

JUNE 1-15
2013
VOL. 21
#10
\$1.50

people's VOICE

**Right-wing
hysteria in UK**

See page 7

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

Millions march against



Debunking the world's biggest GMO food pusher: page 6



Rural residents under attack by Canada Post and Harper Tories

- story on page 3 -

2

No Ontario election

Voters in Ontario may heave a sigh of relief that they won't be going back to the polls this spring. What does the agreement between the Wynne government and the NDP mean to working people?

INSIDE

5

BC struggle continues

British Columbians face four more years of a Liberal majority in Victoria, but the fight to put "people before profits" will not stop.

12

Electoral Fraud

Harper's Tories claim that a court ruling on the robocalls scandal lets them off the hook. But Judge Richard Mosley's ruling is actually a serious indictment of the federal Conservatives.

Ontario election averted as NDP slips

By Liz Rowley

An Ontario election has been averted, with the NDP throwing its support behind Premier Wynne's budget, despite the Liberal government's plan to cut jobs and wages across the public sector, and slash spending on health, education, social programs, and public services.

The Liberal minority will survive to fight another day because the NDP's conditions for support were so timid. While the NDP asked for 25,000 youth jobs, the Liberals gave them 30,000. The NDP asked for long term care beds, so the Liberals gave them beds. The NDP asked for a 15% cut in auto insurance rates, and the government promised to get it done.

Perhaps feeling the heat of public criticism, the NDP came back just before budget day, asking

the Liberals to create and staff a Parliamentary Budget Office. The only thing the government didn't give was authority for the Provincial Ombudsman to supervise the healthcare file.

With pressure from labour to avoid an election and the possibility of a Tory win, the NDP

How we see it...

backed the budget, no doubt with some sense of relief.

But why did labour support this budget with its devastating attack on public services and public sector workers?

There are two sharply different reasons. First, the right wing social

democratic leadership is still predominant in many Ontario trade unions, which refuse to criticize the NDP and view the labour movement solely as an electoral machine for the party.

Second, there is real fear and trepidation in the OFL and among progressives at the strength in the polls for the Tories, despite scandals in the Prime Minister's Office in Ottawa, and in the Mayor's office in Toronto. While a majority of voters and working people generally are appalled by massive Tory corruption, the Tories still have a sizable base which rejects all criticism as 'lies' and 'damned lies' by the 'soft-on-Communism' press and media 'maggots'.

They take their lead from Rob and Doug Ford, John Baird, Jason Kenney, Tim Hudak, and an assortment of pit-bulls. And their leaders are very well funded, as

the little \$90,000 solution to the Duffy problem shows.

Well, everything's relative. Perhaps the \$90,000 is peanuts, compared to what it was designed to hide from public scrutiny. An independent public inquiry would help to find out.

More important, the corporations behind them are huge funders - never mind the Canada Elections Act, tax receipts, financial rules and laws, etc. Pierre Poutine was funded by people with deep pockets, who never asked for receipts. How many other extra-judicial operators are getting ready to steal the next election - maybe in Ontario, maybe in Toronto, or maybe Canada again?

The federal Tories and the Ford Brothers' machine in Toronto broke election financing laws, and got away with a slap on the wrist. It helps to have friends in high places. New laws to sharply reduce election spending, and to police and enforce those spending limits, would also reduce the frenzy of US-style attack ads that coincidentally helped the BC Liberals hang on to government.

It would all be "ridiculous" (to quote the Mayor) if he and the Tory machine weren't such an immediate threat to democracy and to working people.

In the context of deep austerity, the public is feeling the pain of the cuts and insecurity imposed by right-wing "with us or with them" governments. Some, like those described as "Ford Nation," are looking to blame someone for their falling living standards. Their grievances are real. But the tea party populism whipping up their anger is manipulated by powerful corporate forces. Front men like Ford, Hudak and Harper are directing that anger at unions and unionized workers, at women, migrants, youth, Aboriginals, people of colour, and LGBTQ persons, all labelled the privileged "social elites". This is a dangerous and explosive cocktail.

It may be that the Ford Brothers have gone too far. The Mayor could be forced out in advance of next year's election. No doubt that would be a victory for democracy in Toronto. But the Mayor and his Bro were elected as part of a right-wing majority in City Hall that aimed to privatize city services, sell public assets, slash jobs and wages, and smash city unions,

amongst other things. The Mayor may go, but his agenda remains, 18 months before they can be turfed out. Too long to wait on stand-by.

So, we have by-passed an Ontario election this spring after all. Instead we can anticipate new opportunities for an election this fall, when the stakes are too high, and the political options too limited to stop the train wreck that's surely ahead. The 5-year austerity plan put in place by Premier Wynne, backed by the NDP, and imposed by PM Harper's majority federal government, is the guarantee that things are about to get much worse for the 99%.

There's no solution in the current Legislature or Parliament, and with the undemocratic first-past-the-post system, little hope for any real progressive change in the near future. In fact, this electoral system gave Harper a majority with the support of only 20% of eligible voters - a scenario that's quite possible in Ontario.

The present minority situation gave the NDP a golden chance to fight for significant concessions like public auto insurance, rent controls and social housing construction, substantial increases in the minimum wage and social assistance, plant closures legislation, and infrastructure spending to create jobs and raise living standards. Instead, they supported an austerity budget that will do great harm to working people, the unemployed, women, youth, and many others in Ontario.

Mass independent and escalating political action in the streets to resist austerity and demand new policies that meet people's needs: that is what the labour, democratic and people's movements must organize now. A Peoples' Coalition is the political vehicle to stop austerity and change direction.

In Ontario, the OFL's Common Front is a good first step, but needs more action on the agenda, and more active participation by OFL affiliates. The Days of Action are a good model for sustained and escalating action. What's urgently needed is the political will and the money. We need to get on with it while there are still public services, jobs, pensions, and rights left to fight for.

For more on this, check out the Communist Party's 10 Point Prescription for a People's Recovery @ontariopc.ca.

Only 13% of jobless youth qualify for EI benefits

The Canadian Labour Congress says that the federal government's labour market policy is failing young workers. The CLC was responding to the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey for April 2013.

There were 1,361,700 unemployed in April, and the overall unemployment rate was 7.2%. In the 15-to-24 age group, unemployment stood at 14.5% and 46.8% of young workers are employed only part-time.

"It is really stunning that only 13% of unemployed workers in the 15-to-24 age group were able

to able to qualify for Employment Insurance in 2012 - a mere 7.0% of unemployed women and 17% of unemployed men," says CLC President Ken Georgetti. "This speaks to the harmful changes that Ottawa introduced to the EI system in 2012."

Official figures count 1.4 million unemployed Canadian workers, but as Georgetti notes, "the federal government has assisted employers to import hundreds of thousands of vulnerable migrant workers paying them less than prevailing wages. This has not helped match Canadians looking for work with

the jobs employers need to fill. We should be concerned that there are no jobs for the unemployed and the TFWP is part of the problem."

A gain of over 12,000 jobs in April was not enough to move the unemployment rate, which remained at 7.2%. All of the employment gains were due to public sector hiring, as the private sector shed 20,000 jobs in April.

The real unemployment rate for youth age 15-24 increased by half a percentage point over last April, to 20.9%. ●

People's Voice hosts UK speaker

As part of our annual Press Fund Drive, People's Voice is pleased to host a special guest from Britain at two important events this month.

Liz Payne is the Vice-Chair of the Communist Party of Britain, and the CPB's National Women's Organiser. She is deeply involved in campaigns to build wide popular resistance against the UK Conservative government's anti-equality policies. Not least, she is a contributor to our sister publication, the *Morning Star*, the world's only daily English-language socialist newspaper.

First is the annual People's Voice Victory Banquet in Vancouver, where our guest will speak on the Cameron government's anti-women policies. Doors open at 6

pm, Saturday, June 8, at the Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave. in the historic Strathcona neighbourhood. Tickets are \$20, or \$10 for unwaged, and the banquet features great food, refreshments, and performers. Call 604-255-2041 for information and tickets, or pick one up at the door.

Liz Payne will also speak at a People's Voice Forum on Thursday, June 13, 7:30 pm, at Toronto's Beit Zatoun, 612 Markham St. (near Bathurst subway). For details, call 416-469-2446.

Payne has been a member of three trade unions: the National Union of Teachers (NUT), the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE, now the Association

of Teachers and Lecturers) and UNISON, Britain's huge public services union. She has held union committee positions at branch, regional and national levels, and been actively involved with union regional women's groups.

She is a member of the committee which organises the annual International Women's Day event at the Marx Memorial Library in London, an event which she has coordinated and chaired on the last three occasions.

Among her other activities, she is a founder and National Council member of CODIR (the Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights), and a member of the National Assembly of Women, which is affiliated to the Women's International Democratic Federation.

Last November, Payne represented the CPB at the annual International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, held in Beirut, Lebanon.

During her tour, comrade Payne will also take part in some informal events, including a discussion with women activists in Vancouver on fighting back against austerity policies in Britain and Canada, where the Harper Tories see David Cameron's government as a model for their right-wing attack against equality rights at all levels.

Contact People's Voice at 604-255-2041 for more information. ●

Here's my contribution!

Enclosed please find my donation of \$_____ to the 2013 People's Voice Press Fund Drive.

Name _____

Address _____

City/town _____

Prov. _____ Postal Code _____

Send your contribution to:

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



The Fifth of the Month to Free the Five

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

E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

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

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

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

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

Rural Canada under attack by Canada Post

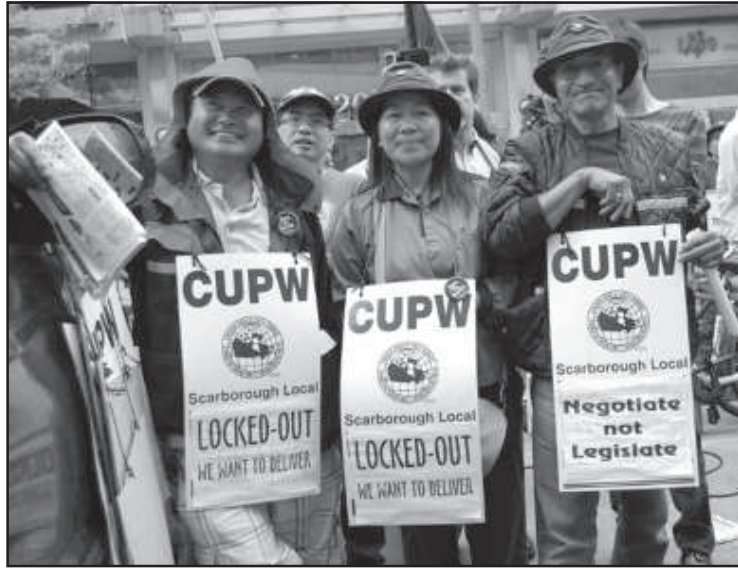
By Mark Hamilton

The Canada Post Act (1981) mandates the maintenance and expansion of our public post office. Canada Post is a public service that belongs to all of us, connecting communities both large and small, from isolated locations like Pictou Island to downtown Vancouver. The services provided by Canada Post are invaluable for individuals and businesses, even in this "digital age," especially in rural areas.

Contrary to what many have been led to believe, Canada Post Corporation has made consistent profits, year in and year out. For a full sixteen years, the post office returned handsome dividends to the federal government, costing the taxpayer nothing.

For the first time, Canada Post announced a financial loss for the year 2011. It claimed that this was due to a major and continuing decline in letter mail volumes. Certainly, letter mail has declined, but not at the exaggerated levels presented by the Corporation.

The real reasons for the loss in 2011 differ from what Canada Post suggests. During labour negotiations, Canada Post locked out their workers, and invested



Postal workers want to deliver the mail to urban and rural resident across the country - but Canada Post and the federal Conservatives have a different agenda. (Photo by Ed Bil, from the June 2011 lockout of CUPW by the Harper Tories.)

billions into new sorting machinery. If letter mail is truly in a historic decline, why invest so much into machinery to sort an ever diminishing volume of mail?

Despite plenty of fear mongering, Canada Post once again returned to profits in 2012, claiming that this rebound was due to cost savings achieved through

the last collective agreement. The mistakes of management were paid for by the postal workers themselves, in direct cuts to benefits such as sick leave and two-tier wages for new hires.

Based on a report issued by The Conference Board of Canada, a corporate think tank, Canada Post projects a return to a loss position

for next year and into the future. This biased report was funded by Canada Post, and Deepak Chopra, the current President and CEO of Canada Post, sits on the Board of Directors of the Conference Board.

Canada Post and the Harper Tories are using such "studies," and the gradual decline in letter mail, to justify dramatic cuts in both jobs and services. Rural Canada and Quebec have been hit especially hard. Small villages and towns have seen local post offices close or reduce their hours.

Canada Post also provides decent jobs in rural areas which often have few employment opportunities, and the post office is still a hub of activities in many communities. Rural mail delivery has a long and proud history. Rural and Suburban Mail Couriers (RSMCs) deliver mail to residents in every corner of the country, in all types of weather.

One prong of the attack has been made under the guise of health and safety. Canada Post has sent so-called safety inspectors to evaluate mail boxes on rural routes. Out of a feigned concern for employees, Canada Post has declared many such mail boxes to be unsafe. Residents who may have received mail for decades at the end of their driveway have had their mode of delivery changed to a community mailbox, which can be kilometres away. Many rural routes have lost significant numbers of points of call, costing jobs and forcing seniors and those with disabilities to travel to get their mail.

In December of last year, Canada Post made changes to how local mail is processed. Until then, local mail would be cancelled and sorted in its office of origin, and usually delivered the next day. Now mail is being sent to urban centres to be sorted, and returned to the local destination address. Canada Post has tried to maintain that these changes do not impact delivery standards, but the truth is otherwise. For example, almost all mail in the provinces of Nova Scotia and PEI, will be sent to Halifax to be sorted, returning later. The deterioration of service was immediate, as were

job losses, with huge numbers to come as more workers retire and more services are cut.

A new smaller, retail model is being implemented by Canada Post. All postal outlets are to be reviewed, and many of the first targets are in rural Canada. In Nova Scotia, some of the offices to make the first list are Truro, Yarmouth, Pictou and North Sydney. This new model involves the downsizing from the standard two wickets, to one single wicket. This prevents relief staff from assisting when necessary, and creates long wait times for customers. The postal clerk is left to work out of a hole in the wall, with the products hidden behind the counter.

While there are challenges facing the post office, the solution is not to be found in reducing jobs and services, but rather through an expansion of services. Canada Post has the ability and infrastructure to reach every household in the country, actively competing with private courier companies. Postal banking and financial services are another promising avenue for revenues. Many postal administrations around the world have successfully moved into banking, like Germany, New Zealand and China. Canada Post should do the same. An expansion into banking would be a great asset for rural areas, many of which no longer have access to banks.

Rural Canadians deserve to have mail delivery. But there is a clear agenda by the Corporation's management and the Harper Conservatives to dismantle and destroy Canada Post as a public service. The decisions point in the direction of privatisation, which would be a disaster for postal workers and the public.

Stay informed and participate in local actions organised by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Tell your Member of Parliament and Canada Post that you want an expansion of services! Canada Post has an online site where you can provide your thoughts on the future of the post office. This site may be accessed through www.canadapost.ca. ●

"Brigadistas" return from Cuba volunteer work program

Chevy Phillips, Toronto,

A press conference was held on May 15 at Toronto's City Hall to welcome back and hear from the most recent Che Guevara Work Brigade, a group of 43 people from 15 to 82 years of age, from five provinces across Canada and one American state, who spent three weeks engaging in a variety of volunteer work projects across the island of Cuba.

The highly diverse group included 12 students and 9 retirees, 13 people on their first Brigade experience, 12 who were present last year and one person for whom 2013 saw their fifth Brigade excursion. Many participants are active in Canada with Cuba Solidarity campaigns, work with their local Cuban Friendship Associations, and take part in the global campaign to free the "Cuban 5" prisoners held in US prisons. Rene Gonzales, one of the 5, has recently been given leave to remain in Cuba and is no longer obliged to fulfil the restrictive bail conditions imposed after his release from incarceration due to the popular pressure of the international "Free the Cuban 5" campaign. Members of the Young Communist League of Canada were also proud participants of the Brigade.

The Brigade's press conference was led by Niagara's Dave Thomas, who has been the coordinator for the Work Brigade for the past three years, and heard contributions from four of the Brigadistas. Examples of the activity of the Brigade were discussed, including work on a cooperative farm and visits to schools and hospitals. Work Brigade members of all ages were given tasks according to their abilities; on a mango farm this

meant sorting fruit for distribution or weeding out in the fields, since the overwhelming majority of Cuban agriculture is organic. The Brigade participants related how their efforts were always warmly and gratefully received by local Cuban workers.

A visit to a housing complex for victims of recent hurricane damage was also discussed, the Brigade members relating how impressed they were that even this small community on an island off the mainland was still generously served by education and health services, both of which are world class and free to all citizens. This community has seven teachers for ten students, four daycare workers for around a dozen young children, and a doctor and nurse in residence in the community. One of the Brigade participants, a nursing student from Vancouver, spoke of how trainee nurses in Cuba receive excellent levels of one-on-one training with qualified doctors, and how the average wait time in ER in Cuba is just 30 minutes. In Canada, the average wait times are over four hours, among the highest in the world. Cuba's health service provided a dramatic and lasting example to the Brigadistas of how even a relatively poor country can have excellent health provision if resources and spending priorities

are set accordingly.

One highlight was, as anticipated, May Day in Havana. The Brigade participants spoke of their admiration for the enthusiasm and collective spirit of the million or so participants, who from first thing in the morning began to gather with great pride at the achievements of their country, their ranks being led this year by scientific workers currently engaged in ground breaking cancer research. This year's May Day parade also saw a giant tribute display to the late Hugo Chavez, recently deceased president of Venezuela, who was a great friend of Cuba and much loved by the people there.

In the words of some of the Brigadistas themselves:

"I have great hope that the Cuban Revolution is strong and surviving, and has answers for the problems we have here in Canada."

"I was greatly impacted by the warmth and humanity of the Cuban people."

"Cuba is a beautiful and powerful example of what a country can achieve when its people work together."

Organising for the next Che Guevara Work Brigade will begin a little later this year. See www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/ for more information. ●



NIAGARA NEWS BULLETIN

People's Voice Niagara Bureau

* **A memorial to over 128 workers** (the list is still incomplete) killed or injured in constructing the Welland Canal is finally being built 80 years after the government first promised it. A local campaign gathering over 1,600 signatures and support from local municipalities is helping to remember workers who came from 14 countries, many of whom were crushed to death.

* A new record was set on Victoria Day as **1,000 people protested Marineland's opening day**, including whistleblowing former workers. The second largest animal rights protest in Canadian history shows momentum is continuing, despite the erection of a chain link and multiple lawsuits against workers and activists. One former trainer has just filed a counter-suit for abuse of process and defamation. The park's owner is one of the bigger landowners in the area.

* The region's only **children's mental health clinic laid off its only art therapist** as the latest casualty of 10 years of no inflationary increases in funding. The clinic is turning away 220 children per year who should have been treated at schools and other agencies in the first place.

* **Ontario Conservative leader Tim Hudak was "unveiling" his austerity agenda** of massive public sector layoffs at a Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce meeting on May 15, suggesting 300,000 jobs be cut. Labour and allies demonstrated outside and vowed to follow him wherever he goes.

* Brock University's Niagara Community Observatory calculated that **poverty costs the region \$1.38 billion** in health care, social, and lost productivity costs. ●

EDITORIALS

Harper and Ford: corrupt criminals

Rarely has the gap between the pompous rhetoric of right-wing politicians and the sleazy reality been so vast. Both Stephen Harper and Rob Ford gained office as supposed enemies of corruption and crime, and both now stand revealed as utterly corrupt criminals.

The Prime Minister is deeply entangled in a web of payoffs and backroom deals involving his fired chief of staff and a gaggle of buffoonish Tory Senators caught scamming the public with phony expense claims. The only downside to this news is that the PM may yet force his patronage appointees - Mike Duffy, Pamela Wallin, and Patrick Brazeau - to take the fall. But the stench of this scandal will cling to Harper, since it infuriates much of his own voter base who have long been suspicious of the unelected Senate.

Rob Ford's downfall - for surely he cannot survive his latest debacle - is more bad news for the political right. It's true that there is a certain classist and racist twist to the mayor's situation; if Ford had been filmed swilling expensive Scotch with "business leaders" in expensive suits, few would bat an eyelash. But after constructing his image of a down-to-earth fighter for the "little guy", Ford has now betrayed even his most loyal believers.

The task of the left, however, is not to focus on these tawdry spectacles, since the anti-working class agenda is not the product of individual politicians. Scandals can help to erase the phony "populist" image of hypocritical right-wing leaders. But the real question is how to mobilize resistance against big capital and governments (Conservative, Liberal, and even NDP and PQ) which follow the neoliberal model. This requires a conscious effort by the labour movement and its allies to build unity around a real People's Alternative to corporate domination. There are welcome stirrings of interest along such lines, but much more needs to be done.

Poverty amidst untold wealth

Next time you hear that we "can't afford" decent pay, working conditions and pensions for those who actually make the wheels turn round, here are a few facts to consider. In 2011, Canadian CEOs made \$7.7 million on average, or 171 times more than the median Canadian wage of \$45,448, according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. In the Globe and Mail's new listing of Canada's top 100 CEOs, Canadian Pacific Railway boss Mark Harrison was number one, taking home \$49,151,065 for the year. The remaining top 20 on the Globe's list all topped \$10 million. For example, Gordon Nixon, the CEO of the Royal Bank of Canada, raked in \$13.7 million. Yes, that's the same Royal Bank which took advantage of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to replace 45 employees in its Securities division, until RBC's insatiable greed was inconveniently exposed to the public.

And the greed-fest is getting uglier. The Globe writes about "a fevered pace of CEO turnover... as firms pay millions in severance to former executives while also shelling out to attract new leaders". No wonder that a Pew Research Centre study finds that 76 per cent of Canadians think income inequality is worsening. Overall, 74 per cent of people polled in the developed capitalist countries said the economic system favours the wealthy and is unfair to most people.

We live under a system which functions very well indeed for the top sliver of the 1%. But for those on the bottom of the heap - minimum wage workers bringing home \$15,000 a year, social assistance recipients starving on less than \$8,000 a year, unemployed students graduating with massive debt loads - the capitalist system is a life sentence of poverty in the midst of staggering wealth. Makes the idea of a socialist Canada sound pretty good, doesn't 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

Volunteers and contributors for this issue:

Dave Arland, Ed Bil, Mark Hamilton, Jean Kenyon,
Darrell Rankin, Liz Rowley, Gurpreet Singh, and our
mailers in Vancouver & Toronto.

Editor: Kimball Cariou Business Manager: Gabriel Au

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

LETTERS

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

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



The great crime scene of Greece

By Greg Palast

It wasn't too difficult picking out the Fat Bastard in the crowd of Russian models, craven moochers and media mavens. Besides, he and I were both desperate for coffee and heading for the same empty urn.

We'd both signed on for Kazakhstan's annual Eurasia Media Forum, a kind of burning man festival for eastern oilgarchs and their media camp followers.

Now, it is my policy never to mention an interlocutor's weight, nor question the legitimacy of their birth, given my own vulnerabilities.

But this particular man was asking for it. I had tried to put the belly of this beast out of my thoughts, but I still had a *New York Times* story folded in my pocket that begins:

"Athens - As an elementary school principal, Leonidas Nikas is used to seeing children play, laugh and dream about the future. But recently he has seen something altogether different, something he thought was impossible in Greece: children picking through school trash cans for food; needy youngsters asking playmates for leftovers; and an 11-year-old boy, Pantelis Petrakis, bent over with hunger pains."

Fat Bastard - or Theodoros Pangalos, leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Party (Pasok), Greece's equivalent to Britain's Labour Party - thinks the little Greek kiddies should stop belly-aching.

Pangalos is best known for blaming the working people of Greece for the horror and the hunger among the ruins of what was once Greece's economy.

However, it is, of course, not his fault. Until last year, and through the core of the crisis, he was just Greece's deputy prime minister - why should he be held accountable for anything?

Pangalos is much loved by Europe's banking chieftains, by vulture speculators and by German Chancellor Angela Merkel because they've got themselves a Greek politician who will mouth their mantra - that his nation's sudden collapse can be blamed squarely on olive-pit-spitting, lazy-

arse Greeks who won't work more than three hours a week, then retire while they're still teenagers to swill state-subsidised ouzo.

Pangalos leads the fifth column of Greeks calling to accept Germany's terms of economic surrender - austerity, meaning cuts in food allowances, in pensions, in jobs. More than one in four Greeks (27 per cent) are now out of work.

While we hunted for caffeine, Pangalos told me that anyone who complains about the austerity diktat "is a fascist or a communist



"We all ate it together" - PASOK leader Theodoros Pangalos

or a conspiracy theorist."

He didn't tell me which of these three categories the 11-year-old kids complaining of hunger pains fell into.

Just for the record, those Greeks who can get a job work 619 more hours per year than the average German (and way, way more than British or US workers as well).

But in the world according to Pangalos, Merkel and poobahs of the media, Greece went to hell in a handbag because the entire nation suddenly turned into work-shirking grifters.

But there's another explanation for wrack and ruin - Greece is a crime scene. And its working people are not the perpetrators of the crime, they are the victims - scammed, defrauded, their national industries looted and their treasury drained by financial flim-flam.

In 2001 Greece dropped the drachma for the euro. The drachma was good enough for Aristotle and very good for tourism, Greece's main industry.

But when sun-and-fun was

replaced in euros, tourists swam across the Adriatic for kofte meatballs priced in dirt-cheap Turkish lira.

Pre-euro tourist visits to Greece outnumbered those to Turkey by millions, but by last year it was the just the opposite, with twice as many tourists tanning in Turkey.

With its Treasury bleeding hard currency, the government of Pangalos' Pasok joined together with the opposition in a complex international currency kiting operation to conceal the losses from the public and, most importantly, from the European Central Bank.

Why the cover-up of the deficit? The answer is that the euro is more than a currency - it is a straitjacket, a set of constricting rules that, for example, prohibit any euro nation from running a deficit of more than 3 per cent of GDP.

That's impossible in a recession - not to mention plain insane - as it requires cutting public spending when spending is needed most. The US, China, Brazil, India - the nations that pulled the world from depression's brink - all ran deficits way over the nutty 3 per cent cap.

I asked finance whizz Nomi Prins to calculate the US's debt-to-GDP ratio using euro rules, and she estimates that Obama's deficits

see GREEK, page 11

Renew today!

Check your label

Please check the address label on the front page to see if it's time to renew. Subscribers who find "2013/06/01" on their label, for example, will have their subscriptions expire with this issue, June 1-15, 2013

Don't miss a single copy - renew today!

The struggle in British Columbia will continue

Statement by the BC Provincial Executive Committee, Communist Party of Canada

The May 14 B.C. provincial election saw the right-wing Liberals win a fourth consecutive majority, thanks largely to the corporate sector which financed a massive anti-NDP attack ad blitz. But it must be also noted that Adrian Dix's NDP failed to campaign on a platform to defend the interests of the working class against big business.

Coming after years of popular anger against the Liberals, including the historic defeat of the HST, the election result defied polling numbers which had given the NDP a wide lead.

The Liberal share of the popular vote dropped slightly, from 45% in 2009 to 44% in this campaign, and Premier Christy Clark was defeated in her own riding. But the BC Conservatives took less than five percent of the popular vote, so the anticipated split of the right-wing forces did not materialize. Decisive sections of big capital united to preserve B.C.'s traditional "free enterprise" coalition of federal Liberals and Conservatives. In particular, the energy and resource industries made enormous efforts to save the Liberal government, which is expected to repay them with support for projects to expand hydrocarbon exports.

The coming months will expose the true, anti-working class character of the B.C. Liberals. Despite their

gamble on big revenues from resource exports, the Liberals cannot save British Columbia from the effects of the global capitalist economic crisis. Hydrocharges will skyrocket, the union-bashing seen during Campbell's years as premier

How we see it....

will return, the rights of First Nations will be trampled, and poverty will deepen for large sections of the population. On May 15, six more schools were closed by the underfunded Cowichan Valley school district, an ominous sign of things to come. The Premier's "balanced budget" will be seen as a cynical lie, and next year's budget will launch a new round of social spending cuts.

This situation is a powerful rebuke to those who argued that the working class and popular forces should try to ride out the storm until the NDP's return to power.

The defeat of the NDP proves yet again that change cannot be won simply through electoral tactics. This is not to dismiss the aspirations of labour and progressive activists who worked so hard to elect a new government. Their courageous efforts over the past twelve years, and during this election, deserved a far better result.

But this struggle was not matched by the NDP leadership, which repeatedly dampened any hopes of reversing the damage inflicted by

the Liberals, instead calling for "small, realistic" changes. In fact, the NDP (like social democratic parties in other countries) largely accepts the basic premise that the capitalist system can only be adjusted, not challenged. This allowed the Liberals to set the tone for the campaign, falsely pitting "economic growth" against "the environment", when in fact the Liberal record on both issues has been dismal.

Adrian Dix did pledge to reverse a small part of Campbell's \$2 billion annual tax breaks for the corporate sector and upper-income brackets - but so did Christy Clark, to distance herself from Campbell's legacy. Dix had planned to use some of these revenues to support badly-underfunded public schools and post-secondary education. On the other hand, the NDP's promise to raise starvation-level social assistance rates by a miserly \$20 a month - and only after two years - was seen by many poor people and anti-poverty advocates as a slap in the face. The NDP also failed to present any serious plan to build more low-income housing, or to make strong commitments to progressive changes to labour legislation.

This strategic failure, not so-called vote splitting by the Greens, is the real reason for the NDP's defeat. The NDP share of the vote declined from 42% in 2000 to 39.5% in this campaign. The drop in turnout of eligible voters to below 50% indicates that many potential NDP supporters were not inspired by the party's weak

platform.

Adrian Dix will lead 33 MLAs back to Victoria, and some of these members will be powerful critics of the Clark government. The Green MLA Andrew Weaver will also be a welcome voice for the environment rather than corporate interests.

But the key struggles over the coming four years will be in workplaces, communities, and wilderness areas across British Columbia. The Liberal attack must be met with a powerful, militant, united response, by working people, First Nations, youth, seniors, women and not allow our movements to be distracted and divided by narrow electoral ambitions, nor by counter-productive tactics of isolated individuals. Only broad, united movements can set the stage for fundamental change in British Columbia.

The BC Federation of Labour, and other organized labour groups in the province can play a crucial and positive role in such a struggle. When the organized labour movement gets involved politically for social change in the interests of the working class, they can make a difference. Political action by labour must move beyond simply providing foot soldiers, resources and mobilization as a part of the NDP electoral strategy, although this may be a part of it. Independent political action together with its allies in community and social activist groups, raising the issues year-round from a working class perspective, is needed. This kind of political action must break out of narrow sectarian strategies and

be inclusive as a rallying point for progressive opponents to the Liberal pro-corporate agenda.

This is why it remains critical to build a much larger and more influential Communist Party in British Columbia. The Communist candidates presented a comprehensive platform to put people and the environment ahead of corporate greed. As expected, the low vote for Communist candidates reflected the difficult choices faced by working people desperate to defeat the Liberals. But much larger numbers of young people supported the Communist Party in the Student Vote BC project. This shows that our policies for fundamental change do have wider support. The time is coming when Communist MLAs will be on the floor of the Legislature to fight for the rights and interests of the working class.

To all our friends who campaigned and voted for change on May 14th, only to face bitter disappointment, we say: the struggle to block the corporate agenda will continue in British Columbia. Our party will continue to fight shoulder to shoulder with others for poverty reduction, social housing, improved labour legislation, a higher minimum wage, full equality, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and other vital demands. We welcome you to join our Party, to help us build a powerful People's Alternative to the neoliberal agenda, and to work for a socialist Canada, where exploitation, oppression and environmental destruction are replaced by economic justice, social equality, and a sustainable future! •

Why I voted Communist

By Gurpreet Singh

Ever since I became a citizen of Canada in 2006, I have been consistently voting for the New Democrats both provincially and federally. But the New Democrats lost my vote in the May 14 BC election. The reason is simple; the party that claims to be progressive and leftist recently removed socialism from its constitution.

As news of the end of socialism in the Federal NDP came, I began asking my allies and friends to give me one good reason to vote for the party. However, the NDP platform for the BC election added fuel to the fire. I could not believe when I did not find any solid assurance to restore the BC Human Rights Commission in the election platform.

The BC Liberals had disbanded the body when they first came to power in 2001, making BC the only province in Canada without a Human Rights Commission. While the NDP has been attacking the Liberals for this move for all these years, the party platform was non-committal on the issue. If this was not enough, the former NDP candidate from Kelowna-Mission shocked everyone by saying racist things about the indigenous peoples. Instead of firing her right away, the party had her resign.

Angered by these developments, I decided to vote Communist in my North Delta riding. I understand that my vote

won't count in the BC legislature, but it was my way of lodging protest and sending a message to the NDP that to have support of people like me, it has to shift to the left instead of pandering to the centrists or the right wing vote bank.

Although I acknowledge that I truly believed the NDP to be a party closest to my ideology within the Canadian parliamentary system, and has taken some progressive positions in the past, the series of recent ugly developments left me with little choice but to pick a real alternative. It is way harder for this alternative to become a voice in the Canadian parliament or provincial legislatures, but I have no regret.

I must also admit that I thought more pragmatically in the past while voting, and considered the "socialist" NDP as a better choice over the communists within the parliamentary system. But what's the point in voting for a party which has deliberately decided to depart from socialism? The NDP cannot take my support for granted after all.

I would also like to briefly share a firsthand experience which might have also influenced me to vote communist. A friend of mine, Harjit Daudhria, a staunch communist, was assigned the duty to get signatures on the nomination form of the North Delta Communist candidate George Gidora. Since he wasn't well, he requested me to get these signatures from friends in the South Asian community. As I went to different homes to get signatures,

I was shocked to find that some people, including those known for their leftist leanings, expressed their reservations to sign the form. A few of them frankly said that they hate communists.

One can agree that the Communists are not perfect or that the Communist regimes might have lost credibility for various reasons, but the same goes for other political parties and regimes.

What really affected me the most was that the communists like the late Darshan Singh Canadian fought for the right to vote for the East Indians in this country, but still these people showed no remorse in expressing disrespect for a party that stood for Indian immigrants when they were disfranchised in 1907. The right was restored after a 40-year-long struggle in 1947. The communists stood for equality when the immigrants were being subjected to racial discrimination.

Finally, I am not happy with the results. The BC Liberal victory is not really good for the working class, as its right wing corporate agenda is very clear. But at least the BC Liberals are honest and clear in their approach, unlike the NDP, which is only trying to become another Liberal Party by denouncing socialism and other progressive values to win elections.

Gurpreet Singh is a journalist and human rights activist from Surrey, BC. •

90th Birthday for the "Two Graces"



About 200 friends, relatives, fellow activists and comrades packed the banquet room of Nanaimo's Coast Bastion Inn on May 18 at the joint 90th birthday party for Grace Stevens (above) and Grace Tickson (below). After a delicious lunch, speakers paid tribute to the "two Graces" for their decades of commitment to the working class struggle for a better world, and then it was time for music and dancing! Best wishes to the long-time Communist Party stalwarts were presented on behalf of the entire Party by CEC member Kimball Cariou.



Why millions marched against Monsanto

An estimated two million people took part in world-wide protests against seed giant Monsanto on May 25. "March Against Monsanto" was held to call attention to the dangers posed by genetically modified food and the food giants that produce it. Founder and organizer Tami Canal said protests were held in 436 cities across 52 countries. A PV correspondent looks at the issue from a Canadian perspective.

By Jean Kenyon

"Roundup Ready" alfalfa is about to be registered for use in Eastern Canada in June or July, over the protests of farmers and concerned consumers. So says the latest update from the activist group CBAN - the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network.

The new genetically modified hay variety is a Monsanto product, to be distributed in Canada by Forage Genetics. If you and your family eat beef or drink milk, the introduction of this new cattle feed

could soon be important to you.

The National Farmers' Union (NFU) held a protest outside Kitchener's Delta Hotel last October, where the Canadian Seed Trade Association was meeting. The CSTA, which includes Monsanto, Forage Genetics, and other agribusinesses, was promoting the idea that genetically modified (GM) alfalfa could "coexist" with conventional hay, so farmers wouldn't need to worry.

But few people believe Monsanto's assurances any more.

Protester Phillip Woodhouse, president of NFU Grey County Local 344, said the term 'co-existence' is merely industry spin meant to allay farmers' concerns about contamination. "Make no mistake - GM alfalfa will cross-pollinate with non-GM and organic alfalfa, and will threaten the very livelihoods of Ontario's family farmers," he warned.

For one thing, farmers are terrified of being sued by Monsanto, if a few unwanted GM plants should turn up on their land. After all, Monsanto "owns" these life forms - they have patents saying so. In the state of Indiana, Monsanto agents have been known to go onto farms at will, sample what's growing there, and then show up at the supper table to serve farmers with huge lawsuits. Farmers can be rapidly put out of business or forced to settle out of court, while Monsanto "snitch lines" turn neighbour against neighbour.

A similar thing happened to Saskatchewan canola farmer Percy

Schmeiser, with the Supreme Court of Canada finding in Monsanto's favour. The commentator who tells the Indiana story in the stunning documentary *The World According to Monsanto*, calls these company tactics "totalitarian".

Conventional farmers are also afraid of losing export markets, if they can no longer guarantee that their crops are 100% GM-free. As for organic farmers, they will be out of business if the pasture and hay on which their cows graze might be contaminated with GM alfalfa. They are desperate to stop it from ever being approved here.

A Canada-wide protest against GM alfalfa in April was ignored by the Harper government. There was one small victory, though: the approval didn't come through in time for this year's planting season. So the protests against Monsanto are being stepped up.

The effect of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) on human and animal health hasn't been definitively established. In fact Monsanto makes sure of that!

Dozens of scientists who have attempted to investigate the health effects of Monsanto products over the years have lost their funding, jobs, and reputations.

But the 2012 study "Myths and Truths of GMOs", by Earth Open Source, reports some alarming findings. In Quebec's Eastern Townships, pregnant women and their fetuses had insecticide chemicals in their bloodstream that are found in Bt plants. (Bt's are a type of GMO that secretes insecticide, killing not only pests but beneficial insects - a real wonder crop!) Did the women get the chemical from eating Bt corn (or animals that had consumed it), or living near a plantation of these Franken-crops? Obviously further study is needed.

People with a nut allergy developed symptoms after eating soy beans grown from seeds into which a Brazil nut gene had been blasted.

The insertion of the foreign gene is about as accurate as a BB gun, and depending on where the gene lands in the DNA of the target plant, the effects can vary. *The World According To Monsanto* shows pictures of monstrous specimens of corn that have resulted in Mexico from contamination by U.S. GM corn imported at subsidized prices under NAFTA, and by lab experiments with random insertion of the genes.

Yet the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) would have us believe that GMO crops are "substantially equivalent" to conventional crops, and therefore need no special testing! Monsanto officials and their friends in the FDA must be laughing on their bar stools after these pronouncements are made. After all, they're often the same people, switching position every few years through the industry-government revolving door.

Canadians may remember how three federal scientists were fired in 2004, after one of them revealed to a Senate committee that Monsanto had offered a bribe to Health Canada to approve Bovine

Growth Hormone. Thanks to the scandal, BGH was never approved for use in Canada. But their careers were sacrificed.

Now their research linking BGH to mastitis in cows, as well as increased use of antibiotics, joint problems, and more, is becoming public knowledge. In 2008 the US too stopped the use of BGH.

"If genetically engineered products like this were safe, Monsanto would put 'made with GE' in big block letters on all its products," said Josh Brandon, an agricultural campaigner with Greenpeace. "Instead Monsanto is doing everything it can to obstruct the consumer's right to know what they are eating. Monsanto's strategy backfires, once consumers start asking questions about the health and environmental safety of GE products."

In response to these and a host of other issues involving Monsanto, in February a concerned American named Tami Canal started a social media campaign. She called for rallies around the world on May 25 against Monsanto's practices and against government collusion with the company. A key demand was for mandatory labelling of foods containing GMOs. She put up a very informative web site at: www.march-against-monsanto.com.

When the day came she told Yahoo news, "If I had gotten 3,000 people to join me, I would have considered that a success." But instead she was overwhelmed by the response. At last count, "March Against Monsanto" protests were held in 52 countries and 436 cities on six continents!

We must hope it will prove to be the beginning of resistance to one of the most destructive multinational corporations in history.

The film *The World According to Monsanto* can be viewed for free at: <http://bit.ly/R91Y0k>

See also Canadian Biotechnology Action Network www.cban.ca. CBAN calls for the banning of all GMOs. ●



#MarchAgainstMonsanto May 25, Everywhere

Monsanto debunked

In response to the May 25 global protest, a Monsanto spokesperson said: "We believe we are making a contribution to improving agriculture by helping farmers produce more from their land while conserving natural resources such as water and energy."

Is this true?

The Independent noted in 2008:

"Genetic modification actually cuts the productivity of crops, an authoritative new study shows, undermining repeated claims that a switch to the controversial technology is needed to solve the growing world food crisis. The study - carried out over the past three years at the University of Kansas in the US grain belt - has found that GM soya produces about 10 per cent less food than its conventional equivalent, contradicting assertions by advocates of the technology that it increases yields..."

"The new study confirms earlier research at the University of Nebraska, which found that another Monsanto GM soya produced 6 per cent less than its closest conventional relative, and 11 per cent less than the best non-GM soya available."

Scientific American reported in 2009:

"Proponents argue that GM

crops can help feed the world. And given ever increasing demands for food, animal feed, fiber and now even biofuels, the world needs all the help it can get. Unfortunately, it looks like GM corn and soybeans won't help, after all..."

The Union of Concerned Scientists wrote the same year:

"For years the biotechnology industry has trumpeted that it will feed the world, promising that its genetically engineered crops will produce higher yields.

"That promise has proven to be empty... [A UCS report] reviewed two dozen academic studies of corn and soybeans, the two primary genetically engineered food and feed crops grown in the United States. Based on those studies, the UCS report concludes that genetically engineering herbicide-tolerant soybeans and herbicide-tolerant corn has not increased yields. Insect-resistant corn, meanwhile, has improved yields only marginally. The increase in yields for both crops over the last 13 years, the report finds, was largely due to traditional breeding or improvements in agricultural practices.

"The report does not discount the possibility of genetic engineering eventually contributing to increase crop yields. It does, however, suggest

that it makes little sense to support genetic engineering at the expense of technologies that have proven to substantially increase yields, especially in many developing countries. In addition, recent studies have shown that organic and similar farming methods that minimize the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers can more than double crop yields at little cost to poor farmers in such developing regions as Sub-Saharan Africa."

And in a new paper funded by the US Department of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin researchers have essentially negated the "more food" argument as well. The researchers looked at data from UW test plots that compared crop yields from various varieties of hybrid corn, some genetically modified and some not, between 1990 and 2010. While some GM varieties delivered small yield gains, others did not. Several even showed lower yields than non-GM counterparts. With the exception of one commonly used trait - a Bt type designed to kill the European corn borer - the authors conclude, "we were surprised not to find strongly positive transgenic yield effects." Both the glyphosate-tolerant (Roundup Ready) and the Bt trait for corn root-worm caused yields to drop. ●

For links to the studies quoted above, visit www.washingtonsblog.com/



“Our government has put us at risk”

By Lindsey German

The attack in Woolwich was horrific. There can be no justification for a murderous attack on an individual soldier in the streets of London. It must have been awful too for the local people who witnessed it.

Unlike with most terrorist attacks or indeed other crimes, we have been able to see film footage of the perpetrators, hear testimony from the witnesses who saw or talked to them.

So we know what these men say motivated them. They claimed that the killing of the soldier was in response to the killing of Muslims by British soldiers in other countries. One said that the government did not care for people and should get the troops out.

The Boston bombers last month were supposedly similarly motivated. The Woolwich attack, carried out by two men now shot and wounded and under arrest in hospital, appears to represent a phenomenon pointed out nearly a decade ago by the security services - that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq would lead to a growing threat of terrorism in Britain.

Those of us in Stop the War



Who will remember this child? On Aug. 21, 2009, seven-year-old Syed Wali Shah was killed by a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan.

have long predicted that these sorts of attacks would happen because of the war on terror. Unfortunately there is little sign that the government, media and military will draw any of the conclusions that they should from the attack.

The instant response was to brand it as a serious terrorist attack, although many commentators are saying they believe it more likely that this was a one-off and isolated incident, and unlikely to be part of a wider conspiracy.

David Cameron cut short a visit

to Paris in order to fly home. This reaction is one which manifestly fails to deal with the political causes underlying such attacks.

The simple truth is that there were no such cases in Britain before the start of the “war on terror” in 2001, which led to the invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The consequences of those wars have been devastating for the people of those countries and further afield. Up to a million died in Iraq and four million were made

refugees. Tens of thousands have died in Afghanistan.

Fighting still continues and Iraq looks like descending into civil war in some parts of the country.

The US and its allies have been involved in bombing attacks on these countries which have been responsible for many thousands of deaths.

A media comment that this was the day Baghdad came to the streets of Britain shows a grotesque ignorance of the country the invasion was meant to rescue for democracy, where daily sectarian bombings and killings are escalating on a scale not dreamt of in this country.

The interventions have spread in the name of “fighting terrorism.” Drone attacks are taking place in a number of countries including Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia.

The bombing of Libya by the West in 2011 led to at least 30,000 dead. British troops are aiding the French in Mali. The British are intervening in the war in Syria for their own ends, and want to lift the EU arms embargo there in order to escalate the war and achieve regime change.

The US and EU continue to back Israel despite its treatment of the Palestinians, even sending the architect of the Iraq war, Tony Blair, as envoy for peace in the Middle East.

Any rational balance sheet of the last decade and more would demonstrate that the war on terror has been a failure on its own terms. It has not prevented terrorism but has caused it to spread. The failure of politicians and military to face up to this has further damaging consequences.

If the government refuses to change its own policy it has one simple solution - “blame the Muslims.” Muslims are expected

to condemn any such attack whereas no such demand is put upon people of other faiths when a killing is carried out by Christians.

Muslim is also equated with black or Asian, as when one television reporter described the men as of “Muslim appearance.”

Again, atrocities by white gunmen, in Norway and the US for example, which are often highly politically motivated, are not regarded as needing to be defined by race. They are also rarely described as terrorism, but as the acts of fanatics or madmen.

It is an integral part of the war on terror that the invasion and occupation of mainly Muslim countries abroad has led to the dehumanising of the victims of the wars, so Muslim comes to equal extremist and terrorist.

Racists like the English Defence League turned up in Woolwich to try to further foster Islamophobia. But this treatment of Muslims goes to the top of government and is spewed out daily in the press.

Similar views of the Irish were much more common in the 1970s and '80s when the IRA had a major bombing campaign in Britain. In the end there had to be a political solution which recognised a genuine grievance.

In the end there has to be a political solution to terrorism. But it can only start with recognition of the disastrous effect of Western foreign policy in the Middle East and south Asia for decades now, exacerbated by the consequences of 12 years of wars.

That means acknowledging that those of us who said these wars were not the answer and would make things worse were absolutely right. Terror is inexcusable. But it is bred by terror.

Lindsey German is convenor of the UK Stop the War Coalition •

Hysterical British media whips up far-right

www.morningstaronline.co.uk

Far-right fanatics cashed in on the May 22 murder of a British soldier with attacks on three mosques and dozens of other racist incidents. Aided and abetted by an ill-judged media frenzy following the death of off-duty soldier Lee Rigby at the hands of self-styled “jihadists”, extremists from the English Defence League fought with police near the scene of the killing.

Anti-racist campaign group Hope Not Hate said the far-right acted swiftly to cash in on the atrocity: “As soon as the identity and motives of the perpetrators were known, EDL, BNP and National Front supporters rushed to whip up hatred and incite violence. Thousands more vented their racist and Islamophobic hate online. Dozens of other incidents were reported.”

Hope Not Hate said it stood “against the violent and sickening jihadist ideology that motivated these attackers just as we stand against the racists and fascists who will target all Muslims in response.”

Lindsey German of the Stop the War Coalition said of the far-right reaction: “Racists like the EDL turned up in Woolwich to try to further foster Islamophobia. But this treatment of Muslims goes to the top of government and is spewed out daily in the press.”

The Muslim Council of Britain described the murder as “a truly barbaric act that has no basis in Islam and we condemn this unreservedly - our thoughts are with the victim and his family.”

Train drivers union ASLEF general secretary Mick Whelan said the union was “appalled” by

the attack. “At the same time we are disgusted by right-wing groups who are callously exploiting this personal tragedy for their own ends. Our union is horrified at the intrusive and sensational way the media has covered today’s tragedy... To stir up hatred in order to sell newspapers or advertising is perverse.”

In a May 24 editorial, the Morning Star wrote: “Communities across Britain should be on guard against the efforts of troublemakers to set us against each other in the wake of the sickening butchery of soldier Lee Rigby in Woolwich.

“The tanked-up yobs of the English Defence League have already sought to fish in these troubled waters and expressed their love for British freedoms by heaving bottles at the police. But it is not just the far-right fringe that poses a threat to people’s unity. Too many right-wing politicians and newspapers have kept up a constant drip-drip propaganda campaign against national and religious minorities, especially Muslims, as alien to British society.

“Neither the Woolwich attack nor the views expressed after it can be pinned on our Muslim fellow citizens. In common with the vast majority of people in Britain, from whatever ethnic or religious background, they regard what took place in Woolwich as alien and unjustifiable. Some Muslim organisations and individuals have gone public in their condemnation, but this should not be a demand targeted generally at Muslims.

“The tiny minority of Muslims who carry out atrocities are no more representative of Islam than Tony Blair’s easy recourse to

illegal mass slaughter in Iraq and Afghanistan can be laid at the door of the Catholic church or individual Christians. Such crimes are the responsibility of those who carry them out no matter how loudly they claim to be acting on behalf of an entire community.

“However, as horrific and unjustifiable as the random killing of a British soldier in London is, it cannot be separated from the western powers’ support for imperialist carnage in north Africa, the Balkans and central and western Asia, including Palestine.

“One of the men filmed on smartphones after the soldier’s murder articulated the argument that people in many Muslim countries have routinely witnessed human destruction delivered remotely on their streets. Bombs and rockets are programmed from thousands of miles away to be fired from warplanes or drones in supposed ‘precision’ strikes. These targeted assassinations, which often kill bystanders, are dubbed ‘bug splats’ by some keyboard warriors, equating them to the squashing of an insect.

“George W. Bush and his loyal lieutenant Blair always ascribed ridiculous motives to al-Qaida and other groups seeking to bomb civilian targets in Europe and the US. ‘They hate our way of life and our freedoms,’ they intoned piously rather than admit the reality that civilians in western countries were being targeted in acts of revenge for what our governments were perpetrating overseas.

“Government security services forecast after the invasion of Iraq that this would be likely to happen. However, the immediate reaction

see HYSTERIA, p. 11

THATCHER'S LEGACY



Toronto People's Voice Forum
Speaker: LIZ PAYNE
 Vice-Chair and National Women's
 Organizer, Communist Party of Britain

7.30 pm, Thursday, June 13
 Beit Zatoun, 612 Markham Street
 (near Bathurst subway)
 Further Info: 416-469-2446

Sponsored by: People's Voice
 News for people, not for profits!



GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

Lockout widens on west coast

Workers at the Port of Vancouver, Washington, USA have been locked out by the Japanese conglomerate Mitsui-United Grain, since Feb. 27. A second foreign-owned grain handling conglomerate operating at taxpayer-supported ports along the Columbia River has also locked out its local workforce and replaced them with out-of-state workers.

On May 4, Columbia Grain, owned by Japan's Marubeni Corporation, locked members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 8 at Portland's Terminal 5. The company accused the union of "working to rule" and demanding too many safety inspections. As many as 75 jobs daily are impacted.

The action follows the lockout of members of ILWU Local 4, which represents about 200 longshore workers, all of whom rotate to fill 44 jobs at the grain terminal.

Both United Grain and Columbia Grain are part of an employer bargaining group - the Pacific Northwest Grain Handlers Association. The ILWU has worked under the agreement dating back to the 1930s. The agreement also covers grain terminals owned by Netherlands-based Louis Dreyfus Commodities in Portland and Seattle, and U.S.-based TEMCO elevators in Portland, Tacoma, and Kalama.

ILWU pickets are hammering on how the foreign-owned companies profit from local taxpayer investments while ruining local union jobs that pay good wages and benefits.

The union says Mitsui, owner of United Grain, "makes huge profits by using Washington's public ports, highways and railroads." It points out that a "\$275 million West Vancouver Freight Access rail project allows Japan's Mitsui to export grain shipments for record profits" and the "\$178 million Columbia River channel deepening project moves Mitsui's massive grain ships in and out of United Grain."

Mitsui & Co. Inc. reported profits of \$6.08 billion in 2012.

Dubai strikers being deported

Backed by security forces, bosses at Arabtec - a massive construction firm with interests across the Gulf states - ended a strike in Dubai on May 20. Some workers in the dispute were quickly given deportation orders.

"Between 20-25 people just got the [deportation] letter now," Ashraf, a Bangladeshi scaffolding installer at Arabtec, told Al Jazeera on May 22 after receiving a phone call from a co-worker. "When we got the news of the deportations everyone came down shouting. When the police came, we just went back to our rooms. People were trying to be part of the group without coming to the front."

Unions and strikes are illegal in Dubai and across the Gulf. Rather than demonstrating, a few thousand

workers simply stayed in their accommodations on May 18-19. The strike ended after management refused to accept demands for increased wages from people earning about \$200 a month to complete mega-projects in 40 degree Celsius heat. Worker demands varied from a monthly pay raise of between \$100-\$135,



while others wanted free food that they say was promised to them.

Arabtec has tens of thousands of employees and contracts to work on the city's airport, the Abu Dhabi branch of the Louvre museum, and other high-profile projects. It's unclear how many workers downed their tools, but hundreds may be forced to leave the country they have helped to build.

Dubai is an autonomous city and part of the United Arab Emirates, a federation run by an unelected emir where the press is censored and public demonstrations are illegal. The camp where Ashraf lives with some 2,500 Arabtec employees is located in Sonapur or the "land of God", a series of dusty streets and barracks-style labour camps guarded by private security and home to about 200,000 workers. A worker's legal status in the country is tied to his employer. Foreigners cannot change jobs without permission from their company.

Known for its ostentatious displays of wealth, less than 20 percent of the UAE's roughly 7.9 million residents are citizens. To attain citizenship, a person must usually demonstrate a blood connection on the father's side to the Emirates' original inhabitants. Many labourers arrive in Dubai saddled with debt, a result of visa fees and other charges imposed by local labour agents in their home countries. These practices are illegal in Dubai, but tracking perpetrators in Bangladesh or India is almost impossible for police forces.

"Exterminating" port workers?

On May 19, Israeli Minister of the Economy Naftali Bennett talked about sending the army into the ports in the event of a strike. A few days later, he talked about "exterminating" them. In a Facebook posting, he wrote, "That's it. The ants are impossible. I came home and realized that something had to be done. They're in the kitchen, the living room, the guest room. The whole house is filled with ants. I called in the exterminator."

In Hebrew, the word for "ants"

and "ports" is the same - nemalim. The reference to workers at Israel's seaports and their unions is unmistakable. Bennett has drawn up a plan, "Code 1981", to send the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) into the ports in the event of a wildcat strike over the government's plans to build a new private-owned port. The plan's name was inspired by US President Ronald Reagan, who broke the air traffic controllers strike that year.

A member of a port's workers committee told Globes Online, the Israeli business news outlet, "I fear for Israel's fate with such a minister in the government. I strongly hope that this man is not serving on the security cabinet and making decisions. The port is less important."

Prof. Yoni Yona of the Labor party responded, "Bennett is stringing himself up from a high, monstrous, racist tree; his inspiration is fed from the racist Nazi strategy which held that if you want to prepare the ground to physically harm a human group, first symbolically shove it into the animal world. That is exactly what the Nazis did... Bennett doesn't intend to physically exterminate the ports workers. He only wants to harm their salary conditions. How does he propose doing that? He intends to propose a reform which will turn them into contract workers, or maybe prisoners in a labor camp. And if the prisoners - inferior animals - rebel, then call in the exterminators, the soldiers, and the trained dogs and set them against the 'ants' who entered the kitchen, living room, and guest room. That's how you carry out ethnic cleansing of 'ants'!"

Campaign to re-run World Cup vote

Unless Qatar improves its treatment of workers, the World Cup vote must be re-run, unions told the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Congress in London on May 24. UEFA delegates were lobbied by unions to secure better treatment for migrant workers employed on the construction of stadiums for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, and for foreign footballers currently playing in the Gulf state.

The British TUC and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) want FIFA, the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association*, to re-run the vote for the 2022 tournament should the Qatari government fail to take action. Campaigners handed over a petition detailing abuses of players' and workers' rights in Qatar, signed by thousands of football fans from around the globe.

Harsh treatment, low rates of pay, excessive working hours, a ban on joining unions, poor safety standards and numerous abuses under the country's strict visa sponsorship system have led to accusations that Qatar is acting like a 21st century slave state.

TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady said: "The number of workers killed in the construction industry in Qatar each year is up to eight times higher than in the UK and other developed countries.

With the UEFA Congress here in London, we cannot let delegates ignore workers' deaths and injuries. Football fans everywhere will be shocked to learn of the way in which workers are treated - conditions akin to a modern form of slavery - and will want UEFA's support to put pressure on Qatar to reform or risk having FIFA re-run the vote for the 2022 World Cup."

Football fans and trade union members are being encouraged to join the campaign at www.rerunthevote.org in one of the largest global campaigns embarked upon by international unions in recent years.

Ford execs charged in Argentina

Three former Ford Motor company executives have been charged with crimes against humanity in Argentina for allegedly targeting union workers for kidnapping and torture after the country's 1976 military coup. All three men are in their 80s now, and their case is part of a new wave of prosecutions focusing on corporate support for the dictators who ran Argentina from 1976-1983.

Factory director Pedro Muller, human resources chief Guillermo Galarraga and security manager Hector Francisco Jesus Sibilla are accused of giving names, ID numbers, pictures and home addresses to security forces who hauled two dozen union workers off the factory floor to be tortured and interrogated and then sent to military prisons. Judge Alicia Vence said that eliminating union resistance inside Ford's Argentina subsidiary was their goal.

McDonald's New Zealand boycott

Child labour, workers paid in food vouchers and management threats are all in a day's work for staff at McDonald's in the New Zealand town of Kaikohe, says Unite Union campaign manager Gary Cranston.

McDonald's claims the allegations are being raised as part of a collective agreement dispute after negotiations broke down in April. The union is calling for a boycott of McDonald's restaurants owned by the same franchise holder in Kaikohe, Kerikeri and Kaitaia.

Workers at Kaikohe say that a manager had sworn at staff and one worker had an orange juice thrown at her in front of others.

"The [Kaikohe] restaurant manager has her three kids working for her," Cranston said. "The youngest is only 12 years old. She is being paid in McDonald's coupons."

When a staff union delegate raised that and other issues which breached company policies, she was threatened with disciplinary action that included her hours being cut.

Cranston says the union is concerned about a "hornet's nest of issues", including allegations of staff working in positions above their pay or training level, sexual harassment, racial discrimination and understaffing. "I've never seen anything like it. It is just out of control and it all comes back on the franchisee for failing to provide her crew with a safe and harmonious workplace, as she is legally obliged to do."

The union recently presented the owner with its "Worst Franchisee of the Year" award.

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

Send me information on the Communist Party of Canada



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

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

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

B.C. Committee CPC
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1
604-254-9836 <cpcinfo.bc@gmail.com>

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

Calgary CPC
5421 - 8th Ave. SE
Calgary, AB, T2A 4L7 Tel: 403-248-6489

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

Ottawa CPC
Tel: 613-232-7108

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

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

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

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

The three heroines of Guatemala

By Amy Goodman

Former Guatemalan President Efraín Ríos Montt was hauled off to prison [on May 10]. It was a historic moment, the first time in history that a former leader of a country was tried for genocide in a national court. More than three decades after he seized power in a coup in Guatemala, unleashing a US-backed campaign of slaughter against his own people, the 86-year-old stood trial, charged with genocide and crimes against humanity. He was given an 80-year prison sentence.

The case was inspired and pursued by three brave Guatemalan women: the judge, the attorney general and the Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

"My brother Patrocinio was burnt to death in the Ixil region. We never found his remains," Rigoberta Menchú told me after Ríos Montt's verdict was announced. She detailed the systematic slaughter of her family: "As for my mother, we never found her remains, either.... If her remains weren't eaten by wild animals after having been tortured brutally and humiliated, then her remains are probably in a mass grave close to the Ixil region.... My father was also burned alive in the embassy of Spain [in Guatemala City] on January 30, 1980."

Rigoberta Menchú was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, "in recognition of her work for social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation based on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples."

She continued telling me about her family's destruction: "In 1983, my brother Víctor Menchú was also shot dead. His wife had her throat slit, and he was fleeing with his three children. Víctor was jailed in the little town, but his three children were kept in a military bunker. My two nieces died of hunger in this military base, and my brother Víctor was shot. We still have not found his remains."

According to the official Commission on Historical Clarification, which undertook a comprehensive investigation of Guatemala's three-decade genocide, at least 200,000 people were killed. Menchú brought one of the original lawsuits against the perpetrators of the genocide, which resulted in the trial that ended with Ríos Montt's conviction.

Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey was appointed as Guatemala's first female attorney general in December 2010, and has earned wide acclaim for her pursuit of perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

The judge in the case is another woman, Yassmin Barrios. In a country where, historically, people who challenge those in power are often killed, Paz y Paz and Barrios demonstrated tremendous courage.

Journalist Allan Nairn, who has covered Guatemala, among other



Banner in Guatemala depicting victims of the regime's genocide.

conflict zones, since the early 1980s, observed the trial. In mid-April, the trial was ordered shut down by another Guatemalan court, presumably under the influence of President Otto Pérez Molina. From Guatemala City, Nairn reported then: "The judge, Yassmin Barrios, and the attorney general, Claudia Paz y Paz, both say they're going to defy this order to kill the case, which is extraordinary."

They continued the trial, and eventually Ríos Montt was found guilty. Nairn said, after the verdict: "Judge Barrios... ran the trial. She was the one who had to deliver the verdict. As she left the courthouse every night, you could see her wearing a bulletproof vest. The judges and prosecutors involved in the case received death threats. In one case, a threat against a prosecutor, the person delivering the threat put a pistol on the table and said, 'I know where your children are.' It takes a lot of courage to push a case like this."

Menchú said: "This verdict is historic. It's monumental. The verdict against Ríos Montt is historic. We waited for 33 years for justice to prevail. It's clear that there is no peace without justice." It is all the more so because it occurred in a national court in Guatemala.

She noted that the International Criminal Court, as currently empowered, could not have taken the case, saying: "It's not retroactive. It doesn't address those



Judge Yassmin Barrios

cases that were committed before the court was created. So the statute of limitations on the International Criminal Court should be lifted."

WFTU reports on solidarity mission to Mali

Following the 2nd meeting of Panafrican affiliates of the World Federation of Trade Unions, held in Sudan in February 2013, a WFTU delegation travelled to Mali on May 19-21.

More than half of Mali's 14.5 million people survive on less than \$1.25 per day, even though Mali is the third biggest producer of gold in Africa. Eighty percent of the population are involved in agriculture; cotton is the main product.

Mali has seen continuous instability and suffering following the autonomist extremist movement of jihadist groups in Northern Mali, the coup d'état of March 2012, and the French-led imperialist intervention supported by NATO forces as well as African countries. The French government has announced that it will sustain a force of 1,000 soldiers indefinitely, adding to the 5,000 soldiers at its four bases in Africa. A "Donors Conference" is taking place in Brussels to decide upon the future of the country.

The mandate of the WFTU delegation was to examine the living and working conditions of the people of Mali, to hold bilateral discussions with the trade union movement, and to help strengthen international solidarity for the struggles of the Malian people.

The delegation included Abdou Isaaka from Niger, a representative of WFTU's Francophone African affiliates and a member of the WFTU Youth Secretariat, and Alexandra Liberi, representative of the Central Office of WFTU.

In Bamako, the capital city, the delegation visited the headquarters of the National Workers Union of Mali (UNTM), which was attacked during the coup in March 2012. They had a fruitful discussion with UNTM General Secretary Siaka Diakité, and Tibou Telly, General Secretary of the Education Union.

The UNTM leaders spoke about the conditions of the workers, the reasons that led to the conflict, and the problems of the displaced populations today, in the context of an election announced for July 28th.

Wider geostrategic develop-

ments were discussed, from Afghanistan, to Libya, to the conflict in Mali. In the UNTM's view, the profile cultivated by the French as "liberators of Mali" hides the imperialist interests for control of the region and its resources. Siaka Diakité denounced the strings attached to

Nairn was supposed to testify at the trial. One interview he conducted in 1982 has attracted widespread attention. On camera, he spoke with "Major Tito," who said entire families of indigenous villagers worked with the guerrillas. Tito's troops told Nairn that they routinely killed such civilian villagers. "Tito," it turns out, is none other than the current president of Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina. Nairn sees the guilty verdict against Ríos Montt as an opening to potential prosecution of Pérez Molina and others: "There would be hundreds of US officials who were complicit in this and should be subpoenaed, called before a grand jury and subjected to indictment - including [President Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights] Elliott Abrams. And the US should be ready to extradite them to Guatemala to face punishment, if

the Guatemalan authorities are able to proceed with this. And General Pérez Molina is one who should be included."

Regardless of where the case goes from here, Guatemala has set an example for the world, away from violence and impunity. Or as Nairn puts it, "Guatemala's Mayans have reached a higher level of civilization than the United States."

From *www.nationofchange.com*. Goodman is the host of *Democracy Now*, the influential U.S. progressive radio news show. This article was written prior to a court decision to annul the verdict against Ríos Montt, on a technicality that the ex-dictator had been without a lawyer for a few hours on April 19. The trial may resume again under a new set of judges, starting from that date in the proceedings, but this could be prevented by further defense appeals. ●



Siaka Diakité, veteran leader of the UNTM

"donor funding for the reconstruction of Mali". His view was in agreement with the WFTU's analysis of the imperialist motives for intervention in the region.

The WFTU delegation visited the state textile industry to meet with the local trade union and the administration of the enterprise. At the Institute of Rural Economy, they discussed agricultural development and the WFTU campaign against high food prices.

A meeting was also held with local WFTU affiliates, to discuss the struggles of workers in Mali, as well as trade union coordination in the French-speaking region of Africa and across the continent.

Ibrahima Toure, the 2nd Deputy General Secretary of UNTM, and General Secretary of SYNAPRO, one of the biggest affiliates of UNTM, welcomed the delegation to this meeting.

Alexandra Liberi, head of the WFTU Media and Communications Department noted:

"The people of Mali have suffered long from lack of education - since only 15% are enrolled in schools, from diseases that could have been made extinct if not for the multinationals' control of medicines, from food insufficiency, from a life expectancy which is only 53 years, from lack of access to water, even from slavery in some regions. Only half of the population has some access to electricity. All this misery was dramatically increased since the Malian people have been caught in the middle of regional and international imperialist plots. On top of that, those who created the problem are presented as 'liberators', and will be given as a gift the whole country, its resources and the future of the Malian people under their full control, continuing their colonial grab."

She added: "We cannot forget that it was the imperialists who created the extremist groups against the popular movement in Afghanistan. It was the imperialists who had common goals with the extremist groups in Libya, aiming at control of oil resources, and it was their imperialist intervention in Libya that pushed these groups towards Northern Mali. A new fragmentation of the region would not be a surprise."

Abdou Isaaka stated that: "We have seen that the imperialists don't do favours. They have interests, and they want to protect only their interests. The 'reconstruction' planned through the 'Donors Conference' in Brussels will not solve the problems of the Malian people. We see it more like a modern day slave-market. As WFTU, we will stand in solidarity with the people of Mali as our internationalist duty. The African people must become truly strong and independent, to control their present and future and provide complete solutions to their suffering. The positions of WFTU reflect the reality and the interests of the African people. WFTU's voice is the voice of the 90% of the African people."

Based on a report by the WFTU delegation, see *www.wftu.org*. ●

REDS ON THE WEB

www.comunist-party.ca

www.peoplesvoice.ca

www.ycl-ljc.ca

rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com

<http://solidnet.org>

Female, black and vulnerable

By Rob Gowland, *The Guardian*, newspaper of the Communist Party of Australia

Keith Sulzer, commander of the Cleveland Police force, became highly indignant when a surprising number of critics emerged after three young women who had been kidnapped and held prisoner for ten years in a house in the poor part of Cleveland were finally rescued.

The critics claimed that the police would have taken the disappearance of the three young women a lot more seriously if they had been white or from well off families. The white police chief found that assertion very unfair, but critics pointed to other cases to prove their point.

Notably, they pointed to the case of Anthony Sowell. He was a serial killer who specialised in raping and killing drug addicts and alcoholics. One woman he attacked escaped and reported the attack to the police, but they didn't believe her, and released Sowell without charge.

When further incidents forced police to finally search Sowell's house in 2009, they found the bodies of no less than 11 women.

Journalist Angie Schmitt wrote a few weeks ago that "what made these women such easy targets was being black, being women and being from the highly segregated

and desperately poor east side of Cleveland... Nobody was going to tear up the city looking for a few black women from the east side with sketchy pasts."

Judy Martin, founder of community group Survivors/Victims of Tragedy, maintains that when poor people - especially poor people of colour - go missing, the police assume the person has

services" in the most affluent nation on Earth as a factor in the police failure to adequately follow up cases of missing poor people. Police Commander Sulzer told a public meeting of concerned east side residents that 2,900 people were missing in Cleveland alone.

But according to Mark Anthony Neal, Professor of African-American studies at Duke University. "We live in a society that places an incredible amount of value on whiteness at the expense of those who can't fit in the box of whiteness." He told the media that "across the US, missing people from Black or Hispanic backgrounds and lower socio-economic status are more likely to get few resources and attention than affluent, white victims."

The inherent racism in the police handling of the cases echoes the findings in court-ordered investigations into racial disparity in instances of "stop and frisk" by the New York Police Department, which found that some 87 percent of the five million individuals stopped by the NYPD were Black or Latino. Now the city is facing a federal class action suit over the alleged racism in the police actions.

Of course, picking on US crime statistics is an easy target: the country that promotes capitalist greed and being rich as the most admirable of all virtues, is also the country that relentlessly promotes crime and criminals via its films, TV shows, novels and newspapers. Even its criminal trials are presented as entertainment, making celebrities of the prosecutor, the judge and of course the criminal.

In US TV shows and movies, it is always the criminals who have the fanciest cars, the classiest mansions, the most upholstered women - as well as the most servants and lackeys, receive the most respect and have the most money.

That reminds me of one of the distinguishing features of the old Untouchables series with Robert Stack: the criminals were treated with contempt. It stood out because that attitude is so uncommon on US television. Gangsters might come to a sticky end, but only after they have led an exciting, luxurious, glamorous life of crime. ●



simply walked away and that there is no crime to investigate.

Stung by the widespread criticism, Sulzer hit back: "The Cleveland Police Department doesn't care about someone's economic or social status," he told reporters. "We don't care what status you're from. Everybody gets the same treatment."

Throwing Sulzer a bone, Angie Schmitt also pointed to "significant underfunding of police and city



MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

"Ding Dong the Witch is Dead"

American songwriter E. Y. "Yip" Harburg (1896-1981) would have been amused when a song he wrote with composer Harold Arlen for *The Wizard of Oz* reached the top of the U.K. singles charts in April. "Ding Dong the Witch is Dead" became an instant hit in the aftermath of the death of former P.M. Margaret Thatcher, as spontaneous celebrations broke out across the U.K. In the ensuing controversy about whether it is acceptable or useful to celebrate the death of a reviled public figure, singer-songwriter Billy Bragg warned against raising a glass "to the death of an infirm old lady." Bragg's advice: "Don't celebrate. Organize!" Harburg's son Ernie begged to differ. "For the 99%," he said, "laughing and joy are required at the funeral of a tyrant." BBC Radio refused to play the 60-second song on its weekly roundup of best-selling singles. It was not the first time that Harburg's music has been censored. The socialist songwriter was blacklisted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) in the 1950's.

Solidarity with Guitar Center workers

Guitar Center is the world's largest retailer of musical instruments, with 247 locations across the USA. In April, workers at its flagship New York City store announced their intent to join the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. Most Guitar Centre workers are musicians. Until recently many saw a job at Guitar Center as a temporary step on the way to a more satisfying career. Their attitude started to change after 2007 when the chain was bought out by Mitt Romney's bottom-feeding Bain Capital, a company that specializes in slashing wages, gutting labour rights and outsourcing jobs. Non-sales workers now eke out a living on poverty-level wages, part-timers receive no health benefits, paid sick-leave or vacation days, and full-time sales workers are faced with reduced commissions. Sign the solidarity petition at www.rwdsu.info/.

The Sandy Hook Promise

Folk musicians Peter Yarrow and Dar Williams have joined forces with singer Francine Wheeler, whose six-year-old son Ben was killed in the December 14, 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook, where a youth gunned down 20 school children and six adults before taking his own life. The musicians are appearing together to promote The Sandy Hook Promise, a Newtown, CT non-profit formed in the aftermath of the massacre to fight for gun control. In April the group was present in Washington to witness the defeat of a bipartisan Senate resolution to require instant background checks on all persons buying guns on the internet or at gun shows. The resolution won the support of 54% of the senators, but in the aristocratic Senate it takes a 60% majority to pass a bill. On May 5, Wheeler and Yarrow were guests on "Moyers and Company", the weekly public television interview show. Visit <http://billmoyers.com> for the full interview, including a moving performance by Wheeler and Williams.

Fair Trade Music in Seattle

AFM Local 76-493 in Seattle is reaching out to club musicians. Fair Trade Music Seattle will certify venues as having "Fair Trade Music" when they pay wages and benefits that are fair to both the musicians and the venue. The union also seeks to raise public awareness of the difficult economic circumstances that club musicians face, and it's working with elected officials to improve working conditions. This summer the city will instal "Musicians Loading Zone" signs to help out bands that get hit with stiff parking violation fines when loading and unloading gear in traffic-congested club districts. Fair Trade Music was started by Local 99 (Portland, Oregon) in 2005. Since then the campaign has been embraced by Local 47 (Los Angeles), Local 174-496 (New Orleans) and Local 1000 (non-geographic). While Fair Trade Music has had a limited impact so far, it's good to see musicians working together. For info: <http://fairtrademusicafm.org/>.

Rita MacNeil: 1944-2013

Flags were at half-mast in Cape Breton April 17th as fans paused to remember singer Rita MacNeil, who died the night before of complications following surgery. Cape Breton's "first lady of song" will long be remembered for her soaring voice and her music that celebrated the daily lives of hard-working women and men. Her popular songs, "Flying On Your Own", "Home I'll Be", and "Working Man," are excellent introductions to her work, illustrating a recurrent theme: the courage of working people to rise above the challenges of everyday life at both the individual and community level. "Working Man," recorded with the Cape Breton miners' choir Men of the Deeps, is her signature song, but the feminist anthem "Flying On Your Own" stands beside it as a classic. Rita MacNeil was an activist in the Canadian feminist movement in the seventies and she always honoured those formative years. For info: www.ritamacneil.com.

La Trova Nuestra
Fridays, May 31 & June 28, 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."

People's Voice Victory Banquet

Celebrate our first 20 years of publication!

GUEST SPEAKER: Liz Payne, Communist Party of Britain National Women's Organizer, on the impact of the UK Conservative government's neoliberal policies against women

Great dinner, music, door prizes, refreshments & more!

Saturday, June 8, doors open 6 pm
Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave., Vancouver

Tickets \$20 (unwaged \$10), from *People's Voice*, 604-255-2041
email newlabourpress1@gmail.com

FARC negotiates land deal with Colombian government

Morning Star (UK) and other sources

The Colombian government and the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have struck an agreement on land reform after more than six months of peace talks in the Cuban capital Havana.

"This agreement will be the start of a radical transformation of the countryside," a May 26 joint communiqué said. The parties must now reach understandings in five other areas, starting with the political reintegration of FARC fighters.

"Today we have a real opportunity to attain peace through dialogue," said government chief negotiator Humberto de la Calle. "To support this process is to believe in Colombia."

The leader of neighbouring Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, quickly congratulated the Santos administration and the FARC negotiators on the advances. "It fills us with joy," he said during a visit to Bolivia.

Both delegations will take a break of several days, and then begin talks on political participation, the second agenda point. They are set to also discuss illicit drugs, decommissioning weapons and how to handle victims

of the armed conflict.

FARC is Latin America's oldest insurgent group and has been fighting the government since 1964. Land rights and distribution are at the heart of the conflict, which saw FARC rise up against the state in the mid-1960s on behalf of the country's peasants. The guerrillas say about five million acres of land has been stolen from rural farmers during the decades-long conflict, expropriated by officials in fraudulent and corrupt processes.

Today 52% of Colombia's farms are in the hands of just over 1% of landowners, according to

the UN Development Programme, one of the most unequal land distributions in the world. According to official figures, only 22% of potential arable land is cultivated and 6.5 million hectares of land were stolen, abandoned or forcibly changed hands in other ways between 1985 and 2008 as a result of the conflict.

The May 26 agreement "seeks to reverse the causes of the conflict" and would be the "start of radical transformations in Colombia's rural and agrarian reality", according to the statement read in Havana, where the negotiations have been taking place since November.

As part of the deal, Colombia would create a land bank through which farmland would be redistributed. Farmers would receive loans, technical assistance and marketing advice as well as legal and police protection. •



Celebration of Life JIM BULLER

Saturday, June 22, 1 pm

Pine Hill Cemetery & Visitation Centre
625 Birchmount (north of St. Clair)

(Subway to Warden Station, then Birchmount bus)
Parking available

*Please join us to remember the life of a militant,
Communist trade unionist, social, political and peace
activist, & proud son of Communist leader Annie Buller*

Everyone welcome

Greek crime scene...

continued from page 4

are now way down from recession's peak - to 10.2 per cent of GDP.

Greece, fearing expulsion from the euro loony bin, turned to Goldman Sachs. For a mere \$400 million in fees, plus golden sacks of ill-gotten trading gain, the investment bank was willing to cook the nation's books via a complex set of derivatives transactions.

Since the con was busted open in 2009, the Greek public have had to pay cheated bondholders a premium to insure against default of the nation's debts. The credit default insurance costs an average of \$14,000 per family per year.

When I was a racketeering investigator working with the US Justice Department, in the days when we pretended the US still had justice, we would have called the derivatives trick a "fraud on the market." We'd handcuff the perpetrators and lock 'em up - or at the least make them cough up their purloined profits.

So, should Goldman pay up? Not according to Pangalos, because - in the worldview of our rulers - the victims of the scam are as guilty as the victimisers.

Pangalos even put it into a famous (or infamous) motto - mazi-ta-fagame. That's Greek for "We all ate it together." Right. The mass privatisation of public property at wiener schnitzel prices has German speculators dipping in their spoons as well, though the Federation of German Industry is complaining about Greece's own "princes" gobbling up the assets.

I was going to invite Pangalos to lunch to test his theories, but he left in a huff when I asked him about Geir Haarde.

Haarde, the former prime minister of Iceland, was found guilty of concealing his knowledge of the trickery used by Iceland's banks before they melted that nation's finances.

I asked Pangalos whether he thought he should be in prison for similar conduct in the Greek government. Maybe that's why he didn't want to go to lunch with me. •

What's Left

Cumberland, BC

Miners Memorial Weekend, June 20-22, "Songs of the Workers," pancake breakfast and much more. For info, visit www.cumberlandmuseum.ca

Vancouver, BC

People's Voice Victory Banquet, Sat., June 8, doors open 6 pm, Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave. Guest speaker Liz Payne, Communist Party of Britain National Women's Organizer, tickets \$20 (unwaged \$10), call 604-254-9836 or 604-255-2041.

La Trova Nuestra, evening of Latin American music and socialising, admission \$10, 8 pm, Friday, June 28, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive.

Left Film Night, Sunday, June 30, 7 pm, at the Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive. For film and details, call 604-255-2041.

Winnipeg, MB

Marxism Course, Contact Communist Party of Canada Manitoba Committee to join, 586-7824 or cpc-mb@changetheworldmb.ca.

Toronto, ON

Thatcher's Legacy, People's Voice Forum: Liz Payne, Vice-Chair & National Women's Organizer, Communist Party of Britain, 7:30 pm, Thursday, June 13, Beit Zatoun, 612 Markham St. (near Bathurst subway). Info @ 416-469-2446.

Celebration of Life for Jim Buller, Sat. June 22, 1 pm, Pine Hill Cemetery & Visitation Centre, 625 Birchmount.

Montreal, QC

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

Paul Pauk, 1919-2013

A Celebration of Life for the late Paul Pauk on May 26 brought out many of his comrades, friends and family to the Ukrainian Cultural Centre in Toronto.

Born in Fraserwood, Manitoba in 1919, Paul "rode the rods" looking for jobs in the "Dirty Thirties". He worked at various jobs, including at John Inglis in Toronto, where he became active in the Steelworkers Union and joined the Communist Party. He was active in class struggles all his life, from election campaigns, to working for a progressive publisher, and building the party newspaper, the peace movement, and solidarity and social justice struggles, and his community.

Paul enjoyed music, reading, playing cards, fishing and debating with his friends. Following a stroke in 2003, he was cared for by his devoted partner Frances, before moving to the O'Neil Centre, which presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his work with the Paul Robeson Committee.

Speakers at the Celebration included Elizabeth Hill of the CCFA, long-time friend Dave Pouliot, Ontario Communist leader Liz Rowley, trade unionist Domenic Bellissimo, Irene Kuusela of the Paul Robeson Committee, and Wilf Szczesny from the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

People's Voice deadlines

June 16-30 issue: Thursday, June 6

July 1-31 issue: Thursday, June 20

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

Marvin Glass, 1943-2013

Marvin Glass passed away peacefully at home in Ottawa on May 18. Born and raised in Winnipeg, Marvin moved to Ottawa via Kingston in the late sixties and worked as a professor at Carleton University. His teaching focused on Marxist and feminist philosophy. Spending forty years of his life at Carleton, Marvin was a popular and respected professor, renowned for his wit, his intelligence and his ability to instill critical thinking in his students.

Marvin was a well-known social activist in Ottawa, loved and esteemed by a cadre of friends and supporters. He was a tireless fighter for the rights of working people and, alongside Lynda, his partner of 25 years, he championed many causes in support of social justice and peace. He was recently recognized by Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP) for his leading role in founding the Canadian Network on Cuba and in serving as its co-chairperson for four years. A long-time member of the Communist Party of Canada, Marvin was elected to the Party's Central Committee on several occasions, and stood as a Communist candidate in provincial and federal elections. He will be remembered as a man committed to revolutionary politics, a friend, a teacher, a philosopher, a fellow activist and comrade and a loving partner.

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party extends deepest condolences to Marvin's partner Lynda, brother David, sister-in-law Rochelle and their children Kimberley and Colin, and Lynda's brothers Jim and Gerry Davies. •

News for people, not for profits!



Major fears for copper-gold mine in Kamloops area

By Kimball Cariou

Few left-wing activists in British Columbia held out much hope that electing an NDP government on May 14th would have led to far-reaching reforms. But most agreed that the unexpected Liberal victory makes it much more difficult to achieve even limited progressive changes over the next four years.

Some of the most serious consequences of the election are on the environmental front. Clark is much more likely to strike a deal with the Conservative federal and Alberta governments to allow the Enbridge and Kinder Morgan tar sands pipelines and tankers to move ahead, providing a few hundred jobs at the risk of oil spills which could inflict huge damage to the fragile coastal ecosystem and the tourism sector.

Another project which has received little attention in the corporate media could devastate the Kamloops area.

As Allison Griner wrote recently for the Tyee website, some preparation has already begun for the Ajax copper/gold mine planned by KGHM International. This area of grassland, forest and lakes on the southwest edge of Kamloops will be transformed into a 261-hectare open pit mine, with a 150-meter-high tailings storage just a few kilometres from schools and residential neighbourhoods.

Two similar projects are within ten and seventy-five kilometers of



this central B.C. city of 85,000 people. But the push for an open-pit mine within the natural geographic "bowl" which contains Kamloops has many residents deeply worried.

Dr. Jill Calder recently formed the Kamloops Physicians for a Healthy Environment to press for an independent health assessment of the mine.

"We don't disagree with mining and the creation of jobs and projects that are good for the economy. But this particular mine, in this location, we are against it," says Calder.

The mine's proposed boundaries will overlap with Kamloops city limits. Wind and the sloping nature of the land could carry pollutants towards schools, hospitals and seniors' residences.

Worried that KGHM has not been "transparent and forthcoming" about health concerns,

the 50-member Kamloops Physicians group is looking into other projects, including the Rio Tinto Kennecott copper mine near Salt Lake City, Utah. The evidence from Utah points to serious health issues, including increases in lung disease, cancer, heart attacks, strokes and neurological diseases like Parkinson's.

The physicians warn that heavy metals unleashed through mining will seep into the soil or be picked up by the wind as dust. The local water table could plummet under the strain of the mine's operations, and added emissions from burning diesel at the site will be released into the city.

For its part, KGHM is conducting its own environmental assessment of 41 components of the project. No physicians have been employed in the company assessment, which is gauging potential effects on air and water. KGHM says it aims to finish sampling and testing by the end of September, when the results will become part of its application to the provincial government.

During the following 180-day period, the provincial Environment Assessment Office (EAO) will review the application and hold open houses to hear public concerns. Among those expected to speak out are local ranchers, whose families have been in the area for over a century, and First Nations people who trace their origins around Kamloops back for thousands of years.

Dr. Calder's group are sceptical of KGHM's claims that the company has a good record of not polluting urban areas at nine similar operations across the western hemisphere. Critics stress that existing mining rules were

established for construction in areas with large geographical buffers and few nearby inhabitants - not on the border of major cities.

The mine became a big issue in the May 14 election. While serving as Clark's environment minister, the Liberal incumbent in Kamloops-North Thompson, Terry Lake, declined to call for a joint federal-provincial review of the project. Both Kamloops ridings were held by the Liberals, increasing concerns that the Ajax mine could become virtually unstoppable.

Supporters like MLA Terry Lake argue that the mine will generate jobs, a view which swayed some working class voters at a time of economic uncertainty.

But the Ajax mine would only employ some 380 people, for a period of just 23 years. Critics say the negative impacts on health and the environment far outweigh this relatively small economic benefit, and that the local tourism industry would also suffer.

Having received huge financial support from the resource corporations going into the May 14 election, Premier Clark and her cabinet will try to ignore the opposition of many Kamloops area residents. But a big enough mobilization of public opinion could still affect the outcome of this project.

For more information, visit www.stopajaxmine/home. ●

Federal Court rules on "robocalls" case

PV Vancouver Bureau

The long-awaited Federal Court ruling on "voter suppression" tactics used during the 2011 election campaign was released on May 23. To the satisfaction of the Council of Canadians, which has worked to keep the case in the public arena, Judge Richard Mosley wrote: "I find that electoral fraud occurred during the 41st General Election."

In a statement about the ruling, Maude Barlow, National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, wrote the following:

While his ruling stopped short of annulling election results, this is a powerful victory for Kay Burkhart, Ken Ferance, Yvonne Kafka, Bill Kerr, Sandra McEwing, Tom Parlee, Jeff Reid and Peggy Walsh Craig - the eight brave Canadian voters who launched their legal challenges and the thousands of us who continue to stand behind them.

The judge raised grave concerns that the fraudulent calls 'struck at the integrity of the electoral process by attempting to dissuade voters from casting ballots for their preferred candidates. This form of voter suppression, was, until the 41st General Election, largely unknown in this country.'

From the outset, the eight applicants argued that the fraudulent robocalls were widespread, targeted and centrally organized - which is precisely what Judge Mosley found: 'I am satisfied that it has been established that misleading calls about the locations of polling stations were made to electors in ridings across the country, including the subject ridings, and that the purpose of those calls was to suppress the votes of electors who had indicated their voting preference in response to earlier voter identification calls,' and that 'the most likely source of the information used to make the misleading calls was the CIMS database maintained and controlled

by the CPC [Conservative Party of Canada], accessed for that purpose by a person or persons currently unknown to this Court.'

Of course the [Conservatives] will try to paint this as a victory, but they have nothing to celebrate. That is unless an attempt to steal the election using their database, to which only senior Conservative Party members have access, is a cause for rejoicing. This is a serious indictment of the Conservatives.

Judge Mosley himself praised the eight applicants for their virtue, while chastising the Conservative MPs. 'It has seemed to me that the applicants sought to achieve and hold the high ground of promoting the integrity of the electoral process while the respondent MPs engaged in trench warfare in an effort to prevent this case from coming to a hearing on the merits.'

And Mosley even made special note of their shameful obstructionist tactics, stating, 'Despite the obvious public interest in getting to the bottom of the allegations, the Conservative Party made little effort to assist with the investigation at the outset despite early requests. I note that counsel for the Conservative Party was informed while the election was taking place that the calls about polling station changes were improper. While it was begrudgingly conceded during oral argument that what occurred was "absolutely outrageous", the record indicates that the stance taken by the respondent MPs from the outset was to block these proceedings by any means.'

... The Federal Court has found fraud and this isn't over. The applicants have an automatic right to appeal this ruling to the Supreme Court of Canada - and the Council of Canadians is committed to standing with them every step of the way.

The Council is raising funds to cover the applicants' Supreme Court appeal, which must be filed within eight days of Mosley's ruling.

For more information, see www.canadians.org ●



I WANT YOU
NOT TO VOTE

Canadians live paycheque to paycheque

A new survey conducted for the Certified General Accountants Association of Canada finds that 29% of households from coast to coast are stuck tread-milling between paycheques, and a quarter of households say they rarely set aside any savings.

Regionally, 34% of Ontario respondents said they had either no money or nearly no money after paying their bills, compared to 26% of remaining Canadians.

"(Ontarians) struggle more in actually accumulating wealth and being satisfied with the results of that accumulation," Elena Simonova, a co-author of the analysis which examined the responses of more than 1,800 people, told the *Toronto Star*.

Two-thirds of national households had no expectations that their situations would get better, and reported they would continue to have no wealth accumulation.

Canada's household savings rate plummeted to 3.8% of disposable income at the end of 2012, from its peak of about 20% in the early 1980s, the analysis said. The wealth of an average Canadian adult was only \$6,600 in 2012, or 2.7% higher compared to early 2008.

The online survey was conducted last Sept. 14-21 by Ipsos Reid with 1,805 Canadians aged 25 and older.

NEWS FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFITS!

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

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

people's
VOICE

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

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postal Code _____

Send to: *People's Voice*,
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1

10/13