

Support the Cuba Trade Act of 2021

by Richard Grassl

The U.S. blockade of Cuba, a product of 60-plus years of hostility and mistrust, has had a deep impact on US society. Hidden beneath congressional laws, amendments and executive orders that slander our neighbor country, the truth of the matter is clear, and is rarely glimpsed by the mainstream media.

In fact, the moral, ethical and humanist values instilled in the Cuban people during their long revolutionary struggle, from the 19th century through January 1, 1959, strengthened their resolve from that time on to overcome adversity and isolation imposed by Yankee imperialism.

In the wake of a worldwide Covid-19 pandemic and the spread of unprecedented misery beyond borders, Cuban scientific research combined with human diligence and global solidarity provides hope for a better tomorrow.

The United States has just averted an illegal insurrection with intent to destroy democracy. But we look 90 miles across the Gulf of Mexico and see a different reality. Cuba trains their doctors to care for their own people and those in many other countries in the world. Why is this significant?

In Cuba, individualistic wants are of secondary importance to social needs such as healthcare, education, culture, safe workplace and clean environment, etc. Workers understand that the slogan “an injury to one is an injury to all” means service as a passion, not a ticket to exploitation.

In contrast, the United States has experienced more than a year of businesses closing, workers losing their jobs, families suffering and

525,000 Americans dying. Six hundred sixty (660) US billionaires increased their wealth by \$1.3 trillion since January 2020.

A New York Times article by Emma Goldberg, Feb. 19, 2021, points out that thousands of doctors in America cannot get a job — specifically half of U.S. graduates from foreign medical schools who are rejected from residency programs in the U.S. They need to work: the average medical school debt for students graduating in 2019 was \$201,490.

But there's more. One of them, Dr. Khan insisted, "I didn't go to medical school to sit on the sideline," adding that "Hospitals need to realize that highly trained people could show up to work in the next hour if we're called". The Association of Medical Colleges recently released a study that found the country faces a shortage of 54,100 to 139,000 physicians by 2033.

Cuba, on the other hand, prepares more physicians per capita than any country in the world. Some 30,000 doctors and other health professionals work in 60 or so other countries. Cuba sets an example.

In Cuba, science is paramount. Cuba makes vaccines, including four aimed at preventing Covid-19 infections. Soberana 02, the first Latin American vaccine now in phase III clinical trials, will soon be available to 85,000 volunteers as Cuba begins to immunize its entire population.

People in Cuba share what little they have with the world. Could this be why U.S. policymakers fund a genocidal blockade against Cuba? Is that why that particular part of U.S. foreign policy toward Cuba has become institutionalized? Is that also why U.S. citizens' constitutional right to travel and trade is subject to fines and punishment?

In order to reverse this injustice, call your Congressional Representatives and demand that they support S. 249, the US Cuba Trade Act of 2021, introduced by Senator Ron Wyden, Ore. Tell them it is time to "step up to the plate" and normalize relations with Cuba.