

**AUGUST**  
1-31,  
2014

**VOL. 22**  
#13

**\$1.50**

# people's VOICE

## Colombia peace talks

*See page 7*

Printed in Canada by union labour  
on recycled paper  118-44  
Publications Mail Agreement #40011632

# World anger at Israel's attacks on Gaza

**- see page 9 -**



People's Voice  
photo: Ed Bil

## ***The crisis in Ukraine deepens - see pages 4 & 5***



After a ten-day ceasefire in late June, the Ukrainian military resumed the bombardment of populated centers in the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Lugansk, both bordering with neighboring Russia. Above right, forces of the NATO-backed government in Kiev conducted a July 15 air strike which killed 11 people in this apartment block in Snizhne, 100 km. east of Donetsk. Two days later, Malaysian Air flight MH17 crashed in the region under mysterious circumstances.

### **3** **TFWP "reforms"?**

The Harper Tories say they are "improving" the Temporary Foreign Workers Program. But the TFWP remains a key strategy in the corporate/government drive to push down wages and living standards.

### **INSIDE**

### **6** **Ontario rejects Hudak**

Voters turned thumbs down on Conservative Tim Hudak's plans to roll back the calendar on labour rights. But what comes next?

### **12** **YCL Convention**

The Young Communist League of Canada is building across the country and taking part in many progressive struggles, according to delegates at the group's recent convention in Toronto.

# First Nations leaders call for inquiry and action on murdered and missing Indigenous women

First Nation leaders, women's groups, elders and youth gathered in a Circle of Hope in Halifax on July 16, offering a special tribute to missing and murdered Indigenous women during the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 35th Annual General Assembly which took place in Mi'kmaq territory.

The Circle of Hope, organized by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (NSNWA), the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre and the Host Committee for the Annual General Meeting of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), coincided with resolutions being considered by the AFN's membership.

According to statistics released by the RCMP there are 1,181 murdered and missing Aboriginal women in Canada. Aboriginal women accounted for 16% of female homicides and 11.3% of missing women.

Cheryl Maloney, President of NSNWA said, "Based on the proportion of Aboriginal women in Canada these numbers are three to four times higher than the number of non-Aboriginal women who were either murdered or missing." She added, "Unless and until we get to the reasons why, the number of Aboriginal women whose lives will be cut short or who will vanish without a trace will continue to grow and more First Nation families and communities will be devastated."

Michele Audette, President of NWAC said, "We are here in solidarity to say that each and every woman counted among the almost 1200 who were murdered or are missing deserves justice. We will continue to speak up for them and for their families until the Federal Government responds to our pleas and takes concrete action to end the violence against Indigenous women."

Audette said events like the Circle of Hope help to capture the

public's attention. "We are grateful for the support we continue to receive from members of the non-Aboriginal community, but also recognize that too many Canadians are still unaware of the pain this is causing First Nations people. The goal of the Circle of Hope and similar events held throughout the country is to help educate and enlighten the public to this national travesty so that they join us in demanding justice for all."

Assembly of First Nations Alberta Regional Chief Cameron Alexis also spoke, continuing calls for a National Public Commission of Inquiry as well as for urgent and direct action to prevent violence against women and girls.

"We demand immediate action based on the fact that not one more woman or girl can be victimized and that no family member should spend another day without answers," said Chief Alexis. "Ending violence against Indigenous women is an urgent priority for First Nations across the country, and AFN continues the call for a coordinated National Action Plan, including a National Public Commission of Inquiry, as well as immediate direct investments in shelters and preventative support measures to keep the most vulnerable of our citizens safe and secure."

There was a special tribute to the families and to Marlene Bird who was recently a victim of violence in Saskatchewan. A blanket dance raised \$4,508 for Marlene Bird's care and treatment.

The Assembly brought together more than 1,100 First Nation leaders, Elders and youth gathered from across the country to address priority issues and set direction and strategy for the coming weeks and months.

One of the key decisions was to set the location and timing for the next election for AFN National Chief, which will take place at a Special Chiefs Assembly in Winnipeg from December 9 to 11. AFN Quebec/Labrador Regional

Chief Ghislain Picard will act as Interim National Chief until the December election.

The 302 Chiefs-in-Assembly taking part passed a number of resolutions in priority areas, including a commitment to fully review the way the AFN is structured and operates to ensure it evolves and adapts as First Nations rebuild their nations and assert their sovereignty and jurisdiction.

"I am honoured to take on the responsibility of interim National Chief and look forward to working together with the Executive Committee based on the clear direction of First Nations to ensure we take every opportunity to advance Aboriginal title, rights and Treaties in ways that will rebuild our nations and achieve safe and secure communities for all our peoples," said AFN Interim National Chief Ghislain Picard. "This has been an important Assembly for open and honest dialogue on our common priorities, our objectives and our organization. We must now move forward and take action based on this direction."

Other resolutions dealt with

Treaty implementation; engaging on First Nations control of First Nations education respecting regional approaches, needs and diversity; funding for post-secondary education; appointment

of a Chiefs Committee on hydraulic fracturing; and reconciliation and justice for survivors of residential schools, among others.

All resolutions will be available at [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca). ●

## Tent protest for social housing



Inspired by the Supreme Court ruling which recognized the Tsilq'otin Nation's title to their unceded territories, Indigenous people and anti-poverty activists have set up tents in Vancouver's Oppenheimer Park to demand social housing. Street homelessness is on the rise again in Vancouver, one of the most expensive cities in the world. (Photo: K. Cariou)

## OFL President slams Harper's policy on Gaza

In a July 21 statement, the Ontario Federation of Labour says it "joins millions of Canadians who are shocked by the armed conflict between Israel and Hamas, which has created a nightmare for tens of thousands of civilians who are caught in the crossfire."

"The Harper government's policy is unbalanced toward Israel, and is completely out of step with Canadians' views," said Sid Ryan, President of the OFL. "If this government has as strong a relationship with Israel as it claims, then Prime Minister Stephen Harper must use every ounce of his influence to convince Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to stop his military's indiscriminate

bombing of Gaza."

The OFL says "the conflict affects both sides, but by far the worst is being endured by Palestinian women and children. According to the latest update from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as of (July 20) the Palestinian death toll since the start of the emergency was at least 375, of whom 270 (72 percent) were believed to be civilians. The Palestinian Ministry of Health adds that over 3,000 Palestinians have been injured, including 904 children and 533 women."

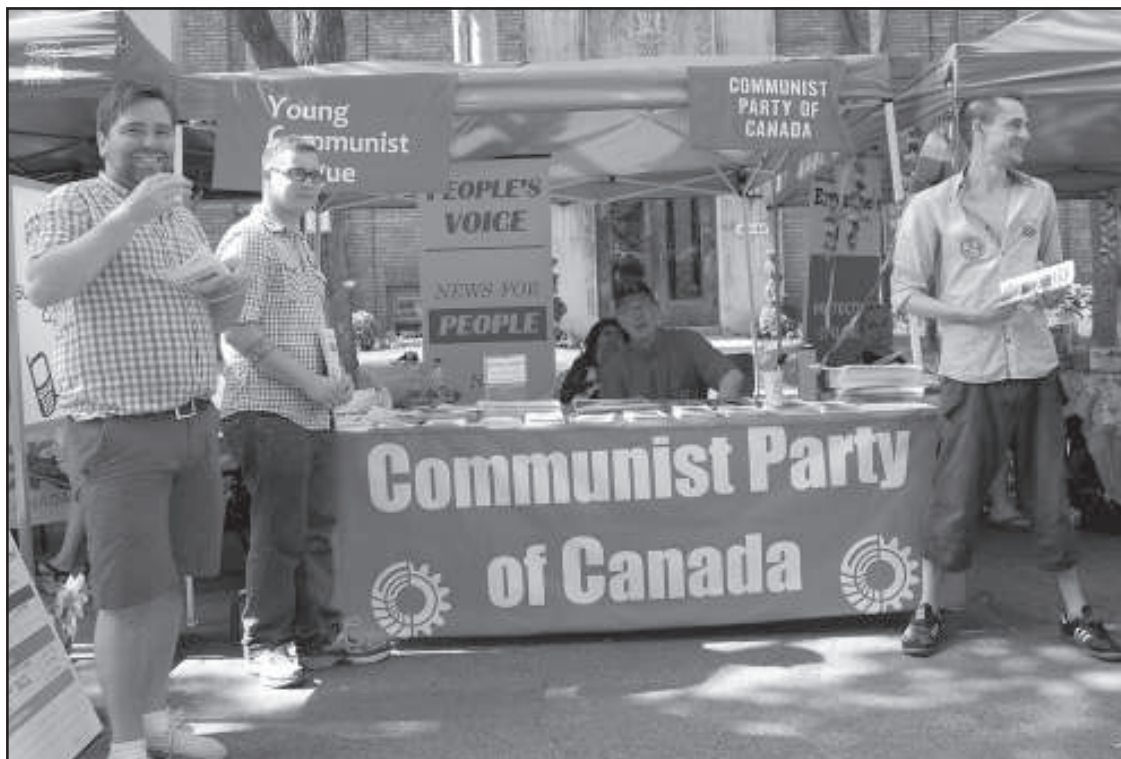
The Federation also says "the indiscriminate firing of rockets by Palestinian armed groups into Israel" is unacceptable. Two Israeli civilians have been killed from rocket and mortar fire since the start of hostilities.

But as the statement points out, "Parents in Gaza are fleeing their homes from Israel's attacks, which UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described as 'atrocious'... Nearly half of Gaza's blockaded territory is affected by evacuation warnings or declaration of 'no-go zones,' leaving 80,000 people

crammed into schools operated by the United Nations, seeking shelter. The high proportion of civilian casualties, along with allegations by human rights organizations about the targeting of civilians and civilian locations by Israel, such as homes and a hospital, have rightly drawn international condemnation... Palestinian labour and civil society groups are crying out for help. An appeal signed by the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions and the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network (comprising 133 member organizations), which was received by the Ontario Federation of Labour, called for 'immediate international protection of the civilians of Gaza.'"

"Every effort must be made immediately to protect civilians, especially women and children, in the short term," said Ryan. "I am also urging the Harper government to support a lasting peace, which will only come through international efforts to lift the blockade of Gaza and to end the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands." ●

## Communists in the street this summer



Members of the Communist Party of Canada and the Young Communist League are busy this summer, taking part in LGBT Pride festivals in several cities. Seen above is the CPC/YCL display at "World Pride" in Toronto at the end of June. During August, Communists will be distributing literature at Pride events in Vancouver, New Westminster and other areas. (Photo: Ed Bil)

## Here's my contribution to the PV Fund Drive!

Enclosed please find my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the 2014 People's Voice Press Fund Drive.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/town \_\_\_\_\_

Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Send your contribution to:

People's Voice, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1

# TFWP changes - who do they help?

By Kendra Strauss,  
Canadian Centre for Policy  
Alternatives-BC, <http://behindthenumbers.ca/2014/07/15/temporary-foreign-worker-program-changes-who-do-they-help/>

The Conservative Government's Minister of Employment and Social Development, Jason Kenney, announced on June 20th 2014 a raft of changes to the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). The program has attracted controversy since at least 2006, most recently when the CBC reported that MacDonald's outlets in Victoria were favoring temporary foreign workers over Canadians in hiring decisions and the allocation of hours.

The 2006 census recorded a 118% increase, since 1996, in the number of adult non-permanent residents who were working in Canada. Research by Statistics Canada has shown that "the number of non-permanent residents who entered Canada in 2008 (399,523) exceeded the number of permanent immigrants of all types landed that year (247,243)." In other words, Canada admitted more people on temporary visas than people with the right to remain permanently in the country. This increase in temporary migrants has met with contradictory responses, even within provinces seen to benefit most. The argument that provincial labour markets (like Alberta's) suffer shortages in key areas has been countered with the response that all regions of Canada still suffer from unemployment, and that temporary foreign workers (TFWs) take jobs from Canadian workers.

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program has been the fastest growing component of non-permanent admissions to Canada. The TFWP has four streams: agricultural workers, live-in caregivers, higher skilled occupations and lower skilled occupations. The lower skilled occupation stream has seen the biggest increase. Employers who want to hire TFWs have to obtain a positive labour market opinion (LMO) from Employment and Social Development Canada - an LMO is essentially a labour market test to determine if the employer is justified in hiring a migrant worker. The number of TFW positive labour market opinions doubled

between 2005 and 2012 in sectors like manufacturing and mining, oil and gas, and increased more than seven-fold in construction. Even more striking, though, is the increase from 4,360 to 44,740 during the same period in accommodation and food services positions (see info). The "low skilled" route is therefore the part of the program targeted by the recently announced reforms. These include a cap to limit the proportion of low wage TFWs that a business can employ, a reformed labour market assessment process (LMOs are being changed to Labour Market Impact Assessments, or LMIA's), and a refusal to process applications for low-skilled positions in accommodation, food services and retail in regions with more than 6% unemployment.

The argument, and justification for reforms, is that the TFWP has distorted local labour markets by keeping wages down and creating a vulnerable workforce with little to no labour market mobility. These arguments focus on the perceived threat to Canadian workers. What about the conditions faced by migrant workers themselves? As the Government's own data has shown, migrant workers are more likely than Canadian workers and recent immigrants to be underemployed (in 2006, 85% of non-permanent resident housekeepers and 55% of cleaners had completed postsecondary training) and to have lower weekly earnings. The proposed changes to the TFWP restrict the length of permits in the low wage stream to 1 year. They do not address the persistent problems of exploitation that result from the precarious legal status of TFWs. These include being tied to the sponsoring employer (making it difficult to leave abusive or exploitative situations), poor quality and/or expensive tied accommodation, and a lack of access to collective representation. Most importantly, the changes to the TFWP do not answer the question: if someone's skills are needed in Canada, why can't he or she immigrate with full rights to permanent settlement?

These are significant gaps in what the reforms address, but equally significant is the fact that they don't even touch on problems with the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) and agricultural streams. This is because, unlike hospitality and food services work,

"low skilled" agricultural and care jobs are seen as ones that Canadian citizens and those with permanent residence will not do. The LCP requires workers to live with their employer as a condition of their visa, leading to well-documented problems with excessive working hours, non-payment of over-time, and a lack of privacy and personal space. Workers cannot in practice bring their dependents, enforcing long periods of separation within families. Many caregivers are nurses and teachers but are de-skilled through years spent in low wage care work, with no access to programs for upgrading skills and qualifications. In all of these ways, the LCP also creates labour market distortions by creating a pool of precarious workers who must accept the requirement to live-in - as the Philippine Women's Centre puts it, to "mortgage themselves" for the hope of remaining in Canada. Workers in the Seasonal

Agricultural Worker Program must also live in employer-provided accommodation (often onsite) and have no path to settlement, even though many are hired year after year to work on Canadian farms.

In the cases of the LCP and SAWP, then, labour market "distortions" are justified by the need for low paid workers in the sectors that provide our basic needs: food and care. In the latter case, they prevent the provincial and federal Governments from having to address the "care deficit" that results from a lack of public investment in childcare and homecare for the elderly. In all sectors they prevent employers from having to raise wages and improve conditions to attract workers. It is striking that both the Government and the big corporations like Tim Hortons and MacDonalds, so keen to tout the "free market" and theories of

supply and demand under other circumstances, cry foul when labour shortages mean they might be forced to raise wages and improve conditions to attract workers. Even more pernicious is that way that the TFWP, in protecting businesses from pressures on their profits, applies conditions that make it difficult to impossible for the workers who do these vital jobs to make Canada their permanent home. The program devalues the work done by employees on these visas by designating them as "low skilled", even when workers' qualifications match or exceed those required for other streams. Jason Kenny's changes do not address any of these issues. He might claim to be putting Canadian workers first, but he is hardly playing fair with Canadian immigration policy.

The author is a research associate with the CCPA's BC Office. ●

## Unifor supports judicial review to stop Northern Gateway

The Northern Gateway pipeline will do more harm than good to the economy, according to Canada's largest union in the private sector. Arguing that the National Energy Board presented a deeply flawed report to federal cabinet, Unifor will join multiple First Nations and environmental organizations using legal grounds to stop the unpopular pipeline

from being built.

"The Northern Gateway pipeline brings sky-high risks to Canadians but only foreign oil companies will benefit," said Jerry Dias, Unifor's National President. "We will not stand by while Stephen Harper runs roughshod over Canadian jobs, First Nations' rights, and environmental concerns."

The Northern Gateway pipeline (and pending Kinder Morgan and Keystone XL projects) will ship unrefined bitumen to foreign markets. But according to the Alberta Federation of Labour, only 228 permanent jobs will be created from the pipeline.

"Canadian natural resources should create long-term Canadian jobs and meet Canadians' energy needs," said Dias. "Unifor stands united with the groups demanding that the federal government stop reckless pipeline projects and invest in greener jobs that can support families."

130 First Nations, most BC municipalities, and at least half of British Columbians oppose the Enbridge Northern Gateway proposal.

Unifor was founded in 2013 when the Canadian Auto Workers and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions merged. With more than 305,000 members, Unifor is Canada's largest union in the private sector.

(Source: Unifor) ●



(People's Voice file photo)

## VDLC backs Pride Parade and Gaza solidarity

By Peter Marcus

The Vancouver and District Labour Council held its monthly meeting on July 15. The guest speaker was Paul Croes of Multi Union Pride, who was promoting labour participation in the Pride Parade on August 3. Unionists should gather on Alberni Street between Thurlow and Burrard by 11:00 am at section F, North 17.

VDLC President Joey Hartman reported that the Council's municipal election committee is conducting surveys and interviews of pro-labour candidates in the areas under its jurisdiction. The Canadian Labour Congress is holding workshops for potential candidates across the region on September 7. Municipal

elections take place across B.C. on November 15.

Hartman spoke on the Metro Vancouver Alliance, and identified four general issues around which committees are being formed: housing, transit, poverty and social isolation. She was in Cumberland recently for Miners' Memorial events, and to lead a discussion on labour history including the role of Japanese, Chinese and aboriginal miners and their mistreatment by the mine owners.

Resolutions were passed to support the B.C. Teachers' Federation, and to support the July 19 rally against the Israeli attacks on Gaza.

In other reports, the Hospital Employees' Union has ratified its facilities contract, with a 5.5% increase over five years, some gains in vacations, and limits on

contracting out. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has uncovered a secret study by the Harper government to privatize Canada Post. CUPE 1004 will contribute funds towards pro-labour candidates in the civic election, and is endeavouring to work with other locals.

According to the Solidarity in Action Committee, IKEA workers in Richmond are still picketing 24/7 with support from the VDLC, and the boycott of IKEA stores is still on. A tentative contract is being delayed by the problem of scabs, which is being dealt with at the Labour Relations Board.

The trade union movement will celebrate Labour Day on Monday, September 1 at Swangard Stadium in Burnaby's Central Park. ●

### Annual People's Voice Walk-A-Thon

Bear Creek Park, Surrey, BC  
Sunday, August 10

Meet at the picnic area near the 140 St. parking lot, just south of 88 Ave.



11 am - Walk around beautiful Bear Creek Park  
12 noon - Enjoy an international potluck lunch  
1 pm - Relax and watch our speakers and performers

# EDITORIALS

## The first casualty of war

There is an old saying that "the first casualty when war comes is truth." This generalization reflects the tendency by imperialist powers to turn reality upside down to win public support for their crimes. Canadians remember that the tragic US-led occupation of Iraq, which has ultimately cost the lives of over half of million people, was "justified" by an outrageous campaign of lies orchestrated by the Bush White House. The U.S. shot down Iran Air Flight 655 in 1988, killing 300 civilian passengers, and Ukraine's military shot down a Siberia Airlines flight over the Black Sea in 2001. It now appears that a Ukrainian fighter jet was near Malaysian Air flight MH17 before it crashed on July 17.

There are many unanswered questions and widespread public cynicism around accusations by the NATO powers that Russia or eastern Ukrainian defence fighters caused that crash, based on "taped phone conversations" and speculation about the location of missile systems. Canada's Conservative politicians were quick to urge NATO action against Russia, which could further destabilize the entire region and potentially spark a wider war. Coming from Stephen Harper and John Baird (supporters of Israel's killings of Palestinian children) this irresponsible rhetoric is highly dangerous.

Instead of wild finger-pointing and threats, there is an urgent need for a calm and rational approach. Only an impartial international investigation can determine the truth behind the crash of flight MH17. That message should be sent to all the parties in Canada's Parliament, who shamefully continue to give full support for the fascist-backed regime in Kiev which is shelling and bombing civilians in southeast Ukraine.

## Revenue cuts cause deficits

Now that Ontario voters have rejected the far right drive to slash public programs even further, the big corporations have stepped up the pressure to cut spending to the bone, and even to amputate. A set of briefing notes from the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions reveals that the problem with government finances is actually revenue slashing.

Ontario has both the lowest public spending and the lowest revenue of all the provinces on a per capita basis, even though most other provinces are relatively poorer. This is nothing new. Statistics Canada data for 2009 (the last year available) indicates that Ontario had the lowest per capita revenue at that time, by a large margin. The data also indicates that Ontario's "own source" revenue (excluding federal transfers) was 14.4% of Gross Domestic Product, far less than the average 17.9% of all the provinces.

The briefing notes calculate that if Ontario had taken in the same revenue as the rest of Canada, the treasury would have received an extra \$19.5 billion in 2009, and similar amounts every succeeding year. But since the Wynne Liberal government is not likely to increase taxes on corporations and the wealthy, Ontario working people will be stuck with the real spending cuts which are on the way, especially if the government keeps to its plan to balance the budget by 2017/18. With inflation in Ontario running at 3% annually, workers in the public sector face years of pay increases at well below that level.

The picture is similar across Canada. In British Columbia, the massive tax cuts for the rich and the corporations granted by the Campbell government back in 2002 continue to cost the provincial treasury over \$2 billion every year. The next time you hear politicians and corporate media call for austerity, remember that the economic elite are receiving the biggest handout in Canada's history - an endless "grave train" for the rich.

## 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, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1  
Tel: 604.255.2041 Email: pvoice@telus.net

### Volunteers and contributors for this issue:

Dave Arland, Ed Bil, Wally Brooker, Miguel Figueroa,  
Drew Garvie, Dave McKee, Liz Rowley, Graham Wilson,  
and our mailers in Vancouver & Toronto.

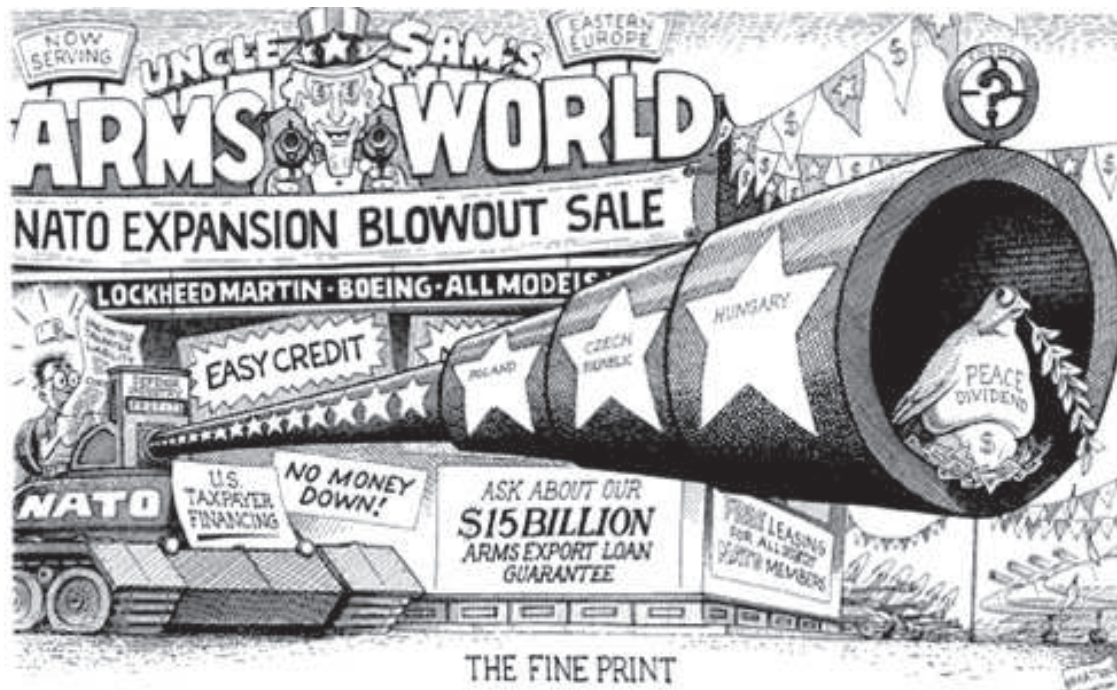
Editor: Kimball Cariou Business Manager: Hassan Azimikor

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.



## World Peace Council calls August 30 "Global Day of Protest against NATO"

The year 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War. It was one of the deadliest imperialist conflicts in human history, a tragedy that killed 17 million people. It was described as "the war to end all wars," but today, a century later, the military potential to destroy lives and a livable environment is at a terrifying level and continues to rise.

Everyday, all over the world, people suffer from armed conflicts, military build-up, occupation, acts of intimidation and aggression, modernization and proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The capitalist economic crisis is further aggravating peoples' life while profits of the war industries are growing. The ground for military aggressions and imperialist wars was never determined by accidental events or personal decisions.

The centenary of World War One should be a moment for reflection, for strengthening peace and for encouraging international friendship and solidarity on the basis of equality and respect for the sovereignty of the peoples. It must be directed toward ending economic domination of the monopolies and multinational corporations as well as towards aggressive military alliances.

Therefore, we should act against NATO, the number 1 war machine in the world. The World Peace Council, founded shortly after the end of the World War II under the slogan "No more War - No more Fascism", underlines the need to draw conclusions from the period which led to the Nazi invasion to Poland on 1st September 1939 and the beginning of the Second World War. The growing imperialist ambitions of Nazi Germany then met with the imperialist agenda of other forces, who did not oppose the German expansion to the East in the beginning. The glorious resistance of peoples against Fascism and Nazism in combination with the struggle and the tens of millions of Soviet people who died, led to the liberation of Europe from fascism and the victory of the peoples.

The post war international situation, the foundation of the UN and its charter created a new situation for the peoples and their strive for freedom and sovereignty. All this is being fiercely challenged and overthrown today. Efforts are made to substitute the UN by NATO, neo-fascist forces are growing in many parts of Europe serving reactionary ideologies and plans against the

peoples. The WPC opposes the growing militarization of international relations, the imperialist plans for the "Great Middle East", the "Pivot of USA to Asia", and the interference in the sovereign affairs of peoples and nations in Latin America.

### NATO crimes against humanity

NATO is the largest, strongest and most aggressive military alliance in the world today. Firmly dominated by US imperialism, NATO is also a pillar of the European Union's defense strategy. NATO currently has 28 member states across North America and Europe. Another 22 countries are engaged in the so-called Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). Next to this another 19 countries are engaged with NATO through programs such as the "Mediterranean Dialogue", the "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative" or the "Partnership for Peace" across the globe.

Since 1991, NATO has aggressively expanded its membership and theatre of operations. This fact alone reveals its fundamental purpose: to be a key tool of Western imperialist domination of the globe.

NATO is an enemy of peace. NATO is committed to the doctrines of first strike and pre-emptive strikes. As an offensive military alliance it stands ready to intervene before diplomacy has been given a proper chance, if such is in the interest of Western imperialism. NATO's expansion and provocations - as the crisis in Ukraine demonstrates - are directly responsible for destabilization, unrest, violence and war.

NATO is an enemy of the peoples. When it intervenes, its members regularly use toxic weapons containing depleted uranium or white phosphor. Moreover, NATO considers nuclear weapons to be a fundamental part of its defense strategy. The alliance aggressively pursues and promotes military provocation and intervention all around the globe, and the results are always increased destruction, displacement, and death. The examples of the wars in the former Yugoslavia and the creation of the protectorate of Kosovo, in Afghanistan and Libya, as well as the aggression against Syria, all bear witness to the disastrous humanitarian impact of NATO's intervention. In Iraq, where NATO took on part of the

reconstruction effort, it brought neither peace nor democracy.

NATO is an enemy of peace and of the peoples. Without any public debate, NATO's European member states are hosting U.S. nuclear weapons on their territory. In 2010 a secret agreement on the deployment of modernized versions of B61 warheads extended this presence by several decades, not leaving any space for democratic debate on the matter. Through its Article 5 as well, the NATO alliance imposes obligations on member states that are incompatible with the sovereign right of states to decide on peace and war.

The coming summit of NATO in Wales will adopt and further develop the Lisbon summit decisions (2010), will use old and new pretexts for its role as "world sheriff" securing markets, energy resources and spheres of influence, to the detriment of the peoples rights and needs. The dissolution of NATO must be a priority for those defending peace, social justice and progress, along with the right of every people to struggle for the disengagement from it.

We call upon all peace loving people and organizations to mark the August 30, as a Global Day of Protest Against NATO, demanding its dissolution! ●

To coincide with the WPC Global Day of Protest, the Canadian Peace Congress is encouraging actions across Canada on Aug. 30. For information, or to list an event, please contact the Peace Congress at [info@canadianpeacecongress.ca](mailto:info@canadianpeacecongress.ca).

## Renew today!

### Check your label

Please check the address label on the front page to see if it's time to renew. Subscribers who find "2014/08/01" on their label, for example, will have their subscriptions expire with this issue, August 1-31, 2014

Don't miss a single copy - renew today!

# West reopens old sores in Ukraine

By Graham L. Wilson

July 2014 - As the cease fire ended, and the peace process falters further, Ukraine descends further into bloodshed. Reports say that fighters from Chechnya have joined the rebels in Eastern Ukraine, alongside Right Sector militants being brought in from Western Ukraine on the side of the Ukrainian military (as well as private American mercenaries) - worrying signs that the country will continue to be roiled by ethnic conflict.

The fears of a fractured society born from the February coup seem to be rapidly becoming realized. By deposing an elected president and forcing a polarizing, definite shift either to east or west, the nation's unity now seems irreconcilably broken. As fighters continue to pour in, the European continent is seeing violence unheard of since the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. As has happened in Iraq, Libya and Syria, the West seems to care little about the chaos that ensues in the aftermath of its attempts at regime change.

A drastic uptick in violence followed the May 25 presidential election, which the West had portrayed as the turning point towards stability, but was largely boycotted in the restive east. Clashes between rebels and security forces rose sharply, as the Ukrainian military turned to large scale bombardment against both rebels and populated civilian areas.

Hopes for peace are slipping even further away after President Poroshenko's "peace plan" proved to be cynically ineffective. To anyone with a long memory, this all seems too terribly familiar. The aftermath of the First World War, with the collapse of both the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires, left an environment that continued to be bloody long after

1918. Nationalist sentiments created new nations, as the remnants of the old guard struggled to reemerge.

The threat of a new war was never far from anyone's mind, which brings us to the geopolitical duel between Russia and the West. Even without a large scale confrontation, the renewal of ethnic and religious skirmishes and insurgencies is worrisome enough.

This all strikes a personal note when I consider my own family history. My ancestors on my maternal grandfather's side, ethnic Ukrainians on the eastern edge between Austria-Hungary and Russia, were stuck in the middle of the morass. My great baba was hauled off to work as a slave in a German dairy, while my great gido was sent to fight for the Hapsburgs. He eventually surrendered to the Russians, was held as a POW, escaped during the Revolution, and made the long trek on foot back to his home village, which was now within Poland. My great baba survived through secretly suckling the cows she tended, and eventually was allowed home.

My great-grandparents met, married and set out to have a family. My great baba, however, was a very astute woman. Sensing the coming of the next great war, she eventually convinced my great gido of the necessity to emigrate to the New World. His family, the Warchomikas, were comparatively well to do in the region, and it required some sizable persuasion from his wife, who came from the lower class Ference family.

This class difference was illustrated by two different experiences. One relative from the Warchomikas fought alongside the Nazis for the fascist Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, a group extolled by the far-right groups that frighteningly remain in key positions among the new Ukrainian

authorities. Another from the Ferences fought against and successfully escaped twice from Nazi imprisonment, rejoining with the Red Army from Stalingrad to Berlin. But my immediate relatives had managed their escape in 1929, allowing their descendants to live in peace at last.

There is a common thread of immigration to Canada in order to escape never-ending war. This helps to show how hollow are the attempts by the Canadian government to depict Canada's sizable Ukrainian community as absolute in their support for the new Ukrainian authorities, even to the point of encouraging an increasingly brutal civil war.

Ukraine deserves the right to determine its destiny free from political domination from either east or west, and to reject either the economic control of Russia's corrupt oligarchs or the devastation of IMF imposed theft and austerity. Its diverse regions deserve fair representation within a decentralized federal system, but most of all, Ukraine deserves peace, dialogue and reconciliation, and the rejection of the fascist nationalism that has



Home in the eastern city of Sloviansk destroyed in a June 24 bombing raid by Ukraine military forces.

sparked violence in the west and east of the country. The alternative seems little more than

the continuation of the centuries old cycle of violence. A grim prospect indeed. ●

## Other voices...

## Howard Kaplan launches campaign for re-election to TDSB

Long-time advocate for universal quality public education, Howard Kaplan, has announced his campaign for re-election as Toronto District School Board trustee in Toronto's Ward 5, York Centre.

"Too many students are falling between the cracks while others are unable to reach their full potential because of inadequate government funding and short-sighted policies," said Kaplan. "It's time we put in place a funding formula that addresses students' real needs."

With the provincial budget released, Kaplan appeals to the Liberal government to keep its

election promises and provide adequate funding for all day kindergarten and special education, especially for some of the needier Ward 5 schools in the TDSB. "We need increased capital funding to deal with the shortfalls, which lead to pressure to sell off school land and buildings," said Kaplan, who spent considerable time during these past four years as a trustee, working with parents opposed to selling off public spaces as a band-aid for manufactured budget failings.

"I also call on the Minister of Education to provide the funds we need to reach fair collective

agreements with our teachers and support staff this upcoming year. We respect our staff and our contracts at the TDSB. Now is the time for the provincial government to show its commitment by dedicating new funding to education," Kaplan emphasized.

Kaplan's campaign manager is Elizabeth Hill, herself a veteran 18 year former trustee on the TDSB and York Board of Education. "Howard works tirelessly to ensure that our schools are safe and healthy. He really supports 'Kids - not Cuts', and that's why I'm working to re-elect Howard," stressed Hill. ●

## TFWP "reforms" leave cheap labour strategy intact

Statement by the Central Executive Committee, Communist Party of Canada, July 2014

After a series of revelations about abuses of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), the Harper Conservatives have announced so-called "sweeping changes". Their political aim is to prevent this scandal from becoming a major issue in the 2015 federal election, without reversing the cheap labour strategy demanded by big capital.

Canada needs policies to put people's needs ahead of corporate greed. Instead, the Harper government uses temporary foreign workers as part of the drive against job and income security for working people. This includes the

expanding use of casualized, temporary, non-union workers, paid minimum wages and without benefits. The drive to reduce labour costs and attain a flexible work force is creating a brutal system of modern capitalist slavery, a system which generates, and feeds off, a huge pool of working poor.

The TFWP was introduced under the former Liberal government, as part of a wider corporate drive to channel cheap labour to employers. The Conservatives have gone further, erecting new obstacles against immigration for family-reunification and other humanitarian grounds, and reducing the number of successful refugee applicants. Visa requirements have been increased for certain nationalities, and foreign visitors suspected of potentially seeking asylum are being blocked at ports

of entry, while others are being deported without the right to appeal. The racist Bill C-24, the so-called "Strengthening Citizenship Act", creates a new second-tier category of citizens with less rights. The Tories axed health benefits for refugees and refugee claimants, denying access to drugs, dental and vision care, and even wheelchairs, until this racist policy was overturned by the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program expanded, to funnel foreign workers into poorly-paid jobs without legal rights, protections or benefits. These super-exploited workers are at the mercy of employers, and then forced to leave Canada. The 2012 Conservative budget allowed companies to pay TFWP workers 15% less than the prevailing wage, a move which was later reversed after intense

public pressure.

Like similar programs in other capitalist countries, the TFWP also gave right-wing forces an opportunity to divide the working class by promoting anti-immigrant racism.

But with growing protests over the mistreatment of TFWP workers, and the understanding that this program artificially inflates unemployment rates, it became necessary for the Conservatives to announce changes.

But the "reforms" announced by Minister Jason Kenney will save the low-skills TFW program. The estimate that some 12,000 employers rely on the TFWP leaves out primary agriculture, tourism and resorts relying on youth with open work permits. Some 830,000 employers with fewer than 10 workers are

exempted from the cap on low-wage, temporary migrant workers.

Placing limits on the number of applications and charging higher fees will not stop employers who depend on cheap temporary labour, including big corporations like MacDonalds and Tim Hortons.

We join with others in the labour and immigrant rights movements to say that the entire TFWP must be scrapped, not just "adjusted". We support the demands to grant immediate access to the immigration stream for all current temporary foreign workers, to shut down the low-wage categories, and to allow those who come to work in Canada the ability to settle as permanent residents, with the same rights and protections of all workers. ●

# Ontario voters reject Tory austerity and job cuts

*Commentary by the Executive Committee, CPC (Ontario) - abridged*

The June 12th Ontario election was a victory for the Liberals who won a majority, rebounding from a series of scandals linked to privatization and vote-buying in 2011, and the massive attack on teachers and educational workers with Bill 115 in 2012. The Liberal win was also a resounding defeat for Tim Hudak and the Tories' anti-labour, austerity platform of public sector job cuts, privatization, and "right to work" laws.

This election was unwanted and opposed by the Ontario Federation of Labour, who had appealed to the NDP to support the government's budget. But the NDP

pulled the plug on the Liberal minority, heedless of the OFL's well-founded fear of a Tory win and promise of right-to-work legislation.

The Liberals wanted the NDP to support the budget, but were also prepared to go to the voters, with a \$130 billion, 10-year infrastructure plan, and an Ontario defined benefit pension plan stolen from the NDP's 2010 policy book. The Liberals designed the budget - which became their platform - to look very progressive, obscuring the regressive wage and privatization policies that were also in it. In the process the Liberals out-maneuvred the NDP by offering what appeared to be a big and a progressive agenda, while the NDP offered up policies that were small, inadequate, and

incremental.

The NDP had no intention of working with labour to extract concessions from the minority Liberals. Instead they planned to force an election, hoping to secure more seats at the expense of the Liberals. NDP leader Andrea Horwath wanted to duplicate the success of Jack Layton in the 2011 federal election when the Liberal vote collapsed and the NDP surged on the "orange wave" to become the Official Opposition. But it was the Tories that formed a majority government in 2011 - one Canadians have been in sharp struggle with ever since.

The "New Labour" politics of Tony Blair, Jack Layton, and Roy Romanow showed up in the NDP campaign, with Horwath's promise to link increases in the minimum wage to tax cuts for small business, and the promise to Big Business that any tax increase on corporations and the wealthy would be minimal and temporary. To those campaigning for "a \$14 minimum wage now", Horwath said the NDP would offer \$12 - but not until 2016.

The platform and the strategy bent so far to placate corporate interests that a sharply critical letter from 34 prominent NDPers was leaked to the media in mid-campaign, while Gerald Caplan wrote a similar scathing assessment in a *Globe and Mail* op-ed piece. Among other things, the 34 wondered if there was still a place for them in the NDP. The public agreed with the sentiment and the NDP lost three of its five Toronto seats. They won three seats in Sudbury, Oshawa and Windsor thanks mainly to the efforts of the local labour movement, ending up with the same 21 seat total - and no longer the balance of power.

OFL President Sid Ryan tweeted, "By triggering this election the NDP placed the Labour Movement in harm's way. There will be a serious and frank discussion with the party."

The Liberals meanwhile donned the mantle of defender of workers, jobs, and public services. They were ably assisted by the well-financed Working Families Coalition and its effective television and media attack ads. They appealed directly to NDP supporters to vote Liberal, as the only way to stop the Tories. In so doing, they completed the transformation of the Liberal image from corrupt, self-serving Big Business party, into a defender of democratic and social rights, and as the creator of jobs, growth, and economic and social security. And they did it virtually overnight.

## The Tories: 1 million jobs, 100,000 job cuts

The Tories campaigned on a platform of creating a million jobs, after by-election results last spring showed that their pitch for "right to work" laws was a vote-loser, not a vote-getter. Tim Hudak declared the issue was off the agenda, but the public rightly didn't believe it, after the trade union movement had spent the last year mobilizing and educating workers and communities about "right to work for less" laws in the US, and the significant loss of wages and rights that followed.

The Tories also shot themselves in the foot with the proposal to start creating one million new jobs, by laying off 100,000 public sector workers. It made no sense, and it struck a chord of real fear in a province suffering one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. Hudak made it even worse by releasing figures that didn't add up, exposing the plan's creators as rank amateurs. Economists from all sectors dismissed the figures as gibberish.

The result was 10 lost seats for the Tories (down to 27), the NDP holding at 21, and the Liberals up to 59 seats with a comfortable majority. Voter turnout was up,

despite efforts to suppress the vote by the conservative right. This included complaints by the Liberals and NDP to Elections Ontario that Tory operatives in London and Ottawa had sent letters mis-directing voters to polls on election day. The complaints were similar to the robocall scandal in the federal election.

The Tories were soundly rejected across urban and suburban areas, and in northern Ontario, while they retained rural ridings in eastern and south-western Ontario. The Tories' one "beachhead" in Toronto (won in a spring by-election by former Deputy Mayor Doug Holyday, with the support of Rob Ford and the Harper Tories), was lost by more than 4,500 votes in Etobicoke. In Burlington (just outside Hamilton), the Tories were easily defeated despite having held the seat continuously since 1943.

The Green Party, which had polled up to 7% before the election, lost some support as votes polarized. As well as electoral reform and environmental issues, including sharp opposition to Line 9, the pipelines, and the tar sands, the Greens also campaigned for a merger of Catholic and public school systems which many voters understood to mean a single, secular system of education. This position now has majority support in Ontario.

But in fact the Green Party advocates confederated school boards in which both Catholic and public systems would co-exist, maintaining the status quo where Ontario continued to be the only province still funding a parallel religious school system. With the exception of some of its candidates, the Green party offered no substantial challenge to austerity policies.

## Communist Party's support grows

The Communist Party more than doubled its vote, and interest was much greater than in previous elections. Only the Communist Party had a clear and consistent platform against austerity, projecting a way out of recession based on job creation, higher wages and living standards, expanded social programs and public services, real economic growth through public investment and the development of an industrial and manufacturing policy that puts people's needs before corporate greed.

The party proposed to double the corporate tax rate to 23%, restore the capital tax and capital gains taxes, collect deferred taxes and close tax loopholes, and introduce wealth and inheritance taxes on estates over \$750,000. The party also proposes immediate tax relief for working people by eliminating the HST, removing education from the property tax, and eliminating user fees.

Rent controls and plant closure legislation with teeth are also high on the agenda to stop greedy landlords and run-away corporations, along with action and funds to protect healthcare from privatization in all its evolving forms. Anti-scab legislation and



Communists on the streets, distributing the party's leaflets at Toronto's Dufferin and Bloor during the Ontario election campaign. (Photo: Ed Bil)

## OFL: Wynne's budget must go further to reverse austerity

*Statement from Sid Ryan, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour*

July 14 - The Ontario Federation of Labour welcomes the measures in today's budget that will make the province a better place for workers, but warns that it will continue to vigorously oppose all forms of privatization and cuts that unfairly place the burden for reducing the deficit on the backs of workers.

The government received a strong endorsement from Ontarians in the last provincial election to move forward on commitments to create a public pension program, invest in public infrastructure and job creation, implement modest steps towards fair taxation, and increase wages for personal support and childcare workers. The OFL commends these positive measures and looks forward to working with the government to ensure the Ontario Registered Pension Plan (ORPP) will work for Ontario workers. The importance of the ORPP being comparable to the Canada Pension Plan, so that it can be rolled into that plan at a later date, cannot be overstated.

Overall, the government must go further to reverse austerity and the labour movement cautions against being drawn back into another divisive round of deficit paranoia. Ontario already has the lowest per capita spending on public services and, for all Ontarians who rely on these services, further cuts is not an option. Instead, the government must live up to its responsibility to raise revenue and reinvest it back into our communities. While raising income tax on the top two percent is a positive measure, recent corporate tax cuts should also be reversed to ensure corporations are paying their fair share.

The continued focus on public private partnerships (P3s) and the potential privatization of public assets also raises major concerns. Ontario needs to look no further than the Brampton hospital boondoggle that cost taxpayers an additional \$394 million or the Highway 407 debacle to know that P3s and government giveaways of public assets do not deliver gains for the citizens of this province.

The coming months and years will be challenging times for the government and labour in this province. It should come as no surprise to the government when public sector unions come to the bargaining table looking for gains. Furthermore, as Ontario continues to struggle to rebound from the recent recession, the labour movement is committed to working with the government to increase protections for workers increasingly finding themselves in precarious and part-time work to ensure no one is left behind. ●



The labour movement and its allies worked to make the demand for a higher minimum wage a key issue in the Ontario election. Seen here, OFL Young Worker representative Denise Martins speaks at a rally in Toronto. (PV photo: Ed Bil)

# A female combatant of FARC-EP speaks out

*This interview with Natalie Mistral, international combatant of the FARC-EP, is dated July 9, 2014. The complete original Spanish text is online at [www.mujerfariana.org](http://www.mujerfariana.org).*

*"I am a communist, I have always been, and as such I am internationalist; I don't recognize neither the bourgeois concept of the nation-state, nor the artificial boundaries that want to restrict my identity. I am part of the people, a citizen of the world who decided to take part in a global war declared a long time ago by the big capitalists to the rest of humanity".*

This is part of an article written by Natalie Mistral, entitled "We are internationalists ... so what!" in which she vindicates her status of internationalist combatant, while she extols the value and detachment for anything individual of so many men and women like her, who decided to expand their frontiers to give the best of themselves to the noble cause of the oppressed.

This statement is enough to know that Natalie is a woman who, like many other human beings on this planet, does not believe in borders when it is about defending issues of justice and human dignity. She affirms that feeling of solidarity when she says "Colombia deserves the world's attention". Another important aspect to highlight is that she used to be a labor activist and she participated in the different social struggles of her country.

Nearly two years after these statements, with the experience of more than twelve years of membership in the FARC-EP, a period characterized as one of the bloodiest in the fascist onslaught against the organization, Natalie speaks with *mujerfariana*, on foreign policy, Latin-American integration and feminism.

**Mujer Fariana (MF):** What do you think of the foreign policy of the United States? What relationship do you see between the conflict in Libya, Syria, Ukraine and Venezuela, and in that context: what role does Colombia play?

**Natalie Mistral (NM):** The foreign policy of the United States is an aggressive policy aimed at the geo-economic control of the planet, in a colonial way. This means that the survival of the American way of life depends on its unlimited access to energy and biological resources produced by other nations, and all means to guarantee them seem valid.

What we are seeing now is the implementation of a strategy of destabilization against governments who do not submit to their interests. Therefore, they use and enhance an internal reactionary opposition, which they artificially organize and feed with the help of the CIA. This, with the help of paramilitary groups that generate street violence and with full support of the international media, gives an impression of chaos and lawlessness. It happened in Libya, Syria and Ukraine, among many sinister examples. The Venezuelan case is an example of heroism of a people that doesn't allow anybody to pressure or manipulate it, despite the obvious and intense destabilization, which has increased since the death of Comandante Chavez.

In Colombia, the context is different, because the Republic has, since its inception, been subjected to the interests of Washington. Therefore there is no democracy but a masked dictatorship of changing faces. Here, the political opposition evolves towards a class struggle, and the highest expression of it is the revolutionary armed struggle, which arises from the impossibility of the existence of a true democracy. I am talking about an armed people, which has been resisting for more than 50 years and which has suffered more massacres and disappearances than during the dictatorships of the Southern Cone. The intervention of the United States in this case is to maintain the relationship of dependency, to avoid the fall of the government, at whatever cost. Without their intervention, Colombia would have had its revolution and established true democracy many years ago.

Colombia is a key player in the geo-strategic board of the continent. Its central geographical position, its water, its biological



**Natalie Mistral**

and mining and energy resources are important for the United States, but also critical for achieving democratic consolidation in the region, once real democracy for the people is achieved. We can say that who controls Colombia, controls Latin America, and our commitment is to the people.

**MF:** What do Latin American integration processes, such as

UNASUR, ALBA and CELAC mean, can these bodies contribute to peace in Colombia?

**NM:** I think they are important processes, for states, so that all of Latin America and the Caribbean can regain their sovereignty... for the construction of the Great Bolivarian Nation. And of course, the consolidation of a new power bloc to defend the

well-being of its people and peace, changing the outlook for the colonialist and militaristic U.S. game, principles outlined in the Declaration of the Second Summit of CELAC held in Havana, Cuba in January 2013. ALBA is, moreover, an economically and politically independent body, in relation to the interests of central capitalism. I believe that they are some of the few international bodies that could be suitable to mediate in an armed social conflict, as intense and prolonged as the Colombian one.

**MF:** Let's talk about being a female guerrilla combatant. Do you consider yourself a feminist? **NM:** If we define feminism as critical thinking and political practice that rejects the unjust treatment of women and the domination of one sex over the other, yes. But above all I am a communist. I believe that the class struggle is anti-racist, anti-homophobic and anti-patriarchal and absolutely internationalist by nature. That's not just a cute statement of principles, it is a necessity, because the capitalist system is based on racial, sexual and social division of labor; therefore capitalism won't be destroyed without overcoming these misconceptions. Equity in all these matters is my aspiration for society. ●

## Colombia peace talks still moving forward

Little noticed in North America, the important peace talks taking place between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) continue to move forward in Havana. In July, the two sides issued a joint Communiqué 39 from the talks, about the status of the negotiations. Communiqué 39 informs the Colombian public about mechanisms for direct participation by victims of the internal conflict, which "will be a key input for the discussions on this issue."

At the request of both parties,

the organization and the selection process of the delegations on this topic will be done by the United Nations/Colombia and the Centro de Pensamiento y Seguimiento al Proceso de Paz from the National University, in consultation with different associations of victims of the conflict.

The communiqué stresses the need to select delegations which are balanced and pluralistic, reflecting "the whole universe of human rights violations and breaches of International Humanitarian Law that have been made during the internal conflict, taking into account the different

social sectors and populations, and the regional approach."

Members of the delegations should be direct victims of the conflict, not others speaking on their behalf. The delegations and their members will have full autonomy to express their viewpoints, and both parties commit to take full account of their views and proposals, as part of the general purpose of ending the conflict and achieving reconciliation.

More information on the peace process, as understood by the FARC-EP, can be found online at <http://farc-peace.org>. ●

## International statements condemn attacks against Gaza

### Joint Statement of the Communist and Workers' Parties

We, the communist and workers' parties which sign this Joint Statement condemn the barbaric and criminal assault of the state of Israel against the Palestinian people.

We express our full solidarity with the people of Palestine and we call on the workers all over the world to mobilize in order to strengthen the wave of condemnation against Israel, in order for solidarity with the Palestinian people to be expressed in a practical way.

The USA also bears an enormous responsibility for these bloody developments, which is supporting Israel in every way in the continuation of the oppression and massacre of the

Palestinian people.

The EU also bears responsibility, as it follows the line of keeping an "equal distance" between the victim and the persecutor and is simultaneously developing cooperation with Israel at a military and economic-political level.

The communist and workers' parties that sign this statement demand:

- That the crime against the Palestinian people be condemned.
- The continuing air raids against the Palestinian people must cease immediately and a ground offensive must be prevented.
- The Israeli occupation armies must withdraw.
- The immediate liberation of all political prisoners from the Israeli prisons.
- The tearing down of the unacceptable wall of division and

the lifting of every form of blockade against the Palestinians in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

- The immediate end to the settlements and the withdrawal of all the settlers that have settled beyond the 1967 borders.
- The right of return of all the Palestinian refugees to their homes, on the basis of the relevant UN decisions.
- All joint military exercises and all the agreements of military cooperation with Israel must be cancelled.
- A Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

*(This statement was initiated by the Communist Party of Greece. As of July 18, the statement was signed by over sixty parties, including the Communist Party of Canada. For the full list of*

*signatories, see <http://solidnet.org>.)*

### World Peace Council

The World Peace Council expresses its outrage with the ongoing bombardment of the Palestinian Gaza strip by the Israeli occupation forces which have resulted already in more than 100 dead and hundreds of injured, majority civilians and even children amongst them.

We condemn the brutal murderous attack by the Israeli Air Force against the Palestinian people aiming at the collective punishment of a people struggling for its inalienable right for an independent state and with obvious goals to obstruct any kind of negotiations and peace settlement in the decades long occupation.

We denounce furthermore the

recent increase of all kind intimidation and arrests in the Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem against Palestinians citizens.

The aggressive policy of the occupation regime of Israel, the ongoing settlements in the West bank and Jerusalem, demolition of houses, the separation wall in the West Bank is being fully supported by the USA and the EU, who are equating victims and aggressors. It is constituting a criminal complicity in the slowly genocide of the Palestinian people.

We support the right of the Palestinian people to resist occupation in their territories and demand the end of all type of attacks by the Israeli army.

Peace and stability in the region

see STATEMENTS, page 11



# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Peru unions fight anti-worker law

Unions in Peru are fighting to stop a package of anti-worker economic incentives from becoming law. The proposed measures aim at attracting foreign investment and boosting growth at the expense of workplace health and safety and the environment.

The package was approved by Congress and could be signed into law soon by President Ollanta Humala. Unions are urging him to instead to engage in a wider debate on growing the economy while ensuring full respect for labour, social and environmental rights.

The Ollanta government is caving to employer pressure and backtracking on earlier advances. In 2008, the newly-elected government passed a law on workplace health and safety with the promise of forging a new culture of risk prevention and enforcement through labour-management health and safety committees. Employers resisted implementing the law, with disastrous results: 436 workers have died in the last three years in industrial accidents.

The government is now letting employers outsource accident prevention to third-party service providers, reducing the frequency of health testing, limiting the time available for trade unionists to be involved in health and safety issues, and decreasing fines and criminal penalties in cases of violations.

The proposed changes would also weaken the Environment Ministry, reduce fines in the event of environmental damage, and speed up the approval process for permits in key sectors such as mining and energy, which is likely to increase social conflicts over the use of natural resources.

## Serbs protest labour law bill

Thousands of Serbian workers have protested planned changes to the labour code designed to cut wages and jobs as part of austerity measures. The draft law would allow longer fixed-term contracts, lower severance payments, and do away with industry-wide collective agreements. More than 4,500 people gathered in front of the parliament building in Belgrade on July 17.

Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic's cabinet is under increasing public and political pressure as it balances the promises to create jobs and improve living standards, while trimming the budget deficit. Serbia has fewer than 1.7 million people actively employed, just as many pensioners and 787,000 unemployed. About 780,000 work in public administration and state-owned companies.

"The proposed changes are perilous for all workers in Serbia and the protest today is a sign of a workers' revolt," union president Ljubisav Orbovic said. "Other forms of protests will be discussed in the coming days. But we will start gathering signatures.... We hope to have at least 500,000 signatures, or five times more than

needed" to force cancellation of the bill.

Independent police trade unions joined the protest and told the government that "trade unions are not public enemies" and do not "threaten Serbia's constitutional order."

Union leaders blame Vucic and Labor Minister Aleksandar Vulin for meeting most of the requests from foreign employers in Serbia.

"This law will not benefit workers, it will benefit employers who will be able to generate more profits," Orbovic said.

Vucic is trying to stabilize his cabinet after Finance Minister



Lazar Krstic quit on July 12, saying the premier was unwilling to go along with austerity measures. Krstic's successor, Dusan Vujovic, wants to seek international financing to cover for easing the pain of austerity.

The new labour code offers no protection or exemptions for nearly 60,000 workers employed in about 160 enterprises that have been restructured for years and which the government needs to resolve by next spring.

## Garment worker talks break down

Garment workers from two factories descended on Cambodia's Labor Ministry on July 17 as talks over their separate wage demands began and then broke down within hours. About 60 workers from Ocean Garment factory, which suspended operations on May 26 and ignored an Arbitration Council ruling to pay wages during the shutdown period, turned up to the negotiations but factory representatives were a no-show.

Pav Sina, the president of the Collective Union Movement of Workers (CUMW), said that officials from the Ministry of Labor advised workers to take an offer from Ocean Garment of \$100 for staff employed for more than six months and \$50 for those who have worked for less than six months.

"Some workers have now agreed to take that money because they badly need to pay for living costs such as rent," he said. However, Sina said protests would continue, even if the factory makes its payout, until workers receive their full wages and benefits.

Theang Thy, a 37-year-old worker at Ocean Garment, said that workers would take action if the factory did not offer more money.

"We might even block the entrance to Phnom Penh airport,"

she said. "It is only Samdech [Prime Minister] Hun Sen who can resolve this issue for us. If he does not help there is no hope."

A management representative at Ocean Garment said workers would not receive anything if they kept protesting. The factory has asked district authorities to deploy police to protect its property.

On the same day, about 90 employees from Sun Well Shoes factory arrived at the ministry for their own wage negotiations. About 1,000 workers began a strike on July 15 to demand a monthly \$5 attendance bonus, a \$15 per month travel and accommodation subsidy, severance pay and better safety equipment. Negotiations ended after just two and a half hours, and the management enlisted soldiers to guard the factory.

## Walkouts paralyze grain exports

Port workers in Argentina's Rosario hub began an indefinite strike on July 16, joining grain inspectors, who walked out a day earlier. The strikes threaten exports from the world's No. 3 exporter of soybeans and corn.

Argentina has a depreciating currency, and inflation is expected to hit 30% this year, eating into buying power.

The San Lorenzo branch of the CGT federation said the strike would cause "total paralysis for an indefinite period of time in all the port terminals of the region."

"(Wage) agreements reached last year are now totally outdated, given the inflation rate," said Pablo Palacio, secretary of the Union of Grain Recipients of Argentina (Urgara) in Rosario. Urgara has demanded a wage increase of 45 percent for its workers.

Meanwhile, crews operating port vessels have threatened to walk out, an action that could paralyze the movement of container ships. Truck drivers also vowed to strike by July 21.

The industrial actions come near the end of the harvest for soy and corn, a peak time for exports. Typically thousands of truckloads of grain reach Rosario every day, with more than \$20 billion worth of grains and soy products shipped every year.

## UK making strikes "almost illegal"

A strike ban pledge unveiled by the Conservative-led British government would make legal strikes close to impossible, warns Trade Union Congress general secretary Frances O'Grady. Speaking at a July 18 event to commemorate the Tolpuddle Martyrs, O'Grady said that Conservative plans for a strike vote turnout threshold of 50 per cent would "fundamentally shift the balance of power" behind bosses and see pay rates decline, even for people who have never been in a union.

Unions will be forced to carry out complicated strike ballots that require members to vote on minute details of disputes. Bosses must be given 14 days' notice of a strike rather than the current seven and

mandates will be limited to three months. Even if unions meet the 50% threshold, members could face criminal charges if they break strict new picketing rules.

The Tolpuddle event celebrates farm workers who were transported to Australia for the crime of forming a union. O'Grady said, "Back in 1834 the government used the law to send six farm workers to Australia to stop them campaigning against low pay. Today Conservative politicians are threatening to change the law on ballots to stop workers from taking strike action against low pay."

## Release Reza Shahabi!

Reza Shahabi, treasurer of the Syndicate of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, has been in custody in Iran since June 2010 on charges that result from his representation of union members. Shahabi is suffering from health problems, which appear to result from brutal treatment when he was arrested. Reports say that Shahabi has lost about 17 kilos, and is experiencing partial loss of vision and eye pain. He is also having stomach pain and defecating blood, accompanied with severe headaches. Walking has become very difficult, and he is feeling weakness and numbness in various body parts, especially his feet.

Unions and other organisations, including the ITF, Amnesty International, and the International Labor Organization, have made numerous appeals for his freedom, and to receive the medical attention he needs. For information, visit [www.labourstartcampaigns.net](http://www.labourstartcampaigns.net).

## NXP fires union leaders

NXP Semiconductors, the billion-dollar electronics manufacturer, is intimidating workers and using delaying tactics to break demands to reinstate illegally fired workers in the Philippines. The Dutch multinational, which is reportedly supplying technology for Apple's new iPhone 6, sacked 24 trade union leaders from the Metal Workers Alliance of the Philippines (MWAP) on May 5. Now the company wants to pay off the sacked workers, effectively removing the union leadership from the plant. MWAP has rejected this offer.

Despite assurances, NXP has failed to bring a new negotiating team to the table for talks. In the meantime, the fired trade unionists remain without work and without pay. NXP has also increased the number of security guards at its plant in Cabuyao, outside the Philippine capital Manila.

MWAP has succeeded against all odds in achieving union representation at the Cabuyao facility, which is located in a special economic zone notorious for hostility towards unions. When MWAP workers attempted to negotiate a new collective agreement, NXP fired their leaders under the pretext that failure to work on public holidays mounted to an illegal strike.

NXP has operations in over 25 countries. Formerly a Philips division, in 2013 NXP reported revenue of US\$4.82 billion. As well as being a key supplier to Apple, its customers include Bosch, Continental and Samsung among other major employers.

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

## Join 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, ON, M4K 1N6

416-469-2446 <[info@cpc-pcc.ca](mailto:info@cpc-pcc.ca)> [www.comunist-party.ca](http://www.comunist-party.ca)

**Parti Communiste du Quebec** (section du Parti communiste du Canada)  
5359 Ave Du Parc, Suite "C"  
Montreal, QC, H2V 4G9  
Email: [pcqccc@gmail.com](mailto:pcqccc@gmail.com) Tél: 438-338-8890

**B.C. Committee CPC**  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1  
604-254-9836 <[cpcinfo.bc@gmail.com](mailto:cpcinfo.bc@gmail.com)>

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

**Calgary CPC**  
5421 - 8th Ave. SE  
Calgary, AB, T2A 4L7 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, MB, 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, L8H 2K3  
Tel: 905-548-9586

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



# Is Israel planning Gaza's "final solution"?

By Felicity Arbuthnot, July 11, 2014

Yet another massive assault on Palestine is underway, where, of course, according to the Balfour Declaration, the Jewish population are guests not occupiers since: "... the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of (this) it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine ..."

Overnight (July 8-9) however, 160 targets were initially hit [at the time of going to press more than 1,000], including the European Gaza Hospital (a war crime without a war.) More than 120 people were killed at the time of writing and untold numbers wounded, adding to the unending onslaught on Palestine from the day the Zionist cuckoo took over the Palestinian nest, homes,

gardens, history, culture, ancient sites, cemeteries, villages, valleys, olive and apricot groves on May 14 1948 ignoring, jack booting and bulldozing entirely the "civil and religious rights" of the population, accompanied by subsequent decades of mass murder and demolitions.

The current onslaught is apparently in response to the deaths of three youths from settler families, for whom no one has claimed responsibility and many questions remain. However, homes of two Palestinian "suspects" were arbitrarily destroyed by the Israeli military with no arrests, trial, recourse to law for the dispossessed victims of any kind.

Subsequently in an apparent revenge killing, Palestinian teenager Muhammad Abu Khudair was kidnapped and murdered, his body doused in gasoline, which was also reportedly poured down his throat before setting him alight. Muhammad's cousin Tariq Khudair, visiting from Florida, was apprehended and beaten so badly

by the Israeli police that he seemingly: "woke up in hospital."

This all led to rockets being fired into Israel, though no injuries have been reported. Israel responded by targeting Gaza (Palestine of course, has no meaningful defence forces) with: "400 tonnes of bombs and missiles" with "440 targets being hit" and with: "The battle against Hamas (to) intensify over the coming days; it will exact a huge price." The tiny Gaza Strip is just 41 kilometres long and between six and 12 miles wide and home to 1,816,379 people. Nearly 45 percent of the population is under 14 years.

Israel is clearly planning another "turkey shoot" reminiscent of General Norman Schwartzkopf's

infamous boast of his aerial slaughter on the Basra Road, of those seeking safety, with nowhere to hide, in the first Gulf war.

With the UN in the form of Ban Ki-moon flaccidly urging "restraint" and world leaders mute, as ever, on Israel's murdering misdemeanours and homicidal excesses, it must be noted that 2000-2014, Palestinian child fatalities "as a result of military and settler violence" to date are 1,407.

Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Conventions is unequivocal: collective punishment is a war crime. "No person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation ... are

prohibited ... Reprisals against persons and their property are prohibited."

It is a supreme irony that when unspeakable crimes were committed against the Jewish people, their rights, their property, the Nuremberg trials were meticulous in their findings, retribution and laying down of laws to attempt to guarantee "never again", against any race, group or society. In 65 years of unspeakable crimes by Israel against their fellow Semites, the Palestinians, international law has remained deaf mute.

Since US aid to Israel is US\$3 billion annually, they too are partner in yet another Middle East crime against humanity. Will the insanity ever end? Maybe there is a glimmer of hope.

The coming week end there are demonstrations in cities around the world in numbers not seen since the proposed assault on Iraq in 2003, in outrage at the attack on Palestine and the Palestinian people. To read the extraordinarily comprehensive list of participating cities arranged in so brief a time should, in itself, be a wake up call for governments.

The US and UK, the closest of Israel's allies and leaders of world wide destruction, both have elections next year perhaps this might be the start of a mega warning message to both countries and to Israel: Enough.

- [www.londonprogressive-journal.com](http://www.londonprogressive-journal.com) ●



Two children in front of a house destroyed in an Israeli air strike in Maghazi refugee camp in Gaza. UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan

## Do unto apartheid Israel what you did to apartheid South Africa

COSATU statement on Israeli bombings of Gaza, July 10, 2014

On the night of the 8th July, 2014, Gaza woke up to the tremors of earth-shaking bombings by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF).... The Israeli cabinet has further authorised the reactivation of 40 000 army reservists in anticipation or signalling a possible ground offensive, to top up those already deployed in and around Gaza. How do we explain 60 airstrikes in one day?

The intensification of the mass arrests against Palestinians in various parts of the occupied territories, such as in West Bank where about 500 Palestinians have been arrested in a space of 3 weeks. Mohammed Abu Khdir, a Palestinian child, was kidnapped, tortured and burnt alive in Jerusalem. Mohammed is amongst millions of Palestinian children who have for years been murdered by the state of Israel in the name of self-protection against "terrorists".

We firmly support the ANC statement that, "In line with our 2012 policy resolutions, that called on "all South Africans to support the programmes and campaigns of the Palestinian civil society which seek to put pressure on Israel", branches and structures of the ANC across the country will be joining the Palestine solidarity and boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement in organizing protests and pickets calling for the immediate end of Israeli violence against the Palestinian people. We call on all South Africans, Black, White, Jewish, Muslim, Christian and all others to join us in expressing our solidarity. Solidarity will bring us together as different South Africans just as how the international anti-apartheid movement brought people together".

It is only those who have lost their humanity who cant feel or share in the pain felt by the suffering people of Palestine from the barbaric and savage attacks by what has become the most acceptable, deliberate and legalised murder and deliberate violation of international law by a country.

Israel is only able to commit all these ruthless atrocities because of the licence from the US, EU and allies. The UN must be ashamed of itself for failing humanity and the people of Palestine, always pleading for restraint from the victim, equally. We cannot equate an aggressor to a victim or coloniser to a colonised. Nelson Mandela was also called a terrorist for fighting for freedom, hence the natural task of oppressed people to wage a liberation struggle and our natural responsibility is to support them.

We call on the international trade union movement, various civil society organisations, international religious bodies and even business to speak out against savagery and barbarism against fellow human beings. We support the call to recall South African ambassador to Israel, kick out the Israeli ambassador from South Africa and move with speed to decisively isolate Israel and all who sympathise with racism and Zionist occupation all over the world.

Now is the time for the world to stop words of pity and lamentation, but take action by doing what it did to apartheid South Africa when its policies were declared a crime against humanity. Indeed, apartheid remains a crime against humanity wherever it happens. If apartheid cant outrage us, our humanity is called into question and our morality is hollow. ●

- <http://www.cosatu.org.za>

## Stop Israel's massacre of the Palestinian people!

The Communist Party of Canada condemns the murderous bombardment of Palestine by the Israeli Air Force, and calls for this aggression to end immediately. Israel's attacks have already killed hundreds of people and left several thousand wounded and displaced. The Communist Party reiterates its support for the right of the Palestinian people to resist occupation in their territories, and for their legitimate struggle for an independent Palestinian state.

Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Baird, has once again taken a shameful position in this crisis, stating support for Israel's attacks and criticizing the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights after she called for an immediate ceasefire and raised questions about the legality of Israel's airstrikes. These comments are part of the effort by Baird and the Harper government to reduce Canada's foreign policy to uncritical support for Israel, cloaking its aggressiveness in the language of "self-defense" and "anti-terrorism."

We also condemn Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apologetics for the flagrant war crimes being committed against civilians - especially women, children and elderly - by blaming the victims, saying that Hamas activists were using their families as "human shields". Harper's "we bomb your home, and if your family is killed in the process, it's your fault" represents unbelievable

and offensive double-think that reflects his aggressive, imperialist foreign policy.

It is pitiful that the opposition parties, including the NDP, have adopted positions that ape the Conservatives and attempt to sideline the historical basis for this crisis. As the Communist Party noted in November 2012, "Those who seek to assign "equal blame" for the crisis ignore the decades-long Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories in

foreign policy based on illegal positions.

The Communist Party supports the struggle of the Palestinian people for a viable independent state, within the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. We demand the right of return for all Palestinian refugees, and the release of all Palestinian political prisoners from Israeli jails. We reiterate our support for the right of the Palestinian people to resist occupation in their territories. We call for the wall of separation to be dismantled and condemn all efforts to divide the Palestinian people and territories.

The Communist Party supports the rapid mobilization of peace and solidarity movements in Canada and around the world, to oppose Israel's criminal bombardment and prevent escalation of the attacks. We encourage the labour and progressive movements in Canada to continue protests, and to build a mass mobilization to force the Canadian government to end its uncritical support for Israel and adopt a foreign policy of peace. Furthermore, the Communist Party encourages all individuals and organizations in Canada to actively support the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign, as a concrete, powerful and effective way to apply pressure to end Israeli apartheid.

- **Central Executive Committee, Communist Party of Canada, July 15, 2014** ●



contravention of international law and many important resolutions of the United Nations." Israel's warning for all Palestinians to flee Gaza if they want to survive is tantamount to ethnic cleansing at the point of the gun. We call upon the opposition parties to demand that the Canadian government press Israel for an immediate ceasefire and to open genuine peace talks. Further, the Communist Party calls for John Baird to resign as Foreign Minister, on the basis that he is pursuing a

# UK workers say: We're not going away

By Luke James and Conrad Landin, for the Morning Star

Two million people defied Tory strike ban threats on July 10 to come out fighting against poverty pay - and PCS union leader Mark Serwotka warned the government it was "just the beginning."

Serwotka rallied a sea of teachers, firefighters, council workers and civil servants in Trafalgar Square in his first major speech since recovering from heart surgery. He said he hoped cabinet ministers would "finally feel the humanity and compassion in their Tory bones" to lift the pay freeze forcing workers below the poverty line.

But he conceded that is unlikely and urged unions to learn the lessons of the 2011 pensions dispute that "fizzled out" after a two-million strong one-day strike.

Serwotka told the crowds from Nelson's Column: "Today is starting something that the government must understand will get bigger and bigger. Today has been fantastic but if we need to do more, we must do more."

The civil servants' union leader called for an urgent meeting of trade unions to "ensure that further action is planned and co-ordinated



The scene in London's Trafalgar Square as two million British workers strike against Tory policies on July 10.

and gets bigger and bigger."

Workers across Britain, who have seen their pay slashed by up to 20 per cent over the last five years, took part in over a thousand picket lines at town halls and schools.

Unite national officer Fiona Farmer said the minimum wage will surpass the lowest local government workers' pay on October 1 without a pay rise.

"If the economy is in recovery then our members deserve some of that," she demanded.

Unions reported that four thousand schools were closed completely, while 2,000 more were

partially closed as teachers and support staff walked out over pay and pension cuts.

And thousands of striking staff and their supporters packed public squares for rallies in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bournemouth and Brighton as well as London.

Taxi and van drivers sounded their support as a colourful parade of strikers swamped the streets of central London on the march from BBC's Broadcasting House.

Fire Brigades Union general secretary Matt Wrack said it was a "magnificent strike."

He told them: "You know that we should do this again. And you know that we should do this again soon. What we see today is just an inkling of the power that rests in the hands of working people if we only realise it."

Firing a warning shot down Whitehall to Con-Dem ministers, he said: "We're not giving up and we're not going away."

September could be the next date for action if the second ever NHS strike is staged.

Unison London secretary Linda Parks said her union's health executive were meeting next week to discuss balloting NHS staff after they rejected another pay freeze.

She said the pay freeze was "not because employers can't afford it but because this government have a deliberate attempt to hold down our wages."

She added: "We had no choice to come out today. If necessary we will continue to campaign through to the general election and beyond." ●

## Global boycott of Carnival Cruise lines

As part of a global campaign against Crown Holdings, the USW (United Steelworkers) is calling for an expansion of the boycott of Carnival Cruise lines.

A message from the union says, "On September 6, 2013, Crown Holdings provoked a strike by 120 members of USW Local 9176 in Toronto by demanding a permanent two-tier wage plan where the starting rate for new hires would be returned to what it was 28 years ago. The strikers have shown tremendous solidarity and resilience during more than nine months on the picket line. They made it through one of the toughest winters on record. But there is still no end in sight to the strike and they need your help."

Other concessions demanded by Crown include the elimination of the cost of living allowance and new language that would reduce union protections.

The company's last offer included a back-to-work protocol that provided few if any assurances that USW members would be recalled to their jobs. The vote against the proposal was 117 to 1.

The CEO of Carnival Cruise lines, Arnold Donald, is a key director of U.S.-based can-making giant Crown Holdings. As a member of Crown's Compensation Committee, he approved a compensation package to the CEO equivalent to \$7,000 per hour with lucrative retirement benefits, while remaining silent as the company slashed wages and benefits for workers.

The International Transport

Federation (ITF) reports that Carnival has strongly resisted unionization and is the only major cruise line whose seafarers remain unorganized. The ITF describes Carnival as the "Walmart of the Cruise Industry" because as the largest cruise line in the world it is holding down wages and benefits for all workers, even union workers, aboard cruise ships.

The boycott will put pressure on Carnival at a busy time of year for travelling and is one part of the broader campaign to get Crown to offer USW members a fair contract.

For more information about the Carnival boycott and the full campaign against Crown, as well as videos and other materials, see [www.TakeBacksNoMore.com](http://www.TakeBacksNoMore.com). ●



### The Fifth of the Month to Free the Five

Join in the worldwide action on the 5th day of each month! Write to President Obama and demand that he Free the Cuban Five:

E-mail: [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

On the web: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>

Phone 1-202-456-1111 Fax 1-202-456-2461

Telegram: President Barack Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 2500, USA

For more information, see <http://thecuban5.org> or [www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca](http://www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca)



## MUSIC NOTES By Wally Brooker

### Québec musicians break with AFM

Québec musicians have voted to disaffiliate from the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) and its Toronto-based branch, the Canadian Federation of Musicians (CFM). In a June 2-8 referendum, members of the *Guilde des Musiciens et Musiciennes du Québec* (GMMQ) voted 53.3% in favour of the break. About 70% of the union's 3,000 members cast ballots. Guitarist Luc Fortin, President of GMMQ, declared that the results confirm "a majority of Québec musicians no longer have faith in the current model of affiliation with the AFM, and want a stronger association of Québec professional musicians that can represent them effectively and be fully empowered to negotiate working conditions adapted to Québec's reality". The AFM's response came from the International Executive Board (IEB) in New York, informing Fortin that a member of Montreal Local 406 has filed charges against him for abuse of power. Fortin replied that according to AFM rules, charges must be brought before Local 406's executive, not the IEB. Among the contentious issues is the matter of affiliation fees and subsidies, especially in light of the union's obligations under Québec's Status of the Artist Act. The transition could be challenging for the GMMQ. Many agreements with cultural institutions will have to be renegotiated. For more info: [www.gmmq.com/en](http://www.gmmq.com/en)

### Music teachers fired for joining union

Two music teachers at a non-profit community centre in Toronto's Jane-Finch area are taking their employer to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Ruben "Beny" Esguerra and Omar Sanchez say they were fired for joining a union formed last October to represent the 20 workers of the non-profit San Romanoway Revitalization Association (SRRA). They allege that the April 30 shutdown of the SRRA-managed Palisades Media Arts Academy (PMAA), where they taught music and recording skills to Jane-Finch youth, was a consequence of the unionization of the parent organization. The SRRA argues that the money (a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation) ran out, but lawyers from CUPE, who represent Esguerra and Sanchez, point out that the Trillium grant was for three years, while the program only commenced two years ago. The OLRB hearings begin in September. Residents of the neighbourhood have launched a campaign to reopen the PMAA. The closing of the program, which provided free music and art classes to youth aged 14-29, leaves a void in the lives of many young people in this poor and stigmatized neighbourhood. For more info: [www.savepmaa.wordpress.com](http://www.savepmaa.wordpress.com).

### Young's Tel Aviv Gig cancelled

After a world-wide campaign by cultural boycott supporters, large protests outside his concerts, and an impassioned open letter from musical peer Roger Waters, Neil Young ended up not playing his controversial July 17th concert in Tel Aviv. The Israeli promoter cancelled, blaming Hamas rockets. After the cancellation Young had an opportunity to condemn the Israeli onslaught on Gaza, but chose to remain silent. His only message came indirectly from a spokesperson who lamented that "tensions" had "rendered the event unsafe at this time". The statement, in effect, echoes the official Israeli position. It's hard to believe that Young, who garnered accolades for supporting First Nations struggles against tar sands development, and who took a stand against the Vietnam and Gulf wars, is unable to see the parallels between the struggles of North America's First Nations and the Palestinian people. One can easily imagine the pressure that the Israeli regime and its supporters apply to artists who might consider supporting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign. But in his silence Neil Young is unfortunately complicit in the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

### Charlie Haden RIP

The great jazz bassist Charlie Haden died in Los Angeles on July 11 after a prolonged illness. He was 76. In the late fifties Haden was a member of the revolutionary Ornette Coleman Quartet. The group's music led a "free jazz" revolution that shook up the jazz world and exerted a lasting influence on subsequent generations of musicians. Haden went on to explore diverse musical paths that combined his ever-evolving aesthetic preoccupations with his progressive political and social beliefs. The latter were most definitively realized in the Liberation Music Orchestra, an intermittent project that was essentially a collaboration between Haden and pianist-arranger Carla Bley. In 36 years, the Liberation Music Orchestra released just four albums, but each one is a creative venture into a musical world where avant-garde jazz meets revolutionary people's music. They remain statements of and for their time, protesting the war in Vietnam, lamenting the death of Che Guevara, opposing U.S. intervention in Central America, and finally saying "Not In Our Name" to the post 9/11 wars of the Empire. Charlie Haden left a legacy of beautiful and relevant music for subsequent generations to discover.

# Ontario election analysis....

continued from page 6

bankruptcy protection are also in the platform (available at [www.CommunistPartyOntario.ca](http://www.CommunistPartyOntario.ca)).

In an election where mass unemployment, precarious employment, and declining wages and living standards were the main issue, the Communist Party stood out as the only party fighting for the rights and interests of the working class and youth, and advocating a people's agenda and a people's recovery.

Canvassing and distributions of the Party's platform had some remarkable results. Many people who took the platform on the streets, bus stations, or subways could be seen carefully reading it. Some returned to say they would vote for the candidate, and had been looking for policies like that. Others said they would vote Communist if there was a candidate in their riding. There were many requests for lawn signs, and it was easier for Communist candidates to get into all-candidates debates.

## Throne Speech

Premier Wynne re-introduced the Liberal budget on July 14th. Reaction from international credit rating institutions was instantaneous. The budget was too rich, the debt and deficit would skyrocket; in fact the earth would open up and the sky would fall. The message was clear: stick to austerity and stay away from interventions in the economy that don't involve more corporate tax cuts, wage cuts, privatization, deregulation and free trade.

Provincial Treasurer (and former banker) Charles Sousa responded angrily that "the banks aren't freaking!". The *Globe and Mail*, on behalf of corporate Canada, responded "somebody's freaking." But Ontario still has a credit rating equivalent to an "A" on a report card according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

## A Trojan Horse

In fact the budget contains some bombs which have to do with the funding for the ambitious plans in the budget, and the government's steely commitment to eliminate

the \$12.5 billion deficit by 2017-18 come hell or high water. After more than 30 years of tax cuts for the corporations and the very wealthy, revenue streams into the provincial treasury have been greatly reduced, generating decades of cuts and privatization by Liberal, Conservative and the NDP government in the early '90s.

The Premier flew trial balloons for road tolls, income tax increases, user fees; but all were found to be vote losers and were dropped prior to the election. Now a new think tank is urging resuscitation of these ideas. The budget proposed privatization of public assets, and expanding public private partnerships, meaning that services that are now public are likely to emerge as partly privatized services.

## Extending Bill 115

The budget also includes 0% wage increases across the public sector in upcoming negotiations. This is what generated Bill 115 in 2012, and precipitated a crisis in education that ended with the suspension of free collective bargaining, the removal of \$2 billion from the pockets of teachers and educational workers, and finally, the resignation of Premier Dalton McGuinty and the prorogation of the provincial parliament.

A similar struggle will unfold, pitting the government against every public sector worker at every level. It must be opposed by those in the Legislature who claim to represent "everyday people" and who, like the Premier, want to "build Ontario up". But this cannot be done on the backs of working people, youth, women, and the unemployed.

The labour movement has been very effective at linking the struggle for public sector jobs with the fight for quality public services. Efforts to privatize public services, healthcare, hospitals, schools, public transit, and more, must be met with stiff public resistance.

The Liberals can count on the support of the Tories who hate public services and assets as much as they hate organized labour and

the unionized public sector.

What position will Andrea Horwath and the NDP caucus take? In 2012 the NDP caucus opposed the Bill 115 legislation, but they supported removing \$2 million from teachers and education workers' pockets. They argued they could convince the unions to give up the money voluntarily. In 1993, NDP Premier Bob Rae introduced the social contract which opened up collective agreements to pick the pockets of public sector workers in Ontario.

## The split in the NDP

The split in the NDP is likely to become wider. At the base is the question, which side are you on? That's what NDPers in the labour and social movements will have to decide, sooner rather than later.

What will be decisive is the role of the OFL and the Common Front to mobilize working people for a massive and escalating struggle against austerity, and for a People's Recovery. Despite the Liberal image make-over, there is a huge storm coming and no way around it for Ontario's working people. On this side will be the working class, the unemployed, youth, women, Aboriginals, racialized communities, migrants. On the other side are the corporations and their governments. This budget is the lull before the storm.

The change in leadership and the demand for a change in direction at the recent CLC convention is most welcome. So is the focus on independent labour political action being pursued by the OFL leadership, and by the Common Front with its nearly 100 affiliated community and democratic organizations and people's movements, including the CPC (Ontario). Unity and strength in escalating mass independent political action can repulse the coming attack, and move labour from the defensive onto the offensive. This strategy is needed rack up real victories for working people in the next four years, and to achieve a much different and better electoral outcome in 2018. ●

# What's Left

## Nanaimo, BC

**Moncada Day Celebration**, Sat., July 26, 4-7 pm, Salmon BBQ \$10/plate, live music, raffle draw. 530 Wakesiah Avenue. For info, Gilberto 250-754-4277 or Alan 250-760-0252. Proceeds to People's Voice Fund Drive.

## Vancouver, BC

**Moncada Day Celebration**, Sunday, July 27, 2 pm, 2128 Grant St., speakers, music, food (\$15, BYOB), organized by Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association.

**Latin Summer Fest 2014**, Sunday, Aug. 17, 11 am-7 pm, Trout Lake Park, by donation, [www.latinsummerfest.com](http://www.latinsummerfest.com).

**La Trova Nuestra**, evening of Latin American music, admission \$10, 8 pm, Friday, Aug. 29, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive.

## Surrey, BC

**People's Voice Walk-A-Thon**, Sunday, August 10, at Bear Creek Park (picnic area at 140 St. & 88 Ave.), meet 11 am for walk around the park, 12 noon delicious lunch, 1 pm cultural & political program. For more information or to sponsor a walker, call Harjit, 604-543-7179.

**Forum on Bill C-24 and Harper's anti-immigrant policies**, Sat., Sept. 6, Noon-3 pm, Bombay Banquet Hall, 7475-135 St. Sponsored by Radical Desi magazine, ph. 604-255-2041 for info.

## Toronto, ON

**Salsa on the City Square!**, 19th Annual Toronto-Cuba Friendship Day, Nathan Phillips Square, 2-8 pm, Sat., Aug. 23, free admission. Direct from Cuba: 8 piece band Grupo Moncada, and Toronto's Pablo Terry and Sol de Cuba. Cuban flag raising 3 pm. Cuban food, sugar cane juice, beer garden, 2015 Pan American Games display, display tables, photo exhibition. Sponsored by Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association Toronto, [www.ccfatoronto.ca](http://www.ccfatoronto.ca).

## Ottawa, ON

**People's Social Forum**, August 21-24, hundreds of workshops, caucuses and meetings. For details, see [www.peoplesocialforum.org](http://www.peoplesocialforum.org).

## Latin Summer Fest: August 17

Vancouver's celebration of Latin American culture returns on Sunday, August 17, from 11 am to 7 pm at Trout Lake Park. Latin Summer Fest features a wide range of arts and culture, with an import market, kids activity area, and food pavilions surrounding an outdoor stage. Performers will include Tren al Sur, Grupo America, Nahualli, Caudillos, Caracas and Ezra Kwizera. This family event is free; donations are welcome. Presented by Latinos in Action with support from City Cultural Affairs, Academy One, Latin community media, Joy TV and Courier.

## People's Voice deadlines

September 1-15 issue: Thursday, August 14  
September 16-30: Thursday, Sept. 4

Send submissions to PV Editorial Office,  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1  
<[pvoice@telus.net](mailto:pvoice@telus.net)>

## World condemns attacks on Gaza...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7) can only be achieved by the establishment and recognition of an independent State of Palestine within the borders of 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The WPC condemns all efforts to divide the Palestinian people and territories and demands the release of all Palestinian political prisoners from Israeli jails as well the right for the return of Palestinian refugees to their lands according to the UN Resolution 194.

We call upon all members and friends of the WPC to take up initiatives of protest against the Israeli aggressiveness and to express solidarity with the Palestinian people as well as with the peace loving forces inside Israel.

The massacre of the Palestinian people has to end now!  
- The Secretariat WPC

## WFTU

July 11 - The World Federation of Trade Unions true to its internationalist solidarity to the Palestinian people which is being expressed with moral and practical means in a day to day basis denounces the murderous policy of the Israeli Government, the attacks, the kidnappings and the expansion of the settlements in the Palestinian territories.

There is no law or argument that can make these bloody attacks acceptable. The blood of the innocent and the injustice over the Palestinian people is not only in the hands of the Zionist Israel but also those who support it like the USA and the European Union and those who do not do anything to put an end in their torment.

We express our solidarity, support and brotherhood to the WFTU affiliate the GUPW, to the Palestinian workers and the Palestinian people for a free, independent and sovereign Palestine.

**News for people, not for profits!**



**Have you sent a donation for our 2014 PV Fund Drive?**

**Latin Summer Fest 2014**

[www.latinsummerfest.com](http://www.latinsummerfest.com)

**Sunday, August 17**  
Trout Lake Park  
Victoria Drive/15th Avenue  
Nanaimo/Broadway Skytrain Station

**11am - 7pm**  
Admission by Donation

Photography: America © Barry Furtco  
[www.gertrudco.com](http://www.gertrudco.com)

Latinos in Action

# Young Communists hold successful 26th Convention

## Special to People's Voice

From May 23 to 25, young Communists from across the country convened in Toronto for the Young Communist League of Canada-Ligue de la jeunesse communiste du Canada's 26th Central Convention. The purpose of the Convention was to elaborate the YCL-LJC's policy on important questions, debate updates to the constitution, set an organizational plan of work, elect a renewed central leadership, and develop a united, militant and activist strategy for the youth fightback. The slogan of the Convention was "with militancy and unity we will build the youth and student fightback".

## Towards a counter-offensive

The Political Report that was amended and adopted by the Convention outlined the collective analysis of the YCL-LJC. It expressed that "the most important new developments have been, on the one hand, the consolidation of the austerity 'recovery' agenda by monopoly capitalism and, on the other hand, the uneven but dynamic uprisings and social explosions of protest". The Convention discussed many recent struggles such as the Occupy movement, the Quebec Student Strike, Idle No More and environmental struggles against pipelines and the Tar Sands. While recognizing that these examples have "enlivened and reclaimed our streets in protest", the Convention realized that much more is needed to be done: in order to reverse the attacks and shift to a counter-offensive it is necessary that these struggles develop further and move beyond spontaneous protest towards an even broader united, militant and organized extra-parliamentary fightback with the labour movement at its core.

Delegates discussed the capitalist economic crisis, imperialist intervention and war globally, environmental crisis and climate change, the intensification of the attack on organized labour, youth unemployment/under-employment and precarious work, poverty wages, ableism, xeno-



Some of the participants at the YCL-LJC 26th Central Convention (PV photo: Ed Bil)

phobia and racism, the ongoing genocidal attack on Indigenous peoples, sexism, transphobia and homophobia, and the struggle for free, accessible, quality public education at all-levels.

"The goal of the convention was to strengthen the collective of the YCL through analyzing all the different struggles the League, our clubs and members are involved in," said Marianne Breton Fontaine, leader of the LJC-Quebec. "Through this we can see that what connects these movements is their resistance to capital and capitalist governments across Canada."

## Guests and allies

The Convention welcomed greetings from a range of allies who also strengthened the discussions. The Consul General of Cuba talked about some of the Cuban experiences with principles of Communist leadership; Communist Party of Canada leader Miguel Figueroa gave greetings; a representative of the Raise the Minimum Wage Campaign detailed creative and dynamic work being done in Ontario to lift workers out of poverty; and representatives from the Solidarity Committee with the Communities Affected by Chevron and McMaster's Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement gave

presentations and received support from the Convention. A speaker from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers talked about the campaign to "Save Canada Post" and the Convention passed a special resolution in solidarity with CUPW and to take action as the YCL-LJC to actively support the campaign.

The Convention was attended by 27 delegates and 7 alternates from clubs across Canada, in addition to several observers. Delegates were elected by their clubs to attend the Convention in order to ensure equal representation of the League as a whole. The YCL-LJC has recruited and grown substantially, especially in British Columbia, and where clubs are most active in Ontario, which meant for many delegates this was their first Convention of the YCL-LJC. The 26th Convention was the largest since the re-founding of the YCL-LJC in 2007, representing new challenges and opportunities for the organization.

Toronto YCL member Zidane Mohamed called the convention an "inspiring experience": "we hosted communist youth from all over the country, all eager to make positive change in their communities, and united under a common banner to end all oppression and exploitation."

On Saturday night, almost 100

people gathered for a social event that saw author and activist Stephen Endicott talk about his time in the YCL in the 1950's. Progressive hip-hop artist Mohammad Ali ("Socialist Hip-Hop") and folk-singer and YCL member Zach Morgenstern performed at the event, which took place at the Steel Worker's Hall.

## Challenges and renewed leadership

Procedural challenges and confusion lead to some serious time constraints, however all work put before the Convention was finished by Sunday evening as comrades met well into the evening. Other challenges included ensuring collective and democratic discussion on the leadership of the YCL-LJC. Delegates openly addressed these shortcomings on the floor of the Convention, and ultimately rejected side-line conversations in favour of striving for a culture of open criticism and self-criticism necessary to build a healthy, fighting YCL-LJC, capable of solving collective problems.

Gender-fraction meetings grappled with the reality of building a revolutionary youth organization in the midst of a patriarchal society, and the damaging effects that sexism has on our own organization. These discussions and the task of building the YCL-LJC's work in the women's movement will continue in the second annual "Women's School" to be held later in 2014.

The 26th Convention elected a Central Committee of 13 committed young activists with a variety of links to working class and social movements in Canada, responding to the call from the Convention for the CC to become the "activist-core of the League".

The Central Committee elected

a Central Executive Committee of five members. Drew Garvie, a longtime member of the YCL-LJC, a student activist for a number of years in Guelph, and member of the outgoing CEC, was assigned the position of General Secretary.

Marianne Breton Fontaine, also a longtime member of the YCL-LJC and the leader of the Ligue de la jeunesse communiste du Quebec, will continue as the Central Treasurer. Comrade Zidane Mohamed, a leading member of the YCL Toronto was elected Central Organizer. Rozhin Emadi, the organizer of the YCL Vancouver club and a Cuba Solidarity activist was elected as an At-Large member of the Executive. Brent Jantzen, a young worker activist, and a leading member of the YCL Vancouver club was also elected as an At-Large member of the CEC.

This Convention also marked the aging-out of several leading members. The Convention recognized comrade Johan Boyden's integral contribution to rebuilding the YCL since 2004, and through his main assignment as General Secretary since 2007. Thanks were also sent to Mark Hamilton, a longtime member, postal worker and Central Committee member from Nova Scotia, Philip Ford, a longtime organizer and leader in the YCL Toronto, and Drew Bowering from Alberta, who had been a member of the Central Committee since 2007.

## A step forward for the YCL-LJC

The 26th Convention, despite all the challenges of organizing a meeting of revolutionary youth in the context of capitalist reaction, marked a big step forward for the YCL-LJC. We have every indication that the biggest and most heroic struggles still to come.

As the Convention stated: "The current economic and political conditions have caused more and more young workers and students to look for alternatives to cut-backs, privatization and austerity. We have answers to the questions that are now being raised. The case against war, poverty, misery, environmental devastation, unemployment, exploitation and oppression is really the case for socialism!"

Conventions of the YCL-LJC aren't just a talkshop or a conference where socialist youth come together. The 26th Convention helped to reinforce the YCL-LJC in order to build the militancy and unity of the whole youth fightback. The real role of the YCL-LJC only comes to life in action, in this sense our latest Convention is still just the beginning! ●

## 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 Harper Tories, 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,  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1

13/14

## REDS ON THE WEB

[www.comunist-party.ca](http://www.comunist-party.ca)

[www.peoplesvoice.ca](http://www.peoplesvoice.ca)

[www.ycl-ljc.ca](http://www.ycl-ljc.ca)

[rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com](http://rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com)

<http://solidnet.org>