

DEC.
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VOL. 19
#21

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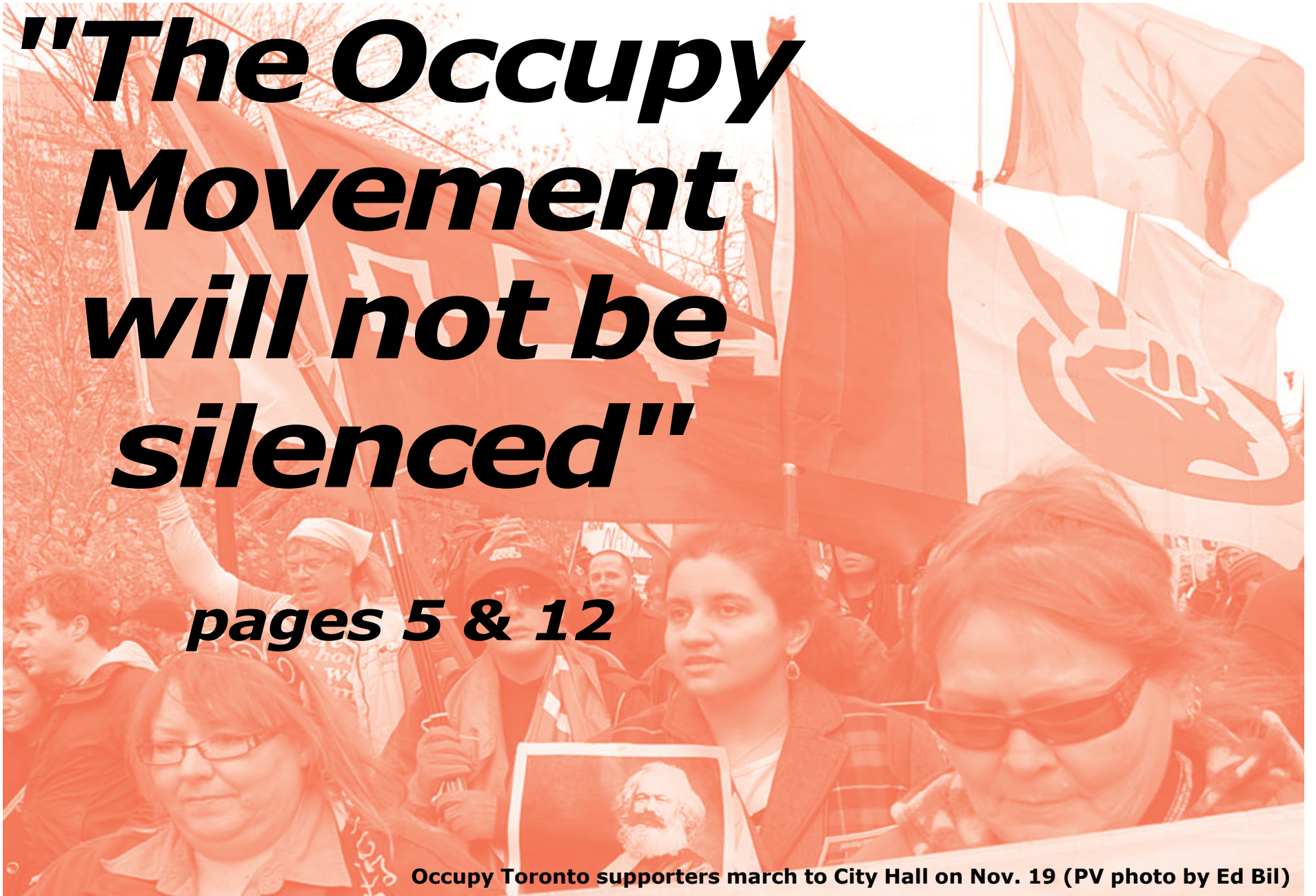
Victory for pay equity

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

"The Occupy Movement will not be silenced"

pages 5 & 12



Occupy Toronto supporters march to City Hall on Nov. 19 (PV photo by Ed Bil)

Human needs, not warships and fighter-bombers

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Good news/bad news

First, the good news: voters in Vancouver blocked the attempt by far-right forces to take over City Hall. The bad news? The Coalition of Progressive Electors suffered a setback.

INSIDE

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The problem is the system

Changing the government by adding a right-wing political party to the ruling coalition solves nothing in Greece, where the real problem is capitalism.

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The real victims

On Remembrance Day 2011, a prominent leader of Canada's progressive Jewish community spoke out about the real victims of war: civilians who are caught in the deadly violence.

Anti-imperialist youth meet in Portugal

Special to PV

Representatives of youth organizations from around the world gathered Nov. 8-13 in Lisbon to discuss the work and political direction of the largest international anti-imperialist grouping of young people.

The Assembly of the World Federation of Democratic Youth was hosted by the Young Communists of Portugal, who have held the presidential position of WFDY for the past eight years.

Delegations from 82 youth organizations were present at the largest meeting of WFDY in over two decades. The Assembly was held a year after the successful 17th World Festival of Youth and Students in Tshwane, South Africa, the first festival ever held in sub-Saharan Africa.

"There was vigorous discussion and debate about the economic crisis and the nature of the imperialist system today," Johan Boyden (who represented the Young Communist League of Canada at the General Assembly) told *People's Voice*.

"We are in a difficult time but with significant potential. Everywhere, young people are redoubling their resistance," Boyden said. "Developments like the Arab uprisings across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the 'spontaneous' mobilizations of the youth across Europe and North America with the Indigenous and Occupy Wall Street actions, were at the front and center of the meeting,

as was the continued struggle of the Latin America against imperialism."

A statement issued by WFDY noted that the meeting underlined the world federation's anti-imperialist character and reaffirmed that the struggle of the youth, together with the workers, in each country, is the only way to overthrow imperialism.

"The present crisis is not just a 'bad moment' or the result of a 'bad administration of the system,'" said the WFDY statement, but rather "the only possible result of a system based on exploitation. Capitalism was never, is not, and won't ever be capable of responding to the needs of humankind as whole, as it is based on inequality when sharing resources and wealth."

"I think the WFDY showed great determination by laying out that it is the capitalist system, in its highest imperialist phase, that is responsible for the tremendous inequalities and injustices in the world, and war," Boyden said. "As numerous delegations said, there are many different global charities, humanitarian groups, and liberal-oriented organizations but WFDY is the only anti-imperialist youth federation."

The Assembly expressed its full solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, Western Sahara, Cuba, Korea, and "all those who fight against imperialism" adding that "this is a daily struggle and demands courage and determination, despite the clear advantage that imperialism has to

fight the peoples."

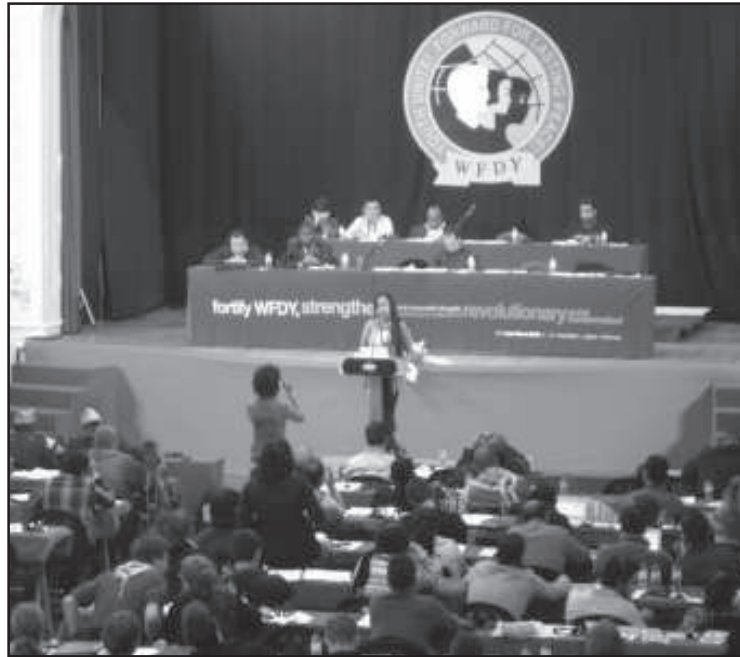
The meeting was also an important step forward for the YCL Canada's continued international relations, Boyden told PV. "We are continuing the work we began at Tshwane. Although we are a small organization among many in Canada that campaign for solidarity with the oppressed people's and nations of the world, we are strengthening relations with progressive-democratic, national liberation, socialist and communist youth organizations from around the world."

The YCL also made a number of resolutions and contributions to the discussion and resolutions, raising issues like the self-determination of North American indigenous peoples, the militarization of the Arctic, the Occupy movement, and the struggles of young women and girls.

The Assembly also elected a new leadership for the Federation. The communist youth of Cyprus, EDON (represented by Dimitris Palmyris) and communist youth of Cuba (represented by Hanoi Sanchez) are the new President and Secretary-General, respectively.

Two vice-presidents were elected from each region (Europe and North America, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Africa), one to work locally and the other from the WFDY office in Budapest.

The WFDY's 35-member General Council includes the General Union of Palestinian Students, the Communist Youth of Syria, the



Delegate from Eritrea speaks at the WFDY General Assembly

United Progressive Youth of Egypt, the Japanese League of Socialist Youth, the Youth Federation of Nepal, the youth of the MPLA Angola, the KSM of Czech Republic, the Communist Youth of Greece, the Young Socialists of Brazil, the Young Socialists of Mexico, and the YCLUSA.

The closing ceremony of the Assembly was held at Voz do Operario (Voice of the Worker), where a rally organized by the JCP Portugal was greeted by Jeronimo

de Sousa, Secretary-General of the Portuguese Communist Party.

Delegates to the Assembly also marched in a massive general strike of 180,000 Portuguese public sector workers against IMF and EU reforms being forced on the country. Portugal is building towards a general strike at the end of November. ●

Videos of the demonstration and the Assembly are online at the YCL's site www.Rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com.

Voices from the WFDY Assembly

General Union of Palestinian Students: We support all anti-imperialist fighters. We see the direction of our struggle towards socialism... Israel is still imposing suffering on the Palestinian people with many forms of occupation. We ask for your support in our struggle to recognize Palestine as a full member state of the United Nations.

Communist Youth of Cuba: We need to fly our flags without concessions, and be a beacon for the youth. We have the responsibility to not forget the history of the youth movement, and to demonstrate the value of the youth struggle...

KNE, Communist Youth of Greece: Is it enough today to condemn imperialism? ... The main task is to obtain a common viewpoint about the nature of imperialism. Imperialism is not an aggressive foreign policy implemented by the US and leading powers of Europe. It is not only identified with neo-liberalism. Imperialism is capitalism at its highest stage...

Communist Youth of Portugal: We are Revolutionary because we are deeply aware and we acknowledge youth problems today, because we are the only ones who are truly willing to do anything to solve these problems, because the basis of our intervention is Marxism-Leninism, which allows us to define the aims of struggle according to the historical moment that we are living.

Show the holiday spirit of anti-capitalist solidarity!

The past twelve months have seen **intense political, economic and social confrontations** across the planet. From the battles in Tahrir Square and Athens to the Occupy actions across North America, **popular resistance by the 99%** against the corporate bosses is on the rise.

But power yields nothing without a struggle. And the working class never makes lasting advances without a revolutionary contingent which can help elevate spontaneous fightbacks into a **conscious, united movement for radical change**.

The Communist Party warned a year ago that the corporate attack on labour and democratic rights, on women, workers, youth and racialized communities would be sharper than ever during 2011. Since then, the economic recovery has been exposed as a **recovery for profits, while working people pay the price** with escalating wage cuts, job cuts, collapsing living standards and insecurity. As **capitalism wobbles on the brink of yet another meltdown**, the situation demands urgent action, mass political struggle, and an alternative and progressive vision for the future.

While many voices criticise the crimes of capitalism, only the Communist Party of Canada puts forward such a comprehensive strategy. As we enter the New

Year, we urgently need your support to help fan the anger against capitalism and take the fight for peace, jobs, democracy and sovereignty to the next stage.

A small party with big ideas, the Communist Party is Canada's working class party of socialism. We know the future will be grim without a powerful People's Coalition that can mount a counter-offensive against the corporations and the Harper Tories. We are doing everything in our power to help build such a coalition, one which can turn the tables in favour of working people, for real and fundamental change opening the doors to socialism.

In the spirit of anti-capitalist solidarity, please show your



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solidarity this holiday season. Your tax deductible donation will help us build a strong Communist Party and a powerful and united People's Coalition to defeat war and reaction in Canada.

Your donation up to \$400 will generate a \$300 tax rebate when you file your 2011 taxes, costing you just \$100. A \$500 donation will cost you just \$150. A \$750 donation will cost \$275.

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For donations up to the first \$400, you receive a federal tax rebate of 75%. For the next \$350 in total donations, receive a tax rebate of 50%. And for the next \$350, the tax rebate is 33%.

The maximum allowable annual federal donation is \$1100, for which the rebate totals \$600.

Unlike the larger parties, we do not receive any taxpayer funding. The Communist Party is solely supported by contributions from people like you. With your donations, large or small, we can keep organizers in the field, publish new leaflets and pamphlets, build the fightback, and campaign for a progressive people's alternative to the crisis - during and between elections.

Thank you for your support! We couldn't do it without you. ●

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Good news/bad news in Vancouver vote

PV Vancouver Bureau

The good news from Vancouver's Nov. 19 civic election was very good. But the news for Canada's oldest progressive municipal reform party was very, very bad.

On the positive side, over 140,000 Vancouverites went to the polls (a relatively high turnout of 34%), blocking this city's version of the Rob Ford gang in Toronto. Mayor Gregor Robertson of the centrist Vision party was re-elected by 77,000 to 58,000 votes over the NPA's Susan Anton, and Vision won majorities on city council, school board and park board. The outcome was a welcome rejection of the NPA's far-right agenda and its fear-mongering tactics, based largely on Anton's demands to attack the Occupy Vancouver camp at the Art Gallery.

For working people, the negative result was the defeat of the Coalition of Progressive Electors at every level. Only one of COPE's four incumbent candidates was re-elected: Allan Wong, who won a fifth consecutive term as school trustee. The other COPE incumbent trustees, Al Blakey and Jane Bouey, both went down to defeat, despite winning about 52,000 votes, a gain of 4,000 over their 2008 results, as the NPA and Vision candidates scored even larger gains.

At City Council, COPE incumbent Ellen Woodsworth missed the tenth and final seat by just 91 votes to the Green Party's Adriane Carr (although the Greens' Stuart Mackinnon lost his position on the park board). COPE's Tim Louis lost his bid to regain the city council seat he held from 1999 to 2005, finishing 17th with 43,926

votes, almost 5,000 behind Carr. The other COPE council candidate, first-timer R.J. Aquino, was 19th with 39,054 votes.

The results left the NPA with two council seats, three out of nine on the School Board, and two on park board. These gains may help the flagging fortunes of the city's historic favoured party of big business, but the NPA will have little direct influence over the next three years. Politically, however, many observers fear that the NPA gains and the losses by the left-oriented COPE may tempt Vision's council caucus to shift to the right in an attempt to maintain their hegemony at City Hall.

The post-mortem of COPE's setback began immediately, but it will take time and studies of poll-by-poll results to gain a clearer picture. Some quickly blamed COPE's electoral agreement with Vision for the losses, accusing the



"If we can put COPE at the heart of community struggles, we'll be in a much better position to elaborate a winning electoral tactic when the next campaign arrives" - Vancouver School Board vice-chair Jane Bouey, who lost her re-election bid.

governing party of failing to do enough to encourage its supporters to also vote COPE. They argue that COPE members should have backed an alliance with the Greens or smaller parties and independents which have been sharply critical of Vision.

But "what-ifs" are no substitute for a more in-depth analysis. For example, some pundits claim that if COPE had teamed up with the newly-formed Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver, the outcome would have been better. This observation ignores several significant points. For one thing, NSV did not even exist until after COPE's September nomination meeting. For another, NSV's core support was the 4,007 votes cast for its mayoralty candidate. Since the NSV had urged supporters to back both its own and COPE's council candidates, there is little "net gain" in this equation.

Perhaps more to the point, the COPE/Vision alliance reflected the determination of the labour movement and other progressive groups to avoid a split which could have handed City Hall back to the NPA. In the wake of the Harper majority won with just 39% of votes last May, that nightmare scenario



Re-elected COPE trustee Allan Wong thanks campaign workers on election night. (PV photos: K Cariou)

was key to the decision by most COPE members to support the agreement with Vision.

Rejection of the agreement would have cost COPE much of its \$340,000 campaign budget, as well as sharply dividing the city's centre and left voters. An anti-Vision campaign would probably have meant less votes for COPE, not more as actually happened on election night.

Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) faces new threat

PV Vancouver Bureau

Teztan Biny (Fish Lake), a trout-filled lake on BC's Chilcotin Plateau west of Williams Lake, faces a new threat from the proposed Prosperity gold and copper mine project.

Back in November 2010, a federal environmental assessment turned down the project because it would have turned Fish Lake into a toxic mine dump site. The damage to the lake (home to 80,000 trout) and surrounding lands, forests and waters was too devastating to allow.

First Nations people and conservationists cheered the decision. Members of environmental groups had sent in stacks of letters and emails demanding to honour the Tsilhqot'in Nation's wishes to preserve Fish Lake. Recently, the Wilderness Committee presented Chief Marilyn Baptiste, of Xeni Gwet'in, one of six Tsilhqot'in communities, with the 2011 Eugene Rogers Environmental Award for her work to protect Teztan Biny.

Now the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has been asked by Taseko Mines to consider its "New Prosperity Mine" project. The company now claims it won't drain the lake, but the new tailings pond it plans to build will destroy other bodies of water that are vital to the survival of Teztan Biny.

"Fish Lake will still be on life support and die a slower death" says Chief Marilyn Baptiste. "Nothing has changed except that it has moved two kilometers upstream."

Taseko Mines is attempting to begin exploration near Teztan Biny on unceded Tsilhqot'in Territories. The company was asked to leave the territory, and on Nov. 14 the Tsilhqot'in Nation filed for an injunction "to halt its plans for extensive road-building, drilling, excavation of test pits and timber clearing in support of its unprecedented and controversial resubmitted bid for approval of its

soundly rejected Prosperity Mine project."

Taseko is attempting to begin work knowing that it will not hear a decision from the federal government for at least 12 months. The company has responded by applying for its own injunction against the Tsilhqot'in Nation.

"The company is on record admitting this new option is worse than the one that was rejected last year, and a CEAA review panel has

The biggest lesson may be that campaign budgets determine the overall outcome of Vancouver civic elections. Vision and the NPA each spent over \$2 million, pouring vast amounts into TV, radio and print ads, and hiring armies of "volunteers". This spending overwhelmed COPE's attempt to mobilize enough real volunteers to pull the vote on E-Day. The most urgent electoral reform in Vancouver is not establishing a ward system or proportional representation - it has to be spending limits, which seem equally difficult to achieve at this point.

Another factor which hurt COPE was the voter suppression strategy conducted by the NPA, which tried to deny ballots to large numbers of poor people in the Downtown Eastside.

"This is not a time for COPE to look inward or backwards," says Jane Bouey. "This is a time for COPE to focus on grassroots issues, to strengthen our links with working people and progressive movements. If we can put COPE at the heart of community struggles, we'll be in a much better position to elaborate a winning electoral tactic when the next campaign arrives." ●

already agreed with that assessment," said Chief Joe Alphonse, Chair of the Tsilhqot'in National Government. "To proceed any further will place an unjustified burden on us and on taxpayers and will demonstrate the excessive influence that this company, its lobbyists and hired guns have on government."

For updates on the Fish Lake situation, visit this website: <http://wildernesscommittee.org>. ●

NIAGARA NEWS BULLETIN

People's Voice Niagara Bureau

* A second Niagaran has died from the **second hospital infection outbreak**, after the previous one in October led to 35+ fatalities. Local 26 of the Ontario Nurses Association issued another warning that nurses could not provide the standard of care necessary because of understaffing, despite the province saying earlier cuts were not the cause of the health crisis. McMaster University released a survey showing 50% or more of residents in municipalities covered by the Niagara Health System (NHS) don't trust it, up to 80% in Ft. Erie. Meanwhile the inquest continues into the role of moving emergency rooms to a more distant P3 hospital in the death of a teenager who could not be treated locally because of the cuts. The Region has also released a "Let's Start a Conversation" video which shows that local health care problems are rooted in poverty and the economy, copying a similar documentary from Sudbury.

* A Niagara Falls fast food worker has started a **campaign to ban smoking from drive-throughs**, since the health of service workers is left unprotected by the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. The local Liberal MPP thinks it's a good idea, but wants to leave it to businesses to self-regulate.

* CUPE-affiliated **Steel City Solidarity**, a Workers Action Centre organized to extend labour's support to non-unionized workers, picketed a Grimsby restaurant where the manager had not paid a worker almost \$2,000 in wages despite being ordered a year ago by the Labour Board to pay up. Scheduled to be open, the restaurant was closed up during the picketing.

* Rural Niagara residents were again warned they might see **soldiers running around with weapons** and military vehicles on exercises in civilian areas as part of militarization.

* A city councillor has denounced the Niagara Regional municipal council as a **"dictatorship"**. The council refused to hold a by-election after a councillor representing Welland was recently elected as a provincial MPP. Calling a by-election "financially irresponsible", the regional body tried to appoint a replacement despite opposition from Welland council.

* As part of municipal cuts from provincial underfunding and downloading, St. Catharines will **stop shovelling the driveways of seniors and the disabled**, originally implemented to make it a "walkable city." ●



"Looks like I can ditch the reindeer and use a helicopter."

Tory "head in the sand" mentality

The Harper Tories have a "head in the sand" mentality around climate change, said Matt Horne of the Pembina Institute in response to Environment Minister Peter Kent's recent speech to the Toronto Economic Club.

"Minister Kent's speech is more notable for its glaring omissions and misrepresentative statements about Canada's performance than for the \$30 million per year promised for domestic climate change adaptation," said Horne. "The government's positioning shows a continued 'head in the sand' mentality that falls desperately short of the expectations of Canadians and the international community."

"Frustratingly, the government continues to praise itself for its estimate that the combined efforts of federal and provincial governments only get Canada one quarter of the way toward Canada's 2020 pollution reduction commitments. When the federal government's own advisory panel has found that catastrophic climate change could wipe out up to 25 per cent of Canada's GDP, our government must demonstrate how it will avoid that scenario by dramatically reducing our own pollution and being a constructive player in the international negotiations." ●

EDITORIALS

PRPPs attack pension rights

The Canadian Labour Congress was right to quickly slam the Harper government's "Pooled Registered Pension Plans". The PRPP is no "solution" to the pensions crisis; it's a deliberate attempt to sabotage the public pension system in the interests of finance capital. As the CLC says, PRPPs would reward banks, insurance companies and mutual fund companies instead of offering secure retirement options for all Canadians.

Anyone who thinks the PRPP sounds like a good idea should look a bit closer. Unlike the Canada Pension Plan, PRPPs are privately administered workplace pension plans that resemble group RRSPs. They will be unable to provide a secure, predictable benefit, indexed against inflation. They will not require employers to contribute. They won't match the CPP's very low cost. They lack the survivor and disability benefits offered by the CPP, and they will not be universally portable, following the worker no matter where he or she is employed. There is no indication that the PRPP legislation will control high management fees charged by banks and mutual fund companies on pension investments.

The Conservative plan ignores the discussions held by provincial finance ministers in December 2010, when the majority of provinces pressed Ottawa to examine proposals to expand the CPP. This is a big disappointment for the labour movement, which had been pushing governments to double future CPP benefits through modest increases in contributions from workers and employers.

Instead, the PRPP takes Canadians in the opposite direction, towards replacing the CPP with private pensions. The result will be a massive growth of poverty among seniors, and an equally rapid boost in profits for finance capital. It's a trend sweeping the capitalist world, and it must be met with determined resistance by the labour movement and its allies across Canada.

Save Teztan Biny!

The struggle over Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) is a microcosm of issues which are central to the future of Canada and indeed the entire world. Similar issues arise around other projects, such as plans to boost exports of tar sands oil to satisfy the energy demands of U.S. imperialism.

As reported in this issue, Taseko Mines has submitted a "revised" proposal for a gold and copper mine on the Chilcotin Plateau in northern British Columbia. The project would turn Teztan Biny and other bodies of water into tailings ponds, causing permanent damage to trout stocks and other wildlife, and to the surrounding area. Even Stephen Harper's former environment minister Jim Prentice called a federal assessment of the project "probably the most condemning I have ever read."

This dispute raises two crucial questions. First: just because a mineral deposit has been discovered, should corporations be allowed to "develop" such resources in the interests of their shareholders, regardless of consequences? In our view, the clear answer must be "No." The future of our world depends on halting the unchecked capitalist plunder of natural resources in pursuit of private profits. The rights of human beings and the natural environment must trump the greed of corporations.

Second: like most of British Columbia, Teztan Biny is on unceded aboriginal lands, in this case the ancestral territories of the Tsilhqot'in Nation. For them, Teztan Biny is an important spiritual place, which would be destroyed by twenty years of open pit mining. The government of Canada is obliged by the Constitution to protect First Nations, a commitment reinforced by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The national rights of aboriginal peoples must take priority over the corporate drive to rip gold out of the earth.

PEOPLE'S VOICE

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

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Circulation Dept.,
People's Voice, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1
Tel: 604.255.2041 Email: pvoice@telus.net

Volunteers and contributors for this issue:

Dave Arland, Ed Bil, Wally Brooker,
Sam Hammond, B. Prasant, Liz Rowley,
Saleh Waziruddin, and our mailers in
Vancouver & Toronto.

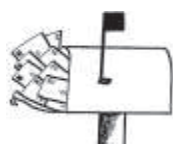
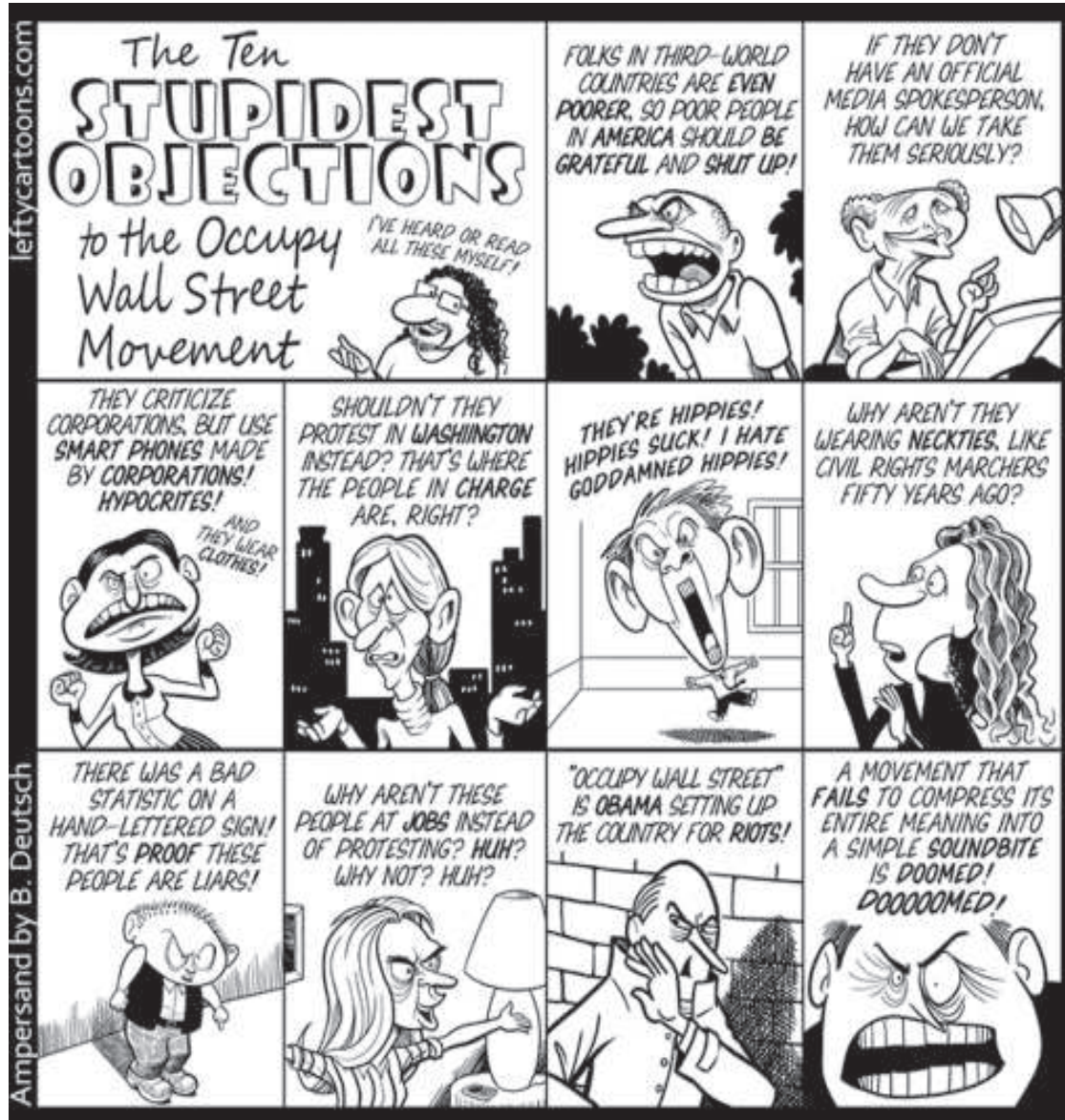
Editor: Kimball Cariou Business Manager: Sam Hammond

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

LETTERS

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

So-called "Free Trade deals" only help the 1%

All we need is yet another "free trade" deal. In the introduction to the 2002 edition of her classic *Silent Surrender*, Kari Levitt wrote:

"... An international trade specialist once observed that NAFTA is unique because none of the three countries who are party to it believe they have gained - all claim to have lost employment to one or both of the other partners. How can this be when there has been overall economic growth in all three countries? The explanation is that what appears to be an agreement about mutually beneficial trade is in reality an instrument for the

redistribution of income from labour to capital - in all three countries. Capital has captured most of the gains from growth, while intensified competition in the labour market has reduced real wages in all three countries - most drastically in Mexico. In the absence of political institutions of redistribution, the 'efficiency

gains' of economic integration accrue to multinational capital." (*Silent Surrender*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal & Kingston - London-Ithaca, 2002, xxxii-xxxiii).

In a word, these deals are designed to benefit the one per cent at the expense of the 99%.

Jordan Bishop, Ottawa, ON

The nature of imperialism

We need to reflect on the present world situation in Africa and the Middle East, and on the capitalist-financial-international crisis.

U.S. imperialism is using its NATO partners, not only for the recolonisation of Africa and the oil-rich Arabian states, but also to advance its plans for all-out world domination. This is the nature of imperialism, which cannot exist otherwise than through war, oppression and exploitation. No country will be safe from it unless humanity unites and puts an end to this self-imposed privatised dictatorial system.

Romeo Platschick, Winnipeg, MB

Correcting mistake re. Athens demo

In our Nov. 1-15 issue, People's Voice reported on the massive rally by tens of thousands of Greek trade unionists and Communists at Syntagma Square in Athens on Oct. 20, the second day of a huge general strike against the "austerity" package demanded by the IMF and big European powers. Unfortunately, our article included a serious error. Contrary to some mainstream news reports which we repeated without checking adequately, the Syntagma Square rally was not an attempt to block entry into the Parliament by Greek MPs. The rally was intended to show the opposition of working people to the austerity policies. We apologize for our mistake. ●

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Occupy Movement won't be silenced

Guest editorial from the Morning Star, Britain

Official explanations for the crackdown and dismantling of protest camps in various US cities do not hold water. Statements that the co-ordinated removal of peaceful encampments was dictated by health and safety considerations or to prevent violence defy credibility. They are on a par with the St. Paul's Cathedral decision to close the church to worshippers because of health and safety risks posed by a few dozen tents pitched in its vicinity.

Everyone can imagine the response that would have emanated from London and Washington if the Ukrainian authorities had acted in a similar manner by sweeping their poster woman Yulia Tymoshenko and her pro-democracy forces from Independence Square in Kiev in 2004 as they protested against ballot rigging and, on occasion, launched forays into parliament to intimidate MPs.

If there were indeed fears for health and safety, cleanliness or

public sanitation regarding the Occupy Wall Street camp in New York's Zuccotti Park, the Frank Ogwaza Plaza camp in Oakland or similar settlements in Oregon, Vermont, Colorado, Utah and Missouri, the answer lay in the authorities' own hands.

They could have replicated what

they did in Kiev in 2004, intervening to ensure that the happy campers did not lack for life's essentials. US finance paid on a daily basis for 5,000 tonnes of porridge and 10,000 loaves of bread, together with 300 portable toilets, tents with heaters, foam pads and sleeping bags. Even rubbish disposal was coordinated,

with 11 lorries a day removing the protesters' detritus.

If such a sterling effort was good enough for pro-democracy campaigners half a world away, surely it should be offered to US citizens in their own backyard to enable them to point out that the American Dream is turning into a nightmare for too many of them. However, it seems that, for Washington, neither charity nor solidarity begins at home. For them it's armed riot police and fire hoses to wash away any trace of their protest.

The authorities should come clean and admit that they are embarrassed by the presence of these witnesses to the injustice of the capitalist system and to the system's defence of the interests of society's richest 1 per cent over those of the other 99 per cent.

Capitalism's defenders are happiest when they deal in clichés and generalisations about freedom and democratic rights. They are less confident when protesters highlight specifics and draw attention to the vast rewards gained by the tiny elite in the face of hardships and tumbling living

standards assailing the dispossessed majority.

After initial paralysis in the face of the mass protests in Cairo's Tahrir (Freedom) Square, following the upsurge in Tunisia, Washington tuned in to the talk of democracy and attempted to incorporate the Egyptian national liberation movement into its own historical narrative. It ignored the reality that ousted military dictator Hosni Mubarak had been a US tool, reliable and dependable in his brutality and corruption.

Egyptian popular sentiment against the dictatorship was echoed by angry denunciations of Washington for its protection and manipulation of Mubarak because of his complicity with Israel in holding back Arab liberation.

US citizens and Europeans launching their own mass protests against being treated as pawns by bankers don't languish under similar brutal dictatorship that oppressed Egyptians. But their economic and democratic complaints are valid and should not be silenced by authoritarian repression.



Anti-Left terror campaign across Bengal

By Kimball Cariou

In the months since the May 2011 electoral defeat of Bengal's Left Front government, the campaign of violence against the Indian state's progressive parties has continued, taking dozens of lives. The violence is part of a long-term strategy by right-wing and extremist elements to destabilize the Left Front, which had been in power since 1977, and to reverse the land reform and democratization policies adopted during these years.

A recent letter to the Prime Minister from the Left Front - a coalition of ten communist, socialist and progressive parties, the largest of which is the Bengal unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) - outlines the wide scope of the attacks against its supporters.

Most of the killings and assaults have been the work of thugs from the Trinamul Congress (TMC) which won the May election in part by creating an atmosphere of intimidation and fear. The new state administration, headed by Mamata Banerjee, has concentrated its post-election offensive against the CPI(M), which had been at the forefront of decades of struggles to defend the interests of peasants and other working people in Bengal.

One result may be a greater impetus for the disintegration of Bengal, such as the push to create a separate "Gorkhaland" within the current borders of the state. Ever since India gained independence from Britain in 1947, the country's main left forces have opposed tendencies to fragment its territory into smaller pieces, a process which they argue will divide the population along caste and ethnic lines, at the expense of building broad, united struggles for fundamental social progress.

A 100-page summary of the violence unleashed against the Left from the Assembly elections up to Aug. 15 is highly revealing. During this time, thirty Left Front leaders and workers (28 from the CPI-M and two from the Revolutionary Socialist Party) were killed, and another seven driven to commit suicide. Assaults against women totalled 684, including 23 rapes. A total of 3785 people had to be hospitalized for injuries inflicted by their attackers, and others were prevented from seeking treatment or lodging complaints with the police. There were 2064 reports of arson and looting of houses, and 14,081 persons were evicted from their homes. Thousands more have been compelled to pay off local TMC leaders to avoid being driven out or attacked. According to a conservative estimate, the total of extorted funds could exceed Rs. 277.7 million (\$5.6 million).

A wide range of offices and buildings used by trade unions, political parties and other organizations have been attacked. The summary counts 758 such premises as being ransacked, burnt, forced to close or taken over by TMC goons. In 77 cases, student union offices have been captured, with elected leaders driven out or forced to resign. Student activists have been threatened against taking exams, effectively driving them out of their schools.

There has also been a widespread attack on the peasantry, with 3418 denied the right to cultivate their own lands, amounting to over 9000 acres. Another 26,838 rural tenants and sharecroppers have been forcibly evicted.

Thousands of Left Front activists face trumped-up legal charges, often accused after weapons were allegedly "found"

in their homes or offices. The campaign extends to attacks on freedom of the press; 241 public display boards featuring the pages of the CPI-M daily *Ganashakti* have been dismantled, thousands of copies have been burnt, and its

vendors often beaten up to disrupt circulation.

The terror extends to disruption of the widespread network of local institutions of self-government built up during the Left Front period. Physical attacks, threats, and orders

of the new government have shut down many *panchayats* and other forms of local administration, as well as elected bodies on university campuses. In some areas, teachers and other staff are not allowed to enter their institutions. ●

Here are just a few of the hundreds of examples listed in the summary of violent attacks compiled by the Bengal Left Front.

May 14: Jiten Nandy, a primary school teacher in Paschim Medinipur district, was dragged out of the CPI(M) office and beaten to death by the Trinamool Congress-backed miscreants.

May 17: Dibarani Mandal (20), a supporter of the CPI(M) and a resident of Mahadevpur village in the Mushidabad district, was kidnapped by TMC hooligans on her way back from Lalbag Hospital where she went for treatment. The hooligans raped and murdered her.

May 19: Dahiruddin, an agricultural labourer and CPI(M) supporter (Chopra, Uttar Dinajpur) was severely beaten by TMC miscreants. Dahiruddin succumbed to his injuries in hospital.

May 28: RSP-worker Sudeb Barman of Majhigram, South Dinajpur was attacked by armed TMC men and killed on the spot.

June 29: Headed by local TMC leaders, hooligans hacked CPI(M) member Zakir Hossain (Nirmisha village, North 24 Parganas) to death in front of the local mosque when he was returning from a local market.

June 23: Tapan Deb, a member of the CPI(M) Dabgram Local Committee in Ward 44 of Siliguri (Darjeeling District) was called into the local thana (police station) and mentally tortured from 5:30 pm to 11 pm under

instigation from TMC politicians. Coming home he broke down in abject depression. He was found hanging inside his room by his daughter-in-law.

June 6: TMC hoodlums ransacked 70 houses of innocent people in Boro Palashan village under Memari PS in Bardhaman district. Women were attacked and allegedly molested. Ranjit Rajbanshi, an old man, suffered serious injuries when he tried to rescue the women.

July 1: The CPI(M) Zonal Party office, in Paschim Medinipur, Chandrakona Road, was attacked by 50-60 armed TMC hooligans. The computer, TV, and furnishings were demolished and thrown out of the office. Four motorcycles and six bicycles were broken. Around Rs. 60,000 were looted from the office, money for those who have been evicted from their houses.

July 26: TMC-backed anti-socials and supporters compelled the elected student's representatives of Ckadah College to resign. In the last students union election at this college, the communist-led Students Federation of India won all seats. But since May 13, SFI supporters have been subjected to continuous attack by TMC workers and anti-socials, who ransacked the student's union and locked it from outside. Sangeeta Dutta, the General Secretary of the Students Union, was threatened

with dire consequences and she was compelled to resign.

August 3: In the area of Budhikhali Gram Panchayet at Kakdeep, District-South 24 Parganas, at least 100 members of 28 poor families were forced to find refuge in the jungle at the bank of the Saptamukhi River. Eight CPI(M) supporters were seriously injured when they protested the eviction of the farmers from the *khasland* (government lands) by landlords backed by TMC leaders.

July 9: at Haroa, Dist-North 24 Parganas, police indiscriminately fired on poor bargadars (sharecroppers) and helped armed TMC goons to illegally and forcibly evict them from their own land. Four poor tribal peasants were severely injured and admitted to the hospital. Similar attacks followed in Gopalpur No. 1 and No. 2 Panchayet areas of Haroa, Dist-North 24 Parganas. Almost 10,000 poor villagers, pattadars (leaseholders) and bargadars, and peasants have been evicted from around 2600 acres of government lands. Police and armed TMC goons fired upon the peasants when they came to cultivate their lands, causing many serious injuries. Using the police presence the TMC men seized lands and 10 granaries were razed to the ground. ●

Warships: massive waste, wrong priority

Disguised as a "jobs and defence program", the Harper Tory strategy to militarize Canada has gone into overdrive with detailed plans to spend \$35 billion on new warships and coast guard vessels. The program is a major piece of Harper's so-called "Canada First Defense Strategy", a massive scheme to pour nearly \$500 billion into the military, even as Ottawa's contribution towards spending on social programs, health and education declines. The Communist Party of Canada condemns the massive waste of taxpayer dollars on weapons of war. Instead, we demand that these funds be used to tackle the urgent crises affecting working people across this country.

The National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy is the largest federal shipbuilding program since World War II. Halifax-based Irving Shipbuilding was awarded contracts to construct warships costing \$25 billion over the next two decades. The 15 vessels will include six to eight Arctic offshore patrol boats and a fleet of combat ships to replace the Navy's destroyers and frigates. The company is owned by the Irving family, which has long been a dominant force in the east coast economy. Seaspan, which has yards in Victoria and Vancouver, was picked to build icebreakers and Coast Guard patrol ships, plus several naval supply ships, for an estimated cost of \$8 billion over the next two decades. Seaspan is part of a group of companies owned by U.S. billionaire Dennis

Washington.

Another \$2 billion will be spent on building smaller vessels at other

Commentary from the Communist Party of Canada

Canadian shipyards, such as Davie in Quebec. More spending will be needed to repair, refit and maintain all these ships over the next several decades. Even more significant, there has been little attention on the expensive price tag for deadly weaponry on these warships - missiles, artillery, machine guns, ammunition, and other armament.

Not surprisingly, the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries, which represents 860 companies, supports the decision to expand the naval fleet "in a way that mitigates the boom-and-bust cycles normally associated with ship fleet construction."

The opposition parties in Parliament, which had raised some criticisms of the process for purchasing 65 heavily-armed F35 fighter-bombers, have been cheerleaders for the warship program. The late NDP leader Jack Layton campaigned hard for the Irving bid, together with Nova Scotia's NDP Premier Darrell Dexter, who calls the ship program "the greatest opportunity for Nova Scotia since Confederation."

The NDP leadership backs the warship program as a way to create jobs, but also because it supports

the "responsibility to protect" doctrine which allows the major imperialist powers to intervene militarily across the planet on short notice. Canada's aggressive participation in the NATO attack on Libya was endorsed by the NDP caucus, for example.

The Communist Party of Canada rejects the false arguments which claim that the warship program is necessary to "defend Canada", to create jobs, or to support crisis-free regional development.

hundreds of thousands of low-income, social, and cooperative housing units. Invested in the child care program cancelled by the Harper Tories, these funds could allow working class parents to improve their education and training and to find employment. Thousands of new buses could be purchased for urban transit systems, immediately reducing Canada's carbon emissions. Free tuition could be provided to tens of thousands of post-secondary students, removing the heavy burden of loan debts as they

Defence Strategy" is an attempt to turn Canada into one of the most heavily armed members of the imperialist NATO alliance. Increasingly in recent years, Canada has backed the U.S. in making war against countries such as Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Libya, and in the police and military occupation of Haiti. With virtually no public debate, the Harper Tories plan to establish seven military bases in foreign countries, from Asia to Africa and Latin America. Far from "defending" our borders, this strategy is a plan to expand Canada's role as a willing ally of the U.S.-led group of imperialist countries which use brute military force to impose the interests of transnational capital on the planet.

From this perspective, the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy is a crucial part of the drive to further militarize Canada's coastal waters, including in the Arctic. Global warming is melting the polar ice cap, opening up new shipping lanes and a mad scramble for oil and gas exploitation by the transnational energy monopolies. Canada's new icebreakers, patrol boats and naval vessels are intended to help the Canadian ruling class and its U.S. allies seize the lion's share of this new resource bonanza. The expanded fleet will also no doubt play a role in assisting the expansion of oil and natural gas exploration and exports along the west coast.

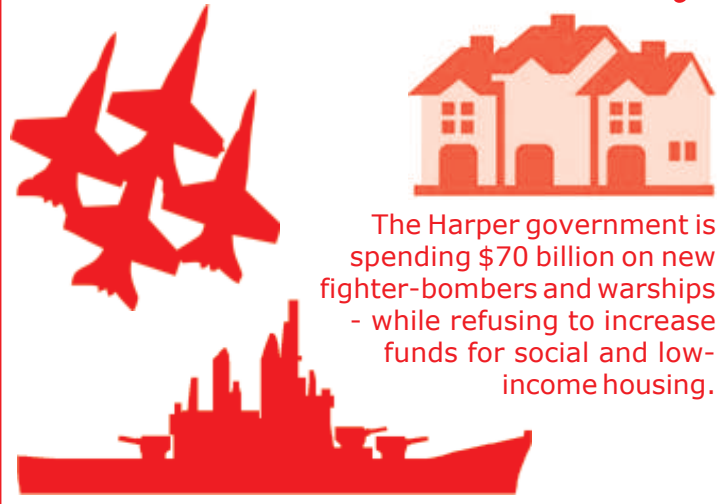
Even the argument by some that the west coast component of the shipbuilding program deserves support because of its alleged "non-combat" character is untrue. The icebreaker and the coast guard and supplies vessels to be built in Vancouver are integral parts of a wider strategy to create a much larger Canadian military.

Given these facts, we are deeply concerned by the uncritical, even celebratory tone adopted by much of the trade union leadership regarding the warships. It is true that this military expansion would provide employment to several thousand workers. But the labour movement has a responsibility to demand that governments address the real needs of working people, rather than building expensive weapons systems which will be used to bomb, occupy and kill our sisters and brothers in other countries.

As Frederick Engels pointed out over a century ago, in real terms, military spending is similar to producing commodities which are then simply dumped into the sea. Former U.S. President Eisenhower put it another way: "Every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, and the hopes of its children."

Rather than spending \$500 billion on militarism over the next two decades, as projected in the Canada First Defense Strategy, the Communist Party of Canada calls for a People's Alternative based on rebuilding our country's economic infrastructure and manufacturing sector, and on tackling the urgent social priorities of working people. ●

Peace and Prosperity, not War and Austerity



The Harper government is spending \$70 billion on new fighter-bombers and warships - while refusing to increase funds for social and low-income housing.

Canada's 2010-11 military budget is \$23 billion, a full 61 per cent higher than the \$8.4 billion level of fiscal 1998, when military spending reached its post-Cold War minimum. Annual military costs are projected to climb rapidly as spending on the F35 fighter-bombers (now estimated at about \$30 billion including maintenance, parts and munitions) kicks in.

The \$65 billion total price tag for the warships and fighter-bombers could help tackle many pressing problems faced by working people. These funds could be used to build

graduate. The crisis of unsafe drinking water on First Nations reserves and Aboriginal communities could be resolved, along with the terrible shortage of good housing faced by Aboriginal peoples. Federal support for health care, social programs, and education could all be increased substantially. All these measures would create far greater net employment than spending on warships and fighter-bombers.

Nor is it true that Canada is "threatened" by other countries. In reality, the costly "Canada First

"Every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed."
Former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower

Pay equity victory at Canada Post after 28 years

Twenty-eight years after their case was filed, members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada have won a decisive pay equity victory against Canada Post. On Nov. 17, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of PSAC, ending attempts by the crown corporation and governments to deny justice to the female employees, some of whom have since retired or passed away.

The union first filed a complaint over "unequal pay for work of equal value" in 1983 on behalf of women clerical workers in the CR classification, who were paid much less than male employees in other jobs. This practice, argued the union, was contrary to the anti-discrimination provisions of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal compared wages between 6,000 mainly female clerical staff and the predominantly male postal operations group. More than a decade of hearings took place, over 410 working days between

1992 and 2003, to consider and quantify the work done by male and female workers. The tribunal ruled in 2005 that Canada Post had violated the Act and awarded back pay covering 50% of the wage gap in damages.

Together with interest, the award totalled about \$150 million. That amount, of course, does not compensate for the other half of the wage gap over decades, nor for the resulting lost pension income.

The corporation continued to use every possible legal avenue to have the Tribunal overturned. The Federal Court of Appeal later set aside the tribunal's decision, saying the finding of discrimination

could not be supported. "In our respectful view, the tribunal became confused, and therefore fell into error," Justices Sexton and Ryer wrote for the majority on the appeal court.

The Supreme Court unanimously backed the original Tribunal ruling. In a rare move, the Nov. 17 decision was released directly by Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin, sending a powerful signal that the Federal Court got it wrong.

Meanwhile, the Harper Tory government has moved to deny workers any legal avenue to redress pay equity claims. In 2009, the Conservatives pushed through legislation requiring workers to secure pay equity during collective bargaining rather than in courts and tribunals. Given the tendency for the new Conservative majority to interfere in labour negotiations on behalf of employers, it appears that opportunities to correct such inequities in future may be severely limited.

Ginette Chartrand was one of the women who filed the original



"The deep crisis concerns the capitalist system itself"

A government of the front of the parties of capital is being formed, of capital itself, with the EU in the role of chief maestro, in order to impose the interests of Greek and European capital in conditions of crisis and competition, to deal with the friction in the EU and to subjugate the people. Ostensibly the EU pressured ND and PASOK to form this government. In reality the pressure is being turned against the people. We state with certainty that this government is not going to deal with the debt or the deficits or the depth of the crisis, is not even going to deal with the possibility of an uncontrolled bankruptcy.

The avoidance of uncontrolled bankruptcy in the following months or years does not depend on the formula of political management, which the various bourgeois governments implement, nor whether it will be a coalition or single party government. The question as to whether there will be more parties in the coalition, is chiefly related to the disciplining and subjugation of the people, because the problem of the crisis is deeper: it concerns the capitalist system itself and not its management.

The people must know the following: that what it has experienced in the previous period it will experience now. To begin with they will take anti-worker anti-people measures. Afterwards the instalment will be paid and we will begin the new cycle of instalments of the new memorandum. We do not believe in the slightest that the initiative of Papandreu to proceed with a "Euro or Drachma" referendum is what led to the formation of the coalition

Statement from the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), on the formation of a new government of the social democratic PASOK and the right-wing ND (New Democracy), with the support of the nationalist LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally).

government. They had been preparing it for a long time. Of course this was the opportunity.

Capital in our country and the EU wanted to impose a dynamic and strong government. It did not want to have ND as an official opposition. It wanted a unified alliance government.

A large section of the people feel humiliated by the interventions of the EU and the statements of Merkel and Sarkozy. If they want to be liberated from this humiliation they must, first of all, be liberated from the power of the monopolies in our country, to disengage from the EU. Otherwise such humiliations will remain and we reiterate that they will be even worse.

Contemporary patriotism for us is this: Socialisation of the monopolies, working class-people's power, disengagement from the EU, which in today's conditions also entails the unilateral cancellation of the debt.

This government will not be for a few weeks only. They intend to drag it on for as long as possible. But even if it is for a few weeks it will take measures which concern the life, the living standards and the rights of the people for at least 10 to 15 years.

Indeed, the IMF talks about a two-year government. We call on the working class, the popular strata to cast down this government with their struggle as quickly as possible, to make its life difficult, to

utilise whatever difficulties the new alliance government has and to shorten its stay as far as possible, before final decisions are made, and to impose elections. Of course what is needed here is an unprecedented struggle and particularly that the workers, the popular strata who still believe in PASOK and ND, should not have any inhibition about this. They must not hope that this alliance will bring about something better...

The people have an additional weapon today, not only their just cause and experience which they have acquired in the past and recent period, but also the fact that the EU is experiencing serious difficulties. The governments of the EU cannot manage the crisis.

The people must not be anxious about the weaknesses of the bourgeois system. The debts, the deficits, the memoranda, the medium-term programs, whether they will be passed or not, is the anxiety of the ruling class of our country and the parties which serve it. The people must be anxious about one thing: how it will be able to prevent and overthrow measures, how it will be able to be victorious.

They are threatening the Greek people that they will expel Greece from the Eurozone. The people must use this threat, to lift their heads and say: With our decision, with our strength, with our project from now on we will disengage from the EU.

It is not impossible; it is possible that in the following years the EU might not look as it does today. Countries might be expelled from the Eurozone, from the EU, the EU might be split, and something else might appear in its place. Indeed there was a discussion to transform the EU to an organisation like the USA. They think that they can abolish the nation state through political decisions. The reason is

that this is a way to subjugate the people, to suppress their militancy. And secondly, it is a way to ensure that the struggle between the monopolies is carried out in the best possible way for them. Nor can this plan abolish the crises in the capitalist system, the rivalries and the divisive splits.

As regards the question Euro or Drachma, our answer was that there are sections of capital, not only in Greece but in other countries as well, which are interested in Greece remaining in the EU and leaving the Eurozone because their economic position in the system is

or with the Drachma.

From this point of view any fronts against the memorandum like these are not only temporary - they will split sooner or later - but they also constitute one of the ramparts to protect the bourgeois class, which on the one hand wants a clear reactionary conservative front, but at the same time it can utilise a front for struggle as a form of protection. Anyone who fights within the framework of the EU in terms of negotiation and changes in the political formula does not constitute a threat to the system...

We believe that fronts of



appropriate for speculation.

However our answer is: disengagement. We will not take sides with the speculators of the Euro or the Drachma. The people's interests will not be served by a general "anti-memorandum" front, no matter if it is called progressive, patriotic or left. Until now ND classified itself amongst the forces against the memorandum and you see where it has ended up.

The front we need today must not be simply an "anti" front. It must say where the people should go. We are talking about a social popular front for the overthrow of the power of the monopolies, for their socialisation, for the workers' and people's control, for the disengagement of Greece from the EU and NATO and of course all these entail the cancellation of the debt. We do not want the anti-worker policy either with the Euro

struggle must develop immediately. The forthcoming budget will cut expenditures even further, it does not leave anything for education, healthcare, welfare, nurseries, for the elderly, for the persons with special needs, for the special problems of women and youth, for unemployment...

The fronts of struggle arise from the people themselves in the neighbourhood, in the factory. Consequently we need to immediately use all forms of struggle - strikes, demonstrations, people's committees and social alliance at the ground level. There cannot be any factory or people's neighbourhood without centres for action and struggle. All of these must gather together in a massive torrent for the overthrow of the power of the monopolies. There is no other alternative solution today. ●

EU delivers Greek shakedown

Greece's EU economic "mindors" admitted on Nov. 17 that half of an estimated 60 billion euros in uncollected taxes is tied up in lengthy legal disputes that prevent the country from getting its hands on desperately needed funding.

In its first report, the European Union task force headed by Horst Reichenbach painted a confused picture of Greece's efforts to repay its debts. The group said that of the outstanding taxes, as much as 8 billion euros would be immediately collectible and could help Athens cut its massive budget deficit. But about 30 billion euros of the outstanding taxes are caught up in the courts and could take seven to 12 years to resolve.

"Even though the actual prospects for collection are very low the very size of these tax arrears casts a doubt over the efficacy of the overall tax administration," the task force's report said.

It didn't name the tax-dodgers who are generating the arrears, but given the size of the debts it is unlikely that it is owed by working-class taxpayers.

Rather than propose solutions for the tax evasion issues the EU task force focused on a more favoured area for its members - privatisation. It plans to send in experts to help the country value and eventually cash in on its big holdings of companies, properties and land.

But it bemoaned the fact that Athens won't be able to privatise public assets worth 5 billion euros by the end of 2011 because the unexpectedly sharp economic downturn has made speculators cautious about investing in Greece.

The 50 billion euro multi-year privatisation plan is central to the two bailout programmes forced on the country by the EU and the International Monetary Fund. Athens has to raise 1.3 billion euros by selling off publicly owned companies and real estate by the end of the year, the task force said. It did not give financial details of the privatisations that took place already this year.

(From the Morning Star) ●



Rally by PAME, the All-Workers Militant Front of Greece, which is backed by the KKE



GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

ILO condemns Fiji Junta

The International Labour Organisation has condemned Fiji's military junta over severe violations of labour rights. The ruling follows the arrests of Daniel Urai, President of the national trade union centre FTUC on October 29 and Felix Anthony, the organisation's General Secretary, on November 5. Both were eventually released on bail following worldwide protests. Worker representatives have also been subjected to a campaign of harassment, intimidation and physical beatings.

"Fiji's military rulers are turning the country into an absolute dictatorship, and seem determined to destroy the trade unions as part of their strategy to crush any dissent and eliminate the legitimate voice of civil society," said ILO General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The arrests of Urai and Anthony and the travel bans placed on them, have been linked to union opposition to a recent "essential services decree" which eliminates the right to union representation for a large part of Fiji's workforce. The decree, written for the regime by a US law firm, takes away collective bargaining rights for many workers, imposes heavy restrictions on those elected to union positions, and removes the right to strike and minimum wages for all the sectors it covers.

Urai faces charges under the regime's Crime Decree of urging political violence. "Whether or not their charges will stick is not the matter here, they just want to harass us, they just want us to go through the system and get thrown into remand prison," said Urai, who has not entered a plea.

Felix Anthony was released from custody only after six days of questioning. No charges were laid but the police said he may be brought in again.

Papua gold mine strike continues

A foreign mining company, protected by hundreds of soldiers, extracts precious resources from an open pit mine in a tropical forest, paying members of indigenous tribes abysmally low wages. This is the world's largest gold mine, located in the mountains of Indonesia's Papua province and owned by Freeport-McMoRan, a U.S. mining conglomerate.

Thousands of miners have been on strike at the Grasberg mine since Sept. 15, seeking big increases on their pay rates of \$1-3 per hour. On Oct. 10, they tried to block scabs from boarding buses to the mine. Some strikers threw rocks at police, who answered with gunfire, killing miner Petrus Ayamiseba and wounding six others. On Oct. 15 and again on Oct. 21, unidentified gunmen struck, killing four workers and two locals. Meanwhile, saboteurs cut the pipeline that carries minerals from the mine down the mountain and to a local port. After weeks of deadlocked negotiations, police in Papua have threatened to break the strike if the union doesn't call it off.

Freeport-McMoRan signed its

first contract with Indonesia in 1967, two years before Jakarta annexed the country's poorest province. Last year, the Grasberg mine contributed \$6.3 billion of the nearly \$19 billion in revenues reported by Freeport-McMoRan, which ranks 136th on the Fortune 500 list, just behind Nike and ahead of Time Warner Cable.

Critics accuse Freeport-McMoRan not only of underpaying workers but also of destroying the environment in Papua, and of decades of complicity in human rights abuses by the



Indonesian military. In 2003, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission considered similar allegations, but sided with Freeport-McMoRan. The company's powerful board members include former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. A decade ago, when a new Indonesian government suggested renegotiating its contract with the company, Kissinger flew to Jakarta to meet with the president. The issue of renegotiations never resurfaced.

Warning strikes in German steelworks

The German metalworkers union IG Metall is carrying out warning strikes in Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Bremen, to demand raises of seven percent for the 75,000 steelworkers in the German states. Other demands are that trainees receive permanent status, and that older employees are offered to work part time. The employers have so far refused to make a proposal. The next round of negotiations began November 21 in Dusseldorf.

A third of all German workers under the age of 35 have never had a permanent job. IG Metall wants to limit temporary employments, the use of work agencies and precarious working conditions in a new Bargaining Agreement.

At ThyssenKrupp Nirosta in Dillenburg, 12,200 steelworkers downed tools on Nov. 10 for the second warning strike. In Bremen 1200 employees at ArcelorMittal GmbH stopped work for two hours, and in Bochum 2000 steelworkers gathered for rallies, the largest one in front of the gates of ThyssenKrupp Steel Europe AG.

On November 14 in Muhlheim, employees at Vallourec & Mannesmann, the pipe works of Mannesmann, Europipe and the Foundry of Friedrich-Wilhelm stopped work for two hours. The next day, employees in Vallourec & Mannesmann in Dusseldorf-Rath downed tools, followed by

steelworkers in Schmolz-Bickenbach at Herzogenrath Kohlscheid.

Argentine teachers and oil workers take action

More than 4 million students in Argentina's most populous province stayed home from school on Nov. 14 because of a teachers' strike over wage claims. The 24-hour walkout affected both public and private elementary and secondary schools in Buenos Aires province. "Observance of the strike is complete," said the secretary-general of the Suteba teachers union, Roberto Baradel.

A coalition of the teachers' unions called the strike after negotiations with provincial education authorities failed. Suteba officials are seeking a "restructuring of wages" through the regularization of their salaries, and also demand that teachers be able to collect the government subsidies available to working parents.

The unions complain that raises granted during previous administrations have not been regularized, while around 50 percent of teachers with children who are minors receive none of the family compensation they should be getting.

Meanwhile, Argentine oil and natural gas industry workers held a 24-hour strike on Nov. 14 in the energy-producing provinces of Neuquen, Rio Negro and La Pampa. Companies including YPF (the local unit of Spain's Repsol), France's Total and Apache Corp. operate in the Neuquen basin area that straddles the three provinces. The workers are seeking to resume negotiations on a collective agreement, said Guillermo Pereyra, secretary-general of the Private Oil and Gas Union, who said another strike may be held starting Nov. 21 for 48 hours.

A series of strikes in the southern province of Santa Cruz hit Argentina's oil output earlier this year. Inflation is running at an annual rate of more than 20 percent, fueling labour unrest in the South American country.

UK may change strike laws

Britain's right-wing government is threatening to "reform" laws regulating strikes if public sector workers push ahead with industrial action. Cabinet Office Minister Francis Maude said on Nov. 19 that such legislation was "under review". Maude also said that the Confederation of British Industry had made a "powerful case" to set a minimum 40% turnout on strike ballots before they are deemed legal. "Members, for the most part, simply haven't voted in these ballots," he told a BBC show.

"I have made this point to the unions that if they do call out their members on strike at a time of huge fragility for our economy (affecting) people who don't have access to pensions anywhere near as good as public sector workers will still

have at the end of this - then actually the pace for reform of the ballot laws will become very pressing," he warned.

More than two million workers are set to walk out on Nov. 30 for a day of action co-ordinated by the TUC, closing schools, courts, government offices, jobcentres, driving tests, council services and hospitals. Unions representing teachers, civil servants, NHS and council workers have balloted in favour of action, arguing that the Government's pension reforms will leave them paying in more, working longer and receiving less when they retire.



New round of Bahrain trials

The latest trials against opposition activists have begun in the Gulf kingdom of Bahrain. On Nov. 15, three officers of the Gulf Air union appeared in a court on charges concerning "national security". At the end of November, a group of sports journalists and athletes that includes the country's top-scoring soccer player, A'ala Hubail, are to be tried for "illegal assembly and inciting hatred against the regime", and on November 28, the doctors arrested at the Salmaniya Medical Complex,

already tried in a military court, will be retried in a civilian court.

Meanwhile, on Nov. 23, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), set up by King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, will produce its report into whether or not there were human rights violations during the spring uprisings. The fate of hundreds of protestors already imprisoned or still going through the courts may depend upon this report. U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton has delayed a \$53 million arms sale to Bahrain until the BICI's findings are announced, and complaints raised by trade unions and the European Parliament have put the US-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement in jeopardy.

Since the uprising began on Feb. 14, the Sunni ruling elite have used foreign troops, martial law, military courts, and torture to keep their grip on power. Nearly 3000 workers have been dismissed, TV and social media are being used to name and shame "traitors", and U.S. and British PR and intelligence gathering firms have been employed to ensure that the government's story is the one the world is listening to.

About sixty union leaders have been fired, and two unions have been dismantled altogether: in March Bahrain Petroleum (Bapco), where 293 workers were dismissed, dissolved its company union, and in April the Bahrain Teachers Association was closed down, and its president and vice-president arrested. On websites such as Bahrain Online and Bahrain Arabia, photos of workers at demonstrations have been posted, their faces circled and names identified. One site, Awakened Giant, has 131 photos identifying Gulf Air pilots, engineers, ground staff and cabin crew.

Many items in our "Global Class Struggle" column are from the Labour Start website, www.labourstart.org

Send me information on the Communist Party of Canada



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

Central Committee CPC
290A Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6
416-469-2446 <info@cpc-pcc.ca> www.comunist-party.ca

Parti Communiste du Quebec (section du Parti communiste du Canada)
5359 Ave Du Parc, Suite "C"
Montreal, QC, H2V 4G9
Email: pcq@cpc-pcc.ca Tél: 438-338-8890

B.C. Committee CPC
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1
Tel: 604-254-9836 E-mail: cpbc@telus.net

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

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

Saskatchewan CPC
Email: mail@communist-party-sk.ca

Ottawa CPC
Tel: 613-232-7108

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

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

Hamilton Ctee. CPC
265 Melvin Ave., Apt. 815
Hamilton, ON, L8H 2K3
Tel: 905-548-9586

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

Terror and revenge engulfs NATO's Libya

By Franklin Lamb,
CounterPunch

BENGHAZI: The "new Libya" has entered its own "Terror" which is spreading inexorably, aided by NATO member states including American, French and British SAS units known locally as "disappearance squads". This is one of the rapidly developing consequences of the UN's rush to "protect Libya's civilian population" last Spring. And it is why human rights investigators are arriving in Benghazi, Libya.

One has to listen carefully in Libya these days to grasp the important distinction between certain English words when referring to the fate of increasing numbers of supporters of the Gadhafi regime. In the current atmosphere one often hears that someone "has disappeared" which, depending on one's political views is usually good

news and it means the person is in hiding or left the area or fled the country to safety. Alternatively, it might be said that a person "is disappeared" meaning that she or he was caught by the new regime

and is gone, probably, forever without a trace for loved ones to pursue.

Following meetings with Libyan evacuees (disappeared) from NATO's nine months of bombing



Damage caused by NATO bombing of Tripoli, June 2011

who are now present in nearby countries and from meetings inside Libya with incarcerated former officials and some of their family members as well as fugitive opponents of the new "government" it is clear that the current period is cascading into revenge attacks and political cleansing.

Those increasingly being targeted by "disappearance squads" are family members and associates, even former domestic employees such as gardeners, handymen, and household staff of former regime affiliates. Homes, cars, furniture, of the former Gadhafi government affiliates are being systematically confiscated. Torture has become the normal means to elicit information regarding the whereabouts of individuals thought to still be supporting the former regime. The reason, according to one former Libyan official who barely escaped one of the French squads and who now resides in Egypt, "is the same reason drones are so popular with your US military, torture works. Not 100 percent but it's better than the other options."

Even Libya's NATO-managed NTC members are worried that they may be investigated by the International Criminal Court after its prosecutor said allegations of crimes committed by NATO in Libya would be examined "impartially and independently." Some Western lawyers currently in Libya who are here to help victims of NATO crimes are oddly being approached by members of the new regime for discussions relating to the possibility that the ICC may come after them. This is also one of the reasons why rumours that Gaddafi's son Saif al Islam is about to surrender to the ICC are false. Saif is being advised to wait and rest because the ICC case will collapse as more facts of NATO

crimes surface. Former Libyan officials in hiding are also well advised to stay safe if possible as time may be on their side.

Government officials of countries bordering Libya are being advised to allow sanctuary for supporters of the former Libyan government and to refuse extradition requests because activity currently taking place in The Hague may well pre-empt a war crimes investigation.

Tunisia is today under great pressure from NATO not to change its mind and not to decline the NTC extradition request for Libya's former Prime Minister Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi. NATO is concerned because US lawyers recommended last month that Baghdadi apply for UN political refugee status with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to try to prevent his extradition from Tunisia. On November 11 the UN acknowledged receipt of Dr. Baghdadi's petition.

Another reason the NTC and NATO are concerned is that there is currently being undertaken in the Hague an encompassing internal legal review of all incidents in which NATO bombing or other NATO or NTC actions caused civilian casualties. An American-led team is nearing completion of its six month investigation which is expected to be forwarded to the ICC and made public soon.

A main reason former interim Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril resigned recently, and others will, is the pressure from Islamists and many others who remember his record as the Gaddafi's Minister of Justice and Jibril's concern that he may be investigated himself by the ICC for many decisions he has made over the past eight months that are now coming to light.

It is this atmosphere that is significantly fuelling the terror across Libya. ●

Guatemala to be under "hard hand"?

By Emile Schepers,
People's World

Guatemalans went to the polls on November 6 for a runoff presidential election between a military man who promised to rule with a "hard hand" ("mano dura") and a businessman who promised to carry out public executions. With a choice like that, it is perhaps not surprising that turnout was low, about 50 percent.

The Patriotic Party's General Otto Perez Molina, the one with the hard hand, won with 53.7% over the execution-happy Manuel Baldizon of the LIDER Party, who got 46.3%.

In a region where the left has considerable strength, how did it come about that the runoff was between two right wingers? Perez Molina is credibly accused of involvement in massive human rights abuses during the long period of US-supported military dictatorships that began with the CIA's overthrow of left-wing President Arbenz in 1954. Baldizon, besides his enthusiasm for public executions, has been accused of having ties to drug cartels.

In the first place, the main centre-left political alliance, the National Unity of Hope-Grand National Alliance, of incumbent President Alvaro Colom, made a miscalculation. Under the Guatemalan constitution, Colom could not succeed himself, so his party decided to run his wife, Sandra

Torres, as their candidate. But the constitution also forbids relatives, including the spouse, of the incumbent president from running. Colom and Torres tried to get around this by having her divorce him, but the courts did not buy this. So the centre-left ended up with no candidate at all.

Further to the left, the "Broad Left" alliance consisting of the Winaq, URNG-MAIZ and Alternative New Nation organisations ran Nobel Peace Prize winner and indigenous Maya rights activist Rigoberta Menchu. However, she only got about three percent of the vote on September 11. Given Menchu's fame and the fact that the organisations backing her candidacy were, in part, derived from the old guerrilla movement, which at one time had considerable grassroots support, such a low figure may seem surprising.

But although the wars that were set off by the 1954 coup were "settled" by negotiation in the 1990s, Guatemala is still the land of impunity, where the rich and powerful rule the impoverished majority by violence and fear. Rural Guatemalans especially are vividly aware that political activism on the left can get you killed.

The major reason for the move to the right, however, is the consternation generated among the Guatemalan people by a massive increase in violent crimes during Colom's tenure as president. This is a regional phenomenon, seen also

in El Salvador and Honduras. Mexican drug cartels have been colonising whole areas of Guatemala, especially the Peten, which sticks up into the jungles of the Yucatan Peninsula, and along the border with Mexico, so as to control the routes by which cocaine is transported into the United States.

Gangs like the infamous "Zetas" eliminate anybody who gets in their way. Very seldom are any of the murderers brought to book. Evidently there was a feeling that Colom's government was inadequate to the task of dealing with this crime wave.

Perez Molina promises that he will use the same methods of dealing with crime as former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe and Mexican President Felipe Calderon, in spite of the fact that in both cases a military approach (supported materially by the United States) has led to much greater violence. Perez Molina is going to increase the size and presence of the military and police. What he will do about Guatemala's struggling economy and endemic poverty is unknown.

The new president is likely to get support from the 158 seat unicameral Congress. In the September 11 general election, his Patriotic Party picked up 26 new seats (for a total of 56), while Colom's National Unity of Hope-Grand National Alliance lost 37 (leaving them 48). Menchu's leftist coalition picked up a seat, giving them only three in total. Baldizon's LIDER Party picked up 14 seats. Most of the other parties represented in Congress are also right wing.

How hard will the hard hand be? Among the first cabinet appointments by Perez Molina was Colonel Mauricio Lopez Bonilla as Minister of Interior, in charge of internal security. Lopez Bonilla was an advisor to dictator Efraim Rios-Montt, who ruled Guatemala from 1982 to 1983. Rios-Montt, with the full support of the Reagan Administration, unleashed a genocidal wave of repression against the indigenous Maya population of the highlands, killing around 70,000.

So chances are the "hard hand" will be very hard indeed. ●



Guatemalans walk past a banner depicting victims of the 36-year war waged by the military and right-wing governments.

COSATU critical of SA deputy president

The Congress of South African Trade Unions has voiced disappointment with the stance taken by South African Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, on both Walmart's merger with Massmart and the youth wage subsidy. Motlanthe said recently that the government is "happy" that giant US retailer Walmart has chosen South Africa as an investment destination.

This contradicts the view of cabinet members Ebrahim Patel, Rob Davies and Tina Joemat-Pettersson, who have applied to the Competition Appeals Court to review the approval for the Walmart-Massmart deal, and for stronger conditions to be imposed, fearing a loss of jobs in both retail and manufacturing sectors as a result of the merger.

COSATU has expressed similar concerns, based on the mountain of evidence from around the world that Walmart's entry into the retail market leads to the closure of rival retail stores, the procurement of goods from the cheapest source with no regard to the wages and conditions of the workers producing them, and the creation of a monopoly. This could lead to a drastic further weakening of South African manufacturing industry, as more cheap imports start to fill Massmart stores' shelves.

As COSATU says, "while his government comrades are courageously battling to represent the best interests of the majority of South Africans on the Walmart matter," the Deputy President welcomes this enemy of the working class.

On the Youth Wage Subsidy, a policy which the ANC National General Council in 2005 rejected out of hand, Motlanthe told parliament that a number of accords had already been signed, and that it was important for the subsidy not to be resisted by unions.

COSATU responded that the unions' arguments are based on a conviction that employers will use the subsidy as an excuse to replace older workers with workers for whom they can claim the taxpayer subsidy, creating a two-tier wage structure. Motlanthe is giving mixed signals, says COSATU, demanding that the Deputy President defend ANC and government policies. ●

Remembrance Day and the 99%

Excerpts from a Remembrance Day 2011 speech at the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians' hall in Toronto, by David Abramowitz, Co-President of the United Jewish People's Order of Canada

My attitude to Remembrance Day has changed over the years. At school we were indoctrinated to honour those soldiers who died protecting our freedom - truly a noble cause where it applies.

But as I matured I began memorializing all those innocent civilian relatives of mine, killed in the first and second world wars. During WW I, in Poland, my dad's father died in 1916 (when dad was 9) and his mom in 1917 when he was 10 - an orphan in wartime raised by older sisters who delayed their weddings to help the three youngest become somewhat self sufficient. My dad, at age 13, was a tailor in a union shop! But, as a child, I always felt that WW I had robbed me of my paternal grandparents.

In my mother's family, tragedy struck in 1918. Zlotchev, where my grandparents came from, (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) was under siege by the Austrian army fighting the advancing Polish army. My grandparents only lived a few kilometers away, in Olesko, known locally for its famous Olesko Castle on whose surrounding hills my mother and her childhood friends played. Word reached my mother's father that Jews in Zlotchev were being attacked particularly severely by the Poles - a pogrom - in addition to the war.

My grandfather went to help the Jews, only to return a few days later (the end of October) with significant wounds in his leg. Gangrene set in, incurable in those days, and he died on November 11, 1918, Armistice Day, when my mother was 11 years old. The Poles won the war in that region, so it became part of Poland which is what my mother left when she came to Canada in 1928 and joined the Toronto Ukrainian Labour Temple. Thus I no longer had three of my potential grandparents.

During the mid-1930's my mother, her sister and two brothers applied three times to bring their mother and her youngest daughter to Canada. Each time they were told to try again in a few years, the last time in 1938. We now know that Jews were routinely denied Canadian immigration as a government policy in the mid to late 1930's. Irving Abella and Harold Troper wrote a book about it called *None Is Too Many*.

World War II intervened and some in my mother's family in Canada became soldiers. What we didn't know was what happened to the youngest sister, Rifke, and their mother. The aunt I had never seen, Rifke, had become a nurse and worked in a Kyiv hospital. In

1941, she was killed when the Nazis bombed the hospital. My grandmother, an orthodox Jew, with no immediate relatives around her (Olesko and Zlotchev were not nearby), decided to help defend Soviet Kyiv and joined the Home Guard. She would have been 61 or 62 then. She was given a "gun", possibly a rifle, was taught how to shoot it and was sent to defend Kyiv.

During her vigil she noticed Nazis storing arms in a bombed out building. Somehow she acquired two grenades and went near that cache of arms. With the first grenade she partially blew up the building and finished the job with the second. She apparently didn't duck and was shot from behind by a hidden Nazi sniper. As she lay

stop it. But innocent civilian casualties go largely played down (or rather I should say suppressed) by our capitalist-controlled "free press". Rupert Murdoch's media "manipulations" come to mind most recently; but other generations had their own charlatans misinforming civilian society. In the first half of the 20th century it was William Randolph Hearst ("give me the pictures and I'll give you the war" he said as he financed Franco in the Spanish civil war); most recently, on TV, it's the FOX Network.

And the top 1% couldn't care less. They have what they want so let the rest go to hell. And there is no single leftist movement which now can provide inspiration and guidance to the masses.

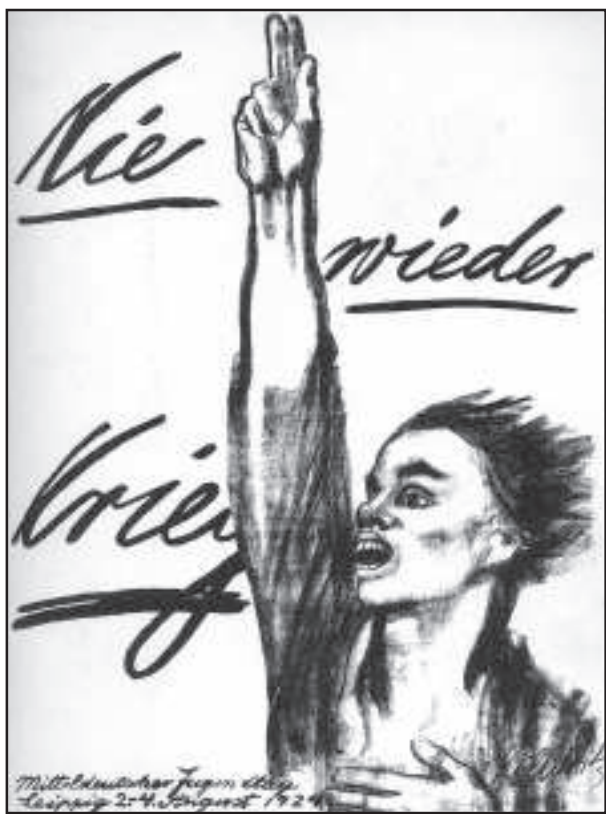
In the movie *Network* the broadcaster ranted "I'm fed up and I'm not going to take it any more!" It's taken 30 years or so but the public, the other 99%, are awakening and beginning to take up the cry. Among them are conservationists, environmentalists, opponents of agribusiness and large conglomerates, and many, many people disgruntled with their indebtedness but no idea how they will escape it. Students with huge university loans have no job prospects to pay them off. Families in mortgaged homes with cars bought on credit where the breadwinner(s) have lost their jobs as corporations moved

their operations "south or offshore" to save on salaries and make more profit. And their greed denies them the decency to share some of their cost savings by lowering prices.

So this year, on Remembrance Day, I also thought about those who are at war with the 1%, with the rabid capitalists, even though many may not realize it - yet. I mourned for more than 100 of my father's family and more than 70 of my mother's who died in the holocaust. I was grateful that all my enlisted family members returned home safely. And I mourned for all those recently killed Canadian soldiers who thought they were fighting to preserve our freedom.

Canada has many black marks against it in this regard. Of the 80,000 Ukrainian Canadians during WW I, all of whom were declared "enemy aliens", 6,000 were placed in 26 prison camps, starved, and many used as slaves to build the infrastructure of Banff National Park, its hotel and other projects. The description of their prison camps sound as if the Nazis used them as a model for their later concentration camps. The denial of basic freedoms to Chinese immigrants so vital in building our railroad, charged a huge head tax and denied the right to bring over their families - this wasn't freedom. The internment of thousands of

see REMEMBER, p. 11



"Never Again War", by German artist Kathe Kollwitz

dying from loss of blood a soldier, wounded at the front, and in Kyiv for rehabilitation before returning to the front, witnessed this and went to see if he could help. This sounds like fiction, but he was from Olesko, knew my grandmother and her family; his sister went to school with my mother! He stayed with my grandmother while she told him the story I've just relayed, till she died from loss of blood. He wrote of this "miraculous meeting" to his sister in Toronto, who by chance saw my mother in a supermarket and conveyed the story to her for the first time. I was to never know any of my grandparents - because of war.

Today, the loss of my grandparents and their families would simply be depersonalized and called "collateral damage". Thus the capitalists, who are responsible for the wars in the first place, have desensitized several generations from seeing and understanding the true cost of war on all humanity.

But are we reminded of the millions of innocent civilians who have been slaughtered so brutally by wars in the 20th century alone? A few brave journalists and societal observers/commentators have written about it, though these issues are not widely reported upon. Even General Romeo Dallaire wrote about the travesty of the genocide in Rwanda in *Shake Hands with the Devil*, and how we could have but failed to prevent or



MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

Hawaiian musician stages APEC protest

Hawaiian guitarist Makana sang his anticapitalist song "We Are Many" to Barack Obama, Stephen Harper, Hu Jintao and other Pacific Rim leaders at the APEC Summit's gala dinner in Honolulu on Nov. 12. Hired to provide instrumental music to the assembled heads of state, Makana revealed a t-shirt bearing the words "Occupy with Aloha" and calmly began singing his song, repeating the lyrics for 45 minutes. "We Are Many" opens with the "many" telling world leaders "the time has come for us to voice our rage," and concludes with the lines "we'll occupy the streets, we'll occupy the courts, we'll occupy the offices, till you do the bidding of the many, not the few." To download a free copy of "We Are Many" visit <http://makanamusic.com/>. Anti-capitalist culture jammers the Yes Men facilitated the action. See their news release at www.yeslab.org/APEC#video.

Music celebrities spread OWS message

Some might argue that the presence of well-known musicians is a distraction from the serious work going on at Occupy Wall Street, but their support is important. They've helped to keep spirits up and inspired millions with the message of the "99%." On Oct. 21, Pete Seeger, now 92 and walking with two canes, led a thousand marchers from his concert at Symphony Space to the alternate OWS site at Columbus Circle. There he joined old musical partner Arlo Guthrie, composer David Amram and a multitude of voices in a moving version of "We Shall Overcome." More recently, David Crosby and Graham Nash of the rock band Crosby, Stills & Nash played an impromptu acoustic set at Liberty Square, and Joan Baez sang out in solidarity at nearby Foley Square. A host of prominent musicians have been raising their voices for OWS, including outstanding contemporary urban/hip-hop artists like Talib Kweli, Lupe Fiasco and Immortal Technique. Check out their contributions on YouTube.

NPR opera host under attack

Non-profit U.S. radio network NPR has dropped its distribution of the weekly show *World of Opera* because of the political activism of freelance host Lisa Simeone, who's been supporting the occupation movement in Washington, D.C. The show's producer, NPR affiliate WDAV in North Carolina, correctly interpreted the network's ethical guidelines to mean that a journalist working on a non-news program is free to openly engage in partisan political activity. In fact, even NPR news hosts have taken political stands in the past (usually on the conservative right). WDAV will now distribute *World of Opera* itself. Hopefully the 60 NPR-affiliated stations that carried the show will not be intimidated by this political appeasement. NPR is often accused of "liberal bias" by conservatives. However, while the network receives donations from individuals and charities, its biggest funders are a who's who of the corporate elite including GM, Prudential, Cargill, Citibank and UPS. Media watch group FAIR has started a petition to protest the intimidation. To sign it visit www.fair.org.

U.S. musicians support René Gonzalez

Rock musicians Bonnie Rait and Jackson Browne joined folk artists Pete Seeger and Si Kahn and actors Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover and Elliott Gould, in an open letter to President Obama calling for the immediate return of Cuban Five prisoner René Gonzalez to Cuba. The letter was the latest action by Actors and Artists United for the Freedom of the Cuban Five. Gerardo Hernandez, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labanino, Fernando Gonzalez, and René Gonzalez were convicted of espionage in 2001 by a kangaroo court in Miami for defending their country against terrorist attacks. Gonzalez is the first to be released, but courts have ordered that he remain on parole in the U.S. for an additional three years, with a continuing ban on visits from his wife and family. Meanwhile convicted anti-Cuban terrorist and international fugitive Luis Posada Carriles walks the streets of Miami with impunity. For info: www.thecuban5.org/wordpress/index.php.

Calle 13 sweeps Latin Grammys

Puerto Rican urban/hip-hop duo Calle 13 dominated the 12th annual Latin Grammys in Las Vegas on Nov. 10. Calle 13 are noted for their socially-conscious lyrics, their pan-American influences, and their avoidance of the genre's traditional macho posturing. They're also supporters of the Puerto Rican independence movement. Their 2005 video "Querido FBI" protesting the FBI's killing of militant independence leader Filiberto Ojeda Rios can be seen on YouTube. Prominent among Calle 13's awards this year: Best Album ("Entren Los Que Quieran") and Song of the Year ("Latinoamérica"). Unlike the regular Grammys, which recognize recordings made only in the U.S., the Latin Grammys honour recordings made in Spanish and Portuguese anywhere in the world. Calle 13's homeland is the oldest colony in the world. Puerto Rico was seized by the U.S. in the Spanish-American war of 1898 and its inhabitants are still second-class citizens. For more info visit <http://lacalle13.com/>.

Concerns for Iran as tensions mount

Human rights and peace activists are deeply concerned about the mounting tension between the USA and Iran, says the UK-based Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights (CODIR).

In the past few weeks Israel has been sending out provocative signals that it may bomb Iran's nuclear facilities. It is widely believed that the intention of the Israelis is to exert pressure upon the US and the world community to isolate Iran.

The Canadian government of Stephen Harper has signalled its intention to support this campaign, and the NDP official opposition has also spoken in favour of stronger international action against Iran.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee of the US Congress is currently considering a bill which will restrict anyone in the US government having any contact with any representative of the government of Iran. Such a move would be unprecedented in wartime but is unheard of in peacetime.

The bill, if passed, would effectively prevent the US government from engaging in

diplomacy with the Islamic Republic of Iran, other than in circumstances which pose an "extraordinary threat to the vital national security interests of the United States".

The bill comes against the background of comments made at the G20 summit by Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy that pressure must be kept upon Iran over the nuclear issue. UK Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, also stated in relation to Iran that "Britain would not take any options off the table..."

At a time of such sensitivity for the world and for the Middle East, human rights and peace campaigners fear that the ground for war against Iran is being prepared. Following events in Libya and the current crisis in Syria, the possibility of seeing Iran as the next regime change "issue" to address in the region cannot be ruled out.

"Diplomacy is the core of the system of international relations", says CODIR Assistant General Secretary, Jamshid Ahmadi. "A system in which states can simply cease to speak to each other can only end in bloodshed. Diplomacy is the route to prevent war. Cutting

off communication cannot bring about any mutual understanding or compromise."

Ahmadi adds: "There is an urgent need for the formation of a popular and united movement for defence of peace, democracy and social justice in Iran. However, the repressive policies of the theocratic regime against the progressive movement in the country have made the formation of a popular front for peace and against foreign aggression impossible. When the left and progressive forces, trade unions, the youth, student, and women movements are under the vicious attack of the regime, how could a dynamic mass movement take shape to defend the integrity and sovereignty of the country?"

CODIR has consistently campaigned to defend human rights and political prisoners in Iran, and also argues that the fate of Iran to be in the hands of its people, not the governments of Israel or the United States. Opposing war, the group calls for ongoing diplomacy through the United Nations to resolve any issues between Iran and other countries. •

Remember victims of war...

continued from p. 10

Japanese Canadians during WW II, their property, as the Ukrainians before them, confiscated without compensation and their resettlement to their home regions prohibited - how could we call this freedom?

When I hear our politicians talk about our wonderful country, though in some contexts it still has some merits, I want to paraphrase Churchill by saying, "Some Freedom! Some democracy!"

When our founders came to a Canada that discriminated against many of its "foreign workers," as Conservative leader Tim Hudak called them during the last Ontario election campaign, I thought very little had changed. Your organization's founders and mine, in combination with other progressive ethnic organizations, had to campaign long and hard to be able to have the right to legal unions and the right to collective bargaining, pensions for the aged,

for single mothers, for the disabled, the right to universal healthcare and so on. And now they're all under attack not only by the 1% but by their representatives in our federal government.

Our battles aren't yet over as the struggle to retain and improve our social safety net continues. It's not for us but for those who, inspired by the Occupy Wall Street movement, are now occupying many major city spaces in Canada, the U.S. and world-wide, and from which some are now being forcefully removed.

We must support them; join with them in their demonstrations; and, as some of us may find it difficult to march with them, let's meet them at their destination and mingle amongst them. Help enlighten those with whom we come in contact, and prove to the 1% that this isn't just a movement of a disgruntled bunch of youngsters blowing off steam. Let the cameras record that it's a movement of all, young AND old, who want a truly

free, peaceful and prosperous world where ALL are entitled to a decent piece of the pie - and until that happens that the movement will build (above or underground) till, in one united voice it says, we say, "We're all really mad, and we're not going to take it anymore."

Our campaigns of the past have to become a part of the foundation of this emerging international movement.

And should some in this movement also become victims of the "war against the masses", on future Remembrance Days, we will also remember their sacrifices, just as we legitimately remember those veterans who fought against fascism, dictatorships, genocide, oppression, slavery, capitalism, bondage, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and the like. Then their sacrifices will not have been in vain. Then we can proudly say we have done our share to make this a better world where justice and democracy will also be the victors. •

What's Left

Vancouver, BC

Left Film Night, screening of "Will the Real Terrorist Please Stand Up," 7 pm, Sun., Nov. 27, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Dr. Admission by donation, call 604-255-2041 for details.

Winnipeg, MB

Celebrate 90 years of the Communist Party of Canada, Sat., Dec. 3, Ukrainian Labour Temple, 591 Pritchard Ave. Dinner-Politics-History-Culture. Tickets \$50 waged (includes tax credit), \$15 unemployed/students. Call 586-7824.

Toronto, ON

Celebrate 90 Years of Struggle by Canada's party of socialism, Sat., Nov. 26, GCDO Hall, 290A Danforth Ave., (Chester subway). Cocktails 6 pm, dinner and speakers 7 pm, live music and dancing at 9 pm. Tickets \$20 (\$10 unwaged; children under 12 free). Auspices: Toronto Committee CPC. For tickets and info call 416-469-2446.

East Toronto Club CPC Invites You!, Sat., Dec. 10, GCDO Hall (290 Danforth). Dinner 6:30, "Occupy Toronto" (short film) 7:15 pm, "Inside Job" (feature film on the 2008 crisis) 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$20 advance, \$23 at door, \$15 Unemployed/Students - Children Under 12 Free. Call 416-469-2446 for details.

Montreal, QC

Palestinians And Jews United, boycott/disinvestment/sanctions picket, every Saturday, 1-3 pm, outside Israeli shoe store "NAOT", 3941 St-Denis Street.

Occupons la fete! Occupy the party! Tomemos la Fiesta! Seasonal party and celebration at the end of a historic year of struggle, organized by the Ché club of the PCQ. Features a delicious meal by a professional chef from one of Montreal's famous five-star hotels, live entertainment and great company. Nothing's too good for the working class! Sat., December 10, 6:00 pm, 5359 ave du Parc (Greek Workers Association Hall).

Note to PV readers

Publishing Schedule Change

Due to other events and commitments, our January 1 issue will be published early in the New Year, not before Christmas. We'll see you in 2012!

Ronald Buck

Ronald Timothy Buck passed away peacefully, at Castlerview Wychwood Towers in Toronto, September 25, 2011, approaching his 96th year.

Ronny was the eldest son of the late Tim and Alice Buck. Predeceased by his brother Ted and sister Olive, Ronny is survived by his daughter, Lynne Russell and grandson Brian.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada expressed deepest sympathies to Lynne and the family.

People's Voice deadlines

January 1-31 issue: Thursday, Dec. 15

February 1-14 issue: Thursday, Jan. 19

Send submissions to PV Editorial Office,
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The 99% movement: a populace in action

By Michael Parenti,
November 9, 2011

Beginning with Occupy Wall Street in September 2011, a protest movement spread across the United States to 70 major cities and hundreds of other communities. Similar actions emerged in scores of other nations.

For the first two weeks, the corporate-owned mainstream media along with NPR did what they usually do with progressive protests: they ignored them. These were the same media that had given the Tea Party supporters saturation coverage for weeks on end, ordaining them "a major political force."

The most common and effective mode of news repression is omission. By saying nothing or next to nothing about dissenting events, movements, candidates, or incidents, the media consign them to oblivion. When the Occupy movement spread across the country and could no longer be ignored, the media moved to the second manipulative method: trivialization and marginalization.

So we heard that the protestors were unclear about what they were protesting and they were "far removed from the mainstream." Media cameras focused on the clown who danced on Wall Street in full-blown circus costume, and the youths who pounded bongo drums: "a carnival atmosphere" "youngsters out on a spree," with "no connection to the millions of middle Americans" who supposedly watched with puzzlement and alarm.

Such coverage, again, was in sharp contrast to the respectful reportage accorded the Tea Party.

House Majority Leader, the reactionary Republican Eric Cantor, described the Occupy movement as "growing mobs." This is the same Cantor who hailed the Tea Party as an unexcelled affirmation of democracy.

The big November 2 demonstration in Oakland that succeeded in closing the port was reported by many media outlets, almost all of whom focused on the violence against property committed by a few small groups. Many of those perpetrators were appearing for the first time at the Oakland site. Some were suspected

food, security, and sanitation.

One unnoticed community protest was Occupy Walnut Creek. For those who don't know, Walnut Creek is a comfortable conservative suburb in northern California (with no known record of revolutionary insurrections). Only one local TV station gave Occupy Walnut Creek brief attention, noting that about 400 people were participating, average age between 40 and 50, no clowns, no bongos. Participants admitted that they lived fairly prosperous lives but still felt a kinship with the millions of Americans who were enduring an

This makes it all the more imperative for ordinary people to join together in demonstrations, hoping thereby to maximize the visibility and impact of their opinions. The goal is to break through the near monopoly of conservative orthodoxy maintained by the "liberal" media.

So demonstrations are important. They have an energizing effect on would-be protestors, bringing together many who previously had thought themselves alone and voiceless. Demonstrations bring democracy into the streets. They highlight issues that have too long been buried. They mobilize numbers, giving a show of strength, reminding the plutocracy perched at the apex that the pyramid is rumbling.

But demonstrations should evolve into other forms of action. This has already been happening with the Occupy movement. It is more than a demonstration because its protestors did not go home at the end of the day. In substantial numbers they remained downtown, putting their bodies on the line, imposing a discomfort on officialdom just by their numbers and presence.

At a number of Occupy sites there have been civil disobedience actions, followed by arrests. In various cities the police have been unleashed with violent results that sometimes have backfired. In Oakland ex-Marine Scott Olsen was hit by a police teargas canister that busted his skull and left him hospitalized and unable to speak for a week. At best, he faces a long slow recovery. The day after Olsen was hit, hundreds of indignant new protestors joined the Occupy Oakland site. Police brutality incites a public reaction, often bringing more people out, just the opposite of what officials want.

Where does this movement go? What is to be done? The answers are already arising from the actions of the 99%: Discourage military recruitment and support conscientious objectors. Starve the empire of its legions. Organize massive tax resistance in protest of corrupt, wasteful, unlawful, and destructive Pentagon spending. Transfer funds from corporate banks to credit unions and community banks. Support programs that assist the unemployed and the dispossessed. It was Giulio Tremonti, Italy's embattled finance minister who declared: "Salvate il popolo, non le banche" ("Save the people, not the banks"). It would be nice to hear such sentiments emanating from the U.S. Treasury Department or the White House.

Coordinate actions with organized labor. Unions still are the 99%'s largest and best financed groups. Consider what was done in Oakland: occupiers joined with longshoremen, truckers, and other workers to close the port. Already there are plans for a general strike in various communities. Such actions improve greatly if organized labor is playing a role.

We need new electoral strategies, a viable third party, proportional representation, and even a new Constitution, one that establishes firm rules for an egalitarian democracy and is not a rigmarole designed to protect the moneyed class. The call for a constitutional convention (a perfectly legitimate procedure

under the present U.S. Constitution) seems long overdue.

Perhaps most of all, we need ideological education regarding the relationship between wealth and power, the nature of capitalism, and the crimes of an unbridled profit-driven financial system. And again the occupiers seem to be moving in that direction: in early November 2011, people nationwide began gathering to join teach-ins on "How the 1% Crashed the Economy."

We need to explicitly invite the African-American, Latino, and Asian communities into the fight, reminding everyone that the Great Recession victimizes everyone but comes down especially hard on the ethnic poor.

We need to educate ourselves regarding the beneficial realities of publicly owned nonprofit utilities, publicly directed environmental protections, public nonprofit medical services and hospitals, public libraries, schools, colleges, housing, and transportation—all those things that work so well in

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of being undercover police provocateurs. Their actions seemed timed to overshadow the successful shutdown of the nation's fourth largest port.

Time and again, the media made the protestors the issue rather than the things they were protesting. The occupiers were falsely described as hippie holdovers and mindless youthful activists. In fact, there was a wide range of ages, socio-ethnic backgrounds, and lifestyles, from homeless to well-paid professionals, along with substantial numbers of labor union members. Far from being a jumble of confused loudmouths prone to violence, they held general assemblies, organized themselves into committees, and systematically took care of encampment questions,

economic battering. Here was a contingent of affluent but rebellious "middle Americans" yet Walnut Creek never got mentioned in the national media, as far as I know.

The Occupy movement has promulgated a variety of messages. With a daring plunge into class realities, the occupiers talk of the 1% who are exploiting the 99%, a brilliant propaganda formula, simple to use, yet saying so much, now widely embraced even by some media commentators. The protestors carried signs condemning the republic's terrible underemployment and the empire's endless wars, the environmental abuses perpetrated by giant corporations, the tax loopholes enjoyed by oil companies, the growing inequality of incomes, and the banksters and other gangsters who feed so lavishly from the public trough.

Some occupiers even denounced capitalism as a system and hailed socialism as a humane alternative. In all, the Occupy movement revealed an awareness of systemic politico-economic injustices not usually seen in U.S. protests. Remember, the initial and prime target was Wall Street, finance capital's home base.

The mainstream news outlets not only control opinions but even more so opinion visibility, which in turn allows them to limit the parameters of public discourse.



Occupy Toronto demonstration (PV photo: Ed Bil)



Michael Parenti spoke to hundreds of people in southern Ontario during early November. He was on a speaking tour to Toronto, Guelph and Hamilton, sponsored by People's Voice and other progressive groups.

better known in some quarters as socialism.

There is much to do. Still it is rather impressive how the battle is already being waged on so many fronts. Meanwhile the corporate media ignore the content of our protest while continuing to fulminate about the occupiers' violent ways and lack of a precise agenda.

Do not for one moment think that the top policymakers and plutocrats don't care what you think. That is the only thing about you that wins their concern. They don't care about the quality of the air you breathe or the water you drink, or how happy or unhappy or stressed and unhealthy or poor you might be. But they do want to know your thoughts about public affairs, if only to get a handle on your mind. Every day they launch waves of disinformation to bloat your brains, from the Pentagon to Fox News without stint.

When the people liberate their own minds and take a hard clear look at what the 1% is doing and what the 99% should be doing, then serious stuff begins to happen. It is already happening. It may eventually fade away or it may create a new chapter in our history. Even if it does not achieve its major goals, the Occupy movement has already registered upon our rulers the anger and unhappiness of a populace betrayed. ●

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