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# people's VOICE



**DEFEAT Bill C-51**  
pages 3 & 9

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# MAY DAY

**Solidarity and struggle against austerity!**  
- see page 8 -



Demonstrators demand higher wages for fast-food workers in Tokyo's Shibuya shopping district.

## Fast food workers mpunt a global campaign for justice

"Fast food" chains dominate much of the global culinary landscape, but the industry faces a growing rebellion from their underpaid and over-exploited employees...

*Story on page 7*

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### Alberta election

Voters go to the polls in Alberta on May 5. For the first time in many years, the ruling Conservatives face serious challenges on both the left and right, and the Communist Party is also on the ballot.

## INSIDE

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### Victory over fascism

While most of the world celebrates the 70th anniversary of the victory over Hitler fascism, the Harper Tories seem to have other priorities.

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### Global labour news

Our regular column on reports from the front lines of class struggles across the planet, including Swaziland, Mexico, Costa Rica, Norway, Ukraine, Nigeria, Western Sahara, Kenya, and Bangladesh.



## Durham teachers strike against Liberal wage freeze and education cuts

By Liz Rowley, Toronto

Two thousand secondary school teachers in Durham were out on picket lines April 20, the first of many bargaining units to say NO to austerity in Ontario classrooms. OSSTF members are bargaining for the first time with both the provincial government and the local School Board. In previous

negotiations the province was the invisible partner and the banker, after School Boards had been stripped of their taxing powers and then chronically underfunded by the same government.

The province now sits at the bargaining table, but the purse strings are even tighter, with \$800 million in education cuts slated over the next four years, and a

legislated wage freeze imposed across the public sector.

The province is also trying to force the closure and sale of 600 public schools, most located on prime real estate, as part of its privatization agenda. This is supposed to reduce costs and generate income for School Boards, but will instead result in over-crowding, bussing, reduction

in programming, and layoffs.

Negotiations have been crippled by employer demands for concessions and roll-backs, including demands to remove the cap on class size. This would directly affect the quality of education, and is a huge issue for students, parents, teachers and educational workers. Teachers have clearly indicated that they

will not bargain concessions on their wages and working conditions, or on the quality of education for students.

Durham secondary teachers are the first to strike among almost 200,000 education sector workers currently in bargaining. Seven Districts will in a position to strike by the end of April, including Thunder Bay, Peel, Rainbow, Ottawa-Carleton, Halton, Waterloo, and Durham.

OSSTF President Paul Elliott told media April 20, "Unless we begin to see school boards take this process seriously, unless we see positive movement at those bargaining tables and the removal of any strips those boards are pursuing, and unless we see some real improvements, our members will make good on their commitment to job action."

The Wynne government will have to decide quickly whether it wants to conclude agreements in the education sector this spring, or whether it wants a repeat of 2012, which saw the resignation of then Premier Dalton McGuinty after massive province wide struggles protesting Bill 115.

The public is already deeply unhappy with school and hospital closures around the province, both mandated by Queen's Park. The Premier is taking a big risk assuming the public will support deficit reduction and austerity over schools and hospitals. Does she really want to roll the dice? The next few weeks will tell. ●

## Anti-Poverty Summit concludes without call to action

PV Ontario Bureau

TORONTO – A much hyped province-wide Anti-Poverty Assembly organized by the Ontario Common Front and the Ontario Federation of Labour started with a bang April 17 and ended with a whimper just a day later.

Themed "Solidarity Against Inequality," the conference meant more information sharing, not more action, despite the website promoting "the Assembly is designed with one primary purpose: to develop a broad and comprehensive plan for eliminating poverty in Ontario".

Since the policy pieces required to eliminate poverty are well known (higher minimum wage; higher pensions and social assistance rates; affordable childcare, housing and post-secondary education), most activists assumed this meant "a broad and comprehensive ACTION plan".

The star-studded list of speakers

included Jessica Davis (Fight for \$15 Chicago), Rick Ross (Fight for \$15 Seattle), Crystal Sinclair (Idle No More), Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois (Quebec student leader), Linda McQuaig (journalist and author), John Clarke (OCAP), Grace-Edward Galabuzi (Ryerson University professor) and Melissa Addison-Webster (disability activist), all of whom spoke eloquently about the depth and urgency of the crisis, and the need for united action.

Many delegates waited patiently to hear the "Call to Action" listed as the last item on the agenda. Instead, they were told they could go home early, while organizers would get back to them after developing a plan from studying workshop notes. Trade union leaders had already left.

With summer and a crucial federal election just weeks away, it seems unlikely that a mass independent political action campaign will be born out of this conference. More likely is a

campaign to mobilize support for the NDP in vote-rich Ontario, where the election could be won or lost. But orienting solely on building an electoral machine is the wrong direction to go.

A better strategy would have been to utilize the energy and clarity that this roster of mighty speakers delivered to the three to four hundred committed delegates, to build a mass campaign for a \$15 minimum wage, for good jobs and pensions, for social assistance rates above the poverty line, for affordable childcare and housing, for accessible post-secondary education, for peace and an end to austerity and war. Such a campaign would have helped set the stage for labour and its allies to go on the offensive, and to put the Tories and Liberals and their corporate backers on the defensive. Ontario voters would have been much more aware of the real political and economic alternatives to austerity.

Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois,

Crystal Sinclair, Jessica Davis, Rick Ross, and John Clarke all talked about building a movement that could achieve profound political and economic change, a movement that also changes the way people think about themselves and their capacity to win.

Sadly, organizers didn't seem to get that message, and missed an opportunity to launch a united fight by labour and its allies against poverty and austerity in Ontario.

They also didn't seem to get the early endorsements of the event by the Communist Party (Ontario) and the Young Communist League, which were never included in the list of endorsing organizations despite several phone calls and the fact the CPC (Ontario) is a founding member of the Common Front. Is this also about the coming election? ●

### A great two weeks - over \$25,000 raised to date

The past two weeks have seen another \$6500 raised towards our 2015 Press Fund Drive target, taking us to a grand total of \$25,125, just over 50 percent. We have received \$9078 from British Columbia (45.3%), \$2600 from Alberta, \$385 from Saskatchewan (65%), \$400 from Manitoba (20%), \$11,755 from Ontario (53.3%), \$235 from Quebec (47%), \$400 from Nova Scotia, \$25 from Newfoundland & Labrador, and a welcome gift of \$250 from a friend in the USA.

That's the good news. On the other hand, we still have nearly \$25,000 left to raise this year. A large chunk of that will come from

our usual series of spring and summer fundraisers in several provinces, which reliably bring in about \$8000; see below for some details. That means we need another \$17,000 from our readers, so if you have not sent in a donation, we hope to hear from you soon!

Since our previous report, PV Editor Kimball Cariou and CPC Central Organizer Johan Boyden spoke at forums on Bill C-51 in Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver and Surrey. We received some generous contributions at these events, from readers who support our historic tradition of exercising free speech to fight for working class rights, democracy, social justice, peace

and socialism. Many thanks to all!

Our 23rd annual Victory Banquet is on Saturday, May 2, 6 pm, at the Victoria Drive Community Hall, 2026 E. 43 Ave. in Vancouver. This year's keynote speaker will be Micheal Vonn, policy director of the BC Civil Liberties Association, a prominent public spokesperson for the BCCLA in the struggle for free speech. Don't miss this chance to hear her speak. Tickets are \$20 (students/unemployed \$12) from the PV office. The annual Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast organized by the Burnaby Club CPC is on Sunday, May 10, this year at the Chilean Co-op, 3390 School Ave. in Vancouver; see page 11 for details of both events, or phone 604-255-2041.

As promised, this year's May Day issue features greetings from dozens of trade unions, solidarity movements, CPC clubs and other groups. These greetings total over \$3000, and they all count towards our Fund Drive totals. Our Editorial Board hopes that this issue will help to strengthen the ties of working class solidarity in all parts of Canada.

And finally, we also express our solidarity with the 200-plus CBC employees who received layoff notices in mid-April. This is yet another blow against journalism by the Harper government, and another reason to build alternative media outlets, such as People's Voice. ●

## United Jewish People's Order-Canada

*For a future of economic and social justice for all.*

### Nicola Valley Chiefs and supporters occupy Premier's office

On April 16, five Nicola Valley Chiefs (Chief Harvey McLeod of Upper Nicola, Chief Marcel Shackelly of Nooaitch, Chief Aaron Sam of Lower Nicola, Chief Percy Joe of Shackan and Chief Lee Spahan of Coldwater) and supporters of Friends of the Nicola Valley, faced with inaction from the B.C. provincial government on the grave issue of importing sewer sludge into the Nicola Valley, occupied the office of Premier Christy Clark in West Kelowna.

"The Nicola Valley First Nations hold and exercise Aboriginal Title and Rights over areas where biowaste operations are currently being carried out, and where future biowaste operations have been proposed. The biowaste operations affect our Aboriginal Title and Rights. The Province of British Columbia is obligated to consult and accommodate us in relation to the impacts of biowaste operations on our Rights and Title", said Chief Aaron Sam.

A statement from the Chiefs said, "We are unified in our mission to stop this toxic waste coming into the Nicola Valley area. We take care of our own sewage and expect other municipalities to do the same. Trucking thousands of tons of sewage treatment waste to be spread onto our farms, ranches and forests is not healthy for our lands. We stand together to safeguard the environment for future generations. The traditional practices of harvesting from our lands and waterways, has been jeopardized by this risky practice. We believe in applying the 'precautionary principle' in matters such as these, where cultural ways of life are threatened and ecosystems compromised. We are requesting an immediate moratorium on all importation of these so-called biosolids into the Nicola Valley." ●

### Here's my contribution to the PV Fund Drive!

Enclosed please find my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the 2015 People's Voice Press Fund Drive.

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Send your contribution to:

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



# No foregone conclusion in May 5 Alberta election

By Naomi Rankin, leader of the Communist Party-Alberta

It's springtime and a whiff of change is in the air. For the first time in 44 years, the outcome of an Alberta provincial election is not a foregone conclusion. The Tory dynasty has survived in part by casting each new leader as a change, asking for and receiving a fresh start from the voters, setting aside the failed promises and accumulating scandals of the previous leader's regime. Jim Prentice, recently elected as Tory leader and therefore premier, to replace the scandal-plagued Alison Redford, seems to have worn out his newness and freshness with remarkable speed. Some polls show the Tories behind the Wildrose and the surging NDP.

Of course, polls of decided voters don't tell us what will be done by

undecided voters. Loyal Conservatives who were polled may have claimed to support other parties as their only avenue to express frustration with their own party before finally voting as always. And a province gerrymandered to give disproportionate power to rural ridings, in addition to all the usual problems with the first-past-the-post system, could still give a substantial majority to the Conservatives even with a dwindling minority of the popular vote. An NDP sweep of Edmonton might be thwarted by the far-right Wildrose failing to run candidates in several key ridings, which could presumably give the combined Tory/Wildrose vote the majority.

Beyond the foggy crystal ball of polls, however, more voices across the political spectrum are raising the issue of the free ride the

corporations have had in Alberta for many years. The idea of raising royalties and corporate taxes doesn't sound so "Bolshie" anymore. If Conservative voters realize how profoundly weak their politicians are, how utterly they have caved to multinational dictat, they might in fact be in a mood to sweep them from power.

The Communist Party-Alberta has a program that focuses on eliminating poverty, through full employment and higher wages, on improving education and removing financial barriers, and a universally accessible quality child care system. Social services should be well funded, professionally delivered, and should be positive and preventive in nature.

Moreover, services should be provided by professionally trained workers who have job security and

benefits and membership in unions. This implies stable, long term funding of services as an integral part of the provincial budget. In health care, education, culture, scientific research, housing, sports and many other sectors that involve provision of necessary services, the government should assume its long neglected role of providing funding from general revenues.

A major job of a government that really serves the interests of ordinary working people is to eliminate economic cycles. There is so much untapped wealth and unused potential in Alberta that a reasonable program of planned development would result in steadily increasing employment and prosperity for many years to come. Anyone can say that things should be better, but we propose to fund social services by increasing royalties and corporate taxes, so that it is not just wishful thinking.

The Communist Party also challenges the conventional frames of reference of the capitalist parties. We want to share part of our vision of socialism - a society where the major productive forces are under democratic public control and used for the benefit of society as a whole.

We imagine a society where

those who strive to house the homeless can turn their energies to involvement in their own housing co-ops because there is no more homelessness; where those desperately seeking funding for medical research can instead work on keeping abreast of research and advising on the best use of government funding because there is ample money going to research; where those who combat adult illiteracy can turn their attention to running book reading clubs and drama groups because they will have solved the problem of adult illiteracy; where artists and sports enthusiasts are spending their time not in casinos but teaching kids and adults in publicly funded programs in every community.

All it will take is the political clarity and will to elect governments that are servants of the working people, not the corporations.

(Naomi Rankin is the Communist candidate in Edmonton Mill Woods, along with Bonnie Devine in Calgary East. The full Communist Party-Alberta platform is at [www. communistparty-alberta.ca](http://www. communistparty-alberta.ca).)

## This May Day Remember Our Music in the Internationale

Pierre Chretien De Geyter (1848-1932) was a Belgian socialist and composer, known for writing the music of *The Internationale*. The lyrics were a poem by Eugene Pothier written in 1871 when the Paris commune was suppressed. De Geyter's music superseded the original rendition which was usually sung in the tune of the *Marseillaise*. In 1927, leaders of the Soviet Union discovered that the real author of *The Internationale*, the Soviet national anthem, had not yet died. De Geyter was invited to Moscow for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution along with honorary guests including the German sculptor Käthe Kollwitz. Joseph Stalin awarded him a Soviet Union state pension, which was Pierre's only income, apart from modest fees collected on music for other Eugene Pothier lyrics, and on popular tunes he had composed. After his death in 1932, more than 50,000 people attended his funeral in Saint-Denis, Paris. [Source: Wikipedia]



## Edmonton Club CPC



## A BETTER FUTURE IS POSSIBLE

### May Day Greetings

Harry Hunter Club  
Hamilton

## KI Chief calls to stop spying on First Nations

On April 16, the Kitchen-uhmaykoosib Inninuwig [KI] First Nation spoke out in Toronto against Bill C-51, and filed a request for access to all spying records kept on their community by the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). Chief Donny Morris called on all First Nations in Canada to flood the RCMP and CSIS with access to information requests and make the information public.

Previous access to information

requests have revealed that the RCMP created a wide-ranging surveillance network in early 2007 to monitor protests by First Nations, including KI, and shared the intelligence gathered with private extractive industries. KI is located more than 500 km northwest of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

In 2008, Chief Donny Morris and five community leaders served more than two months in jail for peacefully blocking mining com-

pany Platinex to protect their water and rights. The Ontario Court of Appeal released the so-called KI Six and directed the Ontario government to negotiate with the First Nation.

At the news conference, Chief Donny Morris was joined by Canadian Civil Liberties Association Executive Director Sukanya Pillay, and Unifor representatives. The event was part of a forum on Bill C-51 hosted by Unifor and the Canadian Labour Congress. •

# MAY DAY GREETINGS!

From the Davenport Club  
CPC

## 1er mai 2015



Voeux de combativité, de solidarité et d'unité,

Contre l'austerite, l'imperialisme et la guerre

Pour la paix, la democratie et le socialisme

PARTI COMMUNISTE DU QUÉBEC

## May Day Greetings!



Unite and Fight against  
Austerity and War!

For Peace, Democracy  
and Socialism!

East Toronto Club ~ CPC

## MAY DAY GREETINGS to working people in British Columbia

*Fight for the \$15/hour minimum wage!*

*No to tar sands pipelines and tankers - defend jobs  
and the environment on the West Coast*

**B.C. Provincial Committee, Communist Party of Canada**

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



# EDITORIALS

## 70th anniversary of anti-fascist victory

This month marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the greatest military-political victory of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the triumph of the Allied forces over Hitler fascism. Late in the evening of May 8, 1945 (May 9 in Moscow), Germany capitulated to Marshal Georgi Zhukov, commander of the Soviet Red Army which had played the decisive military role in Europe, inflicting over 80% of German military casualties during the course of this terrible conflict. Most of Hitler's major defeats (especially Stalingrad and Kursk) came at the hands of the Red Army, which also liberated Auschwitz, Maidanek, Ravensbruck, and other concentration camps, and freed most of eastern and central Europe from Nazi occupation. For this, the Soviet people suffered vast economic destruction, an estimated 10 million military deaths, and another 15 million civilians. Despite the Hollywood portrayal of WW2 as a series of triumphs by the capitalist US and Britain, it was the socialist USSR, under the political leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which saved the world from fascist domination.

This reality was widely understood in the post-war era, including in Canada. The Soviet victory boosted the popularity of socialist ideas, giving new strength to the labour movement and the political left, which won a series of bitter struggles for the right to organize, the shorter work week, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, universal medical care and much more. It is no exaggeration to say that these gains in working and living conditions achieved by the working class in Canada and elsewhere were largely won thanks to the blood shed by our Soviet brothers and sisters on the battlefields of the Eastern Front.

Given all this, how shameful it is that the Harper government plans to spend millions of dollars to build a huge anti-communist monument. This project is a direct slap in the face to all Canadians, who lost 45,000 soldiers in the fight against Hitler fascism. We urge readers to mark Victory Day by urging members of Parliament to oppose this shocking pro-fascist monstrosity in the heart of Ottawa.

## May Day - then and now

May First, the international workers' day, had its origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century struggles by U.S. workers for the 8-hour working day and against the brutal exploitation of that era. On May 1, 1886, about 300,000 workers went on strike across the United States, including 40,000 in Chicago. Two days later, police and thugs attacked strikers at the McCormick Reaper Works, killing two workers. At a protest in Haymarket Square the following day, an unknown person threw a bomb towards the police, who began firing into the crowd. Although the bomb-thrower was never identified, four anarchist leaders were later executed. Despite the "red scare" following Haymarket, the labour movement eventually won the eight-hour day (a victory which has been under attack by the ruling class for many years), and May Day became an international revolutionary tradition.

Over a century and a quarter after these dramatic events, another upsurge by U.S. workers has begun. The struggle by fast food industry workers started in New York on November 29, 2012, when 100 walked out to demand better wages and working conditions, and the right to form trade unions. The struggle spread with days of action across the country, and on April 15 of this year, tens of thousands of fast food workers rallied in 200 cities. Similar actions are now being held in dozens of countries on six continents.

The courageous battle of the U.S. fast food strikers, and the recent successful strike by post-secondary education workers in southern Ontario, are powerful evidence that the bosses can never stamp out the spirit of the working class struggle. On May Day 2015, that spirit should inspire all those who fight for a better world and a socialist future.

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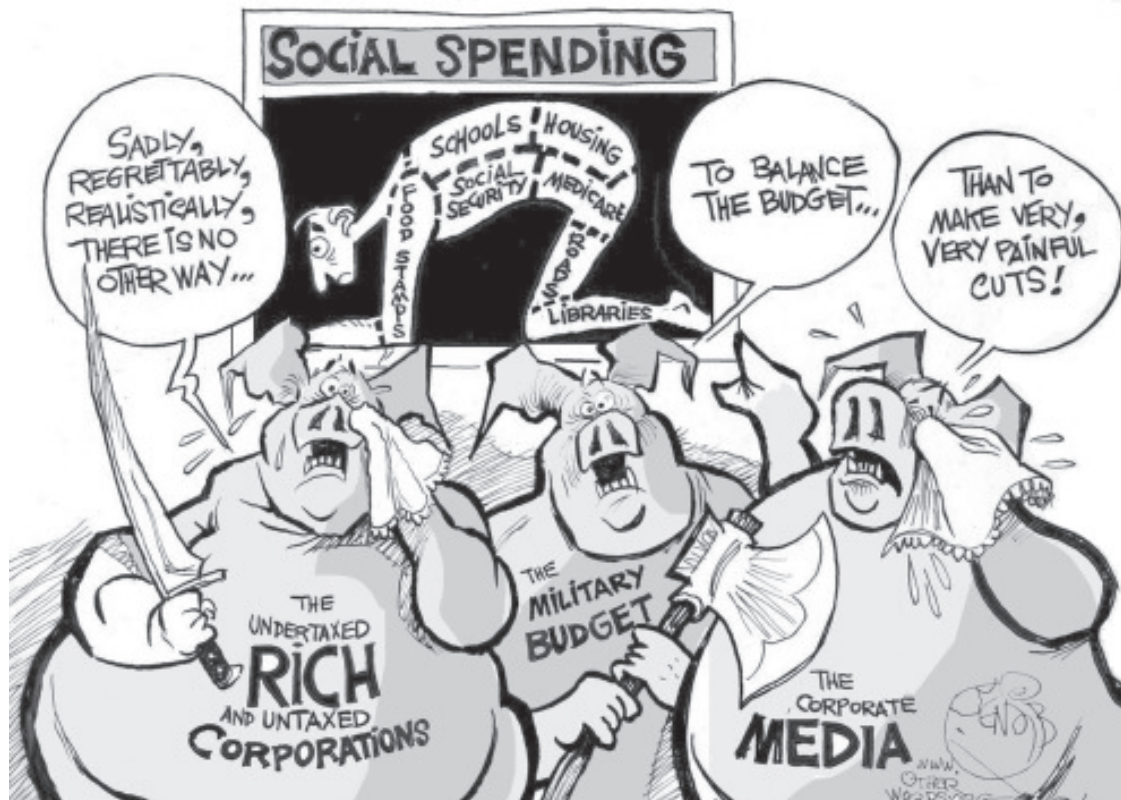
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Editorial Board: Kimball Cariou, Miguel Figueroa,  
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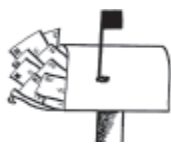
## LETTERS

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 2015 federal budget was introduced by Tory finance minister Joe Oliver on April 21, just as this issue went to press. Our apologies to pigs, who have been getting a bad rap from editorial cartoonists for centuries!



## Letters to the Editor

### A new mood in Alberta?

Well, it is not exactly the outcome of the 28th Albertan legislative assembly that would have been predicted following Election Day 2012. To the surprise of many salivating far-right hawks, after having essentially trumped an expected Wildrose surge, Alison Redford and the PCs seemed to have an easy stroll ahead with their 12th straight majority government, becoming the longest standing political dynasty in Canada on September 4, 2014.

A massive expenses scandal, the resignation of the Premier, and a subsequent dubious leadership race later, and the map is suddenly dramatically altered. The nominally "Red" Tory Redford, once promoted as a successor of the populist Peter Lougheed, has been replaced by the miserly conservative Jim Prentice, a parachuted-in former minister from Stephen Harper's federal cabinet. As oil prices fall and the panic

begins, the new Premier rushed into an election before things became even more unpredictable.

Upon becoming Premier, Prentice quickly set about promising austerity beyond even that of Ralph Klein, attracting many of his similarly minded compatriots in the Wildrose to cross over to the government benches. It would seem that Harper got his wish of a Wildrose government after all. Still, Prentice's announced budget has hardly proved popular, and it seems the PMO is still playing both sides.

Enter stage extreme right Brian Jean, a fellow former Conservative MP who was elected leader of the rump Wildrose on March 28th. Never mind the fact that his family business was found to have given a notable campaign contribution to Jim Prentice's leadership run. He claims that he had a change of mind, accusing Prentice of still being a closet "liberal", and trying to rally the politically disgruntled on side with virtually the same platform. To an observer outside

the PC-Wildrose squabble, little distinction exists between the two.

Of course, this is not the only mash-up of allegiances to manifest in Albertan politics of late. Longstanding Liberal MLA Laurie Blakeman recently caught attention for winning the nomination in her riding, not just for her own party, but also of the ideologically aligned Alberta and Green parties, although such an idea was quickly scuttled by Elections Alberta. While Blakeman claims it as a symbolic gesture to try to unite a "progressive" front, it does little more than show the irrelevance of all three centrist parties. Even the pollsters agree, with the New Democratic Party led by Rachael Notley surging past them to a virtual tie with the Wildrose and PCs.

Obviously a more radical mood has emerged among Alberta's long suffering voters, and one can only hope that the present mire of the right will help at least generate a strong NDP opposition. The election of either of the two Communist Party candidates could also only further show Alberta's true conscience.

Graham L. Wilson, Seba Beach, AB

## Revolutionary Culture Calendar 2015



To order a copy of the People's Voice 2015 Revolutionary Culture Calendar, send \$15 (includes postage and handling) to People's Voice, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1.

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# Vancouver dock fire and fuel spill raise huge environmental concerns

**Statement by the Communist Party of BC, April 19, 2015**

Two recent serious environmental incidents in Vancouver, within the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples, are a sobering reminder of the potential consequences of transporting huge quantities of volatile raw materials through heavily populated urban areas. On March 4, a fire at the port released clouds of toxic acid into the air over a large part of the city, followed on April 8 by a spill of bunker fuel in English Bay.

In the view of the Communist Party of BC, these cases, and also the massive April 16 fire at the Squamish Terminals deep-water port, are proof that corporate interests and governments at all levels must be held fully accountable when their economic activities (or inaction) endanger people and nature.

There are still many unanswered questions about the March 4 fire at the Vancouver docks. This

situation could have been even more dangerous if not for quick action by courageous, well-trained members of the International Longshore Workers Union, who identified the chemical involved in the container fire, and by firefighters who were on scene within 11 minutes. These workers also helped to ensure that the dock area was evacuated and that the health hazard to thousands of people was made known as soon as possible. The city's response in warning residents of the affected neighbourhoods to stay indoors was timely and well justified. However, it appears that little effort has been made to estimate the full extent of the toxic materials emanating from the fire. Residents in the Downtown Eastside, Strathcona and Hastings-Sunrise neighbourhoods reported seeing brownish-yellow clouds of toxic chemicals in streets close to the port, which should warrant a much more in-depth investigation of the possible long-term health impacts in these areas.

Just over a month later, at least 2700 litres of toxic bunker fuel was leaked from the MV Marathassa, a grain carrier in English Bay. Hours elapsed before any cleanup began, and the City was not notified until nearly 12 hours later. Although this size of fuel spill is regarded as relatively minor, it resulted in the temporary closure of recreational fisheries west of the Lion's Gate Bridge, and residents were warned to stay off the beaches for several days during cleanup operations. In the wake of the spill, it was unclear which level of government or which department has authority over monitoring water quality in English Bay and Burrard Inlet, and experts say that federal cuts to science programs have left a major gap in research and preparedness for such events. This incident confirms that the Harper government committed a major blunder by closing down the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station last year. According to retired Canadian Coast Guard Capt. Tony Toxopeus, who spent his 32-year career in the Vancouver harbour, the station could have had a boat with oil-containing booms by the vessel's side within an hour of the spill. The paltry savings of \$700,000 from this closure will lead to a far larger expense in human lives or environmental costs, even sooner than expected.

The Communist Party of BC believes that there are several urgent lessons to be learned from these near-tragedies, which could very easily have become far worse. First, these incidents show the importance of strong public services. The short-sighted

austerity agenda of slashing services to allow for bigger tax cuts to the rich and the corporations will have enormous negative long-term costs. Second, these cases emphasize the need for organized workforces in both the private and public sectors. Since they are usually the initial responders in emergencies, workers who have the protection of trade unions and strong collective agreements are in a much better position to act in the wider interests of society, without fear of being fired or disciplined for refusing to put their priority on corporate profits.

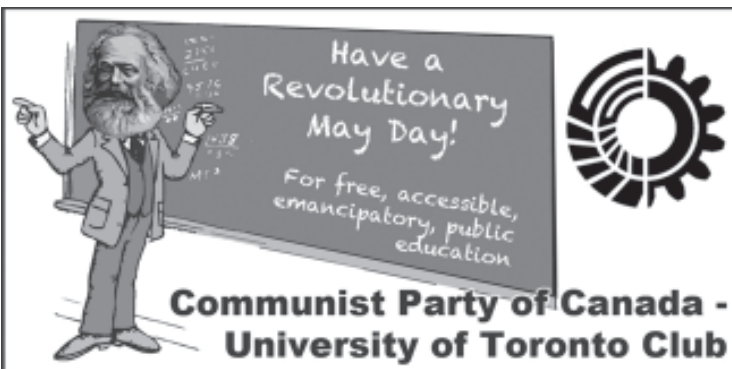
These incidents also raise fundamental issues related to jobs, the economy and the environment. As experiences in both capitalist and socialist societies over the past centuries prove, human economic activities inevitably have consequences for the environment, such as the impact of greenhouse gas emissions on global weather patterns. The Communist Party does not advocate ending industrial economic activities, a strategy which would result in the deaths of billions of human beings, especially those who lack the wealth and resources to survive such a change. But we do argue that governments must be compelled to exercise much more

stringent controls over the extraction, transport and processing of raw materials, in order to limit the extent of resulting environmental damage. Our collective aim must be to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, and to utilize other strategies to limit the environmental footprint of human economies. Ultimately our goal is to curb the power of transnational capital, and to create economies based on socialized ownership of resources and the means of production, under the genuine democratic control of the working class. In other words, we call to replace the present day capitalist system, which is based on maximising private profit for the tiny handful of rich exploiters, with a socialist society which puts the needs of people and nature first.

Time is running short to block the disastrous environmental crisis looming for our planet, which is overwhelmingly the result of unchecked exploitation of labour and natural resources by transnational corporations and imperialist powers. The Communist Party of BC urges the people of this province to mobilize for immediate measures to preserve the environment, and to fight for a socialist alternative to the dead end of capitalism. •

## "Peace, Jobs, Socialism"

Elgin "Scotty" Neish  
Club, CPC  
Victoria, BC



Have a Revolutionary May Day!  
For free, accessible, emancipatory, public education

Communist Party of Canada - University of Toronto Club

**News for people, not for profits!**



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

## May Day 2015

Greetings from the Parkdale Club  
Communist Party of Canada

For a world without fear  
without poverty  
without war  
without injustice  
For a world without capitalism



**WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!**

**MAY DAY 2015**

Burnaby Club, CPC

**MAY DAY GREETINGS!**

Greek-Canadian Democratic Organization





# CUPE mounts campaign to block Hydro One selloff

From [cupe.on.ca](http://cupe.on.ca)

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is mounting a massive campaign to stop Premier Kathleen Wynne's plans to privatize Hydro One.

Speaking on April 17, CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn warned that "The Hydro One selloff is a short-sighted plan by the Liberal government that will mean higher electricity bills and a loss of billions in long-term revenue that could be invested in public infrastructure and services. But Hydro One isn't sold yet. There's time to stop this privatization mistake, and we'll do everything we can - from mobilizing people across the province to legal action, if necessary - to stop the Liberals from selling off what we've built together over more than a century."

Wynne's announcement to sell 60 percent of a valuable, revenue-generating public asset to the private sector was not part of the Liberal platform during the last provincial election.

"Taking Hydro One out of public hands and selling it to the private sector is a betrayal of Ontarians, who overwhelmingly support keeping Hydro public," Hahn said. "It will mean losing control of this valuable public asset, which has a long history of providing stable, reliable electricity."

In every jurisdiction where such a privatization scheme has been carried out, electricity bills

have gone up. CUPE points out that while the Liberals claim they will be able to restrict rate increases, with only 40 percent of seats on the privatized Hydro One board, the government will have little influence. The Liberals claim the Ontario Electricity Board will step in and defend the public, but the OEB has never demonstrated any interest in regulating hydro rates.

"Have you ever seen an OEB decision that lowered your hydro bill? I haven't," said Hahn. "Ontarians already pay some of the highest hydro rates in Canada, and the government is being less than open about the pressure a private-sector Hydro will face to drive up rates and generate profit for its new owners. Ontarians know the disastrous record of the Liberal government when it comes to privatizing public services. Their record on energy just doesn't pass muster. We remember the money wasted on Smart Meters, the multibillion-dollar Samsung deal and the gas plant scandal."

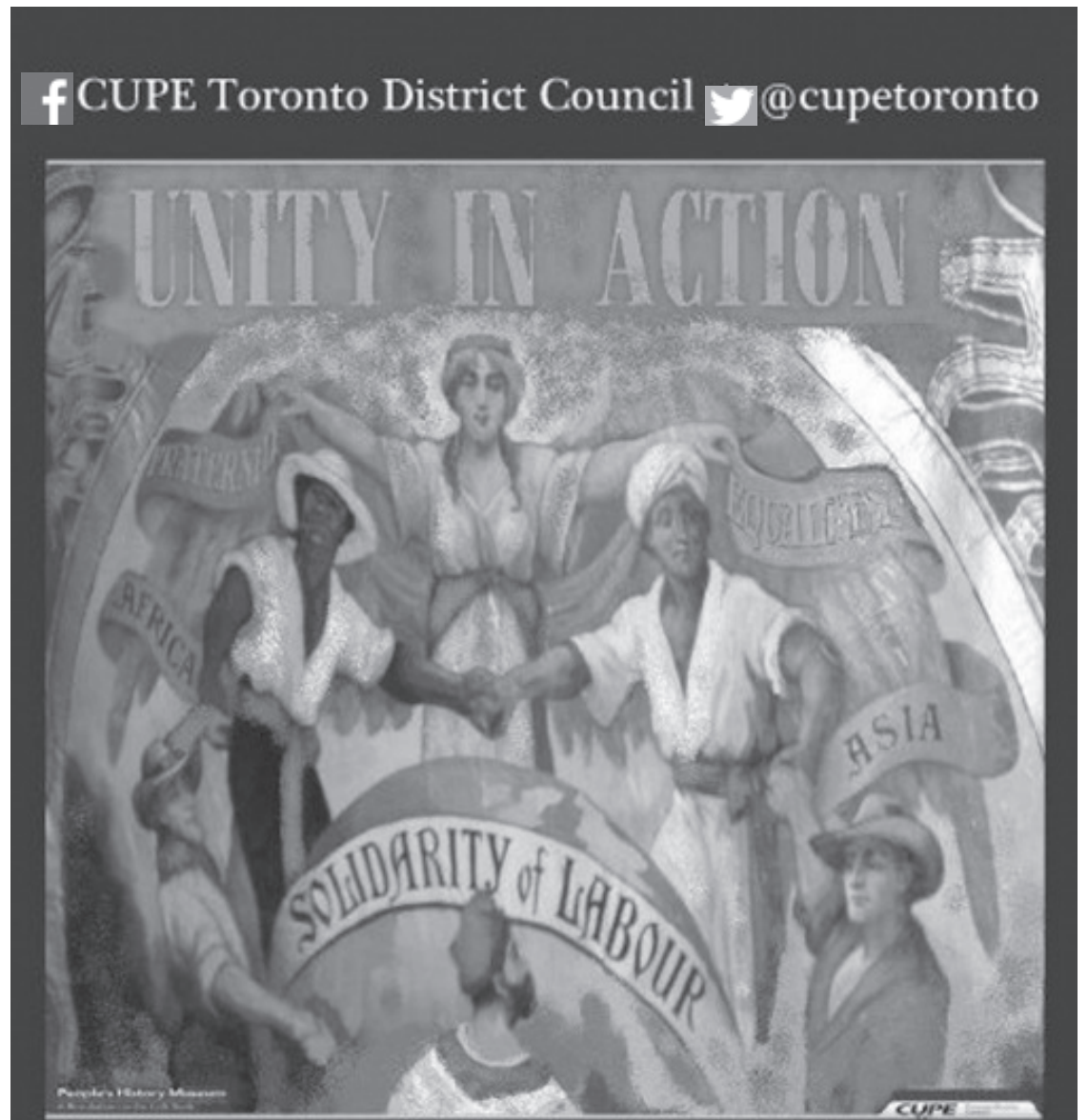
Union members and allies who support public services will mount a campaign to make sure the public knows the full cost of Kathleen Wynne's privatization plan. CUPE Ontario and lawyer Steven Shrybman have released a legal opinion showing the government's plans are not only short-sighted, but also will be illegal.

"Let's be clear, we stopped privatization in 2002, and we'll stop it again in 2015," said Hahn.

"When the PCs tried it, the Liberals were very vocal in their opposition to selling Hydro One. We truly

hope they'll return to their roots and protect the public good by stopping this sell-off. But if they

don't, we'll mobilize in every corner of the province and stop it in court if we have to." •



## Ritz hands Wheat Board to foreign investors

On April 15, federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced that G3, a joint venture owned by two foreign corporations, Bunge and the Saudi investment company SALIC, will be the beneficiary of the privatization of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB).

"With this, the Conservative government has accomplished the biggest transfer of wealth away from farmers in the history of Canada," said Jan Slomp, National Farmers Union (NFU) President. "The CWB's physical assets, its commercial relationships, and its good name have all been given away. The buyers of the CWB actually get to keep the \$250 million pittance they are paying for it. Bunge's 2014 sales totalled \$58 billion and multi-billion dollar SALIC is a subsidiary of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund, PIF."

The federal government has refused to release the CWB's financial statements after dismantling the Board's "single desk" authority to conduct prairie wheat sales. After commissioning an audit of CWB assets in the lead-up to privatization, the government refused to release the results. The

new G3 entity is private, and thus will not publish financial statements.

"Until August 1, 2012 farmers had full disclosure of the CWB's financial position," said Ian Robson, NFU Board member from Manitoba. "The so-called marketing freedom and choice being offered today is a black box."

Touted as an opportunity for farmers to own equity, a "Farmers Trust" will be set up to own 49.9% of the new company. Individual farmers will be allocated \$5 in equity per tonne of grain delivered. After seven years or when the equity reaches \$250 million, G3 can buy it out - a sunset clause to terminate the farmers' equity. The Trust will be managed by three appointed trustees, with one of them getting a Board seat. The farmers' equity will not be shares in the company, but merely "units" in the trust fund. Farmers who participate will have zero control over this equity stake or over how the company operates. The decision to terminate the Trust is entirely in G3's hands.

The "Farmer Trust" is an insult, said Doug Scott, NFU Board member from Alberta. "Since they destroyed the single desk, farmers

have lost more than \$7 billion dollars in less than three years. We had an elected Board of Directors at the CWB that managed the business in our interests and earned premium prices in the world market for all western grain farmers, year after year. Now, the Bunge-Saudi partnership plans to bribe us with our money just to get us to do business with them."

"At least \$170 million of public money was transferred to the CWB to promote its privatization, and Ritz claims - but will not provide evidence - that the total taxpayer investment was around \$300 million," noted Slomp. "The federal government has turned over all of this value, on top of the tangible and intangible assets of the single-desk CWB, to the complete control of Bunge, an American multinational grain dealer and SALIC, a subsidiary of the Saudi Arabian sovereign wealth fund, while farmers and the Canadian public have been locked out of all decision-making... This is not acceptable in a democracy."

A week earlier, the Supreme Court of Canada refused to hear a farmers' Class Action lawsuit stemming from the dismantling of the CWB. Had the case proceeded, the Supreme Court would have been able to determine whether common law property rights apply to collective interests in property, namely the assets farmers paid for and added value to as a result of their management and direction of the CWB. The legal action also

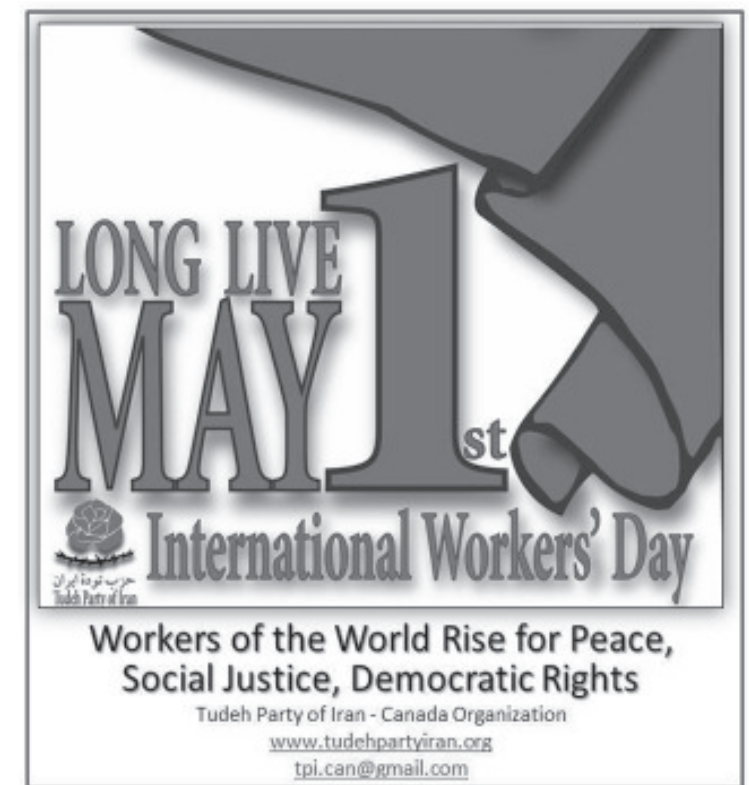
sought compensation for the losses that resulted from the government's actions.

Existing CWB legislation had required the government to hold a farmer vote on such a drastic change. During the 2011 election campaign, the Harper Tories promised such a vote, but then refused to do so.

"Minister Ritz claimed the benefits of individual farmers selling wheat and barley to the private grain company of their choice would be felt immediately, yet the first three years have shown

massive losses for farmers," said Doug Scott. "With the CWB we got close to 100% of the full world price of grain, and sometimes more. Today, we are getting 60% if we are lucky, and economists predict that will keep going down as grain companies and railways flex their muscle. There is no more final payment - what you get from the elevator is it. The grain company keeps the rest. If this is Gerry Ritz's idea of great early results, I shudder to think about how bad it will be in a decade."

([www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)) •





# "Do you want fries with those poverty wages?"

By Clare Speak,  
www.equaltimes.org

When Gayhun Lee, a worker at a McDonald's outlet in Yeokgok, South Korea, joined a rally in support of fast food workers around the world last September, she hoped to draw attention to wage manipulation and unsafe working practices by the company. She didn't expect to have her own employment contract terminated soon afterwards.

Management at the fast food franchise refused to give an explanation for terminating Gayhun's contract, instead telling her to reapply for the job. Her application was rejected.

Gayhun had previously been warned about her union activities by the management, citing a call from head office after she'd taken part in a rally in support of fast food workers in May last year.

Now, as part of the latest worldwide action by fast-food workers, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) are calling on McDonald's to reinstate Gayhun and to stop union busting in Korea.

Fast-food employees in over 30 countries protested on April 15 against poor working conditions and pay: the use of zero-hour contracts in New Zealand and UK; unfair labour practices in Brazil; unpaid or "charity" work for fast food companies in Indonesia and the Philippines; and in the United

States, where it all started, workers will be protesting for an industry minimum wage of US\$15.

According to Massimo Frattoni, the hotel, restaurant and tourism coordinator at the IUF secretariat in Geneva, "the fast food industry relies on the labour of millions of workers around the world who are largely working under brands operated by few giant corporations. Although many workers are young, often students seeking a part-time job to pay for their studies, an increasing number of workers are older, have dependents and need these jobs to sustain their families. Sadly, poor wages, precarious jobs, absence of benefits, no social security and denial of union rights are the patterns of the global industry."

This protest is the latest of its kind. Fast-food workers took global action last May, and in December they were joined by minimum wage workers across many sectors.

The protests include Fight For \$15, a campaign started by US workers supported by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in New York City back in 2012 before spreading to all parts of the country and then gaining momentum worldwide.

Though McDonald's recently announced a small pay increase for employees, Fight for \$15 campaigners were left unimpressed, saying they will not stop fighting until workers earn a living wage.

According to a McDonald's

press release, the company "projects that the average hourly wage rate for McDonald's

## Global fast food workers strike back

employees at company-owned restaurants will be in excess of US\$10 by the end of 2016".

But a Fight for \$15 spokesperson states: "The increase applies only to workers at corporate stores, which means only about 10 percent of the company's US workers will see a change in their income."

The problem of low pay isn't limited to McDonald's, with employees at many other fast food companies planning to take action.

"Our whole store will strike on April 15 because we work too hard to struggle to pay our bills and put food on the table," state a group of workers at Little Caesars in New York.

The McDonald's wage raise followed the decision by US retail giants Walmart and Target to increase their minimum wage to US\$9 an hour, which Fight for \$15

campaigners say will cover half a million Walmart employees, or "456 percent more employees than are covered by the McDonald's announcement."

According to the US Social Security Administration, the average annual wage in the US was about US\$44,000 in 2013, or almost three times the yearly income of the average fast-food worker on a wage of between \$8-\$9 per hour.

Low-wage business models in the US and worldwide are being cited as a root cause of inequality and poverty, leaving many full-time employees struggling to get by. A study conducted by economists at the University of California, Berkeley, found that more than 52 percent of fast food workers rely on taxpayer-funded public assistance programs, such as food stamp benefits or Medicaid.

This, the researchers argue, means that the government is effectively helping to subsidise corporate profits, as company employees are unable to sustain themselves without state assistance.

"The taxpayer costs we discovered were staggering," says Ken Jacobs of the Center for Labor Research & Education at the University of California, Berkeley. "People in fast food jobs are paid so little that having to rely on public assistance is the rule, rather than the exception, even for those working 40 hours or more a week."

But it appears that McDonald's, for one, has begun to pay attention to the protests. In a January SEC filing, risks to shareholders in the upcoming year included protests by low wage workers, as well as increasing public awareness of income inequality. ●

## \$15 minimum wage will help families, reduce inequality

From the BC Office of the  
Canadian Centre for Policy  
Alternatives

In the wake of the BC government's shockingly low 20-cent increase to the minimum wage, a new report suggests that such small changes fail to adequately reduce poverty and inequality, and are unnecessarily timid.

David Green, a professor and former chair of the Vancouver School of Economics at UBC and an International Fellow at the Institute for Fiscal Studies in London, conducted a thorough review of academic research on the economic impacts of minimum wages, and concluded that bold increases to the minimum wage make good economic sense.

"My goal was to assess what would actually happen if we went ahead and raised the wage to \$15," says Green. "In a nutshell, workers and their families would benefit a great deal, and any claims that we'd see massive job losses in low-wage sectors of the economy are just not credible."

Among the paper's key findings:

- \* The large job loss impacts predicted by some opponents of minimum wages misrepresent the existing economic research. In fact, estimates showing job loss effects of minimum wage increases apply only to teenagers. Estimated effects for young adult and adult workers are effectively zero.

- \* For example, in 2011, when the minimum wage increased from \$8 to \$10.25 over a year, the Fraser

Institute claimed the increase would result in a staggering loss of over 52,000 jobs. In reality, employment for 15-24-year olds declined by 1.6 per cent, one tenth of the Fraser Institute's projections. Their projections were based on old estimates and erroneously applied estimates for teenagers to young adults.


- \* An increase to \$15 would likely result in a modest decline in the employment rate. However, the likely impact is less than a 1 per cent reduction in the overall provincial employment rate. Overall, those making less than \$15 would still benefit from a substantial increase in their total wages.

- \* Focusing on teenage workers plays up an inaccurate stereotype about who earns very low wages in BC and leads to exaggerated claims about job losses. Only 26 per cent of those currently making between \$10.25 and \$12 are teenagers, and only 5 per cent of those making between \$12 and \$15 are teenagers.

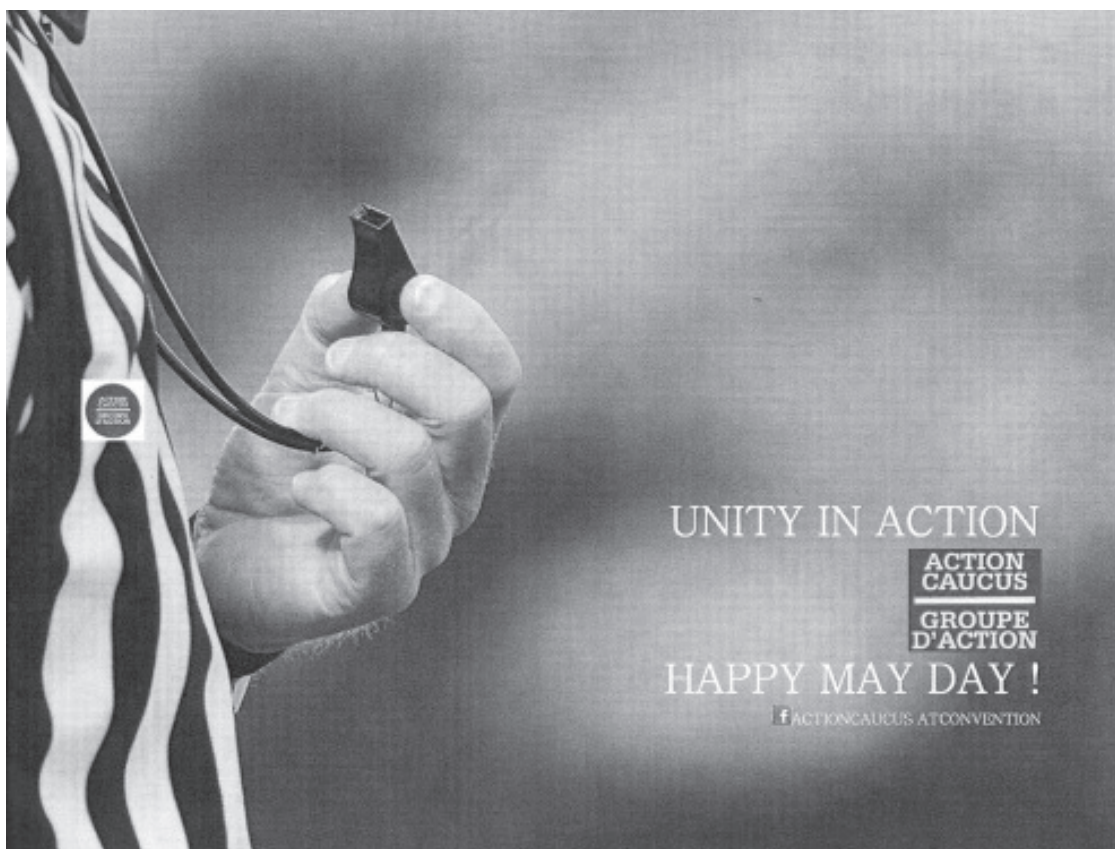
The evidence for Canada suggests that higher minimum wages lead to lower turnover rates, meaning workers are more likely to have higher-paying and more stable jobs. This may be because a higher minimum wage reduces the incentive for firms to operate on a low-wage, high-turnover model.

At the current minimum wage, a full-time worker remains below the poverty line. The minimum wage can be an important tool for reducing poverty and income inequality – so long as it is high enough to lift workers out of poverty. ●

**Who benefits if BC raises the minimum wage to \$15?**

STEREOTYPE		REALITY
Teenager		82% are not teenagers, they are 20 or older
Works part-time after school		39% are 35 or older
Lives with parents		60% are women
Earning extra spending money		58% work full-time
Works in small mom-and-pop business		68% do not live at home with their parents
		51% work for large corporations (100+ employees)

Raising the minimum wage to \$15 will put money in the pockets of workers who really need it and reduce inequality. tinyurl.com/increasemw




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HAPPY MAY DAY!

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Association of Greek-Canadian  
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(1941-1945)

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Tel. 416-466-2336

We send Greetings to all progressive people on this May Day 2015



# May Day 2015: Solidarity and struggle against austerity

## Statement by the Central Executive Committee, Communist Party of Canada

On this May First, the international workers' day, the Communist Party of Canada sends greetings to all working people in our common struggle for a socialist future and for an end to capitalist exploitation and oppression. May Day is an important occasion to celebrate our historic victories, such as the 80th anniversary of the On to Ottawa Trek, which began in the spring of 1935 in Vancouver; the 70th anniversary of the May 1945 triumph over Hitler fascism; and the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Vietnam from U.S. imperialism on April 30, 1975.

This year, a new solidarity is forming across Canada. It is built on the strong foundation of working class experience, adapted to the present conditions. It showed strongly in the 2012 Quebec student strike, the Occupy movement, Idle No More and environment struggles. Solidarity was the pivot point of victory in the highly visible strikes by post-graduate education workers at the University of Toronto and York University in Ontario. This new solidarity reaches outward to recruit allies beyond the old labour solidarity which created it, making the unity of organized labour, social justice movements and the public a key ingredient in the formula for success. Today's solidarity reflects changes in the working class itself, which is largely young, educated, street wise and precariously employed, and increasingly female and based in racialized communities. Most importantly, the new solidarity is unity in motion.

This unity is expanding in the fightback movement in Quebec. Tens of thousands of workers and students have been in the streets to defeat the "lightspeed" austerity agenda of the Couillard Liberals, which includes trying to strip municipal workers of pensions, forcing wage freezes, and swinging a wrecking ball into the hard-won principle of universality of Quebec social programs like childcare. These cuts cannot be defeated without winning at the bargaining table, and the collective agreement is a significant weapon of the working class against austerity. The recent Quebec budget has further propelled all public sector unions in the 2015 "Front Commun" towards preparations for strike actions next fall.

Importantly, the leadership of the CSN, FTQ and other Quebec unions have called for solidarity

with students as they stand up to police violence and legal repression by the government. The students are fighting not just against austerity in education. Reaching out beyond their campuses, they also oppose the destruction of the environment, and the sharpening attack on women and social equality. Differences over tactics in this struggle will be featured by the right-wing and the corporate media as weaknesses, but in fact these debates are an essential ingredient in the process of maturing resistance. Similarly, the emergence of the Common Front led by the Ontario Federation of Labour and last year's powerful strike action by British Columbia teachers are welcome signs that the working class is on the move.

The relentless neoliberal attack on workers and trade unions by the Harper Tories and the provincial governments is changing labour and its allies. The "social-partnership" ideology that permeated labour leadership during the years of the "welfare state" is gasping for breath. Canadian capital has gone on the offensive to destroy the public services, social programs, wages and working conditions which gave it a façade of credibility to maintain hegemony. The trade unions so far have been unable to deflect these multiple attacks. Mass unemployment, extensive de-industrialization, privatization, and unprecedented expansion of precarious work have taken a toll at the bargaining table, forcing labour to devise a coordinated response to the new strategy of capital.

As a key part of its new strategy, the ruling class is arming itself with police state weapons. Bill C-51 is the blueprint for tactics to silence labour, First Nations, environmentalists, students, women, and opponents of Quebec's austerity policies. But even though the labour response to C-51 was delayed by NDP wobbling, it finally joined with the groundswell of resistance which is far from exhausted.

Meanwhile, Stephen Harper's policy of repression and punishment at home is increasingly combined with war and fascism overseas, including military backing for the far-right government of Ukraine which is attacking its own population, and the expansion of war in Iraq and Syria.

In this situation, the pragmatic opportunism of social democracy is the major stumbling block to unity and solidarity, both within

the labour movement and with its allies. A good lesson is Greece, where Syriza, after first adopting a militant position, moved towards tepid acquiescence to capital and managing the economy for the Troika. Changing names and leaders to deliver the "same old" hat-in-hand subservience to capital does nothing to meet the needs of working people.

Here in Canada, the centrist drift of the NDP leadership and its



abandonment of support for many of labour's demands has given rise to growing disenchantment and fueled divisions within labour, making it difficult to attain unity in the face of government and corporate attacks. Although not always clearly expressed, the heart of these divisions revolves around whether we need to mobilize a militant extra-parliamentary struggle, or instead continue to 'contract out' labour's political struggle exclusively to the parliamentary NDP. The necessity for independent militant struggle engages workers and their unions every day in a thousand ground-level skirmishes around the fundamental question of struggle

or surrender. The need to respond to the capitalist offensive is here and now, and cannot wait for parliamentary solutions or the arrival of some dreamlike utopian capitalism based on "fairness".

The mid-level leadership of labour, its heart and soul, is caught in a very large crunch. This helps explain why the candidacy and action program of Hassan Husseini for CLC president was widely welcomed by delegates at the last Congress, and helped set in motion the events which led to the defeat of Ken Georgetti, its former President. Although a very close race, the demand for action and struggle won out, and Hassan Yussuff is now at the helm of the CLC. This marked a significant shift and a victory for labour democracy, though the degree to which it will lead to an actual turnaround in the dynamism and militancy of labour's largest body is still in question.

With a crucial federal election looming, the working class needs to mobilize to defeat the most aggressive and reactionary section of big capital - the Harper Tories - and to win better political terrain to resist the wider neoliberal agenda. Given the immensity of the attack, it is difficult to criticize strategies designed to prevent a Tory victory. Indeed the ground-breaking campaign of the Ontario Federation of Labour and its social justice allies, under severe duress from the right wing in the trade unions, contributed significantly to a major defeat of the Hudak Tories. The commendable and productive unity forged by labour and its social justice allies is developing and should continue.

But this unity should not be side-

tracked by debates over unqualified NDP support vs. strategic voting, which as it exists today merely extends support from one party to two or more. These two narrow options are merely the extension of a dilemma, wherein support at the ballot box becomes unqualified ideological support. Both options fail to put programmatic demands on any party, and instead assume that labour support will be rewarded by those elected. This debate also identifies parliament - the fortress of capital - as the main area of political struggle for the working class, rather than the crucial extra-parliamentary arena of our workplaces and communities. Even so, elections are a very important part of the class struggle, the opportunity to advance progressive programs, tactics and strategies. The Communist Party and its candidates across the country will campaign hard to defeat the Harper Tories, and to win support for policies to put people's needs ahead of corporate greed.

Today and beyond the federal election, the working class needs a coordinated ground level strategy and program led by labour. To mobilize and restructure the fightback towards this end will require a resurgence of the left, and a left program. The members of the Communist Party, as we have done historically, will continue to fight for class struggle trade unionism, and for unity in all its expressions, national, class and gender.

On May Day 2015, we call for all-out solidarity to defeat Bill C-51, to block the right wing agenda of austerity, war and fascism, and to drive the Harper Tories out of office! •

**Unite for peace, jobs, equality and democracy!  
Stop Bill C-51 - Defeat the Harper Tories!**

**MAY DAY GREETINGS**



**Central Committee,  
Communist Party of Canada**

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

**May Day Greetings**

**Stop the sell off of  
Public Assets!**

**Keep Hydro One  
Public!**

**Communist Party (Ontario)**

**MAY DAY  
GREETINGS!**

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

**Belogiannis Club CPC**



## "Bill C-51 will send a significant chill through democratic dissent and activity" - Canadian Labour Congress

*Excerpts from the submission on Bill C-51 to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, by the Canadian Labour Congress*

The Canadian Labour Congress is the umbrella organization for dozens of affiliated Canadian and international unions, regional labour councils, and provincial and territorial federations of labour in Canada. The CLC represents the interests of 3.3 million affiliated workers in every occupation from coast to coast to coast, and advocates on behalf of all working people in a range of different forums.

The CLC is deeply concerned by the far-reaching implications and radical departure from prior conceptions of security contained in Bill C-51. The Congress believes that C-51 is excessive, disproportionate, and unbalanced legislation. We believe this legislation contains significant omissions with respect to the necessary review of security services' powers under the legislation. Bill C-51 increases the risk of abuse of the human rights and civil liberties of Canadians and to workers in Canada.

It is not conjecture to say that unions and union members are at risk of being impacted significantly and adversely by this bill. Workers and trade unionists in Canada have a very long history of being targeted by Canada's security services. Dating back to the First World War, both the Royal North-West Mounted Police and the Dominion Police Force carried out undercover operations to investigate the labour movement, and continued to do so after 1920 as the newly formed Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). From the immediate postwar period through the 1970s, the RCMP targeted radicals in the labour movement, purporting to be concerned with subversive infiltration of labour organizations, and equating communist or anarchist opinion with national

security threats. Commonly, under the guise of national security, the RCMP was simply engaged in undermining strikes and containing labour militancy and industrial unrest.

Bill C-51 again raises the spectre of security service monitoring, surveillance and interference in labour-movement activities, and the erosion of rights and freedoms of racialized workers and workers belonging to Muslim

As Craig Forcese and Kent Roach point out, "Improperly shared information may result in rumours and innuendo being reconceived as fact, and used to justify action, sometimes of a very troubling sort."

In the proposed Act, "activity that undermines the security of Canada" is defined as "interference with the capability of the Government of Canada in relation to intelligence, defence,

which is limited to "serious" interferences or disruption of "an essential service, facility, or system."

The Act provides that the proposed offence does not extend to lawful advocacy, protest, dissent, and artistic expression. However, "lawful" advocacy, protest or dissent is a narrow term, technically meaning in full compliance with all laws. A labour demonstration, march, or rally undertaken without proper municipal permits or in contravention of a local by-law would fall afoul of this definition.

A blockade of a highway is unlawful conduct, as is a street protest conducted without permit. It is aimed at "unduly" (and unduly is undefined) influencing a government, also an offence under the Act when "unlawful" activity is involved. It is a fact of life in a political democracy that peaceful dissent and civil protest may at times involve technically unlawful behaviour. Note that "unlawful" does not equal criminal wrongdoing, but rather means "without lawful authority."

The CLC is concerned about the status of work stoppages that are not intended to endanger life, but which may conflict with the definition of lawful. The proposed Act would also apply to work stoppages, workplace actions, and strikes that run afoul of labour law. Unions and union members that contravene the law fall within the ambit of the security legislation, and would then be subject to information sharing among 17 different federal institutions. Bill C-36, enacting

the Anti-Terrorism Act following the 9/11 attacks, was amended in November 2001 to exempt strikes and protests, regardless of whether or not they are lawful, so long as they are not intended to place life and health at serious risk...

Furthermore, the rider that lawful advocacy, protest, and dissent are exempted only applies if these activities do not occur in conjunction with "espionage, sabotage, foreign-influenced activities, political violence or terrorism or subversion." It is not a stretch to believe that democratic dissent, protest, and advocacy could become linked with security threats such that it would be viewed as assisting, abetting, or conspiring with respect to actual crimes committed by actual security threats. We are concerned, therefore, that even with the exemption of lawful protest and dissent, CSIS will still be sanctioned to attribute many peaceful and democratic activities with a tenuous relationship to actual terrorism, subversion, and political violence.

This is an extremely broad concept of security, and will permit government institutions to exchange information on diverse array of loosely defined 'threats' to Canadian security...

Section 5 of the Act provides that government institutions may share information regarding "activities that undermine the security of Canada", including "in respect of their detection,

**People's Voice will continue to print a wide range of commentaries and analysis of the crucial struggle to defeat the police state Bill C-51.**



communities. The CLC is particularly concerned about the climate of fear and hostility being generated with respect to Canadians of Muslim faith and background. Many Canadian workers, union members, and trade unionists come from Muslim communities, and the Congress commits its full solidarity and support to our Muslim brothers and sisters. We adamantly reject any false, divisive, and cynical attempts to estrange and demonize individuals of Muslim faith and heritage, and we are deeply troubled by the anti-Muslim sentiment providing the dangerous and counter-productive subtext for debate over Bill C-51.

### Concerns with C-51

...Information sharing between government institutions carries potentially serious repercussions, and safeguards need to be carefully designed to prevent grave human rights violations of the sort that occurred in the case of Maher Arar.

border operations, public safety, the administration of justice, diplomatic or consular relations, or the economic or financial stability of Canada."

This is an extremely broad, and indeed overbroad, definition of security. Included in this activity is interference with critical infrastructure, but there is no mention of "attacks" or "destruction" or "damage" or even "serious interference" with critical infrastructure. This is therefore a broader definition than contained in the definition of "terrorist activity" in the Criminal Code,

see CLC, page 13

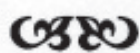
Vancouver & District  
Labour Council



Greetings of Solidarity

**May Day 2015**

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!*

**WE DEFEND  
PUBLIC  
SERVICES  
FOR ALL!**





# Domestic worker exploitation: a global phenomenon

The UK Guardian newspaper reports that an estimated 53 million people, mostly women, are employed as domestic workers in private households around the world. While domestic workers are now considered crucial to the smooth running of national economies, as a workforce they remain one of the most vulnerable to exploitation,

abuse and modern-day slavery.

Human rights campaigners have catalogued a litany of exploitation faced by domestic workers at the hands of their employers, including forced labour, rape, daily beatings and being forced to work long hours with no breaks. According to the International Domestic Workers Federation, employers who exploit or underpay their

domestic workers make \$8 billion a year in illegal profits.

The vulnerability of domestic workers is rooted in the nature of their work – typically undertaken behind closed doors in private homes far from their own communities – and the lack of legal protection they receive. Only 10% of domestic workers have the same basic labour rights as other

sectors. A quarter of all domestic workers have no legal rights at all.

Ai-jen Poo, director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance in the Philippines, says, “The discrimination and isolation these women face is compounded by their absence from many labour laws. It means they can be effectively disappeared behind closed doors in private homes, with

nobody aware of what is happening to them.”

In some countries, including Britain, domestic workers are bound to their employers through tied-visa systems, which prevents them from leaving to seek employment elsewhere even if they face violence and exploitation. In the UK, 67% of domestic workers work seven days a week and 60% are not allowed out of the house alone, according to the NGO Kalayaan. The UK is one of eight countries, including El Salvador and Sudan, not to vote in favour of a new International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention giving domestic workers the same legal protection afforded to other workers.

In the Persian Gulf region, an estimated 2.4 million domestic workers are enslaved. Most are migrant workers from poor countries such as the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal who are recruited to work in private households in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman. Upon arrival in any of these countries, domestic workers fall under the regional kafala system, meaning the consent of the “sponsor” family is required if they wish to leave their employment. In countries that enforce the kafala system rigorously, such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, it is illegal for domestic workers to flee abusive employers.

Human Rights Watch and others have documented horrendous abuse of maids and domestic servants in private households in the UAE, with widespread sexual violence, beatings, confiscation of passports and non-payment of wages. Unmarried domestic workers who become pregnant can be charged with illicit relations and imprisoned with their babies.

In Saudi Arabia, eight maids sheltering with their children at the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh could be jailed for illicit behaviour, even though some of them had been raped by their employers, according to the NGO Migrante International.

A 2012 survey of 3,000 domestic workers in Hong Kong, home to an estimated 320,000 domestic staff, found that 58% had reported verbal abuse, while 18% said they had been physically assaulted and 6% claimed to have suffered sexual abuse. Hong Kong has been rocked by a landmark case in which the wealthy employer of an Indo-nesian domestic worker was convicted of 18 counts of inflicting grievous bodily harm.

A survey of domestic workers in the US found that 25% were paid less than the minimum wage. A total of 10% said they weren't paid anything at all. ●

## Australia's unemployment crisis

By Owen Bennett, Youth Unemployment Coalition (Australia)

Going by the official figures for January 2015, 795,000 people in Australia are unemployed (6.4%), the highest notional rate for 13 years. But this figure does not tell the whole story.

It does not show that just under half of those unemployed are between the ages of 15-24 (361,100), bringing the national youth unemployment rate to 16.1% (more than three times the total average).

It does not show that over 200,000 unemployed people are over the age of 50 - a 40% increase since 2010!

It does not show that there are over 1.2 million underemployed people competing against the unemployed for jobs.

It does not show that going by the latest figures, there are only 152,700 job vacancies. When you consider that there are over 2 million under-employed and employed people competing for these jobs, this means there are more than 13 applicants for each job vacancy!

It does not show that the rate of unemployment benefit is about half of what is needed to live above the poverty line, or that Newstart has not increased in real terms since 1994.

It does not show that one in four people collecting unemployment benefits has a significant disability and has over the last few years been

pushed onto Newstart from the Disability Support Pension or that there are 100,000 single parents who have also been forced onto the starvation rate of Newstart.

And lastly it does not show that long-term unemployment has, over the last few years, doubled to 500,000 – or that the average time spent unemployed, according to the Australian Council of Social Services, is four years.

So how has the government responded to this unemployment crisis that has been slowly building in Australia over the past decade? Has the Coalition tried to increase the rate of jobs available?

No. In fact they have done the opposite and have been systematically slashing jobs in the public service. Since being elected, 100,000 Australians have become unemployed. Even the government's election promise to create 2 million jobs over the next decade is actually below the rate of expected employment growth!

Has the Coalition tried to take responsibility for its failure to create enough jobs by introducing a fair welfare system?

No. Instead, the Coalition has introduced the most wide-ranging series of attacks ever launched on the Australian welfare state since it was introduced in 1945.

Rather than attempting to fix this unemployment crisis, the federal government has launched an unprecedented range of attacks against the unemployed, pensioners, the disabled and families.

But most of you already knew

about this. The question that confronts us today is WHY and WHAT can we do about it?

Let's first look at the question of why successive governments – both Labor and Liberal – have been forcing more and more people onto the starvation rate of the Newstart entitlement.

While the government has repeatedly told us that all these cuts are necessary in order to balance the budget, this is a lie. The real reason is far more sinister.

By forcing hundreds of thousands of people on to the starvation rate of Newstart [Australia's financial support for unemployed workers], the government is effectively making unemployed people so desperate, so impoverished, that they would be willing to accept almost any work at any conditions. For the last two decades, this strategy has placed a strong downward pressure on wages and conditions. As a direct result, today the growth of real wages has fallen to its lowest rate for 17 years!

It's no coincidence that it was 17 years ago when John Howard first introduced the punitive Work for the Dole program and began an ongoing assault against the unemployed and the welfare state. Seen from this perspective, the ongoing attacks against the unemployed, pensioners and the welfare state are essentially an elaborate form of welfare for business, paving the way for lower wages and conditions.

This brings me to my next point: What can we do about it?

Considering the destructive impact the ongoing attacks on our welfare system have had on Australian society, the Australian Unemployment Union has been working to unite all recipients against these attacks.

We have been conducting a campaign to reach out to the trade union movement to help us in our common struggle for a fair wage for all and to bring the humanity back into our welfare state.

If our common struggle is to succeed, we firmly believe we must show that to fight for a humane welfare state, for a fair rate of Newstart entitlement, for a fair rate of pension, and more broadly, for a fair opportunity of secure employment, is something that will benefit all Australians. ●

## MAY DAY GREETINGS!

**Defend the rights of immigrant workers!**


**Lower Fraser Club, Communist Party of Canada**

## History test

Who fought to establish and protect...

1) public education?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
2) child care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
3) public health care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
4) women's rights?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
5) unemployment insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
6) maternity/parental leave?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
7) workplace safety laws?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
8) higher minimum wage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
9) equity legislation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations
10) improved Canada Pension?	<input type="checkbox"/> Unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporations

Answers: 1) Unions 2) Unions 3) Unions 4) Unions 5) Unions 6) Unions 7) Unions 8) Unions 9) Unions 10) Unions



Let's Keep making history

www.cupe4400.org

## Salute to workers on May Day 2015!

Nanaimo Club CPC



# Imprisoned Simon Trinidad connects with peace process

By W.T. Whitney,  
www.counterpunch.org

Ricardo Palmera, alias "Simon Trinidad," is a political prisoner and more. Even as such, his 60-year sentence and constant solitary confinement are extraordinary. Post-sentencing legal services are not always available. His mail is blocked, visitors are limited, and he is shackled when they see him. Trinidad occupies a "Supermax" cell in the United States, in Colorado. In Colombia he's an enemy of the state.

Simon Trinidad was a leader of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) with responsibilities for political education, financial overview, and peace negotiations. He participated with the FARC in talks with the Colombian government in 1998-2002. In Ecuador prior to his capture in January 2004 - with CIA help - he was preparing to meet with United Nations representative James Lemoyne to review the situation of FARC prisoners of war.

On being detained, Trinidad was moved to Colombia, and then on December 31, 2004 he was extradited to the United States. Colombia had asked US authorities to request his extradition. The United States at the time had no outstanding charges against him and Colombian officials had to fashion allegations. Later Colombian courts convicted Trinidad in absentia, and he faces jail time there.

Trinidad, although imprisoned in the United States, remains a political force beyond prison walls. The FARC's negotiations with the Colombian government to end civil war there began in Cuba in November 2012. The FARC still regards Trinidad as one of its leaders, and at the outset of the talks, the guerrillas named Trinidad

as one of their five accredited representatives to the negotiations. In group photos he stands with other FARC negotiators as a life-sized "cut-out" image.

The FARC has repeatedly demanded his release from prison so he can serve as a negotiator. Rumours circulated recently that Colombian officials, listening to the FARC, are asking US counterparts for Trinidad's release.

Negotiators now dealing with the post-conflict fate of guerrilla leaders are discussing issues having to do with imprisonment and extradition. Critics say Colombia's tendency to extradite prisoners to the United States is problematic for Colombian sovereignty. Simon Trinidad is a case in point.

Trinidad personifies another point of contention. Are FARC soldiers criminals or are they soldiers fighting in a war? Terms bandied about such as "banditry," "terrorism," and "drug-running" suggest the former. But to the extent that the FARC's anti-government rebellion led to internal armed conflict, FARC guerrillas are fighting a civil war.

The latter view squares with international law, which recognises the right of revolution. If a peace settlement accepts that notion, then prisoners are exchanged and they return home. Meanwhile, it's illegal under international law for civil war combatants like Trinidad to be sent off to a foreign land.

US accusers said Trinidad helped the FARC kidnap three US contractors after their reconnaissance plane had been shot down by FARC guerrillas in 2003. The US claim is that the hostages were civilians who were fighting drug traffickers. But their FARC captors saw them as military

contractors deployed under Plan Colombia, the mechanism through which the US military took on leftist guerrillas in Colombia. The contractors went free in 2008.

At his first trial, in late 2006, Simon Trinidad faced five charges. Three of them each carried the accusation of conspiring to kidnap one of the three captive contractors. Two more charges had implications for the so-called US war on terrorism. Prosecutors charged Trinidad with membership in a hostage-taking conspiracy, also with providing "material support to terrorists", namely the FARC. Conviction on either charge would have suited the larger US purpose of imprisoning adversaries anywhere who could be portrayed as "terrorists". It was the time then when prisoners of war were morphing into "unlawful combatants". In 1997 the US State Department identified the FARC as a terrorist organisation.

But Simon Trinidad told jurors about his life story and why the FARC was fighting. His presentation, even in translation, was convincing enough for jurors to refuse to convict him on any charge.

Then the Justice Department had to find a new judge for the second trial. The first judge had illegally talked with jurors to gain information about their deliberations that would assist prosecutors in the second trial. That trial ended with Trinidad being convicted on the single charge of conspiracy to take the contractors hostage. He was sentenced in early 2008. Two subsequent trials on allegations of narco-trafficking ended in mistrials.

Trinidad was a member of Colombia's elite. When on December 5, 1987 Ricardo Palmera - he was not yet Simon Trinidad - left his home city of Valledupar, in Cesar department, to join the Caribbean Bloc of the FARC, he left behind a family, his bank-managing job, an economics professorship at a local university, and family assets which he managed - a cattle ranch and cotton and fruit-growing properties.

His father had been a respected lawyer, law professor, and Colombian senator for the Liberal Party. His maternal grandfather had served as governor of Santander. The future prisoner attended a private secondary school in Bogota with a "strong social and democratic ethos". He studied at a naval academy in Cartagena, where President Juan Manuel Santos was a fellow student. Trinidad graduated in economics from a private university in Bogota and obtained a master's degree in business economics from Harvard University in the United States.

In Valledupar, Palmera Trinidad joined the "New Liberalism" party, which after 1982, locally at least, became "Common Cause". That organisation would later affiliate with the Patriotic Union (UP by its Spanish initials) which emerged following a peace agreement between the government and the FARC. Demobilised guerrillas, Communists, and other leftists entered electoral politics as UP candidates. They achieved victories, and then fell victim to nationwide slaughter. In Valledupar in 1987, many of Trinidad's Common Cause comrades died, one by one. Others went into exile. One of them, in her published

recollections, described the climate of fear and desperation. Trinidad stayed.

The Colombian Army cracked down on Common Cause members in 1982. With others, Palmera was arrested, "handcuffed, taken ... to Barranquilla in a cattle truck, deprived of sleep, food, and water for three days, subjected to cruel interrogation, and released after five days." At his first trial Trinidad identified the murder of charismatic UP presidential candidate Jaime Pardo Leal on October 11, 1987 as a watershed moment. He'd had a meeting with Pardo Leal scheduled for the next day.

On March 21, *El Espectador* reporter Maria Flores interviewed

Mark Burton, who is now Simon Trinidad's U.S. lawyer, about his possible release in relation to the peace negotiations.

In the interview, available at [www.counterpunch.org](http://www.counterpunch.org), Burton says that any decision to free Simon Trinidad is in the hands of President Barack Obama, who has supported the peace talks. As Burton says, "Colombia needs Trinidad at the peace talks; he is a well-informed man, capable, and brings his experience of having been a negotiator at the Caguan [peace talks] during the government of Andrés Pastrana. The FARC has accredited him as one of its representatives and it's crucial that he be in Havana." ●

## KKE condemns anti-communist law in Ukraine

On April 15, Dimitris Koutsoumpas, General Secretary of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and president of the KKE Parliamentary Group, sent the following letter to the President of Ukraine, P. Poroshenko:

Mr President! On the 9th of April 2015, a month before the 70th anniversary of the Antifascist Victory, your country's parliament approved a law "On conviction of Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes in Ukraine and the prohibition of propaganda of their symbols" (registration # 2558). In addition, on the same day the country's parliament adopted another law that heroizes the local collaborators with the Nazis.

These decisions constitute a provocation against all those who fought the fascist monster. It is a blasphemy against the millions of people, who gave their lives in the fight against fascism during the 2nd Imperialist World War. They aim in an unacceptable way to identify the Soviet Union with Nazi Germany, when the contribution of the USSR, with the communists in the frontline, is very well known, as it shouldered the main burden of the war against fascism. It is an insult to the communists of other countries, like Greece, who stood in the vanguard of the struggle against fascism and imperialism, for the people's rights and freedoms.

The aim to ban the dissemination of the communist ideals, the banning of the CP, the criminal prosecutions against communists, is a slippery anti-democratic path. This dangerous decision is denounced by the KKE and the Greek communists, by the communist parties all over the world and will be opposed by thousands of social and political organizations, millions of people from every corner of the planet. First of all, however, you will be opposed by the people of Ukraine, who experienced the major social gains of socialism in your country, giving Ukraine statehood for the first time, as the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine, as well as the historic gains humanity experienced in the years of socialism.

Your signature to these unacceptable pieces of legislation would mean the promotion of an anti-historical choice that has been condemned by the peoples and would mean that you would find yourself in opposition to the right to political activity, in opposition to the people's rights, and you would bear great responsibilities. ●



## May Day Greetings

from the  
Eric Blair Club CPC  
of Niagara

Home of Harriet Tubman

## MAY DAY 2015

Greetings from the  
Friends of the KKE  
Toronto

MAY DAY  
Greetings of Solidarity

from the Newest CPC Club  
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FREEDOM & PRIVACY!



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

May Day Greetings  
Rose Luxemburg Club, Ottawa



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FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION  
(Vancouver)

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ratifies its solidarity with the Cuban  
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# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Swazi labour federations banned

Swaziland's monarchy has ordered labour federations to cease operations pending their registration. But the International Labour Organisation says that while the registration is still in process, the Swazi government should allow the federations to engage in protest actions and peaceful demonstrations.

The ILO says that all workers' and employers' federations working within the country must be "fully assured of their freedom of association rights until their effective registration under the amended law, including the right to engage in protest action and peaceful demonstrations in defence of their members' occupational interests, and to prevent any interference or reprisal against their leaders and members."

The government's actions are characterized as eliminating all voices of social partnership in the country, and a serious breach of the international convention on the right to organise.

While federations remain banned, the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) says it will go ahead with its May Day celebrations which are held on May 1 of every year. Asked what would happen if the registration was not finalised by May 1, Secretary General Vincent Ncongwane said there was no law preventing workers from celebrating workers day.

"We are preparing for this year's workers' day celebrations. Nothing is stopping us from doing so, unless government gives us a law proving that we are wrong. We are clear that as long as we are not breaching any law, we can always go ahead," he said.

## Benetton yields to pressure

Italian fashion retailer Benetton has announced it will pay \$1.1 million into an international fund to compensate victims of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh two years ago in which 1,138 people died.

Benetton initially denied using any firms located in the nine-story factory complex which workers and local journalists had warned was unsafe before it collapsed with thousands of people inside. Now, using a report prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the company has decided to contribute to the \$30 million the Rana Plaza Trust Fund is seeking to raise.

"Whilst there is no real redress for the tragic loss of life we hope that this robust and clear mechanism for calculating compensation could be used more widely," said a company spokesperson. The payment follows more than a million people signing a petition on the campaigning website Avaaz urging Benetton to contribute to the compensation fund that was put into place eight months after the disaster.

"Benetton is not giving nearly enough to ease the death and

suffering their clothes have caused, but a million people forced them to reverse two years of refusing to pay any compensation," Avaaz's Campaign Director Dalia Hashad said in a statement. "This sets a precedent for global brands everywhere: when workers die, you cannot walk away. All eyes are now on holdout companies like Carrefour, JC Penney, Walmart, and The Children's Place to step up and fill the funding gap so all victims get what they need and deserve."

The Rana Plaza Trust Fund has raised \$21 million to date but needs another \$9 million to meet its compensation commitments.



## Costa Rica teachers to strike

More than 30,000 teachers in Costa Rica are promising to cancel classes and take to the streets of San Jose on April 24 in protest against what union leaders and activists call the introduction of neoliberal economic policies.

The Association of Secondary School Teachers (APSE) has spent weeks organizing the strike along with grassroots leaders throughout the country. The union says that economic policies put in motion by the Solis administration threaten the rights and living standards of workers.

In a press release, APSE said that the strike would be the "beginning of a struggle" against a number of grievances, including "the anguish felt by thousands of workers to see their jobs and salaries in danger;" [...] "corruption, dirty business, impunity, tax evasion, loss of sovereignty, environmental damage, repression, privatization of basic services, loss of labour rights [...] all as a result of the application of neoliberal policies."

Some of the specific policies include the Public Employment Act (which defines a single wage for each employment role for public employees), Labour Procedure Reform (which will affect the right to strike), an initial exclusion period for CCSS insurance, and draft amendments that would reform income and sales taxes.

Teachers' unions will also take to the streets of San Jose on May 1st, International Workers' Day.

## Dockworkers fight for jobs

Kenya's Dock Workers Union has issued a 21-day strike notice over the move to privatise a section

of the Mombasa port. The government is in the process of sourcing for a private company to manage berths 20-23 at the port, affecting 1,000 dock workers who may lose their jobs.

Union general secretary Simon Sang has written to the Transport and Labour ministries, declaring a trade dispute between the union and their employers, the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA). In the April 14 letter, Sang accused the KPA of breaching its agreement with the union over terms of employment.

"In the agreement, the authority has undertaken that all alterations to the employees' terms and conditions of service shall be the subject of prior notification, consultation and negotiation with the union," Sang wrote.

The KPA and the government argue that the privatisation was necessitated by the terms of a Japanese loan. But the union says this argument is null and void, since the loan transaction was secured by breaching provisions of Kenya's Privatisation Act.

## Statoil to lay off 2400 employees

Norway's Statoil energy giant could shed 2,400 jobs in May, or nearly 11 percent of its total workforce, as the company slashes costs following the plunge in global oil prices.

Media reports indicate that the cuts will hit engineering staff, particularly those drilling and maintaining wells, as well as administrative staff.

"We are working on reinforcing productivity within the company and that could have consequences in terms of jobs, but it is too early to speculate on their number," a Statoil spokesperson told Agence France-Presse.

The cuts are part of a programme to generate \$1.7 billion in annual savings from 2016 that Statoil announced last year when oil prices were still above \$100 per barrel. Oil prices have since fallen to the range of \$50 per barrel, pushing energy companies to accelerate cost-cutting measures and suspend or scale back investment.

In February, when it announced annual profits had been slashed in half due to tumbling oil prices and heavy write-downs, Statoil also announced a 10 percent cut in its \$20 billion investment budget for this year. Statoil is ranked by Forbes as the 11<sup>th</sup> largest global oil and gas corporations. Two-thirds of its shares are owned by the Norwegian government.

## Nigeria labour backs Saharawi struggle

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has reiterated its commitment to the struggles of the people of Western Sahara for liberation from colonial domination by Morocco. NLC President Ayuba Wabba gave the commitment on April 12 to a delegation led by Mohammed Lehbib, leader of the General

Union of Workers of Western Sahara.

"As Nigerians, we need to do more for the independence of the Saharawi people because we cannot claim to be independent if a part of our continent remains colonized. I want to assure you that our support will continue because we share common values with the Saharawi people and we have worked together," Wabba said.

He pledged that NLC would seek the support of the Nigerian government and the African Union in the struggle for the emancipation of the Saharawi people.

"The NLC's firm and continuous support to the struggle of the Saharawi people and workers is the clearest testament of its commitment to an emancipation of Africa that is free from all forms of injustice and colonialism," said Lehbib.

## Journalist gunned down in Kiev

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its regional group, the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), are appalled by the murder of journalist Oles Buzyna, gunned down on April 16. Both Federations have demanded an immediate and independent investigation into his death.

Buzyna was shot at around 12:20 pm in Kiev's Shevchenko district, near his house. The Interior Ministry claimed that the gunmen escaped in a dark blue Ford Focus car with a foreign license plate.

Buzyna was a journalist, TV presenter and former editor-in-chief of the Russian language Kiev-based newspaper Segodnia. In

2012 he had run for a seat in the Ukraine parliament on the Party of the Regions ticket.

Yuriy Lukanov, President of the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine (IMTUU), also affiliate of IFJ/EFJ, stressed that "the numerous beatings, torture and killings of journalists during Maidan and the Revolution of Dignity, which have not been properly investigated and the guilty were not punished - now generate a new wave of violence against journalists. Impunity for crimes creates a new wave of crimes".

## Near-slavery across Mexico

Stories about forgotten Mexican farm labourers occasionally emerge when large groups of near-enslaved workers are freed or strikes are staged, but then silence returns and the men and women who sleep on the ground continue supplying the products that fill North America's grocery stores.

The non-governmental organization Labourers Network does not like the term "rescue," because after such operations farmworkers' lives do not change much. A recent report by the Network says more than 2 million farm labourers are subject to abuses in Mexico, working in near-slavery. Some 60 percent are Indians from the most-impooverished states, like Guerrero, Chiapas and Oaxaca, and about 20 percent are minors. The group has documented the deaths of at least 40 children in farm fields since 2007 and it says the situation is far from improving.

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

## Join the Communist Party of Canada



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

### Central Committee CPC

290A Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6

416-469-2446 <info@cpc-pcc.ca> [www.comunist-party.ca](http://www.comunist-party.ca)

**Parti Communiste du Quebec** (section du Parti communiste du Canada)  
5359 Ave Du Parc, Suite "C"  
Montreal, QC, H2V 4G9  
Email: [pcqpc@gmail.com](mailto:pcqpc@gmail.com) Tél: 438-338-8890

**Ottawa CPC**  
Tel: 613-232-7108

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

**B.C. Committee CPC**  
706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1  
604-254-9836 <[cpinfo.bc@gmail.com](mailto:cpinfo.bc@gmail.com)>

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

**Edmonton CPC**  
Box 68112, 70 Bonnie Doon PO  
Edmonton, AB, T6C 4N6  
Tel: 780-934-7893

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

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Calgary, AB, T2A 4L7 Tel: 403-248-6489

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

**Saskatchewan CPC**  
Email: <[mail@communist-party-sk.ca](mailto:mail@communist-party-sk.ca)>



# CLC sharply critical of Bill C-51....

continued from page 9

identification, analysis, prevention, investigation, or disruption". In the interests of "prevention" and "disruption," even lawful protest and dissent may trigger information sharing, especially if there is reason to believe that the otherwise lawful action may proceed in accordance with an unlawful event. Where terrorism offences are concerned, police have significant and far-reaching investigative powers; they exercise these powers according to their own judgment, or with the authorization provided by warrants often issued with limited conditions and constraints.

The concomitant risks were detailed by the Macdonald Commission investigating thefts, break-ins, mail tampering, and illegal eavesdropping conducted by the RCMP...

Finally, we are also concerned that the information sharing is not restricted to Government of Canada institutions, since institutions are permitted to, "in accordance with law...us[e] that information, or further disclos[e] it to any person, for any purpose." Since this encompasses international information sharing, it is critically important that Canada's security architecture understand and integrate the lessons of the O'Connor and Iacobucci commissions of inquiry on the risks posed by information-sharing with foreign governments.

The new Criminal Code offence, s.83.221, would apply to "Every person who, by communicating statements, knowingly advocates or promotes the commission of terrorism offences in general while...being reckless as to whether any of those offences may be committed." Three observations are in order. First, the new offence is not just applied to public

speech, but also can be applied to private speech, emails, or texts that may be the subject of surveillance by police or security services. Second, under s. 319 (7) of the Criminal Code, it applies not just to speech, but also to "words spoken or written or recorded electronically...gestures, signs or other visible representations." A person can also be guilty of the offence if they aid or assist a person in making such statements. Third, "terrorism offences" is far wider a category than actual terrorism, and includes association, preparation for, and complicity with terrorism.

The reach of this new offence is therefore very extensive. Individuals that publish or convey others' statements that advocate or promote terrorism offences could be potentially guilty of a conspiracy to commit the offence. No terrorist purpose is required, and an individual need not "will" or "desire" a terrorist offence to be committed—he or she would simply need to "knowingly" promote or advocate such an act.

The Congress is concerned that political expression with no intent or connection to terrorist activity whatsoever could be caught up in this provision. For instance, a member of a trade union with a shirt that says, "Smash Israeli Apartheid" or "Support the Zapatistas" could be viewed as knowingly promoting terrorism offences while being reckless as to whether any of those offences may be committed. The effect of this provision will be to cast a chill over constitutionally-protected speech. We believe this provision may be in conflict with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We think that many individuals who have no connection to terrorism and no intention of fomenting political violence will be caught up in the sweeping nature of this offence.

S. 42 of Bill C-51 amending the

Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act states, "If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a particular activity constitutes a threat to the security of Canada, the Service may take measures, within or outside Canada, to reduce the threat". These measures "shall be reasonable and proportional in the circumstances, having regard to the nature of the threat, the nature of the measures and the reasonable availability of other means to reduce the threat".

Undertaking measures to reduce a threat to the security of Canada only requires a warrant if those measures will (not "may") contravene the Charter or Canadian law. It will fall to the government and CSIS to weigh the meaning of "reasonable and proportional" whenever a measure falls short of violating the law or the Charter. Unless the government itself decides that there are "reasonable grounds" for thinking that a warrant is needed, the sole oversight of CSIS's measures will be internal to government.

Where a Federal Court warrant is believed to be needed, measures proposed by CSIS may breach a constitutionally-protected right or freedom and contravene Canadian law. The CLC is extremely concerned that deliberation over whether CSIS should be permitted to contravene Canadian laws and Charter of Rights and Freedoms will take place in secret, in front of a judge and with only government counsel present. The individual or individuals whose rights will be affected by illegal activity by CSIS will not be represented, and may not even be informed of the threatened breach of their rights.

This is a troubling and dangerous step, one that we believe turns on its head the fundamental precept of constitutionally protected rights and freedoms forming the essential precondition and framework for the rule of law.

## Conclusion

Bill C-51's sweeping conception of security and radical expansion of security services' powers implicate commonplace activity in a democracy, in far-reaching and troubling ways. The CLC is concerned that much of Bill C-51 appears to be not primarily about terrorism at all. With Bill C-51, democratic expression, activity, and political engagement not connected to terrorism or violence in any way will be subject to government information gathering and sharing. This will send a significant chill through democratic dissent and activity in Canada. Security legislation in a democratic polity must clearly distinguish dissent from subversion.

The labour movement has a long and painful history with Canada's security services investigating and violating the rights of political dissenters in the labour movement because their dissent was equated improperly and unjustly with subversion. Aboriginal communities and environmentalists protesting resource development projects are already being singled out for monitoring and surveillance by security agencies in Canada.

Legislative efforts to amend

security legislation should not proceed in a climate of fear and division, nor should they encourage fear and division as a mechanism to generate public support. The CLC urges Members of Parliament to halt the progress of Bill C-51 until

the draft legislation is brought into full conformity with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and so that the legislation may fully respect the findings and integrate the lessons of the O'Connor and Iacobucci commissions of inquiry. •

Peace, Solidarity, and Social Justice:  
Let's Move to the Left!



Saturday, May 2nd

United Steelworkers Hall  
25 Cecil Street, Toronto ON

Political & Cultural Evening

Doors open at 6:00 pm

Food & Refreshments

Free Admission

Performers: Banditry, Bānoo Zan, Dane Swan, MataDanze Womyn, Rosy Cervantes, Wally Brooker

Keynote Speaker:

Hassan Yussuff, President, CLC

Organized by The United May Day Committee



May Day  
Greetings

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1 MAY

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[www.osstf.on.ca](http://www.osstf.on.ca)





## "A proper socialist band like every town should have"

By Bob Oram, Morning Star

Workers from the former industries of glass production and mining straddle Barnsley's town crest, above the Latin motto *Spectemur Agendo* - "Judge us by our actions."

That's a fitting motto for Barnsley's new post-punk rock stars The Hurriers, who proudly proclaim: "We're a proper socialist band like every town should have."

Named after the children and women who used to work moving the coal in the pre-reform mines, the band are proud of their roots and belonging to a community that Margaret Thatcher described as "the enemy within."

The band's singer and lyric writer Tony - aka "Lefty" - is instantly recognisable as, in trademark hat, he saunters into Barnsley's best pub, the Old No 7. He's here to tell me about the May Day release of the band's new album, *From Acorns Mighty Oaks*.

If, like me, you're bored with so much of the British music scene today, this record is a blast of fresh air. Wearing their hearts on their sleeves, The Hurriers deliver a roller-coaster ride of political venom, social commentary and spirit-lifting anthems.

Lefty's friendly and down to earth, yet his easy demeanour belies his fierce and passionate political convictions and commitment. We're soon joined by the band's rhythm section - his son Zak, who plays drums, and bassist Jez. They apologise for absent guitarists Jim and Sam but "as a band all with jobs, it's not always easy for everyone to be present."

A generational mix has given the band an energy and dynamic musical influences that, magpie-like, take bits from the past but then forge a sound of protest songs for the 21st century.

The album comprises 11 blistering tracks that cover everything from class consciousness and the need to keep fighting, NHS privatisation, parliamentary hypocrisy, the rise of the far right and austerity.

It also features their stunning anthemic homage to the 30-year anniversary of the miners' strike, *Truth and Justice*. Written about the role of South Yorkshire Police in the Battle of Orgreave, "where blood was spilled and skulls were smashed," it celebrates the fact that the miners would never have been defeated "if Thatcher's police state hadn't left them cheated."

The pride in their voices when talking about playing at the recent With Banners Held High celebration of the end of the strike is personal and pure.

The band laugh when I ask if they think they can maintain a political message in every song. "Well, we started because I was so pissed off at a Unison conference in 2012 that nothing seemed to be happening," Tony says. "I decided to form a band that would be proud to have a clear message in every song. So far, every gig we have done - bar one - has been a benefit."

"We want to support our class and, yes, it is a surprise that it has taken this long in the face of this evil government for bands like us to appear. But there is a growing

number of artists fighting back out there now. That's what the album title is about, starting things small, building things up, little campaigns and together growing into something really big."

The band support the Morning Star and they're clear it is vital that the paper survives. "It should be selling a lot more than it does" argues Tony. "The need for a reader-owned daily of the left is essential. Whatever happens in the election, the real struggles for workers' rights, stopping the privatisation of public services and

the end to austerity will need to continue and it needs a strong daily voice."


The Hurriers are a great example of such a voice in a rapidly growing scene. Steeped in northern culture and history they make folk songs but with a sound so rich and thrilling it could easily cross over into the mainstream. Not since the 1990s has a band been so determined to chronicle the travails and ravages of their class and the defiant political stance in their lyrics tell a story that deserves the widest possible audience. ●

**From Acorns Mighty Oaks is available from  
www.thehurriers.co.uk starting on May 1.**

TSO drops Ukrainian pianist Lisitsa



and its ceo gets a black eye




### La Trova Nuestra

**Friday, May 29, 8 pm**

#### "La Peña Nuestra"

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

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



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

**AUUC Toronto Branch**



## MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

### Craven TSO cancels Valentina Lisitsa

Toronto Symphony Orchestra CEO Jeffrey Melanson's decision to cancel April performances by Ukrainian-born concert pianist Valentina Lisitsa, because of her tweets on the civil war in that country, is a dangerous precedent and another sign of the erosion of democratic rights in Canada. While the head of the cash-strapped TSO was apparently responding to the pressure of pro-Kiev Ukrainian-Canadian patrons, he may also have been reflecting the political line of another influential and meddlesome patron, the Harper Government. The affair is an unsettling reminder of the McCarthy era in the '50s, when six members of the TSO were blacklisted for their left-wing views. Valentina Lisitsa is a talented and popular performer whose concerts are invariably sold out. Her YouTube videos have been viewed more than 50,000,000 times. Her "deeply offensive" comments are directed against atrocities committed in the Ukrainian civil war, perpetrated mostly by the Kiev regime against the Russian-speaking minority in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. Lisitsa's "crime" is to advocate a peaceful solution to the conflict, based on the principles agreed upon at the recent Minsk Summit attended by the presidents of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine. Fortunately her fundamental decency shines through the calumny. This, combined with her talent and popularity, is what her opponents fear. For more info: <http://www.valentalisitsa.com/>.

### Marsalis cancels Venezuela shows

One of the side-effects of the U.S. government's egregious hostility to the government of Venezuela was the recent cancellation of several shows and workshops in that country by jazz musician Wynton Marsalis. The renowned trumpeter and band leader had been scheduled to perform three concerts of his Swing Symphony in Caracas beginning March 13 with the Simon Bolivar Orchestra. Marsalis and his Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra were also scheduled to give a series of workshops with Venezuela's world-famous El Sistema network of youth ensembles. The engagements would have been part of a twelve-city tour of Latin America. A spokesperson for Marsalis blamed "recent political turmoil" and promised to reschedule, adding that neither the U.S. nor Venezuelan government had intervened to influence the decision. Marsalis last visited the Bolivarian republic in 2005. In 2010 he spent a week in Havana jamming with Cuban music students. One can only speculate of course, but it's hard not to think that Obama's absurd declaration that Venezuela represents a "national security threat" to the USA has raised fears of reprisal among artists who depend, as does Marsalis, upon the patronage of the corporate elite.

### Buena Vista Social Club says 'Adiós'

It's been said that they're more a brand than a band, but for the surviving members of Buena Vista Social Club, the music they lovingly preserve is a living tradition and they're keepers of the flame. In 1997 Buena Vista Social Club became a worldwide sensation when the mostly elderly and forgotten Cuban musicians recorded their eponymous Grammy-winning album with American musician Ry Cooder. That led to an Oscar-nominated documentary by German director Wim Wenders and a host of solo albums by the band's members. Since then several artists have passed on, including guitarist-vocalist Compay Segundo, pianist Ruben Gonzalez, and vocalist Ibrahim Ferrer. The current band has been on a worldwide "Adiós" tour since mid-2014. This summer and fall they'll be touring North America, before giving a final show in October at Havana's Karl Marx Theatre. With the tour comes a new CD. "Lost and Found" is a compilation of previously unreleased studio recordings and live performances. Is this really the last hurrah for the Buena Vista Social Club? Why not carry on? The Preservation Hall Jazz Band has been keeping New Orleans jazz alive for generations. For more info: [www.worldcircuit.co.uk](http://www.worldcircuit.co.uk).

### Ceilidh Friends: Northern Remembrance

People's Voice readers in western Canada may be better acquainted with folk trio Ceilidh Friends than their counterparts in the east. Among the latter I must include myself - at least until a month ago when a reader sent me the group's 2014 album, Northern Remembrance. Hailing from Yellowknife, Ceilidh Friends performs traditional, modern, and northern music, featuring vocal harmonies and a variety of acoustic instruments, including guitar, dulcimer, recorder, percussion and auto-harp. They've been singing together since they first met at an anti-Gulf War protest in Yellowknife in 1990. Along the way they've released three albums and been profiled in folk music publications such as Sing Out! and Dirty Linen. The album title Northern Remembrance may have a dual meaning. On one hand it's a musical Remembrance Day project, full of songs that express the horrors and illusions of war, some traditional, and some by well-known songwriters. The title might also be seen as the trio's homage to departed band member Steve Goff, who died in 2009. For more info visit [www.celtarctic.ca](http://www.celtarctic.ca) or write to Moira, Dawn and Steve at [ceilidh\\_friends@hotmail.com](mailto:ceilidh_friends@hotmail.com).



# AUUC speaks out against TSO censorship

Pianist Valentina Lisitsa was recently barred by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra from performing (*for background, see Music Notes, page 14*). The following letter was sent on April 10 to Toronto Symphony Orchestra President Jeff Melanson, and to the TSO's Music Director, Board of Directors, and Musician's Union, by the Toronto Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

Dear Mr. Melanson,  
We, the Executive of the Toronto Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians deplore your decision to bar Miss Valentina Lisitsa from performing with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. From all media reports, you made this decision without having the slightest indication that Miss Lisitsa intended to carry-out her obligations with anything but the

utmost professionalism. Censorship, Mr. Melanson, whether carried out violently (Charlie Hebdo) or heavy-handedly (your way), is still censorship. The fact that Miss Lisitsa is still openly welcomed by many other cities and

orchestras is testimony to the ugliness of your decision. We believe an apology from you is in order.

*Yours Truly, George Borusiewicz, Executive Member, Toronto AUUC Branch* •

## CUPE backs Durham teachers

CUPE Ontario has sent a message of solidarity to the members of the Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF) who began a strike in Durham Region on April 20. CUPE Ontario represents 55,000 education workers in schools.

"Today we send a clear message of solidarity on behalf of all CUPE Ontario members to those education workers who are beginning strike action today in Durham region," said Fred Hahn,

president of CUPE Ontario. "CUPE members who work in schools across the province, including in Durham Region, will do all we can do to support the effort of these workers and their union, the Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF) to achieve a fair collective agreement."

Teachers at the Durham District School Board represented by OSSTF began strike action on April 20, due to a lack of meaningful collective bargaining and proposals tabled that would result in concessions from their collective agreements.

"Now, when the parties have been legislated into a completely new bargaining process, is not the time to re-write and strip the collective agreements, especially in light of the significant losses as a result of Bill 115," said Terri Preston, chair of the School Boards co-ordinating and central bargaining committee of CUPE Ontario. "Our working conditions are students' learning conditions. The Government cannot expect education workers to sit idly by while they are treated without the respect and consideration they deserve for the significant contributions they make to the education system."

"We will work to build support for these picket lines in Durham from all CUPE members in Durham region and the GTA," said Candace Rennick, secretary-treasurer of CUPE Ontario. "The fight for fairness being taken on by OSSTF education workers is our fight, and with support and solidarity, when these workers win, we all do - including the thousands of children and families who rely on the skill and passion of these dedicated education workers."

# What's Left

## Vancouver, BC

**May Day march**, Friday, May 1, starts 5:30 pm from 14<sup>th</sup> & Commercial, speeches at Grandview Park, 1200 block Commercial, sponsored by Vancouver & District Labour Council.

**May Day Info Fair**, Sat., May 2, 1-4 pm, at Grandview Park, displays by many groups including People's Voice.

**People's Voice Victory Banquet**, Sat., May 2, doors 6 pm, Victoria Drive Community Hall, 2026 E. 43 Ave., keynote speaker Micheal Vonn, policy director of BC Civil Liberties Association, on Bill C-51 and the right to Free Speech. Tickets \$20 (students & unemployed \$12), international dinner and cultural program, call 604-254-9836 or 604-255-2041 for info.

**Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast**, Sunday, May 10, 10 am-1 pm, Chilean Co-op, 3390 School Ave., \$15 all you can eat (\$8 under 12). Organized by Burnaby Club CPC, proceeds to People's Voice.

## Toronto, ON

**Confront Barrick Gold**, rally at the mining corporation's AGM, Tuesday, April 28, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, Convention Centre, 255 Front St. West.

**May Day March**, Friday, May 1, 5:00 pm, starting at Nathan Phillips Square (City Hall), post-march performances & show at St. James Park, organized by No One Is Illegal in support of migrant workers' rights and indigenous peoples' struggles.

**70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany**, Saturday, May 2, gather 1 pm at Dundas Square, march to Russian consulate on University

Avenue. Never again fascism and war!

**Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice: Let's Move to the Left!**, political & cultural evening, Sat., May 2, 6 pm, Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St., keynote speaker CLC President Hassan Yussuff, with performers Banditry, Banoo Zan, Dane Swan, Mata Danze Womyn, Rosy Cervantes, Wally Brooker. Organized by United May Day Committee.

**Cuba Solidarity in Canada, Five Decades of People-to-People Foreign Relations**, with author & editor Nino Pagliccia, long-time activist and former organizer of the Che Guevara volunteer Work Brigade, Friday, May 29, 7:30 pm, OISE, 252 Bloor Street West. Peace Lounge-7th floor. Also present will be some authors of the book's 12 chapters outlining solidarity across Canada. Free admission, light refreshments.

**Hear special Cuban guests**, Fernando González, one of the Cuban Five heroes, and now Vice-President of ICAP, and Dr. José Portilla García, member of Cuba's medical mission fighting Ebola in West Africa, presented by Canadian Network on Cuba and CCFA Toronto, Sat., May 30, 7:30 pm, Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St. (near College & Spadina).

**CCFA Toronto Annual General Meeting**, with guest speaker Jean Augustine, former Etobicoke-Lakeshore MP, and guests from Cuban Consulate. Sat., June 13, 7:30 p.m., 519 Church St., Grand Ballroom 2nd floor. Reports of the past year's work, plans for the next year, election of next Executive Committee, free admission.

## People's Voice deadlines

May 16-31 issue: Thursday, May 7

June 1-15 issue: Thursday, May 21

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



## May Day Greetings

Stop fascism and austerity!  
Unite for peace, social  
justice and labour rights!

Vancouver East Club, CPC  
604-255-2041

## REDS ON THE WEB

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

[www.peoplesvoice.ca](http://www.peoplesvoice.ca)

[www.ycl-ljc.ca](http://www.ycl-ljc.ca)

[rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com](http://rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.com)

<http://solidnet.org>

## 23rd Annual People's Voice Victory Banquet

Saturday, May 2, 6:00 pm

Victoria Drive Community Hall, 2026 E. 43rd Ave, Vancouver

### Keynote Speaker: MICHEAL VONN

(lawyer and Policy Director, B.C. Civil Liberties Association)

"Bill C-51 and the Right to Free Speech"



Join us for an evening to defend free speech, featuring an international cultural program, and delicious food (including vegetarian option).

Tickets \$20 (student/unemployed \$12)  
For details, ph. 604-254-9836 or 255-2041



Take your mom  
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**Sunday, May 10**

ANNUAL  
**PANCAKE  
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**10 a.m.**

(last call for pancakes - noon)

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

For information contact Linda, 604-421-7056



# Peace Congress petitions for friendship with Venezuela

With the Harper government continuing to escalate its hostility towards the elected government of Venezuela, the Canadian Peace Congress has responded with a petition urging all Members of Parliament to support international friendship, not interference in that country.

The text of the petition reads:

We are disturbed by the direction of Canada's foreign policy. For nearly a decade, the

government has adopted an increasingly aggressive position in international relations. This includes interfering in the domestic affairs of sovereign countries, supporting foreign coups and participating in wars of aggression. Canada has historically maintained a healthy relationship with other countries in the Americas. However, as a result of its current foreign policy toward Venezuela, Canada is becoming isolated

among countries in the hemisphere.

We are particularly distressed by recent actions of the Canadian government. Following the death of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in 2013, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's official message expressed his hope that "At this key juncture... the people of Venezuela can now build for themselves a better, brighter future based on the principles of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights." This politically motivated and insen-sitive remark resulted in an official protest from the Venezuelan government.

On February 12, 2015 the Venezuelan government uncovered a coup plot that involved a small group of very wealthy, right-wing Venezuelan families who were receiving support from foreign governments. The coup plans included maps with bombing targets. The Venezuelan govern-

ment stated that the coup plot included assistance from RCMP officer Nancy Birbeck and someone from the Canadian Embassy. To date, neither the Prime Minister nor the Minister of Foreign Affairs has responded to these reports.

One of the key moments of the VII Summit of the Americas, held in April 2015, was the meeting between US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raoul Castro. Sadly, this historic moment of international friendship was overshadowed by the decision of the United States and Canada to block the Summit's final document. The US and Canada objected to points including health

as a human right, ending electronic espionage, and repealing Obama's Executive Order that described Venezuela as a security threat to the US. All of the 33 other countries at the Summit approved the final declaration. We call on all Members of Parliament to reject the current foreign policy of interference, intervention and aggression toward Venezuela. Canada needs a new, independent foreign policy based on peace, international cooperation and solidarity.

**For copies of the petition, contact Canadian Peace Congress President Dave McKee, <mckee1968@gmail.com>. ●**

**"We call on all Members of Parliament to reject the current foreign policy of interference, intervention and aggression toward Venezuela. Canada needs a new, independent foreign policy based on peace, international cooperation and solidarity."**



Martha Pardo de Marquez, Venezuelan Consul General in Toronto, speaking at the forum "Venezuela - The Triumph of the People", held on April 11. People's Voice photo: Ed Bil

## House of Saud playing dirty in Yemen

From globalresearch.ca

The US-backed House of Saud has long been playing different Yemeni governments, the Houthis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Al-Qaeda all against one another in a real life version of Game of Thrones.

While Yemen is currently being bombed into accepting the US-Saudi authoritarian order, one could hardly imagine that the House of Saud has previously worked with the Houthis, supporting the idea of a Zaidi imamate and exploiting the sectarian group as a counter-balance against the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in Yemen, notes author and geopolitical analyst Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya.

"The Kingdom's engagement of the Houthi movement was part of the House of Saud's hoary and trite dirty game inside Yemen. In this regard, the House of Saud has been playing different Yemeni governments, the Houthis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Al-Qaeda all against one another in a Saudi real life version of George RR Martin's best-selling book series Game of Thrones," the analyst emphasised.

During the Cold War the House of Saud together with the United States, the United Kingdom and Israel supported North Yemen and a Zaidi group against South Yemen's republicans. However, after the republicans won the war Riyadh began funding Wahhabi sectarian schools in North Yemen in order to split the society.

Remarkably, after South Yemen gained independence from the UK in 1967, Britain, the US, Saudi Arabia and Israel began to support the Muslim Brotherhood movement as a tool in their fight against the communist-led People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

In 1990 the country reunified, but Saudis continued to use the Muslim Brotherhood and its Al-Islah Islamist party in order to control the Yemeni government.

However, when the Arab Spring

protests erupted in the Middle East and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was ousted, the House of Saud shifted goalposts and decided to exploit the Houthis against the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Islah, fearing the influential Islamist group would get the upper hand in Yemen.

The Saudi strategy to manipulate the Houthis against Al-Islah eventually resulted in the rise of the Houthi movement in Yemen, Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya elaborated. Why then has Saudi Arabia recently unleashed the deadly military campaign against its former allies?

"Despite the fact that the Houthis were willing to reassure the Kingdom for months and approached the House of Saud to sue for peace days before the war, the Kingdom wants total obedience from the Houthi movement," the analyst stressed, adding that neither the Houthis, nor the Yemeni General People's Congress can accept this.

The ultimate goal of the House of Saud is suzerainty [feudal overlord] over Yemen. So far, the US-backed House of Saud opted to bomb the Yemeni state into submission, the analyst emphasised.

The Saudi-led aggression has already claimed the lives of nearly 1,000 Yemenis, including women and children. Although Riyadh asserts it is attacking the positions of Houthi insurgents, in reality it is bombing residential areas and civilian infrastructure.

Thus, Riyadh is trying to bomb one of the poorest Arab states into accepting an authoritarian regime of ousted Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, a loyal vassal of Saudi Arabia and the US. ●

## May Day Greetings



Charlie McClure Club,  
CPC, Sudbury

## NEWS FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFITS!

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377-15/08

**The greatest act of international solidarity from Canada this year would be for the working class to arrange the everlasting defeat of the Harper Tories and their ilk in the election this fall.**

**Manitoba Committee,  
Communist Party of Canada**

