

JAN.  
1-15,  
2010

VOL. 18  
#1

\$1.50

# people's VOICE

**Bolivia: Morales  
wins big majority**

**See page 6**

Printed in Canada by union labour  
on recycled paper  
Publications Mail Agreement #40011632

# Canada gets failing grade at Climate Change Summit



Over 100,000 people rallied for action on climate change in Copenhagen. Photo from the Danish Communist newspaper Arbejderen (Daily Worker)

## Global divide opens further at Copenhagen talks

### PV Vancouver Bureau

As this issue of *People's Voice* went to press on Dec. 15, a tentative truce between rich and poor nations has allowed talks to resume at the Copenhagen climate conference. The summit had appeared on the verge of collapse after developing nations walked out in protest over the failure of wealthy countries to commit to an extension of the Kyoto Protocol.

The talks have emphasized what prominent Third World environmental activist Martin Khor calls "a gaping divide". On the one hand, developing nations want the wealthy to live up to the expectation they would cut emissions by 25-40 per cent by 2020, and to provide finance to

help the poor. Meanwhile, many of the developed capitalist countries, including Canada, refuse to move unless the emerging economies take on a crippling share of the investments needed to give the world a chance at limiting warming to two degrees.

"We have to face one reality - there is an ever widening gap between developing countries and developed countries," said Lumumba Di-Aping, the chief negotiator for the Group of 77 developing countries. "And the reason why that gap is widening is because developed countries have accepted that condemning Africa, condemning small island states, condemning small countries to destruction and massive suffering is something acceptable to them."

At a basic level, the dispute is over the legal form of an agreement: whether to have just one treaty or two - the Kyoto Protocol and a second pact that covers all nations, including the US, China and India.

The temporary breakdown between rich and poor came amid speculation that some of the world leaders scheduled to come to Copenhagen before the end of the scheduled talks might pull out failing clear signs of agreement.

China had earlier appeared to offer a lifeline to the summit by saying it had abandoned its demand for funding from the developed world under a deal to cut greenhouse gas emissions. In

see COPENHAGEN, page 4



**2**

### Two conventions

Vancouver was the scene of two different conventions in late November. The BC Federation of Labour adopted an action plan, while the NDP leadership still wants to be buddies with business.

## INSIDE

**3**

### Racist on the run

Calgary's Aryan Guard neo-Nazi group is in disarray after a leading member is charged with the attempted pipe-bomb murder of another racist.

**7**

### Delhi Declaration

Capitalism is in deep crisis, but it won't simply collapse on its own, according to a joint statement by representatives of 57 Communist and Workers' Parties at their recent annual meeting in Delhi, India.

# British Columbia: a tale of two conventions

By Sam Hammond, leader of the Communist Party of BC

President Jim Sinclair opened the 53rd annual convention of the British Columbia Federation of Labour on Nov. 23 with a very militant speech that articulated the attack on working people. He did not hold back at all, defining the evils of the present crisis and the capitalist system that is responsible.

Looking back at the depression of the 1930's, Sinclair repeated the same lies that, in his eyes, are being paraded out again. He expounded on the callousness of pro-corporate neo-liberal policy: "In 1940 Canadians asked the right question: how could their government find billions of dollars to fight a war after spending most of the 1930s claiming they had no money to help the millions of poor and unemployed? Don't you think that in 2009 the question is relevant again to a whole new generation of Canadians? How did governments find hundreds of billions of dollars for banks, and billions for executive bonuses, after spending decades cutting public services and now refusing to help the growing army of unemployed and the poor?... Is something wrong with this picture? I say fire them all and put half of them in jail."

And further: "This is the fight of our lives, and it's between the vast majority of working people fighting to survive tough times and the corporations and their right wing governments... The corporate tax cuts are so deep, that in 2011 students will pay more in tuition (in BC) than corporations will pay in corporate taxes."

Sinclair's analysis reflected the frustration and anger of BC workers, and it was much better than the "not so bad" executive report. If his militancy divided into several channels of economism preceding the rather hygienic workshops the next day, it still provided a point of departure for

expressions of militancy, the criticism of a lack of program and action, and the eventual appearance of a composite resolution late on the third and final day that ended in an "Action Program."

The "Action Program" was probably the offspring of a leadership hearing the anger of the "newly legislated back to work" Paramedics who never got to strike at all, the HandyDart drivers who cannot even get an agreement to compulsory arbitration, the privatized, the underfunded, the dismembered and the disowned.

It was all there on the convention floor. Ken Davidson, Vice President of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, set the tempo, saying he would vote against the Executive Report because it lacked a fightback program. The delegates showed their appreciation.

Angry Paramedics vowed to continue fighting even though their strike was controlled by "necessary service" legislation, and then legislated again in a double whammy to a complete end. Representatives of 500 HandyDart strikers were howling mad at a callous government that privatised their jobs and delivered them into the hands of a profit grinding U.S. transit operation. There are 200,000 public sector workers preparing for bargaining across B.C., facing a pending wage freeze and benefit give-back. Some 10,000 forestry workers are also gearing up for negotiations, facing the massive export of raw logs and the dismantling of processing mills that are being re-assembled south of the border and in low wage areas of the globe.

Dave Pritchett of the Longshore union reflected this collective anger in a militant speech about co-operation between unions to prevent the export of raw logs. "We have to create a crisis of our own," he said, demanding some ground level fightback action. Another delegate said it all: "We have the power, but



Members of CUPE Local 873, the Paramedics who have been fighting for a new contract and improved ambulance services, watching debate at the BC Federation of Labour (photo: K. Cariou)

do we have the will to use it?"

The power and the will to use it was far from the conclusion of guest speaker Linda McQuaig, who did her usual well-researched analyses of evil capitalism, ending with the proposal for good capitalism as existing in the social-democratic Valhalla of Scandinavia. The salvation for Canada's unemployed, hungry and homeless apparently lies somewhere in Norway, not Vancouver. But how do we get there?

The delegates spoke to much more than the resolutions, some of which were good and some quite weak. It didn't matter much, as delegate after delegate used the resolutions as a vehicle to say what was on their minds. CUPE B.C. president Barry O'Neil made a strong and angry speech warning the Campbell government not to bring paramedics from the east, the south or the military to B.C. for the Olympics. He made it clear they would be considered scabs, and the union would not take this laying down. Brigid Kemp from the South Okanagan Labour Council spoke on the hypocrisy of

governments which can fund the Afghan war but not hospitals and social programs. Stephen Von Sychowski received approval and respect from delegates when he spoke of young workers and the minimum wage campaign.

The "Action Program" that resulted is a good start. Not perfect, but perfection is not needed as much as determination and a call to arms on several fronts. The Program is militant, it is about youth, First Nations, the homeless, the unemployed and poor. It calls for labour to unite with its community partners to launch defensive and offensive campaigns. In a positive development, it calls for extra-parliamentary labour action with an eye on mobilizing the community, a day of protest and even "job action."

It is rather telling of the tensions building within labour and within the NDP that point 2 of the Program states: "The Federation and the affiliates lobby New Democratic Party MLAs and constituency associations to ensure the party and the caucus embrace a

progressive economic and social strategy for British Columbia."

The authors think it requires labour lobbying to ensure a "progressive" economic and social strategy from the NDP. It apparently does. The NDP started its biannual convention the day after the BC Fed ended. Even though leader Carol James had the benefit of the BC Fed delegates' feelings, and Jim Sinclair's speech to the NDP convention, she didn't seem to hear.

Perhaps she didn't notice that about 15% of the delegates remained seated during her grand entry to the BC Fed convention, where criticism of the NDP's performance and priorities that blew the May 2009 election was a politely subdued and obliquely expressed undercurrent.

Carol James' perennial courtship of BC business, her stated aim to bring business and labour together, to move the NDP closer to the centre (which is the same direction as to the right) and her complete failure to discuss what went wrong last spring does not bode well for the future.

To bring labour to the table in co-operation with business means she must move labour to the right, and that will cause a split that leaves her alone with business. BC doesn't need two business parties. Jim Sinclair might have been trying to bring some sanity to the NDP Convention when he said, "The real problem we have in this party, the real challenge we have, is we don't have enough working people on side. That's what this party is about, making British Columbia a better place for the working people, the vulnerable and the poor." Carol James and Jim Sinclair have different priorities.

Two conventions. One wants to organize resistance, the other appeasement. One wants to win the next election, and the other seems determined to throw it away again. This is not a Tale of Two Cities, but it is a Tale of Two Conventions, and the choice is yours. ●

## BCFL Program of Action

The Delegates of the Federation endorse the following Program of Action:

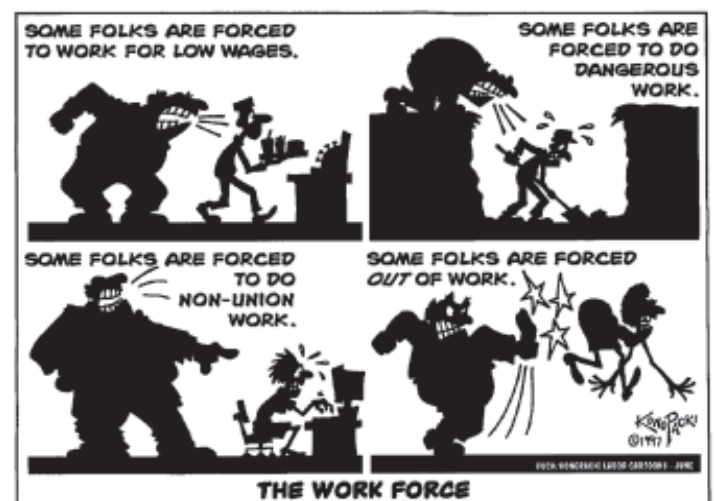
1. The affiliates and the Federation jointly produce popular education materials, including videos, written materials and course materials for use by affiliates, locals, activists, schools and the public to promote a progressive economic and social agenda based on the recommendations in the two papers discussed by workshops.
2. The Federation and the affiliates lobby New Democratic Party MLA's and constituency associations to ensure the party and the caucus embrace a progressive economic and social strategy for British Columbia.
3. The Federation and affiliates work to build a province-wide movement with our community partners to escalate opposition to stop the Liberal Government cuts to services and restore funding, including developing a unified message, co-ordinated

advertising campaigns and regional actions leading to a province-wide day of action.

4. The Federation continue to work with public sector unions to co-ordinate collective bargaining strategies, to reject any attempts by governments to strip conditions from collective agreements and impose back-to-work legislation. This includes solidarity actions regionally and provincially up to and including job action.
5. The Federation develop a co-ordinated fight back campaign against the HST and for fair taxes and the funding of public services. The Officers of the Federation develop a full scale campaign against the tax.
6. Affiliates and the Federation work with community partners, including First Nations, to hold a Summit on Poverty in 2010 which will develop a comprehensive strategy and plan to reduce poverty.
7. Affiliates and their Federation support the Young Workers Committee and their work to

create a low wage worker network to organize non-union workers to fight for their rights, including a \$10 minimum wage.

8. The Federation organize immediately a strategic planning meeting of all affiliates to implement the Action Plan. Each affiliate will commit to participate on the Planning Committee for the implementation of the Action Plan.
9. The Affiliates and the Federation focus campaigns in targeted ridings to build a capacity to defeat the Liberal MLA in 2013, or earlier through recall, if feasible.
10. Provide a complete report to delegates at the 2010 Convention on the implementation of the Action Plan and how best to use our resources to increase our capacity to organize against anti-worker politicians, defeat the Liberal government and to elect and keep accountable politicians who are supported by the Labour movement, municipally, provincially and federally. ●



### "Year from hell" for unemployed

CLC/CALM - "It's been a year from hell for Canada's unemployed workers," says Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress. "Since last fall hundreds of thousands of people have seen their full-time jobs disappear."

People have had to trade full-time, family-supporting work for part-time jobs and self-employment. Fewer than half of unemployed workers qualify for Employment Insurance and those who do get benefits are receiving an average of about \$50 a day.

Statistics Canada reports that in October 2009 there were 1.59 million unemployed Canadians, or 8.6 per

cent of the workforce, up from 6.3% a year earlier. Since the fall of 2008, 400,000 jobs have been lost.

The decline was mainly in manufacturing, construction, transport and natural resources. The deterioration of the labour market is now spreading to the service industry, including retail and wholesale trade, which is down by 31,000, and other services are down by 20,000. More than 24,000 women aged 25 and over and almost 20,000 young workers - groups that are traditionally over-represented in service, retail and wholesale sectors - suffered most of the lay-offs in October. ●

## Grassroots Olympic News

Millions of Canadians are apparently watching the TV news in a frenzy of excitement each night, eager for up-to-the-minute footage of the Olympic flame's long journey to Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Games. Well, that's the impression conveyed by the corporate media, which of course depends heavily on advertising from Olympic sponsors such as General Motors, the TD Bank, etc.

But here in Vancouver, anticipation is plummeting. Promises of "legacy benefits" such as expanded social housing, improved athletic facilities and an influx of tourists have long been exposed as puffery. Instead, residents cringe at the expected long-term tax burden and tight restrictions on movement during the Games.

To keep our fellow Canadians informed, *People's Voice* will print snippets of news from the Olympic front lines in our next few issues.

**Freedom to protest?** After months of angry public reaction, Vancouver City Council reluctantly voted on Dec. 3 to amend its most draconian bylaws against freedom of expression during the Olympics. Enacted last summer by Council's Vision majority, the bylaws shocked even Vision supporters with sweeping restrictions against distribution of printed materials and displays of opposition to the Games. As a result of the amendments, members of the 16,000-strong security force being marshalled for the Games may have to get more creative in search of legal justifications to crack down on critics.

**Jamie Graham returns!** Local supporters of civil liberties were not unhappy when Vancouver's sex-topcop, Jamie Graham, found a better gig running the Victoria police force. Imagine the dismay when Chief Graham recently boasted

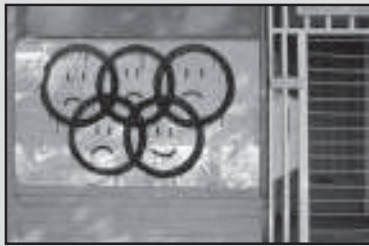
that his force had arranged for an undercover officer to drive a bus rented by the Olympic Resistance Network to take protesters to Victoria for the Torch Relay kick-off on Oct. 30. Olympic "security" actions seem to consist mainly of stalking people who speak out against the "five ring circus of oppression." Now, a misconduct complaint has been filed against Graham. Freelance photographer Bruce Dean says the bragging chief violated the police code of conduct by exposing undercover operations at a security conference.

**The JIG is up?** Members of the Vancouver 2010 Joint Intelligence Group (JIG), an RCMP arm of Olympic Security, are following the torch across the country. In one case, protesters on their way to Victoria spotted two cops who had harassed them in Vancouver a few days previously. One young woman approached other passengers, explaining that the men sitting nearby had been tailing her. When she told the cops to stop, the police allege she threw water on them. The young woman was then cornered. When a bystander objected, one cop pushed the man and threatened to charge him with obstruction. Other passengers began to gather around. Another bystander filming the scene shouted, "This is Canadian civil liberties going down the drain." Facing this show of citizen solidarity, the cops released the woman, only to arrest her later in the streets of Victoria for "Assault Police."

**Host Nation dissidents** The Musqueam Band in southwest Vancouver is one of the four "host First Nations" for the Winter Olympics. But this status has done little to alleviate poverty or fix leaky roofs on their reserve. Disgruntled Musqueam are threatening to occupy the band office during the Games to tell the world about their mouldy homes. With no chance for debate, band members voted on Dec. 3 on a resolution authorizing distribution of \$16 million paid in recognition of their role as a host nation. The plan puts a new gym and improved soccer facilities above housing renovation, which was 11th on the list. "There are some houses down there [in which] it's raining in the inside," Musqueam member Mike Sparrow told the media. One ceiling collapsed during a recent rain storm. Around 40 per cent of homes on the reserve require major repairs, according to a Statistics Canada report last year.

**Standing on guard for what?** Hundreds packed a Vancouver public library meeting room on Nov. 25, waiting to hear U.S. radio journalist Amy Goodman (co-host of "Democracy Now") speak about her new book. But at 7 pm, event organizers broke the news that Goodman was being detained by Canadian border guards. Goodman finally arrived an hour later. What was Canada Customs concerned about? It seems that Goodman's views on the Winter Olympics were at the top of the list. Sharp-witted border guards finally let this potential menace enter Canada, but only on a 48-hour pass. The episode has been reported worldwide, revealing the disturbing pattern of attacks against democracy and civil rights under the Harper Tories.

**Olympic eviction** Evicted tenants of an eight-unit East Vancouver house say the owner required them to sign leases that end January 31, 2010, while assuring that they would be able to extend their leases. But at the end of November, tenants got notices saying the owner requires the entire house "for immediate family," in apparent compliance with the BC Residential Tenancy Act. However, the house is now being advertised online for February-March 2010 rental at tens of thousands of dollars. The owner has told tenants they will be welcome to return in April 2010! ●



Despite the changes to Olympic-related bylaws, Vancouver city staff has ordered the removal of this "offending" mural outside a local art gallery.

# Neo-nazis implicated in latest Calgary bombing

By Kimball Cariou

There has finally been a break in the escalating violence generated by a racist gang which has been active in southern Alberta for the past few years. A leading member of the Aryan Guard is on the lam, accused of bombing the home of a fellow neo-Nazi, and the group has officially disbanded.

As reported in *People's Voice*, anti-racist activists Jason Devine and Bonnie Collins, who are also Communist Party members, have been among the main targets of the neo-Nazis. Their northeast Calgary home was firebombed in 2008, and attackers recently smashed their windows and painted swastikas and other Nazi graffiti. Members of the neo-Nazi group have committed many other criminal acts (see PV, Nov. 15-30, 2009).

These crimes have usually been treated as the isolated actions of individuals. Spokespersons for the Calgary police expressed little concern, calling the violence simply part of a struggle between anti-racists and the local Aryan Guard. Police even hinted that a previous bombing against an Aryan Guard member was probably the work of anti-racists. This claim was denied by Devine and other members of Anti-Racist Action, and by other progressive and democratic movements in Calgary.

Then on November 23, police issued warrants for Aryan

Guard member Kyle Robert McKee, and for an unnamed 17-year-old male. Both men face charges of attempted murder, possessing, making or controlling explosives,



Have you seen Kyle McKee? The accused racist pipe-bomber may have fled back to Ontario, where he once angered Kitchener residents by flying a Nazi flag. Identifying mark? The "Kill Jews" tattoo on his shins.

and possession of a weapon or imitation weapon for a dangerous purpose. The teenager is under arrest, but McKee has apparently headed east to escape the charges.

On Nov. 21, police had responded to a complaint of gunfire in the Rundle neighbourhood in the city's northeast. They found that a pipe bomb had been detonated in a parking lot between

two apartment buildings. Nearby residents were evacuated, and a second detonated bomb was found nearby. The intended victims had heard noises on their balcony, and spotted McKee lighting the devices, which they tossed away moments before the resulting explosion. Police called it a targeted attack, since McKee and the victims know each other and share similar beliefs.

In the wake of the charges, a statement was posted on the neo-Nazi "Stormfront" website, announcing the disbanding of the Aryan Guard following internal disputes.

"Over the past six months," the statement concludes, "the group continued to degenerate, falling further from the ideal the main membership body strived for the group to become... It's sad to say that in the final months the membership body dissolved, leaving only one founding member, one associate and a few new faces striving for membership in something that they could be proud of... With this, The Aryan Guard is officially disbanded."

Unfortunately, this bizarre episode may not be the end of the neo-Nazis in Calgary. Subsequent website comments indicate that some members may try to reorganize under another name. But in future, it will be more difficult for the police to ignore violence carried out by this group of racist thugs. ●

## Young workers meet in Hamilton

PV Ontario Bureau

The youth continue to be hard-hit by the so-called "jobless recovery" facing the working class in Canada, a new report from Statistics Canada has found. The unemployment rate for young workers under 25 remains at a record high at over fifteen per cent, with close to half a million youth looking for work. In British Columbia alone, youth unemployment is up over 56 per cent since this time last year.

The report comes at the same time as a UN study warning of a double-dip recession if stimulus funds stop. Firms have mainly begun to restock inventories, rather than respond to stronger consumer or investor demand, the study said.

"It is going to be a cold winter soon. A lot of people will be trudging through the snow because they can't afford a car, turning the heat down because they can't afford the bills. All while homelessness among youth is rising," said Johan Boyden, General Secretary of the Young Communist League.

"I think many people will be angry to read this report, like me. Of course the fightback needs more than anger - but we cannot tolerate this. These are not just numbers. They are our friends, our relatives. Some we are not related to by birth or by marriage, but they are our family, they are the sisters and brothers of our class," Boyden said.

These topics were up front and center at a conference of young workers organized by the Young Communist League at Hamilton's Solidarity House in late November. The conference, attended by about twenty young workers (most of who were unemployed) heard reports from young union activists, community organizers and other young workers about fighting back against the economic crisis.

Presenters discussed the situation of temp workers, efforts to organize campaigns for higher minimum wages and affordable housing, organizing the unemployed in Hamilton, as well as the Ontario Days of Action and a brave story about young workers organizing hotel workers.

Another aspect of the impact on the crisis is debt, Boyden said. "We are 'generation credit,' we are sent letters at the age of 18 requesting we purchase credit cards, and we are encouraged not to think of heavy personal debt as a major problem - when in fact this is insanity," he added. The heavy debt burden that many young people are facing is at record levels. (The Canadian student debt clock has reached \$13,389,090,000, for example).

Jeff, a young grocery worker and presenter at the conference from the Ontario YCL Committee, talked about his situation and the broader fightback. "The workload [in my store] is sickening on some nights, and you basically have to hurt and exhaust your body just to get the stock up," he said.

"Intimidation and guilt-tripping is quite common, particularly when requesting particular nights of the week off. In fact, I had booked this weekend off, and they put me on the schedule."

"The YCL demands an income that allows all people to more than meet their basic needs, under safe working conditions with full benefits including pensions, health and dental care, statutory holidays, time off with pay for training programs, and so on. As young Communists, we believe that only socialism can guarantee meaningful employment - but we don't insist that everyone we work with share out long-term view," he said.

"Joint struggle for our future is the best atmosphere in which to discuss our ideas about building a better Canada. The Young Communist League links these demands for jobs to the right to peace, education, quality-leisure time, an end to racism, sexism and national oppression, and the right to participate in decision making. We think that this will unite different sections of youth across Canada with others fighting against monopoly capitalism: workers, women, the peace movement, other student and youth organizations and many others."

"United, real progress can be made," he added. "Unity is the best trait we can have in a society, because it creates a mutual responsibility for each of us to look after each others interests as a whole." ●

# EDITORIALS

## Big labour struggles for 2010

The New Year may see a major escalation in the level of working class mobilization across Canada. Already, some heroic struggles are being carried out under difficult circumstances - the Steelworkers on strike against Brazilian transnational Vale, for example, and HandyDart drivers in B.C. battling a vicious U.S. employer.

These and other recent strikes show that workers in Canada have the capacity to stand up against the right-wing attack, despite an unfortunate shortage of militant leadership at the highest levels of the labour movement. But much wider struggles are needed to move from sporadic local actions to a truly powerful resistance movement led by the organized working class.

The recent Ontario Federation of Labour convention, which elected a new leadership and heard that the CAW is coming back to the OFL, is a welcome sign that the situation is improving. But the main impetus for change may come from Quebec and British Columbia, where contracts will soon expire for public sector workers.

In Quebec, unions representing 475,000 members have united to issue common demands such as an 11.25% pay increase over three years, improved retirement plans, and support for workers' family commitments. Despite right-wing claptrap about "overpaid government workers," Quebec's average public sector wage of \$36,000 lags behind the private sector by 7.7%. The Common Front is the largest since 1972, when the Quebec working class launched an historic general strike. Some 200,000 public sector employees in B.C. are also entering negotiations, facing the Campbell Liberal government which wants to impose a pay freeze and rollbacks of important collective agreement provisions.

Add to the mix the reality that the capitalist economic crisis continues to clobber private sector workers, and it becomes clear that the situation is critical. The entire labour movement must find ways to extend solidarity to all workers engaged in struggle this year, and to reach out to every sector of the population hit by cutbacks, privatization, and other neoliberal policies. The challenge for 2010 is enormous, but the potential does exist for a mighty upsurge that can force governments and employers to retreat.

## Billions for war, not the planet

While the Harper Tories whine about the "high cost" of reducing carbon emissions, a new report for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives by defence analyst Bill Robinson shows that military spending will be \$21.185 billion in 2009-2010. That puts Canada 13th highest in the world, and number six among NATO's 28 members. The government spends twenty times more on "defence" than on the federal Environment Department, which has a budget of just \$1.064 billion. Even the \$1.8 billion increase in military spending for 2009-10 nearly doubles the Environment Department budget.

Canada has spent \$23.1 billion in successive increases to military spending since 2001. About half of that has been spent on the Afghanistan war. In historical terms, military spending today has surpassed the Cold War 1989 figures by 22%. The misnamed "Canada First Defence Strategy" calls for an extra \$130 billion to \$155 billion for the military over the next 18 years. That could nearly triple Canadian overseas development assistance, enabling Canada to meet or exceed the 0.7% foreign aid target and to provide additional resources for climate change.

Meanwhile, war remains highly profitable. The Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade reports that Canadian military exports have gone to 62 countries with troops engaged in foreign wars and/or major internal armed conflicts, and that Industry Canada continues to give generous financial support for military manufacturers and exporters.

Meaningful action on climate change is primarily a matter of political will. Canada has the resources to help tackle this crisis - but the Tories have instead decided to crank up the war machine. It's a criminal policy, and it must be changed!

## PEOPLE'S VOICE

ISSN number 1198-8657 Published by New Labour Press Ltd.  
Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement #40011632

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Circulation Dept.,  
People's Voice, 133 Herkimer St., Unit 502, Hamilton, ON, L8P 2H3  
Tel: 604.255.2041 Email: pvoice@telus.net

Volunteers and contributors for this issue:

Asad Ali, Dave Arland, Ed Bil, Johan Boyden,  
Sean Burton, Sam Hammond, Tim Pelzer,  
Darrell Rankin, Liz Rowley, Gurpreet Singh,  
and our mailers in Vancouver & Toronto.

Editor: Kimball Cariou Business Manager: Sam Hammond

Editorial Board: Kimball Cariou, Miguel Figueroa,  
Doug Meggison, Naomi Rankin, Liz Rowley, Jim Sacouman

## LETTERS

People's Voice welcomes your letters. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity, and to refuse to print letters which may be libellous or which contain personal attacks. Send your views to: "Letters to the Editor"  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1 or  
pvoice@telus.net

People's Voice articles may be reprinted without permission provided the source is credited.



## Canada falls short at Copenhagen climate talks...

continued from page 1

the first major concession by a major player at the talks, Chinese vice-foreign minister He Yafei said financing from rich countries should be directed to poor countries.

"Financial resources for the efforts of developing countries [to combat climate change are] a legal obligation," he told the media. "That does not mean China will take a share - probably not."

Meanwhile, Canada's role at the Copenhagen summit has been dismal. In fact, Canada has been placed near the bottom of 57 countries in the "Climate Change Performance Index." The Index is based 50% on a country's emissions trends, 30% on its emissions level relative to population, and 20% on its national and international policies on climate change.

Matthew Bramley, Director of the Pembina Institute's Climate Change Program, says that "Canada's performance is the worst in the industrialized world - a result of its high emissions, its lack of national policies capable of substantially cutting those emissions, and its unconstructive role to date in international negotiations. Among the world's major emitters, only Saudi Arabia is performing worse."

"Minister Prentice committed earlier this year to come to

Copenhagen with a full suite of policies that relate to all major sources of emissions; his decision not to fulfil that commitment is one reason why Canada has failed to improve over last year's ranking."

It appears that Stephen Harper will be the only G-7 leader to arrive in Copenhagen without a major national program to support renewable power. New data from Natural Resources Canada reveal that the federal government's support for renewables will effectively end as of January 2010.

The federal government has supported low-impact renewable energy development through the ecoENERGY for Renewable Power program since 2007. The initiative has helped to create clean energy and new jobs in every province, and has been important to fostering the growth of renewable power in Canada.

The decision not to renew the ecoENERGY for Renewable Power program or something similar indicates that the federal government has no plans to provide any support to new renewable energy projects in 2010.

"With almost 11,000 megawatts (MW) of projects in the queue for a program designed for 4,000 MW, it is pretty clear that the last few dollars have been spoken for," according to Tim Weis, Director of Renewable Energy and Efficiency Policy at the Pembina Institute. "At the current pace of growth, federal support for renewable power will effectively finish this

month."

There has been no signal that the Tory government intends to renew or strengthen its previous commitments to renewable power. In contrast, even the United States has outspent Canada on renewable energy by 14:1 (per capita) in their respective 2009 budgets.

"With Canada's renewable industry on the cusp of a major growth spurt creating jobs while delivering long-term environmental benefits, it is a strange time for the federal government to walk away," said Steven Guilbeault from Equiterre. "This new federal data is yet another illustration of why Canada is lagging here in Copenhagen."

"As reducing emissions becomes increasingly urgent, this government is choosing to subsidize pollution, rather than reduce it," Dave Martin from Greenpeace Canada added. "The tar sands continue to receive billions in subsidies from this government while renewables are left out in the cold."

Canada has the potential to generate at least 20% of its electricity from the wind alone - a feat Denmark accomplished in the year 2000. Combined with other renewables such as biomass, small hydro and geothermal, renewable power needs to play a major part in delivering on the government's promise to achieve 90 per cent of Canada's electricity from non-emitting sources by 2020. ●



The rally for action on climate change in Copenhagen. Photo from the Danish paper Arbejderen (Daily Worker)

## Renew today!

Check your label

Please check the address label on the front page to see if it's time to renew. Readers who find "2010/01/01" on their label, for example, will have their subscriptions expire with this issue, January 1-15, 2010. Don't miss a single copy - renew today!

# Right wing tactics disrupt CFS meeting

## PV Youth Bureau

Debates around the future of the Canadian Federation of Students, English-speaking Canada's largest student organization, came to a head at its semi-Annual General Meeting last month. Held Nov. 24-28 in Ottawa, the AGM was attended by over 300 delegates from about eighty student union locals.

The meeting took place in the context of thirteen organized defederation campaigns at colleges and universities affiliated with CFS campuses this semester.

"These moves are being vocally supported by the Conservative Party," B.C. delegate Zach Crispin told *People's Voice*. Crispin pointed to a series of cross-Canada workshops bringing together Conservative youth and attended by sitting Members of Parliament,

previously reported in PV last spring.

"We know the Conservatives have been trying to disrupt the work of progressive organizations on campus, like Public Interest Research Groups and Palestine solidarity committees. This semester we've also seen malicious calls for impeachment of anyone on a students' union board who is seen as left-wing," Crispin said.

Of the ninety motions on the floor at the AGM, a large majority were proposed by locals where defederation campaigns were taking place. While a few of these motions publicly intending to "re-shape and reform" the CFS passed, Crispin told PV, "many of these would break collective agreements with the CFS's unionized employees, force elected leaders of the student movement to earn the minimum wage, and institute

procedures such as leadership by lottery."

"In my opinion, delegates from a number of student unions attended the meeting in hopes of

disrupting the process and stifling regular discussion," Crispin said.

Kwantlen Student Association, the Graduate Students' Association of the University of

Calgary, the Concordia undergraduates and graduates, and the Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University repeatedly put forward filibusters, were ruled out of order by the chair, and on one day delayed discussion until 5 am. When it appeared clear a vote would not be cast in their favour, a fire alarm was pulled.

According to Andrew Brett, a student activist and writer for *Rabble.ca*, the McGill Graduates sent three representatives who were not members of their student union. "One of them was Jose Barrios, a University of Victoria defederation activist flown in from British Columbia; another was Dean Tester, a conservative student at Carleton University and owner of [www.alwaysright.ca](http://www.alwaysright.ca)" a right-wing



CFS rally against tuition hikes and student poverty at Queen's Park in Toronto, Nov. 2009 (Photo: Ed Bil)

see CFS, page 10

## CPC-36 Toronto, Feb. 5-7, 2010

# A plan to defend people, not profits

**The 36th Central Convention of the Communist Party of Canada will be held Feb. 5-7 in Toronto. *People's Voice* is printing excerpts from the draft Political Resolution for the Convention. Here are some of the sections on the Communist Party's "people, not profits" policies.**

All of these struggles need to be addressed in the context of the overarching economic crisis which is driving the right-wing attack. What is required today is a comprehensive action plan - an

economic and political solution which serves the interests of people, not profits - including the following:

- \* protections for Canadian working people through the immediate introduction of plant closure legislation to stop the exodus of manufacturing jobs;
- \* emergency measures to protect secondary industries, along with iron-clad guarantees preventing layoffs, job cuts, wage or pension reductions, and requiring corporations to reinvest in the domestic economy;
- \* the expansion of EI to cover all workers for the full duration of unemployment (including the elimination of the waiting period),

with benefits at 90% of former earnings;

- \* a moratorium on evictions and mortgage foreclosures and utility cut-offs due to unemployment;
- \* an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$16/hour, along with legislation to protect and improve wages, benefits and pensions for all workers, to help raise incomes and stimulate domestic consumption;
- \* emergency action to support Aboriginal-led delivery of effective economic and social interventions in Aboriginal communities;
- \* a massive public investment program to construct affordable social housing, to rebuild Canada's decaying infrastructure, in

environmental protection and conservation, and in job creation programs for youth and the arts;

- \* sweeping progressive tax reform based on ability to pay, the revocation of all corporate tax breaks, write-offs and deferrals at every level, abolition of sales taxes, and the introduction of wealth and inheritance taxes - measures that will shift the tax burden from working people onto the corporations and the wealthy;
- \* emergency steps to protect and extend our public healthcare, education and other social programs, including the establishment of a public system of universal, quality, affordable childcare with Canada-wide

standards; and

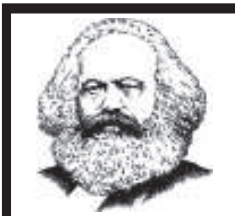
\* Canada's immediate withdrawal from the disastrous war of occupation in Afghanistan, and a 50% cut in military spending.

The security and effectiveness of these anti-crisis actions requires more transformative measures to safeguard the jobs, incomes and services for the Canadian people, including (amongst others):

- \* The nationalization of the auto and steel industries in Canada;
- \* Public ownership under democratic control of the big banks, insurance and other financial institutions in Canada;
- \* the nationalization of the energy industry to guarantee domestic supply and to provide the material basis for the economic rebuilding of Canadian industry and the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs, especially in projects such as renewable energy, mass transit, and the mass production of a more fuel-efficient Canadian car;
- \* Canada's immediate withdrawal from NAFTA, a halt to the "Security and Prosperity Partnership" (SPP) negotiations, and the adoption of a much more diversified, multilateral trade policy based on mutual benefit; and
- \* the introduction of a liveable, guaranteed annual income (GAI) for every individual, as well as a shorter work week with no loss in take-home pay.

... Only united action on a mass scale, drawing millions of working people into struggle, can breathe real life into such a comprehensive anti-crisis plan. That is why we have urged the leadership of the labour movement - the Canadian Labour Congress, the labour centrals in Quebec, and all of their key affiliates - to come together along with its allies in the social movements in an emergency conference to articulate such a unified program of demands, a fightback strategy based on escalating mass action, and with committed resources to see it through... ●

**(To read the entire resolution for the CPC's 36th Convention, visit [www.comunist-party.ca](http://www.comunist-party.ca))**



## Marxist Economics

# Exploitation soars, unemployment up - part 2

By Zoltan Zigedy, from [www.mltoday.com](http://www.mltoday.com)

In Part 1 of this article (*People's Voice*, Dec. 1-13, 2009) the author analyzed the rising rate of exploitation of U.S. workers during the current economic crisis. Part 2 looks at the real trend towards much higher unemployment.

It is not just that workers are working harder; fewer are also working. The October official unemployment rate rose to 10.2%, the highest rate since 1983 and only the second time since records have been kept (1948) that the unemployment rate topped 10%! When workers without full-time work or those discouraged from working are counted, the actual rate is 17.5%, a rate nearly equal to or greater than all but the four peak years of the Great Depression. Where the Roosevelt Administration resorted to public jobs programs to restore employment after 1934, the current Administration, guided by its dogmatic neo-liberal economic team, has largely relied upon

restoring the health of the private sector with generous bailouts and massive loan guarantees, furthering shifting the burden of recovery onto the future tax obligations of the working class.

The impact upon families of working people - saddled with escalating health care and education costs, massive debt, and uncertainty - is devastating. With nearly one out of five US citizens without a secure, sustainable job, the economic crisis is far from over for the overwhelming majority.

As Doug Henwood has pointed out (*Left Business Observer*, #122), even with women entering the work force in very great numbers, the percentage of people in the work force (employment/population) has fallen to within striking distance of the level when the Government first kept statistics (1948).

For the unemployed, the prospect of getting a job has diminished to unprecedented levels: the median length of unemployment now stretches to nearly five months. Therefore, the average worker, out of desperation,

will likely consider employment at a wage and benefit level well below their former rate. This downward pressure on wages contributes to the willingness of those with employment to accept increased exploitation in order to retain a job. With the unemployed willing to work for less, it is likely that those with jobs will fear for the loss of theirs.

The numbers, the reports from the Government's Labour Department, are stark, yet they fail to convey the pain, the misery, the desperation that underlies increasing exploitation and expanding unemployment. Their impact will appear later in poverty figures, suicides, broken families, crime statistics, child malnutrition, avoidable illnesses and deaths, and other measures of neglect and human suffering.

It is irresponsible and dishonest not to locate their cause in policy decisions. It doesn't have to be this way.

The decisions taken by the new Administration, decisions taken to address a profound economic crisis, did not have to place the

burden upon the vast majority of our fellow citizens. History shows other responses: Roosevelt's second term - also hailed as an endorsement of transformational change and a rebuke of past approaches - strove to place many of the resources of government directly for the benefit of those most harmed by economic catastrophe. But this is not the approach that this Administration chose. Instead it hewed to the corrupted line that extending a helping hand to corporate USA - the perpetrators of the crisis - would pull everyone up, a bankrupt return to the cynical approach of the Reagan gang.

Looking forward, this approach will only encourage more corporate irresponsibility and more pain for the vast majority. We, on the left, cannot continue to shirk our duty to speak loudly for a new policy that will put the future of working people at the top of the agenda. It is time to return to a vigorous oppositional stance and cast aside the misplaced, naive trust in the Democratic Administration. The season of childish fantasy is over. ●

# Morales win deepens Bolivian revolution

## PV Vancouver Bureau

Bolivian President Evo Morales vowed to increase state control over the economy and strengthen political power for indigenous groups, after he was re-elected on Dec. 6 in a landslide.

Jubilant supporters waving Bolivian flags jumped up and down in La Paz's central Murillo square after polls closed, chanting "Evo! Evo!" In a booming victory speech punctuated by fireworks from the balcony of the presidential palace, Morales called on all sectors of society - including the opposition - to unite behind him.

"We have the enormous responsibility to deepen and accelerate this process of change," he said.

Morales won about 63 percent of the vote, more than 35 percent points ahead of his closest challenger, rightist former Governor Manfred Reyes Villa. The president's Movement Toward Socialism party also looked likely to win two-thirds of the seats in both houses of Congress, leaving his divided conservative opposition with little power to oppose revolutionary reforms during his five-year second term. Reyes narrowly led in the opposition bastion of Santa Cruz state in the eastern lowlands with 50 per cent, compared to 43 per cent for Morales.

The three political parties that dominated Bolivian politics for decades have now been all but erased. The last survivor was the National Union. Its presidential candidate, Samuel Doria Medina, a cement magnate, got just 6 per cent of the vote.

Morales, an Aymara Indian, is

Bolivia's first indigenous president. He is hugely popular among the Indian majority that also supported a constitutional reform earlier in 2009 to allow him to run for a second consecutive term.

"Bolivians have given us an enormous responsibility to deepen this transformation," he said after his victory. "Bolivians have punished the people who are traitors of this process."

"Evo Morales has a mandate unlike any other president in the hemisphere, including Barack Obama," said analyst Jim Shultz of the non-profit Democracy Center in Cochabamba. "This is the fifth national election in four years and his margin of victory has only increased each and every time."

By taking two-thirds of Congress, the MAS could call for new referendums to amend the constitution. The result also gives Morales control of judicial appointments, reducing the chances the opposition could successfully challenge his policies. Morales will have greater political power to expand on radical changes he already has made, such as indigenous autonomy and land reform.

The re-election to a new five-year term comes under the new constitution which "refounded" Bolivia as a "plurinational" state, allowing self-rule for the country's 36 native peoples.

Twelve of Bolivia's more than 330 municipalities voted on indigenous autonomy, which would allow them to restructure in favour of traditional governance based on consensus-building. Still to be defined by the new Congress are larger territorial autonomies for indigenous groups that could redraw the political map and

redefine how government funds are disbursed.

During his first term, Morales launched a state takeover of the energy industry, and raised taxes on foreign companies in Bolivia, bringing a windfall to fund popular social programs. The government now issues cash payments to school children, mothers and pensioners, reaching a quarter of Bolivia's 10 million people.

"For the first time in Bolivia's... history, the state is reaching every home," he said during the campaign. "It's not a solution, but for many families it's a big relief."

Morales has already given Indian communities more authority over investment in natural resources in their territories. The new constitution enshrines traditional practices after centuries of harsh discrimination since the Spanish conquest.

During this campaign, he pledged to launch state-run paper, cement, dairy and drug companies and develop iron and lithium industries to help Bolivia export value-added products instead of raw materials.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez congratulated Evo Morales, calling his landslide electoral win a victory for all of Latin America.

"Yesterday there was jubilation throughout the continent," Chavez said on Dec. 7 during his speech at the First International Conference celebrating ten years since the adoption of the Bolivarian Constitution of Venezuela.

Chavez said he was sure Morales would continue "fighting without rest to diminish poverty" and improve the welfare of his people, "based on indigenous philosophy."

Chavez said that governments like that of Morales embody a social movement which he dubbed "popular constitutionalism," that



Bolivian President Evo Morales wins a second term.

exists throughout Latin America is also promoted by the governments of Rafael Correa (Ecuador), Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (Brazil) and Cristina Fernandez (Argentina).

"This process that I dare to call constitutionalism is a new force," and "I say with humility that the initial outbreak began here in Caracas," he said, referring to the adoption of the new constitution in 1999, which many refer to as the beginning of the Bolivarian revolution.

He stressed that more needs to be done to deepen this social process across Latin America "with the variations of each case, of each

country... to build a new path in peace... The other way would be to take up arms. I think that is what the bourgeoisie wants but they are at a disadvantage even though they count on the support of the Empire."

Chavez pointed out that when the president of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, proposed to consult the people about the possibility of convening a Constituent Assembly, he was deposed in a military coup. The threat of a coup also exists in Bolivia and Ecuador, said Chavez, in order "to stem the rising tide" of independent governments. ●

## Thousands attend Jara's reburial

The remains of legendary Chilean singer Victor Jara were reburied in Santiago on December 5, 36 years after he was murdered during the U.S.-backed September 1973 military coup.

Thousands of people, including President Michelle Bachelet, paid their last respects during a three-day wake in the capital. His widow Joan Turner, an English-born dancer, stood by her husband's coffin and greeted guests during the wake.

Victor Jara, who was also a theatre director and one of the best-known members of the Communist Party of Chile, was among the first victims of the fascist coup in which General Augusto Pinochet seized power. Rounded up with many others in the National Stadium in Santiago, Jara kept up the spirits of his fellow prisoners, performing his songs until guards finally smashed his hands and shot him dead. His broken body was found a few days later.

His body was exhumed in June to clarify the circumstances of his death. A court then established that he had been tortured and shot more than 30 times. Earlier in 2009, after Jara's family came forward with new information, former army conscript Jose Adolfo Paredes Marquez was charged with the killing. He denies responsibility for Jara's death, and the officers who ordered his murder have never been formally identified. ●



Chilean carrying image of Victor Jara at the reburial.

## New sentences for Ramon and Fernando, but struggle for the Cuban Five continues

### From the Bulletin of the U.S. National Committee To Free the Cuban Five

Dear Friends of the Cuban Five,

Today [December 9] in a courtroom of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida packed with supporters of the Cuban Five including family members of Ramon Labanino and Fernando Gonzalez, Ramon and Fernando were resentenced.

Ramon received a 30-year sentence, reduced from life in prison. Fernando received a sentence of 17 years and 9 months, reduced from his original sentence of 19 years.

Gloria La Riva, coordinator of the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five, said "Sisters and brothers, today in the courtroom, the dignity and courage of our brothers Fernando and Ramon was visible for all to see, as was that of Antonio when he was resentenced on Oct. 13. We commit ourselves

more than ever to fight for the immediate freedom of the Cuban Five, and for the right of Olga Salanueva and Adriana Perez to receive visas to visit their husbands Rene Gonzalez and Gerardo Hernandez."

A new stage in the Cuban Five freedom fight has just begun. We urge supporters around the world to initiate new actions and continue the struggle with renewed vigor until the Five are free.

**"We will continue until the final victory"**

Statement issued by Antonio Guerrero, Fernando Gonzalez, Ramon Labanino, Miami, December 8, 2009

Dear Sisters and Brothers from Cuba and from all over the World:

We have already served more than 11 years in prison and there is still no justice at any level of the American legal system.

Three of us have come to the Miami Court to be re-sentenced due to an order from the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, which determined that our sentences had been erroneously imposed.

Our brother Gerardo Hernandez, who is serving two life terms plus 15 years, has been arbitrarily excluded from this re-sentencing process. His situation remains the principal injustice in our case. The US Government is well aware of the falseness of the accusations against him and the unfairness of his sentence.

This has been a complex process, difficult and much discussed in every detail, in which we participated along with our counsels. We did not give an inch in our principles, decorum and honor, always defending our innocence and the dignity of our country.

Just as it did at the moment of

see CUBAN FIVE, page 11

# "Socialism the only real alternative"

**Statement adopted by the 11th International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties, New Delhi, Nov. 20-22**

This 11th International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties, held to discuss "The international capitalist crisis, the workers' and peoples' struggle, the alternatives and the role of the communist and working class movement":

- Reiterates that the current global recession is a systemic crisis of capitalism demonstrating its historic limits and the need for its revolutionary overthrow. It demonstrates the sharpening of the main contradiction of capitalism between its social nature of production and individual capitalist appropriation. The political representatives of Capital try to conceal this unresolvable contradiction between capital and labour that lies at the heart of the crisis. This crisis intensifies rivalries between imperialist powers who along with the international institutions - the IMF World Bank, WTO and others - are implementing their 'solutions' which essentially aim to intensify capitalist exploitation. Military and political 'solutions' are aggressively pursued globally by imperialism. NATO is promoting a new aggressive strategy. The political systems are becoming more reactionary curtailing democratic and civil liberties, trade union rights etc. This crisis is further deepening the structural corruption under capitalism which is being institutionalised.

- Reaffirms that the current crisis, probably the most acute and all encompassing since the Great Depression of 1929, has left no field untouched. Hundreds of thousands of factories are closed. Agrarian and rural economies are under distress intensifying misery and poverty of millions of cultivators and farm workers globally. Millions of people are left jobless and homeless. Unemployment is growing to unprecedented levels and is officially expected to breach the 50 million mark. Inequalities are increasing across the globe - the rich are getting richer and the poor, poorer. More than one billion people, that is one-sixth of humanity go hungry. Youth, women and immigrants are the first victims.

True to their class nature, the response of the respective capitalist governments to overcome this crisis fails to address these basic concerns. All the neo-liberal votaries and social democratic managers of capitalism, who had so far decried the State are now utilising the state for rescuing them, thus underlining a basic fact that the capitalist state has always defended and enlarged avenues for super profits. While the costs of the rescue packages and bailouts are at public expense, the benefits accrue to few. The bailout packages announced, are addressed first to rescue and then enlarge profit making avenues. Banks and financial corporates are now back in business and making profits. Growing unemployment

and the depression of real wages is the burden for the working people as against the gift of huge bailout packages for the corporations.

- Realises that this crisis is no aberration based on the greed of a few or lack of effective regulatory mechanisms. Profit maximisation, the raison d'etre of capitalism, has sharply widened economic

## Delhi Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties

inequalities both between countries and within countries in these decades of 'globalisation'. The natural consequence was a decline in the purchasing power of the vast majority of world population. The present crisis is thus a systemic crisis. This once again vindicates the Marxist analysis that the capitalist system is inherently crisis ridden. Capital, in its quest for profits, traverses boundaries and tramples upon anything and everything. In the process it intensifies exploitation of the working class and other strata of working people, imposing greater hardships. Capitalism in fact requires to maintain a reserve army of labour. The liberation from such capitalist barbarity can come only with the establishment of the real alternative, socialism. This requires the strengthening of anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly struggles. Our struggle for an alternative is thus a struggle against the capitalist system. Our struggle for an alternative is for a system where there is no exploitation of people by people and nation by nation. It is a struggle for another world, a just world, a socialist world.

- Conscious of the fact that the dominant imperialist powers would seek their way out of the crisis by putting greater burdens on the working people, by seeking to penetrate and dominate the markets of countries with medium and lower level of capitalist development, commonly called developing countries.

This they are trying to achieve firstly, through the WTO Doha round of trade talks, which reflect the unequal economic agreements at the expense of the peoples of these countries particularly with reference to agricultural standards and Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA).

Secondly, capitalism, which in the first place is responsible for the destruction of the environment, is trying to transfer the entire burden of safeguarding the planet from climate change, which in the first place they had caused, onto the shoulders of the working class and working people. Capitalism's proposal for restructuring in the name of climate change has little relation to the protection of the environment. Corporate inspired 'Green development' and 'green economy' are sought to be used to impose new state monopoly regulations which support profit maximisation and impose new hardships on the people. Profit maximisation under capitalism is thus not compatible with environmental protection and

peoples' rights.

- Notes that the only way out of this capitalist crisis for the working class and the common people is to intensify struggles against the rule of capital. It is the experience of the working class that when it mobilises its strength and resists these attempts it can be successful in protecting its rights. Industry sit-ins, factory occupations and such militant working class actions have forced the ruling classes to consider the demands of the workers. Latin America, the current theatre of popular mobilisations and working class actions, has

shown how rights can be protected and won through struggle. In these times of crisis, once again the working class is seething with discontent. Many countries have witnessed and are witnessing huge working class actions, demanding amelioration. These working class actions need to be further strengthened by mobilising the vast mass of suffering people, not just for immediate alleviation but

communist propaganda not only in individual countries but at global and inter-state forums (EU, OSCE, Council of Europe). However much they may try, the achievements and contributions of socialism in defining the contours of modern civilisation remain ineradicable. Faced with these relentless attacks, our struggles thus far had been mainly defensive struggles, struggles to protect the rights that we had won earlier. Today's conjuncture warrants the launch of an offensive, not just to protect our rights but win new rights. Not for winning a few rights but for dismantling the entire capitalist edifice - for an onslaught on the rule of capital, for a political alternative - socialism.

- Resolves that under these conditions, the communist and workers parties shall actively work to rally and mobilise the widest possible sections of the popular forces in the struggle for full time stable employment, exclusively public and free for all health, education and social welfare,

and launch broad struggles for the rights of the people and against the capitalist system. Though the capitalist system is inherently crisis ridden, it does not collapse automatically. The absence of a communist-led counterattack engenders the danger of rise of reactionary forces. The ruling classes launch an all out attack to prevent the growth of the communists and the workers' parties to protect their status quo. Social democracy continues to spread illusions about the real character of capitalism, advancing slogans such as 'humanisation of capitalism', 'regulation', 'global governance' etc. These in fact support the strategy of capital by denying class struggle and buttressing the pursuit of anti-popular policies. No amount of reform can eliminate exploitation under capitalism. Capitalism has to be overthrown. This requires the intensification of ideological and political working class led popular struggles. All sorts of theories like 'there is no alternative' to imperialist globalisation are propagated. Countering them, our response is 'socialism is the alternative'.

We, the communist and workers' parties coming from all parts of the globe and representing the interests of the working class and all other toiling sections of society (the vast majority of global population) underlining the irreplaceable role of the communist parties call upon the people to join us in strengthening the struggles to declare that socialism is the only real alternative for the future of humankind and that the future is ours. ●

### 11th INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE COMMUNIST AND WORKERS PARTIES

20-22 November, 2009  
New Delhi, India

Communist Party of India (Marxist)  
Communist Party of India



for a long-term solution to their plight.

- Imperialism, buoyed by the demise of the Soviet Union and the periods of boom preceding this crisis had carried out unprecedented attacks on the rights of the working class and the people. This has been accompanied by frenzied anti-

against gender inequality and racism, and for the protection of the rights of all sections of the working people including the youth, women, migrant workers and those from ethnic and national minorities.

- Calls upon the communist and workers parties to undertake this task in their respective countries

## Communists call for global actions

Eighty-nine participants representing 57 communist and workers' parties from 48 countries took part in the 11th International meeting of the communist and workers' parties (IMCWP) held in New Delhi. The meeting unanimously adopted the Delhi Declaration (above), and agreed that the next meeting will be hosted by the South African Communist Party.

The IMCWP called for concrete actions to be undertaken in all countries and coordinated globally on the following issues:

- Against NATO and its global expansion; against renewed imperialist military aggressiveness, and against foreign military bases.

- To observe November 29 as a day of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, and to observe 2010 as the sixty-fifth anniversary of the defeat of fascism.

- To strengthen popular mobilisations in defence of workers rights in coordination with the trade unions.

- To intensify international solidarity for the release of the Cuban Five.

- To strengthen popular movements, pressing governments in respective countries, demanding the right to work in coordination with the youth organisations.

Due to last-minute visa problems, Communist Party of Canada leader Miguel Figueroa was unfortunately unable to attend. The CPC was represented in New Delhi by Harjit Daudharia, a veteran party leader from British Columbia.

The CPC's contribution to the discussions in Delhi is posted at the website of the communist and workers' parties, [www.solidnet.org.g](http://www.solidnet.org.g). We reprint here some brief excerpts.

"The global economic crisis has impacted heavily on Canada and its people. While the financial sector escaped relatively unscathed - none of the Canadian banks collapsed during the meltdown - most other parts of domestic economy, especially the manufacturing and resource sectors, both of which are heavily dependent on exports to the U.S. market, have been severely crippled. Unemployment continues to increase, and is expected to officially surpass 10% by the end of this year, although in real terms, it is already much higher than that...."

"And yet despite their right-wing, anti-people policies, the Tories remain in power and are even positioned to gain a majority in the general election expected next year, in large measure because the bourgeois 'opposition' parties, including the main social-democratic party, the NDP, have

failed to bring forward any substantial alternative policies to those of the Conservatives.

"Generally speaking, the fightback by the labour movement and its allies has been slow to develop. There are many reasons for this, including the intensity, speed and escalation of the assault. But it is also a result of the lingering effect of the Cold War attack on the left and the socialist states, which ushered in the dominance of right-wing social democracy as the main ideology of the trade union leadership. This has definitely hampered attempts by organized workers to develop extra-parliamentary political struggles to resist plant closures and economic attacks.

"Notwithstanding these weaknesses however, Canadian workers have repeatedly shown their capacity to struggle in the face of the capitalist crisis and its consequences.

"The problem of leadership - or lack thereof - in the fightback against the corporate attack is not primarily organizational, but rather ideological in character. It is absolutely essential therefore to build the left and militant forces within the trade unions. This is the main challenge confronting our Party as we prepare for our upcoming 36th Convention next February..." ●



# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Dubai crisis sparks migrant job fears

Large numbers of migrant workers from Asia and the Middle East are likely to bear the brunt of the Dubai emirate's severe credit problems, reports the BBC. The country's construction sector still bears the scars left by the global financial crisis.

Dubai had been enjoying a boom, financed by borrowed money. Now that one of the biggest government owned companies, Dubai World, is having trouble paying its debt, more migrant workers could be sent home.

Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers built Dubai, and continue to clean its streets and keep most of its institutions running. In return, remittances earned there have helped them survive the grinding poverty in their home countries. But in Dubai, residency depends on having a job or having a big bank account. If you don't have either, you can be sent home.

The Dubai government says it will not bail out its debt-stricken companies, insisting that although Dubai World is owned by the government, legally it is a separate business entity. Negotiations are underway over how to settle the dispute. But whatever the outcome, affected companies in Dubai will downsize by laying off more foreign workers.

## Apartheid profiteers face lawsuit

The Congress of South African Trade Unions is to act as *Amicus Curiae* (Friend of the Court) in a class action lawsuit being brought against South African firms who collaborated with the apartheid regime in a District Court in the USA on January 6, 2010.

In a statement, COSATU says, "Our decision rests on the belief that the apartheid system was based on the white South African minority striving to secure a cheap and pliant workforce to reap the benefits of the country's vast natural resources, in particular its mineral wealth. Our members were thus among the worst affected, and our organisations were at the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement. We therefore fully support the position taken by the Government of South Africa in its letter of 1 September 2009 and we believe that this litigation is an important part of the rebuilding of South Africa, particularly given the failure of the corporate entities being charged to participate in the Truth and Reconciliation process. Their responsibility of the defendants for their conduct during the apartheid era has never been fully accounted for, and their liability has never been discharged by any reconciliation process.

"Yet, as our members experienced first-hand, certain multinational corporations actively collaborated with the apartheid government and aided and abetted its abhorrent crimes. The customised administrative and technological assistance provided

by multinational enterprises facilitated the commission of the regime's crimes, which could not have occurred without the provision of data-collection and procession systems, crowd-control hardware and vehicles, which were designed and maintained to meet the regime's repressive needs. Injured victims should be able to pursue redress



for the complicity of such entities in the specific crimes listed in the amended complaints.

"The histories of apartheid and SA labour relations are inextricably intertwined. The need for a cheap and pliant labour force led to many of the crimes which underlie this litigation. The laws and institutions of apartheid systematically removed all workplace and constitutional protection from the black labour force.

"The pass laws deprived any pass-carrying person from being an 'employee' and deprived them of any protections and labour rights. The Group Areas Act, the institution of the Bantustans and influx control rendered black South Africans as immigrants in their own country. This was slavery in all but name."

## UK alliance tackles homophobia

Britain's Trade Union Congress (TUC) has announced a new alliance of unions and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) campaigners to tackle the prejudice faced by LGBT people in football. Representatives of the Professional Footballers Association, Pride Sports, Kick it Out!, Schools Out!, the LGBT Sports Network and the Brighton-based Justin Campaign came together with members of the TUC LGBT committee to form a new alliance on Dec. 9.

The organisations agreed to coordinate their efforts against homophobia at all levels of the game. Specific suggestions for how to tackle prejudice will be conveyed to the Football Association, to build on their commitment to deal with the problem. Unions will encourage their members to join in this action.

Millions of people are involved in playing or watching football, from the playground to premier league clubs, but no one dares to be 'out' at senior level in the game for fear of the abuse they will endure, says the TUC.

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber said: "At a time when popular attitudes to LGBT people have improved greatly, football grounds remain bastions of homophobic prejudice. Over a long

period, campaigns like Kick it Out! have succeeded in making racism unacceptable in football. The TUC believes that something similar is needed to challenge homophobia and we have begun this task today with the launch of a new alliance."

## Tea workers office seized

Over 200 tea garden labourers formed a human chain and held a rally in front of the Sylhet Central Shaheed minar on Dec. 8, protesting the illegal seizure of the office of the central union of tea garden labourers in Bangladesh.

The tea labour leaders say that a committee elected during the former caretaker government's rule had established the office at Srimangal. But, a local gang with the blessing of some ruling party men captured the office illegally on November 25. At the rally, union leaders vowed to launch a tougher agitation soon to get back the office. The protesting workers later led a procession in the city before handing over a memorandum to the labour minister.

In the memo, they demanded immediate steps to free their union office from the clutch of illegal occupants and return it back to the elected body. Otherwise, the workers would be compelled to begin a widespread struggle in the tea sector, they warned.

## Chilean miners return to work

Workers at the Chuquicamata mine in Chile's north agreed to end their strike and return to negotiations with the mine's owner Codelco on Dec. 10. "We (the miners) will return to work and to negotiations with Codelco, aiming to get our workers a better deal," union chief Victor Galleguillos said.

Access to the mine was blocked on Dec. 9 as 4,500 workers protested a proposed change to their contract benefits. Codelco wanted to remove previously agreed holiday and pension agreements from the miners' new contract, which is to take effect in January.

Chuquicamata produces around 2,000 fine tons of copper a day. The one-day disruption is estimated to have cost the company US\$8 million.

Meanwhile, industrial action continued at the El Teniente mine south of Santiago, also owned by Codelco. Around 230 subcontracted workers were on strike, demanding that the company add a serious injury compensation guarantee to their existing contract. They also demand a US\$2,500 end-of-strike bonus for each worker.

"It would ideal for all if we can arrive at a deal in the shortest time possible," said union leader Manuel Ahumada.

El Teniente is the largest underground mine in the world, producing 404,700 metric tons of fine copper last year. State-owned Codelco is the world's biggest mining company. Its revenues fund government social programs. A percentage of the company's profits are also kept aside for arms purchases

Codelco reported profits of US\$2 billion for the first nine months of 2009, down from US\$4.8 billion for the same period in 2008. The drop was due largely to falling copper prices. The firm recently announced several big investments, including a US\$2 billion expansion to its Radimiro Tomic mine following the discovery of new copper reserves in Chile's Region II. An investment of US\$900 million will increase daily production at the firm's Andina mine by 25 per cent by 2011.

## Czech workers conduct wildcats

Around 20 Czech workers left the welding shop in Hyundai Motor Manufacturing during their shift on December 1. One day later there was a one-hour wildcat strike at the same company. On Dec. 3, workers at the Hyundai subcontractor Dymos also held a one-hour work stoppage. On Dec. 7, the union called a "strike emergency", a symbolic measure to warn that unless management starts negotiations a real strike action will be called in Hyundai.

Around 400 Hyundai workers took part in the Dec. 2 strike, standing up against obligatory overtime, selective annual bonuses, and workplace harassment. When the overtime was supposed to begin, workers on one of the lines stopped production, and all the other lines joined in. The workers then assembled in the canteen. The management told them to choose a representative to negotiate on their behalf, but instead, the workers demanded the management to come and talk in front of everyone. After an hour of open negotiations, the workers agreed to complete the shift and continue negotiating over the

next few days. They were promised that the overtime on Dec. 10 would be cancelled and the hour they spent striking would be paid.

## Labour disputes rise in Beijing

About 80,000 workers had been involved in disputes with their employers by the end of November, double the number of 2008, a senior official of the Beijing trade union says, according to the *China Daily* English-language newspaper published in the capital city.

There were 26,000 disputes during the same period in 2007 and 49,000 in 2008, said Zhang Hengshun, director of law department of Beijing municipal federation of trade union. The most important reason behind the drastic increase, he said, is that arbitration has been free of charges since May 1, 2008, when the Law on Mediation and Arbitration of Labor Disputes took effect.

"The payment stopped some employees who wanted to apply for arbitration before the law took effect," said Wang Fang, a lawyer from Beijing Zhicheng law firm. Formerly, employees were charged 300 yuan for arbitration. Free arbitration has encouraged more employees to choose legal channels to resolve their labor disputes, Wang said. But as the number of arbitration cases increases, so has the amount of time spent waiting for a result.

Labor dispute cases heard by Beijing courts have also increased, according to a report by the Beijing Second Intermediate People's Court. The court accepted 4,506 labour dispute cases by Nov. 10, 2009, up 180 percent over 2008. About half of the cases were related to overtime rates and payment.

Many items in our "Global Class Struggle" column are from the Labour Start website, [www.labourstart.org](http://www.labourstart.org)

## Send me information on the Communist Party of Canada



The Communist Party of Canada, formed in 1921, has a proud history of fighting for jobs, equality, peace, Canadian independence, and socialism. The CPC does much more than run candidates in elections. We think the fight against big business and its parties is a year-round job, so our members are active across the country, to build our party and to help strengthen people's movements on a wide range of issues. All our policies and leadership are set democratically by our members. To find out more about Canada's party of socialism, contact the nearest CPC office.

### Central Committee CPC

290A Danforth Ave, Toronto, Ont., M4K 1N6  
Ph. (416)469-2446 Fax (416)469-4063 E-mail <[info@cpc-pcc.ca](mailto:info@cpc-pcc.ca)>

**Parti Communiste du Quebec** (section du Parti communiste du Canada)  
5430, av. Trans-Island, Montréal, QC, H3W 3A5  
Tel: (514)737-7817 Cel: (514)212-3857  
E-mail: <[pueblo@sympatico.ca](mailto:pueblo@sympatico.ca)>

**B.C. Committee CPC**  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1  
Tel: 604-254-9836 Fax: 604-254-9803  
E-mail: [cpbc@telus.net](mailto:cpbc@telus.net)

**Edmonton CPC**  
Box 68112, 70 Bonnie Doon PO  
Edmonton, AB, T6C 4N6  
Tel: 780-465-7893 Fax: 780-463-0209

**Calgary CPC**  
Unit #1, 19 Radcliffe Close SE,  
Calgary, T2A 6B2 Tel: 403-248-6489

**Saskatchewan CPC**  
Email: <[mail@communist-party-sk.ca](mailto:mail@communist-party-sk.ca)>

**Ottawa CPC**  
Tel: 613-232-7108

**Manitoba Committee CPC**  
387 Selkirk Ave., Winnipeg, R2W 2M3  
Tel/fax: 204-586-7824

**Ontario Ctee. CPC**  
290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, M4K 1N6  
Tel: 416-469-2446

**Hamilton Ctee. CPC**  
265 Melvin Ave., Apt. 815  
Hamilton, ON,  
Tel: 905-548-9586

**Atlantic Region CPC**  
Box 70, Grand Pré, NS, B0P 1M0  
Tel/fax: 902-542-7981



# "Canada should make Dow accountable"

By Gurpreet Singh, Surrey

As Canada gears up for the Winter Olympics 2010, activists involved in helping the victims of Bhopal - the worst incident in the history of industrial disasters in India - have stepped up their campaign against the US-based Dow Chemical company.

In December 1984, there was a massive gas leak at the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, instantly killing about 5,000 people. The number of the dead later rose to 20,000. Union Carbide is now owned by Dow Chemical, one of the official corporate sponsors of the 2010 Olympics.

Union Carbide CEO Warren Anderson was charged and arrested for the deaths in India, but was allowed to flee the country back to the United States.

The activists who are helping the victims families and those who became visually impaired for the rest of their lives organized a candle light vigil in Vancouver on December 3 to mark the 25th anniversary of the episode. The vigil was held not only to draw the attention of the world to the sufferings of the victims, but also to seek a ban on Dow from the Olympics.

Satinath Sarangi, the prominent leader of the Bhopal victims, who visited Vancouver a few years ago, had asked the Canadian government not to let Dow Chemical participate in the event.

Likewise, Rachna Dhingra who earlier worked for Dow and is now working with the victims of the Bhopal tragedy, feels that the company is both legally and morally responsible to fix the problem after buying Union Carbide, and should clean the water system in the affected area. According to several studies, the underground water of Bhopal is still contaminated.

The Bhopal activists feel that the Indian establishment lacks the will to get Anderson extradited from the USA and to make Dow Chemical accountable. Both the ruling Congress party and the right-wing opposition BJP have accepted favours from Dow, which is also accused of bribing Indian officials. India's Central Bureau of Investigation is probing the matter. India's Ambassador to the USA, Meera Shankar, has named Dow Chemical among other companies which reportedly paid bribes to Indian ministries and staff.

At the time of the mishap, Madhya Pradesh province, where Bhopal city is located, was governed by the Congress. The government did nothing to relocate the Union Carbide plant despite warnings of a possible disaster. T.R. Chauhan, the former plant operator and the author of *Bhopal: The inside story* believes the company was also involved in cost cutting measures and possibly compromised safety. He also says that Union Carbide and Dow are



Dec. 3 vigil at the Vancouver Art Gallery (Photo: K. Cariou)

involved in double standards, as they have been more careful towards public safety in the USA, but do not care when it comes to the safety of the people of a poor country like India.

Twenty-five years later, the BJP

government of the province tried to underplay the issue by claiming that the drinking water of the city is clean. Apart from facing the allegations of protecting Dow, the two big national political parties should also take blame for

recklessly opening the doors to foreign investors at the cost of peoples' life and liberty.

Rachna Dhingra alleges that Dow is one of the donors to the BJP, while the company is represented by a lawyer aligned with the Congress Party. How the rich multinational companies get away by befriending the political forces in developing and poor countries can be understood from the Bhopal episode. Not only has the Indian government failed to press the USA to hand over Warren Anderson, but a meagre compensation has been paid to the victims.

Canada can at least make Dow answerable by cancelling its Olympic sponsorship. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who recently visited India to improve trade relations with that country, should intervene to get justice for the victims of the tragedy. A national daily of India, *The Hindu*, has already set an example by cancelling the associate sponsorship of Dow Chemical for its Friday Review November Fest 2009. ●

## End Torture, End the War

*The Canadian Peace Alliance has issued the following statement on the US/NATO escalation of the war in Afghanistan, and the confirmation of Canada's role in turning over detainees to torture:*

The testimony of Richard Colvin shows that the highest levels of the Conservative Government are complicit in war crimes. As many as 600 detainees, many of whom were just innocent bystanders, were handed over to Afghan law enforcement agencies by the Canadian forces. Torture by the Afghan police forces is known to be widespread.

Stephen Harper and Peter MacKay are challenging the credibility of Colvin, saying that he is listening to "Taliban propaganda" Yet it is the Harper government that totally lacks credibility on this issue. It is hard to believe that they didn't see multiple memos and reports from one of the top diplomats in Afghanistan. It would represent a radical departure from standard procedure for any government.

And even if the memos didn't circulate to the political masters in the Conservative party, there were countless reports from international agencies such as the Red Cross, Amnesty International, School of Law of New York University, Center for Human Rights and Human Rights Watch which all said that torture of detainees was widespread. The Tories must have known this information or they showed a woeful lack of knowledge about their main foreign policy plank.

Once the issue of detainee torture hit the media in early 2007, the Harper Government worked to both discredit the reports and to allay fears with a new detainee transfer agreement. That agreement has not stopped the torture of innocent Afghan civilians.

The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission released a report in April 2009 that interviewed people who had been detained by Afghan police and

army. The results were staggering. According to their findings, 98.5% of detainees said that they were tortured. They have concluded that torture "is a commonplace practice in Afghanistan's law enforcement institutions," and add that "torture is also perpetrated by the parties to the armed conflict in Afghanistan, including the international security forces."

According to Afghan MP Malalai Joya, "It is an open secret that this happens. The Canadian government is still supporting this."

An inquiry into the torture of detainees is long overdue but given the obstructionist nature of the Conservatives, we are unlikely to get a full accounting of these scandalous revelations. Peter MacKay, who earlier this year

called for a Parliamentary discussion on the future role of Canada in Afghanistan, has decided to cancel that debate, likely because he fears any scrutiny on the torture issue. Complicity in war crimes is too serious an issue to be swept under the carpet. There must be a parliamentary debate on ending Canada's complicity in the crime of the Afghan war.

Torture is part and parcel of this occupation and the so-called "war on terror." Right now, the U.S. is expanding the prison at Bagram Airbase in what Afghans are calling a 'new Guantanamo.' Only by ending this occupation can we ensure an end to Canadian complicity in torture. We need to bring the troops home immediately. ●

## Troop expansion means more death and misery: WFDY

*Statement by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, Dec. 7, 2009*

The last week witnessed a new decision by the U.S. administration to send 30,000 more troops to boost the war in Afghanistan. At the same time, other allies in NATO agreed to send 7000 additional troops, mainly from European countries.

It is important to mention that the same president who leads the wars in two countries, Iraq and Afghanistan, won a Nobel Prize for Peace few weeks ago, in a glowing sign that the interests of imperialism are the only criteria used by the world's main leaders, away from the advertising slogans of democracy and human rights. Democratic rights of the people of Iraq and Afghanistan start from their right to live in independence and sovereignty without the death squads and the occupation armies used by imperialism.

WFDY strongly condemns those moves by USA and its allies in NATO and EU governments

because they will only bring more death and misery to the people of Afghanistan and also to all the people of the world.

WFDY demands USA, EU and NATO to immediately halt their military actions in Afghanistan and withdraw their troops out so that the people of their own path of governance. WFDY also supports the democratic and secular forces of Afghanistan which are fighting against the occupation armies and against Taliban and religious extremists at the same time.

WFDY expresses its deep solidarity with the innocent youth and people of Afghanistan being victims of imperialism and extremism, and calls on them to escalate their struggle for their free independent future.

No army has been able to defeat the will of the people when the people are united in their struggles, and the future of the youth and the people in the world shall only be prosperous and safe in a world with no occupation and war, in a world where imperialism is defeated. ●

## Observers challenge Kent on Honduras

A delegation of Canadians who witnessed the recent elections in Honduras disputes the account of events in the recent media statement by Peter Kent, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs (Americas).

Kent said in the Canadian government's December 1 Statement that "we are encouraged by reports from civil society organizations that there was a strong turnout for the elections, that they appear to have been run freely and fairly, and that there was no major violence."

A group of five Canadians, including representatives from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, and the Atlantic Region Solidarity Network were part of 20-person bi-national Human Rights Observation Delegation co-organized by US based Quixote Centre and Common Frontiers-Canada, from November 25 to December 2.

The delegation team observed a low turnout at the polling stations that they visited in the departments of Colon, Tegucigalpa and Santa Rosa de Copan, and witnessed violence and oppression against civilians in the city of San Pedro Sula.

"We witnessed tear gas used on peaceful protesters, citizens being chased through the streets by police in riot gear," reported Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Teachers' Federation.

Delegates photographed protesters who had been beaten

by police. "While standing peacefully outside of our hotel [in San Pedro Sula] we were also tear-gassed by the police" said Lanzinger.

The delegation also witnessed strong military and police presence inside of polling stations, unmarked cars patrolling the streets in the days leading up to the elections, and several raids and detentions. "These events contributed to a climate of fear in which citizens did not feel free to participate in the elections, contrary to Mr. Kent's report," said Jackie McVicar, member of the Atlantic Region Solidarity Network.

Members of the Canadian delegation met with Canada's Ambassador to Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua, Neil Reeder, prior to the November 29 elections. The delegation subsequently relayed an account of events they witnessed on Election Day to the Canadian Embassy, all in advance of Minister Kent's statement. Unfortunately, Kent appears to have ignored these eyewitness accounts from Canadian human rights observers.

The delegates said they were surprised as well as disappointed by Kent's statement. They want the Minister to set the record straight by clarifying which were the "civil society organizations" he consulted that he says reported peaceful and fair elections. ●



## A sweeping critique of Canada's real foreign policy record

*The Black Book of Canadian Foreign Policy*, by Yves Engler, Fernwood Publishing, 285 pages, \$24.95, ISBN: 9781552663141

Review by Tim Pelzer

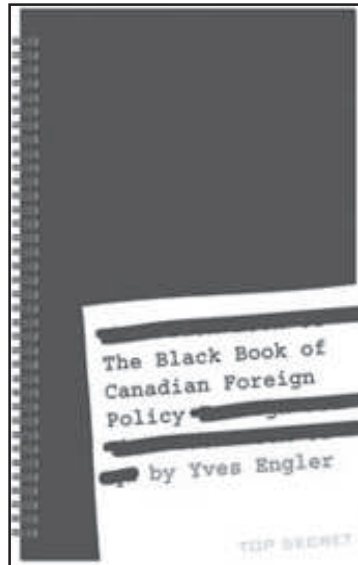
The Harper government's failure to condemn the US sponsored military coup against Honduran President Manuel Zelaya should surprise no one. As Yves Engler demonstrates in *The Black Book of Canadian Foreign Policy*, Canada has a long track record of supporting dictatorships, overthrowing democratically elected governments and backing US interventions abroad.

Since the early 20th century, Canadian Conservative and Liberal Party governments have supported repressive regimes across Latin America, Asia and Africa where Canadian mining, oil companies and banks had substantial business interests. This included brutal regimes such as Somoza's Nicaragua, Pinochet's Chile and Mobutu's Zaire (now renamed the Congo).

While publicly denouncing South Africa's former apartheid regime, Canadian governments helped prop up the racist system. Canada opposed international sanctions, allowed companies to invest in and sell arms to South Africa, and helped the regime develop nuclear weapons. Only after mounting protest did former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney impose sanctions against the regime in 1986, but even then trade between the two nations continued.

In pre-revolutionary Cuba, Canada enjoyed friendly relations with corrupt dictator Fulgencio Batista. Canadian banks and insurance companies became central players in the country's economy, and Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's conservative government appreciated Batista's support and protection of foreign

investment. When Fidel Castro's rebel army overthrew Batista in 1959, Canada opposed the country's new revolutionary government. However, the US State Department urged Diefenbaker to continue trade and diplomatic relations with Cuba to allow it to gather intelligence information for the US. A secret listening post in Canada's Havana embassy has been eavesdropping on Cuban leaders' conversations since 1959,



according to Engler. Pentagon and State Department sources have lauded Canada for providing the best intelligence on the island nation, especially in regards to the Cuban military. Engler reveals that the Harper government is targeting Cuba for destabilization under the guise of promoting democracy.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien's Liberal government conspired with the U.S. and France to destabilize and overthrow democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's center left government of Haiti. The Aristide government was committed to improving conditions for the poor majority, undertaking such reforms as doubling the minimum wage and setting up social welfare programs. In 2003, the Chretien government

organized a meeting with U.S. and French officials in Ottawa where they decided that Aristide must be removed and Haiti placed under UN trusteeship. Canadian-funded non-government organizations, along with those from the U.S., created and funded opposition groups to wreak havoc and make the country ungovernable. When US forces kidnapped Aristide on Feb. 29, 2004, Canadian commandos secured Port-au-Prince's airport to allow a US plane to land and then fly the elected president to the Central African Republic. The U.S., Canadian and French governments then installed an intern government drawn from opposition groups they created. With the help of U.S. and UN soldiers, the regime initiated a campaign to kill and terrorize supporters of Aristide's Fami Lavalas Party, which enjoys broad support. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police took over training and leadership of the Haitian National Police which did the brunt of the killing. Engler provides evidence that Canadian forces participated in the repression.

While Canada publicly opposed the US invasion of Iraq in 2001, it quietly permitted Canadian companies to sell weapons and supplies to U.S. invading forces. Canadian military planners helped the U.S. army develop its campaign to defeat the Iraqi army, and Canadian naval vessels were sent to the Gulf zone to support U.S. naval forces. Canadian officers and soldiers on exchange trips with the U.S. military took part in the invasion. Canadian pilots flew U.S. air force AWAC radar planes that guided air attacks against the Iraqi military. Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci commented at the time that, "Ironically, the Canadians indirectly provide more support for us in Iraq than most of those 46 countries that are fully supporting us."

According to Engler, Jean Chretien told Bill Clinton: "Keeping

some distance will be good for us. If we look as though we were the fifty-first state of the US, there's nothing we can do for you internationally, just as the governor of a state can't do anything for you internationally. But if we look independent enough, we can do things for you that even the CIA cannot do." According to former Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham: "Foreign Affairs' view was there was a limit to how much we can constantly say no to the political masters in Washington."

A major defect in the book is

Engler's tendency to insert block quotations to support his assertions without mentioning who made them. One has to look in the chapter end notes to learn who is being quoted. But *The Black Book of Canadian Foreign Policy* is a persuasive, well researched, sweeping historical critique of Canadian foreign policy.

The former vice-president of the Concordia Student Union in Montreal, Engler has also published *Playing Left Wing: From Rink Rat to Student Radical* and (with Anthony Fenton), *Canada in Haiti: Waging War on The Poor Majority*. •

## Women get shafted on pensions

CLC/CALM

Women are at a significant disadvantage to men when it comes to pensions. Women earn less than men and are often the ones providing unpaid caregiving. Women tend to be concentrated in non-standard, poorly paid jobs with little hope for a decent pension.

Canadian women have made pension gains in recent decades. This is particularly true for women in the public sector. The number of women in workplace pension plans tripled from 1974 to 2004. During this period, almost all the membership increase in workplace pension plans came from women joining unions.

Women have fought for better pension laws and won part-time worker access to workplace pensions and better pension vesting rights. This includes fairer Canada Pension Plan (CPP) rules for those who stopped work to help raise children. CPP and Old Age Security benefits are now indexed to inflation, so the value of public pensions hold steady over the course of your working life.

Despite these positive developments, there is still a major gap in pension income between women and men. Between 1991 and 2001, retired women earned 40 per cent less in pension income than retired men. In 2004, 7.3 per cent of retired women lived in poverty, more than double the rate of retired men.

For single elderly women, the results are far worse. A 2004 study found 45.6 per cent of women in these circumstances were living in poverty.

The persistence of a gender

gap in pension income is easy to explain. Most currently retired women faced a labour market that was partially closed to them. As a result, they were unable to establish substantial pension incomes.

Now the majority of working-age women are on the job - 46 per cent of the Canadian labour market. But women still don't earn equal pay for work of equal value. As a result, they cannot accumulate the same pension income.

Women continue to shoulder the bulk of unpaid caregiving for children and seniors. In 2002, more than two million Canadians provided personal care for seniors - three-quarters were women. The absence of affordable, publicly funded child care and elder care has put working women in frustrating and stressful circumstances.

Women make up the majority in the low-quality, precarious work sector - work that cannot support a household. Forty per cent of women work in these kinds of jobs, and little or none of their income goes into pension savings.

Today, more than 60 per cent of workers of both genders don't have access to a workplace pension. Unions have been effective vehicles to fight for women's equality. There's no doubt about it, unions make a difference in women's lives.

The Canadian Labour Congress's "Retirement Security for Everyone" campaign wants to double CPP benefits, increase public pensions for poor seniors, and introduce a system of pension insurance, helping both women and men increase their pension security to have the dignified retirement they deserve. For more information, visit [www.clc-ctc.ca](http://www.clc-ctc.ca). •

## CFS fights off right-wing attack...

continued from page 5

blog, according to Brett. The third delegate was a student at Concordia who is also leading a defederation campaign.

Last month, Brett and Crispin were among over sixty signers of an "Open letter from progressive students" calling for critical support of the CFS. "Those claiming the CFS can't be reformed and must be destroyed don't address the objective necessity for students to have a cross-Canada organization," the letter stated, adding "After smashing the CFS, what's next? We would wake up with a horrible hangover and have to rebuild."

"At best, the defederation campaigns are an incredible waste of time and distraction; at worst they make all students, well beyond CFS members and including the Quebec's student unions, incredibly vulnerable to the right's agenda," it said.

While the letter was widely reprinted on the web, the editor of the Concordia student newspaper claimed it was evidence of conspiring between Communists and former CFS employees.

"I think that claim is ridiculous," Crispin said. "the fact that they had to single out myself and a few other former Communist Party candidates who signed this letter - together with leaders of the Young New Democrats, anarchists, and host of other progressives, including many who formerly and currently have elected positions within the CFS - that just shows how afraid the Conservative youth are of real debate. They have to go back to the 1950s and the cheap anti-democratic tactics of McCarthy."

The CFS AGM also responded to the defederation campaigns, supporting a motion proposed by the Carleton graduate students to change the rules around local student unions leaving the CFS. Future campaigns now have to

collect double the number of signatures (20 per cent of the CFS local's membership) within the first two months of the school year. Referendums can now only be held once every five years, and only two membership referendums can be held a year. The resolution passed with two-thirds majority support.

Despite fractious debate, delegates worked hard to get regular business achieved. Dave Molenhuis, former CFS national treasurer, was elected new National Chairperson. Delegates also heard a presentation by Malalai Joya, outspoken Afghan anti-war parliamentarian.

By closing plenary, the AGM had passed a number of resolutions, including solidarity statements with students in California (where students have launched a mass actions aimed at stopping a 30 per cent tuition increase and despite heavy-handed measures by police) and Iran. •



"That's the pension plan deduction... for the CEO's pension."

## What's Left

### Vancouver, BC

**Left Film Night**, Sunday, Jan. 31, 7 pm, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive. Film details to be announced early January, call 604-255-2041.

### Winnipeg, MB

**Communist Party Holiday Open House**, Monday, Dec. 28, 3-7 pm, 387 Selkirk Ave. (North End Socialist Centre) (at Salter; buses 16 or 38 from downtown)

**Marxism Course**, classes begin in February. Pre-register at 586-7824 or cpc-mb@mts.net.

### Toronto, ON

**New Year's Eve Celebration**, with the United Jewish Peoples Order and Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, music by Pablo Terry and Sol de Cuba, Winchevsky Centre 585

Cranbrooke (east of Bathurst, north of Lawrence). Dinner (vegetarian advance request only), cash bar, entertainment, complimentary wine toast at midnight! Tickets \$45 advance, \$55 if reserved to pay at door. For info/tickets: Maxine at UJPO, 416-789-5502 (Visa or M/C), or Sharon at CCFA, 905-951-8499.

**Gala Dinner** for Communist Party of Canada's 36th Convention, Sat., February 6, 7 pm, USWA Hall, 25 Cecil Street. Speakers: Miguel Figueroa and Guests. Live music and entertainment, call 416-469-2446 for tickets.

**Norman Bethune Day social**, Sat., Feb. 27, 2010, at the GCDO, 290 Danforth Ave. Tickets \$5, door prize one week all-inclusive trip for two to Cuba. For tickets or info, call media sponsor People's Voice, 416-469-2446.

## Winnipeg picket for Palestine solidarity



On November 29, Winnipeg's Communist Party marked the International Day for Solidarity with the Palestinian People with a picket in front of a Conservative MP's office. Protesting Canada's backing for Israel's occupation of Palestinian land, the picket attracted both Israeli and Palestinian supporters. Actions were held in about ten cities across Canada to mark the date, organized by a wide range of solidarity groups. ●

## 2010 PV Calendar Now On Sale!

The 2010 People's Voice Calendar is now available. This year's theme is "Socialist Women," marking the centenary of the famous 1910 conference which adopted Clara Zetkin's resolution establishing International Women's Day.

As usual, the 2010 Calendar includes a wide variety of memorable dates for the working class movements, from birthdays of prominent revolutionaries to the anniversaries of watershed struggles for peace, social jus-

tice, equality and socialism.

For your copy, send \$5 plus \$2 to cover postage to People's Voice, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1. The Calendar is also on sale at the Ontario bureau of People's Voice (290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, M4K 1N6) and our Manitoba Bureau (387 Selkirk Ave., Winnipeg, R2W 2M3).

Vancouver-area readers can pick up the Calendar at People's Co-op Books, 1391 Commercial Drive, Vancouver. ●



# Communist Party of Canada's 36<sup>th</sup> Convention Gala Dinner

**Saturday,  
February 6, 7 pm  
USWA Hall  
25 Cecil Street,  
Toronto**

**Speaker: Miguel Figueroa  
and guests**

**Live Music and Entertainment**

**Call 416-469-2446 for tickets**

"Come and join  
the Party"

## Anna-Celestrya Carr wins human rights award

On December 8, Anna-Celestrya Carr received the Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth award for her ongoing work to oppose violence against women, especially the stolen sisters and the Sisters In Spirit national campaign. The campaign is demanding more action to solve the disappearances and murders of 500 mainly Aboriginal women in the last 20 years and to prevent further racist crimes.

Carr's work is encouraging men to make a visible pledge not to use their hands in violence against women by participating in banner-making events. She intends to hold these events on campuses across the country. The award was jointly presented by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties.

Except for the Aboriginal People's Television Network National News, Carr's award was



Anna-Celestrya Carr (left) receiving the award.

virtually ignored in the media, but she was widely congratulated for the well-earned award, including by activists and the president of her university.

Now a student at the University of Manitoba, Carr is an active member of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League,

serving on the former's Aboriginal People's Commission. She has been a federal candidate twice in Winnipeg Centre and was vice-president of her university's Aboriginal Students' Association. She is now the Aboriginal representative on the Student Union Council. ●

## Cuban Five struggle continues...

continued from page 6

our arrest and at other occasions during these long years, the US Government proposes now that we collaborate to obtain more benevolent sentences. Once again, we have rejected such proposals, something that we never will accept under any circumstances.

Present in the results of these resentencing hearings are the work of the legal team and the indestructible solidarity of all of you.

It is significant that the US Government, for the first time in 11

years, was obliged to recognize that we did not cause any damage to its national security. Also, for the first time, the prosecutor publicly recognized the existence of a strong international movement in support of our immediate freedom, a movement that affects the image of the US judicial system in the eyes of the international community. Once again the absolute political character of this process is confirmed.

We the Five are punished for accusations that never have been proven. Although three of our

sentences were partially reduced, the injustice remains for all of us. The Cuban-American terrorists continue to enjoy total impunity.

We reiterate: The Five are innocent! We feel profoundly moved and grateful for the permanent solidarity that you give us, so crucial in this long battle for justice.

Together with you, we will continue until the final victory, which will only be reached with the return of the Five to our country.

For more information, visit [www.freethethefive.org](http://www.freethethefive.org) ●

## People's Voice deadlines:

**JANUARY 16-31 issue: Thursday, Jan. 7**

**FEBRUARY 1-28 issue: Thursday, Jan. 21**

**Send submissions to PV Editorial Office,  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1,  
<pvvoice@telus.net>**

# Marine scientists condemn overfishing subsidies

PV Vancouver Bureau

As World Trade Organization ministers met on Dec. 1 in Geneva to review WTO activities, nine leading marine scientists called on them to combat global overfishing by controlling government

subsidies to their fishing sectors. In a letter to WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, the scientists asserted that "the WTO has an unprecedented opportunity to make new trade rules that will turn the tide for the world's fisheries." Data from the United Nations

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that global fishery resources have been depleted by an additional five percent since the Doha trade round started. The FAO now finds that 80 percent of the world's fisheries are overexploited, fully exploited, significantly depleted or recovering from overexploitation. The scientists also point to a recent World Bank study that found an estimated \$50 billion is lost globally each year - more than half the value of the global catch - because of poor fisheries governance

and overexploitation.

The scientists indicated that a WTO deal on fisheries subsidies is essential. "The health of the world's oceans is currently hanging in the balance. Climate change, ocean acidification, and overfishing are putting tremendous strains on the oceans, and threaten the viability of ecosystems that have provided food, jobs, and much more to humanity for millennia. The inevitable consequences of climate change make it essential that the nations of the world act immediately to reduce other impacts on the ocean, including, perhaps most importantly, overfishing," they wrote.

The WTO is engaged in negotiations on fisheries subsidies

as part of the Doha trade round. Global fisheries subsidies are estimated to be at least \$20 billion annually, equivalent to 25 percent of the value of the world fish catch. These subsidies are driving the rampant overcapacity and overfishing that threatens the viability of an essential nutrition source and ecosystems that cover more than two-thirds of the planet. In addition, more than a billion people worldwide depend on fish as a key source of protein and hundreds of millions, in both developed and developing countries, depend on fishing for income. ●

(To learn more about the campaign to stop overfishing subsidies, visit this website: [www.cutthebait.org](http://www.cutthebait.org).)



Corporate overfishing of bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean (Greenpeace photo)

## BC coroner calls for better farmworker safety

By Gurpreet Singh

A coroner's inquest into the deaths of three Indo-Canadian female farm workers in a March 2007 road accident is over and the jury's verdict is out. Eighteen recommendations have been made to four ministries and an equal number of agencies to prevent future accidents.

Amarjit Kaur Bal, Sukhwinder Kaur Punia and Sarabjit Kaur Sidhu died and 14 others were injured when a van carrying farm workers flipped at Highway 1 near Abbotsford. A criminal investigation revealed that the driver did not have the appropriate license, the van was overloaded, and there were not enough seat belts for the passengers. But the driver was fined only \$2,000 and given a one year suspension from driving after she pled guilty. Following

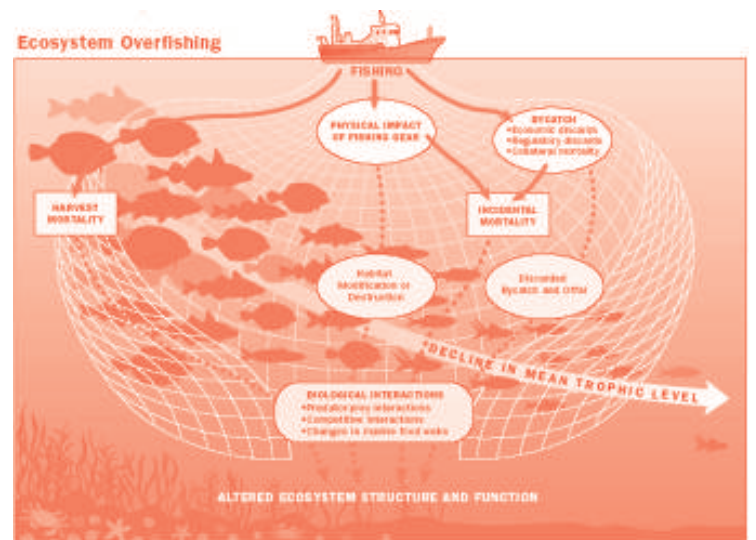
angry protests by families of the victims, along with the farm workers' union and the BC Federation of Labour, a coroner investigation started on December 7, lasting three days.

The coroner has asked the Minister of Solicitor General and Public Safety to increase enforcement of speeding by commercial vehicles, and to conduct random checks to ensure proper operator licensing, seatbelt compliance and vehicle safety. Likewise, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has been asked for mandatory annual inspections of passenger vans. The Minister of Labour has been asked to ensure that the rights of seasonal agricultural workers are protected, while the Attorney General has been asked to sponsor a study of the practicality of a bonding scheme

to ensure payment of fines.

This was not the first time that farm workers' lives were put in danger in BC. The systematic exploitation of farm workers has been rising since the 1980s. A female farm worker died when an overcrowded van carrying 19 farm workers crashed in 2003. Following that incident, the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) made similar recommendations, which were never implemented. Had those recommendations been followed, the 2007 accident might not have happened. Then in 2008, three mushroom farm workers died due to a gas leak.

Will the coroner's recommendations meet the same fate? Only time will tell, but the provincial Liberal government should either improve the conditions of farm workers, or stop boasting that BC is "the best place on earth." ●



## Niagara News Bulletin

By PV Niagara Bureau

\* Over 100 Niagarans mobilized by the **People's Healthcare Coalition** challenged the **Niagara Health System (NHS)** at its open house with questions about moving care out of local hospitals in favor of a P3 (public-private-partnership i.e. for-profit). NHS officials said the questions would be answered "within the next few weeks", but meanwhile started closing 40 Complex Continuing Care beds and laying off 40 staff from local hospitals. Construction began on the P3 hospital with projected costs of \$1.5 billion over 30 years. Niagara Falls city council asked the province to appoint an independent investigator as demanded by the Ontario Medical Association's emergency medicine section.

\* Ontario and the government's subcontractor for driving license testing Serco opened up **drive test centres with scabs in St. Catharines**, but USW local 9511 drive test workers were backed up on the picket line by CAW 199 and ETFO Niagara Occasional Teachers. Niagara high schools received announcements encouraging students to cross picket lines, but this is being challenged by the President of OSSTF District 22 Niagara (secondary school teachers).

\* **Port Colborne Vale Inco strikers** from USW Local 6200 took a bus to New York to join co-workers from Sudbury in protesting the Business Council of International Understanding's giving Vale's CEO the Eisenhower Global Citizenship Award. Local 6200 President Wayne Rae said, "wherever he goes, we're going to follow him".

\* Stephen Harper may have intended to skip Copenhagen, but Niagarans are carrying ahead with their own **climate change agenda**. Niagara College students organized a "C-Day" summit preview of what will be discussed, and the Regional Municipality is implementing a plan to identify sources of local greenhouse gas emissions. Environmental activists organized two vigils for Dec. 12, one urban and one rural.

\* Niagara College and Women's Place of South Niagara marked the **Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women** with memorial displays and information on local resources. CAW 199's women's committee organized a breakfast with a hearse and casket and a list of names of Ontario women killed.

\* One **Niagara food bank** was down to its last pair of men's winter boots before the first local snowfall, while donations are down 30%. The Salvation Army director said demand for charity exploded by mid-November by about 70%. The Regional Municipality's community services commissioner said they would be up to \$2 million over budget and would need an increase of \$6 million more next year.

\* **Elementary students** at the rural Crowland Central School in Welland took the initiative to raise public support for keeping their school open by making and selling bracelets. A 10-year-old said she realized bracelet sales would not be able to raise enough money, but "we decided that someone has to do something." ●

## NEWS FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFITS!

Every issue of PEOPLE'S VOICE gives you the latest on the fightback from coast to coast. Whether it's the struggle to defeat the HarperTories, resistance to social cuts, solidarity with Cuba or workers' struggles around the world, we've got the news the corporate media won't print.

And we do more than that—we report and analyze events from a revolutionary perspective, helping to build the movements for justice and equality, and eventually for a socialist Canada. Read the paper that fights for working people—on every page—in every issue!

people's  
**VOICE**

- \$30 for 1 year     \$50 for 2 years
- Low income special rate: \$15 for 1 year
- Outside Canada: \$45 US or \$50 Cnd for 1 year

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: People's Voice,  
133 Herkimer St., Unit 502, Hamilton, ON, L8P 2H3

1001