Max Elitcher, who claimed vaguely to have seen Sobell visit Julius Rosenberg while carrying a container that could have had film in it.

He then said he had no idea what was in the container, yet Sobell was sentenced to 30 years in prison. He served 17, including five years at Alcatraz.

The prosecution stressed that Sobell and his family went to Mexico after David Greenglass was arrested. If Sobell was such a master spy, wouldn't the Soviets have tried to help him escape?

Instead, Mexican secret police kidnapped Sobell and turned him over to FBI agents at the border.

A key piece of evidence was forged. A hotel card from the Albuquerque Hilton was introduced to prove Harry Gold was in town to meet David Greenglass on June 3, 1945.

Miriam and Walter Schneir were authors of "Invitation to an Inquest," a detailed exposé of the Rosenberg-Sobell case. They looked at copies of the card. It had different date stamps on the front and back despite Gold having checked in and out on the same day.

When the Schneirs sought to examine the original card, the FBI told them that the evidence was destroyed, even though J. Edgar Hoover called the Rosenberg case "the crime of the century."

Smearing the dead

Millions of people around the world rallied around the Rosenbergs. They saw parallels between their frame-up and the anti-Jewish persecution of French army officer Alfred Dreyfus decades before.

The American Jewish Committee, which represents the small section of the Jewish Community that's capitalist, didn't think so. Writing in the AJC's Commentary magazine, historian [Lucy Dawidowicz endorsed](#) the Rosenbergs' execution.

Today when Jewish youth join marches supporting Palestinian liberation, Commentary magazine supports bombing and starving Gaza.

The publication of "Invitation to an Inquest" in 1965 sparked new interest in the Rosenberg and Sobell cases. The U.S. deep state counterattacked, particularly after the overthrow of the Soviet Union.

The FBI and CIA say they have proof that the Rosenbergs and Sobell were guilty. They point to the "Venona Project," which consists of allegedly deciphered messages between Soviet agents in the U.S. and their Moscow headquarters. The documents claim to show that the Rosenbergs, Sobell, and dozens of other people in the U.S. were Soviet agents.

Why should anybody believe U.S. spy agencies? These are the folks that told the world that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

Even if the Venona papers are genuine, the rub is matching code names with individuals. One of the alleged code names for Julius Rosenberg was "liberal." Does that sound like a name for an accused communist super-spy?

The code name linked to Morton Sobell described him as having a wooden leg, which he didn't have. There was no code name for Ethel Rosenberg.

The Venona Project smeared a series of liberals who couldn't defend themselves since they were dead. That was the case of the economist Harry Dexter White, who worked in the U.S. Treasury Department.

The deep state and the ultra-right used the Venona papers to support Joe McCarthy's phony charge that President Franklin Roosevelt's administration was filled with communists.

The documents have also been used to rehabilitate Elizabeth Bentley's tarnished reputation. The professional liar gave dishonest testimony against the Rosenbergs, defendants in other trials and before a series of congressional witch-hunting committees.

Typical of the so-called "red spy queen" was her claim to have given the secret date of the Normandy landings to the Soviets. Actually, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower informed the Soviets of when D-Day would occur. He did so because he wanted them to launch an offensive and prevent German troops from being withdrawn from the Eastern Front.

Never forget the Rosenbergs

"I consider your crime worse than murder," declared Judge Kaufman when he sentenced the Rosenbergs to the electric chair

Worse than the killers of the 14-year-old Emmett Till? The two racists who tortured the Black youth to death got off scot-free.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur wanted to drop dozens of atom bombs on Korea and China. Judge Kaufman blamed the Rosenbergs for the U.S. not being able to do so.

Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk wrote in his memoirs that the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs wanted President John F. Kennedy to approve a plan to launch nuclear first

strikes against the socialist countries.

The whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg revealed that the Pentagon plan would have killed 600 million people.

What if the Rosenbergs and Morton Sobell had helped the Soviets build an atomic bomb? It was only because the Soviet Union — and later the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — were able to develop a deterrent to the Pentagon's arsenal of atomic and hydrogen bombs that a nuclear holocaust was averted.

But the Rosenbergs and Sobell didn't have the ability to penetrate the Manhattan Project. The FBI wanted them to finger dozens of liberals to back up Joe McCarthy's fantastic claim of "20 years of treason" under the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

The courage of Ethel Rosenberg, Julius Rosenberg, and Morton Sobell prevented this nightmare.

Ethel Rosenberg was electrocuted for supposedly typing reports. She was arrested almost a month after Julius Rosenberg was jailed to put pressure on him to lie.

David Greenglass later admitted he lied about Ethel Rosenberg's typing. Justice demands that Ethel Rosenberg be given a presidential pardon.

When Morton Sobell was 91 years old, he was badgered by New York Times reporter Sam Harris into saying he and Julius Rosenberg offered information to the Soviets. It was from their jobs as electrical engineers, not from the Manhattan Project.

Twenty-seven million Soviet people died defeating Hitler. Yet during World War II both Britain and the United States refused to share new anti-aircraft weapons and radar with the Soviets.

If Morton Sobell and Julius Rosenberg did indeed help the Soviets, it wasn't espionage to help a gallant ally. It was whistleblowing like Daniel Ellsberg did when he released the Pentagon Papers or the truth-telling by Chelsea Manning about U.S. war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The best way to honor the Rosenbergs is to fight even harder to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Ruchell Cinque Magee, Sundiata Acoli, Mutulu Shakur, and dozens of other political prisoners.

One way to do so is to donate to the Rosenberg Fund for Children, which helps the children of political prisoners, at [RFC.org](https://www.rfc.org).

Long live the memory of Ethel Rosenberg, Julius Rosenberg, and Morton Sobell!

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The Propaganda of History

written by Struggle - La Lucha
June 21, 2023

In 1935, W.E.B. Du Bois published *Black Reconstruction in America*. This is an excerpt from the final chapter, “The Propaganda of History,” on the way Reconstruction was being studied and taught at the time.

How the facts of American history have in the last half century been falsified because the nation was ashamed. The South was ashamed because it fought to perpetuate human slavery. The North was ashamed because it had to call in the black men to save the Union, abolish slavery and establish democracy.

What are American children taught today about Reconstruction? . . . [A]n American youth attending college today would learn from current textbooks of history that the Constitution recognized slavery; that the chance of getting rid of slavery by peaceful methods was ruined by the Abolitionists; that after the period of Andrew Jackson, the two sections of the United States “had become fully conscious of their conflicting interests. Two irreconcilable forms of civilization . . .” He would read that Harriet Beecher Stowe brought on the Civil War; that the assault on Charles Sumner was due to his “coarse invective” against a South Carolina Senator; and that Negroes were the only people to achieve emancipation with no effort on their part. That Reconstruction was a disgraceful attempt to subject white people to ignorant Negro rule . . .

In other words, he would in all probability complete his education without any

idea of the part which the black race has played in America; of the tremendous moral problem of abolition; of the cause and meaning of the Civil War and the relation which Reconstruction had to democratic government and the labor movement today . . .

War and especially civil strife leave terrible wounds. It is the duty of humanity to heal them. It was therefore soon conceived as neither wise nor patriotic to speak of all the causes of strife and the terrible results to which national differences in the United States had led. And so, first of all, we minimized the slavery controversy which convulsed the nation from the Missouri Compromise down to the Civil War. On top of that, we passed by Reconstruction with a phrase of regret or disgust.

But are these reasons of courtesy and philanthropy sufficient for denying Truth? If history is going to be scientific, if the record of human action is going to be set down with the accuracy and faithfulness of detail which will allow its use as a measuring rod and guidepost for the future of nations, there must be set some standards of ethics in research and interpretation.

If, on the other hand, we are going to use history for our pleasure and amusement, for inflating our national ego, and giving us a false but pleasurable sense of accomplishment, then we must give up the idea of history as a science or as an art using the results of science, and admit frankly that we are using a version of historic fact in order to influence and educate the new generation along the way we wish.

It is propaganda like this that has led men in the past to insist that history is "lies agreed upon"; and to point out the danger in such misinformation. It is indeed extremely doubtful if any permanent benefit comes to the world through such action. Nations reel and stagger on their way; they make hideous mistakes; they commit frightful wrongs; they do great and beautiful things. And

shall we not best guide humanity by telling the truth about all this, so far as the truth is ascertainable?

Read more: **Black Reconstruction excerpts**

[pdf-embedder

url="https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/DuBois-Black-Reconstruction-Selections.pdf"]



In Haiti, 'gang warfare' is a cover for imperialist intervention

written by Struggle - La Lucha

June 21, 2023

Interview by Gary Grass and Babette Grunow of Grass is Greener WXRW River West Radio.com 104.1 FM Milwaukee with Robert Roth, Haiti Action Committee

Listen to the entire interview

here: https://soundcloud.com/user-240416425/202305-16-2000-grass-is-greener-roth-in-haiti-walker-on-cuba?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing. In the transcription that follows, some edits have been made for clarity.

Robert Roth: Haiti is in a deep crisis right now. If you read the mainstream media, it's projected as being a crisis of gang warfare. Really it's a crisis of imperialist intervention, foreign occupation, and the overthrow of democratically elected governments in Haiti over the past decades.

The crisis that now exists in Haiti has its roots all the way back to the 2004 coup d'état that the U.S. orchestrated that overthrew the democratically elected government of Jean Bertrand Aristide and his Lavalas administration. Lavalas is a Kreyol word for flash flood - the flood of the people where it starts as a trickle down the mountains, gathers force as people join it, and eventually is unstoppable.

The Lavalas movement is the movement that put President Aristide into power both in an election in 1990 that led to him becoming president in 1991 - with the U.S. overthrowing him in September 1991 - and then when he was elected again in 2000. His administration was overthrown again in 2004, so these were two coup d'états against the most progressive governments in Haitian history.

The result of that has been the real decimation of Haitian society, where at this point, the conditions are worse than they have ever been for Haitians. The insecurity has been horrific. There's been a wave of kidnappings that have affected all sectors of the population; there's a new cholera epidemic that has gone on now for months. Food insecurity impacts over 5 million people in a country of 12 million.

And so you have a country where you can see the after-effects of the destruction of democracy and the end result of foreign occupation. After these coup d'états, it's been the United States, the UN, and a grouping of countries called the Core Group

that effectively govern Haiti. And so all of the conditions that we are now seeing in Haiti are the direct result of foreign occupation and the attempt to destroy a very vibrant popular movement.

Grass Is Greener: *When you said it's not really a matter of gang warfare, in some sense, it is. There's groups in Haiti that you could call gangs. And moreover, the term isn't evenly applied. If you look at the imperialist forces, you could call them gangs too.*

Robert: That's absolutely true, and of course there are gangs in Haiti. That's true. But the notion that these gangs are operating independently of the elite in Haiti or of the government in Haiti is false. We look at them as paramilitary death squads that have been unleashed on the popular movement with a series of massacres that have been directed at opposition neighborhoods.

For example, at La Saline in 2018 where it was a combination of police and paramilitary "gangs" that attacked a Lavalas stronghold killing well over 100 people with total impunity. And so in a situation where you have these paramilitary forces operating in concert with government actors, they also have the impunity to do whatever else they want, like kidnapping people on the roads or taking over certain fuel depots, whatever it is.

But just like the death squads in El Salvador were not independent from the Salvadoran military, these gangs are not independent of a strategy of repression and terror that's being directed by the government. And it's a government that is supported wholly and consistently by the U.S..

Grass Is Greener: *Yes, the death squad model works because the death squads in El Salvador worked hand in hand with the government and military, but they did have a quasi-independence, right? They had their own leadership, and there was sometimes in-fighting between the death squads and the military. It wasn't this*

complete absolute control, but they were a creation of the state, and they were allied with the state, but they also had just enough independent action to make it kind of deniable.

Robert: But they couldn't have existed without the complicity of the military. And the same thing is true in Haiti. In other words, these gangs have a function that is not just independent of the government. They have a function within an overall structure of repression.

The danger of looking at the violence in Haiti as internecine gang warfare and just simplifying it as that is that then the solution becomes more money to the police, more heavy armament to the police, and also more foreign intervention. Troops on the ground in Haiti, which is what the UN is calling for, what Canada and the U.S. have been debating over the last number of months.

What we say is we want no more funding for the Haitian police, which is a repressive force in Haiti that's been used to attack the Haitian people. And we want no further foreign intervention. In fact, we want the Core Group to leave; we want the U.S. State Department to keep its hands off Haiti.

The current Haitian government has no legitimacy. There are no elected officials in Haiti anymore. There's no Parliament, there are no elected mayors. This is a government that was imposed by the U.S. and its Core Group. It is the source of the crisis in Haiti. Until that government is removed and until there's really a popular united front government that emerges in Haiti based among the people, this crisis is going to continue.

Grass Is Greener: *I believe the current government was put in after the president was killed.*

Robert: Yes. The president who was killed was Jovenel Moise. He was assassinated

in 2021. We look at that assassination as a falling out among thieves. Moise was a dictator in Haiti whose election was protested for months and months by hundreds of thousands of people in the country who called it a stolen election, an electoral coup d'etat.

When he was assassinated, the Core Group, in a tweet, named Ariel Henry – the current de facto ruler of Haiti – and said he should be the new leader of Haiti. And then he refused to leave office when the term of Jovenel Moise expired. Now the U.S. is saying that his government should supervise the next round of elections, which Haitians view as a total farce and an invitation to more fraud, more dictatorship, and more neo-colonial rule.

Grass Is Greener: *Would he be running in the next election?*

Robert: Who knows? If the U.S. selects him, I'm sure he will. If they believe he has no legitimacy, they will pick another person and make sure that they come into power through another fraudulent election. That's why the broad popular movement in Haiti, including Fanmi Lavalas – the party of former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide – has been calling for a transitional government, called Sali Piblik by Lavalas.

This would be a broad government representing civil society, popular organizations, grassroots groups that could lead a transition toward free and fair elections. You would be hard-pressed to find someone in Haiti who believes that this current government – which is a creature of the Core Group – could ever lead to free and fair elections that would be legitimate for the people of Haiti.

Grass Is Greener: *The model is a really familiar one. I think we've seen it in country after country. We first create total chaos and then we say, "Oh look, you've got total chaos and we need to come in and fix the chaos." You've got all these violent extremists and then we fund the violent extremists. It's all just a plot to get*

what we want.

What is valuable in Haiti? What do we want to take in Haiti?

Robert: That's a very interesting question because you could ask that question about every U.S. intervention, right? What did they really want in El Salvador? What do they want in Nicaragua? Why was Cuba such a defeat for them?

Grass Is Greener: *In Syria, at least, we want the oil.*

Robert: On that level, Haiti is an incredibly rich country. It's been made poor by plunder, foreign domination, the control of a very tiny elite. But it is rich in mineral resources: It has gold, it has silver, it has copper, it has limestone, marble, and bauxite.

Right now, under this government, they are digging up Haiti to try to find all the mineral wealth. Plus, it has a labor force that the U.S. and other foreign powers and companies look at as a cheap labor source that they can pay slave wages to.

One of the things that happened after the 2010 earthquake, which killed over 300,000 people in Haiti, was that it was the perfect set-up for what's been called the shock doctrine where Hillary Clinton could go in there at the time and say, "Wow this is an opportunity. Haiti is now open for business. We can rebuild better." And what she meant was that we can create new free trade zones, build huge garment centers in both the north of Haiti and in Port au Prince where U.S. and other companies can come in and make super profits.

So that's on the one hand. The other thing about Haiti is that the movement in Haiti is a "bad example" that the U.S. wants to crush. When you have a progressive movement like the Lavalas movement that led to President Aristide's two terms, and you have a movement that is determined to do land reform, to spend more money on health care than police, that recognized Cuba for the first time after the U.S. under

the Duvalier regimes had worked with Duvalier to isolate Cuba. They taxed the rich for the first time in Haitian history, calling out the names on the radio of those who hadn't paid their taxes.

So you have this progressive government in the Caribbean, and the U.S. has never allowed that to happen – whether in Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, or Venezuela. Wherever those examples exist, the U.S. feels that its business interests and its hegemony is threatened.

So that's why Haiti is important. We think the Haitian popular movement is an example that should be studied much more thoroughly by the U.S. left, and we think one of the reasons that it's not is the white supremacist notions of Haiti that have been imbued in our society ever since Haitians rose up and became the first people to end their own enslavement and become a free nation. Ever since then, Haiti has been demonized and has been marginalized, and attacked.

We think it's time for people who are in the progressive and left movements to take a serious look at the importance of Haiti and the importance of solidarity with Haiti.

Grass Is Greener: *One thing that bodes poorly for Haiti is that the U.S. seems to have its power in decline; its power is waning throughout the world. I think for a country with 12 million people that's so close to the U.S., that's not a good thing because it means that we're going to have fewer opportunities to attack Russia and China and Iran and great big countries with significant power. So that means more intervention in those little countries nearby that we can more easily dominate.*

Robert: Yes, and it's the 2023 version of the Monroe Doctrine, which just had its 200th anniversary. This is the Americas, and the U.S. still demands hegemony, and here's this Black nation with a radical tradition that's rising up, and so they are suppressing it.

Grass Is Greener: *We're not going to be able to keep China out of Mexico or Brazil but maybe we can keep it out of smaller Caribbean countries.*

Robert: And maybe we can keep progressive social and radical change out of the Caribbean. So the reality is that Haiti is very important to U.S. imperialism, as evidenced by the fact that they have orchestrated two coups over one generation to oust progressive governments in Haiti. So they think it's important.

Grass Is Greener: *The going in of the UN is not a positive thing either.*

Robert: That's right. The UN has headed the occupation of Haiti since 2004 – and is still a major force in determining policy around Haiti.

Grass Is Greener: *That's really sad because the UN is sometimes good, sometimes bad. I'm not quite sure what to say about the UN. What countries were involved in the UN forces in Haiti?*

Robert: First of all, the UN in Haiti has been horrific. It committed massacres, it brought the cholera epidemic to Haiti through some of its soldiers defecating in rivers, and then it never accepted responsibility or agreed to pay reparations even after 10,000 plus Haitians were killed. And it has overseen one illegitimate government after another in Haiti.

The countries that led the UN occupation? Brazil, under Lula, the last time Lula was in power, was at the forefront of the occupation of Haiti. Argentina, Chile, Jordan. Jordanian troops committed massacres in Cite Soleil. The Chileans were in the north. Brazil controlled large sections of Port au Prince.

And you know, these were the militaries of these countries, and they treated Haitians as colonial subjects. There was massive sexual abuse of women and children by UN soldiers that was exposed over and over again. And the occupation was a classic foreign occupation that treated the country's citizens as second class.

It was a totally racist occupation. So in terms of Haiti, the U.S. organized their “coalition of the willing” like Bush did around Iraq. Large numbers of countries both in the Americas and outside, paid off their debts to the U.S. by doing service in Haiti. Nepal was in Haiti, Sri Lanka was in Haiti. It has been a major worldwide occupation.

Grass Is Greener: *We just had a show on Palestine, and one of the points that was made there that I think needs to be made for Haiti, too, is that there is a little bit of a tendency to see Haitians as just perpetual victims when in fact there is so much strong active resistance and so much resolve and activity on the part of the Haitians. It needs to be acknowledged that they are actors and not just subjects.*

Robert: Well, that’s right. That’s why understanding the popular movement, understanding the Lavalas movement, and understanding the accomplishments of the Aristide administration is so important. You know, there’s a new Haiti that will be built by this popular movement – right now in the midst of all this repression and paramilitary violence.

For example, when the Aristides came back to Haiti in 2011 from forced exile in South Africa, they pledged to reopen a university that had been shuttered by the coup. It’s called UNIFA, the University of the Dr. Aristide Foundation. At this point, it has over 5,000 students coming from all walks of life in Haiti, including the poorest communities. They have a medical school; they have a school of dentistry; they have a law school, an architecture school, an agriculture school. And they are now opening a world-class teaching hospital.

And all of this has been accomplished in the midst of this incredibly repressive situation, and it’s just like a microcosm, a vision of what Haitians will and can build. In terms of the Haiti Action Committee, we’ve been building solidarity with this movement for 30-plus years, and we’ve never seen it stop. Even dealing with two coups, dealing with thousands of people killed, exiled, disappeared.

This movement still continues today and is demanding the end of the Ariel Henry regime and a transition government led by popular organizations. So it is very important to pay attention. One of the most vibrant movements in the world today is in Haiti.

Grass Is Greener: *Obviously, they face a lot of threats. What are some of those, both foreign and domestic?*

Robert: The biggest foreign threat is the U.S., Canada, and France. That triumvirate is behind the 2004 coup and has deep interests in keeping Haiti under neocolonial control.

One of the things that the Aristide administration did right before it was overthrown was it went to the International Court demanding restitution from France. France, in the 1800s, tried to reinvade Haiti after the Haitian Revolution, and it demanded the equivalent of \$21.7 billion in today's money from Haiti as reparations to France for Haiti freeing itself from slavery. And the Haitian government had to pay that up until the 1940s, and it's what put Haiti in huge debt.

So, the Aristide government said we're the only people in the world that had to pay our enslavers for freeing ourselves from slavery, and we demand restitution. Within a year, he was overthrown by the U.S., France and Canada.

So the international elite is determined to crush this popular movement and they have their allies within Haiti. There's a small elite in Haiti that has been in control in Haiti forever and is extremely rich and extremely determined to not have any kind of labor, peasants or other popular organizations have any power. So it's that alliance between the foreign powers and the elite in Haiti that represents the greatest danger to the Haitian people.

Grass Is Greener: *And that elite is very very interesting because you have far-right*

fascist tendencies within the elite, but you also have a kind of liberal veneer over a lot of it. It's a fascinating case study in and of itself.

Robert: The party that's now in control, the PHTK, is really a neo-fascist party. This is the extreme right in Haiti that's now come into power with clear backing from the United States. It started with the Martelly government; it went to Jovenel Moise and now Ariel Henry. This is the extreme right that's in power and it's not giving up that power easily.

One of the things that has just happened in Haiti which is portrayed only as vigilante violence is that people in these communities that have been attacked over and over again by paramilitary forces have taken matters into their own hands. And there are horrific images being shown by mainstream media of gang members, paramilitaries being killed in one neighborhood after another. But this is the result of the unconscionable acts that these paramilitaries have committed in one community after another.

And so you have a society that is imploding. And the only way that this will both stop and that progressive change can happen is if a new government emerges out of popular protest and then is able to maintain itself without foreign intervention attempting to destroy it as they've attempted to destroy every progressive change in Haiti. Otherwise all of this will escalate and who knows what will happen.

Grass Is Greener: *I can imagine that a good deal of immigration will happen and people will start to leave.*

Robert: That's a really good point and people have left. Under Biden, 25,000 Haitians have been deported from the U.S. There are thousands of Haitians at the U.S.-Mexican border attempting to get in. It is unlivable for people in Haiti and they've had to flee all this terror, and the U.S. is sending them back.

Grass Is Greener: *Unlike refugees from Ukraine where they're allowed to come in or from Cuba where they set foot on U.S. soil and they're allowed to stay. Unlike that, Haitians are shipped back.*

Robert: Yes, and Haitians are very conscious of that double standard. They're very conscious that they are not welcome while other people are welcome. And you saw the images at the border, right? With Haitians being whipped by border patrol officers. That dynamic still exists. The only change that the Biden administration made was they said, try not to whip people. Try not to be on horses and blatantly attack them but we're still going to deport all of them.

Grass Is Greener: *Try to look a little better.*

Robert: Yes, that was an embarrassing image. It was a slavery image. But the policy has remained unchanged.

Grass Is Greener: *Immigration is an area where the Biden administration doesn't seem to have gotten anywhere different than the Trump administration. Trump was supposed to be the most horrible person we've had on immigration in U.S. history and we've got Biden coming in there with a lot of the policies just continuing or being made even worse.*

Robert: Right, they have used the Covid epidemic and Title 42 which was the Trump plan, so that anyone who came in could be immediately deported without any asylum hearing. Now, as Title 42 is about to end, the new policy is that, to apply for asylum, you have to be in Haiti, you have to have access to the internet, you have to be able to fill out all these forms, pay money to get on a plane, and then you just might be considered for asylum.

Grass Is Greener: *So if you are part of the elite, if you have money, then you can get asylum.*

Robert: Right. So for the masses of Haitians who are now getting on boats, drowning off the shores of Haiti or wherever they're attempting to go, or have somehow made it to the Mexican border, they're not going to be able to enter.

And on the other hand, it's a message to the professional class, which is needed in Haiti, that you might be able to get out. So if you're a doctor or a lawyer or part of civil society, an educator that Haitians need, maybe you'll be able to get out. So on the one hand, it creates this brain drain. And on the other hand for people being terrorized under this regime, there's no way out. It's a terrible policy.

Grass Is Greener: *It doesn't seem like there's been a huge impact by the solidarity movement to reflect the interests of the Haitian people. I see some of it but I think there could be a lot more of doing what you're doing.*

Robert: Well, you know. This is always an uphill fight. There has been an uphill fight around Palestine; there was an uphill fight around El Salvador and then that movement built. So that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to really help and sustain and build a solidarity movement that is powerful and that does affect U.S. policy.

On May 18, we designated an international day of solidarity on Haitian Flag Day, which is really Haitian sovereignty day, the day that during the Haitian Revolution the Haitians determined that they would break completely free from France. And that's Haitian Flag Day. And we did actions in many cities across the U.S. and in some places internationally in the Caribbean and Europe. People can find out about these by either going to the Haiti Action Committee's Facebook page or our website, which is <http://www.haitisolidarity.net>.

Grass Is Greener: *That ends that segment. Robert also wanted people to know that contributions to Haiti's grassroots movement can be made, if you're interested, at <http://www.haitiemergencyrelief.org>.*

For 31 years, the Haiti Action Committee has worked in solidarity with the anti-colonial grassroots struggle for dignity, democracy and self-determination of the Haitian people! Contact the Haiti Action Committee at PO Box 2040, Berkeley, CA 94702. Learn more at their Website, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

Source: [San Francisco Bay View](#)

