

FEB.  
15-28,  
2015

VOL. 23  
#3

\$1.50

# people's VOICE

**American Sniper:  
fascism on screen**

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



# ~~C-51~~

## **BLOCK** police state legislation!

**SEE PAGES 6-7**

## **Anti-war protests spreading across Ukraine**

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*Antiwar protest in Chernivtsi, western Ukraine, after the Kiev government imposed conscription last summer. Signs read, 'Bring our children back!' and 'Stop the bloodshed!'*

### **3** **Fight for \$15!**

Less than three years after the labour movement and youth activists compelled the B.C. government to raise the minimum wage, the province is back near the bottom. The Fight for 15 campaign takes the fight to a new level.

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Some fundamentalist Sikhs want to steal the legacy of the Ghadar Party, but this revolutionary struggle had Muslim heroes too.

### **10** **Boycott Indigo & Chapters**

Branches of Indigo and its subsidiaries Chapters, Coles, and SmithBooks are familiar coast to coast. But behind the inviting facade lies the murder of Palestinians.

# Communist Party launches 2015 federal election plans

## Special to PV

The Communist Party of Canada has initiated plans for a larger and more visible presence in the federal election which must be held sometime between this spring and the scheduled date of Monday, October 19.

With this timeline looming, the CPC's Central Committee held a special on-line one day meeting on February 1, devoted to election planning. CC members took part from locations coast to coast, discussing the party's outlook on the current political situation, the CPC election platform, and organizational preparations.

The CC meeting was opened by party leader Miguel Figueroa, who noted that the Tories appear to be retreating from an early election, primarily due to economic upheavals: the fall of the Canadian dollar, dropping world oil prices, rising consumer prices, and mass layoffs. Figueroa warned that the Tories will try to bring in a balanced budget, through more cutbacks of federal employees and other anti-working class measures. He predicted that PM Harper will shift the focus to his party's pro-war and pro-imperialist foreign policy, around Canada's role in the war in Iraq, hawkish positions over the Ukraine crisis, and support for

Israel's expansionism. Harper will also beat the drums for Bill C-51, the so-called "anti-terror" law which allows for preventive arrests without charges, expanded powers for CSIS, and other profoundly undemocratic changes.

The Tories will claim that they



are for a "strong Canada", while stepping up personal attack on Justin Trudeau and the Liberals, and using electoral loopholes to massively outspend the opposition parties. New voter suppression tactics are expected such as changes which allow the major parties to harass voters at the polls by challenging their ID credentials.

Meanwhile, he said, the Liberals will urge "strategic voting" to stop another Tory majority, hoping to win back votes which went NDP in 2011. For its part, the NDP will try

to outflank the Liberals on the left (for example Thomas Mulcair's call for a national child care program), while still aiming to appear as a "responsible" party ready to take the reins of government.

Figueroa said the Communist campaign will present the Party's perspectives and priorities as widely as possible to working people.

"Our first objective," he said, "will be to help defeat the Harper Conservatives - the most aggressive and authoritarian big business party - and to help create the best possible conditions to carry forward the mass struggle after the election... The second objective is to advance our own platform as strongly as possible in the ridings where we are running, and to build support for a socialist alternative, and gain new members for the Party and the YCL."

The CC members had a wide-ranging discussion of a preliminary draft of an election statement reflecting Figueroa's introduction.

That statement notes that while the past nine years have seen widespread resistance, the Harper Conservatives continue to "chop and privatize vital social programs and services, lower the real wages

see CPC, page 11

## LABOUR NEWS

### High cost of privatisation

A new CCPA Saskatchewan report by University of Winnipeg economists concludes that privatizing provincial laundry services may garner some short-term savings but at long-term costs.

In 2013, Saskatchewan's government announced that it would be replacing five publicly owned hospital laundries. Those regional services will be replaced this year with a private centralized laundry services operated by Alberta-based K-Bro Linen, which will establish a single plant in Regina to serve the entire province.

The CCPA report finds that this privatization deal will result in a \$14 to \$42 million decrease in the income of Saskatchewan residents over the next ten years.

Saskatchewan's publicly owned hospital laundry and linen service is in a general state of disrepair because of the neglect of the province in investing and maintaining the existing facilities. The laundry plant closure in Prince Albert alone will result in 74 jobs lost, causing a decline in labour income of \$2.5 million in the region, and a decline in regional GDP of \$3.7 million.

"It's a decent paying job, it's Monday to Friday, and there are a lot of couples that work here, so they are both going to lose their jobs," said CUPE Local 3736 president Anita Labossiere, whose union represents workers at North Sask Laundry in Prince Albert, one of five locations that will soon be closed.

### Trouble on the job - PSAC

The 2014 Public Service Employee Survey released on Feb. 5 demonstrates the negative impact of public service cuts, and raises major concerns about harassment and poor mental health in the public service. The survey is conducted every three years, and takes an important snapshot of how federal government workers feel about their jobs and work environment. A total of 182,165 employees in 93 federal departments and agencies responded to the 2014 survey.

The results show troubling signs regarding public service workers' ability to provide quality services. Most public service workers stated they were proud of the work they do (88%), that they get a sense of satisfaction from their work (74%), and 93% agreed that they are "willing to put in the extra effort to get the job done." However, these numbers are down from the previous survey, which shows that morale is declining among workers.

A significant number (48%), said that the quality of their work suffers because of "having to do the same or more work, but with fewer resources". This was up from 44% in 2011 and 42% in 2008. Workers also cited lack of stability in their department or agency and high staff turnover as negatively impacting the quality of their work.

About one in every five workers reports that they have been the victim of harassment at work. Many did not file a formal complaint or grievance; when asked why, most said they were afraid of reprisal or did not believe it would make a difference.

### Leaked document on TiSA secret talks

Public Services International (PSI), an umbrella federation of public sector employee unions, reports that a leaked document reveals that the Trade in Service Agreement (TiSA) is aiming to commodify health care services globally. The result would be higher costs for governments and poorer performance for patients, to the benefit of large health corporations and insurance companies.

"The proposal (link is external) would raise health care costs in developing countries and lower quality in developed countries in Europe, North America, Australia and elsewhere," explains Dr. Odile Frank, who has analyzed the document for PSI.

The proposal, reportedly tabled by the government of Turkey, was discussed by European Union member states last September at the Geneva TiSA negotiations. It suggests an annex on health care services that would promote offshoring by facilitating patients' travel abroad to access health services. According to PSI, the TiSA proposal assumes that health services are a commodity like any other that can be handled by the market. Establishing trade in health services ignores public health aspects and will exacerbate inequality.

While the solutions proposed would benefit wealthy consumers and private health firms, analysis from Prof. Jane Kelsey, an expert on trade in services, suggests that money will be drawn out of the national health system "whose low level of investment is cited as one of the rationales for offshore treatment, and makes the problem self-perpetuating."

(Source: [www.nupge.ca](http://www.nupge.ca))

### First collective agreement victory

UFCW Canada Local 175 members working at Healthcare Food Services (HFS) in Ottawa have ratified their first collective agreement. HFS produces prepared and fresh food meals for healthcare facilities in Canada's National Capital Region.

The three-year agreement provides wage increases to all full and part-time employees. The employer will also post nine new full-time positions between April 10, 2015 and February 1, 2017. About 90 members currently work at HFS in the Ottawa region.

Members will receive sick leave each calendar year: 80 hours for full-time, and 40 hours for part time. The agreement also includes improved dental benefits and safety boot allowances. ●

## "No to McCarthyist censorship in French university libraries"

The following petition against censorship in French university libraries was addressed on Feb. 3, to the President of the Sorbonne University (Université Paris 1), Professor Philippe Boutry.

A user of the Sorbonne University's Pierre Mendès France Library recently proposed to a librarian that the library acquire the French edition of *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War 1939-1953* by Geoffrey Roberts, professor at the University of Cork in Ireland and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. The book was published in French in 2014 by Editions Delga, and originally published in English in 2006 by Yale University Press. The proposal received the following response:

"The proposed work, although it was written by a university professor, does not in principle seem to us to display the historical and scientific neutrality required for it to be included on our shelves. Nor do the other books published by the same publishing house."

When the library directors were contacted about the incriminated book, as well as about the prerequisite conditions for a publisher's books to be admitted onto the library's shelves, a series of evasive answers was given. A visit to the shelves in question, those devoted to the history of Soviet Russia and the USSR, reveals that for over 15 years, books containing unpro-

fessional journalism and anti-Soviet propaganda have been systematically acquired, such as those by Bernard-Henri Lévy and André Glucksmann, as well as outright holocaust-denying books, such as those by Ernst Nolte. On the other hand, important scholarly works published in French during the same period have not been acquired, such as those by Arno Mayer, Michael Carley and Alexander Werth, whose famous *Russia at War 1941 to 1945*, republished in French in 2011, remains absent.

This censorship is taking place in a particular context. For example, on January 21, 2015, Polish Foreign Minister Grzegorz Schetyna claimed, in order to justify the fact that Russia had not been invited to the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz this year, that it was the Ukrainians and not the Soviet army that had liberated the concentration camp. And on Jan. 8 Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk claimed - without receiving any more public outcry

than the Polish foreign minister - that the Soviet Union had invaded Germany in June of 1941.

These gross falsehoods have not been answered with any official reaction. This passivity is made possible only by the lack of historical knowledge within public opinion, partly a result of the censorship that has extended into the university. While this censorship lay tacit and insidious for a long time, it has now attained such a level that the Sorbonne University library no longer attempts to dissimulate it, in its prohibition of a well-known university professor and the entire catalog of a progressive publisher.

We demand that this blatant violation of university ethics be brought to an end, and that the Pierre Mendès France Library at the Sorbonne University respect diversity and pluralism in its acquisitions of scholarly publications. We demand also that this respect extend to all other university libraries.

No to McCarthyist censorship in university libraries!

Circulated by Godefroy Clair, Research Engineer at Université Paris 8; Annie Lacroix-Riz, Professor Emeritus of contemporary history at Université Paris 7; Aymeric Monville, Editor-in-chief, Editions Delga.

The petition can be found at the Marxism-Leninism Today website, <http://mltoday.com> ●



Library censorship is a common anti-communist strategy.

# SFL welcomes Supreme Court ruling

**PV Vancouver Bureau**

Working people won a major victory on Jan. 30 when the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) ruled on a case brought forward by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) and its affiliates. The precedent-setting 5-2 decision found that the Saskatchewan Party government's Public Service Essential Service Act (Bill 5) is unconstitutional because it violates the right to strike, which is protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The SFL says the ruling means that any government that tries to limit the rights of working people will be vulnerable to legal challenges. Stronger legal protection for the right to strike, according to the Federation, will help workers to form unions and bargain collectively for fair wages and working conditions, countering the power wielded by employers.

"Saskatchewan's Labour movement has always fought for the rights of working people,

protected the public during labour disputes, and ensured that job action is a last resort," said SFL president Larry Hubich, "however, the recognition of the right to strike is necessary to restore the balance between workers and employers."

"As Canadians we value the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. So this decision today is not just a win for working people, it is also a victory for the values of fairness we all share," said Hubich, "it is my hope that the Saskatchewan Party government will recognize its mistake, and pledge to never again let its ideology get in the way of good public policy."

Observers agree that the ruling raises the bar for federal and provincial governments in their dealings with public sector employees, by affirming the right to strike as constitutionally protected.

The Supreme Court gave Saskatchewan one year to enact new legislation, and warned that any new law must be fair to workers. The same principle was used in

another recent SCC ruling to allow RCMP members to form unions or associations.

After winning election in 2007, the Saskatchewan Party introduced Bill 5, stating that if employers and unions are not able to agree on which workers are deemed essential and cannot legally strike, the government gets to decide.

The majority of the Supreme Court judges ruled that such unilateral power violated the section of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms that protects freedom of association.

Saskatchewan Labour Minister Don Morgan initially said his government's original legislation "could have been done far better than it was." But since then, his government has warned that it may use the infamous "notwithstanding clause" to veto the Charter.

Hassan Yussuff, president of

the Canadian Labour Congress, said the ruling will force governments to craft more careful legislation to stop essential workers from striking, compared to the "much more cavalier" approach it has taken in the past.

"The government needs to take



SFL President Larry Hubich

a great deal of care if they're going to intervene to interrupt that right of workers," said Yussuff.

Bill 5 was widely seen as retribution against public sector workers, after a strike by thousands of nurses in 1999 and another by highway workers and correctional officers in late 2006 and early 2007.

Court challenges began in 2008, and the Regina Court of Queen's Bench struck it down as unconstitutional in February 2012. After the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal overturned that ruling in 2013, the SFL appealed to the Supreme Court and succeeded.

The ruling could affect public service unions across the country, such as in Nova Scotia, where the Liberal government imposed a controversial essential services law for health care workers last April. Newfoundland and Labrador and British Columbia have similar laws on the books. ●

## "Fight for 15" starts in B.C.

It took a huge campaign by the labour and student movements to finally compel the B.C. Liberal government to raise the minimum wage rate for the first time in over a decade. But less than three years after that 2012 victory, the province is back near the bottom - eighth in Canada behind Ontario, Nunavut, Yukon, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Prince Edward Island.

Even though Statistics Canada reports that BC has the highest cost of living in the country, 120,000 workers here are paid only the \$10.25/hour minimum wage, and a total of 517,000 earn \$15 or less. Shockingly, liquor servers and farm workers can even be paid lower than the minimum. Restaurant owners often take full advantage of a legal loophole to pay employees just \$9/hour, by scheduling some staff to do table service just often enough to claim that they fall into the liquor server category. Farm workers are still paid at piece rates.

These harsh realities led the BC Federation of Labour to launch a new campaign to raise the province's minimum wage. Taking a page from similar struggles across the border, the demand is for a \$15/hour minimum to be won by the end of 2015. Already there is strong public backing; surveys indicate that about three-quarters of British Columbians support an increase.

The campaign aims to dispel longstanding myths about minimum wage earners. Fast food corporations and other employers often claim that these are mostly high school students working for free at home, or that only new employees are paid the \$10.25 rate while they learn on the job.

In fact, 47% of the 120,400 minimum wage earners in BC are 25 or older, and nearly 10,000 are over 55 years old. Almost two-thirds are women, and 55% have worked in their jobs for at least a year. Nearly half of these workers are employed by companies with more than 500 employees, and 14% - one in seven - hold a university degree.

Unlike some other provinces, British Columbia has no provision to review the minimum wage,

leaving the issue to become a political football. That was the strategy used by Christy Clark shortly after she became Premier in 2012, when she boosted the minimum wage to project an image of caring for ordinary working folk.

The "Fight for 15" campaign argues that "work should lift you out of poverty". A \$15 wage would put BC's lowest paid workers 10 per cent above Statistics Canada's low income cut-off, and help them cover the cost of basic necessities.

And it would also help counteract the trend of increasing income inequality in Canada's most expensive province. For example, young people from low- and middle-income families are finding it harder to access the university or college education they need to get a good job. Tuition fees here have doubled since 2002, leaving many with crippling debt loads. Just to cover

the cost of tuition, a student earning minimum wage must work 550 hours - fourteen weeks of full-time work - which does not include any other living costs.

The "Fight for 15" campaign went public on January 15, with petition drives at locations in Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey and Victoria. Similar events will be organized on the 15th of each month, to highlight unique aspects of the campaign. In January, the focus was on students.

"We know that many students are struggling to put themselves through school and make ends meet on minimum wage jobs," said Irene Lanzinger, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour. "Post-secondary graduates are leaving school with an average of \$35,000 of debt. That is not good for our young people, and not good for the economy." ●

For more details and to get involved in the "Fight for 15" campaign, visit [www.fightfor15bc.ca](http://www.fightfor15bc.ca).

## MAY DAY 2015 GREETING ADS

To mark May Day 2015, People's Voice will print greetings from a wide range of labour and people's organizations in our May 1-15 issue, which will be distributed at events across Canada. The deadline for camera-ready ads will be April 17; if PV is preparing the layout, the deadline is April 16. Please check with us about the format if your ad is being sent electronically.

### Ad rates (based on 5 column page):

One column-inch.....	\$15
One column x 2 inches.....	\$25
One column x 3 inches.....	\$35
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Three columns x 4 inches.....	\$110
Two columns x 7 inches.....	\$130
Three columns x 7 inches.....	\$180

Send greetings to People's Voice at:  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1  
E-mail: [pvoice@telus.net](mailto:pvoice@telus.net)

## Feb. 21 Dinner Celebrates Ontario Party Builders!

A unique Dinner and Evening is being organized in Toronto to celebrate the 2014-15 Builders of the Communist Party in Ontario. Delicious food in a restaurant booked specially for the occasion, will be one of several highlights during an evening celebrating the many new members who have joined the Party in Ontario in the past 14 months, and the comrades who invited them to join.

This will be an evening to remember! Tickets are \$20, available from the Provincial Office or from CPC Club Organizers. Everyone is welcome, but tickets are limited to new CPC members or those who have signed up a new member between January 2014 and February 21, 2015.

The Ontario Party Building tour by Central Organizer Johan Boyden has certainly ramped up new interest and plans for recruiting in clubs across the province. Almost every club is recruiting, and new faces and new energy are a reflection of the Party's work in the recent period, and the growing interest in the Party among working people and youth.

The February 21st Dinner and the Provincial Seminar for new members that will take place during that same weekend, have added a note of socialist competition among members who want to be at the Dinner and join in the fun. Friends and supporters who have been thinking about joining, but haven't been asked, or haven't yet applied - there's no time like the present!

Call the CPC for more info, at 416-469-2446, check out our website at [www.comunistparty.ca](http://www.comunistparty.ca), or drop by our office at 290A Danforth Avenue in Toronto.

Join the CPC! Build the CPC! We have a world to win!

# EDITORIALS

## Canada-Israel MOU and Bill C51

When John Baird resigned his federal cabinet post in early February, there was considerable mock "dismay", including the question: how will Israel be able to function with only one foreign minister?

Probably it's just a coincidence, but his sudden departure came just two weeks after a shocking "Memorandum of Agreement" was co-signed by Baird on behalf of Canada, and the notorious Zionist hawk Avigdor Lieberman, the actual Foreign Minister of Israel. Readers are urged to look up the January 18 MOU on the internet, but a few excerpts suffice to explain its content.

*"Deeply concerned by efforts to single out the State of Israel for criticism and isolate the State of Israel internationally including calls for a boycott of the State of Israel, for the divestment of investments, and for sanctions to be imposed on Israel (and) Recognizing that the selective targeting of Israel reflects the new face of anti-Semitism (the two states) will work together to oppose efforts to single out or isolate the State of Israel through: developing a coordinated, public diplomacy initiative..."*

Taken in the context of the Harper government's vitriolic denunciations of Palestine solidarity movements, this MOU gives Bill C-51, the legislation currently before Parliament, a new and terrifying dimension. Essentially, Canada has signed a commitment to define any supporter of the Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions movement against Israel's apartheid policies as a potential terrorist subject to a wide range of police surveillance, pre-emptive detentions, seizure of computers, and other dirty tricks and state repression. Supporters of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and of the brutal killings of Palestinian civilians by Israeli Defence Forces and deranged Zionist settlers, will of course be treated as heroes. The stench of racist hypocrisy from Parliament Hill these days is overpowering.

### "Every citizen has the right to vote"

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that "every citizen of Canada has the right to vote." But imagine this scenario during the next election. For weeks, the Harper Conservatives have been bombarding the media with attack ads, using a new spending loophole created by allowing a longer campaign period. Shortly before E-Day, an official from "Elections Canada" calls to advise that your polling place has been moved to 666 Dead End Road. So you call the real Elections Canada to report a serious crime. "Not much we can do," they say. "Everyone knows the Harper gang hires U.S.-trained operatives to sabotage elections, but they just designate one fall guy to take the rap."

Undaunted, you head to the polls, only to see a lineup stretching out the doors. Some folks are leaving as the line inches forward. It turns out Conservative scrutineers are being mighty careful. After all, a terrorist cleverly disguised as an Indigenous elder might try to use their Voter Information Card to vote for an opposition candidate.

Everybody knows you can't use a VIC to vote, you point out. But the scrutineers are checking every piece of photo ID, using magnifying glasses, cross-checking name spellings, asking for more proof, just as the new election laws allow. Is it just a coincidence that this is happening in your low-income working class neighbourhood, with a high percentage of seniors, Indigenous people, tenants, and students?

Fortunately, there is resistance. The Council of Canadians is challenging the "(Un)Fair Elections Act" and its restrictive ID requirements, and the opposition parties have pledged to reverse the voter suppression laws. But that not might matter if Harper grabs another majority. So get ready to mobilize your friends. Your vote is your right - don't let them steal it!

## 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

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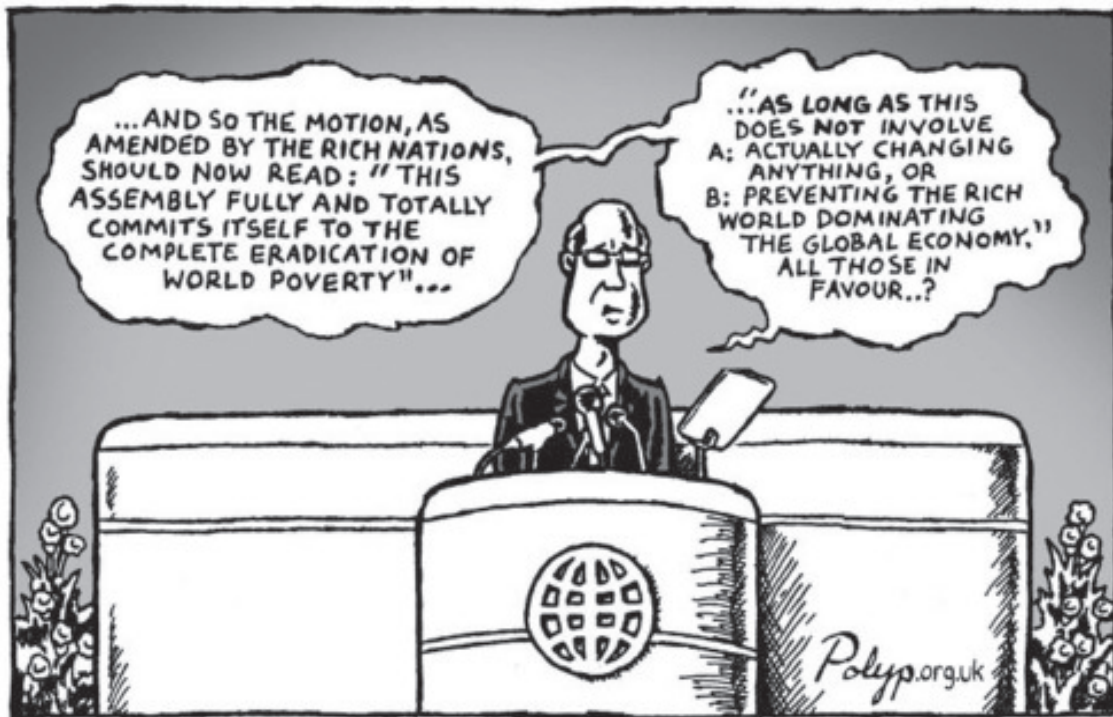
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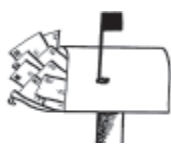
## LETTERS

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

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'SUMMIT UP'



## Letters to the Editor

### Not one more dime for the union-busting, billionaire outfit True North

Public letter to Winnipeg City Council, January 28, 2015, from Darrell Rankin, Leader of the Communist Party of Canada-Manitoba

Dear members of City Council,

The media will probably insulate the public from my comments, but I want to say this about True North's plan to build a hotel and, likely, retail space to link with the Convention Centre. More gambling machines could line the new hallways with funds going to True North.

I don't want to see another dime of City money go to a union-busting, billionaire-backed outfit like True North. This is an outfit that receives at least \$12.5 million in public money every year, and fails to say even a small thank-you on its website.

We are talking about a quarter-billion dollars in public money over twenty-five years being sucked up by True North with no accountability, calculated before we landed the Jets franchise. How fair is that to other downtown hotels?

I'm not counting the recently-

installed gambling machines whose revenue goes to True North and subsidies to support the Jets franchise. How many more machines will True North want in the new development?

It is a private corporation that does not have to report its profits, unlike how the government forces First Nations (who are owed resources and funds) and trade unions (who are democratic, unlike corporations) to disclose all their spending.

This privileged outfit busted the union that worked at the publicly-owned Arena.

Too me, you are allowing Centre-Venture to get away lightly for signing a secret deal with True North. You have the power to make True North give the stage-hands their jobs back, show some gratitude, and disclose its finances.

If True North fails to do that right away, then it's time for you to reverse the privatization of the Arena.

I am unable to make these comments in person to you today, but I hope the discussion at council shows you will put people before billionaires. I'd put \$12.5 million a year towards building houses and child care centres, not supporting an outfit like True North. ●

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### Defeat the Liberals "Create A Crisis" attack on education

Premier Kathleen Wynne has adopted the "create a crisis" strategy of the Harris Tories, demanding the closure and sale of 25% of public schools in Toronto, and the dismantling of the Toronto District School Board. The Board must prove compliance by Feb. 13, or face a provincial take-over.

There are currently 133 schools at or below 65% enrolment, though TDSB enrolment projections put most of them well over that figure in 10 years. But the schools are fully utilized now, with child care centres, parent and family services, adult education, community services, settlement services, parks and recreation. Closing and selling the schools will leave important programs and public services homeless, and neighbourhoods without schools. The largest percentage of proposed closures are in the poorest neighbourhoods in Toronto.

The Liberals' "shock and awe" attack is intended to paralyze voters, just 90 days after the new Board was elected with a progressive majority. Voters clearly opposed the government's long-standing demands that the TDSB sell off schools, land and assets built up over decades for the benefit of children, youth and communities - past, present and future. At every opportunity, the public has opposed the province's directives, including to undermine local democracy and dismantle the Board.

The Premier's real concern is that the largest School Board in Canada, backed by the public, will refuse to sell off assets, privatize services, and cut education transfers - and instead demand a needs-based funding formula. But the only proposals for funding in the provincial budget are to freeze public sector wages and cut education transfers by \$500 million this year, resulting in more layoffs, and the elimination of even more services.

The government intends to do the same to School Boards across the province; that is, to remove all of their remaining responsibilities, and then to eliminate locally elected and accountable Public School Boards altogether. Local democracy and autonomy are in the cross-hairs.

The Communist Party (Ontario) demands that the government immediately withdraw the Minister's January 16 directives to the TDSB, and:

- \* deliver a needs-based funding formula for education in Ontario
- \* provide capital funding for school repairs and new builds
- \* respect local democracy and autonomy
- \* eliminate the public sector wage freeze
- \* create one secular public school system open to all! ●

# Laughing all the way to the bank

By Eugene McCartan,  
General Secretary of the  
Communist Party of Ireland

We have begun a new year just like the old one: the political establishment treating the people like fools, weaving a web of deception about their failed policies with the pretence that we have “turned the corner” and are on our way back to economic health.

Again Ireland has been touted as the poster boy for compliance, with Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, and others from the EU Central Bank congratulating the Irish people on the sacrifice they have made and for taking the medicine dished up by them without a whimper and declaring that the rest of Europe should follow our example.

Data recently published by the Central Statistics Office exposes the harsh economic and social

reality experienced daily by working people: 12 per cent of children experiencing consistent poverty; 37 per cent of young people — 400,000 people —

## Other voices...

experiencing deprivation; 1.4 million people, or nearly a third of the population of the Republic, suffering deprivation, being unable to afford basic necessities. This deprivation is most acute among lone parents, the unemployed, the long-term ill, and the disabled. A quarter of the population are unable to heat their homes.

We witness the spread of zero-hour contracts, low wages, growing numbers of long-term unemployed,

and continued emigration.

The Labour Party is desperately hanging on in government, in the vain hope that the cuts in tax revenue from the professional class contained in the last budget, to be followed in the next budget with changes to the universal social charge, will swing enough middle-class votes to secure it some Dáil representation.

There is a scramble between the two government parties to see who can placate the same classes and secure their vote. Lucinda Creighton, in her effort to build a new political party, is appealing to the same social strata, with her “Reboot” outfit also making a play for changes in the USC, as these would benefit the well off more than those on social welfare, pensions, or low wages. She also wants to keep the property tax and the water charges.

At the EU level Mario Draghi, president of the EU Central Bank (and former managing director of Goldman Sachs), announced the strategy called quantitative easing. There was a great deal of hype about the announcement. In short, the ECB will buy 60 billion worth of sovereign and agency bonds per month, beginning in March 2015 and running to the end of 2016. In total, they estimate that they will pump about 1.14 trillion into the European banking system.

This will mean that global investors will be able to make vast profits off shares. The ECB's statement also makes it clear that it is an open-ended strategy and “will in any case be conducted until we see a sustained adjustment in the path of inflation which is consistent with our aim of achieving inflation rates below but close to 2 per cent over the medium term.” A speculator's dream.

Of course the threat is there that they will buy bonds only for compliant governments that meet their criterion, which is what they call “restructuring,” to make the economy more competitive. To working people this means further stagnation in real wages, precarious employment extending further throughout the economy, tight budgetary controls, and the privatisation of public assets and the commercialisation of public services.

Quantitative easing will only lead to a growth in asset prices and speculation. The European stock market will boom, just as Wall Street boomed with Obama's quantitative easing in the United States. The rich will get richer and the value of shares, government bonds and commercial property will grow, while workers' wages will remain stagnant and the cuts will continue. “Austerity” is to be permanent.

Another trick pulled by the ECB is that 20 per cent of bond purchases



Social Justice Ireland has revealed that 16 percent of adults living in poverty are employed - “the working poor”. The numbers of those living in poverty have increased by 120,000 since beginning of the recession. The top ten percent of Irish households receive 24 percent of total disposable income while the bottom ten percent of households only receives 3 percent. Almost one in five Irish children live in households with incomes below the poverty line. (Photo and statistics from [www.catholicireland.net/16-irish-adults-living-poverty-employed/](http://www.catholicireland.net/16-irish-adults-living-poverty-employed/))

will be subject to what they call “risk-sharing,” which is designed to limit the exposure that the ECB (i.e. Germany) has on its balance sheet. The greater part of the risk, 80 per cent, will remain with national central banks.

What this means is that the banks will have a lot of money to lend; and those clambering for it are the financial and property speculators, once again exposing working people to all the risk and being left to pick up the bill from wild speculation.

Quantitative easing is not about easing your financial problems; it

will not help you pay your bills, your mortgage, or the loan on your car, nor will it put food on the table. It is part of the continuing attempt to save a failing currency, the EU power structures, and a crisis-ridden system. It reflects the central role and the power of finance capital within that system.

It will do little to affect the growing mass of unemployed. It will not put one extra bed in a hospital for those waiting on a trolley. What it will do is make the rich richer; and the bankers and speculators will be laughing all the way to the Cayman Islands. ●

## HSBC helps widen the wealth gap



While this scandal has seen little coverage in Canada, the BBC is reporting that banking giant HSBC helped wealthy clients across the world evade hundreds of millions of pounds worth of tax.

The BBC show *Panorama* has seen accounts from 106,000 clients in 203 countries, leaked by whistleblower Herve Falciani in 2007. The documents include details of almost 7,000 clients based in the UK.

HSBC admits that it was “accountable for past control failures,” but it has now “fundamentally changed”. (Of course, genuine “fundamental change” would require taking a stand against global capitalism, but no doubt HSBC has a different definition of this term.)

The bank now faces criminal investigations in the US, France, Belgium and Argentina. But not in the UK, where HSBC says it is “co-operating with relevant authorities”.

As the BBC notes, “offshore accounts are not illegal, but many people use them to hide cash from the tax authorities. And while tax avoidance is perfectly legal, deliberately hiding money to evade tax is not. The French authorities concluded in 2013 that 99.8% of their citizens on the list were probably evading tax.”

Thousands of pages of data obtained by the French newspaper *Le Monde* have now been passed to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, the *Guardian* newspaper, *Panorama* and more than 50 media outlets around the world.

Britain's HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) was given the leaked data in 2010, and has identified 1,100 people from the list of 7,000 British clients who had not paid their taxes. Almost five years later, only one tax evader has been prosecuted. HMRC said 135 million pounds in tax, interest and penalties have been paid by those who hid their assets in Switzerland, and the bank claims that it now puts compliance and tax transparency ahead of profitability. But many observers believe that the tax scam is much larger and still ongoing.

The bank did not just turn a blind eye to tax evaders - in some cases it broke the law by actively helping its clients. The bank gave one wealthy family a foreign credit card so they could withdraw their undeclared cash at cashpoints overseas.

HSBC also helped tax-dodgers stay ahead of the law. When the European Savings Directive was introduced in 2005, the idea was that Swiss banks would take any tax owed from undeclared accounts and pass it to the taxman. It was a tax designed to catch evaders. But instead of simply collecting the money, HSBC offered customers ways to get round the new tax.

Richard Brooks, a former tax inspector and author of *The Great Tax Robbery*, said: “I think they were a tax avoidance and tax evasion service. I think that's what they were offering. They knew full well that people come to them to dodge their tax liabilities.”

The man in charge of HSBC at the time, Stephen Green, was made a Conservative peer. Eight months after HMRC was given the leaked HSBC documents, Lord Green was appointed as minister of trade and investment, a post he held until 2013.

Speaking on BBC's Radio 4, UK Treasury minister David Gauke defended Lord Green's appointment, saying “I am not aware of any evidence that suggests that Lord Green was involved in this sort of activity”. Sure, just like Al Capone had no idea that his gang was involved in criminal pursuits. ●



## Canada Post issues Mandela stamp

Canada Post unveiled a new stamp on Jan. 27 to commemorate the life of South Africa's anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela and his relationship with Canada.

The stamp was unveiled at Nelson Mandela Park Public School in Toronto. It features a photo taken on Mandela's first visit to Canada in 1990, just four months after his release from prison. The South African flag can be seen in the background.

Mandela was a prominent international figure for more than half a century, first as a human rights campaigner and leader of the African National Congress, and then as the world's best-known political prisoner. After 27 years in prison, he went on to become the first democratically-elected president of South Africa. He died in December 2013 after a prolonged lung infection, at the age of 95.

Mandela visited Canada three times and received the Order of Canada. But while federal Immigration Minister Chris Alexander attended the unveiling, anti-apartheid activists remember that many Conservative Party members and MPs considered Mandela's ANC to be a “terrorist” organization. Under the terms of Bill C-51 now being debated by Parliament, expressions of support for the ANC's armed struggle against the brutal minority white supremacist regime could well have been considered a criminal act. ●

# Tell Parliament - Defeat police state Bill C-51

## Statement from the Central Executive Committee, Communist Party of Canada, Feb. 5, 2015

Across Canada, alarms are being raised against Bill C-51, the so-called "Anti-Terrorism Act 2015" which gives the Canadian state sweeping new powers to further criminalize public dissent. In the first place, it targets those critical of the corporate agenda of austerity, environmental destruction, and imperialist war. This dangerous Tory legislation would help further transform CSIS into a secret police force beyond the control of the public or even Parliament. The Communist Party of Canada warns that Bill C-51 cannot be "amended" or "improved"; it must be rejected by Parliament, and CSIS itself should be dismantled, not expanded.

This Bill constitutes perhaps the most serious threat to free speech and civil liberties in Canada since the era of the *War Measures Act*, which was proclaimed by governments several times from World War One to the 1970s to suspend democratic rights, including mass incarcerations of targeted ethnic groups, Communists, trade union leaders and a broad range of democratic forces in Quebec, until it was finally repealed by Parliament in response to massive public pressure.

Bill C-51's alleged purpose is to protect Canadians from "terrorism", but its true aim is to help the Conservative Party use fear and intimidation tactics to extend its political base in advance of the 2015 federal election. The underlying purpose is to limit civil, labour and democratic rights of all

Canadian citizens and residents, and to expand the powers of an increasingly authoritarian state.

Making racist speeches which single out mosques for special attention, the Prime Minister has openly signalled that entire sections of the population are being placed into a category of potential terrorists, considered "guilty until



proven innocent." Even the *Globe and Mail* has warned that "the fearmongering of a campaigning Prime Minister" is being used to turn CSIS into "something that looks disturbingly like a secret police force."

Under this legislation, CSIS agents will be allowed to act against any perceived "threat to the security of Canada," without a judicial warrant if they claim that their activities do not contravene Charter rights or the law. CSIS would be permitted to disrupt vaguely defined "radical websites", and to apply for court orders to remove "terrorist propaganda" from the Internet. The Bill lowers the legal threshold to detain people without criminal charges, and expands the reach of the "no-fly list".

CSIS agents will be allowed to break into homes and offices, seize

documents, remove whatever they find, install monitoring devices, or carry out any "dirty tricks" or disruptive activities which a judge agrees is "reasonable".

Since the government has declared that Canada is at war, there is every reason to believe that any judicial limits on these police powers will be minimal at best, and that these activities will be integrated with the CIA's "black operations" around the world. Just as ominous, there will be no mechanism for Canadians to even monitor CSIS, leaving only the PMO and a tiny clique of powerless and complicit government officials with knowledge of its actions.

Section 16 of C-51 prohibits "advocating and promoting terrorism", raising a wide range of unanswered questions. For example, Public Safety Minister Blaney has refused to give a direct response in Parliament or to the media regarding non-violent civil disobedience protests against the extraction and export of tar sands bitumen. The clear implication of Minister Blaney's comments is that

any protests directed against the energy industry are by definition potentially dangerous, and could fall under the general umbrella of "terrorist" activity. Similarly, Conservative cabinet ministers repeatedly slander the broadly-supported movements which oppose Israel's apartheid-style occupation of Palestinian territories - such as the Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions campaign - in effect branding these movements as targets of CSIS actions.

Since coming to power in 2006, the Harper government has engaged in massive surveillance against indigenous people's movements, and has frequently used back-to-work legislation against unions under federal jurisdiction, claiming that strikes at Air Canada, Canada Post, etc., constituted a threat to the economy. Now, Bill C-51 will criminalize actions which "interfere with the ability of the Canadian government to maintain economic or fiscal stability", an obvious threat against both the labour

movement and the right to strike, and indeed any movement which resists the agenda of the banks and corporations. Trade unions and Aboriginal peoples will be a major focus of the beefed-up CSIS, just as the RCMP was used for decades by federal and provincial governments to break strikes and target Aboriginal activists.

In other words, the Harper Conservatives are providing CSIS with powers going far beyond those which were stripped from the RCMP over 30 years ago as a result of its illegal activities such as barn-burning in Quebec and spying on CUPW - and at the same time the Tories are implicitly setting the political agenda for this new secret police operation.

A growing chorus of criticism is emerging, including by some media outlets and civil liberties groups. Green Party leader Elizabeth May has condemned C-51 as so "over-broad" that it "could apply to anything". The NDP, Liberals and Bloc Quebecois have raised questions about the lack of public oversight of CSIS, but unfortunately these opposition parties have so far failed to take a principled stand to block C-51 in Parliament.

The Communist Party will do everything in our power to help defeat Bill C-51. We urge the labour and democratic movements, environmental groups, Aboriginal peoples, the Palestine solidarity and anti-war movements, civil liberties groups, and all those who care about civil, labour and democratic rights, to help build a powerful, mass, united campaign against this police state legislation. Such a broad-based fight can win, by mobilizing public opposition right across the country! ●



Communist Party leader Miguel Figueroa (photo: Ed Bil)

## Parliament must reject Harper's secret policeman bill: *Globe & Mail*

### Editorial published by The *Globe and Mail*, Feb. 2, 2015

Prime Minister Stephen Harper never tires of telling Canadians that we are at war with the Islamic State. Under the cloud of fear produced by his repeated hyperbole about the scope and nature of the threat, he now wants to turn our domestic spy agency into something that looks disturbingly like a secret police force.

Canadians should not be willing to accept such an obvious threat to their basic liberties. Our existing laws and our society are strong enough to stand up to the threat of terrorism without compromising our values.

This week, Mr. Harper released

a video in which he recklessly conflates the two recent lone-wolf incidents in Canada with the Islamic State's call for attacks on "non-believing countries."

The two attacks - one in Ottawa and the other in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Que. - were horrendous. They shocked Canadians and scared them. But there is no evidence that either attacker was connected to ISIS. The more likely theory is that they were troubled young men who self-radicalized.

And yet, as the Prime Minister reminds viewers in the video that ISIS has urged its followers to "attack, quote, disbelieving Canadians in any manner, vowing that we should not feel secure even in our own homes," the words are

spoken over footage of the aftermath of the shooting at the National War Memorial, as if the Ottawa attack were a direct outcome of ISIS's urgings.

If the Prime Minister has evidence that either attack was directly linked to ISIS, he should provide it, instead of deceptively implying it in a video saturated with images of fighter jets, warships and rappelling soldiers. (It is reasonable to ask why so political a video appeared on the Prime Minister's website, but then Mr. Harper has long forgone the niceties of distinguishing partisan activities from his duties as head of government.)

The video was posted on Wednesday. On Friday, Mr. Harper - intoning that "a great evil has been descending over our world" - tabled his new anti-terrorism act.

The bill gives CSIS, the domestic spy agency, the ability to act like a police force. Mr. Harper and the Conservatives will deny this, since CSIS will not be allowed to make arrests or detain suspects. But its operatives will no longer be limited to gathering intelligence and then passing it on to the RCMP for investigation.

Nor will CSIS be limited to cutting out the RCMP middleman in cases of terrorism. This is not an "anti-terrorism act." The bill is about "threats to the security of Canada," which include but are

not limited to: interfering with the ability of the Canadian government to maintain economic or fiscal stability; espionage; interference with critical infrastructure; terrorism; and doing anything in Canada that undermines the security of another state.

("Lawful advocacy, protest, dissent and artistic expression" are exempted from being threats to the security of Canada. But how well do governments define those things in times of "great evil"?)

Under the proposed law, CSIS agents will be allowed to take measures to reduce any perceived "threat to the security of Canada." Agents will only need a warrant for activities that might contravene Charter rights or the law. If there is any doubt that the agents will be on the front lines of Mr. Harper's war, you only have to read the part of the bill that says that, in taking measures to reduce a threat, CSIS can't kill or harm anyone, or "violate the sexual integrity of an individual."

Among the things CSIS agents will be legally allowed to do is to seek a warrant to break into someone's home, seize and copy documents, "install, maintain or remove any thing" (presumably a monitoring device), or do anything else a judge agrees is reasonable in these heightened times.

There are other troubling measures in the bill, including one

that criminalizes the act of knowingly advocating or promoting the commission of terrorism offences "in general" by any group anywhere. Will it be illegal to show support for Hamas, a group the Harper government has designated as a terrorist organization? How much support will cross the line? That's a good question.

Most importantly, Parliament must not allow Mr. Harper to turn CSIS, an intelligence agency, into a secret police force. Intelligence-gathering was deliberately separated from police work 30 years ago, after the RCMP's repeated breaches of the law and civil rights. A wise decision was made to keep police out of the spy business, and spies out of policing. CSIS was the outcome, but successive governments, including Mr. Harper's, have not demonstrated enough seriousness about overseeing the agency's activities and protecting Canadians' privacy.

And now CSIS agents are being offered police-like powers. This unwelcome idea is being pushed by the fearmongering of a campaigning Prime Minister. Yes, Islamic State is a menace. But the danger terrorism poses is not only one of violence; its mere threat can distort the way we live and think. On that score, terrorism will have been all too effective in Canada if this bill is adopted as is. ●

### C51 must be rejected, says May

Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada and MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands, was the only Party leader in Parliament to voice agreement with the *Globe and Mail* editorial demanding the rejection of the new Anti-Terrorism Act proposed by the Harper Conservatives.

In a statement, May said, "I completely agree with the editorial in the *Globe and Mail* today (February 2) that Parliament must reject this bill. In the House of Commons today, I urged all MPs to read the editorial and not allow the Conservatives to turn CSIS into a secret police force. The words that are found under the definition of activities, which affects the 'security of Canadians', is so broad that it can apply to almost any activity including nonviolent civil disobedience. This bill could now treat peaceful protesters as potential terrorists. Is Stephen Harper using the imagined fear of widespread security threats to score political points before the next election?" ●

# "C51 creates serious civil liberty concerns"

*Excerpts from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association response to Bill C-51, Feb. 1, 2015*

On January 30th, Prime Minister Stephen Harper introduced Bill C51, the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015. The Bill amends the Criminal Code, the CSIS Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and several other pieces of legislation. Generally speaking, the Bill permits more latitude for greater information sharing between government agencies, lengthens the time for preventive detention, permits police lower thresholds for peace bonds, expands the Canadian No Fly List (i.e. Passenger Protect Program), broadens CSIS's powers significantly, and creates new crimes that may criminalize legitimate speech.

"New laws and new powers don't necessarily guarantee security" said Sukanya Pillay, Executive Director of the CCLA, "But new laws that violate constitutional rights are a prescription for mistakes, and mistakes won't keep Canadians safer."

Pillay questioned the necessity of the many amendments introduced by Bill C51, arguing that Canada has had strong anti-terror legislation in place, including the strong police powers under the Criminal Code. "There are still no answers as to why our existing laws and powers didn't work – or if they didn't work," said Pillay, with reference to the tragic killings of two Canadian soldiers in 2014....

The CCLA is seriously concerned that the powers of CSIS have been broadened within and outside of Canada, giving CSIS greater latitude in its operations including with respect to disruptions. CSIS, who are currently limited to investigative powers, would be given police-like powers, and be allowed to directly intervene, "disrupt" and "counter-message" communications and activities both in Canada and abroad that they believe are threats to national security. As such, it appears these powers would allow

CSIS to intervene or interfere with travel plans, financial transactions, telecommunications, among other possibilities.

The CCLA is concerned that CSIS will be exercising greater powers on the basis of intelligence, which is by nature, not subject to the exacting criteria preserved for evidence collected by the RCMP or police. Of equal concern is the blurring of the line between the functions of CSIS and the RCMP, although going back to the MacDonald Commission, CSIS was created to have distinct features from the RCMP. In this regard the CCLA continues to argue for the government to heed the lessons and findings of the Air India Inquiry.

CCLA is also concerned with the lower legal thresholds for arrest, detention, and peace bonds the Bill proposes. Under the new legislation, enforcement agencies would be able to arrest someone on the basis that they think a terrorist act "may be carried out," rather than the current legal standard of "will be carried out" contained in the Combatting Terrorism Act, legislation the government introduced less than three years ago. Furthermore, it would increase the period of preventive detention from three days to seven. Police have long held powers under the Criminal Code to arrest and detain an individual if there is a reasonable suspicion of an impending crime — and the controversial preventive detention powers introduced by the Anti-Terrorism Act 2001 and renewed last year were never used, thus raising questions of why the new broad provisions are required.

The Bill also threatens freedom of expression as it would criminalize "advocating" terrorism. The CCLA finds the wording overbroad and is concerned the provision could be triggered even where the speaker has no intention of committing a terrorist act. The danger here is clearly to freedom of speech, and the criminalization of legitimate speech. The potential

chilling effect on academics and journalists and bloggers is easily imagined, and the loss would be to a free exchange of ideas so necessary in the pursuit of truth and in combatting radicalization...

CCLA has also over the past five years raised its concerns about Canada's Passenger Protect Program (No Fly List), the failure of a clear and comprehensive legislation framework prescribing its operations and the need for proper legal procedures to be followed, for proper legal procedures to be identified and followed, for privacy protections, and for proper administrative process in accordance with natural justice. The program has had serious errors, and we are concerned that greater elasticity in this process without indication of proper corrections being made will result in more errors – which does not keep Canadians safer.

.... We are still working on a detailed analysis of Bill C51, but our first read indicates that the new anti-terror legislation does create serious civil liberties concerns, and as such it is difficult to forecast concrete security gains.



PV file photo: Ed Bil

## BCCLA: anti-terror bill a danger to Canadians

The BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) - the organization that is currently suing the federal government over allegations of warrantless electronic surveillance by Canada's electronic spy agency - has reacted to the new Anti-terrorism Act 2015 introduced in the House of Commons. As the BCCLA notes, the bill includes measures to enhance the powers of CSIS, lower the legal threshold for police to detain people without criminal charges and criminalizes expressions of support for terrorist activities even where the speaker has no intention of committing a terrorist act.

Micheal Vonn, Policy Director of the BCCLA, said on Jan. 30:

"This radical expansion of national security powers is not sound security policy and presents a real danger to Canadians. Our national security agencies have shamefully inadequate oversight and are hostile to accountability. Canada has utterly failed to respond to the urgent need for national security oversight and instead, proposes an unprecedented expansion of powers that will harm innocent Canadians and not increase our public safety."

Josh Paterson, Executive Director of the BCCLA, said: "Preventive detention permits holding an individual without charges based on mere suspicion of dangerousness. Expanding police powers to detain people

without charges must be examined with the utmost scrutiny. Stripping an individual's liberty where no criminal offence has been found to be committed – or where no offence is even suspected to have been committed – runs against the most basic principles of fundamental justice."

Vonn added: "Criminalizing people's words and thoughts is misguided and won't make Canadians any safer. We will be less free, less democratic and less likely to know who to keep an eye on. This new law will impose a broad chill on legitimate political speech without enhancing public safety, and is likely unconstitutional." ●

## Weak-kneed opposition lets Conservative terror bill sail through

*By Thomas Walkom, Toronto Star, Feb. 3, 2015*

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper unveiled his new anti-terror bill last week, Canada's two main opposition parties were loath to criticize it.

Both New Democratic Party Leader Tom Mulcair and Liberal chieftain Justin Trudeau danced warily around the substance of Bill C-51.

They had nothing to say about measures that would criminalize speech the government deemed pro-terrorist. They had no views on proposals that would give 17 security agencies access to any information in any government department on any Canadian. They said nothing about a section of the bill that would permit the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to engage in illegal and unconstitutional dirty tricks.

Indeed, the only criticism of Bill C-51 levelled by the Liberals

and New Democrats to date is that it doesn't provide parliamentary oversight of security agencies that have been given these new powers.

Which is another way of saying to Harper: We don't mind if you erode civil liberties, as long as you let a few of us in on what you're up to.

Why are Canada's usually obstreperous opposition parties so meek? Alas, they are afraid – afraid that if they criticize the substance of Bill C-51, Harper will paint them as soft on terror.

So far, the only opposition MP with enough guts to critique the content of the Conservative government's new anti-terror bill is Green Party Leader Elizabeth May. She said Monday in the Commons that it would turn CSIS into a "secret police force."

She also asked if the bill's remarkably broad definition of crimes against the security of Canada included anti-pipeline protests (and got no answer).

Now that experts have had a chance to plow through the

omnibus bill, other critics are surfacing.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association asked the most trenchant question: Why are these extraordinary new security powers needed?

"There are still no answers as to why our existing laws and powers didn't work – or if they didn't work," CCLA executive director Sukanya Pillay wrote.

She also pointed out that criminalizing something as vague as the advocacy of terrorism could have a chilling effect on academics and journalists.

The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association has gone even further, saying that Bill C-51 would create "an unprecedented expansion of powers that will harm innocent Canadians and not increase public safety."

In a release, it said it is alarmed by proposals that would expand the amount of time a terror suspect can be jailed without charge and that would allow judges to impose

stringent conditions – including house arrest – on people who have not been convicted of any crime.

Stripping a person's liberty where no crime is committed or suspected runs counter to our "most basic principles of fundamental justice," the B.C. association wrote.

Reached by phone Monday, association policy director Micheal Vonn said the bill's definition of what constitutes a threat to the security of Canada is overly broad.

Bill C-51 would allow anyone who threatened the "economic or financial stability" of Canada – whatever that means – to be charged and jailed.

Federal Privacy Commissioner Daniel Therrien says the bill will allow too much information-sharing. Innocent Canadians, not just terror suspects, will be caught up in the government's net, he wrote Friday.

University of Ottawa law professor Craig Forcese, an acknowledged expert in anti-terror

law, asked in his blog Saturday whether Canadians really wanted to return to an era where the security services engaged in illegal, dirty tricks.

Yet this is exactly what Bill C-51 proposes, he wrote. True, CSIS would have to receive judicial warrants first. But that, Forcese noted, merely makes the courts "enablers of illegality."

In another blog post, Monday, Forcese said the bill threatens to create a "secret jurisprudence on when CSIS can act beyond the law."

All of these are real and substantive worries about Bill C-51. They are exactly the kind of questions the main opposition parties should be raising.

But the Liberals and NDP are running scared. They are so worried about Harper outmanoeuvring them in the public opinion polls that they are giving his fatally-flawed bill a pass. They think that will make us vote for them. ●



# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Garment workers still fighting for compensation

Employees injured in two workplace tragedies in Bangladesh, and relatives of those who died, formed a human chain beside the Dhaka-Aricha highway on February 6 to demand compensation.

On November 24, 2012, a fire broke out at Tazreen Fashions, a garment factory in Ashulia, killing 111 workers and injuring many more. The Rana Plaza building, which housed five garment factories, collapsed on April 24, 2013, killing 1,136 workers.

Nasima Akter, a victim of the Tazreen fire, said she is yet to be compensated. "We cannot pay for food much less other necessities after losing our source of income," she said, breaking down in tears.

Jorina Akter, president of Tazreen Fashions Garment Workers' Union, said the victims need compensation immediately. "Families of those who died are living very miserable lives after losing their breadwinners, and those who were injured cannot work anymore," she said.

The government and garment companies are wasting time so that the matter can be closed but the people will never forget what happened, said Emdadul Islam, president of Rana Plaza Garment Workers' Union.

## Turkey postpones metal strikes

The Turkish Government has issued a Cabinet Decree to postpone a strike launched by the Birlesik Metal-Is union in 19 companies. The January 29 decree also covers 18 companies where the strike was to start on February 19.

Turkey's Law on Trade Unions and Collective Labour Agreement has a provision that "a lawful strike or lock-out that has been called or commenced may be suspended by the Council of Ministers for 60 days with a decree if it is prejudicial to public health or national security." The Government decree, signed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Ahmet Dividual and the entire cabinet, considers the metalworkers' strike as "prejudicial to national security".

This is not new to the Turkish trade unions. In 2014, strikes in the glass and mining sectors were banned by the same government with the same argument.

"The right to strike no longer exists in Turkey", says Kemal Ozkan, IndustriALL Global Union Assistant General Secretary. "This fundamental right, guaranteed by the Constitution of the country and international norms ratified by the government, exists only on paper, not in reality".

Birlesik Metal-Is will apply to the State Council for nullification of the Decree. But in the glass industry struggle in 2014, the State Council ruled in favour of the Government on the basis of "economic arguments", contrary to its earlier jurisprudence which

favoured protecting fundamental rights.

## Don't fly to Dominican Republic

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) warned on Feb. 6 air traffic control in the Dominican Republic is approaching a crisis point. The ITF reports that the safety of the country's airspace is now in jeopardy, following a sustained government attack on the Dominican Air Traffic Controllers Association (ADCA).

ITF civil aviation secretary Gabriel Mocho Rodriguez explained: "The Dominican



Republic's government appears to be hell-bent on breaking the ADCA, and silencing its warnings about deteriorating safety. The kind of incidents that the ADCA has warned the authorities about include: a total communications failure in Punta Cana, with controllers coordinating by mobile phone; unserviceable navigation aids at La Isabela International Airport, forcing pilots to complete all approaches visually; the distance measuring equipment at El Catey Presidente Juan Bosch Airport going out of service; and the control tower at Puerto Plata Gregorio Luperon International Airport working with only an emergency radio for over a year, and suffering frequent communications failures."

The ADCA has tried to make the authorities address these and other safety issues. The response has been suspensions followed by firings, demotions and retaliation against the air traffic controllers, including the arrest of three union officials last year.

ITF Americas regional secretary Antonio Rodriguez Fritz warned that the government will have to live with the consequences of any accident resulting from its failure to act. He commented: "This behaviour isn't just hugely worrying, it's getting worse. In air traffic control you cannot compromise on safety. It's the golden rule. Well, in the Dominican Republic they are compromising. These attacks on the ADCA and its members must stop and be replaced with the social dialogue that is vital to re-establish safe, orderly and efficient air traffic services."

## Work linked to kidney failures

Something is destroying the kidneys of farm workers along the

Pacific coast of Central America. Over the past two decades, more than 20,000 people in western Nicaragua and El Salvador, mostly men in their 20s and 30s, have died of a mysterious form of kidney failure. Researchers have been able to say definitively that it's not diabetes or other common causes of kidney failure. Now a new study from Boston University finds a connection between the disease and the work these men are doing.

"The decline in kidney function during the harvest and the differences [in kidney function] by job category and employment duration provide evidence that one or more risk factors of chronic kidney disease are occupational," the report says.

In 2011 the study followed 500 sugar cane workers at one plantation, El Ingenio San Antonio in Nicaragua. The researchers found that the kidney function of field workers declined over the course of the six-month harvest. Sugar cane cutters and planters saw the sharpest drop.

"Finding that one or more risk factors are occupational is important," says Rebecca Laws, lead author of the paper. "Before this, it was still sort of unknown whether the major risk factors were occupational or nonoccupational."

A suspicion that pesticides or herbicides are the culprit prompted the Salvadoran National Assembly to ban 53 agrichemicals late in 2013. But this new study found that field workers whose primary jobs were spraying for weeds and pests (and had the most contact with agricultural chemicals) had the least decline in kidney function. The researchers also found that dehydration among workers with the most physically demanding job—cutting cane—could contribute to the illness. Cutters who drank more of a generic energy drink while on the job had less of a drop in kidney function than co-workers who drank less of the beverage.

## Michigan anti-labour law upheld

A Michigan judge has thrown out a lawsuit seeking to invalidate the state's right-to-work law over alleged violations of the Open Meetings Act during the legislative process. The suit argued that the public was denied access to proceedings on December 6, 2012, when police locked the doors to the Capitol building for more than four hours as protesters gathered in downtown Lansing.

The lockdown was "part of a larger effort to avoid public accountability," according to the suit, filed on behalf of union officials, Democratic lawmakers and a citizen journalist. The plaintiffs also alleged that Republican staffers "stacked" the House gallery on both December 6 and 11, when a much larger protest occurred, occupying seats that the public could have accessed while the legislation was debated.

Court of Appeals Judge Deborah A. Servitto rejected both arguments. "The temporary cessation of admission to the Capitol building did not impair the rights of the public as a whole,"

Servitto wrote in her opinion.

The Capitol building was closed to additional visitors at 12:05 p.m. on December 6, shortly after eight protestors were arrested for attempting to rush the Senate floor.

Michigan union membership fell sharply in 2014, the first full year under the new right-to-work law. Overall, 14.5 percent of wage and salary workers in Michigan were members of a union in 2014, down from 16.3 percent in 2013, according to federal statistics. Union membership dropped from approximately 633,000 in 2013 to 585,000 in 2014 even as the total state employment numbers grew.

## Labour protests across Iran

A wave of labour protests has been sweeping Iran. The protests are focused on demands for wage increases to keep up with the growing rate of inflation, payment of back wages, and other issues such as layoffs and non-renewal of labour contracts.

Between January 20 to 29, at least eight protests took place in different cities, as reported by Iran's Labour News Agency, ILNA. The protests included work stoppages, gatherings in front of offices they hold accountable, and group letters to the Speaker of the Parliament or the President.

From January 27 to 29, over 200 workers from the Khatoon Abad Copper Company's subsidiaries gathered with their families in front of the Governor's Office in Kerman Province. The workers say that the employer is introducing an employment examination as a way to eliminate contract workers who have worked in the complex for four years with the hope of one day

becoming regular employees.

Two hundred Varamin Sugar Company workers protested the closure of the company and their loss of jobs on Jan. 28. On the same day, thirty mineworkers from the Northern Anomaly Mine in Bafgh protested their dismissal by gathering in front of the Central Iron Ore Mine. Also on Jan. 28, 70 retired Parsylon Thread Company workers gathered in front of the Lorestan Province Governor's Office. The workers, who retired between 2012 and 2014, are still owed back pay from 2008 to 2011.

Workers from the Mehriz Tejarat Cement Company stopped work on January 26 and 27 to protest ill treatment by factory managers. Contract workers from Ahvaz Water and Wastewater Company rallied on January 27 to protest non-payment of four months' wages and the employer's share of their insurance.

On January 25-26, 1400 workers from Tazreh Mine in Semnan Province stopped work to demand three months of outstanding wages owed to them, and gathered at the Shahrood Governor's Office to demand answers. The Governor promised that they would receive their back pay within ten days, but the protesters said that they had heard similar promises before.

School teachers in several cities held two days of protests over wages that are below the official poverty line. Teachers from Robat Karim, Shahrood, Karaj, Shahr-e Ghods, Shariar, Semnan, Marivan, Saghez, Baneh, and Islam Shahr, participated in the strikes.

While the Iranian constitution permits peaceful protests, the authorities frequently disperse, arrest and detain strikers. Labour leaders are particularly singled out for persecution and prosecution.

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

## Join the Communist Party of Canada



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

### Central Committee CPC

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# Conflict continues in Central African Republic

By T.J. Petrowski

With the West's latest war in the Middle East against Islamic State, and the vilification of Russian President Vladimir Putin dominating the news, it is easy to forget that the West is involved in numerous brutal military interventions in Afghanistan, Somalia, Mali, Ivory Coast, Pakistan, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Niger, Haiti, Yemen, and elsewhere.

The Central African Republic (CAR), an impoverished former French colony with abundant mineral resources, has been marred by sectarian violence since the start of hostilities between Seléka, a coalition of insurgents led by Michel Djotodja, a former guerrilla leader in the Bush War, and the regime of Francois Bozize. The Seléka rebels accused the regime of failing to abide by the peace agreements made in 2007 and 2011 that ended the Bush War.

Bozize, who came to power through a military coup in 2003, ran

afoul of Western imperialism when he signed mining and oil contracts with China; the U.S. and France indirectly supported the Seléka rebels by withholding support for his regime. In the words of Bozize: "Before giving oil to the Chinese, I met Total in Paris and told them to take the oil, nothing happened, I gave oil to the Chinese and it became a problem."

French President Francois Hollande cynically declared that the hundreds of French troops in the country were "in no way to intervene in internal affairs," a clear indication of support for the rebels, considering France has been intimately involved with the internal affairs of the country since its independence in 1960, including launching air strikes against anti-Bozize rebels in 2006 and 2007. The U.S. has dozens of Special Forces stationed in the CAR, ostensibly to assist in the search for Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, although likely being another deceptive cover for

a regional imperialist intervention. When Bozize was overthrown in 2013 and Seléka's leader Michel Djotodja declared himself president, then U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland (infamous for her leaked "Fuck the EU" tape), symbolically condemned the coup, but stopped short of calling for Bozize's return to power.

The country quickly deteriorated into a state of warfare following the coup. The predominately Muslim Seléka rebels who brought Djotodia to power, many of whom came from Chad and the Sudan, refused to disarm and committed mass atrocities against civilians, especially Christians from the country's south. Christian peasants and Bozize supporters formed anti-Seléka groups known as anti-Balakas, and armed with machetes, committed retaliatory massacres against Muslims. Close to a million have since become internally displaced or fled to neighbouring countries; there have been reports of widespread rape, torture, beheadings, recruitment of child soldiers, and even cannibalism.

The African Union and the United Nations formed the International Mission to Support CAR (MISCA), expanded in December 2013 with a force of 6,000, and support from nearly 2,000 French troops, to replace the

regional African peacekeeping force. However these "peacekeepers" inflamed tensions in the country; the "neutral" French soldiers have been accused of siding with the Christian anti-Balakas, and the African peacekeepers sent to restore peace have different agendas, with soldiers from Chad supporting the Seléka militias and soldiers from the Republic of Congo and Burundi supporting the anti-Balakas. Indeed, soldiers from Chad and Burundi attacked each other, causing Chad to withdraw its forces from the CAR.

France forced the resignation of Djotodia, replaced by Catherine Samba-Panza, the former mayor of Bangui, in January 2014. Violence nevertheless continued, and the European Union deployed a thousand soldiers to the CAR, its first mission in six years. Several controversial incidents occurred, as foreign soldiers killed unarmed protestors demonstrating against the transitional government and the presence of foreign troops.

Despite the arrival of a larger United Nations peacekeeping force and a peace agreement between the belligerents, the sectarian violence continues, and last July the leader of Seléka called for the country to be partitioned into Christian and Muslim states.

The exploitation of the CAR's extensive natural resources – oil, timber, gold, diamonds, copper, iron, and uranium – by Western corporations, and competition with Chinese investments, are the true reason for the Western-backed intervention.

Former French President Jacques Chirac famously acknowledged in 2008 that "without Africa, France will slide down into the rank of a third [world] power."

Several Western corporations have invested heavily in the CAR's mineral resources. Areva, the French-state owned nuclear corporation notorious for its exploitation of African uranium, was forced to suspend its Bakouma mine ("France's biggest commercial interest in its former colony"), following an attack on the mine by rebels. The first French troops to arrive in the country were sent to "protect its [France's] nationals, many of whom work in Areva's large uranium mine at Bakouma in the south-east of the country," as reported by the BBC. Nuclear power is France's main source of electricity, therefore a continuous supply of cheap uranium from Africa is vital for French economic interests, a fact that was not lost on the French ruling class when Bozize's regime contested Areva's acquisition of the mine. ●

## Guantánamo belongs to Cuba

Morning Star (UK)

Cuban President Raul Castro has justice and international law on his side when he demands that the United States return the illegally occupied Guantánamo Bay naval base.

The world's overweening superpower has hundreds of bases in foreign countries, of course – 130 of the world's 193 UN member states hosts some form of US military presence. Washington's hard-nosed militarists and their media cheerleaders see nothing wrong with what amounts to the military occupation of half the planet.

They delight in such designations as "the world's policeman" and "the indispensable nation" in order to maintain the myth that wars begun by the US are in some way legitimate. Certainly they have convinced themselves. The irony of US Secretary of State John Kerry's response to Crimea's vote to reunify with Russia last year – "you don't just invade a country on a phoney pretext in order to assert your interests" – must have been lost on him, or the state which started the Yugoslav, Afghan and Iraq wars on just such phoney pretexts would have been forewarned about the international ridicule that followed.

There is nothing legitimate about US global power. The worldwide network of military bases is quite simply the enforcement wing of a ruthless imperialist state so paranoid about its pre-eminence that it responds hysterically to challenges from even the smallest countries.

The five-decade-and-counting blockade of Cuba, pursued in the teeth of repeated denunciations by the United Nations, is proof of that. And there are a number of reasons why the Guantánamo Bay naval base is an even greater affront to another nation's sovereignty than all the others scattered across the globe.

For one thing, although the presence of US soldiers from Britain to Japan is generally unpopular with the peoples of the host nations, most bases are at least agreed to by the relevant country's government.

Not so with Guantánamo Bay. True, the base was leased to the United States by the Cuban-American Treaty of 1903 – but as Cuba points out, this treaty was signed under duress. It was part of Cuba's grudging acceptance of the Platt amendment, which committed the island to allow the US to lease land for bases. Cuba had to sign in return for the withdrawal of a US occupation army.

Cuba has demanded the return of the land ever since the 1959 socialist revolution that put the country on the path to true independence from Washington.

Since then, Cuba has refused to accept the absurdly minuscule annual payments made by the US for the base – the figure of US\$4,085 has been unchanged since 1934. Fidel Castro memorably showed an interviewer a desk drawer full of the uncashed cheques – still made out to the obsolete "treasurer-general of the republic" post – in 2007.

And since the beginning of the so-called war on terror, the grotesque use to which the base has been put provides another reason why this involuntary "lease" must be terminated.

In direct breach of its own original treaty with Cuba, which states that the base can only be used as a naval and coaling station, it has become home to the world's most infamous prison camp.

Its inmates have been kidnapped from countries around the world by special forces or sold to the US by a variety of blood-soaked police states. They have then languished in legal limbo for years. Most have never been charged with a crime, many – like British resident Shaker Aamer – have even been "cleared for release," but still they remain, victims of false imprisonment, torture and force-feeding, trapped in a never-ending Kafkaesque nightmare.

It is high time this travesty of justice and insult to the Cuban people was ended. Now the Cuban 5 are free, the liberation of Guantánamo is a top priority for all who stand in solidarity with the Cuban revolution. ●



The public execution of 22 of the convicted mutineers at Outram Road, Singapore, March 1915

## The unsung Muslim heroes of the Ghadar movement

From Radical Desi magazine

This February marks 100 years of a mutiny in the British army that took place under the influence of the Ghadar Party.

The majority of those who participated in the rebellion that rocked Singapore were Muslim soldiers. The uprising took place on February 15, 1915. Two Muslim platoons, Fifth Light Infantry and Malay Guide, were posted in Singapore around that time.

The Ghadar Party, a group of South Asian radical political activists, was established in the US in 1913. The party came into being in response to racism against the South Asian immigrants who had moved to North America for a better livelihood. These immigrants had come to the US and Canada as British subjects. Many had served in the British army and not surprisingly believed in the fairness of the British Empire.

However, the British government never came to their aid in a situation of racial violence from white supremacists. They soon realized that the root cause of their sufferings abroad was the British occupation of India. As a result

they started getting organized to fight back against racism and colonialism. Thus, the Ghadar Party was formed with a mandate to go to India and launch an armed rebellion with the help of Indian soldiers in the British army. Although the majority of the Ghadar activists were Sikhs, the party believed in secularism and wanted to establish an egalitarian society in post-British India.

In 1914, when the British were locked in war with Germany, these activists thought that it was the right time to return and launch a revolt with the help of the masses and those serving in the army. The political situation in India was not that encouraging, and the public was not ready for a radical movement. Thus, the attempted rebellion was suppressed by the authorities. Many Ghadar activists were arrested and hanged, while others had to serve life imprisonments.

On the way to India, many halted in Singapore and propagated against the British Empire, encouraging the Indian soldiers to leave their jobs and join the revolution. They had already built connections in the Muslim platoons, and Ghadar literature was

being distributed among the soldiers. In the meantime, Turkey's opposition to Britain had also influenced these Muslim soldiers, and the Ghadar Party took advantage of that.

Unfortunately, the British army came to know about the plan and transferred the Malay Guide to Penang. But the authorities somehow could not figure out that the Fifth Light Infantry had already fixed February 15 as the date for rebellion. The platoon was informed that they had to leave for Hong Kong the next morning. As the soldiers were being asked to deposit their ammunition that evening they revolted, killing one officer. This led to indiscriminate killings of white officers.

The mutineers occupied the barracks and formed three groups, one of which marched to the German prisoners' camp, while the second headed to the headquarters, and a third party went into the city. But the German prisoners refused to join the uprising. In the end, the British government was able to suppress the rebellion and 44 mutineers were executed. Out of these, 41 were

see MUTINY, p. 11



## American Sniper - "killing ragheads for Jesus"

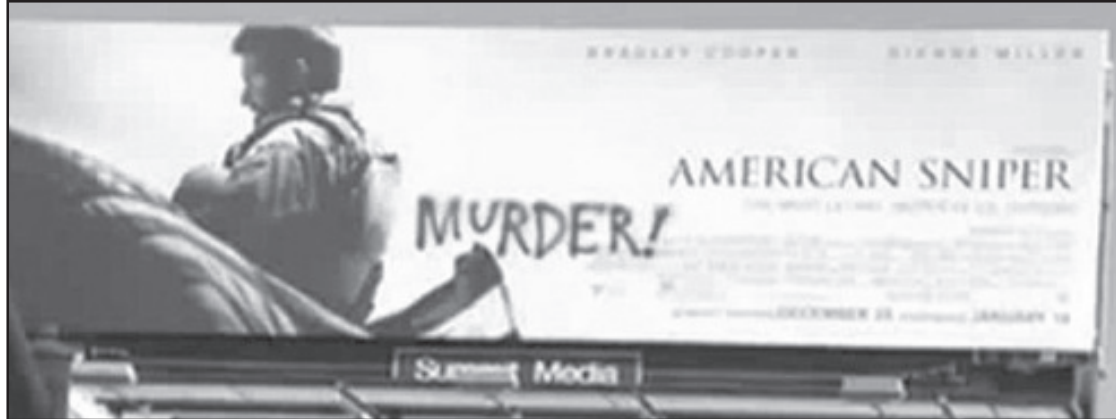
Excerpts from a review by Chris Hedges of the new Clint Eastwood film, "American Sniper"

"American Sniper" (based on Chris Kyle's autobiography of the same title) lionizes the most despicable aspects of U.S. society - the gun culture, the blind adoration of the military, the belief that we have an innate right as a "Christian" nation to exterminate the "lesser breeds" of the earth, a grotesque hypermasculinity that banishes compassion and pity, a denial of inconvenient facts and historical truth, and a belittling of critical thinking and artistic expression. Many Americans, especially white Americans trapped in a stagnant economy and a dysfunctional political system, yearn for the supposed moral renewal and rigid, militarized control the movie venerates. These passions, if realized, will extinguish what is left of our now-anemic open society...

"The movie never asks the seminal question as to why the people of Iraq are fighting back against us in the very first place," said Mikey Weinstein, whom I reached by phone in New Mexico. Weinstein, who worked in the Reagan White House and is a former Air Force officer, is the head of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, which challenges the growing Christian fundamentalism within the U.S. military. "It made me physically ill with its twisted, totally one-sided distortions of wartime combat ethics and justice woven into the fabric of Chris Kyle's personal and primal justification mantra of 'God-Country-Family.' It is nothing less than an odious homage, indeed a literal horrific hagiography to wholesale slaughter."

Weinstein noted that the embrace of extreme right-wing Christian chauvinism, or Dominionism, which calls for the creation of a theocratic "Christian" America, is especially acute among elite units such as the SEALs and the Army Special Forces.

The book is even more disturbing than the film. In the film Kyle is a reluctant warrior, one forced to do his duty. In the book he relishes killing and war. He is consumed by hatred of all Iraqis. He is intoxicated by violence. He is credited with 160 confirmed kills, but he notes that to be confirmed



Graffiti on a Los Angeles billboard describes the reality of the US occupation in Iraq.

a kill had to be witnessed, "so if I shot someone in the stomach and he managed to crawl around where we couldn't see him before he bled out he didn't count."

Kyle insisted that every person he shot deserved to die. His inability to be self-reflective allowed him to deny the fact that during the U.S. occupation many, many innocent Iraqis were killed, including some shot by snipers. Snipers are used primarily to sow terror and fear among enemy combatants. And in his denial of reality, something former slaveholders and former Nazis perfected to an art after overseeing their own atrocities, Kyle was able to cling to childish myth rather than examine the darkness of his own soul and his contribution to the war crimes we carried out in Iraq. He justified his killing with a cloying sentimentality about his family, his Christian faith, his fellow SEALs and his nation. But sentimentality is not love. It is not empathy. It is, at its core, about self-pity and self-adulation. That the film, like the book, swings between cruelty and sentimentality is not accidental...

Kyle was given the nickname "Legend." He got a tattoo of a Crusader cross on his arm. "I wanted everyone to know I was a Christian. I had it put in red, for blood. I hated the damn savages I'd been fighting," he wrote. "I always will." Following a day of sniping, after killing perhaps as many as six people, he would go back to his barracks to spend his time smoking Cuban Romeo y Julieta No. 3 cigars and "playing video games, watching porn and working out." On leave, something omitted in the movie, he was frequently arrested for drunken bar fights. He dismissed politicians,

hated the press and disdained superior officers, exalting only the comradeship of warriors. His memoir glorifies white, "Christian" supremacy and war. It is an angry tirade directed against anyone who questions the military's elite, professional killers.

The real-life Kyle, as the film was in production, was shot dead at a shooting range near Dallas on Feb. 2, 2013, along with a friend, Chad Littlefield. A former Marine, Eddie Ray Routh, who had been suffering from PTSD and severe psychological episodes, allegedly killed the two men and then stole Kyle's

pickup truck. Routh will go on trial next month. The film ends with scenes of Kyle's funeral procession - thousands lined the roads waving flags - and the memorial service at the Dallas Cowboys' home stadium. It shows fellow SEALs pounding their tridents into the top of his coffin, a custom for fallen comrades. Kyle was shot in the back and the back of his head. Like so many people he dispatched, he never saw his killer when the fatal shots were fired.

The culture of war banishes the capacity for pity. It glorifies self-sacrifice and death. It sees pain,

ritual humiliation and violence as part of an initiation into manhood. Brutal hazing, as Kyle noted in his book, was an integral part of becoming a Navy SEAL. New SEALs would be held down and choked by senior members of the platoon until they passed out. The culture of war idealizes only the warrior. It belittles those who do not exhibit the warrior's "manly" virtues. It places a premium on obedience and loyalty. It punishes those who engage in independent thought and demands total conformity. It elevates cruelty and killing to a virtue. This culture, once it infects wider society, destroys all that makes the heights of human civilization and democracy possible. The capacity for empathy, the cultivation of wisdom and understanding, the tolerance and respect for difference and even love are ruthlessly crushed. The innate barbarity that war and violence breed is justified by a saccharine sentimentality about the nation, the flag and a perverted Christianity that blesses its armed crusaders. This sentimentality, as Baldwin wrote,

see SNIPER, page 11

## Partners in Apartheid: Boycott Indigo Books and Music

By T.J. Petrowski

Branches of Indigo Books and Music and its subsidiaries Chapters, Coles, SmithBooks, and IndigoSpirit are familiar coast to coast, thanks to the company's monopoly control of retail bookstore sales in Canada. But behind the inviting facade lies a terrible reality - the murder of Palestinians.

Heather Reisman, the founder and CEO of Indigo Books and Music, and her husband, Gerry Schwartz, the co-founder of Onex Corporation, are among the most pro-Zionist capitalists in Canada. With a combined net worth between \$1.5 billion and \$2.5 billion, they donate millions of dollars to support Israel's occupation of Palestine, through the Heseg Foundation, which they founded to provide scholarships and other support to foreign-born soldiers who serve in the Israeli military.

The Heseg organization handed out over \$100,000 worth of rewards to Israeli soldiers who participated in the 2008-2009 assault on Gaza. The assault, which aimed to weaken the democratically-elected Hamas into submission, killed 200 Palestinians in a single day, and more than 1,400 (including 400 children) in total.

Reisman and Schwartz are close to several powerful Israeli military leaders and war criminals. On the Heseg board are army and air force chiefs of staff, the head of Israeli intelligence (Mossad), and Major General Doron Almog, who has been accused of war crimes for his role in bombing civilians in Gaza during 2000-2003.

Israel's genocidal war on the people of Lebanon in 2006 killed thousands of civilians and destroyed much of the country's infrastructure. At that time,

Reisman and Schwartz, in a highly publicized spectacle, switched from backing the Liberals to the Harper neo-conservatives, who gave strong support for Israel.


Kate Gilmore, speaking for Amnesty International, dismissed claims that Israel tried to avoid civilian casualties: "Many of the violations identified in our report are war crimes, including indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. The evidence strongly suggests that the extensive destruction of power and water plants, as well as the transport infrastructure vital for food and other humanitarian relief, was deliberate and an integral part of a military strategy," she told the press.

The level of destruction in Lebanon invalidates Israeli claims of 'collateral damage' and indicates that the war was about much more than 'self-defense'. The Lebanese government estimated that 30,000 houses, 900 businesses, 120 bridges, 94 roads, and 31 other vital points were destroyed in the 7,000 Israeli airstrikes and 2,000 naval shells launched against

targets in Lebanon. The firing of over a million cluster bombs left large swathes of southern Lebanon uninhabitable, and the extensive use of cluster bombs near the end of the war "looked suspiciously as if Israel had taken the brief opportunity before the war's end to make south Lebanon - the heartland of both the country's Shi'ite population and its militia, Hezbollah - uninhabitable, and to prevent the return of hundreds of thousands of Shi'ites who had fled Israel's earlier bombing campaigns." (See Jonathan Cook, [www.antiwar.com/cook/?articleid=11459](http://www.antiwar.com/cook/?articleid=11459))

The use of white phosphorus shells, a chemical weapon that causes skin to melt away from the bone and can break down, was a clear war crime committed by Israel. In total, an estimated 700,000 Lebanese were displaced and around 1,100 killed by Israeli forces in the 34 day military campaign.

All peace loving people should support the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid's boycott of Indigo Books and Music. •



### La Trova Nuestra

Friday, Feb. 27, 8 pm

#### "La Peña Nuestra"

Centre For Socialist Education, Vancouver  
706 Clark Drive (Clark and Georgia st)  
\$10 Entry

**About Vancouver's "La Trova Nuestra"**  
La Trova Nuestra is composed of 20 individual trovadores who originate from across Latin America and now reside in Vancouver. These trovadores are the keepers of a musical tradition which began with pioneers of the vernacular song. La Trova Nuestra incorporates this tradition interplaying music and poetry. At its foundation is the essence of a popular culture interpreting daily expression... an expression with origins deep within La Raza Mestiza (mixed roots) of Latin America - an expression of the explosive changes within the continent of Latin America today. La Trova Nuestra could be defined as "The encounter between a man, a guitar and poetry - voices pledging for a better world."



Image source: <http://electronicintifada.net>

# CPC election campaign...

continued from page 2

of working people, and gut labour's right to free collective bargaining. Their drive to export raw materials is destroying the environment and trampling on Aboriginal sovereignty, while creating huge profits for the oil and resource corporations. They have attacked civil rights, democracy and equality. And they have driven Canada's foreign policy further toward militarism, aggression and war."

The Communist Party will urge working people to dump the Tories, and to launch a longer-term, extra-parliamentary fight, including mass social mobilizations which can begin to have an electoral impact. The CPC calls for a powerful and broad People's Coalition of the working class and its allies outside of Parliament, as the way to shift power from the banks and transnational corporations, and start moving Canada in a new direction.

The draft statement notes that today's global crisis "is not really about government policies – it is about capitalism itself. It is time that capitalism and exploitation was replaced with a new system – socialism, a society based on full

democracy, human equality, and environmental sustainability, in which the resources and economic wealth are owned and controlled by the working people, not by corporate bosses."

Voting Communist, the statement says, sends "a strong and clear message that another Canada – and a better world – is necessary, urgent and worth fighting for."

The CC meeting moved into an extensive review of a draft election platform, covering a wide range of policy proposals to create jobs, expand democracy and social equality rights, protect the environment, and move towards an independent foreign policy of peace and disarmament. The election statement and platform will be on the agenda for a full in-person CC meeting this spring, or by another conference call in the event of a snap election.

In the meantime, organizational

work has begun to nominate 20-25 Communist candidates in key ridings across the country. The Party's new Central Organizer, Johan Boyden, presented an overview of these preparations, including recent efforts to identify candidates and ridings, and to begin collection of signatures for nominations. Among other rules, Elections Canada requires at least 100 valid nomination signatures in each riding, plus a \$1000 refundable deposit. These requirements pose a significant challenge for a small political party, but the CPC has been up to the task every time that Parliament adds new hurdles and barriers to the participation of smaller parties.

**For information on the Communist campaign, including how to help nominate CPC candidates, please contact the party's central office at 416-469-2446, or email <info@cpc-pcc.ca>.** •

## CPC places 4th in Rabble poll

In early February, visitors to the Rabble.ca progressive website took part in an online survey, on the question "If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" Out of 2782 total respondents, 1284 (46.1%) chose the NDP, 553 voted Liberal (19.9%), 468 voted Green (16.8%), and 197 voted Communist (7.1%), followed by 82 "undecided" (2.9%), 64 Conservative (2.3%), 13 Bloc Quebecois (0.5%), and 121 "other" (4.4%).

## Ukraine anti-war protests....

continued from page 12

In recent weeks, the neighbouring, small city of Debal'tseve has become the epicenter of the military clash between Donbas self-defense forces and the Ukraine army and militias. Thousands of Ukrainian troops are at risk of encirclement and capture. Most of the town's residents have fled. There are only some 6,000-8,000 residents left, and they are living without electricity, heating and water supply. They are reduced to cooking their food over open fires.

The online Ukrainian media outlet *Expres.ua* reports that the mayor of Debal'tseve was recently arrested by the Ukrainian Secret Service, accused of having sympathies with the pro-autonomy forces of Donbas. In the face of all this, the people rallied at the end of January, blaming the Ukrainian troops for their plight and demanding that they leave.

A protest of mothers and wives of conscripts was recently held in the village of Belovodsk in a

government-controlled part of Luhansk region. The authorities arrived under the protection of machine guns to explain the conscription policy. The villagers answered that they did not vote for Poroshenko and they had no interest in sacrificing themselves for the interests of the oligarch Igor Kolomoisky (a well-know Ukrainian billionaire and advocate of war).

Social networks are responding to the mobilization by creating memes with titles such as the "Elusive Battalion". The message is that it's only in make-believe worlds that the children of high-ranking officials, parliamentary deputies, politicians and businessmen are serving in the military.

Writing in the Ukrainian web journal *Liva*, journalist Roman Lyubar explains, "Due to conscription, Ukrainian authorities have managed to unite the citizens of the country who are everywhere joining to boycott the military draft and increasingly protest against it. This despite the threat of criminal prosecution and militarist

propaganda... Now Ukrainians see more clearly than ever that the poorest citizens face being cannon fodder and dying in a war while government officials and rich capitalists escape such a fate."

Yevgeny Kopatko, a Ukrainian analyst and founder of the Research and Branding Group, told TASS, "More and more statements are heard in Ukrainian society about a readiness [by ordinary people] to sit in prison instead of going to fight. In this situation, the decision on more military mobilizations is another test for the Ukrainian authorities".

Sergei Kirichuk, a leader of Ukrainian left organization Borotba, writes in a Jan. 29 commentary, "Even pro-government politicians and analysts are saying that the current mobilization has failed. Some people will not come to the draft board, and others desert after they are signed up. Thus are ever more drops added to the cauldron of popular discontent."

Under such circumstances, the Kiev government may resort to the policy of mass terror (with the help of Ukrainian far-right paramilitary organizations), forcing people to go to war at the point of a gun and murdering antiwar activists. But based on the experience of revolts and revolutions in Europe in 1917-18 during World War One, we know where such policy can lead. When people are armed and forced to fight against their will, when they are indignant, facing dire economic circumstances and demanding peace and yet their will is ignored, then the prospects of governments and private capitalist interests deemed responsible for the mess are not very bright.

**Dmitry Kolesnik is a Ukrainian journalist and editor of *Liva.com* ('The Left'). This article appeared on *Counterpunch* ([www.counterpunch.org](http://www.counterpunch.org)), Feb. 6, 2015. To read a wide variety of articles on the situation in Ukraine, visit the [newcoldwar.org](http://newcoldwar.org) website.** •

## The 1915 Singapore Mutiny....

continued from page 9

shot to death publicly.

The British documents acknowledge that these mutineers were influenced by the Ghadar Party. The centenary of the Singapore mutiny is a reminder of the Muslims' participation in the freedom movement, something that the Hindu right deliberately denies. These days, when Hindu fundamentalists are emboldened by the election of the Hindu nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party government, assaults on Muslims have increased, in the form of religious conversion campaigns designed to bring them into the Hindu fold. Often Muslims are branded as traitors and terrorists, and their loyalties are questioned. That the

Muslims were part of the Ghadar movement needs to be recognized to dispel this myth.

The story also has lessons for supporters of the imaginary Sikh homeland of Khalistan, who continue to distort the image of the Ghadar movement. Because the majority of Ghadar activists were Sikhs, the Khalistanis present the Ghadar movement as a Sikh struggle. The secular image of the Ghadar Party is therefore constantly under attack from both Hindu and Sikh religious extremists. The party had many prominent non-Sikh faces, reflecting its humanist and inclusive character, something that remains missing in theocratic, exclusionist and counter-revolutionary movements. •

# What's Left

## Vancouver, BC

**Another War in Iraq is Not the Answer**, public forum with author/activists Anthony Fenton and Derrick O'Keefe, Sat., Feb. 21, 2-4 pm, SFU Harbor Centre, 515 W. Hastings (check lobby for room). Organized by StopWar Coalition.

**La Trova Nuestra**, evening of Latin American music, admission \$10, 8 pm, Friday, Feb. 27, CSE, 706 Clark Drive.

**Book Launch: Cuba Solidarity in Canada**, edited by Nino Pagliccia, 7:30-9:30 pm, Friday, March 6, Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House Room 3, 800 E. Broadway, organized by Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver. \$14.95 at the event, or call 604-254-3066 to purchase a copy.

**Left Film Night**, 5 pm, Sat., March 7, CSE, 706 Clark Drive. Ph. 604-255-2041 for details.

**Community March Against Racism**, Sat., March 21, gather 1 pm at 14<sup>th</sup> & Commercial for march to Grandview Park (1200 block Commercial). Organized by No One Is Illegal & allies.

## Toronto, ON

**Achievements and Challenges of the ALBA-TCP**, presented by Bolivarian Circle Louis Riel and Canadian-Cuban Friendship Assoc., with remarks by diplomats from Venezuela, Cuba, El Salvador and Ecuador, and expert panelists. Music and poetry by "Voces Poeticas", refreshments, Sat., Feb. 21, 1:30-4 pm, OISE Peace Lounge, 252 Bloor St. W, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor.

**CPC New Members Celebration**, Sat., Feb. 21, 7 pm, tickets \$20, ph. 416-469-2446 for details (see page 3).

**Bethune Day Dinner**, 7 pm, Sat. Feb. 28, 290 Danforth Ave. Tickets \$5, door prize all-inclusive trip for two to Cuba. Media sponsor: People's Voice. For tickets, call 416-469-2446.

## PV 2015 Press Fund Drive

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It is also available for \$14.95 from Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver, 604-254-3066

## American Sniper review...

(Continued from page 11) - masks a terrifying numbness. It fosters an unchecked narcissism. Facts and historical truths, when they do not fit into the mythic vision of the nation and the tribe, are discarded. Dissent becomes treason. All opponents are godless and subhuman. "American Sniper" caters to a deep sickness rippling through our society. It holds up the dangerous belief that we can recover our equilibrium and our lost glory by embracing an American fascism.

*Chris Hedges has reported from more than 50 countries. For 15 years, he was a foreign correspondent for the New York Times.* •

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# When Ukrainians choose not to die in a war

By Dmitry Kolesnik

The current war situation in eastern Ukraine and the decision of the government in Kyiv to begin a new, fourth wave of military conscription and mobilization is unleashing a firestorm of mass opposition and refusal to fight. Protest is rising in all the regions of the country. For sure, there are still nationalist fanatics and far-right militarists exercising violence and intimidation against anti-war protests, but their capacity to stamp out protest is diminishing.

Ukraine is historically a peaceful nation. For some time now, it has avoided military conflicts like those that have flared elsewhere in eastern Europe - Yugoslavia, Georgia, etc. That came to a crashing end last year when the Kyiv government launched its "anti-terrorist operation" against the people in the east of the country. But from the beginning of the conflict, Ukraine has seen refusals by soldiers to fire on their fellow citizens, desertions from the army and refusals to show up for conscription. Women - the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of military conscripts - have held protests and even riots against the war or against forced military service.

The protests have been sparked, first of all, by the fact that many Ukrainians do not accept the interpretation of the war as offered by the government. They don't necessarily see foreign (i.e. Russian) aggression. They only know that when a Ukrainian soldier lifts his gun or artillery barrel, it is a compatriot, a fellow Ukrainian, who appears in the gunshot.

Secondly, many people don't want to die for the current government which they view as composed of extreme nationalists and neoliberals. They are unwilling to be cannon fodder dying for the interests of Ukrainian oligarchs whose only apparent interest is to pursue a civil war, siphon Western financial aid and suppress opposition to their rule.

Last but not least, many ordinary workers and farmers, (contrary to middle-class, urban dwellers),

preserve entrenched, regional identities. They consider their homeland to be a region such as Donbas, Bukovyna, Transcarpathia or Volhynia as much as, or perhaps even more importantly, it is the entity called "Ukraine". It is harder to sell to such people the

**While the U.S. prepares to increase arms shipments to the regime in Kiev, and Canada's PM Harper fans the new Cold War against Russia, the people of Ukraine are increasingly turning against the government which has launched yet another military assault against the eastern regions of the country. This article by a Ukrainian journalist tells a side of the story which the Canadian corporate media completely ignores.**

war's patriotic, pro-Ukraine and anti-Russia message.

The astonishing fact that almost no one is coming voluntarily to the military recruitment offices in this fourth, latest round of conscription is causing panic in the government and top army command of Ukraine. They are appealing, as always, to patriotic and nationalist sentiments, but this is falling increasingly on deaf ears.

Men of conscription age are fleeing in the thousands, crossing Ukraine's borders in all directions, or taking cover internally, to escape the clutches of the military recruiters. President Poroshenko has been obliged to order that, henceforth, only those men of military age with papers confirming they are duly registered with their military registration office will be permitted to leave the country.

"Each day, new facts about mass, draft evasion are emerging" reports the Ukrainian daily *Korrespondent*. It writes, "In the first wave of military mobilization in 2014, 20 per cent of those who showed up for the conscription call did so voluntarily. In the second wave the same year, it was ten per cent. This year, only six per cent of those conscripts showing up for the call to service have done so voluntarily".

In the Transcarpathia region in western Ukraine, entire villages have scattered across various borders to escape conscription. The head of the village council of

Kosiv district in Ivano-Frankivsk region reports that the entire population of the village booked buses and have moved to Russia to wait out the war. In the village of Colchino, authorities could find only three of the 105 eligible males to whom to serve papers.

Chief Recruitment Officer for Transcarpathia, O. Boyko, told *Korrespondent*, "It may seem a paradox, but from the western Ukrainian region of Ternopol, people have fled to Russia in order to escape conscription."

Many people are selecting east European countries as temporary refuges. Yuri Biryukov, an adviser to the Ukrainian president, has admitted, "In the last 30 days, 17 per cent of the total number of reservists of the entire region of Chernivtsy (western Ukraine) have crossed borders into other countries. According to unofficial sources, the hostels and motels in the border area of neighbouring Romania are overcrowded with Ukrainian draft evaders."

In the Volhynia region of western Ukraine, villagers have blocked the attempts by authorities to distribute call-up papers. A news report by 112.ua explained, "On January 24, the residents of the villages of Melniki, Zatishye and Pishcha in Shatsky district of Volhynia region blocked cars of the district administration as they arrived. Inside the vehicles were representatives of the local administration and the military recruitment office, arriving to deliver call-up papers for the military mobilization. Protesters forced the authorities to tear up the papers. They were then allowed to leave and the people went at home."

Authorities in that case struck back. "Three criminal proceedings have been opened under Article 336 of the Criminal Code (evasion of conscription)", reported a local police official.

The Odessa publication *Timer* reports that on January 23 in the village of Kulevchi in Saratsky district of Odessa region, the local population revolted against the military mobilization and kicked representatives out of the local

recruitment office.

The population learned that 240 call-up papers were en route to be served in their village. Within minutes, *Timer* explained, some 500 people gathered on the village square. Six officers of the recruitment office arrived with the papers but they found a less than welcome reception among the local people. When officials declared that refusal of conscription is punishable by criminal prosecution, the people began to shout "No war" and "We want peace". They reminded the officers that

difficult negotiations, a compromise was reached. But then the local residents seized the call-up papers, defiantly poured gasoline on them and set them alight - right before the eyes of the officials who had brought the papers to the village."

In some villages in Ternopil region, the heads of local councils did not even participate in the distribution of call-up papers. Even more, when representatives of military recruitment offices were due to arrive, some local authorities in the region tipped off residents in



Antiwar protest in city of Mykolaiv (Nikolaev), Ukraine, July 25, 2014, blocking traffic bridge over Bug River

Ukraine has not declared martial law and that the Minsk ceasefire agreement of last September has not been formally renounced by the Ukraine government. They called the new wave of military mobilization illegal and the recruiting officers were forced to leave the village.

O1.ua news outlet in Odessa reports, "In the village of Limansky (Reni district), a representative of the military recruitment office arrived with call-up papers accompanied by two armed gunmen. It nearly cost them their lives. The peasant villagers almost lynched the three."

Before the trip to the village, the military commissar of the district, Igor Skrypnik, was aware of the hostile attitude of the civilian population toward the mobilisation process. So he asked for protection while distributing mobilization papers. Two policemen armed with weapons were assigned. But it produced the opposite result.

"When two gunmen in camouflage appeared in the village, it immediately attracted people's attention and caused a spontaneous riot," said the acting chair of the local state administration, Sergey Barinov. "About 200 residents of Lima sky village surrounded the representative of the military and the armed police officers and threatened to punish them. Deputy Chair Ivan Stadnikov of the Reni district state administration and Military Commissar Igor Skrypnik immediately went to the village. After

order to give them the opportunity to avoid conscription.

The Russian news agency ITAR-TASS reports on January 27, "Ukraine's male population has massively started leaving abroad in search of jobs to dodge the current mobilization campaign. Entire villages are booking buses to dispatch their men as far as possible. Military committees are handing over the lists of fugitives to law enforcers to try and restrict the movement of men subject to conscription outside their native districts and areas."

Citing the Ukrainian *Vesti* news agency, TASS reported, "Natalya from Zaporizhia (south-eastern Ukraine) dispatched her son to Russia several months ago. The woman told *Vesti* on condition of anonymity that she had also sent her husband away (also to Russia) one week earlier. Men from western regions are leaving for Poland and Hungary. The city military committee in Ukraine's capital Kiev is also complaining about draft dodgers."

Anti-war protests are continuing in the areas of the Donbas region that are controlled by Ukrainian troops. In the city of Kramatorsk in Donetsk region, women staged a spontaneous rally in late January chanting "No war!" In a video of the protest, a woman asks the military officer present, "Why are they beating on our doors at night and taking our men away to the army?"

see UKRAINE, page 11

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