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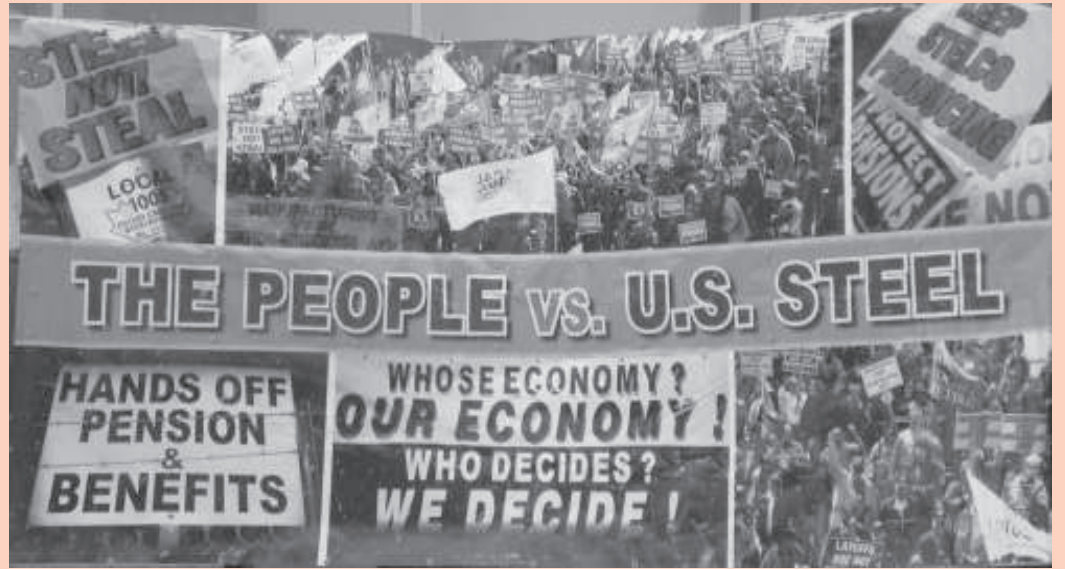
# people's VOICE

## The threat to civil rights

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## Billion dollar robbery!



*How U.S. Steel rips off workers and taxpayers with Harper's help: Page 2*

## So what's wrong with CETA?



"The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union will effectively abolish the democratic ability of municipalities, school boards, hospitals, universities, provincial agencies and Crown corporations, as well as the people of Québec and Aboriginal communities, to use their purchasing powers to stimulate local jobs and prosperity. CETA will lock-in full and partial water utility privatizations making these services virtually impossible to bring back into public hands. It will force corporate privatization of other public services like liquor stores and Canada Post..."

See story on page 6

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### Labour & civic elections

With British Columbia's civic elections just two months away, the Vancouver & District Labour Council backs progressive candidates at the ballot box, but with some changes over past campaigns.

## INSIDE

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### Obama's new war

The US President announces military strikes in Iraq and Syria, with the eager support of Canada's pro-war Prime Minister Harper.

**9**

### Dissent or treason?

She has achieved international celebrity blogger status for her "critical portrayal" of life in Cuba. But is Yoani Sanchez a heroic dissident or a paid agent of the United States administration?

# The continuing tragedy of Ontario Steel

By Sam Hammond,  
Hamilton

The Steel Company of Canada (Stelco) inaugurated what became the longest Company's Creditors Arrangement Act (CCA) supervised restructuring, lasting from 2003 until its sale to US Steel in 2007. During that four year period, a fraud was perpetrated that would make any organized crime syndicate green with envy. But as we will see, that was only the warm-up to the present debacle.

Under the aegis of the CCA, hotly contested by Local 1005 USW, Stelco wiped out its shareholders, and under the adroit footwork of the chief of restructuring officer Rodney Mott (representing a cabal of vulture capitalists) was purchased by these self-same cannibals for a measly \$150 million. Eighteen months later it was purchased by US Steel for \$1.1 billion. Not a bad profit for doing nothing but shuffling cards.

Later, the judge who had presided over the transaction went to work for Stelco's law firm. The Union distinguished itself throughout the whole grab by tenaciously exposing the fraud and just as tenaciously defending its members and pensioners. This short history brings us to the process that began in 2007.

In 2007 the Harper government allowed the foreign takeover of

Stelco by US Steel under the guarantee of certain conditions. Imposed under the Investment Canada Act, these conditions basically guaranteed the maintenance of over 3000 jobs at two plants, the solvency of the pensions, the investment of \$200



million in upgrades, and the continuing production of steel. US Steel never met these obligations. In the last seven years it shut down and resumed operations, locked out workers in Hamilton and Nanticoke three times, cut the work force, imposed concessions, and in late 2013 announced the end of steel making altogether in Hamilton.

The Investment Canada Act and US Steel were on a collision course. The Feds imposed \$10,000 per day fines on US Steel. The company appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada that the fines

were unconstitutional, but the Court rejected the appeal. US Steel was losing hands down. But the Harper government intervened at the eleventh hour and brokered a secret deal behind closed doors that over-rode the original agreement and wiped out the fines.

Only parts of that deal have ever been disclosed, but the government saved US Steel from the win-win court case that would have guaranteed jobs and continued steel production, and protected the taxpayers.

Under the partially disclosed parts of the 2012 back room deal, the company agreed to keep producing steel in Canada, operate its Nanticoke and Hamilton plants until 2015, invest \$50 million by 2015, keep its original pledge to invest \$200 million by October 2014, and donate \$3 million to

community and educational projects in Hamilton and Nanticoke. The problem was (and is), the secret parts of the deal might contain escape clauses for all these grandiose commitments. This is more than a suspicion because of events unfolding since August, when US Steel filed restructuring proposals under the Canada Business Corporations Act (CBCA) to essentially ignore all previous commitments and obligations.

The proposal is to break up US Steel Canada (USSC) into six entities. Each entity would be a

stand-alone company with no revenue from USSC after 2015. USSC would provide \$250 million in financing until the end of 2015, at which time the six companies would stand or fall according to their own balance sheets. There would be four Hamilton companies: Hamilton Land (over 100 acres), Hamilton Coke Ovens, Hamilton Finishing and Hamilton Other. At Lake Erie Nanticoke, there would be: Lake Erie Land (6600 acres of unused land) and Lake Erie Works. In addition USSC would ask the Ontario government to forgive a \$150 million loan made at 1% interest in 2007.

In mid-August, USSC tried to involve the participation of Local 1005 in its diabolical scheme. The attempt drew this withering reply in a letter to Jodi Koch, Director of Human Resources: "Local 1005 USW hereby informs you that its Negotiating Committee is not mandated by the membership to participate in any discussions that do not address the core interests of steelworkers and pensioners ... Local 1005's Negotiating Committee and US Steel have now met several times in August ... Local 1005 notes that these meetings have also revealed what is, in the opinion of Local 1005, a CBCA conspiracy on the part of US Steel to defraud Hamilton pensioners of their pensions, the Province of Ontario of its \$150 million loan it made at 1% interest in 2007, and Canadians of their right to have polluted grounds and waters cleaned up by the corporation responsible for

polluting them."

This correct response from the Union is based on a true understanding of what the company is trying to accomplish, on behalf of their members, pensioners and the Canadian public. Under the proposal, the pension responsibilities could be shifted to one of the new companies that would go bankrupt. A mergers and acquisitions process could be initiated by US Steel (Pittsburgh), who would purchase Lake Erie Land and Lake Erie Works from itself, thus maintaining the newest and most profitable, while allowing 103 years of ecological damage in Hamilton to fall on the heads of the taxpayers, who would inherit the bankrupted Hamilton companies and land.

Further to the above, on Sept. 16, US Steel Canada formally filed for Creditor Protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. This is another act in a multi-level corporate drama. As Thomas Walkom wrote in the *Toronto Star*, "From the Federal government came a deafening silence."

There is so much more as this tragedy unfolds. The corporate mentality, coupled with the opaque secrecy and contempt of democracy displayed by the Harper government throughout the decade of the Steel saga, provides a frightening window into what to expect if and when the Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA) deal with the European Union becomes visible. Watch our pages for further on Steel in Ontario. ●

## Withdraw Bill 3 attack on Québec municipal pensions

Central Committee,  
Communist Party of  
Canada, Sept. 13-14, 2014

The Communist Party of Canada supports the municipal employees of Québec and demands the withdrawal of Bill 3 which attacks their pension rights.

Citing the fear of pension fund deficits due to the improved life expectancy of workers, Bill 3 would tear up collective agreements, and force renegotiation by setting advance concessions that workers must accept. With good reason, the unions argue that such imposed negotiations will be artificial, and that the Bill is an attack on freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Bill 3 covers all Québec municipalities, affecting 170 retirement plans, 50,000 retirees and 122 000 participants, even though these plans are not actually in financial difficulty.

Notably, the bill affects retired workers, by suspending indexation of their pensions. It imposes a limit on contributions paid by municipal employees to fund their pension plans, and requires them to pay half of the deficits accumulated by their employers.

If there is a deficit in these pension plans, the true causes are poor financial returns caused by the economic crisis of 2008, and the contribution holidays given to employers. By giving municipalities the authority to pay their employees their contractual debts,

the government is engaged in robbery, retroactively imposing lower wages.

On the other hand, a firm of independent actuaries, the only one to report during parliamentary committee hearings on Bill 3, disputes the method of calculating municipal pension deficits used by the government. According to the company, the plans are not at all in the red.

In reality, by filing Bill 3, the Couillard government is rushing to meet the wishes of municipalities, especially the mayors of Montreal and Québec City, to reduce their payrolls. The government admits that this is only the beginning, since negotiations will begin shortly for renewal of the collective agreements of 500,000 public and para-public sector employees in Québec. In its

latest austerity budget, the government has made clear its intention to freeze its payroll.

To support its attack against the municipal employees pension fund, the government is trying to pit workers in the public sector - who are largely unionized - against those in the private sector who are not. Premier Couillard claims that the pensions of public sector employees are privileges, forcibly paid by the majority of non-unionized private sector workers who do not receive any supplemental pension plan. But this is an illusion since the attack against unionised public employees is the prelude to a general attack against the entire working class in Québec.

The supplementary pension plans are funded, often exclusively, from the contributions levied on the wages of the employees. The

benefits often leave recipients in poverty. The average pension of retired blue-collar workers in Montreal amounts to only \$24,000 per year, including benefits from the Québec Pension Board and the Federal Security pension old age.

When the public pension plans were established in the 1960s, the financial companies and employers were strongly opposed to government programs which would provide a greater share of income. They wanted to establish private supplemental plans that would provide large reserves of financial liquidity, and allow them to exercise greater control over their employees. Governments were quick to comply.

Consequently, public plans, annuities, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement together currently only amount to 44% of the average wage in Québec. Canada is one of the lowest countries in the OECD, where the average coverage is 54%.

The cynicism of the government has no limit. As he is about to rob the working people, Couillard plans to increase remuneration for Members of the National Assembly by \$46,000, in exchange for reducing their generous pension plan and eliminating their golden handshakes. Recall that the pension plan for MNAs is one of the most generous in Canada. Currently, a member may withdraw at age 60, with a full pension of up to 100% of the base salary (about \$90,000 per year),

plus other remuneration for participation in various parliamentary committees.

The fight has only just begun and will intensify. The City of Montreal, with the support of the Québec government, is using intimidation tactics to stop the mobilization. They recently laid criminal charges and took disciplinary action, including suspensions and dismissals, against dozens of demonstrators, who broke into the Hotel de Ville in Montreal on August 18 to show their anger at City Council. The City has specifically targeted Michel Parent, president of Montreal blue collar workers, who was present to speak during public time provided to council. The very militant Montreal union of blue collar workers has declared its intention to oppose Bill 3 by any means necessary, even an indefinite general strike.

The Communist Party demands:

- Withdraw Bill 3;
- Withdraw all criminal prosecutions and disciplinary actions related to the demonstration of August 18, 2014 at Hotel de Ville of Montreal;
- Establish a system of universal public pensions from age 60, guaranteeing a decent income for all.

Bill 3 is part of the general neoliberal attack against the pension rights of all workers in Québec and Canada. Mobilizations against this agenda should be stepped up - the way forward is unity in struggle. ●



Tens of thousands of workers and supporters marched against Bill 3 on Sept. 20 in Montreal.



# Changing scenarios in Vancouver civic race

## PV Vancouver Bureau

For progressive activists in Vancouver, September 16 was an important date, as Vancouver and District Labour Council delegates debated recommendations for the Nov. 15 civic election. The outcome was very different than in previous campaigns.

The Coalition of Progressive Electors was formed at the initiative of the VDLC in 1968. But this year, delegates gave their support to just two of the party's eighteen candidates, Gayle Gavin for City Council and Anita Romaniuk for Park Board.

Instead, the delegates endorsed all candidates of Vision Vancouver, the centrist party which won majorities at every level in 2008 and 2011. This includes Mayor Gregor Robertson and eight Council candidates (seven of these being incumbents), School Board chair Patti Bacchus and six other Trustee candidates, and six candidates for Park Board (mostly first-timers).

The VDLC also endorsed the new One City party's council candidate R.J. Aquino, who ran in 2011 for COPE; two School Trustee candidates nominated by the Public Education Project, Jane Bouey (a COPE Trustee in 2002-2005 and 2008-2011, and vice-chair of the board in the latter term), and Gwen Giesbrecht, the former chair of Vancouver District Parent Advisory Committee. All three have strong pro-labour track records.

The Labour Council endorsements help candidates to approach trade unions for financial support. Also, the VDLC traditionally sends a "slate card" to residences across the city, urging votes for these candidates. For One City and the Public Education Project, this is a major boost to their first campaigns.

COPE mayoralty candidate Meena Wong told the Vancouver

Sun that she was "shocked" at the decision by "union bosses," using a common right-wing phrase.

But the outcome was no surprise to most observers. Several members of the current COPE leadership have long been hostile to the trade union movement in Vancouver, after the painful divisions which rocked the organization after its sweep in the 2002 civic election. Since that time, the VDLC and some major affiliates, such as CUPE locals representing civic workers, have supported a common slate of Vision and COPE candidates, to block the right-wing NPA at Council and School Board.

The NPA, which is heavily backed by major resource corporations and developers, did win majorities in 2005, and forced

civic workers into a lengthy strike two years later. That bitter



R.J. Aquino, City Council candidate for the new One City party, is among those endorsed by the Vancouver & District Labour Council.

experience was a factor in convincing most COPE members to back a combined slate again in 2008 and 2011.

Such a tactic was not in the cards this year, as resentment grows over the Vision city council's close links with developers, and its attempts to "manage" citizen consultations around zoning and other policy issues. (On the other hand, the Vision trustees on School Board have been strong critics of the BC Liberal government's attacks on public education.)

In recent years, COPE has become dominated by forces which want to scrap the organization's historic city-wide coalition with labour and sections of the left, such as the Communist Party. Instead, the focus is on building a narrower geographic

and political base in the poverty-stricken Downtown Eastside.

Some executive members even welcomed the departure of long-time COPE elected officials, claiming that this would "clarify" issues. They often denied that COPE needed financial or political support from the labour movement, and very few of COPE's current candidates have any links to trade unions.

This strategy will be severely tested in the November 15 election. Recent opinion polls indicate that COPE is running fourth among local civic parties, far behind Vision, the NPA, and the Green Party.

In upcoming issues, People's Voice will analyze the campaign in Vancouver, and present our views on the huge field of candidates.

## Salute to B.C. teachers: the fight to defend public education continues

### Statement from the Communist Party of BC, Sept. 19, 2014

The teachers of British Columbia deserve a huge vote of appreciation for standing on the picket lines to defend public education and collective bargaining rights. The Communist Party of BC salutes their determination to resist the attacks and provocations of the Liberal government, and to win the support of parents, students, and all who value public education. This courageous struggle goes all the way back to the first Liberal term in office, and the budget slashing and union-bashing launched by Gordon Campbell and Christy Clark. We pledge to continue our solidarity with teachers and all education workers in this fight, which has now entered a new stage following the ratification of a new six-year

collective agreement. The teachers will go back to classrooms with justifiable pride that unlike the government, they made the interests of students their priority in this dispute.

After months of government threats and bullying, the final negotiated settlement was reached thanks to the solidarity of community groups, parents and students, and by the financial and moral support and of trade unions across the country and even internationally. Having made huge sacrifices, many teachers were understandably reluctant to accept a deal which leaves them with just 7.25% pay increases over a period of eight years, and with only minor gains on the crucial issues of class size and composition.

Some pundits want to add up figures to declare that the BCTF "lost" this strike. But we say: the teachers won by beating back Premier Clark's insistence on concessions, by winning new funds - however limited - to help improve working and learning conditions, and most of all by rallying huge numbers of British Columbians against the Liberal assault on public services. This historic strike has improved the terrain for future rounds of the fightback against the Liberal agenda of cutbacks, privatisation and union bashing. The teachers showed that it is possible to say no to this reactionary government, with the solidarity of thousands who organized rallies, sit-ins, and other actions. By winning the battle of public opinion, the BCTF and other unions in the education sector have shown the way towards a wider coalition of labour and community groups in upcoming provincial budget debates and around other issues. In our view, such a fightback coalition must go beyond demonstrations and other mobilizations with a defensive character.

This strategy can only succeed by challenging the neoliberal dogma of constant corporate tax cuts and "balanced budgets" - an ideology which is rarely questioned by the NDP. The heart of the Liberal agenda is the

deliberate program of massive tax cuts for the wealthy and the corporations, costing the provincial government more than \$2 billion in lost revenue every year. This is a cynical tool to gut the entire public sector, from education to health to social services, with the aim of creating constant new crises, undermining public confidence, and pushing their privatization agenda. The teachers' strike shows that this government will never relent in its efforts to push families out of the public system, and into private for-profit schools, which are heavily subsidized by the working class through our taxes.

The struggle to roll back

Campbell's tax cuts remains the single most crucial element of the fight to put people's needs before corporate greed in British Columbia today. The next stage begins with the municipal elections taking place this fall. The election of more Trustees and School Boards actively committed to demand full funding for public education is vital to turn up the heat on the Liberal government. We urge the BC Federation of Labour convention in November to take the initiative to build a powerful united movement for policies which will reverse more than a decade of Liberal damage to working people and our communities. ●



Scene from June 2014 student rally at the Vancouver Art Gallery in solidarity with BC teachers. (Photo: K. Cariou)

## Mediation in Ikea dispute

There may be light at the end of the tunnel for over 300 workers engaged in a 16-month labour dispute at furniture transnational Ikea's store in Richmond, BC. After nine months without negotiations, Teamsters Union Local 213 and the company have asked veteran mediator Vince Ready to help resolve the impasse.

"It's a significant development. We are pleased with that ... But we still have a lot of work to do," Teamsters local 213 representative Anita Dawson told the Province newspaper. All issues remain on the table, including wages, benefits, permanent staffing positions, action taken against workers during the strike and the status of more than 30 employees who scabbed on their fellow workers. Seven strikers have been fired for alleged infractions, including blocking traffic.

Picket lines went up in May 2013 after the company issued a lockout. Ikea offered higher wages to entice some workers to cross the picket lines and keep the store open with limited hours and services. That tactic made the dispute even more difficult, and the labour movement responded with a boycott against the store.

Receiving strike pay of about \$350 per week, the strikers have made huge sacrifices to resist the company's concession demands, which include a two-tier system for new hires. ●

## VDLC backs civic candidates

By Peter Marcus, Vancouver, BC

The Vancouver and District Labour Council met on September 16, one day after the BC Teachers' Federation announced a tentative collective agreement with the Provincial Liberal government, reached with the help of mediator Vince Ready. The deal includes a 7.25% increase over six years (coming after a previous two-year pay freeze), and some new funding for public schools. The teachers had spent the first two weeks of the 2014-15 school year on picket lines after a summer of no movement by the government, putting many students and their families in difficult situations. Although many teachers were unhappy that the agreement did not achieve bigger gains in pay and teaching conditions, it was approved by 84% in a Sept. 18 ratification vote.

The Council went in camera to decide on a list of candidates to support in the areas under their jurisdiction for the November 15, 2014 municipal elections. In Vancouver, all the governing Vision party candidates were endorsed, following the pattern of three previous elections. R.J. Aquino of One City and Gayle Gavin of COPE were also endorsed for Council, along with Jane Bouey and Gwen Geisbrecht of the Public Education Project for School Board, and COPE's Anita Romaniuk for Park Board.

The delegates also backed three "alternate" candidates nominated by COPE: Audrey Seagal for City Council, Kombii Nanjalah for School Trustee, and Urooba Jamal for Park Board.

The Council also endorsed candidates in the Francophone school district, the City and District of North Vancouver and their school boards, and the Richmond School Board.

The IKEA workers represent by the Teamsters' Union in Richmond are in bargaining again after being locked out for almost a year and a half. Until a deal is reached, the boycott of IKEA is still on. ●



# EDITORIALS

## C-377 back from the grave

Over a year ago, trade unionists heaved a sigh of relief when 16 Conservative senators helped kill Bill C-377. Sponsored by Tory MP Russ Hiebert, with the support of PM Harper, the private member's bill required unions to publicly disclose any spending of \$5,000 or more and any salary of more than \$100,000. Together with other onerous provisions, C-377 aimed at making it nearly impossible for the labour movement to effectively act on behalf of the interests of union members.

The leader of the Senate revolt was Hugh Segal, who called C-377 "badly drafted, flawed, unconstitutional and technically incompetent" legislation. Segal and his colleagues amended the bill by raising the spending disclosure threshold to \$150,000 and the salary threshold to \$444,000. Parliament was prorogued before the House of Commons could debate the amendments, and the legislation died.

But not forever. Segal has unfortunately retired to Massey College, and this dangerous legislation has returned in its original form. Back under Harper's thumb, Tory senators have reduced debate on private members' business, just as C-377 climbs out of the grave.

This legislation infringes on provincial jurisdiction over labour issues, violates charter guarantees of freedom of speech and association, and invades privacy rights. None of that matters to the Harper government, which specialises in violating human rights. But it should matter to everyone who supports the rights of unions to bargain collectively and to defend the broader interests of working people.

The Canadian Labour Congress is also warning against Bill C-525, which makes it harder for federally regulated workers to join a union and easier to decertify a union. Mass mobilization is needed to resist this assault. The Sept. 20 rally by over 50,000 people in Montreal to defend municipal workers pensions shows what can and must be done!

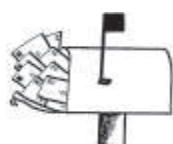
## The CETA fight is far from over

As this issue of PV goes in the mail, Stephen Harper will be shaking hands in Ottawa with European Union representatives, and signing the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), before we see a word of the official text. Just as shocking, the big opposition parties in Parliament support in principle this odious corporate sellout of Canadian sovereignty. So much for democracy in 21st century Canada.

That's the bad news. The good news is that this fight is still in the middle rounds. While politicians are reluctant to even ask timid questions, many of their counterparts in Europe are prepared to say "no way" to unelected corporate rule. The parliaments of all 28 countries of the European Union must approve CETA. That process that could take two years, with no guarantee of the outcome. In Germany, France, Italy and Belgium, citizens and legislators alike are outraged that corporations will be granted the right to sue governments if local, provincial or federal regulations put the interests of people and the environment ahead of capitalist profiteering.

The next federal election in Canada is scheduled for October 2015. And that means that Stephen Harper, Justin Trudeau and Thomas Mulcair will have to face hard questions for voters across the country over the next twelve months.

That gives time for the labour movements in both English-speaking Canada and Quebec to bring together a broad coalition of Indigenous peoples, environmental groups, municipalities, and all those who understand the dangers of this deal. Resistance must include wide ranging public education, petitions, sit-ins, and other forms of mobilization, in an all-out effort to make rejection of CETA a top political priority. A big anti-CETA campaign in Canada is the best way to signal the peoples of Europe that this deal must never take effect!



## Letters to the Editor

### The amnesia of infanticide

The fierce Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip have reached the ugliest form possible. Despite stern international criticism - coming from such politically diverse national entities as the European Union, Russia, China, and most Arab states - Israeli soldiers felt no compunction after the savage destruction of several Palestinian schools.

This, however, was not the only attack on the Palestinians' schools in recent years. In 2008, the Israelis shelled down a school, and in 2009 the attack on several embodiments of the institution of schooling itself, which is the true foundation of civilization, repeated again. In 2009, the most abominable of the Israeli attacks was on a U.N. school where hundreds of Palestinians had sought refuge. Dozens of children were killed then. The horrifying images of grieving parents wailing in exasperating anguish at a hospital filled with dead and

severely wounded children circled the globe the same way it did in 2008 and 2014. The merciless slaughter of such pure souls, as all children are, is a barbarous act worthy only of the most callous miscreants.

As Canadians, what should upset us most is the disconcerting position assumed by the much-embarrassing Harper administration, which in 2014 histrionically condemned the Palestinians, the same way it had done in 2008 and 2009, but mysteriously forgot to mention the odious attacks on the Palestinian schools. Well, Stephen Harper might be amnesic, but Clio, the muse of history is not! Have no fear, Harper's grandchildren will learn about their grandfather's reprehensible government from our future history textbooks.

But, as Mao Zedong wrote in "Changsha" - one of his most beautiful poems, which celebrates the famous city of the Hunan

province, the place where he adhered to Communism - "schoolmates/at life's utmost blossoming," not only in Canada but also in Gaza, Israel and all over the world, will be "full of questioning fervour".

*We were young, schoolmates,  
at life's utmost blossoming;  
full of questioning fervour  
daringly we surmounted all  
obstacles.*

*Pointing to our rivers and  
mountains,  
setting people aflame with our  
prose,  
to us the opulent were only dirt.  
Do you still bear in mind  
how, streaming in full flow, we  
struck the waters  
and the waves halted the hasty  
boats?*

The future is "streaming in full" and the children will halt "the hasty boats" of history, to check the veracity of their consignments; thus, truth will make them even purer. And the purity of children is unforgiving!

Daniel Deleanu, Toronto, ON

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### LETTERS

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## Bombardier workers defeat pension grab in Thunder Bay

### PV Manitoba Bureau

THUNDER BAY - After an eight-week strike, more than 900 members of Unifor Local 1075 defeated Bombardier's attempt to mutilate their defined pension plan, returning to work without a major concession after voting on a new contract on September 13.

Bombardier, the city's largest private sector employer, aimed to change pensions into a defined contribution plan whose benefits would be at the mercy of the market.

A Thunder Bay Chronicle editorial (Sept. 14) noted that "the company was surprised by the strength of the rejection" of an August 25 "last offer" by Bombardier; 750 workers voted 80 per cent against the deal at the time.

During the strike the workers held rallies in their city and Toronto. Unifor stated on August 14 that Bombardier's CEO was paid \$6 million last year and the company was well-off, with \$32 billion in orders on the books and a net profit of \$572 million last year.

Besides targeting the defined benefits plan, Bombardier demanded no pensions for some 500 workers hired after December 2010, and offered a wage increase of less than 1% over three years.

The workers at Bombardier's Thunder Bay plant are back to building subway and streetcars.

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# The politics of pain relief

By Laura Warman, Alberta

Physical pain is an experience shared and disliked by all people (with a few rare exceptions) across all places and times. Even the most privileged are not immune. Given this, it would be sensible to conclude that any advanced society would place a high value on providing safe and effective pain relief to its suffering citizens. However, this is not the case in present-day Canada.

While it is true that there are a wide variety of pain-relieving therapies (physiotherapy, massage therapy, and acupuncture to name

a few) access to them is limited by income. The Alberta government no longer provides physiotherapy as part of its medical services. Mobility restrictions or sheer distance from urban centres keeps others home in pain.

In our society, pain relief is largely a pharmacological matter. From the ubiquitous advertisements for over-the-counter pills to the newest prescription drugs, there seems to be no shortage of pills for treating pain. Again, this illusion is not reality.

The oldest known pain relievers are opiates, originally derived from the opium poppy and now existing

in a myriad of chemically synthesized variants. Among their drawbacks are mental confusion, constipation, tolerance (requiring larger doses over time) and the possibility of death through overdose or interactions with other drugs. There also exists a community of individuals who use opiates for non-therapeutic purposes. This usage is illegal, and those who do so face severe social disapproval as well as legal punishments. Some of these users develop addictions which can be life threatening and difficult to sustain or overcome.

Even though pain patients have a low risk of addiction, they often have restrictions placed on their medication. For example, OxyNeo was made illegal in Ontario due to concerns about a growing number of deaths due to prescription painkiller overdoses. Most of these deaths were due to combining painkillers with ethanol or antidepressants, but complementary restrictions were not placed on liquor dispensers or on doctors prescribing antidepressants.

Another ancient drug used for pain relief is marijuana. American research reveals that states allowing legal use of medical marijuana have up to 25% lower rates of opiate overdose deaths. While medical marijuana is legal for a narrow range of conditions in Canada, the Health



Ministry does not endorse or encourage its use. It can only be prescribed after every other treatment has been found to be ineffective. Many doctors do not feel qualified to prescribe the drug as accurate information about marijuana is lacking. Drug companies are unwilling to spend money researching a drug that is not patentable, and Canada's government research facilities are currently being starved for funds as well as politically muzzled. Those who purchase the drug through the underground market face the same social stigma and criminal penalties as recreational users.

It can be very difficult to obtain effective long term pain treatment. Getting a prescription for a short period of time may not be difficult (though paying for it and enduring the side effects may be) but chronic pain sufferers, such as myself, face

additional challenges. We cannot take active control of our pain management, but must convince a doctor to prescribe what they think is appropriate. This requires a balancing act: you must convince the doctor that you really need medication but also that you are not an addict.

Given the other hardships that go with chronic pain (loss of income, social and physical isolation, sleep deprivation) this additional stress can drive a pain patient to despair. Our society has a cult of optimism, stressing that all obstacles can be overcome by individual effort and virtue, even when this is not physically possible. We are told to "not let pain get in the way" even when effective relief is not available. It would be far wiser to remember the adage "from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs". ●



## Salmond resigns after referendum No result

Area	Yes	No
Aberdeen City	59,390	84,094
Aberdeenshire	71,337	108,606
Angus	35,044	45,192
Argyll & Bute	26,324	37,143
Clackmannanshire	16,350	19,036
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	9,195	10,544
Dumfries & Galloway	36,614	70,039
<b>Dundee</b>	<b>53,620</b>	<b>39,880</b>
East Ayrshire	39,762	44,442
East Dunbartonshire	30,624	48,314
East Lothian	27,467	44,283
East Renfrewsh	24,287	41,690
City of Edinburgh	123,927	194,638
Falkirk	50,489	58,030
Fife	114,148	139,788
<b>Glasgow</b>	<b>194,779</b>	<b>169,347</b>
Highland	78,069	87,739
Inverclyde	27,243	27,329
Midlothian	26,370	33,972
Moray	27,232	36,935
North Ayrshire	47,072	49,016
<b>North Lanarkshire</b>	<b>115,783</b>	<b>110,922</b>
Orkney	4,883	10,004
Perth & Kinross	41,475	62,714
Renfrewshire	55,466	62,067
Scottish Borders	27,906	55,553
Shetland	5,669	9,951
South Ayrshire	34,402	47,247
South Lanarkshire	100,990	121,800
Stirling	25,010	37,153
<b>West Dunbartonshire</b>	<b>33,720</b>	<b>28,776</b>
West Lothian	53,342	65,682
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,623,342</b>	<b>2,001,926</b>

Only 4 voting areas gave a majority "YES" for Scottish independence, including Glasgow and its neighbours North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire, plus Dundee.

By Malcolm Burns, UK Morning Star

Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond resigned on Sept. 19 as the political classes of Holyrood and Westminster manoeuvred in the wake of Scotland's nail-biting independence referendum.

Scots voted No to independence by 55 per cent to 45 per cent in the historic poll on Sept. 18.

In the wake of the defeat, Alex Salmond said it was time for Scotland and the SNP to have a new leader who could take the devolution process forward.

"We lost the referendum vote but can still carry the political initiative," he said. "More importantly, Scotland can still emerge as the real winner."

His decision came as Prime Minister David Cameron and Labour leader Ed Miliband struggled to seize the initiative on constitutional change following a month of frenetic promise-making to try and secure more No votes. Under pressure from many of his Tory backbenchers, Cameron linked new powers for Scotland with restrictions on Scottish MPs voting on non-Scottish bills in Westminster.

He said: "We have heard the voice of Scotland and now the millions of voices of England must also be heard. The question of English votes for English laws, the so-called West Lothian Question, requires a decisive answer so just as Scotland will vote separately on their issues of tax, spending and welfare, so too England, as well as Wales and Northern Ireland, should be

able to vote on these issues. All this must take place in tandem with and at the same pace as the settlement for Scotland."

Commons Leader William Hague will draw up the plans, with the same November deadline as the detailed proposals on powers for Scotland.

Labour leader Ed Miliband said his party would look at any proposals the Prime Minister came forward with - but called for a full constitutional convention to deliver change across Britain.

Speaking ahead of this year's Labour Conference, Miliband pledged to deliver powers promised to Scotland during the referendum campaign.

He said: "This referendum has changed Scotland. But it will also change Britain. We know there is deep anger across the UK with Westminster politics from so many people who feel left out and left behind - that our country doesn't work for them."

Scottish Labour Campaign for Socialism chairman Vince Mills

welcomed the promise of new powers for Scotland but urged Labour to be cautious about accepting the timescale which Cameron is setting out.

"Giving new powers to Scotland in short order is fair enough," he said. "But the Better Together parties didn't say they were going to try to resolve all the problems of the British constitution on the same timetable."

Union leaders representing hundreds of thousands of Scots urged the Westminster parties to make good on their referendum pledge of change.

Unite general secretary Len McCluskey said the Westminster parties had witnessed a "seismic shift in the political culture of these islands, one that must surely hasten the day we can say goodbye to the ruinous political consensus of the past 40 years which has not served our people."

He warned Labour leaders: "People want change, genuine change - please listen, understand these calls and heed them." ●





# BLOCK THE CETA DEAL!

**Central Committee,  
Communist Party of  
Canada, Sept. 13-14, 2014**

Every government and advocates of "Free Trade Agreements" have dangled the illusion of jobs and prosperity. These have never materialized. Indeed the opposite is true. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have vanished through NAFTA, and experts predict at least another 50,000 jobs will be lost through CETA, the latest and most dangerous of these agreements.

Shrouded in secrecy, the Harper Conservative government, the European Union, and major transnational corporations recently concluded the final round of negotiations for the largest free-trade agreement in Canada's history since NAFTA. Although there have been setbacks in the German Parliament over the dispute mechanism, the Harper government are still pushing for a signing, at least in principle, in September 2014. CETA would take effect after it has been ratified by the EU member states, and also by the federal and provincial governments of Canada. This makes the fightback agenda very urgent; just as the MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investments) was defeated, blocking CETA is still possible, through a strategy of mass mobilizations and by making this sellout a key issue in next year's federal election.

The history of the Comprehensive European Trade Agreement is a story of lies, secrecy, and corporate toadying to craft the most dangerous attack on Canadian sovereignty and democracy to date. The CETA agreement will put Canadian governance, from federal, provincial and municipal levels, effectively under the rule of Canadian and European corporations. CETA goes far beyond NAFTA, but because of the preferred nation clauses in NAFTA, it will be upgraded to CETA standards so that everyone can join the corporate feast. What the Tories and later the Liberals couldn't sell under NAFTA will be automatically accomplished in CETA and the NAFTA upgrades. Thus the untouchables (so the public thought) of water, healthcare and procurement are on the chopping block for CETA.

Disgruntled civil servants, in Canada and Europe, have leaked information to the public on both continents, through the draconian screen of security, secrecy, misinformation and outrageous lies perpetrated by the negotiators. This is how we know of an "invitation only" scoping meeting convened in 2009, where Canadian and European corporations drew up their "wish list" for a neo-liberal trade agreement. If not for whistle blowers, even parliamentarians would have no knowledge of this. The news really became public in 2012, when it was learned the negotiations had been going on for years and were apparently nearing completion.

This outraged important sectors of labour, progressive researchers

and NGOs, to the point where the Federal government was compelled to hold some fake hearings and receive submissions in November 2013. The submitters were forced to base their submissions on hearsay, sketchy government documents prepared for this purpose, and leaked



I'M SORRY SIR, WE DON'T RUN THE MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM ANYMORE. IT WAS BOUGHT BY A FOREIGN COMPANY. I'LL PUT YOU THROUGH TO THEIR CUSTOMER SERVICE LINE — IN FRANKFURT, GERMANY.



documents. Under this farcical duress, they were heard by a government that knew everything but officially admitted nothing. Nevertheless the submissions exposed some of the most inherent dangers.

Early in the negotiations, the EU made full access to public

stimulate local jobs and prosperity.

CETA will lock-in full and partial water utility privatizations making these services virtually impossible to bring back into public hands. It will force corporate privatization of other public services like liquor stores and Canada Post.

CETA will allow corporations to crack into the gold mine of post-secondary education, and threaten the integrity of research programs allowing corporations to sue students who whistle-blow unethical research practices.

CETA will attack Aboriginal peoples' treaty rights, sovereignty and self-determination, with the agreement's sweeping scope

allowing foreign industries access to First Nations, Inuit and Métis lands, territories and water.

In all these agreements, the "Preferred Nation Status" clauses provide a diabolical method of upgrading each one to the status and conditions of the last negotiated deal. As bad as CETA is, the "Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership" (TTIP) negotiations now underway between the US and the EU will provide upgrades from negotiations in which Canada has no part.

It's not a secret that Canada mostly sells raw materials to

right to profit. What about the rights of workers to decent jobs? What about the rights of citizens to democratic decision-making?"

Why would any Canadian government negotiate away sovereignty, hand legislative and judiciary powers over to a cabal of international corporate representatives, put municipal and provincial governments under the jurisdiction of foreign corporations, and rob Canadians of decision making in our own country? Because CETA will effectively implement the neo-liberal agenda of privatization without parliamentary decision-making.

The Harper government will accomplish the corporate agenda through a trade deal that was negotiated in secret and will be a fact before anyone, including members of parliament, have seen a complete manuscript. The opposition parties, and particularly the NDP, have disgraced themselves in their support for what is primarily an act of treason. There has been some opposition from labour but the major exposures and opposition have come from forces such as the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Council of Canadians, social movements in Quebec, municipalities, healthcare organizations, environmental organizations and First Nations.

The Communist Party has been deeply engaged in all the struggles against previous corporate trade deals, from the FTA to NAFTA and others, and we continue to be part of this crucial fight. We call for the urgent formation of an all-in resistance block of the labour movements in English-speaking Canada and Quebec, First Nations, environmental and women's groups, social movements, political parties and municipal organizations, to inform the public of the dangers, and to formulate an emergency fightback to stop this dangerous sellout.



procurement a fundamental and necessary part of the deal. They got what they wanted. Procurement has little to do with trade, but everything to do with corporate access to every level of public spending right down to city councils, school boards, etc. Although the government says health care is not in danger, it definitely is. The current existence of P3s, the complicated integrations of public/private services and long-term care facilities, is ample ammunition for corporate complaint mechanisms. Under CETA no government or public body will be able to develop procurement policies that favour local or regional suppliers to promote local jobs or development. All municipalities and public bodies will have to submit their procurement policies and plans to the federal government, and these will be available to all corporations. Any corporation can challenge the practices as unfair advantage, able to file charges that will not be heard in any Canadian courts, but in an as yet unspecified international tribunal made up of unspecified appointees.

Canadian water will be on the corporate agenda if it has previously been commercialized. This means that any bottled water, for instance, that is taken from a public resource and sold commercially, will provide the

Europe, which mostly sells value-added, finished products back to Canada. This has created an extraordinary \$28 billion manufacturing trade deficit with the EU. This deficit can only get worse if we make it easier (and cheaper) for European firms to ship finished goods into Canada, and easier (and cheaper) for Canadian firms to ship resources into Europe.

Part of the summary of the Unifor submission to the hearings in November of 2013 contains the following, "We're granting rights to private investors and corporations that are unheard of. We're granting private investors and corporations the right to challenge democratic policy decisions made by our national and sub-national governments if those decisions infringe on their

## CETA smoke and mirrors....

On August 13, German public television station ARD's program *Tagesschau* (the "Daily Show") leaked the first 521 pages of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). The next day, they released the remaining 1,000 pages of annexes and reservations in the text. These leaks came just a week after the Harper government announced that negotiations on the deal had been concluded. The text is scheduled to be signed by the Harper government and the European Commission on September 25 in Ottawa. After that ceremony, it faces a ratification process that could take up to two years.

No date has been set yet for the text to be officially released, though some media reports have suggested it will be released at the time of the signing (while other reports say that isn't the case).

The Harper government has

refused to confirm that the text released by German media is the final draft or to comment on its content, with a spokesperson for the trade minister saying, "Canada does not comment on leaks of purported negotiating texts."

The Council of Canadians has long called for the text to be released - a call now being amplified by numerous others.

Queen's University Belfast professor Mohsen al Attar McGill and University BCL/LLB student Lucas Versteegh write in the *National Post*, "Of course, negotiating agreements is not a casual affair, and the temporary use of secrecy is often a valid strategy. We note, however, that not everyone is kept in the dark: industry leaders were apprised of the negotiations throughout the process, and many even counselled the negotiating team on their preferred outcome. Included on this VIP list are Canada Pork

International, the Chamber of Commerce, SNC-Lavalin and other agricultural, financial, and service industry groups."

Even the *Globe and Mail* editorial board has called for the government to officially release the text. They say, "For months, there has been talk about 'legal scrubbing' and translations into the many languages of Europe. But Canada has only two official languages. And the finer points of legal drafts-manship are not of primary concern to the Canadian electorate. ...The federal government should instead make the current text of the deal public, as soon as possible. The treaty should not be debated in a mad rush."

That said, the text leaked by ARD is widely acknowledged as the final draft of the deal that will be signed in a few weeks time and it has raised numerous concerns...

**For details, visit <http://canadians.org/blog/ceta-text-leaked-prompting-numerous-concerns-about-its-implications>.**



# Four myths about Obama's war on Islamic State

**A reluctant warrior intervenes against a threat to the homeland, or so we're told by the media. From *Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)*, Sept 12, 2014, <http://fair.org/take-action/media-advisories/>**

With Barack Obama's September 10 announcement of a military plan to launch strikes against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), many pundits might be breathing a sigh of relief. The White House is finally taking the kind of military action they have been recommending for months. But there are some serious questions that should be asked about the threat posed by the Islamic State and about some of the assumptions guiding the debate.

## "Striking the Homeland"

The idea that ISIS poses an immediate threat to the United States - as opposed to its non-Sunni Muslim neighbors - has been a consistent theme in the media, encouraging the public to support war. Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Texas) declared on ABC's *This Week* (8/24/14) that the Islamic State is "intent on hitting the West and there are external operations, I believe, underway." When CBS's *Face the Nation* host Bob Schieffer (9/7/14) asked Republican Sen. Marco Rubio if he thought they posed a "threat to the homeland now," Rubio replied: "I do. I believe they do." Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein said the threat to the country was "potentially very serious." ABC *This Week* host Martha Raddatz (9/7/14) explained that if the options are leaving Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in power or the threat from the Islamic State, the White House was "clearly siding with the threat to the homeland."

On ABC World News (8/16/14), reporter Terry Moran told viewers that "a new US intelligence assessment says that ISIS poses a direct threat to the American homeland. So, what happens here in northern Iraq... matters a lot back home." But experts do not see an immediate danger, which is coming through in some media coverage. As the *New York Times* (9/11/14) put it: Some officials and terrorism experts believe that the actual danger posed by ISIS has been distorted in hours of television punditry and alarmist statements by politicians, and that there has been little substantive public debate about the unintended consequences of expanding American military action in the Middle East. The *Times* added that "when American counter-terrorism officials review the threats to the United States each day, the terror group is not a top concern." And the *Washington Post*'s Adam Goldman (9/10/14) reported that the day Obama delivered his speech laying out his plan, "top US intelligence officials told Congress on Wednesday that the organization does not pose an immediate threat to the country."

## Obama the Reluctant Warrior

One clear message from corporate media has been that Barack Obama is unusually reticent about using military force.

Asked to comment about Obama's "reluctance to take the fight against ISIS to Syria," correspondent



Richard Engel said on *Meet the Press* (8/31/14): Well, I speak to military commanders. I speak to former officials. And they are apoplectic. They think that this is a clear and present danger. They think something needs to be done. And this "reluctance" is seen in Obama's foreign policy generally (FAIR Blog, 8/26/14). As the *Washington Post* (9/10/14) put it, Obama is "six years into a presidency devoted to ending US wars in the Muslim world." The *Associated Press* (9/11/14) presented Obama's Islamic State decision as a dramatic turn, calling him "the president who wanted to end America's wars."

But Obama's actual record conflicts with this picture. In Iraq, Obama tried to keep more troops in Iraq than the Bush administration had agreed to in the withdrawal plan it had negotiated. Obama's substantial achievement in Afghanistan was a massive escalation of that war (FAIR Blog, 5/27/14). His administration greatly increased the number of drone attacks in Yemen and Pakistan, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of civilians (FAIR Blog, 8/30/13). And Obama used the US military to help overthrow the government of Libya - though the disastrous outcome of that operation is seldom cited as evidence that Obama is too eager to intervene.

## Congress always gets in the way

The decision to consult Congress on the matter of starting a war - as required by the Constitution - is often treated as a weakness. As the *New York Times* (9/9/14) put it: A year ago

this month, in one of the more embarrassing episodes of his presidency, bipartisan opposition to airstrikes in Syria forced the president to withdraw his request for authorization to strike the Assad government. NPR reporter Scott Horsley (9/10/14) recalled this incident as a moment of failure: "It quickly became clear Congress had no stomach for that, and Obama had to back down. That was a real body-blow to the president's prestige." The implication is that respecting public sentiment opposing war is a sign of weakness - and that presidents should be more concerned about their "prestige" than about the Constitution.

## Finally intervening in Syria

Throughout the past year, hawkish critics of the White House and many pundits have insisted that the Obama administration should have intervened long ago. To many pundits, if the US had only attacked Syria sooner, none of this would have happened. As ABC's Cokie Roberts (8/10/14) said: We're not acting like a superpower, that's the problem.... I agree with Hillary Clinton, as you quoted her earlier, saying, well, if we had gotten into Syria when the rebels were begging us to come in, and saying, here we are, trying

to secure our freedom, where is America, then you wouldn't have had this group filling the vacuum. Other media accounts (*Washington Post*, 8/11/14) argue that more US support for the armed opposition in Syria would not have been decisive in either removing Bashar al-Assad from power or preventing the rise of the Islamic State.

And some of these arguments rest on the assumption that US policy towards Syria can be characterized as one of nonintervention. As the *New York Times* (9/10/14) reported: Mr. Obama has resisted military engagement in Syria for more than three years, out of fear early on that arming the rebels who oppose Assad would fail to alter the balance in the civil war while more direct military intervention could have spillover effects in the volatile region.

This is seriously misleading - and contradicted by the *Times*' own reporting. Under the headline "CIA Said to Aid in Steering Arms to Syrian Opposition" (6/21/12), the paper reported that the US government was playing a very active role in supporting the armed revolt, with CIA officers in Turkey helping to deliver weapons to particular opposition groups. Days earlier, the *Wall Street Journal* (6/13/12) was reporting that the CIA was working with opposition groups to "develop logistical routes for moving supplies into Syria and providing communications training."

As Patrick Cockburn reports in his new book *The Jihadis Return*, the arms that the CIA was "steering" to Syrian rebels were

instrumental in enabling ISIS to expand the territory it held in Iraq: An intelligence officer from a Middle Eastern country neighbouring Syria told me that ISIS members "say they are always pleased when sophisticated weapons are sent to anti-Assad groups of any kind because they can always get the arms off them by threats of force or cash payments."... Arms supplied by US allies such as Qatar and Turkey to anti-Assad forces in Syria are now being captured regularly in Iraq. ISIS came into being as a result of the US invasion of Iraq (CounterSpin, 8/15/14), and was greatly strengthened by the US-backed destabilization of Syria.

Since it is US intervention that has gotten us where we are today, the false assumption that the White House has failed to do anything at all makes any serious analysis of what to do now impossible. (The idea that doing something effective about the real threat ISIS poses to its neighbors means a military attack was challenged by IPS's Phyllis Bennis in a column for *The Progressive* - 9/10/14; the reverse, she argues, is actually the case.)

What seems abundantly clear is that the media's coverage of the threat posed by the Islamic State - and the group's savvy dissemination of appalling propaganda - have produced some shift in public opinion. As journalist Glenn Greenwald (*Intercept*, 9/8/14) remarked: It's as though ISIS and the US media and political class worked in perfect unison to achieve the same goal here when it comes to American public opinion: fully terrorize them. ●



Anti-war rally at the White House, June 2014

## "Canada out of Iraq - No new imperialist intervention"

**Central Committee, Communist Party of Canada, Sept. 13-14, 2014**

The Communist Party of Canada opposes the renewal of imperialism's war in Iraq, under the pretext of fighting the Islamic State (IS), and calls for Canada's immediate and complete withdrawal from the US-led military intervention.

The doctrine of Responsibility to Protect is being fed to the people of Canada in order to justify a new war in Iraq. In this narrative, intervention is promoted as necessary to save the people of Iraq and Syria from IS terrorism.

But this argument obscures the fact that the main and most immediate threat to peace and to

the people of the Middle East is from imperialism. It was the United States, together with its allies in NATO and Israel, who spearheaded the invasion of Iraq in 1990, and who carried out the murderous sanctions through the decade of the 1990s, and who again invaded and occupied the country from 2003 on. It is the imperialist states who have waged a terrorist war against the people of Syria, in which 100,000 people have died and millions displaced. It is imperialism that has supported Israel's occupation of Palestine, the apartheid policies against the Palestinian people, and Israel's repeated military strikes against Gaza.

The horrors of the Islamic State reflect the legacy of US-led, imperialist invasion and occupation

of Iraq, an aggression that imposed sectarianism and national division on that country.

It is no accident that imperialism's sudden and intense interest in Iraq has developed in the wake of its failure to topple the government of Syria and just as NATO concludes its departure from Afghanistan. A renewed war on Iraq will enable the US and its allies to maintain huge military bases in the region and will provide a pretext for renewed military intervention in Syria.

It is the sole right of the people of a country to determine the path of their political, social and economic development, free from foreign interference. Instead of seeking new pretexts to justify new intervention in Iraq, the US and its allies should withdraw completely from the

Middle East.

In Canada, the Harper Conservative government has voiced its support for imperialist military intervention and has already begun deployment of Canadian military personnel and equipment to Iraq. The massive antiwar mobilizations of 2002 and 2003 prevented the Chretien government from officially participating in the invasion and occupation of Iraq. That important victory must not be forgotten now.

The Communist Party denounces the Harper government's support for a renewed war on Iraq, under any pretext, and calls on all progressive and peace-supporting people to actively oppose Canadian military deployment. ●





# GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

## Turkish mine disaster report

An expert report on a mining disaster in Turkey last May has revealed that the necessary safety measures were not taken to prevent the disaster, even though sensors in the coal mine had reported a risk of fire. The accident is being investigated by a public prosecutor's office. Eight people, including a general manager and the chief executive of the mining company, have been arrested on charges of "causing multiple deaths by negligence."

On May 13 Turkey was shocked by an explosion and blaze at the coal mine in Soma, a town in western Manisa province, that killed 301 workers and injured scores of others. A fire in the mine rapidly depleted oxygen in the shaft, causing hundreds of miners to die of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The main cause, according to the report, was negligence on a wide scale. There was no refuge chamber in the mine, and the mine operator did not provide functioning gas masks. The mine had faults in its electrical system, and while the plan for the electrical layout should have been approved by the General Directorate of Mining Affairs, the management did not seek such approval. There were not enough gas sensors, and officials did not file regular reports on data provided by the sensors. There was not a proper ventilation system to send polluted air outside and supply the mine with clean air. Miners were not able to exit the mine, as many of the routes to the outside were used for coal production purposes. Officials neglected to establish a proper escape plan, and the communication system was not suitable to function underground.

The report said that overproduction was another contributing factor. Production was 2.5 times more than planned, requiring more miners to do the work, but the ventilation system was not strong enough to provide them with clean air. The expert report also states that miners were not given adequate training before being sent underground to work.

The mine is privately operated, but owned by the state-run Turkish Coal Enterprises, under a system introduced by the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) in 2013.

The head of the local branch of mine workers' union Maden-Is has resigned. But not a single government official has accepted any blame, though evidence indicates that it does bear responsibility in the accident, which many blame on a relaxation of work safety rules intended to increase investment returns.

The report's findings have backed up claims raised by some miners. Mehmet Ali Dincer, who was rescued with some injuries, told newspapers that there had been problems with the electrical system for several weeks prior to the accident, but no action was taken by the managers. Dincer and three of his co-workers were hospitalized around one week before the major accident due to

carbon monoxide poisoning, after the mine's ventilators broke down.

## Cambodia garment worker strikes

Two union representatives were arrested and detained for several hours in Cambodia's Prey Veng province on Sept. 17 as a nearly weeklong strike for better working conditions and bonuses continued at the Komchay Mear Trading factory. Sok Siem and Khun Sokhom, of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers' Democratic Union (CCAWDU),



were arrested at 6:40 am as they led a protest in front of the factory, which produces garments for the U.S. clothing giant Gap.

After the arrests, about 3,000 striking workers blocked National Road 1 and surrounded the building, demanding the pair's release. The union leaders were released in the afternoon.

Since a nationwide strike for higher wages briefly crippled the garment industry last December and early January, police have ramped up efforts to suppress protests in the sector by arresting, questioning and releasing the unionists organizing them.

On Sept. 19, workers at Komchay Mear burned tires in front of the plant, and ensuing talks with factory representatives floundered the next day. Negotiations were scheduled to resume the next day in the presence of provincial Governor Has Sareth.

The protests at the Komchay Mear factory coincided with a nationwide campaign to increase the minimum wage to \$177 per month, with workers holding rallies during their lunch breaks.

## Ebola impact on West African workers

More than 2400 known deaths are attributed to Ebola in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal. The economic impact in the region will be devastating and organized labour is challenged to find an adequate response.

An outbreak of Ebola in the developed world would be easily overcome, but West Africa has been unable to contain the disease due to poor health services and other public service failings. The disease has claimed the lives of health workers who lack adequate protective gear to work with infected patients, putting more strain on limited human resources in these countries. The closure of

health facilities unable to deal with Ebola patients has left thousands without care.

Airlines are suspending travel and borders with neighbouring countries have been closed. Multinational companies are pulling foreign staff out of affected countries. Other countries in the region have also been affected by fear of the outbreak spreading, which has affected trade and other economic activities even where there are no reported cases of Ebola.

In a letter to affiliates in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, IndustriALL Global Union's general secretary, Jyrki Raina expressed grave concern of the impact on workers: "Our affiliates have an important role to play monitoring the economic impact, in terms of slow down or stoppage in production by companies, especially in the mining sector and its implications for labour in the form of layoffs. Particular attention also is needed to the impact on migrant workers."

The Steelworkers Humanity Fund has contributed US\$25,000 for Ebola support in West Africa, providing funds to NGOs with ties to the labour movement to undertake a public health education campaign. The Steelworkers Humanity Fund focuses primarily on development projects and emergency aid in developing countries, but also supports Canadian communities in crisis.

## West Bank medical workers end walkout

The Union of X-ray Technicians in the West Bank of Palestine announced the end of a five-day strike after an agreement with the Ministry of Health on Sept. 20. The strike was called off after an agreement that guarantees most of the technicians' demands was signed with the ministry.

The five-day strike was focused on demands for better healthcare for cancer radiographers, an increase in the number of technicians, and an increase in annual vacation days. Union leaders described the agreement, which was signed by health minister Jawad Awwad and union head Mansour Ghanem, as "only the first step on the way. We will continue until we achieve all of our just demands."

## "Don't stop pro-labour changes" in Uruguay

Thousands of workers marched through the Uruguayan capital Montevideo on Sept. 18, to raise their demands with candidates in the presidential election. The union PIT-CNT, the only confederation of the country, gathering about 64 unions and 360,000 workers, summoned the workers to a four-hour strike with the slogan "So the changes do not stop."

Fernando Pereira, one of the coordinators of the march, told the daily El Pais, "We won't tell anyone for whom to vote." But he warned of the situation workers

could face if either the National or Colorado Parties won. The two traditional right-wing parties used to share power before the left-wing Broad Front (Frente Amplio) won the two last elections.

Pereira explained there are two types of development models. One offers to go back to the neoliberal policies of the 1990s, and another proposes to continue with development. The union leader detailed the achievements and benefits for workers obtained under the Broad Front government, including eight-hour shifts for rural workers, the regulation of domestic workers, and limits to outsourcing in the services sector.

On the other hand, National Party candidate Lacalle Pou intends to revoke the current legislation that stipulates prison sentences for company owners found responsible for work-related accidents of their employees.

The PIT-CNT is calling for greater investment in education and in health, in order to reduce waiting lists in the public health system.

The election will take place on Oct. 26. If no candidate receives a majority, a runoff will take place on Nov. 30. Incumbent President Jose Mujica is ineligible to run due to constitutional term limits. The Frente Amplio candidate is Tabare Vazquez, who was President in the 2005-2010 term.

## Legal win for Hyundai workers

Korean workers won a major victory in two cases where courts ruled that all use of in-house subcontractor labour at Hyundai Motor is illegal. One of the winners was the leader of the Ulsan

irregular workers' union branch, who began working at Hyundai Motor's factory in Ulsan as an in-house subcontracting worker in 2002. The rulings mean that 1,179 employees are now recognized as Hyundai regular workers.

Now that Hyundai Motor is their official employer, the "irregular" workers plan to ask for direct negotiations. A total of 1,058 people were recognized as regular Hyundai Motor workers, while another 121 were given mandatory employment status, which legally entitles them to demand regular employment from Hyundai.

Before, the automaker had disregarded its in-house subcontracting staff, insisting that any negotiations be done with their direct employer. Indeed, the in-house subcontractors' union has yet to sit down once at the table with Hyundai Motor.

There is still a strong possibility Hyundai Motor will not go along with the ruling. The workers say that after more than eleven years of denying its illegal employment of dispatch workers and rejecting demands to give them regular status, it is time for Hyundai to quit sidestepping the legal decisions, give them full time status, and apologize to the public for being a big company that has illegally used dispatch workers.

The Ulsan branch had been fighting a lonely battle even among other irregular workers, opposing a special employment deal reached in August between Hyundai Motor and in-house subcontracting staff members in Asan and Jeonju.

But the mood was very different after the legal victories, with many other employees asking to join the union. Hyundai's Ulsan factory has more than 5,400 primary in-house subcontractor employees.

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: pcqccc@gmail.com Tél: 438-338-8890

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Ontario Ctee. CPC**  
290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, M4K 1N6  
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**Hamilton Ctee. CPC**  
265 Melvin Ave., Apt. 815  
Hamilton, ON, L8H 2K3  
Tel: 905-548-9586

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



# Yoani Sanchez: \$60,000 to “upgrade” in a CIA breeding center

By Jean-Guy Allard

Her CIA ties go back to her exile in Switzerland where she not only ate gruyere cheese but had her first romance with Yankee intelligence. Now, after several years of counterrevolutionary activities in Cuba that have made her a millionaire, Yoani Sanchez received a Yahoo grant of \$60,000 to upgrade at Georgetown University, the Alma Mater of a rich collection of luminaries of American intelligence.

The Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and its Institute for the Study of Diplomacy (ISD) announced the news. They indicated that the Cuban “youngster”, who will soon celebrate her 40th birthday, will focus her studies on digital journalism during the academic year 2014-2015. The scholarship includes \$60,000 USD to cover “academic and housing expenses” plus an additional \$5000 for her “travel expenses”.

King Philip of Spain and Bill Clinton studied at Georgetown and several other heads of state and monarchs are among the promoters of the institution. But there are more. Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright and Henry Kissinger were professors at the Institute where Alexander Haig was also noted.

In the long list of celebrities also appear L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the controversial Church of Scientology; J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI chief inquisitor; and Jack Abramoff, the corrupting lawyer who ended behind bars.

Among other “famous” alumni from Latin America is Costa Rican right-wing President Laura Chinchilla and Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani who was involved in the famous slaughter of six Jesuit priests in San Salvador, on November 6, 1989.

But what is most interesting: several directors of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) are distinguished in the list of formers



*Wikipedia describes Yoani Sanchez as “a Cuban blogger who has achieved international fame for her critical portrayal of life in Cuba.” After obtaining her university degree in Cuba’s free public education system, Sanchez left for Switzerland in 2002, and became interested in computer science. When she returned home, Sanchez helped to establish an opposition magazine, and began her blog, Generation Y, which is translated and available in 17 languages. Time magazine listed Sanchez as one of the world’s 100 most influential people in 2008, and U.S. President Barack Obama applauded her efforts to “empower fellow Cubans to express themselves through the use of technology.” This article examines the myth of the “independent” Yoani Sanchez.*

students of the university. Among them, George Tenet, who prompted the criminal aggression against Iraq; Robert Gates, an old agent and favourite of George W. Bush; David Petraeus whom James Petras has called an Israeli agent.

The ugliest of all these lords of imperial intelligence is certainly Allen Dulles who, apart from conceiving, organizing and launching the coup against Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala (1954), multiplied the dirty assaults against the young Cuban Revolution. He was also accused of having ordered the destruction of French ship La Coubre in Havana harbour, causing hundreds of deaths. It was he who invented, together with Richard Nixon, Operation 40 with 40 agents and assassins - Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch among these - which preceded the invasion of Playa Giron.

It is no surprise then that the School of Foreign Service and its Institute for the Study of Diplomacy (ISD) would now sponsor Yahoo’s protege without

requiring her to submit to a contest as outlined in the regulations.

A brief examination of the characteristics of other Yahoo fellows gives a clue as to the nature of the CIA link of that “prestigious” institution which in its brochure openly announces its collaboration

with American government agencies, including the CIA.

French woman Séverine Arsine, a Yahoo “fellow” in 2011-2012, is an expert in handling Internet networks. Her specialty is China, and during her time in Georgetown “focused on social media as tools for disseminating messages.”

Another French woman, Francesca Musiani (2012-2013), worked with Human Rights Watch (HRW), often identified as linked to American intelligence.

Russian Evgeny Morozov, Yahoo Fellow 2009-2010, worked with the Open Society Foundation, of billionaire George Soros.

Another grantee, Han-teng Liao holds a degree in Electrical Engineering and Foreign Languages and Literature, a master’s degree in Journalism and another in Computer Science. He worked for years with the National University in... Taiwan.

It is with pride that the institution boasts of its many partners from the U.S. State Department, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the of the United States Information Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency.

*A CubaNews translation, edited by Walter Lippmann, [www.walterlippmann.com/docs4170.html](http://www.walterlippmann.com/docs4170.html)*

## Ukraine moves to early election

By Wilfred Szczesny

Ukraine is heading for elections on October 26, 2014, years ahead of the normal 2017. On that day, proclaimed by President Petro Poroshenko, Ukrainians will elect new deputies to the Verkhovna rada (that is, members of parliament to the Supreme Council).

Why the rush?

At the end of May 2014, following the ouster of President Yanukovich, Petro Poroshenko was elected President of Ukraine. Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Barack Obama’s and Angela Merkel’s “our boy”, became Prime Minister with the support of a coalition of right-wing parties.

With a very few exceptions, the deputies elected in 2010, including those of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the Party of Regions, remained in place. The Communist Party of Ukraine came under immediate attack, as did the Party of Regions, with increasing tension in eastern Ukraine. There were repeated demands that the deputies from these parties be expelled from their parliamentary seats and that the CPU be banned.

However, the right wing in parliament was unable to gain enough support to enact these demands. The solution, as President Poroshenko and his advisers saw it, was to change the composition of the Supreme Council.

On July 24, in collusion with the President of Ukraine, two parties (UDAR and Svoboda) withdrew from the governing coalition. Unable to pass two



*Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) leader Petro Symonenko, whose party is under attack by the right-wing government.*

vital pieces of legislation (one to fund the government forces in eastern Ukraine, the other to impose austerity measures demanded by international moneylenders), Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and his entire Cabinet resigned.

A week later, the Supreme Council met to consider the resignations. The resignations were rejected, with 125 members of a 450-seat parliament voting. (The rest abstained or were absent.) The two pieces of legislation were passed.

The Prime Minister was left in place, but lacking a majority in parliament. Under the Ukrainian constitution, parliamentarians had 30 days to cobble together a majority bloc. After that, the president was able to call an election. In the meantime, the chairman of the Supreme Council (somewhat akin to a speaker of the House of Commons in Canada) serves as acting prime minister.

Immediate mission accomplished - on August 25, the October

In September 2013, Yahoo CEO, Marissa Mayer, confessed that her greatest fear was to end up in prison if she did not collaborate with the national intelligence agencies. Later, documents provided by former CIA specialist Edward Snowden demonstrated the link between Internet companies “among these Yahoo, Google, Microsoft and Facebook” and US espionage programs.

Repeated attempts by US agencies to use social networks for propaganda purposes, notably in Cuba, are now known.

The CIA connection of Cuban Yoani is known: it goes back to the time when German BND agent and security adviser for Department 211 of the Foreign Ministry (Bundeskanzleramt), Volker Pellet, recruited her during her golden exile in Switzerland.

Yoani Sanchez is already in Washington where the official grant handover ceremony took place on Sept. 9. During her stay in the US capital she will be able to expand her relationship with imperial intelligence, and will also have the opportunity to develop ties with the scoundrels in the Capitol who admire her so. ●



*The Canadian government has announced that “several dozen” military advisors, accompanied by two cargo planes full of weapons, to assist the Iraqi government and Kurdish fighters currently engaged with the Islamic State (ISIS). The Canadian Peace Alliance strongly denounces the Canadian government’s support for a new war in Iraq. These military advisors are drawn from the Canadian Special Operations Regiment – and while the mission is allegedly not one of combat, it is unclear what role the special ops soldiers will play in Iraq. There has also been no clarification about whether any Joint Task Force 2 operatives are currently in Iraq or Syria, and if so, how long they may have been there. Meanwhile, Harper has compared ISIS to the Taliban of Afghanistan, calling them “barbaric” and alleging their aim is “genocide” – a claim clearly aimed at justifying military action that will in reality do nothing to stop them. Take action today to keep Canada out of Iraq and redirect military spending to social and environmental programs.*





## “Pits and perverts:” the legacy of communist Mark Ashton

**PRIDE**, directed by Matthew Warcus, starring Bill Nighy, Dominic West, Imelda Staunton, George MacKay, Paddy Considine, Ben Schnetzer. Review by Peter Frost, Morning Star

It has taken three decades for the BBC and the British film industry to tell the amazing story of Mark Ashton.

Thirty years is a long time, indeed a good few years longer than Ashton's tragically short life - a life cut short by Aids at just 26 in 1987.

Mark, a mercurial young Irishman, was a gay rights activist and a founder member - some would say the founding member - of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) during the epic miners' strike of the 1980s. LGSM came together to support the British miners during the year-long strike of 1984-5. There were 11 LGSM groups throughout the country. London was the largest.

I loved the film. It made me laugh and it made me cry, but I'll leave a full review to others. There is a more important story to be told.

The film is about two tough parallel working-class struggles. First the fight by lesbians and gay men in the '80s against homophobic prejudice, street violence and against the horrifying threat of HIV-Aids. The other battle was that of Britain's miners to stop Margaret Thatcher and her government killing off their industry and their union.

This was a time when Sir James Anderton, then chief constable of Greater Manchester Police, made the homophobic judgement that gay Aids sufferers lived in a "human cesspool of their own making." On striking miners he was equally crass. He described mass picketing and street demonstrations as "acts of terrorism" and trade unions as "a politically motivated industrial mafia at work."

He should have been sacked, but Thatcher knew she needed reactionary police allies like Anderton in her battle to destroy British trade unions, starting with the miners. In this historical maelstrom Ashton was one of the first to realise the connection between two groups both under



attack from bully Thatcher, her savage government and her tame and reactionary police.

Ashton told his gay activist friends: "Mining communities are being bullied like we are, being harassed by the police, just as we are. One community should give solidarity to another. It is really illogical to say: 'I'm gay and I'm into defending the gay community but I don't care about anything else'."

Thatcher, of course, also had the unwavering support of Rupert Murdoch and his awful homophobic and anti-trade union excuse for a newspaper, The Sun. The paper's headline-writers certainly linked the two groups in what must be one of the most disgusting headlines ever written. "Pits and perverts" it screamed in huge type on the front page.

The Sun clearly intended to undermine the striking miners' cause and ridicule or belittle its support from lesbians and gay men. In fact they ended up having exactly the opposite effect. The so-called perverts appropriated that headline as the title of a massive fundraising event organised by Ashton's LGSM at the Electric Ballroom in Camden, London.

The concert itself was a huge success - raising £5,650 (the equivalent of more than £20,000 in today's money) for the striking miners and their families in south Wales. At the concert David Donovan, from the Dulais NUM, told the 1,500-strong, mostly gay and lesbian audience: "You have worn our badge, 'Coal not dole,' and you know what harassment means, as we do. Now we will pin your badge on us - we will support you. It won't change overnight,

but now 140,000 miners know that there are other causes and other problems. We know about blacks and gays and nuclear disarmament, and will never be the same."

The fundraiser was headlined by Bronski Beat, whose lead singer Jimmy Somerville would go on to form The Communards, a group who would record For A Friend, Somerville's personal tribute to Ashton: "Summer comes and I remember how we'd march/We'd march for love and peace, together arm in arm."

*Pride* tells a good story and tells it well, but although one of its main themes is coming out of various closets it is sad that one important closet door remains firmly nailed shut.

Ashton was many things, but he was first and foremost a communist. He never hid that fact. Sadly the film doesn't mention what was one of the most important factors that guided and inspired Ashton in all his actions.

I knew, and worked, with Ashton during the miners' strike when he was general secretary of the Young Communist League (YCL). It is sad, but perhaps predictable, that the BBC has edited Ashton's membership of the Communist Party and his leading role in the YCL out of the storyline completely.

I was proud to work with Ashton and other communists raising money and support for the miners. We helped to picket power stations and fuel dumps, organised fundraisers, demonstrations and street collections.

The savage Thatcher government had sequestered the funds of the NUM which meant that it was pointless for supporters to send donation via the national union. Instead support groups throughout Britain adopted individual mining communities. Ashton's London LGSM group twinned with Dulais Valley in south Wales. They had chosen that particular colliery after meeting some reluctance to accept their support from other miners' groups. Ashton and his LGSM comrades raised an amazing £20,000 for the strikers as well as visiting the Welsh pit village in solidarity and to deliver money, food and other supplies.

The alliances which Ashton and his campaign forged between LGBT and trade union groups proved to be an important turning point in the development of LGBT struggles and issues. Miners' groups began to support and endorse and participate in various Gay Pride events. Miners Lodge and other trade union banners

see PRIDE, page 11



## MUSIC NOTES

By Wally Brooker

### Standing on the edge of a revolution?

Nickleback is one of the most successful rock bands in the world. The slick quartet from Alberta has sold more than 50 million records and raked in a slew of awards, all despite receiving mostly hostile reviews from rock critics. They've been derided for their overuse of that most time-honoured of rock themes: sex, drugs and rock & roll. While occasionally the band engages social issues (e.g. spousal abuse), they've steered clear of political commentary. However, in a surprising turn this summer, Nickleback released *Standing on the Edge of a Revolution*, a single from their upcoming new album *No Fixed Address*. In the video, we find the band in a dimly-lit classroom, performing before students, with a succession of protest images and slogans projected on a screen behind them. They incite the kids with references to the privileges of Wall Street banksters, domestic spying by the NSA & CIA, and images of the Occupy protests. As the kids grow increasingly angry and start overturning desks and throwing paper in the air, the band leads them in a call-and-response chant for revolution. Sadly, it's a little deflating to see the students, fists in the air, defiantly repeating that pathetically unspecific advertising slogan: "We want change!"

### British musicians support BDS


While supporters of the cultural boycott of Israel failed to persuade rocker Neil Young to sign on this summer (he cancelled his Tel Aviv concert for "security" reasons), the BDS campaign continues to attract prominent musicians in Europe. On July 25, during the IDF assault on Gaza, the U.K. Palestinian Solidarity Campaign delivered an open letter to Prime Minister David Cameron calling for an end to Britain's arms trade with Israel. Visiting Canadian rock star Bryan Adams was among the signatories, who also included Bobby Gillespie of Primal Scream, and Robert Del Naja of Massive Attack. Speaking of Massive Attack, the popular English band headlined Ireland's Longitude 2014 music festival earlier that month. Their spectacular concert displayed pro-Palestinian LED solidarity messages. On July 27, more than 50,000 people attended a Gaza solidarity march in London. Speakers included composer Brian Eno and guitarist-producer Dave Randall (of Faithless and Slovo fame). Irish singer Sinéad O'Connor sent greetings and added her name to the growing list of musicians who have pledged not to perform in Israel until justice for Palestine has been realized. For more information, see: <http://refrainplayingisrael.blogspot.co.uk/>.

### Native rapper takes on sports mascots

Sports fans are often attached to symbols associated with their favourite team, but can be oblivious to the racist implications of those symbols. In recent years, Native Americans have stepped up their fight to compel offending teams (e.g. Cleveland Indians, Atlanta Braves, Chicago Black Hawks) to acknowledge the pain that abuse of their identity as sports mascots has caused. At the centre of the controversy is the team with what may be the most egregious name: the National Football League's Washington Redskins. The campaign picked up steam in August when CBS and NBC sports broadcasters Phil Simms and Tony Dungee declared that they will no longer use the word "Redskins" on the air. On Sept. 2 the sports network ESPN dedicated an episode of its show "Outside the Lines" to the controversy. It opened with a performance by the popular 25-year-old Native American rap star Frank Waln (from the Rosebud Sioux reservation in South Dakota) and his band *Nake Nukla Waun* ("I am always ready, at all times, for anything"). A podcast can be accessed at the ESPN website. For info about Frank Waln check out an interview at [www.peoplesworld.org](http://www.peoplesworld.org) and look for his outstanding video "Hear My Cry" on YouTube.

### Musicians respond to racist shooting

American musicians joined in the condemnation of the August 9 slaying of unarmed teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, by white police officer Darren Wilson. In a Huffington Post interview, prominent Brooklyn rapper Talib Kweli, on the front lines in Ferguson after the killing, responded sharply to efforts by authorities to defuse the justified anger of the town's black community. "We're getting killed out here in the streets," he said. "We cannot afford to put peace above justice. We work towards peace, that's the end goal, but it's about organization, it's about strategy, it's about tactics. It's not about calming down." Outspoken R&B singer Lauryn Hill responded to the killing with a new song, "Black Rage". The song takes the melody of the Rogers and Hammerstein standard "My Favourite Things" but replaces the sugar-coated lyric with a bitter satire that evokes Billie Holiday and Nina Simone. Radical singer-songwriter David Rovics also responded. "His Hands Were in the Air" is a typically hard-hitting Rovics broadside. These are only a few of the many interventions by musicians in the Michael Brown case.



## La Trova Nuestra

**Friday, Oct. 31, 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."





## The "Great Power Game"

**Canada in the Great Power Game, 1914-2014**, by Gwynne Dyer, non-fiction, Random House of Canada, 448 pages, \$34.95. Reviewed by Doug Meggison

Iconoclast Gwynne Dyer has written a book that is going to annoy a lot of people. This was certainly so for military historian Tim Cook who called Dyer's overview "utterly conventional" in a nasty review in the *Globe and Mail*.

On the contrary, Dyer - a military historian himself - presents several ideas that are antidotes for the hallucinatory celebrations of World War I in Canada and England. He calls into question Canada's participation in NATO's wars, which at best have had a skein of legal justification from a prostrate United Nations.

Dyer points out that world war is nothing new. The great powers (code for the imperialist nations) have been waging world wars for centuries. This is how the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada came into being after all, at the conclusion of the "Seven Years War."

He demonstrates that a conniving imperial Britain convinced the Canadian government to send our military into its first overseas battle on June 18, 1900 in South Africa. This deliberately set the precedent for Canada to enter the Great War in 1914, not as part of Canada's interests, but in identification with British imperial interests.

## PRIDE...

continued from page 10

headed the 1985 Gay Pride rally in London.

That same year, at the 1985 Labour Party conference in Bournemouth, a resolution committing the party to support LGBT equality rights was passed. The issue had been raised and defeated before. This time unanimous support from the NUM won the vote against fierce opposition from many on the Labour Party national executive.

In 1988 the NUM was among the most outspoken allies of the LGBT community campaign against Section 28 - an attempt to ban any mention of homosexuality in schools.

Ashton was diagnosed with Aids on January 30, 1987. Just 12 days later pneumonia took his young life. His premature death prompted a tremendous response, not just from the gay community but also from the left and the labour movement in general. Red, pink and rainbow flags and miners' union banners all fluttered at his impressive Lambeth funeral.

His memory lives on in the Mark Ashton Red Ribbon Fund. His name is still honoured in the ex-mining valleys of south Wales and now *Pride* will introduce at least some of his story to a massive new audience.

Go and see it. It will make you laugh a lot and cry a little, but more important it will inspire you to action - and that is the only legacy communist Mark Ashton would ever have wanted. ●

Dyer, a Newfoundlander, discusses how that self-governing dominion was manipulated into sending troops into the Great War, where the Royal Newfoundland Regiment suffered the horrors of Gallipoli in August 1915 and the massacre at Beaumont Hamel and Gueudecourt in 1916. Prime Minister Sir Edward Morris, the front man for the imperial government, returned to London in September 1917, and resigned in December. For his services Morris was appointed to two corporate boards and received his peerage. Gwynne Dyer writes, "His heir still sits in the House of Lords today."

The author's central thesis is that the "great powers" have behaved the same way for centuries. The carnage of the First World War (sic) caused some of them to develop plans for collective security under the League of Nations - a new concept. This failed, of course, and Dyer discusses how Canada was a leading smaller power in undermining the League, notwithstanding later glossing over of our role.

## Party building, mass action topics at Montréal event

**We are happy to share news about one of the first events in the Communist Party's "Build the Fightback, Join the Communist Party" campaign.**

Members and friends of the Parti Communiste du Québec met to discuss the political situation internationally and the fightback in Canada at a Sept. 21 event in Montréal. Elizabeth Rowley, the Ontario leader of the Communist Party, was joined by Québec labour activist and writer Robert Luxley, who talked about the protest of 50,000 people the day before against the municipal pension reform in Québec.

The meeting launched the Québec component of the Communist Party's new recruitment campaign. Three new members joined the party at the end of the meeting.

Rowley highlighted the dangerous developments within NATO, and applauded the labour and peace forces in Québec which have taken up the call to get Canada out of this imperialist alliance. This key struggle for peace must be taken right across the country, she said.

Canada, added Rowley, must make a 180 degree turn and implement a new, independent Canadian foreign policy with the objective of a free Palestine. The Parti Communiste du Québec is making "Fire (Foreign Minister John) Baird, Free Palestine" pins - the first in a series coming out of the PCQ's new button press.

Rowley was happy to learn about the recent Saturday closure of a shoe store on rue Saint-Denis, which has been picketed by local Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaigners for several years. The Israeli-based NAOT chain is known for maquiladora-like exploitation at its factories in the occupied Palestinian West Bank. While the store remains open on other days, rue Saint-Denis is at its busiest on Saturday. The BDS campaign in Québec has been joined by a broad

After the Second World War came another attempt to develop a system of collective security in the face of the even more immense destruction wrought by the antagonists, and especially the atomic bombs dropped by the USA on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Dyer thinks that the Security Council system of veto power for the five great powers in the United Nations is about as good as it gets. He is always pointing out in his newspaper columns and this book, that the postwar arrangements have prevented war between the great powers for seven decades and counting.

We can't be complacent, however, because the great powers are re-asserting themselves through NATO, an obsolete organization with nuclear weapons that refuses to die. Canada, under Harper (who only gets one entry in the index) has been itching to join the great power club.

Dyer strips the illusions from this pretense and asserts, in effect, that the "great power game" has to be halted, and this is where Canada's actual interests reside. ●

section of labour and progressive movements, including the PCQ and CPC.

The meeting also heard about developments in the Québec pension fightback. Robert Luxley said that the reforms amount to a theft of workers' wages and a form of super-exploitation.

Contrary to the corporate media's perspective, municipal workers in Québec do not receive golden pensions, and retirees generally live below the poverty line and below most other OECD countries. Luxley, who edits the PCQ's quarterly newspaper *Clarté*, noted that the latest issue which exposes this situation is being well received by working people.

The Sept. 20 mass protest at Parc Lafontaine and other actions by trade unions come at the same time as the re-formation of the Common Front for public sector negotiations. After some division in their analysis of the minority Parti Québécois government, the labour and people's movements are re-mobilizing to fight the new Liberal regime, which is a welcome sign and must go further, Luxley said.

Rowley spoke about renewed public interest in the Communist Party, along with positive signs in the fightback, like the recent People's Social Forum and the defeat of right-wing business trade unionist Ken Georgetti in the Canadian Labour Congress election.

The necessity to build the fightback on the streets and get rid of Harper was very urgent, Rowley said, together with building the Communist Party as a decisive ingredient in the class struggle. Visibility is key to recruitment. Almost every club of the Party in Ontario gained new recruits during the June provincial election, which saw campaigns by eleven Communist candidates in five cities.

Dave McKee, the first Party candidate in London, Ontario, after many years, helped galvanize friends and supporters into action around the Communist "People's

## What's Left

### Vancouver, BC

**Left Film Night**, "Operation Gladio: NATO's Secret Army", 7 pm, Sunday, Sept. 28, and "Weight of Chains", Oct. 25, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive. Ph. 604-255-2041 for details.

**OneCity Policy Forum**, Sunday, Sept. 28, 2:30-4:30 pm, Creekside Community Centre (upstairs), 1 Athletes Way, near Main Street/Science World station. Campaign office opening Oct. 4, details at [www.onecityvancouver.ca](http://www.onecityvancouver.ca).

**The war in eastern Ukraine and the New Cold War**, forum sponsored by Institute for the Humanities, Simon Fraser University, speaker anti-war activist Roger Annis, Monday, Sept. 29, 7 pm, SFU Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St., Room 2270.

**Benefit for Children in Gaza**, proceeds to UNICEF, Tuesday, Oct. 7, 8 pm, Fox Cabaret, 2321 Main St., speaker Dr. Gabor Mate, live comedy, music, magic, dancers and more. Tickets minimum \$20 via Eventbrite or at the door.

**Celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Guatemalan Revolution**, Sat., Oct. 18, 7 pm, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Dr. Donation \$10, music with DJ Carlitos Tun Tun, delicious authentic Guatemalan food. Organized by Otto Rene Castillo Club CPC.

**La Trova Nuestra**, evening of Latin American music, admission \$10, 8 pm, Oct. 31, Centre for Socialist Education, 706 Clark Drive.

### Winnipeg, MB

**7th Annual Anarchist Book-fair and Canzine DIY Fest**, weekend of Oct. 24-26, at the University of Winnipeg ("The Hive" in Lockhart Hall, and Bulman Centre). For info and to reserve tables, <http://wpgbookfairdiyfest.com/>

### Toronto, ON

**Nicaragua: a nation's right to survive**, documentary by John Pilger, U of T Club CPC event, Friday, Sept. 26, 8:30 pm, U of T OISE Room 10-200

**CAFE CUBA**, Thursday, Oct. 16, 7 pm, free admission, at Ellington's Music and Cafe, 805 St. Clair West. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Beatles in North America, Luis Garcia will show his film "John Lennon in Havana", and Hidden Brook Press presents *Window Fishing*, an anthology on the influence of the Beatles, edited by Poet Laureate John B. Lee. For info: CCFA Toronto, 416-654-7105.

### Montreal, QC

**Public services and programs under attack!** Halloween demo against Liberal austerity, Friday, Oct. 31, 11 am, gather at McGill College Ave. and Sherbrooke (near Metro McGill).

## People's Voice deadlines

October 16-31 issue: Thursday, October 2  
November 1-15 issue: Thursday, October 16

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

## ERIC WAUGH

We were deeply saddened by the news that our long-time supporter Eric Waugh passed away in North Vancouver, on Sept. 21. An obituary will appear in our next issue.



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

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

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

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

Alternative" platform. A new Party club will be chartered in London this fall.

The clubs of the PCQ resolved to win more new members, expand the *Clarté* subscription list, and hold a

mass public event celebrating the life of Che Guevara between now and January. That's when the campaign will come to a close, and the Québec communists will hold their National Congress. ●



# “The continuing attack on democratic and civil rights must be reversed”

*Statement adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, Sept. 13-14, 2014*

The Communist Party of Canada's Central Committee calls for democratic-minded people to join in the condemnation of Montréal municipal bylaw P-6 and support the ongoing court challenge against this law. Montréal is on the front line of a much broader, reactionary attack on democratic and civil rights which must be reversed.

Bylaw P-6 was created during, and in response to, the Québec student strike of 2012. Refusing to negotiate in good faith, and responding to the outpouring of public support, the provincial Charest Liberal government imposed draconian legislation under the title of Bill 78 which grossly violated civil and democratic rights by effectively outlawing all student protest and blocking any attempt of solidarity actions by the labour movement.

It is well known that this tactic further discredited the Charest Liberals. Public pressure helped trigger an election in which the Liberals were defeated, and the new minority Parti Québécois government struck Bill 78 from the books.

What is not well known is that on the municipal level, both Montréal and Québec City either adapted or adopted city bylaws mirroring Bill 78 - and that these were never struck from the books.

In Montréal the city substantially amended bylaw P-6, “a bylaw on the prevention of disturbances of the peace, public security, and public order, and on the use of public space.” (This bylaw was originally the notorious Règlement 3926 from 1969, in response to the police and firefighters' strike of that year.) In Québec City the bylaw was entitled RVQ 1091 “for peace and good order.” The key provisions of both bylaws are an escalating series of fines (in Montréal, starting at over \$600) for the first offense and continuing to several thousand dollars. Participants in a any gathering of more than three people which



*This photo from Rebel Youth shows Montreal police in action during Quebec student protests of 2012. The numbers are for coordination of riot squad units to attack and charge protesters. See <http://rebelyouth-magazine.blogspot.ca/2012/04/police-violence-in-quebec-student.html>.*

impedes traffic, did not submit its route for advance approval to the police, or whose faces are covered - including a puppet costume, winter scarf, etc. - can be fined. (The police can also refuse the route given to them).

To enforce this bylaw the police use the internationally condemned form of mass arrest known as “kettling.” Kettling is a type of detention and usually lasts for two to four hours or longer surrounded by police. The arrested are squeezed tightly together by police lines, denied water or toilet access, subject to intrusive and abusive police searches, and kept out in the cold - or heat. Often kettling will begin before the protest actually starts. This means that, whether or not the person is proven innocent or guilty in the end, a certain level of punishment has already been handed out, for a legal infraction equivalent to a parking ticket. The law has no justification and is often accompanied by police brutality. Literally thousands of protesters have now been kettled and fined now in the city of Montréal, in a wide range of protests which have in common basically one basic theme, that they were organized by young people. Late this summer, a total of eight class-action lawsuits

against the city of Montréal on behalf of over 1,600 ticketed protesters were approved to go forward to the Québec Superior Court. (This is just a small part of the total people who have been detained or arrested under these laws). Included in the court challenge are members of the Parti Communiste du Québec and la Ligue de la jeunesse communiste.

Since the approval, charges were suddenly dropped for some 518 students arbitrarily arrested under P-6 during the student strike. While not compensating for the violation of their rights, it does show that the bylaw is illegal and unconstitutional. The next step must be getting rid of the law itself, which is the joint demand of many organizations from across Québec including trade unions, student groups, feminist organizations, housing activists, human rights groups and the Québec Bar Association.

The Communist Party expresses its continued and long-standing full support in the struggle for democratic and civil liberties, and the necessity for people's movements to be able to mobilize on an immediate basis with “permission”. All across the country, labour and social movements face reactionary city

governments and police forces which attempt to restrict the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - whether it comes to putting up a poster, to picketing on a public sidewalk, or marching down a street.

Heavy-handed police tactics are increasing across Canada. Last fall there was public outcry when members of the Elsipogtog First Nation protesting shale gas were assaulted by more than a hundred camouflage-clad tactical police with assault rifles and attack dogs. Similarly, the mass arrests, “caging” and effective imposition of martial law for three days in the streets of Toronto during the G20 resulted in a limited investigation by the Ontario Ombudsperson, which called abolishment for the legislation supposedly justifying that big scoop. Four years later, the Public Works Protection Act remains on the books, and is still a danger, while a class-action law suit for the G20 arrestees is still slowly proceeding through the courts.

Further, as the Council of Canadians has exposed, since 2007 the RCMP has been operating an intelligence clearing house called the Government Operations Centre which monitors all known demonstrations across the country, no matter how mundane, and with special emphasis on aboriginal actions.

Therefore Communist Party of Canada calls for mass united action to turn around the serious and intensifying attack on civil and democratic rights:

- \* Abolish P-6 and all corresponding municipal bylaws across Québec;
- \* Drop all associated charges and bail conditions for those charged during the student strike under P-6, the Highway Traffic Code, and various sections of the

criminal code;

\* Grant amnesty for the protesters who released a small smoke bomb in the subway and have been subsequently charged with the never-before used sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act, “Hoax regarding terrorist activity”;

\* Abolish all laws on the municipal, provincial and federal level prohibiting freedom of assembly, including those requiring special permits or otherwise criminalizing so-called “spontaneous” protests;

\* Require police to explicitly affirm that even when protests are strictly considered “unlawful,” they are equally protected by the right to freedom of peaceful assembly;

\* Launch an independent public inquiry into recent crowd control techniques, mass arrests and police violence across Canada - including during the Québec student strike with events like the police riot at Victoriaville, where several protesters sustained traumatic injuries including jaw fractures, permanent blindness and deafness;

\* Strengthen and enforce sanctions against police officers convicted of using excessive force;

\* Stop the use of agents provocateurs and all forms of entrapment and coercive police techniques;

\* Enact a Parliamentary moratorium banning the use of plastic bullets, stun grenades and tasers, and strictly regulating all other so-called “non-lethal weapons” such as pepper spray and tear gas;

\* Abolish all forms of profiling such as political profiling and the notorious racial-profiling tactic;

\* Abolish the Government Operations Centre and stop “lawful access legislation” which allows online spying without a warrant or safeguards to rights such as covert, real-time surveillance and access to personal or private information;

\* Crackdown on police violence by enacting legislation to put police under public control in every jurisdiction;

\* Provide civilian and community control bodies legislative “teeth” to independently investigate and enforce real civilian controls, including over detention and arrest, the use of force, and search and seizure.

The Communist Party has long proposed guaranteeing civil and democratic rights by enshrining them in a radically new Constitution actually written by the peoples and nations of Canada - not big business and its reactionary political parties - and protecting the habeas corpus right, so the people cannot be arbitrarily deprived of liberty.

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