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# people's VOICE

**Terrorists and  
Neo-Cons...**

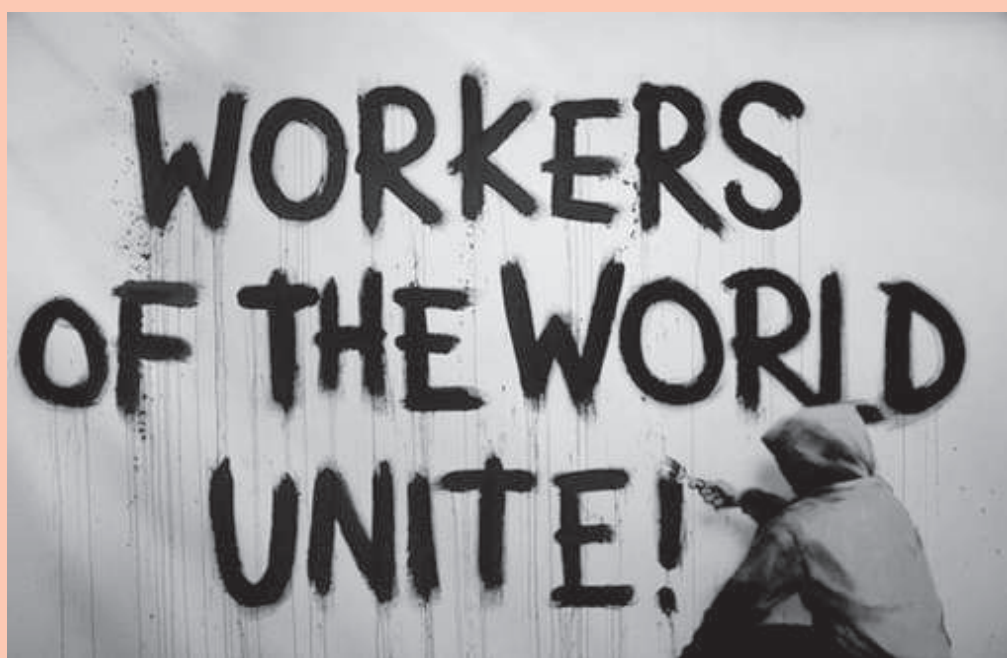
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## May Day 2013

**Unity can  
defeat the  
austerity  
agenda!**

*- see page 8 -*



## Campus free speech fight continues

***U of Manitoba S.U.  
bans Israeli Apartheid  
Week: page 11***

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### **Melt the Freeze!**

Labour and social justice activists Ontario are mobilizing to raise Ontario's minimum wage. Over 500,000 workers get just \$10.25/hour, where the rate has been frozen for the past three years.

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### **Story of May Day**

The International Workers' Day was born out of an era of bitter class struggles in the United States, in particular for the 8-hour day.

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### **Toxic clouds?**

The catastrophic explosion of a fertilizer plant in the town of West, Texas, could be a warning of even more deadly industrial accidents, including the release of toxic clouds of chemicals.

## Government's sudden need to debate terror bill smacks of opportunism

*Globe and Mail Editorial, April 22, 2013*

The two-day debate in Parliament on the Harper government's proposed anti-terrorism legislation smacks of political opportunism, and it is regrettable that it will take place. The debate politicizes the Boston Marathon bombings when few facts are known regarding the bombers' motives or inspiration. As well, Canadian legislators have

no direct interest in the tragedy. The sole apparent purpose of the debate is to attempt to embarrass Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, and to cash in on any public fears caused by the bombings.

The full name of Bill S-7 is "An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act," but it is known more generally as the "Combating Terrorism Act". First introduced in February, 2012, the proposed bill was making its

leisurely way through readings and committee hearings when the government House Leader, Peter Van Loan, unexpectedly announced on Friday (April 19) that it would be the subject of debate on Monday and Tuesday (April 22-23), overriding all other House business.

Vic Toews, the Public Safety minister, said Sunday that there were lessons for Canadian police and legislators in the tragic events of the Boston bombings. "We can always

learn from this type of horrific experience," Mr. Toews said.

That is true, but it is too soon to take any lessons from the Boston bombings. We still do not know the genesis of the bombers' motivation. Any debate that connects the Boston incident to Canadian legislation will be entirely speculative, and could ultimately prove to be counter-productive.

As well, the bill has been through two readings and has committee approval. The government routinely proposed it for third reading in March. There has been no urgency to pass the law, and Canadians - as horrified as they are by the Boston atrocity - have not expressed undue concern that the same type of incident could occur here.

The government's sudden need to debate Bill S-7 seems more likely

to have been prompted by Mr. Trudeau's unfortunate comments about "root causes" the day after the bombing than by a concern for public safety. One suspects there will be less debate about the law itself than there will be stern-faced rhetoric from the

government benches about the necessity for swift, unwavering action, combined with questions designed to suggest that Mr. Trudeau is not firm enough in his stance on terrorism.

More worrying is the fact that there are aspects of the proposed bill that raise questions about balancing civil liberties with the need to protect citizens. A wise course of action would be to postpone the bill's final reading so that any emotional fallout from the Boston bombings doesn't colour an important debate about public safety in Canada. •

**Other voices...**

## Toronto solidarity with Venezuela



Canadian solidarity activists have expressed full support for the democratic process in Venezuela, where PSUV candidate Nicolas Maduro was elected President on April 14. This April 20 rally in Toronto condemned attempts by the right-wing opposition and U.S. imperialism to provoke violence and set the stage for a coup against the Bolivarian Revolution. (PV photo: Ed Bil)

## May Day greetings help lift Fund Drive

When the ruling class pushes the panic button, you can bet that working people will be the first targets. That applies especially to radicals, trade unionists, Aboriginal activists, people from other racialized communities, anyone who questions the orders of the bosses or won't accept the fundamentalist, patriarchal rules of "how to behave". This has been true every time the Harper Tories move to break down and divide popular resistance against the corporate agenda.

We saw the pattern again during April, in the wake of the Boston Marathon bombing. Much remains unexplained in this tragedy, and much is being ignored by the corporate media, such as the sordid connections between the ultra-right and terrorist groups which shift from "friend" to "foe" overnight. Immediate attempts were made to whip up hysteria and witch-hunting, and to "unite" behind Uncle Sam and the Stars and Stripes. Conveniently, the RCMP discovered plans to attack railway lines, giving the Tories a golden opportunity to hammer our civil rights and democratic freedoms.

Times like these, when the pressure

is most intense, are exactly when working class media such as People's Voice are most desperately needed. No, we won't shut up and keep our heads down. We will continue to expose the racist, anti-working class agenda of big capital and its reactionary politicians. We will condemn the big lie about our supposed "responsibility to protect" every time the energy monopolies and the military-industrial complex want to wage another war. And we will constantly reject the Tory hogwash that "we all have to make sacrifices" to keep corporate profits rising to record heights.

This issue will be distributed at May Day events across Canada, and we are deeply grateful that many organizations and movements have taken out May Day greetings to help make our efforts possible. The total value of greetings in this issue is nearly \$3000, boosting our 2013 Fund Drive for \$50,000 past the fifty-percent mark. This is solidarity in its finest form, a concrete expression of the desire for working class unity against austerity and war. Thank you all!

We remind readers again that comrade Liz Payne, a frequent

contributor to our sister publication, the *Morning Star*, will be the featured guest at People's Voice events this spring, speaking on the impact of the British Conservative government's attacks against women in the UK. In Vancouver, she will headline our Victory Banquet marking the 20th anniversary of People's Voice, Saturday, June 8, at the Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Avenue. A few days later, she will speak at a PV event in Toronto. Liz Payne is the vice-chair of the Communist Party of Britain, and the women's organizer of the CPB. She is also a long-time activist for solidarity with the Iranian people, and we are delighted to host her visit to Canada.

Questions about the Fund Drive? Feel free to call editor Kimball Cariou at 604-255-2041, or our business manager Gabriel Au, 604-254-9836. We'll be glad to hear your ideas and satisfy your curiosity about the paper!



**Solidarity Greetings on the occasion of May 1, 2013 to workers in Canada and across the world.**

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

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# Melt the Freeze!

## Campaign to raise Ontario's minimum wage

By Jean Kenyon

Fourteen communities across Ontario took part in a campaign to Raise the Minimum Wage, launched on March 21. The campaign was co-ordinated by the Workers' Action Centre and supported by eight other grassroots groups including the Toronto and York Region Labour Council.

Participants rallied at the Ministry of Labour in Toronto, and at MPPs' offices from Sault Ste Marie to Belleville to Windsor. They brought blocks of ice with a \$10 bill and a quarter inside, to illustrate their demand to Melt the Freeze! The minimum wage in Ontario has been frozen at \$10.25/hr since April 2010, while the cost of living in this expensive province keeps pulling out of reach.

One in ten workers in Ontario - 534,000 of us - now work for the minimum wage. This is double the number it was ten years ago. If you include workers who earn scarcely above the minimum, the proportion rises to one in six, or about 800,000 workers. Many are trying to scrape together a living with two or three part-time low-wage jobs.

And it isn't only youth who are struggling with abysmally low wages, Armine Yalnizian of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives points out. The proportion of older workers among minimum wage earners is steadily increasing.

A wage of \$10.25 at 35 hours per week comes to approximately \$1700/month, or \$18,000/year. And many low-wage workers do not even get this many hours.

Who can live on \$1700/month in Ontario today? You are continually choosing between housing, proper food, heat and hydro, a means of transportation, internet and phone bills, clothing and shoes - and that's if you don't have a child to provide for too. Or student debt to pay down. And saving for retirement? A joke.

Trish Hennessy heads up the new Ontario office of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. She points out that Ontario's minimum wage cannot be



considered a living wage. "In Ontario, one in three children who live in low-income families have at least one parent who is working - meaning work doesn't pay enough to lift them out of poverty. That's the problem with using the minimum wage as the only standard. It limits the conversation to what's the lowest amount we



can pay workers that's politically acceptable."

The Workers' Action Centre states, "The minimum wage should be enough to keep workers out of poverty. It should be benchmarked at 10% above the poverty line." Therefore WAC is calling for a raise to \$14/hour.

For a single person in Ontario today, the poverty line, or "Low Income Measure", is \$23,000/year. (That is, half of our society's median income.) This is the income one needs in order not to experience social exclusion because of a lack of things that others take for granted.

To have breathing room of 10% above the poverty line, a single Ontarian would need to earn \$24,500/year. This works out to \$14/hr. No full-time worker in

Ontario should earn any less than this, before deductions.

In a report by Bob White on Corporate Social Responsibility and a Living Wage, he writes, "The living wage is defined as the minimum hourly wage necessary for each of two workers in a family of four to meet basic needs and to participate in the civic/social life of their community." He places a living wage in Canada today at over \$16/hr.

But the trend is now clearly in the opposite direction. Stephen Harper may claim that most new jobs are being created "in industries that pay high wages". But as Armine points out in her article Welcome to the Wageless Recovery! - Harper is pulling a bit of a deception. The construction industry, for example, pays high wages to some highly skilled workers. But that doesn't mean that most of the new jobs created in that industry pay high wages! In fact entry-level positions are falling further and further behind the average wage in many industries, and wage scales are starting to be ratcheted down. The bottom 40% of the work force has seen a significant erosion of wages, and a loss of hope for the future.

The trend toward lower wages is made worse by Ontario's starvation-level social assistance rates. One group supporting the Workers' Action Centre's campaign is called Put Food in

the Budget. This group challenges "middle class" Ontarians to try eating on a welfare budget for a week. Spokesperson Lily Baumgartner said, "I'm tired of seeing the government and the media play the poor against each other. Low social assistance rates and low minimum wages are part of one strategy: to keep people in perpetual poverty, to keep them down, so they can easily be exploited by those with power."

But wouldn't raising the minimum wage cause unemployment? Wouldn't employers stop hiring? Experience does not bear this out, according to Armine Yalnizian. The years when the minimum wage was being steadily raised were also years of strong hiring. And even during the recession, many provinces and territories raised their minimum wages without suffering job loss.

Better wages at the bottom actually support job growth, she adds, because the lowest-income people spend all they have back into the economy. Consumer spending drives more than half of our gross domestic product. So

bringing the lowest-paid people up makes the most sense for economic prosperity.

Just to reach the equivalent value of the minimum wage we had back in the 1970s, we would have to raise it to \$11.50/hr immediately. This is recommended by Ontario's biggest anti-poverty group, 25 in 5. It would give the lowest paid workers an increase of \$2500 a year.

And if the Ontario government's annual 75-cent increases had continued beyond 2010, we would be reaching \$12.50/hr now, in the spring of 2013. That would have been good, but it would still be short of the poverty line for a single person, and far below it for a worker with any dependants.

We need to get the minimum wage up to at least \$14/hr as fast as possible - then see that it is indexed to inflation thereafter.

The Workers' Action Centre concludes: Ontarians can't wait for another commission to study when the minimum wage should be raised and by how much. We need action now!

The campaign continues. ●

### For more information, check these sources:

**Armine Yalnizian**, "Behind the Numbers: Boost the Minimum Wage, Boost the Economy, from the bottom up", <http://behindthenumbers.ca/author/armine/>, and "Welcome to the wageless recovery,"

<http://sgnews.ca/2012/11/05/welcome-to-the-wageless-recovery/>

**Trish Hennessy**, "What if the minimum wage were a living wage?" <http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/trish-hennessy/2012/11/what-if-minimum-wage-was-living-wage>

## May Day Greetings!

Solidarity from the Canadian  
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GREETINGS**

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Serving our community  
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DAY  
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rights of  
immigrant  
workers!

Lower Fraser Club,  
Communist Party  
of Canada

# EDITORIALS

## Which tragedy? Whose bombs?

Once again, unexpected bomb blasts have killed and wounded large numbers of innocent people, instantly turning a joyous celebration into a scene of terrible carnage. But which city? What event? Whose bombs?

These are critical questions. Why? Because for every Boston Marathon atrocity committed on U.S. soil, dozens of similar slaughters have been perpetrated elsewhere, most often by the governments and military machines of the U.S., Canada and our NATO allies. For example, a crude form of cluster bomb was used by the accused Boston attackers. But during the Vietnam War, the U.S. Air Force dropped an astronomical 300 million similar bombs. The most "cluster-contaminated" countries include Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the former Yugoslavia.

The shock and horror felt by North Americans in the wake of the Boston events are normal human reactions. Yet our own governments have inflicted deadly violence across the planet. The anti-war movement, and the people of other countries victimized by such "government terrorism," are increasingly demanding an end to imperialist killings, such as the drone attacks which frequently hit family weddings or village markets.

Just as in Afghanistan, imperialist support for local reactionary forces can result in terrible "blowback". The article "Chechen terrorists and the Neo-Cons" in this issue reports on the links between the ultra-right in the U.S., and anti-communist forces backed by imperialism in its drive to overthrow socialism. The repercussions of this strategy continue to the present day, quite possibly to the events in Boston.

Any attempt to limit expressions of sympathy to "our" victims would be utterly hypocritical. We extend our deepest support and solidarity to all victims of terrorism - including those killed by the state terrorism of the NATO countries.

## Viva Venezuela and Maduro!

When is a majority not a majority? Apparently, when Uncle Sam and his toadies say so. That seems to be the lesson from Venezuela, where PSUV candidate Nicolas Maduro received 50.7% of the votes in the April 14 election to succeed the late President Hugo Chavez. Despite the fact that opposition candidate Henrique Capriles received just 49.0% of the total, the numbers don't seem to matter in Washington, which continues to whine about the results.

To remove any doubts, President Maduro agreed to expand the audit of the ballot boxes to a full 100%. The North American corporate media has remained silent on the fact that on election night, after the end of the electronic voting, at least half of the ballot boxes at each polling station were opened and counted in the presence of both Maduro and Capriles supporters. This process matched the initial electronic results, as will the audit of the remaining 46% of ballot boxes. But the pro-Yankee opposition don't care about the real numbers. Their aim is to spread confusion, setting the stage for further attempts to destabilize Venezuela, even a U.S.-backed coup. Canadians who care about democracy and social justice need to mobilize against this threat.

Yes, the April 14 result was closer than the revolutionary forces in Venezuela would have preferred, and clearly they face challenges in the coming years. But the PSUV and its allies do have majority support for their policies - unlike Stephen Harper's Tories, who have never received 40% backing in a Canadian election.

Instead of attacking Venezuela, our federal government should look at borrowing some *chavista* policies. Public ownership of energy, for example, could help expand social programs, and put many of Canada's 2 million jobless back to work. Sadly, Mr. Harper speaks only for the corporations, not the people - the opposite of President Maduro.

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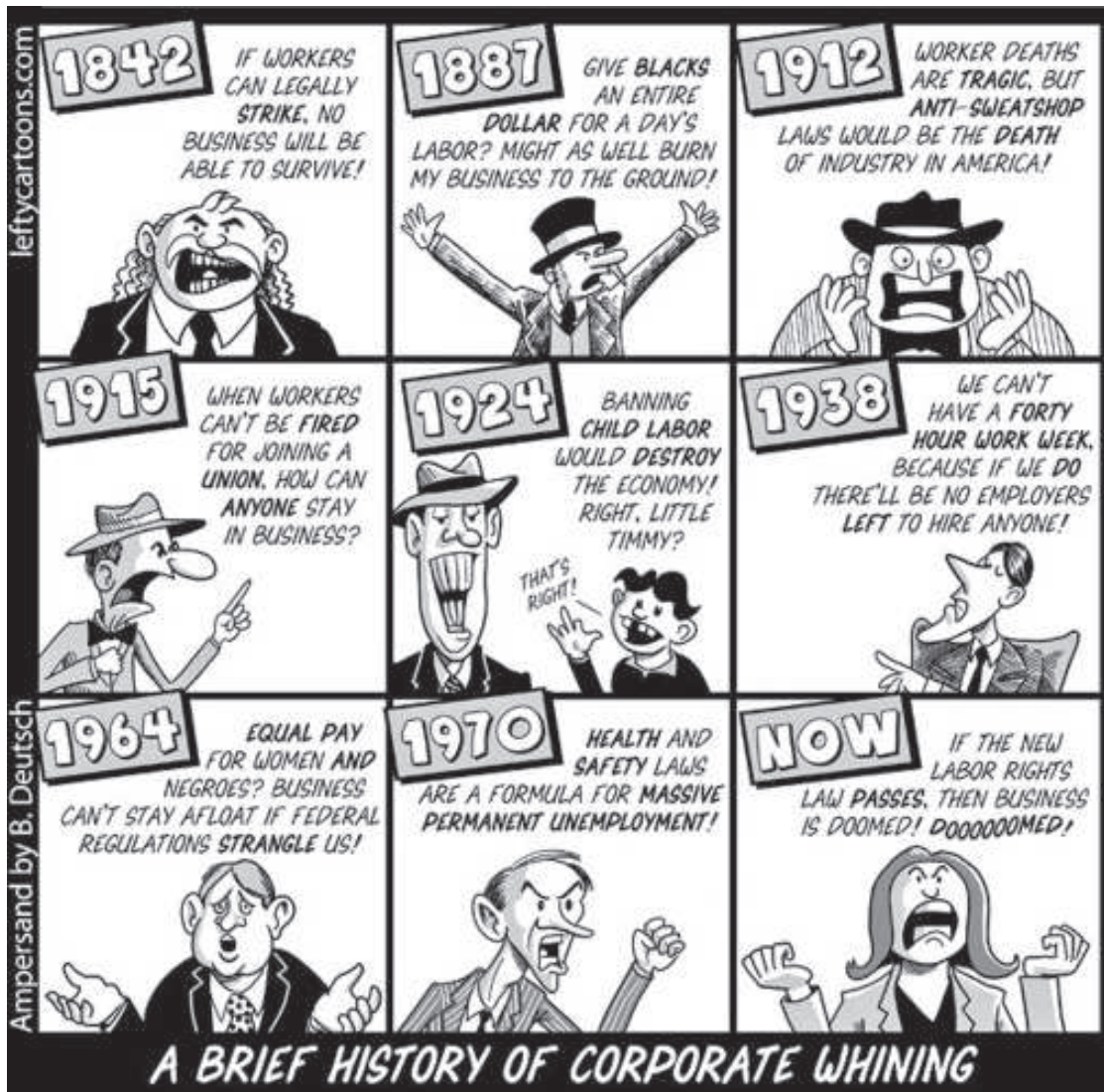
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## LETTERS

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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## The rubbish tip of history

Editorial from the Morning Star (UK), on Margaret Thatcher's funeral

St. Paul's Cathedral was packed to the rafters with the great and the good who benefited from Margaret Thatcher's class war rule, but this didn't tell the whole story.

The plethora of events staged by the former Tory prime minister's victims provided eloquent testimony to the widespread antipathy many working-class communities feel towards her. Tory governments have always prioritised the interests of big business, landowners and the wealthy minority, but she was special in not only reverting to pre-war ruthless repression of her opponents but making clear how much she relished doing so. Those who stress her status as a mother and grandmother and demand quiet respect are out of step with the confrontational approach she embodied.

Her government's victims, thrown out of work in their hundreds of thousands as a result of neoliberal policies imposed without pity, were also someone's parents, grandparents, children and other family members, but their lives were consigned to the Thatcherite scrap heap without so much as a moistened eye.

While some of those attending her funeral did so out of diplomatic formality, others saw it as a celebration of the life of an inveterate class fighter for the rich

and powerful. Thatcher's ability to rely on such a minted minority to finance her final months living in a suite at the Ritz epitomises the gulf in society between the likes of her and the rest of us.

The various anti-Thatcher events, whether celebrations of her demise or protests over her policies that have since been largely validated and emulated by

### Guest Editorial

successive governments, including the current Westminster coalition, have used imagination and humour to make their points. From burning her mock coffin on a coal fire or handing out milk to dramatise her shameful status as school children's "milk snatcher," the participants have demonstrated that the battle is not over yet.

The working class will continue to fight for its own "values of unity, solidarity and community," as Scottish TUC general secretary Grahame Smith said, even though they are "dismissed by those without compassion, who value greed and self, who promote division and discord, who hold the poor in contempt and worship the free market."

Each alternative commemoration of Thatcher's life and death represents an act of resistance against the gushing plaudits of the political Establishment. Working-class communities ravaged by

unemployment, drugs and anti-social behaviour have united to show that they haven't given up while MPs Dennis Skinner and George Galloway braved a Tory paying mob in Parliament to challenge the orgy of adoration.

The Tory high command's insistence on having a quasi-state funeral was a profoundly political act. David Cameron and his acolytes were intent on using the funeral of an acutely divisive individual to emphasise a sea change in political consensus and to use an outpouring of synthetic emotion to bolster their own programme of transferring wealth and power from poor to rich.

Each protest or complaint at the injustice of the public purse being raided to fund the funeral of a woman who derided the idea of society serves as a challenge to the conservative coalition's heartless agenda. Now that the dustcart has traced the route of the funeral parade, clearing up after the pampered elite, the task facing trade unionists and other campaigners is how to consign Thatcher's policy to the rubbish dump of history.

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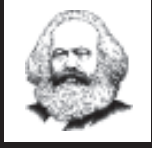
## May Day Greetings!



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East Toronto Club ~ CPC



## Marxist Theory

# Stockman's Rant: a renegade from corporate Republicanism

By Zoltan Zigedy,  
www.mltoday.com

On the rare occasion, an article appears in the mainstream press that takes a deeper, more thoughtful view of human affairs, a document that gives a hint or glimpse of an unspoken truth beyond the pabulum that occupies media puppets. Such an occasion was the publishing of *The New York Times* opinion piece entitled "State Wrecked: The Corruption of Capitalism in America" (3-31-2013) and authored by former Reaganite budget director, David Stockman.

Now Stockman is a renegade from corporate Republicanism; he actually believes in the ancient principles put forward by Adam Smith and other classical capitalist thinkers. While corporate Republicans cozy up to their party's ugly, fascist outliers, they always, in the end, make their bed with the rich and powerful. Stockman, on the other hand, actually embraces the mythical virtues of small business ownership and town hall democracy. In classical Marxist terms, he represents the ideology of the petite-bourgeoisie.

In the swamp occupied by Democratic and Republican

politicos - the breeding ground for conventional politics - such views are unwelcome. Principled politics from the right or the left are alien equally to the snakes and the rats that prey on the cognitively weak and unwary.

Stockman is in a panic because he sees beyond the stock market euphoria and Pollyanna commentaries that have induced the mass delusions of the last several months. And what he sees angers him.

Stockman constructs an indictment, a list of charges against the current US economy: growth of output is woefully inadequate, jobs are both indecently scarce and low paying, the incomes and the net worth of "ordinary" citizens are dropping while poverty is on the rise. To anyone with a grip on reality, these are not signs of real economic recovery or systemic success. He notes that "we've had eight decades of increasingly frenetic fiscal and monetary policy activism intended to counter the cyclical bumps and grinds of the free market and its purported tendency to underproduce jobs and economic output. The toll has been heavy." And yet imagine the toll if no remedial action had been taken! Surely, this unintended critique of eighty years of state-monopoly

governance counts as a devastating charge against modern capitalism. If the era of state-monopoly capitalism can do no better than produce the sad state outlined by Stockman, it is decidedly a failure.

Stockman dares speak the truth so discomfiting to liberals and social democrats: [World War II] "did far more to end the Depression than the New Deal did," though he misleadingly praises the Eisenhower years for its "sound money and fiscal rectitude." Perhaps he is too young to remember the massive increases in military spending, the ambitious interstate highway system, and the enormous growth of public spending brought on by the Cold War and the Sputnik panic. In any case, the dose of war socialism and the "frenetic activism" of state-monopoly capitalism kept the capitalist ship afloat, though with fewer and fewer rewards for the majority of US citizens.

Stockman correctly sees that the remedies pursued by US state-monopoly capitalism directed more and more of the lubricant of public funds towards the financial sector over the last decades: the Greenspan "put," the Long-Term Capital Management bailout, extended ultra-low interest rates, TARP, Fed purchases of bank junk,

the support of federal bond prices, and support for equity markets. He calls this, not incorrectly, "Keynesianism - for the wealthy."

And this is a salient point. It is commonplace to express the differences between Democratic and Republican policy makers since the Reagan era as pro- and anti-Keynesianism. But this is wrong. Ironically, it was only during the Clinton administration that growth of government spending was at all curtailed and today fiscal and monetary expansion remains a ready tool of the ruling class well after Reagan's departure. Certainly Keynesian pump priming has taken new and evolving forms over decades: direct job creation, military spending, massive space programs, infrastructure projects, public-private partnerships, repair of financial institutions, and stimulation of financial demand. While one or the other may be the favoured priming tool of rulers at any given time, the similarities of the forms are far more important to recognize than their differences. State intervention in markets continues to be at the core of contemporary state-monopoly capitalism. Stockman sees this; others don't.

In Stockman's account, the

enabler of pump priming in all of its forms has been debt. Borrowing or printing money is the means to continue the regimen of "frenetic fiscal and monetary policy activism." But, in his view, this regimen is running out of steam. "The future is bleak." And the "Fed has incited a global currency war (Japan just signed up, the Brazilians and Chinese are angry, and the German dominated euro zone is crumbling) that will soon overwhelm it..."

A bleak picture indeed, but one entrenched in reality.

So if modern capitalism - in its state-monopoly form - is a disaster, does that mean that Stockman advocates socialism?

Definitely not. Instead he holds out for a nostalgic return to the gold standard. Avoiding what he calls "end-state metastasis," "would necessitate a sweeping divorce of the state and the market economy [the wholesale rejection of state-monopoly capitalism! ZZ]. It would require a renunciation of crony capitalism and its first cousin: Keynesian economics in all its forms. The state would have to get out of the business of imperial hubris, economic uplift

see RENEGADE, p. 7

## Manitoba budget harms workers

By Darrell Rankin

Dealing a blow to workers and the poor, the Manitoba NDP raised the provincial sales tax from seven to eight percent in its April 16 budget. Take-home pay is taking another hit, reinforcing Manitoba's status as a low-wage province.

The wealthy elite will barely notice the PST hike. However, workers will have less for the necessities of life. This is a wage cut by other, indirect means - about \$300 a year per family. Before-tax wages in Manitoba were \$3,500 (or 8 percent) below the country's annual average in 2012.

The budget follows the model of pro-corporate governments around the world, making cuts that harm workers and the needy and protecting the corporations and the wealthy. Impoverishing workers prolongs and deepens the economic crisis that has gripped global capitalism since 2008.

In one sense, it is a standard Canadian Prairie provincial budget with no grand vision or hope for a fair society. It is blind to inequality, the wholesale robbery of Aboriginal peoples, the inequality of women and the growing climate catastrophe. Good-paying jobs, higher education and child care will continue to be just a crushed dream for many.

Without any factual basis, Manitoba NDP Finance Minister Stan Struthers claims that the PST hike will be "shared by everyone." Struthers emphasizes the need for urgent flood protection spending, but most new spending is for overdue maintenance and an aging population's needs.

Needed spending has been delayed for decades as a way to keep public spending low and give

Manitoba a "competitive advantage," but there is a limit to how long our infrastructure will last. No doubt, the Manitoba NDP tax hike was urged by local corporate leaders.

There is no other reason why workers and the poor are facing this new burden. And unlike the two-year "wage pause" announced in the 2010 provincial budget that continues to rob public sector workers of hundreds of millions of dollars, this tax hike hurts all workers.

Labour and other groups are condemning the budget for promoting inequality and failing to reduce poverty. For example, the Progressive Conservative and Liberal opposition parties both endorsed an anti-poverty campaign pledge to raise the welfare housing allowance to 75 percent of market value, weeks before the budget.

The budget raised the housing allowance by a paltry \$20 a month, far below the required amount of \$100 to meet the anti-poverty coalition demands. This is the first real increase in the allowance since 1992.

A relatively small sum of \$19 million would solve the housing allowance demand, something the NDP might do before the 2015 election. It will take far more significant measures to eliminate poverty, create good-paying jobs and grow the economy than this minor reform.

The Manitoba Federation of Labour is pointing out that the NDP has cut \$1 billion in personal and corporate taxes since it was elected in 1999. These tax cuts helped the corporate elite. They also helped create a weaker and more unequal economy.

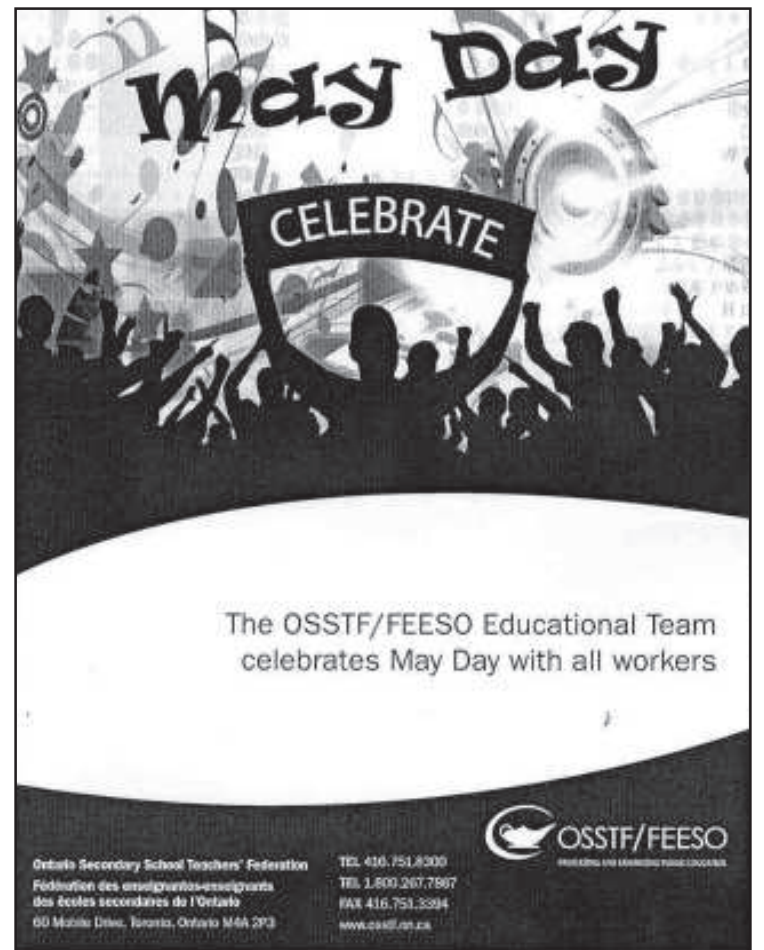
Taxes must shift to a progressive basis, on ability to pay. An inheritance tax on large estates would also go a long way to boost revenue for needed public spending and reduce social inequality.

Working people and the poor are being told by the Manitoba NDP that they must pay more to solve the crisis. It's like the NDP has no memory how Canada's economy grew faster and more people had better paying jobs when the wealthy and the corporations paid higher taxes.

The NDP is pushing the line that taxes are "good" regardless who pays them because we need medicare and roads, but the NDP "overlooks" the main reality. Today's tax hikes and spending cuts are impoverishing workers. They protect the greedy, not the needy.

The Manitoba NDP is creating a new, cruel reality just like other pro-corporate governments.

*Darrell Rankin is the leader of the Communist Party of Canada - Manitoba.* •



## MAY DAY GREETINGS to working people in British Columbia

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# Ghadar Party: A Continuous Struggle

By Gurpreet Singh

As the Indian Diaspora celebrates the centenary of the Ghadar Party this year, many observers have mainly focused on its role in India's independence from the British Empire, overlooking the party's contribution to mass movements in the post-independent period.

India gained independence from the British rule in 1947, following years of struggles by both the passive resistance movement and armed insurgents. The Ghadar Party was among the groups that believed in violence to rid India of foreign occupation. The word "Ghadar" means mutiny in Urdu, and the British rulers referred to the first organized act of rebellion in 1857 as the "Ghadar" which was suppressed. When Indian immigrants on the Pacific coast of the US and Canada formed the Hind Pacific Association in 1913 to seek independence, they chose to rename their first newsletter after Ghadar.

The new Ghadar Party came into being after ugly experiences of systematic racism and discrimination suffered by the Indian migrants from the white supremacy in both countries. Most of these men came to Canada as British subjects, as Canada like India was a British colony. Many had actually served in the British army, but this did not help them in an alien land. Never did the British government come to the rescue of these people when they complained against racial discrimination. They were not allowed to bring their families to

Canada, and were disfranchised in 1907. This alienation laid the foundation of the Ghadar Party that fought against social injustices in a foreign land, and foreign occupation back home. Most of these men returned to India to organize an uprising, only to face gallows or life imprisonment, while others went underground to continue resistance.

Since the contributions of the Ghadar movement have largely been obscured in the mainstream history books, several myths have formed. One of the most popular mythologies says the party failed in its mission, primarily because the Ghadar Party's identity as a continuous struggle has been completely misunderstood.

First, let's face it that the party did not achieve what it intended through an armed rebellion. That their strategy did not work is one thing, but to suggest that the movement failed is not correct. Their strategy failed as the people of India were not prepared for mutiny. The mainstream political leadership either believed in passive resistance, or was pro-British. Despite such a bitter experience, these men did not give up. Some became members of the latter armed struggles like the Babbar Akali movement, a group seeking freedom of Sikh temples from the corrupt and pro-British priest class. Others joined the communist movement.

In post-independence India they continued their fight against state repression and injustices. Among them was Mangu Ram Muggowal,

who launched a movement against the caste-based oppression of untouchability, a form of physical mistreatment practised against the so-called low caste people. Muggowal launched his movement before independence, and continued it after the British left India. Likewise, Boojha Singh became a member of the ultra-leftist Naxalite movement of the landless tillers, and died at the hands of the Indian police. So the movement's influence on other mass struggles continued after independence.

Other militant movements prior to 1947 were also greatly inspired by the Ghadar activists. For instance Bhagat Singh, a towering revolutionary leader who was hanged by the British in 1931, considered Kartar Singh Sarabha, one of the founders of the Ghadar Party as his role model.

Even before the Ghadar Party came into being, the Indian immigrants in London had celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first mutiny of 1857, despite opposition from the British government and the white supremacists. They openly honoured the participants of the

first mutiny. Nor was the Ghadar of 1857 the first act of resistance against colonization, as many earlier anti-British skirmishes took place in different parts of India.

All this suggests that the struggle is a continuous process. The Ghadar was not limited by boundaries of time and place. The


challenges that gave birth to the Ghadar Party in 1913 are still there, both in India and Canada. The ongoing social and political injustices, like casteism, uneven development, imperialism, racism and discriminatory immigration policies, will never be able to shut the door to a Ghadar-like uprising. ●




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**Greetings of Solidarity**  
**May Day 2013**  
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!*

**MAY DAY 2013**

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**MAY DAY Greetings**

From the Eric Blair Club in Niagara



**MAYDAY**

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## ... A renegade from corporate Republicanism

and social insurance and shift its focus to managing and financing an effective, affordable, means-tested safety net."

In short, Stockman advocates going back to a conjured idyllic time before state-monopoly capitalism, a time imagined by the petite-bourgeoisie as one of healthy competition, entrepreneurship, and opportunity. For him, the golden age of capitalism would be the pre-depression era of small town USA, family farms, vibrant and expansive industry and foreign policy isolationism. Of course any pretense of continuity or viability of that era was dashed by the Great Depression. In fact, the policies decried by Stockman (and associated by Marxists with state-monopoly capitalism) served as a temporary backstop to the further contraction of the capitalist system produced by that fantastic era.

Stockman may wish for a return to an earlier time just as others may wish to time travel back to the court of Louis XIV, but it isn't going to happen. Capitalism, like any organism, has its own life span, its own history. Saved from a

critical illness, capitalism passed from its laissez faire period to a period of intensifying state intervention and management. Today, that phase of capitalism's development - state-monopoly capitalism - is also threatened with a critical illness. I would not be so bold as to predict capitalism's imminent death, but certainly it will not be revived by reliving its past as Stockman fantasizes.

At a time when liberals and conservatives argue pathetically over the right mix of austerity and stimulus, Stockman is a welcome mainstream herald of the profound crisis pummeling global capitalism. His anxiety and anger reflect a deeper understanding of the contradictions of the moment. His rant, spiked with sarcasm and vitriol, stands in stark relief against the smugness of the lap dog punditry.

### **Krugman Strides into the Ring**

The Stockman screed generated a storm of opposition. Liberals and the fuzzy, mushy left were

particularly affronted. Unlike Stockman, they would like to only turn the clock back to the early seventies, another supposedly "idyllic" time when business unionism was generating satisfactory contracts, the "Great Society" programs were blooming, and war in Vietnam was winding down (at least for US combatants). The fruits of the civil rights struggles and urban uprisings were realized in the creation of programs, bureaucracies, and other buffering agents against domestic insurgency. Jobs servicing the Great Society generated a stratum of social liberals who matured into the base of a social democratic left inside and outside of the Democratic Party. For them, the world turned evil and foreboding with the Reagan "revolution," a movement they characterize as neo-liberalism.

In the dust-up with Stockman, Paul Krugman, columnist for *The New York Times*, assumed the role of savior and protector of their interests and perspective. Krugman, the darling of the "respectable" left, attacked Stockman for his audacious critique of the track record of state intervention in the capitalist economy. Anyone who follows Krugman knows that his response to the crisis is a simple solution: spend more public funds and spend freely until growth perks up. The soft left finds this an agreeable solution because it promises to save capitalism (and forestall socialism!) while creating a potential material basis for pet welfare programs. It is simply the fantasy of another New Deal. And never mind that Krugman doesn't share the fantasy!

Apparently, the Stockman-Krugman battle merited a major media appearance before the Sunday morning gasbags, the big stage for what our media passes off as intellectual fare. While I lacked the stomach to watch the sparring between the two, refereed by the likes of Huffington, van Susteren, and Will, I would commend an entertaining account of the match by Mike Whitney in *Counterpunch* (Krugman vs. Stockman, April 11, 2013).

The merit of Stockman's account is that he is righteously indignant with an economic system

that has failed the great majority of people and inflicted great pain and uncertainty. He goes beyond the dominant rhetoric of "we are all in this together" and "we are all at fault" to find systemic rot in capitalism. He correctly places the blame for this at the doorstep of state-monopoly capitalism, the stage of capitalism evolved to rescue the system from the accumulated contradictions of laissez faire capitalism, contradictions brought to light by the Great Depression. But he cannot go where logic would take him. He cannot entertain options that would transcend capitalism. Thus, he is resigned to a pathetic nostalgia for a bygone era where the contradictions of capitalism did not appear in such sharp focus. While he stretches the bounds of mainstream thinking, he can not see beyond markets and private ownership; he cannot see socialism.

Krugman and most of the US left are thoroughly conventional in their thinking - they offer a more

"enlightened" management of the economic system and a cheerful capitalism with a human face. They would be hard pressed to point to a period when capitalism bore a human face, however. Nonetheless, they are undaunted before a rising tide of interest in the socialist option. They are resolute in their fear and rejection of real socialism.

Pressured by five years of relentless economic crisis and increasing signs of favour towards socialism, especially with the young, our feckless left offers a cold plate of empty slogans of localism, anti-consumerism, platitudinous "participatory" democracy, cooperatives, and a vacuous "new" economy. As if these are answers to the \$17 trillion dollar US multinational, monopoly capital behemoth. In truth, these are simply evasions and dissemblance.

If Stockton is right and capitalism is "state-wrecked," then its time to leave the wreckage and turn to socialism. ●

## **A BETTER FUTURE IS POSSIBLE**

### **May Day Greetings**

*Harry Hunter Club  
Hamilton*

## **MAY DAY GREETINGS!**

**Greek-Canadian  
Democratic Organization**

## **May Day Greetings**



**Charlie McClure Club,  
CPC, Sudbury**

## **MAY DAY GREETINGS!**

**From the Davenport Club  
CPC**

### **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!**

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economic and social  
justice for all.**

**WORKERS OF THE  
WORLD UNITE!**

**MAY DAY 2013**

**Burnaby Club, CPC**

# Labour and People's Unity Can Defeat Austerity

## May Day 2013 message from the Communist Party of Canada

On May Day, the International Workers' Day, the Communist Party of Canada extends warmest solidarity to all those in struggle against capitalist austerity and war.

The systemic crisis of capitalism in Canada and internationally continues to deepen, reflected in ever-widening social disparity, intensified economic and social attacks against the people, fresh assaults on labour and democratic rights, the further degradation of the national and global environment, and increasing militarism, aggression and war.

The austerity policies pursued by ruling circles in the leading imperialist states, including Canada, to resuscitate economic activity and profits on the backs of the working class and working people in general, have failed miserably. The economies of the U.S., Europe and Japan - the "tripod" epicentre of this global crisis - remain stagnant or in decline. The crisis and the intense, all-sided offensive launched by the ruling class are exacting a heavy economic, social, cultural, physical, psychological and environmental cost on all humanity.

The main target of this anti-social offensive of capital is the working class, especially its organised section, the trade union movement. It is also falls heavily on women, youth and students, indigenous peoples, immigrants and migrants, pensioners and the elderly, peasants and small farmers, the extreme poor and marginalized sections of the people, and on all those reliant on the social functions and services of capitalist states - benefits won through many decades of hard struggle.

This capitalist offensive is creating an atmosphere of insecurity and desperation among wide sections of the working class and the people, but it is also giving rise to increased resistance. Labour and mass democratic struggles across Europe have been marked by countless general strikes, mass demonstrations and factory occupations. Millions have come out into the streets of Greece, Spain, Portugal, France, Britain, Italy, Cyprus and elsewhere to demand jobs, decent wages and pensions, to defend labour rights, to insist on the restoration of health, education and other public services, and to denounce the austerity policies dictated by the EU at the behest of European bankers and monopolists.

The counter-offensive of labour and people's movements is also

growing across Canada. The historic Québec student strike and social struggle which took place in 2012, and the Canada-wide "Idle No More" protests of Aboriginal peoples and their supporters are particularly significant. These and many other mobilizations in defence of labour, social and equality rights, and the environment, signal a qualitative

change in the mood of the working class and its allies to fight back against the austerity agenda of capital and its governments.



Communist Party flag at Toronto rally in solidarity with Venezuela.

change in the mood of the working class and its allies to fight back against the austerity agenda of capital and its governments.

Today, the issue of working class unity has become critical, as the big corporations attempt to pit sections of workers against each other. Even as the ruling class removes any barriers to the mobility of capital and investments, new obstacles are erected against the legal rights of workers to move across borders in search of better employment opportunities. Instead, the Harper Conservatives have dramatically boosted the Temporary Foreign Workers' Program, aiming to provide cheap labour for employers, and keep overall wage levels low. At the same time, right-wing forces fan the flames of racism, blaming migrants for high unemployment and declining living standards. The enemy of Canadian workers is not our sisters and brothers from other countries, but rather the anti-worker policies of the federal government and the big corporations. May Day 2013 should see a powerful rejection of this racist divide-and-rule capitalist strategy, and a call for unity of all workers - employed and unemployed, organized and unorganized, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, young and old, of all

genders and national origins, including migrant workers. The shift to the use of temporary, non-unionized workers, paid minimal wages and benefits, is part of a wider reactionary agenda which the Harper government, and its pro-corporate counterparts at the provincial and municipal levels, are carrying through on behalf of

finance capital. Their goal is to accelerate the accumulation of capital through every conceivable means (privatization, state-restructuring, corporate tax cuts, etc.), and to weaken and suppress working class and popular resistance.

Lest we forget, the first target of the new Harper majority after the 2011 election was organized labour (CUPW, the Air Canada and CP Rail workers, etc.). Harper's "war on labour" in the federal jurisdiction gave a green light to right-wing provincial and municipal governments to demand that workers yield concessions or face the legislative hammer, such as Ontario's attack on the bargaining rights of teachers.. Since 1982, federal and provincial governments in Canada have passed 199 pieces of legislation to restrict, suspend or deny collective bargaining rights. What is qualitatively new is the speed, ferocity and punitive nature of these legislative attacks.

At its core, this offensive aims at crippling and ultimately destroying the organized labour movement. The federal passage of C-377, requiring unions to disclose salaries, time spent on political activities and expenses, was only the beginning. There are now ominous signals that the Harper

Conservatives are preparing to impose "right-to-work" legislation on all workers under federal jurisdiction.

From the perspective of the ruling class, the weakening of the trade union movement is the key to reducing the cost of labour-power, and not only among organized workers. They know that such reductions will put tremendous downward pressure on the wages and incomes of all workers, most of whom have no union protection. Finance capital realizes that the labour movement - because of its size, resources and ability to take job action - is the only social/class force capable of uniting broad sections of the people against its offensive.

The struggle against rampaging militarism, aggression and war must also be a central focus of the labour and people's fightback. As this May Day approaches, threats of fresh imperialist aggression against Syria, Iran and the DPRK are escalating. We are called upon to oppose this growing war danger, to defend the national sovereignty of all countries, and to condemn the drive to militarization, along with the chauvinist, "anti-terror" rhetoric used to justify it. This May Day, we express unwavering solidarity with socialist Cuba, the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and with all progressive and anti-imperialist forces and movements around the world!

The labour movement is the key to building broad struggles for the rights of all workers, for jobs and improved living standards, in defence of social services and programs, for gender equality, for justice for Aboriginal peoples, for young people's right to an education and a future, for genuine environmental protection, and for a foreign policy based on peace and disarmament.

But the overall state of labour's fightback has so far been insufficient. More than five years into the current crisis, the CLC under Ken Georgetti (and the leaders of some important unions) have yet to draw the entire labour movement and its social partners together into a broad labour-community "common front" against austerity. Instead, the CLC

is focussing on organizing "political action" conferences to line up labour participation in the NDP's electoral machine for the 2015 general election.

The Communist Party urges the CLC and its key national affiliates to act now to build the extra-parliamentary fightback by convening an emergency "labour & people's summit", bringing together the entire trade union movement (including the non-affiliated labour centrals in Québec) and its social partners - Aboriginal peoples, women, youth & students, peace, environmental and LGBTQ activists, seniors and other mass democratic movements.

Recent experiences show that it is quite possible to build a stronger labour resistance against the corporate offensive, and to win broad support from community allies. Despite the adverse conditions and subjective weaknesses, many labour and popular movements are becoming ever more vibrant and militant. New forces are coming into the fightback. Militant tactics and coalition-building can move labour from a defensive posture towards a fighting strategy of mobilizing the entire working class and its allies to block the right-wing agenda and to move onto the counter-offensive.

While situations elsewhere cannot be mechanically replicated in Canada, militant, class struggle trade unionism seen in Greece and other countries should inspire union activists here. A Canada-wide common front against the corporate/government attack in turn can win wider support for the goal of a labour-led People's Coalition to unite broad sections of the people's movements, not around a nostalgic return to a "rosy" Keynesian past, but rather around a platform of radical progressive demands, and for a fundamental challenge to the economic and political hegemony of finance capital, both domestic and international.

As we salute the struggles of workers in all countries on May Day 2013, the Communist Party of Canada is confident the labour and people's unity can defeat austerity and war! ●

**May Day Greetings to all from the CPC (Ontario)**

**Unite and Fight to Defeat Austerity!**

**Jobs, Not Bombs!**

**Build the Common Front!**

**REDS ON THE WEB**

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<http://solidnet.org>

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

**MAY DAY GREETINGS**



**Central Committee,  
Communist Party of Canada**

[www.communist-party.ca](http://www.communist-party.ca)



# The History of May Day

Excerpts from "The History of May Day," by Alexander Trachtenberg, *International Pamphlets, 1932, available online at www.marxists.org.*

## The Fight for the Shorter Workday

The origin of May Day is indissolubly bound up with the struggle for the shorter workday - a demand of major political significance for the working class. This struggle is manifest almost from the beginning of the factory system in the United States.

...Already at the opening of the 19th century workers in the United States made known their grievances against working from "sunrise to sunset," the then prevailing workday. Fourteen, sixteen and even eighteen hours a day were not uncommon. During the conspiracy trial against the leaders of striking cordwainers in 1806, it was brought out that workers were employed as long as nineteen and twenty hours a day.

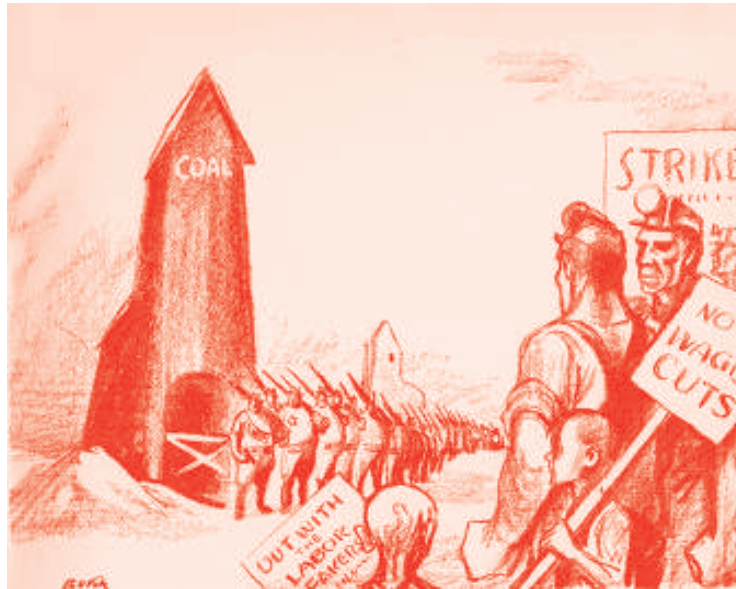
The twenties and thirties are replete with strikes for reduction of hours of work and definite demands for a 10-hour day were put forward in many industrial centers. The organization of what is considered as the first trade union in the world, the Mechanics' Union of Philadelphia, preceding by two years the one formed by workers in England, can be definitely ascribed to a strike of building trade workers in Philadelphia in 1827 for the 10-hour day. During the bakers' strike in New York in 1834 the Workingmen's Advocate reported that "journeymen employed in the loaf bread business have for years been suffering worse than Egyptian bondage. They have had to labor on an average of eighteen to twenty hours out of the twenty-four."

The demand in those localities for a 10-hour day soon grew into a movement, which, although impeded by the crisis of 1837, led the federal government under President Van Buren to decree the 10-hour day for all those employed on government work. The struggle for the universality of the 10-hour day, however, continued during the next decades. No sooner had this demand been secured in a number of industries than the workers began to raise the slogan for an 8-hour day. The feverish activity in organizing labor unions during the fifties gave this new demand an impetus which, however, was checked by the crisis of 1857. The demand was, however, won in a few well-organized trades before the crisis. That the movement for a shorter workday was not only peculiar to the United States, but was prevalent wherever workers were exploited under the rising capitalist system, can be seen from the fact that even in far away Australia the building trade workers raised the slogan "8 hours work, 8 hours demand in recreation and 8 hours rest" and were successful in securing this by 1856...

The 8-hour day movement which directly gave birth to May Day, must, however, be traced to

the general movement initiated in the United States in 1884....

Although the decade 1880-1890 was generally one of the most active in the development of American industry and the extension of the home market, the year 1883-1885 experienced a depression which was a cyclical depression following the crisis of 1873. The movement for a shorter workday received added impetus from the unemployment and the great suffering which prevailed during that period, just as at the present time the demand for a 7-hour day is becoming a popular issue on account of the tremendous unemployment which American workers are experiencing.



The great strike struggles of 1877, in which tens of thousands of railroad and steel workers militantly fought against the corporations and the government which sent troops to suppress the strikes, left an impress on the whole labor movement. It was the first great mass action of the American working class on a national scale and, although they were defeated by the combined forces of the State and capital, the American workers emerged from these struggles with a clearer understanding of their class position in society, a greater militancy and a heightened morale. It was in part an answer to the coal barons of Pennsylvania who, in their attempt to destroy the miners' organization in the anthracite region, railroaded ten militant miners (Molly Maguires) to the gallows in 1875.

The Federation [*American Federation of Labour*], just organized, saw the possibility of utilizing the slogan of the 8-hour day as a rallying organization slogan among the great masses of workers who were outside of the Federation and the Knights of Labor, an older and then still growing organization. The Federation appealed to the Knights of Labor for support in the movement for the 8-hour day, realizing that only a general action involving all organized labor could make possible favourable results.

At the convention of the Federation in 1885, the resolution on the walk-out for May First of the following year was reiterated and several national unions took action to prepare for the struggle, among them particularly the Carpenters and Cigar Makers. The agitation for the May First action for the 8-hour day showed

immediate results in the growth of membership of the existing unions. The Knights of Labor grew by leaps and bounds, reaching the apex of its growth in 1886. It is reported that the R. of L., which was better known than the Federation and was considered a fighting organization, increased its membership from 200,000 to nearly 700,000 during that period. The Federation, first to inaugurate the movement and definitely to set a date for the strike for the 8-hour day, also grew in numbers and particularly in prestige among the broad masses of the workers. As the day of the strike was approaching and it was becoming evident that the leadership of the

can be seen from the fact that while in 1885 there were only 2,467 establishments affected by strikes, the number involved in the following year had increased to 11,562. In spite of open sabotage by the leadership of the K. of L., it was estimated that over 500,000 workers were directly involved in strikes for the 8-hour day.

The strike center was Chicago, where the strike movement was most widespread, but many other cities were involved in the struggle on May First. New York, Baltimore, Washington, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and many other cities made a good showing in the walkout. The characteristic feature of the strike movement was that the unskilled and unorganized workers were drawn into the struggle, and that sympathetic strikes were quite prevalent during that period. A rebellious spirit was abroad in the land, and bourgeois historians speak of the "social war" and "hatred for capital" which was manifested during these strikes, and of the enthusiasm of the rank and file which pervaded the movement. It is estimated that about half of the number of workers who struck on May First were successful, and where they did not secure the 8-hour day, they succeeded in appreciably reducing the hours of labor.

## The Chicago Strike and Haymarket

The May First strike was most aggressive in Chicago, which was at that time the center of a militant Left-wing labor movement. Although insufficiently clear politically on a number of the problems of the labor movement, it was nevertheless a fighting movement, always ready to call the workers to action, develop their fighting spirit and set as their goal not only the immediate improvement of their living and working conditions, but the abolition of the capitalist system as well.

With the aid of the revolutionary labor groups the strike in Chicago assumed the largest proportions. An 8-hour Association was formed long in advance of the strike to prepare for it. The Central Labor Union, composed of the Left-wing labor unions, gave full support to the 8-hour Association, which was a united front organization, including the unions affiliated to the Federation, the K. of L., and the Socialist Labor Party. On the Sunday before May First the Central Labor Union organized a mobilization demonstration which was attended by 25,000 workers.

On May First Chicago witnessed a great outpouring of workers, who laid down tools at the call of the organized labor movement of the city. It was the most effective demonstration of class solidarity yet experienced by the labor movement itself. The importance at that time of the demand - the 8-hour day - and the extent and character of the strike gave the movement significant political meaning. This significance was deepened by the developments of the next few days. The 8-hour movement,

culminating in the strike on May First, 1886, forms by itself a glorious chapter in the fighting history of the American working class.

But revolutions have their counter-revolutions until the revolutionary class finally establishes its complete control. The victorious march of the Chicago workers was arrested by the then superior combined force of the employers and the capitalist state, determined to destroy the militant leaders, hoping thereby to deal a deadly blow to the entire labor movement of Chicago. The events of May 3 and 4, which led to what is known as the Haymarket Affair, were a direct outgrowth of the May First strike. The demonstration held on May 4 at Haymarket Square was called to protest against the brutal attack of the police upon a meeting of striking workers at the McCormick Reaper Works on May 3, where six workers were killed and many wounded. The meeting was peaceful and about to be adjourned when the police again launched an attack upon the assembled workers. A bomb was thrown into the crowd, killing a sergeant. A battle ensued with the result that seven policemen and four workers were dead. The blood bath at Haymarket Square, the railroading to the gallows of Parsons, Spies, Fischer, and Engel, and the imprisonment of the other militant Chicago leaders, was the counterrevolutionary answer of the Chicago bosses. It was the signal for action to the bosses all over the country. The second half of 1886 was marked by a concentrated offensive of the employers, determined to regain the position lost during the strike movement of 1885-1886.

One year after the hanging of the Chicago labor leaders, the American Federation of Labor, at its convention in St. Louis in 1888, voted to rejuvenate the movement for the 8-hour day. May First, which was already a tradition, having served two years before as the concentration point of the powerful movement of the workers based upon a political class issue, was again chosen as the day upon which to re-inaugurate the struggle for the 8-hour day. May First, 1890, was to witness a nation-wide strike for the shorter workday...

On July 14, 1889, the hundredth anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, there assembled in Paris leaders from organized revolutionary proletarian movements of many lands, to form once more an international organization of workers, patterned after the one formed 25 years earlier by their great teacher, Karl Marx.

Those assembled at the foundation meeting of what was to become the Second International heard from the American delegates about the struggle in America for the 8-hour day during 1884-1886, and the recent rejuvenation of the movement. Inspired by the example of the American workers, the Paris Congress adopted the following resolution:

"The Congress decides to organize a great international

see MAY DAY, p. 11

# Chechen Terrorists and the Neocons

*Coleen Rowley, April 19, 2013, Consortiumnews*

The revelation that the family of the two suspects in the Boston Marathon bombings was from Chechnya prompted new speculation about the attack as Islamic terrorism. Less discussed was the history of U.S. neocons supporting Chechen terrorists as a strategy to weaken Russia.

I almost choked on my coffee listening to neoconservative Rudy Giuliani pompously claim on national TV that he was surprised about any Chechens being responsible for the Boston Marathon bombings because he's never seen any indication that Chechen extremists harboured animosity toward the U.S.; Giuliani thought they were only focused on Russia.

Giuliani knows full well how the Chechen "terrorists" proved useful to the U.S. in keeping pressure on the Russians, much as the Afghan mujahedeen were used in the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan from 1980 to 1989. In fact, many neocons signed up as Chechnya's "friends," including former CIA Director James Woolsey.

For instance, see this 2004 article in the *UK Guardian*, entitled, "The Chechens' American friends: The Washington neocons' commitment to the war on terror evaporates in Chechnya, whose cause they have made their own."

Author John Laughland wrote: "the leading group which pleads the Chechen cause is the American Committee for Peace in Chechnya (ACPC). The list of the self-styled "distinguished Americans" who are its members is a roll call of the most prominent neoconservatives who so enthusiastically support the "war on terror."

"They include Richard Perle, the notorious Pentagon adviser; Elliott Abrams of Iran-Contra fame; Kenneth Adelman, the former US ambassador to the UN who egged on the invasion of Iraq by predicting it would be "a cakewalk"; Midge Decter, biographer of Donald Rumsfeld and a director of the right-wing Heritage Foundation; Frank Gaffney of the militarist Centre for Security Policy; Bruce Jackson, former US military intelligence officer and one-time vice-president of Lockheed Martin, now president of the US Committee on Nato; Michael Ledeen of the American Enterprise Institute, a former admirer of Italian fascism and now a leading proponent of regime change in Iran; and R. James Woolsey, the former CIA director who is one of the leading cheerleaders behind George Bush's plans to re-model the Muslim world along pro-US lines."

The ACPC later sanitized "Chechnya" to "Caucasus" so it's rebranded itself as the "American Committee for Peace in the Caucasus."

Of course, Giuliani also just happens to be one of several neocons and corrupt politicians who took hundreds of thousands of dollars from MEK sources when that Iranian group was listed by the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). The money paid for these American politicians to lobby (illegally under the Patriot Act)

U.S. officials to get MEK off the FTO list.

## Down the Rabbit Hole

Alice in Wonderland is an understatement if you understand the full reality of what's going on. But if you can handle going down the rabbit hole even further, check out prominent former *New York Times* journalist (and author of The Commission book) Phil Shenon's discovery of the incredible "Terrible Missed Chance" a couple of years ago.

Shenon's discovery involved key information that the FBI and the entire "intelligence" community mishandled and covered up, not only before 9/11 but for a decade afterward. And it also related to the exact point of my 2002 "whistleblower memo" that led to the post 9/11 DOJ-Inspector General investigation about FBI failures and also partially helped launch the 9/11 Commission investigation.

But still the full truth did not come out, even after Shenon's blockbuster discovery in 2011 of the April 2001 memo linking the main Chechen leader Ibn al Khattab to Osama bin Laden. The buried April 2001 memo had been addressed to FBI Director Louis Freeh (another illegal recipient of MEK money, by the way!) and also to eight of the FBI's top counter-terrorism officials.

Similar memos must have been widely shared with all U.S. intelligence in April 2001. Within days of terrorist suspect Zaccarias Moussaoui's arrest in Minnesota on Aug. 16, 2001, French intelligence confirmed that Moussaoui had been fighting under and recruiting for Ibn al-Khattab, raising concerns about Moussaoui's flight training.

Yet FBI Headquarters officials

balked at allowing a search of his laptop and other property, still refusing to recognize that: 1) the Chechen separatists were themselves a "terrorist group" for purposes of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act's (FISA) legal requirement of acting "on behalf of a foreign power" and 2) that Moussaoui's link to Ibn al Khattab inherently then linked him to bin Laden's well-recognized Al Qaeda group for purposes of FISA (the point in my memo).

This all occurred during the same time that CIA Director George Tenet and other counter-terrorism officials - and don't forget that Tenet was apprised of the information about Moussaoui's arrest around Aug. 24, 2001 - told us their "hair was on fire" over the prospect of a major terrorist attack and "the system was blinking red."

The post 9/11 investigations launched as a result of my 2002 "whistleblower memo" did conclude that a major mistake, which could have prevented or reduced 9/11, was the lack of recognition of al Khattab's Chechen fighters as a "terrorist group" for purposes of FISA.

As far as I know, the several top FBI officials, who were the named recipients of the April 2001 intelligence memo entitled "Bin Laden/Ibn Khattab Threat Reporting" establishing how the two leaders were "heavily entwined," brushed it off by mostly denying they had read the April 2001 memo (which explains why the memo had to be covered up as they attempted to cover up other embarrassing info).

There are other theories, of course, as to why U.S. officials could not understand or grasp this "terrorist link." These involve the U.S.'s constant operating of "friendly terrorists," perhaps even al Khattab himself (and/or those

around him), on and off, opportunistically, for periods of time to go against "enemy" nations, i.e., the Soviet Union, and regimes we don't like.

## Shifting Lines

But officials can get confused when their former covert "assets" turn into enemies themselves. That's what has happened with al-Qaeda-linked jihadists in Libya and Syria, fighters who the U.S. government favoured in their efforts to topple the Qaddafi and Assad regimes, respectively. These extremists are prone to turn against their American arms suppliers and handlers once the common enemy is defeated.

The same MO exists with the U.S. and Israel currently collaborating with the Iranian MEK terrorists who have committed assassinations inside Iran. The U.S. government has recently shifted the MEK terrorists from the ranks of "bad" to "good" terrorists as part of a broader campaign to undermine the Iranian government. For details, see "Our (New) Terrorists, the MEK: Have We Seen This Movie Before?"

Giuliani and his ilk engage, behind the scenes, in all these insidious operations but then blithely turn to the cameras to spew their hypocritical propaganda

fueling the counterproductive "war on terror" for public consumption, when that serves their interests. Maybe this explains Giuliani's amazement (or feigned ignorance) on Friday morning after the discovery that the family of the alleged Boston Marathon bombers was from Chechnya.

My observations are not meant to be a direct comment about the motivations of the two Boston bombing suspects whose thinking remains unclear. It's still very premature and counterproductive to speculate on their motives.

But the lies and disinformation that go into the confusing and ever-morphing notion of "terrorism" result from the U.S. Military Industrial Complex (and its little brother, the "National Security Surveillance Complex") and their need to control the mainstream media's framing of the story.


So, a simplistic narrative/myth is put forth to sustain U.S. wars. From time to time, those details need to be reworked and some of the facts "forgotten" to maintain the storyline about bad terrorists "who hate the U.S." when, in reality, the U.S. Government may have nurtured the same forces as "freedom fighters" against various "enemies."

The bottom line is to never forget that "a poor man's war is terrorism while a rich man's terrorism is war" - and sometimes those lines cross for the purposes of big-power politics. War and terrorism seem to work in sync that way.

*The author is a retired FBI agent and former chief division counsel in Minneapolis. She's now a peace and justice activist and board member of the Women Against Military Madness. •*

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**AUUC Toronto Branch**

**May Day 2013**

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of All*

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**Manitoba Committee,  
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**Jobs, not Cuts!  
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disarmament**

**Jacob Penner -  
Norman Bethune Club  
Winnipeg, Manitoba**



# U of Manitoba SU bans Students Against Israeli Apartheid

*The following is from an Open Letter to the University of Manitoba Students' Union, from the Canadian Students' Coalition for Palestine, in response to the UMSU's decision to revoke the student club status of the U of M's branch of Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA), and to ban SAIA from operating in "UMSU spaces."*

... By denying students at UManitoba the right to initiate and operate SAIA, you are denying them the right to engage in criticism of the State of Israel, and this decision is a flagrant violation of students' Fundamental Freedoms of Expression and of Association as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms under sections 2(b) and 2(d).

We understand and indeed share your commitments and aspirations to protect the Human Rights of all students and to eradicate discrimination and harassment based on the Protected Grounds as defined in both Provincial and Federal Human Rights Legislation. However, we believe that your interpretation of such legislation sets a dangerous standard by conflating nationalist ideologies with individual national origins, and by equating criticism of state policies with harassment of persons on the basis of national origin. We urge you to reconsider these false equivalencies between concepts and principles, and to pay closer attention to the complexities and political

motivations of the arguments being drawn.

Firstly, we would like to respectfully point out that Zionism is not and should not be confused with an individual's national origin. Zionism is a nationalist ideology that pursues the establishment and endurance of a Jewish state or homeland on the traditional lands of the Palestinians. Like all ideologies, Zionism is often highly valued and held close to its adherents as an inextricable part of their individual identity. This does not mean, however, that it is equal to a person's or individual's national origin or Israeliness. Indeed, there are many Israeli citizens who are not Zionist, for example many of the 1,617,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel who are subject to multiple forms of discrimination despite citizenship because of the fact they are not Jewish. Palestinian citizens of Israel are excluded from the Zionist project. Also, there are many leftist anti-Zionist Jewish citizens of Israel who believe in a democratic Israeli state with equal rights for all of its citizens regardless of ethnicity or religion. Furthermore, there are many Jewish-identified Canadians in Manitoba and across Canada who stand proudly in solidarity with Palestinians and who define their religious and/or ethnic identity as

separate from and/or in opposition to the ideology of Zionism.

Secondly, criticism directed at any state, especially criticism that is firmly based in the principles and standards of International Law and Human Rights conventions, should never be conflated with harassment directed at individuals or groups of a particular national origin. We are especially concerned that this type of conflation will lead to a dangerous precedent where Academic Freedom is stifled and where

on the successful human rights campaign against South Africa during the days of South African Apartheid. According to the logic of UMSU's Motion, criticism of South African Apartheid would have been a form of discrimination against White Afrikaner Nationalists in South Africa. This is not such a far off or unlikely scenario; during the days of Apartheid in South Africa, White Afrikaners and their allies around the world made this exact argument. By this same logic Tamil student groups could be banned for criticizing the Human Rights violations of the Sri Lankan state, Tibetan student groups could be banned for criticizing the Human Rights violations of the Chinese state, and where even indigenous and Métis student groups could be banned for criticizing the Human Rights violations and reservation system of the Canadian state. We also emphasize the importance of a broad view of human rights, including the importance of acknowledging our

roles as settlers on the stolen indigenous land of Turtle Island, and a statement of solidarity with Indigenous peoples, as well as an acknowledgement of Canadian settler colonialism that is often read aloud at the beginning of our events.

Thirdly, we would also like to draw attention to the section of the Motion that criticizes Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) and the activities of SAIA in the promotion of this week on university campuses. We are extremely concerned that your Motion, without any evidence, claims that incidents of "violence and harassment" have occurred in universities across Canada. As organizers of various IAW events across the country we have not heard anything of these supposed incidents of "violence and harassment." Both SAIA and IAW maintain and enforce a very strict anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy. All forms

of hate-speech, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are banned from our official events and organizations. To ensure this, our moderators, speakers and marshals are all trained and updated throughout the week on how to maintain and enforce these policies. As a standard practice, a statement of anti-discrimination is read aloud prior to every IAW event. Thus, IAW does not, in any way, endorse "violence and harassment" of any group of students. The expression "Israeli Apartheid" may be viewed as controversial by UMSU; however, regardless of that view, it still stands that "controversy" is neither a form of, nor equivalent to harassment by any standard of comparison. Revealing the racist dynamics of Zionism is no more an act of hatred than criticizing the justifications of settler-colonialism implicit in Canadian nationalist ideologies...

We urge you to reconsider the Motion you have put forward and passed, as well as the logic and principles upon which it is purportedly based. We hope that you will be careful not to make connotations that can lead to the unjust silencing of students' voices. We urge you to rescind the decision and take a step forward in committing yourselves to the principles of Academic Freedom, as well as the Fundamental Freedoms of Expression and of Assembly guaranteed to all under the Canadian Charter.

*Respectfully, The Canadian Students' Coalition for Palestine, York University's SAIA, Western University SPHR (Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights), University of Windsor PSG, University of Calgary SPHR, University of Toronto Scarborough's TSJP, University of Toronto Mississauga SAIA, McMaster University SPHR, Wilfrid Laurier's L4P, University of Waterloo SPHR, George Brown SPHR, University of Guelph SPHR, University of British Columbia SPHR*

*NOTE: Dozens of other progressive and democratic organizations across Canada have also signed onto this statement. ●*



student clubs engaging in Human Rights activism will be targeted by increased administrative sanctions. The international solidarity movement with Palestinians, of which Students Against Israeli Apartheid is a part, is a peaceful movement modeled

## MAY DAY...

continued from p. 9

demonstration, so that in all countries and in all cities on one appointed day the toiling masses shall demand of the state authorities the legal reduction of the working day to eight hours, as well as the carrying out of other decisions of the Paris Congress. Since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon for May 1, 1890, by the American Federation of Labor at its Convention in St. Louis, December, 1888, this day is accepted for the international demonstration. The workers of the various countries must organize this demonstration according to conditions prevailing in each country."

...May Day, 1890, was celebrated in many European countries, and in the United States the Carpenters' Union and other building trades entered into a general strike for the 8-hour day. Despite the Exception Laws against the Socialists, workers in the various German industrial cities celebrated May Day, which was marked by fierce struggles with the police. Similarly in other European capitals demonstrations were held, although the authorities warned against them and the police tried to suppress them. In the United States, the Chicago and New York demonstrations were of particularly great significance. Many thousands paraded the streets in support of the 8-hour day demand; and the demonstrations were closed with great open air mass meetings at central points.

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\*

**Viva Cuba! Long Live the Cuban Revolution For All!**  
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marginalization  
& **Free the Cuban Five!**

Rainbow Sea of Red Open Collective with Cuba -SoR(..)C

\*

seaofredopencollective@gmail.com

All welcome to our Planning meetings & film-music events for  
World Pride 2014, Toronto-Havana LGBITQ /Trans & Ally worker  
Exchange - Meet 4<sup>th</sup> Tues monthly @ the 519 Church St CC, Toronto

.....



# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Hong Kong dockers vs. Li Ka-shing

Striking Hong Kong dock workers have camped outside the headquarters of Asia's richest man, Li Ka-shing. The workers are demanding a 20 percent pay raise, drawing attention to the city's high living costs and wealth gap.

About 150 workers were gathered alongside a dozen tents outside the Cheung Kong Building in the southern Chinese city's financial district, after marching there on April 17. Office workers turned their heads at banners reading: "Richest in Asia, meanest in the world" and "Pay up Li Ka-shing", with many contributing to a strike fund for the dockers.

Li's Hongkong International Terminals (HIT) has tried to distance itself from the dispute, saying the workers are not direct employees but were taken on by subcontractors. One of the contractors, Global Stevedoring Service, announced that it would close on June 30 after 130 of its 170 workers went on strike, saying it was unable to continue operating. But the workers appeared undaunted.

Union of Hong Kong Dock Workers leader Stanley Ho said he wanted to negotiate directly with HIT rather than the contractors. "If HIT comes to the negotiating table... the whole situation could be resolved tomorrow," he told a press conference, adding that Global workers were highly experienced and were likely to find work with the other contractors.

Li's vast empire includes supermarkets, pharmacies and housing. HIT, which operates 12 berths, is a unit of Li's Hutchison Whampoa, and controls about 70 percent of the city's port traffic. The strike is delaying some shipments for between one and eight days, and the port's productivity is down to as much as 70 percent.

## Attacks on migrants in Greece

Two men were arrested in Greece after foremen for strawberry growers allegedly shot and wounded 27 migrant labourers who were demanding to be paid. The migrants, mainly from Bangladesh, were hospitalised in the western port of Patras and other areas with gunshot wounds after being fired upon late on April 17 by three foremen for the growers in the village of Manolada, one of the main areas of strawberry production in Greece.

The migrants had been working in local farms without being paid for the past six months. Around 200 of them went to demand their money when they were fired upon.

The Communist-led PAME (All Workers Militant Front) union noted that the incident was only the latest in a long history of abuse of migrant workers in Greece. PAME said the workers had been fired upon with shotguns and pistols. It claimed 33 were hurt, while the police said 27 were wounded, one of

them critically.

"Growers and landowners have operated with cover from the government and justice for years, creating a hell-hole with slavery labour conditions," the union said. "Modern slaves in Manolada work in stifling conditions, pay rent to their exploiters and are lodged in sheds without water and electricity."

In 2008, Manolada was the scene of a rare strike by hundreds of migrant workers against near-



slavery conditions on the fields. The treatment of migrants in Greece has long been criticised by domestic and international rights groups.

## Call for new vote on World Cup

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has written to the international football federation (FIFA) to rerun the vote for the 2022 World Cup. The move comes after a series of broken promises and no sign of any change from FIFA or the Qatari Government to address the fact that hundreds of workers are dying and thousands more are injured in Qatar.

ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said more than a million migrant workers face continued exploitation, poverty wages and denial of the most basic rights.

"This is not a move we take lightly," said Burrow. "The 2022 World Cup was awarded years ahead of schedule, if a new venue is selected in the next two years there is still time for the infrastructure to be in place in time for the games. FIFA must act now - the longer the delay, the more workers will suffer and die. FIFA and Qatar have spoken frequently about need for reform, but the record is rife with broken promises. The Qataris have pledged to ensure that international labour standards are met, while construction workers die at a rate eight times that of other rich countries."

A leaked copy of a 'Workers Charter' written by the local organizing committee for the Games shows contradictions with Qatari law and fails to give workers any real rights or protection from slavery conditions. The 2022 World Cup has been plagued with controversy since it was awarded to Qatar in December 2010.

The global campaign is in 11 languages - Arabic, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Campaign

materials can be downloaded from [www.rerunthevote.org](http://www.rerunthevote.org)

## COSATU backs Swazi workers

The Congress of South African Trade Unions and its affiliates "are proud to be a decisive part of the ever-growing global movement in support of the oppressed and fighting masses of Swaziland", says a COSATU statement marking April 12, the 40th anniversary of the 1973 date that the Swazi king repealed the constitution of the country and assumed supreme personal power.

On April 12, a series of events inside Swaziland, in South Africa, and in several other countries called for greater international solidarity and support for the suffering people of Swaziland.

COSATU hailed the success of these events, adding "the time for unity, decisive action and intensified campaigning on the ground is now. We believe it set the time for the new era and the fact that Swaziland is turning a new political leaf as the resolve of the masses changes to embrace a new principled and undying spirit for real change. Patience is a crime when people are dying and delaying the liberation of the people is a permanent scar on the conscience of humanity, hence the new tempo set by the struggling masses."

## Portugal march hits poverty

Thousands of people rallied in the streets of Lisbon on April 13 to protest rising poverty resulting from the government's belt-tightening measures. The protest was the culmination of an anti-poverty march was organised by Portugal's leading union, the CGTP, and capped a week of protest activities throughout the eurozone country.

"Unemployment in Portugal is a national disgrace" and "a minimum wage increase is a necessity" protesters chanted. They also called for the resignation of the government whose pledges to straighten out Portugal's finances in return for a 78-billion-euro (\$102 billion) bailout have been deeply unpopular.

Spurred by cutbacks in public spending, unemployment soared in the fourth quarter of last year to 16.9 percent. The economy contracted by 3.2 percent in 2012. In early April, the constitutional court ruled that several measures in the 2013 budget were unlawful, which will make it difficult for the government to reduce the public sector deficit to 5.5 percent of gross domestic product, a condition for European Union and International Monetary Fund bailout funds.

The court rebuff means that the government needs to find another 1.3 billion euros elsewhere to plug the gap. Eurozone finance ministers have given Portugal an extra seven years to repay its loans, but the deal implies deep cuts in healthcare services, social

security and education. The new austerity measures were presented to Portugal's troika of international lenders: the EU, the IMF and the European Central Bank, on April 22.

## Greek workers protest job cuts

Hundreds of Greek public sector workers demonstrated in Athens on April 17 against plans by the government to axe thousands of state jobs this year to meet austerity goals on the orders of international lenders.

Archaeologists, hospital workers and other public staff gathered outside the civil administration ministry which is planning the layoffs, which the government claims will target "problem workers". Under the Greek Constitution, it is difficult to fire public sector workers, but Prime Minister Antonis Samaras said that doesn't apply to the mergers and consolidations of agencies.

Hospital workers, who had earlier protested outside the health ministry, carried a banner calling Greece's international bailout deal "harmful to your health". The health sector has faced many difficulties since the government began austerity cuts in 2010. There have been supply and drug shortages in hospitals, cuts to staff wages, overtime pay, and jobs, resulting in understaffing, and hospitals have been shut down. Hospitals have been flooded with new unemployed people who have lost their health care insurance and cannot pay for health care.

"What I am afraid of is the tsunami of poor and homeless

people who flood the hospital clinics every night, and you don't have enough time to treat them," said nurse Zoe Florou. "And most of all, they don't have free medical care... It is unacceptable and I cannot accept the idea that a person cannot have free medical care. Don't they understand that this is an issue of human survival?"

The President of the Greek Hospital Workers Federation, Stavros Koutsoubelis, said that surgeries had to be cancelled. "We cannot operate, because the hospitals don't have money, they don't have supplies. Suppliers are not stocking hospitals any more. It is a vicious circle that we are fighting if we try and surpass the crisis by using state funds to support the health system," Koutsoubelis said.

## General strike at Israeli airlines

According to the Israeli Histadrut labour federation, all Israeli airlines were hit by a general walkout on April 21. The strike is over the impending decision by the country's new coalition government to impose an "Open Skies" agreement which threatens the livelihood of thousands of Israeli working families.

The unions fear that the Israeli-owned airlines will suffer as giant multinational carriers will drive them out of business. According the head of the Histadrut's trade union department, the strike therefore has an 'existential' character. The workers' councils in all three Israeli airlines support the decision to strike.

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

## Send me information on the Communist Party of Canada



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

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see MILLIONAIRES, p. 10

# Racism against Bejay, Cuba and the U.S.

By Manuel E. Yepe,  
www.walterlippmann.com/  
docs3768.html, a CubaNews  
translation, translated by  
Walter Lippmann

The uproar started by Republican Congress members of Cuban origin Marco Rubio and Ileana Ros-Lethinen around the recent trip to Cuba of Afro-American superstars Beyoncé and Jay-Z has shed light on issues that go far beyond the hostilities between the two sides of the Florida Strait.

Both Senator Rubio and Representative Ros-Lethinen are political names in the state of Florida very closely linked to the actions, and especially to the funds that for decades Washington has been allotted to fight the Cuban Revolution. They are both prominent members of what in Cuba is known as the counter-revolutionary Miami mafia, and in Florida is defined as the anti-Cuban hate industry.

The very popular couple formed by rapper Shawn Carter (stage name Jay-Z) and pop singer Beyoncé Knowles-Carter is professionally known as "Bejay".

They have been married for five years and decided to celebrate their anniversary in Cuba taking advantage of the discreet openings in the travel ban (laws which forbid travel to Cuba) recently authorized by President Barack Obama's administration. These allow travel for certain categories of United States citizens with special approval by Washington.

The couple could make the trip to "the forbidden island" with their mothers and other relatives and

aides. To do so they had to comply with all the restrictions Washington imposes on their citizens who travel to Cuba. The organizers of the Bejay trip had to submit to the Treasury's Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) a detailed itinerary before they were granted the license for the visit.

The laws and regulations of the blockade to Cuba forbid Americans to travel to Cuba, but during the administration of Bill Clinton and for certain categories of persons some were approved: trips for religious, humanitarian and educational purposes. President Bush abolished this, but Barack Obama approved them again as part of his "people-to-people" policy whose explicit aim is that visitors promote "democracy" among Cubans (democracy understood as a synonym for capitalism by Washington).

Cuba has always accepted the challenge implied in this purpose which attempts to challenge its national sovereignty. This is because, in practice, it offers Cubans the opportunity to show visitors the falsehoods of the campaign that the U.S. government and the media have waged against Cuba for more than half a century.

The distance between the manipulations of the campaign and the truth is of such magnitude that "generally" on the first contact with reality, visitors open up to an understanding of the reasons that underpinned the historical popular accomplishment that is the Cuban Revolution, and the unreasonableness of the policy of hostility of their government against the island.

Bejay dedicated their full time in Cuba to visiting the Instituto Superior de Arte [University of the Arts], attending the performances of a famous children theatre company, and a modern dance ensemble among other cultural and educational activities; abstaining from visiting the many beaches and recreation centers for tourism that millions of national and foreign tourists enjoy in Cuba. Meanwhile, in the U.S., Senator Marco Rubio and Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen tried to provoke a scandal. They managed to get many American and world media to publish the lie that Beyoncé and Jay-Z had travelled to Cuba illegally (or without the proper license).

This was an attempt to reverse Obama's decisions which have brought a certain relaxation to the prohibition of travelling to Cuba which affected Americans, and at the same time depicted Obama as a defender of the Cuban government; something that he certainly is not.

With this they also suggested that Obama was giving privileged treatment to Afro-Americans and thus win support among non-Black Americans for their anti-Cuban crusade, accusing Bejay and their Black friends and relatives of breaking the U.S. law by travelling to Cuba.

Rubio and Ros-Lethinen have

never moved a finger in favour of the dark skin of the Latinos who reside in the United States, and much less for Black Americans. As adherents of capitalism, they make use of racism and sexism to keep peoples divided and unable to join together against the unfair order that oppresses them.

April 2013. •



**CUBAN-CANADIAN  
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION  
(Vancouver)**

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## We will not become the slaves of the 21st Century!

**May Day 2013 message from the World Federation of Trade Unions**

The World Federation of Trade Unions appeals to all the trade union organizations in the world to organize on the occasion of May Day 2013 rallies and activities in all countries, in all continents, honouring the International Workers' Day and the martyrs of the working class. The WFTU proposes, based on its resolution at its Presidential Council Meeting on March 7-8, 2013 in Lima, Peru, the slogan: "CHICAGO SHOWED US THE WAY", to be used next to the respective slogans of each union organization.

The international trade union movement bears great responsibility to protect and defend the International Workers Day from the efforts of capitalist governments, employers, various institutions and non governmental organizations to vanquish this day or completely alter its meaning.

May Day is for the international working class a symbol of the irreplaceable role that the workers hold in the society and the production, of the important and the victorious achievements of the class struggles historically, of the fact that all the rights are the fruit of bloody struggles. Nothing was handed over to the working people.

The May Day is a DAY OF MEMORY AND TRIBUTE to the martyrs of the working class who sacrificed themselves in the crucial

and decisive strikes of the American workers in Chicago (1886) demanding 8 hours of work, 8 hours of recreation, 8 hours of rest, as well as the struggles for the working hours in many countries all over the world before and after the Chicago strikes, throughout the history of the class struggle until today. We pay tribute to the martyrs of the working class who were killed, tortured, imprisoned and were forcibly disappeared by the anti-popular and anti-labor governments of the capital in all continents.

May Day is a LESSON FOR THE NEW GENERATIONS that includes the principles of the working class such as proletarian internationalism, class unity, the irreplaceable value of the decisive struggles with class-orientation.

Most of all, the May Day is a DAY OF STRUGGLE where the International Working Class meets in the streets of the fight for the contemporary labour and social rights. For the right to less working hours with dignified salaries which was realistic in the 1880's and cannot be unrealistic in the technological progress of the 21st century!

Nowadays, while capitalism being in its deep crisis exposes in all the spectrum its barbaric, brutal and ruthless face confiscating any ounce of right from the working

class and the popular strata; Nowadays that the competition of the monopolies creates more battlefields and new imperialist interventions;

Nowadays that the state violence, repression of social and labour struggles and the violation of the trade union freedom escalate internationally let's move:

\* Chicago showed the way: NO to the contemporary capitalist slavery

\* We fight for a world without exploitation

\* On May Day, the WFTU expresses its internationalist solidarity with the people of Cuba, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Mali, Colombia, Venezuela etc.

THE WFTU SECRETARIAT,  
Athens, Greece, April 16th, 2013,  
www.wftu.org •

**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  
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**The Fifth of the Month to Free the Five**

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

E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov  
On the web: http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact  
Phone 1-202-456-1111 Fax 1-202-456-2461  
Telegram: President Barack Obama, The White House,  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 2500, USA

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

**May 1st  
greetings from  
Pyongyang!**

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ASSOCIATION**

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**GTA West Club, CPC**

**Extends its Solidarity  
to Working People  
On May Day**

**Salute to  
workers  
on May  
Day 2013!**

**Nanaimo  
Club CPC**



## Documenting the decline and fall of the American aristocracy

**The Queen of Versailles, 2012, directed by Lauren Greenfield, review for PV by Glen Truax.**

Dear Lenin in heaven, this was difficult to watch.

It won't be too brutal for fans of the kind of trophy wife showcases that Bravo and VH1 pump out with regularity (see *Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*, *New York, Orange County*, *Vancouver*, etc). Reality shows such as this traffic in the concept of spoiled women blithely going through life without a shred of self-consciousness. They make fools of themselves, but they're too self-deluded to notice, and the audience shares a little shameful-joy at the sight of rich idiots behaving stupidly. If you think there's a bit of class warfare involved, you may be on to something. The overwhelming majority of the audience aren't within hailing distance of the incomes enjoyed

by these housewives, and very few people actually look up to them with reverence.

*The Queen of Versailles* is like a more self-aware, intelligent, feature length version of these shows. It tells the tale of Don Siegel, one-time king of the timeshare business, his wife, Jacqueline, and their massive brood of children. Siegel hooked on to the timeshare business in the early 80s, converting his fruit farm into a destination of sorts, and then built on that, creating monstrosities that would make Donald Trump blush. Along the way, he married three women, fathered a bunch of children, helped get George W. Bush elected in 2000 (in ways that he admits weren't entirely legal), and finally married Miss Florida, Jacqueline.

The Siegel clan flourished, and at the top of their game decided to build the largest house in America, modelled after the


Palace of Versailles. It was an act so rich in hubris and arrogance that it was almost doomed to fail. And fail it did.

The same moron that Siegel helped turn into a president was among those responsible for one of the worst financial disasters in U.S. history in 2008, with banks failing and the real estate speculation market imploding. Siegel's company was hit badly, and everything they took for granted disappeared. The pseudo-Versailles lies in partially constructed ruins, and no one is in the mood to buy it.

Siegel comes off as an obvious villain in this documentary, so the heart of the film falls into the hands of Jacqueline. She isn't stupid, and she is a caring mother (although the messy part of actual mothering is left to the help). She is probably more clueless than callous, which makes her interactions with real people more amusing. Watching her give up the private jet and begin taking commercial flights is a sight to behold.

Jacqueline isn't without her creepy side: her dead dogs are stuffed and placed in glass cases throughout their mansion. Her living dogs are not housebroken, defecating throughout the manse, only one of many signs of internal decay.


The comparisons between Marie Antoinette and Jacqueline are too obvious to mention, but suffice to say that this film accurately documents the decline and fall of American aristocracy. There are no angry mobs of peasants demanding Don Siegel's blood, but it's clear that total arrogantomania has a clear price to pay. This is but one story of the bleak economic landscape of America, and it's a grim picture that is not going to lighten up anytime soon. ●



**La Trova Nuestra**  
Friday, May 31, 8:00 pm

**"La Peña Nuestra"**  
Centre for Socialist Education, Vancouver  
706 Clark Drive (Clark and Georgia st)  
\$10 Entry

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



**IDEAS OF  
REVOLUTION**

**2013 People's Voice Calendar**

The People's Voice Calendar for 2013 - "Ideas of Revolution" - is now on sale. Dedicated to the struggles of the international working class for peace, liberation, equality and socialism, this year's calendar features quotations by a wide range of revolutionaries, artists, and writers, such as Nelson Mandela, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, Tim Buck, Soong Ching Ling, Germaine Greer, Evo Morales, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Claudia Jones, Fidel Castro, Jose Saramago, and Frida Kahlo. The 14-month calendar (Jan. 2013-Feb. 2014) also includes notable dates from the history of the people's movements, and statutory holidays and celebrations for the year.

"Ideas of Revolution" can be ordered by mail for \$10 in Canada, or \$15 in the United States (price includes mailing costs). Send a cheque to People's Voice, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1. For information on bulk orders of five or more calendars, contact our Vancouver Editorial Office: <pvvoice@telus.net>, tel. 604-255-2041.

Residents of Ontario can order directly from the Ontario Bureau of People's Voice, 290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, M4K 1N6, ph. 416-469-2446. The Calendar will be on sale at our Manitoba Bureau (387 Selkirk Ave., Winnipeg), and our Quebec Bureau (5359 Ave. du Parc, Montreal).



## MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

### The indomitable Anne Feeney

Several years ago Music Notes carried a story about U.S. labour singer Anne Feeney, who'd just been diagnosed with lung cancer. The odds were against her survival, but medical statistics were unable to factor in the Pittsburgh native's indomitable fighting spirit. While illness has reduced her ability to perform, this summer Feeney will be singing with the Summer of Solidarity Tour (a roving band of U.S. musicians out to support striking workers and union organizing drives), and the "Almanac Singers Tour" (in the footsteps of that historic band's 1941 tour). She'll also appear at the Northern Lights Festival Boreal in Sudbury. In 2010 Feeney headlined a Detroit solidarity concert that raised \$2500 for striking Sudbury miners of USW Local 6500. If you don't know Feeney's work her popular song "War on the Workers" is a great place to start. Look it up on YouTube. Then buy an album or make a PayPal donation to help make up for the income she's lost to illness. For more info: <http://annefeeney.com/>.

### Progressive choirs in the U.K.

Canadian choirs with a radical-progressive orientation might consider establishing links with their counterparts in the U.K. Take Raised Voices for example, a socialist choir based in north London. It sings for peace, justice, environmental sustainability, and against capitalism, racism and sexism. Raised Voices also participates in U.K. campaigns against Canada's tar sands - something that clearly invites a response from our side of the pond. A spokesperson recently told Music Notes that they are interested in sharing songs with Canadian choirs. As my contribution, I suggested David Francey's contemporary classic "Torn Screen Door." To send a song suggestion and view a video of Raised Voices at a recent action against healthcare cuts visit [www.raised-voices.org.uk](http://www.raised-voices.org.uk). For a list of radical choirs in the U.K. visit the Workers' Music Association, a venerable cultural organization with a wealth of resources: [www.wmamusic.org.uk/](http://www.wmamusic.org.uk/).

### Local 1000 at Folk Alliance 2013

A highlight of the Folk Alliance International (FAI) conference in Toronto last February was a concert presented by American Federation of Musicians Local 1000. The AFM represents many musicians in the USA and Canada, but Local 1000, founded in 1996, is unique. Unlike other AFM chapters, Local 1000 (a.k.a. the North American Travelling Musicians Union) is not based upon geography. The vast majority of its members are, apparently, progressive-minded activist folk musicians. The achievements of Local 1000 were enumerated at the FAI convention by President Tret Fure. Most notable are pensions and health insurance - benefits that labour activist musicians have always dreamed about. Local 1000's convention showcase, ably hosted by Canadian VP and Toronto roots music luminary Ken Whiteley, demonstrated the spirit, talent and commitment of dozens of its members. If you're a progressive musician why not consider joining? For info: [www.local1000.com](http://www.local1000.com).

### A gala tribute to Marcelo Puente

Toronto's Lula Lounge was packed on March 17th as dozens of musicians from the city's Latin American community and beyond paid homage to Marcelo Puente, one of the outstanding exponents of the "nueva cancion" tradition in this (or any) country. Marcelo Puente came to Toronto in the aftermath of the coup in Chile in 1973, bringing his songs and poetry. In the late seventies he co-founded the popular Chilean-Greek band Los Companeros, a group of anti-fascist exiles who discovered a common musical language, and who have, after a period of inactivity, returned to the bandstand. Earlier this year Puente suffered a career-threatening injury. Long-time bandmate and friend Juan Opitz quickly rose to the occasion and organized the well-earned tribute at the popular nightclub, with old musical friends like Proyecto Altiplano, El Fernan, Ismael Duran, Nancy White and Heather Chetwynd. The homage concluded with an emotional performance by Los Companeros, with Puente singing his popular song of exile "Mis Amigos del Bar." Check out YouTube for concert clips. For more info: <http://companeros-group-international.com/>.

### Radical street bands to meet in Toronto

Radical street bands from across North America will gather in Toronto Aug. 23-25 for BAM! 2013 (Bands Agitate & Mobilize Convergence). Invited bands from Milwaukee, Seattle, Montreal, Minneapolis, New York, Oakland and elsewhere are active in anti-capitalist community struggles. The host band is Toronto's Rhythms of Resistance, itself part of an international movement of street bands, and also a militant and highly-respected presence at local mobilizations. Organizers are fundraising to meet travel expenses and other costs, expected to be in the range of \$25,000. Individuals and organizations interested in helping out can make cheques payable to Rhythms of Resistance Toronto (with BAM! 2013 in the notes line) and send them to Rhythms of Resistance, c/o Katelyn Blascik, 1269 Davenport Rd., Toronto, ON M6H 2H2. For more info: <http://rortoronto.wordpress.com/>.

## Toronto's 28th Annual Mayworks Festival



**NO**  
to the  
austerity  
agenda

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

From [mayworks.ca](http://mayworks.ca), Toronto

Toronto's Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts is a multi-disciplinary arts festival that celebrates working class culture. Founded in 1986, the Festival was built on the premise that workers and artists share a common struggle for decent wages, healthy working conditions and a living culture.

The 2013 festival program committee's goal was to include works that reflect solidarity with local, national, and international campaigns such as the Idle No More movement, affordable housing, opposition to austerity measures, migrant rights, amongst others.

Some events organized in partnership include: an evening of spoken word poetry with the support of Public Service Alliance of Canada; a film night with the Canadian Labour International Film Festival which includes two documentaries that speak to the effects of increasing economic and job insecurity, layoffs, and inadequate social assistance on communities; and a tribute concert in honour of Arlene Mantle's (1939-2012) lifelong contribution to the labour movement in collaboration with her family and friends.

We are proud to host a number of forums and workshops such as a Theatre of the Oppressed workshop led by Ponni Arasu.

In solidarity with the Idle No More movement, Anishnawbekwe curator, writer, and media artist Wanda Nanibush is leading an Idle No More teach-in at the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre.

Details at <http://mayworks.ca>

## What's Left

### Nanaimo, BC

**90th Birthday Celebration**, for Grace Stevens and Grace Tickson, Sat., May 18, Coast Bastion Hotel, call 250-741-7411 for details.

### Burnaby, BC

**Pancake Breakfast**, 10 am, Sunday, May 12, proceeds to PV Drive, new location: Chilean Co-op, 3390 School Ave., Vancouver. Speaker: Merli Vanegas (Venezuelan Consul) at 11 am, last call for pancakes 12 noon. \$12 adults, \$8 under 12. Sponsored by Burnaby Club CPC, 604-294-6775.

### Vancouver, BC

**Left Film Night**, Sundays, April 28 & May 26, 7 pm, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark, call 604-2455-2041 for details.

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

### White Rock, BC

**Social Justice Film Festival, ReGENERATION**, 7 pm, May 31, at First United, 15385 Semiahmoo, White Rock Social Justice Film Society.

### Edmonton, AB

**May Day March and Rally**, starts 6 pm, Wed., May 1, from U of A Corbett Hall.

### Winnipeg, MB

**AUUC Spring Concert**, Ukrainian Labour Temple, 591 Pritchard Ave., Sunday, May 5, 2 pm, \$10, 589-4397.

**Victor Jara: The right to live in peace**, film at Cinamateque, 100 Arthur St., Sun., May 5, 7 pm, tickets \$8-9, Chile 40 Coalition and Mayworks, ph. Kristy 925-3456 ext. 106.

**Mayworks Festival of Labour & the Arts**, visit [mayworks.org](http://mayworks.org) for calendar of events.

**Marxism Course**, Contact Communist Party of Canada Manitoba Committee to join, 586-7824 or [cpc-mb@changetheworldmb.ca](mailto:cpc-mb@changetheworldmb.ca).

### Toronto, ON

**May Day Celebration**, political and cultural event, Sunday, April 28, Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St., doors 4:30 pm, program starts 5 pm, speakers, live music, poetry & dance, food & refreshments. Free, organized by United May Day Committee.

**May Day of Action**, Wed., May 1, 5:30, Nathan Phillips Square.

**Mayworks Festival of Working People & the Arts**, May 1-15, for program details visit <http://mayworks.ca>.

### Hamilton, ON

**May Day Rally & BBQ**, Local 1005 USWA, Wed., May 1st, 3:30 pm, assemble 350 Kenilworth Ave North.

Take your mom  
out for breakfast!

**Sunday, May 12**

ANNUAL  
**PANCAKE  
BREAKFAST**

**10 a.m.**  
(last call for pancakes - noon)

**\$12.00 (kids under 12 \$8.00)**

Special guest speaker 11 a.m.:  
**Venezuelan Consul General  
Merli Vanegas**  
"Venezuela after Chavez"

**\*\*Note new location:**  
Chilean Co-op  
common building  
3390 School Ave., Van.  
(near Kingsway and Tyne)

Celebrating  
**MAY  
DAY  
2013**

Build a Common Front  
Against Austerity & War

**Political & Cultural Evening**  
**Sunday, April 28th**

Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil Street, Toronto

Doors open 4:30 pm - Program begins at 5:00 pm

Speakers | Live Music, Poetry & Dance | Food & Refreshments

Free Admission

Organized by the United May Day Committee

Come to  
the Rally  
Wednesday  
May 1st

**The Young  
Communist League  
of Hamilton sends  
their warmest  
wishes to all  
Working and  
Oppressed peoples  
on this May Day!**

**The youth are  
the future. The  
future is  
socialism!"**

## People's Voice deadlines

May 16-31 issue: Thursday, May 9 (note change)  
June 1-15 issue: Thursday, May 23

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

**In solidarity with all people fighting  
the capitalist global austerity agenda.  
Venceremos!**

**May Day Greetings**  
Rose Luxemburg Club, Ottawa

## People's Voice Victory Banquet

**Celebrate our first 20 years of publication!**

**GUEST SPEAKER: Liz Payne**, Communist Party of Britain national women's organizer, on the impact of the UK Conservative government's neoliberal policies against women

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

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

For tickets and information, call People's Voice, 604-255-2041  
email <[newlabourpress1@gmail.com](mailto:newlabourpress1@gmail.com)>

# Toxic cloud could sicken millions in Chicago

**By John Wojcik & Mark Gruenberg.** *The day after this article appeared on the People's World website, a massive explosion at a Texas fertilizer plant killed dozens of people.*

CHICAGO - A rapidly spreading toxic cloud of hydrofluoric acid fumes from an accident at two oil refineries in Lemont and Channahon, Ill., could kill thousands and sicken millions in the Windy City, says a leading union authority on worker and public safety.

The threat to Chicago and other areas around the country is so great, said Gary Beevers, who runs the United Steelworkers' sector representing oil refinery workers, that the result would be equivalent to or worse than what happened in Bhopal, India in 1984.

In that disaster, considered the worst industrial disaster in history, as many as 8,000 - 16,000 died and 750,000 or more living in the shantytowns surrounding the plant fell ill under a toxic gas cloud.

The United Steelworkers union released a report on April 16 as part of a campaign to end the use of hydrofluoric acid in U.S.

refineries because, in addition to producing severe chemical burns, the chemical can enter the bloodstream and irreparably damage the heart and skeleton. Hydrofluoric acid can travel in a large cloud for 25 miles or even more from the point of a release. If released into the atmosphere it forms a dense vapour cloud that hovers close to the ground, spreading sickness and death as it billows outward from the source.

Beevers issued his warning at the Good Jobs Green Jobs conference in Washington. The conference was called by the Blue-Green alliance, a coalition of unions and environmental groups.

Beevers says that a U.S. version of Bhopal is possible in more than just the Chicago area. Some of the other dangerous plants cited in the report, in addition to the ones in Illinois, include the St. Paul Park Marathon Oil plant near the Twin Cities, three refineries along the Delaware River near Philadelphia, a Marathon refinery in Canton, Ohio, four different refineries in New Orleans and two in Texas City, Texas.

When the populations of all the threatened areas are added up it comes to 26.1 million at risk

nationwide.

There appears to be good reasons to compare the impending danger Americans face to what happened in Bhopal.

Hydrofluoric acid is used in refining gasoline in a process called "alkylation," to make the fuel burn more cleanly. It is highly toxic, however, and any accidental release can cause severe burns, damage eyes, damaged skin and respiratory problems. Wind-blown clouds of hydrofluoric acid quickly spread over wide areas, accounting for the high numbers of people at risk in any accidental release.

So far, we've been "lucky," Beevers admits. But "luck" is relative because the six hydrofluoric acid releases that did happen between 2004-12 hospitalized or severely injured seven workers, four with severe burns.

And a release in 1987 sent 900 people to the hospital in Marathon City, Texas, with 50 square blocks having to be evacuated.

At all seven accidents winds were minimal or non-existent. Higher winds would have caused exponential increases in casualties, experts say.

Beevers is concerned about the



refusal of oil companies to even admit that there is a problem. He is frustrated, he says, because oil refineries are on the top of the list when it comes to threatening the health of both their own workers and residents of communities surrounding the refineries.

The refineries he cites are 60 years old or even older. "Their hydrofluoric acid tanks and pipes are aging and some of them leak. And they are chronically understaffed and short of workers who are trained to find and stop such leaks before they spread," Beevers said.

To compile the report safety experts from inside and outside the USW examined the safety of USW-represented refineries using hydrofluoric acid to refine fuel by reviewing data from OSHA, the U.S. Chemical Safety Board and the industry. Their aim was to see how well these refineries were managing the risk of a hydrofluoric acid release.

At three quarters of the refineries surveyed, a total of 131 hydrofluoric acid-related incidents or near misses had occurred the previous three years. Sixteen sites that reported their most serious events said workers either were or could have been injured, and half said the events caused injuries to people in the community.

More than half of the site survey teams reported that 26 out of 332 safety systems were less than very effective in managing the integrity of the hydrofluoric acid alkylation process.

The study cites alternatives to using hydrofluoric acid and suggests ways existing alkylation units can be made safer. It also says the government could help the process by doing intensive inspections of hydrofluoric acid alkylation units.

"The industry has the technology and expertise and money to eliminate HF alkylation entirely," said Beevers. "It lacks only the will, and if it cannot find the will voluntarily, it must be forced by government action."

Asked why oil companies would resist solving the problem, Beevers says it has to do more with power than greed.

"The refiners don't want anyone," he said in his Texas drawl, "Least of all a little ol' union like us telling them what to do."

The only other thing that would force companies to act, Beevers said, would be a huge and fatal accident like the one in Bhopal.

"But we don't want that," he said. "The point of our report is to publicize the threat before it happens." ●

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08/13



Association of Greek-Canadian  
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(1941-1945)

290 Danforth Avenue,  
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*We send Greetings to all progressive  
people on this May Day 2013*

## MAY DAY GREETINGS!

*To People's Voice readers and  
to working people everywhere!*

**Belogiannis Club CPC**