

No War On Cuba Movement
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Media Advisory

Washington Area Cuba Solidarity Group to Counter Slander Campaign About Cuban Libraries

Saturday, June 23rd, 2007 - 9am - 1pm

**At Washington Convention Center
801 Mount Vernon Place, NW Washington, DC 20001**

An outfit calling itself "Friends of Cuban Libraries" will take its slander campaign against Cuban libraries to the American Library Association (ALA) conference this weekend in Washington, DC. The group will picket the opening of the ALA to protest the inclusion of two Cuban documentaries, "*The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil*" and "*Salud! What Puts Cuba on the Map in the Quest for Global Health Care*," during a Human Rights Festival held by The Princeton Public Library. The library's director is Leslie Burger who is also the current president of ALA.

On June 23rd the No War On Cuba Movement coalition and other community members who support freedom of information and honest reporting will be counter protesting against the campaign by Friends of Cuban Libraries to slander the Cuban revolution.

Members and supporters of "Friends of Cuban Libraries" are claiming the films were biased and cast Cuba in an undeserving positive light: As quoted in the Princeton Packet, "it's inexcusable to ignore Cuba's human rights violations - such as rationing food, jailing journalists and librarians for disseminating information and promoting a public health system they say is based on apartheid in treating different citizens unequally - during a human rights film festival" says Princeton Township resident Fausta Wertz and Maria C. Werlau, executive director of Cuba Archive, an organization that collects information about Cuba. Ellen Bernstein of Pastors for Peace countered that Cuba's "exemplary health-care system" can't be denied and said, "The point was to talk about health care as a human right."

One year after the triumph of Cuba's 1959 revolution the country embarked on a radically successful Literacy Campaign, in which hundreds of thousands of young people were able to reduce their country's grave illiteracy rate to below 4% in one year alone. Today the CIA's 2007 World Fact Book even lists the country's rate at 99.8%. Cuba's investment in libraries has been vital in maintaining this achievement. Increasing from having very few school libraries and only 32 public libraries for the whole country before the revolution, Cuba now has over 400 public libraries and 6000 school libraries that play "a prominent role in the conservation of historical records, the promotion of reading and lifelong adult learning, and the preservation of cultural patrimony, making libraries respected and valued institutions in Cuba" says Rhonda L. Neugebauer, Bibliographer of Latin American Studies at University of California, Riverside.

The **No War On Cuba Movement** is a coalition of groups and individuals in the Washington DC metro area dedicated to improving ties between the peoples of the US and Cuba and committed to bringing about a peaceful and respectful U.S. policy towards Cuba. We say **NO** to all forms of U.S. intervention in Cuba and support Cuba's sovereignty. We demand an end to the blockade on Cuba, support the normalization of relations with Cuba, and support the right of all to travel to Cuba. www.NoWarOnCuba.org