As U.S. coup stalls in Venezuela

Haiti rebels

By John Parker

As Ralph Ellison portrayed in his groundbreaking book “Invisible Man,” the plight and the struggles of African peoples are often ignored by mainstream media. And because of the ability of the ruling class to spread the racist idea that countries consisting of dark-skinned peoples are of no consequence, that invisibility manifests as apathy and ignorance even amongst some progressive news outlets.

Take Haiti, for example. The protests that exploded in July 2018 appeared as if coming out of thin air — as if coming from a fourth dimension into our three-dimensional world, missing the element of time and history giving context. But those protests — of fuel price increases of 38 percent to 50 percent by President Jovenel Moïse’s government — were also a culmination of anger at the consistent violence, poverty, short-sightedness, and history giving context. But those protests were also a culmination of anger at the consistent corruption, poverty, shortages and stolen elections in collusion with U.S. and European imperialism.

The protests also reflect a history of unwavering determination against those assaults. Those out in the streets are the descendants of a people who won the first successful slave revolution in 1804 — freeing themselves and defeating the mighty French military. The violent protests in July 2018 stopped business as usual and forced the announced price hikes demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to be rescinded. Then, in October, they tried to implement fuel price increases again, which were also stopped by more militant protests.

All of the protests have been met with brutal repression, and, as of early February, as the repression increased so did the militancy. Flights on major airlines are restricting travel to Haiti and the government has canceled Carnival. According to the Miami Herald: “Observers say this is only the third time in recent memory that the Haitian government has canceled Carnival. The previous two occasions were in 1986, after the fall of the nearly 30-year Duvalier family dictatorship and in 2009, after the country's massive earthquake.”

CNN reports that, as of Feb. 16, the U.S. and Canadian governments have warned people not to travel to Haiti “due to crime and civil unrest.” The Canadian government has issued a travel advisory to “avoid all travel to Haiti.”

Although CNN reports this week that the protests have calmed down, a conflicting report this week says that the protests have gotten so intense that family members of President Jovenel Moïse are reportedly leaving the country in fear. According to a report by Yves Engler on Feb. 22: “The Haiti Information Project reported that Canadian troops may have helped family members of President Jovenel Moïse’s unpopular government flee the country. HIP tweeted, ‘troops & plainclothes from Canada providing security at Toussaint Louverture airport in Port-au-Prince today as cars from Haiti’s National Palace also drop off Canadian government official’s family to leave the country today. … Two days after Canadian troops were spotted at the airport five heavily armed former U.S. soldiers were arrested. The continued on page 6

CONFERENCE against capitalism, white supremacy & anti-immigrant bigotry

STOP the WAR on WORKERS

from VENEZUELA to LOS ANGELES

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

‘U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA’

Fmr. Venezuelan Diplomat from Caracas

- Fighting to end racism, police & ICE terror and prison repression
- The importance of Indigenous peoples’ struggles
- Teachers’ fight against privatization — building workers power
- End imperialist war & occupation at home & abroad
- Liberation of women, oppressed genders, and LGBTQ2S people
- Socialist unity in the fight against the alt-right and fascism in 2019
- Capitalism & global warming — how to save the planet.

Conference @ Carecen, 2845 West 7th St. LA, CA 90005
By Gloria Verdieu

San Diego

In March of 2016, the San Diego Unified School Board voted to ensure the district would have the ability to expand Ethnic Studies in the San Diego City School District after hearing a report from the Ethnic Studies Now Coalition Advisory Committee. The report was based on research done by members of the advisory committee which confirmed that an Ethnic Studies curriculum increases student attendance, participation, and overall interest in school. The advisory committee developed Ethnic Studies courses at two San Diego high schools for the 2016-2017 school year as part of a pilot program.

That was two years ago. Even though there has been some progress, it is moving much too slow. Too slow for Latinx students at High Tech High in the neighboring city of Chula Vista who decided to create and implement their own Ethnic Studies curriculum. At the Association of Raza Educators (ARE) general meeting on Feb. 12, two students who participated in the struggle to demand Ethnic Studies in all schools spoke about how they successfully implemented an ethnic studies curriculum at their school.

High Tech High students Luz Victoria and Fernanda Siodria began their presentation with a slide that read “Ethnic Studies — Fight for History, No Self — Know History, Know Self!” — artistically designed and laid out like a banner. The next slide had interesting facts about High Tech High: 70 percent of its student body are Latinx; the school is located 15 minutes away from the U.S./Mexican international port of entry, in nearly four years of high school these students only experienced four Latinx teachers, and the school is project-based and has been culturally impacted by the 2016 presidential election.

At the meeting, there were students from Castle Park High School, Lincoln High School and Lindsay Community School, which is where the meeting was held. These students were not only interested in how students at High Tech High were able to implement an Ethnic Studies program, but some wanted to know, what is Ethnic Studies?

Ethnic Studies is important

Luz explained that the current school textbook does not include the rich history of the Indigenous people, African people, Asian people, Palestinian people, and the list goes on. It is if these people had made no contributions to the development of the world. It is important, she emphasized, that we know our history and our contributions. Since the textbooks don’t have it, we have to bring our own books, do our own research and challenge what is being presented to us.

Luz noted that the students received a lot of resistance at first, but at the teachers’ rally they saw the improvements in the students who participated in Ethnic Studies classes, the students began to get more support from them. Teachers began to see the value in students learning about who they are in relationship to the world. The classes discussed topics like solidarity, respect and listening, as well as the concepts of imperialism, class consciousness and white supremacy, she continued.

Organizers encountered challenges recruiting male students, white students and students with the ability to speak on pressing issues. For this project to work, students must increase their consciousness by studying and leading.

The big question is: How can these school-based advances be maintained? One way is through community involvement. That is what ARE and Unión del Barrio had in mind when they began Escuela Aztlan Saturday classes, an Unión del Barrio project for barrio youth.

Escuela Aztlan is an independent school organized by young people and educators to develop cultural and political consciousness. Its mission is to educate youth about Raza history, current events and the power we possess to change our communities. Topics in the school’s curriculum include Mexican history, the Mexican Revolution, Education vs. Prisons, Farmworkers, LGBTQ2S issues, Indigenous struggles and more.

Luz explained that their message — No charters! — was delivered to the port of entry, in nearly four years of high school these students only experienced four Latinx teachers, and the school is project-based and has been culturally impacted by the 2016 presidential election.

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**CLAUDIA JONES**

**Afro Caribbean communist woman in struggle**

**INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN’S DAY MARCH 8**

CLAUDIA JONES

By Carlos E. Lazo

**Stirrings + La Lucha**

March 4, 2019


A s Black History Month 2019 con- cludes and Women’s History Month begins, we want to take this time to honor a revolutionary Afro-Caribbean im/migrant woman who unfortunately isn’t discussed as widely as she deserves to be, given her immense contributions to Marxist theory and organizing the struggles of her time is Claudia Jones.

Her life was full of hardship, pain and suffering — but also unbreakable courage and dedication to fight for the full liberation of Black and all oppressed peoples worldwide.

Wherever she lived, Jones was on the front line, leading movements of resistance against injustice.

Jones was born Claudia Cumberbatch on Feb. 21, 1915, in Port of Spain, the capital city of the island of Trinidad. In 1924, when she was 8 years old, she arrived in New York with her parents, aunt and sisters. Her mother died less than a decade later at the young age of 37. Claudia then became ill with tuberculosis. She would suffer continuing healthcare problems for the rest of her life. Her father, meanwhile, struggled to find steady employment due to racism, anti-migrant bigotry and the economic crisis of the Great Depression.

Jones became one of the most important political organizers in the Communist Party USA as well as an enormously important figure in the Black freedom struggle. Due to her life experiences, from a young age she had a very deep understanding of the class struggle and the way various oppressions intersect.

**Joining the Communist Party**

In the mid-1930s, Jones became an activist and organizer on the Scottsboro Nine case. More commonly referred to as the Scottsboro Boys, these nine African-American youths were falsely accused of raping two white women. The Scottsboro Nine were convicted by an all-white jury and sentenced to death — without evidence, investigation or a fair trial. Jones became the defense leader of the Scottsboro Nine case. More commonly, the NAACP led the defense efforts on behalf of these youths.

Advancing understanding of intersectionality

Jones developed much needed theory regarding the woman question, the national question and the way these oppressions intersect.

One of her best-known pieces was first published in the June 1940 edition of Political Affairs, the theoretical magazine of the CPUSA, dedicated to the theoretical problems of the Communist Party. Her widely studied essay, released after her death and posthumously published, is titled “The Negro Woman's Role in the Problems of the Negro Woman.” It was followed by a series of works from this period.

“An outstanding feature of the present stage,” Jones wrote in 1964, “is the Negro liberation movement is the growth in the militant participation of Negro women in all aspects of the struggle for peace, civil rights and economic freedom. Symptomatic of this new militancy is the fact that Negro women have become the most important symbols of the Negro people. This growth of militancy among Negro women has profound meaning, both for the liberation of the whole Negro people, and thus of the anti-imperialist and anti-imperialist coalition. To understand this militancy correctly, to deepen and extend the role of Negro women in the struggle for peace and for all interests of the working class and the Negro people, means primarily to overcome the gross neglect of the special problems of Negro women. This neglect has been demonstrated in the labor movement generally, of Left-progressive, and also of the Communist Party. The most thorough assessment of these shortcomings by progressives, especially by Marxist-Leninists, is vitally necessary if we are to help accelerate this development and integrate Negro women into the labor movement in the nation as the callous attitude which the bourgeoisie displays and cultivates toward Negro women.

**Surveillance, repression, deportation**

Jones was targeted by the state as both her theoretical contributions and political organizing increasingly posed a threat to white supremacist capitalism. She had been monitored and surveilled since the days of her membership in the CPUSA. Jones was first arrested in January 1948, during the early days of the Cold War witch hunt, based on her reputed status as a Communist (To this day, U.S. citizenship can be denied time and time again because of her affiliation with the CPUSA. To this day, U.S. citizenship can be denied time and time again because of her affiliation with the CPUSA.

The state next targeted her through Left of Karl Marx

Claudia Jones died of heart failure in the early morning hours of age 69. She was buried in the east section of Highgate Cemetery in London. Her gravestone is located near that of Karl Marx, directly opposite Marx’s tomb.

Marc’s tomb has been in the news recently due to two separate acts of vandalism. It’s crucial that we defend against these acts of xenophobia. Jones embodied the spirit of international proletarian solidarity.

**Sources:**


While Jones was dealing with deportation and worsening health, she remained dedicated to the struggle against imperialism, capitalism and all of its tools of repression. Throughout these long years, she continued to expand her work through all of this hardship.

She was a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain and joined the West Indian Forum.

Jones was active in organizing the Caribbean Working-class population in London. By 1958, she had co-founded the West Indian Workers’ and Students’ Association and the West Indian Gazette. The publication played a major role in the Caribbean diaspora community, helping to found the first Caribbean carnival in London. It later became the Notting Hill Carnival, an annual event that continues to this day.

She helped to organize the Afro-Asian Caribbean Conference. In 1964, she traveled to China and met with communist leader Mao Zedong. She also attended women’s conferences in the Soviet Union.

She organized demonstrations against apartheid in South Africa, along with rallies calling for the freedom of imprisoned Nelson Mandela. Jones embodied the spirit of international proletarian solidarity.

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People worldwide stand with Bolivarian Venezuela

By Greg Butterfield

“The extremist Ku Klux Klan govern-ment that Donald Trump directs was a war on Black people, and more than just oil,” said Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in an interview with ABC News.

The Venezuelan people know it. Workers and oppressed people around the world know it. And they are taking action to stop it.

Feb. 23 was the D-Day set by Trump and his appointed “interim president” Juan Guaidó to forcibly bring humanitarian aid across the Colombian border into Venezuela. It was meant to be a beachhead for U.S. military intervention.

The plot flopped. The Venezuelan people mobilized, hundreds of thousands strong, from the border flash-point to the capital, Caracas. The Venezuelan government, the military and the masses of working people handled Washington’s provocations with strength and discipline. The “aid” trucks didn’t pass.

But the Venezuelan people weren’t standing up to imperialism only on their own. Not only here in the U.S., but around the world that day — in hundreds of cities, towns and villages — people demonstrated in solidarity with Venezuela, understanding that their own struggles for daily survival and a better future are tied up with Bolivarian Venezuela’s resistance to imperialist attack.

When Feb. 23 was still hours away from dawn in Caracas, people in New York took over the steps of the Lincoln Center in New York City, including the monument of Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin in the International Peace Garden.

Meanwhile, Alexey Albu of Ukraine’s outlawed anti-fascist group Horotba, arriving in Caracas for the International Peoples’ Assembly, told reporters, “We have seen how the U.S. operated in Ukraine. We have seen what this leads to. Fortunately, the citizens of Venezuela also understand this threat, so they rallied around their president to fight off the impending storm.” Hundreds of delegations from 85 countries gathered for the assembly, which began Feb. 24.

Earlier in February, Palestine liberation organizations, including the Marxist Popular Front (PFLP) and the Democratic Front (DFLP), held demonstrations in solidarity with Venezuela.

“There is a similarity between the Palestinian people and the Venezuelan people,” said Nisreen Abu Amra, a member of the DFLP Central Committee in Gaza. “We are in the same trench, facing a reactionary, imperialist conspiracy led by the United States and Israel.”

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. coup: Ukraine 2014, Venezuela 2019 — Hands off Venezuela! 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. Picketers chanted, “USA, CIA, out of Venezuela! Hands off Venezuela!”

Signs also pointed to the need to stop the ongoing war by Ukraine, Trump and funded by the U.S. against the anti-fascist Donets and Lugans People’s Republics.

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.

— Greg Butterfield
Bolivarian Venezuela defeats coup, deadline, reads for next round

By Gary Wilson

The Red Cross and other international relief agencies have condemned politicalization of humanitarian aid. They did not participate in the NGO conference in Colombia, although their red cross symbol was falsely used there.

The U.S.-backed pretender, Juan Guaidó, has increased his call for U.S. military intervention, supported by dangerous statements by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio. U.S. Vice President Mike Pence held a meeting Feb. 25 with Juan Guaidó and right-wing Colombian President Iván Duque in Bogotá to plot further aggression.

What leader would call down that disaster on their own people? Of course not. Perfection is unknown in any sphere of human activity, so it is not surprising that mistakes made by Maduro — subject to the criticism that they have failed to end economic crisis was not caused by Maduro or other Chavistas, or even corruption. Trump pointed to the crisis in Venezuela as one reason for U.S. sanctions. Trump's message to our movement is clear. If you push for “socialist” policies such as Medicare for All or a $15 minimum wage, the result will be runaway inflation and an economic crisis like we’ve contributed to in the U.S. and abroad.

Who is responsible for the economic crisis?

By Gary Wilson

The Trump administration has imposed a full-scale economic blockade against Venezuela. The assets of the state oil company held abroad, including Citgo, its U.S. branch, have been seized and handed over to the Bolivarian Venezuelan government.

The sanctions have hobbled Venezuela's economic crisis. This happened, the economy falls into crisis. When the price of oil is high, the economy boom. When the price of oil is low, the economy falls. The goal of Trump’s sanctions is to harm Venezuela, hoping that that will bring about either a collapse of the government or a coup. But neither thing happens.

The economic crisis in Venezuela

Some say that Maduro, a school bus driver by profession, has been a terrible president and economic manager. But, despite what these opponents might be saying, the economic crisis was not caused by Maduro or Chavistas, or even corruption. Trump blames the “socialist” policies of Venezuela for the economic crisis, not the colonial monoculture economy or U.S. sanctions. His State of the Union address, Trump pointed to the crisis in Venezuela and boasted that the U.S. would not support the fight of Black and Brown people and against the working class inside the U.S. and abroad.

Who is responsible for the economic crisis?
NY tenants say ‘Keep public housing public!’

By Anne Pruden

New York

Dozens of tenants of New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) apartment buildings held a militant rally on Feb. 10 on the steps of city hall. The chant read, “Keep public housing public!” In spite of freezing temperatures, they came out on this raw day to protest Mayor Bill de Blasio’s proposal to sell off one-third of NYCHA homes. The NYCHA’s 300,000 tenants are to be sold to private real estate developers. The mayor and his team claim their plan will “save NYCHA.” Meanwhile, thousands of the 500,000 NYCHA tenants, including children, have suffered for months without heat and hot water. Among the crowd was Ana Llona, a resident of the Jacob Riis Housing Project who spoke at the rally, exposed how the lack of services has led to thousands of children being poisoned by lead paint.

Local, state and federal politicians stall and manufacture excuses for the lack of historical rent control, arguing it is needed to repair NYCHA buildings. But tenants and supporters, like rally sponsor Progress New York, have presented alternative plans to pay for NYCHA repairs and improve- ment, such as increasing taxes on big business or imposing a new sin- dge in subsidies offered to Amazon.com to build its new headquarters in New York and $50 billion planned to build new skyscrapers.

Another part of de Blasio’s plan calls for selling vacant lots owned by the city, such as the vacant lot of a vacant lot of a vacant lot of a vacant lot. But low-cost housing is what is desperately needed by the many working-class residents of the city who are being gentrified.

The bill owed to the mostly Black and Latinx tenants of New York public housing is over $7 billion, with 38,000 tenants facing evictions. New York City tenants have long been fighting a battle to keep NYCHA housing public.

As U.S. coup stalls in Venezuela

Haiti rebels

Continued from page 5

next day the five Americans and two Serbian colleagues flew to the U.S. to attend the evidentiary hearing. They remained in the U.S. for months without heat and hot water. Their赖以生存的 survival and their destinies of Haiti have not waved since.

U.S.-led sabotage and corruption against economy

Like Venezuela after its indepen- dence, Haiti’s economic growth was sabotaged with invasions and coups — in Haiti’s case from 1915 to 1934, with the occupation initiated by then-President Woodrow Wilson. Haiti faced brutal suppression by U.S. soldiers of a nationwide strike killed at least 1,500 people.

This repression forced a change in Haitian thinking. There, the finan- cial basis for U.S. ownership of Haiti’s assets and land. Later on, the U.S. would use more subtle but just as effective forms to steal resources from the Haitian people using cheap rice subsidized to U.S. farm- ers to drive Haitian rice farmers out of business, while at the same time increasing “humanitarian” aid, us- ing rice as a weapon to supposedly provide the food to those negativ- ely impacted by the predatory trade policies of the U.S. through the U.S. Agency for International Develop- ment (USAID). The rice would then be distributed into the Haitian market at cheaper prices than the Haitian rice, thus further fanning the rich.

This was done to force an end to the domestic production of rice and other agricultural production for domestic needs into production for export only. These policies are also mandatory dictates from the IMF, using future loans as extortion to force economic compliance, re- sulting in the dependence on foreign imports and “aid” and the loss of livelihoods in Haiti, increasing pov- erty exponentially.

A clear example of this is written on the Haiti Solidarity website in an article titled: How the United States Crippled Haiti’s Rice Industry by Leslie Mullin.

In 1984, Haiti received $11 million in food aid and from 1985-88 it received $54 million in food aid. The Caribbe- an Basin Initiative called for inte- grated rice project. Its goal was to redirect 30 percent of Haiti’s domestic food production towards export crops, a plan that USAID ex- pected to result in 4 percent of Haiti’s food being exported. It was therefore no wonder why the CIA World Factbook admits that the unemployment rate in Haiti is over 40 percent (2010 estimate) and that two-thirds of the labor force do not have full-time jobs while 58.5 per- cent of Haitian people (2012 esti- mate) live below the poverty line and only 38 percent (2013 estimate) have electricity. Despite all of this, the movement of resistance continues to grow, as witness- ned during the protests in Haiti from February to May against fraudulent U.S.-sponsored elections. That rise in the movement led to the first democratic elections in Haiti in 1991. But the coup was led by Jean-Clair Jayron, who had been de- feated by then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in the 1990 elections. Like Presi- dient Maduro in the 2018 elections in Venezuela, he also received 67 per- cent of the vote.

The final parallel between Hai- ti and Venezuela is the Bolivarian government’s policies were dedicated to working towards an economy that benefits the poor and forces the rich to pay taxes while fighting off IMF austerity and ruling-class cor-ruption. And as the Bolivarian Rev- olution began to make tremendous inroads into its birthplace, increasing pov- erty by redirecting priorities towards working and poor people, so did the Aristide government.

During the 1990s, Haitian revolutionaries and intellectuals coordinated with Robert Roth, co-founder of the Haiti Action Committee, titled Haiti: Roots of an Uprising.

“Despite U.S.-orchestrated coups against the administrations of former president Aristide, despite a sophisticated COINTELPRO-style campaign aimed at dividing and marginalizing Fanmi Lavalas and its allies, despite an occupation by the U.S. military, the Bolivarian Revolution has succeeded in maintaining the Lavalas Movement. Like President Hugo Chávez, announcing the victory of the people and their will, President Aristide was forced out of office in a military coup in 2004.”

The U.S. responded to progress made by Haiti with the same solution it tried against Venezuela — a coup. It failed in 2002 against the Bolivarian government, but succeeded against Aristide. Leslie Mullin writes: “Just seven months after his inaugu- ration, President Aristide and the Fanmi Lavalas government was overthrown in a bloody military coup led by General Raoul Cedras. Trained in the CIA, Cedras commanded the Haitian Army. His regime unleashed the col- lective violence of Haiti’s repressive forces against its own people. From 1991 to 1994, nearly five thousand Lavalas activists and supporters of the constitutional government were massacred; many others were sav- agely tortured and imprisoned. Rape as a political weapon was widespread. The Lavalas leadership was arrested and then slowly driven into hiding, while tens of thousands fled the country.”

The final parallel between Hai- ti and Venezuela is the Bolivarian government’s policies toward the criminals following suit with U.S. war crimes against sovereign coun- tries filled with Black and Brown people is a further crime of racist genocidal brutality. Whether they are Canadi- an, French or even South American revolutionaries, all those who struggle against imperialism, people should disrupt and shut down those embarrassments in concert and solidarity with the people of Haiti. Let’s build a militant solidarity movement in defense of our interna- tional Haitian family and reject the invisibility of the glorious legacy and current Black struggle in Haiti.
An appeal for freedom and prison abolition

By M. Odom

To very little fanfare, in December 2018, new DNA testing was ordered for California death row inmate Kevin Cooper, a Black man accused of killing four white people. For over 30 years, Cooper has been on California’s death row for the gruesome Chino Hills murders in 1983. Chinohills is a semi-rural town east of Los Angeles in the San Gabriel Valley. Cooper has maintained his innocence in the case, investigative journalists and legal experts have insisted Cooper is the victim of a framing by law enforcement and deadly crime partners, and radical anti-prison activists have been the only ones to mobilize in defense of Cooper. Cooper’s case highlights the racism in prosecution, not only in law enforcement. The forensic lab and San Bernardino County sheriff’s department, which in subsequent years to the Cooper case had been proven to lie and plant evidence at the scene of crimes, settled upon Cooper as their main suspect in the crime. Evidence and personal accounts suggest that at least three white-presenting men were responsible for the killings. With the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Nicholas Kristof has described as a clear cover-up, why haven’t Cooper’s case been given the cause celebre it deserves to be?

Liberal Prison Reform Versus Radical Prison Abolition

In recent years, prison reform activities have gained increased celebrity within liberal and moderate conservative aspects of U.S. society. With rivaling superstar couples of Kim Kardashian and Kanye West and Jay-Z and Beyoncé in opposite corners, some cases that radical activists have been advocating for quite some time have gained much notoriety. Jay-Z produced a six-part series on the late Kalief Browder and has been a part of a popular campaign to bail out people awaiting trial. Jay-Z and Beyoncé quietly spent millions of dollars to help the defense of the formerly incarcerated rapper Meek Mills — and they have now united with Meek Mills and a football team owner to push for further prison reform legislation. As well, Kardashian and West have appealed to Donald Trump and social media for prison reform and clemency. In the summer of 2018, Alice Marie Johnson was released from federal custody following appeals from Kardashian and West. In late December 2018, President Trump signed the First Step Act, passed by the Senate by a margin of 87 to 12. Van Jones described the bill as a “Christmas Miracle.” On Jan. 7 of this year, incarcerated activist Cyntoia Brown had her sentence of 51 years to life commuted to 15 years. For over a decade, Cyntoia’s case had been relegated to the ranks of anti-prison activists and former sex workers. Yet, again, her commutation has been attributed to the work of Kim Kardashian and others.

It must be made explicitly clear that all of the people released do not only deserve to be released, they should have never been incarcerated in the first place. Radicals are critical of liberal prison reformism, especially these partnerships of elected officials and entertainers, because of their frequent use of what might be called the “question of innocence.” As Mills College’s Kim Kardashian and others have noted: “From the vantage point of people who have historically been members of color and the poor that society has imprisoned, it is incomprehensible how Cooper had recently escaped from the minimum security yard at the California Institute for Men in Chino and deputies who examined his file and mugshot saw a black man with a huge Afro who fit their narrative of an incorrigible criminal. He was wrong. It is about the warehousing of surplus populations of people of color and the poor that society has imprisoned.”

Radical activists have consistently demanded the release of Cyntoia Brown because they are innocent or “don’t belong there.” The argument is often used to either support or encourage these beliefs. One’s relationship to the state, not on one’s own character or actions. Popular concern over mass incarceration has too often focused its gaze on the innocence and even value of the incarcerated person. Liberal reformers focus on reformers foreground criticism of the racial capitalist incarceration regime which, in fact, makes the question of innocence or guilt quite irrelevant. In short, to suggest that the only reason someone deserves to be released is because they are innocent or “don’t belong there” reasons to suggest that there are, in fact, people who do belong in prison. This contradiction explains the lenient sentences from the “Affluenza” case to Brock Peters, even in the face of public outcry. It also explains why Kevin Cooper was charged with these murders and why popular concern has overlooked Cooper and countless other incarcerated people.

Free ‘Em All!

Amongst radical anti-prison activists ac- counts the terms of “em all’ and “All prisoners are political pris- oners” are popular sayings. In San Diego, this is why members of the Chula Vista Legal Aid, Libera- libel priso- ners and the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee simultaneously struggle for the release of prominent polit- ical prisoners like Leonard Pelti- er and Mumia Abu-Jamal as well as advocating for the release of gang members and addicts rounded up in unjust federal drug indictments. For radical activists, mass incarceration has been proven to not be about right or wrong. It is about the warehousing of surplus populations of people of color and the poor that society has imprisoned. As the “Affluenza” case to Brock Peters, even in the face of public outcry. It also explains why Kevin Cooper was charged with these murders and why popular concern has overlooked Cooper and countless other incarcerated people.

Kevin Cooper

Previously, California Gov. Jerry Brown and Kamala Harris, in her role as state attorney general, refused to allow new DNA testing in the case. Yet, following Kristof’s exposé in the New York Times, the now-Sen. Kamala Harris and Sen. Dianne Feinstein re-versed their positions and advocated for the advanced DNA testing that Brown and Harris had previously opposed.

Radical activists who have consistently demanded the release of Cooper anxiously awaited the results of the new testing. Prison abolitionists and anti-police terror organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area continue to hold rallies outside the San Quentin State Prison, where Cooper is held captive. For activists, this account of injustice evinces the need to fight against the carceral prison and the death penalty. Cooper’s case is of crucial importance to the contemporary Movement for Black Liberation and Mumia Abu-Jamal as well as radical activists, mass incarceration industry, including an end to the death penalty. Cooper’s freedom does not hinge on the exceptional nature of his case. There is strong evidence that at least 15 of the nearly 1,500 prisoners executed since the reinstatement of the death penalty in 1976 have been posthumously pardoned.

For updates and to get involved with the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, visit “Kevin Cooper — Free ’Em All” on Facebook.
Venezuela Bolivariana derrotó firmemente la fecha para el cambio de régimen

Por Cheryl LaBash

Washington, D.C. — Venezuela Bolivariana derrotó firmemente la fecha del 23 de febrero establecida por los Estados Unidos para el cambio de régimen. Los provocativos planes ampliados por los medios de prensa corporativos de violar las leyes Venezolanas que sirven para controlar sus fronteras e importaciones, fueron sólidamente rechazados. Las barreras humanas unidas de la policía venezolana, las fuerzas militares y las masas chavistas detuvieron firmemente la “ayuda” militarizada.

Fue trasgredido su fracaso político, en el lado de la frontera Colombiana, los camiones que supuestamente transportaban ayuda humanitaria fueron incendiados en las cercanías de pandillas que llenaban botellas de gasolina – mejor llamadas bombas molotov. La entrega el 21 de febrero, de 7.5 toneladas de medicina demuestra que la nación de que el presidente Nicolás Maduro Meta respondió de alguna manera no es de interés periodístico. EE.UU. Que 150 ciudades en el mundo se manifiestan frustrados por su fracaso político, en el senado Marco Rubio. El vice presidente de los Estat Unidos Mike Pence programó una reunión el 25 de febrero con Juan Guaidó y el presidente colombiano de derecha, Iván Duque, en Bogotá, para planear una nueva agresión.

¿Qué líder convocaría ese desastre contra su propio pueblo? Los observadores solo deben acordarse de la invasión de Iraq, de Libia, recordar la agresión estadunidense contra Siria y la devastación armada de Yemen por parte de los Estados Unidos. Como el canciller venezolano Jorge Arreaza señaló en una entrevista de una hora en Democracy Now, las bombas de los Estados Unidos no discriminan entre las familias de los pro-chavistas y la oposición.

El apoyo sereno, firme y unido de la Revolución Bolivariana hacia el Presidente Maduro y la resistencia en EE.UU y Bretaña continúan orientando su narrativa imperialista. Medios de prensa corporativos siguen cómplices de cambio de régimen por el imperialismo estadounidense. Los medios de prensa corporativos internacionales en EE.UU y Bélgica continúan orientando su cobertura para legitimar el plan de golpe Guaidó EE.UU. Que 120 ciudades en el mundo se manifestaron contra la guerra de los EE.UU. hacia Venezu elas de alguna manera no es de interés periodístico. ¿Dónde están las entrevistas que muestran que los trabajadores y los pobres en los Estados Unidos recuerdan las desacaradas mentiras que llevaren a la invasión estadunidense de Iraq y la destrucción de Libia? ¿Por qué la intrusión el 21 de febrero, de la conferencia de prensa intentada por el monigote de los Estados Unidos queriendo normalizar a los conspiradores del golpe no fue cubierta en las noticias de los medios de prensa corporativos, que no han ganado nada con otra guerra de EE.UU. para llenar los bolsillos de los bancos y los monopolios internacionales de combustibles fósiles como Exxon Mobil.

Una manifestación nacional se ha llevado a cabo en Washington, D.C., el 16 de marzo y otra dos días más tarde, el 30 de marzo, antes de que la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte se reúna el 4 de abril. Esta última fecha es un insulto por ser el aniversario del asesinato del Reverendo Martin Luther King. Apoye las manifestaciones de protesta, construyálas, asista. En Los Angeles, el 16 de marzo, vaya a McArthur Park a las 11 a.m. para un esfuerzo de múltiples organizaciones, y más tarde en el día con la Answear Coalition.

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