

September 22, 2018 - No. 32

In Memoriam

President Tran Dai Quang of Vietnam



October 12, 1956 - September 21, 2018

It is with great regret that *TML Weekly* informs you that President Tran Dai Quang of Vietnam passed away at 10:05 am on September 21, in Hanoi, at the age of 62, due to serious illness. Despite the enormous efforts made by domestic and foreign doctors and professors, a member of the President's medical committee said he could not be saved. His death is a great loss to the people of Vietnam, whose champion he was.

Anna Di Carlo, National Leader of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), sent a letter of condolence to the Vietnamese people through the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and its General Secretary. In it she expressed the deepest sympathies of all Party members for their great loss.

Tran Dai Quang was born in 1956 in the northern province of Ninh Binh. He began working at the Ministry of Public Security in 1975 where he held many posts. A staunch Party member, he was elected to the Politburo of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 2011 and became Minister of Public Security in August 2011, a post he held until he was elected President of Vietnam on April 2, 2016 at the 11th session of the 13th National Assembly. He was also promoted to a full general in 2012.

President Tran Dai Quang is especially known and admired for his contributions to the development, renovation and opening-up of Vietnam.

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Matters of Concern to the Polity

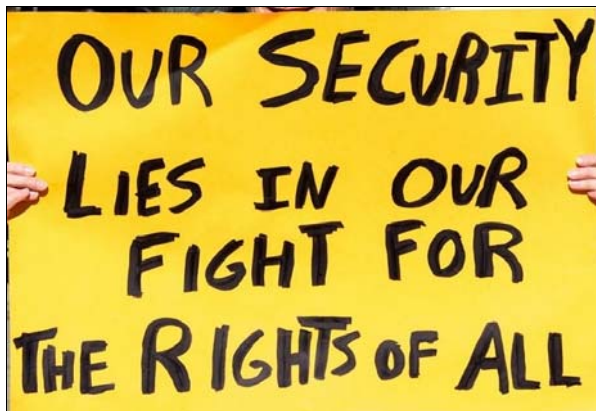
Prosperity and the Concentration of Wealth

- *K.C. Adams* -

Ten years ago, a broad economic crisis gripped the entire world. It began with a financial meltdown in the U.S. when the oligarchs in control of Lehman Brothers could no longer prop up their ponzi-like schemes of phony bonds, mortgages, auto loans and other derivatives, and declared bankruptcy. All the biggest oligopolies recoiled in panic as commerce -- especially borrowing -- froze and sales of big items such as houses and vehicles plummeted with millions of people losing their homes and jobs.

Instead of examining the situation as it presented itself and searching for a new direction, both U.S.

Presidents Bush and Obama gave trillions of dollars to the financial oligarchy to bail them out. Saved from the loss of their privilege, social wealth and power were the very oligarchs and institutions responsible for the crisis. Meanwhile the people were left to suffer, their dreams shattered and rights violated.



In Canada also, the government justified looting of the state treasury using the high ideal that this was to protect the people from the collapse of the banking system, and housing and auto sectors. Of course economic collapse hurts the people but it is not them the government aims to help with its bailouts and other pay-the-rich schemes. Aided greatly by the media and economic pundits, the rich try to hide the fact that the imperialist system of parasitism and decay under the control of the financial oligarchy is designed to rob the people and make them pay for the

inevitable crises that occur. The working people are deprived of their right to solve problems in a manner that favours them and brings into being a new pro-social direction.

The bailouts for the financial oligarchy ten years ago and the continuing pay-the-rich schemes have resulted in an even greater concentration of wealth and power. One U.S. oligarch, Jeff Bezos the CEO of Amazon, has net personal wealth exceeding \$170 billion. According to widely circulated reports, 117 oligopolies with intertwining private ownership of thousands of businesses and debt control more than 40 trillion dollars of social wealth in money, property and productive forces worldwide. Put another way, those few oligarchs in control have the fate of billions of people and the direction of the world in their hands.



The concentration of social wealth in private hands accelerates because the overriding aim is to serve the private interests in control. This means they are driven not to achieve prosperity for all but prosperity for a few at the expense of the many. All this underscores the need for democratic renewal and a modern nation-building project that humanizes the social and natural environment and brings the modern socialized productive forces of industrial mass production and distribution under the

control of the working people.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the bourgeoisie from the centres of mass production, trade and money-lending, organized themselves and their enterprises in opposition to the old feudal rule and economy of petty production. The rising bourgeoisie constituted itself the nation and subordinated all life to the right and rule of private property. That bourgeoisie has become a global financial oligarchy and has brought the world and humanity to the brink of disaster. The working class must now take control of its own destiny and save humanity by constituting itself as the nation, bring the socialized productive forces under the common control of the actual producers, and remake all arrangements in a manner that vests decision-making power in the people, not a propertied ruling class and its retinues.

What Should Be Our Point of Reference in BC Referendum?

- Peter Ewart -

In analyzing phenomena, human beings necessarily proceed from a point of reference and outlook. The current discussion in British Columbia on the upcoming referendum on Proportional Representation (PR) is no different.

For example, the No side is proceeding from a point of reference based on fearmongering and disinformation, including ludicrous claims that, as a result of switching to PR, voters will have no local representation, that neo-Nazis and racists will be emboldened and even come to power, and that the economy will collapse.

For their part, the political parties in the Legislature are proceeding from a reference point based on the narrow view as to whether PR will either hinder or benefit their election possibilities.

But what should be the reference point for voters in the upcoming referendum? It cannot be fearmongering or cartel party factions. It must be to proceed from the interests of all British Columbians.

People in British Columbia are fed up with a party-dominated electoral system that disempowers and marginalizes them. They are striving to have more say and more control over the economy, politics and their lives.

It is this striving that motivates the people to vote for PR, just as it was in the 1989 referendum on the right to recall MLAs and launch citizen initiatives (both of which passed by over 80 per cent) or the Single Transferable Vote referendums of 2005 and 2009 which had 57.7 per cent and 39.09 per cent support respectively.

And it is this striving that will empower British Columbians to push for more control over the electoral system and their lives if PR is adopted.



More Bogus Neo-Liberal Accounting in Offing for Ontario's Finances

- Steve Rutchinski -



The Chief Executive Officer of the Business Council of Canada (BCC) John Manley wrote to Ontario Premier-designate Ford on June 12, just five days after the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party was elected to power. Manley, who is a former federal Liberal cabinet minister, congratulated Ford and gave him the BCC's position on how to deal with the Ontario economy to ensure its members' private interests, privilege, power and wealth are preserved and enhanced.

Manley wrote, "As an association of business leaders from every major sector -- fully half of whom represent Ontario-headquartered companies, employing more than a million Canadians -- we share your belief that private initiative and investment, not increased public spending and deficits, are the source of long-term growth and prosperity."

Citing Moody's Investor Service and the Dominion Bond Rating Service's "warnings about the fragile state of the province's creditworthiness," Manley directed the Ford government to deal with "the heavy burden of public debt, which has doubled in the past 10 years and now stands at \$350 billion."

Manley's warning is *déjà vu* all over again and so is his refusal to acknowledge that the oligarchs he represents, who control large swaths of the economy and also own much of the public debt, are largely responsible for the economic crisis of 10 years ago and the political and social problems facing the province. This refusal to accept social responsibility extends to depriving the people from discussing a new direction.



Whenever the servants of the ruling oligarchs want more pay-the-rich schemes, they talk about the need to bring down the deficit and pay down the debt. The result is not any real solutions to economic problems or a new pro-social direction but the status quo of more payments to the rich, public borrowing from private moneylenders and the anti-social offensive.

Pretending to be astute and on top of the issues, Manley repeats what he always says and in doing so gives Ford his marching orders: "First you and your officials must adopt a credible plan to clean up Ontario's fiscal mess, constrain public spending and reduce the province's debt-to-GDP ratio from 37 per cent today to below the pre-recession level of 27 per cent."



It therefore came as no surprise when the Ford government announced on July 17 that it would "restore trust and accountability back to Ontario's public finances by launching an Independent Financial Commission of Inquiry and an external line-by-line audit of government spending."

The three-person Commission appointed by Premier Ford is led by a proven anti-social neo-liberal, former Liberal BC Premier Gordon Campbell. The Ontario government website notes: "As Premier of British Columbia, Campbell

focused on creating jobs and cutting taxes, reducing regulation, increasing competitiveness, and investing in post-secondary education. Campbell was also instrumental in opening Canada's Northern Gateway."

Let's Set the Record Straight

During his decade in office from 2001 to 2011, BC Premier Campbell deregulated forestry and mining, leading to such tragedies as the Mount Polley mine disaster and increased raw log exports. He implemented massive cuts to government services including legal aid, welfare, and services for children and seniors, thereby undermining the living conditions and security of thousands. Campbell orchestrated legislative attacks on workers' rights, wages and working conditions. He introduced the contracting-out to supranational oligopolies of hospital services and government agencies, including child welfare and community home support services, depriving thousands of workers of their union-protected collective agreements that guaranteed a certain standard of living and working conditions. Campbell facilitated the establishment of private medical clinics and closed beds in seniors' residences. His government destroyed important regulations governing the economy, such as the law that logs had to be milled in the region where they were cut. This greatly increased the number of mill closures and the export of raw logs, destroying the livelihoods of thousands of BC workers and those communities dependent on processing timber. As Premier, Campbell privatized two-thirds of BC Hydro and passed legislation requiring BC Hydro to purchase expensive power from private operators, resulting in skyrocketing electricity bills. After he left office in 2011, the Harper Conservative Party in power appointed Campbell as Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, where he remained until 2016.

The two other commissioners of Ontario's Independent Commission of Inquiry are Al Rosen and Michael Horgan. Rosen's company website says: "In addition to having his MBA and PhD, [Rosen] is a Fellow of the Chartered Accountants of Ontario and Alberta (FCA), a Fellow of the Society of Management Accountants (FCMA), a Fellow of the Hong Kong Society of Accountants (FHKSA), a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), a Chartered Insurance Professional (CIP), a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and a specialist, Investigative and Forensic Accounting (CA-IFA)."

Al Rosen is known for already having weighed in on Ontario's finances. The Auditor General of Ontario Bonnie Lysyk challenged the 2017 budget figures regarding the Liberal government's Fair Hydro Plan: "Charging Ontarians less for electricity than it cost to produce meant the province would have to borrow billions of dollars to cover the shortfall. In order for that to not show up on the bottom line, they created creative accounting to take it off the government's statements." *The Globe and Mail* reported that Ms. Lysyk "questioned the common practice of hiring particular consultants

to provide favourable accounting opinions."

Forensic accountant Rosen said at the time, "Generally speaking, it's not difficult to hire consultants to provide favourable accounting opinions in Canada, in part because standards are so elastic. You can go to any of the public accounting firms and get them to render an opinion on whatever you want. The ethics have gone all to hell." Mr. Rosen did not say if his own company's ethics have gone all to hell. It begs the question whether this means today his hiring as a consultant/commissioner is "to provide a favourable accounting opinion" for the new Ontario government so that it can pursue its pay-the-rich schemes and anti-social offensive.

The third commissioner, Michael Horgan, is a former federal Deputy Minister of Finance in the Harper government. Since resigning as Deputy Minister, Horgan has been with the well-known neo-liberal CD Howe Institute. Already as a member of the Ontario Commission, Horgan wrote an August 23 *Globe and Mail* op-ed lauding the decision of the Ford PCs to privatize the sale of marijuana in the province. Horgan wrote, "Ontario Premier Doug Ford should be congratulated for improving Ontario's marijuana market structure last week. He decided to privatize the retailing of marijuana in the province. That decision represents a reversal of the previous government's choice to place retailing in the hands of a high-cost government monopoly."



The ties of the Commission are clearly to the financial establishment and its dominant privileged private interests. The Commissioners have a track record of faithful service to the pursuit of the neo-liberal agenda. Nonetheless, Premier Ford persists in the charade of describing the Commission as "independent." Independent of what, one may ask? Certainly not of the anti-social agenda of the Ontario government although the implication is that the Commission is "arms-length from government" and can be trusted to be objective and therefore presumably defend the public interest. But that is the cry of all charlatans

when they hire consultants to reinforce an already agreed upon agenda.

Regarding the line-by-line audit of the previous government's finances, the PC government announced on August 14 the hiring of the firm Ernst and Young Canada, remarkably and without shame. Ernst and Young was part of a group of global accounting companies that the previous Wynne government consulted and used to win approval for its "creative accounting," which was so dramatically challenged at the time as unethical by the Auditor General of Ontario and the now Commissioner Rosen. Whoever pays the piper calls the tune comes to mind.

Ontario Finance Minister Vic Fedeli announced on August 30 that the Commission has concluded its work and presented its report. "We will take time to review their report to ensure the implications of its recommendations are considered in full, and release the report in its entirety to the public as promised in the coming weeks. We are committed to restoring accountability and trust in Ontario's finances," Fedeli said.

Ernst and Young is to complete its line-by-line audit by September 30.

The unfolding events require vigilance by the workers and people of Ontario and more importantly, working out how to set their own agenda. The pressure is for everyone to react to the agenda being set by the ruling circles, including attempts to sow divisions in the polity based on self-serving formulations of "right-wing" versus "left-wing." Working people must firmly plant their feet in any situation based on their ongoing fight for rights and empowerment. In doing so, they can provide

themselves a perspective from which to analyze what is taking place and work out their own agenda based on the considerations that favour their interests.

(With files from Government of Ontario, Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, C.D. Howe Institute, Business Council of Canada.)

Disinformation About the Economy in the Quebec Election

- *Pauline Easton* -

Disinformation about the economy on the part of the ruling class and their media is commonplace. It is designed to deprive the working people of an outlook to deal with the world as it presents itself so that a way forward that favours the people can be found. The world as it presents itself, and not some concoction and distortion of the rich oligarchs, reveals the necessity for the working people to take charge of the economy. Disinformation on the economy seeks to ensure that the privilege, wealth and power of the ruling oligarchs prevails and a pro-social outlook and new direction for the economy do not come into being.



This has become very evident in the Quebec election campaign. On every important matter of concern to the working people, the parties vying to form the next government, their leaders and the media have overwhelmed the campaign and fill the airwaves with disinformation on the reality confronting Quebec. The way the leaders speak in the contrived "debates" and elsewhere shows that the lives of the people and the problems they face are submerged in the contention of the ruling parties and their leaders' desperation to come to power.

No serious information is provided on the economy except by *Chantier politique*, the online paper of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Quebec (pmlq.qc.ca). The tightly controlled leaders' debates, which exclude all others except four of the 18 parties registered in this election, are filled with venom to stir up personal animosities. Anti-immigrant prejudices are used to hide how internal migration and foreign immigration serve the big companies and the role they play in Quebec's economy and that of Ontario and other regions. The biggest human traffickers are the rich and their supranational oligopolies that scream "labour shortage" if the competition amongst workers is not intense enough to drive down wages or workers are not readily available for the financial oligarchy's big projects and other uses.

The leaders of the rich also confuse immigration and humanitarian responsibility towards refugees. In both cases, as well as when it comes to all working people, they are not treated as human beings with rights to lay claims on society, which a modern society is duty-bound to fulfill. Instead, the people are reduced to categories of deviants of one sort or another to be denigrated and criminalized. This splits the ranks of citizens and residents under both criminal labels, such as terrorists, or high-sounding ones such as identity and values. Meanwhile not a single economic, political, cultural or social problem stemming from how the life of the people and the economy presents itself is addressed.



Regardless of which government this election brings to power, it will administer the Quebec economy, which is the country's second largest regional economy after that of Ontario. In Quebec, as is the case across the country, the ruling class believes that prosperity is achieved by opening the country to the plunder of our resources and work, and that personal, business and state indebtedness at all levels to private moneylenders is necessary to make the rich richer.

The conception that prosperity is achieved through paying the rich is a self-serving false ideological belief. The polity is subjected to mind-numbing repetition of nonsense about how measures to pay the rich will preserve jobs and improve the standard of living of a fictitious

middle class and that somehow people will eventually reap the benefits. The people know this is not true but the repetition of the false ideological belief serves the purpose of portraying all those who fight for the rights of the people as extremists who are ideologically driven and do not have the people's well-being at heart. It serves to tear the social fabric and the peace of mind of working people and their families asunder. The more insecurity the people feel because the economy is directed at paying the rich, the more the people must persist in laying the claims on society which they must. This is what humanizes the natural and social environment and opens the path to society's progress.

For Your Information

The Economy Which is Not Discussed in Quebec Election

The election on October 1 will usher in a new Quebec government. It will administer the second largest sub-country economy in Canada and one of the most important in North America.^[1] The combined Quebec and Ontario Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is larger than all but four U.S. states: California, Texas, New York, and Florida.

The Quebec GDP in market prices for 2016 was \$394.819 billion (in chained 2007 dollars). The Quebec GDP was 19.4 per cent of Canada's total GDP of \$2,035.506 billion.

Goods Production

Goods production in Quebec accounted for \$87.558 billion GDP or 27.5 per cent of Quebec's GDP at basic prices of \$318.87 billion.

Service-Producing Industries

Service-producing industries totalled \$231.072 billion or 72.5 per cent of Quebec's total GDP.

Quebec's Largest Economic Sectors by GDP

Manufacturing = \$44.401 billion

Real estate and rental and leasing = \$37.579 billion

Health care and social assistance = \$25.243 billion

Public administration = \$22.252 billion

Finance and insurance = \$20.138 billion

Construction = \$19.831 billion

Retail trade = \$19.122 billion

Wholesale trade = \$19.029 billion

Educational services = \$18.773 billion

Note that two productive sectors in the regions are well down the list in terms of GDP:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (not including forestry manufacturing)
= \$5.450 billion

- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction = \$4.596 billion

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BY SECTOR (NAICS)

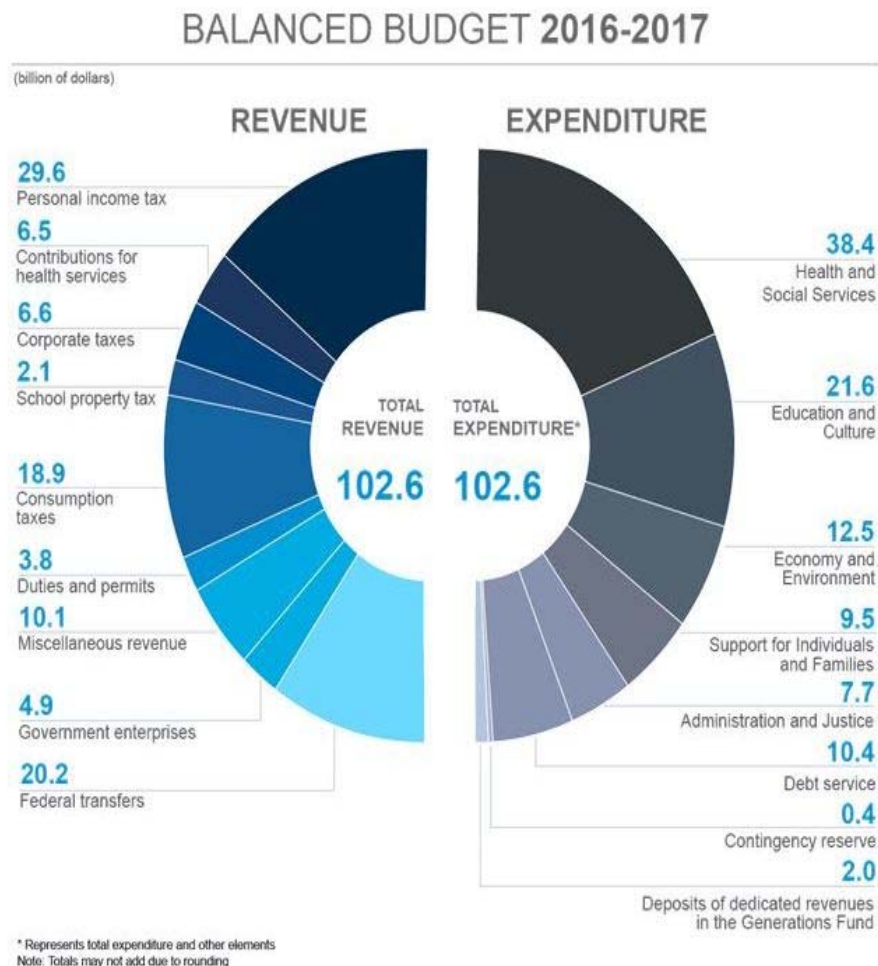
	Unit	2011	2015	2016
■ GDP at basic prices (in chained 2007 dollars) ¹²⁴	\$M	298,465.4	314,060.5	318,867.9
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	\$M	4,782.8	5,219.4	5,450.4
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$M	3,344.9	4,620.8	4,595.7
Utilities	\$M	12,550.5	12,865.1	12,958.1
Construction	\$M	20,374.2	19,398.0	19,830.8
Manufacturing	\$M	43,849.1	44,800.0	44,400.5
Wholesale trade	\$M	17,334.4	19,129.8	19,029.3
Retail trade	\$M	17,136.3	18,396.3	19,121.9
Transportation and warehousing	\$M	12,212.2	13,482.4	13,934.4
Information and cultural industries ^S	\$M	9,950.0	9,880.1	10,064.0
Finance and insurance	\$M	17,869.8	19,604.6	20,138.4
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$M	32,988.3	36,535.5	37,578.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	\$M	16,002.1	17,525.4	17,693.5
Management of companies and enterprises	\$M	2,234.6	2,335.9	2,354.0
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	\$M	7,742.8	8,073.0	8,195.1
Educational services	\$M	17,844.9	18,682.4	18,772.9
Health care and social assistance	\$M	23,524.1	24,900.6	25,243.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation ^S	\$M	2,528.5	2,724.1	2,773.4
Accommodation and food services	\$M	6,606.2	7,129.3	7,422.5
Other services (except public administration)	\$M	6,663.4	6,680.4	6,775.9
Public administration	\$M	22,541.0	21,827.5	22,251.6

(For complete list, see [Institut de la Statistique du Québec: Québec Handy Numbers.](#))

Gross Government Debt

According to the Quebec government's budget:

- Quebec government gross debt to private moneylenders (2016) = \$207.709 billion
- Quebec government gross debt as a percentage of GDP (2016) = 55 per cent
- Interest paid on gross debt to private moneylenders (2016) = \$10.4 billion
- Debt interest paid was the fourth largest gross expenditure in the 2016 budget after;
 - Health and Social Services = \$38.4 billion
 - Education and Culture = \$21.6 billion
 - Economy and Environment = \$12.5 billion



Quebec Workforce

The Quebec population in 2016 was 8,321,888. Also in 2016:

- The active workforce in the socialized economy 15 years of age and older, both employed and unemployed = 4,448,300.

- The participation rate of all people 15 years and older in the workforce, both employed and actively searching for work = 64.9 per cent.
- Employed workers in the workforce, both full and part-time = 4,133,100.
- Unemployed workers in the workforce = 315,200 (7.09 per cent of the total active workforce).
- Number of workers employed in the goods-producing sector = 844,400 (20.43 per cent of the employed workforce). Note that while the goods producing sector GDP was 27.5 per cent of Quebec's GDP, the number of workers was 20.43 per cent of the total employed workforce.
- Number of workers employed in the services-producing sector = 3,288,700 (79.57 per cent of the employed workforce).

Employment in Quebec (15 years and older)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total, all industries	4,060.8	4,059.7	4,097.0	4,133.1	4,223.3
Goods-producing sector	885.6	862.8	837.0	844.4	856.3
Agriculture	54.6	55.8	54.5	56.5	57.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	35.1	32.6	31.3	31.2	36.2
Forestry and logging and support activities for forestry	15.2	12.2	10.1	9.5	12.1
Fishing, hunting and trapping	x	x	x	x	1.9
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	19.0	19.3	20.8	20.9	22.1
Utilities	29.6	29.0	27.9	27.5	25.2
Construction	272.1	255.6	234.7	236.0	245.8
Manufacturing	494.2	489.8	488.6	493.1	492.1
Durables	277.4	280.2	281.8	284.4	277.7
Non-durables	216.8	209.5	206.9	208.7	214.4
Services-producing sector	3,175.2	3,196.9	3,260.0	3,288.7	3,366.9
Wholesale and retail trade	645.2	644.9	662.5	652.4	664.9
Wholesale trade	139.7	134.3	140.5	150.7	159.7
Retail trade	505.6	510.6	521.9	501.8	505.2
Transportation and warehousing	183.0	185.6	196.5	195.6	206.8
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	217.0	218.2	215.1	216.0	233.8
Finance and insurance	162.9	159.4	170.0	157.2	178.3
Real estate and rental and leasing	54.1	58.8	45.1	58.8	55.5
Professional, scientific and technical services	306.8	298.7	315.7	311.9	328.2
Business, building and other support services	153.5	155.1	169.3	182.0	181.8
Educational services	279.9	274.1	278.0	280.2	293.1
Health care and social assistance	553.8	569.2	576.5	581.8	577.7
Information, culture and recreation	180.5	181.9	171.3	179.5	185.3
Accommodation and food services	257.0	269.7	279.4	284.0	272.4
Other services (except public administration)	180.8	180.1	159.5	167.2	175.1
Public administration	217.5	219.5	236.3	238.1	247.8

Manufacturing Sector

The following information is from 2016:

- Manufacturing GDP = \$44.401 billion.
- Share of manufacturing GDP in Quebec's total GDP of \$394.82 billion = 11.25 per cent.
- Share of Quebec manufacturing in Canada according to total revenue^[4] from manufacturing = 23.9 per cent (Ontario's share is 47.9 per cent).
- Total Quebec manufacturing employment = 457,767 workers.
- Actual production workers of the total = 310,826.

- Total salaries (all workers) = \$22.243 billion.

- Average salary (all workers) = \$48,590.

Total Revenue (thousands of dollars)

Ensemble du Québec	158 794 436
311 Fabrication d'aliments	25 788 754
312 Fabrication de boissons et de produits du tabac	4 638 666
313 Usines de textiles	863 962
314 Usines de produits textiles	757 688
315 Fabrication de vêtements	1 411 900
316 Fabrication de produits en cuir et de produits analogues	148 118
321 Fabrication de produits en bois	8 523 724
322 Fabrication du papier	8 753 575
323 Impression et activités connexes de soutien	2 400 111
324 Fabrication de produits du pétrole et du charbon	10 529 937
325 Fabrication de produits chimiques	10 109 782
326 Fabrication de produits en plastique et en caoutchouc	8 023 704
327 Fabrication de produits minéraux non métalliques	3 550 665
331 Première transformation des métaux	19 247 921
332 Fabrication de produits métalliques	9 149 555
333 Fabrication de machines	7 376 111
334 Fabrication de produits informatiques et électroniques	4 108 381
335 Fabrication de matériel, d'appareils et de composants électriques	3 573 956
336 Fabrication de matériel de transport	22 671 896
337 Fabrication de meubles et de produits connexes	3 879 839
339 Activités diverses de fabrication	3 286 191

Figures on Manufacturing Jobs Compared to Total Jobs

	Emploi Total	Emploi en production
Ensemble du Québec	457 767	310 826
311 Fabrication d'aliments	64 466	47 112
312 Fabrication de boissons et de produits du tabac	9 258	4 685
313 Usines de textiles	3 704	2 788
314 Usines de produits textiles	2 854*	1 943*
315 Fabrication de vêtements	8 973	6 665*
316 Fabrication de produits en cuir et de produits analogues	x	x
321 Fabrication de produits en bois	29 590	23 824
322 Fabrication du papier	15 112	11 105
323 Impression et activités connexes de soutien	15 700	12 080
324 Fabrication de produits du pétrole et du charbon	2 769	2 185
325 Fabrication de produits chimiques	20 876	11 089
326 Fabrication de produits en plastique et en caoutchouc	29 428	21 161
327 Fabrication de produits minéraux non métalliques	14 171	10 379
331 Première transformation des métaux	18 490	13 806
332 Fabrication de produits métalliques	43 178	31 407
333 Fabrication de machines	F	F
334 Fabrication de produits informatiques et électroniques	13 948	7 525
335 Fabrication de matériel, d'appareils et de composants électriques	10 556	7 312
336 Fabrication de matériel de transport	45 989	31 646
337 Fabrication de meubles et de produits connexes	24 518	17 737
339 Activités diverses de fabrication	17 447	11 210

- x : Donnée confidentielle
- F : Donnée peu fiable, ne peut être diffusée

Regional Distribution of Manufacturing

Statistiques principales du secteur de la fabrication, Québec et régions administratives, 2013-2016						
Année : 2016 / Régions administratives ou secteurs de fabrication : Régions administratives						
	Revenus totaux k\$	Revenus des biens fabriqués k\$	Dépenses totales k\$	Salaires et traitements k\$	Emploi total n	Emploi à la production n
Ensemble du Québec	158794436	148925929	143383050	22243035	457767	310826
Bas-Saint-Laurent	3078706	2964015	2730381	428093	8519	6629
Saguenay--Lac-Saint-Jean	6277910	6083514	5399776	663553	11420	8521
Capitale-Nationale	7773715	7071036	6283654	1332643	26349	16279
Mauricie	4080009	3942105	3585992	625413	14476 *	10787 *
Estrie	9389988 **	8581160 **	8382122 **	1388177 **	27141 **	19501 **
Montréal	44181740	41425439	40396241	5989700	106487	73181
Outaouais	1682569	1569164	1494905	223732	4275 *	3108
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	4481229	4330437	4065062	313981	5483	4033
Côte-Nord	2519931	2431115	2513458	365039 *	6224 *	5080 *
Nord-du-Québec	417297	415267	376199	60644	1188	994
Gaspésie--Îles	670742	641973	652529	91003	3150 *	2728 *
Chaudière-Appalaches	16675821	15907136	15279393	1856683	39469	29026
Laval	3772622	3474310	3480553	700613	15784 **	11962 **
Lanaudière	4528813	4259177	4123303	804803 *	17260 *	12652 *
Laurentides	8398896	7683623	7749860	1141490	21172	14285
Montréal	32369709	30169793	29206949	4942925	91620	62586
Centre-du-Québec	8494738	7976667	7662671	1314543	F	F

F : Donnée peu fiable

Notes :

Données révisées pour l'année 2015.

Les chiffres ayant été arrondis, la somme des éléments peut ne pas correspondre au total.

* : Coefficient de variation se situant entre 15 % et 25 % interpréter avec prudence.

** : Coefficient de variation supérieur à 25 % estimation imprécise, fournie à titre indicatif seulement.

Source :

Statistique Canada (SC), Enquête annuelle sur l'industrie manufacturière et sur l'exploitation forestière, 2013 à 2016, adapté par l'Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ).

Employment Canada-wide in manufacturing was 1.7 million workers in 2016, comprising nearly one in 10 of all workers in Canada. The level of one in 10 remained relatively unchanged from 2009. Quebec manufacturing employment of 457,767 workers was 26.9 per cent of the total number Canada-wide.

Quebec's Imports and Exports

Total exports (2017) = \$85.110 billion.[2]

Destination of exports (2017 -- approximate):

- United States = \$60.276 billion (70.8 per cent of total)
- China = \$2.86 billion (3.36 per cent of total)
- Mexico = \$1.755 billion
- France = \$1.693 billion
- Japan = \$1.363 billion

Major export products (2017):

- 1) Aerospace product and parts manufacturing = \$10 billion
- 2) Unwrought aluminum and aluminum alloys = \$7.5 billion
- 3) Iron ores and concentrates = \$2.4 billion

Electricity exports both to U.S. and the rest of Canada = \$1.527 billion (2014)

Of this export, 65 per cent went to the U.S. (\$993 million) and 35 per cent (\$534 million) to the rest of Canada.

Total imports into Quebec (2017) = \$77.401 billion.

Imports into Quebec from country of origin (2017):

- United States = \$24.641 billion (31.8 per cent of total)
- China = \$10.95 billion (14.18 per cent)
- Germany = \$3.597 billion
- United Kingdom = \$3.278 billion
- Mexico = \$1.902 billion

Major import products (2017 -- all dollar figures approximate in chained 2007 dollars):

- Aircraft parts and other aerospace equipment = \$6.5 billion
- Pharmaceutical and medicinal products = \$3.4 billion

Of particular note is the balance of trade in energy sector (figures from 2013):

- Electricity = +\$1.527 billion (surplus)
 - Petroleum = -\$12.197 billion (deficit)
 - Natural gas = -\$1.244 billion (deficit)
 - Coal = -\$90 million (deficit)
- Total deficit in energy sector = -\$12.178 billion

Origin of crude petroleum supply from 2006, 2013 and 2014 (Note the dramatic increase from the Americas, mainly the U.S.):

	2006	2013	2014
Americas (including Canada)	15.1%	19.7%	63.1%
North Sea	38.7%	21.7%	8.6%
Africa, Middle East and other countries	46.2%	58.7%	28.3%

Comparing Quebec 2014 Trade with Rest of Canada and Internationally

Total exports from Quebec to both Canada and other countries (2014) = \$172.777 billion.

International exports (2014) = \$105.365 billion.[3]

Exports of total goods and services from Quebec to the rest of Canada (2014) = \$67.412 billion.

Exports to the rest of Canada represent 39 per cent of total exports and 18 per cent of Quebec's GDP.

Detailed information on all commodities available [here](#). Statistics Canada itemizes all Quebec exports both intra-Canada and internationally in a long list. To view, choose a commodity and click "Apply." For example scroll down to Aircraft and click "Apply." This shows:

- Intra-Canadian Quebec exports of aircraft = \$0.659 billion.
- International exports of aircraft = \$6.347 billion.

Readers should note that the Quebec people or government are not in control of imports and exports. The control is exercised through ownership of the companies involved in trade. The ownership of most companies is supranational in scope with the control mostly exercised from outside Quebec. The motivation behind trade, both imports and exports, is found in the private interests of the oligarchs who own and control the companies involved. The Quebec people and governments do

not have sovereign control over trade, which forms a major sector of the economy. The supranational oligopolies have become so large and powerful they want to eliminate all public authority over trade and exercise their private authority over trade to serve their private interests not the interests of the Quebec people and their economy.

Discussion on Economic Reports

The problem with economic reports from authorities such as governments, Statistics Canada and the big companies stems from the underlying feature of an anti-worker bias and outlook. They refuse to recognize that the workers through their work-time transform the natural bounty of nature into economic value. Using market prices or the accounts of companies as the basis of economic reports and figures diverts people from examining and grasping the actual source of economic value and from developing solutions for economic problems that favour the people and their economy.

The anti-worker and anti-social bias and outlook of the ruling elite turn the working class into a cost of production rather than the source of value. Instead of nurturing the working class as the most precious factor of a modern economy and guaranteeing workers their well-being, rights and security as the key to guaranteeing the well-being and security of all and the economy and society, those who own and control the economy attack the very human factor that produces all economic value. A fundamental transformation in outlook and practice must occur if the people are to humanize workplaces and the social and natural environment, guarantee their own well-being and security and the general interests of society. The battle for democratic renewal and a modern Quebec that defends the rights of all must be engaged in earnest if problems in the economy are to be solved and the dream realized of building a new society fit for human beings.

Notes

1. Ontario's GDP has grown to be more than twice as large as Quebec's at \$794.835 billion, mostly from the increased economic activity of a growing population. The Greater Toronto Area population alone is approaching seven million, only one and half million shy of the total Quebec population of 8.4 million.

2. The figures are in chained 2007 dollars. The total appears far less than in current dollars because of inflation. However, the figures appear higher than the Quebec GDP. In fact, many different methods are used to report economic activity, which result in widely differing figures. The export totals used here are the market prices at the time of sale in equivalent 2007 dollars. The selling price includes both old and new value within the commodity unlike GDP, which is designed to measure only new value added during a specific reporting period, usually one year. If GDP were reported at market prices of goods and services, it would include value already reported from a previous period and not just the value produced during the year in question.

3. 2014 figures from Statscan are in basic or current prices and not chained to the 2007 dollar to adjust for inflation, so they appear far higher than figures above from the Quebec Handy Book, which are chained.)

4. Total revenue means the gross income from sales. This includes both the old value from previously produced value within the goods sold and the new value that active production workers produce and add to the goods in the reporting year. Total revenue (gross income) differs from GDP in that GDP generally only contains newly produced value from the reporting year; otherwise, GDP would be reporting again as new value already produced value from previous reporting years.

(Sources: Banque de données des statistiques officielles sur le Québec; Statistiques Canada; canada.ca; Québec Handy Numbers from the Institut de la Statistique du Québec; Quebec government budget)

Hands Off Venezuela!

"Responsibility to Protect" Must Not Be Used to Justify Aggression Against Venezuela!

- Margaret Villamizar -



The latest attempt by U.S. imperialism to float a trial balloon for a "humanitarian" military intervention in Venezuela fell to the nefarious Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro. After broaching the matter directly blew up in his face recently, he came back for another try, dressing up his pro-war message in phrases about protecting the Venezuelan people from their government.

On September 14, Almagro made a high profile visit to the Colombian city Cúcuta, near the border with Venezuela. He accused Venezuela of causing the "humanitarian crisis," and the "migration crisis" while covering up the hardships the people are suffering as a result of the criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade the U.S. has imposed against the country.

When asked by a reporter at a press conference he held in Cúcuta with Colombia's Foreign Minister and Ambassador to the OAS if he considered a military intervention "the solution for Venezuela," Almagro responded, "Regarding a military intervention to overthrow the regime of Nicolás Maduro, I believe we should not rule out any option."

OAS Secretary General's Support for Military Option Rebuked

Almagro's defence of a possible military intervention against Venezuela immediately drew rebukes from several quarters. Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez said her government would denounce Almagro before the United Nations and other international bodies for promoting a military intervention and attacking peace in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Bolivia's president Evo Morales said attacking Venezuela is attacking Latin America, and that with his words Almagro confirmed that he had stopped being Secretary General of the OAS to become a civil agent of Trump's coup plots.

The government of Ecuador issued a statement saying the crisis in Venezuela should be solved by peaceful and democratic means and that Venezuelans alone should be the ones to decide their future. It rejected any declaration supporting the use or threatened use of force in international relations, saying this was contrary to the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles guiding Ecuador's international relations as established in its constitution.

Even 11 of the 14 countries belonging to the Lima Group, formed to isolate Venezuela and push for

regime change in the country, dissociated themselves publicly from what Almagro said. In a statement September 15, the eleven expressed their "concern and rejection of any course of action or declaration that implied a military intervention or the use of violence, or threats of the use of force in Venezuela." Notably, Canada was one of the three Lima Group countries that refused to sign the statement. The other two were Colombia and Guyana.[1]

The governments of Cuba, Nicaragua and Uruguay, as well as political parties, organizations and personalities around the region, and the editorial board of the Cúcuta newspaper whose reporter posed the question to Almagro, have spoken out to condemn the idea of the U.S. or anyone else intervening militarily against Venezuela. The Nicaraguan government noted that one week earlier, at a Latin American Summit held in Miami, Almagro told those present that the international community also needed to "asphyxiate" the government of Nicaragua. It pointed out that Almagro's declarations, in his capacity as Secretary General of the OAS, constituted "a serious threat to international peace and security and a very serious violation of the most fundamental principles of international law."



Prevarications of Warmongering Secretary General

Given the instant rejection of his call to keep "all options open" for acting against Venezuela, Almagro tried to back-track, claiming disingenuously that his words had been misinterpreted. In a video posted to the OAS website on September 16 he attempted to explain, unconvincingly, what he allegedly did not mean by what he said: "It was assumed," he said, that "we were speaking of violence, of a military attack and that we favoured armed aggression. This is not true." What exactly he did mean to say, if not what everyone understood him to say, was not explained.

In his video, Almagro said the international community had a moral imperative to "act" against "the Venezuelan dictatorship" and dragged out the imperialist "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine as the basis for his call to action.[2] Desperate to make his case, he huffed and puffed about the Venezuelan government allegedly violating international humanitarian law and committing crimes against humanity, about which, he said the OAS had delivered testimonies to the International Criminal Court. He went so far as to liken the failure to "act" against Venezuela to not acting to stop "the genocide in Rwanda" and "when Pol Pot massacred his own people" in Cambodia. This is why the Responsibility to Protect must remain an option, he declared. His protestations aside, can there be any doubt what the Secretary General is calling for?

What Is Canada Up To?

The Trudeau government's failure to sign the Lima Group statement repudiating Almagro's vile attempt to promote war and aggression, just like its uncouth refusal to condemn the August 4 assassination attempt against President Maduro and other Venezuelan officials, suggests something rotten is afoot.

All this means Canadians need to be vigilant about what may be said or done in their name in the coming days and weeks at the United Nations or elsewhere, possibly under the banner of "Responsibility to Protect," to try and justify further aggression against Venezuela of one type or another. Where there is smoke there is usually fire. It also means stepping up the work for an

anti-war government and making Canada a zone for peace so it stops serving as a base for U.S.-led interference, aggression and regime change around the world.

Hands Off Venezuela!
Support the Venezuelan People's Right to Self-Determination!

Notes

1. Signatories to the Lima Group statement included the governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Saint Lucia.
2. The "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine is held up by its proponents -- Canada figuring prominently among them -- as a "new" guiding principle of international law. It seeks to circumvent the prohibition against the threat or use of force against sovereign states contained in the Charter and founding principles of the United Nations in the name of stopping or preventing atrocities. It condones international intervention against sovereign states, up to and including armed intervention, if they fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. NATO's 1999 war on Yugoslavia was considered an example of the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine. Then-Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, a well-known proponent of the doctrine at the time, cited events in various African countries. In 2009, then-UN Secretary General Kofi Annan issued his report entitled "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect" to codify and integrate this imperialist doctrine into UN policy.

The UN's first and so far only official application of this doctrine was against Libya in 2011 when the Security Council authorized the use of force against the government of Muammar Gadhafi, providing a green light for the U.S. and NATO to launch their destructive war for regime change in the name of "protecting civilians under threat." Canada was one of the countries that actively lobbied the UN Security Council to intervene against Libya under the Responsibility to Protect at that time. Canada also initiated a (non-binding) resolution at the UN General Assembly in December 2016 aimed at justifying aggression in Syria by the U.S-led NATO military alliance should that country's government be found failing in its "responsibility to protect."

(With files from Prensa Latina, teleSUR, El Telégrafo, La Opinión, Tortilla con Sal)

Cuba Upholds Friendly International Relations and Defends Its Right to Be
Ottawa Reception for President of Cuba-Canada
Parliamentary Friendship Group



On September 18, Ottawa Cuba Connections hosted a reception to welcome Gladys Mercedes Lopez, new President of the Cuba-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group, who was visiting Ottawa. Gladys is also a member of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power. More than 40 friends of Cuba attended the reception and were eager to hear about the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Group. Gladys also spoke about the ongoing discussion taking place throughout Cuban society on the draft proposal for the new constitution of the Republic of Cuba.

In her remarks, Gladys pointed out the great significance of the discussion on the draft Constitution, as the last time changes were made to the Constitution was in 1976. Now the people throughout the country are discussing the changes being proposed to 224 articles of the present Constitution. She pointed out that 11 articles guaranteeing the socialist nature of Cuban society are irrevocable and will not be part of a referendum vote on the new constitution.



Some of the changes being proposed are in the area of the economy, defining the right to private property while the main form is state ownership of the means of production.

The draft proposals also include definitions of citizenship in which the rights and duties of citizens have been broadened.

A new chapter is being proposed on international relations which enshrines the need for solidarity work and cooperation with countries that are most in need.

There are significant changes being proposed on the role of Municipal Assemblies which would enable this level of government to put forward strategic developments for their areas. The Provincial Assemblies would be replaced by a Governor who would lead the Provincial Government whose main role would be to coordinate the work of the Municipal Assemblies.

Many changes are also being discussed about the functioning and role of the National Assembly of People's Power which is responsible for electing the President and also electing the Council of Ministers upon the request of the President. One of the new proposals being considered is the creation of the position of Prime Minister who would head the Council of Ministers.

Discussions are also taking place on the issue of age limits, especially for the position of President, and this position would also be limited to two five-year terms.

A new Article is being proposed to guarantee the right to same-sex marriage.

Gladys also pointed out that the youth are fully involved in the discussions on the draft constitution. As the voting age in Cuba is 16 years, extensive discussions are taking place in all the schools in Cuba to involve all the youth in these important decisions.

The consultations began on August 13 and are to end on November 15. Taking into consideration all the views and proposals gathered during the consultations, a new draft proposal will be finalized and put to a referendum vote throughout the country.

This is expected to be completed by early 2019 and Gladys explained that, once a new constitution is adopted, this will require a great deal of work for the National Assembly of People's Power, which will have to modify many laws and add new ones to ensure conformity.

In her remarks at the reception, Gladys also spoke about the important work of the Parliamentary Friendship Group and its role in providing the Members of Parliament in Canada with information about issues like the U.S. blockade of Cuba and its consequences for the economy and the lives of the Cuban people. She spoke also of the important role of solidarity groups to keep all Canadians informed and she thanked all the friends of Cuba in Canada who have defended the right of Cubans to decide the kind of system that meets their needs.

After her remarks, many from the audience thanked Gladys Mercedes Lopez for a very informative presentation and posed many questions. The meeting ended with a very lively discussion which continued throughout the reception portion of the program.



Trump Administration Strengthens Blockade of Cuba

On the 17th of each month, informational pickets are held in front of the U.S. embassy in Ottawa and U.S. consulates in Montreal and Vancouver against the U.S. blockade of Cuba. A blockade is an act of war and the U.S. blockade of Cuba has been going on for more than 50 years in an attempt to defeat the Cuban revolution and force the people to submit to U.S. dictate and annexation.

On September 14, 2018, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations issued a communiqué to the press which detailed how the economic, commercial and financial blockade that the U.S. government has imposed on Cuba since 1962 has been strengthened by the current administration of Donald Trump. On June 16, 2017 in Miami, Donald Trump signed the National Security Presidential Memorandum on "Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba." This document repealed the directive issued by President Barack Obama on October 14, 2016, entitled "Normalization of U.S. relations with Cuba." This has caused a setback to the position of the previous administration, which had chosen to take steps in favour of dismantling the blockade, the Cuban Mission to the UN pointed out. The communiqué continues:

As a result, on November 8, 2017, the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Treasury and State issued new regulations and provisions. Restrictions were imposed for trips under the category "people to people" and limitations on educational trips, which has had the effect of decreasing the number of travellers from that country to Cuba during 2018 and, consequently, on the activity of tens of thousands of Cuban self-employed workers.



Ottawa picket, May 17, 2018, against U.S. blockade of Cuba.

On the same date, the Department of State issued a "List of Restricted Cuban Entities and Subentities," which included 179 companies. The objective of this measure is to continue to impede the economic and commercial relations of Cuban companies with potential U.S. and third-country partners. The extraterritorial impact has been considerable during 2018, as confusion has been generated in relation to the Specially Designated Nationals List of the Office of Foreign Assets Control.



Banks and institutions in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia have imposed conditions and created obstacles to continuing to operate with Cuban companies and embassies that have been their clients for years. Among the main effects recorded, as a result of this intimidating effect, are: the prohibition of transfers of funds in U.S. dollars or other freely convertible currencies; the cancellation of accounts of embassies and companies with Cuban interests abroad, as well as of financial services for businesses related to Cuba; and the refusal to grant credit facilities or the processing of letters of credit.



In relation to the alleged symptoms or health problems reported by a group of diplomats from the U.S. Embassy in Cuba, the U.S. government adopted the unjustified measure of declaring a travel warning that recommends potential visitors reconsider their intention to travel to Cuba. The effect of this measure has led to a significant decrease in visitors from the U.S., who refrain from travelling because, among other reasons, insurance agencies take travel alerts seriously. This

measure by the U.S. government was implemented without any proven evidence of actual damage to the people residing in the U.S. Embassy in Cuba; and without any of the five million visitors to Cuba that year reporting such symptoms.

Using the same pretext, the U.S. government unilaterally and unjustifiably demanded the withdrawal of a significant number of Cuban diplomatic officials from the Embassy in Washington. Among them was the staff of the economic-commercial office, in charge of exploring the opportunities and channels of commercial exchange within the extremely narrow framework of licences and exceptions to the blockade provided by the U.S. government. This has an additional impact on limited bilateral trade exchange.

Cuba's Report on UN Resolution 72/4 on Need to End U.S. Blockade

Introduction

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the government of the United States of America against Cuba for almost six decades is the most unfair, severe and extended system of unilateral sanctions ever applied against any country. From April 2017 until March 2018, the period with which this report deals, the blockade policy has intensified and continues to be applied with all rigour.

The government of the United States has imposed a serious setback to the bilateral relations with Cuba based on President Donald Trump's signing of the Presidential Memorandum for National Security about the strengthening of U.S. Policy against Cuba on June 16, 2017, thereby renewing, among its aims, the tightening of the blockade against the Island. In November of that same year the Departments of Commerce, the Treasury and State of the U.S. issued new regulations and provisions to put into effect the aforementioned Memorandum.

The measures applied restricted even further the right of Americans to travel to Cuba and imposed additional obstacles to the limited opportunities of the American business community in Cuba by setting up a list of 179 Cuban entities with which American natural and juridical persons are prohibited from carrying out transactions.

The new sanctions against Cuba have caused a notable decrease in visits from the U.S. and they have generated greater obstacles to Cuban companies' economic and commercial relations with potential American and third country partners. These measures not only affect the Cuban State economy but they also affect the country's private sector.

The strengthening of the extra-territorial application of the blockade has been another of the distinctive manifestations of the tightening of this policy, with marked effects on Cuba's international financial and loan relations.



In recent months, the permanent persecution of Cuban financial transactions and bank and loan operations with Cuba has intensified on a world scale. This has caused severe harm to the country's economy especially on the commercial activities of companies and national banks in their links with international banking.

The tightening of the blockade on Cuba has been accompanied by aggressive, menacing, disrespectful rhetoric and conditions coming from the most senior levels of the U.S. government; this generates greater mistrust and uncertainty among American financial institutions, companies and suppliers due to the very real fear of being penalized for their relations with Cuba.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes the principal obstacle for the development of all the potentials for the Cuban economy. It represents a brake for the implementation of the country's National Plan for Economic and Social Development as well as for Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals. It is the principal hurdle for the development of Cuba's economic, commercial and financial relations with the U.S. and, because of its extra-territorial nature, with the rest of the world.

The accumulated losses from the blockade being applied for almost six decades reach a figure of \$933,678,000,000 dollars taking into account the depreciation of the dollar as compared to the price of gold on the international market. At today's prices, the blockade has caused damage that can be calculated at over \$134,499,800,000.

In the period considered by this report, the blockade has caused losses to Cuba of around \$4,321,200,000.

This policy of economic aggression, along with the promotion of internal subversion, corroborates the aim of the U.S. government to destroy the economic, political and social system that has been freely chosen by the Cuban people.

The blockade constitutes a massive, blatant and systematic violation of the human rights of all the Cuban people and qualifies as an act of genocide, according to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948. It violates the United Nations Charter and international law and constitutes an obstacle for international cooperation. It is imperative that the United States comply with the 26 resolutions adopted by the international community within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly and put an end, unconditionally, to its policy of blockade.

To read the full text of Cuba's Report "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Blockade Imposed by the United States against Cuba" [click here](#).

Cuban Medical Specialists Reject Theory of "Health Attacks" on U.S. Diplomats

On September 13, a meeting was held in Washington, DC between scientific experts from the United States and Cuba to discuss the health symptoms reported by U.S. diplomats accredited in Havana. The Cuban multidisciplinary group, composed of nine scientists and physicians who are members of a panel of the Cuban Academy of Sciences, was headed by Johana Tablada, Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' U.S. Department, and Cuba's Ambassador to Washington, José R. Cabañas.

The U.S. team was chaired by Kenneth Merten, assistant principal secretary for the Western

Hemisphere, and was made up of medical personnel from the United States Department of State.

Prior to this meeting, the Cuban team had examined the scant information provided by the U.S. Embassy about the alleged incidents, publications by a medical team from the University of Pennsylvania, especially an article published by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (*JAMA*), and the conclusions of police investigations, carried out separately, by authorities of Cuba's Ministry of the Interior and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

At the meeting, the Cuban team received a summary describing the results of medical examinations previously reported in *JAMA*, and presented its analysis of the limitations of this study, questioning its main conclusions as well as the scientific interpretation of the reported symptoms.

At the conclusion of the exchange, the Cuban experts noted that the information provided does not support the hypotheses of health attacks and brain damage suggested thus far by the State Department as an explanation for the symptoms its diplomats referred to.

In particular, they reaffirmed that with the information exchanged it is neither possible to prove the existence of a new neurological medical brain injury syndrome, nor to affirm that brain damage of the type caused by blows to the head has been produced without any cranial trauma having occurred. That is impossible.

They observed that the medical evidence presented has serious limitations. Most of the cases described present symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness and subjective balance and sleep disturbances, that are produced by functional disorders and illnesses such as hypertension, stress, and many others very prevalent in the United States and the world.

The accuracy of the reports may also have suffered from the average time interval of 203 days between the alleged incidents and the reported medical investigations.

The neuropsychological tests, considered more objective, were interpreted with unusual criteria which, if applied to a group of healthy subjects, would assess almost all of them as being ill. Had internationally established standard criteria been used, only two individuals could be considered affected, which could be attributed to various pre-existing illnesses.

According to the report, only three individuals with slight or moderate hearing loss were found, but each one with audiograms that would be seen in different, and probably pre-existing, conditions.

No findings indicative of brain damage were reported in neuroimaging. In two individuals, mild signs were reported and in another, moderate signs that, according to the evaluators, are non-specific, appear in many illnesses and could be attributed to processes that occurred before those people travelled to Cuba. It has not been possible for Cuban experts to access those images.

The scientific studies, the Cuban and FBI police investigations, as well as the information shared by the State Department, indicate an absence of evidence of any type of attack or deliberate act.

The Cuban delegation categorically rejected use of the term "attack" without there being any substantiating evidence. U.S. officials, for their part, stressed that they had no explanation for the incidents.

The Cuban delegation expressed its willingness to cooperate and reiterated that it is in its best interest to find an explanation for the reports that have been described.

In this regard, it recalled that since the Embassy of the United States in Havana informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about alleged "acoustic attacks" against some of its officials in February 2017, Cuba has requested and offered the maximum cooperation to clarify what happened, and very early

on suggested holding a meeting involving medical experts from both countries.

It regretted the lack of access to clinical information and to the doctors who assessed the diplomatic personnel that reported health symptoms.

Nevertheless, the Cuban medical team considers the holding of the meeting as a positive, if insufficient, step. Up to this point, the scientific and medical exchange had taken place only indirectly, through the publication of scientific articles, political statements and regrettable leaks to the press. The Cuban medical team extended an invitation to the team of U.S. researchers to engage in another scientific exchange in Havana in the near future, with the professionals who directly attended the U.S. diplomats also participating.

(Cubadebate. Translated from the original Spanish by TML)

73rd Anniversary of Vietnam's Independence Day and 45th Anniversary of Canada-Vietnam Relations

Events in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto Celebrate Longstanding Bonds of Friendship and Trade



Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Nguyen Ngoc Thien speaks at celebration in Ottawa, September 11, 2018.

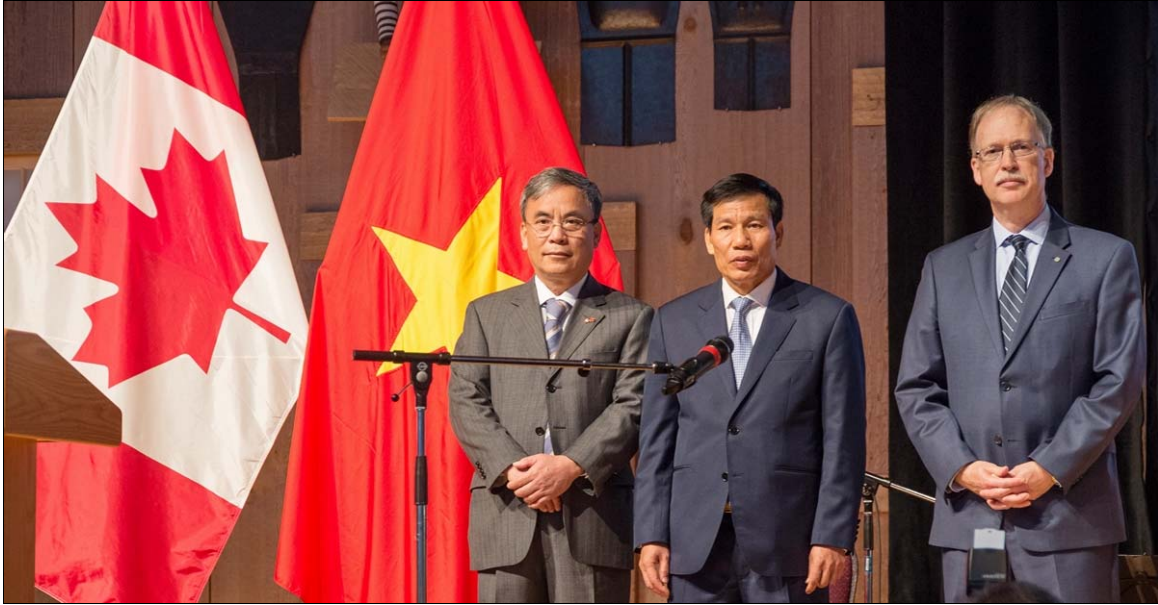
On September 2, Vietnam celebrated its National Day, the day in 1945 when the great leader of the Vietnamese people President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence at the Ba Dinh Square in Hanoi. There he proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, officially declaring the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam from France and Japan.

To celebrate this event, as well as the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Canada and Vietnam, Vietnam Culture Week was inaugurated in Ottawa and Montreal.

On September 11, in Ottawa and September 14, in Montreal, receptions and cultural performances were held. In both places several hundred guests from the diplomatic corps as well as many Canadian friends of Vietnam and local members of the Vietnamese community were in attendance.

Notable events also took place in Toronto in August and September.

Ottawa



Left to right: Vietnam's Ambassador to Canada Nguyen Duc Hoa; Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Nguyen Ngoc Thien, and Canadian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ian Shugart.

At the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, the Opening Ceremony of Vietnam Culture Week began with a welcoming speech by Vietnam's Ambassador to Canada Nguyen Duc Hoa.

Next to speak was Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Nguyen Ngoc Thien who spoke about the important role that culture plays in building links internationally. He pointed out that during Vietnam Culture Week, various activities such as art performances, photo, film and tourism exhibitions would form a bridge of friendship between the two peoples and help Canadian people understand more about the land, people and culture of Vietnam.

Then Canadian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ian Shugart spoke, stressing that the two countries have a long-term friendship which has brought great results in bilateral trade exchange and education cooperation.

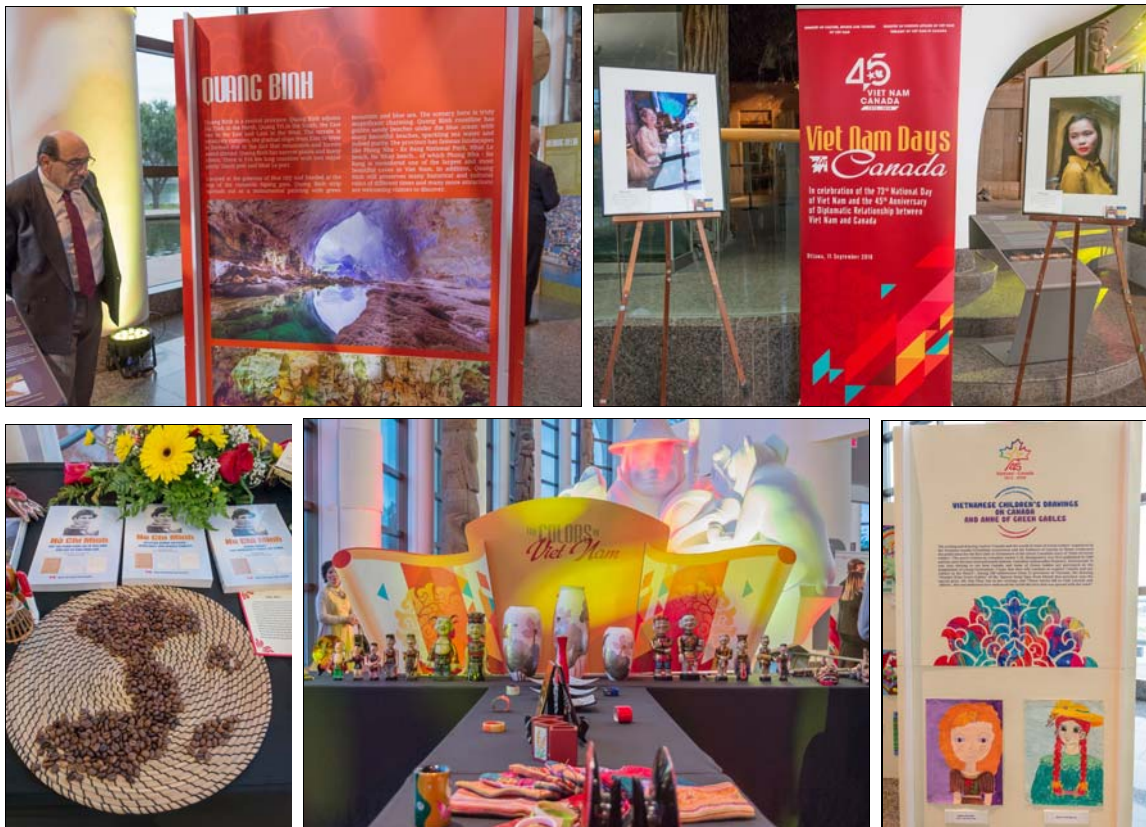


The speeches were followed with performances by some of Vietnam's most renowned musicians, singers and dancers. Their performances were of great artistic quality and filled with pride for the achievements of the Vietnamese people. They received enthusiastic applause from the audience.





The main hall of the Canadian Museum of History was beautifully decorated for the occasion. Among the totem poles and Indigenous sculptures, was a lovely photo exhibit depicting picturesque scenes from Vietnam, as well as tables displaying literature and other cultural items.



Montreal

On September 15, the Opening Ceremony of Vietnamese Film Days was held in the auditorium of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. In the lobby, people were warmly greeted by staff members of the Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Canada. The ceremony opened with welcoming remarks of the Vietnamese Ambassador in Canada Nguyen Duc Hoa to the more than 100 members of the audience. He was followed by Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Nguyen Ngoc Thien, who spoke about the important role this presentation of Vietnamese culture plays in deepening the bonds of friendship between the Vietnamese and the Canadian peoples. The final speaker was the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Quebec Ministry of International Relations and Francophonie Éric Marquis who spoke about the growing links developing between Quebec and Vietnam in different spheres such as economic exchanges and culture.

In the evening, a program of songs and dances was performed with great artistry by the performers. The songs and dances highlighted the treasury of Vietnam's multisecular traditional music, of music from the national liberation war and music depicting the living conditions of people from various parts of Vietnam, such as mountainous and coastal regions. They were performed with grace, elegance and great virtuosity, especially in the use of traditional string, wood and percussion instruments. The audience was delighted and could appreciate the various aspects of Vietnamese culture as well as the high calibre of the performers. The artists were greeted with a standing ovation at the program's close. The evening of September 16 was devoted to the presentation of Vietnamese films.

Toronto

Canadians and visiting Vietnamese officials participated in four events in Toronto to commemorate the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Canada. These events all contributed to the strengthening of friendly relations between the Canadian and Vietnamese peoples.

On August 23, Professor Dai Trang Nguyen launched her book *Ho Chi Minh: Selected Works on Peace, Democracy and Gender Equality* at the University of Toronto. This was Professor Nguyen's third book on the life and work of Ho Chi Minh, who led the Vietnamese people to defeat the French colonizers, the Japanese militarists and the U.S. imperialists in Vietnam's struggle to affirm its independence and sovereignty, giving rise to a dignified, modern and peace-loving nation.



Book launch in Toronto, August 23, 2018.

Professor Nguyen has conducted considerable research to popularize the life and work of Ho Chi Minh so that the legacy and contributions of this immortal Vietnamese patriot and fighter for Vietnam's independence, sovereignty and world peace are known to Canadians and to a wider

audience. Her book, printed in English, French and Vietnamese, includes letters from Ho Chi Minh to various political personalities of his time, including to former Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson. At the book launch, Professor Nguyen highlighted the role that Ho Chi Minh played in ensuring that Vietnamese women played a leading role both in the wars of national liberation and in the building of the new society.

On August 31, a delegation of Vietnamese business people and political leaders from Danang City, a coastal city in central Vietnam, made a presentation to a group of business people in downtown Toronto. They came to promote investment opportunities for Canadian entrepreneurs in their city, particularly in the high tech and tourism sectors. At this event, Canadian companies that have been operating in Vietnam also made presentations about the favourable conditions that prevail there that facilitate business activity for the mutual benefit of the Vietnamese and the foreign companies concerned.



Delegation of Vietnamese business people and political leaders from Danang City visits Toronto, August 31, 2018.

On September 14, a delegation of the Vietnam-Canada Friendship Association (VCFA) held a meeting with a delegation from the Canada Vietnam Society in downtown Toronto to share experiences and ideas of how to enhance relations between the two peoples and countries. After drinking a toast to the friendship between the peoples of Canada and Vietnam, Dr. Nguyen Viet Thien, Deputy Minister of Health of the government of Vietnam and President of the VCFA, expressed appreciation for the 45-year diplomatic relationship between Canada and Vietnam and stated that there is much potential to enhance relations further through economic, social and cultural exchanges.

Ms. Nguyen Thi Tru Gian, General Secretary of the VCFA, outlined the three main pillars of Vietnam's external relations -- state-to-state, party-to-party and people-to-people. She said that Vietnam has good relations with the Trudeau government in building trade and they hope to see this partnership strengthened in the future. She expressed the hope that the visit of the delegation will foster greater friendship, understanding and co-operation between Canadians and Vietnamese. Ms. Nguyen offered suggestions of the types of people-to-people activities that could be promoted, including opportunities for exchanges arranged through NGOs, cultural exchanges and between business people. She also mentioned that the number of Vietnamese students in Canada, both state-sponsored and private, almost doubled in the last two years and that Canada will continue to be a place where Vietnamese youth come to study in the future. She also welcomed more visitors to Vietnam to see for themselves the reality of life in her country.



Meeting of Canada-Vietnam friendship organizations, Toronto, September 14, 2018.

The Canada Vietnam Society (CVS) members responded that they were glad to meet their sister organization from Vietnam and noted that the Canadian people have always been friendly to the Vietnamese people, notably during the U.S. war of aggression against Vietnam, when tens of thousands of Canadians marched in Toronto and other cities to condemn the war and support the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people. The members of the CVS pledged to do their part to promote and enhance people-to-people friendship between Canada and Vietnam in the interest of mutual benefit and peace.

The final event took place September 17 at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Toronto. This was a Vietnam Tourism Road Show organized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam, with the support of the Ontario government.

The trade show brought together those involved in the tourism industry in Canada and Vietnam as well as those interested in travel to Vietnam. Some 150 people took part in the event. Mr. Nguyen Anh Tuan of the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism made the opening remarks, saying that

this was the first time that such an event was taking place in Canada. He noted that Vietnam is a fast-developing country, that tourism represent eight per cent of the GDP of Vietnam and that the country is well-placed to grow this sector of the Vietnamese economy rapidly. Mr. Nguyen stated that visiting Vietnam affords Canadians the opportunity to experience first-hand the history, culture, ethnic diversity and natural beauty of the country and would help give Canadians a more complete picture of modern Vietnam. He pointed out that in 2017, some 128,000 Canadians visited Vietnam, which represents less than one per cent of the total number of travellers to Vietnam. He expressed the hope that more Canadians will travel to Vietnam in the near future.



Vietnam Tourism Road Show, September 17, 2018, in Toronto.

The event included several videos depicting the scenic beauty of Vietnam as well as live performances by skilled musicians in national costume playing melodies from Vietnamese culture on traditional instruments. Travel industry representatives from both countries took the opportunity of the event to exchange contact information with a view to creating mutually beneficial business channels.

(Photos: TML, VNA)

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