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MAY DAY 2012 Message

See page 16

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Huge rally kicks off Ontario Common Front against austerity cuts



- Story on page 2 -

People's Voice photo by Ed Bil



Greece in political turmoil

The Greek election campaign is heading into the final stretch, with wide uncertainty about the outcome on May 6 and beyond. The right-wing and "socialist" parties which have supported the "Troika" demands for brutal cuts to social programs and living standards are fighting for survival, while opposition parties appear to be making gains. Unemployment is now over 20%, salaries and pensions have dropped dramatically, and new corruption scandals continue to emerge. Recent surveys predict a parliament split into ten parties, double the current number. A new coalition government may emerge from the results, but there are also rumblings of military rule to impose the devastating austerity program.

See "COUP FEARED IN GREECE", page 11

7 Tories vs. First Nations

The Harper Tories have announced plans to gut Canada's environmental review process. British Columbia First Nations chiefs are speaking out against this sellout to Big Oil.

INSIDE 10

A Green/Red Future

Inspired by the Quebec student fightback, climate justice groups call for "a clean energy future that is socially and economically just."

14 NO fighter jets!

While the parties in Parliament debate a so-called "fair procurement process" for F-35 fighter-bombers, the Communist Party calls to scrap all plans for deadly military hardware.

15,000 rally against Ontario's austerity Budget

OFL Launches Common Front

PV Ontario Bureau

More than 15,000 people descended on Queen's Park April 21 to protest the most right-wing provincial budget in decades - more devastating to working people, the unemployed and the poor than even the Mike Harris budgets of the 1990s, according to OFL President Sid Ryan.

The austerity budget includes massive layoffs in the public sector, and closures of hospitals, schools and child care centres. Social programs are slashed, with the elimination of many services. Cities face deep cuts to public transportation and housing. Social assistance and disability support rates, already among the lowest in Canada, are frozen. Many public assets, lands, and crown corporations will be privatized. Major new user fees are planned.

The budget viciously attacks public sector wages and pensions, with the government threatening to impose wage controls if unions refuse to accept the proposed "voluntary" pay freeze and other concessions that will eliminate thousands of jobs and the services that go with them.

According to the Communist Party of Canada (Ontario), the budget is aimed to drive down wages, pensions, incomes and living standards in the public and private sector, to privatize or eliminate social programs, and severely weaken labour and democratic rights. It will force the unemployed, those on social assistance and ODSP, and many in precarious jobs, to live on incomes too small to cover the cost of housing, let alone food. Combined with the federal budget, this could tip the province into

another deep economic recession. In January the OFL issued a call for the April 21 Day of Action. One hundred buses were filled with workers and community activists from all over Ontario. Thousands more arrived from the GTA and Toronto, filling the lawns of Queen's Park. Thunderous applause echoed across the downtown during the speeches, followed by chants, songs and music throughout the boisterous march that followed.

But it wasn't all applause. NDP leader Andrea Horwath was roundly booed by demonstrators (including many wearing orange scarves) who clearly felt the NDP caucus was giving away the store in negotiations with the minority Liberal government over the terms of the April 24 budget vote.

The Tories - the Official Opposition in Queen's Park - oppose the budget in an effort to force another election which they believe they can win. The ball fell to the NDP to get austerity off the agenda. But the big majority of demonstrators clearly felt the NDP had conceded too much, and ought to have pressed the Liberals a lot

harder for the platform it had campaigned on last September, including its policy to restore the corporate income tax rate to 14%. A long stream of speakers talked about the horrendous effect of the budget cuts, underlining how little the NDP appeared to have secured.

Sid Ryan and many others spoke about the need for a sustained and broad-based fight against austerity, about the bold and extended fight by Quebec students and labour against tuition hikes. They called on the labour and democratic movements to get involved in the Common Front.

A day earlier, in a downtown Toronto church, over a hundred labour, social, community and political activists crowded in to unanimously support the OFL's proposal for a Common Front to fight austerity and the budget cuts. Ryan, OFL Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Hutchison, Ontario Health Coalition director Natalie Mehra, Social Planning Council Chair Peter Clutterbuck and others spoke about the need for a massive response to austerity. Ryan referenced the Days of Action that almost brought down the Harris government in the 90s, clearly indicating the direction he wants to move.

Ryan also expressed the view that the NDP should not be afraid of an election, clearly critical of the

concessions made by Horwath. A survey commissioned by the OFL showed that a large majority of those polled supported taxing the corporations and the wealthy to avoid devastating budget cuts. An NDP member and sometime candidate, Ryan clearly expects the party to clean up if an election is called.

Not everyone shares that view. Other polls indicate an election now would likely result in another minority government, with voter support split among Liberals, Tories and NDP. The Greens and small parties could also be a factor in a tight vote.

The CPC (Ontario) warned against a snap election, suggesting an NDP outcome was far from certain, and that an NDP minority would be more likely to move towards the Liberals in a three-party House, giving the Liberals and their austerity policies the upper hand in any future negotiations.

"Today the working class and its allies will be in the strongest position by building the Common Front into a massive extra-parliamentary movement that can bring its weight to bear on the minority Liberal government - and the NDP caucus," said CP (Ontario) leader Liz Rowley.

Instead of austerity measures, the Ontario Communists are calling for wealth taxes and inheritance

taxes on large estates, higher corporate income taxes, restoring the capital tax, and increased capital gains taxes. This would generate the revenue needed to fund health, education, childcare and social programs, to create jobs and build affordable social housing, to substantially raise the minimum wage and social assistance rates on the road to a guaranteed annual income above the poverty line, and to enforce free collective bargaining and the right to strike.

"This is also the time to win gains such as rent control legislation, anti-scab legislation, plant closure legislation, and other social, civil, labour, and democratic rights", said Rowley. "The working class and its allies must rely on their own united and mass independent political action to force the Legislature to jettison austerity and introduce policies for jobs and an economic recovery for working people."

The mass demonstration and the Common Front are welcome developments at a time when many battles are being fought alone by the few directly involved. The birth of the Common Front makes each struggle a common struggle for jobs and justice. It transforms the few into the many, the fingers of struggle into the fist of a powerful movement for real and progressive change. ●

Unite to defeat Harper!

For jobs and peace, not fighter jets



Jacob Penner - Norman Bethune Club

Winnipeg, Manitoba

PEOPLE'S VOICE FUND DRIVE: \$50,000

Fund Drive nears half-way mark; Quebec over top

Congratulations to our supporters in Quebec, the first region to go over the top in our 2012 Fund Drive, with \$760 turned in towards a target of \$500. This reflects a solid gain in PV subscriptions and distribution over the last year, quite an achievement considering that our Quebec

supporters also publish the French language *Clarté*.

Looking at the rest of the country, Alberta is closing in on their target, with \$3030 (89%) of their \$3400 goal achieved, followed by Saskatchewan (\$380, or 47.5% out of \$800), Ontario (\$9381, or 43% towards \$21,600), BC (\$6461, or 32.3% towards \$20,000), Manitoba (\$750, or 31% towards \$2400), and the Atlantic region (\$270, or 22.5% towards \$1200).

As of April 19, we can report a total of \$21,482, or about 43% of our annual goal of \$50,000. This does not include nearly \$3000 worth of May Day greetings submitted for this issue. The value of these ads will be counted towards the Fund Drive when final payments are received.

That's a great start, and a number of our most significant annual fundraisers are coming up to help boost our efforts. This month, B.C. Lower Mainland

readers are urged to take in the annual Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast organized by the Burnaby Club. The Breakfast is on Sunday, May 13, from 10 am to 1 pm, at 5435 Kincaid St. in Burnaby, and admission is just \$12. Look for more details and a map on page 15.

The 20th Annual People's Voice Victory Banquet will be Saturday, June 2, at the historic Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave. in east Vancouver. Tickets are \$20 (or \$10 unemployed), now available at our offices (706 Clark Drive). For reservations, call 604-255-2041. See our next issue for more details.

A special thanks to our supporters in Ottawa, who recently held an extremely successful social which raised \$800 towards their share of the Ontario target. Such examples show that creative events can make fundraising an enjoyable political activity, and a great way to keep People's Voice in print!

Marking 90th anniversary of the working class press



Our look back at 90 years of the working class press in Canada continues with this historic front page from the B.C. Workers' News, one of the predecessors of People's Voice. Dated June 28, 1935, this issue gave extensive details of the progress of the On To Ottawa Trek, which was brutally attacked by the RCMP in Regina just three days later. The paper also reported on the violence against longshore workers who were trying to organize into a trade union in Vancouver and other west coast ports.

Here's my contribution to the PV Fund Drive!

Enclosed please find my donation of \$_____ to the 2012 People's Voice Press Fund Drive.

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

BC teachers squeezed by government & LRB

By Kimball Cariou

Trapped in a government/Labour Relations Board squeeze play, British Columbia's 41,000 public school teachers continue to stand up for their rights and for the interests of students. At this point, one of the few options left for teachers is to withdraw from extra-curricular activities.

In early March, faced with a refusal to bargain by the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA), the Teachers' Federation escalated their limited job action which began last September. The BCTF held a three-day strike, pressing the Liberal government to back down from its "net zero" mandate which locks BCPSEA into a pay freeze position.

The response by Premier Christy Clark's Liberals was to ram Bill 22 through the legislature. The Bill virtually wipes out limits on class size and composition, and forces the BCTF to engage in so-called "mediation" which will strip crucial clauses from their existing collective agreements. The legislation imposes enormous fines against the union and its members for any new strike actions.

BCTF delegates voted at their March annual meeting to hold a province-wide vote on a resistance strategy against Bill 22. In mid-April, 21,625 teachers voted in favour, and 7,846 against - a 73% rejection of the "Education Improvement Act."

BCTF President Susan Lambert called the result "a powerful message to government that they must rethink Bill 22, listen to the concerns of teachers, respect our

rights, and invest in services to students. Teachers are united in opposition to this terrible piece of legislation, the twentieth bill passed by the BC Liberals since 2001 targeting teachers' professional and labour rights."

Lambert acknowledged that teachers made a difficult decision to withdraw from extra-curricular activities, which "bring so much joy to our engagement with students. We know this will mean the loss of some highly-valued activities, and we sincerely regret that. But we have to look at the bigger picture and the longer term."

The fightback plan also calls for non-cooperation with the Ministry of Education; a public awareness campaign to educate British Columbians about the impact of Bill 22; a possible future vote on a full withdrawal of services; and working to help elect a new government in May 2013 that will repeal Bill 22.

The BCTF has also applied to the B.C. Labour Relations Board to quash the appointment of Dr. Charles Jago as mediator. Given

his past actions and writings, and his financial contributions to the BC Liberals, most observers conclude that Jago was appointed to do the government's dirty work. Jago has until June 30 to mediate the dispute, receiving \$2000 per day. He is expected to fail, and will then be directed to submit non-binding recommendations.

In another development, the LRB ruled on April 19 that teachers have until April 27 to produce report cards with student marks dating back to September 2011. The LRB ruling was triggered by a BCPSEA application which argued that the teachers' refusal to write second-term report cards amounted to an illegal strike. It remains to be seen how this will play out, since the BCTF maintains that the decision compels its members to perform "struck work." On April 23, the LRB ruled that the Victoria BCTF local, which had refused to direct its members to comply with the report card order along this timeline, was engaged in an illegal strike.

The LRB ruling supports the lie spread by the Liberals that high-

quality report cards can be prepared at the push of a button. Much of the government and corporate media attack against the BCTF is based on similar demagogic slanders, accusing the teachers of being "lazy" and "overpaid."

The withdrawal of extra-curricular activities is one of the few cards the BCTF had left to play. The union stresses the fact that by underfunding public education, the Liberals bear the true responsibility for this tactic.

However, the BCTF still has a powerful base of support among parents, students, and some school boards whose positions are not reflected by BCPSEA. The Vancouver Board of Education, for example, passed a resolution stating that "Bill 22 is causing our valued education partners to feel bullied and disempowered, putting any real improvement to our education

system in peril. We support and respect the rights of employees to freely and collectively bargain the terms of their employment and we ask you to do the same."

The resolution sharply criticizes the Bill's provision to pay extra to teachers who accept over-sized classes, and for failing to provide supports for students with special needs. It concludes by backing the call from the Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council to rescind Bill 22.

Despite Christy Clark's deepening unpopularity - and her party's devastating losses to the NDP in two April 19 byelections - the Premier still commands a majority in the legislature. The Liberals intend to ride out the protests, as a scare tactic to gain votes. But in the end, her anti-public education policies may contribute to a resounding defeat at the polls next May. •

PEOPLE'S VOICE VICTORY BANQUET

Sat., June 2, doors @ 5:30 pm
Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave.
VANCOUVER

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May Day greetings!
Peace, Equality, Socialism!

Mathew Popowich Club,
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MAY DAY GREETINGS

From CUPE Local 1004
Vancouver BC

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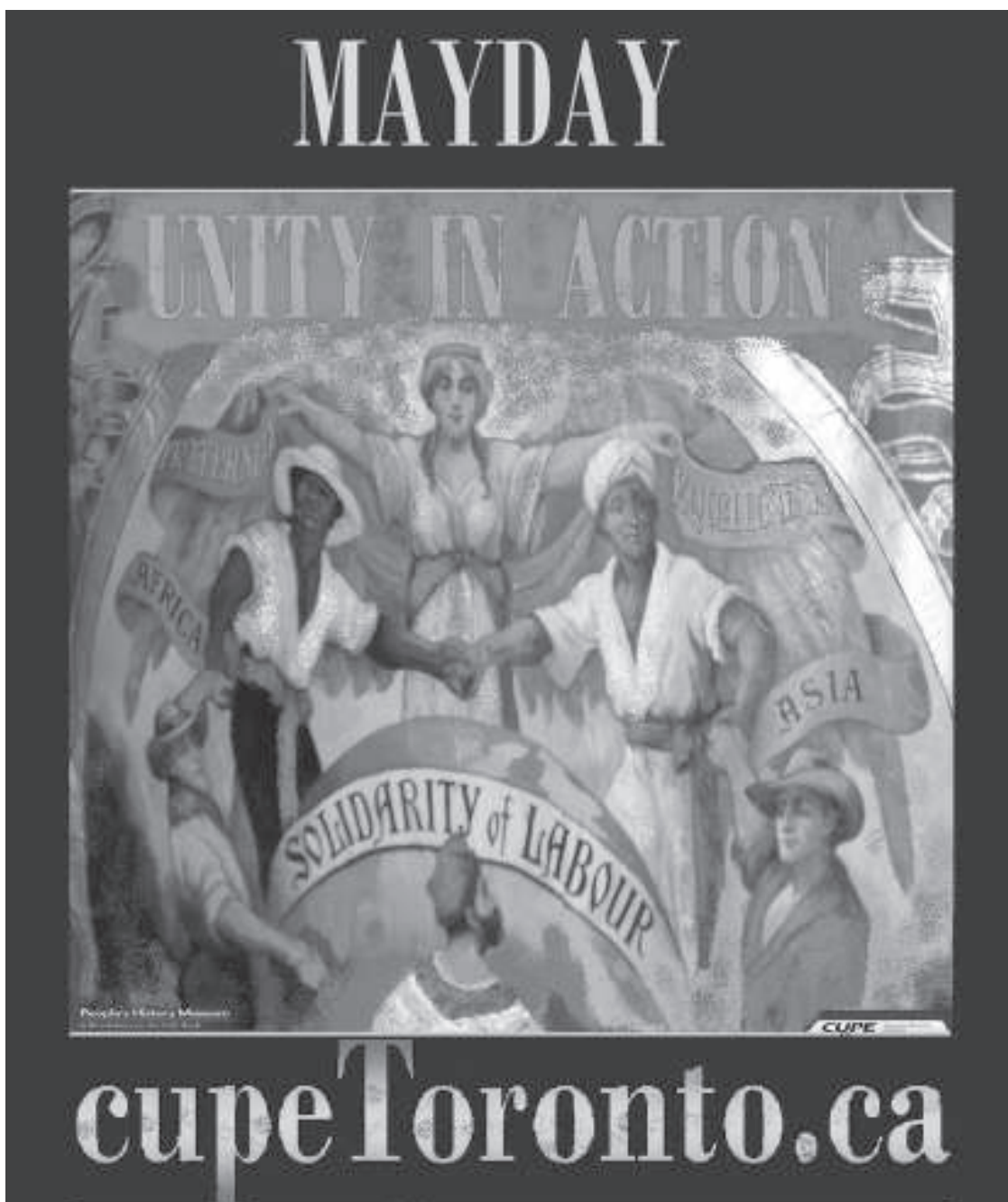
Vancouver & District
Labour Council

Greetings of Solidarity
MayDay 2012
International Day of the Worker



A day of unity for workers
of all countries.

Many small differences may divide us but
our common interests as workers unite us!



EDITORIALS

Red alert from Quebec

Whatever the immediate outcome, the Quebec student strike has raised the bar for popular resistance struggles, for at least two compelling reasons.

One concerns the broad movement which has emerged in solidarity with the students. By uniting around core demands for accessibility to education which resonate with all working people, the students have expanded their base, from campuses across Quebec, to the wider population. This fight expresses the sentiments of working people in many countries, fed up with endless demands by bosses and governments to make us pay for an economic crisis caused by big capital's drive for profits. The student strike shows that the way forward is not through isolated individual protests, but through conscious efforts to build mass, united action.

The Quebec students have also begun to question the basis of our entire social system. As the Climate Justice statement (see page 10) says, "the fight against an unjust economy and the fight against climate change" are one and the same, "because the crises of the climate and the economy have the same root: putting profits before people and the planet.... This economic model that celebrates greed above all else is not just making education inaccessible, but it will make our planet uninhabitable."

The policies demanded in this statement are urgent: reducing inequalities; mass public transit; free education; green jobs that decrease dependence on fossil fuels; restraining the power of corporations and banks; rapid reduction of carbon emissions.

Although not explicitly socialist, the statement calls for change that is "green as well as red", for "a clean energy future that is socially and economically just". This moves in the direction of democratic public ownership of productive wealth, i.e. replacing the private profit system with working class power. Once this concept wins the support of millions, it will become a powerful political force to win a new Canada and a better world.

End the Afghan tragedy now

Amidst a deepening crisis, pressures are building for an end to the imperialist occupation of Afghanistan. This disaster is not an unexpected turn of events. For example, in January 2002, People's Voice reported on a study by Prof. Marc Herold of the University of New Hampshire, who presented reliable evidence that more than 3,500 civilians had been killed by U.S. bombs since the attacks were launched on the previous Oct. 7. For over a decade, Afghan civilians have suffered a death toll far larger than the casualties of U.S., Canadian and other occupation armies.

The litany of horrors keeps growing, from the burning of Korans, to the massacres of civilians, to the sickening revelations about U.S. troops posing with corpses and body parts. One in five U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan are now caused by Afghan security forces, trained and supplied by Canada and other NATO allies. "Guardian angel" soldiers have to stand guard while other U.S. troops sleep.

A recent CBS poll shows a record 69% of Americans think the U.S. should not be involved in Afghanistan, and a solid majority of Canadians have called for return of the troops for years.

The truth is clear to all. Imperialism's military strategy in Afghanistan has been a total, abysmal failure. Canadians are wasting billions of dollars to occupy a population bitterly angry about the unending deaths and humiliations inflicted by the NATO powers. Despite all the feel-good news stories about "reconstruction," Canada's role in Kandahar has been closely linked with drug warlords and violent thugs. This shameful chapter in Canada's history must be closed, not in 2014, but immediately. Bring the troops home now, and begin to pay compensation to the Afghan people for the terrible crimes committed in our name.

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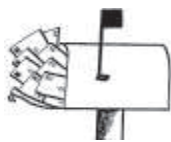
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LETTERS

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

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Letters to the Editor

The Sticky Question of Religious Rights

During our Alberta provincial election, CBC offers "Vote Compass" on its website, allowing voters to compare their positions on policies to those of the main parties. Respondents answer a questions on a range of issues. When finished, a graph compares the voter's beliefs to those of the parties. I was not surprised to find myself slightly to the left of the NDP on economic and social issues.

On one issue, the result made me appear closer to Wildrose Party policy, although nothing could be further from the truth. The question asked whether or not religious minorities need more protection. I disagreed. Except for the Wildrose Party, political parties generally agree with giving religious minorities more protection. Most members of the Wildrose Party believe that Christians are a majority in our society and that the rights of Christians are compromised while "minority" religions are given more rights and privileges. As an active and practising Christian, I believe nothing is further from the truth.

I have no doubt the majority of people do believe in God. However, religion is not an important part of most people's lives. On Sunday morning, you are more likely to find people in the local retail mall or sports activity than in church. The truth is that Christianity is one more religious minority, perhaps larger than other minorities, but still a minority.

Furthermore, more rights and privileges are granted on the basis of religion than any other personal or group factor such as gender, race, culture, or sexual orientation. Supporting a religious organization normally entitles givers to charitable tax privileges. Yet, Judeo-Christian scriptures (and I am sure the scriptures of other religious traditions) make it clear that support of a believer's

faith community is a duty, not a charity, to be done without show.

Taxpayers support a variety of religious institutions and privileges. For example, in Alberta, Roman Catholic Schools are normally public schools and given full public support. In recent years, public boards have opened programs for a variety of other religious traditions - all supported through tax revenue. Private religious schools and homeschoolers who agree to follow the provincial curriculum (even as they adapt it to their own religious beliefs) receive public support. Yet, this is not good enough for religious leaders. In Catholic schools for example, Bishops exercise control over school board decisions on curriculum, student clubs and school policies - even though they themselves do not have children (at least none they admit to).

Religious groups also seek to control secular law. For example, Roman Catholic hierarchy have threatened Catholic legislators to vote in accord with church doctrines on certain issues or be denied the sacraments. While a church has the right to set rules of personal behaviour as a condition of membership, this cannot include forcing legislators to make church beliefs into law - especially against the will of the people they are elected to represent. Is it not illegal to procure the vote of a legislator through the use of threats?

Religious freedom allows people to follow their own beliefs in their home and place of worship. However, it also allows freedom from religion and protects those following alternative religions. It does not let religious organizations enforce their values in law or to expect public support for their operations.

For example, learning about religion should be part of a complete education, but there is no longer any justification to

expect taxpayers to fund schools for any one religious denomination to teach one set of exclusive religious beliefs. Furthermore, religious groups should be treated like any other corporate entity. Fundraising for specific charitable purposes (e.g.: operating a food bank or supporting disaster relief) should be eligible for charitable tax status. Beyond that, if religious groups wish to issue tax receipts to donors, then they should expect to declare all income through donations and pay taxes on that income.

Let there be no doubt. Protecting religious rights is part of protecting human rights in a democratic society. However, setting up a hierarchy of rights in which religious rights are given priority over other human and equality rights, and particularly giving extra protection to certain religious groups, whether that group is a majority or minority in society, is replacing religious freedom with state religion. This, we must not allow.

Wayne Madden, Edmonton, AB

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Peace and Friendship events on April 28 in Caledonia/Kanonhstaton

April 20, 2012 marked the sixth anniversary of the OPP raid of the Six Nations reclamation of the former Douglas Creek Estates, which cast a spotlight on Native land disputes in Canada.

In an historic event, hundreds of non-native supporters are being organized to bus in from eight Southern Ontario cities to peacefully rally in Caledonia and walk to a celebration at Kanonhstaton, the former Douglas Creek Estates, on Sat., April 28.

Following years of inaction on unresolved land and treaty issues at all levels of Canadian government, Native and non-native communities are rallying together in unprecedented numbers to demand that Six Nations land rights be respected.

Tracy Bomberly, a Six Nations spokesperson for the April 28th Coalition says "It has been six years since Kanonhstaton ("the Protected Place") or the Reclamation began in 2006. Much has occurred since then. Our people have stood up and raised

our voices and many connections, friendships, and relationships have been built. However, at the same time nothing has been done by the Canadian Government to address our treaties and land rights."

This day of celebration and lead-up events are being organized by a broad based April 28th Coalition. Luke Stewart, a historian and lifetime Haldimand Tract resident, is one of the group's spokespeople. Stewart described the march as "a call to honour and respect our historical agreements, and move toward a peaceful future of healthy coexistence, not colonial subjugation and corporate land theft." Stewart added that the Coalition is comprised of residents of Caledonia, Oshweken, Hamilton, Kanonhstaton, Brantford, Dunville, Kitchener, and other small towns along the Grand River as well as supporters from Toronto and beyond.

According to Caledonia resident and group spokesperson Katherine Moesker "This day can mark the beginning of the

reconciliation of relationships between two communities. We cannot move forward if we all don't take a stand and decide to work together. This event can be a powerful statement to anyone who witnesses it: we can show the world that it is possible to grow closer together as a community despite what has happened in the past."

(As seen in this photo from the first week of the Six Nations reclamation, the struggle was marked by a high degree of solidarity from working class movements.) •



The Ontario Budget's attack on women

Statement from the Greater Toronto Worker's Assembly Feminist Action Committee

We want to commend the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) for refusing to negotiate with the Government of Ontario on cuts to Education, and for rejecting these cuts on the grounds that it is an attack on women.

It is absolutely essential to see the sustained attacks on public sector workers by all levels of government as attacks on women. Public sector jobs are some of the only well-paid, secure and unionized jobs where women and

people of colour are highly represented in Canada.

Women still face inequality and higher rates of poverty than men. Women who work full-time earn 71 cents on every dollar earned by men; 60% of minimum wage earners are women; for racialized women it is worse - poverty in racialized communities is 22% compared to 9% for non-racialized communities.

Public sector jobs are an avenue to reduce income inequality. Employment equity measures in the public sector were an extremely important and hard-fought victory for women and people of colour. Public sector unions should continue to fight not only to protect secure, well-paying jobs, but also to stand up for the interests of all working people, especially those less privileged.

Women are not only highly represented as service providers, but they also look to public services to help alleviate the workload of caring for children, the elderly and ill family members. Cuts to public services will not only limit women's employment prospects for well-paying jobs, but will increase the stress of balancing childcare, housing and grocery costs on a reduced budget with limited social support.

The freeze on social assistance and ODSP rates, which are already grossly inadequate, and the elimination of the Community Start Up and Maintenance Fund from social assistance benefits, should be understood as cuts which amplify these effects and create undue hardship for women.



We are being told that we need to tighten our belts and make do with less. But there's no austerity for the rich, they are not the ones being asked to make do with less. Instead our public services are being squeezed so we can subsidize their tax cuts.

Without a doubt we are facing attacks by the province against the working-class and women, one that will continue to require a multi-pronged and coordinated resistance. It will be necessary for a broad coalition of social forces to come together. Some of that is already happening. In Toronto, for example, women have been involved in campaigns against municipal level cuts through Toronto Stop the Cuts and other organizations in the community and the labour movement. But we'll need to expand and deepen this mobilization. It will also be important to integrate a feminist analysis and initiatives related to the paid and unpaid work done by women. •

Taras H. Shevchenko Museum & Memorial Park Foundation

May Day greetings and firm solidarity to all working people in struggle for a better future in a peaceful world!

Visit our web site at www.infoukes.com/shevchenkomuseum

NO
to the
austerity
agenda


Solidarity this **Mayday**
Public sector workers club
Toronto

May Day 2012


Defend the Rights of Workers

Defend the Rights of All

from Communist Party Clubs in Alberta




Greetings on May 1st — the original international workers' day




THE SOCIETY OF ENERGY PROFESSIONALS IFPTE LOCAL 160

The Society of Energy Professionals/IFPTE Local 160 represents more than 8,000 professional employees - engineers, scientists, middle managers, information technology specialists - in Ontario's electricity industry.



The OSSTF/FEESO Educational Team celebrates May Day with all workers

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario
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TEL 416.701.8300
TEL 1.800.267.7867
FAX 416.701.3354
www.ostf.on.ca



Solidarity with the Québec student mobilizations

For free education and a general political strike!

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee, Communist Party of Canada, April 15, 2012

Since early February, college and university students across Québec have been confronting the Charest Liberal government's attack on accessible education with a magnificent and historic student strike that has rocked the province. The student strike has been marked

by its high level of support from the people of Québec, the unity of the students, and the sheer scale of the mobilization.

In a lesson of the power of unity and militancy, the four main Québec student union centrals have set aside their differences to combat a tuition increase of \$1625 over five years. The students have also been clear that their campaign is part of the broad struggle against austerity measures and about a projet social for a different and better society with accessible and free education.

Over three hundred thousand students have engaged in limited strike action, and close to two hundred thousand students are currently out of class and in the

streets. Multiple demonstrations and occupations are taking place daily across Québec, with a record and enormous mobilization of over two hundred and fifty thousand protestors on March 22. Another massive action is planned on Earth Day under the slogan "for a Québécois spring!"

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada gives our full solidarity and support to this magnificent struggle, to the student organizations, and the people of Québec. In the critical labour and people's fight-back against the corporate anti-people agenda of budget cut backs and privatization, attacks on labour unions, the right to strike, pensions, environmental destruction, etc. across the country, the Québec students directly are on the front-line.

Our Party fully endorses the slogan "Just one minute longer" adopted by the National Executive of the Communist Party of Québec (PCQ), calling upon the students to bravely continue to hold out and stay united against the Charest Liberals. We also support the proposal of the PCQ's newspaper Clarté, that the trade union movement throw its active support behind this struggle and convene an Estates General of progressive forces against the Charest Liberals, with labour the core, to formulate the way forward with a general, political strike.

The Québec government, big business and right-wing forces (with the collusion of the top-level of many university administrations) have attempted to break the student strike through police brutality, court challenges, unilateral decrees, an expensive media blitz of mis-information, and an anti-democratic strategy of standing "tough" and refusing to seriously negotiate with the students.

But the Charest Liberal government has not succeeded and have instead lost the broad support of the people of Québec. The final report of the Charbonneau Commission (examining links between the construction industry, politicians, and organized crime) is inevitably around the corner. Despite all their bluster, the Charest Liberal's are in an increasingly precarious position. It is essential that Québec labour step-up now, amplifying the moral

pressure that the students have wielded with the economic pressure of a new Common Front and general political strike. The people's options are also very difficult, but there is no other way forward than a united fightback. On the other hand, as the left-wing political party Québec Solidaire said just this week, we can make a sharp break with the programme of the monopoly corporations and win a people's agenda including the elimination of tuition fees.

The students are now entering the eleventh week of their strike, an increasingly tough and important juncture. To detract solidarity, media coverage of the student strike outside of Québec has been limited and has made great efforts to focus on a handful of altercations involving the protestors. In reality, it is the notoriously violent Sureté du Québec (and other security forces) that are repeatedly tear gassing

and pepper spraying demonstrators, have blinded a student with a sound bomb, and are now arresting large numbers of protestors at demos.

We call for labour, student, community and progressive organizations to send messages of support to the Quebec students, and for emergency solidarity actions to be held across the county to break the silence in English-speaking Canada about this incredible people's movement!

We repeat our long-standing demand for free education from cradle to grave, a living stipend for students, the abolishment of student debt and replacement of loans with grants, the right of students to organize autonomously without interference, rolling back privatization by restoring and expanding all public funds to education, and the demilitarization of research and development. •

Revolutionary Greetings From the East Toronto Club of the Communist Party



Onward to A United Struggle for a World Free of Exploitation and Greed

A United Struggle in defense of humanity and the planet

A United Struggle for Socialism



May Day greetings in solidarity with Canada's working people in our struggle for a better life!


AUUC Toronto Branch

Toronto Association for Peace and Solidarity (Canadian Peace Congress)



Solidarity with the Peoples of Syria and Iran! No to Imperialist War!

tap@canadianpeacecongress.ca



Solidarity Greetings May Day 2012
from
Leap Forward Design and Print

a unionized worker co-op
leapfwd@sympatico.ca

Peace and Solidarity

Hands off Syria!  Hands off Iran!

Canada Out of NATO!
For an Independent Foreign Policy of Peace!

Canadian Peace Congress
www.canadianpeacecongress.ca

Solidarity Greetings on the occasion of May 1, 2012 to workers in Canada and across the world.

*Society Staff Union (SSU)
Toronto, Ontario
(Staff employees working for the Society of Energy Professionals)*

First Nations Chiefs “deeply disturbed” by environmental review changes

The B.C.-based First Nations Leadership Council has issued an open letter to Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver, condemning the Harper government's “Responsible Resource Development Plan”. Announced on April 17, the policy gives the federal government sweeping powers to fast-track projects at the demand of resource monopolies.

The Open Letter reads:

We are writing with respect to your government's shocking announcement to completely gut the environmental assessment process. We are gravely concerned with this announcement to eviscerate the process for environmental review on resource development projects after the changes lay waste to the credibility of the process. These environmental laws and the associated processes do not replace the judicially-recognized and constitutionally-protected Aboriginal Title, Rights and Treaty Rights but there are vital parts of the Crown's relationship with First Nations. Fundamental changes to the environmental assessment process and other environmental protection laws can only be undertaken with meaningful consultation with First Nations. We urge the federal government to work with First Nations to improve environmental protections rather than weaken them with the reduction of assessment timelines and the reduction of required organizations responsible for such reviews.

First Nations have legal and constitutionally protected rights and responsibilities to protect their traditional territories and all that this encompasses, and are not merely stakeholders in resource development projects. Both domestic and international law recognize the importance of Indigenous Peoples' relationship to resources and all activities that take place on our traditional territories.

A recent report by the United Nations Committee on the

Elimination of Racial Discrimination emphasized the need for Canada to include Indigenous peoples in decision making, recommending that Canada “Implement in good faith the right to consultation and to free, prior and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples whenever their rights may be affected by projects carried out on their lands, as set forth in international standards and the State party's legislation.” Further, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples sets out in Article 26(1) that “Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied, or otherwise used or acquired.” We fully expect Canada to uphold its commitment to this important international doctrine.

We remind you that the Crown cannot legislate itself out of its duties to consult and accommodate First Nations. With upcoming projects that require further review such as Taseko Mines Ltd's Prosperity Mine, expansion of the Kinder-Morgan pipeline, Enbridge Northern Gateway Project as well as other resource development projects, the Federal government must engage in good faith and meaningfully consult with First Nations. Removing or weakening environmental reviews for projects will only result in greater uncertainty and heightened conflict on the land.

We are keenly aware that the British Columbia government is simultaneously working to create regulations to exempt some so-called “low-risk activities” from the requirement to hold a Mines Act permit. The regulatory changes to the Mines Act were set out in Bill 19, which was introduced on November 14th and rushed through the House to receive Royal Assent on November 24th, the last day that the Legislative Assembly sat in 2011. We wish to put you on notice that we are monitoring the dovetailing approaches taken by



This March 26 rally against the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline project, organized in Vancouver by the Heiltsuk Nation, drew a crowd of some 2000 people. (Photo: K. Cariou)

both the provincial and federal governments to categorically erode the approval process for environmental projects in favour of industry and in complete disrespect for Aboriginal Title and Rights and Treaty Rights.

Again, we are deeply disturbed by these developments and we urgently request a meeting with

the First Nations Leadership Council to further discuss how these proposed changes to the environmental assessment process and other environmental protection laws will impact on the Aboriginal Title, Rights and Treaty Rights of First Nations in BC.

Signed on behalf of the First Nations Summit by Grand Chief

Edward John, Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun, and Dan Smith; on behalf of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs by Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Chief Bob Chamberlin, and Chief Marilyn Baptiste; and on behalf of the BC Assembly of First Nations by Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould. ●

The ENG project: a critical struggle for the future

From a resolution adopted by the Central Committee, Communist Party of Canada, April 14-15, 2012

The stakes are huge in the struggle over the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway (ENG) pipeline project, which threatens both the inherent rights of First Nations over their traditional territories, and the natural environment in northern British Columbia and along the west coast of Canada. The hearings of the Joint Review Panel on the ENG have become a historic clash of diametrically opposing views. On the one hand, the transnational energy monopolies are pushing to expand the export of raw materials. On the other hand, a broad coalition of Aboriginal peoples, environmentalists, progressive activists, working people, and even elements of the business community seek to protect the environment, and to create jobs through the processing of raw materials in Canada.

This meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada extends our full solidarity to the courageous movement which is working tirelessly to block the ENG project, and we condemn the Harper Tory government's blatant attempts to manipulate the Joint Panel Review hearings. Determined to ram through this pipeline, the Tories are even preparing to gut environmental review processes which could pose obstacles to the

ENG pipeline and other energy industry projects.

Environmental experts warn of the strong potential for catastrophic damage along the 1177-kilometre corridor, which would export bitumen in one pipeline, across some 1,000 rivers, streams and bodies of water, to supertankers in the narrow Douglas Channel, one of the most fragile areas of the west coast...

We strongly oppose the policy of exporting unprocessed raw materials, which strengthens U.S. imperialism and its Canadian cronies, but drives another nail into the coffin of Canada's declining domestic industrial and secondary manufacturing base. Instead, the Communist Party of Canada calls for a People's Energy

Plan, based on several key principles, including: the need for a sustainable, conservation-based economy rather than expanded exports of crude oil and other raw materials; full respect for the inherent rights of First Nations over their traditional territories and resources; and democratic public ownership of the energy industry, as the material basis to rebuild Canada's industrial and manufacturing sector and to create jobs...

We urge the labour and democratic movements to build solidarity with the Aboriginal peoples and environmentalists against this dangerous project, and to unite around a genuine people's alternative plan for economic development, based on people's needs and the environment, not corporate greed! ●

GTA West Club, CPC
Extends its Solidarity
to Working People
On May Day

MAY DAY
GREETINGS!

To People's Voice readers and
to working people everywhere!
Belogiannis Club CPC

MAY DAY
Greetings

From the
Eric Blair
Club, CPC

in Niagara, home of
Harriet Tubman



"Time for a united fightback strategy"

Special to PV

As global capitalism continues to flounder, the attraction of radical alternatives appears to be rising. Meeting in Toronto over the April 14-15 weekend, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada analyzed this important development, and how to help strengthen the working class movements. Elected from across Canada at the Party's 36th Convention in 2010, the 20-member CC meets twice yearly.

One indication of change has been the wave of mass political strikes by workers in Greece, Portugal, and Italy, but also in India and other countries where anger is rising against the so-called "austerity reforms" imposed by pro-business governments.

In North America, the upsurge in labour resistance was sharpest in Wisconsin, where huge mass protests were followed with a campaign to recall far-right Republican governor Scott Walker. Then last fall, the Occupy movement emerged to challenge the domination of the corporations on a continental scale.

Just as significant, left and communist alternatives are gaining voter support in some countries. As the Main Report adopted by the CC meeting says, "These struggles in turn have radicalized political thinking, weakened the grip of social democratic and reformist illusions among workers, and increased support for the Communist and revolutionary left forces in these countries." In Greece, the PASOK (social democratic) party is down to about 15% in the polls, while support for the KKE (Communists) and the left in general has risen to nearly that level. Support is also growing for the Left Front in France (which includes the PCF), for the Communist-led United Left (IU) in Spain, and for the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

These developments, the Report notes, are linked to the downward spiral of the imperialist system. Despite frantic efforts to stabilize their economies since the outbreak of the crisis in 2008, most capitalist countries still face persistently high unemployment and low growth rates.

As the Report says, "The political-economic offensive launched by monopoly and



Toronto communists on the march... (PV file photo: Ed Bil)

capitalist governments to drive down the price of labour-power through savage wage cuts, increasing the intensity of labour ('speed-up'), pension and other benefit take-backs, and the gutting of public services, has in turn spawned growing labour and popular resistance and fightback."

In Canada, the CC members pointed to several powerful expressions of this fightback: the Quebec students' mass strike for access to post-secondary education; the battle of BC teachers against the Liberal government's "net-zero" mandate; and the efforts of the Ontario Federation of Labour to build a broad common front of the organized working class and its allies. The move to hold united May Day events in several major cities this year is another important advance. Movements to block the Harper government's attack on pension

rights and to stop the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline project are also welcome signs of popular resistance to the corporate agenda.

But the meeting also noted that unlike in some countries, the leadership of the main trade union body in Canada is doing little to help mobilize a concerted fightback. Over the past several years, the Communist Party and left labour activists have urged the CLC and its affiliates to convene an emergency meeting of the trade unions and key social forces to put together such a united strategy, but the Georgetti leadership has so far refused to take any such initiative.

The Communist Party will continue to press for an orientation towards mass labour and democratic resistance. With its next Central Convention now set for April 2013, the Party will focus on "identifying and helping to overcome the weaknesses which are inhibiting a more powerful and dynamic resistance movement among broad labour and people's movements, and to

build our Party, the YCL and our press in the process."

Looking at the international situation, the CC meeting warned that today "all three imperialist blocs are mired in a protracted economic crisis of great magnitude." The ruthless austerity measures dictated by big capital are driving down wages, cutting pensions, wiping out social programs, and spreading

malnutrition and hunger.

Most alarming, says the CC Report, is "the stepped-up drive for militarization and war, and the incessant saber-rattling by the main imperialist powers - including Canada - for foreign aggression against both Syria and Iran."

"The drive to war is an inherent feature of capitalism in its imperialist stage," the Report notes, as rival imperialist powers struggle to increase domination over markets, seize natural resources, and re-divide the world."

But this "impulse to aggression" has been intensified by the prolonged economic crisis, since militarism is one way in which capitalism seeks to shed "excess capacity" and resuscitate stagnant economies. The ruling classes are whipping up war hysteria, aiming to distract working people from their class-based grievances against the dominant "1%". The campaign to launch new wars is also being carried out under the pretext of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) civilian lives.

In this dangerous situation, the CC stressed, "it is vital that every effort be made to rally the peace movement across Canada and internationally to stave off imperialist aggression, and to support a peaceful, political solution of the Syrian conflict." ●

how we see it...

Communists slam "austerity budgets"

Coming shortly after the Ontario and federal "austerity" budgets presented in late March, the Communist Party's April 14-14 Central Committee meeting concluded that these documents express the "long-term strategic offensive of monopoly capital."

Despite the Harper government's attempts to "soft-pedal" its funding cuts, the Report warns that the impact of slashing \$5.2 billion in program spending (a 6.9% reduction, or actually more than 10% over three years when inflation is taken into account) will be substantial. The losses will not be the 19,200 job cuts claimed by the government, but more likely 50-60,000 jobs in total, when the earlier 'program review' cuts and the loss of spin-off jobs are taken fully into account, at a time when the real unemployment rate is well over 10% (and more than 20% for young people).

These reductions will affect numerous frontline services, covering everything from employment counsellors to food inspectors. Over 5,500 Public Service Alliance of Canada members in 22 federal government departments have already received termination notices. More than 1,500 scientists, veterinarians, engineers, medical doctors and other staff represented by the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada also received notices.

The effect of the budget will fall most heavily on programs and services which the Tories want to target for political and ideological reasons, such as the environment, aboriginal affairs, the CBC, and so on. The changes to the pension system will have the most negative effect on low income earners with the least ability to protect themselves; many will be forced to stay longer in the workforce.

In condemning this vicious austerity budget, the Central Committee noted that if the government's real intent was to achieve a balanced budget by 2015, "this could have been achieved in other ways, such as by cutting swollen military/security expenditures, by reducing corporate hand-outs, and by increasing public revenues by reversing the massive cuts in corporate and wealth taxes."

But in fact, the CC said, "the Tories have used crude scare tactics of looming 'economic meltdown' on the scale of Greece and Spain if they fail to curb spending, while at the same time down-playing this vicious budget as 'cautious' and 'moderate' (swiftly and uncritically parroted by the mainstream corporate press). In this respect, the Flaherty budget is a skilfully cynical and dishonest piece of work, one which fits neatly into... monopoly's long-term strategic objectives, especially with respect to the role of the Canadian State."

The Central Committee agreed to organize a public campaign by the Party this fall, around the general theme of progressive alternatives to the corporate austerity agenda. The six-week campaign will include a range of materials calling for radical policy changes, and presenting the Communist Party as the most consistent force for fundamental change in Canada. ●

May Day Greetings to the working class of Canada

National Executive Committee of the Parti Communiste du Québec

Prolétaires de tous les pays, peuples et nations opprimés, Unissez-vous!



**Unite for peace, jobs, equality and democracy!
Defeat the Harper Tories!**

MAY DAY GREETINGS



**Central Committee,
Communist Party of Canada**

www.communist-party.ca

Students-labour-environmentalists unite for "Québec Spring"

By Marianne Breton Fontaine and Johan Boyden, based on a presentation given by Marianne, leader of the YCL in Quebec, to YCL student activists.

APRIL 24 - After almost eighty days of protest, the Québec student strike is entering a record 11 weeks. After 250,000 students and their allies from community and labour groups flooded downtown Montreal with a river of people on March 22, another enormous demonstration was held on Earth Day, April 22.

Close to 300,000 people were in the street - students, environmentalists, labour activists and others from diverse backgrounds. The rally, linked explicitly with the student struggle, showed the unprecedented mounting public anger against with the Charest Liberals and strong support for pro-people and pro-nature policies and a "Québec spring."

Making History

The Québec student strike is one of the longest student protests in North American history and has seen some of the biggest mobilizations in Canadian history.

To achieve this magnificent level of resistance, the Québec student movement has had to work on the "ground-level" of their campuses, convincing their members of the importance of accessible education, but also beyond their campuses, reaching out to larger forces in society and building unity.

What we are seeing today is the result of many years of hard work and some painful lessons, especially over the last five years.

In 2007, after several years of tuition freezes won through student pressure, the Charest Liberals increased fees. The most recent student mobilization was in 2005, when 200,000 students hit the streets in a record united effort

against an attack on bursaries. Charest waited two years, and then announced an increase of \$500 in tuition fees. There were immediate calls made by the left student organization ASSE for an unlimited general strike (like today, where there is no end date set for the mobilization other than victory).

Unfortunately, because of a lack of unity and a low level of preparation, the strike did not succeed, although a large three-day strike took place on many campuses.

This taught an important lesson to the Québec student movement, particularly the ASSE. Recognizing their mistake, the progressive and left students went back to work knowing that this was just the first round of a much larger battle.

FECQ, FEUQ, ASSE

For those who don't know the Québec student movement, there are three major national student union centrals. The FECQ and the FEUQ are the largest and always work together. They are somewhat oriented towards lobbying and parliamentary strategies; whereas the ASSE, smaller but much more active, is oriented towards actions in the street.

As the strike votes were just beginning to be organized, the ASSE decided to unite with a number of independent (unaffiliated) student unions for the time of the struggle. This CLASSE coalition currently represents 47% of the strikers. These two poles of organisation have a long standing history of conflict, but as we see today - when they are together, they have achieved amazing mobilisations.

Red Hand Coalition

After 2007 the ASSE made a lengthy two-year reflection and internal debate on the question of strategy (including about how to place the question of elimination

of tuition fees, and how to work with other forces). ASSE decided to push for the creation of a united left front against austerity, the Red Hand coalition.

The Charest Liberals announced in 2010 the tuition fees will again increase, by an unspecified amount. A series of demonstrations were made with the student movement, labour and community organisations under the Red Hand Coalition's banner.

Their rallying cry was not just against the fee increase, but more largely against austerity measures in the Charest budget - such as a regressive flat tax for health care of several hundred dollars. Electricity costs for working families and sales taxes have also been jacked-up.

Every month, statements were spread on campus calling for an unlimited general strike, whatever the actual increase. An important agitational role was played by regularly published newspapers produced by the national Québec student unions.

A year ago, nobody thought that the very elitist McGill University could go on strike. Today, McGill students (and other campuses that are usually removed from the broader student movement) are in the middle of the action. At McGill the strike of PSAC-affiliated campus technical support staff reinforced the solidarity between workers and students, as well as the students' class consciousness.

Mobilisation is never easy, but it works!

All this organizing has also been done in a special context of the global economic crisis and a political crisis in Québec.

Québec unemployment has spiked with 25,700 job losses in January alone. Employment fell by 2% in seven months following May 2011. (To put this number into context, Canadian employment fell by 2.5% in the nine months following the October 2008 economic crisis). Official youth unemployment is 13-16 percent in Québec cities, +20 percent in the Saguenay.

Scandals & victories

A major corruption scandal (linking the mafia with the government) has also been building. For over a year, the Charest government refused to launch a public inquiry. The resulting Charbonneau Commission will hear witnesses in June, but the RCMP are not cooperating with the commission.

Plus, a huge mobilisation against Hydraulic Fracking inspiringly succeeded in reversing the government's position.

In this context, the Communist Party of Québec (and other left voices) have begun calling for a general social strike to make a sharp break with the current direction and win a people's alternative agenda.

While the student strike is supported by most Québécois, there has been a polarization of opinion. The far right-wing is more brazen. On April 12, high-level bureaucrat Bernard Guay published an article on the Québec city-based *Sun* newspaper website calling for the use of "fascist tactics" against the students and the left. Earlier, a right-wing (and Islamophobic) mayor of Hérouxville called on drivers to run over students blocking traffic and to deploy the military against students.

The government, on the other hand, has mocked the student strike. For example, while a police riot took place outside the Palais des congrès de Montréal against a tent camp of Aboriginal people and protesting students (who were opposing the promotion of a major corporate resource extraction project in northern Québec called Plan Nord) Charest joked inside that the students just wanted to get in to get jobs.

Blind in one eye...

Before the student strike the government also announced the formation of a special police unit - clearly anti-communist, anti-democratic, and anti-student - against anarchist and marginal groups or GAMMA.

By February the violent

methods of the police were evident. Rallies were suddenly gassed, protestors pepper sprayed. Student Francis Grenier lost sight in his right eye when riot police fired a sound bomb into his face at a non-violent picket. Grenier was playing a harmonica. There are sometimes 500 arrests in a weekend.

The government is also using tribunals with injunction powers, forcing the students to return to class. But the injunctions have failed because of the amazing actions by the students and teachers - occupying offices and shutting down university buildings.

The teachers have been key players in this movement - respecting the students in their strike and challenging the university administration, and creating Teachers Against Fee Increases. The teachers have constantly worked in the media and strongly encouraged "yes" strike votes on campus. Some teachers have even been arrested by the police on the picket lines.

Finally, the government agreed to talk with the students - but not on the question of fee increases! The government will only discuss the administration of public funds within the university (apparently covered by an old law that the ministry never implemented).

Minister of Education Line Beauchamp also refused to meet with the CLASSE because they do not openly condemn violence. The CLASSE, however, did not play the game, passing a resolution "defending the principle of civil disobedience [...] condemning deliberate physical violence against persons except in self-defense [...] and condemning police and institutional systemic violence, including discrimination in access to education as socio-economic criteria, injunctions harassing the right to strike, and freedom from association, humiliation, intimidation, and violent repression by the security forces and government[...]"

Begrudgingly, the Minister has started negotiations with all three student groups.

Support needed

The Young Communist League of Québec and the Communist Party of Québec are both calling for the students to stand strong, together "just one minute more" than the government can.

Québec now needs solidarity. The Charest government continually justifies the tuition increase by pointing to English-speaking Canada's higher fees. Québec students, they say, are cry babies. We must show English-speaking Canadian students do not agree. Proposals and draft resolutions are at www.RebelYouth-Magazine.blogspot.com

Lastly, we must to break the silence about the Québec student strike, which shows that with hard work, an escalating plan of mobilization, and brave leadership - the people will fight. Spreading the information about the Québec strike is therefore calling to begin such a broad and united mobilisation in the rest of Canada!

Solidarity Against Austerity

MAY 1

11:30AM - CONFEDERATION PARK GATHER & MARCH

12PM - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE MASS RALLY

2PM Teach In Against Austerity

3:30PM-7PM Community Supper

7:30PM May Day Music Festival

#maytoll

TAKE TO THE STREETS TO STOP THE CUTS

Unable to join the downtown rally & march? Take action in your neighbourhood or at your workplace! Visit the Solidarity Against Austerity website for ideas.

WWW.MAYDAYOTTAWA.CA @MAYDAYOTTAWA

May Day Greetings to all from the CPC (Ontario)

Unite and Fight to Defeat Austerity!

Jobs, Not Bombs!

Build the Common Front!

MAY DAY 2012
Greetings from the
Friends of the KKE
Toronto

Our Generation's Quiet Awakening must be Green and Red

by *Climate Justice Ottawa and the Canadian Youth Climate Coalition, and Climate Justice Montreal*

The creative, courageous and inspiring Quebec student movement will today [April 22 - Editor] weave its way through Montreal's EarthDay rally, mixing red and green, merging its demands for a freeze on tuition with respect for the earth and those most impacted by climate change. Let their meeting not remain accidental, but deepen and flourish.

Our country has always been divided by solitudes of nation, religion, and language, but no two solitudes are as important to overcome today as this: the fight against an unjust economy and the fight against climate change.

It has never been more urgent to make the connection. The old mentality may have told us to fight our battles separately: Let environmentalists deal with the

environment. Let workers and students deal with the economy. But a new mentality tells us this is the same fight, because the crises of the climate and the economy have the same root: putting profits before people and the planet.

This must be our generation's quiet awakening.

If students squarely in the red is a warning our economic model is failing them, then climate change is a terrifying expression - the ultimate red alert - that the economy is failing the earth. This economic model that celebrates greed above all else is not just making education inaccessible, but it will make our planet uninhabitable.

It says to us: each person for himself; make the students shoulder the burden; and let people stricken the world-over by climate change-induced droughts, storms, flooding and crop-failures suffer their fate.

The neoliberal economic model that commercializes education is

also the model that will turn the St. Lawrence valley into an industrial shale gas experiment. That will turn the north of Quebec into a mining and forestry sacrifice zone. That will turn the gulf of St. Lawrence into an oil pumping site. And that will turn the province into an eastward launching pad of the Alberta tar sands, a carbon bomb.

Science tells us that this model of business as usual - of perpetual growth and greed, of constant expansion and extraction - is spilling so much carbon into the atmosphere that it will ensure cataclysmic climate change. It insists we find alternatives.

The real solutions to the climate crisis will come in creating an economy that serves everyone and our ecology: closing deepening inequalities; funding a strong public sphere that includes mass public transit and free education; creating good, green jobs for young people that decrease dependence on fossil fuels; and restraining the reckless power of corporations and banks that profit off the privatization of our schools and the pollution of the planet.

We need to end the reign of oil in Ottawa, and its influence in Quebec city. The federal government now hands-out \$1.4 billion a year to the world's richest and most polluting oil companies, when such a hand-out to students could begin a system of free

education in Quebec and across Canada.

Climate change adds great urgency to all these demands for social, economic and ecological justice - because we must reduce our carbons emissions rapidly, time is short. Climate change must be the spark to remake our economy on a very tight deadline.

The values of our new social movements - solidarity over individualism, reciprocity over hierarchy, cooperation over competition - should orient our vision for a clean energy economy. This is a movement that will be

stronger when it is united. When it finds solutions simultaneously to the crises of the economy and ecology. When it is green as well as red.

During POWERSHIFT 2012 this October 26 to 29, thousands of youth from across the country will converge in Ottawa to force these issues onto the national agenda, to fight for a clean energy future that is socially and economically just. If the spirit and power of Quebec's spring blossoms, and spreads across Canada, we can achieve it.

www.facebook.com/powershiftcanada

other voices...

Greetings to the workers of the world!

Congratulations to the People's Voice and the communist press in Canada for 90 years of building unity and action, for peace, democracy and socialism!

Manitoba Committee, Communist Party of Canada



"The Communist Party of Chile, celebrating its 100th anniversary, salutes the international workers day and workers' struggles in the world."



MAY DAY GREETINGS to working people in British Columbia

Unite to win progressive change! Reverse the Liberal corporate tax cuts - Demand adequate funding for health care, public education and social programs!

B.C. Provincial Committee, Communist Party of Canada

706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1
604-254-9836 cpinfo.bc@gmail.com



MAY DAY GREETINGS!

Defend the rights of immigrant workers!

Lower Fraser Club, Communist Party of Canada



May Day Greetings

Celebrating Cuba's 54 years defending its independence from US colonialism

Canadian-Cuban Friendship Assn. Toronto
Celebrating friendship between Canadians and Cubans since 1977
info@ccfatoronto.ca www.ccfatoronto.ca
PO Box 99051 -1245 Dupont St, Toronto ON M6H 2A0

"Peace, Jobs, Socialism"

*Elgin "Scotty" Neish Club, CPC
Victoria, BC*

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

MAY DAY 2012

Burnaby Club, CPC

Salute to workers on May Day 2012!

Nanaimo Club CPC



Working class solidarity with youth & students!

Vancouver East Club, CPC
604-255-2041

Coup feared as Greece veers toward collapse

By Petros Papakonstantinou,
Granma International News,
Havana, April 11, 2012

In an interview published in the French newspaper *Liberacion*, March 3, 81-year-old Michel Rocard, Prime Minister during Francois Mitterrand's administration, declared, "My conclusion is that the inequitable developments will lead to a civil war. This implies important questions for Greece. How can elections be held in this environment? How can anyone govern telling the people that they must give up 25% of their salary over the next 10 years in order to pay the debt? No one talks about this, but the only way to get out of the problem in Greece is through military rule."

Three days later, the Spanish *El Pais* published an article by sociologist Ignacio Sotelo about the Greek crisis which arrived at the following conclusion, "The danger exists that democracy could be destroyed by a developing process approaching social revolution. The radicalization that this process could imply would not be tolerated by the upper classes in Greece and most likely, not by their European associates either. This obliges them to justify some form of military intervention."

Several British media have expressed sentiments along these same lines, "Fears of army coup as Greece hits meltdown," according to the *Daily Express*.

We should not underestimate the seriousness of these statements, mistaking them as exaggerated. Despite the social horror being proposed and the enormous difficulties, the lack of continuity and leadership within the popular movement (which cannot be derailed by the elections, a hopeless quagmire), a social explosion is not inevitable. The question is not if it will happen,

but when and how and what the outcome will be.

Five years after the fall of the first domino - the U.S. real estate market - it is abundantly clear that global capitalism is experiencing an unprecedented structural crisis, with no resolution in sight. For the first time in its history, there is no positive idea to offer the popular classes, no wellbeing produced by a "New Deal" or national greatness as proposed by Fascism, or the 30-year consumerist society of the "glorious" postwar era, not even "popular" capitalism with easy credit and benefits. This is the high point of neo-liberalism. The only thing promised is a terrifying nightmare of "internal devaluation" in which the French become Greeks and Greeks become Bulgarians and Greeks, Chinese.

In this context, the system's last great idea, the battle which remains, is that of fear. The only struggle permitted is one against your neighbour, for survival, in a world where people become wolves. Such a social environment, as Hobbs foresaw in the Leviathan, generates legitimacy for a new type of totalitarianism, especially if working class uprisings take on the desperation of Los Angeles or an Iron Heel, terrorizing the petty bourgeoisie, in a climate of anarchy, real or manufactured.

The negative forecasts are accumulating. The *Observer* reported that some of Britain's most important construction companies, possibly in collaboration with the police and M15 secret services have formed a semi-state gang organization to pursue left-wing workers and trade unionists they have included on a "black list," to make it difficult for them to find work. Governments of non-elected "technocrats" appointed by Berlin, the abolition of union contracts - something even the Military Junta did not do - attacks on peaceful demonstrators

with chemical weapons, arrests and prosecutions of minors on the basis of anti-terrorist laws, government statements about the possibility of tanks protecting banks... What else is this, if not a steady drift toward authoritarianism?

Capitalism's development from "creative destruction" to "disastrous evolution" undermines traditional reformist politics, that is the two-pronged strategy in

which the party does parliamentary work and the trade unions carry out an economic struggle for growth. Another type of politics on the left has become a necessity, focused on policy and on the struggle at a national level to solve social problems, - not in the sense of a guerrilla movement, but yes, giving the idea of having a plan for government power, for the popular, democratic renovation of

the country.

Regardless of strategic disagreements, the forces on the left must create a broad alliance to defend democratic rights, creating the necessary mechanisms (counter information, organization and security of struggles, enemy vigilance and popular self-defense, etc.) to support the level of popular struggle, solidarity and morale in the coming battles. ●



Members of PAME (Greek All-Workers Militant Front) occupied the Acropolis in Athens last year to protest the "austerity" cuts imposed by the "troika".

UK Coalition to rob poor kids' meals

Cuts to Britain's welfare system could leave over 350,000 impoverished children without free school meals, a leading charity warned on April 19.

An analysis by the Children's Society found that 2.2 million English schoolchildren live below the poverty line, with more than 1.2 million currently missing out on the dinners which are linked to low-income benefits. If a proposed earnings threshold of £7,500 was introduced for free school meals 120,000 families in England - around 350,000 school-age children in total - would lose out.

Government plans for a system of universal credit to replace the current benefits and tax credits

system could mean that hundreds of thousands of families could be left with lower entitlements.

Such decisions risked creating a "cliff edge" with parents having to slash their working hours or take a pay cut to keep their benefits, it warned.

Children's Society's Campaign for Childhood director Elaine Hindal condemned the government's "policy failure" but said it has an opportunity to increase the availability of free school meals to all low-income working families.

"We have shown that there are literally hundreds of thousands of children living below the poverty line who aren't getting a free school meal," she said. "There is no reasonable defence for this policy failure."

She called for all children living in poverty in England to be entitled to a free meal by October.

Children's Minister Sarah Teather claimed the government remained "totally committed to continuing to provide free school meals to children from the poorest families. We are reforming welfare

to get more people into jobs as that is the surest way of cutting poverty. The reforms mean we will have to think hard about the best way to decide who is eligible for free school meals so they continue to be targeted at those who need them the most."

But Child Poverty Action Group parliamentary and policy officer Tim Nichols said the government should be investing in an extension of free school meals.

"The evidence base shows that the more kids that qualify, the greater the benefits for improving classroom concentration, improving child health and easing income poverty," he said.

"There are clear social benefits with good reason to believe there will be long-term economic benefits too. It's one of those win-win investments that the government really just needs to get on with. We cannot seriously expect a long-term solution to getting rid of the deficit if the government doesn't have the confidence to give the green light to policies like this when all the evidence so clearly stacks up on the side of taking action."

(Morning Star) ●



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*We send Greetings to all progressive
people on this May Day 2011*

**"We have been naught,
we shall be all"**

**The Parkdale Club wishes all
Comrades, family, and friends
A revolutionary May 1st, 2012**

"A better world's in birth!"

May Day Greetings



**Charlie McClure Club,
CPC, Sudbury**



GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

Get Rio Tinto off the podium!

Mining and metal workers' unions around the world are campaigning to stop mining multinational Rio Tinto from supplying the gold, silver and bronze for medals at the London Olympics which begin July 27. Rio Tinto, a sponsor of the Olympics, is providing 99 percent of the metal, tarnishing the medals with the company's anti-labour practices.

Protesting at the recent Rio Tinto Annual General Meeting in London, Marc Maltais, President of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 9490 representing 800 locked out workers at a profitable Rio Tinto smelter in Alma, Quebec, said, "World class athletes deserve medals that aren't tainted by Rio Tinto's brutal treatment of its own workers and communities."

The campaign (www.offthepodium.org/) has been developed in support of the USW members because they refused a plan that would put new starters on insecure work arrangements with half the pay.

The lockout, which began on December 30, is a violation of Rio Tinto's obligations to fair play under the Olympic charter, said Manfred Warda, General Secretary of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Union (ICEM). "Rio Tinto would like to bask in the reflected glory of the Olympic Games, but it has a black record on the treatment of its own people," said Warda.

David Cockroft, International Transport Workers' Federation General Secretary, said: "Rio Tinto is one of the most aggressively anti-union businesses in the mining industry and deserves to be the subject of ongoing scrutiny and action by unions and workers throughout Rio Tinto's global supply chain."

Meanwhile, unions attending an international mining conference in Australia from April 17 to 19, decided to mount a global campaign against the company. A resolution passed at the ICEM World Mining conference in Sydney noted that Rio Tinto, like many transnational mining companies, was recording strong profit growth while engaging in brutal and unethical practices.

Iran bus union leader released

Ebrahim Madadi, vice-president of the Syndicate of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, has been released from prison. First arrested in August 2007 and released in December 2007, Madadi was again detained in December 2008. Set free in December 2011 he was rearrested a short while later, accused of putting Iran's national security at risk.

Welcoming Madadi's release, the International Transport Federation said, "Ebrahim has been released, as expected, at the end of a three and a half year sentence whose justice he has

always challenged. The ongoing representations to the government of Iran made by his supporters worldwide have helped ensure this latest action, which we trust will not be followed, as it has in the past, by further police harassment and imprisonment."

Meanwhile, however, the union's board member and treasurer Reza Shahabi has been sentenced to six years imprisonment. In a poor state of health, Shahabi has already been detained for 22 months. The sentence includes one year for



"propaganda activities against the system" and five years for "conspiracy with the intention of acting against national security". It is also understood that he has been prohibited from carrying out any union activities for five years and has been fined seven million Tomans (more than US\$4,500). Shahabi has begun a hunger strike in protest over the sentence.

Slovenia public sector strike over pay cuts

Teachers, doctors, police officers and other public workers went on strike April 18 in Slovenia over proposed pay cuts under austerity measures. The strike, which involved some 80,000 public sector workers and closed most schools and kindergartens across the country, was the largest in Slovenia since it declared independence from socialist Yugoslavia in 1991. It was the latest sign of public unease across the euro zone over drastic spending cuts to tackle the sovereign debt crisis.

"The strike is a serious message to the government that we are determined to defend the social state and the acquired standards in education," Branimir Strukelj, head of the confederation of public sector trade unions, told Reuters. Strukelj said the unions might agree to pay cuts if the government backs down on plans to increase class sizes and working hours for teachers that would result in layoffs.

The right-wing government of Prime Minister Janez Jansa, which took power in February, claims that the country's economy is "on the edge" and that the budget deficit must be cut from 6.4 percent in 2011 to 3.5 percent this year. Debt soared to 47.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2011 from 21.9 percent in 2008.

Public sector wages and benefits will bear the brunt of the belt-tightening. The Slovenian Parliament will begin debating the

measures in late April. Jansa said his government would continue talks with trade unions but that significant changes to its plan to cut public sector wages by some 7.5 percent from July would not be possible.

The Alpine state was the euro zone's fastest growing economy in 2007 but was badly hit by the global crisis due to its dependence on exports. The economy shrank by 8 percent in 2009. After a mild recovery in 2010, Slovenia reentered recession in 2011 when GDP fell by 0.2 percent with a further fall of 0.9 percent expected in 2012 amid lower export demand and weak domestic spending. An estimated 12,000 companies have gone bankrupt during the economic crisis, cutting into government revenues and wiping out 120,000 jobs in a country of 2 million people. Unemployment soared to 12.4 percent in February from 7 percent at the end of 2008.

Poverty in North Africa

High levels of economic growth in North Africa over the last decade have generated jobs but many of them are low paid, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

ILO studies note that the labour market situation in North Africa faces many structural challenges. The first is low employment-to-population ratios, especially for young people and women. Out of 100 people that could potentially work, only 40 work in North Africa. For women the ratio is 20 out of 100 and for young people it is 24 out of 100, according to one of the papers discussed at the conference. High unemployment is common across all income and education levels; a university degree does not guarantee a decent job.

High levels of unemployment lead to another challenge, which is a high employment dependency ratio. On average, an employed person in North Africa has to support 2.4 people.

Another problem is the quality of the jobs created. Being employed in North Africa does not mean one will escape poverty, with as many as 30 per cent of employed people living below the poverty line, the majority of whom work in the informal sector.

Prague rally vs. anti-social "reforms"

A mass demonstration against anti-social reforms in the Czech Republic took place on April 21. Organisers demanded the government's resignation as well as the call for early elections. Led by trade unions and together with more than 20 civil initiatives, NGOs, including organizations representing patients, pensioners, unemployed, as well as university students, demonstrators protested against the current living and working conditions in the Czech Republic.

Their main demands are abolish the drastic cuts the government is pushing on health, welfare, pensions and other sensitive areas.

Organisers also want the government to end the destruction and privatization of public services.

The demonstration was national in scope, with train tickets for Prague sold out in advance and buses for participants arranged by the trade unions across the country. The event was the culmination of a week of protests under the slogan "STOP GOVERNMENT". Starting April 18, local rallies were held across the whole Republic, along with petition drives and public forums.

Labour protests up in Russia

The number of labour protests in Russia has reached the highest total in five years, the Center for Social and Labour Rights reported on April 19. There were 61 worker strikes and protests during the first three months of 2012, up from 53 during the same period last year. Although the numerical increase is not large, protests have become more intensive. In January and February 2011, with more protesters participating in related demonstrations.

The center has monitored labour conflict in Russia since 2008. Center analyst Pyotr Bizyukov, who conducted the research, told *Kommersant* that the number of protests might grow to between 40 and 45 a month.

"There are grounds to predict that summer 2012 might become a hot period for political protests," Bizyukov said.

The center's findings state that the recent protest over wages at the Benteler automotive plant in the Kaluga region might be awarded the title of "protest of the month" for March. More than 100

Russian employees of German-owned Benteler walked off the job. They demanded a salary increase, saying that their wage was lower than that paid by other automobile plants in the region. The unions forced management to consider their demands after Governor Anatoly Artamonov stepped into the fray.

Boris Kagarlitsky, head of the Institute for Globalization, said the increase in protests in Russia is connected with the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis. The country weathered the crisis thanks to large financial reserves generated by high oil prices.

Kagarlitsky compared the situation in Russia to the one after the Great Depression in the United States. He contrasted the Russian leadership with the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose New Deal policies were aimed at boosting the failed U.S. economy in the 1930s.

Although the majority of workers protesting conditions at their plants do not express political slogans, Kagarlitsky said their distrust of the government could be seen in the poor election results for the ruling United Russia party in the regions. He said the protesting workers might join forces with citizens demanding political reforms.



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.

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Gaitan, OAS, and Cuba: from tragedy to farce

By W. T. Whitney Jr.

On April 9, 1948 in Bogota, Colombia, an assassin's bullets killed the eloquent, populist Liberal Party leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan. Onlookers murdered the shooter, Juan Roa Sierra, variously described as deranged or fascist. Radio broadcasters blamed the assassination on the government and its Conservative Party leaders. For months, police and paramilitaries had been eliminating adherents of a newly unified Liberal Party widely expected in the 1950 elections to propel Gaitan into the presidency.

The assassination was tragedy, and so too was violent upheaval that within 48 hours took 330 lives in Bogota and killed 3000 people throughout Colombia over two weeks. Then ten years of conflict between guerrillas identifying with Gaitan's Liberal Party wing and military forces of governments led by the Conservative Party or by dictator Rojas Pinilla caused over 200,000 deaths. Beginning with the early 1960s, war between leftist insurgents and the government's U.S. supported military machine killed tens of thousands more.

Congressman Gaitan, condemning the 1928 massacre of United Fruit Company banana workers, castigated a "government [with] its tremulous knee on the ground before Yankee gold." The young lawyer founded the short-lived National Revolutionary Left Union as a vehicle for land reform. Rejoining the Liberal Party, he served as Bogota mayor in 1936 and later as national education minister and labor minister. The branch of the Liberal Party headed

by Gaitan called for agrarian reform, poverty alleviation, and poor people's rights. Party disunity led to Conservative Party victory in the 1946 presidential elections.

On February 7, 1948 in Bogota,



Jorge Eliecer Gaitan

a "silent march" ended with Gaitan's famous "Oration for Peace." Mr. President," he said, "We ask you for deeds of peace and civilization... We deeply love this nation, and we don't like that our victorious ship has to navigate rivers of blood."

In 1948, the government attributed violence and Gaitan's killing to communists wanting to eliminate a rival and bring down the state. Colombia cut relations with the Soviet Union. John C. Wiley, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia in 1946-1947 had reported that Gaitan "blindly promoted state socialism" and "would deplume our eagle."

Simultaneously, amidst shootings, fires, and tumult, the ninth Pan American Conference was meeting in Bogota. For safety, delegates retreated to a secure warehouse. U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall was on hand to promote establishment of the

Organization of American States and thereby create an institutional framework for cold war in Latin America. Marshall explained to reporters that chaos enveloping the city and nation represented "the first important communist attempt in the Western hemisphere since the end of the war." He reiterated that theme in radio broadcasts to Colombians.

U.S. Ambassador Beaulac had warned Gaitan earlier of communist plans for an uprising that would be blamed on his Liberal Party. An Embassy official supposedly offered Gaitan a prestigious European academic position in return for leaving Colombian politics.

History did repeat. The Organization of American States (OAS) returned to Colombia on April 14-15 as the 6th Summit of the Americas, which it sponsored. News coverage centered on Cuba's exclusion from the meeting in

Cartagena. Evidently Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa regarded Cuban absence, a non-event, as farce. His government stayed away.

The OAS, having expelled Cuba in 1962, worked afterwards to isolate and enforce continent-wide hostility against revolutionary Cuba. Under Latin American pressure, the United States relented in 2009 allowing the OAS to readmit Cuba, which remains a non-member.

The "Bogotazo," as the leaderless rebellion following Gaitan's killing is labeled, yielded another Cuba connection. Young Fidel Castro was in Bogota at the time representing the (Cuban) University Student Federation at an international student conference. He consulted with Gaitan.

And CIA operative John Mepples Espirito was in Bogota in 1948 monitoring leftist students. Later in Cuba he fought against Batista and was jailed for complicity in the death of a comrade. Mepples'

revelations to Cuban intelligence officials about helping to assassinate Gaitan for the CIA became the basis for a documentary film shown to Gaitan's daughter Gloria in 1961. Verification problems prevented its release.

Later jailed as a counterrevolutionary insurgent, Mepples in 1980 told more in return for release from prison. He claimed he and others had set up Juan Roa Sierra as the assassination's "fall guy."

U.S. lawyer Paul Wolf eventually gave up on Freedom of Information requests to secure U.S. intelligence material on the assassination. The CIA refused to release relevant microfilms, and, according to Wolf, the FBI had disposed of hundreds of files. Prior to the Summit of the Americas, host President Juan Manuel Santos announced he'd urge the U.S. government to let up on Cuba. That too may end as farce. ●

Hemispheric leaders divided on drug policy, Cuba

By Pedro Conceicao, *People's World*

At the sixth Summit of the Americas, held April 14-15 in Cartagena, Colombia, regional leaders wrestled over a range of politically sensitive issues. The 33 heads of state discussed the war on drugs, energy, trade, and the United States' ongoing embargo on Cuba. Deep disagreements over certain issues underscored America's

waning influence in Latin America.

"I feel that the agenda of the U.S. and the agenda of Latin American countries, instead of moving in parallel to each other, or converging, are taking paths that separate them, that distance them," said right-wing president of Guatemala, Otto Perez Molina.

The war on drugs drew the sharpest contrast among the leaders, with the U.S. on the defensive over how to deal with drug trafficking. Latin American leaders urged American officials to decriminalize marijuana in order to deprive drug cartels of revenue sources and quell violence related to the drug trade.

Obama welcomed the debate but said, "I personally, and my administration's position, is that legalization is not the answer." Many analysts see the recent united and open criticism of U.S. drug policy as a watershed moment in regional politics concerning prohibition. Only Canada fully backed the U.S.'s position of maintaining the status quo.

"The prohibition paradigm that inspires mainstream global policy today is based on a false premise: that global drug markets can be eradicated," said Molina, who was elected in November. He and other officials called for a global approach that regulates the consumption and production of drugs like tobacco and alcohol.

Absent from the meeting was president of Cuba, Raul Castro. American officials insisted on excluding the sole communist-led nation in the Western Hemisphere.

President Rafael Correa of Ecuador boycotted the meeting,

calling Cuba's exclusion "intolerable." Hugo Chavez, who was receiving medical treatment in Havana, sent Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro to head the Venezuelan delegation.

Latin American leaders, including the host and long-time U.S. ally, Colombian President Jose Manuel Santos, vowed that Cuba will participate in future Summits of the Americas.

"This is the last Summit of the Americas unless Cuba is allowed to take part," Bolivian Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca told the Associated Press.

There was no joint political declaration at the end of the summit. A declaration of support for Argentina's claim on the Falklands/Malvinas Islands, which the U.S. opposed, failed after hours of negotiations. Venezuela, Argentina, and Uruguay refused to sign the final declaration due to the U.S. and Canada's veto of Cuban participation in future summits.

The rise of leftist governments and China's growing influence in the region has made it difficult for the U.S. to maintain its hegemony in the region. Ever since 1995, when then-President Bill Clinton hosted the first meeting in Miami, the U.S. has been unsuccessful in its attempt to create a hemispheric free-trade area.

Although they could not come to a consensus on the final declaration, Santos said the leaders agreed to meet again in Panama in 2015 and that "hopefully within three years, we can have Cuba" at the summit. ●

Happy International Workers' Day

To the entire working class & Progressive and Secular forces, from

Gurpreet Singh

Freelance journalist with

People's Voice

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Warmest May Day greetings from...

Hamilton Committee CPC

for peace, jobs, and a living wage!



Happy May Day 2012!

No fighter jets - slash military spending!

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee, Communist Party of Canada, April 14-15, 2012

Demands are growing for the resignation of Defense Minister Peter MacKay and Prime Minister Harper, in the wake of the Auditor-General's report that the purchase of sixty-five F-35 fighter-bombers would cost taxpayers at least \$10 billion more than the Conservative government ever admitted. But while corruption and lies are among the defining features of the Harper Tory regime, this scandal raises far deeper issues. Far more significant questions concern the true nature of Canada's role in the global imperialist drive for markets, resources, and corporate profits, and the choice between military spending versus urgent social needs.

As the Communist Party and the anti-war movements have warned for several years, the Harper government and the top military brass have repeatedly lied to Canadians about the F-35s. The calls for MacKay's resignation are welcome, but the real responsibility for this \$10 billion whopper lies squarely with Stephen Harper, who runs his government with an iron fist.

Fundamentally, however, the F-35 scandal is not about a flawed procurement process, or finding the "most suitable" jet, or "defending" Canada. The real problem is the concept that Canada needs to spend tens of billions to purchase new fleets of aircraft and

warships, even though there is simply no military threat to this country. Nor are 21st century fighter jets like the F-35 suitable for use as "patrol planes" with search-and-rescue capabilities - they are killing machines with massive arsenals of bombs, rockets, and bullets, and alarmingly, with the capability to carry nuclear weapons payloads. They are a key part of the imperialist strategy for global corporate control of raw materials such as hydrocarbon resources, and for NATO's tactics of "regime change", under the "responsibility to protect" doctrine.

Another lame justification for the F-35 and warship procurements has been the argument that these programs are necessary to boost research and development spending in Canada, allegedly to create high-tech jobs. But the reality is that the government's "Canada First" plan to spend \$500 billion on military purchases over the next two decades will create far fewer jobs than investments in clean water for Aboriginal communities, social housing, public transit, a Canada-wide childcare program, universal pharmacare and other

improvements in the Medicare system, or many other urgent social and economic priorities. In short, the fighter-bomber program and other military purchases will come with an enormous human and environmental cost to Canadians, while serving no purpose other than to fuel the insanely expensive and dangerous global arms race.

With the exception of Green Party leader Elizabeth May, no party in the current Parliament has taken a principled stand against the F-35s, or more broadly in opposition to the "Canada First" military expansion strategy. During the F-35 debate, Thomas Mulcair's NDP, which claims to be a party of peace, has failed to reject the drive to make Canada an integral part of the U.S. war machine, preferring to join in the chatter about improved military procurement processes.

The Communist Party of Canada urges the labour and democratic movements to address the real issues arising from the F-35 scandal. Tell all the parties in Parliament: No to any purchases of fighter-bombers and warships! Slash military spending by 75%, in favour of investments in peaceful priorities for Canada! ●

No NATO war on Syria or Iran

Excerpt from a joint statement by the World Peace Council (WPC) and the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY)

...Our two International Organisations salute the millions of peace loving people and youth of Syria and express our sincere solidarity to the genuine, peaceful, social protests and just demands for economic, social and political and democratic changes in the country, so that the Syrian people will be the masters of its fortunes, wealth and future.

Under no pretext do we accept any foreign political or military intervention in Syria, which is being currently planned by the USA, Israel and NATO hand in hand with Turkey and some Gulf monarchies, supposedly for the protection of civilian population and human rights. We denounce this hypocrisy and call upon humanity to oppose any repetition of the "Libya model."

We underline that the sole and sovereign right to decide upon the future of Syria and its leadership is with the Syrian people, its workers, peasants, youth and women.

We condemn the imperialist plan for the "Great Middle East" which is aiming in the control of energy resources by the Multinational corporations and monopolies and seeking at spheres of influence in the region by the various imperialist forces.

WFDY and WPC (together with hundreds of our Member Organisations) opposed and fought against all recent imperialist aggressions in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, as well as the Israeli criminal aggressions against Palestine and Lebanon. We express the wishes and desire of millions of people and youth worldwide by opposing vehemently imperialist threats and aggressions against Syria today or Iran tomorrow...

April 15, 2012, Coordinating Council of WFDY, The Secretariat of WPC ●



MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

Celebrating working-class culture

This month labour arts festivals are again bringing working-class culture to centre stage. From its beginning in Toronto in 1986, when Mayworks was founded by the Labour Council, the idea has sunk roots in Winnipeg, Halifax, Windsor and several other cities. In the present era of intensified class struggle the growing importance of such festivals should be obvious. Whereas in the past cynics might have dismissed them as small centres of cultural resistance, now it is increasingly possible to imagine them as catalysts for a broader progressive culture. While Mayworks festivals offer a full spectrum of artistic activity, here are some musical acts to check out: Greg Crowe & the Scarlet Union (Winnipeg), Dub Trinity (Toronto), Ian LaRue (Winnipeg), Norma MacDonald (Halifax), Evalyn Parry (Toronto), Deedee Slye (Halifax). For more info visit: www.mayworks.ca.

Hip-hop responds to Trayvon's killing

The fatal shooting of black teenager Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida has focused international attention on the flagrant racism that persists in American society. The scandalous reluctance to press charges against community watch vigilante George Zimmerman has led many African-Americans, especially young males, to conclude that it must be open season on any black youth sporting a hoodie. Hip-hop artists were quick to express their outrage and solidarity. Mos Def, Dead Prez, Nas, Young Jeezy & Immortal Technique all took to the airwaves to release statements, and Pittsburgh MC Jasiri X released *Trayvon*, a powerful protest track (check it out on his YouTube page). Only after 45 days and the protests of millions was Zimmerman finally arrested and charged with second-degree murder. Once again the hip-hop community has reminded the world that the alleged "post-racial" character of contemporary U.S. society is a sham.

Peggy Seeger: Swim to the Star

On the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic, observed with much fanfare last month, eminent Anglo-American folk musician Peggy Seeger released a poignant tribute to the people who perished on that April evening in the North Atlantic. *Swim to the Star* (co-written with son Calum MacColl for BBC Radio) has been released as a single, as well as with a haunting video. Seeger and MacColl have not forgotten that the majority of the victims, those denied access to the limited supply of lifeboats, were the crew and the second and third-class passengers. They've also remembered the grieving families on both sides of the Atlantic, in particular, relatives of the crew in Southampton and Belfast. The Titanic disaster is often interpreted as a metaphor for the collision of industrial civilization with the forces of nature. It takes on richer metaphorical meaning if one looks at the logic of a malevolent capitalist system that will, if not stopped, destroy the earth's ecosystem in its pursuit of profit, leaving behind countless millions of victims. Look for "Swim to the Star" at <http://www.peggyseeger.com/>.

Planting seeds of peace

Hanna Khoury is an outstanding Arab-Israeli musician currently residing in Philadelphia. On March 31 the violinist gave a masterclass on Arabic music at Toronto's Palestinian cultural centre Beit Zatoun. Khoury was accompanied by Palestinian percussionist Hafez Ali and qanun master and York University musicologist George Sawa. The next day the artists, under the banner of Intercultural Journeys, were joined by Israeli cellist Udi Bar-David, Syrian singer Youssef Kassab and students from the Royal Conservatory of Music for a concert at the RCM's Koerner Hall. They presented Arabic music from Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, and engaged in a cross-cultural experiment called "Vivaldi gone wild." Intercultural Journeys was founded in 2001 to promote concerts and discussions between musicians who might, because of political conflict, be unable, or reluctant to play together. Hanna Khoury and his colleagues are making a vital contribution to peace in the Middle East. For info: www.interculturaljourneys.org.

Earl Scruggs: 1924-2012

Earl Scruggs, the virtuoso of the five-string banjo, died March 28 at the age of 88. Tributes to the former textile mill worker from North Carolina poured in from around the world. Bluegrass music features distinctive instrumental and vocal stylings, usually with a combination of banjo, guitar, fiddle and mandolin. From its Appalachian birthplace it was carried to cities by migrant workers in search of economic opportunity. Like the rural blues musicians who were its African-American counterpart, bluegrass met up in the sixties with a younger generation looking for an alternative to the commercial music mainstream. Scruggs is a key figure in this history. A bluegrass band is not complete without a banjo played in the unique three-finger picking style he developed. Check out Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs' classic 1950 recording "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" on YouTube. Bluegrass continues to flourish as a distinctive part of the contemporary roots music scene. To learn more visit <http://bluegrasstoday.com/>.

MAY DAY GREETINGS!

Greek-Canadian Democratic Organization



From the Women's Commission, Communist Party of Canada

Happy May Day!

Following in the revolutionary footsteps of great communist women

...
Dorothy Livesay
Annie Buller
Becky Buhay
Grace Hartman
Jeanne Corbin
Florence Custance
Margaret Laurence
Bella Hall Gould
Dorise Nielsen

Is it a crime to be a Communist?

**By Elizabeth Rowley,
Ontario leader of the
Communist Party**

The following letter was sent to the Toronto Star, in response to the article "Kingston Pen: The Criminal Element" (April 20, 2012). The article includes Communist Party leader Tim Buck among the so-called "criminal element" jailed at Kingston, which is soon to be closed.

Since when is it a crime to be a Communist in Canada?

Tim Buck was imprisoned for three years in Kingston by Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, but he was no criminal.

Imprisoned for advocating workers' rights to free speech and to organize unions while miners were getting beaten up by police in Estevan and across the country, Buck was also guilty of organizing the unemployed to demand jobs, employment insurance, medicare, public pensions, and a lot of those

things Canadians value most today. "Iron Heel" Bennett representing the 1% in 1930-35, made it his job to crush the unions, the unemployed, the Canadian Labour Defence League (led by Communists) and the Communist Party of Canada which also advocated socialism as the alternative to war, austerity, and depression for workers.

That's why Bennett declared the CPC illegal and had Tim Buck and seven other Communist leaders rounded up, charged and imprisoned under the infamous Section 98. Mass protests forced Buck's release in 1934 after a failed assassination attempt by Kingston guards during the trial. 25,000 supporters greeted Tim Buck at Maple Leaf Gardens December 2, 1934.

The play "Eight Men Speak" is

about the trial, the Red Squad, and the attacks on labour and democratic rights that eventually led to the Ontario Ottawa Trek and massive defeat at the polls for Bennett in 1935.

Harsh austerity measures by Harper and McGuinty combined with police violence at the G-20 and elsewhere, seem eerily familiar. So do Mulroney's effort to wipe the CPC off the political map with repressive political legislation, defeated after a 10 year struggle in the courts. We continue to be Canada's second oldest registered political party.

The CPC is alive and well at 90, gaining new members and supporters with every new attack on jobs, wages and living standards, on labour and democratic rights. ●

Toronto dinner salutes Dave Rigby



Friends, comrades and family members gathered April 14 in Toronto to pay tribute to Dave Rigby (above), the long-time bookkeeper and accountant for the Communist Party of Canada. Comrade Rigby recently retired from his volunteer duties. Speakers included CPC leader Miguel Figueroa, Ontario Communist leader Liz Rowley, and many others. The Editorial Board of People's Voice sends our best wishes to comrade Dave for many more years in the working class struggle! ●



RALLY & MARCH

TUESDAY
MAY 1
4 PM

NATHAN PHILLIPS
SQUARE
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QUEEN & BAY

May Day Greetings: The Good Fight Continues

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People's Voice deadlines

May 16-31 issue: Thursday, May 3
June 1-15 issue: Thursday, May 17

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

ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

10 am, Sunday, May 13
(last call for pancakes - noon)
\$12.00 (kids under 12 \$8.00)

5435 Kincaid St. Burnaby

Proceeds to People's Voice

REDS ON THE WEB

www.comunist-party.ca
www.peoplesvoice.ca
www.ycl-ljc.ca
www.solidnet.org

What's Left

Burnaby, BC

Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast, 10-1, Sunday, May 13, at 5435 Kincaid, \$12 (\$8 for kids under 12). Organized by Burnaby Club, proceeds to PV Fund, 604-294-6775 for info.

Vancouver, BC

Left Film Night, Sunday, April 29, 7 pm Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Dr. This month: "Class Dismissed", critical documentary on TV portrayals of the working class. Free, call 604-255-2041 for info.

May Day Rally, gather 3 pm, Tue., May 1, Art Gallery, speakers & displays, march at 6 pm. Organized by Vancouver & District Labour Council and Occupy Vancouver.

Edmonton, AB

May Day rally, Tuesday, May 1, gather 5:30 pm Corbett Hall lawn, march down Whyte Ave. to End of Steel Park.

Cultural Dinner Celebration for Victor Jara Dance Group, Sat., May 19, 7 pm, Holiday Inn, 4485 Gateway Boulevard (Evergreen Ballroom), to recognize its history and contributions, donation \$40, tickets from Panaderia Latina, 5716-19A Ave., 780-462-5295.

Winnipeg, MB

May Day March, Tue., May 1, 5:30 pm from City Hall. Info: Wpg Labour Council 942-0522.

Welcome for Yinka Dene Alliance, Freedom Train to Stop the Tar Sands. Friday, May 4, Feast (6 pm) followed by panel (8 pm) at Thunderbird House, 715 Main St. Sat, May 5, 1 pm Water ceremony and rally at Fork's Odeena Circle. Info (204) 898-6460

Festival of Mandolins, Sat., May 12, 8 pm. Ukrainian Labour Temple, \$15, info AUUC, 589-4397.

Spring Concert, Sunday, May 13, 2 pm. Ukrainian Labour Temple, info 589-4397.

Woody Guthrie's 100th Birthday Party, Thur., May 17, West End Cultural Centre. Info Mayworks 998-4748; mayworksmedia@gmail.com.

Marxism Course, to register or for info, contact Communist Party of Canada, 586-7824 or c p c - mb@changetheworldmb.ca.

Toronto, ON

Workers Unite, Stand Up and Fight!, celebrate the international worker's day. Performers, speakers, children's program, food & refreshments, free admission. Sunday, April 29, 2-6 pm, Steelworker's Hall, 25 Cecil St. Visit "Mayday Cultural Event" on Facebook for info, or tel: 416-469-2446.

United May Day March, Tue., May 1, 4 pm, from Nathan Phillips Square.

Ottawa, ON

Solidarity Against Austerity, May 1, gather 11:30 at Confederation Park, march 12 noon to rally at Prime Minister's Office, www.maydayottawa.ca

Montreal, QC

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

Join the UMDC Coregroup in the United May Day March Tuesday, May 1 @ 4 p.m. Nathan Phillips Square (wear something red)

political and cultural celebration of May Day 2012

SPEAKERS - MUSIC - CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

FREE ADMISSION Family-friendly event with Food & refreshments children's program

Sponsored by United May Day Committee of Toronto
Endorsed by dozens of labour, political, community and solidarity organizations

For more information, visit our Facebook event page: "May Day Cultural Event"

MAY DAY 2012

"The capitalists cannot live without us, but we can live better without them"

Solidarity message from the Communist Party of Canada

Organized labour in Canada is under attack legislatively and economically, blackmailed by strike and lockout. Two and three tier levels of wages, benefits and pensions are being forced on workers under the bludgeon of lockout and forced strikes. There has not been a major victory in years for labour but the corporate offensive is still escalating.

Ask the Toronto Transit workers, the BC Teachers, airline workers, Sudbury miners, Rio Tinto workers in Quebec, Hamilton Steelworkers or Windsor Diesel Plant workers if this is a hospitable or a dangerous environment. All these workers were and are militant. Some are licking their wounds others are still engaged, but the formula for victory has not been found.

In BC the attack of "net-zero" bargaining threatens public sector workers who are emerging from previous wage freezes, and a 15% roll-back for hospital employees just a few years ago. In Ontario the

provincial Liberals are sneering at public sector workers and teachers who thought they could bargain with them. Ditto Quebec and every other jurisdiction in Canada.

In every capitalist state in the world, the neo-cons have forced "labour reform" on the agenda. The anguish of the present is only a sample of the staggering misery that is looming if we do not organize more effective resistance. The global plan for cheap, flexible, mobile, compliant and un-organized labour requires the destruction of organized labour as we know it, or its transformation into a control mechanism of management.

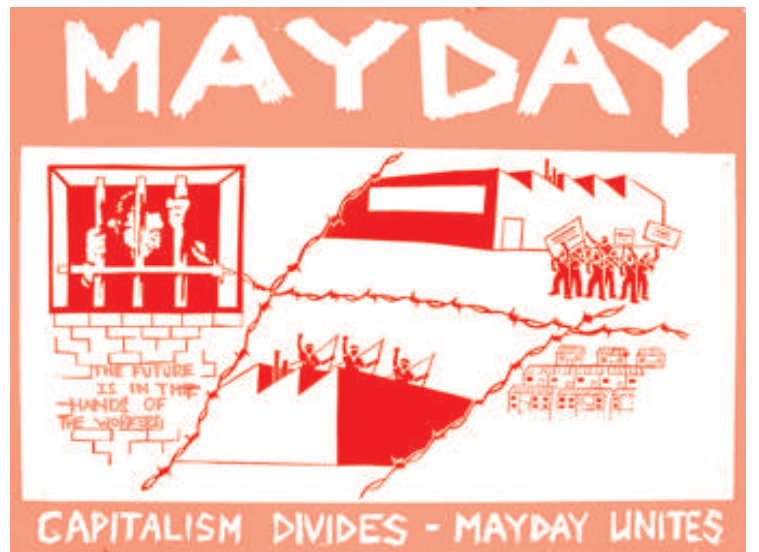
Organized labour will be legislated into compliance and tolerated only if it is not an inconvenience to the corporations. The right to strike, to withdraw labour and to free assembly is being denied larger sections of workers by provincial and federal legislation. The International Labour Organization cites 30 violations of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights by Canadian governments.

The two and three tier

conditions are a direct and vicious attack on youth, the future workers. The different levels of economic citizenship that this creates will eventually separate youth from organized labour, which they so badly need as an instrument of resistance. In Europe the "reforms" in the Lisbon Treaty talk about "productive" and "non-productive" labour, where a worker's right to freedom of movement will be determined by their usefulness to employers. In Canada, with over 10% real unemployment (closer to 20% for youth), less than 40% qualify for E.I. benefits that all paid for when they were employed. Yet the Tories are talking about E.I. "reform" geared to satisfying the need for agricultural labour. This is forced labour paid for from the workers' own contributions; for the employers, a disposable pool of strong and healthy youth for subsistence wages and third world living conditions. "Guest Workers" in our own country. A Harper refinement of the "dirty thirties" work camps.

The debt-based paper wealth of capitalism that feeds off the destruction of the real (manufacturing) economy nourishes itself on the privatization and plunder of public wealth and services, the destruction of lives doomed to hunger, disease, unemployment and subservience. The accumulation of wealth and the degree of misery are unparalleled in human history and the "trickle down" theory has been exposed as the "cascade up" of wealth into the maw of insatiable greed.

The resilience of the world's working people, the 99%, has produced rumblings of discontent that emerges in movements ranging from peaceful protest to insurgency. The Occupy Movement has flexed its global muscle. The Greek Militant Workers Front (PAME) has inspired Portuguese, French,



Italian and Spanish workers into massive strikes and protests. The Indian people, both organized and unorganized, responded in millions to a general strike in February that was not reported in our media. The Quebec students have launched an historic strike struggle over tuition fees with labour support. The BC Teachers persevere, and will probably win in the courts and public opinion, only to be robbed in the legislature. The Hamilton Steelworkers and the Sudbury Miners fought courageously and will fight again.

The will is there but the top leadership and unity is not. Where is the Canadian Labour Congress in these struggles? Why are centre or left-centre elements under attack from the right? The vaunted re-organization of the CLC structure has given us a resounding more of less. Raiding continues, and mergers are organizational consolidations for business purposes without fightback ideology or strategy.

How long can the leadership of the Canadian labour movement preside over a membership mauled by trade agreements, de-industrialization, claw backs, anti-labour legislation, plant closures and unemployment? And what about the 70% unorganized? Who will speak for them, who will organize them?

What were sore points in the class struggle twenty years ago have become open wounds. But we need more than bandages, we need the weapons of program, planning and unity. We need the indignation of oppression and defeat to express itself in organization and resistance. If the entire workforce, or a sizeable percentage merely stayed home, we could bring them to the bargaining table. We can win because the capitalists cannot live without us, but we can live better without them. There is another world and it is waiting for us.

Happy International Labour Day, May 1st! •



Capitalism cannot withstand one moment without workers. Hold high the honoured red flag of our class!



Les amis du KKE, Montréal

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12/07

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Extends May Day Greetings to all Canadians

MAY DAY GREETINGS!

From the Davenport Club
CPC