June 3, 2017 - No. 20

Canada 150

Oppose Government's Hypocrisy on Its Responsibilities and Commitments to Indigenous Peoples

• Do Not Let the Trudeau Government Off the Hook for the National Inquiry!
  - Philip Fernandez -

• Open Letter to Inquiry Chief Commissioner Marion Buller
  • Idle No More Calls for Action on Canada Day
  • Support Mi’kmaq Demand to Remove the Name "Amherst" from PEI Historic Site
• Inappropriate Parks Canada Celebrations at Manoir Papineau
  - Chantier politique -

Fight Against Wrecking of Maritime and Transportation Sector
• Privatization and Deregulation in Service of Financial Oligarchy and Empire-Building Is Not Modernization
  - Louis Lang -

• No to the Use of Locomotive Audio-Video Recorders to Spy on Workers!
  - Pierre Chénier -

• Trudeau Liberal Government Seeks to Spy on Railway Workers
Discipline and the Modern Economy
- K.C. Adams -

"We Won't Stand for Dismantling of Cabotage and Regulations or for Privatization"
- Interview, Terry Engler, President, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 400 -

Economic Integration Within Fortress North America
- Challenges of a New Nation-Building Project

Annual Weapons Fair Held in Ottawa
- Militant Picket Opposes Militarization and War

Venezuela Fights Back Against Foreign Attempts at Regime Change
- Venezuelans Prepare to Elect National Constituent Assembly
- U.S.-Backed Counterrevolutionary Forces Reject Elections and Call for Violence
- Imperialist Scheme at Organization of American States Unravels
- Who Is Behind U.S. State Department's Coup Plot in Venezuela?
  - Misión Verdad -
- Script for Plans to Destroy Bolivarian Revolution Was Written in Washington
  - Sergio Alejandro Gómez -

Canada 150

Oppose Government's Hypocrisy on Its Responsibilities and Commitments to Indigenous Peoples

The Government of Canada uses double-talk about respecting the rights of Canada's Indigenous peoples. This serves to deflect attention from the crimes of neglect this government continues to commit against Indigenous peoples, not to mention its unacceptable actions on other fronts. Recently, a Working Group of Ministers was formed "to deal with relations with Aboriginal peoples"[1] and the Prime Minister requested the Pope to apologize for crimes committed by the Catholic Church in the
Residential Schools in Canada.[2] These schools were created by the colonial government of the day to assimilate the Indigenous peoples into the "European way of life" -- that is to say, to commit genocide against them by depriving them of their identity and collective right to be. More recently, the government has been forced, by the persistent actions of families, to stop dragging its feet on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

The February 22 press release announcing the formation of the Working Group of Ministers "to deal with relations with Aboriginal peoples" said the group "will examine relevant federal laws, policies, and operational practices to help ensure the Crown is meeting its constitutional obligations with respect to Aboriginal and treaty rights; adhering to international human rights standards, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and supporting the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action." In the same release, Prime Minister Trudeau stated:

"Today, we are meeting the commitment we made to First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and to all Canadians to review the laws and policies that relate to Indigenous Peoples. The Working Group of Ministers -- in partnership with Indigenous leaders and a broad range of stakeholders, including youth -- will assess and recommend what statutory changes and new policies are needed to best meet our constitutional obligations and international commitments to Indigenous Peoples. Through this initiative and the other steps we have recently taken, we are working on a complete renewal of Canada's nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples."

Herein lies the duplicity. When the Trudeau Government speaks of "a complete renewal of Canada's nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples," it is a renewal not defined by the Indigenous peoples themselves. It is a "renewal" defined in a manner which favours the interests of the international financial oligarchy to access the resources which lie on the lands of the Indigenous peoples and overcome "obstacles." Everything the Trudeau government does is to eliminate the resistance of the Indigenous peoples and their fight for their right to be and to control their own destiny.

No amount of talk on the Prime Minister's part about the "renewal of nation-to-nation relations with the Indigenous peoples" changes the fact that the Government of Canada and the federal Cabinet have no intention of relinquishing control of decision-making power on matters of concern to Indigenous peoples. The fact that the Liberals' Working Group of Ministers does not even refer to Indigenous peoples but to "Indigenous leaders and a broad range of stakeholders, including youth" shows it continues to deny that they constitute sovereign, self-determining peoples with rights that belong to them by virtue of their being. It gives a clear idea of where this government continues to head.

The rationale for forming a "Working Group of Ministers" must be considered in the context of the actual deeds of the Liberals concerning Crown-Indigenous relations since coming to power in the October 19, 2015 federal election. In this light, the Working Group can only be seen as a cruel joke made at the expense of Indigenous peoples and the Canadian people. The aim is to further deprive Indigenous peoples of their rights, subvert their resistance to the duplicity of the Trudeau Liberals, and attack the political unity of the Canadian people, the people of Quebec and the Indigenous peoples.

The Trudeau Liberals have proven just as determined as their predecessors the Harper Conservatives to run roughshod over the hereditary, treaty and political rights of Indigenous peoples while paying
lip-service to these rights. Where is the action to address treaty rights such as the right to safe drinking water, a longstanding problem in close to 90 First Nations communities? Where is the swift action to ensure fire-safe housing in First Nations communities in the wake of several fatalities resulting from substandard housing? Why has the Trudeau government refused to expedite compensation payments to victims of the residential school system, and, like the Harper government, tries to deny justice and compensation to victims on the basis of technicalities, such as the children who suffered while interned at St. Anne's Residential School in Fort Albany, Ontario?

On the pressing need to restore and fully fund programs for First Nations children and families, the Liberals still refuse to comply with the order of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to do exactly that. This despite the complaint brought forward by Dr. Cindy Blackstock and the First Nations Caring Society more than 10 years ago and after two previous warnings by the Tribunal. Instead, record numbers of Indigenous children are still being abducted by Canadian state agencies and put in foster care far away from their communities. On May 30, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal issued its third compliance order demanding that the federal government fulfill its obligations to fully fund programs and services for Indigenous children.

What possible justification can there be to not address these life and death matters, to say nothing of the foot-dragging on the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls?

One of the stated goals of the Working Group established by Prime Minister Trudeau is to "decolonize" the Indian Act and on that basis renew the "nation-to-nation" relations with Indigenous peoples. Such an objective is but another blithely vacuous promise on the part of the Trudeau Liberal government, made in its trademark style of using "buzz words" and correct-sounding phrases to negate the peoples' demands and obfuscate its total refusal to address the rights of Indigenous peoples. Recognizing these rights is part and parcel of ending Canada's colonial relations with Indigenous nations and establishing just nation-to-nation relations that are worthy of the name. This Working Group and its "goals" are a cheap political manoeuvre to further disempower First Nations and extinguish their treaty, hereditary and political rights and claims.

The job of decolonizing Canada is the task that history has put before the Indigenous peoples of this land, the Canadian people and the people of the Quebec nation for solution, which is being taken up in earnest by the political movement of the people. It is part of the profound renewal required by society to put an end to the anachronistic institutions and political arrangements that deprive the peoples of their right to be decision-makers and exercise control over their lives.

The times present an historic opportunity to step up the work for political renewal. Justice must be rendered to the Indigenous peoples for the present privations and historic injustices for which Canada is responsible, so that those who have settled in Canada and the Indigenous peoples can move forward together. A modern and democratic People's Canada must be established within a free and equal union if the people so decide. A Canadian-made constitution must recognize and codify in law the sovereignty and right to self-determination of the Indigenous peoples and the nation of Quebec as well as citizenship rights defined by the people themselves on a modern basis.

**Note**

1. The group comprises six federal ministers: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett; Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard Minister Dominic LeBlanc; Minister of Justice
and Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould; Health Minister Jane Philpott; Families, Children and Social Development Minister Jean-Yves Duclos; and Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr.

2. It was reported that on May 29, at a private meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican, Prime Minister Trudeau broached the subject of the Pontiff making a "papal apology" on behalf of the Catholic administrators of these schools.

(With files from PMO, CBC News, Globe and Mail)
be solved. The families of the victims and their advocates need justice and closure for the more than 4,000 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls recorded since the 1980s, and most importantly, to honour their memories by ensuring that this epidemic of violence against Indigenous women in Canada is ended.

The government appointed five Indigenous people to lead the Commission's work. All of them expressed their desire to do their duty. However, their efforts have been repeatedly frustrated due to conflicting views on the aims of the Inquiry. Ongoing demands and concerns raised by the victims' families as well as organizations such as the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), the BC Coalition for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Families of Sisters in Spirit and others have clearly raised the Inquiry's shortcomings. In fact, even before the Inquiry was announced, they had to fight for their right to play key roles in shaping its mandate and framework. Their concerns reflect their experiences of being politically shut out of participating in such mechanisms. For example, the 2010 Missing Women Commission of Inquiry in British Columbia barred the participation of the Coalition on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls which represents a large number of groups and families who want an end to the violence and murder of Indigenous women and girls in that province.

Despite hearings now getting underway, a major concern has been the fact that from the get-go, the Trudeau Liberals imposed political control over the Inquiry and framed its mandate. The mandate was set to examine the "systemic causes of all forms of violence -- including sexual violence -- against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLBTQ throughout Canada; underlying social, economic, cultural, institutional and historical causes contributing to the ongoing violence and particular vulnerabilities of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLBTQ in Canada; and institutional policies and practices implemented in response to violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLBTQ in Canada, including the identification and examination of practices that have been effective in reducing violence and increasing safety."

Nowhere does the Inquiry even acknowledge that the agencies and agents of the Crown actively commit violence against Indigenous women and girls today. As well, the very fact that the reasons why cases of missing women and girls continue to go unsolved are not to be investigated shows that the Inquiry is not serious. Efforts by the families and advocacy groups to raise their concerns about the mandate and the framework of the Inquiry, including its omission of the role of police, the Canadian state and its colonial relations with Indigenous peoples so as to ensure its success have been blocked.

On May 16, NWAC issued its Second Report Card on the Inquiry giving it failing grades and called for immediate action to be taken to put it back on track. Providing context on the release of its Second Report Card (the first was released at the beginning of 2017). Francyne D. Joe, Interim President of NWAC, noted, "This many months into the inquiry, we cannot afford to be nice any more. Families are upset, they're getting discouraged and we need to see action on the part of the commissioners to ensure that this inquiry is going to be family-first and is going to be respectful to the missing and murdered women." She added, "My biggest fear at this point is that this is not going to be a family-first inquiry, that families are going to come third," Ms. Joe said. "There's a lot of discussions around the technical side of things, there's a lot of discussions around the legal side of things. But there's not enough discussions as to how families are going to be part of this. And they have been the ones fighting for this inquiry for decades."
Other Indigenous leaders have also weighed in. In an article which appeared on May 15 in the online law journal, The Lawyer's Daily, Dr. Pamela Palmater, Mi'kmaq, lawyer, author, Idle No More organizer and Chair of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University wrote: "The Terms of Reference [of the Inquiry] lack the two areas of inquiry that were most important to Indigenous families, leaders and advocates: (1) a review of all the known police case files of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and (2) a comprehensive review and investigation of police behaviour, specifically racism, abuse and sexualized violence of Indigenous women and girls by police forces. Yet, these two things are specifically exempted or protected from review in the terms, forcing witnesses who want to give evidence about these issues, to go back to the very same police forces that committed the flawed investigations of their missing or murdered loved ones, or the same police forces that failed to act on abuses by their officers."

On the same day, an open letter (see below) was sent to the Chief Commissioner of the National Inquiry into MMIWG Marion Buller, written by Christi Belcourt, a Michif (Métis) visual artist and political activist and co-signed by more than 50 people. The letter raises many concerns about the Inquiry, including some questions about the possibility of political interference in its work by the Trudeau Liberals, such as: Is the Privy Council Office (PCO) interfering in the work of Inquiry? Can you demonstrate that the PCO has not or is not impairing the independence of this Inquiry?

These questions would not even be posed except that there is a history of how the PCO interferes in the workings of an inquiry or commission to render it ineffective. One has only to recall the relentless efforts by the previous Harper government to sabotage the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the Residential Schools, to deny the victims any possibility of seeking justice and redress, as well as financial compensation.

In her May 19 response to Ms. Belcourt's open letter, Chief Commissioner Buller acknowledges the concerns raised and pledges to address them. On the questions raised about the PCO's influence, Ms. Buller points out that the Inquiry is "a creature of government" and that the PCO controls its purse strings. Furthermore, she notes that the Inquiry is also subject to "government rules and procedures," but that the Commission's work and recommendations will be independent. Commissioner Buller also informs that the PCO bills the Commission for the work it does on behalf of the Commission. Since coming to power in November 2015, the Justin Trudeau Liberals have shown themselves in their deeds to be little different from the previous Harper government which worked to extinguish the hereditary, political and treaty rights of the Indigenous people across Canada. Indigenous peoples and Canadians were shocked that when then Prime Minister Harper was asked in a 2014 year-end interview about the call for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women he responded "it isn't really high on our radar, to be honest."

Now that the Liberals have dragged their feet on the MMIWG Inquiry and limited its scope in a way that does not address the profound concerns of the families, Indigenous people and Canadians, many have drawn the conclusion that the Liberals are no different. They seek to "renew" relations only to achieve what all previous governments of Canada have not been able to achieve -- the extinguishing of Indigenous rights. This is an impossible task, because rights belong to people by virtue of their being. They can neither be given, taken away nor forfeited in any way. The political unity between the Indigenous peoples and their Canadian allies must be strengthened at this time to ensure that these rights are recognized and provided with a guarantee in concrete terms. The Inquiry must be conducted...
in a way that allows justice to be done, and the government must not be let off the hook.

All out for the July 1 National Day of Action called by Idle No More in the context of the 150th anniversary of Confederation! Help to strengthen the demand that the National Inquiry into MMIWG serve its purpose of rendering justice to the victims and their families so that the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls is ended once and for all, and the cause of providing Indigenous rights with a guarantee is advanced!

(With files from NWAC, CBC, National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls)

Open Letter to Inquiry Chief Commissioner Marion Buller

Dear Chief Commissioner Buller,

Across the country, families, advocates, Indigenous leaders, experts and grassroots people are loudly raising alarms that the Inquiry is in serious trouble. We recognize that you and your fellow Commissioners have undertaken a difficult challenge, however, it is now clear that you must take immediate action to mitigate the damage and fundamentally shift your approach in order to move forward in a credible way.

We write this in honour of the spirits of the women, girls and Two-Spirit people -- our relations -- who spur us to ongoing resistance of the systemic violence that continues in this country.

We are deeply concerned with the continued lack of communication that is causing anxiety, frustration, confusion, and disappointment in this long-awaited process. We request that you, as the leader of this Inquiry, substantially rework your approach in order to regain trust and ensure that families are no longer feeling re-traumatized in this process. We echo and strongly agree with the concerns raised by the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition, the Coalition on MMIWG in BC, Indigenous
organizations, and recognized advocates in recent days.

Here are some of the critical issues and questions that urgently need to be addressed by you in your capacity as Chief Commissioner:

Respecting the Spirits of Our Relations

We note there is inconsistency in following Indigenous ceremonial protocols to acknowledge, respect, recognize and honour the spirits of our sisters and families. As was indicated by the pre-inquiry process, ceremony and culture must be intricately incorporated into all aspects of the Inquiry's schedule and work. We have heard from some people who participated in advisory circles or meetings that there was not enough time following ceremony to complete work needed to be done. In other cases, we have heard there has been a lack of a needed and/or appropriate ceremony. The Commission must find a way to strike the right balance between the time families and/or a community indicates it needs for ceremony and the work that the Inquiry seeks to achieve without rushing or compromising either. We recommend that proper planning with community must be done to respect specific Indigenous laws and ceremony where the Inquiry will be sitting. Communities need time to discuss among their Elders and ceremonial people so they can provide feedback to the Inquiry on the amount of time they would need to be able to respectfully observe their own regional protocols or wishes around prayers and ceremony.

Extension

With the first report due on November 1, 2017 and the hearings for families now delayed until the fall, the time frame for this Inquiry is clearly too short. We disagree with the National Inquiry's assessment that an extension is not necessary (as stated in response to the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition). We recommend that you formally request an extension now rather than wait. This will enable you to use the time this summer to seriously consider how the Inquiry can be reformatted to address the myriad of concerns being raised widely across the country, including the concerns we are outlining here.

Leadership

We are deeply concerned and confused as to why so many of the most renowned family leaders, advocates, activists, and grassroots (in short, those known and respected across the country with a deep subject matter expertise), have not been asked to help. This is baffling and a missed opportunity for those who are anxious to contribute to the Inquiry's success. With respect, refusing to engage with known and respected advocates who have led the charge for the Inquiry over the last 30 years does not bolster your independence; it simply harms your ability to effectively pursue your mandate.

We have noted that the lack of a centralized office and lack of a leadership with this deeper knowledge has put the Inquiry at a disadvantage. We urge you to convene a working group as soon as possible who can help to put the Inquiry back on track this summer.

We urge you to shift the Inquiry process by hiring a Managing Director or Chairperson from among the many recognized and respected Indigenous grassroots experts across the country whose task it would be to help oversee, guide, and ensure the overall vision for the Inquiry is being achieved as set out in the terms of reference but importantly, also in accordance with the spirit and call for the Inquiry coming from families and advocates over these many years.

We recognize that you have retained excellent people as legal counsel and staff for the Inquiry. However, there is widespread perception and concern that the Inquiry is too legalistic in its operations to date, and that a legal lens is dominating the Inquiry's pursuit of its mandate. We urge you, as Chief Commissioner, to personally take a clear lead in expressing the vision and direction of the Inquiry,
with openness and transparency, and in keeping with the advice provided in the pre-Inquiry phase regarding Indigenous legal orders. The guidance of Elders and from families of MMIWG2S [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People] will be of critical assistance to you in this regard, and more broadly over the course of the Inquiry.

**Trauma-Informed Process**

We have heard from families that the process so far has already left some families re-traumatized. We agree with the Manitoba MMIWG Coalition's observations that much of the process does not appear to be trauma-informed and understand from your response to their letter that the Commissioners, Directors, and most staff will be trained in June 2017. We implore you as Chief Commissioner to understand the extent to which inquiry has already re-traumatized families with continued delays, silence, miscommunications, confusion, repeated cancellations, and how conversely shifting the process drastically to be open and transparent combined with a reliable schedule will help remove these as potential factors.

**Supports for Families and Loved Ones**

Families and loved ones of MMIWG must be supported with the necessary capacity, resources and care while this process is being set up, during the sharing, and after the hearings. It is not at all clear how this will take place. We ask:

1. Will lawyers be available for families? There is a concern that the lessons of the BC Missing Women Inquiry have not been learned, where many lawyers were involved in the process but very few provided any representation to the families.

2. What mechanisms are being set up, as indicated during the pre-inquiry phase, to ensure that proper follow up and access to traditional healing supports are in place?

**Independence**

We were promised an independent inquiry, but it appears that many questions remain about the role of the Privy Council Office (PCO) in decision-making. Questions raised include:

1. Does the PCO approve expenditures or does the Inquiry?

2. Has the Inquiry been hampered in its ability to support families or its work because of the PCO?

3. Has any of the budget for the Inquiry been spent to support PCO offices or civil service staff?

4. Can you demonstrate that the PCO has not or is not impairing the independence of this Inquiry?

**Communications**

The disorganized, haphazard, and insufficient communications from the Inquiry has harmed its credibility and caused confusion and frustration among families and others who have a sincere desire to see the Inquiry succeed. Information about the Inquiry's plans and procedures are sometimes released by the media or unofficially in social media, rather than from the Inquiry or directly from Commissioners. The lack of a consistent and open communications strategy has raised concerns about the Inquiry's transparency and accountability. This can and must be remedied immediately.

The Inquiry must have a clear communications plan and strategy as you proceed with your work, so that information is provided through a recognized spokesperson -- ideally a Commissioner -- in a predictable and reliable manner. Information should be provided regularly and should display openness about the Inquiry's procedures, processes, and plans of action.
Standing

We urge you to extend the deadline for applications for standing, since the process to date has been mired in confusion, mis-communication, lack of communication and lack of transparency. We suggest adding several due dates for additional waves of applications to come in, and request a clear explanation for families, communities, and advocates about how they can participate.

In addition, much clearer explanation is needed on how the Inquiry plans to engage members of Indigenous communities affected by extreme levels of violence and individuals who are not necessarily captured by "family" hearings. More specifically, we need answers to the following questions:

1. How will the inquiry include people who are street-involved?
2. How will the testimonies of people engaged in sex industries be included?
3. How will the Inquiry accommodate individuals wanting to testify about matters related to police violence?
4. How will the inquiry specifically seek to hear from Two-Spirit and Transgender individuals and experts wanting to testify?

Schedule

There needs to be a clearly published schedule of events and locations. The Inquiry thus far appears shrouded in secrecy, giving the impression that participation in family advisory circles or other meetings is by invitation only, causing confusion. This is leaving Indigenous grassroots people who are affected and concerned with no mechanism to support the Inquiry or families.

It is with heavy hearts that we sign our names to this letter. We all desperately want this Inquiry to work, and not only to work, but to succeed beyond what we could imagine. This is an opportunity that will not come again and none of us can afford for it to fail. We know that you, your fellow Commissioners and the staff share our desire for a successful Inquiry.

We ask that you now take immediate steps to address the serious concerns about the viability for the Inquiry to continue without a fundamental shift to correct the structural failures that are now being flagged across the country, and we request that you respond to this letter by May 22 indicating your plans to do so.

We remain willing and ready to help. Please call upon us.

In memory of those lost and with prayers for the missing to come home,

For full list of signatories click here.

(May 15, 2017)

Idle No More Calls for Action on Canada Day

Idle No More and Defenders of the Land issued a call on May 15 to make July 1 a National Day of Action "in support of Indigenous self-determination over land, territories, and resources." Idle No More also calls for the use of the occasion for education on how Canada's constitutional framework,
"first established 150 years ago in the British North America Act (1867), illegally confiscated [Indigenous] lands, territories, and resources, spawned the post-confederation Indian Act and attempted to write Indigenous jurisdiction -- and Indigenous Peoples -- out of existence."

Idle No More notes that "This assault has not stopped. If anything, it has accelerated under the current government. Prime Minister Trudeau has been approving pipeline projects and continues to bank on the exploitation of our resources. He does not want to recognize Indigenous land rights. We will be demanding that the Trudeau government respect our internationally recognized right of self-determination, including our absolute right to Free, Prior, Informed Consent to any activities in our territories, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

The people's movements "will never accept any behind-the-scenes attempts to weaken our rights, like the closed door meetings of the Cabinet and a Ministerial Working-Group now underway with the three National Aboriginal Organizations (Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Métis National Council), led by Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould," Idle No More states.

The Day of Action will demand:

1) a new open truly Nation-to-Nation recognition process that begins by fully recognizing collective Indigenous rights and Title, and our decision-making power throughout our territories.

2) full implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls for Action, including rejecting the colonial doctrines of discovery and recognizing Indigenous self-determination.

3) full implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the ground.

For updates and more information, see the Idle No More website here and the Facebook event page here.
Support Mi'kmaq Demand to Remove the Name "Amherst" from PEI Historic Site

Since 2008, Mi'kmaq leader Keptin John Joe Sark, a member of the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island has been demanding that the PEI government take action to have the name of Jeffrey Amherst -- a notorious British General responsible for distributing blankets infected with smallpox amongst the Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples in the 19th Century -- removed from the historic site at Port-la-Joye at Rocky Point, across the harbour from Charlottetown.

Keptin Sark also points out that his protest about the monument is also against the current Liberal government in PEI which has failed to respect the hereditary rights of the Mi'kmaq, particularly on the matter of respecting land rights on Mi'kmaq traditional territory. The provincial government has refused to help Keptin Sark, pointing out that matters related to National Historic Sites are a federal matter. In early May this year, Keptin Sark returned the Order of PEI that he had been awarded to the provincial legislature.

In making his case, Keptin Sark points out that to keep the name of Amherst on the historic site is an insult to the Mi'kmaq and all Indigenous peoples as he was a "tyrant" who not only engaged in the historically documented military slaughter of the Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples, but ordered the distribution of smallpox-infected blankets among them to kill men, women and children.

The Trudeau Liberals have also refused to show respect to the Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples and remove the name of Amherst immediately. Keptin Sark notes that he has sent several requests to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Catherine McKenna, proposing several Mi'kmaq names to replace that of Amherst, to no avail.

In a recent letter to the Charlottetown Guardian, Parks Canada writes: "It is important to note that the site does not commemorate or celebrate the actions of Jeffery Amherst [...]"

"The historic place names attached to the site commemorate events that took place there while it served as the seat of government for French and then British colonial governments..."

Acknowledging the crimes of a particular British colonial military or civil administrator such as Amherst is not simply a matter of replacing one name on Canadian historical sites for another more appropriate one. The intransigence of the Liberals in power both in PEI and at the federal level is to justify the crimes being committed by the Canadian colonial state against Indigenous peoples today.

TML Weekly calls on everyone to join the campaign to remove the name of Jeffrey Amherst from the historic site at Port-la-Joye, PEI. Write or call Catherine McKenna, the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and demand action: Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca; Twitter -- @cathmckenna; Telephone -- (613) 996-5322. All places in Canada that use this name should be changed.
Inappropriate Parks Canada Celebrations at Manoir Papineau
- Chantier politique -

On May 17, the federal government, through Parks Canada, announced the kick-off of Canada 150 celebrations at Manoir Papineau in the town of Montebello in the Outaouais, named after Louis-Joseph Papineau who betrayed the Patriots. We often hear of those who betrayed the revolutionary movement of the Patriots of 1837-38 and accepted "reasonable accommodation" with the Crown after the Rebellion was brutally crushed. The "reasonable accommodation" allowed them access to positions in the government and the institutions to defend their own right to private property and even to the seigneurial rights they enjoyed under the French regime. They reconciled with power not to defend and pursue the struggle for recognition of the Republic as is often claimed, but to defend the British monarchy and its institutions which betrayed and continue to usurp the right of the people to be sovereign.

Like Louis-Joseph Papineau, those who sought to be accommodated were characterized by their eternal love for the old French and British institutions and contempt for all those who would question them; and their political descendants have always played a leading role in political arrangements designed to "return lost sheep to the fold." They typically say that the organized movements of the people, especially the youth, are just disruptive. They consider questioning of the institutions as sacrilegious and invite all those who have grievances to forever put their faith in institutions that have failed them again and again.

On February 25, 1838, Robert Nelson wrote to J.B. Ryan Jr. that "Papineau abandoned us for personal and family reasons concerning the seigneuries and his inveterate love for the old French laws. We can
do well without him, and better than if we were with him; he is a man good only with words and not at all with action."[1]

The current line of official historians and the government, that all those who fought have in fact given birth to the current democratic institutions, that "in the end, all are patriots," is laughable. This includes even the British soldiers, since they were paid by the empire and served as its cannon fodder. All of this is to hide the fact that what has been called the "Constitution" of Canada has only created institutions that consider rights as privileges, which the executive branch can give and take away as it wishes.

It was under the Harper regime that museums began to advance the idea that "all" are patriotic, as if the cause for which hundreds and thousands of people struggled had no basis in class and no progressive or reactionary spirit!

To use Manoir Papineau in Quebec to celebrate this fact in the context of this 150th anniversary of Canada is a true insult to Quebec, which was born in this struggle for independence.

**Note**

1. Unofficial translation.

---

**Fight Against Wrecking of Maritime and Transportation Sector**

**Privatization and Deregulation in Service of Financial Oligarchy and Empire-Building Is Not Modernization**

- *Louis Lang* -

Transport Minister Marc Garneau introduced the *Transportation Modernization Act*, Bill C-49, in the House of Commons on May 16, 2017, which contains measures to amend the *Canada Transportation Act* with regard to air and railway transportation.

The Trudeau Liberal government says the direction it wants to take "to grow Canada's economy" is to modernize it by introducing further deregulation and privatization. This direction is not new by any means, and was also the policy of the former Harper Conservative government. Bill C-49 consolidates
the Harper government's direction in the service of foreign monopoly corporations in the transportation sector. They profit from Canada's network of transportation corridors that facilitate the international trade they dominate. Trudeau's direction does nothing to address the serious decline in Canada's manufacturing sector with its constant announcements of factory closures and workers losing their livelihoods by the thousands.

In a speech to the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce on May 18, Transport Minister Garneau endorsed the Harper Conservatives' direction, "Over the past three decades, the revenue of goods travelling by rail has more than doubled. That growth has been supported by deregulation and privatization within the industry. It has become more productive, efficient and reliable."

**Bill C-49**

The reporting in the monopoly media conveyed a sense that Garneau's transportation bill deals solely with an air passenger bill of rights. Such reporting omits important changes that should be discussed, such as the following:

a) Changes to the international ownership restrictions for Canadian air carriers.

b) Improving access, transparency, efficiency and sustainable long-term investment in the freight rail sector.

c) Requiring railways to install voice and video recorders in locomotives.[1]

Bill C-49 increases the allowable percentage of foreign ownership of Canadian airlines from 29 to 49 per cent. This provision in the bill also states that a single investor can hold up to 25 per cent of the voting interests of a Canadian carrier, and an international carrier can own up to 25 per cent of a Canadian carrier.

With Bill C-49, the Liberal government continues the previous government's deregulation and extension of the federal Cabinet's discretionary powers to intervene directly in the economy to serve the financial oligarchy. In this regard, Bill C-49 accords the Transport Minister the right to intervene in joint ventures where the arrangement "raises significant considerations with respect to the public interest." Joint ventures are agreements among two or more airlines travelling to, from or within Canada where they co-ordinate or collude on details of operations including pricing, scheduling or routes. Presently, joint ventures are governed by the *Competition Act*.

Specifically, regarding the operation of the Canadian National Railway Co., the bill proposes to increase maximum voting shares that can be held by one person from 15 to 25 per cent. At present, Microsoft oligarch Bill Gates is CN's biggest shareholder, with 13.3 per cent through his holding company. He also controls another 2.3 per cent through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

On the issues of "access, transparency, efficiency" in the freight rail sector, Minister Garneau emphasized the Liberal government's measures to have "A rail system that maintains low rates, so we can trade competitively and remain an essential part of global value chains."

Garneau's remarks in Edmonton alluding to imperialist globalization or empire-building in opposition to nation-building are reminiscent of a speech Stephen Harper made in 2007, during the Security and
Prosperity Partnership discussions with the U.S. and Mexico. "The emergence of global chains as pre-eminant business models is a key factor in global economic change. Prosperity and Canadian living standards cannot be maintained unless Canada becomes a logistical hub for the international trade of goods between North America, Asia and Europe," Harper said at that time.

Bill C-49 creates a new mechanism called Long-Haul Interswitching (LHI) to replace the present system of Temporary Extended Interswitching, which is managed through regulations.

According to Garneau's rationale, LHI is needed to provide a "competitive alternative" for captive shippers who have access to only one railway. This measure is clearly intended to further deregulate rail transport favouring the railway monopolies operating now mostly in the U.S., as this gives them more access to the Canadian railway network than they already have.

Taken in its entirety, the legislation puts the railway transportation network in the service of the oligopolies, those transporting freight and those with freight to transport. It contains a vague definition of "adequate and suitable" rail service that requires railways to provide shippers with the "highest level of service that can reasonably be provided in the circumstances." Such subjective definitions, which do not spell out specific conditions and actions to be met, are easily manipulated for self-serving purposes with sometimes disastrous consequences. Garneau's May 18 speech pretended concern for the interests of grain farmers who have battled the two main railway monopolies in Canada continuously for over a century. Garneau said, "Grain farmers are the lifeblood of the prairie economy. Upwards of 60 per cent of their crops are destined for export markets. We are talking about more than $15 billion in sales. They deserve to be well and efficiently served by our railways."

Garneau conveniently ignores the serious situation of grain farmers and the pressure they have faced since the elimination of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) in 2012 by the Harper government. The CWB and its single-desk acted as the lynchpin of grain handling, transportation and a marketing system favouring prairie grain farmers. The oligopolies wanted to deprive farmers of their lynchpin and the Harper government did their bidding. Far from restoring any semblance of farmer control over grain production, marketing, and transportation, Bill C-49 intends to provide and solidify rail service for the oligopolies that have benefited from the absence of control of the CWB's single-desk.

A report prepared for the Canadian Wheat Board Alliance in 2016 assesses the situation facing grain farmers following the demise of single-desk:

"For prairie farmers the present state of the grain handling, transportation and marketing system is not working in their favour. In the past two years grain farmers have lost in the order of $5 to $6 billion which has impacted not only them but their local communities and provincial economies too.... The current configuration of the prairie grain handling, transportation and marketing system has not provided prairie farmers with a better share of the port price nor has it provided better transportation logistics for grain movement."[2]
To say rail transport and all parts of the transportation sector are important for the Canadian economy is to repeat a truism given Canada's size and the abundance of resources that the imperialist system of states covets. As well, any modern nation-building project outside and in opposition to empire-building and the imperialist system of states requires an efficient internal transportation system to serve an economy of industrial mass production completely socialized and interrelated.

The issue is not to state the obvious but to renew the system in favour of the actual producers and nation-building. This requires not just regulations but actual restrictions on the power of the oligopolies to deprive Canadians of their power to control those affairs that affect their work, lives and nation-building.

Bill C-49 increases the power of the financial oligarchy to deprive Canadians of a nation-building project that serves their interests and opens a path forward. It specifically subordinates Canada's transportation needs to the demands of the global empire-builders further depriving Canadians of control over those affairs that affect their work and lives. As such, the legislation should be denounced and resolutely opposed. Bill C-49 is a continuation of the Harper, Martin, Chrétien and Mulroney governments' actions to put Canada under the domination of the financial oligarchy of Fortress North America.

Notes

1. Transport Canada.

2. *An Evaluation of the Present Situation for Western Canada Grain Farmers Within a Historical Context*, by Laura Larson (PhD), a report prepared for the Canadian Wheat Board Alliance, March 31, 2016 and revised April 17, 2016.

---

**No to the Use of Locomotive Audio-Video Recorders to Spy on Workers!**  
*Pierre Chénier*

*Railway monopolies welcome state-organized measures to spy on workers and negate their rights*

The Liberal government's new transportation legislation, Bill C-49, demands that railway companies install audio-video recorders in all locomotives. In a surprise attack, the bill authorizes the companies to use the recordings to spy on workers. This bill paves the way for increased criminalization of railway workers and the denial of their rights. They already face regular disciplinary action for reporting unsafe working conditions or showing any signs of fatigue arising from the impossible schedules and constant harassment from their employers.
The bill amends two pieces of legislation. First, it changes the *Railway Safety Act* to prohibit railway companies from operating trains if they do not have audio-video recorders onboard. The recordings, which previously have only been used by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada to assist in the investigation of accidents are now available to the companies to discipline workers. Authorization for private use by companies of such sensitive information has never before been allowed.

Bill C-49 delineates the conditions under which companies can use information captured by onboard audio-video recorders:

**Companies -- use of information**

17. 91 (1) A company may use the information that it records, collects or preserves under subsection 17. 31(1) for the purposes of

(a) conducting analyses under section 13, 47 or 74 of the Railway Safety Management System Regulations, 2015; and

(b) determining the causes and contributing factors of an accident or incident that the company is required to report under the *Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board Act* to the Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board and that the Board does not investigate...

Use -- threat to safety of railway operations

(3) If a company uses information under subsection (1), it may also use that information to address a prescribed threat to the safety of railway operations.

Note the expression "to address a prescribed threat to the safety of railway operations." The railway monopolies have shown consistently in the past that they are prepared to use any information to force workers into accepting unsafe, hazardous and worse working conditions under the pragmatic banner of improving productivity and profit. They will now surely use these recordings in any way they see fit to serve their narrow private interests and attack the rights of workers. "The end justifies the means," they scream, in the manner of a warlord empire-builder. The companies see audio-video spying on workers as another weapon to weaken the organized resistance of workers in defence of their right to decent, humane and safe working conditions.

Bill C-49 shamelessly admits that the authorization
to spy on employees' actions and words at work is an assault on the right to privacy and the right to conscience. The bill allows the railway monopolies to ignore existing legislation prohibiting the gathering of personal information. It says companies can spy on workers, "Despite section 5 of the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, to the extent that that section relates to obligations set out in Schedule 1 to that Act relating to the collection, use, disclosure and retention of information, and despite section 7 of that Act." (Section 7 limits the circumstances under which an organization may collect personal information without the knowledge or consent of the individual -- TML Note.)

The railway companies may also use the information provided by the recorders, "despite any provision of provincial legislation that is substantially similar to Part 1 of the Act referred to in paragraph (a) and that limits the collection, use, communication or preservation of information."

The second piece of legislation amended by Bill C-49 is the Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board Act. This act prohibits the use of audio-video information from onboard recorders by any organization other than the Transportation Safety Board, and only for the strict purpose of investigating accidents. Bill C-49 overturns this prohibition as follows:

Nothing in this section prevents the use or communication of an on-board recording if that use or communication is expressly authorized under the Aeronautics Act, the National Energy Board Act, the Railway Safety Act or the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 and

(a) there has been no transportation occurrence that is required to be reported under this Act to the Board that involves the means of transportation to which the recording relates; or

(b) there has been a transportation occurrence that is required to be reported under this Act to the Board that involves the means of transportation to which the recording relates but that is not investigated under this Act.

CP Rail quickly translated the convoluted language to mean whatever the railway monopolies demand. CPR writes on its website:

"Effective use of this technology would include the ability for it to be used for investigation after an accident, as well as allowing railways the opportunity to conduct random sampling of footage to detect such things as tampering, cell phone use, sleeping and compliance with other safety-critical rules."

"Access to the information would be restricted to areas related to rules and standards compliance, and would not be made available to those in supervisory roles to locomotive crews. Outcomes related to any findings would be managed through the collective agreement processes, as they are today."

CPR confirms that the information gathered is to prove their contention that workers' behaviour is the cause of accidents. They deny that the cause of accidents arises from the dangerous and anti-worker operating procedures of the companies, which are always trying to cut corners in their pursuit of private profits. CPR and others say that workers should accept dangerous and bad working conditions for the good of the company and that those who object are probably guilty of bad behaviour, and the reams of gathered information will surely find something to be used against certain individuals.
The use of audio-video equipment to spy on workers is an additional state-organized weapon the railway monopolies will have to criminalize and harass workers and weaken their organized resistance on all fronts in defending and improving their terms of employment. Criminalization and harassment of workers are an integral part of what is putting the safety of workers and the public at risk. This state-organized attack is yet another way to allow the railway monopolies to blame others for their own adventurism carried out for their narrow private interests in pursuit of profit and empire-building, which is done at the expense of workers and the safety of communities. It must not pass!

---

**Trudeau Liberal Government Seeks to Spy on Railway Workers**

*Government and railway oligarchs say workers' bad behaviour is the cause of accidents; it must not pass!*

Without shame, the Trudeau Liberals snuck into Bill C-49, the *Transportation Modernization Act*, a crude and objectionable attack on railway workers' individual and collective rights. The bill authorizes the railway companies to spy on workers with audio-video equipment in locomotives. Previously, the information was only available to the Transportation Safety Board (TSB) for accident investigation. To record workers performing their duties and talking amongst themselves, and then use this information to single out and attack certain workers is an affront to the entire working class and completely unacceptable.

Workers are not to blame for accidents. For the government to agree with the railway oligarchs that workers are to blame for accidents and must be spied on is a gross attack on the dignity of workers and denial of the reality that working and operating conditions imposed by the companies are the root cause of accidents. Companies are driven by the aim to make as much profit as possible and not by any other aim. Undermining working conditions and cutting corners on safety in the name of profit is standard operating practice for the railway monopolies and a major reason why workers need an organized and militant union to defend their rights and the rights of all.

The companies and their obsessive aim for profit must be constantly opposed in an organized way and regulated and restricted, as that is the cause of accidents and other problems. Railway workers do the best they can within the working conditions the companies provide. When workers complain that the working conditions are unsafe or otherwise unacceptable, the companies view them as standing in the way of making profit -- the main and singular aim of the companies -- and single out certain workers for attack.

Railway workers want the trains to operate safely. Why would they want anything else or do anything that would endanger the operation of the train? Their livelihood, personal safety and that of the people and communities depend on the safe operation of the trains they are conducting. Railway workers have no objection to the installation of audio-video recorders on trains for strict TSB investigative purposes. Right from the beginning of the use of recorders, they have firmly opposed that the content
be made available to the railway companies. They do so from the perspective of defending their
dignity and privacy and their right to protect themselves from being singled out for arbitrary
disciplinary measures, which are already numerous and would certainly increase if this state-
organized espionage is allowed to pass.

Railway workers and their representatives have made numerous interventions on this subject,
including before House Committees. The Trudeau federal government has chosen to ignore their
concerns and demands and shamefully lie about their views and presentations. For example, Transport
Canada disgraces itself, writing in a press release:

"Since fall 2016, Transport Canada officials have met with key stakeholders and partners including
companies, unions, and the TSB. These discussions have focussed on the type and configuration of
equipment, scope of application, and how the information from the recorders would be used. During
those consultations, it was **generally determined** that the safety benefits of LVVR would be
maximised if the recording could be used by railway companies and Transport Canada for proactive
safety management." *(TML emphasis)*

In a self-serving Trudeau Liberal government way, the Ministry declares a "general determination" of
the so-called consultations it held. The "general determination" purposefully excludes the views of
those who are directly involved and most affected, the railway workers themselves and their
representatives. Who made this "general determination" asserted by the government? Not those who
deliver the service to Canadians, often at their own risk and in conditions dangerous to communities,
and about which they have long complained. Working conditions of railway workers have generally
worsened, as the railway companies impose their aim of profit above all else. Railway work has
become more complex, with trains that are longer, heavier, running at higher speeds with tight
schedules, and often loaded with dangerous materials.

With the same Liberal government arrogance, the Transport Ministry is trying to cover itself with a fig
leaf that cannot hide what is underneath. It writes:

"The proposed legislative amendments would also
limit the purpose for which the data is used, to
mitigate the employees' privacy concerns."

Railways would use the information "to conduct
analysis via random sampling in order to identify
safety concerns as part of ongoing safety
management; to determine the cause of a reportable
accident/incident not being investigated by the
TSB; and to address a prescribed safety threat."

The point here is that the rail monopolies will have
in their hands the contents of the recordings, so they can spy on the workers and use the information
against specific individuals, others and their union. Once the state empowers the companies to spy on
workers' actions with impunity, they can concoct whatever "analysis" they want from the "random
sampling" to deal with what they consider to be a "prescribed safety threat."

The government has simply given new police powers to the rail monopolies to further criminalize
workers. Added to the constant fatigue that workers suffer due to untenable schedules, constant
disciplinary measures, especially when they stand up against dangerous conditions, and the secret and
private nature of the safety management systems of the railways, this new measure to spy on workers
is a criminal abuse of power.

The proposal is a cover-up of who is ultimately responsible for rail safety and what is necessary to
improve the conditions. As such, it represents an abdication of the social responsibility of those in
power for the safety of workers and the public, and must not pass! The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) firmly denounces this new measure and the accompanying liberal hypocrisy, and calls on all workers to rally around railway workers in opposition. The Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress held May 8-12 in Toronto unanimously passed an emergency resolution calling on the CLC to organize a campaign of all its affiliates to stop this attack. All unions, labour councils and others should implement the resolution without delay and ensure the Trudeau Liberal government and railway monopolies are held to account and forced to abandon this measure.

---

**Discipline and the Modern Economy**  
* K.C. Adams *

**The necessity to humanize working conditions**

The Railway Robber Barons applaud Bill C-49 for giving them the right to spy on workers, attack their right to conscience, and for the bill's reference to workers as a "threat to the safety of railway operations." The oligarchs have always held that accidents and other problems are the fault of the workers themselves and not caused by bad and unsafe working conditions.

The railway oligarchs defame their workers saying they sleep on the job, use their cell phones, tamper with the equipment, and generally are responsible for accidents. This contention is a total lie and denies the positive role of the human factor in the socialized economy and the discipline that arises spontaneously from industrial work.

The defamation of workers comes from the antagonistic social relation between the working class and the oligarchs. Defaming workers is an aspect of the propaganda war against the working class and its class struggle to defend its rights in the present and prepare the subjective conditions to take away control of the socialized economy from the ruling oligarchs and their state and embark on a modern nation-building project to vest sovereignty in the people whereby those who do the work, control the work and make the decisions regarding the concrete conditions of the work.

Within the modern economy of industrial mass production the concrete conditions discipline workers. Both individually and collectively, workers themselves enforce a discipline of the workplace that arises spontaneously from the concrete conditions. The discipline itself emerges from the scientific demands of the machines, such as a locomotive, the exigencies of the working conditions including work-time, and the necessity to work to live. Workers, especially those well trained, adhere diligently to the demands, science and rhythm of the machines they use and the conditions under which they operate as a matter of survival. For their own personal well-being and that of their fellow workers and the work itself, they will not go against the discipline of the concrete conditions. Humanizing the concrete conditions at the workplace is the fundamental way to improve safety.

Within the existing social relation, the working class is not in control of the working conditions and can only defend itself and manage the working conditions through organized class struggle. The oligarchs control the working conditions and impose their aim of relentlessly pursuing private profit on those conditions in contradiction with and in opposition to the socialized nature of the modern economy and the necessity to humanize the working conditions and the social and natural environment.

The only social force capable of changing the direction and aim of the socialized economy is the working class. The actual producers themselves can give the economy an aim in harmony with its socialized nature and take up the necessity to humanize the working conditions and the social and
natural environment. The problem facing the working class is how to deprive the ruling oligarchs and their state of the power to deprive workers of their right to control the work they do and to humanize the working conditions and the social and natural environment.

"We Won't Stand for Dismantling of Cabotage and Regulations or for Privatization"

- Interview, Terry Engler, President, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 400 -

Demonstration in Vancouver, February 23, 2017, against changes to transportation sector proposed in Emerson Report.

TML Weekly is publishing below an interview conducted by Workers' Forum, the online publication of the Workers' Centre of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) with Terry Engler, President of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 400 on the workers' fight against the wrecking of the maritime and transport sectors in Canada.

***

Workers' Forum: ILWU and other maritime and transportation unions are waging a campaign to stop the wrecking of the sector. How do you characterize this fight?

Terry Engler: We are working very hard to have the Emerson Report killed. The report was written by David Emerson who was mandated by the previous Harper government to write it. He did not consult with any unions to write his report. The report calls for the end of cabotage, the requirement that work done between two Canadian ports or inside Canada is done by Canadian companies with a Canadian crew. He calls for an end to that. He calls for the privatization of ports and airports. We are opposed to all of those things and we are doing everything we can to convince the Liberal Party to kill the Emerson Report. This is something that we are going to fight until we have [the report scrapped]. We held actions in January on the same day in Vancouver, Victoria, Prince Rupert as well as Toronto, Montreal and St-John's to oppose the Emerson Report and CETA, the free-trade agreement between Canada and the European Union.
For us, these things would mean a loss of jobs and a loss of our future. Economic consequences would be in the range of 14,000 job losses, millions of dollars lost in wages for Canadian workers and Canadian communities. Our demonstrations were loud and vociferous. We stopped traffic in downtown Vancouver for a couple of hours. We are going to leaflet Rogers Communication's headquarters, as Rogers is the main customer of a cable repair vessel that is sitting in Victoria right now and the plan is that it is going to be there for the next eight years [leafleting took place on May 11 -- WF Note]. The ship carries a crew of Filipino workers who are being paid $4 an hour or less. We feel that they should be using Canadians first and if they are not, those workers should be paid Canadian equivalent salaries not international salaries. We have a court action against that also.

We will be doing further actions that will include all modes of transportation so that everybody understands that there is a problem and that we are not going to stand for the dismantling of cabotage and regulations or for privatization. We are going to make it very difficult for them to make it happen. We need to protect our jobs and our future. Other unions are doing the same internationally; they are having the same struggle to protect their jobs in Australia and around the world.

We are also involved with the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). They have a cabotage workforce to fight those who are bringing in workers that are exploited to the bone and are being used to lower the standards in the country that they come through. We are not opposed to foreign workers. We are working with the ITF to protect them as the situation they are in is horrendous for them. Last year the ITF recovered over $41 million in stolen wages for seafarers. Even though the workers are paid so little, the employers are still refusing to pay them.

We want to protect the jobs that we have left that provide a living wage for family support. We are doing everything we can so that young people have the same ability that I had to support my family.

Economic Integration Within Fortress North America

Challenges of a New Nation-Building Project

Recent export data record the extent to which Canada and Mexico are integrated with U.S. imperialism within Fortress North America under the control of the dominant oligopolies. According to data released by TD Securities and Bloomberg, Mexican exports to the U.S. are equal in value to 27 per cent of Mexico's total value of production calculated as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Canada's value of exports to the U.S. as a percentage of GDP is not much less, at 22 per cent.

Exports to the U.S. as a percentage of total exports are 81 per cent for Mexico and 77 per cent for Canada.

Total exports as a percentage of the country's GDP equal 33 per cent for Mexico and 26 per cent for Canada.
No other country in the survey has anything close to Mexico and Canada's percentage of exports to the U.S. compared with total exports or GDP.

Ireland exports to the U.S. a value of production equivalent to 11 per cent of its GDP. All other countries in the survey are in single digits with China and UK at 4 per cent each and Japan at 3 per cent.

The per cent of exports to the U.S. compared with total exports is 24 per cent in Ireland far less than Canada's 77 per cent and Mexico's 81 per cent. The next closest is Japan at 20 per cent and then China at 18 per cent.

The data in the survey point to integration of the three countries in Fortress North America with an economy dominated by the oligarchs of U.S. imperialism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exports to U.S. (% of total)</th>
<th>Exports (% of GDP)</th>
<th>Exports to U.S. (% of GDP)</th>
<th>Total Impact Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TD Securities, Bloomberg. Note: Ordered by Total Impact Score, a sum of the previous three columns. The Globe and Mail article in which the survey appears does not specify any dates.

The Globe and Mail article states, "According to the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) group, [a U.S. border tax on imports] would be a logistical nightmare because manufacturing parts are difficult to track and finished products contain varying amounts of Canadian content.

"For example, car parts move across the Canada-U.S. border multiple times before a vehicle is ready to be sold to a customer. 'How would they tax a vehicle?' said Mathew Wilson, senior vice-president of the CME, which represents 90,000 manufacturers across Canada. 'The majority of cars going into the U.S. have more U.S. content than Canadian content.'

"According to Mr. Wilson, there isn't a system in place to trace products to their country of origin. The 1965 Auto Pact between the United States and Canada, as well as the North American free-trade agreement [NAFTA], allow most manufacturing parts to move freely between countries without being taxed. 'Would you tax the full value, or do you only tax the amount that came from Canada?' Mr. Wilson said. 'How do you even figure out the amount that came from Canada? There is no regulation or law that asks for how much comes from Canada. All you have to track is how much comes from the NAFTA partners.'"[1]

Mr. Wilson describes a situation where the oligopolies control the integrated economy within Fortress
North America and move manufactured value around according to the interests of their private empires. The knowledge of those movements is secret. The industrial empires declare that their right to secrecy stems from the constitutional rights of property, established with the overthrow of medieval autocracy.

The implication of the CME that state governments and their agencies do not know what is going on in the main sectors of the economy and that tracking of imports and exports of manufactured parts is "a logistical nightmare" is misleading at best. The oligopolies of industrial mass production want their operations to remain a mystery of state, as that contributes to their control over the working people and society, and assists them in their competition with rivals.

The movement of value within empires could easily be made known to the people. The leading executives and technocrats of the industrial empires know the exact location of every nut and bolt and where and when they are needed "just in time" for workers to engage in further production or sell the social product. The movement of value within Fortress North America as exports and imports is to enrich the oligopolies and consolidate the private power of empires and social wealth, and make Fortress North America a bastion and powerful military force to conquer the world and impose the hegemony of U.S. imperialism over all rivals, nations and peoples.

The control of the industrial empires that stretch their tentacles across all sectors exists within a Canadian economy where exports account for 26 per cent of the total produced value, and 77 per cent of those exports flow to the United States. Fortress North America represents and defends the interests of the oligopolies and empire-builders within the continent and globally against the interests of working peoples everywhere and all those striving for independent nation-building, peace and freedom from domination and repression.

When the North American auto monopolies fell into chaos and crisis in 2008, Fortress North America furnished state funds to bail them out. State money was given and regulations enacted to secure the control of the oligarchs and deprive the working class of the opportunity to develop a new direction for the economy that favours the people, promotes cooperation not brutal and destructive competition amongst its constituent parts, eliminates recurring crises and opens a path forward to the emancipation of the working class.

The current reality is one of private empires and rule of the most powerful oligarchs within Fortress North America. The working people have no control over the basic economy and those affairs that affect their lives. The working people depend on the basic economy for their well-being and security yet they have no say or control over it. The oligarchs direct the affairs of the dominant monopolies and the state. Governments represent the most powerful oligarchs, do their bidding and put the collective police powers, military and other resources of Fortress North America behind their private interests in contradiction with the working people, the interrelated needs of the socialized economy of industrial mass production and nation-building.

**Historic Mission to Build the New**

Property right was established in law and constitutions to protect the rights of merchants, manufacturers and others seeking freedom from the tyranny of the medieval aristocracy. "L'état, c'est moi" -- The state is me, attributed to King Louis XIV of France (1638-1715). Those holding productive property within the developing new economy of mass production were in competition with medieval petty production and autocracy. The owners of the new productive forces of mass production wanted freedom for their private property and legal protection to prosper, expand and challenge petty production in all sectors. To succeed, they needed peasants and guild workers to be released from feudal bondage and rules, so they could be exploited freely as wage slaves.

Today in the 21st century, the private property engaged in production of goods and services has long
been freed from feudal state restriction. The private property of old has assumed new forms and content within colossal global empires and powerful states dwarfing anything Louis XIV could have imagined. "L'État, c'est l'empire des oligarques." The state is the empire of the oligarchs that crushes not only the working people but also all property both private and public that stands in the way of their empire-building.

The right of owners of property to develop the forces of production from petty to a mass form utilizing science without feudal restrictions, and to free the masses to become wage slaves was the necessary historic motion of the initial period in the development of the productive forces from petty to industrial mass production. For the new direction of the economy of mass production to assume its predominate place in society and supplant petty production and feudal restrictions, the form of the state and relations of production had to be radically transformed. This transformation occurred more or less explosively throughout Europe and spread throughout the world creating its greatest product, the international working class or proletariat.

The new productive forces of mass production and right of private property freed from feudal impediments have become massive and concentrated in oligopolies throughout the entire world. The freedom and right of private property to develop without medieval restrictions has turned into the freedom and right of oligarchs and empires to deprive the working people of their freedom and right to develop and establish socialized relations of production in conformity with the modern socialized forces of industrial mass production and to establish a state form that serves and develops the new content.

The working class with its modern outlook to uphold the rights of all and to guarantee the people's well-being and security and the general interests of society using the immense social product of the modern socialized forces of industrial mass production, is the engine of the historic motion of the present period. The working class with its modern outlook imbued with the human factor/social consciousness and the genius of being at the centre of production of all value will develop a modern state form consistent with the necessity for new relations of production.

The working class of Mexico, Canada and the United States can and must accomplish its great mission to build the new within a nation-building project that vests sovereignty in the people, upholds the rights of all, and establishes independence and the control of the working class over the basic economy of industrial mass production, social programs and public services.

To accomplish its historic mission, the working class must develop and extend to all people its modern outlook and build its own institutions and independent political headquarters capable of challenging and depriving the ruling oligarchs of their power of empire and imperialist Fortress North America.

Note

Annual Weapons Fair Held in Ottawa

Militant Picket Opposes Militarization and War

Canadians from all walks of life held a militant picket on the morning of May 31 against the annual CANSEC weapons fair sponsored by the Trudeau war government and the biggest U.S. arms monopolies. Warmongering Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan, who was scheduled to speak at a breakfast event shortly after 7:00 am was delayed in entering, along with representatives of General Dynamics, the producer of light armoured vehicles sold to Saudi Arabia, Raytheon, the world's largest guided missile producer and many other arms monopolies. Protestors denounced Canada's participation in escalating war preparations and the use of the CANSEC event to pay the rich weapons monopolies and secure arms for war criminals such as the U.S., Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and others.

The private event featured thousands of participants from more than 60 countries, including more than 4,000 from the Canadian government and Department of National Defence. The annual event is organized by the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI) and the main sponsors this year were the Canadian Commercial Corporation, a Crown corporation that arranges weapons deals between companies with facilities in Canada and foreign governments, and Lockheed Martin, the largest U.S. military contractor. Speaking on the stepped up war preparations and what this means for weapons producers, President of CADSI Christyn Cianfarani told media, "Defence spending in general is on an upswing. That is drawing companies."

Keynote speaker Minister of Defence Harjit Sajjan praised the role of the armed forces, saying they "fight terrorism, protect civilians, contend with natural disasters and work to secure a more peaceful world." Not a word was spoken to recognize the horrors that have come with imperialist war and aggressive military deployment in the past century or that deploying the armed forces whatever the pretext is a grave matter. Instead he emphasized that militaries "need to be flexible, agile and quick to respond in this global security environment."

Sajjan focused on addressing the so-called "capability gaps" facing the Canadian Armed Forces. He
said that these gaps or "underinvestment" concern fighter jets, "surface combatants" and other examples. The elephant in the room with regards to Sajjan's complaints about capability gaps is capability for what? In the context of U.S. demands for NATO members to dramatically increase military spending and purchasing of heavy weapons, as well as threats against sovereign countries in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, the Trudeau government is concerned with Canada's capability to participate in further U.S. wars of aggression.

In that regard, Sajjan announced that Canada's "new defence policy," to be unveiled on June 7, will increase military spending and provide "predictable, consistent funding." Speaking about the role of private arms manufacturers, including in the creation of the new defence policy, Sajjan stated, "We need to work together, as a nation, if we are to address the threats we face." He further harped on the role of defence contractors in driving "innovation" that will "revolutionize military tactics" and that the Canadian Armed Forces will now "collaborate with [private interests] to the fullest extent possible" to "give businesses the experience and exposure they can use to pursue opportunities in global markets." Sajjan concluded that Canada's new defence policy will "further clarify our expectations, formalize our acquisition intentions, and better meet your needs as we meet ours."

Other presenters included Chief of Defence Staff Jonathan Vance; Acting Vice-Chief of Defence Staff Alain Parent; Steven MacKinnon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement; and retired U.S. General Keith Alexander, CEO and President of "IronNet Cybersecurity" and former commander of U.S. Cyber Command.
Venezuela Fights Back Against Foreign Attempts at Regime Change

Venezuelans Prepare to Elect National Constituent Assembly

"[President] Maduro, convoked us and here I am -- the National Constituent Assembly is the road to peace!"

In the context of increased U.S.-led regime change efforts and foreign-inspired violence inside the country, Venezuela's government is taking steps to sort out problems on a peaceful basis and open a path for the Bolivarian Revolution to renew itself.

Note

Venezuelans will elect a Constituent Assembly in July with the aim of "transforming the state, creating a new legal framework and writing a new constitution" that will allow the people to better defend Venezuela's independence, sovereignty and well-being and exercise control over their economy and society.

Workers, women, youth, Indigenous peoples, small farmers and fishers, community organizations and others have taken the convening of the Constituent Assembly as an opportunity to discuss how to solve the problems Venezuela is facing and empower themselves, while U.S.-backed opposition forces have boycotted and continue to carry out violent attacks.

On May 23, the Director of Venezuela's National Electoral Council (CNE), Tibisay Lucena, held a press conference to announce that the National Constituent Assembly will be composed of 364 territorial and 181 sectoral members for a total of 545 elected members.[1]

![Meeting of rural women in Zulia state for Constituent Assembly](Y. Machado)

All of Venezuela's eligible voters can elect representatives to the Constituent Assembly through a direct, universal and secret vote. The process will culminate in the new constitution drafted by the Constituent Assembly being put to a national referendum. The referendum will be followed by elections at all levels, with regional elections in December, and Presidential elections in 2018 as mandated by Venezuela's constitution.

The 181 sectoral representatives will be: Indigenous people (8), students (24), peasants and fishers (8), entrepreneurs (5), people with disabilities (5), pensioners (28), communes and community councils (24), and workers (79).

The workers sectoral category will be broken down into sub-sections which include oil, mining, basic industries, business, education, health, sport, transport, construction, culture, intellectuals, the press, science, technology and public administration. One national delegate is to be elected for every 83,000 registered voters for each sectoral constituency, with the exception of the commune and communal council delegates who will be chosen via "communal leadership in their own states."

Candidates will be nominated by their peers in their corresponding sectors and must also have support from at least three per cent of registered voters in their sector or professional field.

One constituent delegate will be elected in each municipality across the country regardless of population and two constituent delegates will be elected in the capital city of each of Venezuela's 23 states. Seven delegates will be elected in the National Capital District of Caracas.
On May 31, a website was launched for Venezuelans who would like to stand in the Constituent Assembly elections, where they can download the application form and begin collecting signatures of registered voters. Candidates must:

- be Venezuelan by birth, with no other citizenship;
- be over 18 years of age at the date of election;
- have resided for five years in the country;
- be enrolled or registered in the Electoral Registry.

Elected government officials, active army personnel, judges, ministers, and CNE directors, amongst others, are prohibited from standing for election to the Constituent Assembly.

Venezuela's CNE launches its website for all those who wish to stand for the Constituent Assembly election.

The Constituent Assembly is to be convened within 72 hours of the elections taking place to begin its work.

At a rally on May 29 in Caracas, President Nicolás Maduro spoke on the important role of the Constituent Assembly in facilitating the Venezuelan people's rejection of counterrevolutionary violence and foreign-sponsored regime change. With the economic and political crises Venezuela has faced, the refusal of U.S.-backed forces to resolve differences through dialogue and their determination to attack Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution and advances made in the people's well-being, President Maduro declared, "I entrust everything to the people of Venezuela to exercise their will, their total and absolute sovereignty."

Speaking to Venezuelans on his weekly Sunday television program the day before, he said, "Let each one make his or her decision: if he or she wants a vote or wants bullets, if he or she wants a Constituent Assembly or wants terrorist guarimbas [violent street blockades]. Let everyone decide in this country. One or the other: […] Constituent Assembly or violence. Constituent Assembly or guarimba."
Note

1. On May 1, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro Moros issued two presidential decrees convening a National Constituent Assembly and a Presidential Commission to determine its functioning and consult Venezuelans, facilitating their participation. Article 347 of the 1999 constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela states that the "original constituent power rests with the people of Venezuela," and that this power can be exercised by a Constituent Assembly "for the purpose of transforming the State, creating a new juridical order and drawing up a new Constitution."

Venezuela's Constitution not only permits an elected constitutional assembly to be called (on the initiative of the President, other levels of government or by citizens) but prohibits the President from objecting to its results and any state authority from impeding its work (Articles 348 and 349).

The decrees issued by President Maduro called for the Venezuelan people to "decide the future of the country, reaffirming the principles of independence, sovereignty, equality, peace and participatory, multi-ethnic and pluri-cultural democracy." All political sectors have been formally invited to participate and encouraged to use the opportunity to resolve their differences democratically and in a peaceful fashion.

For more information, see "National Constituent Assembly Convened to Open Peaceful Path to Progress," *TML Weekly*, May 20, 2017.

---

**U.S.-Backed Counterrevolutionary Forces Reject Elections and Call for Violence**

Hours after Venezuela's National Electoral Council (CNE) announced the framework for Constituent Assembly elections, Julio Borges, President of the National Assembly dismissed the CNE announcement as a "trick." Borges, who is part of the U.S.-backed "Democratic Unity Roundtable"
(MUD) coalition that controls the National Assembly, announced that the MUD will boycott the National Constituent Assembly elections and instead begin a "new phase of struggle." Borges stated that the Constituent Assembly elections are a distraction from the efforts to overthrow Venezuela's elected President Nicolás Maduro. Opposition leaders gave the same response to the announcement of the December 10 date for gubernatorial elections and in regards to the 2018 Presidential election.

Venezuela's capital Caracas and other cities have faced daily violence from counterrevolutionary elements since April 4, the day after the Organization of American States adopted a motion to discredit Venezuela and falsely declare a breakdown in the constitutional order. Sixty-eight Venezuelans have been killed in circumstances alleged to be related to the protests -- 10 are alleged to be the result of police violence; 15 from the targeting of government supporters by counterrevolutionaries; five deaths indirectly caused by protests, 29 deaths unaccounted for; and nine accidental deaths.[1]

The Venezuelan government has prohibited the use of firearms, including those with rubber bullets, by police assigned to the riots to prevent harm coming to protestors. Venezuelan authorities point to attempts to provoke violence, even the targeted killing of protestors, to create the appearance of state violence and justify foreign intervention on the basis of a breakdown of order.

The counterrevolutionary violence is limited to small groups in small areas, particularly wealthier neighbourhoods where its participants live, but the results have been tragic. In one example captured on video, a young Afro-Venezuelan man, Orlando Jose Figuera, was burned alive by protestors,
allegedly for his support of the Bolivarian Revolution. Another man, Carlos Ramirez was severely burned in a wealthy neighbourhood of Caracas after attackers cried, "This Chavista has to die, he has to die for being Chavista." Besides street blockades known as *guarimbas* that have led to numerous traffic-related deaths, common tactics include attacking public institutions and burning public buses. During the early morning hours of May 22 over 50 buses were torched and totally destroyed in the terminal of the Transbolívar line in Bolivar state.

While the vast majority of Venezuelans oppose the violent actions as well as foreign intervention, representatives of the MUD have met frequently with U.S. and other foreign officials, asking for intervention targeting the Venezuelan government. Following the announcement of Constituent Assembly elections, the MUD called for further violence, announcing it will "stay in the streets until our objectives are achieved."

Another U.S.-backed MUD leader, Freddy Guevara called the regional elections which will be held in December a "trap" and called for more street violence. "Every day in the street is one day less of Nicolás Maduro in power, let us continue to overcome the dictatorship," Guevara said.

**Note**

1. For updates, see "In Detail: The Deaths So Far," *Venezuelanalysis.com, May 8, 2017.*

---

**Imperialist Scheme at Organization of American States Unravels**

On May 31, the U.S., Canada and a few other countries tried but failed to get an interventionist declaration against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela adopted at an Organization of American States (OAS) Foreign Ministers meeting. The Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs as the meeting was called, had been convoked for the sole purpose of discussing the situation in Venezuela as a result of a motion passed at an illegal April 3 meeting of the OAS Permanent Council, held with the connivance of the U.S., Canada, Mexico and certain other member states.[1]

A draft declaration put forward at the May 31 meeting by the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Peru and Panama in the name of "solving the crisis in Venezuela" repeated the spurious accusations and demands of foreign-backed counterrevolutionary forces in the country including, this time, a call for
"No to the dirty role of Canada and the OAS against Venezuela"

"A halt to the convocation of a National Constituent Assembly as presently conceived." All of it represents blatant interference in Venezuela's internal affairs despite the lip service paid to "solidarity and friendship" with the people of Venezuela and it being up to the Venezuelans to find their own solutions to the current situation with facilitation and support from the international community.

Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland bragged during the lead-up to the meeting that Canada would use the occasion to "call for action" on Venezuela and used her Twitter account to invite people to listen to a live audio stream of her speech. She also played up the fact that she and OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro had arranged to conspire before the ministerial meeting at a private meeting of their own. Almagro has been leading the charge against the government of Nicolás Maduro at the OAS and wherever he can get an audience. He has been widely criticized for his personal crusade against Venezuela through the OAS, despite the fact that he is a functionary of the organization who is supposed to answer to OAS member states.

At a news conference held the same day the OAS meeting was taking place, Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Keith Rowley called for Almagro to be removed from his position, citing the "very derogatory way" in which he has been dealing with the government of Venezuela and its president. He said the role being played by the OAS leadership had led the situation to deteriorate into partisan attacks and was threatening to have the same effect on the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), giving the example of some member states, but not others, being called to meetings in Washington to discuss what to do about Venezuela.

The interventionist efforts of Canada and the minority group it is part of at the OAS were blocked by the 15 states of CARICOM who closed ranks and gave unanimous support to a draft declaration of their own that began by reiterating a commitment to the principles of non-interference and non-intervention.[2] While expressing "deep concern regarding the political, economic, and social situation in Venezuela, in particular the increase in violence and polarization between the government and the opposition," CARICOM's draft declaration differed starkly from the one put forward by Canada and the others in that it did not take up the cause of anti-democratic opposition forces pushing for regime change or attempt to impose their demands on Venezuela.[3]

During the meeting which was attended by all 34 OAS member states, representatives of different countries rose to speak in support of one declaration or the other.

It soon became clear that the interventionist group led by the U.S., Canada and Mexico would not be able to garner the two-thirds majority vote required to get their declaration passed, or even a simple majority for that matter, much less have it adopted by consensus. When it came time for Canada to speak, Freeland was reduced to proposing to the Chair that the session not be adjourned, but remain open so that work to find a "solution" for Venezuela could continue over the coming weeks until the OAS General Assembly meets in Mexico on June 19-21.

This, in fact, is what the Chair did. After all those requesting to speak had done so, Guatemala, as Chair, called a 30-minute break and asked members to use the time to try and reach a consensus based on points they had in common as reflected in the two draft declarations, saying he didn't want a vote,
that it "made no sense." Bolivia said there were two very different paths for members to take and asked for a vote to be held. In the end, a motion by CARICOM calling for the meeting to be suspended and for work to continue towards reaching a consensus at the General Assembly prevailed and the meeting was suspended by the Chair with no further action taken.

**Who Said What**

The representative of Nicaragua, the first person to speak, said Nicaragua wanted its firm rejection and condemnation of the meeting having been convoked to intervene in Venezuela's affairs on the record, calling the holding of it an illicit and unfriendly act. He also said the double standards in how countries were treated at the OAS was unacceptable, and that anyone genuinely interested in helping should begin by respecting Venezuela's sovereignty.

The Foreign Minister of Bolivia denounced the aggressive, interventionist actions of OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro which he said had given rise to an atmosphere of conflict in Venezuela, generating violence and even causing deaths. If there is a real interest to contribute, let’s open spaces for dialogue among equals, without imposition, he said. He reminded all those present that every state has the right to choose its own form of government and that free peoples don't need protectors or the tutelage of others.

The representative of Ecuador pointed out that if there is going to be talk of such things as democracy, the right to health, levels of violence and the protection of human rights and the separation of powers, they would have to look at other countries in the hemisphere, which she said include some of the most violent, unequal countries in the world.

Trinidad and Tobago’s representative said his country’s foreign policy was based on respect for sovereignty, and non-interference and adherence to international law and the principles of the United Nations, including the right to self-determination. CARICOM's declaration was consistent with the foreign policy of Trinidad and Tobago, he said, and on that basis he said he supported it fully, adding that Trinidad and Tobago would not seek to determine for any other sovereign state what constitutes interference in its internal affairs.

The representative of St. Kitts and Nevis spoke out against calls for punitive measures against Venezuela and other unauthorized statements made in the name of the OAS -- understood to be directed at the Secretary General -- that he said were in direct violation of the OAS Charter. This stand was reflected in remarks made by some other countries' representatives as well.

The representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines emphasized her country’s "unstinting respect for the principles of sovereignty and non-interference."

**Notes**

1. For more information, see "Oppose Canada's Nefarious Role! Hands Off Venezuela!" *TML Weekly*, April 22, 2017.
2. CARICOM members include Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

3. The Consensus Document of CARICOM stated:

   Reiterating its commitment to the principles of non-interference and of non-intervention as set forth in the Charter of the OAS, as well as to representative democracy which is essential to the stability, peace, and development of the Region.

   Reaffirming that the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a basic condition for the existence of a democratic society.

   Recognizing that the OAS is an organization of nations that share principles and values constructed collectively to which Venezuela has contributed since the Organization's inception, including the principles of state sovereignty and independence, as enshrined in Article 3 of the Charter of the OAS

   Expressing:

   Its friendship and solidarity with the Venezuelan people and its conviction that it is up to the Venezuelans to find their own solutions to the current situation with facilitation and support from the international community.

   Its deep concern regarding the political, economic, and social situation in Venezuela, in particular the increase in violence and polarization between the government and the opposition.

   The urgent need to put in place a renewed process of dialogue and negotiation, with the full participation of all political actors, based on the principle of good faith.

   Calls For:

   1. The immediate cessation of violence and hostilities committed by any of the parties, especially those that could cause injury or loss of life.

   2. The establishment of concrete plans for the restoration of peace and stability as soon as possible.

   3. Absolute respect for human rights, the rule of law and the constitutional processes of Venezuela.

   4. All parties to commit to engage in a renewed dialogue and negotiation leading to a comprehensive, political agreement with established timetables, concrete actions and guarantees to ensure its implementation for the wellbeing of the nation.

   5. The Government of Venezuela to reconsider its decision to withdraw from the OAS.

   Declares:

   The willingness of member states to offer their help in meeting the serious challenges facing Venezuela, as may be requested by the Government of Venezuela.

   Its willingness to establish a group or other mechanism of facilitation to support a renewed dialogue and negotiation between the government and opposition in Venezuela, and to accompany and promote the timely implementation of the parties' commitments.
Its willingness to remain seized of the situation with due regard to the principles earlier enunciated.

(With files from OAS.org, Jamaica Observer)

---

Who Is Behind U.S. State Department's Coup Plot in Venezuela?
- Misión Verdad -

Creating a distorted image of the humanitarian crisis is the starting point.
Painting a picture of a country on the verge of collapse is the alibi.

The coup plot against Venezuela has already been written and presented. On March 2, 2017, during the first round of OAS talks, Shannon K. O'Neil (Latin American director of the Council on Foreign Relations, (CFR)) presented the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee with a portfolio of actions and measures to be taken by the United States if it wants to remove Chavismo from political power in Venezuela.

**Key Players on the CFR and Their Origin**

The Council on Foreign Relations, or CFR, is a think-tank founded in 1921 with money from the Rockefeller Foundation. It is aimed at creating a group of experts to shape U.S. foreign policy and its leadership positions, including those of the president and the State Department, which does not act for its own reasons but rather according to the interests of these lobbyists.

Since it was created, the council, which is made up of 4,500 members, has placed a number of senior officials in positions to implement CFR strategy. These include Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell, responsible for the wars in Vietnam, Yugoslavia and Iraq respectively, and in the case of Powell, a major player in the April 2002 Venezuela coup.

Moreover, an honorary member and ex-vice president of the think-tank was David Rockefeller, the former owner of the Standard Oil Company who has great interests and influence in Venezuela. His penetration in the country's national political life reached such a point that he was one of the sponsors of the Punto Fijo pact that gave rise to the Fourth Republic.

**Corporations that Finance the CFR and Use It as a Political Platform**

Corporations born from the dissolution of Standard Oil also finance the CFR, namely Chevron and Exxon Mobil. The former was involved in financing the sanctions against Venezuela and the latter wants to create conflict between Guyana and Venezuela in order to take advantage of the large oil reserves in Essequibo.

Among CFR's financiers is Citibank, which last year blocked the accounts of the Central Bank of
Venezuela and the Bank of Venezuela, affecting the country's ability to import essential goods. The financial corporation JP Morgan is responsible for using financial aggression as an excuse to declare Venezuela in default of payments in November 2016, along with manipulative maneuvers to affect Venezuela's financial credibility.

Both banks aimed to hurt Venezuela's ability to attract investment and loans that would stabilize its economy. The most aggressive players of the financial and economic coup against Venezuela are part of the CFR. These same players are now responsible for designing the agenda of the political coup -- in the same way that Colin Powell, a CFR member, devised and armed the 2002 coup against Chávez when he was George W. Bush's secretary of state. Now, just like then, the MUD (today called the Democratic Unity Coalition) only responds to a political line designed by these forces of the establishment -- the real power that governs the United States.

**Presentation to the United States Senate**

O'Neil is no more than a delegate of the royal leaders of this private organization. He is in charge of presenting to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate the actions that must be taken to change the political course of Venezuela, using unconventional war tactics, as outlined by the interests of the great economic powers represented by the CFR.

The audience begins by [him] reporting, without solid and reliable figures, that the Venezuelan population currently lives on par or in worse conditions than the citizens of Bangladesh, Republic of Congo and Mozambique, countries brought to extreme misery by private and irregular wars which sought to plunder their natural resources.

Creating a (media-distorted) image of the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela is the starting point for the rest of the plan. Painting a picture of a country on the verge of collapse is the alibi.

During the presentation, O'Neil said that the PDVSA is on the brink of default, omitting mention that Venezuela's state oil and natural gas company has continued to make its external debt payments honouring its international commitments. In the leadup to revealing its proposals to the U.S. government, the CFR delegate said that Venezuela is strategic for U.S. interests in the hemisphere, and that a hypothetical collapse in oil production would hurt the U.S. (because it would increase prices), while also affirming -- without any proof -- that the incursions of the Zetas and Sinaloa drug cartels in Venezuela poses a threat to the region.

**The Coup Plot**

The CFR proposes three major political actions for the U.S. to execute a coup in Venezuela in the immediate future, options that, because of the political and financial weight embodied in the CFR, are already in full operation (and have been running for months). Indeed the CFR has directed the anti-Chavista leadership to strictly follow this coup manual.

1. The CFR proposes to continue sanctions on "human rights violators, narco-traffickers and corrupt officials" to increase pressure on the Venezuelan government. Anti-Chávez leaders, following that script, have backed these actions and the false positive in question, since there is no evidence linking Venezuelan Vice President Tareck El Aissami to international drug trafficking. Even leaders like Freddy Guevara have gone to Washington directly to "demand" that the sanctions be extended, with the support of the anti-Venezuelan lobby led by [Senator] Marco Rubio.

2. The United States must take a tougher stance within the OAS to implement the Democratic Charter against Venezuela, co-opting countries in the Caribbean and Central America to support this initiative, which in recent OAS (illegal) sessions they have resisted supporting. Marco Rubio's threat against Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador is not an isolated action, but a coordinated maneuver.
led by the State Department to increase pressure against Venezuela's international alliances.

The CFR also proposes that the Treasury Department convince China to withdraw its support for Venezuela to increase political and economic pressure on the country and the government. The MUD has been a stellar actor in this part of the script, using [Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS)] Luis Almagro to demand the Democratic Charter be applied against Venezuela. The latest statement from the U.S. State Department on the march convened by the MUD on April 19, aims not only to harden its stance toward Venezuela to increase pressure from the OAS (trying to bring together the largest number of allies with this critique), but legitimizes, with premeditation, violent and lamentable acts that could occur in the march. Clinging to false narratives such as the use of "collectives" to suppress demonstrations and "tortures" carried out by Venezuelan state security forces, the State Department proposes calling April 19 a turning point to escalate the siege against Venezuela and expand sanctions against the country, making them more aggressive and direct.

3. The CFR states that the United States should work together with Colombia, Brazil, Guyana and Caribbean countries to prepare for a possible "refugee increase," channeling resources to various NGOs and UN organizations from USAID, an agency of the State Department. But beyond this warning of an intervention in Venezuela, there is a real political operation in place: the NGO funded by the same Department of State, Human Rights Watch (HRW), published today, April 18, 2017, a report on how the "humanitarian crisis" has spread to Brazil. Based on specific testimonies and by magnifying immigration data, HRW took the opportunity to call on the governments of the region (with special emphasis on Brazil) to put pressure on the Venezuelan government, as required by the strategy proposed by the CFR. Luis Florido, leader of Voluntad Popular, is currently touring Brazil and Colombia to try to reactivate the diplomatic siege against Venezuela from border countries.

The U.S. think-tank also requires that these countries under the leadership of the United States and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) organize a financial guardianship plan for Venezuela, that hides Russian and Chinese investments in strategic areas of the country. In recent days, [President of Venezuela's National Assembly] Julio Borges has used his role in parliament and as a political spokesperson to continue the message that propagates the false narrative of the "humanitarian crisis" in Venezuela. It is the same strategy outlined by the CFR, arguing that the United States should increase its level of involvement in the internal affairs of Venezuela from the State Department, now headed by Rex Tillerson, linked to oil company Exxon Mobil (he was its CEO from 2007 until he took over this public position), a CFR financier.

**Where the Opposition Leaders Come Into Play**

These ongoing actions, while unveiling the geopolitical urgency in the coup strategy against Venezuela (affiliated with the latest statements by U.S. Southern Command Chief Admiral Kurt Tidd on the need to displace China and Russia as allies of Latin America), also reflect how they have delegated the generation of violence, programmed chaos and diplomatic procedures (in the best of cases and exclusive use of Luis Florido) to their intermediaries in Venezuela, specifically, the leaders
of the radical parties of anti-Chavism. These actions led by the United States (and corporations that manage its foreign policy) lead toward one final aim: intervention by financial and preventive military means.

**How to Justify Intervention**

The evidence presented by President Nicolás Maduro links leaders of Primero Justicia with financing vandalism against public institutions (the case of the TSJ in Chacao). This is what, beyond this specific case, reveals the very probable promotion of para-criminal, irregular and mercenary (allied and politically directed) factors to escalate and encourage violence in order to legitimize the position of the State Department.

The badly-named MUD is a private embassy that works on the basis of the great economic interests of these powers that be, which are vital for its strategy to advance. Whether these strategies can keep pace with this global moment will depend on what their supporters can do on the ground....

Despite the tactics of the financial and political war (financial blockade, international diplomatic siege, programmed attack on PDVSA payments, etc.) and the maneuvers of the State Department, made on its behalf, to generate all the conditions of pressure, siege and investment needed by their Venezuelan operatives, the highly-anticipated breaking point in Venezuela has still not arrived.

But for those who financed and designed the agenda against Venezuela, it is important this point come as soon as possible.

*(April 27, 2017. Edited slightly for grammar by TML.)*

---

**Script for Plans to Destroy Bolivarian Revolution Was Written in Washington**

- *Sergio Alejandro Gómez*

Breaking the law, creating a parallel government, organizing alternative economic institutions, harassing public officials, destroying property, hoarding goods, marching, obstructing social events, boycotting elections, disrupting schools, using false identities, seeking arrests, launching hunger strikes, and overwhelming the state administrative systems -- are only a few of the 198 methods to overthrow governments proposed by CIA coup expert Gene Sharp, more than 40 years ago.

Finding just one of these techniques that has not been used against Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution is difficult.

These last several years, President Nicolás Maduro's administration has faced particularly intense attacks and the implementation of so-called Non- Conventional Warfare, based on psychological manipulation, social protest, coups, and irregular armed struggle.

Unlike traditional conflicts, non-conventional wars are based on promoting confrontations between authorities and the population, to undermine the government's ability to function, leading to its demise without the use of a foreign military intervention.

Perhaps the clearest example of this kind of warfare is the operation carried out by U.S. and Western powers against the government of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya. Bands of opponents, armed and advised from abroad, carried out the dirty work on the ground, while NATO provided air support, and
the transnational corporate media manipulated the facts presented to the public.

Protests in Venezuela have become more violent and better organized as projected in non-conventional warfare strategy.

**Venezuela, a Case Study**

As soon as the possibility of an independent leader like Hugo Chávez winning the Presidency came onto the horizon -- in the country with the world's greatest proven oil reserves -- a strategy to overthrow him was activated.

Given the fact that the corrupt 4th Republic was entirely discredited, the first steps were taken to organize a new opposition and recruit younger leaders. It was the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) that channeled funds to create political parties and train many of the leaders of the current Democratic Unity Coalition (MUD).

U.S. Special Forces manuals, like Training Circular 18-01, define seven different stages of non-conventional war. The first few are devoted to "psychological preparation," to unify the population in opposition to the government, and "initial contact" by special services agents on the ground. Subsequent stages include the extension of anti-government actions, moving toward a "transition," during which the national government's control of the country is challenged.

Despite the defeat of the 2002 coup attempt -- by a massive mobilization of the Venezuelan people -- the idea of taking the streets was never abandoned. Chávez was confronted by protests and sabotage, of different proportions, until his very last days.

When the Bolivarian leader died in March of 2013, and his successor Nicolás Maduro took the reins, the right wing and their foreign advisers activated the most aggressive tactics of their non-conventional war strategy, in hopes of dealing the revolution a final blow.
More Than Street Barricades

The mounting violence of protests taking place recently in Venezuela is reminiscent of the street barricades and fighting (guarimbas) which occurred in February of 2014, leaving 43 dead and more than 800 injured.

At that time, extremists, who emerged in protests allegedly composed of students, went so far as to string cables across streets to decapitate motorcycle riders, and caused millions of dollars in damage to public property, with the objective of sowing panic and paralyzing the country.

But this last wave of violence appears to be better organized and more extensive. Some of the scenes reported are totally senseless, defying all logic.

The attack by armed opposition gangs on the Hugo Rafael Chávez Frias Maternal-Infant Hospital, with 54 children inside, would qualify as a war crime before any international court.

It is not difficult to identify the organized groups in marches -- holding shields, wearing gas masks, and waving blunt objects. If the protests are supposed to be peaceful, why do these youth come prepared for a fight?

A video recently released by Venezuelan authorities shows a dozen youth wearing hoods and making Molotov cocktails, during a march in the comfortable East Caracas neighborhood of Altamira.

After the arrest of Nixon Leal, a violent subject linked to several MUD leaders, Vice President Tareck El Aissami presented evidence about how the armed bands are organized to carry out open confrontations with the government in Caracas and other important cities, clearly following the steps outlined in non-conventional war strategy.

Threats to authorities are not only physical, but are also meant to humiliate, as seen in the recent practice of using human excrement to fabricate homemade bombs called "Puputovs."
Symbolic War Fake News

One aspect of non-conventional war, which is key to its success, is the symbolic dimension, especially in the construction of realities via the mass media, even more so in hyper-connected societies where many use social networks to find out what is happening just a few metres away from their own homes.

Sometimes with greater intensity than in the streets, Venezuelan cyberspace functions as a battlefield, in which it is difficult to differentiate accurate information and what authorities have identified as fake news, or "false positives."

Making its way across the planet this month was an image of two Venezuelan youth, naked and tied to a tree in the state of Táchira, showing signs of a physical attack. Several international media, including Latin American ones, reported the act as the responsibility of Chavista "bands." It was in fact linked to common criminal activity and residents of the area had decided to serve justice themselves.

The selectivity of the international corporate press, in terms of choosing what to report, is also used as a weapon. The same day that three million people marched in Caracas to show support for Nicolás Maduro, what dominated headlines on mainstream websites and newspapers were the much less attended opposition protests.

Also among non-conventional war tactics, is the creation of symbols with which any group could identify. The image of a woman dressed in a Venezuelan flag, standing in front of a Bolivarian National Guard armored vehicle, was publicized relentlessly, and went on to become the demonstrators' icon.

Likewise, the number of photographers surrounding a young violin player during an opposition protest makes it hard to believe that this was a spontaneous act, and not a carefully staged one.

The Solution

The Venezuelan right, traditionally divided given its personal rifts, with various individuals competing for power, is, on the contrary, united in following the non-conventional script written in Washington. Violence is the only common ground.

Repeated calls for street demonstrations, despite the fact that more than 40 lives have already been lost in this round of guarimbas, along with the opposition's refusal to participate in the Constituent Assembly, make clear, once again, that the only solution the opposition offers is an end to the revolution, by any means and regardless of consequences.

The continuity of the social project begun by Hugo Chávez -- which has forever changed the reality of this country to benefit the poor -- is not all that is at stake.

The success of the opposition strategy would become a nefarious reference point for the use of non-conventional warfare, one that would be added to the list of coups, military interventions, and secret operations which bear the trademark signs of Washington at work in Latin America.