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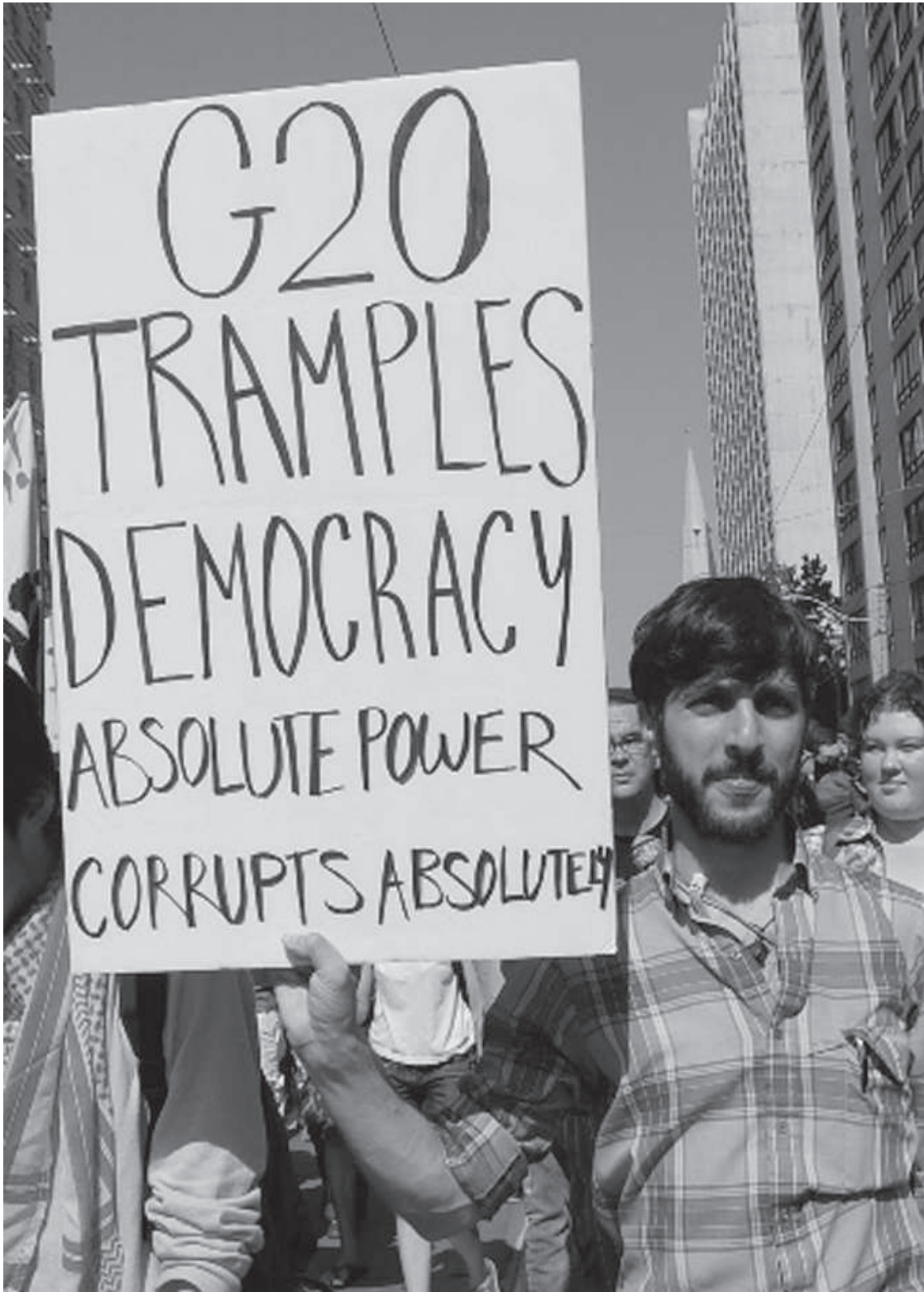
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# people's VOICE

**Prospects for  
disarmament**

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**Hundreds  
still face  
charges in  
G20 police  
assault on  
civil rights**

***Reports and  
analysis on  
pages 3, 6, 7***

**Below-poverty wages, big  
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## **Afghan revelations**

The release of 92,000 pages of files on the NATO war of occupation in Afghanistan can only strengthen the growing demands across Canada to bring the troops home now.

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## **Confront the Right**

The "religious right" remains a highly organized and effective force against social progress - how can we build a stronger movement to fight back?

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## **Two labour strategies**

Events in June offered a look at the differing policies and strategies of the world's two largest labour bodies, the International Trade Union Confederation and the World Federation of Trade Unions.



# Info leaks reveal scope of Afghan war disaster

*This is a slightly abridged version of a report by U.S. blogger Kevin Gosztola*

Classified information on the war in Afghanistan has been released by the *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *Der Spiegel*. Nearly 92,000 documents were provided to the three sources by Wikileaks, and have been published in the form of "war logs."

The documents illuminate disturbing realities: a US-assassination squad in Afghanistan operates with a "kill-and-capture list," drones used by the US are prone to system failures, computer glitches and human error, Pakistan actively arms the Taliban even as the US works to keep the country an ally, CIA has expanded its paramilitary operations, intelligence agents are awash in data they don't know what to do with (a conclusion that the *Washington Post's* "Top Secret America" digital journalism project probably demonstrates as well), how killings of civilians by forces are going unreported, how the US has covered up certain Taliban activity, and how Iran is likely aiding the Taliban.

*Der Spiegel* characterizes the US-assassination squad as "the Secret Hunters." The squad, known as Task Force 373 to the NATO coalition in Afghanistan, is a "black unit of forces" that has been hunting "down targets for death or detention without trial." The targets come from the joint priorities effects list (JPEL), a list of more than 2,000 senior figures believed to be drug barons, bomb

makers or part of the Taliban or al-Qaida. Forces set out to "seize" targets on these lists for "internment" but in many cases the targets are killed instead.

The force includes "U.S. elite soldiers" from the "Navy Seals and members of the Delta Force." They receive orders "directly from the Pentagon and are independent of the chain of command of the international ISAF Afghanistan security forces." The decision to arrest or kill is often up to those hunting the targets down.

The existence of an assassination squad is not surprising to those who remember it was revealed in 2009 that former Vice President Dick Cheney ordered "a highly classified CIA operation hidden from Congress because it pushed the limits of legality by planning to assassinate al-Qaida operatives in friendly countries without the knowledge of their governments."

Documents indicate Pakistan, a US ally, have "directly with the Taliban in secret strategy sessions to organize networks of militant groups that fight against American soldiers in Afghanistan, and even hatch plots to assassinate Afghan leaders." The intelligence files suggest Pakistan's spy agency ISI has been supplying, arming, and training insurgents in Afghanistan since 2004.

The Obama Administration provides \$1 billion of military aid to Pakistan. There is significant doubt about much of the information concerning ISI. The recorded allegation of a plot against Hamid Karzai is sourced to the National Directorate of Security (NDS),

which is Afghanistan's premier spy agency and an agency with a history of hostility toward the ISI. However, the documents do indicate the ISI is engaged in some level of collusion with the Taliban.

Also illuminated is the reality that US forces are getting into battles on the Pakistan border and in Pakistan. US troops have been "disregarding Pakistani sovereignty to fire on Taliban fighters" being sheltered by Pakistanis in the country's tribal belt.

## Civilian deaths

The existence of CIA paramilitaries isn't much of a secret to *Der Spiegel*, which reported on America's use of CIA paramilitaries in Iraq. However, the paramilitaries' role in civilian deaths has likely gone unreported due to the nature of these forces.

Around 144 entries in the war logs indicate so-called "blue on white" events involving assaults on Afghans resulting in hundreds of casualties. The logs indicate civilian casualties come from the shooting of individual innocents or air strikes.

*The Guardian's* assessment is that "the logs demonstrate how much of the contemporaneous US internal reporting of air strikes is simply false." The source notes this in conjunction with the reality that "US and allied commanders frequently deny allegations of mass civilian casualties, claiming they are Taliban propaganda or ploys to get compensation, which are contradicted by facts known to the military."

# CCFA-Vancouver marks Moncada Day



Kevin Neish (above), one of the Canadian activists who took part in the Gaza Freedom Flotilla earlier this year, was among the speakers at the annual Moncada Day picnic held on July 25 by the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association in Vancouver. The group will mark its 50th anniversary over the coming year. People's Voice supporters in Nanaimo also held a successful Moncada event on the same day. Nova Scotians marked the 57th anniversary of Moncada with music, speakers and poets Halifax's Victoria Park, and the annual pig roast and festivities in historic Grand-Pré. Look in our "What's Left" column on page 11 for other Cuba solidarity events during August. (Photo: K. Cariou)

## Taliban missiles

The leaked documents indicate the Taliban has been using portable heat-seeking missiles. The documents show that the US military covered up "a reported surface-to-air missile strike by the Taliban that shot down a Chinook helicopter over Helmand in 2007 and killed seven soldiers, including a British military photographer."

The CH-47 Chinook was shot down on 30 May 2007 after dropping troops at the strategic Kajaki dam in Helmand where the British were leading an anti-Taliban drive. Witnesses reported that a missile struck the left rear engine of the aircraft, causing it to burst into flames and nosedive into the ground. All on board died.

NATO and US officials suggested the Chinook was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) but the logs show they were certain it was a missile from a Manpad - the military term for a shoulder-launched surface-to-air missile.

Altogether, about 10 near-misses by missiles show up in the documents. They suggest that some of the same technology used against Russia in the 1980s (which the CIA supplied) is being used against US troops and coalition forces.

## Notes in conclusion

Julian Assange told *The Guardian* (in a video that appears on the source's website), "The significance of this material is both the overarching context - that is it covers the entire war since 2004 - and the individual events" detailed like the incidents with Task Force 373 and the information in the logs concerning the way "the political class interfaces with US military and intelligence." In the video, Assange notes the release is analogous to the Pentagon Papers, in some respects, and notes how this leak is much different.

"The situation is different in

that it's not just more material and been pushed to a bigger audience and much sooner - like everyone has the book, the whole log at once - but rather that [the situation is different because] because people can give back. So, people who are around the world who are reading this are able to comment on it and put it in context and understand the full situation. That is something that has not previously occurred and can only be brought about as a result of the Internet."

Indeed, any person can look over these files by downloading them or by media sources who have done their journalistic duty by reporting on the documents. The people of the world can respond and give back to the people who are bearing the brunt of this war and its abuses by engaging in a conversation about the leaked materials - first by sharing what is detailed in the contents and then by commenting on what the content's details mean and what the proper response to those details should be.

It is not the job of any journalist to contact governments and ask permission to report something (even though that is how the majority of US press operate). As Assange said at the TED Conference this month, "there's a lot of information organizations are spending economic effort into concealing. That's a really good signal that when information gets out there's a hope for doing some good."

The US government cannot get and will not get the value of the leaked documents. It's not in the government's interest to find value in them. That doesn't mean the people of the world, especially Americans, cannot appreciate access to documents that show the truth of what is going on and use the release of classified information to catalyze a change, to shift perceptions on the Afghan war by spreading the contents of the documents far and wide. ●

## Temperature's rising - take care in summer

### Union/UFCW 832/CALM

We joke about the heat in summer months but it is really no laughing matter.

In 2001, a 44-year-old bakery worker in Barrie, Ontario, died at work of heat stress. According to the United Food and Commercial Workers, about 220 workers die every year in Canada and the U.S. from heat stress.

Excess heat is a serious workplace health and safety. Workplaces such as bakeries, food processing plants, laundry and dry cleaning establishments, and outdoor environments present a high risk.

The human body is healthy when the body's internal temperature is around 37 C. This healthy internal temperature becomes stressed when people are exposed to higher air temperatures, when they are exposed to objects that are hot and when they are involved in physically strenuous activity. When people are exposed to two or more of these threats they are at risk of increasing their internal body temperature and suffering from heat stress.

Like other workplace health and safety hazards, the best way to reduce the risk of heat stress is to control the hazard at its source.

For example, air conditioning,

effective air circulation and exhaust systems and good quality insulation on equipment like stoves and furnaces are the most effective methods for reducing or eliminating the risk.

These controls are often not what they should be. Workers should know how to protect themselves and their co-workers. Many variables that contribute to heat stress, and individual workers and workplaces can be very different.

Passing laws based solely on exact numbers is not practical. Factors other than temperature are also significant in contribution to heat stress:

- \* older workers and women are at higher risk
- \* acclimatization, the body's ability to get used to the heat after a period of time
- \* consumption of alcohol increases dehydration and decreases the body's ability to control internal temperatures
- \* clothing - some protective equipment retains body heat
- \* air movement and humidity
- \* how heavy and how fast the work is.

When there is a threat of heat stress, adequate break times and the availability of cool drinking water is required.

The humidex scale is often a guideline that workplaces use to

determine certain actions. It is a measure that combines the effect of heat and humidity.

The Workplace Safety and Health Division has a scale that makes general recommendations for preventive actions when the humidex scale reaches certain levels. For example, when the humidex reads between 30 and 37, cool water should be available for workers near their workstations.

When it reaches 38-39 degrees, workers need a 15-minute break every hour. When it reaches 40-41 degrees, there should be a half hour break every hour along with the availability of cool water. If the humidex measure is up to 45, then a 45-minute break should be provided. Humidex readings more than 45 are dangerous and work should stop. It is important to keep in mind, however, that there are many variables, most importantly how heavy the work is. That can change these recommendations so a workplace that requires a lot of exertion will have to take preventive measures at lower humidex readings.

Employers and safety and health committees should review the particular circumstances in their workplace and assess the risks workers are exposed to. Heat stress is a serious condition that can have serious consequences.



# Faux News coming North?

by Simon Enoch/CCPA  
Saskatchewan/CALM

It seems a certainty that we will soon have our very own "Fox News North" cable channel as Quebecor is poised to launch Sun TV News. Although Quebecor has recently tried to deflect accusations that it will adopt a conservative point of view, its main architects are a bastion of Canadian conservatism, with Quebecor CEO and Tory

supporter Pierre Karl Peladeau bankrolling the project and Kory Teneycke - a former chief spokesperson for Stephen Harper - slated to run the channel.

Critics of the proposed channel fear it will be divisive and polarizing. Supporters counter that the channel will offer much needed diversity of viewpoint in the Canadian media.

While we can only speculate on what Sun TV will ultimately contain,

it certainly appears to be a Canadian version of Fox News, built on a mix of news reporting (from Sun media staff) and opinion. Teneycke's characterization of the new channel as "unapologetically patriotic," in contrast to the supposedly "smug, condescending, and politically correct journalism" of the mainstream certainly seems akin to the Fox News model.

However, it should be plainly stated, the Fox News model is barely news in any sense that we understand the term here in Canada. Indeed, Fox News not opinion, has violated perhaps every standard of journalistic practice in its brief 15-year history. For instance, Fox News has plagiarized - typos and all - from a Republican press release and tried to pass it off as legitimate reporting. Fox News has altered photos without informing their audience that the images had been manipulated. They have reported factually inaccurate news items that disparage Democrats. They have used "conservative blogs" as a supposedly credible news sources, skewered statistics to bolster Republican politicians, and routinely failed to fact-check news stories.

These violations have not sat well with some Fox News employees. According to the

Columbia Journalism Review, several former Fox employees complained of "management sticking their fingers in the writing and editing of stories to cook the facts to make a story more palatable to right-of-centre tastes."

Indeed the daily internal memos from management that direct Fox News staff on what stories to cover and what slant to take illustrate the degree of control that management attempts to exact upon reporters.

A 2003 Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) from the University of Maryland found that 80 per cent of regular Fox News viewers were likely to harbour one or more misperceptions about the Iraq war. In contrast, only 23 per cent of National Public Radio/Public Broadcasting Service viewers held false beliefs.

The PIPA study showed 67 per cent of regular Fox News viewers it surveyed believed that there was direct evidence linking Saddam Hussein to Al-Qaeda. The U.S. government itself has publicly admitted there were no links. Thirty-three per cent believed that weapons of mass destruction were found after the American invasion of Iraq, despite the conclusions of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) that Iraq had no stockpiles of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. Lastly, 35 per cent of believed world

opinion favoured the U.S. invasion of Iraq. World opinion was vehemently opposed to such an action. In every category, Fox News viewers consistently displayed the highest level of misperception and false belief.

That an audience can be so misinformed. Summing up these findings, media critic Robert McChesney notes: "For any self-respecting journalist, if you're told that the more people that consume your media, the less they will know about the subject and the more they will support government policy "that's the worst thing a journalist should want to hear."

If Sun News TV follows the Fox News model, we can expect a highly misinformed segment of our population. Perhaps the only thing more dangerous than an apathetic and disengaged electorate would be an electorate acting on falsehoods. Our democracy can only be as strong and vibrant as the information its citizens act upon. To invite a Fox News North into our political debate will not be a guarantee of diversity, but rather a guarantee that our political discourse will only become further impoverished.

(Simon Enoch is director of the Saskatchewan office for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.)

## Hotel workers protest Hyatt



Hyatt Hotel chain employees across North America demonstrated on July 22 to protest mistreatment by their bosses (see page 8 for details). At this rally in Vancouver, members of the UNITE-HERE union and other supporters blocked Burrard Street outside the Hyatt for over 30 minutes. (Photo: K. Cariou)

## Big business benefits from poverty wages, but fightback is growing

By Stephen Von Sychowski

On July 1, the lowest minimum wage in Canada fell even further behind when Newfoundland raised its level to \$10/hour. It has been almost nine years since British Columbia's minimum wage was increased to \$8/hour in 2001, at the same time that the ageist "training wage" was instituted at \$6/hour.

In late June, young workers and other volunteers from the BC Federation of Labour and the Employee Action & Rights Network protested at a McDonald's restaurant in East Vancouver.

"McDonald's and other low-wage employers in BC are real beneficiaries of the minimum wage freeze," said BC Fed president Jim Sinclair, in a media release sent out to mark the demo. "McDonald's will pay as little as possible and our low minimum wage means McDonald's workers in BC earn the lowest starting wages anywhere in Canada."

McDonald's highlights the way in which huge corporations profit from BC's below-poverty level wages. While a part time worker starting at McDonald's in St. John's would be paid \$10.25 by law, in BC the same worker would be paid as little as \$6.75 and could legally be paid as little as \$6. Contrary to the claims of right wing economists and politicians to the effect that higher wages automatically mean higher prices, the cost of eating at McDonald's is the same in St. John's as in Vancouver. Meanwhile, a minimum wage worker in BC would have to make \$13.21/hour to have a comparable standard of living to that of their Newfoundland counterparts. In other words, big

business in BC is simply pocketing the "savings" from paying lower wages as higher profits.

The McDonald's protest was far from the only action against the Liberal government's wage freeze in recent months. Both the BC Fed's \$10 NOW campaign, and the Living Wage campaign, have mobilized in different ways for increased wages. Many activists on these campaigns have been young workers. Some of the most exciting developments recently have been the adoption of a living wage policy by municipalities including New Westminster, and the formation of the Employee

Action & Rights Network. EARN is educating non-union workers about their rights and fighting to ensure that those rights are respected at work.

The situation of wages in BC, and the living conditions of those who make those wages, may be dismal. But it looks like Gordo and the Liberals could have a rocky couple of pre-election years in store if these movements continue to grow, and to build towards involving the masses of non-union workers who are most directly affected by these issues into these excellent struggles that organized labour has launched. ●



## Fund Drive report returns next issue

It's the "dog days of summer," and many of our contributors and volunteers are either on vacation or just returning. We'll return next issue with an up-to-date report on the 2010 PV Fund "Drive". In the meantime, readers in the Lower Mainland area of BC should take note that our annual Walk-A-Thon organized by the Lower Fraser Club has been changed to Sunday, Aug. 22, starting at 11 am. Everything else is the same - it's at Bear Creek Park in Surrey, 140th and 88th, with the usual great lunch. We look forward to seeing you there!

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

Enclosed please find my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the 2010 People's Voice Press Fund Drive.

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# EDITORIALS

## Countdown in Ottawa

At first glance, the Conservatives' new-found righteous anger against the long-form census seems bizarre. After all, big business uses census results in countless ways to refine marketing strategies. And for a government which happily spends billions to track and harass its critics, the sudden concern over "privacy rights" is a bit strange, to say the least.

But there is a method to this Tory madness. It is often said that the Harper government aims to downsize the Canadian state, a view which is only partially correct. In fact, the Conservative goal is to expand the repressive apparatus of the state - prisons, military, police, "security" agencies - while eliminating its "redistributive" functions, especially universal social programs. From this perspective, scrapping a reliable method of tracking poverty or the impact of social spending makes complete sense. *People's Voice* often prints articles based on accessing Statistics Canada reports, which present a fairly reliable picture of developments such as the accumulation of wealth by upper-income earners at the expense of workers. Put simply, the ruling class in Canada is sometimes embarrassed by revelations that its policies are robbing the poor to fatten the rich.

There's another side to this uproar. After more than four years in office, Mr. Harper still languishes deep in minority territory. Discontent over the ongoing economic crisis, the endless war of occupation in Afghanistan, cuts to health care and other urgent priorities, all combine to hurt the PM in the polls, despite the lacklustre efforts of his Parliamentary rivals. This helps explain the use of "wedge tactics" to divert attention from serious issues. High unemployment? More deaths in Kandahar? No matter - let's vent about the "outrage" voters feel when asked how many bathrooms are in their mansions.

Once again, the Harper gang stand exposed as hypocritical bullies. We're counting the days until their welcome defeat.

## Wikileaks and Canada

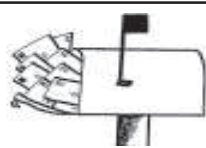
The reaction from the ruling class and its bootlickers to the latest WikiLeaks revelations of the military occupation of Afghanistan are predictably self-serving.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon warned that such leaks "endanger the lives of our men and women in Afghanistan." Without a hint of irony, the Minister went on to assure Canadians that "we are extremely transparent" and that adequate information about the Afghan mission is passed on to the public.

Earth to Mr. Cannon: over 150 Canadians have already died in Afghanistan, not to mention many thousands of civilians. The only way to save lives is simple: bring the troops home. As for "transparency," perhaps the Minister was subconsciously referring to the fact that most Canadians see right through the feeble justifications for this brutal war.

Then there's Christie Blatchford, chief flagwaver for the Armed Forces at the *Globe and Mail*. "There's no doubt," wrote Blatchford, "this is a dirty, costly, horrible war being waged in a country inured to death and corruption and hopelessness.... The truth is, no one who paid the slightest attention to the war in Afghanistan could be surprised by the latest WikiLeaks." Of course, Blatchford remains stubbornly confident that this is an honourable war, despite the nasty realities.

In fact, many Canadians, like citizens of other NATO countries, have been paying close attention to the war, and we are not surprised. Despite frantic efforts to promote the Armed Forces by the mass media and politicians (even the NDP's Jack Layton, sadly enough), some 60% of Canadians want to exit Afghanistan and end this shameful chapter of our history. The WikiLeaks files are a valuable tool for the anti-war movement, which has heroically struggled for nearly a decade to achieve this goal.



## Letters to the Editor

### Central, not Eastern

The July issue of PV published a statement from the Central Executive, Communist Party of Canada naming Poland, Hungary and indirectly Czech Republic as "East European." I would expect for the Executive and definitely your fine publication to know that these countries are NOT "East European" but - central and Central European.

What you are using is the Cold War jargon describing some of the former Warsaw Pact (the so called "Eastern Bloc") countries as, "East European". This tragic political and military chapter and the division of Europe into two political adversarial sides "East - West" has been closed for over twenty

years now.

Like with any other continent there must be the centre before establishing other parts of a continent, such is the case with: Central America, Central Asia, Central Africa, etc. Europe has also its south and north but only because it has its centre. So you know, the actual centre of Central Europe (and entire Europe) happens to be near western Polish city of Poznan.

On top of referring to geography the term Central Europe has also its deep historical and cultural traditions.

The following countries have always been and always will be CENTRAL European. Unless there is a way found to move the mountain ranges, the land mass, the lakes and rivers they shall remain central: Austria, Czech Republic, Germany,

Hungary, Liechtenstein, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland.

Even though culturally Western, Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic are geographically central. Using the Cold War mentality, jargon, and its "logic", these countries should be considered today (along with the former East Germany) to be West European because they are members of NATO, the so called Western Alliance. It was membership in NATO or Warsaw Pact, and not geography or cultural belonging, that was the great divide between "East or West."

"Central Europe is the region lying between the variously defined areas of Eastern and Western Europe. The term and widespread interest in the region itself came back into fashion after the end of the Cold War, which, along with the Iron Curtain, had divided Europe politically into East and West, splitting Central Europe in half." (Wikipedia)

Best wishes in your important work.

Derek J. Sirocka

### Old growth forest threatened

Recently I was in the northern interior of British Columbia. Having heard about an ancient rain forest near Prince George I was naturally intrigued and decided to head out there for a hike. What I saw was absolutely amazing. Some of the trees are over 1,000 years old and up to 16 meters in circumference. It is the only forest of its kind anywhere in the region and contains, in addition to the literally ancient trees, numerous other flora and fauna as well as bird and wildlife habitat, waterfalls and more. Its stunning natural beauty is completely preserved with the exception of two things: the man-made hiking trail, and the paint and ribbons which mark many of the trees for logging.

That's right; this extremely rare old growth forest was slated to be chopped down prior to its discovery by a student from the University of Northern British Columbia which led to a campaign to have the forest protected. Had this not occurred, the forest may

have been destroyed by logging and lost forever unbeknownst to the vast majority of the people of British Columbia.

The marking tape and paint is visible all along the hiking path through the ancient forest. It remains as a stark reminder that under capitalism, profit comes first and the environment is always considered expendable in the pursuit of that profit. Let's hope that one day we can build a new society where that doesn't hold true, before capitalism finishes this planet off once and for all. It's time that we took control of our forest industry and our economy to develop it on a sustainable basis and to provide good, green, jobs for all. In the meantime, thank goodness there are people willing to stand up and fight to protect our environment and our natural heritage from the wood chippers of profit-hungry corporations.

Stephen Von Sychowski,  
Burnaby, BC

## PEOPLE'S VOICE

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## LETTERS

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# Strategies to confront the Religious Right

By Wayne Madden,  
Edmonton

In Texas and other states, Republicans adopt key policies suggested by “evangelical” conservatives on health, education, human rights, environment, the role of government, and international relations. In Canada, key members of the Harper government (as well as provincial governments in Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan) have close ties with religious fundamentalist organizations. For fear of being accused of opposing religious freedom and rights, politicians (of all parties) and media do not question political activities or fundraising undertaken by religious groups. It is just not politically correct.

The growing power of religious conservatives is well documented. Although a minority in society, they influence government by organizing their supporters to lobby for social conservative policies. While claiming they do not seek to establish a theocracy, they work for government policies that reflect Judeo-Christian values on which they claim both Canada and the United States were founded. (In fact, both countries were founded on principles of separation of church and state, and free exercise of religious beliefs, unencumbered by government interference.)

This movement is not going away. How do we respond?

Be informed. Scan news and their websites for information on evangelical political activities. Do not assume stated goals are their ultimate goals. Their strategy is incrementalism. On reproductive rights for example, they begin by pushing to end public funding for

abortion, but their ultimate goal is recriminalizing abortion. Another example: In state referenda to restrict marriage rights they claimed their “only goal was to protect marriage”. After winning several referenda, they moved on to try and prevent local and state governments from passing laws protecting LGBT people from discrimination or including sexual orientation in hate crimes laws.

While monitoring religious groups, also monitor political leaders and representatives. It is reasonable for them to meet with and listen to Christian groups, but many then ignore secular (and religious) groups who do not share the fundamentalist agenda. Pay extra attention when controversial issues arise. Be prepared to expose hypocrisy, for example, politicians who preach family values, but are unfaithful in their own relationships.

To defeat the “evangelical” political movement, we must copy their strategies. Religious organizations get legislation they want (and block laws they do not want) by engaging in sophisticated strategies of lobbying, that includes motivating their supporters to contact political office-holders through letters, e-mails and telephone contacts. We must do likewise.

It is essential to have an organized response both to conservative religious organizations and to political representatives. Build coalitions of activists that include Christian and religious moderates who support separation of church and state. Such coalitions work on issues as they arise, but must be proactive, working to prevent governments from developing policies based exclusively on

religious beliefs.

We know coalitions work. Remember, coalitions of peace activists opposed to United States military involvement in Indo-China, eventually helped to force U.S. withdrawal, allowing the people of Vietnam and Cambodia

business owners and make it clear you will boycott them and why. Obviously boycotts are more effective when led by organized groups.

Keep up pressure even when progressives are in power. In fact it is more important to keep pressure



(www.slapupsidethehead.com)

to find their own solutions.

Respond on key issues both to religious groups and politicians. It is particularly important for progressive Christians to express their views to leaders of evangelical organizations, confronting their pretensions these groups present “the Christian” point of view.

Engage in boycotts when necessary. Boycott corporations and businesses that publicly support or give encouragement to right-wing religious agendas or organizations. Write to CEOs and

on politicians and political parties that have won election on socially progressive policies. Public pressure gives them power to stand up to conservative religious organizations. If we fail to give that

## Long-term jobless rates double for Canadians

Long-term unemployment in Canada almost doubled during the recession, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The OECD has warned the Conservative government to closely monitor job-search efforts to avoid so-called “dependency” on EI benefits.

In a report on employment in its member countries, the OECD said the proportion of workers unemployed in Canada for at least 12 months stood at about 8 per cent during 2009, below the OECD average of almost one in four. But this percentage almost doubled in the two years to the end of 2009.

Overall, the jobless rate for the OECD stood at 8.6 per cent in May. About 17 million jobs are needed to bring employment back to pre-crisis levels in the OECD countries, and jobless rates may still be above 8 per cent by the end of 2011.

The report notes big differences between countries in the way the burden of joblessness is shared. In some economies there are very high levels of unemployment, while in others (Japan, Germany, the Slovak Republic, Austria), there have been reductions in the number of hours worked but lower levels of those out of work completely. “Short-time work schemes” have preserved jobs during the crisis, particularly in Germany and Japan where they saved more than 200,000 and almost 400,000 jobs respectively.

Unemployment is particularly acute where a boom-bust pattern in the housing market had a role in the subsequent recession, such as Spain, the US and Ireland. ●

## SPEAKING FRANKLY

## The commercial mass media and the G20 Warrior Nations

By Roy L. Piepenburg

The Canadian Peace Alliance, renowned for its reliability in reporting peace movement news, released some stunning figures concerning the spending of G20 nations in preparation for war, and/or actual participation in war: “The G20 nations account for 87% of global military spending, with \$1.29 trillion spent in 2009, 95% of arms production, possession of 98.5% of nuclear weapons and 96.5% of troops in Afghanistan.”

Keep those statistics in mind as you recall some of the recent excellent articles in People’s Voice about the gross disparities in the ‘have not nations’ when it comes to the poor quality of health and education services, meagre per capita income, intolerable longevity and decimation of the environment, just to mention several facets of their privation. These dire circumstances can all be attributed to the continued colonization and exploitation of those nations by the imperialist G20 nations, whose only real interest is their selfish national economic interest.

Historically, the U.S.A. has been



CPA banner at G20 demo. People's Voice photo: Ed Bil

foremost in its imperialistic bent. Their involvement in Afghanistan is a case in point. The future construction of a trans-Afghanistan pipeline to tap the rich oil resources in the Caspian Sea region clearly serves American interests. A recent media story about the vast strategic mineral resources in the same nation was based on the assessing of that wealth by none other than the U.S. Geological Survey. The corrupt Afghan puppet government

complicates the U. S. strategy to reap economic benefits through bloody militarism.

But, the U. S. strategy has ancient historical roots going back to the period of American imperialistic expansion in the late 19th century. Woodrow Wilson, U.S. president, 1912-1920, said in 1907: “Since trade ignores national boundaries and the manufacturers insist on having the world as a market, the flag of the nation must follow him (e.g. Latin America),

and the doors of the nations which are closed against him must be battered down.... Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process. Colonies must be obtained or planted, in order that no useful corner of the world may be overlooked or left unused (e.g. Afghanistan).”

At the G20 summits, there are always hollow commitments made to better the quality of life in the ‘have not nations,’ and billions of dollars are earmarked for that purpose. The unfortunate reality is that those commitments are not honoured. Why not? The obvious answer is that, collectively, they spend so much on their military, that only crumbs are left over for poor colonized nations’ needs.

The challenge exists for all human beings on the left to reverse this unfair, inhuman circumstance. When we have a socialist global village, the inequities will disappear. The warrior nations will be subdued and drastically reoriented for Earth peace and universal social justice. ●



## Communist leader calls for inquiry into G20 police repression

Communist Party of Canada leader Miguel Figueroa has sharply denounced the wave of police repression which swept over downtown Toronto on June 26-27 during the G20 Summit. Figueroa has called for a comprehensive independent public inquiry, including a thorough investigation of those politically responsible for giving a "green light" for the police thuggery and the unprecedented number of detentions and arrests.

"Most of the 900 people - mainly youths - arrested on Saturday and Sunday were not engaged in any unlawful activity. Nor were they anywhere near the perimeter fences. They were expressing their democratic right to dissent in public," Figueroa said on June 28. "Even media workers and curious bystanders were victimized when the police charged and began indiscriminately beating, bloodying and detaining all those in the vicinity."

This outrage has been



Participants in the Communist Party/Young Communist League contingent at G20 protests. (Photos on pages 6 & 7: Ed Bil)

compounded by the ill-treatment of the detainees, added Figueroa, noting reports that the arrested were herded into cold, dirty and cramped quarters, and denied even basic access to food, water or

bathroom facilities, in violation of their rights.

"The police 'riot' and the mass arrests did not come about spontaneously, or result from the overzealous behaviour of individual officers," the Communist Party leader added. "It is obvious that the police tactics had been carefully worked out well in advance, provided with legal 'cover' by Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty's secretive Order-in-Council measure, and vetted by the Office of Prime Minister Stephen Harper."

"All three - Harper, McGuinty and Toronto Police Chief Blair - are culpable for this 'reign of terror' on the streets of Toronto," said Figueroa. The Communist Party, along with many other labour and democratic organizations, are also

furious about the mounting evidence that police sent in undercover agents provocateurs to mingle among the protesting anarchist groupings, and instigate property damage and the torching of police vehicles in order to provoke clashes and justify the heavy-handed police attacks.

"These tactics are not new - the use of police provocateurs masquerading as members of the anarchist 'Black Bloc' or similar 'direct-action' groups was well documented in the 2007 SPP protests in Montebello, Quebec, and at other summit protests around the world," Figueroa noted. "And their purpose is all-too-clear - to discredit and delegitimize genuine mass protests against the capitalist policies of the monopolies, the banks and their governments; to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation to frighten others from openly expressing their opposition; and to pave the way to ever more authoritarian limits on civil liberties and political rights. Such repugnant tactics have no place in our society. Those responsible for organizing and authorizing these proto-'police state' actions must be identified and brought to public account."

The Communist Party leader also criticized the adventurist policies and actions by various anarchist groupings - especially the Southern Ontario Anarchist Resistance (SOAR) and the "Black Bloc" - for playing into the hands of state repression.

"It is high time that the anarchists and their misguided and counter-productive policies be publicly repudiated and condemned. Their infantile antics pose absolutely no threat to the ruling class and its state apparatus," Figueroa said.

"Such actions are extremely harmful in that they scare away the masses of working people from political struggle, and provide a convenient cover to those trying to further curtail the democratic rights of the people."

The Communist Party leader concluded by reiterating his Party's demand for immediate measures to guarantee the rights of the detained people, including their speedy access to a court hearing; for a full and independent public inquiry into this appalling incident; and for stepped-up efforts to build a broad, militant and united Canada-wide campaign to defeat the Harper Conservatives. ●



## Civil Liberties Association blasts police actions



July 10 rally in Toronto demands public inquiry.

On June 29th, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association released a preliminary report on the G20 Summit policing and security. Entitled "A Breach of the Peace," the report is based on the observations of over 50 human rights monitors that the CCLA dispatched to G20-related demonstrations.

In its summary, the CCLA finds that "police conduct during the G20 Summit was, at times, disproportionate, arbitrary and excessive. In our view, despite instances of commendable and professional conduct, the policing and security efforts, especially after 5 pm on June 26 and June 27, failed to demonstrate commitment to Canada's constitutional values."

These values, says the CCLA,

include the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees of the right to freedom of expression, to peaceful assembly, and to be free from arbitrary detention and unreasonable search and seizure.

Instead, the G20 was characterized by "the lack of transparency surrounding the designation of the security perimeter," inappropriate use of search and seizure powers, and police intimidation.

"June 26 represents a turning point," says the CCLA. "Widespread property damage was committed by a cohort of vandals in the downtown of Toronto on that day. We condemn this criminal activity and acknowledge that it warranted a response by police. The response which police provided, however,

was unprecedented, disproportionate and, at times, unconstitutional.

"Over the next 36 hours, over 900 people (possibly close to 1000) were arrested by police - the largest mass-arrest in Canadian history. Media, human rights monitors, protesters and passers-by were scooped up off the streets. Detained people were not allowed to speak to a lawyer or to their families. Arbitrary searches occurred in countless locations across the city, in many instances several kilometers from the G20 summit site. Peaceful protests were violently dispersed and force was used. In an effort to locate and disable 100-150 vandals, the police disregarded the constitutional rights of thousands." ●



# A look at the future: mass opposition, brutal state repression

## PV Commentary

Defying a barrage of threats and warnings against exercising their democratic freedoms, tens of thousands of people from across southern Ontario and the rest of Canada rallied in Toronto leading up to and during the weekend of June 26-27. A wide range of protests during the G8 and G20 Summit meetings expressed mass opposition to the anti-people policies being imposed by right-wing and social democratic governments.

The message in the streets was a powerful demand for a change of policies, such as the call by the Canadian Peace Alliance and its affiliates for an end to the war in Afghanistan and a shift from militarism to civilian priorities. Other participating groups urged protection of labour rights rather than corporate profits, just settlement of indigenous peoples' demands, and a swift reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

But the corporate mass media largely ignored these actions, which were organized by labour and popular movements representing millions of Canadians. Instead, attention was focused on the torching of several police cruisers conveniently left unguarded by the massive security forces surrounding the G20 meetings.

Since the events of June 26-27, heated debates have raged around the issues of police responsibility (or lack of such), and the implications of the biggest mass arrests in Canadian history.

The position within the popular movements is that the G20 leaders, and the major imperialist powers in particular, are responsible for crimes against working people and the planet far outweighing the relatively minor property destruction in the streets of Toronto.

Most of the same movements have been sharply critical of the so-called "black bloc" tactics used by some groups which were infiltrated by security forces. This criticism is based on the view that such tactics are welcomed or even encouraged by the ruling class, since they provide a handy excuse to convince working people that protests against corporate policies are carried out by forces which have no interest in the needs of "ordinary citizens."

But there has also been nearly universal condemnation by such critics of the brutal, arbitrary use of police powers to attack people in the streets of Toronto. The "police riot," far from being an aberration, is seen by many as an exercise in crushing dissent, a deliberate message to Canadians that mass opposition to the corporate agenda - or even curiosity about witnessing such opposition - is *de facto* an illegal act which will be met with violent state repression.

For this reason, the same movements which rallied thousands in Toronto have called for a full, independent public inquiry into the police attacks and the attempt to criminalize protesters



and onlookers.

This demand is critical, because the brief period of "pump priming" in response to the economic crisis appears to be over. Most G20 states have indicated their determination to make deficit reduction the main goal - at the expense of social programs. There will be no reduction of military spending or warmaking, no stopping the expansion of the prison system, no end to billion-dollar "security" operations surrounding capitalist summits. Instead of raising taxes on the wealthy and the corporations, working people can expect more and more of the "Greek solution" - major cuts to the public sector, wage reductions, attacks on pensions, further privatization of public assets.

This all-out attack across the capitalist world is intended to drive down wages and shift even more wealth into the hands of the tiny minority of billionaires who control the global economy. The G8 and G20 leaders expect a response similar to that of the workers in

Greece and other countries: massive protests and general strikes. Defeating such opposition will call for full use of the state's forces of repression. As Canadians saw in June, this means removing the "obstacles" of legal protections for the rights of free speech and assembly. The traditional concept of "bourgeois democracy" - which the working class and its allies have struggled for decades to expand - will increasingly be reduced to a mere shadow.

In this ominous direction lies the threat of fascism, the open, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary sections of the ruling class, no longer cloaked with limited electoral rights and constitutional protections.

That's the warning of the summit protests in Toronto. The tactics of window-smashing and hiding faces are of little use in this situation; if anything, such tactics only confuse and divide the millions of people who can and must be moved into action against the capitalist attack.

On the other hand, attempts to confine the resistance movement to purely symbolic and ineffective actions are doomed to fail.

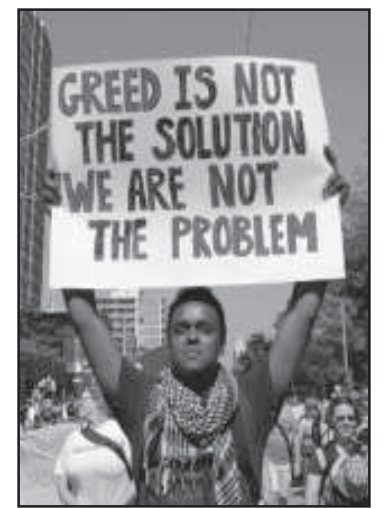
The response of the labour movement and all others who reject the corporate agenda must be to build more powerful and united mass struggles.

In a statement issued leading up to the June summits, the Communist Party of Canada noted that "this savage attack is being met by heroic resistance across the European continent, especially in Greece and Portugal where the left, Communist-led unions and popular movements are mounting escalating general strikes and other forms of mass resistance."

At the heart of a similar resistance movement in Canada, we need a genuine, progressive alternative to pro-capitalist "solutions" such as the mantra of "deficit reduction." To capture the imagination of the peoples of

Canada, such an alternative must include sweeping measures which challenge the rule of monopoly capital, such as nationalization of the banks, the big energy monopolies, and other key sectors of our economy. These steps need to be combined with expanded access to healthcare, public and post-secondary education and childcare, a \$16/hour minimum wage, a shorter workweek with no loss in take-home pay, and improved public pensions. We need sweeping tax reforms to shift the burden from working people onto the corporations and the wealthy, and a 50% cut in military spending, which would save \$10 billion every year.

In the wake of the Summits, the issues before us are clear. The big monopolies and banks want to make working people pay for the economic recovery through lower wages, higher unemployment, and huge cuts in social spending. We say: those who reap billions in profits must pay! Unite and build the fight to put people's needs, peace, and the environment before corporate greed! ●



## G20 arrestees face charges

Leah Henderson, Amanda (Mandy) Hiscocks, and Alex Hundert, along with others, are facing politically-motivated charges in relation to the Toronto G8/G20 protests. The three were pre-emptively arrested at gunpoint in a house raid on the morning of June 26, before the G20 protests began.

Friends, family, and supporters are attesting to these activists' valuable efforts to serve the community and to further social justice.

According to Michael Keefer, Professor at the University of Guelph, "I know Ms. Hiscocks as a generous, open-hearted, and gentle young woman. She is a pillar of the Guelph community who has, amongst other things, coordinated a youth shelter and clean up of Speed River." Approximately 30 professors across Ontario have written in support of Mandy, calling for her release from detention, claiming that "Her community activism is in the public interest. Her continued detention is not."

Judy Da Silva of Asubpeeschosewagong Anishinabe (Grassy Narrows First Nations) attests to Alex and Leah's commitment: "Alex and Leah support the Grassy Narrows community in our continuous struggle to protect our boreal forest from logging and pollution. They are friendly, patient, generous, and work tirelessly on environmental and social issues."

Harjap Grewal, organizer with the Council of Canadians, states "Over the last year I have gotten to know Alex and Mandy. Their work carries purpose and commitment to marginalized communities, amongst whom they share many friendships."

These politically-motivated charges illustrate the increasing criminalization of those who work for social change. "The arrest at gunpoint of these three and the delay before bail hearings amounts to the criminalization of dissent. It is not the first time perceived leaders of an action have been jailed for what they were alleged to have said in meetings or demonstrations. I have worked with Leah Henderson, she deserves an award not vilification and arrest", adds veteran activist Judy Rebick. ●





# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## More killings in Colombia

Two more trade unionists have been assassinated in Colombia: Nelson Camacho Gonzalez, a member of the oil industry's united workers' union USO (Union Sindical Obrera) and Ibio Efrén Caicedo, an activist from the Antioquia teachers association ADIDA (Asociacion de Institutores de Antioquia).

Ibio Efrén Caicedo, who had a strong track record as a trade union activist, was killed on the day before the June 20 presidential elections. His murder brings to seven the number of unionised teachers assassinated in Antioquia in 2010 so far.

Three days earlier, Nelson Camacho Gonzalez died after being shot at repeatedly at the bus stop on his way to work. The killing is another in a series of systematic attacks and threats against members and leaders of the oil workers' union during industrial disputes. The union has been in conflict with the multinational British Petroleum in Casanare, with Ecopetrol-UT on the Andean pipeline, with TGI on the departments of Boyacá and Casanare, and with Ecopetrol over various other labour disputes.

## Workers protest treatment by Hyatt

Thousands of hotel workers across North America took to the streets on July 22 to protest the practices of Hyatt and its billionaire owners, the influential Pritzker family. The most prominent member of the family is Penny Pritzker, the former national finance chairwoman of Barack Obama's presidential campaign. She now serves as a member of the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board.

The hotel industry has rebounded from the recession but hotel workers have not shared in the profits they helped create. More than 115,000 jobs in the industry have been cut across the U.S. since the recession began in 2008, including 46,000 in the first quarter of 2010 alone.

Last March 31, Hyatt reported it had more than \$1.3 billion in cash available. Yet Hyatt workers have endured staff cuts, reduced hours, and excessive injury rates. In one example, Hyatt fired the entire housekeeping staff from its three Boston-area hotels and replaced them with minimum-wage workers from a subcontracting agency. While many hotel workers live in poverty, the Pritzker family cashed out more than \$900 million as part of Hyatt's initial public offering last November.

According to UNITE HERE President John Wilhelm, "Hotel guests are returning and investors are trumpeting the recovery of the hotel industry, but in city after city, Hyatt is taking unfair advantage of its employees. Hyatt should be leading the way to make hotel jobs good jobs; instead they are forcing workers to make do with less pay, worse benefits and unsafe working conditions."

This year, citywide contracts

covering 45,000 union hotel workers in 10 cities in the United States and Canada will expire and hotel workers are being asked to take concessions. Actions were held in Chicago, Honolulu, San Francisco, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Boston, Rosemont, Vancouver, Toronto, Miami, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Santa Clara and San Diego.

## Maritime trainees face sex abuse

A number of maritime trainees say they have been sexually abused at sea. Abuse aboard ships was highlighted after 19-year-old Akhona Geveza's body was found floating at sea off Croatia on June 24, a day after she was meant to meet the master of *Safmarine Kariba* and the Ukrainian chief officer whom she alleged had raped her. It is not known whether she was murdered or committed suicide.

Geveza had been one of 130 young people - 100 of them women - participating in a maritime training programme supported by South African-based Transnet corporation. At least five cadets, who asked to remain anonymous because they are completing their qualifications, told the *Cape Times* newspaper they had experienced "awkward situations" ranging from older officers groping them inappropriately to being forced to kiss the officers.

"We're helpless when we're out there. There are often foreign officers on the ships. They see young women coming aboard and they think we are backward because we don't necessarily come from cities. Nothing (physical) has happened to me but my friends have spoken about bad situations. I'm scared," one said.

Another said trainees were often bullied into keeping quiet, or felt under financial pressure, as they were supporting their parents.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union said: "The death of Akhona has surfaced many other cases of alleged sexual abuse of these young people - both men and women." The union planned to discuss with Transnet measures that must be taken to protect trainees from further abuse.

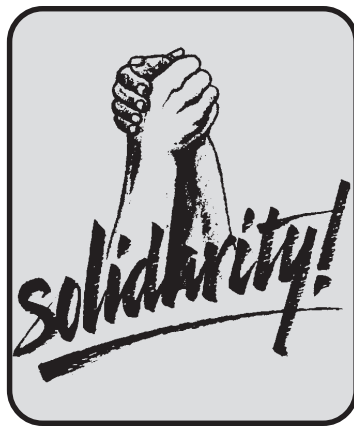
## SA public workers plan strikes

A South Africa-wide strike by state workers, including teachers and health workers, is planned for next July 29 following a deadlock over wages in bargaining talks. The Public Servants Association (PSA), which represents about 210,000 workers, was the first union to give strike notice.

Four major unions affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) - the SA Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu), National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu), Democratic Nurses Organisation of South Africa (Denosa) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) - which represent more than a million workers, were still balloting members in mid-July to

support industrial action.

DENOSA said on July 23 that it "categorically rejects the ludicrous 6.5% wage increase that is currently offered by government. We also wish to reiterate that we have declared a dispute with the employer on these wage negotiations under our federation COSATU. DENOSA is angered and frustrated by government's delay to come to the party in terms of meeting the demands of workers.



"The employer should recall that, in the 2007 public sector strike, their old tactic of not finalizing the minimum service level agreement proved fruitless. We therefore want to caution them that this ploy is not sustainable, detrimental to service delivery and can only result in the recurrence of the 2007 total shut down. DENOSA calls on the employer to stop hardening its attitude and urgently review their current offer in order to avert the inevitable."

Negotiations in the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council have deadlocked. Despite numerous, the employer has not moved from its offer of 6.5% across-the-board and of R120-a-month (\$17 Can.) on the current housing allowance of R500 (\$70 Can.) a month.

The government said it would meet with the unions before July 29 in a bid to avert the strike. Unions are demanding an 8.6% salary raise plus a R1000-a-month (\$140 Can.) housing allowance.

## Teachers form independent union

Frustrated with their government-dominated union's ineffectiveness, some Egyptian teachers have established an independent union. The founders claim to have attracted 5000 of Egypt's one million teachers. The by-laws of the new syndicate demand a minimum wage of LE1200, the improvement of working conditions, and the amendment of Egypt's education law. Most schools lack offices for teachers, and class sizes can be as large as 80 or 90.

This is the latest episode of a teachers' protest movement that first began in 2007, triggered by an amendment of the education law giving the government more leeway to hire and fire newly appointed teachers.

The existing teachers union is the largest of Egypt's 24 professional unions, with the potential to exercise enormous political influence. Since 1956, the union has been headed by figures usually associated with the

Education Ministry and known for their loyalty to the ruling regime.

In recent years, several other labor and professional groups have succeeded in imposing their demands on the government, encouraging teachers to take a similar course. Deteriorating economic conditions have prompted numerous protests for better employment conditions, along with the establishment of independent unions. In 2008, real estate tax collectors announced the creation of their own autonomous union, on the heels of a series of strikes that forced the government to offer higher salaries.

To circumvent legal strictures, teachers refer to the new entity as a "labor union." The People's Assembly must formally recognize any new syndicate, provided that no other syndicate exists for the same professional grouping. Although unions may be subject to less stringent restrictions, it remains difficult for teachers to fulfill two legal requirements: that their members obtain the endorsement of the Education Ministry; and that they provide the Manpower Ministry with their founding documents.

## Zambia miners cautious over Vale

The Miners Union of Zambia has urged caution over the impending investment of Brazilian major Vale SA in the copper mining sector. Rayford Mbulu, president of MUZ, said on July 21 the government should take caution as Vale has a poor human rights record, based on its operations in countries such as Canada, where Steelworkers just ended a year-long strike. Mbulu said that much

as the country needs to attract investors in the mining sector, the government isn't considering the question of credibility and worker welfare.

"If we lack ideas to extract our copper, it is better for it to remain in the ground so that our children can come and extract it. If Vale cannot respect the rights of workers in Canada, a First World country, what about Zambia?"

Vale said early in July that the company would invest up to \$400 million to develop the 50,000-metric-ton-a-year Konkola North Copper mine in the Copperbelt province. Construction work is expected to begin in September. The country's annual copper output is expected to hit 1 million tons by 2011 compared with 700,000 tons produced last year.

## Wages up in China

"Is the era of cheap labour in China ending?" That question is being debated on the website of *The Economist* magazine.

A recent study, based on China Household Income Project data, finds that in 2006 and 2007 migrant wages increased by 11.5% and 11.2% in nominal terms, and 10% and 6.4% in real terms. The growth slowed down in 2008, but resumed in 2009 when migrant wages increased by 17.3% in real terms. Some surveys show that migrant wages increased by 20% in the first half of 2010. This has led some researchers to conclude that China has depleted its surplus labour.

Others note that the countryside still has 45% of China's labour force, but agriculture only contributes to 11% of national GDP. In 2007 there were 80 million rural people who were potential migrant workers.

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

## Send me information on the Communist Party of Canada

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

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# Centenary of Copenhagen Conference

**“Socialist women of all countries will hold each year a Women’s Day”**

This month marks the 100th anniversary of the historic meeting which launched International Women’s Day. On August 26-27, 1910, the Second International Conference of Socialist Women was held in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The lively proceedings included the adoption of a resolution drafted by Clara Zetkin, the famous German revolutionary leader:

“In agreement with the class-conscious, political and trade union organizations of the proletariat of their respective countries, the Socialist women of all countries will hold each year a Women’s Day, whose foremost purpose it must be to aid the attainment of women’s suffrage. This demand must be held in conjunction with the entire women’s question according to Socialist precepts. The Women’s Day must have an international character and is to be prepared carefully.”

The date of this Women’s Day varied in early years, but soon it settled on March 8th.

The First International Conference of Socialist Women had been held in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1907, when “the women’s socialist movement was still in its infancy,” as Russia’s Alexandra Kollontai wrote some years later.

Kollontai noted that “the growth of the women’s proletarian movement over the last three years was noticeable at the opening of the Copenhagen Conference. In Stuttgart the delegates numbered 52, in Copenhagen they already numbered around 100 and represented 17 countries... Socialist parties and trade unions were represented, together with clubs, societies, and unions of women workers adopting a class position.”

The Copenhagen meeting naturally included discussions on ways to establish closer links between the growing numbers of organised socialist and trade union women from different countries.

But two major issues were also on the agenda, avoiding what Kollontai described as the “sickly-sweet feminine flavour” of some other women’s conferences.

First was the campaign to achieve votes for women. As was often the case during this era, the debate revealed sharp political and tactical differences.

On one side were the representatives of English workers’ organisations who worked together with the suffragettes; this section called for “qualified electoral rights,” a strategy of gradually extending the vote, starting with wealthier women. The British delegation won support from the Austrian social democrats.

But the “battle” on the floor was completely unequal. Led by the more radical German delegates, the overwhelming majority of women in Copenhagen supported a resolution demanding universal suffrage. Their argument was that “qualified” suffrage meant abandoning the rights and interests of the overwhelming majority of working class women. The English were fighting for a lost cause, as Kollontai pointed out. Women’s universal suffrage became a reality

in most capitalist countries within a decade, with exceptions such as the racist practices of many U.S. states.

Another critical set of issues at Copenhagen revolved around social security and protections for women and children. The conference adopted a set of demands largely developed by the German Social Democrats, including an 8-hour working day, the prohibition of female labour in dangerous industries, 16-week

## Pages from Working Class History

leave for expectant and nursing mothers, and the introduction of compulsory maternity insurance.

But there were sharp differences over the question of so-called “legitimate and illegitimate” mothers.

Alexandra Kollontai heaped scorn on those who supported such a division. “It is precisely such a fuddled mode of thinking that dominates in the West, sadly even among women socialists, that preference for legalised marital cohabitation, which made it desirable to debate this fundamental point more thoroughly,” she wrote. “It was important to emphasise with all the authority of the conference that

maternity is to be recognised as a social function independently of the marital and family forms it assumes...”

A related battle erupted over a Danish proposal on night work. Introduced by women type-setters, this resolution pointed out that prohibiting night work for women but permitting it for men hindered the working woman in her struggle to gain access to better-paid jobs and better working conditions. The resolution was defeated by delegates who argued that “night work must be abolished simultaneously for both men and women, as it is equally harmful to both.” But the debate illustrated the importance of developing a serious overall approach to the equalisation of labour conditions for women and men.

Another resolution, put forward by the English, reminded women of their obligation to oppose chauvinism and bring up their children in a spirit of anti-militarism. The resolution was adopted with warm applause. Tragically, four years later the majority of Social Democratic and labour deputies in most European parliaments betrayed this promise, voting in favour of credits to allow their bourgeois governments to launch the First World War.

“Whatever may have been the superficial failings of the second international socialist conference,” wrote Kollontai, “its work will undoubtedly have a major and beneficial influence upon the



Early Soviet poster proclaiming March 8 as International Women's Day.

further success of the workers’ comprehensive emancipation of movement,” including “the women.” ●

## Nuclear disarmament - Principles, practices and prospects

*Based on an intervention by Darrell Rankin at the second North American Trilateral meeting of the World Peace Council, Mexico, the United States and Canada, in October 2009. It is published to mark the 65th anniversary of the atomic bombing by U.S. imperialism of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.*

U.S. imperialism is the largest proliferator of nuclear weapons, having aided and protected nearly all the states that have developed nuclear weapons since the Non-proliferation treaty was signed in 1969 - Israel, India and Pakistan.

The United States has led, pushed and dominated the nuclear

arms race from the start. It used two atomic bombs on Japan and targeted Russia, China, Iran and North Korea with multiple nuclear threats.

The main purpose of U.S. imperialism’s nuclear strategy throughout the Cold War was to preserve its domination of the non-socialist world and to threaten socialist countries. Britain, France and the NATO military alliance played a supporting role.

The history of the World Peace Council, formed in 1949, roughly coincides with both the establishment of NATO the same year and the signing of the United Nations Charter in 1945. The United Nations Charter is humanity’s main democratic achievement in international law, flowing directly

from the defeat of fascism in the Second World War. The U.N. Charter cost fifty million lives, the price paid for imperialism’s appeasement of fascism.

Under the hegemony of the United States, NATO was formed as an alliance of empires such as the U.S. itself, Britain, Netherlands and France, each with possessions stretching around the globe. As such NATO violated the U.N. Charter’s ban against global military alliances. Today, NATO’s nuclear weapons and the alliance’s first strike doctrine are the most dangerous threats facing all other members of the United Nations.

U.S. imperialism’s nuclear strategy is inherently divisive and racist, starting with the criminal use of atomic bombs against Japan. The U.S. has a long history of sparking nuclear tensions far from its shores, in Asia and the Middle East, half way around the globe.

In our own hemisphere, the Caribbean and South America were declared nuclear weapons free in 1967, by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The activation of the U.S. Fourth Naval Fleet in this zone is a crude violation of the treaty. Ports harbouring U.S. warships carrying nuclear weapons are sure to be targets of protests as a result. We are in solidarity with the peace movement in the Caribbean and South America to kick out the U.S. Fourth Fleet and to respect the

nuclear weapons free zone. No harbours for U.S. warships!

Nuclear disarmament and arms control treaties often reduced stockpiles of outdated and surplus weapons. The treaties gave hope. They signalled decreased tensions and realistic prospects for averting a new world war.

Yet the treaties still preserved the sharpest spears, the newest and more deadly weapons. Regrettably, humanity still faces the prospect of weapons in space, new weapons from the sea, and ever more deadly conventional weapons.

The reason these weapons are not the subject of disarmament talks is because imperialism wants them. Humanity will be in danger from these weapons until imperialism and its unjust world order are gone.

Recently U.S. President Obama gave his support for the principle of abolishing nuclear weapons. This is a remarkable statement considering U.S. imperialism’s recent history. Why is President Obama making such a statement now?

It is not just President Obama making these statements. Some of the most reactionary hawks in the United States like Henry Kissinger are declaring they support nuclear



Hiroshima Day lantern ceremony at Burnaby’s Central Park last year. For information on similar events this month, contact your local peace group. (Photo: K. Cariou)



# Northern BC biosolid dumping faces resistance

By Stephen Von Sychowski

Biosolids are processed human waste derived from sewage. In some parts of the world, they are widely used as fertilizer for crops. In other countries they are banned. All around the world, where biosolids are used there are reports of health problems, sometimes severe, attributed to them. So it isn't surprising that when residents of the Red Rock/Stoner community in northern B.C. were outraged to learn that without any consultation, biosolids would soon find a home at a dump site in their area.

In late 2009, signage appeared on a lot on East Patterson Road in Red Rock, stating that it would soon become a biosolids dump. The biosolids, from the nearby city of Prince George, are purported by the project's supporters to be safe, but no conclusive proof has been provided, and \$40,000 for basic tests to prove the safety of the biosolids was put on hold last May. At a community meeting in February 2010, Prince George Mayor Dan Rogers attempted to quell fears about the potential dangers of the dumping, but local residents were unconvinced.

Meanwhile, dozens of cases have been reported around Canada of symptoms ranging from rashes and sore throats to difficulty breathing and severe digestive problems in areas where biosolids are present.

Red Rock/Stoner residents have

additional cause for concern in that all drinking water in the area comes from underground wells which could easily be contaminated by seeping biosolids. Livestock, wildlife, and pets could also be put at risk if they come in contact with the substances.

Bob Headrick, Regional Director for Red Rock and one of the leading figures in opposition to the biosolid site, had the following to say in a media statement: "This site is less than one kilometer from residents and is near the Red Rock Creek. After researching the use of Class B biosolids there are concerns in the community that contamination in the form of heavy metals, pathogens and other contaminants may affect surface and underground water ways, may dry and become airborne and may affect game such as moose, deer grouse, etc."

Another community leader, Sheila Coburn, backed Headrick up. "You don't have to be the guy who lives next door to be concerned," she said. "They're not working it in, it's a surface application. It's going on an open field on top of a hill. Where is it going to end up? In our backyards and our wells."

While residents await testing which will supposedly prove or disprove concerns about the project, dumping remains on hold. If the dump site is stopped, it could send a message to local and provincial governments about the need for environmentally practices and for a respectful consultative process with those potentially affected. In the meantime, many community members maintain their opposition and willingness to fight the establishment of the dump site which could threaten their health and livelihood. ●



## ITUC meets in Vancouver...

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direction of government policies threatens to lead to a fundamental and reactionary change in the nature of our societies, dismantling hard-won achievements of union struggle and collective bargaining. Congress calls on the ITUC and its affiliates to redouble their resistance to this deeply regressive trend."

The resolution hints at the policies of social democratic parties in power with the following sentence: "The inability or unreadiness of governments to subject finance to effective regulation would mean an

intolerable subjugation of the democratic process to the powers of finance."

The resolution never names the "model of development" as capitalism or imperialism. Instead, it assumes that this model can be modified: "Now the people must benefit from globalisation. It is time now to move forward from the crisis to global justice."

Even better, it goes on to claim that "the crisis also offers new opportunity to realise the objective set out in the ITUC's founding programme of changing globalisation fundamentally to make it fair and sustainable."

How this goal could be achieved without a fundamental transformation of the capitalist economy is never spelled out. Instead, the resolution identifies "seven priorities in the ITUC's strategy for global social justice."

These include the following campaigns: promotion of "jobs-intensive anti crisis strategies"; universal observance of fundamental workers' rights and an end to all forms of gender inequality at work; defence of public services against austerity policies aimed at satisfying financial markets rather than the needs of people; "effective and adequate regulation of financial markets" and an international tax on financial transactions; a "sustainable low carbon future" for the global economy; a new development model to ensure that all countries benefit fairly from social and economic progress; and initiatives for governance "which replace today's market fundamentalism with a commitment to policy coherence for a social dimension in globalisation, with decent work as the overriding policy objective..."

To achieve these goals, the resolution urges the labour movement to become more inclusive of women, youth, migrant workers, and those in the informal sector. It also stresses that the "maintenance and strengthening of peace is closely related to the achievement of social justice," and calls for an end to "the high and growing levels of military spending which divert resources from meeting pressing human needs." ●

## WFTU fightback strategy...

continued from page 12

The hope for workers lies at the struggles, at involving young people, women, immigrants, indigenous people in these fights. In Europe, Asia, Latin America, the people march on the streets and demand.

Today everybody understands that the crisis concerns everyone. The crisis is everywhere. So the coordination should be generalized. Coordination, cooperation - internationalism and solidarity. Not each one alone but all together, in all countries, all workers, all the unemployed. All together to fight with modern demands to respond to the current needs.

Based on today's data we demand:

- The workers must not pay for the crisis. Dismissals must be

prohibited.

- Stop the expenditure on military equipment. This money must be redirected to the unemployed and the poor.

- Act now to erase the debts of Third World countries.

- Free and public health, education, food and water for all.

Our organization, with these main objectives, but also with others corresponding to the needs of each continent and each country, is going to hold on September 7 the International Day of Action of the trade union movement.

We urge all fighting trade unions to act, to participate, to join us. Through small and big struggles, the international working class will understand that the future of humanity can be drastically improved only through the abolition of exploitation of man by man. ●



## MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

### Solidarity with Korean guitar workers

Unjustly dismissed workers at Cort Guitars, a South Korean-based company that manufactures musical instruments for such well-known brands as Gibson, Ibanez and Fender, have taken their case to the South Korean supreme court and the world. After forming a union in 2006, the workers were illegally fired and the company relocated to non-union environments in China and Indonesia. Musicians in the USA, Germany and Japan have participated in solidarity actions with the Korean workers, including Rage Against the Machine guitarist Tom Morello and System of a Down frontman Serj Tankian. Morello and Tankian are co-founders of The Axis of Justice, a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to bring musicians and fans of music together to fight for social justice. For information visit <http://cortaction.wordpress.com/about/> and <http://axisofjustice.net/>

### Seeger's new album: Tomorrow's Children

In 1997 folk music legend Pete Seeger became a regular visitor to a fourth-grade music class in his hometown of Beacon, New York. The 91-year-old singer's latest album, *Tomorrow's Children*, features, among others, a group of those students called The Rivertown Kids. Given the kind of artist Seeger has been, it's not surprising that the kids had a hand in writing and adapting some of the album's songs. "The future of the entire human race lies in the hands of children so I felt this was an important collaboration," said Seeger in a recent interview with *American Songwriter* magazine. Watch a video of Pete with fellow musicians Dar Williams, David Bernz and The Rivertown Kids performing their new song *Solartopia* on YouTube. Just enter "Solartop 12" in the search box.

### Raging Asian Women at Massey Hall

Raging Asian Women (RAW), a Toronto-based taiko drum ensemble, made a dramatic impression at historic Massey Hall on June 25. The group's two sets were the only performances in a program otherwise packed with prominent speakers at the Council of Canadians-sponsored "Shout Out for Global Justice" rally on the eve of the G20 summit. RAW combines intricate and vigorous rhythms with dramatic choreography. The eight-member non-profit collective of East Asian and Southeast Asian women was founded in 1998 to carry on the Japanese-North American taiko drumming tradition and promote social justice while making music. Learn more about this impressive ensemble at [www.ragingasianwomen.ca/](http://www.ragingasianwomen.ca/) and look them up on YouTube to see a powerful clip from their Massey Hall concert.

### Rapper Drake fights offshore drilling

Drake, the 23-year-old Toronto hip-hop phenomenon, is campaigning for environmental justice. On June 13 he headlined a "Stop the Offshore Drilling" rally in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the Hip-Hop Caucus and Green the Block. "Everywhere you turn, pollution and poverty are hurting our communities," Drake told the rally. "We can change that. Going green is the solution. I'm green on my tour, I am greenin' the block and you can too." While some may find this opportunistic, consider who Drake has partnered with. The Hip-Hop Caucus claims 700,000 members. Its stated aim is to foster "civic engagement among young people of color on issues of social and economic justice, human rights, the environment, and international peace, so they can attain increased opportunities for themselves and their communities." Green the Block is a national campaign and coalition aimed at "helping low-income communities of color become driving forces of the clean-energy economy." Check these movements out at <http://hiphopcaucus.org> and [www.Greentheblock.net](http://www.Greentheblock.net).

### "Otis" Richmond's Diasporic Music

Many of this paper's readers in the Toronto area are aware of broadcaster, journalist and activist Norman "Otis" Richmond (a.k.a. Jalali), host of the long-running radio program Diasporic Music (and several other shows) on Toronto's campus-community radio station CKLN FM 88.1. Diasporic Music covers the immense world of African music from a progressive perspective, often with a special emphasis on the music of African-Canadians. The two-hour show airs live on CKLN every month, but there's no need to be in Toronto to listen. For details check the station's website at [www.ckln.fm/](http://www.ckln.fm/). It's also possible to subscribe to a podcast, thanks to Richmond's recent affiliation with Uhuru Radio, at [http://uhurunews.com/radio/show?show\\_id=dm](http://uhurunews.com/radio/show?show_id=dm).

### The Killers play the White House

Is it just me or was there something thoughtless, ironic, even sinister, in President Obama's choice of a rock band called The Killers to play at the White House for a Fourth of July "Salute to the Military" concert? Might this act be interpreted by the world as an intentional message to U.S. troops overseas? What would people in occupied countries like Iraq and Afghanistan think of it? The U.S. military, with more than 700 bases in 156 countries, does kill an awful lot of people, including many innocent civilians. The Killers' lead singer Brandon Flowers called the gig "a monumental honour" and closed the band's set with that old nationalistic flagwaver *God Bless America*. ●



# John Vlahos, 1924-2010

John Vlahos, who passed away in June, devoted his life to the causes of anti-fascism, revolutionary struggle and socialism. John joined the Communist Party of Greece during the Second World War. He was a member of the Greek National Resistance and the Democratic Army of Greece during the civil war, in the struggle against domestic reaction and Anglo-American imperialism.

This was the sharpest period of class struggle in Greece during the 20th century, and the Democratic Army of Greece was in every sense a democratic people's army. Assemblies were held at the platoon level where every soldier had voice; women made up 30% of the army's fighting strength; and in the free areas of Greece a Provisional Democratic Government with people's councils were established in the villages with the right to recall.

In the war John was injured,

arrested and exiled to Romania. However, he returned to Greece where he continued the struggle. In the 1970s John was exiled again to Montreal. Here he became a militant of the Communist Party of Canada, while helping support the battle against the fascist regime at home. John helped found the Greek Veterans Association of Montreal, Resistance against the Junta, and was active in the Greek Worker's Association of Quebec.

Later in his life John returned to

Greece but never forgot his close friends in Canada's communist movement. In Greece John again joined the KKE, becoming international treasurer of the political refugees organization in Greece. He will be remembered as a brave comrade, fidel to the end to the cause of socialism and communism. The National Executive Committee of the Parti Communiste du Québec sends its condolences to John and his family. ●

Proud parents Marianne Breton Fontaine and Johan Boyden are very happy to announce the birth of their first son, Zavier Pierre-Alan Boyden, in Montreal on May 9th 2010, at 2.15 kg!

## People's Voice deadlines:

SEPTEMBER 1-15 issue: Thursday, August 19

SEPTEMBER 16-30 issue: Thursday, Sept. 9

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

**Solidarity with  
the Greek  
workers!**

**Support the PV  
2010 Fund Drive!**

## Disarmament prospects....

continued from page 9

disarmament and abolition. Kissinger argues we have reached a tipping point because nuclear weapons could fall into the "wrong hands."

This is a dubious argument considering that the U.S. nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union posed a far greater and real danger than proliferation. It does not answer why some prominent elements of U.S. imperialist circles are starting to raise the prospect of nuclear disarmament at this time.

The vast, hegemonic size of the U.S. military and its development of new so-called conventional weapons that rival nuclear weapons for their destructive power are insufficient reasons for this new development.

Another and more reasonable explanation for President Obama's support for disarmament comes from the fact that imperialism is experiencing multiple crises that it cannot hope to resolve without first trying to reassure the world's peoples that it can fix the problems.

Put another way, the imperialist beast is wounded from its many crises and wants to make overtures to the world's peoples. At the same time, it doesn't want to lose all its claws or teeth. It just wants to have people believe and hope that it is no longer carnivorous.

That is the power of hope, because a wounded beast generally likes to escape the spotlight of public scrutiny for a while, retreat to its cave, lick its wounds and pounce on some prey when it feels a bit better and hungrier. We are all in favour of beasts losing claws and teeth.

It is actually a good problem when the two main nuclear weapons states - the United States and Russia - pledge to abolish these weapons. The key question is, can we trust them and what can we do to make that happen?

For an answer, it is useful to look at the record of détente in the 1970s, when the U.S. displayed a hopeful nuclear policy towards the Soviet Union. The greatest historical gains in nuclear disarmament and arms control were

made during détente, including the strategic arms reduction talks (START) and the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty.

The crises in the 1970s were not as serious as today. Environment problems were not prominent. The imperialist countries were in shock from losing their colonies in Asia and Africa. The U.S. was losing in Vietnam. There was the dirty float of the U.S. dollar in 1969, the 1973 recession, the rise of OPEC as an anti-imperialist oil cartel, and the growth of the crushing debt burden in the former colonies.

Naturally, imperialism at that time wanted the world to stop, to freeze, for there to be no further setbacks. It needed time to gather its strength and launch a ferocious counter-attack, as it did in the last years of the Carter administration, under Margaret Thatcher in Britain, and with the push for free trade integration with the U.S. in the final years of the Trudeau government.

The answer by the world's peoples at that time was to continue the struggle, to win the war in Vietnam, to liberate the colonies from Portugal, to continue building the anti-imperialist peace movement, to rise against the deployment of U.S. Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe.

It is clear that today the world's peace forces must continue to mobilize and to unite with all the global forces seeking solutions to the great problems confronting humanity today. None of these problems can be solved by war. The struggle for peace and progress must continue until victory. Our demands must be combined, our efforts must be united.

(In our next issue we will publish the second part of Darrell Rankin's commentary, examining the prospects for today's struggles for disarmament.) ●

## Dr. Emil Bjarnason Scholarship Fund

The Dogwood Foundation for Socialist Education is pleased to announce the establishment of the "Dr. Emil Bjarnason Scholarship Fund" to assist students who support the aims of the Foundation in the furtherance of their post-secondary education. The Dogwood Foundation was founded in March, 1974, "to promote the aims, objectives and welfare of the working people of British Columbia" including, "the establishment or operation of educational activities associated with the interest of the working people of British Columbia." Your generosity in furthering the aims of the Foundation and assisting in the education of future generations is requested. If you are able to assist please send your cheques, payable to "Dogwood Foundation - Scholarship Fund", to Dogwood Foundation, c/o 3469 Commercial Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, V5N 4E8.

## What's Left

### Victoria, BC

**Hiroshima-Nagasaki annual lantern ceremony**, Friday, Aug. 6, 7:30 pm, Craigflower Park/Kosapsom, at Admiral's Road and Gorge Road West, Saanich. Sponsored by Raging Grannies, Victoria Peace Coalition, Physicians for Global Survival, Nikkei Cultural Society, 250-665-7788.

### Burnaby, BC

**Peace Lantern Ceremony**, Sat., Aug. 7, 7:30 pm, at South Pond of Central Park. Organized by Lanterns for Peace and Veterans Against Nuclear Arms.

### Vancouver, BC

**Luis Enrique Mejia Godoy and Tierra Fertil**, presented by La Trova Nuestra, 7 pm, Sat., Aug. 21, Peretz Centre, 6184 Ash St., tickets \$25 from Los Guerreros (3317 Kingsway) and other locations, call Hugo Rojas for info, 604-436-5599.

**Left Film Night**, returns Sunday, August 29, 7 pm, Free, donations welcome, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive. For film information, call 604-255-2041.

### Surrey, BC

**Celebrate the anniversary of the independence of Pakistan and India**, Fraser Valley Peace Council and South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy present a two-day event. Forum with Dr. Hassan Gardezi, "Discovery of Independence: South Asia at 63", Sat., Aug. 14, 2 pm, Newton Library,

13795-70th Ave. "The Sky Below," documentary by Sarah Singh on the partition of India and Pakistan, Sunday, Aug. 15, 2 pm, SFU Surrey Campus (SUR 2600), 13450-102 Ave. For info: Shahzad Nazir Khan, 604-613-0735.

**People's Voice Walk-A-Thon**, Sunday, August 22, (NOTE DATE CHANGE!), Bear Creek Park (by parking at 140 St. & 88 Ave.), walk starts 11 am, food and cultural program at 1 pm. For details, call Harjit, 604-543-7179.

### Toronto, ON

**Salsa in the City Square**, celebrate the 15th annual Toronto Cuba Friendship Day, Sat., Aug. 28, 1-8pm. Live music with 3 Latin bands: Yani Borrell y los Clave Kings, Sonido Cubano and Pablo Terry's Sol de Cuba. Messages from City Hall and the Ambassador of Cuba in Canada. Enjoy authentic Cuban food, beer garden, info tables. Come and show your support for Cuba! Free admission. Call Sharon at 905-951-7629 or Ardis at 416-534-5340.

### Cobokok, ON

**Friends of Cuba Corn Roast & BBQ**, Sat., Aug. 7, 3 pm, drop-in, no charge. 205 Shuttlesworth Road, near Burnt River, call Doug at 705-454-8859 for directions and info.

### Montreal, QC

**Palestinians And Jews United**, vigil against the occupation, every Friday at noon, Sainte-Catherine and Union (near Metro McGill).

## Police brutality at East Jerusalem protest

Ten activists were detained and held for questioning over blocking roadways at a protest in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of occupied East Jerusalem late on Friday, July 9.

The Palestinian district is the site of weekly demonstrations against the takeover of local residents' homes by Israeli settlers. The demonstrations are frequently attended by Israeli peace activists among them several Hadash (Democratic Front for Equality and Peace - Communist Party of Israel) militants.

Some 300 peace and left-wing activists arrived in the neighbourhood to rally against the evacuation of Arab families in favour of Jewish residents. The protestors attempted to enter the "Simeon the Just" compound, claiming a court had given them permission to do so, but were stopped by police and Border Guard officers.

Activists who clashed with the police said the officers used violent means against their passive protest. Well-known author David Grossman and former Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair attended the rally as well. Grossman was also pushed by the police.

"We have wanted to protest inside the neighbourhood with the Palestinians for the past nine months. We have a court approval," said one of the protestors, Shir Sternberg. "We demanded to enter in a non-violent manner, and the police pushed us."

Six weeks previously, several hundred Hebrew University students and lecturers marched from the Mount Scopus campus in Jerusalem to Sheikh Jarrah in protest over the settlers' takeover of local residents' homes. The protest march included such prominent professors as Ze'ev Sternhell, Yaron Ezrahi, Ariel Hirschfeld and others.

([www.solidnet.org](http://www.solidnet.org))

## 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)

[www.solidnet.org](http://www.solidnet.org)



## Two federations, two strategies

By Kimball Cariou

The month of June saw an interesting contrast of strategies expressed by the two main global federations of trade unions.

On June 16, the general secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, George Mavrikos, spoke at the International Labour Conference in Geneva. Excerpts are reprinted below; the WFTU leader gave a searing critique of global capitalism, and announced that the body, which has affiliates in 95 countries with over 70 million members, will hold a world-wide day of action on September 7th.

A few days later, over 1,000 delegates gathered in Vancouver for the second Congress of the International Trade Union Confederation. The ITUC was formed in 2006 ago by the merger of the Cold War-era International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labour. Today, the ITUC has affiliates in 156 countries with 175 million members, including the Canadian Labour Congress and the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux in Québec. Another affiliate is the Christian Labour Association of Canada, notorious for cooperating

with employers to undermine collective bargaining rights.

The newly-elected general secretary of the ITUC is Sharan Burrow, the former leader of the Australian labour movement, who served as ITUC president for the past three years. Coming out of the Australian teachers' union, she built a reputation as a militant labour leader during years of struggles against that country's right-wing governments.

The ITUC Congress was marked by divergent views around the current economic crisis and the fightback. While the leadership is dominated by social democratic forces which are reluctant to name and condemn capitalism, ITUC affiliates include a number of national trade union bodies where Communists and other left-wing activists have a powerful influence.

Interestingly, many delegates from these unions were delighted to meet Canadian communists at a June 22 public rally called by the ITUC outside the Vancouver Convention Centre. Delegates from Chile, France, Namibia and other countries posed for photos with a Communist Party of Canada banner, and copies of People's Voice and the CPC's leaflet on the economic crisis were snapped up quickly.

## ITUC Congress resolution sets October 7 mobilizations

Inside, there were some sharp debates around strategy and policies. Many delegates gave enthusiastic applause when the Spanish unions announced plans for a general strike in September, and some urged similar actions on a wider scale.

The ITUC leadership instead called for a "mobilisation of affiliates on key international issues." This means following up on the "positive experience of the first two World Days for Decent Work," events which saw actions in many countries in 2008 and 2009. A resolution adopted at the Congress instructed the ITUC General Council "to build on this so as to make the World Day on

October 7 a strengthened, expanded and truly global event..."

The choice of different "days of action" by the WFTU and ITUC is paralleled in Greece, the flashpoint of confrontations between the working class and the global bosses in recent months. The impetus for a series of general strikes and mass demonstrations against the neoliberal policies of the social democratic government of Greece has come from the All-Workers Militant Front (PAME), a communist-led labour body affiliated with the WFTU. Under pressure from their memberships, the larger Greek labour federations which represent public and private sector workers have extended

support to some of these actions, while trying to maintain close links with their allies in the PASOK government. This "balancing act" is seen in other countries where social democratic parties are imposing the demands of big capital, such as Spain.

The ITUC Congress also reflected this dichotomy. For example, in its main resolution, the Congress deplored "the enormous damage inflicted on working people by the gravity of the current crisis which comes after decades of the operation of a model of globalisation that has been anti-worker, anti-poor, and anti-development. The current

see ITUC, page 10

## WFTU calls International Trade Union Action Day

*From a speech by George Mavrikos, General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), at the 99th International Labor Conference, held on June 16 in Geneva*

In 2009-2010, we live in a period of global crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is deep and embraces all areas of the system: the economy, politics, society, culture, environment, even personal relations among people.

All governments are either neo-conservative or social-democrat and follow the recipes and the directions jointly decided in Brussels and Washington. Take a look at the governments of Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain. Everywhere they follow the same policies: to attack workers and remove trade union and labour rights. Redundancies, poverty, privatization. The ILO data have shown a big rise in unemployment and poverty rates.

In Greece, the social-democratic government reduced the wages of civil servants by 25%, it doubled

the lay-off percentages and increased the retirement age by five years for women and three years for men. It reduces all pensions by 40%. It is selling public assets, abolishes collective contracts, increases taxation on ordinary people, etc.

In Britain, the conservative government follows the same policy. Two weeks ago they announced cuts on public spending by 7 billion euros.

In Spain already the salaries of civil servants were decreased by 5% as a first step and other measures will follow.

In Germany, the famous car firm OPEL announced 8000 layoffs in Europe and reduction of 265 million euros during 2010 in the annual salaries of workers. The same situation exists in Portugal, Romania, Denmark, everywhere. The situation is the same in the USA, in Asia and all continents.

This financial crisis of the system is very deep. We believe that in the years to follow the crisis will further worsen and become deeper. This situation creates and exacerbates the competition between monopolies and multinationals. Between states. Between the EU and the USA. The conflicts on the exchange rate between the euro and the dollar are hard and will continue.

The strong inter-capitalist rivalries embrace the roads and pipelines of gas and energy, the control of new markets for new spheres of influence, etc. You all follow the confrontation that takes place between Germany and France about who will capture Africa and Middle East.

You see what happened in Haiti immediately after the recent earthquake. Socialist Cuba has sent 1,600 doctors. The USA sent 16,000 soldiers. Take a look in Latin America, the militarization of Colombia to strike at the Bolivarian processes in Venezuela, in Ecuador, in Bolivia and elsewhere.

Look at the brutality and the crimes of Israel against the Palestinians, against the Gaza Strip, against all Arab people. Crimes are done with the tolerance and the hypocrisy of international

organizations.

Look at Mexico, where the government is attacking SME trade union (Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas). This is in the headlines, it is the picture of the capitalist system today.

### THE GLOBAL FREE-MARKET SYSTEM



Is there a cure? Is there a way out?

International capital is attempting to control the anger of the people by changing governments, by changing people and putting businessmen as Prime Ministers. With paid propaganda they are trying to convince workers that the IMF has labour-friendly, social purposes. The ruling class tries to convince them that the crisis and the difficulties are temporary.

We, the World Federation of Trade Unions, do not believe this kind of analysis. We use the analysis done by Karl Marx that cyclical crises keep coming back. Because crises exist deep in the DNA of capitalism. Even the slightest development, any development rates may occur in the coming years, will be low and temporary and weak. And most of this development will be based on the bleeding of workers, on the poverty of the unemployed, on the uncertainty of youth for the future. Any little development will be based on social ruin.

So far as World Federation of Trade Unions is concerned, we have organized many seminars, meetings with specialists and we also have organized major struggles.

see WFTU, page 10



Rally at the ITUC Congress in Vancouver. A delegate behind ITUC banner holds up Communist Party leaflet with the headline: UNITE to demand a People's Recovery! Tax the corporations! Slash military spending! (Photo: Scott Marshall)

## 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!

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10/13