Mass protests oust governor in just 12 days

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Breaking news: Just minutes before midnight on July 24, Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló announced his resignation through a recorded message posted on his Facebook page. "This is not a resignation because I am resigning. This is a resignation because I am resigning in recognition of the tremendous pressure placed on all of us by the legislature, the people and journalists in suspense for hours, after postponing a news conference scheduled for 4:30 p.m. — another example of his disdain for the people. But in the streets, the people shouted: "Ricky did not resign! We ousted him!" taking ownership of the victory.

July 24: "The enormous outrage felt in every pore by the Puerto Rican people erupted in massive demonstrations July 13 following the revelation of a shameful Telegram chat between Gov. Ricardo Rossello and 11 of his closest collaborators. In this content, covering only 50 days, reflects the enormous contempt of this pack of wolves towards the Puerto Rican people. With this massive, filthiest and most degrading manner, filled with sexism, homophobic and racist insults, even including threats to civil servants and elected officials, it documents a cruel and perverse elitism towards those who are not white, wealthy men.

The barbarity, mocking even those killed by Hurricane Maria, has no comparison. The anti-Puerto Rican sentiment of these members of the New Progressive Party — which pursues U.S. statehood — was revealed when one of them said that he "sees the future of Puerto Rico and it is so wonderful, without Puerto Ricans."

The great work accomplished by journalists of the Center for Investigative Journalism of Puerto Rico, which published 889 pages of this Telegram chat, began a process of awakening never before seen from space with a sign that said astronaut Joseph Acaba sent a photo to from the International Space Station.

The Puerto Rican people have said ¡BASTA! — ENOUGH! — and poured into the streets: every day, in every town, especially in Old San Juan.

Without party flags, waving only the Puerto Rican single star banner in its original colors of red, blue and white or the mourning flag in black and white. Not even one U.S. flag, indicating the firm decision to assert Puerto Rican identity in front of a pro-statehood government and the U.S. junta. It was the people, self-sacrificed, in all their diversity, that abruptly broke with sexism, racism and homophobia in response to the affront presented by the so-called leaders of their liberation struggle, a great leap in collective awareness.

Suddenly they lost their fear while uniting around the demand "Ricky Resign!" There were thousands of people of all ages who had never participated in demonstrations before. Whole families with their children in tow, older people, and a huge number of young people.

Puerto Ricans outside the archipelago joined in demonstrations, from the diaspora in the United States, to Puerto Ricans in different countries who sent photos or videos through social media, joining the demand. Artists, athletes and Puerto Rican scientists manifested themselves in one way or another. Even astronaut Joseph Acaba sent a photo from space with a sign that said Ricky Resign! They have gone from indignation to dignified action. They have made a huge dialectical leap that will be impossible to stop.

The road is long and it’s just beginning. As most protesters said, “It’s not just Ricky. We want a new country.” And that country can only be new and fair when it is free and sovereign.

This new wave of activism, especially of the youth, who were not afraid to confront the criminal class, has taken on frightening proportions. The road is long and it’s just beginning. As most protesters said, “It’s not just Ricky. We want a new country.” And that country can only be new and fair when it is free and sovereign.

Puerto Rican people show the way

Mass protests oust governor in just 12 days

We are more and we are not afraid

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Puerto Rican people have said ¡BASTA! — ENOUGH! — and poured into the streets: every day, in every town, especially in Old San Juan. La Fortaleza, where the governor resides in Old San Juan, was thousands of people of all ages and from all walks of life, including hundreds of women and diverse gender groups.

We ousted him! Taking ownership of the victory, this time, took the people only days to achieve the unity of nearly a million Puerto Ricans — almost a third of the population — in what was the largest demonstration in Puerto Rico's history, the July 23 Puro Nacional.

What does it mean?

A people that has been under colonial rule for more than 500 years, first by Spain and later by the United States, has also been the victim of great repression. Fear and deception have been constantly imposed by empires that have used the most diverse methods to drown the liberation struggle.

Now, however, the people have lost their fear and entered the streets. They follow the legacy of our liberation fighters, Ramón Emeterio Betances, Eugenio María de Hostos, Lola Rodríguez de Tío, Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and Oscar López Rivera, our students and teachers who have fought for public education, environmental activists, migrant and class-conscious trade unionists, women and diverse gender groups.

All this new wave of Puerto Rican revolutionary forces have kept the torch of the struggle for social and economic justice burning, above all for liberation from colonialism, which is the ultimate source of government corruption.

Now the people have been able to see that they do have power, that unity in action is possible, and that it leads to victory. They have gone from indignation to dignified action. They have made a huge dialectical leap that will be impossible to stop.

The road is long and it’s just beginning. As most protesters said, “It’s not just Ricky. We want a new country.” And that country can only be new and fair when it is free and sovereign.
We are Mauna Kea!

By M. Tiahui

Kanaka Maoli – Native Hawai‘ians — are engaged in a historic fight to protect their sacred Mauna Kea and stop the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project from being built there.

There are already 13 telescopes atop Mauna Kea, the highest point in all the Hawai‘ian islands, and Kanaka Maoli have been opposing telescopes there since the first one was built by the U.S. Air Force in 1968. The $1.4 billion TMT would be 18 stories high and take up an area as big as four football fields. The project could be built elsewhere—La Palma in the Canary Islands would welcome it—but the state, the University of Hawai‘i and other forces have been persistent in forcing it through at Mauna Kea despite opposition from Kanaka Maoli.

Mauna Kea is a place of ceremony and contains the bones of many ancestors. Native Hawai‘ians have a sacred relationship with their land—a cultural value known as aloha ‘aina, love of the land. But for more than a century, the government of colonial Hawai‘i that sits on stolen land has consistently overridden the Kanaka Maoli right to consent to or refuse development on their lands.

Arrest of Kupuna (elders) galvanizes struggle

After years of going throughhearings and courts, construction on the TMT was scheduled to begin on July 15 but was blocked by Pu‘uhonua (refuge or sanctuary) ‘a (with a heavy heart),” she said. “I called her to Hawai‘i and told her that I love her. I said, ‘I carried your Hawaiian creed with me. It’s okay for you to carry me now.’

“They’re colonization does to us,” she said. “It divides and pits us against each other. But being colonized doesn’t mean we aren’t Hawaiian.”

The Thirty Meter Telescope is the colonizer trying to exterminate our identity and our sense of self as Hawai‘ians. But this mountain is so sacred to us we must protect it. In the Kumulipo (Hawai‘ian creation story) Mauna Kea is where our akua (gods) dwell.”

Throng of Hawai‘ians gathered outside Gov. David Ige’s office. For two days, traffic was slowed on the H1 highway. On July 21, more than a thousand marched in Honolulu. On July 22, when there was a march in Honolulu to support the popular uprising in Puerto Rico, some tourism workers also stopped work for a day to support the protectors at Mauna Kea. The access road camp has grown to over 2,000 people on some days.

There have been solidarity actions throughout Hawai‘i, on the U.S. mainland and worldwide. The many expressions of Polynesian solidarity and unity have been inspiring. This outpouring of support has pushed back Gov. Ige, who had declared a state of emergency and called in the National Guard to support the protectors for several days. He was widely criticized and as a result backed down and came to visit the camp on July 23.

Kanaka Maoli culture leads the way

Some media, university officials, scientists and others have falsely painted the Kanaka as being anti-science. But Kanaka Maoli were observing the stars and functioning as scientists on their own lands long before the Europeans showed up.

The Mauna Kea struggle has brought to the fore the issue of the need for scientists to decolonize themselves from colonialist and racist values and beliefs. Science needs to stop disregarding and running roughshod over the rights of Indigenous, Black and other impacted communities in the name of “progress.” While many people are noting the similarities to the #NoDAPL defense at Standing Rock in 2017–2018, it is important to emphasize that the Mauna Kea defense is in another time and place and reflects distinct Kanaka Maoli history, practices and cultural values.

The youngers have been studying with the elders who have been in the struggle for decades, and have also clearly studied past and current struggles in other places as well, while bringing deep cultural knowledge to bear to make the essence of the resistance align with Kanaka values and beliefs.

The camp at the access road is beautifully organized, with many youth leading the way. In just a short period of time, protectors have set up free classes, cooking facilities, sanitation, childcare, medical care and much more. Everyone’s work is valued. Being there not only gave me a new one but also started counting down the seconds I had left to do it.

“It also alerted a manager if I had too many times of ‘Time Off Task.’ At my warehouse, you were expected to be off task for only 15 minutes per shift—mine was a 90.0 a.m. to 6 p.m.—which included using the bathroom, getting a drink of water or just walking slower than the algorithm dictated.”

DELIVERY WORKERS

Companies keep tips

Unknown to most, the tips given to delivery workers have been kept by the company. The New York Times reports: “DoorDash, the nation’s biggest on-demand food-delivery app, is dropping a widely criticized tipping policy that effectively meant customers’ tips were going to DoorDash rather than the worker who delivered their meal.”

DoorDash and most other delivery apps pay delivery workers a set fee. If a customer gives a tip through the app, the tip is deducted from the fee. For example, if DoorDash paid a worker $7 for a delivery and a customer did not tip, DoorDash would directly pay the worker $7. If

Read the full article and find out how you can help at Struggle-La-Lucha.org

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Community organizes self-defense against ICE raids

By John Parker

Los Angeles

On Saturday morning, July 13, activists heeded the call of Unión del Barrio (UdB) and gathered at a community center in Los Angeles to anxiously hear plans on community self-defense strategies against raids by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE).

The community meeting focused on the creation of “Comités de Resistencia/Community Self-Defense Committees” against ICE raids. It came on the same weekend that Donald Trump had threatened to carry out deportation raids targeting families in 10 major U.S. cities. ICE and police terrorize Latinx residents, but this government is egged on by the white-supremacist Trump administration, while children continue to die in Trump’s inhuman detention centers.

Like many who are frustrated by the lack of real action by politicians to follow self-defense strategies against ICE raids, the franciscan treasured migrants at the border and in detention centers, UdB believes it is up to the people themselves to change the situation.

Ron Gocher, one of the presenters at the community meeting, said, “Protests and marches are important, but they are not enough. We must organize ourselves to be ready to defend our people.”

At the meeting, organizers discussed how to create “Comités” in schools, churches, labor organizations, and anywhere necessary. The goal is to set up self-defense committees in different areas around the city of Los Angeles.

Some 70 people participated in the first meeting, and a second weekly meeting on July 20 was also well attended. The initiative by UdB has so far received a good amount of mainstream media attention. Six major media outlets attended a press conference held in South Central Los Angeles a few days prior to the meeting.

Members of Partido de Socialismo Unido/Socialist Unity Party were invited to speak at this press conference and have joined the weekly meetings, hoping to build and support this most important effort in Los Angeles.

Another of the attendees at the press conference was a member from the San Diego chapter of UdB, where they are using cars with decals attached to the doors identifying them as people’s patrol cars to protect community members from ICE.

A Facebook page announcing future meetings states: “We call on the community to join the resistance against Trump, the migra, the police or anyone else who is threatening our community!”

It is no accident that this organization is leading the battle here in Los Angeles. Unión del Barrio is a community organization dedicated to the liberation of the people of Latin America against U.S. imperialism and works toward the empowerment of local Latinx communities, while also helping to build Black and Brown unity.

This type of response that empowers people to not rely on politicians or allow fear of the police and ICE to stifle activism will surely encourage similar strategies and militancy around the country while building broader solidarity with migrants and all of those threatened by ICE and the police.

News from Los Angeles

“Back where you came from” is one of the oldest slurs directed at oppressed workers. This slogan—with its implied threat of deportation—denies and hides the very catastrophe … telling the people of the United States, the greatest and most powerful Nation on earth, to go back and the rest of the planet.

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President Donald Trump’s attack on The Squad is an attack on all workers.

Together, Black Lives Matter and their allies have called upon to defend The Squad and ourselves. This slogan—attacked by Trump—and Democrats, too!

Of course, none of this matters to Trump, his neo-fascist supporters in government and law enforcement, or their white supremacist base, many of whom speak openly not only of deporting but also of murdering, Muslim peoples, Black and Brown people, LGBTQ2S people, and anti-fascists and others.

But it’s not just Trump or the Republicans who are responsible for creating this dangerous situation. Leading congressional Democrats like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, with the backing of the Democratic National Committee, paved the way for Trump with their own racist attacks on The Squad.

Listen to Pelosi’s words directed at them just days before Trump’s rant, quoted in the New York Times: “All these people have their public whatever and their Twitter world. But they didn’t have any following. They’re four people and that’s how many votes they got.”

“They do not resemble the people they claim to represent.”

After earlier backing Trump’s racist “border security” bill, on July 12 Pelosi’s House Democrats major lost to those occupying the border. The “Squad” & their allies have taken their jaws and voiced their outrage, saying: “The Resistance,” the Democratic leadership has no fundamental differences with Trump when it comes to terrorizing migrants and refugees, waging anti-migrant wars or exploiting workers everywhere.

The issue is racism

Together, Trump and his Democratic collaborators have put a target on the back of each of these women — and through them, on the backs of all oppressed people. Racism is the issue. Misogyny, Islamophobia and anti-migrant bigotry are the issues. Trump’s appeal to his fascist base with code words and slogans that ramp them up for acts of terror against oppressed workers, women, and migrants is the issue.

Many of the Democrats who are making hay out of Trump’s overt racist appeals today bailed the hook for him yesterday, and continue to attack The Squad even now. They want to divert the growing lightbight against deportations and concentration camps into passive support for their 2020 election campaigns. They cannot be trusted to defend these congresspeople, even though they belong to the same party.

Every worker, including every white worker, has a stake in this struggle. Trump, the Republicans and the Democrats are all engaged in the oldest and deadliest form of ideological war on the working class: divide and conquer.

Trump’s racist, anti-migrant rhetoric aims to convince white workers that they have more in common with the bosses who exploit them than with their fellow workers who are Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab or Indigenous, or who happen to have been born somewhere else.

To counter this poison, we have to build unity and solidarity in action.

Like the anti-war, immigrants’ rights, labor and community activists who turned out by the hundreds at the Minneapolis airport to greet Omar with chants of “Welcome home! Welcome home!”

Like the neighbors in Hermitage, Tenn., Black, white, Latinx, Indigenous—who formed a human chain to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents from arresting a targeted man and child.

Like Union del Barrio, which is patrolling the streets of San Diego to warn the community of ICE raids and working with allies to build Resistance Committees in Los Angeles.

Only we—the workers and oppressed—can be trusted to defend The Squad and ourselves.
Protestas masivas expulsan al gobernador en solo 12 días

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

LA CONCIENCIA POPULAR nunca antes vista en el archipiélago es prueba fehaciente de la gran fuerza que tiene la lucha en manos del pueblo.

Contexto

Esta publicación fue como la consabida gota que colmó la copa. La consecuencia de años de recesión económica que merecieron la frágil sostenibilidad fiscal del país, hasta la imposición de una Junta de Control Fiscal bajo la ley Promesa aprobada por el Congreso estadounidense, bajó la administración de Obama para pagar una deuda ilegítima de más de $73 mil millones.

Las medidas de austeridad y la ola de privatizaciones desencadenadas tanto por la Junta como por el mismo gobierno que impuso una Reforma Laboral mermando los derechos laborales, han sofocado la población. Símese el terrible golpe de los huracanes Irma y María de 2017, donde sufrieron una enorme pérdida económica, y empezó así un cuarto de mil boricuas a un exilio involuntario. Más de 400 escuelas cerradas, aumento del costo de los servicios en la Universidad pública, servicios médicos reducidos, aumentos en impuestos y servicios que elevan el costo de vida a la vez que se reducen pensiones, bonus y se elimina la ayuda de los servicios sociales.

Todo esto enmarcado en un amargo esquema de corrupción donde millones de dólares en fondos federales y de las propias arcas del país fueron robados por oficiales del gobierno y contratistas beneficiados por sus relaciones con diferentes políticos. Esto incluye hasta la Secretaría de Educación, Julia Keleher, una norteamericana a la cual se pagaba $250,000 en un país en bancarrota. Ella, responsable del cierre de más de 200 escuelas, y del intento de privatización de las escuelas públicas, ahora fue arrestada y se encuentra enfrentando un proceso federal por robo y desvío de fondos.

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nauta Joseph Acaba envió una foto desde el espacio con un cartel que decía Ricky Renuncia.

En las casi dos semanas de manifestaciones ininterrumpidas se ha constatado la creatividad boricua. Los carteles escritos a mano con mensajes reflejando el momento particular y las formas de protesta, desde bailes, cacerolazos, acrobacias, teatro de calle, carreras de motocicletas, de bicicletas y hasta de lanchas.

Realmente, nunca antes el pueblo se había tirado a la calle tan consistente y como ahora. Lo más cercano fue la lucha para sacar la Marina estadounidense de la isla de Vieques, que no fue hasta dos años de comenzada la lucha que se lograron manifestaciones multitudinarias como la adelantada esta semana. Ahora ésta se apoderó solo una semana para lograr la unión de cerca de un millón de boricuas—casi un tercio de la población—en lo que fue la manifestación más grande de la historia.

¿Cuál es el significado?

Un pueblo que ha sido colonia durante más de 500 años, primero de España y luego de Estados Unidos, ha sido también víctima de una gran represión. El miedo y el engaño han sido una constante impuesta por los impuestos que han utilizado los más diversos métodos para ahogar la lucha libertaria.

Sin embargo, ahora ese pueblo pertenece a sí mismo. Han seguido el legado de figuras de la liberación, desde Ramón Emeterio Betances, Eugenio María de Hostos, Lola Rodríguez de Chaviano, Juana Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Filierto Ojeda Ríos, Oscar López, nues- tros estudiantes y maestros que han luchado por una educación pública, lxs integrantes de la lucha ambiental, sindicatos militantes y clasistas, la nueva ola de movimiento feminista y de dere- vers. Toda esa gama de revolucio- narixis boricuas que han mantenido la antorcha de la lucha por la justicia social y económica, y sobre todo por la liberación de la colonia, que es la fuente de las corrupturas gubernamen- tales.

Ahora ese pueblo ha podido con- statar que sí tiene poder, que unida- dad en acción es posible y lleva a la victoria. Todos los duros meses de aper- ción a la digna acción. Han dado un enorme salto dialéctico que será imposible de detener.

El camino es largo y solo está comenzando. Como decía la mayoría de manifestantes, “no es solo Ricky, queremos un país nuevo.” Y ese país solo puede ser nuevo y justo cuando sea libre y soberano. Esa nueva ola de activismo, sobre todo de la juventud, que ha tenido como motor a esa a política criminal que con gas- es lacrimógenos intentó sofocar las manifestaciones, ha dado un grito: “Sonsos no te tenemos miedo!”

¡Viva la Revolución Boricua!